



## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

# UPDATED AGENDA INCLUDING PAPERS MARKED 'TO FOLLOW' FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2023

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Place: Committee Rooms 2&3, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford,  
M32 0TH

AGENDA	PART I	Pages
1. ATTENDANCES		
To note attendances, including officers, and any apologies for absence.		
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
Members to give notice of any interest and the nature of that interest relating to any item on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.		
3. MINUTES		1 - 6
To receive and, if so determined, to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2023.		
4. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC		
A maximum of 15 minutes will be allocated to public questions submitted in writing to Democratic Services ( <a href="mailto:democratic.services@trafford.gov.uk">democratic.services@trafford.gov.uk</a> ) by 4 p.m. on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must be relevant to items appearing on the agenda and will be submitted in the order in which they were received.		
5. PRESENTATIONS BY STUDENTS FROM TRAFFORD COLLEGE		Verbal Report
To receive presentations from young people who study at Trafford College.		

6. **NEW ARRIVALS IN TRAFFORD** 7 - 26  
To consider a report from the Corporate Director of Children's Services.
7. **CHILDREN'S PLACEMENTS SAVING PROPOSALS** 27 - 48  
To consider a report from the Corporate Director of Children's Services.
8. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATE** Verbal Report  
To receive a verbal update from the Chair of the Committee.
9. **TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION IN 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR**  
For Members to discuss any items they would like to suggest to be considered during the next municipal year.
10. **URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**  
Any other item or items which by reason of:-
- (a) Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the Chairman of the meeting, with the agreement of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency as it relates to a key decision; or
  - (b) special circumstances (to be specified) the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency.
11. **EXCLUSION RESOLUTION**  
Motion (Which may be amended as Members think fit):
- That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the remaining items on the agenda, because of the likelihood of disclosure of "exempt information" which falls within one or more descriptive category or categories of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, as amended by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, and specified on the agenda item or report relating to each such item respectively.

**SARA TODD**  
Chief Executive

Membership of the Committee

## Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 7 March 2023

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Councillors D. Western (Chair), Miss L. Blackburn (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, R. Duncan, F. Hornby, S. Maitland, S. Procter, M.J. Welton, G. Whitham, A.M. Whyte, S. Zhi, D. Acton (ex-Officio) and M.P. Whetton (ex-Officio).

### Further Information

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

Alexander Murray,  
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## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**24 JANUARY 2023**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors Miss L. Blackburn (Vice-Chair), F. Hornby, S. Maitland, S. Procter, M.J. Welton, A.M. Whyte, S. Zhi and D. Acton (ex-Officio)

### In attendance

Jill McGregor	Corporate Director of Children's Services
Pamela Wharton	Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
Karen Samples	Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance
Glen Perryman	Head of Service for Provider Services
Laura Barton	Specialist Commissioner
Alexander Murray	Governance Officer

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bennett, R. Duncan, G. Whitham and M.P. Whetton

### **10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

### **11. MINUTES**

The Chair noted that she had been recorded as absent in the minutes and asked that this be amended.

RSOLVED: That, following the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held 27 September 2023 be agreed as an accurate record.

### **12. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions were received.

### **13. FAMILY HELP OFFER**

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care and the Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance went over the highlights of the presentation circulated within the agenda pack. The presentation covered what family help was, what the Greater Manchester (GM) early help principles were, and the main elements of the Family Hubs including a brief description of what they were, the principles they were based upon, and Trafford's ambitions for Family Hubs.

[Note Councillor Zhi joined the meeting at 18:45.]

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The Committee's attention was then drawn to implementation timeline for the Trafford Team Together (TTT) programme which included a pilot scheme, a design phase, leading to a full scale roll out. The Committee were then provided with an overview of the TTT programme and the role it would play within Trafford's approach to family support. The overview covered the intended outcomes of the TTT, feedback received from the pilot schemes, and details of how the work had already impacted service delivery. The Committee were informed that the family hubs and TTT would be key elements of the Council's future family support offer.

Following the presentation Councillor Acton asked how the family hubs would develop going forward. The Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance responded that Trafford had two family hubs so far and that an appointment would be made for an officer to drive the work forward, especially with regards to the digital offer.

Councillor Acton noted that family hubs were similar to children's centres but with a greater amount of collaboration and expressed his interest in seeing how the hubs developed. In response to Councillor Acton the Corporate Director of Children's Services spoke of the unique approach Trafford was taking to delivering the work. The support received from schools and third sector providers had helped the service to move forward with family hubs in the area, but the complexity of delivering the work collaboratively presented a large challenge.

Councillor Procter noted the presentation did not include information about formal evaluation for the family hubs or TTT. The Councillor raised concerns that if the programme did not have evaluation data from the start as well as the end of the programme the service would not be able to measure the impact of the work they had done. Councillor Procter welcomed the positive feedback the programme had received but stated that it needed to be backed up by formal evaluation. The Corporate Director of Children's Services assured Councillor Procter that there were evaluation tools being used as part of the TTT and work was underway to appoint a Department for Education (DfE) evaluator to review the programme. As part of the continued evaluation of the programme the Council were co-creating assessment tools with partners to ensure they were suitable. The Committee were asked to note that the Council did have a range of measures for early years and school readiness of young people in place including the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs). Some of the data sat with health services and the Council were working with those partners to ensure there would be a good level of information available for comparison in later evaluations.

Councillor Hornby asked how the programme would be funded. The Corporate Director of Children's Services explained that the programmes would transform and re-invest existing resources to deliver services in a new way. However, the Council would continue to look for opportunities to bid for additional funding. The Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance added that due to the overall level of affluence within the borough Trafford were unlikely to receive additional funding without applying for it and assured the Committee that the team would be looking for opportunities.

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Councillor Blackburn asked how the staff within each hub would be managed. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded it was difficult to say how the staff would be managed as each of the hubs was designed to meet the needs of the communities and so it would be different in each area. The Corporate Director of Children's Services added that the feedback from internal review of the TTT had been very positive with the adaptability of the model and the involvement of a wide range of partners.

Councillor Welton asked for a description of the pathway for families to access the service and if a diagram of the pathway was available. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded that there were multiple ways for families to be referred into the service as Trafford were moving away from a standard linear approach to access the service, which made it difficult to represent in a diagram.

Councillor Welton asked how long cases were generally open for. The Corporate Director of Children's Services spoke about how the service was moving towards talking about children and families rather than cases. The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care responded that when contacted the service looked at the needs of the child and their family to determine who would work with the family to deliver the most appropriate support for an initial 12-week period. Following that 12-week period a review was held to decide what, if any, further support was needed.

Councillor Maitland asked what the Council's team looked like. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded that one of the key aspects of the model was looking at the skill mix within teams to ensure that they met the needs of users. As part of that work a skills gap had been identified around substance misuse which would be addressed with support from some of the Council's third sector partners who had expertise in that area. The Council's approach was no longer about having a set number of social workers but having a diverse range of people and skills available that were able to adapt to the needs of service users.

Councillor Maitland asked what the new position leading programme would look like. The Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance stated that position would require a high level of skills due to the seniority of the role and a wide range of skills due to the varied approach taken within the programme.

Councillor Procter sent a link to the Department of Health Questionnaire to all in attendance and noted a study which showed that intervening at a very early stage saved society hundreds of thousands overtime. The Corporate Director of Children's Services agreed with the points raised by Councillor Procter and confirmed that the service was working to capture the types of savings mentioned within the study.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

#### **14. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care introduced the Presentation, went over the request from Scrutiny which was around placement stability and sufficiency.

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The Specialist Commissioner then went over what sufficiency meant within the Children's and young people's environment. The Committee were asked to note that a summary of the Sufficiency strategy was available on the website and the Specialist Commissioner went over a few of the areas the strategy covered.

The Committee were informed of the national context which included that an increased complexity of need being seen across the country and the regional context mirrored the national picture. The difficulties the region faced were exacerbated by the large number of placements by Councils from outside of the northwest in the area. The Committee were then shown comparison with other GM authorities and statistical neighbours for the local context.

The Specialist Commissioner handed over to the Head of Service for Provider Services who went over Trafford's position for cared for children. The Committee were told of the progress that had been made in reducing the number of children in care and it was hoped it would continue. The level of reduction was slowing down as the service had reached a point where the children who were in care needed that support. The services' sufficiency goal was to increase the number of children who received care within a family setting. Among the older young people in care the focus was upon ensuring that they were placed within suitable accommodation. Of all the children in care 57% were placed within Trafford and it a goal of the service to increase level as wanted children in care to be close to their family, friends, and community. 87% of Children in care were placed within GM and the service also hoped to increase that position further.

The Committee were asked to note the benefits of placement stability and were informed of the plans being implemented to improve placement stability within Trafford. The Head of Service for Provider Services then went through the case studies listed within the presentation. The first case study was of a young person who had had 8 different placements by the age of 10. The Committee were told of the impact the large number of placements had on the young person and the associated costs to the Council. The Committee were informed of the exit plan for the young person which involved placing them with experienced foster carers and having strong wrap around support in place. The second case study was another high-cost placement of a young person who required three members of staff to care for them at all times at a cost of £12,400 per week.

The Head of Service for Provider Services and the Specialist Commissioner then went through the next few slides which covered fostering placements. The Committee were informed of the internal fostering provision and the work the Council had been doing to reduce the number of connected person placements. The Specialist Commissioner spoke about Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) and explained the similarities and differences between IFAs and the internal provision, which included the differences in cost to the Council.

The presentation then moved onto residential placement with the Head of Service for Provider Services covering the Council's internal provision and the Specialist Commissioner providing details of external and unregulated placements. The Presentation concluded with an outline of the challenges the service faced and the plans to meet those challenges through utilisation of both internal and external



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placements with a goal of increasing the internal provision where possible to improve consistency and reduce costs. One innovative approach was the GM housing programme where young people were given the opportunity and support to take ownership of a property themselves.

Following the presentation Councillor Acton stated that he had seen on the news about a home where residents had been abused and asked how Trafford monitored placements to ensure the young people received the care they needed and weren't being abused. The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care noted Councillor Acton's question and in response gave an overview of the work the Council did as part of their due diligence and the collaboration with other authorities to utilise their knowledge of providers to ensure placements were of sufficient quality. Councillor Acton asked whether the service performed any surprise visits and was told that only Ofsted had the power to perform surprise inspections. The Committee were assured that officers did meet with young people on a regular basis and that they did recognise the Committee's concerns, especially regarding those young people who had difficulties in communicating. The Corporate Director for Children's Services also assured the Committee that following the news story a review of Trafford's placements had been conducted with full assessments being carried out for any placements that were of concern.

Councillor Procter raised concerns that only 57% of Trafford's placements were provided inhouse. The corporate Director of Children's Services responded that the Head of Service for Provider Services was working on a modernisation plan for foster caring. The service recognised word of mouth and the support of foster carers were key elements to attract more foster carers. The Committee were informed of how the nature of fostering had changed in response to the needs of the young people and that the structure of the fostering service had changed to provide an improved level of support for foster carers.

Councillor Procter noted the costs of IFA placements and that the internal placements cost the Council around half the amount and asked what could be done to match their offers. In response the Corporate Director of Children's Services stated that the council were looking at the possibility of developing not-for profit fostering agencies. The Council also benchmarked what they offered foster carers and looked at what was most important to foster carers to ensure that it was in place within Trafford.

Councillor Procter asked about the new for children with complex needs and why the Council did not set up the home themselves. The Corporate Director of Children's Services responded that there were issues around having the property and staff with the required skills. The Committee were informed of the work being done at a GM level which was looking to develop 9 homes across the conurbation. The Corporate Director of Children's Services added that the main issues were around placement sufficiency and the home would offer a lot to the Council.

Councillor Procter asked what was provided that made the high-cost placements so expensive. The Corporate Director of Children's Services answered that it was a large amount of staff time, specialised therapy, and security for the young people.

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Councillor Procter asked about the digital campaign, whether it was utilising existing foster cares, and how they would measure the success. The Head of Service for Provider Services responded that the campaign would be using existing foster carers and success would be recruitment being higher than the loss of foster carers. The success of the campaign would also be measured through increasing enquiries and maintaining or increasing the conversion rate of enquiries to appointment, which took around six months from the first contact.

Councillor Blackburn asked what had led to the reduction in connected person placements over the last year. The Head of Service for Provider Services responded that the reduction had been caused by young people moving into permanent arrangements.

Councillor Blackburn asked how many perspective carers drop out or are not found to be suitable. The Corporate Director of Children's Services answered that once they go to assessment stage the dropout rate was quite low, so it was the early interaction where the Council needed to focus and improve.

Councillor Maitland asked whether exit interviews were conducted for foster carers and were there any trends or reasons. The Head of Service for Provider Services responded that exit interviews were offered but there was a low level of take up. The ones that had been completed showed they were leaving due to a range of reasons including change in family circumstances, changes in employment, and change in location but no discernible pattern had been identified.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

## **15. IMPACT OF THE COST OF LIVING**

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Committee. The Chair asked that the report at the next meeting include information on how schools were dealing with the increased energy costs.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.
- 2) That the report is to contain information on the impact of increased energy costs on schools.

## **16. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair then went through the other items and asked if Committee Members had anything else they wanted to add but no additional items were raised.

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and finished at 8.50 p.m.

## New Arrivals

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**Pamela Wharton**  
**Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care**

# Introduction to Impact and Response

British National (Overseas)  
status holders from Hong  
Kong

Unaccompanied Asylum-  
seeking children under 18

Ukraine: The International  
and National Context

Asylum Seeking Families:  
Context

Asylum Seeking Families:  
Trafford's Position

Impact & Challenges

Addressing our Challenges

# Hong Kong Settlement programme

- An immigration route opened on 31 January 2021, providing British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders from Hong Kong and their eligible dependants with the opportunity to come to the UK to live, study and work, on a pathway to citizenship.
- Data from the 2021 census indicates that there has been an increase of 817 residents in Trafford born in Hong Kong since 2011. The number is likely to have increased further since the census was carried out.
- We have provided a range of support, through providing school places & a number of jobs fairs targeted at those from Hong Kong and Ukraine.
- They have a wide range of job skills and entrepreneurship, and integrated within our local community.
- Some safeguarding concerns due to different cultural norms

# Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children (deemed under 18 when arrived)

- **Trafford Children Social Care have been supporting by fulfilling our statutory duty under the Children Act legal framework**
- **Children's Social Care have 18 Cared for Children who are Unaccompanied and 15 Care Leavers who were formerly Unaccompanied who will be supported to the age of 25 as care leavers**
- **This includes of support to meet their needs such as education, health, employment, accommodation and provide stability through statutory intervention**
- **Our Children's Homes have become experts in this area**

# Ukraine: The International and National Context

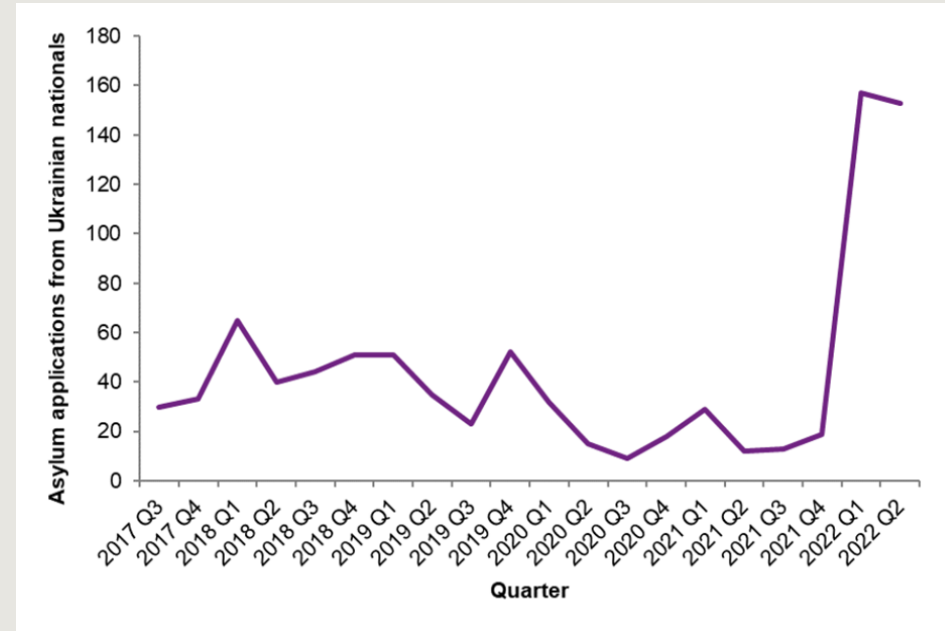
- **Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to the large-scale displacement of people.**
- **Over 10 million refugees fleeing Ukraine have been recorded across Europe.**
- **As of February 2023 there are approximately 161,400 Ukrainian refugees in the UK.**

# National Context

Between January and June 2022, the UK received 310 asylum applications (relating to 484 people) from Ukrainian nationals, Around two-thirds (202) of applications in this period were lodged between the start of the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics>

The Homes for Ukraine scheme allows people seeking sanctuary with no family ties to the UK to be sponsored by individuals or organisations who can offer them a home, such as a spare room or unoccupied residential self-contained unit.

Home Office Asylum applications lodged in the UK by Ukrainian nationals<sup>1</sup>, quarterly, from 2017 Q3 to 2022 Q2





# Ukraine: Trafford's Position

- The Early Help Hubs Intensive Family Support Team and Trafford Team Together have completed **120 families initial home visit - face to face** since 30th March 2022.
- We have been working closely with home for Ukrainian teams to ensure that the families coming to the UK receive a prompt service.
- The workers completed home conditions checklists and an Early help Assessments for each family
- There are no Ukrainian families currently open to Early Help or Children's Social Care. Families have been given welcome packs and signposted to appropriate service within their locality area.

# Ukraine: Trafford's Council's Response

Trafford Council has coordinated a response across all agencies and the community to welcome and support new arrivals from the Ukraine.

Our collective focus has been ensuring that those residing in Trafford have access to all that they need.

Services in Trafford have been working closely with Home for Ukrainian teams to ensure that the families coming to the UK receive a prompt service.

Trafford Community Hubs have contributed by supporting Trafford families to prepare their homes to receive refugees and also facilitating donations.

# Ukraine: Trafford Children's Social Care

- The Early Help Hubs, Intensive Family Support Team and Trafford Team Together have collectively completed initial home visits (face to face) since 30th March 2022 to 71 families.
- During those visits practitioners completed home conditions checklists to ensure the welfare of the children and families.
- Where co-ordinated support needs have been identified, early help screening has been undertaken with each family in conjunction with First Response Team.
- In 2 cases the initial host relationships broke down, and Trafford supported in finding new hosts

# Feedback from the families

- **Guests have reported receiving high level of support from the team and community such as home visits, signposting and practical help**
- **Positive feedback regarding support through the transition to independent living**

- **Appreciated Prompt response for school admissions**
- **Positive feedback for the talk shop and youth engagement service**
- **Children and young people have benefitted from the direct work and right intervention**

# Ukraine: Child Safeguarding:

- 5 children arrived in Trafford who were unaccompanied by an adult or legal guardian (Unaccompanied Minors).
- A qualified Social Worker from Families First has overseen the safeguarding and welfare of the Unaccompanied Minors from Ukraine.
- Welfare visits and suitability assessment in line with Private Fostering assessment framework have been completed with these children.

Age	Number of Children
9 years	1
15 years	2
16 years	1
17 years	1

# Asylum Seeking Families: Context

Following the national dispersal of Asylum-Seeking Families from the Manston Migrant Centre in Kent, Trafford Council welcomed Asylum-Seeking Families into the borough on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023. Families are residing at the Britannia Ashley Hotel, Hale, Altrincham, which has a capacity of 144 spaces.

As of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023, there are a total of 118 Asylum Seeking persons residing in the Britannia Ashley Hotel. This comprises of:

- 34 families, 2 of which are single mothers
- 59 children under 18 years old
- 3 families with children with complex needs
- 1 family with 4 children

Gender	No. of people	
Female	65	
Male	54	
Total no of people	119	59 of them are under 18

Serving diverse community with different culture and various spoken languages

Albanian

Arabic

Chinese

English

Kurdish

Pashto, Pushto

Persian (Farsi)

Spanish

Turkish

Ukrainian

Unknown

Urdu

Afghanistan

Albania

Cameroon

Colombia

Honduras

Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region of China

Iran, Islamic Republic of

Iraq

Kuwait

Nigeria

Pakistan

Saint Lucia

Saint Vincent and Grenadines

Sudan

Syrian Arab Republic (Syria)

Tunisia

Turkey

Ukraine

# Trafford Priorities for supporting Asylum Seeking Families







**Current  
Impact  
&  
Challenges**

Schools across Trafford are full

Stigma and segregation may be created if separate buses are used to transport children to school

Resources, Staffing & Pathways

Cultural and language support to enable them to successfully integrate both in the community, in educational establishments and socially.

The families must reside in the Hotel, and this creates a current challenge in keeping the children of all ages engaged with age appropriate recreational and stimulating activities.

Community Integration and diversity and equality will need to be promoted across the community to ensure the family's safety and wellbeing.

# Impact for Education Services

Trafford Admissions Service worked in partnership with schools, to provide a school place at pace. Each local authority must have a Fair Access Protocol (FAP) to ensure that unplaced and vulnerable children, and those who are having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, are allocated a school place as quickly as possible.

Funding has been available for the provision of education and childcare for children ages 2 to 18 who have entered via the Homes for Ukraine visa route. This can be used for:

- a place for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds accessing the 2-year-old, universal or 30 hours entitlements
- the provision of a suitable place for all other children up to the age of 18 (including time for staff resource and travel)
- funding placement of larger clusters of children into schools and registered early years settings, including the costs of additional and specialist teaching, non-teaching and administrative staff
- providing suitable travel arrangements, where necessary, to facilitate a child's attendance at school or suitable provision
- the provision of specialist and bespoke services, such as support for children with additional needs, and resources (this may include education materials for schools)
- free school meals and school uniform (including school bags, provisions for example, water bottles, etc.)
- to provide access to extra-curricular activities for example, sports

Trafford Council ensured that this funding was passed on to the child's education or childcare setting to ensure a smooth transition

# Continued Support

- Resources, staffing and pathway have been addressed by multiple agencies working together to address needs and co-ordinate support.
- Regular operational meetings with key professionals to co-ordinate support.
- Further data/ information will be gathered to identify the language, cultural, educational, and social needs.
- There are plans to take further clothes, including the remaining warm clothing packs that were procured for Ukraine families.
- Welcome packs **are being** put together by Altrincham Community Hub and the local Mosque.

# Continued Support

- School age children's data is being gathered, and support offered with school and college applications
- Discussions to secure activities for the pre-school children centred around activities and play.
- Altrincham Community Hub are going to lead on securing some prayer mats, and SERCO will lead on arranging a prayer room.
- Altrincham Community Hub will co-ordinate 'Living Room' projects
- Altrincham Community Hub will identify any volunteers who can teach English.
- Early help staff will complete further toy drops



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TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL

# Children's Placements Savings Proposals

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Report detailing the service approach to placements including stepping up and stepping down of placements. How savings could be achieved from high-cost placements in 2023/24 and how the demand led nature of the service can influence the attainment of potential savings.

**Glen Perryman – Head of Service, Provider Services**

# Introduction and Context Setting

- External Placement Budget Overview
- Commitment and Savings
- Demand and Pressure
- Trafford's current position
- Challenges of delivering future Savings
- Long Term Plans for improved internal sufficiency



# Overview of Placement Budget 2023/24

Children's Placement budget 2023/24 as at Period 8	£
External Children's Homes	2,648,412
Agency foster care	1,854,737
In-house foster care	1,914,392
Connected Persons foster care	1,691,216
Asylum Seekers	-185,658
Special Guardianship	1,967,179
Child Arrangement Orders	21,444
Aftercare Section 23	1,701,655
Supported Lodges/Staying Put	668,371
Adoption allowance expenditure	257,069
Children with Additional Needs	4,332,363
Other Budgets (including income)	3,628,991
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,500,171</b>

- Includes 5.5% inflation
- £1m demography
- £580k for pressures seen in 22/23
- £1m savings target
- 12.5% uplift for foster carers allowances as set by NMA.

# Commitment of budget

- Budget 23/24 is set for existing children who are already cared for.
- Any new children coming into the system would be offset by either children exiting current placements or reduction in the current costs.
- There was £1.440m budget for new children at P8 in 2022/23.
- We have 12 children with additional needs who are currently cared for in high cost placements are likely to remain there until adulthood due to their complex physical and learning needs.
- 2 of the children have plans of step down to fostering, but due to their level of needs and complexity this will be a challenging fostering search. The other 10 children are likely to remain in current provisions till adulthood.

# Savings

- The savings achieved for the last three years are:
  - 2020/21 £1.611m
  - 2021/22 £1.500m
  - 2022/23 £1.358m
- £1m savings target included in the 23/24 budget
- Identified £1.291m of savings as at P8

# Demand and Pressure

- External residential placement costs £5,381 per week and on average £272k per year. The cost of our most expensive placement currently is £14,700 per week.
- The average IFA placement costs £889 per week and on average £46,335 per year.
- There has been a reduction of the number of internal foster carers over the past 2 years in Trafford and across GM. Foster carer recruitment and retention is challenge currently.
- There are limited vacancies within the market which means that most placement searches result in IFAs not being able to offer a placement or the time required to find a placement extending to several weeks, sometimes months.
- Finding the right match locally has been challenging's resulting in consideration of options beyond GM. IFAs report the same difficulties recruiting and retaining carers as LA fostering services do

# Current Average Placement Costs

- We currently have 12 Children with additional needs in external residential placements which cost on average £272k per year.
- We also have a further 19 children in external residential placements costing £3.676k
- If we were to move a child/young person from an external residential into an external fostering placement this could save £258k (full year effect)
- A further £24k could be saved if the child young person were to move to an internal fostering placement – overall saving of £282k – which demonstrates the need for a robust and successful fostering recruitment and retention strategy.
- If we were to be able to convert long term fostering arrangements or connected carers to Special Guardianship Orders then there are further placement cost savings which could be achieved (£8,237 and £4,192 respectively)

	Night £	Week £	Year £
External residential	833	5,831	304,045
External fostering	127	889	46,355
In-house fostering	60	420	21,900
Connected persons	49	343	17,855
Adoption	19	135	7,024
Supported lodges	48	334	17,416
SGO	38	263	13,663
CAN	747	5,229	271,890

# Impact of increase in provider fees and an overview of the approach being taken locally and regionally to manage this



In a market where demand outstrips supply, the power balance shifts in favour of providers who can charge increased fees because they know they can fill a residential bed several times over.



We aim to develop positive relationships with a number of providers to build trust and goodwill which allows space for negotiation in some cases.



We challenge uplift requests, reviewing cost breakdowns to understand the rationale for increased fees.



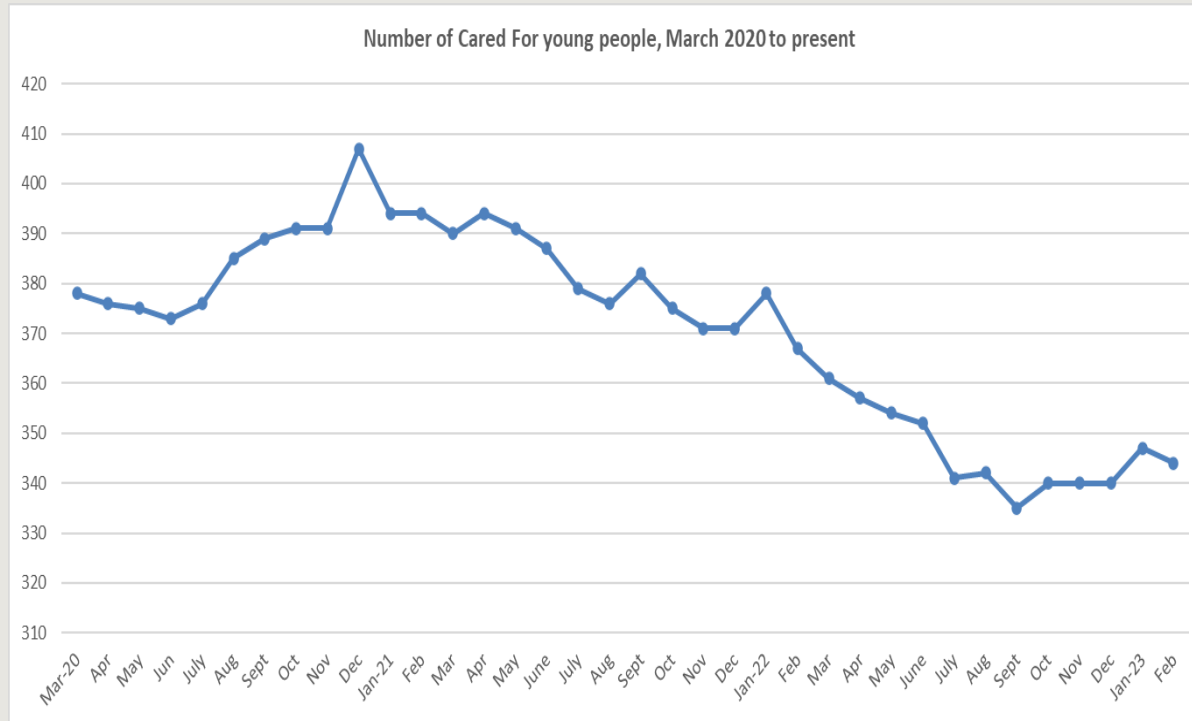
Regionally, PNW is implementing a standard approach to fee uplifts across all sectors (except 16+) which will be based on a set figure each year.

# Budget Management Controls

We have a number of controls in place to monitor and analyse spend of the placement budget:

- **High Cost Placement Clinic** – A monthly meeting chaired by Director of Children Services with LA (service and commissioning) and health partners to review all high cost placements and consider step down where appropriate, care planning and budget forecasting.
- **External Placement Panel** – All requests for external placements, additional staffing and increase in costs are presented at the panel for HOS oversight and agreement. Panel TOR are currently being refreshed to incorporate multi agency approach.
- **Placement Budget Monitoring** – Regular meeting with finance to review the placement budget to enable accurate forecasting and monitor spend against savings.

# Cared For Children and Young People

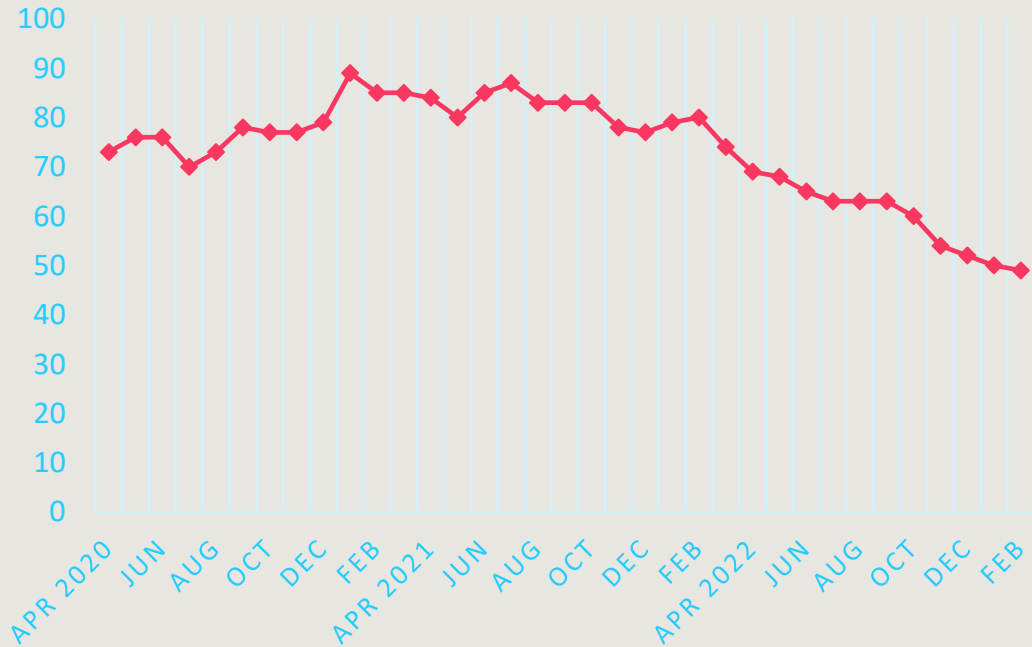


- From the high of around 410 at December 2020, we have seen a generally steady reduction in the number of young people Cared For, currently 345.



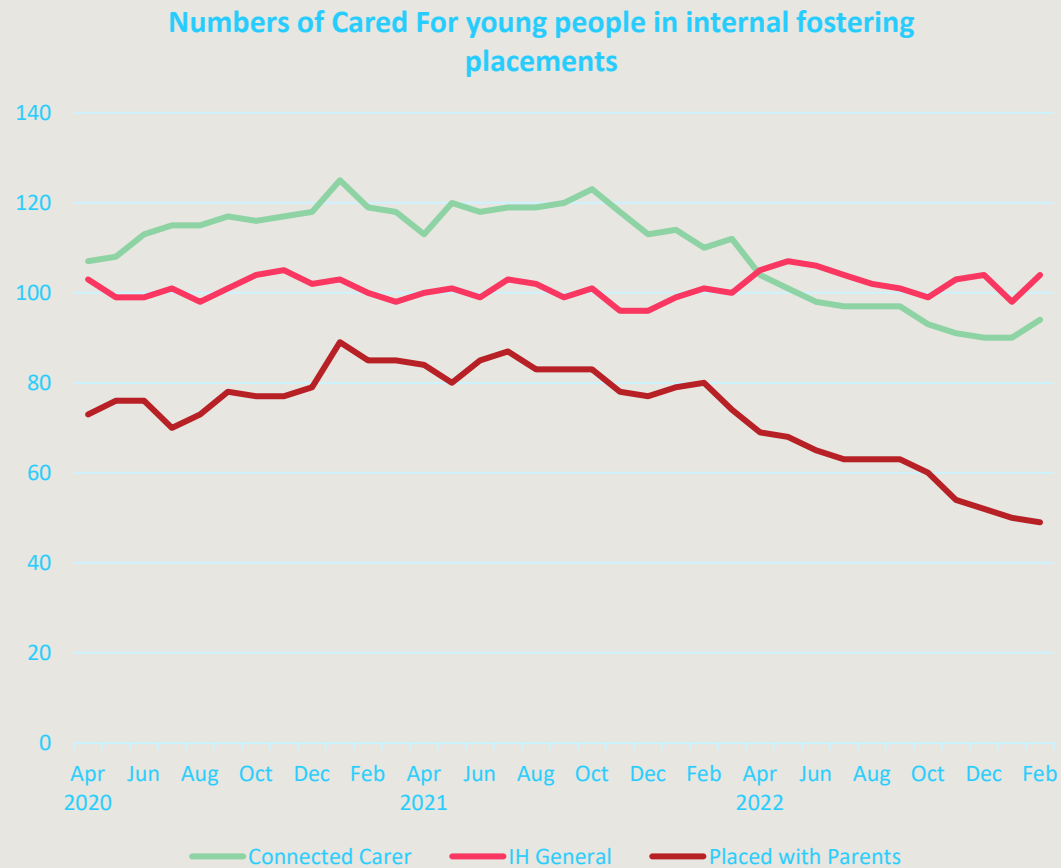
# Placed with Parents

NUMBER OF CARED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE 'PLACED WITH PARENTS'



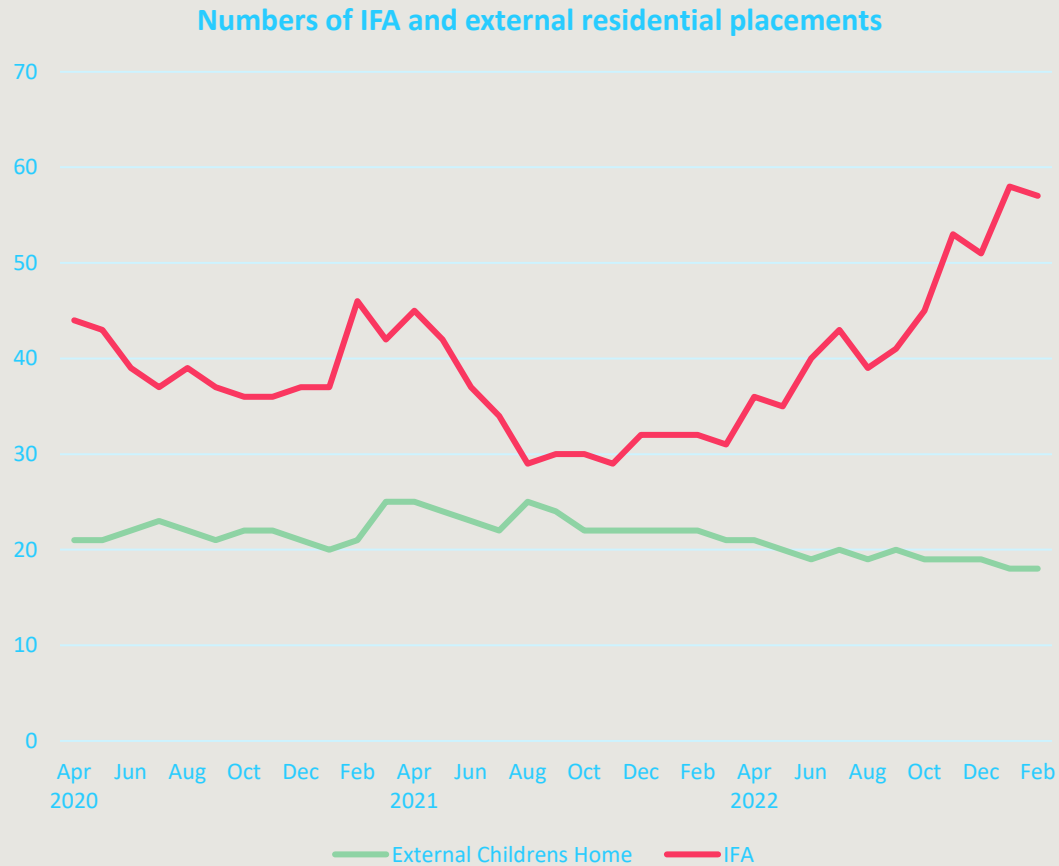
- The proportion of Cared For young people who were 'Placed with Parents' has been the highest in the country in the last two sets of national data, at around 20%.
- A long-term programme aimed at addressing this is now showing results. Reduced from 89 to 50. The proportion is now down to 14%. This is still high in comparison to national average which was 7%, but it is much closer to the regional figure of 12%.

# Total number of children placed internal fostering placements.



- The chart shows the number of in-house fostering placements has remained generally stable over time, at around 100.
- The number of young people placed with connected carers has declined over the last year due to increased number of SGO's being secured – 23 last year, 14 to date this year

# External Placements



- **Use of IFAs declined until about 18 months ago since which time it has increased to beyond the levels we saw 3 years ago. This is due to a reduction in house foster carers**
- **Use of external children’s homes is declining, albeit very slowly.**

# Current Placement Type

- The majority of the cared for children are living with internal approved foster carers.
- There has been an increase in the number of children placed in IFA placements.
- Number of connected foster carer placements have reduced, and this will be partly due to the increase in SGO's being granted. In 2022/23 there were 23 SGO's granted and in this reporting period there has been 14.
- External residential placements have remained static.

Placement Type on Date	Apr 2020	Mar 2021	Mar 2021	Feb 2022
Adoption	1.6%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Connected Carer	28.3%	29.9%	30.8%	27.1%
IH General	27.2%	24.8%	27.5%	30.0%
In-House Childrens Home	2.1%	1.5%	2.5%	2.9%
Placed with Parents	19.3%	21.5%	20.3%	14.1%
P2 - Independent Living	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
H5 - Residential Accommodation	4.0%	2.0%	3.0%	2.6%
IFA	11.6%	10.6%	8.5%	16.4%
External Childrens Home	5.6%	6.3%	5.8%	5.2%
Residential Care Home	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
HNHS/Health Trust	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Residential School	0.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%
Family/Mother & Baby Unit	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Secure Unit	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
YOI ot Prison	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%

# Trafford Demand Management Strategy - Right children, Right placement for the Right length of time.

The Strategies in place to improve the Quality of Leadership and Practice in Children's Social Care Improvement Plan. They relate to:

- **Effective co-ordinated early help offer as part of a longer term prevention strategy.**
- **Improving the quality of assessment and care planning particularly where childhood neglect and domestic abuse are features of children's lives**
- **Implement Permanence and Sufficiency strategies alongside the No Wrong Door model so that children/young people progress swiftly to their plan of permanence living in family's within their communities in Trafford or to return them to family based care in Trafford**

# Forecast – Leaving Care Demand

We have reduced Cared For numbers from 409 (January 2021) to 345 (February 2023) but we know our previously high number of cared for children means we have a growing cohort of young people that will need our support into adulthood.

We have an increasing number of young people who will become care experienced adults in the future, it is critical we start planning for them now so they will have the support available to them when they need it.

We will need to have appropriate accommodation for a significant number of cared experienced young people over the next 5 years.

Analysis of the age cohorts of our cared for children – February 2023

**77 (22.3%) in 16-17 age bracket**

**163 (47.2%) in 10-15 age bracket**

# 16+ Unregulated Placements

- The numbers of looked after young people in 16+ unregulated accommodation is stable. The costs across all settings range from £510 to £3636 pw, with an average of £1234.15 pw.
- There were 8 looked after young people placed in external semi-independent, unregulated 16+ placements. 3 are 16 years old, 1 female and 2 males. 5 are 17 years old, 3 females and 2 males.
- There were 34 young people aged 18+ in commissioned placements. The costs across all settings range from £79 to £4500 pw, with an average of £871 pw.
- We commission 2 supported accommodation services specifically for Trafford young people. Both have recently been reviewed and continue to deliver positive outcomes for our young people. They are:
  - Mary House – a group living provision for 4 young people with support on site 24/7. A satellite flat for 2 young people is also supported by the staff team
  - Forest Court – 5 individual flats in one building with support staff and/or a concierge team on site.

# Current Challenges and Pressures

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Increasing demand and complexity of need which has significant impacts on the placement budget

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For those children in Tier 4 Hospital Beds, providing them with suitable and appropriate step down provision in the Local Area.

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Ability to provide range of choice to match & access children to local placements

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A reduction in number of internal foster carers over past 2 years.

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Availability and choice of move on accommodation for care experienced young people

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# How we plan to address our challenges



Returning fostering to growth – Internal Fostering modernisation plan in place to increase number of foster carers retain our current fostering community.



GMCA fostering recruitment Campaign- Will launch in May 2023 to increase the awareness of Local Authority Fostering with an aspiration to increase the number of foster carers in GM.



Securing local beds – a pilot approach working alongside 4 GM LAs to ‘soft block’ a bed in a residential home which will be ring fenced for the 4 LAs.



Project Skyline – ‘Project Skyline’ has emerged out of the create supply project line in the GM LAC sufficiency Programme. The aim is to create high quality homes in GM for more complex young people including services that either prevent escalation to Tier 4 provision or as a step down transition from such a service.



Re-launch of the NWD model at Kindle Lodge in Trafford. This investment will stem the flow of adolescents needing to be cared for and can remain in the care of family safely.



Continue to drive the implementation of Trafford’ House Project which is supporting 7 young people to develop their independent skills and find their tenancy

# Summary

- Even with all the previous success of year on year savings from the placement budget it will be challenging and difficult to continue to make further savings.
- The nature of the work is unpredictable and there is increase in complexity and trauma of children who need to be cared for.
- With ongoing challenges with internal sufficiency and difficulties sourcing appropriate external placements for complex young people, this could lead to more children being placed outside of Trafford and increased costs.
- There is significant ongoing work internally, locally and regionally to address these difficulties with aspirations that they will lead to prevention and reduction in cared for children.

# Thank you for listening – any questions?



