

P&C COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	Children's Commissioning CCC & PCC
REPORT AUTHOR:	Helene Carr – Head of Service
REPORTING PERIOD:	11/05/2020 – 15/05/2020

KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

Children in Care –

Continuing to liaise closely with strategic providers to review business continuity issues, future vacancy information, placement stability and general concerns and issues; engagement with strategic providers is being expanded to meet the Authorities' needs in respect of recovery planning.

Access to Resources [ART]

- There are some challenges in sourcing placements for children and young people in both the internal and external market; finding sustainable placements provision has not returned to pre-Covid-19 levels. However ART team are continuing to successfully identify placements due to existing relationships with strategic providers.
- There are a number of 'live' complex cases currently too, which is adding to the pressure.
- ART have received positive feedback from an IFA due to their focus on resolution and relationship building.
- ISEPS continue to hold meetings with key providers; this has improved communications and timescales. The ISEPS Team are currently working on 106 consultations; whilst school placements are being offered, access is Covid-19 dependent. The majority of these 106 cases have packages of tuition/alternative provision in place.
- ISEPS continue to process PPE requests, alongside business as usual.
- There have been no placement breakdowns in CCC or PCC that are Covid -19 related in the last week.

SEND

Out of School Tuition

Monitoring arrangements have been widened to include the main three providers, and to encompass additional detail about timetable hours for each provider against delivered hours. Providers are continuing to support families and signpost to additional support mechanisms, e.g. for Free School Meals and Hubs.

Changes to SEND Requirements during COVID-19

Central Government have recently introduced measures for Local Authorities (LAs) and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in relation to their respective duties to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Jointly Commissioned Services

Consideration needs to be given by the LAs and CCG as to what should be made in light legislative amendments. This needs to encompass alternative ways of working, and likely an increase need for certain therapeutic services based on the direct and indirect impact of COVID-19 within the recovery phase.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment for children vulnerable or with an Education, Health and Care Plan has been approved by all stakeholders, a communication has gone to parents and outcomes continue to be tracked.

Children with Disabilities [CWD]

Residential Short Breaks

- Action for Children [CCC] continues to function across the 3 homes with reduced capacity (1 at London Rd, 2 at Haviland Way and 2 at Woodland Lodge). By reducing the numbers of children means that the individual homes can isolate and maintain staffing levels.
- Recovery Plan activity remains ongoing, in response to latest guidance
- There is capacity within AFC to comfortably respond to a failure of another Provider to accommodate up to 2 children (additional staffing maybe required)
- Operations have advised that their risk assessment currently is that children should be able to access school and AFC where appropriate.
- AFC currently has a good supply of PPE
- Cherry Lodge is reviewing their capacity regularly in response to need; Shared Care and High Risk CIN cases continue to be prioritised. There is capacity within Cherry Lodge to provide emergency provision to children with complex needs if required.

Domiciliary Care-Community Support Service (CSS)

- Actively managing the needs across external and internal providers. All Providers report on a weekly delivery.
- There is some capacity across PCC and CCC; this is being quantified to ensure the capacity is effectively utilised across the system. Contracts continue to be paid in full.
- Recovery Plan activity remains ongoing; usage data is being gathered to assess where Dom Care packages are being utilised

Activity Short Breaks/Community Short Breaks

- Circles Network [PCC] are continuing to offer support flexibly; this ranges from supporting children and young people one to one in the community and hosting Zoom Youth Clubs
- Vivacity [PCC] are not currently able to offer their Large Group activities due to social distancing measures
- CCC – Romsey Mill who are offering virtual/remote individual/group activities (CamPlay, Sports Works and University Museum not offering anything).

Insourcing of CCC Residential Children's homes

- Remains on track to come under CCC 3/9/20. Primary responsibility is sitting with Operational Heads of Service, supported by Transformation. Contract management and quality assurance of the incumbent provider is still being managed by Commissioning.

Emergency Residential Provision/Alternative Provision

- Workstream is ongoing; operational colleagues working alongside commissioning to assess demand at this stage.

Finance

- Business Cases have been submitted to secure additional funding across PCC & CCC. There continues to be an increase in requests for support due to school closures/school offers. For PCC, additional funding will be required for One to One Support, Direct Payments, Domiciliary Care and High Level Family Support. For CCC, Business Cases have been submitted to support groups and Externally Provided Holiday Clubs to function in line with social distancing rules and increased venue costs etc.

Children and Families

- Children and Families Services acknowledge the Governments 'Stay Alert and Safe' guidance and continue to work safely, mostly virtually, to minimise workers exposure to and spread of Covid infection. The wider reopening of schools and childcare is a key factor in determining when services can offer face to face support.
- The All Carers Services procurement process has progressed; the Young Carers contract has been awarded.
- Communications are ongoing with strategic providers to ascertain delivery arrangements and resolve any issues.
- Caring Together have received funding from the Carer's Trust to enable them to offer small grants during May 2020, designed to help address the emergencies and difficult situations that have arisen due to COVID-19.
- In terms of Recovery Planning, Spurgeons (who oversee two children's centre hubs in Peterborough) are looking at how they can begin to open the centres for some limited face to face support whilst ensuring safety of staff and families.

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

Children in Care –

- Fee increase requests are starting to be received, which may result in cost pressures. These are being considered via the business continuity panel. Scoping has been completed to inform the potential financial impact of any uplift requests across CCC & PCC's Children in Care cohort in line with business cases submitted, that indicate likely impact on placement budgets.

Access To Resources [ART]

- The continuation of foster carers self-isolating or not taking placements is further reducing market capacity and exacerbating pressure on in-house foster carers. There still remains some capacity however.
- There is a trend for placements to be under threat of breaking down due to children leaving placement several times a day and carers viewing that they and others in the house are being put at risk. However, this is not as significant as in previous weeks. Commissioning and ART meet with The Social Distancing Compliance Team weekly. YOS are working closely with the Police and the compliance team will be visiting those young people identified as not complying with social distancing and patrolling those areas more.
- ISEPS schools continue to be partially open for keyworkers and vulnerable children, however some children remain at home with their families. Schools are being innovative in terms of their assessments by offering virtual taster days and interviews.

SEND

- There may be challenges reintegrating children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) into school after a period of absence. The SEND Risk Assessment should support with this, alongside school guidances regarding social distancing measures etc.

WORKFORCE UPDATE

There are currently no staff off sick. The ART, ISEPs Children's Commissioning Teams are working from home.

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- A number of providers have requested fee uplifts due to the impact of Covid-19; these are being reviewed on a case by case basis at the Business Continuity Request Panel.
- Business Cases have been submitted across CWD, CiC and SEND due to the impact of Covid-19.

ISEPS/ART

- There are some potential increased costs to education transport being unable to fulfil requests (1 CCC case); this is being negotiated by the ISEPS team.
- Minimal additional costs incurred due to delays in placement moves due to Covid-19

RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)

Work has begun on formalising a recovery / resilience plan for all commissioned services. This will likely focus on key pressures within service areas; availability of quality placements and provision for children and young people, and mechanisms to be employed to increase access to suitable provision options. The Business Continuity Panel will remain in situ in order to track and progress recovery planning.

COMMUNICATIONS

FAQs continue to be distributed weekly to external providers and the incident report log is distributed daily to senior management. A letter has been drafted to Providers to include an acknowledgement of the dedication, resilience and continued support our carers, support workers, teaching and care staff have demonstrated in recent weeks within their key roles supporting and caring for our children and young people.