

## **CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 6 JANUARY 2014  
7.00 PM**

**Council Chamber - Town Hall**

### **AGENDA**

**Page No**

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations**

At this point Members must declare whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, or other interest, in any of the items on the agenda, unless it is already entered in the register of members' interests or is a "pending notification" that has been disclosed to the Solicitor to the Council.

Members must also declare if they are subject to their party group whip in relation to any items under consideration.

**3. Minutes of meeting held on 11 November 2013**

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**4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions**

The decision notice for each decision will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision may then be implemented on the expiry of 3 working days after the publication of the decision (not including the date of publication), unless a request for call-in of the decision is received from any two Members of a Scrutiny Committee or Scrutiny Commissions. If a request for call-in of a decision is received, implementation of the decision remains suspended for consideration by the relevant Scrutiny Committee or Commission.

**5. City College Peterborough**

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**6. New Vision for Early Years Services Including Children's Centres in Peterborough**

**21 - 50**

**7. Review of Placement Strategy for Children Looked After and the Implementation of the Fostering Action Plan**

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**8. Adoption Reform and Implementation Plan**

**59 - 72**

**9. Children's Services Performance Report to DfE**

**73 - 92**

<b>10.</b>	<b>Forward Plan of Key Decisions</b>	<b>93 - 104</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Work Programme 2013/2014</b>	<b>105 - 112</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meetings</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 January 2014 – Joint Scrutiny In a Day – Focus on the Impact of Welfare Reform</li> <li>• 10 February 2014 – Joint Scrutiny of the Budget</li> <li>• 17 March 2014 – Creating Opportunities &amp; Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee</li> </ul>	



There is an induction hearing loop system available in all meeting rooms. Some of the systems are infra-red operated, if you wish to use this system then please contact Paulina Ford on 01733 452508 as soon as possible.

#### **Emergency Evacuation Procedure – Outside Normal Office Hours**

*In the event of the fire alarm sounding all persons should vacate the building by way of the nearest escape route and proceed directly to the assembly point in front of the Cathedral. The duty Beadle will assume overall control during any evacuation, however in the unlikely event the Beadle is unavailable, this responsibility will be assumed by the Committee Chair.*

#### Committee Members:

Councillors: S Day (Chair), C Harper (Vice Chairman), B Rush, G Nawaz, J Shearman, B Saltmarsh and D Fower

Substitutes: Councillors: J R Fox, M Nadeem and Thulbourn

Education Co-optees: Jane Austen (Roman Catholic Church Representative), Miranda Robinson, (Church of England Representative), Alistair Kingsley – Co-opted Member Tricia Pritchard, (Director of Education & Training), Diocese of Ely

Further information about this meeting can be obtained from Paulina Ford on telephone 01733 452508 or by email – [paulina.ford@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:paulina.ford@peterborough.gov.uk)

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE  
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH  
ON 11 NOVEMBER 2013**

**Present:** Councillors S Day (Chairman), C Harper, B Rush, J Shearman, N Sandford

**Also present**

Alastair Kingsley	Co-opted Member
Matthew Purcell	Youth Council
N Kingsley	Youth Council
Councillor Sandford	Leader of the Liberal Democrats
John Harris	SLE Associates

**Officers in Attendance:**

Sue Westcott	Executive Director, Children's Services
Jonathan Lewis	Assistant Director Education and Resources
Gary Perkins	Head of School Improvement
Jawaid Khan	Cohesion Manager
Ray Hook	Performance and Information Officer
Paulina Ford	Senior Governance Officer, Scrutiny
Marie Southgate	Lawyer

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Saltmarsh, Councillor Fower and Councillor Nawaz. Councillor Sandford was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Fower.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations**

There were no declarations of Interest or whipping declarations.

**3. Minutes of the meetings held 9 September 2013**

The minutes of the meetings held on 9 September 2013 were approved as an accurate record.

**4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions**

There were no requests for Call-in to consider.

**5. The Vision for Education in Peterborough**

The report was introduced by the Assistant Director for Education and Resources and provided the Committee with an update on the development of the School to School Support Partnerships. Members were informed that a significant amount of work had been achieved with schools and SLE Associates and this is seen as an invaluable way of improving schools outcomes through schools working together. John Harris from SLE Associates advised Members that work had now been undertaken to put a proposal together which had been shared with schools. Members were asked to refer to Appendix 2 of the report 'System on a Page - Peterborough Schools Self Improving Network' which outlined the proposed school to school support system. This had been presented to all Head Teachers and Governors at the beginning of October. The key proposal and thinking behind school to school support was that schools in Peterborough become self-improving schools and as a result of this

Peterborough becomes an attractive place for people in the community to learn and for people who work in schools.

Key components to the network:

- Head teachers challenge each other about their schools performance through a formal process of peer challenge.
- Schools would work in groups of approximately nine schools.
- Support available to schools is widely developed and more flexible.
- Overseen by School Improvement Board which sets overall direction of the school improvement strategy. The Board would be accountable to Scrutiny, the Director of Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University.

The next stage would be to pilot some of the work with a Primary School and Secondary School starting in January the results of which would be brought back to the committee.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members supported the proposal but were concerned at how the change from the proposal into working practice would work and how the school grouping would be achieved to ensure a good mix of schools were in place in each group. Members were concerned about the weighting of the school groups. *Members were advised that the major element was the core quality peer challenge process and the rigour of that process. The next stage of work was to develop in detail how the peer challenge would work to ensure people providing the challenge were working to a common set of arrangements. Training and development would be provided supported by high quality data. The Head teachers would work in groups of three to ensure a spread of expertise.*
- Members wanted to know why there would only be three Head Teachers in a group. *Members were advised that the Head Teacher Task and Finish group working on the proposal had assessed this and felt that three was the right number. The Triad System was typically used in Peer Challenge systems and there was good evidence to show that it was an appropriate process.*
- Members also wanted to know about the process of encouraging collaboration instead of forcing collaboration. *Members were informed that collaboratives were focused on a system of school review and support not on all purpose arrangements for collaborating on every part of work that schools do together. Collaboration worked best when focused on two key things. 1. Improving quality of teaching and learning and 2. On leadership and management. There was no firm view on the construction of the collaborative or about how to go about that process. Design suggests schools in a collaborative process should be drawn from a range of areas in the city. The pilot in January would be a chance for people to test the process and see it working and to give people the confidence to put it into practice. This would then encourage participation.*
- Members sought an opinion on the role of governors and they referred to page 12, paragraph 5.2 and 5.3 of the report regarding three consultation events for headteachers, school leaders and governors and the outcome of the results on page 26. What was being done to get the governing bodies on board? *Members were informed that the consultation papers were sent out in October to all schools and governing bodies for them to respond. The table on page 26 showed the results from the responses. Officers noted that there would need to be continuing discussion with governors as the process evolved as governors had a critical role to play. It was possible that governors could be built into the peer challenge process.*
- Member commented that the time scale for the consultation had not allowed for the governing bodies to have the consultation as a formal agenda item at one of their meetings. The Assistant Director Education and Resources *informed Members that schools had been well briefed.*
- Members commented on the composition of the Peterborough School Improvement Board being set up and noted that there was reference to only one Councillor being a member

and that was the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University. Members suggested that given the importance of the subject that an additional councillor should be on the Board and suggested a Member from the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee. *The Assistant Director Education and Resources noted the suggestion and advised that he would feed it back to the Board for consideration.*

- Members referred to the table of consultation responses on page 26 and noted that there appeared to be over whelming support for proposal. There was however an exception in the column marked LA showing a low response number of 7 with 2 not supporting the proposals and 3 uncertain. Who were these people and what was the nature of their concern? *Members were informed that those people were members of the Local Authority school improvement function and that their roles would evolve with this model which would be different going forward.*
- Members were concerned that there appeared to be too much parallel work happening at the same time and were concerned that the priority was more about timeframe than the right decision. *Members were assured that this was not the case and there was a structured approach being taken.*
- A Member of the Youth Council referred to the statement in the report which referred to “the local authority allocating from the DSG a recurrent commissioning and development fund of £450K for a period of three years” and wanted some examples of where the money would be spent. *The Assistant Director Education and Resources advised that the money that had been put aside was money that had been previously held back from the local authority to fund school improvement activity. The money would be used to target and support individual programmes to drive improvement. Schools would need to demonstrate how it was being used and the School Improvement Board would monitor to make sure that the money was being used effectively.*
- Was the £450K provided over three years or was it £450K per year. *Members were advised that the Schools Forum had agreed that it was £450K per year.*
- Members of the Youth Council were concerned that the pilot of the secondary school collaborative in spring 2014 would provide a reaction from other schools and affect exam results. *Members were advised that the pilot would be testing the model, it would not affect teaching and learning for the 2014 exams series. This year was about putting the framework in place.*

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director Education and Resources for an informative report and for the work completed so far on the development of the School to School Partnership.

#### **ACTIONS AGREED**

1. The Committee noted the report and endorsed the proposals for the School to School Partnership.
2. The Committee requested that the Assistant Director Education and Resources provide the following:
  - a. A briefing note to update the Committee in January 2014 on any further developments that have taken place since this report.
  - b. A further full report on the development of the programme and progress of the pilot to the Committee in March 2014.
3. The Assistant Director Education and Resources to ensure that governors are also included as part of the peer challenge process and that this is tested in the pilot stage.
4. The Assistant Director Education and Resources to request on behalf of the Committee that the School Improvement Board have an additional councillor on the Board and that it is a Member from the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee.

## 6. Presentation of 2013 Unvalidated Examination Results

The report provided the Committee with a summary of the 2013 unvalidated assessment and examination results for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. The results were provisional and Members were advised that they were liable to change as they did not take into account any re-marks or any allowances for pupils who were new to the UK and had been present for less than 2 years.

Key Highlights were:

### Key Stage 2

- The way Primary School Key Stage 2 tests were assessed had been changed. There was still a focus on Level 4 but English had been split into two different measures: reading and writing and a child would need to pass both measures to achieve the bench mark.
- The gap in reading and writing to the national average was still significant but this should narrow when the results have been validated and had improved over the last three years.
- Additional support was being provided to schools where needed to help narrow the gap with the national average.
- Key Stage 2 results should show a further increase in positive results when the validated data arrives.

### Key Stage 4

- The gap to average had been closed by 6% this year and there had been a significant improvement from secondary schools.
- Results for 5 A\* to C remains above national average.
- Pupil Premium performance had shown a 10% increase this year.
- 15% increase in GCSE results over the last 5 years.
- The authority is the 5<sup>th</sup> most improved authority since 2008 in terms of 5 A\* to C GCSE's (excluding English and Maths).
- No secondary schools below floor standards.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members congratulated the officers on a positive set of results.
- Members sought assurance that the positive progress that had been made would continue under the proposed new school improvement process. *Members were informed that a lot of the improvement work was driven by the analysis of data and this would still be the key driver going forward. Some of the interventions already in place would remain as they had proved to be outstanding. The school improvement strategy going forward would incorporate the improvement work done so far.*
- Members sought clarification that under the changing landscape improvement in KS4 results would continue. *Members were informed that nationally at Key Stage 4 - 5 A\* to C including Maths and English fell by 2% this year and the expectation was that it would fall again in the next two years. Next year would be due to the Government changes regarding early entry to exams which meant that a child could only be counted on their first exam entry whereas previously all entries prior to the summer exams had been counted. In 2015 there would also be a change in the measure of how a schools performance was measured. 5 A\*-C including Maths and English will disappear and there will be a measure around the best eight subjects at GCSE. The expectation was that there would be a significant drop in exam results in September nationally.*
- Members referred to the table on page 33 of the report, item 5.24 regarding KS4 floor standards over the past four years. How would the Committee know which schools had yo-yoed below or above the floor standard over the four years shown? *Members were informed that the information was available and would be provided after the meeting.*

- Members wanted to know if there was evidence that schools had applied the Pupil Premium in a positive way and if it had made a contribution to the improvements made. *The Assistant Director Education and Resources confirmed that there had been a positive impact through the use of Pupil Premium and this was evidenced in the uplift in results. Every school had to show where they were spending their Pupil Premium on their school websites so it was evident how it was being used. It was also monitored at national level.*
- Did Governing Bodies have a good understanding of Pupil Premium? *Members were advised that Pupil Premium was now a significant part of Ofsted Inspections and therefore Governors had become much more aware of its significance and how it was being used.*
- Members referred to page 37 of the report, Key Stage 4 Results and commented that they were very impressive. Were the results evenly spread throughout all of the secondary schools or was there a disparity between schools. *Members were advised that when the validated results were presented at the meeting in March school level results would be shown. It was fair to say that some schools had improved significantly and some less significantly but the final results would be shown when the validated results were released. The average performance between Maintained Schools and Academies were the same.*
- A Member of the Youth Council referred to page 32 of the report, section 5.15 Key Stage 4 League Tables. He was concerned about how many subjects would be cut following the Wolf Report. Could this change have a significant impact on the LA average against the National Average? *Members were advised that the outcomes of the Wolf Report and the change in GCSE's would affect everyone nationally. The main concern going forward would be the change in performance measures to the best eight subjects in GCSE's and which subjects this would include.*
- Members sought clarification that the LA would be challenging schools on the way they spend their pupil premium to ensure it was spent in the cohort it was specifically allocated to. *Members were informed that Pupil Premium was a separate grant and schools were fully accountable for it. The Statute states that the Head Teacher is responsible for the accountability and spending of the Pupil Premium money. Schools have to demonstrate that there is a tangible impact on the child's outcome through use of the Pupil Premium. The Head Teacher would be challenged if there was no improvement in the outcomes of the relevant cohort receiving it.*

The Chair thanked Alistair Kingsley and Councillor Shearman for the work that they had done with Gary Perkins to analyse the examination results data. The Chair also thanked Gary Perkins for his clear presentation of the data and willingness to work with the Committee.

The Chair also thanked the Assistant Director Education and Resources for all the hard work he had put into the development of the School to School Partnership and congratulated him on his new position as Head of Corporate Property and Children's Services.

## **ACTIONS AGREED**

The Committee noted the report and requested that further detailed information be provided when available on the schools within the Floor Standard data for both Primary and Key Stage 4.

## **7. Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan**

The report was introduced by the Community Cohesion Manager and provided the Committee with a final draft of the Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan. The strategy provided a structure and common accountability to the work being done to tackle poverty. The following had been added to the strategy since last being presented to the Committee:

- Measures had been developed to help evaluate the progress being made in tackling poverty.
- A large amount of data has been added.
- An action plan to show how the strategy will be taken forward.

- A governance structure to oversee the work.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members referred to page 53 of the report, Priority 4: *“A city of people living healthy and resilient lives in decent homes”*. There was no mention of the environment in which people live and having access to green space. Could this be incorporated? *Officers noted the comment and agreed to incorporate the ‘green space’ factor in the strategy.*
- Members wished to pass on thanks to Adrian Chapman for an excellent and comprehensive piece of work he had done on the Poverty Strategy.
- What is the timescale for the action plans? *Members were advised that there would be a detailed action plan for each of the key delivery projects but timescales had not been confirmed yet.*
- Members requested that a detailed structure plan be included in the Poverty Strategy and to show how the scrutiny committees would fit into this.
- A Member of the Youth Council referred to page 55, Priority 5: *“A city where children enjoy their childhood and express their skills and potential in life”* and was concerned that work experience had not been included as part of this priority. *Members were referred to page 82, Priority 5, “Children are enjoying their childhood and expressing their skills and potential in life” and Priority 6, “Our city is a place where business succeeds and communities thrive”. Although work experience was not mentioned there were projects within these priorities that would support work experience. Officers noted however that this element could be strengthened.*
- Members referred again to Priority 5 in the strategy and referred specifically to the statement *“To give our children the best chance for success and reaching their potential we will invest in the early years so that children make the best start in life”*. Members wanted to know if this referred to all children in all wards across the city and if there would be an impact on the strategy following the recent announcement regarding the change of status in the Children’s Centres. *Members were informed that it did refer to all children in all wards across the city. With regard to the Children’s Centres the strategy would be amended accordingly to incorporate the outcome of the decision with regard to the children’s centres once that was known.*
- Members commented on the improvement in employment figures for Peterborough and wanted to know what percentage of the improvement might be attributed to people in part time work and were still having to claim benefits. *Officers did not have the information at the meeting but would report back to the committee.*
- Members referred to page 58, item 3, Living Wage and wanted to know what percentage of people were earning less than the Living Wage. *Officers did not have the information at the meeting but would report back to the committee.*
- Members wanted to know if the true situation with regard to Poverty in the city was being masked by saying that the number of people working in the city had improved. *Members were advised that the figures provided were from National Statistics and a further piece of work would need to be done to drill down underneath these. The Community Cohesion Manager commented that there were also a percentage of people on zero hour contracts which meant that they would still need support.*
- A Member of the Youth Council referred to Priority 4, *“A city of People living healthy and resilient lives in decent homes”* and that it mentioned that work was being done with young people to identify volunteer Community Health Champions. There was however no mention of working with young people in the action plan. What was the age range of young people who were being worked with and could working with young people be clearly identified in the action plan. *Members were referred to page 81, project 4 and the roll out of the Community Health Champion’s Programme which referred to the work done with young people. The officer noted that the words Young People had not been mentioned and could be incorporated. The age range would be approximately late teens to early twenties but this could be clarified.*



- A Member of the Youth Council requested that young people be taught in schools how to handle their finances.

The Chair congratulated officers on the Strategy and acknowledged the amount of work that had gone in to producing it.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee endorsed the Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan and recommended it to Cabinet for approval.

## **ACTIONS AGREED**

1. The Committee noted the report and requested that the Community Cohesion Manager incorporate the following into the strategy:
  - a. Incorporate the 'green space' factor in the strategy.
  - b. Include a detailed structure plan in the Strategy and to show how the scrutiny committees would fit into this.
  - c. Include work experience and apprenticeships under the projects to deliver priorities 5 and 6.
  - d. Include the wording 'young people' in the action plan under project 4 relating to the community health champion's programme.
2. The Performance and Information Manager to provide information on:
  - a. percentage of people were earning less than the Living Wage
  - b. percentage of people in part time work
3. The Committee requested that an update on the progress of the Poverty Action Plan be brought back to the Committee at a further meeting.

## **8. Children's Services Improvement Programme**

The Executive Director of Children's Services introduced the report. The report informed the Committee on progress that had been made on the Children's Services Improvement Programme which had been put in place following an Ofsted Inspection in August 2011. The progress report had been a regular report to the committee and the last update to the committee had been in September 2013. The key highlights of the report were:

- Decrease in number of referrals in September
- Re-referrals dropped down to 23.3%
- Decrease in number of initial assessments completed down to 151
- Increase in number of initial assessments completed in timescale to 88.1%
- Decrease in CAFs – although within target
- Decrease in Child Protection Plans to 189
- There had been some staffing problems as some staff were leaving due to more attractive pay rates in some failing authorities. A refreshed advertising campaign had been launched to attract new staff.
- Early Intervention and Prevention – Cherry Lodge and the Manor had recently received an Ofsted Inspection and both units had received a 'good'.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members requested an update on Looked After Children visits. *The Director of Children's Services did not have the information at the meeting but agreed to send this out separately.*

- Members noted a large decrease in the number of referrals for September and sought clarification on why and assurance that the decrease was an unusual month. *Members were advised that this had been looked into and dip samples of some contacts and referrals were taken to see if all the contacts were meeting the threshold criteria for referral and then initial assessments. The contacts sampled were consistent with the threshold criteria. It was unclear why there had been such a decrease in that month.*
- Members referred to the Troubled Families Project and sought assurance that mechanisms had been put in place to ensure that those families that had been “turned around” did not slip back. *Members were advised that there was a fast track process in place. This was provided for families that had been on the programme and was in place in case they did need further support in some way. Families could be fast tracked back into the programme to ensure improvement could be sustained in their lives.*

The Chair thanked the Executive Director of Children’s Services for a positive report but voiced concern on the staffing issues and hoped that the recruitment campaign would be successful.

## **ACTIONS AGREED**

The Committee noted the report and requested that the Executive Director of Children’s Services provide an update on Looked After Children visits.

### **9. Scrutiny in a Day: Understanding and Managing the Impacts of Welfare Reform on Communities in Peterborough**

The Senior Governance Officer introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on the progress being made towards organising the Scrutiny in a Day event on 17 January 2014 which would focus on the impacts of Welfare Reform.

The following comments and suggestions were made:

- Members commented that the time available in the morning for information gathering may not be enough to take in all the information.
- A member of the Working Party advised that Members would be able to focus on strands of interest relevant to their own committees.
- Members commented that it might be difficult for some people to attend the event in the day time.
- Councillor Sandford commented that it was an important subject and a high level of scrutiny should be applied and felt that the whole day should be held in public.
- Members commented that the morning session was in effect the equivalent of the pre meeting of a normal committee meeting. This allowed Members the opportunity to study the reports, go through the evidence and identify key lines of enquiry.
- Members wanted to know if other councillors who were not Members of the Scrutiny Committees could also attend the event. *The Senior Governance Officer advised that other councillors could attend to observe the Joint Scrutiny Committee and ask questions in the same way they would be allowed to at an ordinary scrutiny meeting.*

## **ACTIONS AGREED**

The Committee agreed that the Senior Governance Officer take the comments made by the Committee back to the Member Working Party for consideration.

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

The Committee received the latest version of the Council’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual

Cabinet Members would make during the course of the following four months. Members were invited to comment on the Forward Plan and, where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

#### **ACTION AGREED**

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

#### **11. Work Programme**

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2013/14 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

#### **ACTION AGREED**

To confirm the work programme for 2013/14 and the Senior Governance Officer to include any additional items as requested during the meeting including:

- Domestic Violence Strategy
- Early Years Children's Centres
- Poverty Action Plan Update

#### **12. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 6 January 2013

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 9.34pm

CHAIRMAN

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<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 5</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## Report of the Principal/Head of Service, City College Peterborough

Contact Officer(s) – Pat Carrington, Principal / Head of Service  
Contact Details - 01733 761361

### CITY COLLEGE PETERBOROUGH (CCP)

<b>1.</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>
1.1	To give an overview of what Peterborough City Council's Adult and Community Learning Provision, City College Peterborough (CCP) does, who uses the college, its outcomes, NEETS, the Raising of the Participation age and the impact the service has on local residents and businesses.
<b>2.</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
2.1	Members of the committee are asked to note the report and the role City College has to play in delivering improved educational and other outcomes for the city. The committee is also asked to consider further areas they may require information on.
<b>3.</b>	<b>LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY</b>
3.1	The work delivered by CCP cuts across all four priorities of the sustainable community strategy and all the strands of the Single Delivery Plan, by helping to develop individuals, improve their skill sets, raise potential and aspirations, and by having a direct impact on individuals' social and economic wellbeing.
<b>4.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>
4.1	The college has been operating since 1944. Originally known as the Peterborough Adult Education Institute, it became Peterborough College of Adult Education (PCAE) in 1970 when it moved to its current premises in Brook Street and then became City College Peterborough (CCP) in 2010, to better reflect the wide range of adults, young people and businesses using its services.
4.2	CCP operate as a self-financing organisation and is under contract to the Skills Funding Agency, the Education Funding Agency, the National Apprenticeship Service, European Social Funding, other smaller funding pots and is also sub-contracted to by a private provider and an FE College (bringing additional income into the City), as well as delivering programmes at full cost recovery where no direct funding is available. The college turnover is around £5m per annum.
4.3	The College has its own Governing Board, is responsible for its own finances and the Principal reports into the Head of Corporate Property and Children's Resources but is equally accountable to the Governing Board (membership can be found in appendix 1). It employs 95 permanent members of staff and has 134 sessional tutors and works actively with 55 partners across the City
4.4	Our premises and facilities include the Brook Street Campus which, as well as standard classrooms, has a fully functioning professional catering kitchen, a construction training room,

	<p>"Flat One" - a 1 bedroom flat to enable delivery of independent living skills, a sensory room to support our students who have autism, an art studio and an outdoor classroom / meeting space that is wildlife friendly. We also manage the John Mansfield Community venue which includes a skills campus that has standard classrooms, a mechanics workshop, hairdressing salon, welding room and community rooms including a performing arts centre.</p>
4.5	<p>At its last inspection, CCP was graded good with outstanding features and included comments around our outstanding work with young people (Grade 1 provision), our partnership work that allows us to identify and help meet local need and the way in which we strive for excellence. Ofsted stated in the report:</p> <p><i>"The college is outstanding at seeking learners and partners views to make improvements....."</i></p> <p><i>"The quality of teaching and learning is good with many outstanding features"</i></p> <p><i>" The range of provision is excellent at meeting the needs and interests of learners and users"</i></p> <p><i>"Learners improve the social and economic wellbeing to a good level"</i></p> <p><i>"The senior leadership team has set ambitious targets and has provided very effective leadership to create a culture of excellence, inclusion and high standards. It has established a broad range of communication channels to encourage participation by all stakeholders in the college life. Staff work very effectively to make learning an enjoyable and empowering experience for all learners."</i></p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>KEY ISSUES</b>
5.1	<p>CCP successfully delivers learning opportunities and skills development to the people, communities and businesses of Greater Peterborough and the surrounding areas. It has a reputation for quality, strong partnership working and the ability to respond very successfully to local needs both planned and unplanned thereby reactive to any given situation. Our breadth of provision is vast, yet very specialised – often working in niche markets to help support the economic and social development of Peterborough.</p>
5.2	<p>The College is used by a wide variety of people. In 2012/13 academic year we had 7090 enrolments. These consisted of:</p> <p><u>Age Profile</u>  16% - 16-18 year olds  9% - 19-24 year olds  56% - 25-59 year olds  19% - 60+</p> <p>However, it is worth noting than many students of 19+ are on part time courses and the majority of 16-18 year olds are on full time courses</p> <p><u>Disability and Learning Difficulty</u>  13% of the students disclosed a disability and 10% disclosed a learning difficulty.</p> <p><u>Ethnicity</u>  81% - White  2% - Mixed  8% - Asian  2% - Black  1% - Chinese  3% - Other</p>

5.3	<p>The areas in which we work can be segmented into the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult skills – qualifications for adults and working with unemployed adults to retrain to get back into the workplace.</li> <li>• Young people / NEETs- 16-18 year olds who for whatever reason did not do well at schools, developing them across the board to move into the workplace or further education or training as well as working with 14-16 years olds as an alternative to school.</li> <li>• Traineeships and Apprenticeships - Traineeships is a new programme for young people who want to work, but who need extra help to gain an apprenticeship or job. Traineeships will give these young people the opportunity to develop the skills and workplace experience that employers require. An Apprenticeship is a real job with training so candidates earn while they learn and pick up some nationally recognised qualifications as they go.</li> <li>• Community Learning - delivering non-qualification adult training and learning to support sustainable and adaptive communities, and moving people closer to the work place. We also fund some programmes for the third sector in their specialist areas to engage with residents that we would not normally reach, to start them on their journey of lifelong learning.</li> <li>• Family Learning - Helping parents to help children learn whilst improving their own English, maths and parenting skills at the same time.</li> <li>• Business – up-skilling and developing the workforce from management training nationally, apprenticeships, both for young people and adults within the existing workforce, through to mandatory qualifications and bespoke softer skills training delivery.</li> </ul>
5.4	<u>NEETS and the Raising of the Participation Age</u>
	<p>CCP runs a range of programmes for 16-19 (25) year olds to help young people progress from NEET to EET. We offer young people a substantial vocational qualification, up-skilling in Maths, English and employability skills providing a tailored wrap around support and work experience package to meet their individual needs. In the past two years we have progressed 74% of our young people onto something positive when it is time to move on. This is an exceptional success rate when the starting point is considered.</p>
5.5	<p>Currently we are helping 178 full time students and 60 part time students and plan to recruit a further 60. The learners we work with are furthest away from the labour market, have multiple and more often than not, complex support needs and have various barriers to progressing to the next stage of their lives.</p>
5.6	<p>Year by year, the client group is becoming more complex. We risk rate our learners at the recruitment stage. Normally a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system works, however this year 72 (40%) of our 178 full time learners have been categorised as purple (a category we have had to develop that is an extreme red) meaning that they have displayed episodes of significant self harm, are suffering abuse/have a serious safeguarding issue, are in care, are a suicide risk or have a serious health issue.</p>
5.7	<p>A further 44 (25%) are categorised red. These young people have issues including learning difficulties, behaviour, emotional or social difficulties (BESD), history of depression, live independently or are care leavers.</p>
5.8	<p>Not only do we help young people move from NEET to EET with a positive progression and qualifications but we also empower them with the skills to be functional in society.</p>
5.9	<p>CCP is also rapidly expanding its provision to accommodate learners with low to moderate learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD). This is a growing market with some young people</p>

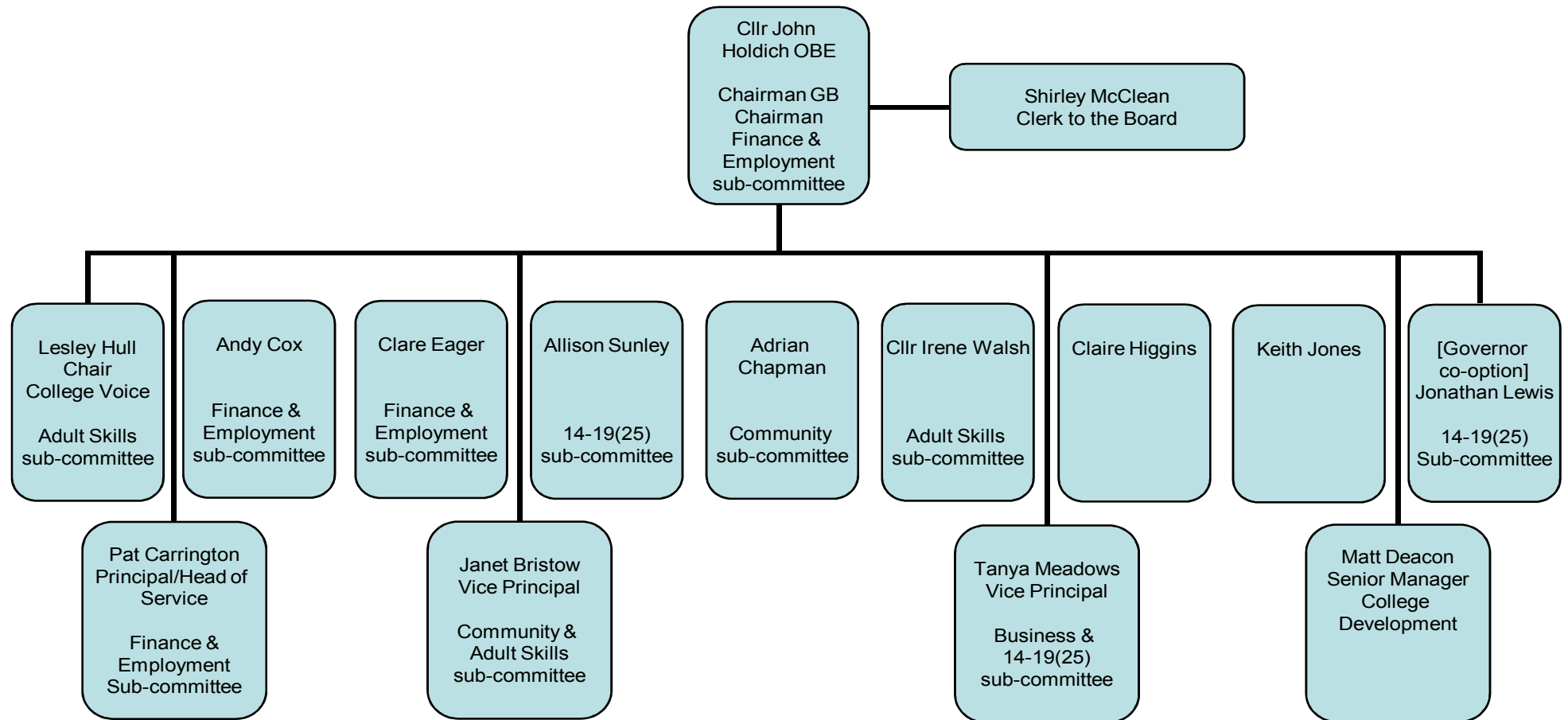
	being sent out of county. As a result of this, CCP are capacity building a further 32 places to eliminate the need for learners to study outside of Peterborough. Skills for independence is crucial for LLDD learners to progress to be self sustaining, both in life skills and financially. CCP run transitional 'link' courses with Marshfields School, Spring Common, Phoenix, Nenegate and Heltwate.
5.10	We house the Youth Access Hub and have done so for the past three months following the closure of the Youth Access Point in Central Library. The hub is open for three afternoons per week for information, advice and guidance, job search skills, help with housing and benefits, food parcels etc. CCP's primary function is to progress young people onto a positive progression whether it be at CCP, another provider or service or an employer.
5.11	The Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) has increased the demand for full time provision for 16 year olds. Normally we would have around 100 full time young people, whereas this year we have 150.
5.12	<u>Outcomes for Learners</u>
	There are three key areas in which we measure outcomes across the board. These are Retention (the % of people that start a course who complete the course), Achievement (% of those that are still there at the end of the course that achieve) and Success (% of those that start a course that achieve).
5.13	In 2012/13 our figures for this were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention - 91%</li> <li>• Achievement - 92%</li> <li>• Success - 83%</li> </ul>
5.14	Of our overall provision, 57% is outstanding (significantly above the national average) and this includes 16-18 Foundation Learning (our NEET work), ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Language), Business Skills / Level2+ and Community Learning.
5.15	In addition to the hard statistical outcomes, we also measure the development of personal and social skills that are incorporated across the provision, which is graded overall as Good. This is done through the recording and reviewing of learners' individual learning plans where at the start of their programme, they record what they personally want to get out of the course. We also ask them to complete an end of course evaluation form that includes the question "What have you been able to do as a result of attending this course?" and the reviewing of support logs (that are undertaken with our young people). For our students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities we have introduced Learner Reps and undertake many enrichment activities with them for example, the Well Crafted Event at the Cathedral. In our work with the unemployed we get them to undertake project work which includes fund raising events.
5.16	The standard of learners' work is very high as evidenced by: reports of excellence from our awarding bodies (ie City and Guilds, NCFE), National Learner Awards winners, for example, having the only national City and Guilds Gold medal winner for IT apprentices attending a prestigious black tie event in London to collect his award, three adult arts and crafts students having their work displayed in the V&A Museum in London as national competition winners for three years running; having our oldest student – 91-year-old Laurie win an Adult Learners Award and attend the presentation ceremony at Duxford and having the Youth East 2 (a NEET project)winner for Outstanding Learner.
5.17	We have also received special recognition for an innovative community project called "Unlock the Box" which was chosen to be presented to HRH Princess Anne in August 2013. The project was one of only 4% bids nationally to be awarded NIACE Community Learning Innovation Funding to run this project between September 2012 and July 2013. It brought together 62 adults furthest away from learning to celebrate some of the dynamic cultures and communities



	<p>in Peterborough. The adults were from 7 different ethnic communities: Kurdish; Latvian; Polish; English; Pakistani; Slovakian and Welsh. They were trained in the skills needed (including IT and photography) to create culture boxes to showcase their history, language, culture and tradition. The boxes were then shared with new communities and volunteers from the new communities were supported to create their own boxes so ensuring sustainability. The impact demonstrated impressive improvements in learners' skills, including IT and English; self-esteem and confidence e.g. learners engaging with their child's school and supporting their education for the first time; social relationships within and outside the family; positive attitudes to another culture and people volunteering, getting jobs or going into further learning / training. The project was run in English and a website with resources was also created. Since then, the project has been presented at various strategic and local partnership meetings e.g. The Children and Families Stakeholder Board with a view to adapting it to different local needs and contexts such as Parenting.</p>
5.18	<b><u>The Overall Effectiveness of the College</u></b>
	<p>With a philosophy of continuous improvement and striving for excellence, there have been many areas that have enhanced our customers' experience and there are many strengths of which we are proud and will continue to build on. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Very good teaching and learning with increasing amounts of outstanding - Increasing the percentage of good outstanding teaching to 88% from 76 % in 10/11 and 35% in 09/10.</li> <li>➤ Outstanding and continuous enhancement of individual pastoral support and care for vulnerable learners</li> <li>➤ A highly-effective governing board (with a varied and skilled background reflective of the city) actively participating in developing the strategy, monitoring performance and providing critical challenge and advice</li> <li>➤ A Senior Leadership Team that continues to set ambitious targets and provide very effective leadership and performance management, creating a culture of excellence, inclusion and high standards.</li> <li>➤ A highly-creative curriculum designed around local and national priorities targeted to a diverse range of learners including those furthest away from the labour market</li> <li>➤ Learners' views and skills which are actively sought to make an outstanding contribution to the direction and development of the service.</li> </ul>
5.19	<p>We actively seek to raise the profile nationally and regionally, of the learners we work with, of Peterborough and the College. The Principal sits on the LEAFEA national board and is the representative for the East of England and also sits on the HOLEX national policy board. One of the Vice Principals sits on the Education Training Foundation Professional Standards Review Board and the Other Vice Principal is the Vice Chair of the East of England Work Based Learning Provider Network.</p>
5.20	<p>We also achieved, for our 12th year running, the IIP award with the following comment reported by the inspector "The college is to be congratulated at maintaining good communication and full employee engagement during a time of great change and reducing budgets. Excellent and sensitive support for people in the form of observational mentoring and their "How to be a brilliant teacher" programme that has driven up standards."</p>
5.21	<p>In November 2013, in recognition of the work we do with our learners and the "extra mile" we go for all our students, we received the Peterborough Telegraphs Business Award for Customer Service.</p>
<b>6.</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
6.1	None
<b>7.</b>	<b>CONSULTATION</b>
7.1	Not applicable

<b>8.</b>	<b>NEXT STEPS</b>
8.1	Not applicable
<b>9.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b> Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
9.1	List any documents and other information used to write this report. DO NOT include exempt items. Be specific as anything you list here must be available for public inspection for several years after the committee meeting.
<b>10.</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
10.1	Appendix 1 – Membership of Governing Body

## GOVERNING BOARD



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<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 6</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Director for Communities**

**Contact Officer(s) – Wendi Ogle-Welbourn**  
**Contact Details – 01733 863749**

### **NEW VISION FOR EARLY YEARS SERVICES INCLUDING CHILDREN’S CENTRES IN PETERBOROUGH**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update and inform the Scrutiny Committee of the outcome so far of the consultation around the proposed changes to the way early years services are run in Peterborough including Children’s Centres.

The report will update Scrutiny on the following:

- The consultation process
- Emerging issues and themes from parents and the community
- Alternative proposals and suggestion from parents and the community

The report also seeks the views of scrutiny members as part of the ongoing consultation process.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 For Scrutiny Committee to endorse the process of consultation to date and to be aware of the issues and themes currently emerging from the consultation process. For the committee to recognise that formal consultation does not end until 8<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and that this report provides information gathered from the consultation mid-way through the process.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 3.1 This report relates to the Supporting Vulnerable People priority in the Single Delivery Plan.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Cabinet gave approval for consultation to begin on the future delivery of early years services in Peterborough including Children’s Centres on 18 November 2013. Formal public consultation began on 26 November 2013.

The consultation document has been sent to all interested parties and a questionnaire has been devised to gather responses. Both consultation document and questionnaire appear on a dedicated link on the council’s website. To date:

- 18 questionnaires have been returned by post
- 77 responses have been completed on line
- 23 responses have been sent by email

All relevant statutory bodies have been consulted. The commissioned organisations who run the children’s centres – Barnardos and Spurgeons have also been consulted.

Six public consultation events have been held – one in each locality – and these were attended by a total of 107 people.

In addition, officers are meeting with members of the children's centres Parents Advisory Board and parents/others who attend the individual centres in all 15 of the children's centres to hear their views and to take away their suggestions and concerns.

To date individual centre consultations have taken place in:

- Orton – 6 attendees
- Caverstede – 16 attendees
- Wittering – 30 attendees
- Highlees – 29 attendees
- Eye – 27 attendees
- Honeyhill – 24 attendees

Meetings at Fulbridge, Werrington, Bretton, Brewster Avenue/Stanground, Gladstone and East children's centres took place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013. A meeting at Hampton children's centre took place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December.

The council has received three petitions from the public petitioning against the closure of children's centres.

## **5. KEY ISSUES**

5.1 Emerging issues from the consultation process relate to the following:

- A lack of clarity around the data used to inform the decisions around the re-designation of children's centres and the identification of the 'super hubs'.
- Challenges around the principle of delivering services to the most vulnerable families with the argument being that this could foster stigmatisation of these families and would not develop a sense of inclusion in communities
- Concerns over a loss of services in general to communities and that for some communities the children's centre is yet another community resource to go. There was a strong belief that the children's centre was a hub for the community and loss of the centre would fragment the community.
- Many parents in outlying communities raised the issue of accessing the super hubs given a reduction in public transport to some areas.
- Parents were concerned that access to universal provision via the super hubs would be limited given the increased demand on these services.
- Parents voiced concerns how a reduction in the preventative aspect of children's centres could result in higher levels of need in future years with increased numbers of post natal depression and children on child protection plans.
- Parents voiced concerns about 0 – 2 play sessions not being available – these sessions they particularly valued.
- Parents voiced concerns about access to baby clinics and baby cafes if these are no longer delivered from centres.
- Some parents thought we should consider other ways of delivering at least some services in the least deprived areas – e.g. charging

In addition, there has been some misunderstanding around the function and delivery behind the concept of a Super Hub. In more recent consultation meetings the following description has been communicated:

Super Hubs will have a wider reach area than the existing Children's Centres and will be the focus of activity in relation to working with the 75% of most vulnerable families in that extended reach area as defined by Ofsted. The Super Hubs will be the central point of activity for a range of partners – both currently existing partners such as Job Centre Plus and new partners e.g. integrated locality teams. Services will be wrapped around the Super Hub delivery thus allowing the Children Centre Management to count the engagement of other partners with vulnerable families in the reach area as part of their reach profile for Ofsted. It is not envisaged that other organisations will have permanent bases in the Super Hubs. The Super Hubs will work closely with the Outreach Centres to coordinate activities in these centres as well as using them as a base for more detached engagement with the community.

The methodology for defining which children's centre will be de-designated and which centres will transform into Super Hubs and Outreach Centres has also been questioned. A number of people found it difficult to understand the IDACI data and rationale and were concerned about increases in population and the impact of closing centres at a time of changing demographics. In clarification, the statistic which underpins the proposals is from the latest IDACI (Income Deprivation affecting Children Index). In 2004, the whole of England was divided into 32,482 small areas called Lower Layer Super Output Areas, shortened to 'SOA' or 'LSOA'. These areas each contain on average 1,500 residents (1,000 minimum threshold, 3,000 maximum threshold). The IDACI was used to determine which of Peterborough Super Output Areas falls into the top 30% most deprived. Children's Centre reach areas can consist of several SOAs – for example in Gladstone children's centre reach area, there are 6 SOAs. All 6 SOA's in this reach area fall within the top 30% most deprived IDACI ranking. Therefore it is considered that the proportion of children living in the top 30% area of deprivation is 100%, as all 6 fall within this top 30% ranking. Wittering Children's Centre reach area also consists of 6 SOA's, although none of these fall within the top 30% most deprived on the IDACI ranking. It is therefore considered that the proportion of children in Wittering reach area who are living in the top 30% area of deprivation is 0%.

An analysis of the school census data showing the growth in school populations and the link to positioning of Super Hubs and Outreach centres is contained in Appendix 2.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

The re-designation of children's centres in some areas of Peterborough will have an impact on those communities in Peterborough where there is less deprivation and fewer families in need. However, in mitigation of these impacts the following agreements have been made:

Health visiting and maternity clinics (including baby cafes and baby massage) will continue to be supported and to be delivered in these areas – either from the re-designated buildings or from community centres.

Headteachers/governing bodies of many of the schools linked to re-designated children's centres have expressed a strong desire to continue to deliver children's centre like services and will be supportive in housing maternity and health visiting services.

A number of parents have expressed a strong desire to run services/run centres and support is in place to help these organisations in respect of training and delivery. This will be through our early years officers and community development team.

Commercial organisations that currently deliver childcare have expressed interest in expanding childcare but at the same time still offering universal services to families in the community.

To date in the consultation process officers in the Communities directorate have had detailed discussions with a number of organisations and community groups ranging from the two

contracted providers; Spurgeons and Barnardos to pre-school providers, parents' groups and schools to seek alternative usage for the centres that have been identified as being re-designated with the aim of trying to preserve some of the services offered by the Children's Centres.

Proposals for re-designated children's centres are listed below:

<b>Re-designated children's Centre</b>	<b>Emerging Proposals (as at time of writing)</b>
Cavestede	<p>The headteacher and governors are keen to maintain some open access within the setting and they will use their financial resources (Direct Schools Grant) to make this happen.</p> <p>They will continue to work with children and families with additional needs. This will be a commissioned activity.</p> <p>As an Ofsted judged 'Outstanding' provider the centre will be commissioned to share this expertise across the city through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering training</li> <li>• Supporting childcare settings</li> <li>• Mentoring staff</li> </ul> <p>The centre will not continue as a designated children's centre. However, some of the children's centre functions and activities will continue to be integrated with the work of the nursery school.</p>
Brewster Avenue	<p>Ongoing discussions with the school in respect of managing the buildings. The school has committed to ensuring health and maternity services continue to operate from the building.</p> <p>The school would also like to offer a continuation of some of the services currently being delivered, the details of which will be determined after consultation and will be dependent on the cabinet decision made.</p>
Wittering	<p>The school is currently pursuing setting up a community interest company in order to seek grant funding to continue running the centre. They have applied for a grant from the Military Covenant fund. The outcome of their application will be known in March 2014.</p>
Stanground	<p>There is a potential for the Portage service to be based at the centre.</p>
East Rural (Eye and Thorney)	<p>Thorney Parish Council are interested in using the space for pre-school provision. Eye parents were interested in looking at the possibility of establishing the centre as a charity.</p>
Hampton	<p>An external provider has expressed an interest in running the centre as a children's centre, maintaining open access facilities for parents and delivering many of the children's centre functions.</p>
Werrington	<p>Continued discussions with the school around future use.</p>
Westwood and Ravensthorpe	<p>Continued discussions with the school around future use.</p>



## **7. CONSULTATION**

7.1 Please see above.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

Continue with consultation as planned with a full report following the end of consultation to be presented to cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

Investigate ways of mitigating the impact of the removal of services, as voiced in the concerns raised by parents, through securing additional resources to fund specific interventions. This might take the form of:

- Provide funding for a member of staff to facilitate on open access 0 – 2 play session for parents in each of the re-designated children's centres.
- Extend the Peterborough and Fenland Mind post natal depression project to other areas in the city.
- Replicate the Parents United model in localities where children's centres will be re-designated and secure paid facilitation for this.
- Establish, and publish, a training programme for parents who are interested in running their own sessions or interested in running centres.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

9.1 **None**

## **10. APPENDICES**

10.1 **Appendix 1**

Responses to consultation to date.

### **Appendix 2**

An analysis of the school census data showing the growth in school populations and the link to positioning of Super Hubs and Outreach Centres.

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## **Formal Consultation**

### **New Vision for Early Years Services including Children’s Centres in Peterborough**

#### **Comments received and Responses to the Consultation Paper**

**Explanatory Note**

This document sets out a summary of the comments and issues raised at the consultation stage on the draft “New Vision for Early Years Services including Children’s Centres in Peterborough”

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Peterborough City Council wishes to thank all those who took the time between November 2013 and January 2014 to complete the response form, to write to us with your thoughts, ideas and concerns and those who attended the public meetings to let us know their views on the proposals.
- 1.2 This annex highlights all those comments/suggestions submitted in response to the consultation. The responses include comments that have been emailed to the children's centre email address as well as comments that have been included in the questionnaire, in response to the final question *"Taking account of the context set out in the consultation paper, if you have any alternative proposals which you would like the council to consider please provide details"*

## General Comments

We need to keep as many centres as possible, however the centres in areas of deprivation are essential. Families who find everyday a struggle will not travel to other centres and we need to focus on pre-school children at the centres, not spread to much into the whole community support system. Despite government initiatives to get young children into nursery at a very young age, research has shown children do best when they have a good early education at home first, and parents need in this.

Super centres should not just be as per suggested location. Without sounding 'snobby' these are undesirable areas and not local enough for access.

I would like to propose to keep all of the children's centres open for the following reasons:

- 1) Every child needs to be able to play with other children outside their own or a friend's home - it prepares them for nursery and pre-school.
- 2) Young parents are vulnerable - they can become lonely and overwhelmed by the responsibility - to be able to have a chat, change of scenery and exchange views is vital to a person's wellbeing
- 3) I believe it's the council's responsibility to provide such good quality communal spaces for everyone to use.
- 4) If you look after your children, you look after your future.
- 5) Closing the centres will undo a lot of good work and progress that has been achieved over the past years since 2006 - how much money will it cost to re-establish them when funding increases again.

Pay the council people less and put that money into the children's centres. As not every parent drives (myself being one) and putting the super hubs where you propose means a lot of people are going to miss out on these services which isn't fair. And with myself being a parent to a child with a disability, public transport or taxis are not an option due to cost and the way my child reacts with these services.

It seems a shame that when the government is pledging funds for "Early Years" the early years centres are being reduced in effectiveness. Where are the funds going?

Please do not take away our children's centres. They are such a valuable, special place giving so much support to families. I come every week and my son really enjoys it. We have come since our son was a baby and at this time I found it a huge help to have somewhere to come and meet new parents and develop our son's skills. Don't take this resource away.

Keep the most popular nurseries such as Caverstede, take into consideration all aspects: people travel from all over Peterborough to attend groups here because of its brilliant service, reputation and staff. If you feel the need to "discontinue" some nurseries, it should be those that do not have a high volume of people attending, these could become the super hubs or outreach and redesignated". There is a great need for services and baby groups and play day needed for the ever growing population!

Forgetting services 0 - 2 years: Attachment/Parenting - Peer support/expert support. - Higher risk of post natal depression for non high risk parents. - Children's social care - more referrals

Children Centres are an advantage to the children and their learning. It also gives an opportunity for parents to meet other parents. It is a good build up for children and being able to organise and understand a nursery/pre-school setting and environment. Children's Centres should remain as they are and not be closed down.

I object to services being removed from any locality. Many vulnerable people can only access their local services "on foot". People who are isolated will become more vulnerable and local groups provide a "lifeline" for these people. Alternative proposals: Make a higher charge for group activities and provide a voucher scheme for those who cannot afford to pay.

I would like to register that the "timetable" re the "proposals" seems to be very hurried and unpublicised. There has been very little explanation of the economics of changing the "centres". There has not been detailed figures showing the cost of centres as they are and the costs of conversion. There only seems to be one proposal to be decided upon. If any other proposals are put forward then they can only be grounded on limited information. If the "cabinet" is deciding on 20th January and the consultation period ends on 8th January then there is very little time for a further public consultation. Is this a "done deal"?

Response to Q3.g) Centre name: Ravensthorpe - New Use/s: As one super hub as it's close to another children's centre but keep the others as they are. Comments at Q4.: Only having one super hub in Peterborough. Too many parents with children like myself on my own as a lone parent need the network and support of the Children's Centres and other parents like me who need to socialise or we would go mad at home day in and day out. Funding (?) two years old is fine if you have a job, not all people with a two year old have jobs. Also what about the under twos? I can't return to work because not enough childcare providers for babies!!!

Only comment in response to Q3.g) Centre name: Ravensthorpe - New Use/s: Its got 2 children centres close to each other

Would rather they stay the same, especially in the rural areas the babies/children will lose out if they shut/go private. Most of us cannot afford to travel to city centres and who will be the family support if this happens? Who's most in need? Those that 'are' in need don't tend to 'come forward' so will not attend these clinics/centres, so will be left out/forgotten. It's the Children's Centres who notice problems and alerts the system for help, generally. This will disappear leaving the average family much more vulnerable.

Would prefer the Centres to stay as they are as easy access for all problems. Also family play is a weekly thing my children enjoy coming to. If this closes access to other facilities are at a distance which will make things harder to attend especially for single parents if no access to a car.

Support services MUST continue to be easily available for all mothers in the Peterborough area. All are vulnerable, regardless of their income. The existing network of children's centres provides this currently - it's going to be incredibly difficult to set this all up again. Once it's gone, it'll be gone forever. Ease of access (many mothers will have had complications in childbirth which will make travelling across town difficult/impossible) is essential. Easy access to breastfeeding support is crucial in the early weeks, as is weaning support once the children reach six months of age. Removing children's centres and their services will lead to increased isolation and rates of post-natal depression in Peterborough mothers. In December 2010 I gave birth to my son, complications at the end of the pregnancy meant that he was born by caesarian section. This led to difficulties with establishing breastfeeding and much reduced mobility for me. My health visitor judged that I was at a high risk of developing post-natal depression, as I had very little social support with my and my husband's families living in the North West, i.e. 170 miles away. So, as an isolated new mum, in pain and immobile, it was a relief to discover that my nearest Children's Centre was based literally five minutes walk away in Stanground (where we lived at the time). I took advantage of every session and group available to me, obtaining huge amounts of help and support through the baby cafe, soothing my, at times fractious, baby with baby massage and meeting other new mums at the Brewster Babes session held at Brewster Avenue for people with children under six months. Although I found life with a newborn incredibly difficult, those groups and centres provided a lifeline for me at this point. Now I hear that Peterborough City Council plans to close most of the children's centres, replacing them with four "super hubs" for the most disadvantaged families. I dread to think how I would have coped during my maternity leave if Stanground and Brewster Avenue Children's Centres didn't exist. I do however; know that my mental health and the health of my child (as I would have had to stop breastfeeding without the support) would have been hugely affected. My immobility (you are unable to drive for at least six weeks following a C-section) means that the proposed hubs would be unreachable for me. I'm not "disadvantaged" in terms of my income (though anybody receiving Statutory Maternity Pay of £136 a week when they have bills to pay can hardly be described as well-off!) but putting any mother at an increased risk of post-natal depression and removing support networks could leave many parents in a severe state. Please, please reconsider this decision for the wellbeing of ALL children and mothers in the city

There should be somewhere to get advice on breastfeeding in a location close to where you live. Not all parents can drive and are less likely to travel to centres which are not local to them. Closing local centres will isolate parents especially first time mums. More should be done to enable mums to attend classes with their babies for example post natal exercise classes and advice on child care. There is no space to do this in the new hospital, so I was told when I needed such a class. Closing children's centres doesn't seem to be consistent with caring for parents of young children and babies. They provide a crucial service to all parents regardless of background.

It is my view that the proposed closures to children's centres should not happen. All across Peterborough there is a need for the levels of support that the children's centres provide. I recall Hampton before the children's centre was in existence and at the time I was a new parent who felt very much alone. I dreamed of the support that a children's centre could give. Our local centre provides a place for new and existing parents to meet, a place to seek support and a location for involved professionals to catch up with each other about children within their care. I use the centre as a child minder and bring my mindees there each week to meet other child minders and their mindees for learning and play opportunities. I have been able to discuss the care of a mindee with her health visitor while at the centre. It provides a local level of support for parents that will disappear if the Super Hubs are created. There is a level of need in our area as there are in all areas of Peterborough but removing the support from this area because another area has a greater need will in the end lead to an imbalance of support and will lead to a growth in the need of support in this area. Not everybody has cars to travel for groups. Please reconsider.

I wish to make the following points:

1. I disagree with the proposal to have services located in 4 super hubs and 3 outreach centres, which with the exception of Orton Hub and Bretton Outreach Centre are all located very near each other in the central and eastern areas of the city. It will be very difficult for families living outside these areas (many, if not most, reliant on public transport) to travel to services in these hubs and outreach centres, and very expensive for the local authority to provide transport for this purpose.
2. These proposals would deprive whole communities of the services currently provided by children's centres; many of these communities have very needy families who may not qualify as targeted families able to access the limited provision in the hubs and outreach centres; and even in apparently affluent communities such as Longthorpe and Netherton there may be families whose needs are camouflaged by their income, lifestyle or type of housing.
3. For the families who do qualify as 'targeted families' the services as proposed will in many cases be outside their local community; as a result they will lose the local contact currently provided in children's centres, they will be mixing with families from across the city with whom they have no other links, local communities will not be strengthened as a result of these proposals, rather the contrary. It will be difficult to encourage families to travel from a distance to one of the proposed super hubs or outreach centres, and therefore there will probably be low take-up and sporadic attendance.
4. The loss of universal services means that families using the services in the super hubs and outreach centres will be easily identified as vulnerable or troubled families, with the ensuing stigma that that might bring. At the moment, Family Support Workers can encourage parents who have poor parenting skills or problems dealing with their child's behaviour to come into groups where they can mix with and learn from more experienced parents, as well as getting advice from Early Years Workers. If the proposed superhubs and outreach centres are only going to deal with troubled families, there will be no good role models for these parents to copy, instead there will be a much more formal relationship with professionals; instead of an exchange of experiences and ideas between parents, as at present, there will be more instruction from professionals, which parents may resent, especially if they feel the professionals do not have personal experience of bringing up children.
5. The proposal to have different agencies working together is an excellent one, but this already happens in the existing Children's Centres and there is plenty of scope for it to expand. Health, adult education, Job Centre and housing are all represented on the Children's Centre Advisory Boards and Children's Centres would welcome more input and involvement from them. There is a very close relationship between health services and the Children's Centres which I fear will be damaged with the loss of local Children's Centre provision.
6. Children's Centre Family Support staff have very full caseloads; they receive a lot of referrals from Health Visitors and work closely with Social Workers and Early Years settings. They do a great deal of work with families where children are subject to CP or CIN, and work with untold numbers of families to prevent things reaching that stage. It's difficult to see, how even with a small increase in numbers (from 43 to 54 by 2015, I believe) Health Visitors could manage without the Children's Centre Family Support Workers, who know their local community and have the opportunity, not just to visit families in their homes but also to observe them within the Children's Centre.
7. Local Children's Centres provide a very cost-effective way of supporting troubled families. If you remove that local support network, and I stress the word 'local', in a few years time, the local authority will be paying for far more

expensive intervention by social services - expensive not simply in purely financial terms, but even more importantly in terms of the damage to children's lives and families.

8. Peterborough has a rising birth rate and increasing numbers of migrant families settling here. Mention has been made of increased Government funding going into early years education, but this is for children aged 2 upwards. The number of 0-2 year olds is also increasing, but there is no provision for these children in the proposed structure, unless they belong to a targeted family. There are many parents in Peterborough who will not meet the criteria for targeted support, but who nevertheless need help and advice with parenting and the opportunity to meet other parents, not just in a social setting (as might be provided by the frequently mentioned 'mums and tots' groups) but with the support of a friendly, impartial professional who can suggest ways in which parents can help their child's development. There are many isolated families in Peterborough who have limited, or no, command of English and Children's Centres provide an ideal way for parents and children to meet and mix with other families who do speak English, to learn English, to integrate into the community and form friendships. The value of this in terms of social cohesion cannot be overestimated and is particularly valuable for under 5s before they start school. 8. While I appreciate that there is a need to save money, I would suggest that more consideration is given to the alternative: raising income. Although funding for Children's Centres has not been ring-fenced, presumably the local authority could, if it wished, allocate more money from the income raised through Council Tax towards maintaining the present Children's Centre structure. I suggest that this would represent a saving in the long term, obviating the need for much more expensive intervention by social work and health professionals in the future. In short, money spent on maintaining Children's Centres today will save money tomorrow and also pay dividends in terms of happier, healthier, more integrated communities. Given Peterborough's poor reputation for safeguarding and educational standards, the local authority should be investing more, not less, in supporting families with under 5s, regardless of where the Government chooses to focus its funding. The proposals as outlined in the consultation paper are short-term measures which will need to be reversed in a few years time, at far greater cost to the local authority. From discussions I have had with other professionals on the ground, I have not come across anyone who thinks differently.

9. If the Council decides, despite widespread opposition in the community, to 're-designate' these six centres and change the way in which the remaining centres operate, then I would urge that consideration is given to staff in the superhubs providing regular services in the areas where there will no longer be any Children's Centre provision: Westwood and Ravensthorpe, West Town, Netherton, Longthorpe, Hampton, Stanground, Woodston, Eye and Thorney and the other villages within the Peterborough Unitary Authority area boundary. I would suggest that this takes the form of one or two days a week where groups are led by Early Years Practitioners, which all families can access and where parents can be helped to acquire good parenting skills, and parents and children can socialise; if space allows, health clinics and other community services could also be provided at the same time.

Since families are living further away from extended families and support, the children centres are of huge importance to people who feel isolated. The issue with closing the centres that are deemed 'not in deprived' areas, fails to acknowledge the usage and need for support for women who may not be deprived but use them as a lifeline. Building the super centres not only will people have to travel further to get to them, but the inability to deal with the number of women and families in the whole of Peterborough. Let alone the time, space, training, facilities etc, it would take to get them up and running quickly but with excellent standards. Losing the proposed children centres will leave a gaping hole where support is necessary and an increase in mental health issues will be the long term cost where savings are trying to be made in the short term. The proposal seems to focus purely from a monetary benefit point of view and seems to be ignoring the huge impact on parents and children's social, psychological and community benefit that the children centres provide.

I don't have an alternative proposal, the children's centres are it, which someone had proposed 10 years ago & actioned. Maybe I can propose a children's centre in 10 years time when the current proposals fail & supporting all community members is thought of as a good idea again

Community asset transfer? With the right support maybe the families could set it up themselves



I feel that the location of the 'super hubs' needs to be drastically re-designed. For families living anywhere west of Bourges Boulevard & North of the A605, there are no day to day, weekly or monthly services within easy access. Many of the families in these areas do not have access to personal transport so will face an untold amount of costs & hassle just to get to a 'super hub'. Although my family is not classified as in need, the Westwood & Ravensthorpe Childrens Centre has been a fountain of assistance both prior to the birth of our child & after it. It has helped my wife get out & socialise with other parents & my son to spend time with other children. Removing the access to this centre will drastically affect her lifestyle as well as my sons development

Keep all child centres open. This consultation is flawed and not consultation. At no point have you stated what my opinion is with regards should this centre close. This "consultation" presumes the centres will close and is biased as a result. This flawed

Look at contracted services in the area and bring them into the centres & charge. Maintain the local centres and put effort into improving take-up rates by addressing the barriers that parents have to using the services. 1. Benefits of the services offered are not understood. 2. When choosing how to spend time with their children, other paid activities are trusted ahead of the free services of the centre. These higher cost services by contracted providers should be brought into the centres 3. There is an apprehension around joining in and fear of being preached too at a centre

If you wish to open up super hubs and out reach centre that's fine but my disagreement is that these centres wont be open to everyone . Why should children miss out on what. Is the only groups available. Around Peterborough. Because you have decided to label people . Only having these hubs open to families. On low income with attach a stigma. To the hubs . I understand some of the centres being closed and being used for pre schools due to a high demand for placement but once again make these hubs or centres open to all families. Please excuse the poor grammar on a smartphone

Leave the children centres alone and stop spending money on crap things like the water fountains in the city centre!!!!!!

I cannot afford to send my son to a nursery. I assume 2 year old funding is available for vulnerable people not for everybody

I use the children's centres to meet up with other mums and attend play groups and development groups with my 6 month old daughter. I fear that these changes will dramatically reduce the resources available to people like me. I understand the proposal and I don't disagree however it's unfair to only focus on providing services to the more deprived and those with special needs when new mums need support too. My concern is that creating superhubs in the most deprived areas will not provide a welcoming environment for newborns and toddlers. Although mums like me may not be high priority we do make up a huge proportion of the people that currently use the centers so where do we go?

Firstly, I am not convinced that the creation of Super Centre Hubs will save costs if taken into account the costs of creating them in the first place and the cost of running them. Also, by closing the local Centres you increase the journey time to the Hubs - increasing car journeys and excluding families with no means of getting there because they have no car or no money for the bus ticket. The Children's Centres provide a very important place for all families, and should be inclusive, for the following reasons: 1. Children who don't attend nursery or childminders have got a chance to play with other children outside their own home or a friend's else's home - it prepares them for nursery or school later on. 2. Families from non-deprived backgrounds also need a place to go for advice and to meet other parents - it benefits the local community because we get to know each other and our children play together. 3. I can only speak for Walton, but there is a lack of good quality playgrounds in the area. Itter Park is ok, but Walton Park Playground is not nice, one swing is broken and there is not much equipment for the size of the park.

Firstly, all new parents / and parent of small children will face some of the same problems / obstacles. For e.g, Breastfeeding difficulties (of which there can be many), A risk of post natal depression, and everyday behaviour and health concerns of their child. THIS IS REGARDLESS OF THEIR CLASS OR FINANCIAL BACKGROUND/CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES!!! To remove the services currently provided for at local children's centres, and replace with "Superhubs" (I imagine a consultant was paid a large amount of money to come up with this concept), is hugely detrimental to our society and smacks of discrimination. Firstly, what will happen to the vast number of women who need support with breastfeeding but don't fall into the "vulnerable"/" Deprived " category? The NHS will not be able to

cope with the influx of visitors to their own hospital based support groups. Peer supporters serve a great role, but there is a huge difference in having someone giving you information and sending you home or being able to sit with other feeding mothers, as they feed, in a welcoming environment with a professional present to advise where needed on a weekly basis. I can state that had it not been for the baby cafe service at my fantastic children's centre (Brewster Avenue) I would have switched to bottle before 3 months, instead I fed exclusively till 6 months, combined till 8 months and night fed till 19 months!!!! Secondly, How comfortable will someone feel accessing these superhubs knowing they are to be accessed only by those who fit the "deprived" status? You may as well stamp it on their foreheads. Never mind the fact that the targeted market would be likely to have problems reaching their superhub. Each community needs realistic access to a children's centre. Post Natal Depression can strike any women, again regardless of social class, financial standing...Having somewhere within the community to visit, to reach out to fellow new parents, share experiences, learn skills and to be able to talk freely about parenting concerns / coping ability without being judged or categorised can dilute the pressure that builds up, and I believe can actually serve as a prevention of post natal depression. And for women who do suffer with PND, as I did, the homely, welcoming and non judgemental feeling of a childrens centre and all it has to offer can be totally invaluable. Again without these resources, where do these women go, how do they cope? Brewster Avenue and Stanground children's centres have been campaigning / brainstorming ways to attract more vulnerable parties into the centres for some time now, you cannot force people to use the facilities if they are not interested. And if they do use the facilities, surely these individuals would benefit for having a broad range of society around them, positive role models, rather than centres utilised only by those from deprived areas /categories. Such a step to exclude other members of society from using the facilities will just create/ increase a class divide. The reality is these "superhubs" will be turning away people that want/need/will benefit from and are prepared to pay for their services, and will probably be unable to attract those that are targeted, or unable to keep them interested. Big expensive empty buildings ahead!! Surely a more sensible option is to keep the centres open to all, introduce universal fee's to sessions at each of the centres, and for health professionals to issue free membership cards/vouchers/ record card for those genuinely vulnerable/deprived, so they can access for free, discreetly, without it being public knowledge, allowing these people some dignity, and the positive benefit from accessing a facility used by all. Invest in our current centres, and the amazing people, paid and volunteers, who dedicate their time to providing invaluable support to our NHS/community/society as a whole. Speak to the people this relates to, the mums/dads/staff and NOT management consultants and executives!!

Please keep all centres open I feel that closing them would really have a negative impact on young children as it helps them to socialise at a young age, it also helps mums to make friends when otherwise may become isolated.

Maintaining the children's centres but charging parents fees for all or some activities. Consider only closing children's centres where under used, for example closing the least used 25%.

I feel the centre provide a much needed resource and meeting point for families. By just targeting specific families to receive help, then their will be a majority of families will not get the support the need. Also by taking away activities for some you will be making families become more introvert.

Keep the Childrens Centres open for all. They are vitally important for all families whether they be disadvantaged or not. Those who can afford it could pay more for sessions.

Younger children do not need much space. This decision has no meaning in terms of space saving.

To leave the children's centers alone to do the wonderful work they are already doing.

There doesn't appear to be a space for general comments in this consultation response so I am using this box but this is not a suggestion of an alternative proposal. I appreciate that the Council needs to save money and I can see that Central Government funding is entirely based on funding for vulnerable children. However, the children's centres provided me with an invaluable source of support and opportunities for play for my son when I was alone on maternity leave, when he was too young to go to nursery, and I was very vulnerable suffering from depression. I am looking to have a further child in the near future and the idea of doing this without the opportunity to take my children to a children's centre simply for their social development and support for me in terms of spending time with other parents and for the support that was provided by the staff makes the whole thing seem all the more daunting. I do not mind travelling to a super hub, and I do not mind paying for the time that I spend there, but I am very concerned that in the

drive to ensure that the most vulnerable groups are catered for, those of us that are not generally vulnerable but are made so by the experience of child birth, and our children, will not have the support and assistance that the children's centres have previously provided so well.

Firstly the council should make available ALL the data on the children's centres. How can anyone have an opinion on their suggestions without having some data on which to base that opinion? The only opinion I have is that there is evidence of a lazy, inept, incapable council which having to face a very difficult decision has made no effort to look at serving those for whom it functions (one can hardly say 'works' since there is little or no evidence of any work being done on this). There is no evidence presented on current costs of running the current system never mind a breakdown of what constitutes those costs. Neither is there a projection of the costs going forward. When there should be a spreadsheet model of the service and all the costs of providing it, to not even be presented with basic costs shows just how incapable the council officers are to make any suggestion of what should be done. That councillors are not demanding that this be made available to all parties shows how incapable they are of making a decision on the issue. To present a document which, with the lack of any clear evidence, randomly closes the centres, states "the alternative is to do nothing" only underlines the arrogant cavalier attitude of those producing the consultation paper, (Jim Royle would have quite adequately commented on the word "consultation"). Where is the full risk analysis which clearly shows all the risks in closing any child centre never mind most of them? Where is the breakdown of the required outcomes (objectives) of having a network of children's centres, the criteria against which the objectives were measured and what the yearly assessments were? Surely if they are to be closed there must be evidence that they are not working. Where is that evidence? Speaking personally the children's centres mean nothing to me, except like so many others I pay for them. If the council feels that it is a worthwhile move to close them then demonstrate it, conclusively, no attempt has been made to do this. If the service can be demonstrated as having value to the community, leave it or provide a number of viable alternatives for the community it currently serves. The council should have all the data on these centres, it's what the IT we pay so much for is all about, if the council has not set objectives for them, monitored them, assessed them on a regular basis then it should be looking at reducing costs by culling it's management structure, they're not managing in a modern environment. Finally it's not up to the users to prove that they should be left open unless they have all the data collected on them and all the data of the city wide parameters within which a decision is to be made

My alternative proposal is that the proposed centres are not closed and no super-hubs created. The focus of help on designated deprived areas is wrong when it comes to babies and children. All parents can need the services currently provided by the children's centres regardless of their socio-economic position. something as simple as the opportunities to meet other carers makes a big difference psychologically for people who are alone with a child all day and there are no affordable private places in Peterborough.

All parents I have spoken with would gladly pay for these sessions etc and pay towards the upkeep of the centres and already agree that a voucher system be put in place for 'less fortunate' parents.

I think it is a disgrace to close the services of the children's centres. The reason that they are doing such a good job is that they are open to everyone. As soon as you single out the needy families they would not want to attend. The groups held at the centres for everyone are vital for babies. My child has attended little wrigglers and you can see in her what a fabulous opportunity it has been for her to socialise. She is kind and careful of the babies and that is because she has grown up attending this group. She has no other opportunities to socialise as we do not have any family. The baby group is vital for new mums it was sometimes the only opportunity to put my baby down and have a hot cup of coffee all week. Providing 15 hours of child care for three year olds is simply not enough for you to believe you have done anything to help children and families. If anything throwing children in a room at 3 and expecting them to get along when they have had little to no social interaction with other children would be damaging! This is what you are proposing to do by closing the centres. The groups the centres provide are invaluable for parents and children the private groups are simply too expensive to attend on a regular basis. By providing the centres for everyone to attend it makes it possible to help those needy families without singling them out or making them feel different. It was stated in prime ministers questions that more money is being provided for children's centres than before. So I wonder what the council have used the money for. It is a disgrace to even suggest closures what you should be doing is providing more!!

I moved to Peterborough from Cambridge shortly before falling pregnant with my son, I have friends and family in Cambridge and worked there so had no contacts in Peterborough without the children's centres I would have struggled and not made the friends I have. It is an invaluable resource without which you will isolate mums and families these are

used not just by those on benefits and if a bigger contribution to groups above 50p to £1 is required to keep these valuable groups going then those who have more income I'm sure would contribute to keep this as I definitely would

Keep all centres open and open access to all. Prime Minister said Children's Centres in England have more funding...you have to keep these open and improve the services available. Don't socially isolate anyone. Keep them open!!!

With reference to the proposals to close every children's centre in Peterborough to all except deprived families, my personal concerns are that we have many people in Hampton who are not deprived, but have no family to turn to for support, because we are such a new area, still building our social infrastructure.

Also, with only "officially deprived" families able to access such services, I fear a stigma may become attached to them, leading to many being too proud to attend the centres despite needing them.

I recall a number of years ago, as a first time mother, I was advised I could access a Sure Start centre. I was very young, married, and renting a council house, but I did not consider myself as being the most deprived member of society! I was far too proud to attend the centre, which is a shame, because I would have benefited from it, I'm sure. Opening these centres up to everyone removed the stigma, making the centres truly accessible to all. You are proposing to undo that good work, but there must be a way to keep them open despite the council no longer having money ring-fenced for these centres.

For starters, you could consider if there is flex in any other area of the budget.

Secondly, you could also consider if centres could request discretionary higher session fees from those who are able. I think you'll find a lot of people would rather find a little extra to keep a service open than lose it altogether.

I saw it reported in the Peterborough Telegraph that a proposal has been made to close some Childrens Centres. Whilst I don't think, for a moment, that this is actually going to happen, as people will protest and those proposing it will back down, as usual, I would like to point out that not everyone is against the idea. All attempts to rein in public spending will impact on Users, who will complain loudly, and this is no different. Go ahead and close them. Public bodies are still spending FAR too much.

You don't need to live in a deprived area/state to need children's centres. People in the deprived areas are the ones that do not seem to use these centres. The Tunnel opened over the summer holidays, Free activities for children for people living in orton. I went nearly every time, and I did not see hardly any of these deprived parents attend.

As a full time mummy I am gutted my baby's will have their special local fun filled educational playgroup ripped from them. Iv heard as I'm not involved with social services or on benefits I won't be able to trek to the hubs if I wanted to. It is the working class tax payers that suffer yet again. My group has just started a fee and I would pay more if it kept it open. Love how you have put a price on children's social and education. Wel use the money saved to buy a cinema for them sit on their arses and get obese on sweets n coke instead. Why don't u increase fees. Couple of quid per session and get donations from holding fates\car boots\discos etc.

I feel that the centres are not the primary problem. Though there is scope for improvement in layout to make the buildings more welcoming. The issue is lack of use and not charging commercially for delivery to end users.

The services are underused because of several reasons. These issues need to be addressed 1st, not the buildings. I believe the centres have a big perception problem and also many parents don't rate the benefits of the services..... a marketing issue.

I believe there is scope to increase fees charged and to bring in other revenues by providing a venue to private children's service providers and activities.

Issues to put effort and money behind:

1. Benefits of the services offered are not understood.
2. When choosing how to spend time with their children, other paid activities are trusted ahead of the free services of the centre. These higher cost services by contracted providers should be brought into the centres.

3. There is an apprehension around joining in and fear of being preached too at a centre. Help is needed here.

It is easier for parents to do nothing than to actively strive to join in with these activities. If inconvenience is increased to many by moving services further away, less parents will be motivated to join in and the chances for progress on any of the 3 points is reduced.

Improvements to the local services is a better option to help support this region's parents and very young.

It is in the 1st 3 years of a child's life that 90% of the child's brain is formed, so the majority of behaviour, character and intelligence tendency is set for life in this stage. We need to help families bring up social, confident, emotionally mature, creative individuals for the benefit of all our futures.

I am glad there is a review, but please look at the services from the end user perspective. Centralised services or targeted locations can only be step backwards. The centres are helping to keep communities alive allowing experiences and connections vital for a child's life in the local area. The value of the centres is as much as community hubs helping with social cohesion than as just service centres for the young.

A suggestion is to work with other interested parties (such as NCT and MumsNet) to evaluate services offered and to put money, skill and time behind promotion of these services. Efforts to provide profitable services and combine functions with other venues at the local level should be priority over cost saving and centralisation.

If there is an opportunity to improve the buildings, a more welcoming environment should be considered.

## South Locality

I would urge you not to close so many children's centres south of the city. The whole of the south will have to go to Orton, unfair? Where will the dads groups go? Stanground dads group on a Saturday is amazing, please don't shut it down

Stanground and Hampton are important and not accounted for in proposals. Stanground is isolated on public transport and Hampton will see rising PND etc without services for children

I, honestly, urge you not to close all the centres south of the city. Admittedly, I would not be in your deprived target audience (I am married, educated, professional), I can honestly say that I would have been very stuck when I first became a Mum 3 years ago. I went to baby massage and met 3 people who became my life line. It sound dramatic but they honestly are my best friends. We met up at least once a week and still see each other all the time. I also want to say that it is not just the Mum's who are affected. My husband has real confidence issues but I 'forced' him to go to Saturdads to socialise with our son. Jason, Teresa and Debbie really made him feel welcome and it upsets me to think that this group would close. I do understand that cuts need to be made but only proposing one children's centre South of the city is madness. No one goes to Orton! Keep either Stanground or Brewster. Please.

I can not begin to say how devastated my husband and I are at the news of our two local children centres (Stanground and Brewster Ave) closures.

I have a One Year old daughter and my second baby will be due next year. During the last year and a half I have accessed both Stanground and Brewster Ave Children's Centres. The support that the centres gave my family during the months before birth and after are immense.

Both centres are well attended and offer a range of sessions from newborn and beyond. It baffles me why these centres are being closed and therefore the children and parents who access these are left without opportunities to mix with similar parents. In some cases the sessions were a means of getting out and discussing issues with parents and staff who could give advice and strategies to cope. Without this support and often a lifeline for some I fear health visitors, midwives and such like will have more demands upon their case loads.

I for one will be disappointed that the support from the centres will not be there for my second child.

I truly hope some of these centres can be saved.

I am deeply troubled by your proposal to close selected children's centers in Peterborough. I am 31 and a first time mum, I had trouble with breast feeding and confidence and lacked the ability to talk to others, the children's centre was so important to myself and daughter as she will not go to nursery or school till later, it gave her the opportunity to mix and learn and develop with other children.

These centers are vital to all who use them and will in the future. to say they will be only for deprived family's is also wrong I'm not on benefits or have a low waste but like all I have bills and a mortgage to pay for I can not afford private nursery or group costs !! but I would not be able to use your centers.

Myself and many others use Stanground centre and Brewsters avenue this is one of the best run centers I have ever attended.

I hate to be so blunt but you spend a lot of money on providing pretty things in the town the fountains the new block paving to the high street etc.

I really do feel that you should review you policy suggestions thoroughly and talk to parents and famous that use these centers and to people who will be directly affected !!!

I am emailing as I feel very strongly that the council are making the wrong choices when trying to save money. I moved to this city just before giving birth to my son and knew no one here. I realise that the children's centres are supposed to be for deprived families which we are not but actually they are used by all sorts of mums and dads. Through the local centres I have made some wonderful friends and having this resource makes me feel less alone as a new mum. I am writing to you as I am hoping you can understand what a valuable resource is about to be lost. Being able to attend a children's centre means groups which help your child's development, being able to meet and talk to other parents and being able to see a health visitor. I am facing losing 3 of my 4 closest children's centres (Stanground, Brewster Avenue and Hampton) which leaves me facing long lonely days without the activities to attend at these centres. The remaining centre is a hall (the Italian centre in Fletton) which does not run any activities apart from weigh ins that I am aware of.

These centres help bring the communities in this area together which with so many social issues in this city I would have thought you would want to help integration not stop it. I hope that the council is able to understand that this would be a catastrophic move to make.

## **Bretton Children's Centre**

I honestly, urge you not to close all the centres south of the city. Admittedly, I would not be in your deprived target audience (I am married, educated, professional), I can honestly say that I would have been very stuck when I first became a Mum 3 years ago. I went to baby massage and met 3 people who became my life line. It sound dramatic but they honestly are my best friends. We met up at least once a week and still see each other all the time. I also want to say that it is not just the Mum's who are effected. My husband has real confidence issues but I 'forced' him to go to Saturdads to socialise with our son. Jason, Teresa and Debbie really made him feel welcome and it upsets me to think that this group would close. I do understand that cuts need to be made but only proposing one children's centre South of the city is madness. No one goes to Orton! Keep either Stanground or Brewster. Please.

You are storing up a shed load of trouble by moving services further and further afield. Families will not travel. Why was Bretton not given a fair crack of the whip? Other evening sessions were 6pm - 8pm, Bretton was allocated 4pm - 6pm, right on the school run and evening meal time, hence no one could attend.

## Brewster Avenue

Although I understand that money needs to be saved, and that some children centres are undervalued, I am considerably concerned with the proposal to redesignate the Brewster childrens centre.

My reasons are as follows. Firstly, having being pregnant whilst living in Fletton, it was really helpful to be able to attend midwife appointments at the Stanground or Brewsters centres, especially as a working mother. In addition, I often went for weigh-ins at the Brewster centre as I moved to Sugar way and it was the most convenient place to walk to. If the proposal went ahead, the closest centre would be Orton, which is well beyond a reasonable walk away. Secondly, whilst on maternity leave I attended breastfeeding clinic and baby groups. Especially with such events not happening at many venues in the area, the loss of these activities would be massive to the area. Finally, my oldest child attends Brewster infants school, and the breakfast and afternoon club are located in the childrens centre. Without this provision it would be impossible for me to work. I would be concerned about where and if this provision would continue as the site and facilities are perfect.

The purpose of writing you an email is regarding the current proposal of closing down Brewster and other childrens centres. I want to mention here the importance of children's centres in the life of young mothers like me. For me Brewster is a lifeline, my guide, my only way of socialising, my child's first learning step and much, much more that I can't describe in words literally , all I can say is that we can do whatever 's possible to save these centres. You can put charges on it up to £5 or £10 and those who are willing to be a part of it will surely pay. I think than you will also get to know how important are these children centres for us. Secondly, I personally would love to work in any dpt. Voluntarily to give my input, it could be a management work or administration I would love to serve.

But please don't close these centres as they are integral part of our lives. I hope u will consider

I am very distressed to learn of the proposed closure of Brewster Avenue Children's Centre and would like to very strongly request that the closure does not go ahead. I am a first time mother of a baby boy. My son is happy and healthy, I have a supportive husband and am employed by a company with a maternity policy so am luckier than a lots of mums in the area I live in. Having said that, we don't have a car, or any family in Peterborough so being able to put my baby in the pram and walk to Brewster Avenue has been a life saver for me as a new parent. It takes a village to raise a child, but we don't live in close-knit communities anymore. We are very much on our own, so once the early visits by health care professionals have been and gone, being a new Mum at home can be very lonely and isolating. Having small local children's centres where we can drop in, get help, get support and find a new community without having to travel great distances is so important. In my case, I was keen to give our son the best start in life by breastfeeding him , but although it's a natural thing to do, it didn't come naturally to me at all. In the very early days it was such a struggle, I went almost every day to Brewster Avenue for breastfeeding support and the assurance that one day it would get easier. My son is now 9 months old, I am still breastfeeding him and I know there is absolutely no way in the world that would be the case had it not been for the Brewster Avenue Health Visitors, peer support Mums and staff. It took a long time for me to feel confident enough to go further from home with my baby, to tackle public transport and to breastfeed him when we were out and about. In any case, the buses are so often full to capacity, you frequently have to wait for two or three to go past before you can get your pram on board. My son was born in the middle of winter - it snowed for the first 6 weeks of his life and if we'd had to get to Thorpe Road walk-in centre or Orton Children's Centre to see the Health Visitors we just wouldn't have gone. New mums are so vulnerable in the early days. We desperately need a place that is easy to get to, where we feel safe, where we know and trust staff in order to confide in them no matter what our situation or problem. Whatever our financial circumstances, we all need support at one time or another, and having to get a bus and travel half way across the city hoping someone is available to help us isn't making services accessible to those who need them. There's not a person in the UK who doesn't know times are tight financially and the council has a difficult task ahead to balance its finances. Babies and young children don't have a voice, or a vote, or money to pay rates but they are one of our communities greatest assets. If we don't help parents to the very best for them now, the cost of fixing the problems later on will be far greater than the immediate cost-cutting measures. By closing our local children's centre it feels as though the council is abandoning us at a time in our live when we badly need their support - please don't do it.

## Caverstede Children's Centre

Save our Children's Centre Childminding group (Caverstede) - Being a childminder for many years has been very rewarding but at times can be quiet isolated. The children centre plays a very big part in our community and for us childminders will be a great loss to us. It has enabled us to: - Meet other child minders and their children; provided the children with a very happy and structured play session each week; gave children confidence to make positive relationships with other practitioners and their peers; for individual children to join larger groups, to learn, share, take turns and also prepare for school; have had support and advice from talented practitioners on certain issues i.e. behaviour management, language problems, family breakdowns and extra support for vulnerable 2 year olds; to work as a team and provide children's learning and their achievements in all areas of development; share ideas and also borrow resources i.e. books and multi cultural toys for children whose English is their second language; encourage healthy eating and growing vegetables in their vegetable garden and try new foods i.e. 'Chinese new year and most important to gain social skills; please keep our children's centre open, we don't want to go back to being isolated!

Our children are said to be the future but what future will they be facing if they do not receive the social and other skills needed when starting school. My daughter was extremely shy when we first attended Caverstede, I've seen her grow so much in such a short space of time

We seem to be losing a valuable asset to "Early Years" children's experience. In our 3 years attending Caverstede's "groups" we have seen the benefits to children and families, the improvement in self esteem and confidence in parents that are struggling in coping. We appreciate the professionalism of the staff as they offer support

I feel the centres have done a fantastic job. Caverstede has had outstanding many times. Surely this should come into account for something. I agree the vulnerable children need help however let's not leave behind the other children

The children's centre at the moment works well as they are; they support families and young people with services. Changing them to super hubs will disadvantage people who cannot drive to the centres. I myself use the centre; both my husband and I work full time. We use Caverstede Children's Centre to help build both my daughters social skills and to help integrate with children and families who they may not come across within their life path. My eldest daughter had no language until 11 months ago and attending these settings such as rhyme time and tots helped develop her signing in order to communicate with us as a family. My daughter now attends Caverstede nursery and the progression from the groups to nursery has been nothing but wonderful. Each morning someone from the children's centres leads story time; reading a book every day for the week; giving topics such as Eid, fireworks and starting school and the chance for the children to have repetition. Story time has helped both my children concentrate and question what happens in a book; taking away the children's centre will take away this skill they have both developed since September. My youngest daughter attends the children's centres still; she loves rhyme time and the songs and rhymes she now has and can sing is amazing. I sing at home with her but having a group where we can sing together is an important part of our morning and her development. Working part time; my mother has my children three times a week; taking away this service means that we are taking away a part of their day; where would they go now and get the service, attention and care from the staff at the children's centre which they receive now. My husband takes my daughters every two weeks to Dad's club and loves the hour and a half he has sole charge of the children; the chance for father and daughter time. He and they come home happy full of stories they have done and people they have met. I fully appreciate the fact that the council has to cut funding in certain places; but to cut funding on a service which affects the children of our future seems absolutely outrageous. Parents need services close by to them where they can attend groups, be supported and in some cases have respite. Having super hubs will not work; these are spread out over the city and will be overcrowded (if they work) or not used because staff do not have the time with parents as they do at Caverstede now and I'm sure in other settings.

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I am very concerned and upset about the news that my local Childrens Centre is to close. I live in Walton and go to Caverstede Childrens Centre regularly with my daughter and I also did when my eldest daughter (who is now at school) was young. I have attended the Baby groups and Tots groups and the wonderful singing group called Rhyme Time. They are all excellent groups and are run by brilliant, friendly staff. The staff are so important as they make such an effort to get to know you and your child and the groups have helped both the social and intellectual development of my children.

I do not drive so find it difficult to travel to groups that are further away, the walk is just too long, especially in bad weather. Taking a bus would make the whole trip far too expensive and time consuming and I find it difficult to travel by bus with a buggy. It is so handy having a well run group just round the corner from me. It was so important when my first daughter was a baby as I didn't know any other mums and felt isolated being at home all day with my baby. It was invaluable for me to just be able to pop round the corner to a group at my Childrens Centre and see the friendly faces of other parents and the helpful staff and chat to them. It was essential for my well being. Not to mention it being great for my baby to socialize with other children and use the group's resources. I learnt a great deal through the Centre about different ways to entertain my baby and support her learning.

Caverstede also hold groups and activities during the school holidays which is very useful as a lot of other groups do not take place out of term time. It can be difficult to find affordable ways to entertain your children during the holiday periods. I would really miss this facility if the Centre was to close.

I am not financially disadvantaged, but I am a stay at home mum and do not have much spare money to pay for more expensive, privately run groups. I wouldn't find it easy to get to them anyway. I feel like I am losing out on a really important resource just because I do not live in a deprived area.

I know that they are many other parents who share my views. A huge amount of families will really miss out if the Childrens Centres were to be decommissioned.

As I am unable to attend the lunch time meeting at Caverstede Centre on November 29th I would like you to accept my points and opinions via this email.

- 1 How do you define vulnerability?
- 2 Vulnerable can be deprived families as well as children who have additional needs.
- 3 Children with additional needs are often only picked up if families are aware of difficulties.
- 4 Children Centres can identify these needs and support families and initiate early intervention with agencies.
- 5 If there are no Children Centres then children will not be picked up before they attend nursery therefore, the 2 years of early intervention is automatically taken away.
- 6 So much research has been done about hands on early intervention.... not just Health Visitors calling round parents houses for a quick chat handing out leaflets.
- 7 Not all Parents are able to travel to the planned Super Hubs and quite often prefer to stay in their own catchment

area.

8 Has anyone thought how the parents who need the local Centres will finance the travel to the Super Hubs quite often money is a big issue for some parents.

Parents who are feeling vulnerable come to the Children's Centre Like Caverstede because there they can mix with a variety of people and feel accepted, they come to chat and have a coffee to forget about their own troubles for a while... they don't always want to be with people who have similar problems...when they need support and comfort the CC Staff who are highly trained and skilled practitioners and there.

I am a Grandparent looking after 2 children age 3 years and 22 months I have these children 9 hours a day 3 days a week.. Caverstede Children's Centre has been a lifeline to me. If this facility is taken away from us then we will struggle.

Caverstede Children's Centre has been awarded outstanding again by Ofsted...surely that speaks volumes.

I heard David Cameron on TV saying Children's Centre should not close. In light of his statement could someone please tell me why Caverstede Children's centre is highlighted for closure.

### **East Rural Children's Centre (Eye and Thorney)**

Within Eye the Leeds hall and Manor Farm Community Centre may have capacity to host some of these services currently provided within the current Children's centres, should the transfer of Pre-school and After school be linked to the school However, I have no information as to if this is a viable option

Work with local communities to ensure facilities are used FULLY in Eye & Thorney instead of part time. Parent Committee run & funded groups could run in addition to current sessions.

### **Hampton Children's Centre**

Orton and Hampton are already twinned therefore cuts at Hampton will naturally affect Orton. Parents need professionals to run sessions, the parents cannot run these sessions themselves. Where sessions are run by parents they will not reach those who really need them.

Review the provisions for 0-2 years in Hampton as if the Children's Centre closes there will be nothing where Early Years practitioners are available to give advice and support to parents

Your assessment of "deprived" is flawed. No area has 100% or 0% deprivation. All parents need support regardless of income level. All children benefit from socialisation opportunities. Children's centres should be retained in areas where there is a high proportion of parents who don't have family close by. The proposal claims Hampton has 0% deprivation, yet PCC's Childcare Services in Peterborough April 2012 Annual Review [<http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/ChildrenAndFamilies-EarlyYearsAndChildcare-InformationForParentsAndFamilies-ChildcareSufficiencyAssessments-CSAAssessmentBook2012v3.pdf>] states on page 30 that 21% of children in the Hampton area are dependent on workless benefits, and are shown under the "Deprivation" heading. It also states that the proportion of these children has almost doubled in two years. I propose that you retain the use of children's centres for all parents. Ideally all, but at least keep some for everyone's use. If only "officially deprived" families are able to access such services, I fear a stigma may become attached to them, leading to many being too proud to attend the centres despite needing them. I know from personal experience that this was the case when Sure Start centres were first set up. I am aware that the government has not reduced the funding it provides for early years provision but, because it is no longer ring-fenced, it appears you wish to cut services here in order to meet shortfalls elsewhere in the budget. This is not acceptable. Cut council allowances (I understand they've recently been voted to increase); turn the fountains off until budgets/economy are in a better place; publish the detail of council finances so we can provide further suggestions with the benefit of full information.

Hampton is the largest estate in Europe. The community is fairly new comparing to other communities. The social root is not as strong, most of the residents don't have extended family live in the same area. There are a lot of children under 2; lots of new parents, young parents; single parents. Children's Centre is vital to them. There must be provision for new parents and children under 2.

The decision to close Hampton would have a negative impact on families living in Hampton and this proposal would lead to families not having the support that they currently rely at the moment.

Children's Centres play an essential part in helping to ensure children, families, and communities get the best start in life. The Hampton Children's Centre has access to a whole range of professionals including health visitors, community midwives, family support workers and early year's practitioners. They work closely with families identifying their needs so that the advice and support is specific to each individual family and are the first contact with children and their families in terms of reducing of raising safeguarding children from harm (child protection).

The Hampton Children's Centre currently offer a great range of activities and support for families to enjoy which could include:

- Information and support to find childcare
- Support for children with additional needs
- Drop in sessions for information advice and support etc breastfeeding support
- Healthy lifestyle sessions
- Antenatal and post-natal support
- Young Parents groups including both Mum's and Dad's groups
- Stay and play sessions
- Training, back to work activities and job clubs
- Parenting support
- Information and "sign posting" for debt advice

The Hampton Children's Centre does a lot of preventative work with families to prevent situations moving higher into social care with Children's Services at Peterborough City Council. By removing this vital service that the community relies now will lead to less positive outcomes for children within the local community. We believe that this proposed closure is the wrong decision for the children of Hampton and with OFSTED rating Children's Services as "Inadequate" at Peterborough City Council earlier this year of 2013. OFSTED stated that there are "inadequate" standards in place in terms of safeguarding measures in place to protect children at risk of abuse or neglect within the local authority of Peterborough. This assessment by OFSTED makes the proposal of closing Hampton Children's Centre confusing and wrong based on present current economic climate where more families are struggling to get by and are finding their household incomes considerably reduced which is leading to more families finding themselves in debt and will also this proposal could potentially lead to children having less positive outcomes in terms of their health and wellbeing, child development etc and potentially leading to less intervention being identified for the families who require support and advice.

I hope after reading this that you will chose to support our campaign in "Save the Hampton Children's Centre (Peterborough)" and there are many ways you can do this, by signing our petition, writing to your local MP, writing to Children's Services at Peterborough City Council (email: [childrenscentres@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:childrenscentres@peterborough.gov.uk)) or joining our facebook group page "Save the Hampton Children's Centre (Peterborough).

Hampton Children's Centre provides local families with many vital services and support. The network of support we have received has been a key part in mine and my daughter's lives. She has developed so many skills by attending the groups, especially social skills, she would not have been able to develop had it not been for the Children's Centre. Without Hampton Children's Centre, my daughter would not be the child she is today and the 3 of us (me, my partner and daughter) would not have met so many lovely families who we hope will be lifelong friends. As a stay at home mum, I feel that the Children's Centre is an essential of both our lives, from my point of view to access communication with other adults and for my daughter to interact with other children. As I would like to pursue a career in Childcare, I feel that the courses that have been offered to me have been very beneficial for my future career. I am also in the process of applying to be a Volunteer at Hampton Children's Centre as I want to give back some of my time to somewhere that has essentially been a lifesaver for me and hope to help other people feel the same way I do about the centre. Discussions about children's development, sleep pattern, eating habits and knowing other parents are experiencing the same thing makes it a whole lot easier, relieving and reassuring as a first time parent.

Unless people have actually accessed the Hampton Children's Centre, they do not know and understand what it does. Maybe the people that are proposing the closure should actually come and visit the centre and talk to the parents who use it on a regular basis and what it means to them. Literally a lifeline to many and a lifesaver to me so that's why I want to volunteer. The services it provides from antenatal right up to starting primary school are crucial in an ever expanding Hampton. Most of the new houses being built are either bought by families who will need access to services provided by the Children's Centre or couples that will potentially have children in the future.

Just because Hampton is a less deprived area of Peterborough, does not mean we do not need the services of a Children's Centre in our area, WE DO NEED IT. Everyone needs support with being a parent, no matter what your household income is or where you live. We are a low income household living in Hampton and there are a diverse range of families and families with different needs. If people putting these proposals together did their research first they would see that there are single parents, young parents, low income families, people in receipt of benefits just like any other area of Peterborough. There is a Childminding Group and the Little Miracles Group that access the centre. The Hampton Children's Centre provides support for everyone involved in Early Years Care within Hampton. The Hampton Childminders need a facility that is in Hampton, the facility already exists; please do not take it away. I also know a lot of the mums do not have access to a car during the day or cannot drive so getting anywhere else is time consuming and costly. The Hampton Children's Centre is a vital point of contact for new people in the area. They can meet parents who live locally to them. We need a provision for Early Years Care before pre-school. By closing the Hampton Centre and the proposals that have been set out it seems that children below the age of pre-school don't matter.

Expectant Mums would like to know they will get the same support for their unborn child that they did with their other child/children. We currently access the Centre 3 times a week, maybe more depending on the activities provided and I would like to know and have the reassurance that in the future that when I have a second child that I will be able to access the same services locally to me and NOT IN ORTON, as I have done with my daughter.

Anyone can see on my daughter's face that she loves going to the groups at the Hampton Children's Centre. She has gained so much confidence at just 17 months by going to the groups and meeting other children. As she does not attend nursery, all the groups she has been to and continues to go to have been a very beneficial experience.

Has anyone actually stopped to think what impact the closure of Hampton Children's Centre will have on the lives of the families in Hampton Hargate and Hampton Vale? Has anyone stopped to think about how the lack of these services would impact on an ever expanding Hampton? Has anyone putting these proposals together actually experienced the services that Hampton Children's Centre provides?

WE NEED OUR CHILDREN'S CENTRE IN HAMPTON.

I live on Hampton with 2 children under 18 months, the centre is my lifeline. I'm a non driver & this is the only place my kids get to play & I get done adult chat.

I moved here from the north so I have no other support here as all my family are still up there. I was recently diagnosed with post natal depression so the centre will be even life important to me now.

I'm not sure what will happen to my family if you close, I will have no support & no lifeline. Just because I don't live in a 'deprived' area doesn't mean me & my family are any less needy.

Just to add more to my previous email, networking with other mummies helped me to cope with my postnatal depression, also I have no family around here so meeting other mummy friends really helped.

I recently discovered my baby has cow's milk allergy. It was only by talking to other mummies in Hampton and health visitors at Hampton Children's Centre that I found out my baby has rash and diarrhea is because of cows milk allergy. She had it for 3 months and doctors told me it was teething or infection. Once she had diarrhea for over 20 days; 6 to 7 poos a day! I had never thought about cows milk allergy and trusted doctor's advice. Had I not talked to mummies in Hampton and Health visitors at Hampton' I wouldn't know! Now she is on soya milk and Neocate. She has been fine since we stopped cow's milk. I am very grateful to have this opportunity to socialise with other mummies, get professional help from health visitors.

Please do not close Hampton Children's Centre!

## Honeyhill (Paston) Children's Centre

On the 14th February 2011, myself and my husband took on care of our grandson who was 14 months old. Without the help and support of the staff at Honeyhill Children's Centre, my grandson would not be the happy, content child he is now. Our youngest child was 17 when we took our grandson in at the request of Social Services. The staff at Honeyhill rallied around to get us clothing, bedding and even a pushchair as he came to us with practically Nothing!! Social Services could not help us financially due to No funds, so the help and support from Honeyhill meant we were able to provide our grandson with much needed clothing, etc, that myself and my husband could not afford. When my grandson was 2 yrs old we were told by the Social Services to attend as many groups as we possibly could so our grandson was interacting with other children and adults before he went into pre-school in Jan 2013 so he wasn't "like a rabbit in headlights" when he started pre-school. Honeyhill Centre gave us much needed support, we also met other parents who passed on advice, our grandson was able to play in a safe environment with other children, without this kind of service I don't think we would have coped and our grandson could have ended up in the care system instead of with birth relations.

I am a resident of Paston and attend Honeyhill Children's Centre, I have 3 children aged 5, 2 and 4 months. I am the chair of the Parents Action Group, we have a fantastic group of parents, who very pro active, in fund raising, so we can have trips, parties etc. We are all very worried about Honeyhill becoming a "super hub".

My understanding of the "superhub" is that universal services will stop and there will be no open access, unless you are a targeted family? My children, although not in a targeted family have all benefited from attending our childrens centre, in fact even myself and my husband have.

My middle child, is nearly 3 and will be eligible for a funded preschool place in April, our 2 preschools are full! Where do I take her if Honeyhill closes? What social interaction will she get? If Honeyhill stays open, there's a stay and play session for her most days.

Honeyhill offers a wide range of activities:

- Jumping beans
- Baby group
- Humming bee's
- Sticky bee's
- Messy play
- Cooking group
- Saturdad's

As well as a wonderful library, adult learning, baby clinic, children's drama and a adult drama group. Cross Keys Homes, Midwife, job centre and food bank are based here too.

I am disappointed that these proposals are even being considered, sure start centres in Peterborough are so important. The proof is all around in the children who attend the centres, I have seen how my own children have blossomed and thrived.

## Orton Children's Centre

I just wanted to give my thoughts on the closures.

I use orton, if this is turned into a super hub the way I understand it is that I will still loose the centre as I know it. I have two children a 6 year old and a 2 year old. After having my 2 year old I really struggled, after being advised to go to my doctors by my health visitor I was told I had depression and would be placed on a 3 month waiting list for counseling. 3 months?! My health visitor then got me involved with a time for you session at the centre and also encouraged me to go to groups. This service has been invaluable for me and my son. Without it I really don't know what

I would have done. They gave me back the chance to enjoy time with my baby. I didn't need the counselling by the time I reached the top of the waiting list. The centre makes you feel included in your local community, gives your children structured opportunities to mix with larger groups of children which most wouldn't get the chance to otherwise. I have gained lots of useful advice from health visitors etc at the centre and met many people whom my son now socialises with regularly. It provides opportunities for my 6 year old too as I sign up for many of the half term activities much of which I wouldn't be able to afford otherwise. We are not a family that would be classed as deprived or especially needy, my partner has a full time managerial job, we own our own house and a car. But it doesn't mean we have any spare income after bills to enable us to pay for other groups for my children like swimming or anything of any cost on a weekly basis which many ask for, it doesn't mean that because we have them things I was exempt from feeling depressed and low after having my youngest son.

Like myself when you have been working and then have to give up your job as you can no longer afford child care for two children most of the friends and social network you would have also all have jobs therefore during the day at home with children can be very lonely and not only does the parent suffer from that but that has a knock on effect to the children. This is where the children's centre is vital, you don't have to be deprived to feel in need of help and this is what the children's centre offers whatever your background, everyone is welcome. Closing and turning them into super hubs would leave so many people cut off, lonely and no where to turn. Lots of children would have little if any social interaction with other children before the free funding at the age of 3 if it wasn't for these centres. What impact would that have?!

### **Stanground Children's Centre**

I am a Health Visitor based at Stanground GP surgery and I do not believe that Stanground will remain an area of low need. With the new Cardea estate opening the level of families with complex social needs in this area has greatly increased and indeed social workers are already asking what services are available in this area for clients and apart from the children's centre there is nothing. A large proportion of social housing families on the Cardea estate do not drive and many of them won't be able to afford the bus fares to Orton or want to travel that far for support. I think the distance you are asking people to travel from Stanground via the bus routes with very young children is unreasonable. Currently in the Stanground area the children's centre is the only place to offer young families support and although quoted in the proposal document Health Visitor numbers have increased in Peterborough they have not increased here in Stanground, we are actually working below recommended staffing figures and us Health visitors at Stanground surgery actually work for Cambridgeshire Community Services not CPFT. What I am concerned about is once you take the children's centre away from Stanground there is going to be nowhere for parents with young children to get guidance, there is also a lack of suitable venues in the area for groups to be run from with the equipment and surrounding that young children need.

### **Werrington Children's Centre**

I am so unhappy of the proposed closing of Werrington children's centre, My daughter and I have attend the centre for 2 years, we have been supported by the staff regarding money matters, help with my daughter. My daughter has lots of friends at the play group.. the groups have kept me going as a single mum.. I do not have the money to travel to the OTHER groups.. I have suffered from depression and over the last year from the support of the staff and groups have felt well enough to come off my tablets ... we attend groups everyday at Werrington.. I am now wondering what is going to happen to me next year when we do not have these classes to attend !! Its not just a children's centre it is part of my life gives me a reason to get up and get dressed every day ! Three ladies from the PASTON area attend the Werrington centre as PASTON in there words IS NOT NICE... I attend lots of groups before I decided WERRINGTON was the best one. PLEASE RECONSIDER!!!!

It would be deeply detrimental to Peterborough to close or re-designate any of the Children centres. I relied heavily upon the support given by Werrington Children's centre when my baby was born and dread to think what will happen in the future if that support is no longer there. I do not come from a "deprived" situation and would therefore not be eligible for help from the new proposed centres, but even if I was it would be very unlikely I would be able to use them due to transport issues around Peterborough.

## **Westwood and Ravensthorpe Children's Centre**

As a business we are concerned that if the children's centre based at Highlees Primary Schools used to accommodate more 2 year old childcare spaces, that there will be a saturation of pre-school provision and not enough children in the area to take up these places, placing the existing 5 pre-school provisions under threat of losing business

## **Wittering Children's Centre**

It is my submission that if the Covenant does not step in to support the military personnel there is going to be a media storm. The categorisation of "deprivation" does not get any worse than the stress these families are under as a result of the commitment of military personnel to the cause and just because the wives and some husbands cope, or do not seek help (sometimes because they are not embedded in the community as they move around so much), does not mean that the council can write them off. Further Wittering suffers from a lack of longevity as a result of the population mobility, accordingly the school finds it difficult to attract support of the right calibre that is in for the long haul. The idea that a voluntary run organisation can thrive in the setting is misguided. Basically Wittering presents unique problems, that cannot and should not be treated in the same pool as the rest of the candidates for closure. I think there is a legal issue too, the withdrawal of funding is effective closure, and the commitment to provide support in basically taking a chance on finding further funding is an untried format and therefore does not get round the issue.

Wittering children's centre provides an invaluable service for the village of Wittering and many surrounding villages. It's not purely providing for service children but also many civilian families. As a non service parent I completely value this service. I have also witnessed first hand the life line it offers mothers and young children of service families. These families put their lives on the line for our country and other vulnerable communities. Those left at home not only live under the threat that their loved one may not return but if they do what emotional state they will be in. To hear that these families are not considered vulnerable and the services provided by the centre not valued is completely shocking

Whilst I understand the need for budget cuts and streamlining I feel that this is short sighted on the part of the council. The LA have only just come out of a category with regards to Children's services and by effectively removing the first line of support then a whole wave of issues are going to appear in the near future. The systems will be overloaded again and we shall return to a reactionary situation. The centre at Wittering is well used and the rural communities are at risk of being cut off completely as the impression the plan gives is that if you are not in the centre of the city then there is no provision. Public transport from the rural areas is poor at best. With council spending on vanity projects seemingly on the increase it is shortsighted to lose the support that people receive especially those families. I also strongly feel that the council are putting at risk their previously good relationship with the armed forces by removing one of the few resources for support that you offer as a council. When discussing this I am often told by council employees that the RAF should pay for things. It is not the partners and children of service personnel who are employed by the RAF but they are the ones who will potentially lose any support that the council currently offer.

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**Appendix 2**

<b>Primary Schools where more than 80% of children on role live in the 30% most disadvantaged areas, ranked in order of numbers (based on primary school statistics)</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>Total pupil numbers</b>	<b>Number of pupils living area of top 30% disadvantage (IDACI)</b>	<b>Percentage of pupils living area of top 30% disadvantage (IDACI)</b>	<b>Local Children's Centre</b>
Winyates Primary School	199	195	97.99%	Orton CC
Gladstone Primary School	443	425	95.94%	Gladstone CC
Parnwell Primary School	282	269	95.39%	East CC
The Beeches Primary School	617	587	95.14%	Gladstone CC
Bishop Creighton Academy	221	208	94.12%	East CC
Welland Academy	312	293	93.91%	First Steps CC
St Thomas More RC Primary School	407	378	92.87%	East CC
Braybrook Primary School	254	234	92.13%	Orton CC
Paston Ridings Primary School	490	450	91.84%	Paston CC
Fulbridge Academy	709	649	91.54%	Fulbridge CC
St John's C of E School	259	237	91.51%	Orton CC
Abbotsmede Community Primary School	404	370	91.58%	East CC
Newark Hill Primary School	473	426	90.06%	East CC
Middleton Primary School	318	284	89.31%	Bretton CC
Watergall Primary School	320	285	89.06%	Bretton CC
Dogsthorpe Infant School	267	236	88.39%	First Steps CC
Dogsthorpe Junior School	350	305	87.14%	First Steps CC
West Town Primary School	299	255	85.28%	Westwood and Ravensthorpe CC
Highlees Primary School	364	299	82.14%	Westwood and Ravensthorpe CC
Eyrescroft Primary School	402	322	80.10%	Bretton CC

he data is based on primary schools information. Primary schools only have been used as children tend to attend local primary schools. Secondary schools have wider catchment areas and therefore do not compare as well to children centre areas



<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 7</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services**

**Contact Officer(s) – Lou Williams**  
**Contact Details - 864139**

### **REVIEW OF PLACEMENT STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOSTERING ACTION PLAN**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This report provides Scrutiny with an update in relation to Children in Care placements and progress relating to the Fostering Action Plan.

It focuses on progress made in bringing the mix of placements for children in care in Peterborough more into line with national averages through the recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers. It also details actions that we are taking to help to ensure that we only look after the right children, at the right time in their lives, and for the minimum possible period, in line with best practice.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and particularly the indications of success in the recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers for children and young people who are looked after in Peterborough.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 3.1 Creating Opportunities - Tackling Opportunities

- Supporting vulnerable people

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

This report updates Members on progress made over the last 12 months in increasing the proportion of children and young people in care in Peterborough who are placed with our own foster carers as opposed to foster carers provided by independent fostering agencies.

##### **4.1 Context**

Most children and young people achieve the best lifelong outcomes by being cared for within their families. All families experience short term crises from time to time. In most circumstances, families are able to call on their own extended family or friendship networks to support them through such crises without the need for any other external support.

Not all families have access to informal support mechanisms, however, making it more difficult for them to manage the sort of challenges experienced by us all. In addition, some groups of families – those with a child with a complex disability for example – may have considerable support from their family and friendship networks, but still need this to be supplemented if the family is to not come under significant pressures.

A small group of children are unable to be safely cared for within their families without an intensive programme of assessment and support. A smaller group still cannot remain with their families at all because the risks to them are too great.

Where children do have to move from their birth families, it is better that they do so at as early an age as possible. This is so they can make secure attachments to their new permanent carers, who are either adopting them or who have applied for a Special Guardianship Order or Residence Order. In some cases, children can be placed permanently with relatives, ensuring that they maintain a link with their birth families.

Children who are adopted or placed permanently on a Special Guardianship or Residence Order from an early age the children are likely to achieve the best lifelong outcomes of any who come into the care system.

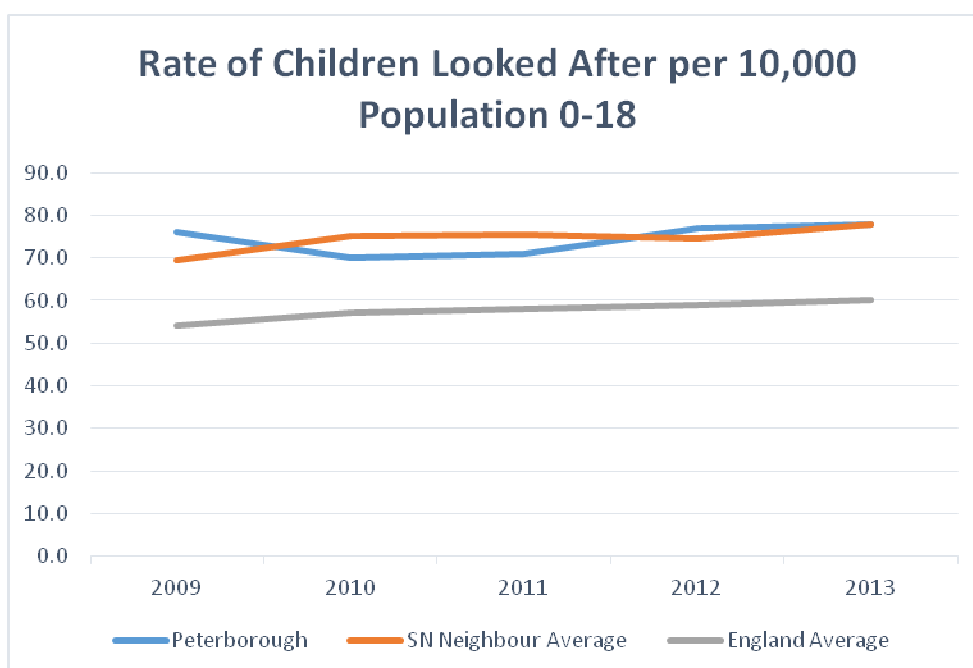
Our aim has therefore been to offer families with older children intensive and flexible support services so that they can address challenges they are facing without the need for their children to come into care, while ensuring that where families have very young children, we do not delay decision making either before they come into care or for the time that they are in care.

Not only is such practice the best way of securing positive outcomes for children and young people who come into the care system or who are on the edge of doing so, but it also leads to a better use of resources.

#### 4.2 Overall Numbers of Children and Young People Looked After

The overall number of children and young people looked after as of the end of November 2013 was approximately 355 [the number is always approximate as it fluctuates slightly on a daily basis as children enter and leave the care system]. This compares with an approximate number of 365 children and young people in care in June 2013, and there has been a gradual downward trend between June and November 2013.

The most common way of expressing numbers of children and young people looked after is the rate per 10,000 population of children and young people. This enables comparisons to be drawn with national and other authority trends and performance. The chart below compares the rate of children looked after in Peterborough with the average of our statistical neighbours and the England average over the last five years, up to and including the year 2012/13 – data that has been published recently:



The chart above shows that there has been an increasing number of children and young people coming into the care system among our statistical neighbours as well as nationally between 2012 and 2013. Set in this context, the recent downward trend in Peterborough is a clear achievement.

The chart also illustrates how having too few children and young people in the care system may be an indication that children and young people are not being adequately safeguarded. The rate in Peterborough in 2010 and 2011 was much lower than years previously or since, coinciding with the period when OFTSED assessed safeguarding arrangements in the City to be inadequate.

We have implemented a number of initiatives and reforms in order to ensure that we are looking after only those children and young people who absolutely need to be looked after, and that when we do look after children and young people, we do so for the least possible time. These changes include:

- Provision of commissioned crisis response family support services that aim to prevent family breakdown in families where there are older children and young people. These services are available at times when families are typically under pressure – evenings and weekends for example. Once the immediate difficulties are addressed, our Adolescent Intervention Service works intensively with the family and young person to build parenting abilities and help families to better negotiate relationships so that further build up in tensions is avoided;
- Provision of commissioned and directly provided support services that work with families with younger children, helping them to develop their parenting skills within the home and address the difficulties that they are experiencing so that their children are able to remain safely in their care;
- Commissioned and directly provided services that help to support children and young people to return either to their own families or to extended families safely and as quickly as possible in the event that they do need to come into care;
- Development of a highly responsive and flexible range of support services for families who have children with complex disabilities, enabling this group of children to remain being cared for within their own families for as long as is possible and in line with what families and children with disabilities tell us that they want;
- An adoption tracking process that ensures that young children who come into care and for whom a safe return home to family or extended family is not possible are placed for adoption as quickly as legally possible;
- A fortnightly performance meeting that oversees progress for all children and young people who are looked after;
- Oversight of high cost resources through the Peterborough Access to Support Panels, chaired by the Acting Assistant Director, Commissioning.

Despite the availability of these services, pressures on the system remain intense. There is an increasing birth rate, for example, making it more important than ever that we work with our partners to identify situations where parents may need support in order to care for their baby and where it may be unsafe for the baby to be in their parents' care during the pregnancy so that the necessary services and assessments can be put in place and completed prior to birth wherever possible.

4.3

### **Recruitment and Retention of in-house Foster Placements**

Where children and young people do need to come into care, it makes sense for a number of reasons that they are placed with our own foster carers, as opposed to carers provided by independent fostering agencies. There are a number of reasons for this, including:

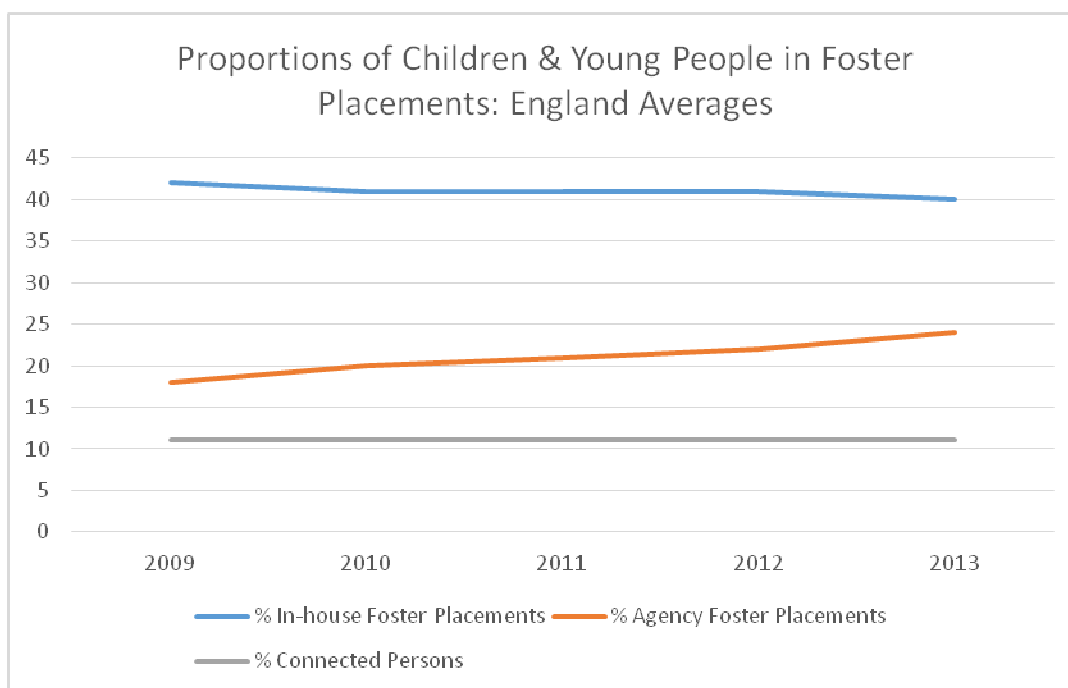
- Our own carers are much more likely to be local and living in or close to the City, making it easier for children to retain school places, have contact with their families and maintain peer relationships;
- We get to know our own foster carers really well, making it easier for us to match the needs of children coming into care with the foster carers available;
- Using our own carers is a better use of financial resources as unit costs are lower.

For all of these reasons, recruiting foster carers has therefore been a high priority for the service over the last 12 months, and remains so.

Foster care recruitment is an area where constant activity is required simply to maintain the status quo as a number of carers will always leave fostering during any one year. Often, foster carers cease fostering for the very best reasons in relation to individual children; for example a number of carers stop fostering for Peterborough every year because they have decided to adopt children who have been placed with them. This is a great result for the individual children concerned but still results in a reduction in foster placements available to the City.

Recruitment activities have been given a new focus in the current financial year; we have invested in a new website, new marketing materials and a far more intensive recruitment campaign than we have in any previous years. The Fostering Service has an agreement with the Commissioning Service that it will achieve a net increase in mainstream foster carers of 24 during the current financial year 2013/14 – a very stretching target. To put the current target in context, the service achieved a net gain of only 10 new mainstream foster carers in 2012/13, despite considerable efforts.

Recruitment of foster carers is an activity that takes place in a highly competitive market. There are a number of large fostering agencies that are well-established within the Peterborough area. These agencies have access to significant financial backing, and have developed expertise in the recruitment, training and assessment of foster carers. Over recent years across the country, Agencies have been steadily increasing their share of looked after children placements, as shown by the chart below:



The above illustrates the challenge on a national level of recruiting and retaining in-house foster placements in the face of a concerted effort to increase market share by fostering agencies. Agency foster placements are typically around three times the cost of in-house placements so even small changes in overall proportions can have significant impact on placement budgets.

However, contrary to national trends, recruitment activity in Peterborough in the year to date has been encouraging, and is showing a significant improvement against progress made in 2012/13. Activity to date is summarised in the table below:

Carer Type	New Approvals	Terminations	Net Change
Mainstream	15	4	11
Connected	1	1	1
Link & Respite	3	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>

The net gain of 10 mainstream carers in the year 2012/13 has already been exceeded in the current financial year. There are a further 26 mainstream fostering assessments in progress at present, making the stretch target for the service of a net gain in foster placements of 14 for the year to April 2014 just about achievable.

The effectiveness of the new campaign, website and overall approach in place for the current year is also demonstrated by the number of enquiries made to the service about becoming foster carers, which to the end of November was over 200, compared with 170 for the year as a whole in 2012/13.

Connected carers are relatives or close friends of the children who have been assessed as carers for those individual children only, so they do not become available to look after other children and young people once the child that they have been caring for moves on.

Link and Respite carers do not take full time placements; they offer short break placements either so that our mainstream carers are able to take a break or to support the families of children with disabilities by offering those children short breaks away from home.

4.4

#### Placement Mix Performance 2012-13:

We are also seeing steady positive changes in the placement mix of the looked after population in Peterborough. The proportion of our children and young people placed with in-house foster placements is increasing while the proportion placed with Agency Fostering is declining:

Placement Type	Peterborough Nov 2012 %	Peterborough Nov 2013 %	National Average 2013 %
In House fostering	35%	38%	40%
Agency Fostering	38%	33%	24%
Connected	6%	9%	11%
Residential including secure, secure remands & residential schools	10%	9%	12%
Independent Living	5%	4%	3%
Placed adoption	5%	4%	5%
Placement with Parents	2%	2%	5%

We have also increased the proportion of children and young people placed with connected persons – i.e. with relatives or friends – over the last 12 months – bringing this more into line with the national average position. This type of placement is often a good option for the child or young person concerned as it enables them to remain within their extended family or friendship network, as opposed to being placed with carers they do not know.

4.5

#### Placement Mix Performance 2012-13: Residential Placements

Over the last 12 months we have taken significant steps to reduce the number of children and young people in residential placements. The number of children who are in care and who are placed in residential placements has reduced from 29 to 22 between November 2012 and November 2013. Residential placements are associated with some of the poorest outcomes for children and young people in the care system, and it is a priority to reduce their use for this reason.

This is a significant movement and reflects our determination to ensure that young people placed in residential provision are moved on into semi-independent living placements once they have concluded statutory education, rather than remaining in residential care. Not only does this lead to a better use of resources, but semi-independent placements are much better at preparing young

people for independent living at age 18 than residential children's homes.

We have also developed a highly flexible range of support services to families with children and young people who have disabilities, offering a range of community based short breaks, direct payments, activities and some overnight short breaks. These services have proved their worth in enabling more children and young people to remain within their families – as both they and their families say that they want to happen – and which in turn reduces the likelihood that they will need expensive specialist care and education placements.

## 4.6

### **Increasing Diversity of our Child Looked After Population**

Given that the population of Peterborough is becoming increasingly diverse, it is not surprising that the child and young person in care population is reflecting this.

Approximately 8% of the child in care population as of November 2013 is from Eastern European backgrounds – this is below the percentage of the overall child population in the City which comes from Eastern Europe, which was estimated as 10% by the Office of National Statistics in 2011.

Children and young people of dual heritages are the largest overall minority ethnic group within the care system at 9% [although this group includes white and black Caribbean, White and Asian and all other mixed backgrounds]. This is a slight under representation compared with the overall community, where the ONS estimated that children from dual heritage backgrounds make up approximately 11% of the overall child population in the City.

Children from Pakistani and African heritages make up 3.1% and 2.8% of the child in care population respectively, compared with approximately 11% and 2% of the overall child population in the City. Children from Pakistani heritages are therefore significantly under represented among the child looked after population, while children from African heritages are slightly over represented.

Children from White British backgrounds are over-represented in the looked after system in Peterborough, accounting for just over 70% of all children and young people in care, compared with approximately 62% of the 0-18 population in Peterborough according to ONS estimates based on the 2011 census.

The challenge for the service in meeting the needs of this changing population include:

- Delivering effective family support services that can engage with families from differing cultural backgrounds, enabling them to make the sustained changes necessary in order that their children achieve the best possible outcomes while remaining in their care, and;
- Recruiting foster and adoptive carers from backgrounds similar to the child in care population so that all children and young people who do come into care are placed with families with similar cultural histories, practices and approaches to life.

The latter point is a particular challenge when it comes to recruiting carers from communities who are newly arrived into the country. Foster carers in general are often parents who have older or grown up children; they have become established in the community and are looking for new challenges. They are therefore usually from a slightly more mature group than the population as a whole. This more mature group has yet to form among those communities who are newly arrived in the country simply because they have not yet been here for long enough.

## **5. KEY ISSUES**

### 5.1 Key issues arising from the above include:

- The number of children and young people in care in Peterborough is in line with the current average of our statistical neighbours and does now appears to be on a gradual downward trend. This is in line with expectations and represents a positive picture when compared to the trend among our statistical neighbours and the national picture;



- The proportion of the children and young people in care who are placed with our own in-house foster carers has increased significantly and is now close to the national average;
- The proportion of children and young people placed in Agency foster placements has reduced significantly, although remains above the national average;
- We have achieved significant reductions in the proportion of children and young people placed in residential placements and our performance is now significantly better than national average performance in this area;
- These changes have been achieved while maintaining best child-care practice and not considering placement moves for children and young people who are settled in their placements;
- Progress in relation to the recruitment and retention of foster carers has been strong, with more general foster carers recruited up to November 2013 than in the entire year previous financial year and with significant numbers of carers in assessment. The stretch target of 24 mainstream foster carers is still within reach which would be an exceptional performance;
- The rapid increase in diversity of our children in care population also poses challenges both in relation to providing culturally appropriate support services to prevent needs escalating within families such that children are at risk of coming into care and in recruiting carers able to meet the cultural, religious and linguistic needs of children from black and minority ethnic communities in the City.

Significant progress has therefore been made in relation to managing overall numbers of children and young people within the looked after system in the City, while bringing the placement mix more into line with national averages through the recruitment of more foster carers over the last 12 months. Nevertheless, pressure on the system remains significant and the projected increase in child population in the City is likely to increase the pressure on overall numbers of children and young people in care in future years.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The financial targets in relation to the costs of children's care placements are stretching. They assume continued strong performance in the recruitment of in-house foster placements and a gradual reduction in the number of children in care to 330 by 2017 within the context of a growing population of children and young people in the City.

Performance in relation to both elements in the year to date has been strong, however, placing the service in a good position moving forward.

While the increased performance by the Fostering Service in recruiting and retaining foster carers has been managed within existing resources to date, continuing to increase the number of foster carers will eventually mean that there will be a requirement for additional social workers to support the increased number of carers and to undertake tasks such as household reviews. While this is clearly better than the alternative – more children being placed with agency foster carers – additional costs in this part of the service will offset some of the financial gain achieved by placing more children and young people with in-house carers.

The increasing diversity of our child in care population will require us to develop new approaches to engaging with those communities and encourage them to consider fostering as a career that would benefit not only themselves but their wider community.

The implications of this report relate to the City as a whole as opposed to any individual wards.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with the Children's Services Directorate Management Team and with the Fostering Service.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 Analysis of the potential impact of the growing child population in the City is to be completed and reported to CMT.

It is suggested that an updated report on the continuing efforts to recruit in-house foster carers and the implementation of the Placement Strategy to bring overall placement mix in line with national averages is prepared for Scrutiny in January 2014.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1 Department for Education, Statistical First Release: Children looked after in England, including adoption; 2013

## **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 None.

<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 8</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services**

**Contact Officer(s) – Simon Green**  
**Contact Details – 01733 864571**

### **ADOPTION REFORM AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

1.1 The Government priority is to increase the numbers of adopters available for children and to reduce the length of time children wait for adoption. This requires:

- Structural reform of our adoption recruitment, assessment and support processes in order to increase the supply of adopters.
- Additional support to ensure the sustainability of those adoptive placements by developing needs led, evidence based post adoption support services.
- Development of skills and capacity within the workforce to ensure they are supported in the essential reform process; including the training and remodelling of teams as well as bringing in the required expertise.
- Ensuring children who are at risk of suffering harm are identified earlier, and clear pathways towards permanence implemented.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Members are invited to note this report and identify any additional information they would like to receive.

Annex A: Adoption action plan.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

3.1 To provide quality adoption placements for children with special/health needs.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 The main objective for Peterborough Adoption Service will be to provide a high quality and comprehensive range of adoption and adoption support services that meet the needs of children, birth families and other relatives, foster carers, prospective adopters, adoptive families, adopted adults and all affected by the adoption process.

Adoption is a rapidly changing Government priority, with unprecedented changes in statutory requirements and expectations in a very short period of time. An 'Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay' was developed, which highlighted concerns about delays in the Adoption system and its impact on children. It recognised that this is not just an issue for local authorities but it is a whole systems issue, involving all agencies in the Adoption system including the Family Justice system.

There were a number of issues identified as contributing factors in the delays:

- Delay in decision making
- Delay in court process
- Delay in searching for adoptive family and then matching child and family
- Too few prospective adopters willing or able to adopt children with complex needs
- Bureaucratic training and assessment process for adopters
- Variable post adoption support.

The Government have made swift legislative amendments followed by guidance to direct Local Authorities to change their adoption practice and whilst recognising that there are a range of permanent care options for children, including Special Guardianship and Residence Orders, it stressed that adoption is the best option for many more children than are currently benefiting from it nationally. The number of children adopted from care had been going down in recent years.

On 1 July 2013 new guidance was introduced which changed the adoption assessment process significantly. It was designed to speed up the time it takes for adopters to become approved, through a two stage process which is designed to take two months for stage 1 and four months for stage two. The two stage process has been fully implemented and the first applicants under the new system will be presented to panel in January/February 2014.

A new Prospective Adopters report was also introduced and has been used since July. Staff members have adapted to the changes well, and have been fully involved in developing the service to comply with the new regulations. Several adopters have been approved who are interested in Fostering for Adoption, whereby children are placed with approved adopters under temporary fostering regulations before the Court process has been completed.

Families are being put on the National Adoption register if there is not a match for them in house after three months. Six families approved by PCC have been matched with children from other local authorities through the adoption register and other sources. This attracts payment of the interagency fee to PCC.

All local authorities have been given a grant (The Adoption Reform Grant) to attract new adopters and make structural change to reduce delay and increase the use of adoption for more children. Peterborough will need to compete with neighbouring authorities in order to continue to attract and support adopters and maintain the services current positive reputation.

The Adoption Reform Grant has been awarded to all local authorities for the financial year of 2013–2014 in two parts. Part A: non ring-fenced funding and Part B: ring-fenced funding.

The Governments direction for how the grant should be spent:

- Structural reform of adopter recruitment to increase the supply of adopters.
- Reducing the backlog of children waiting for adoption, particularly by developing innovative ways of finding adoptive families for children who traditionally wait longer than average to be adopted.

### **Actions to-date**

In order to meet the challenges and requirements of the Adoption Reform Programme to reduce the length of time children wait for adoption and increase the supply of adopters the following changes have already been made to the Adoption Panel functions.

The Adoption Panel no longer consider the *proposed* Adoption Plan for children who are looked after; they are submitted directly to the Agency Decision Maker, thus streamlining the process. The Adoption Panel now only considers the applications of those wishing to become adopters and the linking of children (for whom adoption is the plan) with prospective families.

Following analysis of the reasons for delay, we have strengthened the tracking of children with a plan for adoption. The early indication is that this is already having an impact on tighter more cohesive planning. However it has highlighted the need for systemic change in order to improve our adoption process from start to end. See Annex A: adoption action plan.

## **5. KEY ISSUES**

### **5.1 Adoption orders**

There have been 21 adoption orders granted since April 2013. This compares to a total of 19 in the year 2012/13. Of these the majority were placed on their own, a smaller number were placed as part of a sibling group.

### **5.2 Numbers of children matched**

20 children have been matched with adopters. There were five sibling groups of two amongst these and 10 single children. Two single children joined their siblings in their adoptive homes to make two families of three children. Four of the families were fostering the children before they applied to adopt them. There were 10 girls and 10 boys. The youngest was 10 weeks old and the oldest was 10 years old. Nine of the children are from black and minority ethnic heritage, with six having African Caribbean heritage and three having Eastern European heritage.

### **Approvals of adopters**

#### **5.3**

21 adoptive families have been approved. This compares with a total of 22 for 2012/13. This makes up a combination of single applicants, couples and those is heterosexual and same sex couples. Two of the couples have previously adopted. All of the families are white and with the exception of two adopters, are British.

### **Service development**

#### **5.4**

BAAF Adoption Activity Days (adoption parties).

These are opportunities for adopters and children needing adoptive homes to meet in an informal and natural setting.

They are intended for those children who are harder to place. PCC was part of the two year pilot project as a member of the East Midlands Adoption Consortium. This came to an end in April 2013 after 5 Activity Days had taken place with a 19% rate of matching children and adopters. PCC entered into a partnership arrangement with EMAC to commission further AAD's and three have occurred since April. 11 children have attended from PCC but despite interest shown in some of the children on the days, these have not progressed to matches.

Two of our adoptive families have found children at activity days however – a sibling group of two and a single child. PCC feature in the TV documentary which is to be aired in January on Channel 4.

### **Adoption Support services**

#### **5.5**

The adoption service has maintained its links with Cambridgeshire County Council to offer adoption support groups on a monthly basis to adopters. Social opportunities for children and adoptive families have taken place in September (adoption picnic) and December (the Christmas party). In excess of 50 people attended the Christmas party where Father Christmas and Peppa Pig made appearances.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The increased number of Adoption Orders made this year to-date (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013) demonstrates improved and effective care planning by the service as a whole compared to where we were last year.

There is an increasing culture of proactively planning for permanency for children who are unable to live with their parents.

It has been recognised that there have been some historical challenges around consistency in this area, which are now being systematically addressed with vigour, pace and organisational determination. Strategically, the department is currently well placed to address areas of (self-identified) development, and clear progress has been made. This has been assisted by strong performance management reporting arrangement and strongly embedded quality assurance processes.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 N/A

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 Development of skills and capacity within the workforce to ensure they are supported in the essential transformation practice process; including the training and remodelling teams as well as bringing in the required expertise.

Ensuring children who are at risk of suffering harm are identified earlier, and clear pathways towards permanence implemented.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 9.1 N/A

## **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 Annex A – Adoption Action Plan

**One Children's Service**  
***Helping Children to be their Best***  
**Adoption Action Plan**

## **Our Vision for Children**

### ***Helping Children to be their Best***

- Providing children and families with early support
- Helping families with problems and keeping children safe
- Giving the best opportunities to children and young people in care
- Working with schools and others to make sure that children succeed
- Supporting our staff to be outstanding

### ***Our practice standards***

1. The families best interest shall be of primary consideration in all areas affecting them
2. Work is carried out in partnership with the child
3. Work is carried out in partnership with parents and carers to enable them to meet their responsibilities and achieve optimum outcomes for children
4. Work with families is carried out within community networks and between agencies to achieve optimum outcomes
5. Work with children is undertaken with the legislative framework and makes best use of best practice guidance
6. Work with children, young people, parents and carers, consistently promotes social inclusion
7. Records and reports are accurate, complete, accessible and up to date and demonstrate the decision making process
8. Work with families is managed and supervised to achieve the best possible outcomes



## ***Our Principles***

- **Access:** Children, young people and families should be able to access a range of appropriate services at the time they need them and in places that make sense to them
- **Early intervention:** Effective early assessment and intervention will reduce the need for more costly and possibly less successful provision later
- **Reducing dependency:** Working with families at all levels of need to reduce dependency and promote self-reliance
- **Shared responsibility and response:** Getting the best for a family is everyone's business and services need to develop shared responsibility and response to children, young people and their families
- **Equality of Opportunity:** Services should continue to work together to remove the cultural, geographical and economic barriers to opportunity which some families face
- **Workforce Development:** All staff will have access to learning and development experiences related to early intervention and prevention

## ***Our priorities for adoption (in line with the service development plan)***

Giving the best opportunities to children and young people in care by:

- Ensuring that children remain in care for the least time necessary and that permanent alternatives are secured on their behalf as quickly as possible
- Ensuring that all children and young people in care have up to date care plans that are robust and personalised
- Improving placement choice and ensure that placements are matched to the long term changing needs of children and young people



						early permanency for children Fostering for adoption is now part of the assessment and approval process for prospective adopters		
1.2	Ensure agency decision making is in place and includes appropriate challenge	Commence an audit of ADM decisions to ensure timescales are met  Paper presented to DMT detailing ADM arrangements for both Adoption and Fostering Services	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance head of service  Head of Adoption and Fostering Service	January 2014  January 2014	The appointment of a new panel advisor has been completed	All agency decision makers decisions are made within 7 days of the ADM receiving minutes and papers  Create capacity for accurate and reflective decision making		
1.3	Ensure child permanency reports and other opportunities are maximised to reflect and record children's wishes	Produce Children's guide for two age groups and disabilities  IRO's views on plans for children should be evidenced and recorded at the point that papers are sent to the agency decision maker  Questionnaire to be used at relevant stages of the adoption process	Head of Service  Head of Service / Safeguarding Team Manager  Head of Service (QA and A&F)	January 14  November 13  January 2014	Draft guides have been circulated to managers, Heads of Service and DMT for comment  IROs views are recorded within the child's permanency report and an 'IRO tick box' has been included before papers are passed to the ADM	A comprehensive selection of children's guides available, as per Ofsted's recommendations  ADM to receive IRO's views and comments with papers to inform the decision making process  Children's views and wishes are recorded throughout stages as they		

						children and parents / adopters	proceed through the system	
		Produce a 2014 programme of social events for adopted children	Adoption service	December 2013		Summer gathering and Christmas party have been booked and information distributed	Adopters and adopted children feel valued and appreciated	
1.4	Ensure all life story books and later life letters are completed and provided to adopters within 10 days of the adoption order hearing	Audit to be undertaken to outline quality of later life letters and any backlogs	Jenny Goodes and QA team	January 2014		Social workers have been made aware of their responsibility to complete Later Life Letters which are monitored through supervision and at the fortnightly inspection preparation meetings	All life story books and later life letters are in place without any backlogs	
1.5	Ensure annual Ofsted feedback questionnaires are sent to children	Embed process for a member of staff to complete this action annually	Adoption team manager	May 14		This year's questionnaires were sent out 1 week after the email was received from Ofsted	All current children are sent a questionnaire and are encouraged to complete and return	
1.6	Development of Liquidlogic to reflect new changes to the two stage adoption assessment process and improve monitoring of children with plan for adoption	Fully implement version 9 of the Liquidlogic Adoption & Fostering module	Adoption team manager and performance manager	April 14		Scoping meetings to be arranged Now scheduled for January 2014	Adoption service to be able to view version 9 Childrens data is accurate and up to date	
1.7	Review how information is communicated to children in care and ensure material meets their level of understanding and ability	Set up process for information to be monitored during childcare reviews and include process in permanency policy	Adoption team manager and Head of Service	January 14		Draft guides have been circulated to managers, Heads of Service and DMT for comment	A range of materials is available to meet individual children's needs	

1.8	Each child to have a recruitment plan to attract prospective adopters	Schedule of 2014 activity days and promotional activities to be agreed and launched	Adoption recruitment team	February 2014	Meetings have been arranged to discuss initial concepts	A clear record of children matched through interest generated from publicity	
		Audit to be undertaken highlighting outstanding recruitment plans	Adoption team manager and quality assurance manager	February 2014	Team managers to discuss to agree audit requirements	Creation of individual recruitment plans	
<b>Priority 2: Assessment and approval of adopter recruitment</b>							
<b>Accountable Lead: Head of Service and Adoption Service</b>							
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>RAG</b>
2.1	Ensure panel members and adoption staff files are compliant with regulations	Embed 6 monthly audit of supervision files	Head of Service / HR Business Partner / Panel Advisor	Dec 13	Serco HR have completed audit on personal staff files in June 13  An audit of panel members files was undertaken in June 13	All personal files up to date and in line with regulations	
2.2	Ensure annual Ofsted feedback questionnaires are sent to adopters	Embed process for a member of staff to complete this action annually	Adoption team manager	May 14	Action to commence	All current adopters are sent a questionnaire and are encouraged to complete and return	
2.3	Increase coverage of recruitment campaign in the surrounding areas of Peterborough	Data to be analysed following National Adoption week, to include website hits	Adoption service	March 14	Marketing and recruitment strategy has been developed and a new website has been launched  Currently using the Council communication channels to increase	Increase the number of initial enquiries	

						circulation of information leaflets		
<b>Priority 3: Post adoption support</b>								
<b>Accountable Lead: Adoption Team Manager</b>								
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>RAG</b>	
3.1	Develop adoption passport	Service to begin developing adoption passport and reporting mechanism to monitor performance measure	Adoption service	May 14	Action to commence	A procedure is in place to ensure adoption passports are sent to all adopters providing them with clear and precise guidance on how to access post adoption support		
3.2	Review of post adoption support services and processes (new legislation is being launched in April 2014)	Start to finish process review of adoption support provision Training to be provided to adoption service following further guidance from the DfE	Head of Service / Serco	May 14 May 14	Action to commence	A good response rate to questionnaires to enable service to improve services offered		
3.3	Review training services for adopters	Consider ways to improve or increase training courses available for each stage of preparation and post support	Adoption service	Dec 13	Action to commence	Increase in numbers of attendance on training courses with improved feedback		
3.4	Review extending Vivacity arrangements for adopted children (activities)	Head of Service to request commissioning to undertake review	Head of Service and Commissioning Lead	Nov 13	Action to commence	Extension of contract		

Priority 4: Challenge and scrutiny						
Accountable Lead: Head of Service						
Item	Objective	Action	By Whom	By When	Progress	Performance Measure
4.1	Improve reporting processes	Embed annual review of the Adoption Charter and Statement of Purpose  Creation of monthly performance adoption report  Creation of 6 monthly report on service user feedback	Head of Service  Head of Service  Adoption Team Manager	Jan 14  Jan 14  Feb 14	Service action plan is reviewed by DMT quarterly  6 monthly adoption report to be tabled at Corporate Parenting Panel in Jan 14  6 monthly QA report will be tabled in February 14	All reports are scrutinised by the Departmental Management Team and the Corporate Parenting Panel quarterly and/or 6 monthly

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<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES &amp; TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 9</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services**

**Contact Officer(s) – Sue Westcott**  
**Contact Details - 863606**

### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide an updated position statement on the progress and sustainability of social care performance as reported to the Department for Education (DfE). This report was presented to CMT and the External Improvement Board on 10 December 2013, and submitted to the DfE on 18 December 2013.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the progress made with continued improvement.

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 3.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy identifies "Improving Health" and "Supporting Vulnerable People" as priorities. Improvement in Children's Social Care is key to the delivery of these priorities.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 An updated report to Scrutiny Committee which was sent to the Department for Education as the last position statement following coming out of intervention in June 2013.

#### **5. KEY ISSUES**

##### **5.1 Highlights**

- Performance being sustained in social care across a range of indicators
- Impressive early intervention and prevention delivery
- Timescales of initial and core assessments on target
- Numbers of Looked After Children on target coupled with an increase in in-house foster care provision
- Difficulty recruiting experienced Team Managers and a recent churn of agency staff leaving to go to other more lucrative employment

- 5.2 The full report is attached at appendix 1.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The cost of the improvement programme can be met from within existing budgets. Resources are available to secure improvement in the immediate and longer term.

- 6.2 The Secretary of State has the power to issue a statutory notice if he is not satisfied that sufficient progress is being made.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

7.1 Partner agencies, parents and children will be involved in the improvement activity.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

8.1 This Committee will continue to receive a regular update on progress and the Task and Finish Group will meet quarterly to support the improvement.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1
- Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding: Peterborough 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011
  - Ofsted Unannounced Inspection of contact referral and assessment arrangements 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011
  - Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked after Children Inspection: Peterborough 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010
  - Ofsted Local Authority Arrangements for the Protection of Children: inspection report 8 March 2013

## **10. APPENDICES**

10.1 Appendix 1. DCS Progress report to DfE December 2013

## **Progress Report for DfE**

### **Background**

Peterborough City Council's Safeguarding and Looked after Children's Services were inspected in March 2010. Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of Peterborough's Safeguarding Services to be 'inadequate'.

An Improvement Notice was issued in June 2010 against key indicators in the areas concerned. A number of key issues for immediate action and improvement were also identified in the subsequent unannounced inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment arrangements in March 2011. These included variations in the quality and timeliness of assessments, poor management oversight and direction, irregular staff supervision and inadequate assessment of risk.

A subsequent Safeguarding Inspection in August 2011 identified a number of unresolved issues identified in previous inspections. Ofsted deemed the capacity for improvement to be inadequate. A further Improvement Notice, due to poor performance was issued on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

Having considered the evidence from the Ofsted Inspection of 2013, the progress report from the Improvement Board and its Chair together with advice from officials, the Improvement Notice was lifted by Edward Timpson, Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Children and Families in June 2013. A further progress report was requested in December 2013.

This report is an update of the progress made in social care since the Improvement Notice was lifted on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The council was asked to demonstrate continued sustainability.

This report covers the 6 month period from May 2013 - October 2013, given our data reporting timelines. To understand the trajectory of recovery and sustainability, it has been necessary, in places, to report the data from October 2012 – October 2013.

### **Ofsted Action Plan and Delivery Plan**

We refreshed our Children's Services vision and priorities in June 2013 under our delivery plan (*Appendix 1*) encompassing:

- *Providing children with early support*
- *Helping families with problems and keeping children safe*
- *Giving the best opportunities to children and young people in care*
- *Working in partnership with schools and others to make sure children succeed*
- *Supporting our staff to be outstanding*

The Ofsted Action Plan, based on the recommendations from the 2011 inspection, was completed in March 2013 and signed off by the Improvement Board as being finalised.

The Ofsted Action Plan was then refreshed to include new priorities for action especially around raising the quality of practice and findings from national Serious Case Reviews. This refreshed Action Plan is attached at *Appendix 2*.

We completed our regional self-assessment in May 2013, which was moderated in July 2013. The moderating DCS commented "In the self assessment, there are no significant safeguarding concerns that are not addressed via action planning. Some elements of the peer review may be helpful after the impact of the Ofsted Action Plan has been embedded." This report demonstrated our strengthened performance in a number of critical areas within children's social care including the timeliness and management of our assessments.

### **Leadership and Governance**

The new DCS was appointed in December 2012.

The new Assistant Director of Safeguarding was appointed in June 2013.

There is now a permanent, new third tier management structure.

We have experienced, like all local authorities, some difficulty in recruiting Team Managers and after an unsuccessful targeted recruitment, have made interim internal appointments with a 'grow our own' approach. We have provided these new Team Managers, promoted internally, with increased support and learning and training opportunities. They are however not experienced front line managers and need a lot of support in their decision making and capacity to provide quality supervision.

The council continues to support social care through significant investment including an additional £1 million investment in our Child Sexual Exploitation Team and the current financing of additional support to bolster management capacity and experience.

The Lead Portfolio Holder, the Cabinet and the Chief Executive continue to provide clear direction and leadership. There is high visibility of the Lead Portfolio Holder and elected councillors in the service through attendance at our Safeguarding Assurance Days and fortnightly meetings with the Assistant Director of Safeguarding and the DCS.

In addition our Members of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Safeguarding Group visit the teams on a monthly basis and report back to the Senior Leadership Team. There is then a follow up report to this.

A new and experienced independent chair was appointed to the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) in December 2012. We have also appointed a new Business Relationship Manager which combines the training function to give the Board added impetus. The new chair has brought a renewed challenge to agencies to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

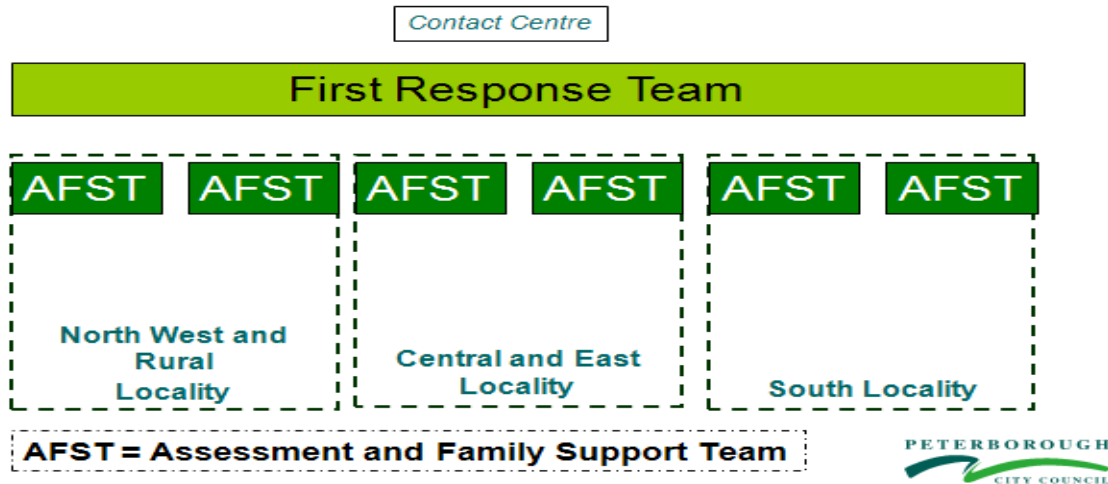
A PSCB development day was held on 16 April 2013 where clear priorities and objectives for the work of the Board were compiled.

### **Reconfiguration of the front door**

In September, we made some changes to the Referral and Assessment Family Support Service that has enabled strengthened information sharing and decision making processes in respect of our responses to referrals and Child Protection enquiries.

We have replaced the Referral and Assessment teams and Family Support Teams with a First Response Team and six Assessment and Family Support Teams facing outward to three localities.

# New organisational structure



The First Response Team, together with our Contact Team, screens all incoming contacts offering guidance and redirection where appropriate to referees. They seek and share information to make threshold decisions to determine the most appropriate response to the contact. The team will conduct Section 47 enquiries on new referrals in liaison with the MARU. Our arrangements with the MARU have been strengthened with tele-conference facilities and greater information sharing.

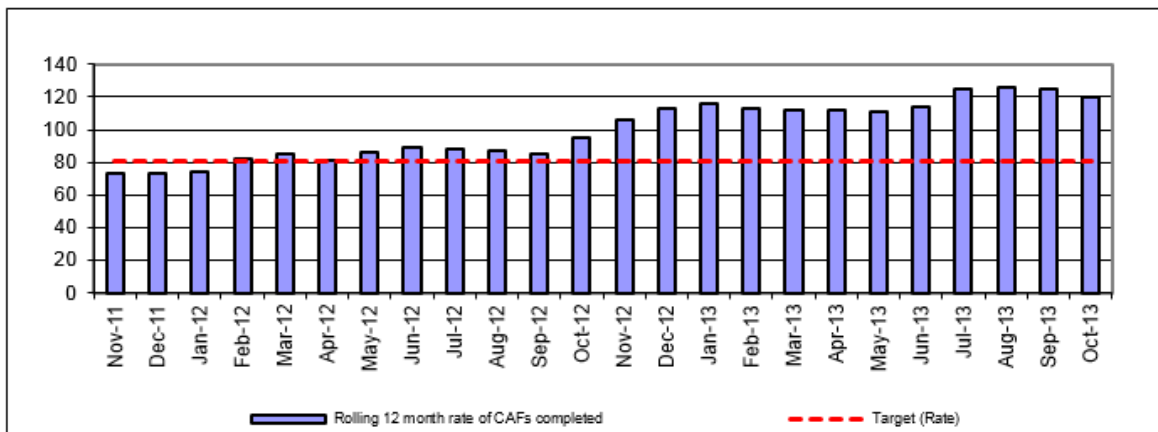
Should a contact become a referral, then the Assessment and Family Support Teams will carry out the Initial and Core assessment, if appropriate. This means that there is increased continuity for children and families and consistency of case management with fewer changes of social worker.

The Assessment and Family Support Teams are now aligned to the three locality areas that are used corporately and by partner agencies to deliver services to the community. This will ensure greater working relationships with schools and neighbourhood communities. Cases are now being transferred into the teams according to where the families live.

## Social Care Performance Data

### Early Intervention Assessments (CAFs)

The Peterborough Children and Families Commissioning Board has developed a simplified, but comprehensive early help assessment with partner agencies. This change has contributed to the significant increase in the rate of new Early Help assessments registered each month per 10,000 population, as illustrated by the chart below:



The main presenting issues for these early intervention assessments between 1 April and to date were behaviour and relationship problems within the family. The top five services offered for support were nursery/pre-school provision, housing advice and support, children centre provision, our 0-19 service and a Team Around the Child Meeting to assess need.

Our e-Caf is due to go live on 9 December 2013 which will give us greater information and ability to review CAF plans, with training for practitioners.

Alongside the multi-agency training programmes, the team also completes a safeguarding and quality compliance audit for all Early Intervention Assessments which is completed by our partners. This consists of the following elements:

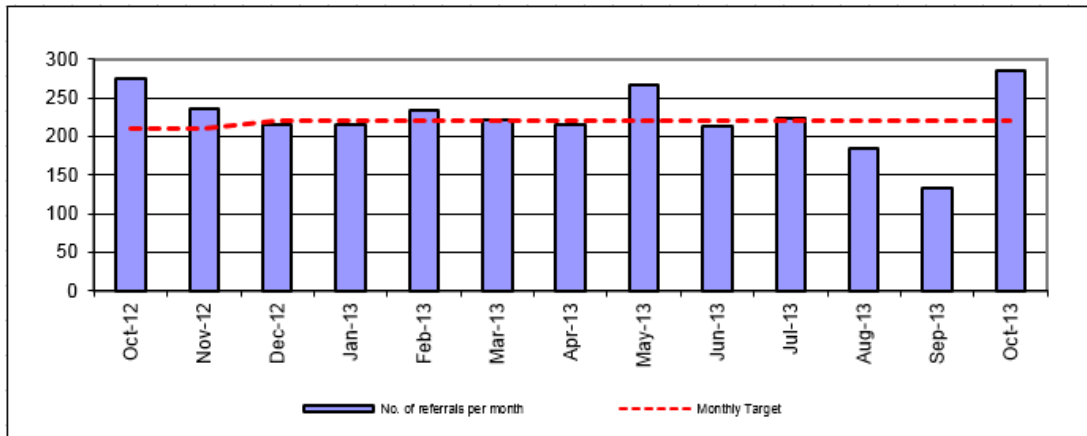
- Every Early Intervention Assessment submitted to the local authority for registering is read by a co-ordinator within the CAF Team in order to ensure that no safeguarding concerns are raised in the documentation. All co-ordinators have received up-to-date child protection training and assess any safeguarding concerns against the Peterborough Threshold Document. Any concerns raised are dealt with immediately by follow-up contact with the practitioner who initiated the Early Intervention Assessment. Where concerns remain, these are escalated as appropriate – a process that includes a discussion between the team manager responsible for Early Help Assessments and appropriate colleagues within Children’s Social Care.
- All comments made by children or young people and their parents or carers recorded on an Early Help Assessment or within any notes of Team Around the Child meetings submitted to the local authority are recorded by the CAF team. All of these comments are screened and any issues that are raised about either the experience of the Early Help Assessment or TAC process are addressed by the team as appropriate. These comments are also used to help to inform training and support sessions offered by the team to practitioners who complete these assessments.
- 10% of all Early Help Assessments completed are selected on a monthly basis at random. Each is assessed using the National Quality Framework for the Early Intervention Assessment process
- Six months following the registration of the Early Intervention Assessment, all lead professionals are contacted for an update on the impact of the Early Intervention Assessment. Returned document scores are recorded and comments discussed by the team. Follow-up action taken is then taken where required.

### **Multi-Agency Support Groups (MASGs)**

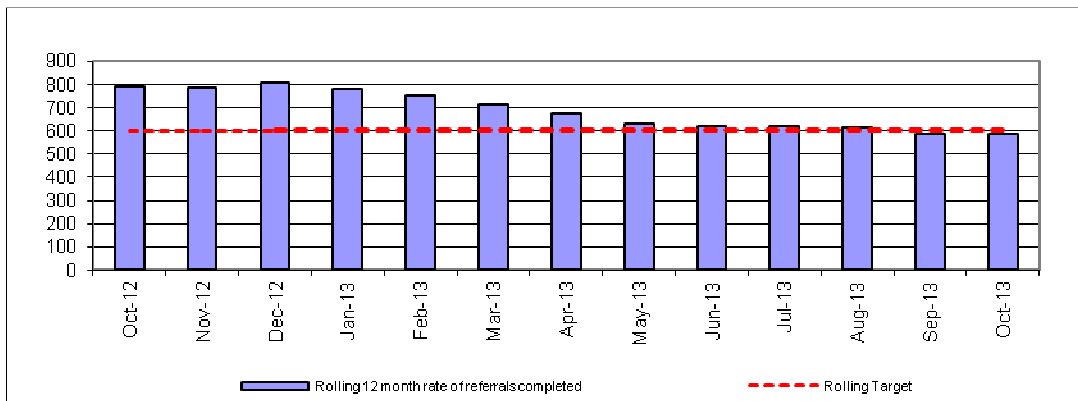
Our multi-agency groups within the localities have, since their inception, offered support to more than 300 families. Whenever a family is presented to MASG, a simple Distance Measured tool is used to track progress made after support services have been in place for a period of time – typically 12 weeks. Analysis of the outcomes identified indicated that of the 221 families where interventions monitored by MASGs had come to an end, there was evidence of improved outcomes that could be attributed to actions by MASGs in 91 cases. Services put in place by the MASGs have included Family Group conferences, family mediation, spot purchased family support services during family crises and parenting support programmes through the voluntary sector. Participants at each MASG include community health services, children’s services, housing, neighbourhood services, early years, educational psychology, connecting families and social care. We have entered our multi-agency support groups for an LGA award.

## Referrals

### Number of Referrals

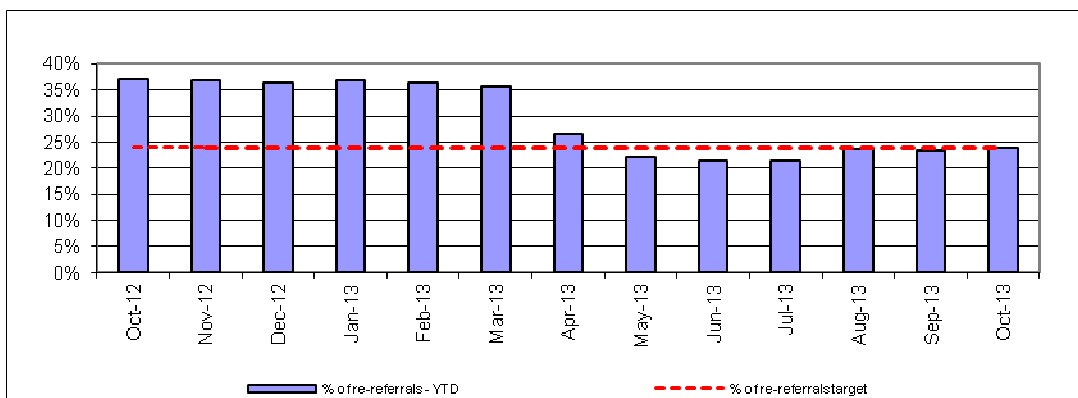


### Rolling 12 month Rate of Referrals



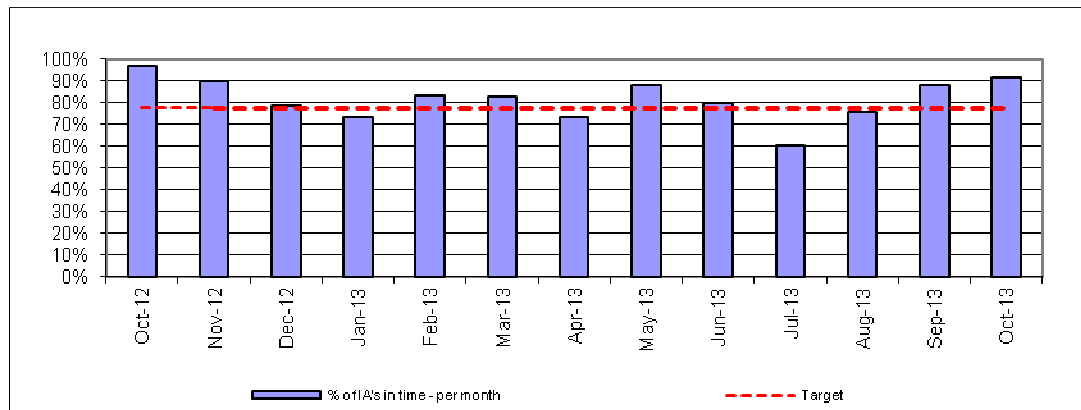
There had been a decline in the actual number of referrals during the summer period owing to schools closing, rising to 284 in October 2013. The average percentage of referrals at year end brings us to 587 per 10,000 of the child population and is within target for the fifth consecutive month.

### Re-referrals

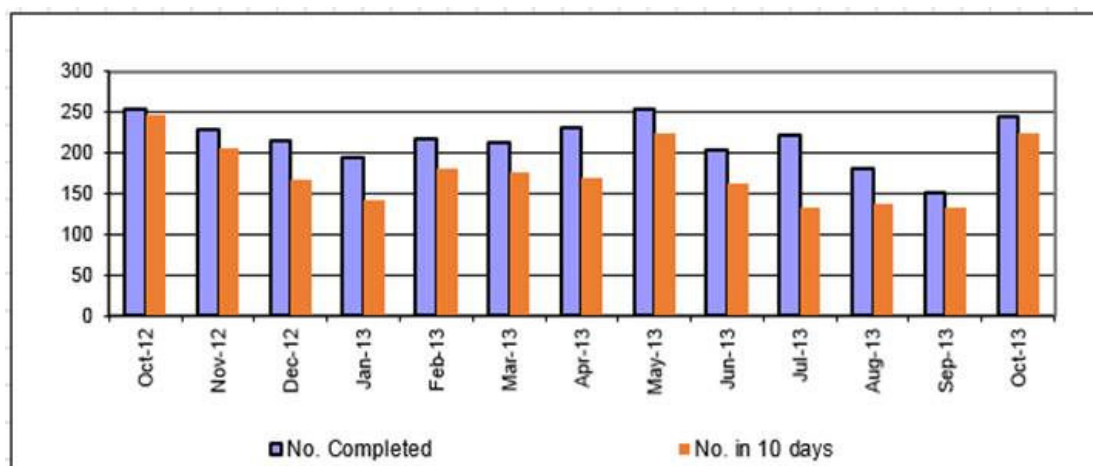


The percentage of referrals where a previous referral has occurred within the last 12 months has dropped. At 23.9%, (October 2013), this is exactly on target.

## Percentage of Initial Assessments in timescale



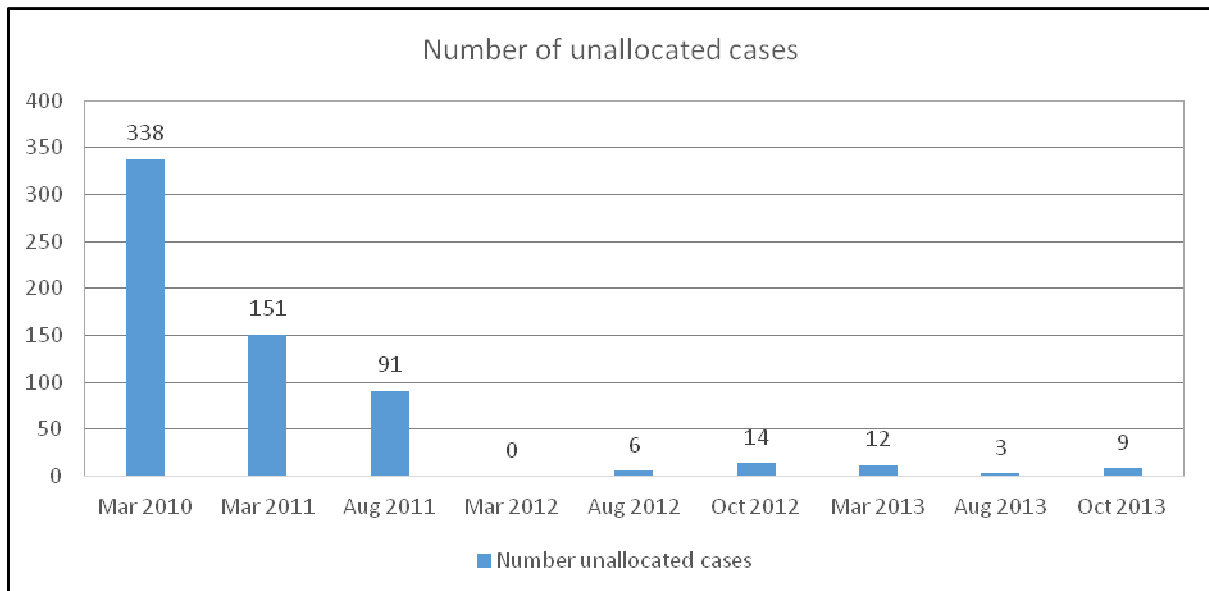
## Number of Initial Assessments Completed



The number of Initial Assessments completed within timescale at 224 out of 244 in October 2013, was higher than previous months with 91.8% of assessments within timescale. The chart shows some fluctuation with the changes to the front door, but brings the year to date figure to 79.6% within target and up again to those reached in this time last year. This is well within the statistical neighbour of 73.9% and English average of 75.5% with a further 5 months to run.

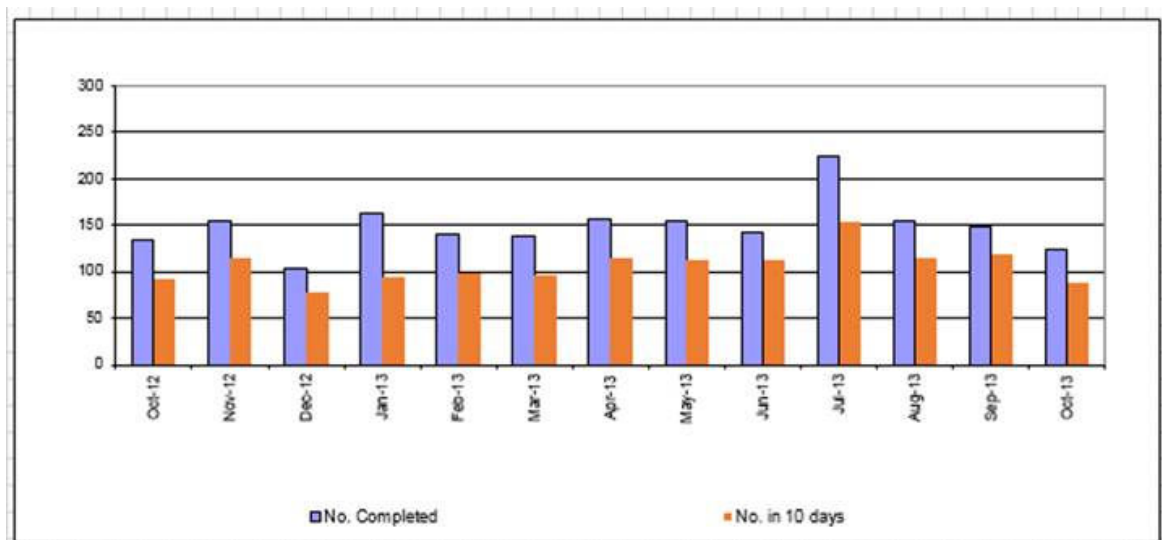


## Unallocated Cases

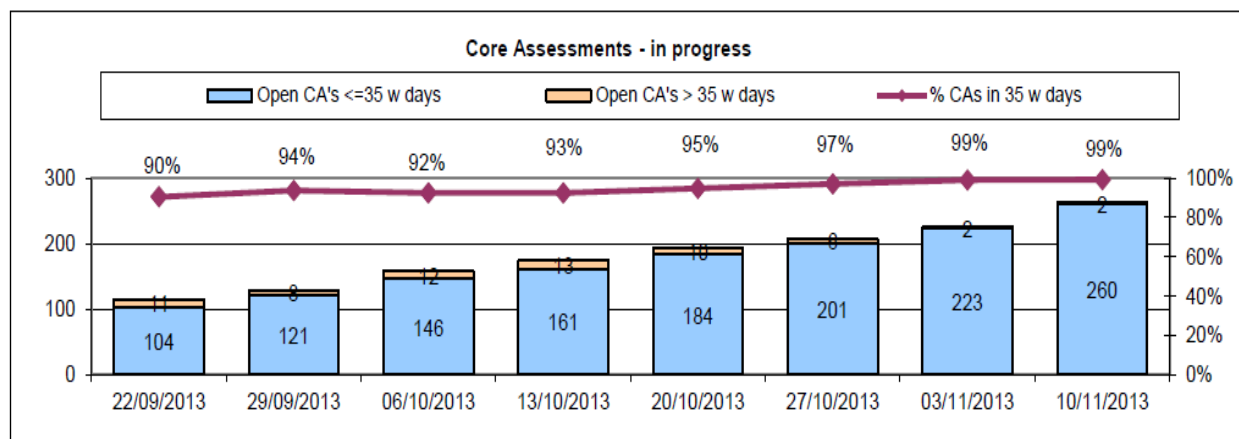


The target each month is a maximum of 20. As you can see, we have been consistently under that since March 2012. There will always be cases that need to be allocated as they come through the front door. At any one point, there may be up to 20 at the point the data is captured.

## Core Assessments Completed



## Number of Core Assessments

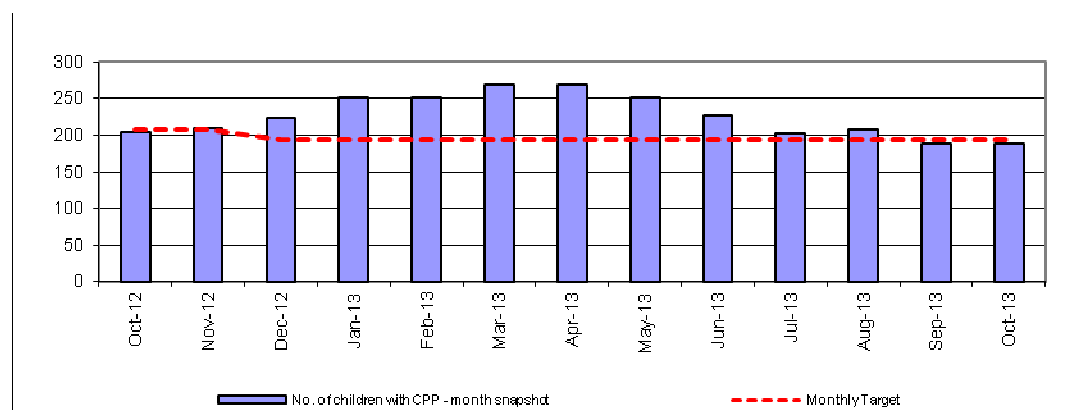


The number of Core Assessments completed continues to be high and significantly above target. The rolling 12 month rate is 400 per 10,000 of the population, which is significantly higher than our target of 173 per 10,000 of the population. This is because we complete a Core Assessment for all children with complex needs rather than move to a Children in Need plan under an Initial Assessment. This is good practice and demonstrates a rigour of assessment. Many other local authorities undertake the majority of their referrals under an Initial Assessment. Notwithstanding this, the number is overly high and we are asking managers to review the social workers' caseloads to close and/or de-escalate to a Common Assessment Framework. This builds on an audit of some 32 Children in Need cases.

The number of Core Assessments in timescale has remained relatively stable at approximately 73.9% which is lower than our target, but within the statistical neighbour average of 69.5% and slightly below the national average of 76.7%. There is however five months to run before the published out-turn position.

The second chart illustrates the rise in the number of open core assessments from 104 to 260 which will be explained later when reporting on the number of Child in Need cases.

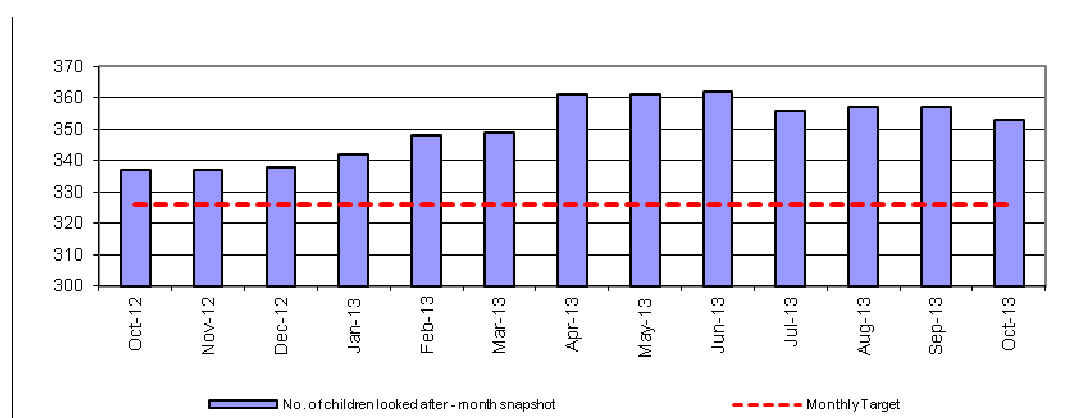
## Children subject to a Child Protection Plan



## Children subject to a plan per 10,000

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan has fluctuated over the last year but stabilised since July 2013. The number increased to an all-time high in March 2013 to 270, declining to 188 in October 2013. This indicates that the threshold for conferences was not well defined. The number of children subject to plans is now where it should be, given that the rough indicator is half the LAC population (351/187). The target of 44.2 per 10,000 of the child population is now met. This has been achieved by reinforcing compliance around thresholds, greater interrogation of potential risks prior to conference, greater scrutiny by the chairs and decisions to go to conference made by the team manager only. The team manager now attends every conference.

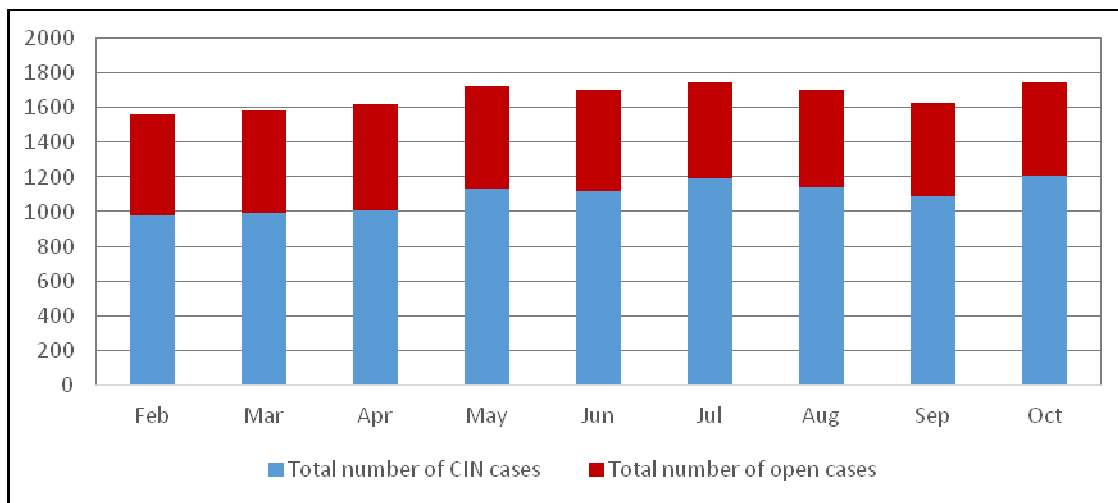
## Children Looked After



The number of looked after children has remained relatively stable from 337 in October 2012 to 353 in October 2013. There was a rise in the number of children accommodated during April – June owing to the identification and accommodation of children subject to Child Sexual Exploitation and the fall in the number of young people exiting our care, which has dropped significantly given the age of the cohort in care.

This number is expected to rise in November following the identification and issue of a number of unborn babies where children have been previously removed.

## Child in Need Cases



Recent audit findings (analysis of decision making at child protection conferences - May 2013) have suggested that child in need cases “may not receive the same rigour of approach and monitoring expected of those cases worked under child protection plans”.

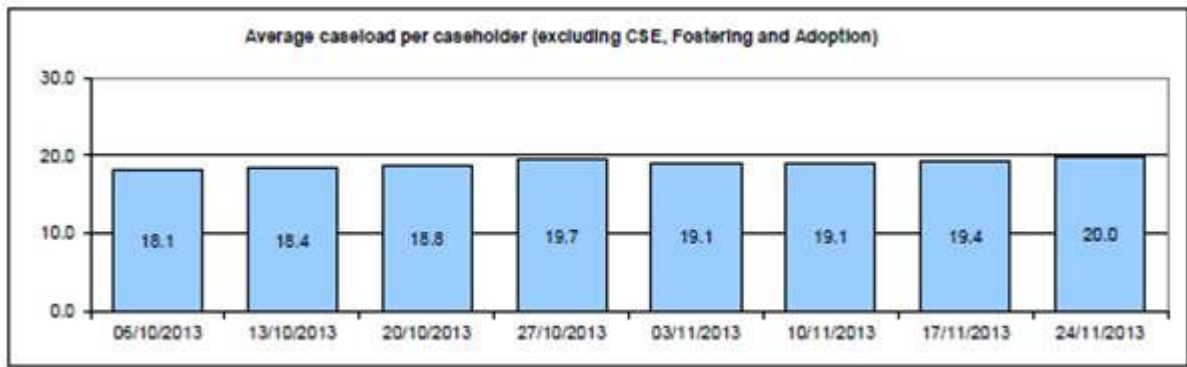
In February 2013, there were 977 open child in need cases. This had risen to 1,130 by May and there are now 1208 open child in need cases open to children’s social care in October 2013.

Child in need cases are worked within several of the social work teams: Referral and Assessment; Family Support Services; Children at risk of Sexual Exploitation; and the Children with Disabilities team. The role of the social worker is to support families through robust child in need plans that minimise risk to children and young people. It is imperative that workers are pro-active in working with families in need to ensure that the risk of these children coming into the care system or the case progressing to child protection is reduced.

In September 2013, we audited a total of 15 child in need cases which were selected at random. Whilst 15 cases were comprehensively reviewed, many of these children were part of larger sibling groups, consequently the findings of the audit related to over 32 children. All of the cases audited related to children and young people aged between 0 to 18 years and 3 of the cases related to children with disabilities. The audit was undertaken using a bespoke audit tool that focused on:

- Quality of the child in need plans
- Involvement of young person; carer’s family
- Timeliness of child in need meetings
- Evidence of multi-agency working
- Frequency of statutory visits
- Quality of management oversight and supervision

## Caseloads



There has been an increase in the overall size of social workers' caseloads. Whilst the average caseload remains slightly higher at 20, our Daily Dashboard shows significant increase in the more experienced social workers' caseloads, in some cases up to 37 (highest in AFST week beginning 24/11/13). This increase is a result of an additional 169 open cases in the system, predominantly children in need. From 6 October – 24 November, there has been no significant rise in the number of children subject to Child Protection and looked after.

We have interrogated the data and found that whilst there has been an increase in contacts and referrals in October there are a number of cases where an Initial and Core has been completed and then not signed off. This is due in part to the reconfiguration of the teams and the absorption of both the initial and core within the Assessment and Family Support Teams and the inexperienced new managers who are focussing on the new work coming through the door rather than closure concurrently. It has to be remembered that this caseload number is the number of children in a household. The social worker who carried 37 during this week had 2 families with 8 siblings.

There is no explanation for the rise in contacts and referrals in October and November. We have dip sampled them and found that they meet the threshold for progression into social care.

There has also been a dip in the number of de-escalations to CAF recorded; 5 in October 2013 against 26 in October 2012.

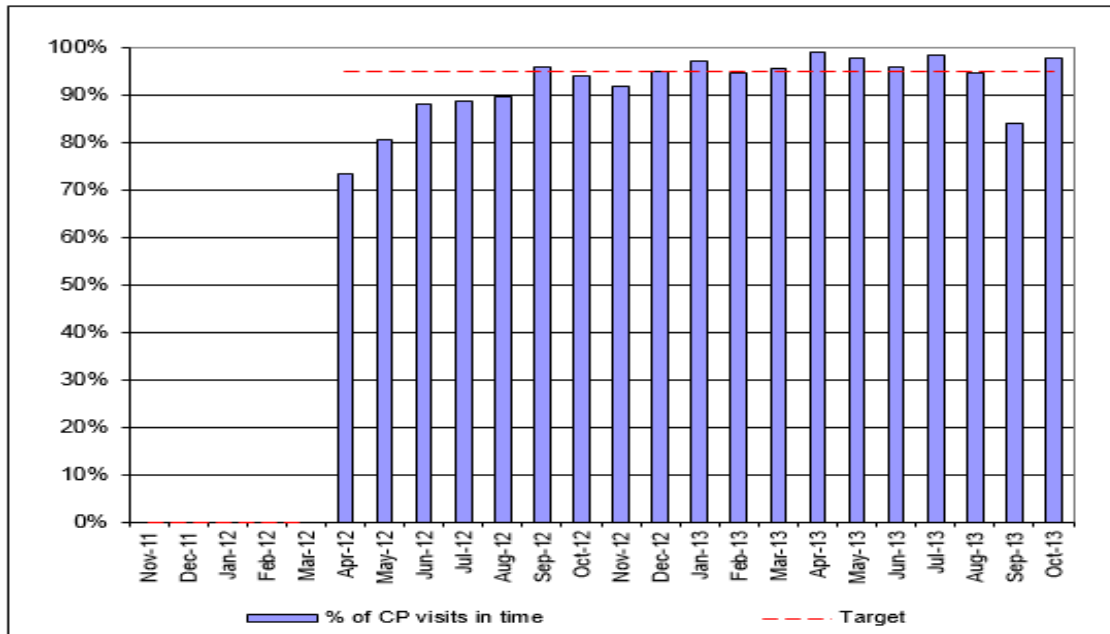
This is against a decrease in the number of re-referrals which evidences a greater working of cases to conclusion and not a premature closing off. Notwithstanding this, we do know that there are cases that need to be closed which we are working on to free the workflow.

We are addressing this through a clear Management Action Plan outlining:

- Individual Action Plan for each Team manager to close off at least 20 cases per team until the work is completed.
- The council has committed additional resource to assist with this closure. Additional capacity to come in and help close off cases with the social workers ensuring the transfer summary and audit tool is completed. An experienced Manager has been appointed to commence week beginning 2 December. These managers will also review whole caseloads to ensure that there are not cases that need to be closed off as there has, with the reconfiguration, been a rise in the number of cases on a social worker's caseload.
- An update ICS list of all cases open and not active has already been produced.

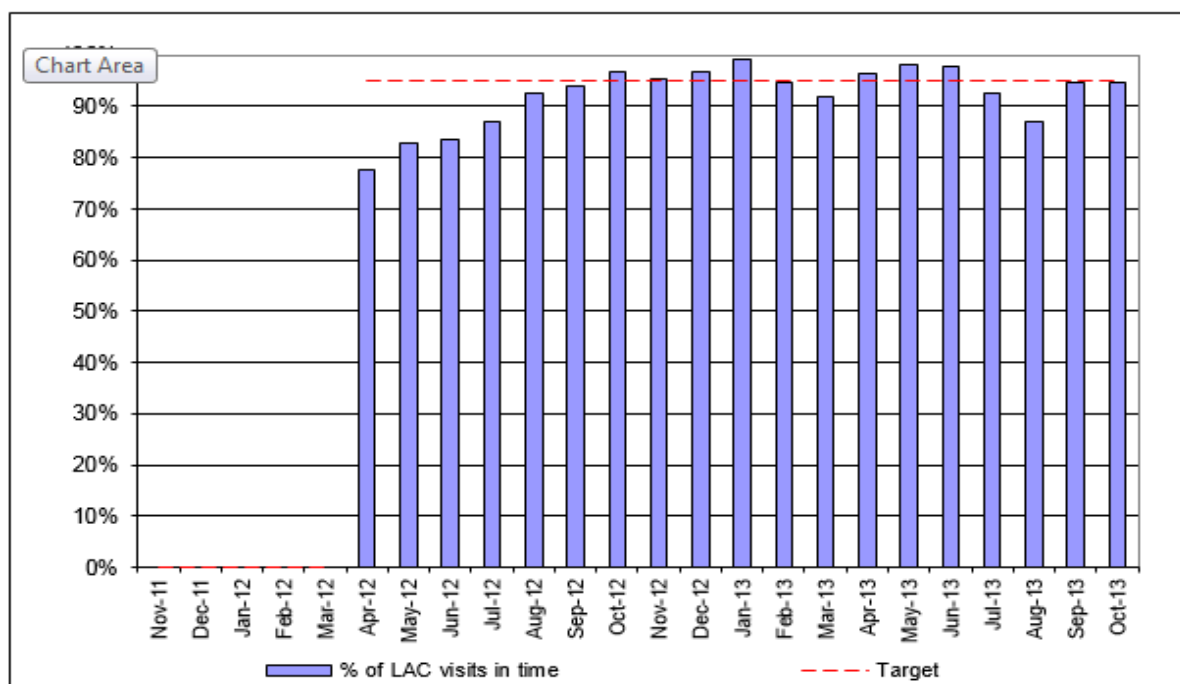
## Statutory Visits in Timescale

## Child Protection visits in timescale



Statutory visits for children subject to a Child Protection Plan has risen this month to 98% from 82% in September following compliance issues. The 2% equates to children who are missing from the country and cannot be located.

## Looked after Children visits in timescale



This remains an area that fluctuates in performance.

To address this, there is a weekly monitoring report for managers identifying the due date and those that have not been completed in timescale. Some staffing pressure and sickness, particularly in the Leaving Care Team, have impacted upon this, especially to those care leavers that are deemed looked after but settled in placement, but where there is still a statutory responsibility. The Adolescent Intervention team and YOS has been assisting the leaving care team with the conduct of visits.

## Progress in Fostering

A number of key initiatives have been set in place since April 2013:

- New Publicity Materials: a complete rebranding of the Fostering Service
- New Website: a totally new rebranded website
- Appointment of a Recruitment and Marketing Officer, with a strong marketing background
- Marketing Strategy: a detailed marketing strategy has been developed
- Change in the senior management arrangements of the service

The service has received over 170 enquiries into the service. This represents a 37% growth compared with the same point in 2012 and means that the service is on track to recruit a cadre of approved foster carers that is around 25% larger than at the beginning of the year, equating to a net gain of 24 new fostering households.

The service continues to develop an improved relationship with our existing and any new carers, minimising the number leaving for reasons other than retirement or through offering permanence to children they are currently looking after.

### **Progress in Adoption**

The increased number of Adoption Orders made this year to-date (2 December 2013) demonstrates strong performance.

	Adopters approved	Children matched	Adoption Orders
2011 - 2012	6	6	7
2012 - 2013	17	16	19
			At 2 December 2013

### **Raising the Quality of Practice**

#### **Quality Assurance update**

We have an ambitious annual quality assurance audit framework in place, and during the period from April - October 2013, the quality assurance team have undertaken a number of themed audits which has amounted to in excess of 535 children's cases being reviewed as part of the audit programme. The department's quality assurance action plan and the audit framework, both of which are up to date, demonstrate strong progress and are included as appendix 1 and 2.

The quality assurance framework and audit programme was refreshed in March 2013 and supported by an internal audit programme detailing the audit activity to support and develop quality practice. Progress against the audit programme is regularly monitored through the departmental management team.

The action plan is reviewed and updated on a monthly basis.

Regular case and themed audits have been undertaken to support improvements in practice and have included:

- Dip sample of decision making at the first point of contact with Children's Social Care monthly

- The robustness of child in need plans and multi-agency involvement (September 2013)
- Multi agency attendance and the quality of decision making within child protection conferences (October 2013)

All findings from the audits are cascaded across the organisation with clear actions plans and there is strong evidence of greater accountability and ownership amongst team managers.

Practice briefings are now well embedded and action learning sets have been developed to address areas for development.

There is still a need however to ensure children's views are always included in an assessment of need and the impact of the quality of parenting received well understood and incorporated into any assessment of need. This will further be enhanced by the introduction of children/young people and their parents' questionnaires/evaluation forms, which will be used at various points in the child's journey.

This will enable greater understanding on how the work we undertake impacts on children and their family's lives and act as a reference point from which to further develop relationship based practice.

### **Service Developments Conference & Review Service**

Following a service evaluation, the service was restructured in November 2013. Previously there were distinct roles of Child Protection Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers. However it was agreed to appoint more chairs who could undertake a dual role in chairing Child Protection Conferences and Statutory Reviews. This enables the chair to understand the trajectory of a child's journey from being subject to a Child Protection Plan through to possible accommodation into care.

Grade descriptors and practice standards have also been introduced to assist in evaluating the quality of child protection plans and also the plans for children who are looked after. The grade descriptors were well received amongst children's services staff and their introduction was also supported by Peterborough's social work forum.

The conference and review service is now more closely aligned to the quality assurance team and PSCB, providing monitoring evidence of attendance at Conference and the provision of reports.

There is now in place a robust monitoring process detailing information on all agencies invited to child protection conferences, the quality of the reports submitted and whether the conference is actually attended. Where there is non-attendance this is followed up and explanation sought.

Where there are concerns about agency attendance these are followed up by meetings with partner agencies, senior management from Children's Services and the board's Independent Chair.

The details of attendance now form part of the PSCB multi-agency data set and are reported quarterly to the board allowing for appropriate scrutiny and challenge.

Early monitoring has already demonstrated improvements in attendance from agencies where there were identified concerns and the timeliness of reports being shared prior to the meeting.

### **The Social Work Forum**

The Social Work Forum, established in May 2012, continues as a consultative and feedback body to the DCS and departmental management team. This ensures direct communication



between senior managers and a representative group of practitioners. The leader of the council attends this forum and the group can, and does, call senior managers to the table.

## Performance Management and Supervision

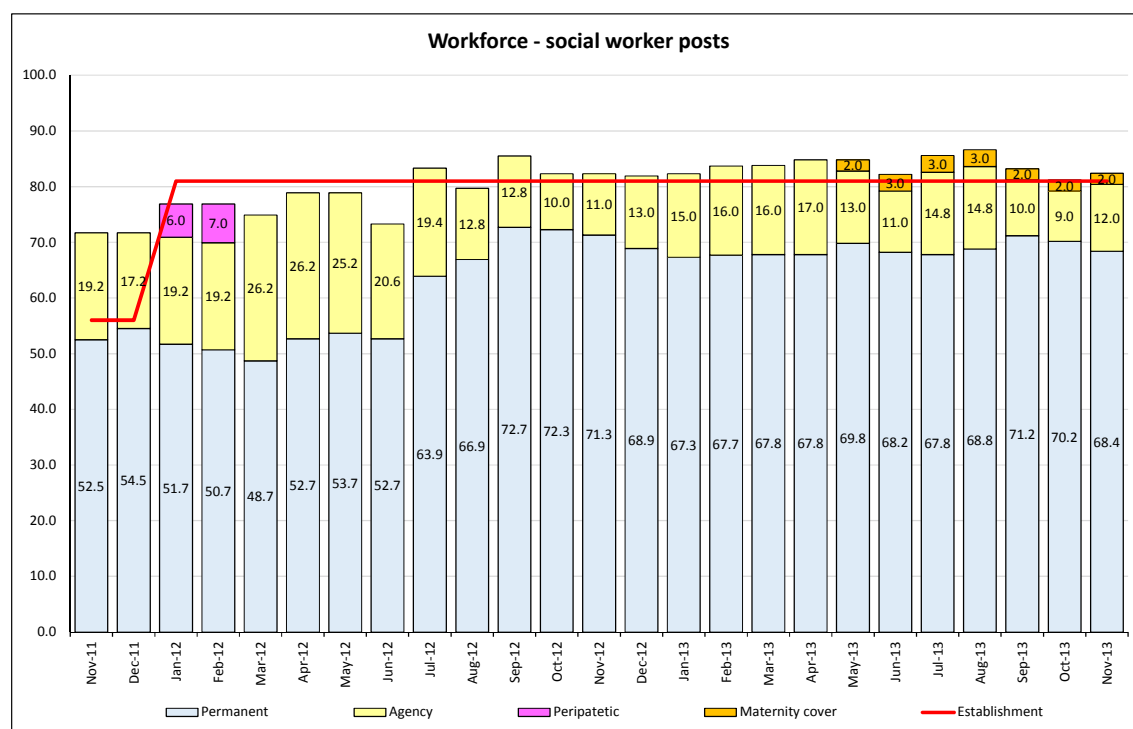
Our performance management arrangements for children’s social care are well established. High level performance management information is used to measure compliance and quality of practice. A suite of daily, weekly, and monthly reports continue to be produced including:

- Monthly Performance Management Information Monitoring Report
- Weekly report on Social Care Performance
- Daily Dashboard
- Weekly report on Unallocated Cases
- Weekly report on Statutory Visits to children in care and those subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Fortnightly staffing levels
- Legal Tracking sheet

These reports are used actively in weekly performance meetings, extended management team meetings, the team managers meeting and team meetings to inform and ensure performance remains on track.

Raising the quality of assessments has also been achieved through reduced caseloads and increasing evidence of reflective supervision on file, enhanced through training and learning sets.

## Staffing



At the time of writing this report (2 December 2013), the number of permanent members of staff in post is 68.4 fte against an establishment of 81 which gives us a vacancy rate of 13.6 fte.

This is made up of:

- 12.6 fte vacancies plus one pipeline leaver

- The current number of agency staff totals within the 81 fte is 14.6 and this includes 2 covering maternity leave in Leaving Care.
- There are no new permanent social workers in the pipeline and ready to start. However, there are 2 Locums ready to start and will begin on 10 and 16 December 2013. 2 locums have agreed to remain in post to cover AFST work which will service to relieve the pressure. This brings the actual vacancy rate down ( where no locum or permanent staff holder is in place to 1)

Against a national background to the shortage of qualified and experienced social workers throughout the country, Peterborough is experiencing some difficulties in attracting social workers. A few neighbouring authorities are offering cash incentives and some of our staff have been attracted to these inducements. To address this we refreshed our targeted advertising campaign in November when we went out to recruit, specifically in Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire and also in the specialist press.

### **Regional and Self-Assessment**

Social Care are conducting a multi-agency self-assessment against the new Ofsted inspection judgements. This complements our adoption and school improvement self-assessment.

The PSCB will also be evaluating their performance against the new Ofsted guidance.

We have requested a lac peer review inspection in the spring to pilot the new regional methodology which we have helped develop. This will give us an independent assessment of our lac services against the new OFSTED judgement areas and indicators.

### **Early Intervention**

The Children and Families Joint Commissioning Board oversees much of the work of agencies to support the needs of children and families through effective targeted early intervention services. An annual report covering progress made in improving outcomes for children, young people and their families against the areas of priority need identified in the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy is available separately.

### **Improving the Quality of Early Years Provision**

We have been committed to improving the quality of childcare provision across the city as part of our determination to narrow the gap in Foundation Stage performance among our most vulnerable children and helping to ensure that they arrive at school ready to learn. Through the provision of targeted support and challenge to childcare providers, the quality of provision in the city, as assessed by Ofsted, has continued to improve over the last 12 months.

### **Supporting Vulnerable Young People and those who are NEET**

We commission and provide a range of services working with vulnerable young people in the city. Our main provided services include:

- The Adolescent Intervention Service which works intensively with individual young people with complex needs and their families
- The Youth in Localities Service, which undertakes a wide range of community based youth work as well running targeted groups to work with young people who have particular needs – for example young women who have been identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation

- The NEET Service which works with schools and other partners to proactively target young people at risk of NEET and to work with those young people to identify constructive options for them as well as working with young people who are NEET and supporting them into employment, education or training

We also commission a range of services and work in partnership with a number of voluntary sector organisations to ensure that we are using every opportunity to provide young people with the support that they need in order to achieve improved outcomes.

Our most recent performance suggests that the percentage of young people NEET in October 2013 remains lower than at the same time last year, at 7.5%. It also remains the case that we know the status of a much higher proportion of our young people than either our statistical neighbours or the England average.

The most recent data available for the rate of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System in Peterborough shows that the rate has fallen to below that of our statistical neighbours for the first time. Local performance data indicates that this indicator continues to improve. Not only is this very encouraging, but we also believe that it is evidence of the success of the partners working with vulnerable young people and tackling issues that are often associated with offending such as being out of employment, education or training and problem alcohol and/or substance misuse.

Softer information on the effectiveness of some of our intensive support work with individual vulnerable young people is provided through our regular sampling of case work files. For example, the most recent sampling of 30 randomly selected young people receiving a service through our Adolescent Intervention Service found that:

- 6 demonstrated improvements in relationships at home
- 9 secured improved school attendance or engagement with different model of education – e.g. college
- 1 young person was no longer homeless
- 6 were referred to specialist mental health services
- 2 young people already in care were supported with the result that their placements became more stable
- 1 young person moved
- While in only 3 cases was there limited or no engagement

### **Troubled Families**

Connecting Families is the local name for the Troubled Families programme. We have adopted a scheme whereby partner agencies have identified workers to become Connectors. These Connectors work intensively with families to address issues such as school attendance and anti-social behaviour. The Connectors form a virtual team who support each other by sharing their knowledge and skills. Access to Connecting Families is through the Multi-Agency Support Groups to ensure that services being provided are properly coordinated. Almost 100 families have now been worked with through the Connecting Families Programme. There are 10.5 FTE Connectors working within the programme from a wide range of organisations including the fire service, police, children's services and social housing, alongside Connectors from Peterborough and Fenland Mind and from Ormiston Trust and Drink and Drug Sense. The Connectors are a highly committed group of practitioners who have had considerable success in helping families to make significant changes to their circumstances.

In parallel to developing the Connecting Families approach, we have developed systems that enable us to bring together agency data. This has meant we can now evidence

achievement of agencies across the city in relation to work with children, young people and families.

**Conclusion**

Strong performance is evident across Children's Services and is being sustained.

**Sue Westcott**  
**Executive Director Children's Services**  
**Peterborough City Council**  
**December 2013**

<b>CREATING OPPORUTNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 10</b>
<b>6 JANUARY 2014</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## Report of the Director of Governance

**Report Author** – Paulina Ford, Senior Governance Officer, Scrutiny

**Contact Details** – 01733 452508 or email paulina.ford@peterborough.gov.uk

### FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This is a regular report to the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee outlining the content of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee identifies any relevant items for inclusion within their work programme.

#### 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The latest version of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions is attached at Appendix 1. The Plan contains those key decisions, which the Leader of the Council believes that the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Member(s) can take and any new key decisions to be taken after 27 December 2013.
- 3.2 The information in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions provides the Committee with the opportunity of considering whether it wishes to seek to influence any of these key decisions, or to request further information.
- 3.3 If the Committee wished to examine any of the key decisions, consideration would need to be given as to how this could be accommodated within the work programme.
- 3.4 As the Forward Plan is published fortnightly any version of the Forward Plan published after dispatch of this agenda will be tabled at the meeting.

#### 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Details of any consultation on individual decisions are contained within the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

#### 5. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None

#### 6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Forward Plan of Key Decisions

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# **PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

**PUBLISHED: 29 NOVEMBER 2013**

## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

In the period commencing 28 days after the date of publication of this Plan, Peterborough City Council's Executive intends to take 'key decisions' on the issues set out below. Key decisions relate to those executive decisions which are likely to result in the Council spending or saving money in excess of £500,000 and/or have a significant impact on two or more wards in Peterborough.

If the decision is to be taken by an individual cabinet member, the name of the cabinet member is shown against the decision, in addition to details of the councillor's portfolio. If the decision is to be taken by the Cabinet, it's members are as listed below:

Cllr Cereste (Leader); Cllr Elsey; Cllr Fitzgerald; Cllr Holdich (Deputy Leader); Cllr North; Cllr Seaton; Cllr Scott; and Cllr Walsh.

This Plan should be seen as an outline of the proposed decisions for the forthcoming month and it will be updated on a fortnightly basis. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan and items may be carried over into forthcoming Plans. Any questions on specific issues included on the Plan should be included on the form which appears at the back of the Plan and submitted to Alex Daynes, Senior Governance Officer, Chief Executive's Department, Town Hall, Bridge Street, PE1 1HG (fax 01733 452483). Alternatively, you can submit your views via e-mail to [alexander.daynes@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:alexander.daynes@peterborough.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01733 452447.

Whilst the majority of the Executive's business at the meetings listed in this Plan will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. In these circumstances the meeting may be held in private, and on the rare occasion this applies this is indicated in the list below. A formal notice of the intention to hold the meeting, or part of it, in private, will be given 28 clear days in advance of any private meeting in accordance with The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Council invites members of the public to attend any of the meetings at which these decisions will be discussed (unless a notice of intention to hold the meeting in private has been given).

You are entitled to view any documents listed on the Plan, or obtain extracts from any documents listed or subsequently submitted to the decision maker prior to the decision being made, subject to any restrictions on disclosure. There is no charge for viewing the documents, although charges may be made for photocopying or postage. Documents listed on the notice and relevant documents subsequently being submitted can be requested from Alex Daynes, Senior Governance Officer, Chief Executive's Department, Town Hall, Bridge Street, PE1 1HG (fax 01733 452483), e-mail to [alexander.daynes@peterborough.gov.uk](mailto:alexander.daynes@peterborough.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01733 452447. For each decision a public report will be available from the Governance Team one week before the decision is taken.

All decisions will be posted on the Council's website: [www.peterborough.gov.uk/executivedecisions](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/executivedecisions). If you wish to make comments or representations regarding the 'key decisions' outlined in this Plan, please submit them to the Governance Support Officer using the form attached. For your information, the contact details for the Council's various service departments are incorporated within this Plan.



## KEY DECISIONS FROM 27 DECEMBER 2013

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	DECISION MAKER	DATE DECISION EXPECTED	MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC	RELEVANT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	CONSULTATION	CONTACT DETAILS / REPORT AUTHORS	DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION SUBMITTED TO THE DECISION MAKER (IF ANY OTHER THAN PUBLIC REPORT)
<p><b>Integrated Community Sexual Health Service - KEY/27DEC13/01</b> To award a contract for the Integrated Community Sexual Health Service.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Irene Walsh</b> Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Public Health</p>	<p><b>Between 1 Feb 2014 and 31 Mar 2014</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Health Issues</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Jo Melvin Children's Services Strategy and Planning Officer Tel: 01733 863954 joanne.melvin@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents</p>
<b>PREVIOUSLY ADVERTISED DECISIONS</b>							
<p><b>Delivery of the Council's Capital Receipt Programme through the Sale of Dickens Street Car Park - KEY/03JUL/11</b> To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, Executive Director – Strategic Resources, the Corporate Property Officer and the Cabinet Member Resources, to negotiate and conclude the sale of Dickens Street Car Park.</p>	<p><b>Councillor David Seaton</b> Cabinet Member for Resources</p>	<p><b>November 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital</p>	<p>Consultation will take place with the Cabinet Member, Ward councillors, relevant internal departments &amp; external stakeholders as appropriate.</p>	<p>Richard Hodgson Head of Strategic Projects Tel: 01733 384535 richard.hodgson@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>

<b>Care and Repair Framework Agreement - KEY/18DEC12/01</b> To approve a framework agreement and schedule of rates to deliver disabled facility grant work, specifically providing disabled access to toilet and washing facilities and associated work in domestic properties.	<b>Councillor Nigel North</b> Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Neighbourhoods	<b>Between 2 Nov 2013 and 31 Dec 2013</b>	<b>N/A</b>	Strong and Supportive Communities	Relevant Internal Departments.	Russ Carr Care & Repair Manager Tel: 01733 863864 russ.carr@peterborough.gov.uk	It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.
<b>Fletton Parkway Junction 17 to 2 improvement scheme - KEY/24JAN13/07</b> To approve the contract for the construction works.	<b>Councillor Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste</b> Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement	<b>December 2013</b>	<b>N/A</b>	Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital	Relevant internal and external stakeholders.	Mark Speed Transport Planning Team Manager Tel: 317471 mark.speed@peterborough.gov.uk	It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.
<b>Sale of Craig Street Car Park - KEY/25MAR13/01</b> To approve the sale of land known as Craig Street Car Park.	<b>Councillor David Seaton</b> Cabinet Member for Resources	<b>November 2013</b>	<b>N/A</b>	Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital	Relevant Internal and External Stakeholders and ward councillors.	David Gray Capital Projects Officer Tel: 01733 384531 david.gray@peterborough.gov.uk	It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.

<p><b>Clare Lodge - KEY/22AUG13/01</b> To award a contract for the provision of services.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Sheila Scott OBE</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Children's Services</b></p>	<p><b>May 2014</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities</p>	<p>Internal and external stakeholders as appropriate.</p>	<p><b>Oliver Hayward</b> Commissioning Officer - Aiming High Tel: 01733 863910 oliver.hayward@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Personal Care and Support for Adults (Homecare) - KEY/06SEP13/03</b> Award of contract for the provision of Personal Care and Support services.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</b></p>	<p><b>Between 14 Oct 2013 and 29 Nov 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Health Issues</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Nick Blake</b> Improvement &amp; Development Manager Tel: 01733 452406 nick.blake@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Transformation of Person Centred Activities for Younger Adults in Peterborough - KEY/20SEP13/01</b> Agree the consultation plan for the Transformation of Person Centred Activities for Younger Adults in Peterborough (Day and Employment services for people with learning and physical disabilities).</p>	<p><b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>16 Dec 2013</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders including service users and staff.</p>	<p><b>Mubarak Darbar</b> Head of Commissioning Learning Disabilities Tel: 01733 452509 mubarak.darbar@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>

<p><b>City College Extension Project - KEY/20SEP13/03</b> Using Education Funding Agency grant to create a dedicated, customised space for students aged 16-19 with learning difficulties and disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Councillor John Holdich OBE</b> Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University</p>	<p><b>January 2014</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Brian Howard Programme Manager - Secondary Schools Development Tel: 01733 863976 brian.howard@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Contract Award for the Provision of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services - KEY/04OCT13/01</b> To award the contract for the provision of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Services.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Irene Walsh</b> Cabinet Member for Cohesion, Safety and Public Health</p>	<p><b>November 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Strong and Supportive Communities</p>	<p>Safer Peterborough Partnership.</p>	<p>Karen Kibblewhite Safer Peterborough Manager - Cutting Crime Tel: 01733 864122 karen.kibblewhite@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Amendments to the Affordable Housing Capital Funding Policy - KEY/04OCT13/02</b> To agree the amendments to the Affordable Housing Capital Funding Policy.</p>	<p><b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>January 2014</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Richard Kay Policy and Strategy Manager richard.kay@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Strategy for People with Dementia and their Carers - KEY/04OCT13/05</b> To approve the Dementia Strategy.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald</b> Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</p>	<p><b>November 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Health Issues</p>	<p>Service users, relevant departments and Scrutiny Commission for Health Issues.</p>	<p>Rob Henchy Commissioning Manager Tel: 01733 452429 rob.henchy@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>

<p><b>Long Causeway Public Realm Improvements - KEY/15NOV13/01</b> To award the contract to undertake engineering works as part of the Long Causeway Public Realm Improvement works.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste</b> <b>Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement</b></p>	<p><b>December 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p><b>Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital</b></p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Simon Mullins</b> Project Engineer/Development Engineer Tel: 01733 453548 simon.mullins@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>The Future Direction of Children's Centres Delivery - KEY/15NOV13/02</b> To confirm the direction of the delivery of children's centres in the city.</p>	<p><b>Cabinet</b></p>	<p><b>20 Jan 2014</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p><b>Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities</b></p>	<p>Legal Services, Human Resources and other internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Pam Setterfield</b> Assistant Head of Children &amp; Families Services (0-13) Tel: 01733 863897 pam.setterfield@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>Consultation Document</p>
<p><b>S256 Agreement between the Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG - KEY/15NOV13/03</b> To agree the transfer of funding for social care.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Wayne Fitzgerald</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care</b></p>	<p><b>November 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p><b>Health Issues</b></p>	<p>Relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p><b>Paul Stevenson</b> Interim Head of Finance Tel: 01733 452306 paul.stevenson@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>

<p><b>District Heating Scheme For PCC Properties - KEY/29NOV13/02</b> To award a contract for the installation of a district heating system for the Town Hall, Regional Pool and Lido.</p>	<p><b>Councillor David Seaton</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Resources</b></p>	<p><b>December 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Steven Morris Client Property Manager Tel: 01733 384657 steven.morris@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents.</p>
<p><b>Legal Advisory Services for the City Council on Behalf of the Energy Services Company (ESCO) "Blue Sky Peterborough" and Related Projects and other City Council Major Development / Investment Projects - KEY/29NOV13/03</b> To award a contract for the provision of legal advisory services.</p>	<p><b>Councillor David Seaton</b> <b>Cabinet Member for Resources</b></p>	<p><b>November 2013</b></p>	<p><b>N/A</b></p>	<p>Sustainable Growth and Environment Capital</p>	<p>Relevant internal and external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Andrew Cox Senior Category Manager andy.cox@peterborough.gov.uk</p>	<p>It is not anticipated that there will be any further documents</p>

**RESOURCES DEPARTMENT Executive Director's Office at Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1HG**

Strategic Finance  
Internal Audit  
Schools Infrastructure (Assets and School Place Planning)  
Corporate Property  
Waste and Energy  
Strategic Client Services (Enterprise Peterborough / Vivacity / SERCO including Customer Services, ICT and Business Support)

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT Executive Director's Office at Bayard Place, Broadway, PE1 1FB**

Safeguarding Family and Communities  
Education  
School Improvement  
Special Educational Needs / Inclusion and the Pupil Referral Service

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE Executive Director's Office at Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1HG**

Care Services Delivery (Assessment and Care Management and Integrated Learning Disability Services)  
Mental Health  
Public Health (including Health Performance Management)

**COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT Director's Office at Bayard Place, Broadway, PE1 1FB**

Strategic Commissioning  
Safer Peterborough, Cohesion, Social Inclusion and Neighbourhood Management

**GOVERNANCE DEPARTMENT Director's Office at Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1HG**

Communications  
Legal and Governance Services  
HR Business Relations (Training and Development, Occupational Health and Reward and Policy)  
Strategic Regulatory Services  
Performance Management

**GROWTH AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT Director's Office Stuart House, St Johns Street, Peterborough, PE1 5DD**

Strategic Growth and Development Services  
Strategic Housing  
Planning Transport and Engineering (Development Management, Construction and Compliance, Infrastructure Planning and Delivery, Network Management and Passenger Transport)  
Commercial Operations (Strategic Parking and Commercial CCTV, City Centre, Markets and Commercial Trading and Tourism)

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CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
 WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
<p>10 June 2013                      23 May Draft report                      30 May Final report</p>	<p><b>Progress Report on Alternative Play Centre Provision</b>                      To scrutinise the delivery of alternative play centre provision and make any recommendations.  <b>Contact Officer: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn</b>  <b>Children’s Services Delivery Plan – Progress Report</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 March 2013 Meeting</p>
	<p>To Scrutinise the progress of the Children’s Services Delivery Plan and make any recommendations.  <b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b>  <b>Impact of Welfare Reform</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 March 2013 Meeting</p>
	<p>To Scrutinise the impact of Welfare Reform and actions being taken to address this.  <b>Contact Officers: Adrian Chapman / Wendi Ogle-Welbourn</b>  <b>Progress Report from Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Monitoring Children’s Services Improvement Plan</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 March 2013 Meeting</p>
	<p>To scrutinise the work of the Children’s Services Improvement Plan Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.  <b>Contact Officer: Louise Tyers</b>  <b>Review of 2012/13 and Future Work Programme</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 March 2013 Meeting</p>
	<p>To review the work undertaken during 2011/12 and to consider the future work programme of the Committee.  <b>Contact Officer: Paulina Ford</b></p>	

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
<p><b>22 July 2013</b>  <i>4 July Draft report</i>  <i>11 July Final report</i></p>	<p><b>Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report</b>                      To receive a report and comment on the work of the Corporate Parenting Group.  <b>Contact Officer: Debbie Haith</b></p> <p><b>Poverty Action Plan – Updated</b>                      To scrutinise the updated Poverty Action Plan and make any recommendations.  <b>Contact Officer: Adrian Chapman</b></p> <p><b>Update Report on NEET's (16 to 18 year olds not in Education, Employment or Training)</b>                      To scrutinise the report make any comments and endorse the actions taken by the 0-19 Service.  <b>Contact Officer: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn</b></p> <p><b>Peterborough School Improvement Strategy</b>                      To scrutinise and comment on the strategy and suggest areas for further discussion.  <b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p> <p><b>Peterborough EAL Strategy</b>                      To scrutinise and support the proposed EAL strategy and make any necessary recommendations.  <b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p> <p><b>Children's Services Improvement Programme– Progress Report</b>                      To Scrutinise the progress of the Children's Services Improvement Programme and make any recommendations  <b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 March 2013 meeting.</p>

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
	<p><b>Scrutiny In A Day: A Focus on Welfare Reform</b></p> <p>To receive a report on a proposal for a Scrutiny in a Day review into the Impact of Welfare Reform.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Paulina Ford / Adrian Chapman</b></p>	
<p><b>9 September 2013</b></p> <p><i>22 Aug Draft report</i></p> <p><i>29 Aug Final report</i></p>	<p><b>Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report (PSCB) 2012/13 and Business Plan 2013/14</b></p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Debbie Haith / Russell Wate, Chairman</b></p> <p><b>Children’s (Social Care) Services Statutory Complaints Process (Children act 1989) Annual Report 2012</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the Children’s (Social Care) Services Statutory Complaints Process (Children act 1989) Annual Report 2012 and make any necessary recommendations.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Belinda Evans</b></p> <p><b>Establishment of Education Improvement Task and Finish Group</b></p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p> <p><b>Children’s Services Improvement Programme– Progress Report</b></p> <p>To Scrutinise the progress of the Children’s Services Improvement Programme and make any recommendations</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b></p>	
<p><b>11 November 2013</b></p> <p><i>24 Oct Draft report</i></p> <p><i>31 Oct Final report</i></p>	<p><b>Children’s Services Improvement Programme– Progress Report</b></p> <p>To Scrutinise the progress of the Children’s Services Improvement Programme and make any recommendations</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b></p>	

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
	<p><b>Tackling Poverty Strategy and Action Plan</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the updated Poverty Action Plan and make any recommendations.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Adrian Chapman</b></p>	<p>Requested at 22 July 2013 meeting.</p>
	<p><b>Presentation of 2013 Unvalidated Examination Results</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the 2013 examination results, assess the impact of the action plan to improve educational results and make any necessary recommendations</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p>	
	<p><b>The Vision for Education in Peterborough – Developing School to School Partnerships</b></p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p>	<p>Requested at 22 April 2013 meeting.</p>
	<p><b>Scrutiny in a Day: Understanding and Managing the Impacts of Welfare Reform on Communities in Peterborough</b></p> <p><b>Contact Officers: Adrian Chapman / Paulina Ford</b></p>	
<p><b>3 December 2014</b></p>	<p><b>Call-In of Executive Decision: Early Years Services Including Children's Centres – NOV/CAB/094</b></p>	
<p><b>6 January 2014</b>  <i>16 Dec Draft report</i>  <i>20 Dec Final report</i></p>	<p><b>Children's Services Performance Report to DfE</b></p> <p>To Scrutinise the progress of the Children's Services Improvement Programme and make any recommendations</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b></p>	

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
	<p><b>New Vision for Early Years Services including Children’s Centres in Peterborough</b></p> <p>To comment on as part of the consultation process the proposed changes to the way early years services are run in Peterborough including Children’s Centres.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn</b></p> <p><b>Adoption Reform and Implementation Plan</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the Adoption Reform and Implementation Plan and make any recommendations.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Simon Green / Debbie Haith</b></p> <p><b>Implementation of the Placement Strategy and Fostering Action Plan</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the Placement Strategy and Fostering Action Plan and progress against these.</p> <p><b>Contact Officers: Lou Williams/Simon Green/Debbie Haith/Wendi Ogle-Welbourn</b></p> <p><b>City College Peterborough</b></p> <p>To scrutinise the role the City College has to play in delivering improved educational and other outcomes for the city.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Pat Carrington, Principal/Head of Service</b></p>	
<p><b>17 January 2014</b>  <b>(Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Committees and Commissions)</b></p>	<p><b>Scrutiny in a Day: Focus on Impact of Welfare Reform</b></p> <p>To conduct an in depth one day review with a focus on the impacts of Welfare Reform across all scrutiny agendas and make recommendations to mitigate those impacts.</p> <p><b>Contact officers: Paulina Ford / Adrian Chapman</b></p>	

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
<p><b>10 February 2014</b>  <b>(Joint Meeting of the Scrutiny Committees and Commissions)</b>  <b>T.B.C.</b></p>	<p><b>Budget 2014/15 and Medium Term Financial Plan</b>                      To scrutinise the Executive's proposals for the Budget 2013/14 and Medium Term Financial Plan.  <b>Contact Officer: John Harrison/Steven Pillsworth</b></p>	
<p><b>17 March 2014</b>  <i>27 Feb Draft report</i>  <i>6 March Final report</i></p>	<p><b>Presentation of 2013 Key Stage 4 Validated Examination Results</b>                      To scrutinise the 2013 examination results, assess the impact of the action plan to improve educational results and make any necessary recommendations  <b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b>  <b>Draft School Organisation Plan 2013-2018 – Delivering Local Places for Local Children – Refreshed</b>  <b>Contact Officer: Jonathan Lewis</b></p>	<p>Requested at 22 April 2013 meeting.</p>
	<p><b>The Vision for Education in Peterborough – Update Report</b></p>	<p>Requested at 11 November 2013 meeting.</p>
	<p><b>Tackling Poverty In Peterborough – Annual Progress Report</b>  <b>Contact Officer: Adrian Chapman</b></p>	

Meeting Date	Item	Progress
	<p><b>Children's Improvement Programme Task and Finish Group Final Report</b></p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Debbie Haith / Paulina Ford</b></p>	
	<p><b>Children's Services Improvement Programme– Progress Report</b></p> <p>To Scrutinise the progress of the Children's Services Improvement Programme and make any recommendations</p> <p><b>Contact Officer: Sue Westcott</b></p>	

**Items to be programmed in: 2013/14**

Item	Referred from
Educational Improvement Task and Finish Group Update Report	
Domestic Violence Strategy	Director of Children's Services at 11 November 2013 meeting

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