

# P&C COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	Children and Safeguarding
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	Lou Williams
<b>REPORTING PERIOD:</b>	To week ending 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2020

## KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

- There has been little change since the last highlight report;
  - Our programme of prioritised face to face vesting to most vulnerable children and young people continues;
  - Other visiting taking place virtually using social media;
  - Some visiting is taking place less frequently than previously where this is proportionate;
  - Links between early help services and community hubs established;
  - Schools continuing to offer excellent support to children who are vulnerable and those of key workers;
- We are beginning to think about how some services might begin to re-open or change delivery models following the easing of the lock-down last week and predicted continued easing over weeks and months to come, including:
  - Looking at how we can safely enable more direct face-to-face contact between children in care and their parents;
  - Thinking about how we might ensure social distancing as some community services such as child and family centres begin to open in the coming months;
  - Thinking about how we can ensure that social distancing can be maintained in our offices as more of our staff begin to return.

## RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

- **Ensuring we have sufficient resources to manage any increase in referrals [Updated from last report]**  
As noted in previous reports, we expect an increase in referrals as schools and early years settings begin to return to normality. We have been very fortunate to have been joined by an employee of Ofsted on secondment, who is helping our thinking about this. She will work with us for 8-12 weeks, helping us to agree how we will ensure we are prepared for challenges. She will also be working closely with our key partners, and schools in particular, as we prepare for a more 'business as usual' world.

## WORKFORCE UPDATE

- Workforce availability steady in both authorities;
- Morale remains very good;
- Staff continue to go above and beyond to maintain contact with families and children.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

Unchanged:

- A few placements where additional costs have been incurred have taken place, which are being captured through our access to resources team;
- Longer term the risks are that there is a shortage of Independent Fostering Agency placements as demand returns to usual levels, which may result in greater use of residential placements;
- There is also a risk that any spike in demand resulting from more children being referred after the lockdown period ends may require additional temporary staff in our front door, assessment teams as well as in early help services.

**RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)**

- As noted above, we are beginning to model how we would manage any increase in demand as the lock-down eases.
- Also as noted above, we are now beginning to think about how we can prepare some of our services to re-start while maintaining social distancing in preparation for the lock-down arrangements easing further.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Regular communications as part of business as usual.