

CABINET

MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2016
10.00 AM

Bourges/Viersen Room - Town Hall
Contact – philippa.turvey@peterborough.gov.uk, 01733 452460

AGENDA

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*Any agenda item highlighted in bold and marked with an * is a 'key decision' involving the Council making expenditure or savings of over £500,000 or having a significant effect on two or more wards in Peterborough. These items have been advertised previously on the Council's Forward Plan (except where the issue is urgent in accordance with Section 15 of the Council's Access to Information rules).*

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MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD 25 JULY 2016

PRESENT:

Cabinet Members: Councillor Holdich (Chair), Councillor Elsey, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Goodwin, Councillor Hiller, Councillor Lamb and Councillor Walsh

Cabinet Advisors: Councillor Casey and Councillor Stokes

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Seaton, Councillor Smith and Councillor Walsh.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Holdich declared a pecuniary interest in item 6, in that he was appointed to the Cross Keys Board by the Council and that he was paid an allowance. He had been granted dispensation by the Monitoring Officer to speak on the item, but would not take part in any vote.

Councillor Fitzgerald declared a pecuniary interest in item 6, in that he was appointed to the Cross Keys Board by the Council and that he was paid an allowance. He had been granted dispensation by the Monitoring Officer to speak on the item, but would not take part in any vote.

It was advised that Councillor Hiller would take the Chair for item 6.

3. MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETINGS HELD ON:

3.1 13 June 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3.2 27 June 2016 – Extraordinary Meeting

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 27 June 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. PETITIONS PRESENTED TO CABINET

There were no petitions presented to Cabinet.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

5. FARMS ESTATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Cabinet received a report which followed its approval of the Strategy for the Management of the Farms Estate on 20 July 2016.

The purpose of the report was to seek Cabinet's approval for the Farm Estate Action Plan 2016/17, this being an implementation plan for lettings, capital investment and proposed sales on the Farms Estate and was the first such action plan.

The report had been submitted following consultation with the Peterborough Tenant Farmers Association through the Farms Estates Advisory Group.

The Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration introduced the report and advised that work had been undertaken closely with the farm tenant's representatives in order to produce the action plan. The Plan established a vision of what the estate would evolve into over the forthcoming 20 years, this being a series of core holdings around 400/500 hundred acres each and also how the educational and community value of the holdings would be explored. A comprehensive set review of the estate would be undertaken, including farm buildings, roads and drainage, so the needs of the estate could be better understood going forward and prioritisation could be given to investment, in consultation with the tenant representatives. All this would mean a much more focussed approach.

Mr Skeels, the Chairman of the Peterborough Farm Tenants Association, addressed Cabinet and thanked all those who had been involved in the creation of the Plan and for involving the Farm Tenants. He personally thanked the Chief Executive and the Leader for their involvement.

The Farms Estate Manger advised that the Plan was extremely beneficial for the long term tenants and would make the land more viable. With regards to the educational and environmental aspects of the estate, reliance was placed on external factors.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Training for modern farmers was important, this being a very multi-skilled profession, and this needed to be reflected within the curriculum; and
- More money would be invested within the estate, money had been identified within the budget for that purpose. There was a plan in place for this and would run over ten years.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the Farms Estate Action Plan 2016/17; and
2. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration to approve future Farm Estate Action Plans.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Following agreement of the Strategy for the Management of the Farms Estate by Cabinet in July 2015 it was important that Cabinet be given the opportunity to comment on and approve the Farms Estate Action Plan 2016.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing - This option was not viable as the Council had to make a number of decisions relating to letting and sale of parts of the farms estate. The Council needed to implement the approved Strategy for the Management of Farms Estate, otherwise its ongoing management had the potential to be done without reference to the agreed Strategy.

Councillor Holdich stepped down as Chair for the next item and Councillor Hiller took the Chair.

6. CREATING A HOUSING DELIVERY COMPANY AND THE RE-ALLOCATION OF CORPORATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS

Cabinet received a report the purpose of which was for it to consider the creation of a Housing Joint Venture partnership between the Council and Cross Keys, in line with the Council's approved Budget and the recommendations of a cross party task and finish group that considered changes to the Council's strategy with regards housing in Peterborough.

Councillor Hiller introduced the report and advised that as part of the budget setting, Full Council had approved the allocation of corporate resources to support the creation of the housing delivery company in order to address the need for housing in the city, by moving the Council from being an enabler to a direct developer of housing. The company would deliver new homes of all different types both in and outside of the city, but initial projects would be Peterborough based. Key aspects of the delivery company's workings and makeup were detailed within the report, alongside initial commitments outlined by both the Council and Cross Keys Homes.

Councillor Hiller further advised that there was a small amendment to the recommendations, recommendation three to read 'approve' rather than 'x'.

The Council's x, the Chief Executive of Cross Keys and x were present to respond to questions. Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The £14.6m right to buy receipts, would be allocated on a case by case basis as projects came forward. This would also be true of the £20m allocation included within the 'invest to save' capital budget, which had been approved by Council at its meeting of 13 July 2016;
- The development of student accommodation could be considered. The venture would consider development of all types of housing and tenures. All cases would need to be financially viable;
- The venture would focus on all areas for development and not just the city centre;
- The Peterborough Investment Partnership was, in many ways, focused on the regeneration of brownfield sites in the city centre (although not solely confined to that) with a larger scale mixed use focus, whereas the Housing Joint Venture would focus primarily on residential accommodation. The Housing Joint Venture would had more of a limited focus than the Peterborough Investment Partnership and may also look at areas outside the city for development; and
- There was no specific scale of development that the Housing Joint Venture would focus on, development would primarily be based upon the viability of the each scheme on a case by case basis.

Cabinet considered the report and **APPROVED:**

1. The establishment of a JV Limited Liability Partnership ("LLP") with Cross Keys Homes Development Ltd ("Cross Keys");
2. The Director of Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Director of Governance and Corporate Director: Resources to exercise delegated authority to finalise and agree all necessary legal agreements with Cross Keys and the LLP to establish the JV's structure and operation;
3. The investment of £100,000 into the Joint Venture for operating capital;

4. The withdrawal of the existing Affordable Housing Capital Funding Policy;

And **AGREED**:

5. That future grants from Section 106 Planning Receipts will be approved by the Corporate Director – Growth and Regeneration, except where they are intended to be given to the Housing Joint Venture in which case they will be approved by the Head of Service - Sustainable Growth Strategy;

And **NOTED**:

6. The allocation of the Right to Buy receipts for the Housing Joint Venture in line with the Council's approved Budget for 2016/17; and

And **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**:

7. Amendments to the Constitution 'Appointments to external organisations' to include the joint venture company once established within the key partnerships category to enable the Leader to make appointments to the Housing Joint Venture Board.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The recommendations allowed the housing delivery company approved by Full Council in the 2016/17 budget to be put into place, creating a mechanism for implementing recommendations from the cross-party task and finish group previously mentioned in within the report. This new joint venture would also allow a more active, targeted use of the Right to Buy receipts, facilitating greater delivery of affordable housing. It would also help the Council to directly act to ensure the Local Plan's five-year supply requirements continued to be met, which would assist in fending off unwanted, speculative development and the range of detrimental consequences such development could potentially have.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing - The Council could choose not to work to develop housing itself. This was rejected because it contradicts the recommendations of the task and finish review group mentioned within the report. It would also be inconsistent with the Council's increasingly proactive approach to delivery.

Develop housing directly through a wholly-owned company or under contract - The Council could choose to work alone rather than with a partner (either through a subsidiary company owned 100% by the Council, or by placing development contracts). This option was rejected because the Council had limited internal development experience, and building such experience both takes time and introduces risk until it is embedded.

Use the Peterborough Investment Partnership - The PIP's progress of the Fletton Quays scheme had been an unarguable success. It was therefore considered early on as to whether an arrangement that included the PIP would be possible for the delivery of housing. Whilst the PIP was clearly capable of developing housing schemes, this option was rejected because the Housing Joint Venture's (at least initial) focus on facilitating affordable homes (including their retention and management) was felt to work better with a partner whose primary focus was that, for which Cross Keys would be a better fit.

Councillor Holdich took the Chair.

7. SAFER PETERBOROUGH PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2016/17

Cabinet received a report which requested it to consider the Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan for 2016/17 and to make a recommendation to Full Council for consideration at its meeting due to be held on 12 October 2016.

The Plan set out the community safety priorities for the Partnership over the coming year.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health introduced the report and advised that the proposed Plan was for a period of a year. He further advised that there was an amendment to the recommendation contained within the report for Cabinet to endorse the report and recommend its adoption to Full Council, as the document was a Major Policy Framework item.

The Council's Service Director Adult Services and Communities advised that the Plan was statutory and was being presented as a one year plan, on the basis that a full needs assessment would be conducted during 2016/17 of crime and ASB and the impacts of both. The Safer Peterborough Partnership had endorsed the Plan and it was the view of the Partnership that there had been significant changes over the past year, not least the launch of the prevention and enforcement service, which warranted further work to be undertaken, hence the production at the current time of a one year plan. There were four priorities contained within the Plan, three being the same as previous and the recommended addition of a new priority focussing on high risk and vulnerable people, in particular people affected by child sexual exploitation and young people missing from home. The Plan contained a number of work streams which would articulate how the priorities would be delivered for the remainder of the year and would feed into the development of at least a three year plan from 2017 onwards.

The Council's Head of Community Services provided further clarification around the rationale for the production of a one year plan including the events which had occurred during 2016, including the European Referendum, the election of a new Police Crime Commissioner and the Paris terrorist attacks.

Cabinet debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- One of the main pieces of work to be undertaken over the forthcoming year was the creation of the multi-agency, multi-disciplinary prevention and enforcement service. An overview of the service was given and it was advised that the improvements would make for a better service for the public. It was due to be launched in September 2016;
- The use of restorative justice was an effective way of preventing individuals from continuing to re-offend and it had been embedded by the police over a number of years and was developing across partnerships;
- With regards to crime rates, current recorded levels showed an increase in certain types of crime, however this could be attributed to the way in which these crimes were being recorded. In reality, there had been no discernable increase in the number of crimes which tended to affect the majority of communities;
- The service offered by the Victims Hub did not differentiate between victim types nor the severity of crimes committed. The Hub was there to provide support to all victims and would never refuse support to any individual who was the victim of a crime;
- Social media was being used to gather intelligence and the 'Engine Room' would monitor social media. There was also a hotline to report environmental issues, in particular flytipping and this was in the process of being going live;

- There were high expectations for the multi-agency system. It would provide a better service for citizens who lived or worked in Peterborough and would make sustainable changes by tackling the root cause of issues;
- Priority number 4 was in relation to the support of vulnerable victims and this was a deliberate terminology encompassing both adults and victims of child sexual exploitation and younger people missing from home;
- Work had been undertaken with Addenbrookes in relation to road safety issues as this was the regional trauma centre for road traffic accidents. Work was also undertaken with other health partners and health had a representative on the statutory community safety partnership; and
- With regards hate crime post referendum, there had been an increase in 14 reported incidents in the space of about a month. Hate crime was an underreported crime and the focus on this nationally was helpful when trying to raise the profile of how a victim of hate crime should report such crimes and get the support that they needed.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to endorse the Safer Peterborough Partnership Plan 2016/17 and the priorities contained therein and to recommend its adoption to Full Council.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Safer Peterborough Plan fulfilled the Council's statutory requirements to have a community safety plan. The Plan set out the multi-agency approach to tackling community safety issues and ways in which the city could build stronger communities.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not approve the Safer Peterborough Plan – This option was not recommended due to the statutory requirements placed upon councils to have a community safety plan in place.

Chairman
10.00am – 10.52am

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	John Harrison, Corporate Director: Resources	Tel. 01733 452520

AMENDMENT OF EXISTING LOAN ARRANGEMENTS TO EMPOWER COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT LLP

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM : Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	Deadline date : N/A
Cabinet is requested to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the amendment of the terms of the Strategic Partnership with Empower Community Management LLP; 2. Approve amendment of the financing agreement with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP; 3. Approve the due diligence on the purchase of the existing operational solar PV installation; 4. Approve Council entering into such further agreements with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and any other body necessary to facilitate the arrangements set out in this report; and 5. Delegate to the Corporate Director; Resources and Director of Governance the ability to finalise any individual matters including the amendment as necessary of any existing contractual documents. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a request from Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to authorise the provision of additional capital finance to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP to which the Council already provides finance as authorised by DEC14/CAB/112 and OCT15/CMDN/85. This follows the decision by Council on 13 July 2016 to increase the Invest to Save budget.

2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.1 'to take collective responsibility for the delivery of all strategic Executive functions within the Council's Major Policy and Budget Framework and lead the Council's overall improvement programmes to deliver excellent services.'

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND TO DECISION

4.1 In December 2014 by DEC14/CAB/112 Cabinet resolved to approve that Council entered into a strategic partnership agreement with Empower Community Management LLP to enable a first project to deliver solar PV on private residential properties in Peterborough. Cabinet also resolved that the Council entered into a shareholder agreement to become an equal partner in a Community Interest Company with Empower Community Management

LLP and that Council entered into a finance agreement with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP (a partnership between Empower Community Management and another entity within the Empower group). The value of this decision was £4.45m.

4.2 By subsequent Cabinet Member Decision Notices OCT15/CMDN/ 83, 84 and 85 approval was given to:

1. Approve Extension of Qualifying Property Ownership for Private Residential in Peterborough – no additional funding.
2. Extension of Scheme to Axiom Housing Association – value up to £2.5m.
3. Approve investment for Social Housing Schemes outside Peterborough – value up to £40m

The total amount currently allocated from the Invest to Save budget to the Empower scheme is £47m

4.3 Following the extension of the Invest to Save Budget, Cabinet is asked to consider potential future investment opportunities in renewable energy schemes with ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and enable it to expand its portfolio of residential property installations. To facilitate this potential investment opportunity an additional £30m was allocated to the Empower project from the agreed increased Invest to Save budget

4.2 Proposed Investment Opportunity – Gentoo Group operational PV systems on social homes

4.2.1 Gentoo Group has a portfolio of 3,100 solar PV systems that are set up and running on the social homes of Gentoo Group which are outside Peterborough. It has approached Empower to take over and manage these operational schemes. The funding required by ECS Peterborough 1 LLP from the Council for the acquisition of these schemes is up to £7m. The transaction will involve ECS Peterborough 1 LLP carrying a debt to Gentoo of c£750,000 however that debt will be fully subordinated to the amounts owed to the Council. Only c£12m of the original £47m already allocated to the Empower scheme by the Council has been utilised to date and therefore the deployment of a further £7m is within the amounts previously authorised and is consistent with the extension approved in respect of investment for Social Housing Schemes outside Peterborough pursuant to Cabinet Member Decision Notice OCT15/CMDN/ 83, 84 and 85.

4.3 Extension to current installation Programme

4.3.1 Empower Community would like to set up new installation programmes and are in discussions with several Councils and ALMO to Councils with a view to including them in the current installation programme if successful.

4.3.2 On the basis of the initial PV programme the estimated total number of installations possible from these programmes is in the region of 95,000 PV systems. This would require additional funding by the Council to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP of up to £22m.

4.4 Due Diligence on the purchase of the existing social housing PV schemes

4.4.1 ECS Peterborough 1 LLP has undertaken due diligence on its purchase of the operational housing PV scheme. The Council, as funder of ECS Peterborough 1 LLP, is also undertaking its own due diligence to give a sufficient level of assurance as the Council has the right to 'step in' and take control of the SPV in the event of default. This due diligence is being undertaken by the Council with assistance from its advisors, Pinsent Mason, for legal advice, Deloitte for financial advice and Arcadis for technical advice and will be charged to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP

Deloitte LLP has reviewed:

- Financial projections for the Gentoo Portfolio as acquired by ECS Peterborough 1 LLP funded by the additional £7m and to be refinanced in mid 2017

- Commercial risks of the financing and their mitigations in contracts and other arrangements

Outstanding items:

There are minor amendments to the financial model of the Gentoo portfolio and its financing which do not affect its overall viability

Arcadis has reviewed:

- Technical review of the installed equipment
- Review of the FIT claim data
- Technical review of relevant aspects of contracts
- Performance of the assets

Outstanding items:

10 sites designated for transfer are still awaiting FIT registration, if these are not approved before the date of transfer they will be removed from the portfolio. Concerns were raised about the performance monitoring of the sites by Gentoo, but going forward weekly and quarterly monitoring is to be undertaken.

Liquidated damages within the O&M contract are to be amended to widen their scope to losses incurred below the expected yield.

Pinsent Masons has reviewed:

- Asset Purchase Agreement (seeking input from Deloitte and Arcadis where appropriate)
- O&M Agreement to be entered into between ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and Gentoo
- Payment schedule annexed to Roof Access Licence (regulating the amounts paid to Gentoo for allowing the PV assets to remain on their rooftops post completion)
- The existing finance documents in favour of PCC to assess amendments required to facilitate the proposed Gentoo acquisition

Outstanding items:

Finalisation of transaction documents (including amendments to existing finance documentation) and of O&M Agreement and Roof Access Agreement. Confirmation of how ECS Peterborough 1 LLP proposes to obtain reliance on all equipment warranties.

4.5 ECS Peterborough 1 LLP - refinancing

- 4.5.1 ECS Peterborough 1 LLP will continue to be funded in the short term at a commercial rate of interest until the scheme is refinanced by long term funding by a private funder and there is an objective to refinance in the second quarter of 2017. Once this has been repaid it was agreed that an extra £50m will be allocated to the Invest to Save budget to enable the funding of future schemes. This additional £50m will only be triggered once ECS Peterborough 1 LLP has been refinanced and the loan repaid to the Council

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Group Leaders have been consulted.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1.1 The proposals in the report:
- are in line with the Environment capital policy of the Council
 - allow owners to benefit from free solar PV installation
 - generate free energy for occupiers
 - will contribute to the alleviation of fuel poverty
 - will deliver an area wide programme
 - will lead to the creation of a local community fund out of profits
 - additional interest income from the increased loan until the re-financing takes place
 - generate investment returns by the Council

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. Generate a surplus income which will contribute to the Renewable Energy Savings targets in the MTFS.
- 7.2 Supports the Council's aspirations to be the UK's Environment Capital by promoting and facilitating use of sustainable energy sources.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The Council has a discretion as to whether to advance any additional funding to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and could determine not to make such further advance. However the Council would lose the opportunity to enhance the refinancing package offered by ECS Peterborough 1 LLP and lose the opportunity to receive the additional interest income from the increased loan until the re-financing takes place.

9. IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Financial

- 9.1.1 ECS Peterborough 1 LLP will continue to be funded in the short term by the Council at a commercial rate of interest (in accordance with Market Economy Investor Principles) until such time as the scheme receives long term funding with a private investor. The objective is to refinance in the second quarter of 2017.

The Council will receive returns from two sources:

- Interest income on the investment
- Existing profit share from ECS Peterborough 1 LLP in so far as profits generated related to the Peterborough area

- 9.1.2 Security for the loan is taken by way of a Debenture which provides the Council with the right to acquire the assets should the loan not be repaid at the appropriate time. The Council under the finance agreements 'step in' to take control of the SPV in a situation where there is a default on the loan

- 9.1.3 The Council also has further securities in relation to its loan. All cash transactions will continue to be managed by NCM Fund Services Limited an FCA registered company operating to strict criteria set by the Council as to when funds can be released

- 9.1.4 The financial benefits to the Council will be increased by the increased loan to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP for the purchase of the existing Gentoo Portfolio, which will generate a net income to the Council for the financial year 2016/17 of £147k. The projected net income for 2017/18 is £77k but this will be subject to the actual date of the refinancing.

9.2 Legal

- 9.2.1 The Council has the ability to lend to ECS Peterborough 1 LLP under the Local Government Act 2003 "power to invest" as well as under the general power of competence. In making any such investment the Council is required to give regard to the Government's commentary to the Guidance on Local Government Investments, as well as the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State and specific guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. Furthermore, any such investment must be consistent with the Council's Annual Investment Strategy. Any request for funding from the Invest to Save budget will also be made in accordance with the Council's Constitution and applicable Contract Rules.

- 9.2.2 Unlawful state aid occurs where a benefit is granted from a public resource for free or on favourable terms which distort competition. The scheme structure follows market principles and as such and there is no unlawful state aid implication. However, this situation will also

continue to be monitored to ensure that no state aid issues arise as commercial terms are finalised.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- Cabinet Decision - DEC14/CAB/112; and
- Cabinet Member Decision - OCT15/CMDN/85.

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CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Lou Williams, Service Director for Children and Safeguarding	Tel. 864139

CONTRACT AWARD FOR NEW PERMANENCY SERVICE

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM : Service Director for Children & Safeguarding	Deadline date : N/A
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Award a contract to The Adolescent and Children’s Trust [known as ‘TACT’] for the delivery of the Permanency Service within Peterborough for a total value of £126,150,000 from 1 April 2017 until 31 March 2027 with a further option for the Council to extend for a 10 year period. 2. Authorise the Corporate Director: People and Communities to (i) extend the contract for a further 10 year period at a cost of up to £125,000,000, adjusted for inflation as necessary, should the Council exercise the option to extend, and (ii) approve any variations to the contract, subject to consultation with the Director of Governance. 3. Authorise the Director of Governance to enter into any other legal documentation necessary to document the contractual and other legal arrangements between the parties. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a request from Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services.
- 1.2 The Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee considered this matter on 12 September 2016. A summary of the observations by Scrutiny will be available for Cabinet to consider at the meeting on 26 September 2016. The Scrutiny Committee report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The service specification of the Permanency Service is attached as Appendix 2.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet Approval to proceed with contract award.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.3. ‘To take a leading role in promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area.’

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. DETAILS OF DECISION REQUIRED

- 4.1. Members will be aware of the proposal to develop a Permanency Service in Peterborough. Under these proposals, organisations were to be invited to tender for the opportunity to deliver a range of services in the City, including:
- Fostering and adoption services;
 - Services to support children and carers living in families under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders;
 - The Family Group Conferencing Service;
 - The opportunity to develop new services to better support children and young people returning home from care;
 - Some limited social work services to children in 'permanent' in-house foster placements and leaving and after care support for this group of children and young people.
- 4.2. This approach is designed to enable us to support improved outcomes for children in care and on the edge of care by ensuring that as many as possible live in stable, loving, and legally permanent homes, improving support for foster carers and so improving placement stability for children and young people in care, while reducing the overall financial cost to the Council. Savings will be achieved through reduced reliance on high cost Independent Fostering Agency placements, with a proportion of savings re-invested into services for children and young people in the City.
- 4.3. The full service specification for the Permanency Service is set out in Appendix 2 to this report. This provides detailed information about the aims and objectives of the new service, together with the performance monitoring arrangements that will be put in place to ensure that these are achieved.
- 4.4. The proposal to develop the Permanency Service is highly innovative, and is the first of its kind in the country. There is considerable interest at national level. This is coinciding with current increased concerns about the levels of profit being made from the provision of private sector fostering placements, and with the current focus of Government on improving outcomes for children and young people in care and on the edge of care.
- 4.5. There are a number of key aims and objectives required from the Permanency Service, including:
- Increasing the capacity of 'in-house' foster placements and so reducing the reliance on much more expensive Independent Fostering Agency placements;
 - Maintaining the current very good performance of adoption services in Peterborough;
 - Improving the support offered to carers of children and young people under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders;
 - Investing in developing Family Group Conferencing Services;
 - Investing in improving support for the significant numbers of children and young people who leave care and return to their parents or former carers;
 - Increasing the number of children who enjoy the security of legally permanent homes.
- 4.6. Together, achieving these aims and objectives will result in improved outcomes for children and young people. At the same time, the approach will support reductions in overall spending by reducing the numbers of children and young people placed in higher cost care placements.
- 4.7. Although the Permanency Service will be delivered through a commissioning arrangement, the service specification sets out the intention for delivery to be through a genuine partnership between the Council and TACT, as described in the governance arrangements, below.

Governance Arrangements

- 4.8. Subject to approval of the contract award to TACT, a Joint Governance Board will be established to include senior officers from the Council and TACT. This board will oversee

the activities of the Permanency Service and ensure that key performance indicators are being achieved. This Board will be chaired by the Director of Children's Services – at least initially - thus ensuring that there is senior level oversight of the development and operation of the new service.

- 4.9. Day to day management of the service would be the responsibility of TACT, but there are further arrangements for ensuring that the service is delivering the outcomes required of it, including through a Strategic Management Board, which will be established to oversee the detailed work required to establish the service, and an Operational Management Board that will have responsibility for ensuring that day to day operations are delivering the required outcomes. The Strategic Management Board functions will be likely to be subsumed into the other two boards once the new service is fully operational.
- 4.10. TACT will also be required to provide regular reports to Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Committee as appropriate, detailing performance and impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Relevant Legislation

- 4.11. In delivering these outcomes the service will adhere to the requirements of legislation and statutory guidance throughout the period of the contract, and will adapt practices and processes in accordance with any changes. Key legislation and guidance relevant to deliver the service include:
- The Children Act 1989 and in particular statutory guidance relating to:
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 1: Court Orders 2008;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2015;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for care Leavers 2010;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011.
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review [England] Regulations 2010, as amended by:
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations, 2013;
 - Adoption and care Planning [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2014;
 - The Care Planning and Fostering [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2015.
 - The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011;
 - Family and Friends' Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2011;
 - Short Breaks: Statutory Guidance on how to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Disabled Children using Short Breaks [2010];
 - The Children [Leaving Care] Act 2000;
 - Staying Put: Arrangements for Care Leavers aged 18 and above 2013;
 - Sufficiency: Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children 2010;
 - The Adoption and Children Act 2002;
 - Statutory Guidance on Adoption for Local Authorities, Voluntary Adoption Agencies, and Adoption Support Agencies 2013;
 - The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 [as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2014];
 - The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2014;
 - The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 including the Children and Young Person's Act 2008 [Relevant Care Functions] [England] Regulations 2014 and Statutory Instrument 2014 Number 2407;
 - The Children and Families' Act 2014;
 - The Special Guardianship Regulations 2005.
- 4.12. In addition, the contracted provider will be required to adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and to Caldecott Guidance in respect of information held, regardless of whether this is held electronically or as part of manual records.

- 4.13. The above list is not exhaustive but sets out the main legislative framework under which the Permanency Service will operate. The overall aims and objectives of the Permanency Service are not deliverables that can be found in any single piece of legislation or guidance. The overarching principle of delivery of the service is that it offers a child centred service that delivers to at least the minimum statutory requirement in all areas of delivery.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. A great deal of time and attention has been given to involving staff, foster and other carers and, at an appropriate level, children and young people, in the proposals to develop the permanency service at every stage through the process. This has included developing the service specification, through to helping to evaluate the submitted tenders. This consultation process has included staff from SERCO, a small number of whom are directly affected by these proposals, and with trades unions.
- 5.2. This involvement has been very helpful to the process as it has helped us to ensure that we have got our proposals right, that we have listened to the what foster carers have told us that they need, and have taken into account suggestions and any concerns raised by staff and children and young people.
- 5.3. One area of concern raised by staff has been any impact there may be on themselves, and particularly in relation to pension entitlement. Employees engaged in the work transferring will have their terms and conditions of employment protected under TUPE regulations. TACT has also confirmed their commitment to providing continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme [LGPS] through obtaining Admitted Body Status to the LGPS. An admission body agreement will be entered into between TACT, the Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 5.4. Assuming Cabinet agrees to the recommendation to award the contract, further extensive consultation will take place with staff, foster carers, young people and other stakeholders. This consultation will be on both an informal and formal basis. Extensive informal consultation involving all relevant stakeholders will take place in order to inform the final shaping of the service, while formal consultation will take place in relation to the transfer of members of staff to TACT under TUPE arrangements. These formal processes will apply to both Council and SERCO members of staff.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The anticipated outcome is that Cabinet approves the award of the contract for the Permanency Service from 1 April 2017 as detailed above.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. Although there are financial savings attached to this proposed contract, the approach to developing the proposed Permanency Service has been built on improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Peterborough, as outlined in the sections above. To summarise, improved outcomes will be achieved as a result of:
- Increased placement choice for children and young people needing care or who are in care through an increased number of 'in-house' foster placements;
 - Better placement matching between children in care and foster carers whom we know well and who are local to Peterborough;
 - Increased placement stability as a result of improved levels of support and training for foster carers;
 - Increased capacity within the Family Group Conferencing Service, increasing the likelihood that children are able to remain with families on a sustainable basis or, where this fails, to remain within their extended family, benefiting from legal permanency as offered by a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order;
 - Reduced risk of the breakdown of placements under the above orders coming to un-planned ends as a result of the development of improved support services that are in-line with adoption support;

- The development of innovative programmes to help to support children and young people returning home to their families after a period in care, reducing the likelihood of a return to care, and all the associated negative consequences to relationships and long term outcome;
 - The continued strong performance in relation to adoption and adoption support as outlined in the service specification;
 - The capacity of a new charitable provider to draw in other charitable organisations and funding streams to support children, young people and their families in Peterborough.
- 7.2. Paragraphs 4.14 – 4.48 of the report for Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee dated 12 September 2016 [Appendix 1 to this report], expand on the above bullet points and provide detailed information about the expected benefits for children and carers that will follow from the development of the Permanency Service.
- 7.3. This is an innovative project. Innovation tends to carry an element of risk. Possible risks have been minimised through the governance arrangements as detailed above, and through a range of other measures as set out in paragraphs 4.82 – 4.93 in the same report to Scrutiny dated 12 September 2016, at Appendix 1 to this report.

Procurement

- 7.4. The contract was procured under Regulation 74 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 7.5. A Competitive Contract Notice was published through Delta, a system that publishes the opportunity to a number of tendering journals, such as Contract Finder and the Council's website. Bidders are directed to the Council's e-sourcing portal (Supplierforce) that gives them access to the council's Invitation to Tender (ITT) and supporting documentation. The ITT explains to bidders how the procurement process will be conducted and gives instructions on how to proceed with entering a compliant bid.
- 7.6. The open procurement process included a separate qualification stage (pass or fail) and an award stage (scored out of 1-00%); both stages are contained within the same Invitation to Tender (ITT) document.
- 7.7. The qualification stage assessed bidders against criteria that included: finance; insurance; safeguarding; quality assurance; licensing and registration; technical and professional ability and specific elements such as if they are a 'not for profit organisation'; willing to participate in open booking accounting and if they meet the legislative requirements regarding Registered Adoption and Fostering Agencies.
- 7.8. The ITT consisted of four elements, with the maximum scores for each listed below:
- Method statement questions [60%];
 - Presentations – four in total [20%];
 - Actual price [10%], and;
 - Pricing assumptions [10%].
- 7.9. Prior to entering their tenders, the participating organisations were afforded the opportunity to ask the PCC clarification questions; this allowed bidders to take account of the answers whilst compiling their bids. Once the bids were submitted the Main Evaluation Panel undertook a desktop evaluation of the ITT responses. Bidders were then invited to undertake four presentations that were evaluated by four separate panels, these included Staff, Foster Carers and Children and Young People. Another separate panel evaluated the Actual Price Submission. Bidders were asked to clarify certain elements of information prior to the final evaluation and moderation process occurring.
- 7.10. Tenders were evaluated on a Quality: Cost ratio of 80%:20%.
- 7.11. Three organisations submitted tenders which were evaluated as follows:

	TACT	Supplier A	Supplier B
	Weighted Score	Weighted Score	Weighted Score
Quality (60%)	44.39%	40.79%	41.73%
Price (10%)	9.87%	10%	8.33%
Financial Assumptions (10%)	7.00%	9.00%	6.00%
Evaluation Panels (20%)	13.5%	10.5%	9.75%
Total	74.78%	70.29%	65.81%

7.12. This means that the outcome of the evaluation process was that TACT supplied the winning tender with a total score of 74.78%.

7.13. In terms of the staff panel, TACT came just behind bidder A [with a difference in score of one mark] but was well ahead of bidder B. Foster carers rated TACT as the strongest bidder of the three. The panel of children in care placed TACT and bidder B as equal first, with bidder A placed significantly behind.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The following options were considered and rejected:

8.2 Option 1 - Continuation of current services. This option was rejected for the following reasons:

- a) The Council has a responsibility to use public resources responsibly and faces significant budget pressures. Doing nothing would imply acceptance of reliance on as many as 100 relatively high cost placements for children and young people, leading to the need to make savings elsewhere in children's services;
- b) A tender exercise would generate competition within the market, potentially leading to innovation and the potential to invest in additional services for children and young people, as outlined elsewhere in this report.

8.3 Option 2 – Cease to provide placement services. This option was rejected as Peterborough City Council has a statutory duty to deliver these services.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications

9.1. The total value of the contract over the 10 year period is £125,250,000.

9.2. Under the terms of the contract, all budgets relating to the placement costs for children and young people in care, to the support of adoptive carers and carers under Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders will transfer to the Permanency Service. The budget that will transfer is that which is sufficient to meet placement costs. The budget that will transfer is the equivalent budget for the cost of all placements as in the financial year 2015/16 - £11,666,309, and the full cost of staff transferring under TUPE [£1.5M for local authority staff and a further £76,000 for non-local authority staff], together with budgets associated with operating the service – mileage and so on. This budget will, however, reduce over the first two years of the contract as we expect TACT to have a quick impact on reducing the use of high cost placements. The table below shows how the budget is expected to reduce over the first four years of the contract, with the current financial year as a benchmark:

Item	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Placements	£11.67M	£11.02M	£10.77M	£10.77M	£10.77M
Salaries	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M
Other	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M
Total	£13.4M	£12.75M	£12.5M	£12.5M	£12.5M

- 9.3. The provider is expected to make savings of £650,000 in the first year and a further £250,000 in year 2. These targets were set at a time when we expected the contract to be awarded earlier in the current financial year. The contract start date of April 1st 2017 makes these savings more challenging to achieve.
- 9.4. TACT has indicated within the bid that it will not deliver the savings within the timescales, requiring more time to deliver the cumulative savings required. However, TACT will manage the delayed phasing of the savings, meaning that the Council will still make the savings identified, assuming that other factors such as the overall demand on the placement budget remains within the expected budget within the current financial year.
- 9.5. Any further surplus generated beyond the envisaged savings target will be subject to a savings share. This will mean that TACT will receive one third of any additional surplus to re-invest in services, while the Council will retain two thirds. Half of the money retained by the Council will contribute to the Council's savings targets, while the remaining half will be invested in prevention and early help services.
- 9.6. The full cost of staff, including on-costs, will transfer with the staff to TACT. There has been no attempt to 'asset strip' the service prior to transfer; we are committed to ensuring that TACT has the resources that it needs to deliver the improved outcomes that we want to see for our children and young people.
- 9.7. The service specification and contract allows for certain contingencies including an increase in placement costs due to increasing numbers of children and young people in care and/or an increase in demand for very high cost placements. Essentially, such pressures will be reported to the Joint Governance Board, which will look for ways of meeting the shortfall within the Permanency Service and children's services as a whole, which is in line with current approaches to when there is an increase in demand.

Procurement Implications

- 9.8. This procurement was conducted using an open procurement process compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015; this utilised the new Light Touch Regime for Health, Social, Education and Certain other Service Contracts. This report is produced as part of Peterborough City Council's Governance Procedures.
- 9.9. Assuming the recommendations are accepted by Cabinet, the bidders will each receive Alcatel letters outlining what scores were achieved and the rationale utilised.
- 9.10. The Alcatel Letter explains that the provisional decision is subject to expiry of the voluntary ten-day standstill period, without challenge. The voluntary standstill period will conclude on 10 October 2016 and no contract will be awarded until after this date. Assuming the Key Decision is approved and subject to the provisional decision remaining unaltered as a result of any representations made during the standstill period, the expected date of contract award will be 11 October 2016, with an expected implementation date of 1 April 2017.
- 9.11. The voluntary standstill period ensures that any challenges are realised before the Contract Award Letters are sent out. Having a standstill period helps protect the Council against any unnecessary risks that may occur as a result of challenge. The Alcatel Letter also strongly advises the winning bidder not to enter into any expenditure before the contract is awarded.
- 9.12. The procurement process has taken into account the complex nature of this Permanency Services procurement and representations from the bidders. As a result, the timescales were extended to allow further questions to be answered by PCC and for these answers to be incorporated into the tender submissions.

Legal Implications

- 9.13. The tender was undertaken in accordance with Regulation 74 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 9.14. As also set out in the Creating Opportunities, Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Report [Appendix 1], the Permanency Service is required to adhere to the following legislation in relation to the provision of services:
- The Children Act 1989;
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by:
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations, 2013;
 - Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014;
 - The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015.
 - The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011;
 - The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000;
 - The Adoption and Children Act 2002;
 - The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 [as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015];
 - The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 including the Children and Young Person's Act 2008 (Relevant Care Functions) (England) Regulations 2014;
 - The Children and Families' Act 2014;
 - The Special Guardianship Regulations 2005.

Human Resources Implications

- 9.15. Human resources implications are detailed in the Creating Opportunities, Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Report [Appendix 1], paragraphs 6.5 to 6.8. These are repeated here for ease of reference:
- 9.16. In summary, all Human Resources considerations have been taken into account during the planning of the tender, the tender itself, and will be incorporated into the mobilisation and transfer planning.
- 9.17. Employees engaged in the work transferring will have their terms and conditions of employment protected under TUPE regulations. The recommended bidder has also confirmed their commitment to providing continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme [LGPS] via Admitted Body Status to the LGPS.
- 9.18. Ongoing informal consultation has been undertaken with affected staff of the Council and those from our strategic partner, SERCO, also affected by the transfer, as well as with the trades unions. Affected staff have had the continuing opportunity to discuss any concerns and confirm their understanding through the programme of regular briefings. Other Council staff have also been kept informed through regular communications.
- 9.19. Assuming Cabinet accepts the recommendation to award the contract, the Council's Human Resources service will liaise with the Human Resources service within TACT to co-ordinate joint formal consultation with affected staff and trades unions, and will ensure that all necessary due diligence is completed.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 None.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Report to Scrutiny Committee, 12 September 2016: Proposal to develop a Permanency Service in Peterborough: Recommendation to award contract
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Permanency Service: Final Service Specification

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 9
12 SEPTEMBER 2016	Public Report

Report of the Corporate Director for People and Communities		
Contact Officer	Lou Williams; Service Director for Children & Safeguarding	Tel: 864139

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A PERMANENCY SERVICE IN PETERBOROUGH: RECOMMENDATION TO AWARD CONTRACT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report provides an update to Scrutiny about the proposals to develop a Permanency Service in Peterborough, and specifically recommends the commissioning of the delivery of this service by an external partner organisation.
- 1.2. The report summarises the approach taken to developing the service specification, the tender documentation and the final outcome following the conclusion of the tender process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the content of this report, and in particular the positive involvement in the process by staff, foster carers and young people.
- 2.2. Members are asked to note the recommendation to award the contract for operating the new Permanency Service is awarded to The Adolescent and Children's Trust [known as TACT] – the largest dedicated fostering and adoption charity in the UK.
- 2.3. Members are asked to provide comment on this scrutiny report that can be taken into consideration by Cabinet, when the recommendation to award the contract is discussed on 26th September 2016.
- 2.4. Members are recommended:
 - To request a report on the progress of the delivery of the new service in 12 months' time.

3. LINKS TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND RELEVANT CABINET PORTFOLIO

- 3.1. This report relates to the corporate priority to support vulnerable people.
- 3.2. The report falls within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. Members will be aware of the proposal to develop a Permanency Service in Peterborough. These proposals were the subject of a report to the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee on 16th November 2015. An update was also provided to Scrutiny on 18th January 2016. Under these proposals, organisations were to be invited to tender for the opportunity to deliver a range of services in the City, including:
- Fostering and adoption services;
 - Services to support children and carers living in families under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders;
 - The Family Group Conferencing Service;
 - Some limited social work services to children in 'permanent' in-house foster placements and leaving and after care support for this group of children and young people.
- 4.2. This approach is designed to enable us to support improved outcomes for children in care and on the edge of care by ensuring that as many as possible live in stable, loving, and legally permanent homes, improving support for foster carers and so improving placement stability for children and young people in care, while reducing the overall financial cost to the Council. Savings will be achieved through reduced reliance on high cost Independent Fostering Agency placements, with a proportion of savings re-invested into services for children and young people in the City.
- 4.3. The full service specification for the Permanency Service is set out in Appendix 1 to this report; the draft specification was shared with the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee on 18th January 2016. Changes between the draft and the final specification reflected the outcome of continuing consultation with key stakeholders, including staff and foster carers, and of advice from colleagues in Legal and Human Resources services.
- 4.4. The proposal to develop the Permanency Service is highly innovative, and the first of its kind in the country. There is considerable interest at national level. This is coinciding with current increased concerns about the levels of profit being made from the provision of private sector fostering placements, and with the current focus of Government on improving outcomes for children and young people in care and on the edge of care.
- 4.5. Four organisations responded to the invitation to tender. Of these, three organisations submitted comprehensive bids, which were assessed against a number of evaluation questions and by representative panels of staff, foster carers and young people. TACT was the organisation that scored the highest marks overall. The other two organisations are referred to in this report as bidders A and B.
- 4.6. The evaluation questions and panel presentations were all designed to help us to assess the extent to which the organisations bidding for the contract could evidence their ability to meet the outcomes set out in the specification for the Permanency Service, the main elements of which are briefly summarised in the following sections.
- 4.7. In the event that the recommendation to award the contract to TACT is accepted, the contract will be for a period of 10 years, with an option to extend for a further 10 years. Any shorter contract would undermine the notion of this being a permanency service. There are the usual break clauses within the contract and, in the event of significant

failings, there is also a 'step-in' clause, by which the Council would be able to take back control of the service.

Overall Aims and Objectives

- 4.8. There are a number of key aims and objectives required from the Permanency Service, including:
- Increasing the capacity of 'in-house' foster placements and so reducing the reliance on much more expensive Independent Fostering Agency placements;
 - Maintaining the current very good performance of adoption services in Peterborough;
 - Improving the support offered to carers of children and young people under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders;
 - Investing in developing Family Group Conferencing Services;
 - Investing in improving support for the significant numbers of children and young people who leave care and return to their parents or former carers.
- 4.9. Together, these initiatives will result in improved outcomes for children and young people, with increased numbers being well supported in permanent family-based homes. At the same time, the approach will support reductions in overall spending by reducing the numbers of children and young people placed in higher cost care placements.
- 4.10. Although the Permanency Service will be delivered through a commissioning arrangement, the service specification sets out the intention for delivery to be through a genuine partnership between the Council and TACT, as described in the governance arrangements, below.

Governance Arrangements

- 4.11. Subject to approval of the contract award to TACT, a Joint Governance Board will be established to include senior officers from the Council and TACT. This board will oversee the activities of the Permanency Service and ensure that key performance indicators are being achieved. This Board will be chaired by the Director of Children's Services – at least initially - thus ensuring that there is senior level oversight of the development and operation of the new service.
- 4.12. Day to day management of the service would be the responsibility of TACT, but there are further arrangements for ensuring that the service is delivering the outcomes required of it, including through a Strategic Management Board, which will be established to oversee the detailed work required to establish the service, and an Operational Management Board that will have responsibility for ensuring that day to day operations are delivering the required outcomes. The Strategic Management Board functions will be likely to be subsumed into the other two boards once the new service is fully operational..
- 4.13. TACT will also be required to provide regular reports to Scrutiny Committee detailing performance and impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Increasing capacity of 'In-House' fostering

- 4.14. The principal aim of the development of this service is to improve outcomes for children and young people in care and on the edge of care, while reducing the unit cost of placements for children looked after. This approach is possible because a proportion of the savings made as a result of the development of the Permanency Service will be re-

invested in the development of improved services to children and young people in care and on the edge of care.

- 4.15. The way in which savings will be made is to reduce the current reliance on expensive foster placements provided by largely private sector Independent Fostering Agencies, or IFAs. We currently spend some £4M per annum on IFA foster placements for around 100 children and young people – a weekly average of around £800. The average placement cost of an in-house fostering placement is around £300 per week.
- 4.16. Analysis of the profile of children and young people who are most likely to be placed in an IFA placement shows that they are typically older at the time of placement and are more likely to be displaying significantly challenging behaviour as a result of past life experiences and trauma.
- 4.17. There is no intrinsic difference between foster carers who foster for an IFA and our own carers – indeed our own carers are highly skilled and very motivated to provide loving and stable homes for Peterborough children and young people. However, what they have told us is that in order to feel confident to provide care for more challenging and older children and young people, they would need access to the same kinds of support that is available to IFA carers – namely 24/7 support including in the home if necessary, access to dedicated consultation with a psychologist, and a programme of training that is better able to equip them with the skills they need than that which is currently available.
- 4.18. These key requirements are built into the service specification. TACT is an organisation that has developed a very comprehensive training and support package for their foster carers, which they will bring to the new service. They also offer the key element of 24/7 support that includes practical in-home support when this is needed.
- 4.19. Alongside the need to provide improved support to existing foster carers, delivering the overall aims and objectives requires us to increase our success in attracting foster carers to foster Peterborough children and young people. We believe that the combination of the enhanced support available through the partnership with TACT and the fact that foster carers recruited will be fostering only for Peterborough City Council, places the new service in a very strong position to maximise recruitment.
- 4.20. In general, foster carers become carers for genuinely altruistic reasons. They want to provide loving and stable homes for vulnerable children and young people. They do not generally come into fostering because they want to contribute to the profits of large multi-national organisations, but they do want to feel confident in the support they will receive and, particularly those who may want to foster as an alternative to working in the care sector, understandably want to have confidence that the allowances they receive will be sufficient.
- 4.21. The Permanency Service offers carers the best of both worlds. Foster carers will be able to access the enhanced support available through TACT while only fostering Peterborough children and young people. They will have the potential to access higher rates of allowances than Peterborough currently provides should they wish to foster the most challenging of children and young people. Finally, and importantly, all carers will be part of an overall approach that will increase investment in children's services in Peterborough, as opposed to contributing to profit.
- 4.22. Improving our ability to recruit and retain foster carers is also important for children and young people in care. There are a number of reasons for this. We know our carers, and

are in a better position to feel confident about matching children and young people with our carers than we can be with carers supplied through IFAs. Because our carers only care for us, there is no possibility that a child or young person will be placed in a fostering household by another local authority, potentially de-stabilising the arrangements for the Peterborough child in placement. Our carers are located within or close to the City of Peterborough, while IFA carers are more likely to be further afield.

- 4.23. The combination of these factors means that placements are less likely to end in unplanned ways, and our children in care are more likely to retain links with their community, school and family because they are more likely to be placed in or close to Peterborough.
- 4.24. This is not to say that IFAs do not provide a valuable service – they do and will continue to do so – but we would like to see our reliance on this type of placement reduced as far as we are able.

Maintaining good adoption performance

- 4.25. Adoption performance in Peterborough is good, and there has been a less marked decline in the use of adoption to secure permanency for children than in some parts of the country.
- 4.26. TACT has many years of experience in adoption, including in identifying adopters for children who are harder to place, and brings this experience to the Permanency Service where it will complement our existing experience and expertise.
- 4.27. The Permanency Service will remain engaged with the development of regional approaches to adoption, but we have taken the view that we do not want to separate the functions of fostering and adoption locally. There is a strong tradition in Peterborough of recruiting adopters for children from other areas of the country as well as those in Peterborough. We expect this tradition to continue and indeed be made easier because we will be able to take advantage of the broader reach of TACT across the country.
- 4.28. The provision of high quality support to children and adults affected by adoption is also a high priority for the new Permanency Service, an area in which both TACT and our current service have a very good track record, and where the two organisations can both bring their skills and experience to the work.

Children subject to Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders

- 4.29. There has been an increasing use of these orders, and of Special Guardianship Orders in particular. A Special Guardianship Order offers children and young people legal permanency with the approved adults in a similar way to an adoption order, except that it does not remove the legal rights of birth parents completely, as adoption does.
- 4.30. Special Guardianship Orders were initially intended to be used for older children and young people, where the permanent legal break with parents that takes place with adoption is likely to be less suitable.
- 4.31. However, Special Guardianship Orders have increasingly been used in respect of much younger children who have come into care and who may previously have been more likely to have been adopted. This means that more children are able to experience legal permanency while being placed within their extended family than was previously the case and for many children, this is a positive outcome.

- 4.32. Nevertheless, there are signs that this approach has brought additional risks in terms of long term outcomes for younger children placed through Special Guardianship Orders. There are indications that the risks of these placements breaking down are higher than those associated with adoption.
- 4.33. There are likely to be a number of reasons behind this. Until recently, Assessments of carers under a Special Guardianship Order were less much less comprehensive than those related to adopters. There has been a recent change of statutory guidance in this area, which is helpful, and assessments are now required to be more thorough, although they remain less thorough than those associated with adoption.
- 4.34. Carers under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders are not entitled to the same level of support as adopters. This is likely to mean that carers are more likely to try to struggle on as problems emerge, and may not seek support until difficulties have become entrenched.
- 4.35. For this reason, the Permanency Service will be required to develop support services so that these are equivalent to those provided for adoptive families. We want to act pro-actively and do all we can to support Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders so that children and young people do not experience any break down in their care arrangements. This pro-active approach will include ensuring that the service remains in contact with carers, so that they know how they can seek support at an early stage should they need this.

Family group conferencing service

- 4.36. Family group conferences enable the wider family and friendship network to develop a family plan that supports parents and carers to provide appropriate care for their child or children. Family plans developed in this way can be very effective and are more sustainable in the long run than is the case where families are only supported by a range of services.
- 4.37. Typically, a family group conference is used where a child is subject to a child protection plan. The conference will usually also discuss contingency plans and it is in this context that extended family members who may be able to offer a child legal permanence through a Special Guardianship Order are first identified, should the risks to the child remaining with their parents not reduce.
- 4.38. This is one reason why it makes sense for the Family Group Conferencing service to transfer to the Permanency Service. There are also other advantages to this arrangement. Locating the service so that it is independent of Children's Social Care and of the Council means that families will correctly perceive it as being independent of the child protection system. Services that are perceived as being genuinely independent are often able to maintain the trust and confidence of families more effectively, and are therefore more likely to deliver positive results through effective partnership working.
- 4.39. Family group conferencing is also an area where there is a need for increased capacity in Peterborough. Increased investment in the service is another requirement of the Permanency Service, meaning that we can enable more children and families to benefit from the sustainable support plans that this approach can deliver.

Supporting children and young people to return home from care

- 4.40. Children and young people returning home from care are the largest group of care leavers and nationally around 35% of care episodes end for this reason. It is obviously the aim for any child returning home to do so on a permanent basis. Sadly, however, as many as half of children and young people who leave care in this way subsequently return to the care system, often having experienced further trauma or abuse in the process.
- 4.41. The Permanency Service is required to develop new and innovative approaches to supporting children and young people to return home on a permanent basis. It will achieve this in a number of ways, including training and supporting foster carers so that they can play a greater role in helping and supporting parents to develop positive parenting skills while the child is in care and in placement.
- 4.42. This approach has been found to be effective elsewhere and TACT has experience in training and supporting carers to undertake this type of support to parents. During the consultation process with foster carers, a number said that they would really like to contribute to supporting families in this way, provided they had the necessary training and support to do so.
- 4.43. Clearly, increasing the proportion of children and young people who return home permanently is not only good in terms of their long term outcomes, but also means that overall numbers of children and young people in the care system reduce, reducing associated placement and social work costs.

Other areas of proposed service delivery

- 4.44. A group of children and young people are placed with foster carers on a 'permanent' basis. This is where the placement has been approved as a long term match for the child or young person. There is no legal basis to this permanency, but it does signal to the child and to the carers that the arrangement is one that should last throughout the child's childhood into adulthood and hopefully beyond.
- 4.45. Where children and young people are permanently placed in in-house [as opposed to IFA] fostering placements, it is proposed that the responsibility for providing social work support to the child will transfer to the Permanency Service. There are two main reasons behind this proposal. The first is that we believe that this will reduce any likelihood of there being any delays in decision making in respect of the day to day life of the child, supported by the ethos of the new service that children in care should experience life in families in a way that is as close to that experienced by all children as possible.
- 4.46. The second reason is that we hope that this arrangement will support foster carers to feel sufficiently confident in the support available through the Permanency Service to apply to make such arrangements legally permanent ones through Special Guardianship Orders. This links to the points made above in respect of improving support to all carers who have a Special Guardianship Order. Foster carers are more likely to apply for a Special Guardianship Order if they can feel confident that they can return and seek support at a later date, should this be needed.
- 4.47. Children and young people benefit from legally permanent arrangements by virtue of them enjoying much greater security. Carers and children benefit through such arrangements because they are able to live their lives and make decisions in the same way that any other family does, and without the need to refer to the Council. Life is more 'normal' and children feel more secure as a result. The benefit to the system is that such arrangements mean that the child or young person is no longer in care, saving on social work time.

- 4.48. This aspect of the service will be delivered in a child-focused way, however. We do not want to disrupt existing long-standing relationships with allocated social workers who will not transfer to the Permanency Service, for example.
- 4.49. The current Access to Resources Team will also transfer to the Permanency Service. This team of four officers is responsible for identifying all types of placements for children and young people in care and who are already in care, but who need to change placement for any reason. Where placements are made with external providers, the team is also responsible for making sure that the correct contracts are in place, and that these specify the outcomes required from the placement.
- 4.50. Given that the Permanency Service will be responsible for identifying all placements for children in care [see the section on Finance below for further details], this team must also be part of the Permanence Service.

Summary: Improving outcomes for children and young people

- 4.51. Although there are financial savings attached to this proposed contract, the approach to developing the proposed Permanency Service has been built on improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Peterborough, as outlined in the sections above. To summarise, improved outcomes will be achieved as a result of:
- Increased placement choice for children and young people needing care or who are in care through an increased number of ‘in-house’ foster placements;
 - Better placement matching between children in care and foster carers whom we know well and who are local to Peterborough;
 - Increased placement stability as a result of improved levels of support and training for foster carers;
 - Increased capacity within the Family Group Conferencing Service, increasing the likelihood that children are able to remain with families on a sustainable basis or, where this fails, to remain within their extended family, benefiting from legal permanency as offered by a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order;
 - Reduced risk of the breakdown of placements under the above orders coming to un-planned ends as a result of the development of improved support services that are in-line with adoption support;
 - The development of innovative programmes to help to support children and young people returning home to their families after a period in care, reducing the likelihood of a return to care, and all the associated negative consequences to relationships and long term outcome;
 - The continued strong performance in relation to adoption and adoption support as outlined in the service specification;
 - The capacity of a new charitable provider to draw in other charitable organisations and funding streams to support children, young people and their families in Peterborough.

Implications for staff

- 4.52. The current Peterborough City Council social work and support staff in the fostering and adoption, family group conferencing service and the access to resources teams will transfer to TACT under TUPE arrangements. One post in marketing and one in finance will also transfer to the new provider. TUPE provides protection for employees in relation to maintaining existing terms and conditions of employment.

- 4.53. In addition, the budget associated with up to two social worker posts and a 0.5 FTE personal assistant role will transfer to TACT in order to support the delivery of social work services to children and young people in permanent in-house foster placements. These posts are currently vacant.
- 4.54. Most members of staff remain positive about the proposals. Any change brings uncertainty with it, of course, and there seems to be a general keenness to get on with the process. Members of staff have managed the uncertainty that the process of developing these proposals has inevitably caused. They will now know the identity of the organisation that is being recommended, which will help to start bringing the changes into something more tangible.
- 4.55. Business support staff within the current Fostering and Adoption Service are currently employed by SERCO. These staff will also transfer to TACT under TUPE arrangements. SERCO and the staff concerned have been included in the discussions around the development of the service. SERCO staff will be formally consulted with about the transfer as is required under the TUPE transfer process.
- 4.56. Assuming the recommendation for the contract to be awarded is accepted, a detailed implementation plan will be developed to ensure that staff transfer smoothly to TACT. This plan will continue the established ethos throughout the process of the close involvement of our current staff in developing the new service.
- 4.57. A formal consultation process relating to the implementation of the new service and the transfer under TUPE arrangements will also take place, in line with existing procedures.

Implications for Foster Carers and Adopters

- 4.58. Foster carers are self-employed and can choose with whom they work. Assuming that the recommendation to award the contract to TACT is accepted, a programme of events where foster carers who care for TACT can meet our own carers so that carers can hear for themselves what TACT offers carers.
- 4.59. Registration of foster carers will gradually transfer to TACT, but Peterborough City Council will retain our registration as a fostering agency. Under the contract, TACT would be required to transfer carers back to the Council in the event that the contract comes to an unplanned end. This requirement would also apply to all new foster carers recruited as a result of this partnership.
- 4.60. The Council and TACT will work together to ensure that foster carers experience a genuine improvement in the support they are able to access in their role. TACT will also bring new opportunities for carers to expand the work that they do, for those carers who are interested in taking on new challenges. The outcome is therefore expected to be an environment within which carers feel better supported, have the opportunity to develop their role and skills still further, while having the security of only fostering Peterborough children, with all this brings in terms of developing relationships with Peterborough staff and managers.
- 4.61. The position for adopters should not change significantly. Those currently approved and awaiting a match will continue to do so and the Permanency Service will work with regional and national partners to ensure that we maintain our strong tradition of recruiting adopters for children needing permanency not only locally but nationally as well.

- 4.62. Potential adopters coming forward for approval should experience the same high quality service as they do at present. The partnership with TACT may improve the chances of adopters being matched with children since TACT is a charity with a national reach, including a significant presence in Scotland.

Financial arrangements

- 4.63. Under the terms of the contract, all budgets relating to the placement costs for children and young people in care, to the support of adoptive carers and carers under Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders will transfer to the Permanency Service. The budget that will transfer is that which is sufficient to meet placement costs. The budget that will transfer is the equivalent budget for the cost of all placements as in the financial year 2015/16 - £11,666,309, and the full cost of staff transferring under TUPE [£1.5M for local authority staff and a further £76,000 for non-local authority staff], together with budgets associated with operating the service – mileage and so on. This budget will, however, reduce over the first two years of the contract as we expect TACT to have a quick impact on reducing the use of high cost placements. The table below shows how the budget is expected to reduce over the first four years of the contract:

Item	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Placements	£11.67M	£11.02M	£10.77M	£10.77M	£10.77M
Salaries	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M	£1.61M
Other	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M	£0.12M
Total	£13.4M	£12.75M	£12.5M	£12.5M	£12.5M

- 4.64. The saving targets were set at a time when we expected the service to go live during 2016/17, however. The delay to the go live until the beginning of the financial year 2017/18 will make the savings targets more challenging to achieve, at least in line with the above timeframes.
- 4.65. In the TACT bid, detailed evidence was provided as to how these savings would be achieved, although over a longer time frame. However, TACT will manage the delayed phasing of the savings, meaning that the Council will still make the savings identified, assuming that other factors such as the overall demand on the placement budget remains within the expected budget within the current financial year.
- 4.66. Any further surplus generated beyond the envisaged savings target will be subject to a savings share. This will mean that TACT will receive one third of any additional surplus to re-invest in services, while the Council will retain two thirds. Half of the money retained by the Council will contribute to the Council's savings targets, while the remaining half will be invested in prevention and early help services.
- 4.67. The full cost of staff, including on-costs, will transfer with the staff to TACT. There has been no attempt to 'asset strip' the service prior to transfer; we are committed to ensuring that TACT has the resources that it needs to deliver the improved outcomes that we want to see for our children and young people.
- 4.68. The service specification and contract allows for certain contingencies including an increase in placement costs due to increasing numbers of children and young people in care and/or an increase in demand for very high cost placements. Essentially, such pressures will be reported to the Joint Governance Board, which will look for ways of

meeting the shortfall within the Permanency Service and children's services as a whole, which is in line with current approaches to when there is an increase in demand.

The tender and evaluation process

- 4.69. Prior to the formal invitation to tender, we undertook a period of soft market testing, using the draft service specification as a framework. Organisations that were potentially interested in submitting a bid were given the opportunity to discuss the proposals with senior officers from the Council. The purpose of this process was two-fold – for us to gauge whether there was sufficient interest in our proposals, and to help us to identify any obvious flaws in our ideas, and to enable potential bidders to have the opportunity to begin formulating their proposals in advance of any formal tender process.
- 4.70. Tenders were formally invited from interested bidders on 18th March 2016. The tender period closed on 20th May 2016. The deadline for submissions of completed bids was extended by three weeks owing to the large volume of clarification questions received from the bidding organisations. Completed bids were received from three organisations: TACT, together with bidders A and B. Of these bidders, TACT and Bidder A were both charitable organisations, while Bidder B was a for-profit organisation but one that had satisfied the requirements to deliver the service through a not for profit vehicle.
- 4.71. All bidders were also required to agree to the requirement that the contract would be subject to open book accounting. They were also required to agree that they would be open to audits of practice by the Council's quality assurance service, and that they would provide a wide range of key performance monitoring information to the Council at regular periods or as requested.
- 4.72. Considerable time has been taken to ensure that we have engaged with stakeholders throughout the process, including in the evaluation of the bids. Prior to the invitation for tenders going live, staff, foster carers and young people all contributed to the development of the questions on which the bids would be evaluated.
- 4.73. As part of the evaluation process itself, bidders were required to present to separate panels of staff, foster carer and young people representatives.
- 4.74. Bidders were also required to answer a range of evaluated questions on how they would deliver the service in the event that they were awarded the contract. These answers were evaluated by a panel of senior officers of the Council.
- 4.75. Finally, bidders were required to provide information about how they would manage the financial elements of the service specification, including how they would deliver the savings required.
- 4.76. Scores for each element of these stages were then combined, and a weighting applied as set out in the invitation to tender.
- 4.77. Given the uniqueness of proposal to develop the Permanency Service, all three of the bidders submitted impressive bids. No single bidder was ahead in all areas, however TACT succeeded in scoring highly in all the main areas of the bid, and scored highest overall.
- 4.78. The table below sets out the position of each bid in each area of the evaluation:

Element of Process	Weighting	TACT	A	B
Evaluation of Method Statements	60%	44.39%	40.79%	41.73%
Young People Panel	5%	4.25%	1.75%	4.25%
Staff Panel	5%	3.75%	4.00%	1.25%
Foster Carers' Panel	5%	3.50%	2.00%	2.25%
Senior Panel	5%	2.00%	2.75%	2.00%
Price	10%	9.87%	10%	8.33%
Pricing Assumptions	10%	7.00%	9.00%	6.00%
Total	100%	74.78%	70.29%	65.81%

- 4.79. Overall, TACT achieved a final score of 75%; Bidder A achieved 70% and Bidder B 66%.
- 4.80. In terms of the staff panel, TACT came just behind bidder A [with a difference in score of one mark] but was well ahead of bidder B. Foster carers rated TACT as the strongest bidder of the three. The panel of children in care placed TACT and bidder B as equal first, with bidder A placed significantly behind.
- 4.81. In terms of the evaluation of the methodology statements, TACT was particularly strong in the following areas:
- In how the organisation proposes to deliver the service;
 - The description of the support and training available to carers;
 - Ideas on and evidence of success in recruiting foster and adoptive carers;
 - The importance of and success in achieving genuine participation of children and young people at both an individual and a strategic level;
 - The child-centeredness of the bid overall;
 - The credibility of the financial modelling to deliver the savings required, even if over a slightly longer timeframe [although with no impact to the Council];
 - Its ability to draw in the support from other charitable organisations in order to build capacity in the City;
 - The track record of the organisation in delivering good outcomes for children and young people and including in relation to securing legal permanency for those placed in foster placements.

Protection for Children, Carers, members of Staff and the Council

- 4.82. This is a contract that covers the delivery of services to vulnerable children and young people, for many of whom the Council is also corporate parent. It is essential therefore that there are appropriate checks and balances to ensure that the service promotes and safeguards the welfare of the children, foster cares and staff, as well as that the Council is safeguarded from risks to its reputation that would arise from any failings of the Permanency Service.
- 4.83. There are a number of ways in which it will be ensured that all key parties are safeguarded. The contract is very detailed in terms of the monitoring information required from the provider, and of the safeguarding approach required in relation to all activities. As noted above, the contract has the usual break clauses and also contains a 'step-in' clause that would enable the Council to regain control of the service in the event of any serious failings.

- 4.84. The successful bidder – TACT – has evidenced their ability to provide the service through an extensive evaluation process. It is a well-established charity, with a demonstrable track record in delivering positive outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.85. These factors will be supported by the governance arrangements that will be put in place to oversee the operation of the new service. As noted elsewhere, although this is a formal contract that involves the transfer of staff, carers and resources, the service specification and arrangements for performance monitoring set out how the service will operate as a partnership between the Council and TACT.
- 4.86. The governance arrangements emphasise a shared problem solving approach to issues that may arise. There is provision within the contract, for example, to address issues that may follow an unexpected increase in numbers of children in care or in the use of high cost placements. Should such circumstances apply, the Council and TACT will look for solutions together to meet such pressures. Demand led budgets such as placement budgets are always volatile, however, and the contract acknowledges that there may be circumstances where the Council is asked for additional funds to cover unpredicted expenditure – as would be the case were the service to remain delivered as they are currently.
- 4.87. Alongside statistical performance monitoring information, the new service will be required to allow auditors from the Council's Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Service access to all client records, and audits will be carried out in the same way as they are carried out across the remainder of children's services. Audit findings will be published and any improvements required identified. TACT will be required to develop an action plan to address recommendations. These arrangements are again the same as are in place across the remainder of children's services.
- 4.88. Other forms of 'softer' information will also be monitored, including rates of staff turnover, sickness, and rates of foster carer resignations and terminations. Independent Reviewing Officers, who chair reviews for children and young people in care, will also continue to use the case alert and other escalation mechanisms to raise any concerns about the progress of care plans or the quality of children's placements – just as they do now.
- 4.89. We are currently in the process of improving mechanisms to secure increased participation of children and young people in care. We have increased capacity in our participation team, and invested in new technology to make it easier for children and young people to make their views known.
- 4.90. As noted above, TACT has established a strong ethos of participation by children and young people throughout the organisation. We will work together to ensure that children and young people in care can help to shape the permanency service and ensure that it is child-centred in its operation. This will include making sure that we continue to respond to any concerns and complaints made by children and young people. Children and young people will continue to be able to access independent advocacy where they have any concerns. All comments and complaints will be monitored and used to help to improve services – again as is the case at the moment.
- 4.91. The partnership approach means that all information about the operation of the permanency service and the impact on outcomes will be shared through the governance arrangements. Any developing issues will be identified early as a result, and early action taken to address these. However, the contract also includes break clauses for the Council at the end of years 3, 7 and 10, where we would need to provide 12 months' notice, and

for TACT at the end of years 4 and 10, when 18 months' notice would be required. There is also a 'walk-in' clause that enables the Council to take immediate control in the event of any serious failure being identified.

- 4.92. Finally, and importantly, all decision making about individual children and young people remains with the Council. This includes the decision about whether a child or young person should come into the care system, agreement as to the suitability of the match between the placement identified and the needs of the child, and all decisions relating to care planning for individual children and young people.
- 4.93. Taken together, these elements of the contract and the approach to governance and performance monitoring will ensure that any issues that may have an impact on outcomes for children or on financial stability are identified early, enabling appropriate action to be taken.

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1. Key issues arising from the above include:

- This is a highly innovative approach to tackling the issue of over-reliance on high cost placements for children in care, which will result in improved outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Peterborough while delivering savings for the Council;
- Staff, foster carers and, at an appropriate level, children and young people, have been fully involved in the development of the proposals from the outset. They have contributed to the identification of the outcomes required from the new service and to the development of the service specification. Staff, foster carers and young people also participated in the selection process, setting questions for the providers that representative groups evaluated at panels;
- TACT was the organisation that scored the highest overall, with an overall score of 75%. Bidder A was close to TACT in terms of overall score at 70%, with bidder B scoring 66%. Given the uniqueness of the proposals to develop the Permanency Service, these are high scores overall and all bidders submitted good quality bids;
- Assuming that Cabinet accepts the recommendation and the contract is awarded to TACT, detailed discussions between all stakeholders will commence on developing a comprehensive implementation plan that will result in the service being implemented on 1st April 2017. These discussions will also include the necessary formal consultations with staff in connection with their transfer to a new employer under TUPE;
- The contact will be operated under a partnership model. This reflects the innovative nature of the proposals and the need to ensure the approach delivers the best possible outcomes for children, young people and their families;
- The range of safeguards built in to the service specification, the range of performance indicators that will be monitored and the retention by the local authority of decision making as this relates to individual children and young people will all ensure that the services delivered are of a good quality, cost effective, child-centred and safe.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1. As noted elsewhere, there are a number of implications arising from the recommendation to award the contract to TACT.

- 6.2. Staff will formally transfer employment to TACT under the provisions of TUPE, meaning that current terms and conditions will be protected. There are formal consultation processes in relation to this aspect of the proposals, which will include unions and other representatives.
- 6.3. Current Peterborough foster carers will transfer registration to TACT, but remain ring-fenced to Peterborough children and young people in care to Peterborough;
- 6.4. Subject to Cabinet approving the recommendation to award the contract to TACT, a period of mobilisation will take place. This will enable TACT, foster carers, members of staff and senior Council officers to establish detailed processes to support effective delivery of the service.

Human Resources implications

- 6.5. In summary, all Human Resources considerations have been taken into account during the planning of the tender, the tender itself, and will be incorporated into the mobilisation and transfer planning.
- 6.6. Employees engaged in the work transferring will have their terms and conditions of employment protected under TUPE regulations. The recommended bidder has also confirmed their commitment to providing continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme [LGPS] via Admitted Body Status to the LGPS.
- 6.7. Ongoing informal consultation has been undertaken with affected staff of the Council and those from our strategic partner, SERCO, also affected by the transfer, as well as with the trades unions. Affected staff have had the continuing opportunity to discuss any concerns and confirm their understanding through the programme of regular briefings. Other Council staff have also been kept informed through regular communications.
- 6.8. Assuming Cabinet accepts the recommendation to award the contract, the Council's Human Resources service will liaise with the Human Resources service within TACT to co-ordinate joint formal consultation with affected staff and trades unions, and will ensure that all necessary due diligence is completed.

Legal implications

- 6.9. The tender was undertaken in accordance with regulation 74 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 6.10. The Permanency Service is required to adhere to the following legislation in relation to the provision of the services;
 - The Children Act 1989;
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by:
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations, 2013;
 - Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2014;
 - The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015.
 - The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011;
 - The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000;

- The Adoption and Children Act 2002;
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 [as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015];
- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 including the Children and Young Person's Act 2008 (Relevant Care Functions) (England) Regulations 2014;
- The Children and Families' Act 2014;
- The Special Guardianship Regulations 2005.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1. As noted throughout this report, there has been a wide-ranging and on-going consultative process with members of staff, foster carers and, at an appropriate level, children and young people throughout the process from developing the service specification, through to evaluating the submitted tenders.
- 7.2. Assuming Cabinet agrees to the recommendation to award the contract, further extensive consultation will take place with staff, foster carers, young people and other stakeholders. This consultation will be on both an informal and formal basis. Extensive informal consultation involving all relevant stakeholders will take place in order to inform the final shaping of the service, while formal consultation will take place in relation to the transfer of members of staff to TACT under TUPE arrangements. These formal processes will apply to both Council and SERCO members of staff.

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1. Assuming Cabinet accepts the recommendation to award the contract to TACT, the next principal steps will be:
- Provision of feedback to all bidders about the strengths and weaknesses of the bids;
 - Award of the contract, expected to be completed by the middle of November 2016, allowing time for any challenge;
 - Commencement of formal mobilisation period, during which the fine details of the operation of the service will be agreed, with full consultation with staff, foster carers, children and young people as appropriate, and relevant stakeholders;
 - The mobilisation period will also include the formal transfer of staff under TUPE, including the formal consultation required for both Council and SERCO staff affected;
- 8.2. The aim is for the new service to be fully operational from April 2017

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 9.1. None

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1. Appendix 1: Permanency Service: Final Service Specification.

March 15th 2016

Permanency Service Final Specification

Version 1.9

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[Lou Williams](#)

SERVICE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND SAFEGUARDING

Peterborough Permanency Service

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Glossary

The following table contains information about the abbreviations contained within this report.

Abbreviation	Full Title	Explanatory Notes
ADM	Agency Decision Maker	The senior officer making decisions on the basis of recommendations from the Fostering or Adoption panel.
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group	The lead body for commissioning health services. The CCG may contribute towards the costs of placements for children in care where these placements are meeting health needs that cannot be met in the community.
DFE	Department for Education	
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant	Funding that is top sliced from schools' budgets and used to fund support packages for pupils with complex needs. In the context of the Permanency Service, DSG funding contributes to some residential placement costs. DSG funding cannot be transferred from the local Authority.
EDS	Emergency Duty Service	The Emergency Duty Service is provided by Cambridgeshire County Council and provides out of hours' cover for Statutory children's and adult services.
IFA	Independent Fostering Agency	IFA carers refers to foster carers providing foster placements for the Council or for the Permanency Service that are sourced from independent fostering agencies.
'In house' carers	N/A	The group of foster carers who are supported by the Council and who would transfer to a new provider, together with new foster carers recruited as a result of this new arrangement by the Permanency Service.
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer	Also known in Peterborough as Independent Chairs, IROs have statutory accountability for ensuring that care plans for children in care are effective and meet their needs. They also play an important role in ensuring that plans progress appropriately.
JASP	Joint Agency Support Panel	The panel chaired by the Service Director for children and safeguarding that discusses children and young people with the most complex needs where support from a combination of Children's Social Care, Education and Health will be required. The provider will be required to attend this monthly panel.
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer	The officer within the Council responsible for the coordination of enquiries required where a professional or carer is the subject of allegations or other safeguarding concerns.

Abbreviation	Full Title	Explanatory Notes
Link Carer	N/A	Foster carers who provide short breaks for children and young people with disabilities
PASP	Peterborough Access to Support Panel	The panel chaired by the Assistant Director for Children's Social Care that discusses high level resource requests and is the form where admissions into the care system are agreed. The provider will be required to be represented at this panel which sits weekly.
STC	Secure Training Centre	Used for secure remands of young people accused of involvement in serious offences; typically when offender is either younger [i.e. under 16] or has particular vulnerabilities – see also YOI
'the provider'	N/A	Shorthand for the organisation that will deliver the Permanency Service on behalf of the Council under this specification.
YOI	Young Offender Institute	Used for secure remands of young people accused of involvement in serious offences; typically when older [i.e. 16 and above] where there are no particular vulnerabilities – see also STC

Peterborough Permanency Service

1. An Innovative, Child-Centred Commissioning Relationship

Peterborough City Council staff, foster and adoptive carers are working together to develop a new delivery model that is focused on securing permanency for children and young people in care, or who may become looked after unless extended family can provide a permanent and sustainable alternative.

The scope of the proposals within this service specification is very wide, including all of the Council's Fostering and Adoption Services, the Family Group Conference Service, and some limited statutory social work functions for a particular group of children in care or for whom assessments of potential special guardians are required.

As well as significant numbers of members of staff transferring to the new service, the entire budget associated with placement costs for children in care, those who are staying put, or who are receiving support packages under adoption, special guardianship and child arrangement orders would transfer to the commissioned organisation together with our foster carers, prospective and actual adopters under this new arrangement.

These arrangements bring both potential gains and risk to the Council and stakeholders. We have to get this right, not only for our staff and carers but most importantly, so that we deliver the best outcomes for our children and young people. So although this is a commissioning led process, we will require joint governance arrangements to be in place, with a joint governance board chaired by the Director of Children's Services monitoring performance and offering support in the event of any indication of emerging difficulties.

But we also want this new service to have the freedom to innovate. We are transferring the cost of our current placement mix, and the full staff cost associated with recruiting, assessing and supporting our fostering and adoptive carers. We are providing the new service with an initial budget that is equivalent to the cost of delivering these services ourselves. However, we do need to make savings on current overall costs, and these will be built in to budgets for future financial years. We also need to see investment in specific areas if we are to secure improved outcomes for children and young people, and this is why the new provider will need to innovate; in reducing unit costs to enable investment and deliver savings.

It is the strength of the Peterborough brand, together with the combined assets of our foster carers, adopters and staff, brought together with innovation and investment by a new provider that we are confident will generate the savings and allow the development of the new service areas outlined in this specification.

The contract length will be 10 years with an option to extend. This is a 'Permanency Service'; any shorter contract would not be in line with our ambitions to demonstrate that we can deliver successful permanency for more of our children and young people in care.

Staff, foster carers, adopters, children and young people have been widely involved in developing these proposals. Their aspirations for the proposed permanency service have informed this service specification, and they will form part of the formal evaluation process of submitted tenders.

2. About these Proposals

Peterborough City Council [the 'Council' or 'We'] is determined to improve outcomes for children and young people who come into care. We want to improve support for children and young people who become looked after and then return home to their families, and increase the number of children and young people who experience permanency through Adoption, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders, or who benefit from long term 'permanent' foster care.

For those children and young people who are looked after and placed with foster carers, we want to ensure that as many as possible are placed with 'in-house' carers. This is because we know our carers better than those who are provided by external agencies. Our carers tend to be located in Peterborough or in the surrounding area, meaning that children and young people can more easily maintain relationships with family and friendship networks, continue to attend local schools and benefit from other local support services.

We want to ensure that our carers are trained and supported so that they are sufficiently confident to look after children and young people with more challenging needs, enabling this group to benefit from stable family placements that are closer to the City, where they can continue in their education and training, and maintain links with family and friendship groups. Our carers have told us that in order to look after this group of highly vulnerable children and young people, they need:

- Access to a bespoke evidence-based training programme;
- Access to improved levels of support that includes 24/7 support and where necessary, practical support in the home;
- Access to improved support to help them to understand the psychological aspects of providing child-centred care to children and young people displaying problematic and challenging behaviour associated with past abuse, neglect or disorganised attachments.

In common with all local authorities, there are significant resource pressures in Peterborough. Investing in the provision of enhanced support services would ordinarily mean that we would need to identify savings elsewhere in the system. One area where savings can be made that can be re-invested in outcomes for children and young people, is in reducing our reliance on higher cost placements for children and young people in care – specifically, residential placements and placements with external fostering agencies.

Despite some success in recruiting in-house foster carers and in maintaining relatively low numbers of children and young people in care who are placed in residential provision, we have come to the conclusion that the best chance of achieving our ambitions to deliver a step change in outcomes for children and young people, is to develop a commissioning relationship with an external partner who can bring both complementary expertise and initial investment to services in Peterborough.

The table below summarises the proposed responsibilities of the Council and Provider in relation to current services and resources, under the arrangements set out in this specification:

Peterborough City Council will retain responsibility for:	The Provider, through the Permanency Service will acquire responsibility for:
<p>Most Statutory services relating to children in need, child protection and children looked after, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments of children in need; • Social work functions relating to children in need, in need of protection and most children who are looked after [see below]; • Most leaving and aftercare services; 	<p>The Fostering & Adoption Service, involving the TUPE transfer of staff and activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of fostering and adoptive carers; • Support and training activities for staff & carers; • Operation and management of panels; • Agency decision maker responsibilities as applying to adopters and foster carers; • Post adoption support functions; • Private fostering; • Non-agency adoption; • Oversight of medicals for adopters & foster carers
<p>Agency Decision Maker role as this relates to Children and Young People</p>	<p>Foster carers & adopters currently approved by the Council</p>
<p>Conference chairs, looked after reviewing officers</p>	<p>Assessments of eligibility for allowances and all payments to carers</p>
<p>Audit and quality assurance functions</p>	<p>The Placement Finding Service</p>
<p>Supervised contact functions</p>	<p>The Family Group Conference Service</p>
<p>Resource Panels</p>	<p>Assessments of carers seeking Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders, as currently undertaken by the Council's Fostering & Adoption Service</p>
<p>Missing from home and care coordinator</p>	<p>A small proportion of statutory social work functions for children looked after and leaving care services [see below]</p>
<p>Responsibility for facilitating effective Children in Care Council</p>	<p>Some Children in Care/Leaving Care Participation Responsibilities</p>
<p>Advocacy Services</p>	<p>Placement budgets for children in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees and Allowances for in-house carers; • Budget for IFA foster placements; • Sole funded residential placements; • Council budget contribution to joint funded residential placements – i.e. funding for these placements from Dedicated Schools Grant and health partners will not transfer; • All other placement related budgets as set out in section 15 including assessment and payment of adoption and other allowances; <p>All other relevant budgets associated with running services of transfer to Permanency Service including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The operation of panels; • Staffing budgets including subsistence and travel.
<p>Oversight of Complaints and in particular complaints under the Statutory children's complaints process.</p>	<p>Management of complaints about the service.</p>
	<p>Ensuring policies and procedures relating to the Permanency Service remain updated in line with legislation and research</p>

3. About Peterborough

Peterborough covers an area of 340km² at the western edge of the Fens in the east of England. The authority is bordered by Cambridgeshire to the south and east, Northamptonshire and Rutland to the west and Lincolnshire to the north. Approximately three-quarters of the authority area is rural, containing villages ranging in size from 150 to 4000 people, with the city of Peterborough lying in the geographical centre of the Peterborough City Council area. The great majority of the population of Peterborough live in the urban City area.

3.1 About the Population of Peterborough

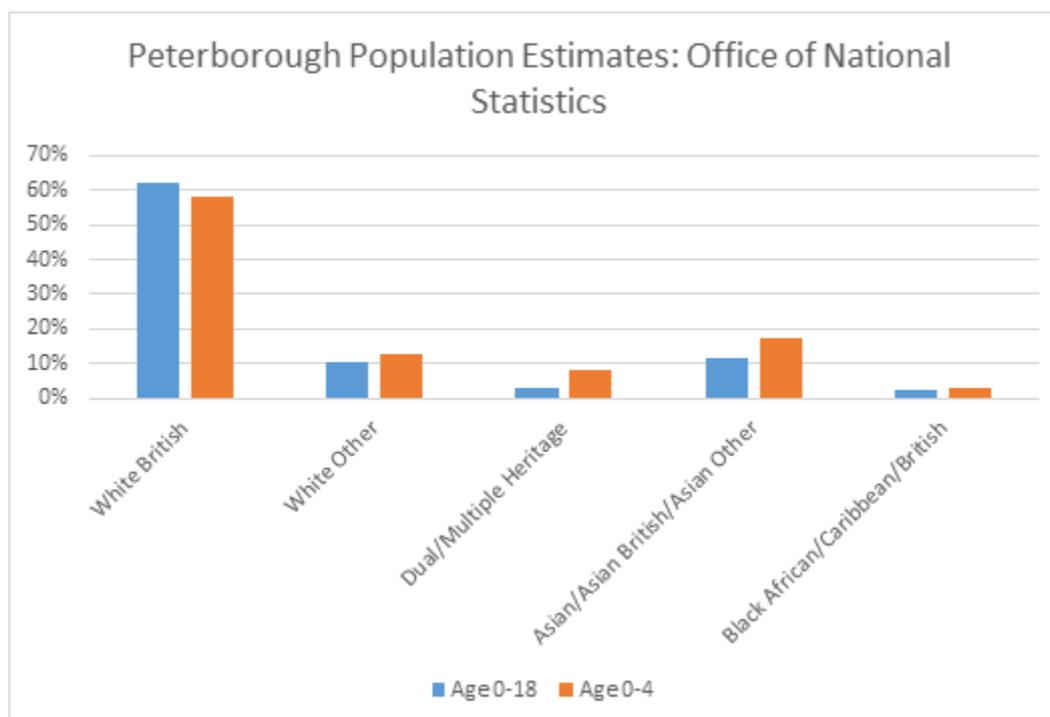
The population of Peterborough City Council is estimated to be around 188,000 and the City is the second fastest growing in the country. The child population is also among the fastest growing in the country. The City's population is becoming increasingly diverse, with diversity greatest among younger age groups and the population of children and young people.

The population has become increasingly diverse in part as a result of the accession of the A10 countries which has seen a notable increase in the number of European citizens moving to Peterborough. The current population of Peterborough is approximately 70% White British, 11% White Other around 7% of the population is Asian or Asian British Pakistani. More than 100 languages are spoken in Peterborough schools.

The City Council boundary contains a diverse mixture of residential neighbourhoods, rural and inner-city wards and wards that contain elements of each of these characteristics. The 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation illustrates that levels of deprivation vary significantly throughout Peterborough. The population of the City is more concentrated in areas of higher deprivation, with 62,000 people living in areas of the City that are among the 20% most deprived areas of the country. The impact of relatively high levels of deprivation can be seen in the average healthy life expectancy for both men and women, which is significantly shorter than national averages.

There are approximately 45,000 children and young people aged 0-17 in Peterborough. Levels of child poverty in Peterborough are high, with around 12,000 children and young people living in poverty. Around 350 children and young people are looked after at any one time, with a further 250 subject to child protection plans and around 1,000 who are assessed as being children in need.

As noted above, the City's population is becoming increasingly diverse, and this diversity is greatest among younger ages. The chart below compares the Office of National Statistics' estimates for proportions of the 0-18 and 0-4 populations in the City by ethnicity:



3.2 About Children’s Services and Adoption and Fostering in Peterborough

A structure chart for the current Fostering and Adoption Service and its’ links with the broader Children’s Social Care Service is provided at Appendix 1.

There are approximately 140 active fostering households in Peterborough, of which the great majority [around 90%] are from white British backgrounds. The current mix of fostering households is less culturally and religiously diverse than the population of children and young people in care, of whom around 65% are from white British backgrounds.

A number of fostering households are located in the rural areas surrounding the City and some are located just beyond City boundaries in neighbouring authority areas. This geographical spread of households is helpful in terms of placement matching, while allowing for children and young people to maintain links with schools, family and communities as appropriate to their needs.

The mix of active fostering households is not currently in line with the population of children and young people in care. Vacancy rates among fostering households are higher than might be expected to be the case, with proportionately more carers seeking to offer homes to younger children, and a relative shortage of carers seeking to offer homes to older children and young people coming into care for the first time.

This element of overcapacity has the potential to be harnessed by a provider able to inspire confidence among carers to accept placements of older young people and children who have more complex needs – both groups who are currently more likely to be fostered by carers provided by Independent Fostering Agencies.

There are relatively few children and young people placed with connected carers in Peterborough, in comparison with national averages. Connected carers are entitled to the same levels of support as ‘mainstream’ foster carers. They are mostly in receipt of level 1 fostering allowances [which are as

set out in section 6.1.3], but are able to access higher levels of allowance, in the same way as mainstream foster carers.

Few private foster carers are known to agencies in Peterborough, despite efforts to raise awareness of private fostering in the City.

4. Views of Key Stakeholders about these Proposals

4.1 Children and Young People

There are a number of comments from children and young people weaved throughout this service specification. Children and young people are concerned about living in stable homes, with carers who are committed to promoting their long-term best interests. Where possible, children and young people want to live in families who share similar cultural, linguistic, faith and other characteristics as their birth families.

They want social workers who work with them to take their views seriously. They do not want to be separated from their siblings and most want to maintain contact with their birth families. Most want to continue living in or near to Peterborough.

The views and aspirations of children and young people have directly informed this service

4.2 Foster carers

Foster carers have been mostly welcoming of these proposals to develop a new way of delivering services to children and young people in care.

Foster carers are particularly interested in the potential for them to be able to access better quality training, more responsive support services and improved access to psychological advice and consultation in respect of meeting the needs of children and young people placed with them. They are interested in how they may be able to use their skills and abilities in new ways in order to support children, young people and their families.

They have some anxieties about the potential impact on staff and are worried about an increase in staff turnover. They do not want to lose the special relationship with the Council and the access that they have to senior officers. Most of all, foster carers do not want to see any new service fail, and will work with the Council and provider to ensure that it is successful.

The views and aspirations of foster carers for a new Permanency Service have directly informed this specification.

4.3 Members of Staff

Members of staff have been cautiously welcoming of the proposal to establish a new Permanency Service. They are interested in the potential for service developments and innovation that a new service may be able to provide. Staff also recognise the potential in terms of improved outcomes for children and young people, particularly in respect of the areas of investment within these proposals and the potential to place more of our children and young people with carers we know well and for whom they are directly responsible.

Staff are keen to know about opportunities for them in terms of career development as a result of the development of the Permanency Service. They are reassured by the fact that they will remain physically located with the remainder of the Council's children's services, meaning that communication and relationships will be maintained.

There are some anxieties about the specific details of the new service, including around the impact on areas of current good performance, and a concern that this is maintained. There are also a number of questions that staff understandably have about the impact on their own terms and conditions that may arise as a result of the new arrangements.

The views and aspirations of members of staff for a new Permanency Service as expressed by our members of staff have informed this specification.

5. General Arrangements for Service Delivery

5.1 Adherence to Legislation and Statutory Guidance

The Permanency Service will adhere to the requirements of legislation and statutory guidance throughout the period of the contract, and will adapt practices and processes in accordance with any changes. Key legislation relevant to the delivery of the Permanency Service includes:

- The Children Act 1989 and in particular statutory guidance relating to:
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 1: Court Orders 2008;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review 2015;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for care Leavers 2010;
 - The Children Act: Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011.
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review [England] Regulations 2010, as amended by:
 - The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations, 2013;
 - Adoption and care Planning [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2014;
 - The Care Planning and Fostering [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2015.
- The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011;
- Family and Friends' Care: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2011;
- Short Breaks: Statutory Guidance on how to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Disabled Children using Short Breaks [2010];
- The Children [Leaving Care] Act 2000;
- Staying Put: Arrangements for Care Leavers aged 18 and above 2013;
- Sufficiency: Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children 2010;
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002;
- Statutory Guidance on Adoption for Local Authorities, Voluntary Adoption Agencies, and Adoption Support Agencies 2013;
- The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 [as amended by the Adoption and Care Planning [Miscellaneous Amendments] Regulations 2014];
- The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2014;
- The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 including the Children and Young Person's Act 2008 [Relevant Care Functions] [England] Regulations 2014 and Statutory Instrument 2014 Number 2407;
- The Children and Families' Act 2014;
- The Special Guardianship Regulations 2005.

In addition, the contracted provider will be required to adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 and to Caldecott Guidance in respect of information held, regardless of whether this is held electronically or as part of manual records.

The above list is not exhaustive but sets out the main legislative framework under which the Permanency Service will operate. The overall aims and objectives of the Permanency Service are not deliverables that can be found in any single piece of legislation or guidance. The overarching principle of delivery of the service is that it offers a child centred service that delivers to at least the minimum statutory requirement in all areas of delivery.

The Permanency Service will adhere to Peterborough policies and procedures as these relate to children and young people on transfer of the services to the provider. Policies and procedures can be amended in due course, subject to appropriate consultation with the Council, and any affected stakeholders including children, young people, carers and key partners. Current Peterborough procedures can be found at:

<http://www.proceduresonline.com/peterborough/>

The local safeguarding children board procedures can be found at:

<http://www.peterboroughlscb.org.uk/procedures/>

It is assumed that the above will apply to all relevant areas described within this service specification.

5.2 Human Resources Issues including Safer Recruitment

The provider is required to have in place robust HR processes that cover key areas including management of poor performance, the raising of employee concerns including through grievance and whistleblowing processes, and the effective management of any safeguarding concerns relating to members of staff. Where safeguarding concerns arise in respect of a member of staff of the Permanency Service, the service will ensure that it follows the requirements of the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board child protection procedures and work openly and proactively with the Local Authority Designated Officer as appropriate. Further information can be found in section 14.2.

All HR processes, including those relating to safeguarding concerns, are to be managed fairly and thoroughly, but without unnecessary delay.

These processes will include the requirement that all members of staff are recruited through a selection process that follows the recommendations of the Bishard enquiry in terms of safer recruitment.

The provider will have in place a clear workforce strategy that will set out how employees will be motivated, recognised, developed and managed to ensure an engaged and highly performing workforce.

The provider will also be required to have in place effective processes for managing allegations made against foster and prospective adoptive carers. These processes must meet the requirements of the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board child protection procedures. The procedures must ensure that children and young people are safeguarded, while also ensuring that carers are provided with appropriate support. The provider will need to work openly and proactively with the Local Authority Designated Officer where appropriate, and support a thorough but expedited resolution to allegations against carers. See Section 14.2 for further information.

It is assumed that the above will apply to all relevant areas described within this service specification.

5.3 Inclusivity of this Service Specification

This service specification is intended to cover all areas of operation of the service included within the responsibility of the proposed Permanency Service.

While every care has been taken to ensure that all key areas of operation are covered, it is likely that there will be areas that require further clarification. Bidders will have an opportunity to clarify elements of the service specification during the tender process.

There will be an opportunity post contract award and during the mobilisation period to confirm any areas of operation covered by the specification that emerge as lacking the necessary detail or clarity.

Where this is the case, the presumption that applies is that all areas that would reasonably be expected to be provided by either the provider or the Council in respect of their responsibilities for the Permanency Service or the operation of general children's services will be undertaken without the requirement for additional funding.

The escalation process for managing contractual issues will be followed where it is not possible for the Council and provider to reach agreement on such issues. See the terms and conditions set out in the contractual dispute mechanism for further information.

6. Functions included within this Service Specification

6.1. Fostering and Adoption Services

6.1.1. Members of Staff

All social workers, the Agency Adviser, two panel administrators and the two team managers, will transfer to a new provider under TUPE. A complete list of posts, including staffing costs and pension liabilities may be found in the relevant schedule of the contract.

Business support functions are currently carried out by a contract between the Council and SERCO. The current administrative staff provided by SERCO to support the Fostering and Adoption Service will also transfer to the permanency Service under TUPE. These staff are listed in the TUPE information as 'Third Party Employees'.

6.1.2 Fostering Services

The new service is required to operate a comprehensive fostering service that at comprehensively meets the requirements of the Fostering National Minimum Standards, 2011 and any subsequent legislative or statutory guidance that comes into force during the contract period.

'To never be separated from my brother'

Primary school aged child asked what they would wish for about their care

Key outcomes required from the new service include:

- Successful recruitment and retention of carers able to meet the needs of children and young people with more complex needs [and in particular, able to care for teenagers and sibling groups] in order that reliance on IFA placements is reduced;
- Successful recruitment of 'Link' carers – i.e. foster carers able to provide regular short breaks for children and young people with disabilities;

- Successful retention of existing foster carers;
- Successful recruitment of foster carers from all sections of the diverse communities of Peterborough;
- Promotion of Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders for children placed in long term foster care, where this is in line with their best interests.

The specific responsibilities of the Fostering Service that transfer to the new service include:

- All duties and responsibilities set out within the Fostering National Minimum Standards and all other relevant legislation;
- Recruitment, assessment, training, annual reviews and support of foster carers including relative or connected carers;
- Statutory private fostering responsibilities including awareness raising of requirement for private foster carers to be assessed;
- Arrangements for ensuring that foster carers receive timely payments of allowances and annual statements of accounts;
- Operation and management of fostering panels;
- Promotion of 'Staying Put' arrangements.

Our foster carers have told us that in order to accept children and young people who have more challenging needs and who are currently more likely to be placed with

Independent Fostering Agency carers, they need to feel more confident in the support and training that they are able to access.

Accordingly, in addition to the minimum requirements as set out within the Fostering National Minimum Standards, the provider will be required to deliver:

- Access to support 24/7 including in-placement practical support where needed for foster carers;
- Access to an evidenced based training package that will equip foster carers with the skills and knowledge to meet common needs including disorganised attachments and to deal with the effects of trauma, abuse and neglect for foster carers;
- Access to psychological consultation to foster carers them to support children and young people in placement for foster carers;
- Support to include consideration of the needs of foster carers' birth children.

Peterborough is a diverse multi-cultural City and there will be occasions when children and young people will need to be placed with foster carers with whom they do not share a common language. The Permanency Service will be required to facilitate access to translation services for foster carers for use when other approaches fail.

6.1.3. Detail of current Fostering Households

The tables below set out the fostering allowances payable to carers as from 1st April 2016. With the exception of the 'Contract Care' rates, the fees and allowances are paid according to the experience and level of training of the carer, rather than being related to the needs of the child.

'Staff stability is what has made Peterborough such a good agency and this must be maintained.... We need to know the staff who support us....'

Peterborough foster carer

Level 1	
Age of Child	Weekly Payment
0-4	145.44
5-10	165.68
11-16	206.23
16+	250.84
Level 2	
0-4	197.59
5-10	219.02
11-16	247.74
16+	278.28
Level 3	
0-4	243.51
5-10	265.01
11-16	293.66
16+	315.52
Contract Care	
0-4	388.25
5-10	407.88
11-16	447.01
16+	490.06

An additional payment of one week at Level 1 is paid for birthday, Christmas and Summer Holidays – these payments are not paid to former agency carers as these are assumed to be part of the higher weekly payment that they receive.

Contract care rates are paid when a child or young person has particularly complex needs. They are paid in only a very small number of scenarios, where a child or young person has very complex care needs arising from a disability, for example. As of 1st February 2016, there were 8 children and young people for whom contract care allowances are paid.

Where foster carers have transferred from Independent Fostering Agencies to Peterborough, there is an agreement in place that guarantees to match the allowances that they were receiving for two years and, for Peterborough children in placement at the time of the transfer, to match the allowances until those children reach 18. There are currently 18 fostering households covered by such agreements.

Supported Lodgings carer are paid at the same rate as Level 1 carers for the age group 16+, less an assumed £30 per week contribution from the young person and Staying Put rates are paid at a total of £239.52 less a Housing Benefit contribution of £91.15 and a contribution from the young person of £30, resulting in a net cost of £118.37 per week. These rates apply regardless of whether the foster placement was previously an in-house or IFA placement.

The table below sets out the number of fostering households at the different levels as of February 2016 [Level 1, 2 and 3]:

Payment Level	Number of Fostering Households
Level 1	47
Level 2	24
Level 3	52

Alternative [IFA transfers]	18
Supported Lodgings	3
Special Rate	1

In addition to the allowances set out above, foster carers are able to claim some additional payments covering, for example, transport costs in certain situations. Budgets covering such incidentals will transfer to the Permanency Service.

Paid respite care is not usually available and is only provided where this is in the best interests of the child or young person concerned. Where such arrangements exist, they are generally capped at 14 nights. Such arrangements apply to between 5% and 10% of children and young people in in-house fostering placements at any one time.

Carers are able to claim retainer fees in some circumstances. Full details of allowances are contained within the Foster Carer's Handbook, which can be found at:

<https://issuu.com/peterboroughfostering/docs/fosteringhandbook/1>

6.1.4. Transfer of Foster Carers

It is envisaged that foster carers would transfer to the new provider following the mobilisation of the contract. Dispensation will be requested from the Department for Education to allow this to happen over a period of time so that formal transfer is agreed by the relevant panel at the time of the household's annual review, or within 6 months from the mobilisation date.

Foster carers who transfer to the new provider will not become part of the general pool of fostering households operated by the new provider. They will remain a defined group of households that only offer placements for children and young people in care to Peterborough, except with the express permission of the Council. This will usually be as a result of agreement at the Joint Governance Board, but in urgent situations where the case concerns a single placement or sibling placement, agreement can be provided on behalf of the Council by the commissioning lead.

All fostering households recruited by the new provider through this agreement will join this defined group of carers offering placements to Peterborough children and young people only.

These arrangements are necessary in order that the special relationship between Peterborough City Council and our fostering households is not diluted.

In the event that the contract is terminated or comes to an end, the expectation is that all fostering households who remain active and who transferred to the new provider at the commencement of the contract, and all those who are recruited as a result of the contract, will transfer back to Peterborough City Council, recognising that foster carers are free to make other arrangements in terms of which agency they choose to be registered. The exit strategy within the terms and conditions provides the details of these arrangements.

6.1.5. Summary of Fostering Services to be provided

The following section describes the main expectations of the provider in delivering effective fostering services on behalf of Peterborough City Council through this agreement. This section is not exhaustive but seeks to describe the key features of a high quality, outcomes focused and child-centred approach to the delivery of fostering services.

Key legislative and statutory guidance requirements relating to the delivery of fostering services are as set out in The Children Act 1989 Guidance Volumes 2, 3 and 4; The Fostering Services Regulations

2011 and The Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011 [and any legislation or guidance that may replace them]; as supplemented by the contents of this service specification.

Assessment of Carers

On completion of the two stage fostering assessment process, the full range of information is considered by the Fostering panel, which then makes a recommendation as to whether or not the applicant/s are approved as foster carers and recommend their terms of approval. Applicants are able to attend the panel to give their views or provide in writing any views they want the panel to consider.

The recommendation of the panel is considered by the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker, who makes the final decision.

Should any concerns about the prospective foster carers arise during any part of the process, these will be discussed with the applicants, and a second opinion interview will be arranged where appropriate.

Should issues arise during the Stage Two process that the assessing social worker or manager believe may mean that an applicant may not be approved by panel, a 'brief report' may be presented to the panel, setting out the concerns. Applicants may make representations in writing or in person to the panel in these circumstances.

Where the panel recommends that an assessment should not be completed, the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker will make a 'qualifying determination' and inform the applicant of their options. Applicants are entitled to ask for the application to be reconsidered by the panel or to proceed to an Independent Review Mechanism. The recommendation of the subsequent adoption panel or of the Independent Review Mechanism is then referred back to the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker who will consider all the information and reach a final decision.

Provision of High Quality and well supported Foster Placements

The Permanency Service will adhere to exceed the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services through innovative care practices and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement through internal quality assurance procedures, monitoring and service development planning.

Foster placements provided by the Permanency Service will be for the sole use of children and young people in care to Peterborough City Council, except where there is specific agreement with the Council to provide assistance to other local authorities, for which the Permanency Service will make a charge to the other authority to reflect the placement and support costs.

Foster carers will be recruited to the Service in accordance with the requirements of the National Minimum Standards and in particular to Standard 13 – recruiting and assessing foster carers who can meet the needs of looked after children. The Service will therefore ensure that:

'Nothing can really prepare you for the first time you have a foster child in your home... But we had a brilliant social worker and the numbers of other carers we could call... and it worked out fine. Now we are able to support new carers as they start out.....'

Foster carer on support

- The principles of Safer Recruitment and equal opportunities are adhered to in the recruitment of foster carers;
- Appropriate levels of Disclosure and Barring Service checks are undertaken in respect of all adult members of the fostering household and any regular visitors to that household and that these are maintained up to date;
- All fostering households are provided with an initial training programme during the recruitment and assessment process and are offered regular training opportunities in accordance with their on-going development needs during their career as foster carers. This training to include child development and safeguarding as a minimum requirement;
- All foster carers are provided with up to date information about the expectations upon them as foster carers acting on behalf of the Local Authority via a Foster Carer Handbook [which may be available as an on-line resource].

Foster Carers recruited by the Service will be able to meet a wide range of needs as exhibited by children and young people in care. While there will always be a need for a number of carers to provide placements for younger children and young people with less complex needs, a significant number of carers recruited to the service will be able to appropriately care for and support children and young people exhibiting a range of more complex behaviours. Such behaviours may include: persistent absconding; offending behaviour requiring on-going support from other agencies; emotional and mental health issues requiring support from other agencies, sexually problematic behaviour that may pose a risk to themselves and others; those who display disorganised attachments and those that may have been abused or neglected and require on-going treatment/support.

The Permanency Service will place particular attention on recruiting a diverse range of foster carers, able to meet the culturally and ethnically diverse population of children and young people of Peterborough.

Recruitment of 'Link' carers able to provide family based short breaks for children and young people with disabilities is a key priority area for the Council and the Permanency Service will work with the Council's short breaks service and social work service for children and young people with disabilities in order to recruit carers able to meet the needs of this group.

Foster carers recruited to the service must be able to develop positive and effective working relationships with all those who play a significant role in the lives of children and young people placed with them. These will include their family and friends, social worker and other professionals and services including schools, colleges and health services.

Educational and learning outcomes are particularly important in terms of securing long term outcomes for children and young people. Foster carers recruited to the service will therefore be required to promote learning and training for children and young people placed with them, which

'Coming into care at the beginning was just horrible because I didn't see my family at home and because I am from a different country moving to an English family is not easy because you have to change the culture one to another.... I cannot see most of my family because they still live in my home country'

Young person describing their experience of care

will include supporting them to complete homework and helping them to consider appropriate learning or training needs in order to meet career aspirations.

Foster carers will deliver supervised care and accommodation 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days per year for each child or young person placed with them.

The Permanency Service will have a duty of care for the child or young person placed with one of their foster carers from the time they are welcomed into the foster carer's home until they leave in a planned and sensitive manner to return to the care of their parent/s or extended family, an adoptive household, to another foster carer, or to move on to independence.

The time in placement will be a positive, stimulating and worthwhile experience for children and young people who will be cared for within safe, appropriate home-environments with age appropriate activities, outings and positive relationships and interactions.

The Council will keep the Permanency Service and the foster carers informed of relevant developments that may have an impact on the child or young person in placement or the placement itself and in particular, any changes in the family circumstances of the child or young person and the progress of any legal proceedings.

The Permanency Service will not make any changes to the placement as agreed in child's placement plan, including the arrangement of any additional respite care, without first consulting the Council [which will usually mean the child's Social Worker or Team Manager]. Where any changes being considered have an impact on the progress of the child's care plan, the child's Independent Reviewing Officer must also be consulted.

Foster carers and their Supervising Social Worker will be expected to attend all necessary meetings, conferences and reviews in respect of the child or young person placed with them, including pre-placement planning meetings.

The Permanency Service will ensure that foster carers are provided with the level of support appropriate to maintain the placement. This will be achieved by ensuring that a stable team of Supervising Social Workers is maintained who are sufficiently qualified and experienced. These workers should have access to specialist training appropriate to their role.

In addition to the requirements relating to the support of foster carers set out in the Fostering National Minimum Standards, the Permanency Service will also provide:

- Access to psychological support and consultation in order to help foster carers to manage challenging or difficult behaviour and to develop strategies to help the child or young person develop more positive behaviours and social interaction;
- Access to support including out of hours support on a 24/7 basis, which will include practical in-home support when this is necessary;

'Being part of a football club'

'Having a laugh with my carers'

'Playing in a band'

'Being trusted by my carers.... And horse-riding'

'I like where I live with my foster carers'

Children and young people in care asked 'What is good about your life?'

- A high quality evidence-based training and development programme for foster carers including in relation to disorganised attachment, parent and child placements, recovery from trauma etc. Training offered will have an evidence base in terms of improving outcomes for children and young people;
- Access to translation services for foster carers when this is necessary to communicate with a child or young person placed with them who does not share a first language.

Foster carers currently enjoy free access to local Leisure facilities through the Council's contract with the relevant provider, Vivacity. The cost of this is heavily subsidised and the package is highly valued by carers. The cost of this arrangement is met from the budgets transferring to the Permanency Service and this form of support will expect to be continued. The Council will ensure that the current preferential rates offered by Vivacity continue following the establishment of the Permanency Service.

Foster carers will maintain a written record of key events in the child or young person's life during their placement. Such events will include:

- A daily log that records general observations about the progress of the child or young person;
- Notes of any significant events including contact with birth family members;
- Any incidents of challenging behaviour;
- All positive events that take place, such as positive reports from school or positive engagement in social or other activities, hobbies and so on.

The record should be written so that it provides a general overview of the progress made by the child or young person in the placement while providing a historical record that is available to the child or young person in later life.

The provider is expected to ensure that foster carers are facilitated to maintain this record securely and, wherever possible, electronically.

The fostering handbook provided to all fostering households must be kept regularly updated and set out the expectations of foster carers in relation to a wide range of issues, including managing challenging behaviour, rewards and sanctions, life story work, involvement in contact and what to do should any child or young person in placement be missing for any period of time.

At the point of mobilisation of the contract, the terms of the existing Peterborough foster carer handbook will apply. The Permanency Service may seek to make changes to the provision of the handbook, but will ensure that changes are consulted upon with carers and the Council through the appropriate governance arrangements as set out in section 16.1 below.

The provider will ensure that a delegation of authority to foster carers' protocol is in place, the provisions of which are agreed with the Council, and that the provisions of this protocol are reviewed regularly.

The Permanency Service will ensure that all fostering households are subject to an annual review in accordance with the requirements of the National Minimum Standards.

Where foster placements appear at risk of coming to an unplanned end, additional support will be offered to the child or young person looked after and the foster placement via a placement stability meeting to include all key stakeholders including the child's social worker, carers and supervising social worker, and any partner agencies able to provide additional support to maintain the placement.

Except where continuing a placement may result in serious safeguarding concerns or the risk of the committal of serious offences, placements will be subject to a 28 day notice period to enable placement moves to take place in a planned way. No placement moves will take place without full involvement and consultation with the child's social worker and independent reviewing officer.

No child should move placement without the agreement of the Council [which in effect means the head of service responsible for the child's case management] except in urgent situations outside office hours where continuing a placement may result in serious safeguarding concerns or the risk of the committal of serious offences. In these circumstances, placement moves are to be discussed with the Council's out of hours' Emergency Duty Service, which may in turn consult with the senior officer providing on call cover for the Council.

Parent and Child Placements: Where the foster placement is offered to a parent or parents as well as their child or children, the child or children must be recognised as the primary users of the service.

The Permanency Service will ensure that the foster carer provides observation, supervision and opportunities for parents to develop their parenting abilities. Foster carers will also support parents to access community based and statutory services.

The Permanency Service will ensure that all foster carers offering parent and child placements have an understanding of emotional attachment and the ability to encourage bonding between parent and their child.

Advice about parenting skills will be given by foster carers in a clear and objective manner to parents, and foster carers will provide clear feedback to parents about their strengths and areas for improvement. Such advice and guidance will need to be recorded, along with general observations, and such recording may be required in court proceedings.

Foster carers offering parent and child placements will have the ability to understand, engage and manage parents who may have complex needs such as learning difficulties, poor mental health or a history of alcohol and/or substance misuse and dysfunctional relationships, including domestically abusive relationships.

'I don't like moving'

'I want to stay with my foster carers... they are kind'

'I don't want to change my [foster] family... I want to know who I am'

'I don't want to change family and trust.... I want to be trusted'

'I wouldn't change anything about my care'

Young people in foster care asked what they would not change about their care

Should a parent and child placement conclude with the need for an alternative care plan for the child, the child must be able to remain in the foster placement until a suitable alternative placement can be made.

Promoting Permanency: The Permanency Service will promote the making of permanent arrangements for children and young people in long term fostering placements, where this is in the best interests of the child or young person concerned.

Such arrangements are usually best achieved through the making of a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order, since this offers the child or young person legal permanency. The Permanency Service will work to provide foster carers with the confidence they need to undertake such arrangements through the provision of a high level of support. Exceptional financial support packages, providing these comply with statutory guidance, can also be made. Further information can be found in Sections 11.1 and 11.2 on Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders below.

'I love where I am... it is very fun... we get to go places.... They give you confidence... I don't want to move: this is my home...'

Young person describing their experience of foster care

If permanency is not secured through a legal option, then the Permanency Service will work with the Council to ensure the placement is formally agreed as the long term placement in line with the wishes of the child and carers, taking into account the families' view.

Staying Put: The Permanency Service will promote Staying Put arrangements with in-house and IFA fostering households where such arrangements are in the best interests of the young person concerned. Current levels of payment to Staying Put carers total just under £240 per week. This total includes a housing benefit payment of £91 per week and an expected contribution by the young person of £30 per week.

Payments for former foster carers under Staying Put are set out in the Peterborough policy on Staying Put. Young people are required to claim Housing Benefit and make a small financial contribution to household expenses from their allowances, earnings or benefits.

The arrangements for financial support to former foster carers under Staying Put are the same, regardless of whether the carers were caring for the young person as 'in-house' or Independent Fostering Agency placements.

The budget for Staying Put will transfer to the Permanency Service, which will be responsible for ensuring that payments are made to carers in a timely way.

Out of Hours Arrangements: Emergency Duty Services [EDS] in Peterborough are provided under contract by Cambridgeshire County Council. A senior officer from Peterborough City Council provides on-call support to the EDS. The EDS must seek agreement from the nominated on call manager prior to any child or young person coming into care outside of office hours.

The Permanency Service will provide the EDS with a 'Duty rota' of foster carers available to take placements out of hours. Except where there are extended holiday periods, such as over Xmas and New Year, it is usually sufficient for one foster carer to be on duty at any one time.

The Permanency Service will ensure that there is an out of hours cover arrangement in place so that in the event of the on-call carer being unavailable or unable to accept a child out of hours, alternative arrangements can be made.

Where the Duty placement is used during the week, the Permanency Service will either ensure that the child moves to a substantive placement the next day, or provides details of an alternative carer who can provide 'Duty' cover for the next out of office hours period.

Carers who provide this service must be approved and able to accept a child or young person of any age and be able to be flexible in the event that a sibling group requires a placement.

An 'Out of Hours' payment is made to foster carers who provide this service. The current fee is £30 per 24 hour period.

Fostering Panel: The Permanency Service will be accountable for ensuring that a properly convened fostering panel in line with relevant regulations is in place and that this has the necessary capacity and administrative support to meet demand arising from approving new fostering households, overseeing renewals of approval and recommending permanent matches of children and young people with their foster carers.

The Fostering Panel will include representation from at least one Council social worker and one senior officer from Peterborough City Council. This officer will ensure that the quality of carers being approved by the Permanency Service is maintained at a consistently high standard, appropriate for meeting the needs of Peterborough children and young people.

The Permanency Service will ensure that a suitably senior and qualified officer acts as Agency Decision Maker for matters relating to the approval and review of approval for foster carers. Arrangements to manage differences of opinion between the ADM and the fostering panel and requests for a second opinion from prospective foster carers or carers unhappy about decision to vary or terminate their approvals will be put in place by the Permanency Service.

Permanency Matches will be agreed by the Agency Decision Maker for the Council as this relates to decisions about children and young people and this role will be retained by the Council.

Foster carers or prospective foster carers who are unhappy with any decisions relating to them in respect of their approval, termination or change to terms of approval are able to access the Independent Review Mechanism and the Permanency Service will provide information on how they can access this service.

6.1.6. Fees and Allowances for Foster Carers

Foster carers have been assured that their allowances will not reduce as a result of establishing the new Permanency Service. This means that the provider will be required to continue to pay fees and allowances that are at least equivalent to those set out in Section 6.1.3 and as described in the current Fostering Handbook.

Subject to this requirement and the requirement for the provider to deliver the service within the available budget provided by the Council, the provider is free to revise fees and allowances and in particular where carers are offering new services. Any changes in fees and allowances will be preceded by full consultation with foster carers and any other relevant stakeholders.

The provider will ensure that foster carers receive accurate payments in a timely way. The provider will ensure that arrangements are in place to enable over-payments to be recouped.

The provider will be required to account for all payments made as required.

The provider will be required to provide all foster carers with an annual statement detailing all payments received over the year in order to assist in the completion of tax returns.

6.1.7. Adoption Services

The Permanency Service will be required to operate a comprehensive adoption service that at least meets the requirements of the Adoption National Minimum Standards, all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, and any subsequent legislation or statutory guidance that comes into effect during the term of the contract.

Key outcomes for the service include:

- Successful recruitment of adopters able to meet the diverse needs of children in Peterborough and contribute towards regional and national requirements for adopters;
- Maintaining close working relationships with children's assessment and looked after functions operated by the Council in order to ensure that children wait for the shortest possible period before being successfully matched with adopters;
- The continued successful promotion of the Fostering for Adoption scheme in Peterborough;
- The provision of effective adoption support to all those affected by adoption, minimising the likelihood of adoption breakdowns.

The specific responsibilities of the Adoption Service that would transfer to the new service would include:

- All duties and responsibilities set out within the Adoption National Minimum Standards and all other relevant legislation;
- Successful recruitment, preparation and assessment of a diverse range of adopters able to meet the needs of the diverse communities of Peterborough and contribute to regional and national needs;
- Provision of evidence-based adoption support services to adopters and adopted children;
- Provision of adoption support services to birth relatives affected by adoption;
- Maintenance of post adoption contact arrangements including letterbox contact;
- Operation and management of the adoption panel.

There is a tradition in Peterborough that every effort to identify adopters for individual children is made. Because the cohort is small, this can result in large variations in key performance indicators and the adoption scorecard. This is accepted, provided that the accompanying narrative can evidence that such variations are the result of delivering a timely, child-led adoption service.

The provider will be required to maintain and develop existing relationships with adoption agencies within the region. This will include maintaining dialogue and discussion with key partners in the development of regional adoption arrangements.

6.1.8. Summary of Adoption Services to be provided

The following section summarises the main services to be provided in relation to adoption services by the provider on behalf of Peterborough City Council through the Permanency Service. This section is not exhaustive but seeks to describe the key features of a high quality, outcomes focused and child-centred approach to the delivery of adoption services.

Services provided under this agreement will at least reach the standards set by the National Minimum Standards for Adoption, 2014, and any statutory guidance or legislative requirements that

come into force during the lifetime of the contract. Provision of this service places the child at the centre of all activities and recognises the life-long impact of adoption on the adopted child, their adoptive families and birth families.

Recruitment and Assessment of Adopters: The Permanency Service will use information about children subject to child in need and child protection plans and becoming looked after to help to inform recruitment activities. It will seek to recruit adopters able to meet the needs of harder to place children – those who are older, belong to sibling groups or who have additional needs – in order to help local children as well as to contribute to the matching of permanent families for children waiting for adoption regionally and nationally.

‘I became a Peterborough adopter because I was welcomed from the beginning... I did not feel judged and I was supported and accepted all the way through’

Comment from a Peterborough adopter

The Permanency Service will ensure that sufficient prospective adopters are recruited who are willing and able to offer fostering for adoption and concurrent placements where such arrangements are in the best interests of the child concerned.

Potential adopters will experience a non-judgemental and equal opportunity focused approach to assessment that values diversity and welcomes potential adopters from all ethnic, religious, language, racial and social backgrounds regardless of sexuality, marriage or civil partnership status and including single applicants.

Enquiries from potential adopters will be handled helpfully and promptly in accordance with the statutory guidance relating to the Two Stage Adopter Assessment Process. Enquiries will normally be responded to on the same day and detailed information packs sent to enquirers. Any enquiries from people living beyond the area within which the Permanency Service can provide a service will be referred to First4Adoption or similar so that their motivation as a prospective adopter is not lost.

The preparation process, obtaining the required statutory checks, arranging of the adoption medical and the assessment process will be carried out by the Permanency Service in accordance with the Adoption National Minimum Standards.

On completion of the two stage adoption process, the full range of information is considered by the Adoption Panel, which then makes a recommendation as to whether or not the applicants are approved as adopters and, if they are to be considered for concurrent planning or fostering for adoption placements, as temporary foster carers for a named child. Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel to give their views or provide in writing any views they want the panel to consider.

‘I cannot praise my adoption workers highly enough... it has been brilliant from start to finish... open, honest, realistic, all the way to the adoption order.... That must not change....’

Comment from a Peterborough adopter

The recommendation of the panel is considered by the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker, who makes the final decision.

Should any concerns about the prospective adopters arise during any part of the process, these will be discussed with the applicants, and a second opinion interview will be arranged where appropriate.

Should issues arise during the Stage Two process that the assessing social worker or manager believe may mean that an applicant may not be approved by panel, a 'brief report' may be presented to the panel, setting out the concerns. Applicants may make representations in writing or in person to the panel in these circumstances.

Where the panel recommends that an assessment should not be completed, the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker will make a 'qualifying determination' and inform the applicant of their options. Applicants are entitled to ask for the application to be reconsidered by the panel or to proceed to an Independent Review Mechanism. The recommendation of the subsequent adoption panel or of the Independent Review Mechanism is then referred back to the Permanency Service Agency Decision Maker who will consider all the information and reach a final decision.

Family Finding and Matching Children with Adopters: The Permanency Service will maintain close links with Children's Social Care services in Peterborough, ensuring that children for whom adoption is identified as being in their best interests can be matched quickly with available adopters.

The responsibility for family finding lies with the Permanency Service and the first priority for the Permanency Service is therefore to recruit adopters able to meet the assessed needs of children needing adoptive homes. However, the Permanency Service will also ensure that it provides adopters for other children awaiting adoption within the Eastern Region and nationally.

'The support from the Adoption Team is always brilliant.... We have worked together to find loving, brilliant adopters for a number of my children.... It's great to feel that you have made such a difference to a child's future....'

Social Worker in Children in Care Service

Adopters recruited by the Permanency Service on behalf of Peterborough City Council will be provided to the Council on suitable matching with children looked after by Peterborough without any application of an interagency or other fee.

Matches of children with adopters will take place in partnership between the child's social worker and the Permanency Service. Matches will be made on the basis of the child's holistic needs and will include consideration of age, siblings, any special needs as well as ethnicity and religion. However, placing a child will not be delayed on the basis of seeking to find an exact ethnic or religious match if a family is available who can meet the child's other needs. In such circumstances, the prospective adopters will need to demonstrate how they will promote the child's positive sense of identity.

The Permanency Service will promote contact with birth families, subject to an assessment of the best interests of the child. Adopters will be consulted on post adoption contact, but the ethos of the Service is based on an assumption that post adoption contact with birth families is usually beneficial for the child.

The Service will seek to match adopters to children at the earliest opportunity. While priority will first be given to matching adopters to Peterborough children, interagency placements of children

from other local authorities will be actively considered in order to support the national priority that no child should be left waiting when a suitable match is available elsewhere.

Adopters recruited by the Permanency Service who are matched with children looked after by other authorities will attract an inter-agency fee. This fee will be retained by the Permanency Service and will be used to support adoption arrangements, or contribute to the cost of interagency fees that are made when a Peterborough child is placed with adopters recruited by other agencies.

Peterborough children placed with adopters recruited by other local authorities or voluntary adoption agencies will be subject to payment of an interagency adoption fee. This fee will be payable by the Permanency Service. Decisions as to whether to approach external adoption agencies in order to identify a suitable match will not be delayed by the need to pay an interagency adoption fee. Where there is any disagreement as to whether to seek external adopters, the Council and provider will use the Practice Issues escalation process as set out in section 17.

In the event of any significant change of circumstances within the adopter's family situation or in the event that no placement has been made a year after approval, a relevant manager in the Permanency Service will review the position. This may result in a recommendation to panel to terminate the approval of the adopters. In such circumstances, the adopters will have the right to view any report provided to panel, to comment on the report and attend panel to provide their views if they so choose. As with the initial approval stage, the Permanency Service will make the Independent Review Mechanism available to adopters in these circumstances.

The final decision to match a child with identified prospective adopters will be made by the Agency Decision Maker for Peterborough City Council. This includes any Fostering For Adoption Placements, in line with regulations and any matches between adopters and children that have been presented to the Adoption Panel.

Support to Placements: the Permanency Service will provide a range of support services to adopters, which will be tailored according to individual needs. Support available will include:

- Study days and evening seminars on issues of relevance to adopters;
- Opportunities for adopters and adopted children to meet at informal social events and so develop informal sources of support;
- Provision of consultation and advice on behavioural problems and emotional difficulties;
- Consultation to adopters on talking to children about their history;
- Support and liaison/assistance with referrals to specialist services such as Community Mental Health Services and local educational support services;
- Support with arranging contact including provision of a letterbox system;
- Lending of relevant resources including books and DVDs;
- Provision of parenting support and training including support with parenting adolescents.

A detailed adoption support plan will be agreed between the child's social worker, the adopters and the Permanency Service, which will detail the support to be provided, including the provision of any financial support, to the adoptive placement.

The Permanency Service will ensure that the Adoption Support Plan is included within the child's electronic case record.

Post Adoption Support: The Permanency Service will provide a full and comprehensive service to support adoptive and birth family members.

Any adoptive family living in Peterborough may request support from the Permanency Service, including an assessment for financial support or support with education. The Service will assess the needs of all those requesting a support service and agree an individual support plan with them. In many cases, the support offered will be via an evidence based programme except where the individual needs of adopters and/or children and young people mean that a bespoke package of support is required.

Short-term specialist intervention may be offered according to the assessed individual need of the adoptive family and may include support with life-story work, mediation over contact issues, attachment and therapeutic support including therapeutic parenting work. The Permanency Service will provide support to adopters and adopted children and young people in accessing a range of other services as appropriate including, for example, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The post adoption support service will help and support families to access parenting support groups including Secure Base programmes, and will offer a variety of support activities including stay and play groups and adoption support groups.

‘A good adoption service is responsible, innovative, creative, reflective, supportive, partnership focussed, curious, open, knowledgeable, friendly, understanding, has vision, is welcoming, ambitious, and experienced...’

Members of staff from the Peterborough adoption team

The Permanency Service will also ensure birth parent counselling for birth parents and other significant birth relatives is provided. A contract is currently in place with Adoptionplus for this service, and this contract has a further two years to run. this contract will be novated to the Permanency Service provider as part of this contract.

The Permanency Service will provide services to adopted adults and their birth relatives including counselling in preparation for search and reunion. Intermediary services between birth relatives and adopted people aged 18 and above, together with birth record counselling will be offered by the Permanency Service.

Panels: The Permanency Service will operate an Adoption panel in accordance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Sufficient numbers of panels will be held in order to ensure that demand from the need to make recommendations around the approval of prospective adopters and to minimise delays in matching and placing children. At least one member of the Adoption Panel will be a social worker and another will be a senior officer from within Peterborough City Council’s Children’s Services.

Responsibility for the administration of the panel will lie with the Permanency Service.

Agency Decision Maker: The Agency Decision Maker role as this relates to prospective adopters will be delegated to the Permanency Service. However, Peterborough City Council will maintain the Agency Decision Maker role in respect of individual children and young people.

Independent Review Mechanism: Prospective adopters who are unhappy with the Agency’s decision have the right to access an Independent Review Mechanism; the Permanency Service will ensure that information about this right is made available.

International Adoption: Applicants who wish to adopt a child from overseas will either be offered a service directly by the Permanency Service, for which a charge will be made that meets the cost of the service provided, or will be referred on to a suitable independent adoption agency that is able to offer a similar service [and which will also apply a charge accordingly].

6.1.9. Payment of Adoption Allowances & Arrangements for Financial Assessment

There will be occasions when adoption allowances are payable to adopters. The Permanency Service will be responsible for undertaking financial assessments and any reviews of adoption allowances as required.

The model of financial assessment used is the standardised model, which can be found at:

http://kinshipcarers.co.uk/documents/Means_test_guidance.pdf

The Permanency Service will be responsible for ensuring that allowances are calculated accurately and are paid to adopters in a timely way. The Permanency Service will be responsible for reclaiming any overpayments made.

6.1.10. Supporting Contact Arrangements

The Permanency Service will ensure that there are arrangements in place to facilitate indirect contact between children and birth families in line with the requirements of any court orders and best practice. This will include the operation of an efficient letter-box contact service.

There may be some occasions when similar arrangements for indirect contact are required where children and young people are in care or are subject to Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders. The Permanency Service will also be responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of such contact arrangements.

7. Placement & Resource Finding Service

Placements for children and young people coming into care or for those in care for whom a change of placement is required are identified by a small team currently known as the Access to Resources Team [ART]. This team consists of three full time Access to Resources Officers and one Business Development Officer.

The Access to Resources Officers identify suitable placements in in-house, Independent Fostering Agency, semi-independent living and residential placements, while the Business Development Officer ensures that accurate records of moves are maintained in order to ensure that correct payments are made to carers and external providers by finance and to ensure that the correct contracts are in place with external providers. The Team also identifies low cost accommodation for young people aged 18 and over who have no recourse to public funds – mostly young people who arrived in the UK as unaccompanied asylum seeking children who were looked after by Peterborough City Council before reaching the age of 18.

While most of the activity of the team is related to placements, it also has responsibility for identifying experts [e.g. psychologists, psychiatrists and so on] where specialist assessments are needed as part of pre-proceedings under the Public Law Outline, and for identifying crisis support to maintain children and young people safely in their homes and so prevent unnecessary or unplanned admissions into care.

These members of staff and the functions they undertake will transfer to the Permanency Service under this agreement. However, while all budgets relating to children and young people in care and

for accommodation for 18+ year olds with no recourse to public funds will also transfer to the Permanency Service, those relating to crisis family support and specialist assessments will remain with the local authority. The Access to Resources Officers will be required to continue to identify crisis support and expert assessments as they do now. This is a small proportion of the work that they do, most of which is associated with placement finding.

Peterborough City Council has a procedure in place that sets out the level of authorisation required for a child to become looked after for the first time, for a placement move to take place, or for an external resource to be commissioned to support a family in crisis or undertake a specialist assessment. It is the responsibility of the Permanency Service to ensure that the correct authorisations are in place before placements or resources are identified.

‘This service is about children, individual and unique children, who need a home that is safe and stable, where they are loved and they can thrive... that’s all that matters really...’

Comment by a Member of staff

Except in urgent situations, the decision to look after a child or agree a change in placement are usually agreed through the Peterborough Access to Support Panel [PASP], which is held weekly except on the last week of the month, when the Peterborough Joint Access to Support Panel [JASP] is held. The PASP is chaired by the Assistant Director for Children’s Social Care, while the JASP is chaired by the Service Director for Children and Safeguarding. The JASP considers resource requests where the complexity of the needs mean that joint funding between the local authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group and/or with dedicated school’s funding is likely to be indicated.

The Permanency Service will be required to be represented on these resource panels in order to assist in identifying suitable resources in advance as well as contributing to the discussion about the type of resource available that is most likely to meet assessed need.

Where the situation is urgent, the decision for a child or young person to become looked after for the first time is the responsibility of the Assistant Director for Children’s Social Care or, in their absence, the Service Director for Children and Safeguarding.

Where a child needs a placement – either because they are coming into the care system for the first time or because a current placement is coming to an end – the Council will ensure that all known and relevant information about the child is provided to the Permanency Service. This is in order to ensure that prospective carers are in the best possible position to meet the needs of children placed through knowledge of their routines and recent experiences, and that all carers are informed about any additional needs and/or risks that the child or young person may pose to other members of the fostering household.

The Permanency Service will do everything possible to match the needs of the child with an available placement as closely as possible, recognising that compromises are always likely to be needed. In respect of placements with ‘in-house’ foster carers, the Permanency Service will make all reasonable efforts to provide additional support to placements so that the placement has the best chance of being successful in meeting the needs of the child or young person.

A fundamental aim of the Permanency Service is to increase the proportion of children and young people placed with ‘in-house’ foster carers, reducing reliance on IFA carers and residential

placements. However, it will be the case that the Permanency Service will continue to need to source placements from these sectors – particularly as the service is becoming established.

The Permanency Service will negotiate with commissioned providers of placements through IFAs and residential placements on behalf of the Council. The contract will remain between the provider of the placement and Council, as opposed to between the Permanency Service and the commissioned provider of the placement. Contracts are standard national contracts, and are designed to apply between Council and commissioned provider.

Decisions about placements and placement matching must remain child-centred; in-house resources should not be used where it is clear that needs are unlikely to be met through this route. Some externally commissioned placements will always be required in order to meet the assessed needs of the child or young person.

The Permanency Service will consult with the child or young person's social worker about the suitability of the placement being offered. In most cases it is expected that the matching process will be such that the child or young person's social worker will agree that the placement being offered is suitable. Where this is not the case, and where the concerns of the social worker cannot be addressed through the provision of additional support to the placement offered by the Permanency Service and assessed as being a good match by the Service, the practice escalation policy in section 17 is to be followed.

7.1. Initial Health Assessment for Children in Care

The Permanency Service will facilitate the arrangement of the initial health assessment for all children and young people when they first become looked after.

Under these arrangements, the Access to Resources Team ensures that the Looked After Children's Health Team is notified when a child becomes looked after, and liaises with the child's social worker to ensure that all necessary paperwork including consent to the medical is provided to the Looked After Health Team.

Initial Health Assessments should be completed within 20 working days of a child or young person first becoming looked after. Performance against this indicator will be monitored as part of the contract.

8. Family Group Conferencing Service

Family Group Conferences support extended families and friendship networks to develop sustainable family-based plans that address the safeguarding needs of children in the family. They are usually held where children and young people are already subject to child protection plans, and where there is a risk that without the development of a sustainable family plan, children and young people are likely to come into the care system.

'You just want it to work... you want to take a child and for them to fit with you and your family... It rarely works that you can meet them before they arrive, it always seems to be a crisis... I always want to know what the child likes, what they enjoy, what makes them happy; we know they are going to have had problems and we need to know those too... but I want to know more than just those....'

Foster carers talking asked to say what they want to know about a child before placement

Family Group Conferences are also often the forum within which relatives who may be able to provide permanent care for a child through a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order are identified.

Operating the Family Group Conferencing Service independently from the Council will be helpful in supporting positive work and engagement with families who will also be engaged with the Council's statutory child protection services.

The current Family Group Conference Service in Peterborough consists of 1 full time conference coordinator and administrative support. There is also a budget to fund incidental expenses such as venue hire and light refreshments.

The Permanency Service will undertake all activities related to delivering successful family group conferences, including facilitating the involvement and engagement of the extended family and friendship network, making arrangements for the Conference including sourcing a suitable venue, providing the conference facilitator and providing necessary administrative support.

The Permanency Service will ensure that the agreed family plan is written up and circulated to all parties, including the child's social worker, within 5 working days of the Family Group Conference. The current arrangements and requirements of the Family Group Conference Service for the monitoring of outcomes and the review of the effectiveness of the provision will continue post transfer.

Where family plans are not able to promote the welfare of a child and serious safeguarding concerns remain, a Family Group Conference can also help families to identify and agree upon possible alternative permanent carers within the extended family or friendship group who could look after the child in the event that it is no longer in the best interests of the child to remain with their parents. Identification of alternative potential permanent carers within the extended family network should therefore always feature as part of the contingency plan agreed by the family in the event that it is not possible to develop a sustainable plan that enables the child or children to remain safely in the permanent care of their parents or carers.

By operating the Family Group Conferencing Service, the Permanency Service will have the benefit of forming relationships with family and extended family members. These may prove to be beneficial in the event that viability assessments and/or Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order assessments of extended family members are required at a later point.

The current Family Group Conferencing Service does not have sufficient capacity to meet need, and one of the areas where the Permanency Service will be asked to identify investment from savings elsewhere is to build capacity within the Family Group Conference Service.

9. Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders

9.1. Assessment

Around 30 children and young people are placed from care with relatives through Special Guardianship Orders [in the majority of cases] or Child Arrangement Orders in Peterborough each year. Prior to such a placement being made, courts require an assessment of the suitability of the carers [who are often relatives of the child or children concerned].

There has been a trend towards younger children being placed through special guardianship orders. Although assessment requirements for adoption and Special Guardianship Orders differ, this trend towards placing younger children with carers through a Special Guardianship Order means that in

order to secure the best long term outcomes for the child concerned, assessments of carers for a Special Guardianship Order benefit from being informed by learning and best practice relating to adoption assessments.

Ordinarily, any viability assessments completed in relation to family members or close friends of the child or family will be completed by the child's social worker. The Permanency Service will however be available to provide advice to social workers undertaking such assessments, and this advice may be particularly relevant where family members have been involved in earlier Family Group Conferences. In some circumstances, Permanency Staff may be asked to do a one off joint visit with the child's social worker as part of the viability assessment, in order that the decision making in respect of the child can benefit from this prior knowledge.

Where a viability assessment is positive and the care plan or parallel plan is for the child to remain with the carer permanently, the Permanency Service will undertake a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order assessment. In doing so, the Permanency Service will liaise closely with the child's social worker.

Assessments will draw on the expertise in relation to completion of assessments of potential adopters, and will focus on the possible challenges that Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Order carers may face both in the immediate term and as the child grows older and in particular, consider the viability of the arrangement and any support needs that may be indicated once the child reaches adolescence. These areas of focus for the assessment are in line with likely amendments to the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005, expected in February or March 2016.

All assessments will be completed in accordance with the timescales as determined by the court or within 16 weeks of the commencement of the assessment, whichever is the shorter. This is particularly the case in relation to court directed assessments, where any delays in completion can result in a wasted costs order being made against the Council. Such delays also result in reputational damage, which must be avoided at all costs.

These assessments are currently undertaken by the Fostering and Adoption Service and it is not envisaged that there will be any transfer of qualified social worker resource to facilitate activities in this area.

All assessments will be completed by a qualified social worker in line with the relevant regulations.

9.2. Support to carers under Child Arrangement & Special Guardianship Orders

The Permanency Service will offer support to carers of children under Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders for all children who were previously looked after by the Council that is comparable to that available to adopters [and as set out in the paragraphs above]. This is another area for priority investment as savings are delivered as a result of the Permanency Service.

Where a Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order is made, an agreed support plan will be put in place detailing the financial and other forms of support to be offered and the duration of this support.

Financial support is ordinarily only available for a period of two years from the making of the Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order, and is subject to an assessment of means unless the child was formally placed with the carers as a child in care [in other words, where the carers were connected carers]. Financial support is generally only available where the child concerned was looked after by the Council immediately prior to the making of the Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order.

The Permanency Service is responsible for ensuring that financial assessments are completed as required and for notifying the carers of the level and duration of financial support. Except where children were placed with non-related general foster carers prior to the making of the Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order, allowances are equivalent to level 1 fostering allowances, less child benefit and holiday, birthday and celebration payments.

The Permanency Service is also responsible for reviewing on-going support to carers under Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders in line with the relevant statutory guidance. This includes undertaking a re-assessment of financial means where this is required by the statutory guidance.

The budget for funding Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Order Allowances will transfer to the Permanency Service and it will be the responsibility of the Permanency Service to ensure that payments are made to carers in a timely way.

The model of financial assessment used is the standardised model, which can be found at:

http://kinshipcarers.co.uk/documents/Means_test_guidance.pdf

All carers under Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders are able to approach the Permanency Service beyond the period of the duration of the original support plan and request additional support from the service.

The Permanency Service will offer a range of support to carers, based on their individual needs. Time limited support may be offered in relation to parenting, supporting the carers with attachment issues, managing adolescence, support with helping to explain the child's history and story to the child and in mediating contact disputes. The Permanency Service will also support carers to access other relevant support services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health and education support services.

9.3. Promoting Special Guardianship & Child Arrangement Orders to Foster Carers

The Permanency Service will promote Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders to non-related foster carers for children and young people in care to Peterborough City Council, as a way of securing permanency and a more 'normal' family life for the child or young person and family concerned, where this is in the best interests of the child or young person concerned.

As part of the promotion of such arrangements, the Permanency Service will offer detailed and bespoke on-going support plans for the carers concerned, giving them the confidence that they can come back to the service at any time should they need support in order to meet the needs of the child or young person.

'My foster carers are brilliant'

'They're protecting you'

'They're building your confidence'

'My carers really care for me...'

Young people asked what they like about foster care

Because the move from being a child in care and looked after by a non-related general foster carer is a very different scenario from that applying to relatives and former connected carers, exceptional financial support plans can also be agreed in these circumstances, providing they remain in line with the Special Guardianship Regulations, 2005 including as these are amended in February 2016.

The Permanency Service will be responsible for developing the support plan in partnership with the carers and in providing any practical assistance necessary to facilitate the application to the Court for the necessary order.

The Permanency Service will be responsible for ensuring that the support plan is included within the child's electronic case record and that a copy is provided to the carers. The Permanency Service will ensure that carers are aware of their obligations in respect of the arrangements.

The Permanency Service will be responsible for carrying out the reviews of the support plan as required by statutory guidance, and for ensuring that payments of allowances are made to carers in a timely way.

The cost of allowances and of non-financial elements of the support plan will be met by the Permanency Service.

9.4. Legacy Arrangements

There are a reducing number of children and young people in Special Guardianship or Residence Order arrangements that were put in place prior to the Council taking the decision that financial support should ordinarily be available for a period of two years from the date of the Order being made.

Payments to carers under these arrangements continue until the child reaches the age of 16, or is no longer in the care of the carers for any reason. Allowances payable are subject to an annual financial assessment, which is the standardised model, which can be found at:

http://kinshipcarers.co.uk/documents/Means_test_guidance.pdf

The budget for payment of allowances to this group of carers will transfer to the Permanency Service, and the service will be responsible for ensuring the timely payment of allowances.

The Permanency Service will also be responsible for carrying out the annual financial assessments, and for ensuring that the outcome of these assessments is loaded to the child's electronic case file and communicated to the carers in a timely fashion.

10. Statutory Social Work Functions for Children in Care & Care Leavers

Most statutory social work functions for children looked after and care leavers will continue to be provided by the Council. However, it is proposed that for the relatively small group of children who have been 'permanently' matched to long term 'in-house' foster carers, where such arrangements have been recommended by the child or young person's statutory review and agreed by the Council Agency Decision Maker, the social work functions in respect of these children will transfer to the Permanency Service.

This is intended to reduce bureaucracy often associated with decision making, and to support effective delegation of decision making to foster carers. The aim is to ensure that children and young people in care in such placements are able to experience a life that is as close as possible to that experienced by any child living in their permanent family home.

The Permanency Service will also be required to promote 'Staying Put' arrangements. Young people living with former foster carers under Staying Put are supported by personal advisers. This function

will also be provided by the new service for the group of children and young people who have been ‘permanently’ placed with in-house foster carers when they leave care.

Once such a placement has been recommended for permanent matching with an in-house foster carer the child or young person’s statutory review, and this recommendation is agreed by the Council’s Agency Decision Maker, the tasks and responsibilities of the child’s social worker will be delegated to the Permanency Service.

Working within the regulations and statutory guidance, the Permanency Service will develop innovative approaches to ensuring that the children and young people living in ‘permanent’ foster families are able to experience a life that is as similar to that they would have were they not looked after. These approaches will need to combine ensuring that the household is effectively supported while providing carers with as much autonomy as possible to make decisions about the day-to-day lives of the children and young people for whom they care, in line with the Permanency Services’ foster carer delegation protocol.

The Permanency Service will ensure separate workers are allocated to the child or young person in placement, and in the support role to the foster carers, in line with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Responsibility for the statutory social work function in respect of the child or young person will only transfer to the Permanency Service once the child or young person’s case file is brought fully up to date.

‘Having lots of different social workers’

‘Having a social worker who always turns up late for meetings’

‘Having to ask permission for everything... seeing friends, going on sleep overs...’

Young people asked what they do not like about being in care

The Permanency Service will ensure that all children and young people for whom they hold statutory responsibility under these provisions receive a service that meets and preferably exceeds the minimum statutory requirements and strives for excellence at all times.

Children and young people will be visited regularly and seen alone in placement; visits will be written up and care and other plans and any assessments will reflect the voice of the child. The allocated worker will work with partners including in health and education to ensure that the child or young person achieves their full potential.

Arrangements will be put in place to ensure that the child or young person accesses health assessments and dental checks at least in line with statutory requirements. Carers will participate in the completion of Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires in a timely way, subject to the age of the child or young person in placement.

Contact will be promoted with family and friends in accordance with the best interests of the child or young person.

Children and young people in care and placed in such ‘permanent’ in-house foster placements will continue to have access to advocacy services as commissioned by the Council, as well as to the Child in Care Council and statutory complaints processes. Any allegations made by children and young people in these placements will be notified to the Council within 72 hours, including any action undertaken to safeguard the child or young person, and the outcome of any subsequent enquiries.

The LADO will be notified where appropriate. Further information on managing allegations and ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded can be found in section 14.3 below.

It is not envisaged that this function will require a significant amount of transfer of resources. Children and young people for whom the Permanency Service will acquire statutory social work functions are the most settled in placement among the in care population as a whole. As such, they will require lower levels of visiting than most other children in care. There will be 2 social worker posts that will transfer to the Permanency Service to meet the needs of this group. There will be very few if any young people who will have left care from this group at the point of contract mobilisation, and so a 0.5 FTE personal adviser post will transfer to the Permanency Service to support leaving and after care functions.

Budgets associated with providing a service to this group of children and young people will also transfer to the Permanency Service. This will include budgets such as subsistence and travel costs for social workers, and incidental budgets related to the costs of supporting children and young people in care where these are not already met as part of the fees and allowances payable to foster carers.

In the event that a 'permanent' placement covered by these arrangements comes to an unplanned end, the child or young person will remain allocated to their existing worker for a period of up to 3 months to ensure that they are supported into their new placement. This period is to allow for a transfer of social work responsibility to the Council's child in care service, and to ensure that all relevant information is shared with any new placement.

10.1 Leaving and After Care Support for Care Leavers formerly 'permanently' placed with 'in house' foster carers

The majority of care leaving services will be provided by the Council. However, the Permanency Service will deliver Leaving and Aftercare Service in accordance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance for all young people placed with 'in house' foster carers on a permanent basis and for whom responsibility has been delegated to the Permanency Service.

All such young people will have a pathway plan by the age of 15, assuming they are looked after at this point in their lives. Pathway plans will be informed by an up to date assessment. Young people will be involved in the development of their pathway plans, and the voice of the young person will be evident throughout the process, as well as recorded within the assessment and the plan.

Pathway plans will be regularly reviewed and a reassessment of need followed by a revised pathway plan will take place wherever there are significant changes in the circumstances of the young person, or in their plans for the future.

The Permanency Service will ensure that all care leavers who are or were formerly placed in 'permanent' foster placements have a Personal Adviser, and measures will be in place to ensure that the Permanency Service remains in contact with care leavers. The service offered to young people will be young-person centred. Care leavers will be involved in the development of plans for them and in developments surrounding Leaving and Aftercare generally.

The Permanency Service will work with local housing providers and in particular with the Council's Housing Services to ensure that all care leavers are provided with suitable housing. Moves to independent living will take place in a planned way except where urgent circumstances prevent this.

The Permanency Service will develop effective means of seeking the views of care leavers including through the development of safe and secure social media and web-based applications. This

approach may be delivered on behalf of the Council to include all care leavers by agreement and in due course.

The Permanency Service will ensure that care leavers have access to advice and support in relation to education, employment, training and apprenticeships.

The Permanency Service will broker support for care leavers from other services that they may need including Adult Social Care Services and Mental Health services.

The Permanency Service will assist care leavers to maintain their relationships with former care-givers and others of significance in their lives, while supporting them with relationships with their birth families as appropriate.

It is unlikely that there will be any need for more than 0.5 FTE personal adviser post to transfer to the Permanency Service in order to provide these leaving and after care services. However, it is recognised that this level of resourcing will need to be maintained under regular review as the Permanency Service develops. This may result in the transfer of additional resources from the Council to the provider at a later date.

In the event that the need for resources increases, arrangements to meet the increased need will be agreed within the Joint Governance Board.

11. Expected Service Developments

The provider will be required to present plans for the development of the following service improvements within 3 months of the end of the mobilisation period. Progress against the resulting implementation plans will be monitored through the Joint Governance Board.

11.1. Improving Support to Child Arrangement & Special Guardianship Order Carers

As noted elsewhere, the number of children leaving care to become permanently placed with Special Guardianship Order carers is currently around 30 per annum – similar to the number of children leaving care through adoption. Numbers placed under Child Arrangement Orders are currently very much smaller, but the principle of improving support to this group of carers applies equally.

The age of children being placed with relatives under a Special Guardianship Order during care proceedings is reducing, with a growing number of children aged 5 or under being placed through these provisions.

Carers providing permanent care to young children under either Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders are likely to face similar challenges to those faced by adopters as children placed with them grow older. We are therefore determined to ensure that this group of permanent carers are able to access similar levels of support as that available to adopters, in order to ensure that as few of these arrangements come to an unplanned end in the future.

Financial support offered to this group of carers is not envisaged to change. Current policy is for Special Guardianship Order carers to be provided with two years financial assistance in line with level 1 fostering allowances, less child benefit, except in exceptional circumstances [such as where the child concerned has complex disabilities]. This financial support to Special Guardianship Order carers is not envisaged to change.

However, the Permanency Service is required to develop a range of support services for permanent carers under Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders that is broadly in line with that available to adopters, as described in sections 6.1.7 and 6.1.8 above. Where children are moving

from the care of the local authority to carers under these orders, particular attention is to be paid to ensuring that the initial support plan that is put in place will promote successful permanency.

11.2. Encouraging Foster Carers to Seek Special Guardianship Orders

For children who are placed with non-relative foster carers – both ‘in-house’ and IFA carers – the new service will promote permanency through Special Guardianship Orders. Our foster carers say that the principal issue that concerns them about Special Guardianship Orders is access to support for the child and themselves in future years, should this be necessary.

Some carers are also concerned about financial implications, and there is greater provision within our current arrangements for an on-going commitment to pay a Special Guardianship Order allowance in these circumstances. However, it is the issue of access to non-financial support that is the most commonly mentioned barrier, and it is in this area that the new service will be expected to make a significant contribution.

11.3. Improving Support for Children Returning Home from Care

The most common reason for children and young people to leave care is returning home to parents after a period of being looked after. Nationally, around 34% of exits from care happen for this reason. Sadly, nationally, around half of these children and young people return to the care system.

We want to improve outcomes for this group of children and young people. The Permanency Service will therefore develop new and innovative approaches to supporting the effective return home, so that such moves result in successful permanency.

Such approaches may not require any significant investment; they may be possible to achieve by utilising existing resources in different ways. Foster carers may be able to be supported to play a bigger role in supporting parents in developing their parenting abilities through modelling, for example.

This approach will generally be available to two groups of children and young people: those for whom the plan on coming into care is to identify and support a sustainable return home and those where an assessment has been completed that indicates that a return home is appropriate, but where some additional support is likely to be necessary in order for this to be successful.

The outcomes of the new approaches to supporting this group of children and young people to return home will form part of the overall performance framework relating to the Permanency Service.

11.4. Developing capacity within the Family Group Conferencing Service

The current level of resources within the Family Group Conferencing Service is limited and is not sufficient to meet demand. This is also an area where the new service will be expected to use savings derived from reduced levels of higher cost placements to increase investment. The eventual aim will be to increase capacity of this service by 100%, or as necessary to meet reasonable levels of demand.

12. Service User Engagement

The Permanency Service will ensure that the voice of service users influences the design of services. In particular, children and young people who are in care and young people who have left care will be provided with a variety of opportunities to participate in the design and review of services as well as in their own individual care and pathway plans.

The Permanency Service will assist in supporting the Children in Care Council and a Care Leaver's participation group. Children and young people of primary school age and above will be encouraged to participate in these representative groups by foster carers and staff within the Permanency Service.

In addition, foster carers and key members of staff will be proactive in ensuring and enabling all children and young people to participate in the development of plans that determine their future, and the review of these plans, in partnership with Independent Reviewing Officers.

The Permanency Service will work with children and young people in care and care leavers as well as with the Council to enable and develop safe and secure means of communicating their views about the services they receive through social media and web-based applications.

The Permanency Service will work with young people as they are preparing to leave care and with those who have left care to help to develop a range of resources that assist young people in managing independent living, including, for example, various practical 'how to' guides on managing the responsibility of a property.

The Permanency Service will ensure that there are a number and variety of ways in which children and young people in care and care leavers are able to meet informally.

The successes of children in care and care leavers will be regularly celebrated, including at events that are specifically designed to build pride, resilience and aspiration among children and young people in care and care leavers.

The Permanency Service will ensure that children and young people in care and care leavers are able to meet with elected Members and senior officers of the authority in formal and informal circumstances.

Foster carers and prospective adopters will be provided with a number of ways of participating in the design and review of services.

The Permanency Service will promote and support a Foster Carers' support group and/or executive committee or similar. Senior officers of the Permanency Service will meet regularly with this group, and will work through any issues of concern for carers with their representatives. The commissioning lead for the Council will also meet regularly with carers through this mechanism.

Foster carers and adopters will be supported to develop their own informal and formal means of support, building capacity across the service. New carers, for example, may be 'buddied' with more experienced carers, who can provide support and advice as they develop their confidence and experience.

Adopters and adopted children will be given the opportunity to meet other adopters and children and thereby develop their own sustainable support networks. Examples of how this can be achieved include 'Stay and Play' sessions, as well as more formal support events, perhaps based around common themes such as helping children to understand their journey.

Parents of children and young people looked after will also be given the opportunity to participate in the design of services, as well as being encouraged and enabled to participate in the planning in respect of their own child, where this is in the child's best interests. Contact will be promoted – where this is in the best interests of the child or young person – and parents' views will be valued and respected.

Birth families of adopted children will also be enabled to participate in the design of services to support birth families and, together with parents and extended families of children and young people in care, will be asked to provide their views about the effectiveness of the services that they receive.

The above activities will support the functioning of the Corporate Parenting Panel, by helping Members to maintain an understanding of the experience of being in care and leaving care and so be more effective advocates for looked after children and young people.

13. Information and Communication Technology

The Permanency Service will continue to use the Peterborough City Council child recording system – Liquid Logic – for recording all child and carer related matters. Information sharing agreements will be in place to facilitate this arrangement, and the provider will be required to have policies and procedures in relation to data protection and data sharing that are fit for purpose and at least meet the minimum statutory requirements.

Licences for use of Liquid Logic will be provided by the Council and will not be subject to any charge to the provider.

The Permanency Service will be expected to develop ICT solutions to facilitate the recording of observations by foster carers of children and young people in placement, enabling an electronic record of the progress of children and young people to be maintained.

The Council will ensure that staff working for the Permanency Service have access to ICT equipment and support in line with social workers and officers working in Children’s Social Care.

14. General Practice Standards

14.1 Record Keeping

14.1.1. Statutory Practitioner Records

The Permanency Service will ensure that all practitioners working with children, young people, foster and adoptive carers maintain accurate records using the Liquid Logic client recording system [or such other systems that may be adopted by agreement with the Council over the course of the contract].

This recording must be in accordance with best practice standards, including:

- Clearly evidencing the views, wishes and feelings and voice of service users;
- Distinguishing between opinion and fact;
- Taking in to account factors such as ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, age and ability, any disabilities in the assessment of need and care planning;
- Evidencing effective management oversight including recording of decisions and reasons for decisions being made;
- Evidencing the involvement of children and young people in care and pathway plans made about them;
- Being completed within 72 hours of the event [visit etc.] taking place;
- Using the correct templates for recoding of information including in the development of chronologies, plans, completion of risk assessments and so on;
- Accepting updates that are applied within Liquid Logic to templates and processes so that practice within the permanency Service is aligned with that within Children’s Social Care.

The case file must include all relevant information including copies of relevant correspondence, financial and other assessments, any complaints or compliments and the outcome of any complaints.

14.1.2. Record Keeping by Carers

The Permanency Service will ensure that all foster carers [including those who are looking after a child under the Fostering for Adoption or Concurrent Planning arrangements] keep clear, written records about the child or young person in placement, their activities, progress, appointments and any incidents or concerns.

Use of electronic recording systems is the expected model of recording factual daily observational recording about children, young people, other family members or those with a significant relationship with the child or young person who have been in contact with the child or foster placement.

Foster carers will also keep up to date photographs of the child or young person and maintain mementos and photos that can support the memories of children and young people in later life, in the form of a 'Life Story' book; again the expectation is that this will form part of a secure digital record.

Foster carers will be supported by the Permanency Service to contribute towards producing well-evidenced and appropriate reports for a range of purposes, including for the potential use in court.

Where a placement is offered to a child and their parent[s], the foster carer will ensure that recording of factual observations is detailed so that it can assist in decision making about the care arrangements that are likely to be in the best interests of the child. This information may need to be presented to court, and on rare occasions, carers may need to attend court. The Permanency Service will ensure that foster carers are trained in this area and are supported to share the information with the parent[s].

It is likely that on some occasions, the behaviour of children or young people in placement may be such that intervention by carers or others is required in order to maintain good order and discipline.

In addition to meeting all Foster Carer National Minimum Standards and in particular to Standard 3:

Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships, the Permanency Service will ensure that foster carers have clear written guidance around how to maintain good order and discipline.

These guidelines will state that as far as possible, only verbal guidance and instruction will be used to influence the behaviour of a child or young person.

Any other measures to influence a service users' behaviour will be wholly exceptional, restricted to minimum intervention and proportionate and appropriate in all circumstances. Any sanctions applied will be used sparingly and be contemporaneous, relevant and just.

In the event that any sanctions are used, the foster carer will record these clearly in the notes they maintain about the child or young person.

'I need help to change my behaviour since that will cause arguments if I get rude to older people'

Young person in care asked what they want to change

Any cases where any form of physical intervention is used will be notified in writing to the Council on the first working day after the event, meaning the social worker and team manager responsible for the child, or the lead commissioner in the case of children and young people 'permanently' matched with 'in-house carers'.

The expectation is that all foster carers are provided with an evidenced based training package that covers issues such as disorganised attachment, managing challenging behaviour, recovery from trauma and similar, with the outcome that there will be a reduced need to use sanctions or any form of physical intervention. Where such interventions have been needed, the Permanency Service will ensure that foster carers are provided with appropriate support with the aim of making it less likely that such responses will be required again.

The above applies to children and young people placed with prospective adopters but who have not yet been formally adopted. Once the child has been adopted, record keeping should be in accordance with that in normal family life – i.e. restricted to keeping mementoes and photos of activities for later life.

14.2. Safeguarding

Promoting the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people using the Permanency Service is of fundamental importance.

All foster carers and prospective adopters must receive in-depth training on safeguarding issues including:

- The provision of appropriate care with clear boundaries;
- Promoting safe use of social media, internet and similar by children and young people in placement;
- How to respond to a child or young person who makes a disclosure of abuse;
- Procedures to follow in the event that a child or young person goes missing from the placement;
- Recognition of signs that may indicate a young person being at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and procedures to follow;
- Recognition of signs that a young person may be misusing non-prescription substances or alcohol, and the procedures to follow;
- Recognition of risks associated with self-harming behaviour.

All staff working in the Permanency Service who have contact with children, their families, or their carers, or who supervise those who have such contact, will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role. This training will include access to the Local Safeguarding Children Board training and levels of training will be at least in line with minimum standards.

A senior manager within the Permanency Service will be named as being the lead for safeguarding issues. This officer will have responsibility for ensuring that the Permanency Service complies with the requirements of s.11 of the Children Act 2004.

The Permanency Service will have in place its own safeguarding procedure that complies with the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board procedures and with Working Together 2015, and any subsequent procedures and statutory guidance that come into effect during the period of the contract. These procedures will be kept under regular review to ensure that they remain in line with best practice.

The Permanency Service will have a Whistleblowing procedure in place, and all staff and carers will receive training on the main features of the policy.

Where allegations have been made against staff or carers, the Permanency Service will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer [LADO].

Allegations made against foster carers will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the relevant National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.

Decisions as to whether children and young people need to be moved from a placement following an allegation will be made jointly by the Permanency Service and the Council, with due regard to the views of the LADO. Placement moves will be avoided where this is unlikely to be in the best interests of the child or young person concerned. Factors to be considered when deciding whether or not a placement move should take place will include:

- The nature of the allegation and the identity of the person who has made it;
- The age and circumstances of the child or young person, with due regard to their wishes and feelings;
- Consideration of what actions can be taken to reduce or minimise any risks while enquiries are made.

The final decision as to whether a child or young person needs to move placement following an allegation having been made rests with the applicable Head of Service within the local authority, taking into account the advice provided by the LADO. Where the Permanency Service is unhappy with this decision and other means of resolving the disagreement have failed, the matter can be escalated using the practice escalation process.

Where the decision relates to a child or young person for whom looked after services have been delegated to the Permanency Service, the Permanency Service will consult with the LADO and IRO for the child or young person concerned. The Permanency Service will then seek ratification of their decision with the Commissioning Lead within Peterborough City Council, having supplied all relevant information about the concerns or allegations.

The Permanency Service will record and report to the Authority the volume of child protection incidents in relation to the Service as well as those referred by the Provider [including themes identified and action taken]. These detailed records of allegations will be compiled into an annual report to the Council which summarise:

- The nature of the allegations;
- Whether allegations have been made about the same carer or member of staff on more than one occasion;
- The action taken as a result of the allegation;
- The outcome of any enquiries or investigations;
- The final outcome – i.e. further training, disciplinary action, termination of approval, prosecution as relevant.

All child protection referrals received by the Authority about the Permanency Service, its employees and/or the Service will be logged and investigated under the Authority's Child Protection Procedure.

To assist the investigation, the Permanency Service will provide the Authority with all required information within the requested timescales.

The Permanency Service will ensure that carers and members of staff attend and contribute to all strategy and other meetings related to the safeguarding of individual children and young people as required.

14.3. Children and Young People Missing from Care

The Permanency Service will have in place a Missing from Care procedure, which will be in line with the procedures of the local safeguarding children board and the Council.

The Permanency Service will ensure that all employees and in particular, foster carers, are made aware of, understand and receive the appropriate training in relation to absconding and missing children and young people and the Permanency Service's procedure.

The Permanency Service will ensure that all absences are notified to the Authority in line with the Fostering Services [England] Regulations, 2011, and any regulations that come into effect during the course of the contract.

Where a child or young person for whom the Permanency Service has responsibility for the provision of a statutory social work service goes missing, the Permanency Service will ensure that appropriate risk assessments, including the Child Sexual Exploitation risk assessment where relevant, are undertaken and that these are used to update the care plan in order to ensure that risks to the child or young person are minimised.

The Permanency Service will co-operate fully with the need for Return Interviews to be completed with any missing young person. These are provided by a Council-commissioned organisation and will not incur any additional cost for the Service.

The Permanency Service will ensure that carers and practitioners attend and contribute to all strategy and other meetings relating to children and young people who go missing as required.

15. Finance, budgets and reporting arrangements

It is proposed that all placement related budgets will transfer to the Permanency Service. These budgets will then have savings targets attached to them, which will be delivered through increased use of Special Guardianship Orders and reduced

use of IFA and residential placements. In addition to delivering savings targets, investment required for new areas of service delivery [as detailed in the relevant sections below] will also be identified through the reduced use of more costly placements.

Staffing budgets for those who transfer to the new service under TUPE will also transfer, along with associated budgets covering staff expenses and similar. Details of posts can be found within the relevant schedule of the contract.

Sufficient budget will also transfer to ensure that incidental staffing expenses such as mileage and expenses are able to be met by the Permanency Service.

Business support functions are currently provided by SERCO to the Council under a long term contract. Resources sufficient to provide business support functions for the Permanency Service will transfer to the new service.

'The Permanency Service has to be value driven, not just cost driven'

Comment by member of staff

The table below sets out the expected year end position for placement budgets as at the end of month 10:

PLACEMENT TYPE	BUDGET
16+ ACCOMODATION / SUBSISTANCE	£839,829
INDEPENDENT AGENCY FOSTERING	£4,014,998
AGENCY RESIDENTIAL [SOCIAL CARE COST]	£2,095,852
IN HOUSE FOSTERING	£2,274,698
FAMILY AND FRIENDS – CONNECTED CARERS	£239,289
ADOPTION ALLOWANCE	£720,353
WELFARE SECURE – SOCIAL CARE COST	£122,905
ASYLUM SEEKERS	£477,656
REMAND	£12,314
REMAND CONTRIBUTION	-£66,340
NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS	£25,025
CLAIM FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS	-£477,656
TOTAL LAC PLACEMENT BUDGETS	£10,278,923
NON LAC GENERAL FUND PLACEMENTS	
18+ ACCOMMODATION SUBSISTENCE	£13,583
LAC EDUCATION	£60,000
STAYING PUT	£159,338
RESIDENCE ORDER	£226,095
SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDER	£727,372
TOTAL NON LAC PLACEMENT PRESSURES	£1,186,388
TOTAL	£11,473,311

The total placement budget allowed for in 2016/17 is £11,666,309, meaning that assuming no sustained increase in numbers of children in the system, there should be sufficient budget to meet placement costs.

There is a £10,000 pa contribution to Axiom Housing within the 16+ budget above which provides some additional support to enable some higher need young people who are looked after to access provision at the Foyer.

The Dedicated Schools Grant [DSG] funds the educational element only of residential placements including welfare secure and remand placements for young people of statutory school age and for

any young person up to age 18 who has an Education, Health and Care Plan that identifies that a specialist education provision is needed to meet educational need.

The current pricing split for joint funded residential placements where the funding is split between children's social care and education is 28%/72%. A small number of specialist placements are also joint funded with the Clinical Commissioning Group, where there are clear health-related reasons for the placement being required. The contribution by the Clinical Commissioning Group is agreed at the monthly Peterborough Joint Agency Support Panel [JASP], at which the Permanency Service will be required to attend.

It is not possible for either of these funding sources to transfer to the Permanency Service. The Permanency Service will therefore be required to ensure that it has measures in place to ensure that the correct sums are received from the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group. The Permanency Service will also be responsible for providing information about children and young people where such joint funding arrangements are in place as requested, and to facilitate the provision of reports from commissioned providers when placements are reviewed within the Council's panel processes and in particular when reviewed by JASP.

The above funding split reduces the risk to the provider associated with high cost, low volume placements such as welfare secure since in most cases, the budget transferred to the provider will only be required to cover 28% of the placement cost, with the remainder being met from the DSG. Where there is a contribution from the Clinical Commissioning Group, the proportion of the total cost borne by the provider may be reduced further.

The operational elements of the Permanency Service will continue to be delivered from the current office locations. For most services, this means Bayard Place, Broadway, Peterborough. The Family Group Conference Coordinator is currently located within the Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough. There is flexibility as to where this post may most appropriately be located. It is recognised that some elements of strategic operation of the service may be located elsewhere but the expectation is that all operational and line management functions remain at Bayard Place in order to ensure good communication with the services that continue to be delivered by the Council.

There will be no charge made to the provider for the use of the Council's accommodation at least in the foreseeable future. The provider will be required to enter into a license agreement as set out in schedule 17 of the terms and conditions.

Services and facilities including desk space, stationery, IT equipment, printing and so on will continue to be provided by the Council. This is so as to enable the Permanency Service to continue to benefit from existing large scale contracts with existing providers.

15.1. Savings to be achieved

The Council requires savings to be applied to the overall cost of providing the service as follows:

- 2016/17: Nil – contract mobilisation period. However, the provider will need to be preparing to achieve savings for 2017/18;
- 2017/18: £650,000;
- 2018/19 – a further £250,000 saving to be applied, meaning that there will be a total budget reduction of £900,000 by 2018/19

Thereafter, the service is expected to be provided at the same cost as for the year 2018/19, save for agreements relating to cost increases as set out below. In the event that further savings are realised after this financial year, these will be apportioned as set out in Section 15.2 on Transparency below.

These savings will be achieved by a steady reduction in the use of IFA placements [there were around 95 children and young people in such placements as of the end of February 2016] or by reduced use of higher cost residential placements. The Permanency Service will also be able to reduce costs by encouraging long term foster carers to feel sufficiently confident to apply for Special Guardianship Orders where this is in the best interests of the child or young person.

The Council also requires that the Permanency Service delivers investment in the following areas:

- Improved support to carers of children who have left care as a result of a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order so that this is equivalent to the support offered to adopters;
- Increased capacity within the Family Group Conference Service so that it is able to meet demand in respect of children and young people subject to child protection plans;
- Investment in improving support for children returning home from care, including through development of innovative approaches to utilise the skills of foster carers to offer modelling and parenting support to families.

More information about these expectations are set out in the relevant sections elsewhere in this specification.

15.2. Transparency

Developing the Permanency Service will result in the transfer of a significant amount of public funding to the new provider. The aim of doing so is to re-energise services in the City with the end result that fewer children and young people are placed with for profit fostering agencies. While this approach is not just about reducing expenditure - we also want more of our children and young people placed with our carers whom we know well and hence we can be more confident about the matching of needs of children to fostering households – it would not be acceptable to the local community or to the political leadership of the Council for any of the public funds being transferred to be used to contribute to private sector profit.

For this reason, the provider of the Permanency Service will be required to operate under a rule of full financial disclosure and open-book accounting. The provider is required to adhere to the following requirements:

- Full accounting including the predicted budget position to be provided to the Council on a monthly basis: This is also essential as it will enable any developing financial shortfalls to be identified early and enable both partners to agree on corrective actions;
- All costs associated with the delivery of central support functions such as Human Resources support, staff training, management costs and similar are to be fully and openly detailed within the monthly reported budgets. The Council reserves the right to cap any such charges where they appear to be applied at a higher level than can be evidenced as reasonable by the provider;
- Where the provider is part of a broader organisation that includes ‘for profit’ activities and operations, the provider is not permitted to sub-contract any activities to ‘for-profit’ operations operated by the same provider except where the provider can evidence that these services are being provided on a cost only basis;

- Any surpluses that are created as a result of the activities of the Permanency Service shall not be used towards the payment of any salaries or bonuses. The Joint Governance Board will agree on how any surpluses are to be used. In most cases, surpluses will be required to contribute to savings that the Council will continue to need to identify, be used to invest in service development within the Permanency Service to support children and young people in Peterborough or in broader children's services within Peterborough, or to develop a contingency fund to assist the service in meeting increased costs in future financial years, as permitted by financial regulations. The likelihood is that any surplus will be used to contribute to all areas.

The provider will be required to make full accounts available to Council Finance Services and to auditors as required. These accounts will need to show where any funds have moved from one part of the provider organisation to another, and how these funds have been used.

15.3. Managing Cost Pressures

The initial budgets and staffing transferring to the Permanency Service from the Council reflect the 'as is' cost of providing a mixed range of placements for children and young people in care, providing adoption, residence order/child arrangement order and special guardianship order allowances, assessing the financial means of carers for allowances, providing adoption support services, recruiting, assessing and supporting foster carers and adopters, and funding young people aged 18 and over who have no recourse to public funds.

The placement budgets together have been sufficient to provide the mix of placements for around 345-355 children and young people in care; the level at which placement numbers have been for the last 12 months.

Cost pressures are most likely to arise from three main sources: increasing fees and costs associated with looking after children and young people because of cost pressures such as salary costs, average unit placement costs, the impact of changes in legislation or guidance, and so on, an increase in the numbers of children in care in Peterborough, or as a result of an unexpected increase in the number of low volume high cost placements.

Where such pressures arise, the Permanency Service and the Council will work together to identify ways in which pressures can be met without the need for additional Council funds being identified. It is not in the interests of the Council, the provider, members of staff or children and young people for cost pressures to become unsustainable, and additional funds will need to be identified where this is unavoidable.

15.3.1. Managing general cost pressures

The assumption in place where there are any areas of increased costs is that the provider will first seek to offset such costs by applying savings elsewhere.

The principles of open book accounting that are required of the provider mean that the Permanency Service is able to demonstrate how increases in costs have been offset elsewhere, and where such actions have reached their limit.

Where the Permanency Service is unable to take further action to offset increased costs, the provider will provide a report to the Joint Governance Board, which will consider the level of shortfalls and the collective response to addressing this.

It will be important for sufficient notice to be provided of any financial risks, as the Council will need time to identify the source of any increased funding should this be required. This means that the Permanency Service must provide at least 3 months' notice of any intention to request additional Council funds to meet general cost pressures.

15.3.2. Increased costs arising from an increase in numbers of children & young people in care

The Permanency Service cannot directly influence the numbers of children and young people who are taken into care by the Council. However decisions about children and young people coming into the care system are only one factor contributing to overall numbers in care. Some research indicates that it is the throughput of children and young people through the care system and out to hopefully successful permanent care through return home, adoption, Special Guardianship Orders and so on that has more impact on the overall numbers of children looked after at any one time. These are all areas where the new Permanency Service will have impact.

Indeed, it is by improving services in such areas that the Council hopes not only to secure improved outcomes for more children and young people, but to help to continue to offset any long term trends towards an increasing number of children and young people coming into the care system as national figures have indicated over recent years.

However, it is recognised that it is increasing numbers of children and young people becoming looked after that present the most significant risk in relation to budget pressures.

The overall number of children and young people in care is not static, and fluctuates across the year. The expectation is that the Permanency Service will be able to manage pressures arising from short-lived peaks in numbers of children and young people in care that are higher than the 345-355 number, providing that these are offset by comparable periods when numbers are lower.

It is also the expectation that the increasing recruitment of fostering households in Peterborough, particularly households able to meet the needs of children and young people with more complex needs, will provide a cushion against which the costs associated with any more general increase in overall numbers of children and young people in care can be offset.

However, should there be any sustained period of high numbers, and particularly should these numbers increase above 365 children and young people in care for more than 2 months, it is recognised that the Permanency Service may not be able to meet the resulting increasing placement costs from savings made elsewhere.

Overall numbers of children and young people in care is monitored on a weekly basis by the Council and will continue to be so. This monitoring provides an early warning of any upward trend in overall numbers.

As in respect of the management of general cost pressures in the section above, the principles of open book accounting that will be required of the provider will mean that the Permanency Service will be able to demonstrate how increases in costs have been offset elsewhere, and where such actions have reached their limit.

It will be important for sufficient notice to be provided of any financial risks as the Council will need time to identify the source of any increased funding should this be required. The Permanency Service will therefore need to provide a detailed report outlining the impact of any increased numbers of children and young people in care once numbers have been at 365 or above for one

month, should this increase be sustained for two months and longer. This report will need to identify what actions can be taken to offset costs elsewhere.

Overall numbers and the impact on placement costs will then be monitored closely by a group of senior officers from the provider and the Council as agreed by the Joint Governance Board. This group will work to ensure that factors such as thresholds for access to the care system and the progress of children through the system remain appropriate, taking action where necessary.

The impact of such remedial actions will be monitored by the Governance Board, which will meet more frequently if this is agreed as appropriate.

Where overall numbers of children and young people in care in Peterborough continue to result in sustained pressures on the budget of the Permanency Service, the Governance Board will support approaches to the Council in identifying additional funds, recognising that this may lead to service reductions elsewhere.

15.3.3. Unexpected increased use of 'Low volume, High cost' placements

Overall numbers of children and young people in Peterborough in the care system are relatively small, meaning that there is a vulnerability to volatility in relation to the numbers of children and young people requiring high cost placements that are generally needed by only a very small number over the course of the year. An example is the cost of remands to secure accommodation within the criminal justice system.

Although criminal remands are rare in Peterborough, there have been occasions where a number of young people have been remanded into custody for considerable periods, often because they have been accused of involvement in serious offences as a group.

For young people of statutory school age, the risk of an exceptional increase in high cost placements is offset by the proportion of the overall cost that is chargeable to the Dedicated Schools Grant [DSG]. This is an important safeguard in that it is this age group who are more likely to be remanded to a secure training centre, where costs are significantly higher than young offender institution [YOI].

For older young people, it is not possible to use the DSG to offset costs unless they have an Education Health and Care Plan that stipulates a requirement for on-going specialist education post 16 – which is unlikely. For older young people, the full cost of such remands will need to be met from the placement budget, although in most cases, the cost will be reduced as it is more likely that young people will be remanded to a YOI unless they have been assessed as having particular vulnerabilities.

In all cases where young people are remanded into custody, the Youth Offending Service will assess risks of re-offending, witness intimidation and failure to surrender to bail and seek to identify alternatives to custody that enable young people to be supported within their families or in non-custodial care placements, which might include a foster placement outside of the immediate area. The Permanency Service will respond positively to any request to identify a placement that is an alternative to custody and make every effort to identify a suitable alternative.

The Permanency Service can work to reduce risks of high cost placements being required as a result of criminal remands through the recruitment of foster carers able and willing to offer appropriate placements to young people involved in offending behaviour, providing such placements with the necessary support and training.

The placement budgets transferred to the Permanency Service includes the grant payable from Central Government that is intended to contribute towards the cost of criminal remands. This grant

has proved to be more than sufficient to meet costs in the current financial year as there have been only very limited remands into custody for short durations.

The other principal area of risk in relation to high cost and low volume placements is in respect of the use of welfare secure. The budget transferred to the Permanency Service assumes that one young person of statutory school age will occupy a secure placement at any one time throughout the year. The DSG makes a significant contribution to the cost of secure placements for young people of this age, again off-setting the risk associated with a higher than expected occupancy of this type of accommodation.

However, there are risks in the event that an older young person requires welfare secure accommodation, and risks should a higher number of young people require such accommodation at any one time. In recent years, use of welfare secure has mostly been in relation to protecting young people from risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, risks that remain present in Peterborough as elsewhere.

Welfare secure will always be used as a last resort; and alternative placements identified wherever possible. The Permanency Service will help to reduce risks of the use of welfare secure accommodation by recruiting, training and supporting carers to offer fostering placements to young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. These activities will also help offset risks of continuing high-cost specialist placements that are otherwise often required as step-down placements from welfare secure.

Where there is an increased use of high cost placements, the expectation will be that the Permanency Service takes all possible steps to identify savings elsewhere that can offset the increased costs involved.

As in respect of the management of other cost pressures discussed in the sections above, the principal of open-book accounting will mean that the provider is able to demonstrate the measures taken to offset cost pressures. Where such pressures cannot be contained within the overall budget of the Permanency Service, the provider will submit a detailed report to the Joint Governance Board outlining the nature and extent of the pressures and the actions taken to mitigate these.

The Joint Governance Board will agree a joint plan to address the pressures, which may include an approach being made to the Council to request additional resources. Such a request may lead to the need to reduce services elsewhere.

15.3.4. General actions to prepare for and avoid in-year cost pressures

The Joint Governance Board will work to ensure that there is a planned response to cost pressures as far as this is practicable. This will include:

- Monitoring of changing patterns of demand, including in relation to placement type;
- Targeted recruitment of fostering households to help to meet changing patterns of demand;
- In so far as financial regulations allow, using any surpluses from one financial year to develop a contingency that can be used in the event of an increase in, for example, high cost low volume placements in a subsequent financial year
- Use of contract variations to meet longer term changes in funding requirements, including as a result of increased costs arising from salaries, general inflation and similar issues.

15.3.5. Accounting and reporting arrangements

The Permanency Service will be required to complete all financial and accounting reporting including the provision of returns to various Government Departments in order to claim grants towards the costs of operating the services for which it is responsible. Examples of grants to be claimed in this way include those relating to the contribution towards the placement costs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.

Full financial accounts will also be required to be submitted to the Council on an annual basis or as requested through the Joint Governance Board. These accounts will identify in detail how Council funds have been spent for the year or period in question.

As noted elsewhere, the provider will also be responsible for managing:

- The payment of fees and allowances to 'in-house' foster carers including the provision of annual statements detailing fees and allowances paid;
- The payment of staying put allowances;
- The payment of allowances to carers of children eligible to receive adoption, residence/child arrangement and special guardianship orders;
- Completion of financial assessments in respect of eligibility for adoption, residence/child arrangement and special guardianship orders;
- Payments to commissioned providers including Independent Fostering Agencies.

The provider will be required to have appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that payments are linked to individual children and young people, allowing payments to be amended or to cease when individual circumstances of the child or young person change.

Specific arrangements on how to manage payments to providers of joint funded placements [i.e. placements where the cost is met by any combination of funding from the Permanency Service, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Clinical Commissioning Group] will be agreed between the provider and the Council post contract award. Placement providers will want to receive payment from one source, which will mean that payment arrangements remain with the Council, which will re-charge the Permanency Service and the Clinical Commissioning Group as appropriate, or be managed by the Permanency Service, which will in turn re-charge the Council for the DSG element and the CCG as appropriate.

16. Governance and Quality Assurance

16.1 Governance Arrangements

The development of the Permanency Service relies on a commissioning arrangement between the Council and the successful provider. However, the nature of the services to be provided by the Permanency Service, together with the risks associated with the provision of services to vulnerable children and young people in care and on the edge of care and the financial risks associated with children in care services means that a very close partnership is required between the Provider and Council.

This close partnership will focus on ensuring the success of the Permanency Service; where the service becomes under pressure for any reason, the provider and Council will work together to resolve the issues.

Performance of the Permanency Service will be monitored through a range of qualitative and quantitative performance indicators as described in the sections below. Clause 23 and schedule 9 of the terms and conditions also describe performance monitoring mechanisms.

A number of forums will oversee and scrutinise the quality of the service provided by the Permanency Service, and provide opportunities to resolve any issues that are impacting on the overall outcomes achieved for children and young people. These forums include:

- **Council Corporate Parenting Panel and Scrutiny Committees:** The Permanency Service will be required to present reports detailing performance and identifying any challenge to the Corporate Parenting Panel and relevant Scrutiny Committees and any other Member forums of the Council as required;
- **The Joint Governance Board:** This board will meet at least quarterly and will be chaired by the Director of Children’s Services and include the Chief Executive Officer of the provider organisation, and relevant senior officers from the Council, the Permanency Service and any other partners. This group will focus on providing strategic leadership for the Permanency Service;
- **The Strategic Management Board:** This board will meet at least bi-monthly and include the Permanency Service’s lead officer and the lead contract/commissioning officers from the Council. It will be chaired by the Service Director for Children and Safeguarding. The focus of this group will be on the development of the partnership and associated service provision. As the Permanency Service becomes established, the work of this group may be subsumed into that of the Joint Governance and Operational Management Meeting;
- **The Operational Management Group:** The group will meet monthly; it will be chaired by the Commissioning lead for the Council, and include the relevant managers from the Permanency Service as well as key performance management officers, able to interpret the key performance information. Key managers from Council Services will also attend this meeting.

The main focus of these boards is as set out in the table below:

Joint Governance Board	Strategic Management Board	Operational Management Group
<p>Purpose: Contract oversight, escalated concerns, decisions making forum for contract changes, budget oversight and sign off for data / performance targets and indicators</p> <p>Involving: CEO/MD, directors, heads of service, commissioning and panel chairs</p> <p>Frequency: Quarterly</p> <p>Agenda: Performance data: exceptions and areas of note Escalated concerns – contract and practice Budget oversight Contract changes</p>	<p>Purpose: Decision making forum for service development and design</p> <p>Involving: Commissioning Lead for the Council; Head of Service for Permanency Service, other managers and partners as appropriate</p> <p>Frequency: Bi-Monthly minimum initially</p> <p>Agenda: Performance data Escalated concerns – practice issues Budget oversight Contract changes</p>	<p>Purpose: Scrutiny of performance data, challenge and overview</p> <p>Involving: Commissioning Lead for the Council; team managers and the Permanency Service’s lead officer and Council as appropriate and performance management officers</p> <p>Frequency: Monthly</p> <p>Agenda: Escalated concerns – practice issues Performance data Reporting oversight (see below) Adoption Fostering Permanency</p>

The boards will agree specific membership and terms of reference during the contract mobilisation period, post contract award.

A range of other meetings will take place as part of the operational day to day management of the Permanency Service, Council services for vulnerable children and young people and to ensure good communication across the partnership in the best interests of children and young people. These meetings will include:

- Monthly reconciliation of children on placement or similar orders with agreed likely dates for adoption to enable accurate forecasting;
- Leaving Care Services – monthly reconciliation on information regarding rising 18s with brief updates on Pathway Planning for all young people likely to be leaving care in the next year;
- Meeting with social work field teams – ongoing programme of visits or attendance at team meetings to ensure any issues are raised and addressed in a methodical manner in a climate of cooperation;

- Emergency Duty Service – participation in quarterly service discussions to ensure that out of hours placements are being accessed appropriately;
- Performance management service – ongoing communication, but with monthly reconciliation of information to ensure veracity of data;
- Finance Section – monthly budget reporting to ensure that live information can replace commitment forecasting to ensure accurate budget predictions;
- The Permanency Service will be required to attend meetings focused on ensuring preparation for OfSTED and similar inspections as required.

There will also be a number of other meetings where attendance by appropriate personnel from the Permanency Service will be required. These will be focused on the need of individual children and will include the following:

- Statutory reviews for children and young people in care;
- Personal Education Plan meetings as appropriate;
- Permanency planning meetings and any tracking meetings necessary to ensure that permanency plans including plans for adoption are being progressed appropriately;
- The Peterborough Access to Support Panel and Joint Access to Support Panel [PASP and JASP];
- Secure accommodation panel meetings to assess whether threshold for secure accommodation is achieved.

This is not an exhaustive list and will change over time. The key expectation is that the Council and Permanency Service will work together openly and proactively to secure the best outcomes for the children and young people for whom they share responsibility, ensuring that opportunities for communication and partnership working are maximised at all times.

16.2. Quality Performance Indicators and Performance Reporting

16.2.1. Purpose

In order to ensure a consistent and excellent level of service, the Permanency service will maintain specific information exchanges and report live and accurate qualitative and quantitative performance data.

Use of Liquid Logic as the recording system for all activities managed by the Permanency Service will enable performance reports to be run on a wide range of key performance indicators.

The Council is currently updating its' performance reporting software, which will enable the Permanency Service, with the support of the Council's Performance Team, to generate a wide range of live performance reports covering all aspects of activity.

It will be the responsibility of the Permanency Service to ensure that all records on Liquid Logic are accurate and that recording [for example of visits to foster carers] are recorded in a timely way, and no more than 72 hours after the event.

16.2.2. Principles

The Permanency Service and the Council's performance management team will work together to ensure that accurate data returns are provided to OfSTED, the Department for Education, the Adoption Leadership Board, the Eastern Region of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, and any additional statutory requirements throughout the life of the contract. Prior to submission of returns, approval and sign off is required by a designated senior member of staff at the local

authority, which will in most cases be the Commissioning Lead but may be another officer as agreed within the Joint Governance Board.

The Permanency Service will also be responsible for providing responses to all other legitimate requests for information that cover the work of the service, including requests made under Freedom of Information legislation. The Council's Performance Team will again assist with such requests.

The Permanency Service will operate a performance management system to gather and analyse a range of information to chart progress and give an early warning of issues affecting the quality of outcomes for children so that corrective action can be taken.

The Permanency Service will operate a quality assurance approach that will engender the delivery of high standards of practice, learning, accountability and continual service development. The Permanency Service will also work with the Council's Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service so that themed audits on a variety of practice issues and dip samples of case files are undertaken. The Permanency Service will use the outcomes of such audits to develop action plans to ensure the continuous improvement of practice.

In addition to locally generated performance data, the Permanency Service will work with the Council's Performance Management Team to review and analyse published data to assess performance against statistical neighbours and regional and national benchmarks. Current sources of data include Department for Education statistical releases, the Adoption Scorecard, Adoption Leadership Board quarterly statistics, OfSTED Fostering dataset and Eastern Region benchmarking.

An accurate database is key to good data reporting. Therefore the Permanency Service will record information using the agreed child, adopter and foster carer case management system, all placement information including changes of placements, and specifically placements for adoption, without exception.

The Permanency Service should update the case management system within 24 hours of a placement change. In exceptional circumstances (public holidays for example) this period can be extended to 72 hours.

The Permanency Service will check the case management system routinely after a weekend to ensure placement moves outside of office hours are captured.

Any discrepancies in record keeping of placements will be addressed and corrected without delay.

The majority of monthly performance information and reporting is numerical and data driven, however upward and downward trends need to be supported by the appropriate analysis and commentary including service user and case level detail.

It is expected that the Permanency Service will benchmark the service against the good and outstanding descriptors set out by OfSTED within their current inspection framework.

The Permanency Service will provide a quarterly staff performance report detailing issues including turnover of staff, analysis of exit interviews, disciplinary processes, average caseloads, sickness levels, key themes from staff feedback and the percentage of staff receiving timely casework supervision.

The Permanency Service cannot be held accountable for areas of poorer performance inherited from services as operated directly by the Council. However, where any such areas of poorer performance

exist, it will be an expectation that the Permanency Service focuses attention on delivering sustained improvements.

It should be noted that performance in relation to placement stability as measured by the number of children or young people who have three or more placements and on the number of placements that last for more than two years in Peterborough is good on both measures. Adoption performance is also good in the City.

16.2.3. Data Platforms

To monitor and evaluate the service provided, the Permanency Service will provide and is required to report its performance in various ways. These can broadly be summarised by 3 key platforms as follows:

- **Scorecard** detailing key performance indicators;
- **Qualitative reporting** including – service user feedback, auditing activity and external scrutiny;
- **Detailed performance report** detailed data report covering all delivery functions;

The Permanency Service will have the lead responsibility in the production of numerical performance reports. The Council's Performance Team will provide advice and guidance on the production of reports and input into the interpretation of the data provided.

Scorecard

The monthly scorecard performance report will include performance data relating to the following activities:

Adoption

- The number of children and young people adopted during the year - measured year to date;
- The number of children and young people waiting to be adopted (with a placement order but not yet placed) – as at month end;
- The number and percentage of children and young people waiting for longer than 18 months (from entering care to being placed for adoption). Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people with a placement order – measured year to date;
- The number of approved adopters waiting to be matched with children and young people – as at month end.

Fostering

- The number and percentage of all children and young people in foster placements who are placed in an in-house provision. Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people in foster placements – as at month end;
- The number and percentage of all children and young people in foster placements who are placed in an agency provision. Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people in foster placements – as at month end;
- The number of approved fostering households – as at month end;
- The number of approved fostering places – as at month end;
- The net increase in the number of approved foster places – measured year to date;
- The percentage of In-house fostering places that are vacant as a proportion of the total number of approved fostering places – as at month end;

- The number of foster carers who have been assessed as permanent carers for children and young people under Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Orders;
- The number of Family Group Conferences on a quarterly basis, and an analysis of outcomes 6 months and 12 months post conference.

Children in care

- The number of children and young people in care and provided a statutory social work service by the permanency service – as at month end;
- The percentage of all children or young people under the age of 16 in foster placements who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years – measured year to date
- The percentage of all children or young people in care with three or more foster placements as a proportion of all children or young people in care – measured year to date;
- The number of children and young people permanently matched with carers at year end;
- Timeliness of completion of Child Arrangement and Special Guardianship Orders in court proceedings;
- Percentage of assessments presented to court where recommendations are accepted.

Leaving care

- The number of care leavers (aged 18 and older) who are supported by the permanency service – as at month end.

General

- The annual staff turnover rate for the permanency service – measured rolling twelve months.

Budget Reporting

As noted in the finance section of this specification, separate reporting on all areas of budget activity will be required on a monthly basis.

Qualitative Reporting

A key measure of evaluating the success of the Permanency Service will be thematic audits. The Council's Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service will work with the Permanency Service to produce at least four thematic practice audits over a 12 month period. These audits will be designed to surface qualitative information about the quality of practice and service delivery. The themes of these audits will be decided by the Joint Governance Board.

'We want a service with the highest aspirations for children but that has realistic expectations about the support that they need...'

'We want a service that never gives up on children...'

Staff description of what they want from a Permanency Service

In addition to these themed audits, a number of other elements will be in place to provide qualitative information about service delivery and the extent to which positive outcomes are achieved for children and young people. These include:

- **Adoption and fostering panels:** These panels are able to report on the quality of the work of the Permanency Service [and of the quality of work by the directly operated Council social work services]. Panel chairs will be members of the Strategic Management Group and will report on any practice issues that require attention. The Council will also be represented on each adoption and fostering panel. Regular business meetings will also be held between the Permanency Service, the independent panel chairs and the lead Commissioner from the Council and these meeting will provide a forum within which any day to day matters can be addressed;
- **Independent Chairs and Reviewing Officers:** Chairs of statutory reviews for children and young people in care have an important role to play in supporting and challenging the work of the Council and of the new Permanency Service, particularly in respect of progressing plans for permanency and addressing any issues around the quality of the placement. Independent chairs will raise any concerns that they may have both informally, via case alerts and through the statutory formal dispute mechanism. Any such concerns that are raised about services provided by the Permanency Service must be responded to within the required timeframes. The Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance will provide a summary report of any key themes and issues arising from these processes for discussion and action at the Operational Management Group. Issues that cannot be addressed within this forum will be escalated to the Strategic Management Group;
- **Service user feedback:** Service user feedback forms an important measure of the quality of overall services. There is extensive information about the extent to which the Permanency Service is expected to seek the involvement and participation of service users in the planning and delivery of services in general as well as in relation to individual plans. The Permanency Service will be required to provide a 6-monthly report analysing key themes from service user feedback. The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service will also provide support in identifying themes from service user feedback, through the independent chairs and through liaison with the Child in Care Council and via routine feedback activities including questionnaires;
- **Response to Complaints:** Complaints about services offered by the Permanency Service will mostly be required to be considered under the statutory Children Act 1989 complaints process. This process includes timescales for the response to complaints depending on the stage at which the complaint is being managed. A child-centred and responsive service will see and respond to complaints as a positive opportunity to change processes and practices in accordance with the voice of users of the service. The Permanency Service will be required to demonstrate how it has learned from complaints; this information will feed into the annual report provided by the Council's Complaints Service and as reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel and relevant Scrutiny Committees.

Detailed Performance Reporting: Monthly Management Performance Requirements

The following performance measures will be required on a monthly basis, and are in line with those that are currently produced by the services in partnership with the Council's Performance Team. This level of reporting is required in order to identify any early patterns or trends that may require corrective action or may be needed in order to inform strategic functions of the Permanency Service, including recruitment strategies for adopters and fostering households.

Fostering service

- The number and percentage of all children and young people in foster placements who are placed in an in-house provision. Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people in foster placements – as at month end
- The number and percentage of all children and young people in foster placements who are placed in an agency provision. Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people in foster placements – as at month end
- The number of fostering enquiries received – measured year to date
- The number of assessments in progress – as at month end
- The number of approved fostering households – as at month end
- The number of approved fostering places – as at month end
- The number of new foster places approved – measured year to date
- The number of approved foster places terminated – measured year to date
- The net increase in the number of approved foster places – measured year to date
- The proportion of new fostering households from black and minority ethnic communities
- The percentage of In-house fostering places that are vacant as a proportion of the total number of approved fostering places – as at month end;
- The number of fostering households at month end [including permanent long-term, short term, emergency, family and friend, parent and child placement, remand, short break and supported lodgings];
- The number of sibling groups placed together and the percentage of sibling groups placed together as a proportion of all sibling groups placed – measured year to date
- The number of individual siblings placed apart due to a resource shortfall – measured year to date
- The number of foster carers without an annual review in the preceding 12 months – measured year to date
- The number of foster carers not visited by a social worker for a statutory visit within the preceding 6 weeks – as at month end
- The number of complaints received – measured year to date
- The number of allegations received against foster carers – measured year to date
- The number of unplanned endings of placements that occurred at the request of the foster carer – measured year to date
- The number of unplanned endings of that occurred for any other reason other than at the request of the foster carer – measured year to date
- The number of children in care who have been matched for permanency at panel and the percentage of children matched for permanency as a proportion of all children in care – measured year to date
- The percentage of all children or young people under the age of 16 in foster placements who have been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years – measured year to date
- The percentage of all children or young people in care with three or more foster placements as a proportion of all children or young people in care – measured year to date
- The educational progress made by children and young people at KS2 and 4, or equivalent measures as these are available – measured annually
- The percentage of annual medical reviews undertaken that are informed by a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire – measured year to date

- The number of children and young people participating in their statutory reviews and the percentage as a proportion of all reviews for children in care (aged at least 4 at the time of the review) – measured year to date.

Fostering Panel Activity

- The number of new fostering households approved
- The number of reviews heard by panel – measured year to date
- The number of ADM decisions that differ from the fostering panel's recommendation – measured year to date
- The number of panel recommendations to permanently match a child or young person to their current placement – measured year to date

Private fostering arrangements

- The number of children currently living under private fostering arrangements – as at month end
- The number of private fostering referrals received – measured year to date
- The number of private fostering assessments carried out within require timescales – measured year to date
- The proportion of private fostering assessments completed within timescales

Adoption service

- The number of registrations (enquiries) – measured year to date
- The number of approved adopters – as at month end
- The proportion of new adopters from black and minority ethnic communities
- The number of adoptive families matched to children and young people – as at month end
- The number of adoptive families with children and young people placed with them – as at month end
- The number of children and young people adopted during the year - measured year to date
- The number of prospective adopters not yet approved – as at month end
- The number of approved adopters waiting to be matched with children and young people – as at month end
- The number of children and young people for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption – measured year to date
- The number of children and young people waiting to be adopted – as at month end
- The number of children and young people waiting to be adopted (with a placement order but not yet placed) – as at month end
- The number and percentage of children and young people waiting for longer than 18 months (from entering care to being placed for adoption). Percentage as a proportion of all children and young people with a placement order – measured year to date
- The number of agency decisions that adoption is in the child or young person's best interests – measured year to date
- The number of inter-agency placements – measured year to date
- The number of Peterborough adopters matched with children or young people from another local authority – as at month end
- The number of adoptions made for children and young people defined as 'hard to place' (aged 5 or more, sibling group of 2 or more, disability, black and minority ethnic) - measured year to date

- The number of children and young people who are defined as 'hard to place' and who are currently waiting to be placed – as at month end
- The number of adoption disruptions – measured year to date

Adoption panel activity

- The number of adopters approved – measured year to date
- The number of matches approved – measured year to date

Adoption support service

- The number of active adoption support referrals – measured year to date
- The number of adoption support referrals waiting to receive a service – as at month end
- The number of access to records request referrals – measured year to date
- The number of post-box contact files – measured year to date
- The number of children and young people placed for adoption without a life story book – as at month end
- The number of children and young people adopted without a later life letter – measured year to date

Special Guardianship

- The proportion of Special Guardianship Order assessments completed within the initially agreed timescale as a percentage of all assessments completed - measured year to date
- The proportion of Special Guardianship Order assessments accepted by the court as a percentage of all those presented – measured year to date
- The proportion of children who left care because a Special Guardianship Order was granted as a percentage of all children who left care – measured year to date
- The number of unplanned endings of Special Guardianship Order arrangements – measured year to date
- The number of Special Guardianship Order carers appropriately accessing post order support – measured year to date
- The proportion of Special Guardianship Order carers who are kept in touch with as a percentage of all Special Guardianship Order carers – measured year to date

For 'return home' support services

- The number of children returning home to family who become looked after again within the following 6 months
- The number of children returning home to family who become looked after again within the following 12 months

For children and young people permanently matched to 'in-house' carers:

- The number of children and young people in care and supported by the permanency service (below the age of 18) – as at month end
- The number of children and young people ceasing to be the responsibility of the permanency service – measured year to date
- The number of children and young people matched for permanency and newly responsible to the permanency service – measured year to date
- The number of statutory visits not completed within timescale and the percentage of these as a proportion of all children in care who are the responsibility of the permanency service – as at month end

- The number of childcare reviews not completed within timescale and the percentage of these as a proportion of all childcare reviews completed for children in care – measured year to date
- The number of children and young people who have been in care for at least 12 months that have not had an annual health assessments completed within the previous twelve months – as at month end
- The number of children and young people (aged 3 to 17 years) who have not had a dental check within the previous 12 months – as at month end
- The number of children and young people of statutory school age who are not in education – as at month end
- The number of children and young people not on target with their personal education plans / educational attainment forecasts – as at month end
- The number of children and young people without a completed Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) – as at month end
- The number of children and young people without an allocated qualified social worker – as at month end

For young people leaving care, supported by the Permanency Service:

- The number of care leavers (aged 18 and older) who are supported by the permanency service – as at month end
- The number of care leavers supported by the permanency service in staying put arrangements – measured year to date
- The proportion of care leavers supported by the permanency service who are not in education, employment or training – measured annually
- The proportion of care leavers supported by the permanency service who are in suitable accommodation - measured annually
- The proportion of care leavers supported by the permanency service who are not in contact with the service – measured annually
- The proportion of care leavers (under the age of 18) supported by the permanency service with a pathway plan that has been updated within the last 6 months and the percentage of these as a proportion of all care leavers (under the age of 18) supported by the permanency service – measured year to date

General

- The annual staff turnover rate for the permanency service – measured rolling twelve months
- The annual staff turnover rate for social workers – measured rolling twelve months
- The annual staff turnover rate for support workers – measured rolling twelve months.

These measures should be broken down to show voluntary and non-voluntary turnover figures.

Amendments to Performance Monitoring post contract award

The areas of performance monitoring noted in this section and the frequency of reporting will be subject to further negotiation following the award of the contract and during the mobilisation period. This is in order to ensure that the correct balance is achieved in relation to undertaking activities that lead to improved outcomes for children and young people and ensuring that these activities are taking place. These negotiations will also include the role and contribution of the Council's quality assurance and performance management functions in supporting the Permanency Service to report on qualitative and quantitative aspects of performance.

17. Decision Making Arrangements & Practice Issues Dispute Resolution

In general terms, the Council will retain decision making in respect of making plans for individual children and young people. The Council will make the decision about whether a child should become looked after, and must agree to any changes of placement once a child is looked after. The Council must also approve any decision for a child or young person to no longer be looked after, except where this is a result of the young person concerned achieving the age of 18.

The decision making processes in respect of children and young people returning to their parents must also comply with the Care Planning and Placement Regulations 2013 and the Placement with Parent Regulations 2010 as appropriate.

The Council will retain the Agency Decision Maker functions as these apply to children, and will make the final decision that leads to a child being matched with foster for adoption carers and prospective adopters. The Council will also make the decision about whether a child's plan should be for adoption. For any relinquished children, following their presentation at adoption panel, the Council will also make a final decision on the plan.

Decisions about changes of placement must be agreed by the relevant Head of Service within the Council, or the Head of Service providing cover during any period of leave or other absence.

Decisions relating to the change of any placement of a child or young person for whom the Permanency Service has statutory social work responsibility must be agreed by the Head of Service for Children in Care or the Commissioning Lead; such a placement change will usually result with responsibility for the child or young person transferring back to the local authority in any event.

Decisions relating to the return home of any child or young person for whom the Permanency Service holds statutory social work responsibility need to be agreed by the appropriate Head of Service [and comply with any other regulatory requirement that may apply]. The appropriate Head of Service will need to agree a transition period where the Permanency Service social worker continues to support the child or young person and their family before any on-going family support needs are met within the Council's Family Support service. No child or young person should return home without a re-assessment. This reassessment will identify the extent to which the factors that led to the child becoming looked after have changed.

It is inevitable that there will be occasions where there are differences of opinion about the correct course of action in respect of individual children and young people. Such circumstances may relate to the suitability of placements identified by the Permanency Service for children and young people, or the viability of any family plan agreed within a Family Group Conference.

Key decisions about children and young people will be made in joint forums in most situations – PASP and JASP for example – and decisions made in such circumstances will be binding on all parties except where there are significant safeguarding concerns or concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person. Where such concerns exist, these should be escalated to the immediate line manager of the person who holds the concerns. The line manager will then follow the process outlined below.

The expectation is that all such differences of opinion will be managed at the lowest point in the respective hierarchies of the Permanency Service and Council as possible. This means that

practitioners should first attempt to discuss any disagreements directly, and should only escalate to their line managers where common ground cannot be identified.

In the event that the relevant immediate line managers are unable to reach agreement, the issue should be escalated to the relevant Head of Service in the Council or Service Manager for the Permanency Service. The lead Commissioner for the local authority may become involved at this point in order to help to facilitate agreement.

In the unlikely event that disagreements remain, the matter should be escalated to the Assistant Director for Children's Social Care, who will bring interested parties together, listen to all views and make what should ordinarily be accepted by all parties as the final decision.

In the very unlikely event that agreement is still not reached, the CEO of the Provider will be able to raise the issue with the Service Director for Children and Safeguarding. In the event that agreement can still not be reached, the final decision maker will be the Director of Children's Services.

Any issues that have required the intervention of the Assistant Director or higher to become involved in resolution will be discussed at the next Joint Governance Board in order that any lessons can be learned.

18. Relationships with other Partners and other Agencies

The Permanency Service will be required to develop and maintain positive working relationships with key partners within the Council and among the broader network of agencies providing services for children and young people in care and/or for whom the Permanency Service has a duty of care. Partners and agencies include:

- Children's Social Care including assessment, care planning functions, independent chairs;
- Early Help Services, particularly in respect of developing sustainable support plans for children and young people returning to the care of their parents or carers having been looked after;
- The Youth Offending Service, particularly in respect of developing and supporting fostering households to meet the needs of young people who have been remanded into local authority accommodation;
- The Virtual School and in particular in working together to improve educational outcomes for children and young people in care and in preparation for those leaving care to permanent arrangements;
- Special educational needs services and in particular in relation to supporting children and young people with Education, Health and Care plans to achieve their full potential;
- Local colleges, schools and services to support young people who may be at risk of being not in education, employment or employment;
- Housing services and in particular in respect of developing plans for young people leaving care or moving on from Staying Put arrangements for whom the Permanency Service has accountability;
- Local providers of supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17, including The Foyer and contracted semi-independent providers of accommodation;
- Child and adolescent mental health services, currently provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust, and in particular to ensure that children and young people in care have access to specialist support for emotional and mental health issues through the specially commissioned service for children and young people in care and care leavers;

- Providers of community and other health services, currently mostly provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust, including ensuring that children and young people in care have access to regular reviews of their health needs, including emotional and mental health, and that children and young people returning home or leaving care for other permanent care arrangements have access to appropriate health care;
- Commissioned advocacy services in order to ensure that children in care are supported to make any representations or complaints about the services that they receive;
- The Council's complaints' service and including ensuring that complaints are dealt with under the appropriate legislation, are progressed within expected timings but are investigated thoroughly and any lessons learned are implemented across the service;
- The Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board and chair, and in particular to ensure that the Board maintains confidence in the safeguarding arrangements in place by the provider in respect of the Permanency Service.

19. Contract Escalation Procedures

This service specification and the contract between the Provider and the Council is built on the foundation of trust and mutual determination of the parties to work together to secure the best possible outcomes for children and young people, while securing effective use of resources.

The approach to management of disputes is in line with this ethos. The emphasis is on seeking informal means to resolve any disagreements or disputes at the lowest point in the respective hierarchies of the Permanency Service and Local Authority as possible.

The quarterly Joint Governance Board is the principal mechanism for ensuring that any areas of potential disagreement or dispute are discussed and resolved, where it has not proved possible to do so informally.

In the unlikely event that such approaches are unable to resolve the difficulty, a formal dispute resolution meeting will be called. This meeting will include:

- The Chief Executive Officer of the partner providing the Permanency Service
- The Director of Children's Services in Peterborough City Council, who will also chair the meeting;
- The senior Council contracting officer or equivalent responsible for the performance and quality monitoring of the service provided.

Should this formal meeting be unsuccessful in resolving the matter, the parties will refer the matter to the Dispute Resolution Procedure set out in Schedule 20 of the Terms and Conditions.

19.1. In the event of Contract Expiry or Termination

Foster carers and adopters who were either originally recruited by Peterborough City Council before the commencement of the contract or who have been recruited as a result of the contract, will transfer to Peterborough City Council, assuming that this is in line with their wishes. Where carers wish to remain with the partner agency, any children in placement who are in the care of Peterborough City Council will remain in placement. Placement costs will be maintained in line with the unit placement cost for children and young people in foster care at the time the contract ends, and not in line with the fee usually charged by the provider.

The exit strategy set out in Schedule 15 of the Terms and Conditions describes the detail of these arrangements.

20. Expected Characteristics of a Successful Partner

We are seeking a single partner organisation to operate the full scope of this service specification.

This service will be responsible for meeting the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people in the City. This means that any partner organisation will be required to demonstrate an established track record of success in delivering high quality fostering and adoption services, as evidenced by demonstrable improved outcomes for children and young people as well as external validation through OfSTED inspections.

Evidence of success in delivering improved outcomes can be provided by measures including:

- Placement stability rates for children placed with foster carers;
- Long-term adoption placement disruption rates;
- Successful recruitment and retention of foster carers;
- Successful recruitment of adopters and in particular, adopters able to provide homes for older children, sibling groups and children with complex or uncertain future needs;
- Long term levels of staff turnover.

Under the 2008 Children and Young Person's Act, local authority adoption functions can only be delegated to a registered adoption society. "Registered adoption society" has the meaning given by section 2(2) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (c. 38). This is:

(1)The services maintained by local authorities under section 3(1) may be collectively referred to as "the Adoption Service", and a local authority or registered adoption society may be referred to as an adoption agency.

(2)In this Act, "registered adoption society" means a voluntary organisation which is an adoption society registered under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 (c. 14); but in relation to the provision of any facility of the Adoption Service, references to a registered adoption society or to an adoption agency do not include an adoption society which is not registered in respect of that facility.

In addition, the intention to transfer some limited statutory services to individual children and young people in care to the new Permanency Service means that the partner agency cannot be a body corporate that operates on a for profit basis, as set out in Statutory Instrument 2014, Number 2407.

21. Possible areas for further post award negotiation

This service specification covers a range of complex areas of service delivery. It is likely that some areas of the specification may require further detailed negotiation post contract award and during the mobilisation period. These areas will not have a significant impact on the service specification and will not have any impact on contract value. Any such changes will be agreed in line with the Change Control Procedure under schedule 15 of the terms and conditions.

Areas where there may be a need for further clarity and negotiation over fine details include:

- Where posts transfer to the new provider, but a small area of the post-holders' responsibility will continue to be required to deliver activities for the Council. This is unlikely to affect more than five posts in total;
- As noted elsewhere in this service specification, there may be a need to agree the detail of the frequency of performance reporting by the Provider to ensure that the balance is correct in terms of assuring compliance and accountability with the effort required to produce the data;

- The mechanism for ensuring the transfer of foster carers to the new provider will depend on clarity from the DFE and OfSTED in respect of the detail of the transfer arrangements. The aim will be to seek agreement for carers to transfer in line with the annual review mechanism;
- Arrangements for managing the payment of jointly funded placements for children and young people in care.

The above is not an exhaustive list and there are likely to be other areas where it will be beneficial to enable some further limited negotiation post contract award, where such negotiations do not make a substantive difference to the overall value of the contract or the effect of these service specifications.

There will also be freedom to extend the provision of the contract to other areas of related service delivery in the event that the service is operating effectively and there is a clear rationale for doing so. An example of the way that this contract may be extended in this way may include a decision to include more aspects of or all of the Leaving and After Care service.

22. Intellectual Property Rights – Permanency Service

The Council is the owner of all intellectual property rights in relation to this Permanency Service Specification, and in the material published on it. This applies to this current version and all future versions of this specification associated with the brand name “Permanency Service”.

The bidder may print off one copy, and may download extracts, of any page(s) from the Supplier Force website for and draw the attention of others within your organisation to material posted on this site.

Bidders must not modify the paper or digital copies of any materials printed or downloaded in any way, and must not use any illustrations, or any graphics separately from any accompanying text.

The Council’s status (and that of any identified contributors) as the authors of material must always be acknowledged.

Bidders must not use any part of this specification for commercial purposes.

If Bidders print off, copy or download any part of the Permanency Service Specification including future versions in breach of these terms of use, then the right to use this material will cease immediately and Bidders must, at the Council’s option, return or destroy any and all copies of the materials.

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Lou Williams, Service Director for Children and Safeguarding	Tel. 864139

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL APPROACHES TO MEETING NEEDS OF UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM : Service Director for Children and Safeguarding	Deadline date : N/A
<p>1. Agree that Peterborough City Council plays a full part in national arrangements under the Government's National Transfer Scheme that is intended to ensure that unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people account for no more than 0.07% of the child population of any one local authority;</p> <p>2. Agree that Peterborough City Council also plays a full part in supporting arrangements across the eastern Region to support the transfer of unaccompanied minors between regional authorities by agreement and where transfer would be in the interests of the child or young person concerned.</p>	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a request from Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet Approval for Peterborough City Council to participate in regional and national schemes that ensure that the responsibility for supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people is managed as equitably as possible between local authorities.

2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.2 'To promote the Council's role as community leader, giving a 'voice' to the community in its external relations at local, regional, and international level, and fostering good working relationship with the Council's partner organisations.'

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. DETAILS OF DECISION REQUIRED

- 4.1. Members will be aware that councils have responsibility for supporting children and young people aged 17 and under who arrive in the UK as unaccompanied minors. The long-standing arrangement has been that the responsible local authority is that where an unaccompanied minor has been detained by the police.
- 4.2. This arrangement has come under pressure following the increase in unaccompanied minors arriving into the UK over the last few years. The pressure has been most intense in Kent, where large numbers of unaccompanied minors have been detained on leaving lorries that have arrived from Europe through the main channel ports.
- 4.3. Other local authorities have also experienced a significant increase in numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people, depending on their location or proximity to ports and airports. Peterborough, for example, has seen a significant increase in unaccompanied children and young people being detained by police within the City, largely because of the lorry routes along the A1. Lorries stopping at local service areas enable young people to disembark, after which they are quickly detained [and often declare themselves] to local police.
- 4.4. Local authorities in other areas of the country have, on the other hand, not experienced any unaccompanied asylum seeking young people presenting for support. Authorities in the North West and South West, for example, have responsibility for few if any unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.
- 4.5. In July 2016, the Government announced a national transfer scheme that seeks to ensure that unaccompanied minors would not be placed in any area where the existing population of unaccompanied minors is above 0.07% of the local child population. In Peterborough, this equates to 33 children, young people and young adults [who were formerly looked after as unaccompanied minors, and for whom the Council continues to have responsibility].
- 4.6. As at the beginning of September 2016, 40 children, young people and young adults fell into these categories, meaning that Peterborough is already supporting more unaccompanied minors and former minors than its notionally allocated number.

National Transfer Scheme

- 4.7. The Home Office wrote to all local authorities on 8 September 2016 asking for confirmation that the Council would be joining the National Transfer Scheme. This letter is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.8. Peterborough City Council has always taken our responsibilities for supporting vulnerable unaccompanied minors very seriously. We are also contributing to broader needs by participating in the scheme to resettle Syrian families, and we are a dispersal centre for asylum seeking adults.
- 4.9. In this context, it is right that we should also be part of the National Transfer Scheme, since this will enable us to continue to play our part in supporting vulnerable unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people, but to do so as part of a scheme that seeks to establish an equitable and predictable use of resources across all local authorities.

Regional arrangements

- 4.10. The Directors of Childrens' Services in the Eastern Region have also committed to work together to ensure an equitable distribution of unaccompanied minors across our region. This would operate in addition to the nationally organised National Transfer Scheme outlined above. It would help us to work constructively together to ensure that, for example, where we have placed children in foster carer another local authority area in the Eastern Region, we can negotiate for case and financial responsibility to transfer to that local authority.

- 4.11. This is a pragmatic and sensible approach, enabling local authorities in the region to ensure that vulnerable unaccompanied minors receive the on-going support of services local to where they are placed.
- 4.12. Case transfer would not, however, apply where a local authority is already supporting a higher number of unaccompanied minors and former minors than the equivalent of 0.07% of their local child population.

Unaccompanied refugee children in Europe [the 'Dubbs' amendment]

- 4.13. As part of the Immigration Act 2016, the Government committed to admitting into the UK up to 3,000 unaccompanied children and young people already in Europe, where it would be in the best interests of those children for such action to take place. The Government is working principally with France, Greece and Italy to identify children and young people who should be admitted under this legislation.
- 4.14. Any children admitted in this way and who have no existing close family connections would be placed in local authorities through the National Transfer Scheme as detailed above.

Financial implications

- 4.15. Councils accepting unaccompanied children and young people under the national transfer scheme will receive a contribution towards the cost of support that is in line with current arrangements. These are a contribution of £95 per day for young people aged 15 and under and £71 per day for 16 and 17 year olds.
- 4.16. Under the previous arrangements, no financial assistance towards the costs of supporting young adults who are former unaccompanied minors was available. Councils will, however, continue to receive a financial contribution from central government for former minors settled under the National Transfer Scheme for whom Councils continue to have responsibility. This contribution is expected to be set at £200 per week for care leavers in this category.
- 4.17. These contributions towards the cost of looking after unaccompanied children and young people do not meet full cost in most cases. A foster placement costs at least £850 per week, for example. This is because we have insufficient capacity in our in-house service to meet need, and so every additional placement in care will be purchased through an Independent Fostering Agency.

Other implications

- 4.18. There are minimal risks in relation to joining the regional scheme, since any movement of young people between regional authorities would be by agreement between the Councils concerned.
- 4.19. The Home Office is clear that it will compel authorities to join the national scheme in the absence of voluntary agreements. There are risks around whether the number of asylum seeking young people that local authorities are required to accept under the scheme may change in the future. Any such changes will, however, be known in advance and will be possible to plan for, in contrast to the current position where we are responsible for young people simply by dint of where they are apprehended, which is much more difficult to manage.
- 4.20. There are a few finer details of the national scheme to be confirmed, particularly around arrangements for transfer between the area where the child or young person is apprehended and the receiving local authority, together with clarification about responsibility for completion of age assessments.
- 4.21. These details do not impede agreement to take part in the national scheme, however. Under current arrangements, where a young person is apprehended in Peterborough, we

are responsible for undertaking the age assessment. Under a national transfer scheme, it would make sense for the receiving authority to have responsibility for the age assessment. Should responsibility remain with Peterborough for young people apprehended in our area, this would not represent any change from the current position.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. There has been consultation across regional local authorities through the Directors of Children's Services.
- 5.2. The Home Office has consulted and continues to consult local authorities about the operation of the National Transfer Scheme.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The anticipated outcome is that Cabinet approves arrangements for the Council to join the National Transfer Scheme and to fully participate in regional arrangements within the Eastern Region.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1. Participating in the National Transfer Scheme will ensure that Peterborough continues to fully play our part in contributing to the support needs of vulnerable unaccompanied minors and former minors and any vulnerable children identified under the provisions of the Immigration Act 2016.
- 7.2. Importantly, however, this contribution will be made in a planned and predictable way that ensures that this support is provided within a framework that is equitable across the country.
- 7.3. Participating in the regional scheme agreed by Directors of Children's Services will enable us to help children and young people we have placed outside of the City to be better supported in the longer term by, for example, supporting case responsibility to transfer to the local authority within which they are placed, by agreement.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The following options were considered and rejected:
- 8.2 Option 1 – Not to participate in either the National Transfer Scheme or regional arrangements. This option was rejected because:
 - a) Non-participation in the National Transfer Scheme would result in the Council continuing to be required to meet the needs of unaccompanied minors being apprehended within Peterborough as at present. Current arrangements lead to an unpredictable and variable resource pressure as numbers arriving fluctuate throughout the year;
 - b) Non-participation in the National Transfer Scheme would risk the Council being perceived as being unwilling to accept our fair share of responsibility for supporting unaccompanied minors, although clearly not actually the case given our history;
 - c) Non-engagement in the regional scheme would mean that we may not be able to secure the agreement of other regional local authorities to accept case and financial responsibility for children and young people we have placed outside of Peterborough, affecting the ability of those young people to access long term and consistent support in an area that has become familiar to them.

9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. Taken together, the Council joining both national and regional approaches to meeting the needs of vulnerable unaccompanied children and young people will be likely to:

- Be better for the children and young people concerned who will be placed in areas where resource availability is likely to be greater because numbers of new arrivals over the years have been lower, and;
- Enable Peterborough to continue our strong tradition of supporting vulnerable children, adults and families, but within a framework that enables us to be better able to predict levels of need and plan accordingly.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

10.1 None.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Letter to the Leader from Home Office, dated 8 September 2016.

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Home Office

Robert Goodwill MP
Immigration Minister

2 Marsham Street,
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

To all Local Council Leaders

8 September 2016

Dear Councillor,

UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING AND REFUGEE CHILDREN

I am writing to you about the commitments the Government has made in relation to supporting and caring for unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children. I know you and your officers have been liaising with my predecessors, James Brokenshire and Richard Harrington on these issues. I am honoured to be taking over this extremely important area of government business.

I would like to start by acknowledging the efforts made by those local authorities that are already engaged in delivering the commitments made across the range of schemes. I know many of you are facing real pressures at this time and I welcome the continued close working between your officers and my officials to find constructive solutions.

I thought it might be helpful to write now to set out further progress and next steps across the three schemes relating to children. I would be grateful if each council could respond via their Strategic Migration Partnership to three formal requests set out in this letter.

The first is to request those local authorities that have not already done so to register for the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) which launched at the beginning of July. The Government is clear that we want to see a fair distribution of unaccompanied children between local authorities, with the NTS the mechanism to achieve this.

The second is to request that you confirm the total number of unaccompanied children that could be placed in your authority for the remainder of this financial year, noting the 0.07 threshold operating under the NTS.

The third is to consider taking children and their families under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. These will be children that UNHCR has identified as the most vulnerable and at risk of child labour, forced marriage,

child carers and other forms of abuse and exploitation. We are starting to receive referrals from UNCHR under the scheme and now need to secure pledges of support.

(1) National Transfer Scheme

The NTS has been in place for over two months now. Since the scheme was implemented on 1 July 2016 over 60 unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) have been transferred successfully under the provisions set out in the transfer protocol. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your teams for the constructive way in which you have engaged with this important work. I understand the regional events that took place over the summer were positive and highlighted a real commitment – both at the regional level and at individual authority level – to make the scheme work and ensure these vulnerable children receive the care and support they need.

I recognise that we still have a long way to go; not least the need for more regions to fully participate in the scheme as quickly as possible, so we are not reliant on the goodwill of a small number of areas. The scheme is designed to ensure that no local authority is required to care for more UASC than it can cope with. If we are to achieve that objective we need more local authorities to take on responsibility for unaccompanied children. As we have already done with the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (SVPR), we want to encourage a regional approach. Therefore we have offered additional funding of up to £60,000 for those regions participating in the scheme to bolster their regional structures. This is in addition to the £60,000 we have already provided to allow a regional approach to SVPR. My officials continue to work with the Strategic Migration Partnerships to ensure implementation is successful and those areas with limited experience of caring for unaccompanied asylum seeking children receive the support they need.

(2) Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme

As you are aware, the Government announced the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme in April to complement the SVPR scheme in helping vulnerable people displaced by the migrant crisis. The scheme will involve resettling up to 3,000 people during this Parliament, made up of children at risk and their families from the Middle East and North Africa region. The vast majority of the children qualifying under this scheme are expected to be resettled with their families and not as unaccompanied minors. We only expect a very small number of unaccompanied children to be brought to the UK under this scheme. We are working with the UNHCR to identify cases suitable for resettlement, ensuring it is always in the best interests of the child. We expect the first families to arrive in the late autumn, and we hope to resettle several hundred before the end of the financial year.

We continue to need the support of local authorities to provide homes and support for those we resettle under this route, and this was discussed at our regional conferences and the engagements with the Local Government Associations in England, Wales and Scotland earlier this year. The key

difference between this scheme and the SVPR is that this scheme is open to all nationalities in the region in need of protection, due to the vulnerability of a child or children. The funding for families will be in line with that provided for the SVPR scheme, and for the small number of unaccompanied children we will fund in line with the national transfer scheme rates.

(3) Unaccompanied refugee children in Europe ('the Dubs amendment')

In addition to the VCRS, the Government committed to bring over unaccompanied refugee children from within Europe as set out in the Immigration Act 2016 (commonly known as 'the Dubs amendment'). We have been working closely with the three Member States – France, Greece and Italy – as announced by the former Prime Minister David Cameron, to identify suitable cases and introduce processes where necessary to transfer these children to the UK.

The Immigration Act requires us to consult local authorities before arriving at a total number for the scheme. This was also discussed during the regional events. I recognise that this commitment puts additional pressure on local authorities. This is why it is vital that we are able to agree a number that works in the best interests of local authorities recognising the children already in your care, unaccompanied asylum seeking children who arrive spontaneously, and those we are bringing to the UK through our formal schemes.

Placing unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children

We have always been clear that unaccompanied children will be treated the same irrespective of their method of entry into the UK, including those arriving clandestinely. It would be unfair to prioritise the placement of unaccompanied children based on arrival method. For this reason, all unaccompanied refugee children who are brought to the UK under a formal scheme, but are not reuniting with family members, will be placed into local authority care through the NTS. Local authorities will receive the same daily funding rates for these unaccompanied looked after children as they do for all other unaccompanied asylum seeking children placed through the NTS.

Unaccompanied children will only be brought to the UK where it is deemed to be in their best interests and the Home Office will share information we obtain on individual children with the relevant local authority ahead of transfer. It is crucial that the NTS is fully operational to transfer and properly support unaccompanied refugee children who are brought to the UK, and make a success of this new initiative.

Next steps

I hope this letter provides some further clarity on the different schemes for children. Annex A provides some additional detail on the criteria for the three schemes.

I would be grateful if each council could confirm by 21 September through your Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP):

- 1) that your local authority is participating in the NTS, if you have not already done so;
- 2) how many unaccompanied children could be placed in your authority for the remainder of this financial year. This should not include those who will be reunited with family members; and
- 3) whether you are able to accept children and their families under the VCRS and the offers of accommodation that you are able to make.

If you have questions, please contact your SMPs or contact officers using the contact details in the annex.

I will be working closely with my Ministerial colleagues, Edward Timpson, the Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families and Lord Bourne, the Minister for Communities and Local Government. On behalf of all three departments I would like to thank you again for all your continued support. We very much look forward to meeting with you and working with you all over the coming months.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Education, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, local authority chief executives, directors of children's services, finance directors, Lord Porter of Spalding as Chairman of the LGA, Dave Hill as President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, and the Strategic Migration Partnership leads.

Best wishes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Robert Goodwill', written over a large, light blue oval scribble.

ROBERT GOODWILL

Annex A – Summary Table

	Unaccompanied asylum seeking children transferred through the NTS	Unaccompanied Refugee Children in Europe ('Dubs amendment')	Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)
Government Commitment	Government committed to considering claims lodged in the UK. 3,043 claims made in 2015	To be confirmed	Up to 3,000 people this Parliament
Summary Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who arrive in the UK and lodge a claim for asylum <p><u>Additional information</u> Most UASC are male and aged 15-17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged under 18 In Europe before 20 March 2016 Will or are likely to qualify for refugee status The transfer to the UK is determined to be in the best interests of the child Priority will be given to cases with a UK family link <p><u>Additional information:</u> Cases will be a mixture of family reunion cases and unaccompanied children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those deemed to be 'Children at risk' as identified by the UNHCR <p><u>Additional information:</u> In the majority of cases, children will be accompanied by their families or carers. We expect a low number of unaccompanied children to be resettled</p>
Nationality	All	All	All
Referral countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> France Greece Italy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turkey Lebanon Jordan Iraq Egypt
Leave granted	To be determined on a case-by-case basis	To be determined on a case-by-case basis	5 years' Humanitarian Protection

Region	SMP lead	Email	Home Office Contact Officer	Email
East of England	Gosia Strona	Malgorzata.Strona@eelga.gov.uk	Cheryl Cohen	Cheryl.Cohen@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
East Midlands	Sarah Short	Sarah.Short@emcouncils.gov.uk	Adam Bell	Adam.Bell@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
London	-	mayor@london.gov.uk	Justine Wilson	Justine.Wilson47@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
North East	Janine Hartley	Janine_Hartley@middlesbrough.gov.uk	Kerry Zuccolo	Kerry.Zuccolo@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
North West	Katy Wood	K.wood@manchester.gov.uk	Rebecca Leeuw	Rebecca.Leeuw@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Northern Ireland	Ken Bishop	ken.bishop@nilga.org	Rebecca Leeuw	Rebecca.Leeuw@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Scotland	Derek Mitchell	Derek@cosla.gov.uk	Rebecca Leeuw	Rebecca.Leeuw@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
South East	Roy Millard	RoyMillard@secouncils.gov.uk	Cheryl Cohen	Cheryl.Cohen@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
South West	Sarah Short	Sarah.Short@swcouncils.gov.uk	Carolyn Bunce	Carolyn.Bunce@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Wales	Anne Hubbard	anne.hubbard@wlga.gov.uk	Carolyn Bunce	Carolyn.Bunce@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
West Midlands	Dally Panesar	Dalvinder.Panesar@birmingham.gov.uk	Adam Bell	Adam.Bell@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Yorkshire & Humber side	-	admin@migrationyorkshire.org.uk	Kerry Zuccolo	Kerry.Zuccolo@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 8
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services	
Contact Officer(s):	Lou Williams, Service Director Children Services and Safeguarding	Tel. 864139

CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee	Deadline date: N/A
1. Cabinet is recommended to approve the draft Child Poverty Strategy.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following the draft child poverty strategy being considered by the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2016. Scrutiny endorsed the strategy and made the recommendation to:
- review the implementation of guidance and best practice in terms of its use for Pupil premium and free school meals.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the draft Child Poverty strategy in order to meet the council statutory obligations under the Child Poverty Act 2010.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4 ‘To promote the Council’s corporate and key strategies and Peterborough’s Community Strategy and approve strategies and cross-cutting programmes not included within the Council’s major policy and budget framework.’

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. Background

- 4.1 The Government published its strategy to reducing child poverty (A New Approach to Child Poverty) in 2011. The strategy sets out the Government’s commitment to eradicating child poverty and its duty to minimise socio-economic disadvantage. The strategy was developed against the backdrop of the Child Poverty Act 2010 sets a statutory requirement on Local Authorities to produce a child poverty strategy.
- 4.2 The Act also prescribes the need for the Local Authority to prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment and also states that the Local Authority must consult with organisations representing children and parents in developing its strategy.
- 4.3 The Act states that the Authority must make arrangements to promote co-operation between each of its partner authorities and such other persons or bodies as the Authority thinks fit, with a view to reducing and mitigating the effects of child poverty in the area.

- 4.4 The draft strategy fulfils the requirements under the Child Poverty Act and sets out the Council's vision to tackle the underlying causes that can cause poverty to develop within a household.

Key Issues

- 4.5 Nationally, it is estimated¹ that the cost of child poverty to the country annually is £25 billion made up of spending on services to deal with the consequences of child poverty, reduced tax receipts from parents, increased welfare benefits and loss of private income.
- 4.6 For too many children, being born in poverty often results in poor children becoming poor adults. Whilst some children born in poverty go on to thrive, the greater majority become the next generation of adults and subsequently parents facing lifelong poverty.
- 4.7 The strategy outlines the council's commitment to ending this cycle of disadvantage and sets out the actions that we will take over the next four years to tackle child poverty. The strategy sets out the following priorities:
- Addressing barriers to work, which includes childcare provision, skills, and using the Connecting Families programme to break down barriers to work for parents.
 - Improving standards of living (food poverty, affordable warmth, health etc.)
 - Preventing poor children becoming poor adults through enhanced skills, education and citizenship.
 - Reducing family debt and preventing financial crisis by improving financial resilience through improved skills and employment
 - Recognising the connection between relationships, income and personal well-being in overcoming disadvantage and living well leading to resilience.
- 4.8 As detailed within the strategy, there are a number of themes that detail the work the Council and partners will undertake to tackle child poverty.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation on the strategy has taken place with a range of voluntary and community organisations who represent children and parents. Organisations were asked for their views on the issues identified within the Child Poverty Needs Assessment, whether they agree with the proposed priorities and what actions they feel that the Council and partners should be taking to tackle child poverty. Consultees agreed with the priorities and actions set out within the draft strategy.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The draft strategy sets out how the work of the council and its partners is helping to tackle the impacts of child poverty within Peterborough. This includes issues such as improving the educational achievement at our schools, tackling health inequalities and providing families with the help and support they need to address debt and better money management.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 As set out above, the draft strategy fulfils the council's statutory obligations under the Child Poverty Act 2010. Cabinet is therefore recommended to approve the strategy.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Do not approve the strategy. This option is not recommended as the council will not be able to meet its statutory requirements.

¹[http://www.cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/Cost%20of%20child%20poverty%20research%20update%20\(2013\).pdf](http://www.cpag.org.uk/sites/default/files/Cost%20of%20child%20poverty%20research%20update%20(2013).pdf)

9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The proposed child poverty strategy aims to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of the Child Poverty Act 2010, in particular Part 2

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

11. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Child Poverty Strategy 2016 - 2021
- Appendix 2 Child Poverty Needs Assessment

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Peterborough's Child Poverty Strategy 2016-2021

1. Introduction

Child poverty matters. Nationally, it is estimated that the cost of child poverty to the country annually is £25 billion made up of spending on services to deal with the consequences of child poverty, reduced tax receipts from parents, increased welfare benefits and loss of private income.

Alongside the financial cost of child poverty sits the impact of poverty upon the child and family. Poverty is strongly linked to reduced physical and mental health, a greater likelihood of domestic abuse, lower educational attainment and generally poorer living standards.

For too many children, being born in poverty often results in poor children becoming poor adults. Whilst some children born in poverty go on to thrive, the greater majority become the next generation of adults and subsequently parents facing lifelong poverty.

This strategy outlines Peterborough City Council's commitment to ending this cycle of disadvantage and sets out the actions that we will take over the next five years to tackle child poverty. One of the ways in which the council can tackle poverty both in families and across the city, is ensuring that the council continues to invest and support the economic development of Peterborough.

We recognise that one of the most important ways of tackling poverty not only in families, but for all of our citizens, is to ensure that there is a broad range of employment opportunities in the city. The council, alongside Opportunity Peterborough, is continuing to invest in Peterborough to bring growth, development and skills to create more jobs and ensuring that Peterborough is a high skilled economy.

2. How do we define poverty?

For the purposes of this strategy, we are taking child poverty to mean relative poverty compared to the financial position of families in Peterborough and across the country.

Historically, the Government has used a measurement that compares household incomes and defines poverty as those households that has an income of less than 60% of the average household income. Whilst this does produce a definitive number of households, the measurement only provides a narrow view of poverty and can mask other indicators of disadvantage. In addition, when a family reaches a pound over the measurement, they are no longer defined as being in poverty, but may well still have a number of significant problems within the household.

Rather than just taking this narrow approach, we have undertaken a broad needs assessment of child poverty within Peterborough looking at a number of issues that contribute to poverty. This data set looks at issues around health, education, parental employment, housing etc. In addition, we have also consulted with a range of organisations who represent children and/or parents to understand their experience of child poverty in the city. This has provided us with a comprehensive picture of child poverty in Peterborough.

3. Our Approach and Vision

A life in poverty means risks to health, to life expectancy, to choices and opportunities. We want all children in Peterborough to have the chance to live a life without social and economic

deprivation. To make this happen a collaborative approach is required: everyone must recognise it is their business to act to reduce child poverty.

Our focus is to break the cycle of disadvantage by identifying families that are the most vulnerable and in need of support. We know that there are a number of factors that can potentially increase the chances of families being in poverty. These include:

- Long term worklessness
- A history of debt
- Addiction issues
- Parents in work but earning low pay
- Low skilled parents
- Poor educational achievement
- Fuel poverty
- Disability or long term health conditions within the family therefore reducing possibilities for employment
- Poor money management skills
- Low quality housing
- Mental health (including low self-esteem and self-confidence)
- People with caring responsibilities
- English as a second language

Over the next four years, the council will work with our partners to reduce and mitigate the impact of child poverty in Peterborough. We will support the most vulnerable families who are in poverty and focus on preventing families from reaching crisis situations, which can lead to poverty.

Our vision is to reduce, prevent and mitigate the effects of child poverty by:

- ***Breaking the cycle of disadvantage that sees poor children becoming poor parents.***
Children growing up in poverty and disadvantage are less likely to do well at school. This can feed into disadvantage in later life and in turn may impact upon their own children. To break this cycle we need to close the gap in education between poorer pupils and those from more affluent backgrounds, ensuring that we raise levels of achievement and progress.
- ***Reducing the reliance on crisis services.***
Our focus is to work with individuals and communities to move away from crisis management to a preventative approach. We will achieve this by supporting people to develop the life skills they need. This will include greater access to information and guidance through our website, but also through community support across social networks, voluntary and community organisations.
- ***Developing greater resilience amongst families so they are better equipped to manage challenges.***
We will offer support families earlier to families in need and sustain that support until families become resilient and self-sufficient. This includes raising aspirations, improving educational achievement, increasing skills within the family and improving health and wellbeing.

4. Measuring Success

It is important to measure the impact of this strategy on poverty in Peterborough, to assess whether the action we have taken is making a difference. The combined impact of the specific actions within this Child Poverty Strategy is hard to quantify and poverty in Peterborough is also influenced by national and international circumstances.

In order to assure that delivery is on track, as well as maintaining a focus on the overall vision, we will review a set of key indicators. These indicators are identified within the detailed priority themes which are outlined in section 8.

We will review our progress on the key actions to the Health and Wellbeing and Safer Peterborough Partnership Delivery Board on a six-monthly basis to ensure we are achieving our vision and manage any risks to the delivery of the strategy as early as possible.

5. Consultation

We have consulted with a number of charities, faith organisations, schools, child care providers and voluntary organisations to ensure that we understand what it really means for parents and their children who live in poverty. Consultees were also asked whether they agreed with the vision, outcomes and priorities outlined in the strategy, the majority of respondents confirmed that they did.

The respondents to the consultation identified a number of key threats and risks for the future, these are summarised below:

- The impact of the welfare reform agenda on those who are already in poverty, particularly the benefit cap and Universal Credit were identified as potential risks to families.
- Whilst getting back to work is an essential part of tackling poverty, there needs to be a recognition that many children in poverty live in working families with low pay.
- The availability of good quality housing and the ability to secure tenancies.
- The impact of low skills can affect employment opportunities and is a key area for poverty reduction. Adult education, with the provision of financial literacy, can help families out of poverty.
- Children who live in poverty are exposed to a range of risks including debt, poor quality housing and low income that can have a serious impact on the family's mental health.

Feedback from the consultation has been used to inform the development of the key themes and will support the delivery of activity which will be developed over the coming months.

6. Findings from the Child Poverty Needs Assessment

A Child Poverty needs assessment was commissioned to provide a clear and detailed understanding of the key issues linked to child poverty in Peterborough. The needs assessment includes analysis of a series of indirect factors that can potentially lead to children ending up in poverty. The key findings of this assessment set out where Peterborough's young people appear to suffer disadvantage and suggests areas where the wider partnership of agencies and organisations in Peterborough need to work together to improve the situation.

The main issues identified by the Needs Assessment are:

- Peterborough's child population is increasing, by 2031 there will be 27% more 10-14 year olds living in the city. A high proportion of our child population are from minority ethnic backgrounds where English may be a second language..
- Poverty in Peterborough is higher than the national average. Using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) analysis, 25% of children in Peterborough are living in poverty, compared to 17% nationally.
- Levels of deprivation are particularly high in Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) near the centre of Peterborough and there is a higher concentration of relatively deprived LSOAs towards the south of the city. Deprivation as measured by IDACI is markedly less prevalent in Peterborough's more affluent, rural electoral wards.
- There would appear to be a link between poor health outcomes and child poverty as reflected in the City's child health profile.
 - Peterborough has high levels of take up of immunisations at age 2
 - 36.1% of children had tooth decay at age 5 –compared to 27.9% nationally.
 - High rates of teenage pregnancy and teenage mothers
 - Hospital admissions for young people relating to drugs and alcohol were higher than nationally but not significantly.

- Children who qualify for free school meals do less well in school and are less likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs. 48.4% of young people achieved 5 or more GCSE's at grade A-C including maths and English – for those qualifying for free school meals it was 28.8%.

To access the full Child Poverty Needs Assessment [here](#).

7. Emerging Issues and Future Risks

Over the last few years, the Government has announced a number of significant changes to welfare benefits such as the Spare Room Subsidy, Benefit Cap and Universal Credit. These changes include:

- Child Tax Credits - From April 2017, any family who has a third or subsequent child will not qualify for Child Tax Credits, which amounts to up to £2780 a year per child.
- In addition, from April 2016 the income threshold reduced from £6,420 to £3,850, meaning that fewer people will be eligible to claim Child Tax Credits.
- Previously claimants' income could also rise - the income rise disregard - by £5,000 a year. That disregard will now be cut to £2,500.
- Most working age benefits will be frozen for four years from April 2016 having only been increased by 1% a year for the preceding 3 years.
- From November 2017, the Welfare Benefit cap will apply to families claiming out of work benefits. This will see the maximum amount of benefit that can be claimed per household at £20,000 per year and expected to affect around 500 families in Peterborough. However, people on working tax credits and carers will be exempt.

Alongside these changes, the Government has also introduced increases in the National Living Wage and the personal allowance of income tax is paid. The Government's intention is that people should always be better off in work rather than relying on out of work benefits. The introduction of Universal Credit makes it easier for claimants to find work or increase their hours without it affecting the benefit entitlements, by automatically adjusting the level of benefit paid to reflect the working income received.

The cumulative impact of these changes (which will affect families both in and out of work) will vary from family to family. The changes can be complex which may lead some families struggling to understand the impact for their budgets. Those families where no-one works are likely to be the most affected, however some people in work, particularly those on zero hour contracts could also be worse off.

Other risks

Economic migrants can be at risk of lower income both in and out of work. For many, they may find employment is cyclical, low wage and variable hours. Whilst this is true for many workers across Peterborough, anecdotally we know that economic migrants are more likely to be impacted.

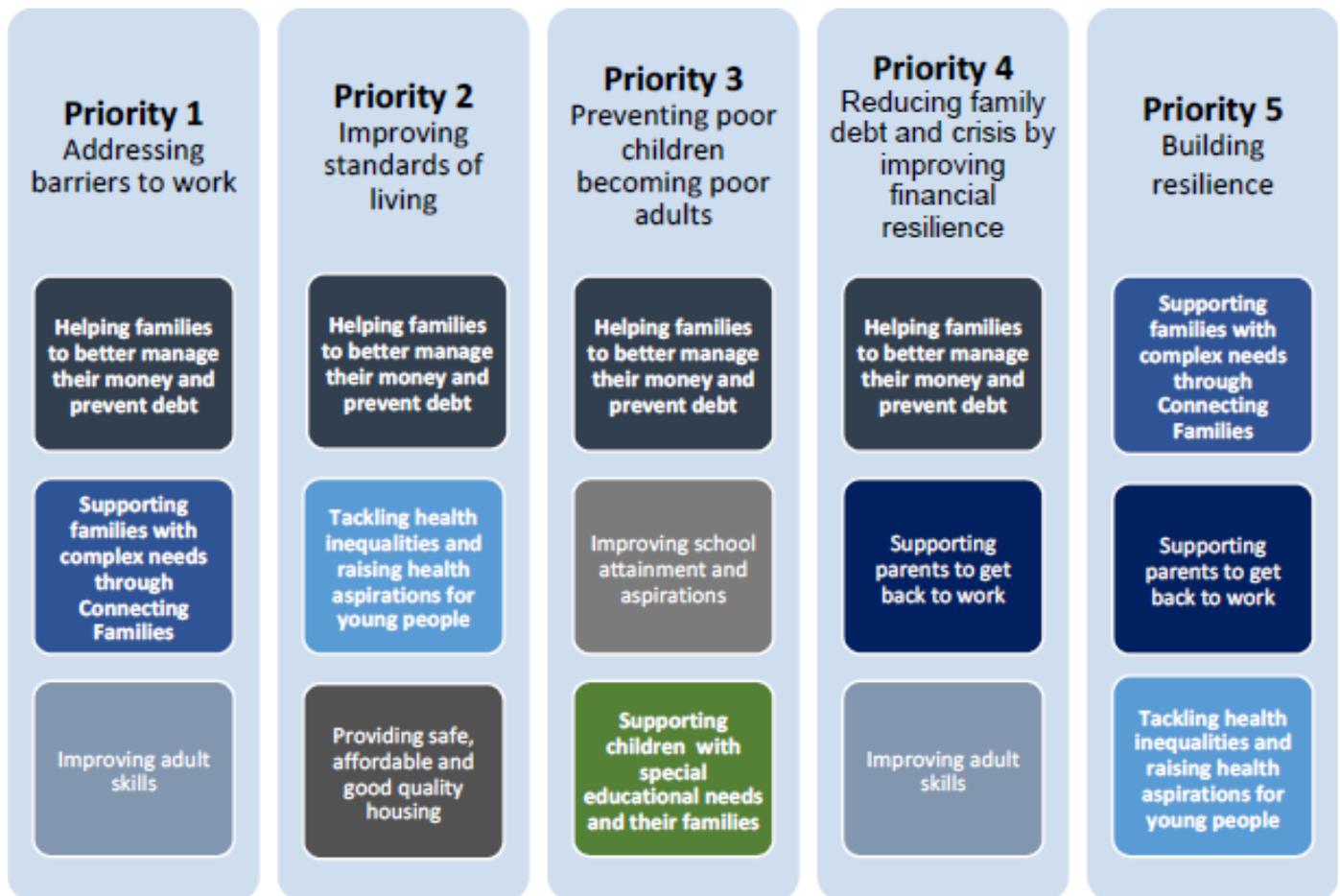
Economic migrants who have English as a second language, may also find it more difficult to access information advice and guidance that the council and other partners provides.

8. How will we deliver our strategy – our priorities:

There are a number of priority areas which we believe are key to addressing child poverty. These priorities have been reviewed following the publication of the needs assessment and consultation with organisations representing children and parents, they are:

- **Priority 1** - Addressing barriers to work, which includes childcare provision, skills, and using the Connecting Families programme to break down barriers to work for parents.
- **Priority 2** - Improving standards of living (food poverty, affordable warmth, health etc.)
- **Priority 3** - Preventing poor children from becoming poor adults through enhanced skills, education and citizenship
- **Priority 4** - Reducing family debt and preventing financial crisis by improving financial resilience through improved skills and employment
- **Priority 5** - Recognising the connection between relationships, income and personal well-being in overcoming disadvantage and living well leading to increased resilience.

Given the cross cutting nature of these priorities, a number of themes have been identified. These are set out in the diagram below:



These themes are discussed in more detail below, together with a number of key actions that we will take over the coming months to mitigate the impact of child poverty in Peterborough.

Theme 1: Helping families to better manage their money and prevent debt

Why is it a priority?

Families who are in debt can quickly reach crisis situations, which can impact on their ability to meet essential needs such as heating, food or housing costs. People in debt can often turn to high credit organisations such as loan sharks and payday lenders which whilst providing short term assistance, leads to increased debt. Unless these debts can be managed, they can rapidly lead to significant problems for all

<p>family members and in the most severe cases, lead to the family losing their home.</p> <p>Families can enter debt for a variety of reasons, for example a change in circumstances, benefit delays/sanctions or substance misuse. However, alongside these issues there is often a lack of basic money management and budgeting skills within the family compounding the issue.</p> <p>Supporting families to tackle their debts and helping them to develop money management skills is a key theme within our strategy of preventing child poverty.</p>		
How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>The council has developed the Peterborough Community Assistance Scheme (PCAS) which provides families who are in crisis with the emergency support they need such as food, white goods, basic furniture etc. In addition, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) works with clients to provide debt advice and support. As part of the scheme, the CAB will work with the family to develop a monthly budget so that families can manage their money and pay essential bills.</p> <p>The Rainbow Savers Credit Union can also help families to manage their money through the use of their “jam jar” accounts. The credit union provides an alternative to high cost credit through offering more affordable short term loans.</p> <p>The council has also developed a partnership with OVO Energy to offer Peterborough residents cheaper energy costs. Switching fuel supplier can help residents to save money and provide affordable warmth.</p> <p>From April 2016, the council has launched a council tax hardship scheme. Working with Citizens Advice Bureau, families who are in arrears with their council tax, can apply to have their liability reduced for a temporary period. This will help some of the most vulnerable people manage their money and get debts under control.</p>	<p>A number of partners across the city refer clients to CAB for support. PCAS also works with voluntary sector organisations across the city.</p>	<p>Families are able to manage their budgets more effectively leading to fewer instances of debt and crisis.</p>
Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
<p>To continue delivery of a crisis support scheme and that the scheme meets the needs of the clients.</p> <p>To develop services with the voluntary sector that can engage families to prevent family debt and financial crisis</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of clients seen • Number of IAG sessions provided • Number of clients supported to gain entitled welfare benefits • Number of white good provided to clients • Food bank vouchers redeemed • Number of referrals to CareZone

<p>To create an Innovation Partnership that will bring together a range of Information, Advice and Guidance contracts in order to enable more streamlined delivery and ensure a greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider event 21st July • Expressions of Interest – September 2016 • Evaluation and enhanced tenders developed – Oct/Nov 2016 • Contract awarded – December 2016 • Contract commences – April 2017 	<p>To be developed once new contract awarded.</p>
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Theme 2: Supporting families with complex and multiple needs through the Connecting Families programme

Why is it a priority?

Families with a range of complex and multiple needs often struggle in knowing where to start to address them. There will often be a wide range of agencies devoting time and resources to deal with individual problems without getting to the root cause of them. If we are able to better support these families with a co-ordinated approach, we are more likely to improve their future outcomes and at the same time reduce the cost to the public purse. They are likely to need supporting intensively during the early stages until they build sufficient capacity and resilience to improve outcomes for themselves.

How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>Peterborough City Council is tackling this through Early Help and the Troubled Families Programme known as Connecting Families.</p> <p>The programme is designed to support families with a range of problems – all of which in their own right could contribute to the family living in poverty. The ethos of the programme is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to support through promoting one Lead Professional / point of contact for the family; one holistic assessment (rather than numerous ones) and one SMART family action plan against which progress can be measured.</p> <p>All families where an Early Help Assessment is opened are screened for eligibility for the programme and become part of the cohort supported through this methodology at that point.</p>	<p>A wide range of partner agencies (which includes a number of third sector organisations) are signed up to engaging with the programme through information sharing agreements.</p> <p>Lead Professionals supporting the families will in the main be external partners, supported by the Local Authority Early Help service</p>	<p>Phase of the Troubled Families programme officially commenced in April 2015. It is a five year programme, with Peterborough aiming to work with and achieve significant and sustained progress with 1640 families during the five year programme. This will take us to April 2020.</p> <p>Those families supported by the programme and on whom significant and sustained progress has been made will have improved outcomes in a wide range of areas – not all of them applicable to every family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and children involved in crime and/or ASB • Children who have not been attending school regularly • Children who need help • Adult & young people out of work or at risk of financial exclusion • Families affected by Domestic Violence and Abuse • Parents and Children with a range of Health Problems

Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
To continue delivery of the Connecting Families Programme to support families with a range of problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Strategic Leads Meeting held in July with a nominated Lead for each of the 6 blocks of the programme • Connecting Families Outcome Plan launch event for partners held in July 2016 • Setting up of a moderation group to look in more detail at cases where there may be blockages to progress • A further 8 Information Sharing Agreements developed and signed by partner agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of Early Help Assessments opened in the period • Total number of families screened and deemed eligible for the programme with 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 qualification criteria • Total number of families making significant and sustained progress (SSP) on each aspect of the programme leading to a possible payment by results claim to be submitted in the first claim window of year 2 of the programme • Total number of families engaged in the 'Work Star' to assist in progress to work being delivered through Access to Employment programme

Theme 3: Supporting children with special educational needs and their families

Why is it a priority?

Children born in poverty are more likely to be born early or small and experience health problems both in early life and into adulthood. Ill health and disability among poor children can be a barrier to attainment not only due to low levels of attendance at school but possibly also as a result of difficulties in accessing the usual school curriculum. Poor children/young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) do worse at school than other children/young people with SEN. In 2012/13 only 15% of pupils on free school meals with SEN got five good GCSEs (including English and Maths), slightly over half the attainment of SEN pupils not on free school meals. Children and young people coming to school hungry or stressed as a result of their social and economic environment may be less "school ready", less socially resilient and less able to access learning. Ensuring children and young people with additional needs and/or special educational needs and/or a disability are able take full advantage of learning opportunities and that they can achieve positive outcomes in preparation for adult life is a key challenge.

How are we tackling this?

The continuing implementation of the strategies and processes around the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014 SEND reforms is providing a key vehicle through which this area is being addressed by the Council.

This has a number of main focus areas including:

- effective identification and support for children and young people in educational settings;
- improved multi professional coordination of the assessment and

How are other partners involved?

A wide range of partner agencies (which includes the local Family Voice) are involved in the coproduction and review of strategic and operational processes and practice in relation to the SEND reforms.

Where do we want to be by 2020?

The attainment gap between pupils identified as requiring SEN support eligible for free school meals and those not eligible for free school meals has reduced.

All children and young people with SEND have their needs effectively identified and met. Their families report satisfaction with the coordination of assessment and planning processes.

<p>intervention strategies for those with additional and SEN needs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> planning and preparation for adulthood that starts from a young age and at the latest when the young person is in Year 9 		
<p>The work of the SEN and Inclusion service provides assessment, consultation and advice for early years settings, schools and colleges that enables:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistent expectations of what is provided as quality first teaching and the differentiation and adjustments that should be made by educational settings to ensure all pupils have access to learning; the early identification of SEN needs and delivery of appropriate targeted support to ensure that that pupils can access education to the best of their ability. 	<p>A multi-disciplinary service working closely with other agencies and educational settings.</p>	
Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
To be developed		

Theme 4: Improving school attainment and aspirations		
Why is it a priority?		
<p>There is a strong association between aspiration and achievement. Many families with a history of negative educational experiences may not have high educational aspirations for their children. Research evidence over many years has demonstrated a strong association between poverty and poor attainment outcomes for children and young people. However, meeting benchmark attainment outcomes enables young people to progress in their next stage of learning and high outcomes is strongly associated with high income levels in adult life.</p>		
How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>The council is giving a strong lead on the need to improve attainment outcomes in all schools and using its statutory powers for maintained school to intervene where these are insufficient, as well as registering concerns with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) where these are insufficient in Academies.</p> <p>The council is consulting with key stakeholders on a reconfiguration of Education Services to take account of government policy to remove local authorities' responsibilities for school improvement, while seeking agreement on urgent priorities for improvement,</p> <p>The council is supporting the development of key strategies to improve attainment:</p>	<p>All schools are engaged through regular meeting with head teachers and school governors in the council's assessment of school performance and priorities for improvement.</p> <p>Schools are participating in a series of workshops to design the framework and priorities for the newly</p>	<p>The aspiration is for Peterborough to be in the top quartile of outcomes when compared to statistical neighbours and the local comparator group. This would also make the authority in line with national averages in attainment outcomes.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-improving schools network • EAL Academy • Closing the Gap Strategy <p>The council has established a School Improvement Board with key partners to have detailed oversight of schools performance and to agree where support and challenge is necessary to accelerate the rate of improvement in attainment outcomes.</p>	<p>configured service.</p> <p>All schools are participating in school to support activities to improve attainment outcomes.</p> <p>The EAL Academy has been developing practice in accelerating the progress and attainment of EAL speakers;</p> <p>The closing the gap strategy has established processes for improving the outcomes of vulnerable groups; these groups are strongly associated with poverty.</p> <p>The School Improvement Board closely monitors schools' performance and the progress of improvement plans.</p>	
Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
<p>The Head of School Improvement to finalise priority schools for support from SIT in 2016-17. High support schools to be identified from low attainment overall, especially where this is evident in data over-time.</p>	<p>Priority support schools finalised by end of Sept 2016.</p>	
<p>Letters of Concern or Formal Warning Notices are written and issued to schools where there are concerns about educational outcomes.</p>	<p>Letters to be issued before end of October 2016.</p>	
<p>Members of the School Improvement Team to identify schools to take part in various programmes or to receive targeted support to address low attainment e.g. in Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes / Year 1 phonics. Establish, implement and monitor such programs / support.</p>		
<p>Members of School Improvement Team to draw-up improvement plans for the relevant high priority schools for agreement with the Headteachers and approval by Head of School Improvement. Ensure that these plans make some reference to improving outcomes / narrowing gaps for disadvantaged pupils.</p>	<p>Plans for priority support schools finalised by end of Sept 2016.</p>	

Head of School Improvement to chair Monitoring and Support Partnership meetings in some targeted schools to periodically review progress being made and impact of school and Local Authority actions. Outcomes and attendance of disadvantaged pupils to be kept under review in such meetings.	Formally reviews of progress at least termly, but often half-termly Dec 16, April 17 and July 17.	
The School Improvement Board to hold lead Headteachers to account for the school improvement activities they are leading as part of the Peterborough Self Improving Schools Network. This is to include some specific questioning around plans to raise outcomes for Free School Meal pupils.	Formally reviews of progress by SIB termly, by Dec 16, April 17 and July 17.	
School Improvement Advisors to promote inclusion of disadvantaged pupils within specific quality intervention programmes such as 'Every Child a Reader' and 'Every Child Counts, especially in high priority schools.		

Theme 5: Tackling health inequalities and raising health aspirations for young people

Why is it a priority?

There is a social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health. (*Fair Society, Healthy Lives, 2010*).

Across the 5 children's and young people's health indicators within the 2016 Local Authorities health profiles Peterborough was ranked significantly worse than the England average for under 18 conceptions and ranked similar to the England average for three indicators. Data for the fifth indicator, 'smoking status at time of delivery' has not been published nationally but local data for this indicator would suggest that this would be ranked as significantly worse than the England average.

Giving every child the best start in life, and addressing the close association between early disadvantage and poor outcomes throughout life, is of the utmost importance. Inequalities in early child development and education, housing and standards of living along with employment in later life are all social determinants of health that are associated with health inequalities.

Reducing teenage pregnancy is one of the key priorities. Most teenage pregnancies are unplanned and around half end in an abortion. For many teenagers bringing up a child is extremely difficult and often results in poor outcomes for both the teenage parent and the child, in terms of the baby's health, the mother's emotional health and well-being and the likelihood of both the parent and child living in long-term poverty.

How are we tackling this?

The City Council has a focus on economic development and regeneration in the City, together with improving educational attainment. In the long term these measures should improve both socio-economic circumstances and health.

City Council commissioned Children's

How are other partners involved?

Tackling Health Inequalities is a major theme of the new Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy (2016-19), while partners such as the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group have a statutory duty to reduce health inequalities and to carry out health inequalities impact assessments of any

Where do we want to be by 2020?

To be able to demonstrate a reduction in health inequalities across a range of settings, including children's centres and schools and at all stages of the life course.

To have made good progress in implementing key solutions that will have a positive impact

<p>Centres to work closely with health visitors, and are located to ensure focus on the areas of the City with the highest levels of need.</p> <p>Special Health and Young People Advise sessions (HYPAs) take place in almost all Peterborough secondary schools and at the Regional College. Sexual health advice is a central component of these weekly events. The specialist young people nurse at ICASH (Peterborough's integrated sexual health service) works with all young people under age 19 who become pregnant, supporting them through the range of decisions they face.</p>	<p>significant services</p>	<p>on local health inequalities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality parenting programmes and the home to school transition • Building children and young people's resilience in schools • Reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) • Addressing fuel poverty and cold home-related health problems • Improving access to green spaces
<p>Key Actions</p>	<p>Key Milestones</p>	<p>Key performance outputs April – June 2016</p>
<p>To procure a new integrated Healthy Lifestyle service, supported by increased investment from the City Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group. The new service will include an increased number of services and interventions for children and families.</p> <p>Establish an accredited Healthy Schools Peterborough programme to support and provide recognition to local schools, with an initial focus on secondary and special schools.</p>	<p>Appointment of new provider December 2016</p> <p>New service will commence from April 2017</p> <p>School sign up to begin in October 2016</p>	<p>Monitoring of the below indicators against national benchmarking and in line with the Peterborough City Council Health & Wellbeing Board's Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in low income families (all dependent children under 20 and under 16s) • 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training (NEET) • Under 18 and under 16 conceptions • Levels of obese and overweight children (reception and year 6) • Bringing waiting times for assessment and treatment for specialist CAMH services in line with national targets • Successful implementation of a multi-agency neglect strategy resulting in increased early intervention in increased early intervention to prevent such patterns becoming entrenched • Chlamydia detection and screening rates among 15-24 year olds

Theme 6: Supporting parents to get back to work

Why is it a priority?

For parents, accessible and affordable quality childcare is essential in order for them to work. Having poor access to appropriate childcare can be a barrier for some parents to access work. The council has a duty to provide sufficient childcare places to meet local need, and seeks to ensure a variety of childcare options including childminders, pre-schools, full time day nurseries, out of school and holiday care are available.

All three and four year old children are eligible for 15 hours funded childcare term time (this can be offered over 52 weeks at approx. 11 hours per week) from the funding period following their third birthday. Dependent on income, parents can also access childcare element of Working Tax Credits to support their childcare costs.

In recent years there has been an increase in demand for childcare places due to the government introducing the 15 hours funded entitlement for 2 year old children, for targeted families. In Peterborough this resulted in more than 50% of two year olds able to take up the funded places, of which between 65% – 75% currently access a funded place each school term.

As the Government continues to support and encourage parents to find work, we can expect this demand to increase over coming years particularly in relation to the Government's introduction of the new 30 hours funded entitlement for working parents from 2017.

How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>The Local Authority will continue to undertake a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and produce an annual market position statement which will identify areas of need, enabling strategies to be put in place to address demand and supply for childcare.</p> <p>This will include new initiatives, such as the expansion of childcare for 3 & 4 year olds</p> <p>Plans will be put in place for the roll out of the new 30 hours childcare entitlement for working parents.</p> <p>Families Information Service provide comprehensive information to parents and carers in childcare choices As part of our Customer Experience programme we will look to identify ways in which we can improve our digital offer and help make our service easier to access for parents and carers.</p>	<p>We will continue to work with the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector of childcare providers to address market demand and support place creation and expansion.</p> <p>We will also work with Schools to look at opportunities to deliver childcare on school sites where necessary and appropriate.</p> <p>Children Centres support the take up of two year old funded places.</p>	<p>Ensuring that there is sufficient high quality childcare to meet the needs of the local community, including all eligible two year olds, and all entitled to the new 30 hours entitlement.</p> <p>The Family Information Service will be further developed to provide high quality, easy to use information, advice and guidance through the council's website</p>
Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
<p>Development of new software to support the customer experience and increase two-year-old funding applications.</p>	<p>Meeting with software Development manager to discuss scope of project (June 2016) Meeting with developers to demonstrate day-to-day processes (June 2016)</p>	<p>To be implemented once new service goes live.</p>
<p>Develop childcare places to support the expansion of the additional free entitlement for three and four-year-olds from September 2017</p>	<p>Government issues 'Expression of Interest' scheme to all local authorities which must be completed in order to later be able to submit a bid for capital funding. Peterborough submits an expression of interest (April 2016) Local authorities who submitted an</p>	<p>Submission of completed bids (August 2016) Announcement of successful bids (December 2016).</p>

	expression of interest are sent details of the capital grant scheme. (June 2016)	
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Theme 7: Providing safe, affordable and good quality housing		
Why is it a priority?		
<p>Providing affordable, warm, safe and secure housing is essential to helping communities to thrive. The significant impact a person's housing has on their health and well-being is widely recognised. The Peterborough Local Health Profile 2015 has indicated that deprivation levels, life expectancy, percentage of children living in poverty and the number of statutory homeless is worse in Peterborough when comparing to the England average.</p> <p>Housing is a key factor for health with worse health outcomes linked to poorer areas. Improving housing conditions will enable better living conditions, reduce illness and promote better achievement in the local population, particularly in education and employment levels.</p> <p>A number of published studies have provided evidence that our local environments can have a positive effect on individual health and wellbeing as well as enabling stronger communities. Poor housing can cause or contribute to many preventable diseases and is associated with injuries due to falls. Fuel poverty can be associated with excess winter deaths especially among those with lower incomes. Overcrowding has been found to adversely affect mental health and has been associated with the transmission of infectious diseases, particularly tuberculosis. Stress is a health issue within many of the hazard profiles of the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and is linked to bullying, truancy, under performance at school, unemployment or absence from work.</p> <p>Registered providers have invested in homes to ensure that they meet the Decent Homes standard. However the quality of some accommodation in the private sector does not meet necessary standards.</p>		
How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>Provision of Repairs Assistance Grants to low income owner occupier households through the Council's Capital Programme to remedy category 1 hazards. Example repairs: roof repairs, remedying damp and mould, improving property security, remedying electrical problems and installing new heating systems.</p> <p>The Private Sector Housing Enforcement Team aim to reduce the number of hazards across the private rented sector, to improve the management of properties, and to enforce general housing standards, including the issue of overcrowding.</p> <p>The provision of disabled facilities grants funded through the Better Care Fund and the Council's capital programme to children people to continue to live independently rather than moving into care, as well as helping people to move</p>	<p>Local contractors in the delivery of repairs and adaptations</p> <p>Registered providers of social housing in agreeing and part funding adaptations in their housing stock</p> <p>Housing developers on new sites in the City</p> <p>Housing developers and investors willing to take on empty property</p> <p>Local Letting Agents in running a private leasing scheme</p> <p>Energy companies for</p>	<p>Children living in safe, warm, secure and affordable housing free from hazards that impact on their health and wellbeing</p> <p>Disabled children being cared for in an adapted home environment that meets their long term needs</p> <p>Designated Lifetime Homes, both in the private and social sector, need minimal grant funded adaptation</p> <p>Maximised housing supply by returning long term empty property back into use</p> <p>Improved energy efficiency of the housing stock. Householders on the most efficient energy tariffs</p> <p>Homelessness prevention is the</p>

<p>back home more quickly after a stay in hospital. Example use of grant: through floor lifts, level access showers and ground floor wheelchair accessible sleeping and bathing facilities.</p> <p>Working with Occupational Therapists and Planning to advise and negotiate with Housing Developers to ensure Lifetime Home and wheelchair accessible house types on new developments can be practically used by children who are full time wheelchair users. Ensuring there is a supply of affordable lifetime homes on new developments</p> <p>Bringing Empty Properties back into use through negotiation with owners and, if necessary, using enforcement powers to take over the management of properties when owners will not engage and the property is causing nuisance. This activity contributes to increasing the supply of housing in which Housing Needs can discharge their statutory duty and they also can allocate families in housing need on the Housing Register</p> <p>Tackling fuel poverty by offering grant assistance for boiler and central heating replacements in owner occupied properties and liaising with landlords (or taking enforcement action if necessary) where a Cat 1 hazard for excess cold exists. Directing clients to energy company funded energy efficiency schemes. Advising on switching and directing clients to Peterborough's Community Switching Scheme and the Peterborough Energy Tariff. Promoting external wall insulation schemes to solid wall properties in the city</p> <p>Where possible the Housing Needs team will provide advice and assistance to households who are threatened with homelessness in order to prevent them from becoming so.</p> <p>Where applicants become homeless we will ensure that decisions on homelessness applications are made promptly in order to prevent the need for emergency accommodation or to ensure that the length of time spent in temporary accommodation is kept to a minimum.</p>	<p>energy efficiency measures</p> <p>Voluntary sector partners support homelessness prevention activities through the provision of advice, assistance and accommodation provision.</p>	<p>main priority for housing services and statutory homelessness is reduced as a result.</p>
<p>Key Actions</p>	<p>Key Milestones</p>	<p>Key performance outputs April – June 2016</p>

To focus the direction of the Housing Needs service towards homelessness prevention activities.	Implementation of effective case management system in Housing Needs and Homelessness prevention opportunities being identified and acted upon at the earliest opportunity.	Quarterly reporting to the DCLG (P1E return) showing the number of interventions, which led to homelessness being prevented or relieved. 64 homelessness preventions achieved April - June 2016
To make best use of temporary and interim accommodation options and to reduce the use of Bed & Breakfast type accommodation for homeless households.	Securing use of alternative temporary accommodation solutions to reduce/remove the need to use B&B type accommodation for homeless households.	Number of households in Bed & Breakfast at the end of the quarter (Apr-Jun 2016 was 90)
Ensure that households with children who are provided with temporary accommodation are referred to the early help team for assistance where required	Referral pathways with early help established and households are actively supported while being accommodated temporarily.	To be reported when implemented End 2016
Ensure the capital programme for Disabled Facility Grants for 2016/2017 is fully spent		As at 30/06/2016 the Disabled Facility Grant programme of £1,616,047 was 40% committed and 29 adaptations have been completed
Ensure the capital programme for Repairs Assistance for 2016/2017 is fully spent		As at 30/06/2016 the Repairs Assistance Grant programme of £1,125,237 was 53% committed and 11 grants completed
Bring 120 empty properties back into use through the intervention of the Empty Homes Officer		As at 30/06/2016 27 properties have been returned to use

Theme 8: Improving adult skills		
<p>Why is it a priority? Skills are vital for our future both in terms of economic growth and wellbeing but also for us to grow individual's social capital. UK Commission for Employment and Skills have undertaken analysis of projected growth for the proportion of the workforce in the Eastern region which shows a significant change in the need for higher level qualifications. There will be a strong increase in demand for people with higher level qualifications, including those with postgraduate qualifications and, correspondingly, those with no or low level qualifications will find it increasingly difficult to find employment.</p>		
How are we tackling this?	How are other partners involved?	Where do we want to be by 2020?
<p>By developing a cross-city post-16 targeted approach to skills development to help address the identified local need, reduce the skills gap, grow the economy, improve well-being and create strong, supportive and inclusive communities.</p> <p>The targeted approach to consist of three strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Employment and Supporting Labour Mobility Social Inclusion and Help Combat Poverty Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning 	<p>By being involved in and members of the themed stands.</p> <p>Delivering provision to the address the identified needs of the targeted.</p> <p>To give impartial information, advice and guidance to support individuals support requirements.</p> <p>To signpost and support to appropriate</p>	<p>Improving the skills of local residents to support economic growth and wellbeing</p>

	interventions	
Key Actions	Key Milestones	Key performance outputs April – June 2016
<p>The Skills Board</p> <p>Through the already established Peterborough Skills Strategic Partnership Board (PSSPB), engage strategic partners across the city develop strategic direction for skills in the city, working within and beyond their individual organisations to sharing and harness the best resources to bring about improvements, influencing thinking, policy and practice to have a positive impact.</p> <p>To develop a comprehensive data set to inform the group and set meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs).</p>	<p>Board to own, review and update strategy annually or as required.</p> <p>Data suite to be developed and KPI's to be identified and agreed.</p>	<p>March 2017 and ongoing</p> <p>January 2017</p>
<p>Employment and Supporting Labour Mobility</p> <p>To take a sectorial approach to skills areas considered to be significant to Peterborough</p> <p>To provide support to local residents to enable them to meet labour market demands</p>	<p>To engage with appropriate agencies to develop this approach</p> <p>To set up appropriate task and finish group</p>	<p>December 2016</p> <p>September 2016.</p>
<p>Social Inclusion and Help Combat Poverty to support lifelong learning</p> <p>To identify need and appropriate skills interventions to include the upskilling of local residents.</p> <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop further high quality ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision • improve the English and Maths skills of local resident 	<p>To set up appropriate task and finish group</p> <p>Identify what is currently being delivered and develop targeted initiatives and work with the appropriate boards and communities</p>	<p>December 2016</p> <p>September 2016.</p>

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Child Poverty Needs Profile

Key messages for Peterborough

Child Poverty – Demographics

Children and young people aged under 20 make up 26.8% of the population of Peterborough.

Peterborough's young population is growing.



24% more 5-9 year olds by 2031



27% more 10-14 year olds by 2031

In 2015 13,458 school children in Peterborough (44.8%) were from minority ethnic groups .

Child Poverty – Income Deprivation

The percentage of children overall living in Poverty in Peterborough according to the IDACI score reduced from 27% in 2010 to 25% in 2015.

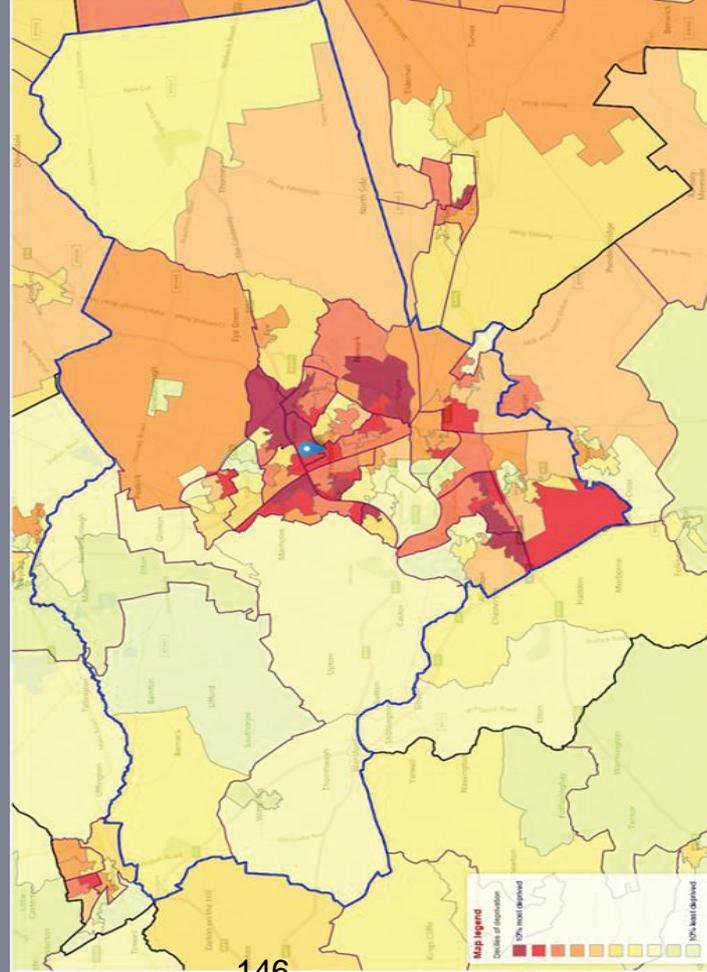


67.9% of Peterborough LSOAs are in the most deprived 50% of all LSOAs in the country.



29.5% are in the most deprived 20%
8.9% are in the least deprived 20% nationally.

Where is Child Poverty?

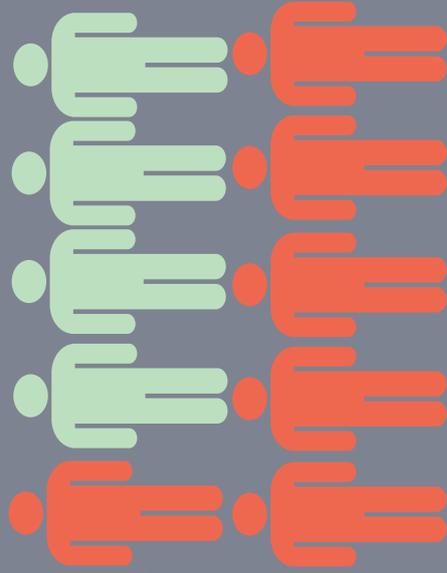


In 2010, five of the most deprived 20 LSOAs in Peterborough were in the Central electoral ward; in 2015, all of these LSOAs are outside of the most deprived 20 LSOAs

The electoral wards with the highest number of LSOAs in the most deprived 20% of all Peterborough LSOAs are

- Orton Longueville (4),
- Dogsthorpe (3),
- Paston (3)
- Ravensthorpe (3).
- The four LSOAs within Orton Longueville that are within the most deprived 20% of all Peterborough LSOAs are all ranked as relatively more deprived in comparison to other LSOAs in Peterborough than they were in 2010.
- Individual pockets of deprivation are also found within Orton Waterville, Stanground Central and Orton with Hampton.

Child Poverty – How we compare



60% of LSOAs fall within the four most deprived deciles

The most deprived LSOA is in Orton Waterville and is ranked 243rd most deprived of 32,844 LSOAs

Child Poverty – Health factors

Child Health Profile March 2016



High levels of take up of immunisations at age 2



36.1% of children had tooth decay at age 5 – compared to 27.9% nationally.



High rates of teenage pregnancy and teenage mothers



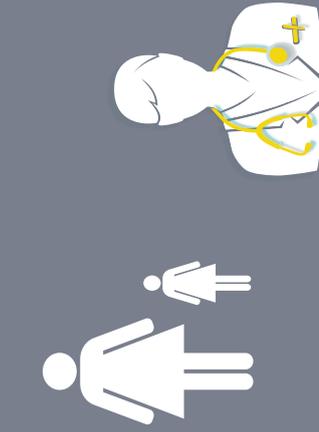
Hospital admissions for young people relating to drugs and alcohol were higher than nationally but not significantly.

Child Poverty – Health factors

Child Health Profile March 2016



12,170 A & E attendances for 0-4s proportionately higher rate than England average rate



Hospital admissions for children and young people.

- High rates for injuries in children 0-14 years
- High rates for injuries in young people 15-24 years
- High rates for Asthma in under 19s
- High rates for self harm 10-24 years
- Slightly lower than average mental health admissions.

Child Poverty – Education



61.1% of children in Peterborough achieved a good level of development at the end of reception (66.3 nationally)



48.4% of young people achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grade A*-C including maths and English – for those qualifying for free school meals it was 28.8%



Children leaving primary school who qualified for free school meals were less likely to reach level 5+ for reading writing and maths (11%) than other pupils (24%)

Child Poverty – Wider Determinants



Children in Care - significantly high rate 74 per 10,000 (nationally 60 per 10,000)



High percentage of 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training – 6.1%



3.2 families per 1,000 homeless (nationally 1.8)

Child Poverty – Health Behaviours

What about YOUTH report



24.2% of young people reported general health as 'excellent' compared to England's value of 29.5%



Smoking rates were slightly above the England average, whereas the 'Percentage who have tried e-cigarettes' was significantly higher at 22% - England = 18.4%



Only 4.7% felt themselves to be regular drinkers, compared to 6.2% nationally.



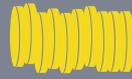
Perceptions of mental health were poorer than the national average



Percentage who had bullied others in the past couple of months' was above the national average at 14.1% compared to England Ave 10.1%

Child Poverty - Work and Benefits

Peterborough's unemployment rate is the same as England overall 5.2%.



Of those not working 30.7% are looking after a family compared with 25.1% nationally.



18.1% of children in Peterborough are living in workless households compared to 15% nationally.

In April 2015 average weekly earnings in Peterborough for full time staff were £460.60 per week, compared to the national average of £529.60 per week



Average weekly earnings in Peterborough dropped by £7.10 per week between 2014 and 2015. Nationally the trend was a rise of £8.50 per week.

Children and Young Persons JSNA

3 key messages - Children and Young Persons JSNA – 2015

1. Children and young people continue to be statistically disadvantaged with regards to both key public health and key quality of life / aspiration metrics.
2. The City is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK, particularly in regard to the growth rate of the population aged under 18.
3. Poor public health outcomes were particularly significant in four of the City's most central wards, Ravensthorpe, North, Park and Orton Longueville.

Conclusions

Peterborough's child population is growing and poverty is a factor impacting on a growing number of children, a quarter of our children using the IDACI analysis. A high proportion of our child population are from minority ethnic backgrounds which will need to be reflected within the Child Poverty Strategy.

Child poverty has decreased within Central ward but remains a significant and enduring factor within Orton Longueville, Dogsthorpe, Paston, Ravensthorpe and Orton Waterville. Our higher rates of Child Poverty could be seen to be relative to the poor health outcomes reflected in the City's child health profile.

Conclusions

Poverty in childhood can be seen to significantly reduce opportunities in later life. Children who qualify for free school meals do less well in school and are less likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs.

Children in Peterborough are more likely to be living in workless households, or lower paid households. This might also impact on aspirations and on the likelihood of young people from areas of high poverty breaking the cycle. Given the enduring nature of the poverty in the City any strategy should look to breaking the poverty cycle if it is to have a long term impact.

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 9
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor David Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	John Harrison, Corporate Director: Resources	Tel. 452520

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND BUDGETARY CONTROL REPORT – JULY 2016

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM : John Harrison, Corporate Director: Resources Steven Pilsworth, Service Director: Financial Services	Deadline date : N/A
<p>That Cabinet notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The financial pressures in the current financial year and the continuing work by CMT to deliver a balanced budget; 2. The forecast budget gap for the financial year 2017/18 and onwards, and the key assumptions currently included in the MTFs forecast; and 3. The proposed report to Council on October 12 that recommends updates to the Budget and Policy Framework to reflect the Council’s approach to a two-phase budget process. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1. This report is submitted to Cabinet following discussion by the Corporate Management Team (CMT), Cabinet Policy Forum, and the cross-party Budget Working Group.

2. PURPOSE & REASON FOR REPORT

2.1. This report comes to Cabinet as part of the Council’s agreed process within the Budget and Policy framework that requires Cabinet to initiate and consider financial strategy and budget proposals in order to set a balanced budget for the forthcoming financial year.

2.2. This report:

- Provides Cabinet with a quarterly update of the Budgetary Control position (however, the information has been updated to 31 July 2016 to give the latest position); and
- To set out the proposed process and timetable for the 2017/18 budget process including dates for the ‘budget conversation’ with the public.

2.3. This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.1 ‘To take collective responsibility for the delivery of all strategic Executive functions within the Council’s Major Policy and Budget Framework and lead the Council’s overall improvement programmes to deliver excellent services’ and 3.2.5 ‘To review and recommend to Council changes to the Council’s Constitution, protocols and procedure rules’.

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	Yes	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	26/09/2016
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Date for relevant Council meeting	12/10/2016	Date for submission to Government Department	N/A
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4. JULY BUDGET POSITION

- 4.1. The approved revenue budget for 2016/17 is £145m. The year-end outturn, based on reported departmental information as at end of July 2016, is currently forecast to be a £1.8m overspend.
- 4.2. At present a transfer to the Grant Equalisation reserve of £3.5m is included for capital receipts that were identified during the budget setting exercise and due in 2016/17.
- 4.3. In addition to a departmental level analysis, a line has been added to highlight any changes in the Council's financing throughout the year (e.g. changes to business rates, grants etc.)

Department	Budget 2016/17 £k	Actual Spend to date £k	Forecast Spend 2016/17 £k	Variance 2016/17 £k
Chief Executives Dept	279	101	277	-2
Governance	6,114	1,269	6,290	176
Growth and Regeneration	12,321	1,569	11,553	-768
People and Communities	73,830	24,660	76,154	2,324
Public Health	-78	-2,110	-78	0
Resources	52,083	7,792	48,685	-3,398
Contribution to GE reserve - Capital receipts	0	0	3,485	3,485
Financing	-144,549	-13,203	-144,549	0
Overall position	0	20,078	1,817	1,817

- 4.4. One of the Council's key pressures is a rise in the number of families presenting as homeless and requiring support.
- 4.5. It should be noted that the £3.5m Contributions to Grant Equalisation Reserve does not represent a genuine budget pressure but is actually related to the delayed realisation of capital receipts due to be contributed to reserve in the 15/16 financial year.
- 4.6. Any additional savings realised from existing budget items will be taken straight to the grant equalisation reserves to underpin the budget in future years.
- 4.7. The Council already has measures in place to control spending and staffing. Specific actions brought forward include:
- Options for mitigating pressures on the Council's homelessness budgets; and
 - Bids to secure additional external funding.
- 4.8. CMT is committed to taking management action to ensure that the budget position is balanced by the end of the financial year, and have taken a prudent view when monitoring the budget position.
- 4.9. Further information is provided in appendices A, B and C, which show the forecast for each service area, an explanation of key budget variances (those over £100k) and risks that have been identified.
- 4.10. CMT regularly receives updates on the in-year budget position. This information is shared and discussed with Cabinet and Budget Working Group as part of the process to formulate next year's budget proposals.

Asset Investment Plan 2016/17

- 4.11. The revised Asset Investment Plan budget as at July 16 is £230.5m, which includes £116.5m for Invest to Save (I2S) Schemes. The agreed investment as per the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFS) was £156.7m. The movement between the MTFS position and the £238.3m as at April 16 was a result of slippages mainly due to delays completing projects from 2015/16.
- 4.12. The actual investment expenditure as at July 16 is £13.2m (17.2% of the revised budget to date). The latest forecast provided by project managers predicts an overall spend of £227.7m, therefore the Council is expecting to spend a further £214.5 m before March 17.
- 4.13. The I2S budget is for schemes that must cover the cost of borrowing and minimum revenue provision (MRP) from either income generation or from generated savings.
- 4.14. The Asset Investment Plan can be funded via three core elements, external third party income (including grants), capital receipts generated from the sale of Council assets, and borrowing from the external market. For the 2016/17 MTFS onwards the approved strategy is to use Capital Receipts as part of a contribution to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) therefore they are no longer factored into the funding of the Asset Investment.
- 4.15. The following table shows the breakdown of the Council's Asset Investment over the directorates and how this investment is to be financed.

Directorate	MTFS Budget £000	1st April Budget £000	Revised Budget (Full Year) £000	Revised Budget (Year to Date) £000	Actual (Year to Date) £000
Governance	-	49	49	16	0
Growth & Regeneration	37,642	44,310	42,167	14,056	3,123
People & Communities	37,236	49,379	46,583	15,528	5,404
Resources	25,293	23,864	25,255	8,418	1,108
Invest to Save	56,524	120,661	116,481	38,827	3,548
TOTAL	156,696	238,262	230,535	76,845	13,183
Grants & Contributions	33,768	44,715	40,243	10,061	5,023
Borrowing	122,928	193,547	190,292	47,573	8,160
TOTAL	156,696	238,262	230,535	57,634	13,183

- 4.16. The movement of £7.7m between the budget as at April 16 (£238.3m) and the current budget of £230.5m is mainly the result of the re-profiling of expenditure for the new secondary school Hampton Gardens and works linked to the Fletton Quays office development, and the delay of expenditure on the Community Stadium Project.

Borrowing and Funding the Asset Investment Plan

- 4.17. It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the level of borrowing it considers to be affordable. The Council's approved Prudential Indicators (affordable, prudent and sustainable limits) are outlined in the approved Treasury Management Strategy. The Council borrows only to fund the Asset Investment Plan. The current plan assumes that 82.5% of the budgeted expenditure will be funded by borrowing.
- 4.18. The Council's borrowing as at the end of July 16 was £376.7m (see table below). The debt is measured against the Council's Authorised Limit for borrowing of £721.5m which must not

be exceeded and the Operational Boundary (maximum working capital borrowing indicator) of £669.5m.

Borrowings	Less than 1yr £000	1-2yrs £000	2-5yrs £000	5-10yrs £000	10+yrs £000	Total £000	Ave. Interest Rate %
PWLB	-	-	-	22,448	290,439	312,887	3.8
Market Loans	-	-	-	-	17,500	17,500	4.5
Local Authority	5,000	13,000	24,500	-	-	42,500	1.9
LEP Loan	784	-	3,000	-	-	3,784	0.0
Total Borrowing	5,784	13,000	27,500	22,448	307,939	376,671	3.5
% of total Borrowing	2%	3%	7%	6%	82%		
Borrowing Limit (PI)	40%	40%	80%	80%	100%		

- 4.19. The majority of the debt is taken on a 10+yr basis. The Corporate Director: Resources believes it to be prudent to take advantage of a relatively low long term fixed rate of interest as it mitigates some of the risk of PWLB rate rises. Long term interest rates are currently at very low rates e.g. the standard PWLB rate for 50yr loans including the certainty rate was 2.24% at end of July 16. The historically low PWLB rates are a result of the investor fears and confidence creating an ebb and flow situation between favouring more risky assets i.e. equities, or the safe haven of bonds. The Council's treasury advisers, Capita, note that they remind clients of how...

"unpredictable PWLB rates and bond yields are at present. We are experiencing exceptional levels of volatility which are highly correlated to emerging market, geo-political and sovereign debt crisis developments."

- 4.20. The Council's treasury team's borrowing strategy, in line with Capita advice, in that as the outlook continues to be uncertain, borrowing is taken in tranches so as to benefit from the current rates but also to provide some flexibility if rates fall further.
- 4.21. The table below shows the activity in Loans held by the Council for the year to date:

Loans Portfolio £000		
April 16 b/f		363,171
repayment of loans to date	(18,200)	
new loans in year	31,700	
net increase/(decrease) to date		13,500
Loans portfolio as at July 16		376,671

- 4.22. Total interest payable on existing loans for the year (£376.7m) is expected to be £13.1m.
- 4.23. As at July 16 the Council held £19.2m of S106 and Planning Obligation Implementation Scheme (POIS) funding available for funding Asset Investment projects. To date £4.3m has been earmarked for specific projects. The process for allocation requires project managers to successfully submit project plans meeting the criteria for which the contributions were intended. The S106 Officer is responsible for approving s106 allocations.
- 4.24. Capital Receipts are used as part of a contribution to fund the MRP however, close monitoring of the Capital Receipts is maintained as any significant change will now have a direct impact on the Revenue position.

- 4.25. The Capital Receipts are monitored on a monthly basis and each sale given a status of Red, Amber or Green to identify the likely receipt before March 17. The MTFS includes a contribution of £3.1m Capital Receipts (not including Investment Assets), with the revised receipts figure including a further £4.6m rolled forward from uncompleted disposals in 15/16. Any shortfall of actual cash receipts in year will therefore have a direct impact on the final Revenue position and in turn the underpinning of the MTFS approach
- 4.26. Given the lack of capital receipts received to date, the sales which are highlighted as a Red risk status of being achieved are no longer factored in the forecast outturn position as shown in the revenue BCR for this month, thus reducing the amount shown as transferred to the Grant Equalisation reserve.

Capital Receipts				
RAG Status	Budgeted Income per MTFS £000	Revised Budget £000	Received to Date £000	Not yet received £000
Green	550	1,466	16	1,450
Amber	1,180	1,385	-	1,385
Red	1,170	1,170	-	1,170
Other Assets	200	3,750	-	3,750
Total (not inc Investment Assets)	3,100	7,771	16	7,755
Investment Assets	2,575	2,575	-	2,575
Total Capital Receipts	5,675	10,346	16	10,330

Investments

- 4.27. The Council aims to achieve the optimum interest on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate the Council considers it appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cashflow fluctuations, and only invest with Barclays (the Council's banking provider) and Bank of Scotland (part of the Lloyds Banking Group), the Debt Management Office and Local Authorities.
- 4.28. As at July 16 the Council's external investments totalled £34.7m.

5. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY – CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1. At its meeting on 9 March 2016, the Council approved the ten year financial strategy for the years 2016/17 – 2025/26. This showed an initial budget gap of just over £4m for 2017/18. It was also made clear in the Budget Report that any further reductions in public spending would further increase the budget gap – further information will be available following the publication of the Autumn Statement.
- 5.2. The table below shows the pressures faced by the Council as at the start of this financial year:

	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000
Opening Budget Gap	11,330	14,710	17,760	19,510
Total Grant Reductions	16,305	21,124	23,214	23,214
Total Budget Pressures	6,311	6,219	6,957	8,484
Total Investments	660	650	640	640
Overall budget gap	34,606	42,703	48,571	51,848
Overall Savings Proposed	- 19,317	- 18,356	- 17,401	- 18,041
Budget gap before application of reserves	15,289	24,374	31,170	33,807
Contribution To/(From) Grant Equalisation	- 11,188	0	0	0
Final budget position	4,101	24,347	31,170	33,807

- 5.3. The budget gap for 2017/18 is relatively small compared to 2018/19 onwards due the Council following a deliberate strategy of realising one-off underspends in 2015/16 to support future year budgets. However, the underlying budget gap remains substantial, and further strategic action is essential.
- 5.4. This forecast assumes a 2% per annum increase in Council Tax in 2017/18 and each year thereafter. The Council will therefore need to identify and implement at least £4.1m of savings in 2017/18 to deliver a balanced budget, with substantial additional savings being required from 2018/19.
- 5.5. Cabinet will consider the first tranche of Budget proposals on 7 November 2016.

6. MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017/18-2026/27 – PROCESS

- 6.1. This section of the report sets out a proposed approach and timetable for the 2017/18 budget-setting process. It is proposed that, as in previous budget rounds, the budget process will have two phases for Cabinet to put forward budget proposals for Council approval.
- 6.2. As the Council's constitution does not currently allow for this approach, a report will be presented to Council on October 12 2016 which will update the Budget and Policy Framework to reflect the two-phased process.
- 6.3. A two-phased approach will allow the Council to give the maximum time possible for public consultation on its budget proposals.
- 6.4. An additional benefit of this approach is that the early agreement of Phase 1 budget proposals in the December before the start of the new financial year gives Departments more time to implement these proposals, some of which may require long lead in times to achieve successful implementation.
- **Phase 1:** Departments will work on budget options that will contribute towards reducing the budget gap in future financial years. These options will be discussed with Cabinet Members and with the Cross-Party Budget Working Group. Following feedback from Joint Scrutiny and a budget conversation with residents, partner organisations and businesses, Cabinet will recommend the first tranche of budget proposals to the Council meeting on 14 December 2016.

- **Phase 2:** Cabinet will recommend further budget proposals to enable Council to set a lawful and balanced budget, along with the 2017/18 Council Tax, at its meeting on 6 March 2017. These further budget proposals will again be consulted on during February 2016 to ensure that decisions made reflect community views.

6.5. The proposed timeline for the process is outlined in the table below. This incorporates the two key statutory deadlines the Council must meet during this process namely:

- The Council Tax Support Scheme must be approved by the end of January.
- The budget and Council Tax must be approved by the 11th March.

Meeting	Content	Date
Phase 1 – Budget Conversation 09/11/16 – 12/12/16		
Cabinet	Consider the first tranche of budget proposals	7/11/16
Scrutiny	Formal scrutiny of Phase 1 budget proposals	16/11/16
Cabinet	To recommend the first tranche of budget proposals to Council, having regard to feedback from Scrutiny and the public	05/12/16
Council	Approve the first tranche of budget proposals	14/12/16
Phase 2 – Budget Conversation 27/01/17 – 06/03/17		
Cabinet	To recommend the 2017/18 Council Tax Support Scheme to Council having regard to feedback from Scrutiny and the public. To agree the Council Tax Base, estimated position on the Collection Fund and the NNDR 1 Tax Base position.	16/01/17
Council	Approve the 2017/18 Council Tax Support Scheme	25/01/17
Cabinet	Consider the second tranche of budget proposals	06/02/17
Scrutiny	Formal scrutiny of Phase 2 budget proposals	08/02/17
Cabinet	To recommend the 2017/18 Budget & Council Tax to Council having regard to feedback from Scrutiny and the public.	27/02/17
Council	Approve the 2017/18 budget and Council Tax.	08/03/16

6.6. This process for setting the 2017/18 budget requires Council approval (to be sought at the Council meeting on 12 October 2016) as it differs from that included in the Council's Constitution. A report will shortly be brought forward to Council that will recommend an update to the Constitution to reflect a two-phased approach.

6.7. The following budget discussions will be held during the two budget conversation phases in order to enable residents, partner organisations, businesses and other interested parties to feedback on budget proposals:

- Discussion with the Trade Unions.
- Discussion with the business community
- Borderline Peterborough Local Commissioning Group
- Peterborough Housing Partnership
- Greater Peterborough Partnership City Leaders Forum
- Disability Forum
- Connect group
- Schools Forum
- Parish Councils
- Peterborough Community Assistance Scheme
- Youth Council

6.8. A hard copy of the budget proposals and the Budget Conversation document will be available in all libraries as well as the Town Hall and Bayard Place reception desks. The Council will also receive responses via an on-line survey on its website.

- 6.9. The Budget Conversation will be promoted through local media and through the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts to encourage as many people as possible to have their say.
- 6.10. The budget will be set to deliver the Council's priorities for the coming year as follows:
- Drive growth, regeneration and economic development
 - Improve educational attainment and skills
 - Safeguard vulnerable children and adults
 - Pursue the Environment Capital agenda
 - Support Peterborough's culture and leisure trust Vivacity
 - Keep all our communities safe, cohesive and healthy
 - Achieve the best health and wellbeing for the city

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 7.1. Consider the anticipated outcome of consideration of this report. For example, it may be CMT will develop budget proposals in order to meet the budget timetable and process proposed in this report.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1. The Cabinet is responsible for initiating Budget Proposals within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. The proposed approach and timetable for the 2017/18 budget-setting process contained within this report varies from that contained within the Procedure Rules and Cabinet is being asked to put forward this alternative, two-stage process, for Council approval. The two stage process was used last year and was successful in enabling the Council to set a lawful and balanced budget. Another benefit of the two stage approach is that the early agreement of Phase 1 budget proposals in the December before the start of the new financial year gives Departments more time to implement these proposals, some of which may require long lead in times to achieve successful implementation.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1. No alternative option has been considered as the Cabinet is responsible under the Constitution for initiating Budget Proposals and the Council is statutorily obliged to set a lawful and balanced budget by 11th March annually.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 10.1. As outlined in the body of the report

Elected Members

- 10.2. Members must have regards to the advice of the Section 151 Officer. The Council may take decisions which are at variance with this advice, providing there are reasonable grounds to do so.

Risk

- 10.3. CMT review the Budgetary Control Risk register on a fortnightly basis. This register has also been presented to the Budget Cabinet Policy Forum and the Cross-Party Budget Working Group for thorough scrutiny by Members.
- 10.4. In-year budget risks have been identified in Appendix 3.
- 10.5. CMT have identified actions to mitigate the risk of overspending in the current year and any actions taken will be formally reported via the Budget-setting process.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1. Appendix 1 – Detailed Revenue Budgetary Control Report

11.2. Appendix 2 – Analysis of Variances <>£100k

11.3. Appendix 3 – Budget Risks

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Detailed Revenue BCR

Department	Budget 2016/17 £k	Actual Spend to date £k	Forecast Spend 2016/17 £k	Variance 2016/17 £k
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT				
Chief Execs Office	279	101	227	-52
Additional Contribution to GE reserve			50	50
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT	279	101	277	-2
GOVERNANCE				
Director of Governance	323	144	323	0
Legal & Democratic Services	3,610	1,413	3,568	-42
Human Resources	1,377	447	1,365	-12
Performance & Information	1,380	293	1,480	100
City Services & Comms - SD*	453	125	444	-9
City Services & Comms- Regulatory Services*	489	-95	424	-65
City Services & Comms- Parking Services*	-2,435	-1,110	-2,465	-30
City Services & Comms- Communications*	238	45	238	0
City Services & Comms- CCTV, Resilience & Health + Safety*	510	193	568	58
City Services & Comms- Markets, Tourism & Events*	169	-186	295	126
Additional Contribution to GE reserve			50	50
TOTAL GOVERNANCE	6,114	1,269	6,290	176
GROWTH AND REGENERATION				
Director, OP & JV	636	311	575	-61
Development & Construction	275	-348	224	-51
Sustainable Growth Strategy	1,321	818	1,308	-13
Peterborough Highway Services	10,089	788	9,446	-643
TOTAL GROWTH AND REGENERATION	12,321	1,569	11,553	-768
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES				
Director of People and Communities	-1,420	188	-1,773	-353
Adult Services	40,224	8,793	40,669	445
Communities	5,065	823	5,983	918
Children's Services and Safeguarding	23,623	6,807	24,184	561
Education	4,902	7,597	5,659	757
Business Management & Commercial Ops	1,436	452	1,432	-4
TOTAL PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES	73,830	24,660	76,154	2,324

Department	Budget 2016/17 £k	Actual Spend to date £k	Forecast Spend 2016/17 £k	Variance 2016/17 £k
PUBLIC HEALTH				
Children 0-5 Health Visitors	3,126	0	3,126	0
Children 5-19 Health Programmes	1,999	68	1,999	0
Sexual Health	1,456	23	1,456	0
Substance Misuse	2,432	588	2,432	0
Smoking and Tobacco	375	-20	375	0
Miscellaneous Public Health Services	2,013	101	2,013	0
Public Health Grant	-11,479	-2,870	-11,479	0
TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH	-78	-2,110	-78	0
RESOURCES				
Director's Office	234	78	232	-2
Financial Services	3,529	1,484	3,525	-3
Capital Finance	18,615	3,273	14,746	-3,869
Corporate Items	6,133	-4,899	5,630	-504
Peterborough Serco Strategic Partnership	8,977	5,926	9,266	289
ICT	4,073	2,110	4,373	299
Commercial Group	-1,802	-1,996	-2,098	-296
Amey Peterborough & Waste Management	10,769	3,295	10,849	80
Westcombe Engineering	52	166	52	0
Energy	-225	-648	-225	0
Vivacity / Cultural Services	2,566	774	2,550	-17
Cemeteries, Cremation & Registrars	-1,256	-568	-1,256	0
Corporate Property*	418	-1,203	673	255
Additional Contribution to GE reserve			368	368
TOTAL RESOURCES	52,083	7,792	48,685	-3,398
Contribution to GE reserve - Capital receipts			3,485	3,485
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	144,549	33,281	146,366	1,817
FINANCING				
Council Tax	-64,038	0	-64,038	0
NDR Income	-49,113	0	-49,113	0
NDR Levy	484	0	484	0
NDR Tarriff	6,736	2,425	6,736	0
Revenue Support Grant	-26,983	-9,714	-26,983	0
Grants	-9,460	-4,390	-9,460	0
Reserves	-1,524	-1,524	-1,524	0
Collection Fund	-653	0	-653	0
TOTAL FINANCING	-144,549	-13,203	-144,549	0
OVERALL POSITION	0	20,078	1,817	1,817

* These budget groups have transferred Directorates – the Budgetary Control Reports will be updated to reflect this change shortly.

Breakdown of savings taken directly to reserve:		Directorate
Chief Executive – additional saving from permanent arrangement	-£ 50k	Chief Exec
Alternative Governance saving	-£ 50k	Governance
Additional saving from MRP review	-£150k	Resources
Apprenticeship levy not payable in 2016/17	<u>-£218k</u>	Resources
Total	-£468k	

These contributions to reserve are shown within the BCR of the relevant Directorate.

Explanation of Key Variances

Key Variances (over £100k)	Total £k	Explanation
Gov - Performance & Information	100	Application Support Saving not achievable
Gov - City Servs & Comms- Markets, Tourism & Events	126	Reduced Market income £80k
G&R - Peterborough Highway Services	-643	Concessionary Fares (£571k)
P&C - Director of People and Communities	-353	Achievement of (£353k) additional savings to offset pressures elsewhere.
P&C - Adult Services	445	0-25 Team £149k adverse (to meet increased case load), £219k – Revisions to grant forecasts.
P&C - Communities	918	B&B homelessness pressure of £1.174m, EPC income shortfall of £144k, savings from PES/selective licensing £250k, other misc.
P&C - Children's Services and Safeguarding	561	£214k short breaks pressure, £251k pressure on childrens placements, CSC Staffing £337k
P&C - Education	757	Home to School Transport £450k demand led pressure for transporting children to available school places across the city, £182k shortfall on ESG - grant reduced in previous years but not spend, £92k shortfall on insurance as per last year. Other misc items.
Res - Capital Finance	-3,869	This is a combination of Capital Receipts (£3.485m) (transferred to GE reserve) and underspends from lower interest rates on new borrowing than anticipated in the MTFs. The capital receipts contribution to the GE reserve was brought forward from sales not achieved in 2015/16. For July BCR in order to be prudent the forecast has been reduced by the receipts marked as Red in terms of being achieved this financial year. This issue will continue to be monitored and figures updated accordingly.
Res - Corporate Items	-504	Apprenticeship Levy no longer due in 2016/17 (£218k), Underspend against pension strain budget (£60k), Car Lease scheme saving not achievable £80k, release of pension budgets (£200k), VAT Shelter income (£64k)
Res - PSSP	289	Procurement pressure
Res - ICT	299	Out of Scope costs £153k, Applications support saving not achievable £140k, Saving in data transmission costs not yet delivered, Schools broadband income shortfall £191k offset by (£250k) budget for cloud
Res - Commercial Group	-296	Court Cost income estimated above budget (£200k).
Res - Corporate Property	255	Rent, Rates & Service Charges for Midgate £200k, other misc.
Contribution to GE reserve	3,485	Capital receipts identified during the budget setting exercise to be transferred to the Grant Equalisation Reserve. However, the Resources BCR now assumes that red risk capital receipts will not be achieved in the year. Further detail

Key Variances (over £100k)	Total £k	Explanation
		is provided at the beginning of this report.
Additional Contribution to GE reserve	468	Additional Chief Exec saving £50k, Alternative Governance saving £50k, Apprenticeship Levy £218k, MRP £150k

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Budget Risks

This section identifies risks to the Council's budget which are currently being monitored and managed. Action is being taken to remove these risks, however, if this is not possible the impact will be incorporated in to the Budgetary Control Report as appropriate.

Risks identified
Gov - Parking Income
Gov - Expenditure on events
Gov - On going restructures
Gov - Taxi legislation impact on fees
Gov - VDC closure and shop move
G&R - Planning Income
G&R - NRSWA Income
G&R - Street Lighting Energy Usage
G&R - Building Control Income
G&R - Ash Tree Virus
RES - ICT - Data transmission costs not reducing in line with target. £257k.
RES - Waste Management – Energy Recovery Facility – Income from waste is subject to fluctuations in energy prices and some income will not be confirmed until later in the financial year.
P&C - Homelessness issue - the adverse variance reported in BCR assumes £1.174m expected net costs. There is a possibility that the costs could be in excess of this, our current assumptions are based on existing volumes.
P&C - Independent Sector placements –These services are demand-led, with spending levels directly correlated to customer volumes. If additional service users are identified, for example, vulnerable older people and children additional pressures may arise.

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CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 10
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor David Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources	
Contact Officer(s):	John Harrison, Corporate Director: Resources	Tel. 452520

EFFICIENCY STRATEGY 2016/17 – 2019/20

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM : Councillor David Seaton	Deadline date : N/A
<p>1. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the Peterborough City Council Efficiency Strategy for 2016/17 – 2019/20.</p>	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following a referral from the s151 Finance Officer.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to consider the proposed 2016/17 – 2019/20 Efficiency Strategy which will enable the Council to become eligible for a Four-Year Funding Settlement from Government.

2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4 ‘To promote the Council’s corporate and key strategies and Peterborough’s Community Strategy and approve strategies and cross-cutting programme not included within the Council’s major policy and budget framework’.

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND

4.1. As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement in February 2016, the Government confirmed its offer of a 4-year Finance Settlement to Local Authorities. The 4-Year Finance Settlement would provide indicative levels of funding over a 4-year period to allow Local Authorities more scope to plan ahead in return for producing an Efficiency Strategy.

4.2. The Government announced that this strategy must be approved and submitted by 14th October 2016 if the Council wishes to accept the offer. The Government has indicated that it cannot guarantee the same level of funding for Councils that do not accept a 4-Year offer.

What It Includes

4.3. As part of the Final Settlement, the Government issued indicative 4-year figures for Revenue Support Grant (RSG), Improved Better Care Fund and New Homes Bonus.

- 4.4. The Government has now confirmed that the 4-Year offer will include RSG, Transitional Grant and Rural Services Delivery Grant (PCC only receives RSG). Improved Better Care Fund and New Homes Bonus are not included in this offer.
- 4.5. Therefore, the 'guaranteed' levels of funding would be as follows:

Item	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
Revenue Support Grant	26,983	19,821	15,056	10,246
Transitional Grant	0	0	0	0
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0	0	0	0
Total	26,983	19,821	15,056	10,246

- 4.6. A survey of 15 Local Authorities indicated that 48% will definitely take the Government's offer with a further 38% saying that they will probably accept. No Authorities have said that they will definitely not accept the offer.
- 4.7. Whilst a 4-year funding settlement does give the Council increased scope to plan ahead, it should be noted that the figures above represent only a very small element of the Council's total income streams, therefore, significant risks of volatility remain.

Efficiency Strategy Document

- 4.8. The draft Efficiency Strategy has been attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.9. Whilst there is no formal guidance from the Secretary of State on what this document should contain, officers have had regard to the best practice recommendations issued by CIPFA and the LGA.
- 4.10. In the four years to 2020, it is recommended that the Council review its strategy annually.
- 4.11. It is not yet known whether another 4-Year Settlement will be available from 2020 onwards. The Government's aim is to have implemented a system of '100%' Business Rates retention by this time, in which case, RSG may become redundant. Officers will continue to monitor developments and report to Members as necessary.
- 4.12. Given the outcome of the recent referendum, there is a significant risk that the offer may be withdrawn or amended. The 4-Year offer was caveated with a statement that the deal was '*subject to changes in multiplier; changes to functions and unforeseen events*'. More detail will be known following the Government's next Budget, which is expected in the Autumn.
- 4.13. There is also additional risk to funding not included in this agreement. The Final Settlement confirmed reforms to New Homes Bonus, which would likely see funding redistributed through a formula which is not beneficial to Peterborough.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. At its meeting on 14 September 2016, the Cross-Party Budget Working Group has considered the offer of a 4-year funding settlement and the draft Efficiency Strategy.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1. That the Efficiency Strategy be agreed in order to enable the Council to become eligible for a 4-year funding settlement.
- 6.2. This Strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy process up to the year 2019/20.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. The approval of the attached Strategy is a Government requirement for eligibility for a 4-year funding settlement.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1. The Council is not bound to accept a 4-year funding settlement – it has the option to receive one-year funding settlements as per the current arrangements. However, the Government has said that it ‘cannot guarantee’ the same levels of funding for Councils who do not accept the offer.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial

9.1. Whilst this report is financial in nature, it does not change the Council’s anticipated levels of funding.

Risks

9.2. Risks are outlined in the main body of the report.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Efficiency Strategy

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Efficiency Strategy 2016/17 – 2019/20



Peterborough City Council Efficiency Strategy 2016/17 – 2019/2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1. As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement in February 2016, the Government confirmed its offer of a 4-Year Funding Settlement for councils who are prepared to demonstrate their commitment to financial stewardship in an Efficiency Strategy. This document fulfils the requirement for accepting this deal.
- 1.2. A 4-Year Funding Settlement will provide relative certainty with regard to the council's levels of Revenue Support Grant over this period and will aid financial planning.
- 1.3. This Efficiency Strategy also demonstrates the council's commitment to transparency in the way it manages its finances.
- 1.4. This strategy was presented to, and approved by Cabinet on 26 September 2016, and will be reviewed annually as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. This document is available for public scrutiny on the council's website.

Signed: _____
Leader of the Council

Signed: _____
Chief Executive

2. Priorities

2.1. The council's priorities are to:

- Drive growth, regeneration and economic development
- Improve educational attainment and skills
- Safeguard vulnerable children and adults
- Pursue the Environment Capital agenda
- Support Peterborough's culture and leisure trust Vivacity
- Keep all our communities safe, cohesive and healthy
- Achieve the best health and wellbeing for the city

3. About Peterborough

- 3.1. Peterborough city is the third-fastest growing city in the country, with a population of over 188,000 people.
- 3.2. It is the UK's first Gigabit city, and was recently named 'World Smart City of the Year 2015', beating competition from Dubai and Moscow.
- 3.3. A dynamic and rapidly growing area, the City has added 7,000 jobs to the local economy over the last three years, with unemployment at its lowest levels since the 1990s. Claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance dropped by 38 per cent in 2015.
- 3.4. Recently, the council has seen the 4th highest level of housing stock growth in the country, more schools than ever rated 'good' or 'outstanding' (over 85 per cent).
- 3.5. As well as the benefits for our communities, the strategy of growing the city and creating jobs provides two main benefits for the council. Firstly, have a thriving economy and high employment can help reduce demand on our services. Secondly, it can help the council to generate revenue through areas such as council tax and business rates. This in turn has allowed the council to deliver savings of £24.1m in 2016/17 without making any reductions to services.

4. Innovations in Peterborough – Case Studies

- 4.1. Peterborough City Council takes pride in developing innovative services that are fit for the future. The following case studies are just a few examples of the ways in which Peterborough has transformed its services for the benefit of residents and the city.

Case Study 1: Peterborough Investment Partnership (PiP)

Established in January 2015, PiP is an innovative Joint Venture between Peterborough City Council and Lucent Strategic Land Fund.

By enabling the development of surplus land in the council's ownership, PiP will help to support and sustain the growth and development of Peterborough by bringing new jobs, retail, housing and leisure facilities to the city.

The PiP's first scheme, Fletton Quays, is a £120m redevelopment including hotel, homes, office space and restaurants. Work is currently under way, with the scheme due for completion in 2018.

Through its involvement with the PiP, the council ensured a share of the uplift in property values as well as maximising the returns on its investment.

Case Study 2: Peterborough Permanency Service

Peterborough's new Permanency Service is the first of its kind in the country.

It includes fostering and adoption services and all placement budgets for children and young people in care. The programme utilises third sector/independent sector partners to improve recruitment and support of foster carers, reducing spend on placements.

This investment in better services means that more children experience secure family homes within their own families, through adoption or permanent care.

Case Study 3: Integration of Health & Social Care

Peterborough City Council leads a Joint Commissioning Unit responsible for the commissioning of child health services across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, bringing council and health services together for benefit of children and young people while also delivering value for money.

Peterborough also supports the response to an ageing population by bringing health and social care teams closer together and providing a one-stop-shop for residents. Social care staff are co-located with NHS services to provide more seamless services.

The council plays a full part in 'Fit for the Future', the 5-year Sustainability & Transformation Plan for the local health and care system, which covers hospital services, community healthcare, mental health, social care and GP services, across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The Fit for the Future programme is made up of four priorities for change, to be delivered through a 10-point plan. The priorities are:

- At home is best
- Safe and effective hospital care, when needed
- We're only sustainable together
- Supported Delivery

Case Study 4: Energy Recovery Facility

A £72 million waste-to-energy facility was opened in Peterborough in 2016. It has the capacity to process up to 85,000 tons of residual waste a year, will enable Peterborough City Council to divert up to 95% of its non-recyclable waste from landfill and is the most efficient plant of its size in the UK.

It has been built without recourse to PFI and has turned the traditional business model on its head. It is expected to generate 7.25MW of electricity, but rather than the operator profiting from its sale, it has to provide the energy to the council who will trade and make money itself.

The energy is enough to power 16,000 households and will also reduce carbon emissions by around 10,000 tons a year – both supporting the councils Environmental Capital priority. This is equivalent to removing 2,800 Ford Mondeo 2.2 litre diesel cars from the road. It is expected to save the council £1million every year for at least the next 30 years on waste management costs.

Case study 5: Peterborough Energy

In May 2015 Peterborough became only the second council in the UK to launch its own energy tariff.

In partnership with award-winning provider Ovo Energy, Peterborough Energy aims to save residents money by offering competitively priced, fair tariffs.

Almost 5,000 households have already switched to Peterborough Energy, generating a cumulative saving across the city of more than £1.25million on their energy bills in the process. The average saving of £260 per annum makes a significant impact on those living in fuel poverty.

Working with contractor Mears, the council installed solar panels on 47 properties including 26 schools. The council has now installed solar panels on all of its major properties that can support this technology.

The council also works with Empower Communities to install free solar panels on residential houses. So far panels have been added to 220 households.

The city council is the first ever council to receive the Community Award at the British Renewable Energy Awards

Case study 6: Digital Libraries

In a climate where many local authorities were closing libraries and/or reducing opening hours the council was determined to buck the trend by installing new Bibliotecha Open+ technology, where residents can gain access to libraries with their library card.

The ground-breaking project has led to a 20 per cent reduction in the cost of the service, whilst at the same time increasing opening hours by 50 per cent. This proposal was underpinned by strong consultation results and received cross-party support.

In addition we have worked with the supplier to promote and showcase across the UK. More importantly we have commercialised this arrangement and receive income from showcasing and software sales.

The scheme has been well-received in all of Peterborough's libraries with the greatest uptake and use in the small rural libraries which has seen usage rise by 5%, however Open+ equates to 40% of usage in Peterborough Libraries.

The scheme has been promoted nationally as part of the DCMS Library Digital tool kit and shortlisted as Customer Project of the Year in the V3 Technology awards.

5. Growing the City

- 5.1. The City has a diverse economy, hosting a wide range of businesses from the environmental services sector, advanced engineering and manufacturing, agri-tech, financial services and more.
- 5.2. Opportunity Peterborough is the council's wholly owned economic development company and aims to attract inward investment, support businesses and to improve the city's skills economy. So far in 2016, House of Fraser, Amazon and Ocado have announced over 1,600 new jobs in the city.
- 5.3. As well as thousands of jobs being added to the local economy in recent years the city has seen a record number of start-up businesses. In 2014, almost 2,000 new businesses opened their doors and Peterborough is currently ranked as the 7th most innovative city in the UK based on the number of patents issued.
- 5.4. The city's retail vacancy rate is around 7 per cent, well below the national average. This follows significant investment to regenerate the city centre and a strategy of investing in the night-time economy which in turn has created jobs, brought new businesses to the area such as Côte Brasserie and Wagamama and created income for the council.
- 5.5. To support its growing workforce, Peterborough has significantly grown its housing stock. Peterborough has the 4th highest rate of housing growth in the UK.
- 5.6. The council continues to seek accelerated growth in the city, with exciting upcoming developments such as the flagship Fletton Quays scheme. In addition to this, the council is undertaking a number of exciting Joint Ventures, including a collaboration with Cross Keys Homes housing association to build houses for sale, private rented accommodation and affordable housing.

5.7. As well as providing hundreds of new job opportunities for local people, these developments will increase the council's business rates and New Homes Bonus income which can then be used to provide high-quality services to the citizens of the city.

6. Innovation & Technology

- 6.1. Peterborough is one of the UK's fastest growing cities and one of the Government's demonstrator cities for smart innovation and technology.
- 6.2. Delivered by City Fibre, a new pure fibre network, the Peterborough CORE, delivers gigabit speed internet connectivity, giving Peterborough businesses a serious competitive advantage, with some of the world's fastest internet speeds. Peterborough was named as the UK's first gigabit city.
- 6.3. The council is delivering on an ambitious Technical Strategy which will move applications and storage on to cloud-based environments.
- 6.4. It outlines an approach for self-service, where access is 'digital by default' for front-door transactions. There will also be an investment in preventative technologies, for example, to promote independence for citizens with care and support needs.
- 6.5. As part of the roll-out, the council will also be assessing all roles and processes to see how technology can be better utilised to minimise the workforce and physical resource requirements. This will include upskilling and culture change within the workforce.

7. Challenges Ahead

- 7.1. Peterborough City Council has achieved a lot in the most challenging financial climate that Local Government has ever faced. However, significant challenges remain. In the six years to 2016/17, the council has seen its government funding cut by £54million, which equates to nearly 50 per cent of its government grant.
- 7.2. In addition to substantial grant funding reductions, there are considerable areas of risk and uncertainty that will impact upon the council's operating environment. These include:
 - **Business Rates Revaluation & 100% Rates Retention** – It is anticipated that a business rate revaluation will occur in 2017 over which the council will not have control, potentially causing volatility in the level of business rates income that the council receives. As the funding system for Local Authorities transfers to a system of 100% business rates retention, additional risk will result from bearing the full burden of sizeable business rate appeals. However, the Council has taken part in a business rates retention pilot, which allows for the retention of 100% of business rates above a set baseline and this has proved to be successful for the city.
 - **New Homes Bonus** – New Homes Bonus has been a key income stream for the council. There remains significant risk that this funding stream may be removed or redistributed, which is a key issue. The expected consultation on New Homes Bonus has not been released at the time of writing and therefore the extent of the impact of reforms in this area cannot be known.
 - **Demographic Pressures** – the council is facing acute pressures to its services, particularly Adult Social Care services. As shown in the case studies above, the council is committed to delivering services in new and innovative ways,

however, in a growing city, there will be inevitable and substantial pressure on the demand for council services.

- **Uncertainty resulting from the vote to leave the European Union** – it is not known what impact the vote to leave the European Union will have on the council's position. This is being monitored closely and regularly by the council's Corporate Management Team and action will be taken as details emerge.

- 7.3. The council's approach to managing financial and other risks is given in section 9 of this document.
- 7.4. As demonstrated by the case studies above, Peterborough City Council is committed to doing things in new and innovative ways in order to deliver services in a sustainable way. However, in such a challenging and uncertain environment, the council will need to continue to develop new strategies and ways of working in order to safeguard the services that Peterborough residents value the most. The council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy will be at the heart of this.

8. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 8.1. Each year, the council produces a detailed Medium-Term Financial Strategy covering a ten year period. This document is at the heart of the council's commitment to efficiency and provides the detailed blueprint of the council's budget strategy over the next ten years.
- 8.2. It includes a thorough analysis of the budgetary position, projections for future years and outlines approaches towards risk management. It also incorporates the council's Treasury Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan.
- 8.3. The MTFS underpins the work of all council departments, ensuring financial sustainability and the best possible level of service for residents.
- 8.4. In its 2016/17 – 2025/26 MTFS, the council has committed to:
- Vigorously pursue efficiency savings.
 - Seek out new forms of service delivery to reduce cost and generate income.
 - Be increasingly entrepreneurial in the way it is managed and run.
 - Act in a measured way when examining options to balance further budgets.
 - Ensure the risks that the Council is likely to face are proactively managed.
- 8.5. The MTFS includes detailed savings proposals, including £24.1m of savings for the 2016/17 financial year which have been achieved without any reductions in service levels. This was facilitated by the council following a deliberate strategy of realising one-off underspends in 2015/16 to support future year budgets.
- 8.6. In its 2016/17 MTFS the council created a Grant Equalisation Reserve from one-off underspends. This reserve will be utilised in order to defer the impact of government funding reductions and to allow for a strategic and measured approach to delivering savings which will, as far as possible, protect the services that the citizens of Peterborough value the most.
- 8.7. However, substantial financial challenges remain. With a budget gap from 2018/19 of in excess of £24m, the Council will need to take strategic action in order to bring the budget into balance and manage the impact of acute reductions to funding.

- 8.8. MTFs savings requirements for the period of this Efficiency Strategy and to 2020/21 are as follows:

	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000
Opening Budget Gap	7,390	11,330	14,710	17,760	19,510
Total Grant Reductions	9,797	16,305	21,124	23,214	23,214
Total Budget Pressures	6,316	6,311	6,219	6,957	8,484
Total Investments	640	660	650	640	640
Budget Position	24,143	34,606	42,703	48,571	51,484
Overall Savings Proposed	(23,194)	(19,317)	(18,356)	(17,401)	(18,041)
One-off Savings Delivered in 2015/16	(12,137)	0	0	0	0
Contribution To/(From) Grant Equalisation	11,188	(11,188)	0	0	0
Revised Budget Position	0	4,101	24,347	31,170	33,807

- 8.9. This Efficiency Strategy will support the effective delivery of these savings. In future years, this strategy will be embedded within the MTFs document in order that it be considered by Cabinet and Full Council in advance of the beginning of the financial year.

9. Risk Management & Governance

- 9.1. A detailed analysis of the budgetary and wider risks that the council faces is given in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 9.2. A Budgetary Risk Register is also in place, which the Corporate Management Team review on a fortnightly basis at their dedicated Budget meetings, including deciding on mitigating actions to take.
- 9.3. The Budgetary Risk Register is also reported to the Cabinet Policy Forum and the Cross-Party Budget Working Group to allow for thorough scrutiny by Members.
- 9.4. The council is committed to a robust system of governance. A link to the council's Annual Governance Statement is provided in section 15 of this document.

10. Performance Management

- 10.1. It is important that the council reviews its performance in order to ensure continuous improvement.
- 10.2. The council has a developing range of performance information and self-assessment tools to support its measurement of performance.
- 10.3. The council uses a range of indicators, including:
- KPIs for Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

- KPIs for the council's partners (e.g. for the council's strategic partnership with Serco)
 - Treasury & Capital Prudential Indicators
 - Regular Budgetary Control Reporting
- 10.4. The council is evolving its performance management methods to incorporate predictive analytics, which will mean easier and faster analysis from standardised linked data and provide a greater insight into customer needs and demands, helping to improve service delivery
- 10.5. Performance indicators are reported regularly to senior officers and to Members as appropriate.
- 10.6. The council has effective systems in place for monitoring the performance of its staff. For example, proactive management and strong occupational health support provided to staff means that Peterborough has a sickness absence rate of 3.48%, much lower than the public sector average of 4.1%. By proactively managing staff absences, the council saves an average of £554 per sickness day prevented.
- 10.7. The council recognises the contribution of its workforce. As part of the MTFs, the council took the decision to maintain service and not reduce headcount, choosing instead to focus on reducing the costs of the pay bill. This has allowed service levels for the residents of Peterborough to be maintained despite a difficult economic climate.

11. Flexible Capital Receipts Policy

- 11.1. As part of the 2015 Spending Review, the Government introduced flexibility on the use of capital receipts:

"To support local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services, the government will allow local authorities to spend up to 100% of their fixed asset receipts (excluding Right to Buy receipts) on the revenue costs of reform projects."

- 11.2. Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 confirms that the flexibility in the use of capital receipts applies to the period from April 2016 until March 2019.

- 11.3. This flexibility applies to:

"expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs or to improve the quality of service delivery in future years. Within this definition, it is for individual local authorities to decide whether or not a project qualifies for the flexibility. Set-up and implementation costs of any new processes or arrangements can be counted as qualifying expenditure. The ongoing revenue costs of the new processes or arrangements cannot be classified as qualifying expenditure"

- 11.4. The council has chosen to not use this flexibility at this stage, due to its alternative strategy of applying capital receipts to Minimum Revenue Provision, which has allowed substantial savings to be realised.

- 11.5. Should the position change in the future, this strategy document will be reviewed and details of qualifying projects included in a report to Full Council and due regard will be given to the impact on the council's Prudential Indicators.

12. Closer Working

- 12.1. The council is committed to working in partnership wherever this may benefit the citizens of Peterborough.
- 12.2. There are a number of existing and planned partnership arrangements in place which will help the council to create savings, promote economic growth and deliver more effective services. These include:
- Working with partner organisations such as Amey, Skanska, Norse, Serco and Opportunity Peterborough.
 - Interactions with neighbouring councils as well as 'statistical' neighbours and the Greater Cambridgeshire & Greater Peterborough LEP.
- 12.3. The council continuously reviews the services it provides and will explore shared services and traded service arrangements wherever this may benefit the area.
- 12.4. We generate income through trading a number of our services including legal, regulatory and planning services. This has been boosted by our planning (Royal Town Planning Institute) and legal services (Lawyers in Local Government) both being named the best in the country. For example, the planning service now generates around £500,000 per year and has formed a joint planning service with Fenland District Council.
- 12.5. The innovative highway services contract with Skanska allows the partnership to provide consultancy and highway construction services to both public and private sector partners. These have ranged from design solutions for mixed use urban extensions for major developers, to support to other councils in design and physical works, with Peterborough City Council benefitting from a percentage of the overall value.
- 12.6. Close working across council departments and other public sector bodies is also a key priority, with different sections working together to provide joined-up services for the citizens of Peterborough.
- 12.7. A key example of this is the recently-formed Safer Peterborough Prevention and Enforcement Service (PES), which brings together staff from the council, including parking enforcement, housing and city officers with Police to work together to reduce anti-social behaviour in the city.

13. Combined Authority

- 13.1. The council is currently consulting with residents and other local stakeholders on the proposal to form a Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority.
- 13.2. Run by an elected mayor, the devolution deal could bring a host of benefits to the local area, including:
- A new £20million annual fund for the next 30 years (£600million) to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs.

- £100m of new funding to support the building of new homes in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including affordable housing
- A new £70million fund to build more council rented homes in Cambridge because house prices are so high
- Creating a transport plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that helps to coordinate road, rail and bus services
- Investment in a Peterborough University with degree-awarding powers.
- Co-designing with Government a National Work and Health Programme focused on those with a health condition or disability, as well as the long-term unemployed
- Integrating local health and social care resources to provide better outcomes for residents
- A devolved skills and apprenticeship budget to give more opportunities to our young people
- Working with local partners as part of an integrated employment service to ensure residents have better access to the job market
- Working with Government to secure a Peterborough Enterprise Zone – attracting investment from business, leading to more and better quality jobs for residents
- Working with Government on the continued regeneration of Peterborough city centre
- Opportunities for additional business rates retention

14. Review

- 14.1. This Strategy will be reviewed annually and submitted to Full Council for approval as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy process.

15. Key Documents

- 15.1. The following documents support the council's commitment to working efficiently:

- Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 – 2017/18
<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/jobs-and-careers/schools-and-education/strategies-policies-and-plans/budgets-spending-and-performance/MediumTermFinancialStrategy-2016-26-May2016.pdf?inline=true>
- Statement of Accounts 2015/16 (Draft)
<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/budgets-spending-and-performance/StatementOfAccounts-201516.pdf?inline=true>

- 2015/16 Outturn Report
<http://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/documents/s28053/Item%205%20Outturn%20Report%20Budget%20Monitoring.pdf>
- Annual Governance Statement 2015/16 (Draft)
<http://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/documents/s28046/Item%209%20Draft%20Annual%20Governance%20Statement%20Cover%20Report.pdf>
- Peterborough & Cambridgeshire Devolution Proposal
<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/upload/www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-and-plans/Devolution-CambridgeshireAndPeterboroughAuthoritiesGovernanceReview-AppendixC-17June2016.pdf?inline=true>
- Customer Service Standards
<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/budgets-spending-and-performance/customer-service-performance/>
- Fit for the Future Programme Summary
http://www.fitforfuture.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/FFTF_SummaryDoc_p9.pdf

Report Sign Off Sheet

Report Sign Off Sheet				
Pre-Drafting Comments	Section	Name	Comments	Date
	Finance <i>If your report contains budgetary implications, please ensure you liaise with Finance prior to drafting your report.</i>			
Date Report Submitted Into BOX 'Holding Folder'				Date
Post-Drafting Comments	Section	Name	Comments	Date
	Democratic Services <i>Please ensure your report has been commented on by Democratic Services prior to obtaining final approvals.</i>	-	-	-
Post-Drafting Final Approvals	Section	Name	Approved	Date
	Legal	Alison Stuart	Seen at CMT	14/09/2016
	Finance	Steven Pilsworth	Approved	16/09/2016
	Procurement <i>(approval must be sought from Procurement if your decision is contract / procurement related)</i>			
	Democratic Services	Pippa Turvey	Approved	16/09/2016
Report Submitted Into BOX 'Clean Folder'				Date
Director's Approval <i>Directors are requested not to sign if the above section is incomplete</i>	John Harrison (seen at CMT)			Date
				14/09/2016

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CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 11
26 SEPTEMBER 2016	PUBLIC REPORT

Contact Officer(s):	Gemma George, Democratic Services Manager Pippa Turvey, Senior Democratic Services Officer	Tel. 452268 Tel. 452460
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OUTCOME OF PETITIONS

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: Directors	Deadline date : N/A
It is recommended that Cabinet notes the actions taken in respect of petitions.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted following the presentation of petitions to Council at its meeting held on 19 July 2016

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the progress being made in response to petitions submitted at meetings of Council and Cabinet.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.3 – ‘To take a leading role in promoting the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area’.

3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. OUTCOME OF PETITIONS

Presented to Council – 19 July 2016

4.1 **Petition relating to Livermore Green Tree Pruning**

This petition was presented to Council on 19 July 2016 by Mrs Careick on behalf of residents of Livermore Green. The petition contained 56 valid signatures and requested that the Council look into the matter of overhanging trees in the vicinity, alongside the railway line, as residents were having trouble with the trees, in some cases which were almost touching the houses, causing darkness and stopping the light and sunlight from reaching the gardens thus causing bad growth to lawns and flower etc. Also, as the trees had not been attended to for a long time, this was causing growth to the roots of the trees and as a result, was also causing problems to the paths and patios of the properties.

The Council’s Amey Partnership Manager responded to the lead petitioner and advised that due to the consensus of public opinion in the case, and with the support of local councillors, a program of works had been identified which was hoped to address the concerns raised. The aim of the works was to remove the shelterbelts trees, within the first five metres from residential boundaries, which had unsuitable long term relationships with properties. Works

will also be undertaken to reduce all vegetation within one metre of property boundaries to ground level and where appropriate chemically treat the area to limit regrowth.

4.2 Petition relating to Parking in Deaconscroft

This petition was presented to Council on 19 July 2016 by Councillor Ed Murphy on behalf of the residents of Deaconscroft. The petition contained 55 valid signatures and called upon Peterborough City Council to consider suggestions from Councillor Murphy to mitigate the parking problems within the neighbourhood. These included the sale of land to residents to create appropriate parking spaces, the provision of a limited number of additional parking spaces and that green spaces were reinstated, protected and repaired as a preferred solution to the introduction of residential parking charges.

The Council's Network and Traffic Manager responded to Councillor Murphy stating that whilst the majority of the land was owned by the City Council, there were also parts that fell under the ownership of Cross Keys Homes. The Network and Traffic Manager asked that Councillor Murphy meet with him on site to discuss the suggestions made and potential dates had been suggested.

4.3 Petition relating to Noise and Anti-Social Behaviour in Century Square

This petition was presented to Council on 19 July 2016 by Ms Jo Carter on behalf of the residents of Century Square. The petition contained 32 valid signatures and requested that Peterborough City Council, the Police and the Safer Peterborough Partnership address more successfully, consistently and appropriately the noise and anti-social behaviour which regularly disrupted the lives of residents living in Century Square, particularly at night time.

The lead petitioner had been visited by the Police and she had outlined her main concerns. The situation was to be monitored for the foreseeable future with the lead petitioner to keep a log of any incidents and to report them as appropriate to 999/101 if a prompt response was required.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 As the petitions presented in this report have been dealt with by Cabinet Members or officers, it is appropriate that the action taken is reported to Cabinet, prior to it being included within the Executive's report to Council.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 There have been no alternative options considered.

7. IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no legal, financial or equalities implications arising from the issues considered.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 8.1 Petitions presented to Council and Cabinet and responses from officers.