

# Blackpool Council

6 November 2018

To: Councillors D Coleman, Collett, Mitchell, O'Hara, Owen, Rowson, D Scott, Mrs Scott, Stansfield and L Taylor

Co-opted Members Mr Sam Johnson and Ms Frances McErlane,

The above members are requested to attend the:

## **RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 15 November 2018 at 6.00 pm  
in Committee Room A, Town Hall, Blackpool

### **A G E N D A**

#### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

#### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2018** (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 September 2018 as a true and correct record.

### **3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

To consider any applications from members of the public to speak at the meeting.

### **4 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** (Pages 9 - 14)

To consider the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions within the remit of the Resilient Communities and Children's Scrutiny Committee.

### **5 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 15 - 24)

To consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan, November 2018 – March 2019.

### **6 GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY** (Pages 25 - 86)

To inform and seek support from scrutiny on the production of a Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy.

### **7 BLACKPOOL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 87 - 142)

To receive and consider the annual report of the Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board.

### **8 EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY** (Pages 143 - 150)

To inform Scrutiny Committee of the educational outcomes and improvement strategy in Blackpool.

### **9 CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE REPORT** (Pages 151 - 172)

To inform Scrutiny Committee of the work undertaken by Children's Services on a day to day basis and to update on the progress and implementation of developments within the service.

### **10 SCRUTINY WORKPLAN** (Pages 173 - 182)

The Committee to consider the Workplan, together with any suggestions that Members may wish to make for scrutiny review.

### **11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday, 7 February 2019, commencing at 6.00pm.

#### **Venue information:**

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager, Tel: 01253 477213, e-mail [sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk)

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**Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2**  
**MINUTES OF RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING - THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**Present:**

Councillor Stansfield (in the Chair)

Councillors

Collett  
Hutton

Mitchell  
O'Hara

Owen  
D Scott

Mrs Scott

Co-opted Member: Ms Frances McErlane

**In Attendance:**

Mrs Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services  
Mr Tony Morrissey, Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principal Social Worker  
Ms Suzy Robertson, Service Manager, Families in Need Service  
Ms Louise Storey, Head of Children's Social Care  
Ms Pauline Wigglesworth, Programme Lead, HeadStart  
Chief Inspector Lee Wilson, Lancashire Constabulary  
Mrs Ruth Henshaw, Engagement and Intelligence Officer  
Mrs Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary, Resilient Communities

Danielle, Craig and Hannah, representing HeadStart

**1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

**2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2018**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 June 2018 were agreed as a true and correct record.

**3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Committee noted that there were no applications from members of the public to speak at the meeting.

**4 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan, September 2018 – January 2019 and requested that further information be provided on decision reference 23/2018 'The £1 million contribution from the Dedicated School Grant Blackpool which contributes to Blackpool School Based Children's Centres in unwinding' as it was unclear what the matter for decision was.

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In response, Mrs Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services advised that the decision was now unlikely to be taken in September 2018 as the proposed changes would not happen as quickly as originally expected. She advised that the decision referred to a change to the level of Dedicated Schools Grant funding received and therefore the impact less funding would have upon how Children's Centres were being delivered. Mrs Booth advised that she would provide more detail to the Committee on the proposals being made at the next meeting.

## **5 SCRUTINY WORKPLAN**

The Committee noted its Workplan for 2018/2019.

## **6 YOUTH RELATED ACTIVITIES AND YOUTH JUSTICE**

Ms Suzy Robertson, Service Manager, Families in Need Service introduced the report and highlighted the recent work undertaken to realign youth services through the Journey of the Child work. She added that there were a number of additional developments that would be put in place over the next year.

The Committee referred to concerns raised by members of the public regarding the level of anti-social behaviour, criminal activity and a small number of serious assaults carried out by young people and sought assurance that there were plans in place to tackle the behaviour and ensure it was dealt with appropriately. In response, Chief Inspector Lee Wilson, Lancashire Constabulary advised that increased collaboration between the Police and Local Authority was required and an emphasis placed on parenting and parental awareness. He added that it was unclear why there were higher levels of concerning youth activity in Blackpool when there were many more interventions in place in Blackpool than in other areas.

Chief Inspector Wilson added that changes were being made to Neighbourhood Policing and that there would be a reduction in the number of Community Beat Managers. There would, however, be more Police Community Support Officers based in the community hubs around the town which would increase visibility and ability to investigate, although they could not make arrests. He also highlighted that the Police would soon be located in the Town Centre which would assist in the prevention of some activity such as 'card tricks'.

The balance between preventing anti-social and criminal activity, keeping young people out of the criminal justice system and also ensuring young people were criminalised at the right stage i.e. before it was too late and criminal activity was habitual was considered in detail. Chief Inspector Wilson advised that young people were given a certain number of chances (dependent on the crime) before being prosecuted. However, it was then for the Court to determine the sentence.

As an example of intervention being successful, it was reported that there had been a number of issues relating to anti-social behaviour around a Children's Centre. Ms Robertson advised that in response the doors to the Children's Centre had been opened and the provision of services to young people increased. In return, the behaviour in the vicinity of the Centre had improved considerably. It was reported that the earlier

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interventions could be put in place the more successful they would be, which had been demonstrated by research. The role of BetterStart in carrying out such interventions was also noted.

Members referred to the fact that the number of young people going through the custody system for charge or summons was double that of the next nearest neighbour in respect of numbers and queried why the number was so high. In response, Mrs Booth advised that the service provision for young people had not been good enough and was being addressed through the recovery plan. She added that she was confident that the number would reduce in the next six to eight months.

Upon, further questioning, Mrs Booth highlighted that there had been a change in service delivery leadership and that expert support had been put in place. She added that partnership working was being increased and she was confident that young people would be tracked through the system with preventative work put in place earlier. Chief Inspector Wilson confirmed that he was also confident the recovery plan would effect the change required and that a reduction in number of young people in custody would be achieved.

It was noted that the education system was one part of the problem and that children and young people excluded from school immediately lost the support and distraction the school environment provided. Mrs Booth reported that how education was provided to those excluded from mainstream education was being considered and that there were Early Help and Social Worker leads in each school helping to role model good behaviour to prevent exclusions. The Resilience Committees and other projects provided by HeadStart were also supporting the work.

The Committee discussed in detail the work they needed to do to ensure that the new system met the needs of young people and to ensure the right people were being held to account and challenged for the support provided. Mrs Booth advised that a dashboard could be provided that set out key numbers, allowing the Committee to identify early on if something was not working. She also suggested that the Committee continue to seek the perspective of partners, but it was noted that there was some reliance on Mrs Booth being honest.

The Committee went on to consider young people that ran away from home and the serious risks and threats to young people in Blackpool. Chief Inspector Wilson highlighted that data was collected on people living in the town that were considered to be dangerous to young people. He also advised that on average seven people were reported missing from home each day in Blackpool and therefore resources had to be targeted to those considered most at risk based on data, policy and procedure.

In conclusion, Members considered that partnership working was key to achieving the safety of young people in Blackpool and requested that Mrs Booth alert them to any concerns that a partner was not engaging appropriately in order that the Committee could challenge their performance.

The Committee agreed:

1. To create a dashboard of data to use as a tool to identify areas of concern requiring additional scrutiny.

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2. That a future piece of work be carried out on the dangers present in Blackpool to children and young people.
3. That Mrs Booth be requested to report on partners that were not appropriately engaged.

## **7 HEADSTART UPDATE**

Mrs Pauline Wigglesworth, Programme Leader, HeadStart presented the HeadStart Annual Report to the Committee and highlighted that the programme had been running for two years, with a further three to go. She advised that the report presented covered the last 12 months of activity, noting that the data provided was simplistic but that it was supported by qualitative feedback from young people in the programme. It was noted that the next stage of the project would involve more detailed evaluation of service provision.

Mrs Wigglesworth introduced three young people to the Committee who were in attendance to discuss their differing experiences of HeadStart with Members.

Danielle reported that she had been supported by a Resilience Coach provided by HeadStart. It was noted that 363 young people and their families had received support from coaches and that one of the key successes had been the Back on Track Project. The project had ensured that 14 young people remained in mainstream education saving the school up to £8,000 per child in charges for permanent exclusion and the Council £15,000 per year per child for a place at the Pupil Referral Unit. Danielle advised that her Resilience Coach had improved her confidence and helped her to understand her feelings and that she was now Head of the Student Council at her school. In response to a question, Danielle advised that she had already been known to HeadStart before requesting further support and being provided with a Coach.

Hannah was a member of the Pupil Resilience Committee at her school. It was noted that all schools were now engaged in the HeadStart programme, action plans had been developed by 17 schools and Pupil Resilience Committees were in place in 18 schools. She reported that the Committee in her school had introduced an anti-bullying hub where students could go to resolve concerns by speaking to either a teacher or older pupil. She also reported on the significant positive impact the Committee had had on the school. In response to a question, Hannah advised that if a pupil needed support they could join a 'buddying system' or speak to a student or teacher ambassador.

Craig advised that he was one half of the first HeadStart 'Friend for Life' scheme. It was noted that the scheme had taken time to put in place as it was imperative to ensure the right people were involved and the right pairings were made. There were currently four friendships in place. Craig advised that he had had a 'friend' for eight months and that before forming the friendship he had felt lonely and without anyone to speak to that was not a professional support worker. He spoke of a situation a number of months ago when he had not wanted to return home. His friend had come to speak to him and they had resolved the issues together, he had felt that someone was on his side and had subsequently given his home another chance.

Members queried whether the approaches with positive outcomes were being rolled out



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across other Council departments and replicated where possible. In response, Mrs Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services advised that it was important to share the learning and noted that HeadStart was a research project. She reported that an in depth evaluation of the programme would be commencing imminently and that learning would be shared wherever possible.

In response to a further question, Mrs Wigglesworth advised that a national evaluation of all the resilience programmes awarded Big Lottery Funding would take place, however, each area was taking a different approach to the programme. She added that there were some national themes and that it might be possible to compare some Blackpool data directly with other areas in 12 months' time.

The Committee agreed to receive a further update on HeadStart in twelve months to consider the initial evaluation undertaken.

## **8 CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW REPORT**

Mrs Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services presented the report as read and highlighted that additional information would be provided on Placement Sufficiency to the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to questions, Mr Tony Morrissey, Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principal Social Worker, Children's Social Care reported that the number of referrals to Children's Social Care had reduced. There had been a slow decline, however, numbers did fluctuate regularly for a number of reasons including national interest. He added that referrals were analysed to consider where they came from and if they were appropriate. The majority of referrals were received from the Police.

Members referred to the report, noting that 86.5% of statutory visits had been undertaken. Mr Morrissey advised that team monthly performance meetings were held and social workers were required to explain every visit that had not been carried out. The majority of delays were small and often due to delays in updating systems. He added that if there were difficulties in accessing a child to undertake a statutory visit, escalation procedures would be followed. Mrs Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services added that a back-up audit whereby young people were contacted directly to ensure visits had been undertaken was used and that Members could be confident that all required visits were being undertaken.

Mrs Booth highlighted the changes being made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and advised that communication of the change was key. She added that the new model could be presented to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

The Committee discussed the exit strategy for Care Leavers and noted that the number of children exiting care had slowed and queried the reasons for the reduction. Mrs Booth advised that there were not enough senior social workers to carry out the work. She added that additional funding had been agreed to provide additional social workers to undertake the work, however, the required appointments had not been made. The majority of applicants were inexperienced and there were a number of roles an inexperienced social worker could not undertake including the discharge of children from

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care. In response to questions, she advised that existing staff were being retained, however, more were required. It was noted that details regarding staffing could be included in the dashboard agreed in Item 6 'Youth Related Activities and Youth Justice'.

Mrs Louise Storey, Head of Children's Social Care added that the service was being creative in recruitment and had realised the aim of creating a good culture in the service, which had encouraged members of staff to stay. She highlighted that there was good team support with a 'no blame' culture but at the same time a culture of accountability. It was noted that news of the positive culture at the Council was travelling by word of mouth and was encouraging more senior workers to consider Blackpool as an option.

The Committee discussed support for staff in detail and considered that a piece of scrutiny work should be carried out on how employees were supported, how involved front line teams were in determining support and the workforce strategy and that they would like to talk to frontline members of staff to discuss the impact of changes made to date and what more could be done. The work could also consider how the learning outcomes being achieved by HeadStart with regards to resilience were being used in the service.

Members considered the total number of children in care and noted the significant increase in June caused by large sibling groups. It was suggested by Mrs Booth that, previously, too many risks had been taken with not enough babies brought into care and in comparison, too little risk had been taken with too many teenagers brought into care. This had had a significant impact on the profile of children and young people in care in Blackpool as babies would likely be adopted more quickly and therefore leave care sooner, whilst an older child or teenager would likely spend a large number of years in the care system. It was highlighted that procedures had been put in place to ensure the right children were coming into care at the right time.

The Committee agreed:

1. To receive information regarding the changes to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub at the next meeting of the Committee.
2. To include data on staffing in the dashboard agreed within Item 6.
3. To undertake a piece of work on the support provided to members of staff within Children's Social Care.

## **9 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE - REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2018/2019**

The Committee considered the proposals for reporting performance against the suite of headline key performance indicators (KPI) for Priority 2 for 2018/2019. It was noted that rather than receiving an additional report of key performance indicators, the reports from the individual services would include the KPI data.

Members considered that the two Priority 2 indicators relating to 'Safe and Secure Communities' linked more closely to the work of the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and should therefore be included in the annual performance report for the Blackpool Community Safety Partnership.

The Committee agreed:

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1. To agree the new approach for performance reporting.
2. To not monitor the two KPIs relating to 'Safe and Secure Communities'.

**10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday, 15 November 2018 commencing at 6.00pm.

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 7.23 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager  
Tel: 01253 477213  
E-mail: [sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk)

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| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S<br/>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager                                     |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | 15 November 2018   |

## EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions within the remit of the Resilient Communities and Children's Scrutiny Committee.

### 2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the Cabinet Secretary or the relevant Cabinet Member in relation to the decisions taken.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure that the opportunity is given for all Executive and Cabinet Member decisions to be scrutinised and held to account.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

### 5.0 Background Information

5.1 Attached at the appendix to this report is a summary of the decisions taken, which have been circulated to Members previously.

5.2 This report is presented to ensure Members are provided with a timely update on the decisions taken by the Executive and Cabinet Members. It provides a process where the Committee can raise questions and a response be provided.

5.3 Members are encouraged to seek updates on decisions and will have the opportunity to raise any issues.

## **6.0 Witnesses/representatives**

6.1 The following Cabinet Members are responsible for the decisions taken in this report and have been invited to attend the meeting, however, Councillor Cain has had to give apologies due to other commitments on this occasion:

- Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary
- Councillor Maria Kirkland, Cabinet Member for Third Sector Engagement and Leisure Services

6.2 As Councillor Cain is unable to attend, questions can either be emailed in advance of the meeting to try and have a response available at the meeting or can be answered in writing following the meeting.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 4(a): Summary of Executive and Cabinet Member decisions taken.

## **7.0 Legal considerations:**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 Human Resources considerations:**

8.1 None.

## **9.0 Equalities considerations:**

9.1 None.

## **10.0 Financial considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Risk management considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Ethical considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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**APPENDIX 4(a)**

| <b>DECISION / OUTCOME</b>  | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>  | <b>NUMBER</b> | <b>DATE</b> | <b>CABINET MEMBER</b>  |
|--|---|---------------|-------------|--|
| <p><b>YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN</b><br/>To recommend to Council the Blackpool Youth Offending Team (YOT) Strategic Plan for submission to Youth Justice Board and update the Executive regarding the position of Youth Offending.</p>   | <p>This plan meets the annual renewal of the requirements to submit a Youth Justice Plan to the National Youth Justice Board</p> <p>This plan has now been approved by all multi agency partners at the strategic Blackpool Young People’s Service Board this includes Youth Offending Service delivery. The Local Partnership is required to agree and contribute to the plan due to the youth offending delivery being a statutory partnership including Police, Health, Education, Local Authority and Probation</p> | Ex45/2018     | 5 Nov 2018  | Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Member for Resilient Communities                           |
| <p><b>CHARGING POLICY FOR CHILDREN’S RESIDENTIAL AND FOSTERING</b><br/>To approve the introduction of the charging policy for children’s residential and fostering services as outlined in Appendix A with effect from 1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019.</p>  | <p>This Policy will enable the Council to ensuring the service’s sustainability and fairness by charging those who can contribute. Blackpool Children’s Services does not presently have a charging policy in respect to Section 20 accommodation of children and young people in fostering or residential care.</p>  | Ph63/2018     | 21 Sep 2018 | Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Member for Resilient Communities                           |
| <p><b>FEES AND CHARGES FOR REGISTRARS – NEW ADDITIONS</b><br/>To approve the additional fees and charges for the Registrars Service from the 1 November 2018 to 31 March 2019 namely the new charges of £1 for the new birth registration wallet and £24 for same day marriage certificate in ink.</p> | <p>Following feedback from both customers, partners and benchmarking with other authorities across the North West, the production of a birth certificate wallet for families when registering their baby’s birth and for a handwritten marriage certificate to be issued at the ceremony has been requested, the fees to be charged reflect the cost of providing the service and market conditions.</p>  | PH72/2018     | 30 Oct 2018 | Councillor Maria Kirkland, Cabinet Member for Third Sector Engagement and Leisure Services |

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| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.                                |
| <b>Date of Meeting</b>   | 15 November 2018   |

## FORWARD PLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan, November 2018 – March 2019, relating to the portfolio of the Cabinet Secretary.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the relevant Cabinet Member in relation to items contained within the Forward Plan within the portfolio of the Cabinet Secretary.

2.2 Members will have the opportunity to consider whether any of the items should be subjected to pre-decision scrutiny. In so doing, account should be taken of any requests or observations made by the relevant Cabinet Member.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To enable the opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny of the Forward Plan items.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## **5.0 Background Information**

- 5.1 The Forward Plan is prepared by the Leader of the Council to cover a period of four months and has effect from the first working day of any month. It is updated on a monthly basis and subsequent plans cover a period beginning with the first working day of the second month covered in the preceding plan.
- 5.2 The Forward Plan contains matters which the Leader has reason to believe will be subject of a key decision to be taken either by the Executive, a Committee of the Executive, individual Cabinet Members, or Officers.
- 5.3 Attached at Appendix 5(a) is a list of items contained in the current Forward Plan. Further details appertaining to each item contained in the Forward Plan has previously been forwarded to all members separately.

## **6.0 Witnesses/representatives**

- 6.1 The following Cabinet Members are responsible for the Forward Plan items in this report and have been invited to attend the meeting, however, both have had to give apologies due to other commitments on this occasion:
- Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary
  - Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning
- 6.2 As the Cabinet Members are unable to attend, questions can either be emailed in advance of the meeting to try and have a response available at the meeting or can be answered in writing following the meeting.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 5(a): Summary of items contained within Forward Plan.

## **7.0 Legal considerations:**

- 7.1 None.

## **8.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 8.1 None.

**9.0 Equalities considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Financial considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Risk management considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Ethical considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.

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## **EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS**

**(NOVEMBER 2018 TO MARCH 2019)**

\* Denotes New Item

| <b>Anticipated Date of Decision</b> | <b>Matter for Decision</b>  | <b>Decision Reference</b> | <b>Decision Taker</b> | <b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| November 2018                       | Youth Justice Plan 2018/2021  | 14/2018                   | Council               | Cllr Cain                      |
| November 2018                       | The £1million contribution from the Dedicated School Grant Blackpool which contributes to Blackpool School Based Children's Centres in unwinding. A review and consultation have been undertaken to find a way forward without reliance of the Grant and in order to enhance delivery using a Hub and Spoke locality model. | 23/2018                   | Executive             | Cllr Benson                    |
| January 2019                        | Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy  | 35/2018                   | Executive             | Cllr Cain                      |

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Matter for Decision<br/>Ref N° 14/2018</b>  | Youth Justice Plan 2018/2022  |
| <b>Decision making<br/>Individual or Body</b>  | Council   |
| <b>Relevant Portfolio<br/>Holder</b>   | Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary (Resilient<br>Communities)  |
| <b>Date on which or<br/>period within which<br/>decision is to be made</b>           | November 2018   |
| <b>Who is to be<br/>consulted and how</b>  | Consultation is to be undertaken internally with Senior<br>Officers.<br><br>Youth Justice Board for England   |
| <b>How representations<br/>are to be made and by<br/>what date</b>                   | In writing to the responsible officer, at the address shown<br>below, by 1 May 2018.  |
| <b>Documents to be<br/>submitted to the<br/>decision maker for<br/>consideration</b> | Report  |
| <b>Name and address of<br/>responsible officer</b>                                   | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Blackpool<br>Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road,<br>Blackpool, FY1 3AH.<br><br>e-mail:diane.booth@blackpool.gov.uk<br>Tel: (01253) 476558 |



**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Matter for Decision Ref N° 23/2018</b></p>                          | <p>The £1million contribution from the Dedicated School Grant Blackpool which contributes to Blackpool School Based Children’s Centres in unwinding. A review and consultation have been undertaken to find a way forward without reliance of the Grant and in order to enhance delivery using a Hub and Spoke locality model.</p>   |
| <p><b>Decision making Individual or Body</b></p>                          | <p>Executive</p>   |
| <p><b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b></p>                                   | <p>Councillor Kath Benson - Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning</p>  |
| <p><b>Date on which or period within which decision is to be made</b></p> | <p>November 2018</p>   |
| <p><b>Who is to be consulted and how</b></p>                              | <p>An 8 week consultation period began on Monday 16th April and closed on 8th June. Information outlining the proposed changes were shared with Children’s Centre users, local residents and stakeholders in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A dedicated webpage was developed with the link to the consultation <a href="http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/consultations">www.blackpool.gov.uk/consultations</a> along with a dedicated email <a href="mailto:childrenscentreconsultation@blackpool.gov.uk">childrenscentreconsultation@blackpool.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• Posters were displayed in Children’s Centre reception and community café areas,</li> <li>• Flyers were shared with Parents, Carers and other service users,</li> <li>• Messaging was shared via Blackpool Council social media,</li> <li>• Press release to local media,</li> <li>• Communication via Your Blackpool</li> <li>• Communication in Employee news and on the Internal Hub.</li> <li>• Email to stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>It is proposed a Consultation with Staff will start in July and will conclude on 07.09.18.</p> |
| <p><b>How representations are to be made and by what date</b></p>         | <p>During the 8 week consultation members of the public were encouraged to share their views and suggestions via their Children’s Centres and the dedicated email.</p>   |
| <p><b>Documents to be submitted to the</b></p>                            | <p>Report</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>decision maker for consideration</b>        | Presentation to Schools Forum   |
| <b>Name and address of responsible officer</b> | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH.<br>e-mail:diane.booth@blackpool.gov.uk<br>Tel: (01253) 476558 |

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Matter for Decision</b><br><b>Ref N° 35/2018</b>                      | Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy   |
| <b>Decision making Individual or Body</b>                                | Executive  |
| <b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>   | Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities)  |
| <b>Date on which or period within which decision is to be made</b>       | February 2019  |
| <b>Who is to be consulted and how</b>                                    | Public consultation has already taken place and will continue as the strategy is further developed                                   |
| <b>How representations are to be made and by what date</b>               | Contact the relevant Director using the contact details below.   |
| <b>Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration</b> | Report and strategy  |
| <b>Name and address of responsible officer</b>                           | John Blackledge, Director of Environmental and Community Services<br>e-mail: john.blackledge@blackpool.gov.uk<br>Tel: (01253) 478400 |

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|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>             |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | John Hawkin, Chief Operating Officer, Community and Environmental Services |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | 15 November 2018   |

## GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To inform and seek support from scrutiny on the production of a Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the content of the draft strategy; providing feedback and challenge along with guidance towards the completion of final strategy.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To engage with Members of the Scrutiny Committee on the production of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Blackpool.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Not applicable.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is both:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool.
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## 5.0 Background Information

- 5.1 Blackpool's Local Plan Core Strategy 2012-2027 includes a Green Infrastructure Policy (Ref CS6) which requires planning and development activity to protect, enhance, create and connect networks of Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI). This draft strategy aims to formalise this policy into a clear vision.

Blackpool's green and blue infrastructure is varied, both in terms of type; ranging from parks and gardens to ponds and lakes, sea and nature reserve, as well as ownership; public sector, commercial organisations, voluntary groups and private individuals.

Given this unique mix, it is clear that responsibility for creating, managing, promoting and funding GBI will fall to numerous people and organisations, working in partnership.

A GBI strategy will need to be a leadership document, setting out vision, goals and priorities that we can build upon to inspire positive change across the town whilst being mindful that GBI does not end at the borough boundary so must connect with our neighbouring authorities.

- 5.2 Work to date has included technical surveys, to assess the current position and compare with recognised benchmark data, consultation with key stakeholders involved in GBI across the town and the gathering of this information into a draft strategy document for further consultation.
- 5.3 Based on this initial work and identified priorities the strategy has been developed around six strategic goals:
- Engaging People in Health and Wellbeing
  - Enhancing the Visitor Experience
  - Greener Housing and Infrastructure
  - Enabling Productive Business and Workers
  - Promoting a Green Image and Culture
  - Improving Habitats and Benefitting Pollinators
- 5.4 Once completed the strategy will be a guide and source of information for future development across Blackpool.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### List of Appendices:

Appendix 6(a): Presentation for Committee Members

Appendix 6(b): (Draft) Blackpool Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 Not applicable.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 Not applicable.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 Not applicable.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Not applicable.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 Not applicable.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 Not applicable.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Wide range of consultation completed with individuals and via stakeholder forums.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Not applicable.

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# Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2018 to 2027

## Resilient Communities

## Scrutiny Committee

### 15 November 2018



## Aim of the Presentation

1. What is Green and Blue Infrastructure?
2. Why we have developed a draft GBI strategy and action plan
3. The process so far
4. Key high level recommendations
5. Our ask of you as leaders in Health and Wellbeing
6. Get your thoughts, feedback and ideas



## Why are We Developing the Strategy – the Issues

Lowest tree canopy cover in England

Intensely urban, with one of the highest densities of housing outside London

Limited usable open space

18 500 Blackpool people use the outdoor environment each week. This is 5,000 people less than the national average

One of the lowest life expectancies in England

## Why are We Developing the Strategy – the benefits of green

The evidence says that green and blue infrastructure:-

Reduces surface water and flooding and therefore seawater quality

Reduces the energy we need to spend on managing that water through drains

Reduces urban heat island effect – green air conditioning

Removes air pollutants

Encourages people to play, walk and cycle

Improves the mental health of adults and children

Increased employee productivity including reducing sickness absence

Increases property values

Attracts inward investment and motivated staff

# Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

## How to Build Green and Blue Infrastructure – Key Recommendations

### 1. Transform housing quality

New and improved parks and creative greening initiatives in the Inner Area, South Shore and the outer estates to make our housing better for family life.

### 2. Double tree canopy

Blackpool has the fewest trees of any English town – create a legacy for future generations, starting with planting 10,000 trees in the next ten years.

### 3. A greener centre

As the town centre and resort core are regenerated, create new pocket parks and an iconic public realm.

### 4. The best in the West

We will celebrate Stanley Park as the best park in the UK so it becomes a must-see for any visitor; and then encourage visitors to explore other parks in the town, Lytham St Annes and Fleetwood.

# Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

## How to Build Green and Blue Infrastructure – Key recommendations

### **5. Take health seriously**

Help at least 5,000 more local people each week enjoy exercise at our parks, beaches and encourage Forest Schools, Green Gyms and nature-based prescriptions.

### **6. Make it easy to get outdoors**

Establish the “Blackpool Activity Trail”, signpost our green spaces better and remind the world that we are a start point for national coastal and Trans Pennine walking and cycling tours.

### **7. Keep it down to earth**

Blackpool has a great backbone of volunteers and can always call on help from businesses, “Blackpool-exiles” and loyal holiday-makers with an affinity for the town. Local park friends, tree wardens, volunteer rangers and councillors are key to delivering and maintaining GBI.

### **8. Always Think for the Future**

Ensure Green and Blue Infrastructure forms part of all our decision-making and supports the future proofing of the town.

## The Action Plan

**GBI strategy is delivered through a few flagship schemes and 1001 individual, neighbourhood and organisational actions**



## Consider the Contrast

Page 37



## Actions At strategic level

- Incorporate the creation of new GBI into the Town Centre Strategy Update where each part of the public realm is considered as an opportunity for civic GBI.
- Identify opportunities in the Leisure Quarter masterplan for GBI.
- Incorporate GBI into the master plan for the Enterprise Zone to create a welcoming place for businesses.
- Create a park in the inner areas for both residents, tourists and town centre workers to use

## Making the most of what we have for residents and tourists

- Create an Arts Trail and promote it to residents, workers, visitors and tourists.
- Promote the Lancashire Coastal Way (137 mile footpath following the coastline between Merseyside and Cumbria) to connect residents to neighbouring GBI and visitors and tourists to Blackpool.
- Develop the Blackpool Activity Trail – cycling, walking, and nature trails.

The Activity Trail links the National Cycle Route, Heron's Reach Footpath Trail, Blackpool Heritage Trail, North Blackpool Pond Trail, and Blackpool Promenade.

## Proposed Actions for Individual Businesses and Public Sector Organisations

- Protect, manage and improve GBI on your sites for biodiversity, sustainable drainage, and to create an attractive setting for employees and customers.
- If your organisation has limited exterior space, think about innovative green elements e.g. roof-top planting, green walls, etc.
- Adopt part of the GBI public realm, to support its maintenance through sponsorship or staff volunteering
- Include GBI in your Social responsibility procurement requirements



# Street Trees



## Planting Trees

- Create a street tree planting plan
- Plant street trees on key transport gateways from the M55, including Yeadon Way, Progress Way and Westcliffe Drive/ Talbot Road
- Explore the opportunity to create a 'Green Line' along the central corridor from south Station to the Town Centre, comprising a continuous green space/series of green spaces that facilitates walking, running and cycling.

# Over to You

- **What are your thoughts in relation to having a Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy?**
- **Have you any questions?**
- **How could it be enhanced and developed?**
- **Is it the right approach and scope?**
- **What are your thoughts in relation to people's involvement in Green and Blue?**

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# Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

*Draft for Consultation*

SUPPORTED BY

**Blackpool Council**





# Contents

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# 1.0 Key Message

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## Introduction

As we write this in 2018, Blackpool is looking forward to a period of sustained transformation. Several major regeneration projects have started and more are to come. Our housing areas, our town centre and our business areas will be refreshed and rejuvenated with massive public and private sector investment.

We are also piloting innovative social initiatives to improve health, well-being, skills and employability. We are rebuilding Blackpool's brand as "the number one family resort with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town".<sup>1</sup>

This is a ten year strategy to invest in Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure. We will enhance our existing parks and open spaces and deliver new high quality green spaces and public realm. We will see many more residents and visitors experiencing Blackpool's great outdoor spaces.

### What is Green and Blue Infrastructure?<sup>2</sup>

**A network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which delivers a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green and blue infrastructure is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. As a network it includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, but also street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, the sea and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and walls. In Blackpool it also includes our coastline.**

The Strategy will be delivered by Blackpool Council in partnership with its own staff, the community, developers, landowners, schools, healthcare providers and infrastructure managers.

Blackpool faces unique challenges due to poor public health, the intensely urban nature of its built form, poor quality housing stock, and high seasonal unemployment.

Yet Blackpool has a lot to offer. It has enthusiastic, skilled and committed volunteers working in our green spaces. Volunteering in the outdoors builds friendships and civic pride, for example at East Pines Park in Anchorsholme, a group of parents enlisted the help of their local councillor to obtain funding which has rejuvenated the park as a thriving local asset. There are many similar groups across Blackpool. Some completely run by volunteers, others facilitated by the public or voluntary sector.

In 2017, Blackpool's Stanley Park was named as the best park in the UK by Fields in Trust, a national charity which protects open spaces and encourages communities to actively care for them. This is a tribute to the managers and friends of Stanley Park who have invested their time and creativity to make Stanley Park a place valued locally, regionally and nationally.

We are also proud of our coastline. South Beach is internationally acclaimed as a Blue Flag Beach. All our other beaches have Seaside Awards; recognition of years of hard work by many partners improving environmental quality.

Our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy builds on these successes. We want the town to be known nationally for the quality and attractiveness of its premier open spaces.

Only a few weeks before Stanley Park received its award, another of our parks, Revoe Park, featured on primetime national TV news, because urban park rangers working in our Better Start programme teach parents how to encourage their infants to play creatively.

The rangers also help with skills and self-esteem amongst people who are looking to rebuild their lives and work prospects after setbacks. There is overwhelming evidence of how green and blue infrastructure is essential to quality of life, and how it can be used as a setting for health-enhancing activity.

It is no secret that Blackpool's Inner Area is short of greenery and attractive open spaces. That is why Revoe Park is so important to its local community who have welcomed the Better Start programme.

A shortage of green infrastructure compounds the public health deficit that affects too many of our population. As we regenerate housing areas and restructure the town centre, we will take opportunities to create pocket parks, plant civic trees and improve greenways so people enjoy spending time outdoors. The promenade and beach are also hugely important assets and we will look to expand the use of them through enhancements and organised activities and events.

Blackpool's wildlife and countryside fringe is also prioritised in this Strategy. Marton Mere is Blackpool's only Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and acts as a centre for an ecological network connecting coast, countryside and urban areas.

Greening the town centre, principal road and rail corridors and our enterprise zones, using a range of horticultural and artistic techniques, will also give confidence to incoming residents, visitors and investors that Blackpool is a town which is serious about its overall vision.



**Councillor Graham Cain**  
*Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities)*

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## How to Build Blackpool’s Green & Blue Infrastructure

### 1 Transform housing quality

New and improved parks and creative greening initiatives in the Inner Area, South Shore and the outer estates will make our housing better for family life.

### 2 More than double tree canopy

Blackpool has the fewest trees of any English town – we will create a legacy for future generations, starting with maintaining our current trees and planting 10,000 trees in the next ten years to more than double our tree canopy from 4% to 10%.

### 3 A greener centre

As the town centre and resort core are regenerated, we will create new pocket parks and an iconic public realm.

### 4 The best in the West

We will celebrate Stanley Park as the best park in the UK so it becomes a must-see for any visitor; and then encourage visitors to explore other parks in the town, Lytham St Annes and Fleetwood.

### 5 Take health seriously

We will help at least 5,000 more local people each week enjoy exercise at our parks and beaches, and we will encourage Forest Schools, Green Gyms and nature-based prescriptions.

### 6 Make it easy to get outdoors

We will establish the “Blackpool Activity Trail”, signpost our green spaces better and remind the world that we are a start point for national, coastal and Trans Pennine walking and cycling tours.

### 7 Keep it down to earth

Blackpool has a great backbone of volunteers and can always call on help from businesses, “Blackpool-exiles” and loyal holiday-makers with an affinity for the town. Local park friends, tree wardens, volunteer rangers and councillors are key to delivering and maintaining GBI.

### 8 Always Think for the Future

We will ensure Green and Blue Infrastructure forms part of all our decision-making and supports the future proofing of the town.

The remit of the Strategy is not to safeguard every last bit of existing green space in Blackpool, it is to secure the highest possible quality of spaces. Where a proposed development would result in a green space being reduced in size, the Council will ensure that the remaining green space is a higher quality so that the benefits it provides are more far-reaching than the existing green space.

This Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan have been developed following comprehensive consultation and review of evidence. We will use the Strategy to guide our actions, large and small, to build a town nationally known for the quality of its open spaces.

#### **GBI is delivered through a few flagship schemes and 1001 neighbourhood activities**

We take heart from other northern places, such as Merseyside and Manchester, where sustained environmental regeneration, alongside economic investment and social change has created parks, cycleways, public realm and places where people and businesses thrive. Fears about investment in landscape being wasted due to vandalism, neglect and plant failure are valid but we will study technical evidence to ensure high standards of planting and aftercare are considered from the outset. Investment in GBI is not a “nice to have”, we owe it to our townspeople and their children to create a healthy and accessible environment on their doorstep.

#### **As a long-term project, this Strategy is the start of a journey of transformation – success can only be achieved with the continued support and involvement of local residents, landowners, developers and a wide range of partners.**

## 2.0 Vision and Overview

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### Our Vision - Blackpool in 2027

Blackpool will be experiencing sustained transformation and its parks, green spaces, coastline and public realm will be locally and nationally renowned. Many more people will be enjoying the health and wellbeing benefits of time spent in Blackpool's "great outdoors".

The natural environment will thrive and support Blackpool's physical regeneration, encouraging economic development and attracting new investors, residents and visitors to Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde.

Blackpool's housing areas will be greener and their open spaces will be safe and well-used. The town will be an exemplar of how coastal resorts can turn their fortunes around through social and environmental regeneration.

Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy will protect and enhance the borough's urban, coastal and rural environments to ensure the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from them are maximised.

### Goals and Priorities

Our six strategic goals and implementation priorities for Blackpool's GBI are described in Chapter 4:

- *Engaging People in Health and Wellbeing*
- *Enhancing the Visitor Experience*
- *Greener Housing and Infrastructure*
- *Enabling Productive Businesses and Workers*
- *Promoting a Green Image and Culture*
- *Improving Habitats and Benefitting Pollinators*

### Objectives

Blackpool's GBI Strategy has the following objectives, which align with Core Strategy Policy CS6:

- *Protect and Enhance GBI i.e. protecting the best and enhancing the rest*
- *Create and Restore GBI i.e. greening the grey and creating new GBI in areas where it is most needed*
- *Connect and Link GBI i.e. making the links, improving connectivity and accessibility of GBI*
- *Promote GBI i.e. changing behaviour, promoting the benefits of GBI and encouraging greater uptake of outdoor activity and volunteering*

These objectives and a series of headline actions are explained at Chapter 5, along with strategic diagrams and illustrations.

Stanley Park



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## Policy

The Blackpool Council Plan 2015-2020<sup>1</sup> has two priorities:

- *The Economy: Maximising Growth and Opportunity across Blackpool.*
- *Communities: Creating Stronger Communities & Increasing Resilience.*

The town must reduce economic and health inequalities. It is widely acknowledged that high quality GBI promotes economic growth and investment and health and wellbeing.

Blackpool's Local Plan Core Strategy 2012-2027 includes Green Infrastructure Policy (CS6) which requires planning and development activity to protect, enhance, create and connect networks of GBI. Many other Core Strategy policies (e.g. Housing Provision, Economic Development, Town Centre, Quality of Design, Heritage, Sustainable Neighbourhoods) also rely on GBI to underpin and deliver their aspirations.

On a broader scale, the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>3</sup> commits to:

- *Making sure that there are high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing; and,*
- *Focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society*

## The Need for a GBI Strategy

GBI is multifunctional and consists of many types of open space, with multiple benefits. This means that responsibility for creating, managing, promoting and funding GBI falls to numerous people and organisations, working in partnership. This strategy is a leadership document, setting out a vision, goals, priorities, objectives and actions which will inspire sustained action across the town.

This strategy covers the whole of Blackpool. As GBI does not stop at the borough boundary, the strategy aims to connect with the GBI of the neighbouring authorities, Wyre and Fylde.

Blackpool Promenade



## 2.0 Vision and Overview

### Evidence Base

This Strategy for Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) and the associated Action Plan have been drawn up following consultation and detailed review of evidence (in the associated Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report<sup>4</sup>) about where investment in GBI will deliver the greatest social benefits, environmental improvements and economic enhancements.

The Blackpool Open Space Assessment<sup>5</sup> was updated in 2018 and provides evidence on the quantity, quality and accessibility of GBI in the borough.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the town's outdoor environment and key issues identified during consultation and evidence-gathering. It sets the scene for the GBI strategy. Annex One and Two list the policy and best practice referenced in the strategy and to key pieces of evidence available in the GBI Technical Report and the 2018 Open Space Assessment.

### Types of Green and Blue Infrastructure

GBI refers to many different types of green and blue space, in public and private ownership, with and without public access, in urban and rural locations:

Parks and gardens – urban parks, pocket parks, country parks and formal gardens.

Amenity space - play areas, communal gardens, playing fields, civic plazas, street trees, living walls and sustainable drainage installations which rely on vegetation.

Natural and semi-natural green space –Woodland, wetlands, water bodies, nature reserves and other wildlife sites housing a variety of habitats and species.

Beach and Promenade – civic spaces, piers and headlands.

#### Key

- Green Infrastructure
- Blue Infrastructure



Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure





Stanley Park Avenue



Marton Mere Overflow Channel



Stanley Park, Italian Gardens

## Benefits of Green & Blue Infrastructure<sup>6</sup>

### 1. Economic benefits

- *Economic growth and employment*
- *Attraction and retention of businesses to the area - creation of attractive environments*
- *Tourism and recreation - enhancement of economy*
- *Staff health and motivation - greener living and working environments*
- *Increased land and property values*

### 2. Social benefits

- *Place-making for family housing and social cohesion*
- *Increased health and wellbeing*
- *Providing recreation and leisure assets*
- *Creation of community resources and a setting for volunteering*

### 3. Environmental benefits

- *Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, landscape and geodiversity*
- *Protection and enhancement of cultural heritage and a setting for art*
- *Climate change adaptation and mitigation*

## Action Plan

The GBI Action Plan 2018-2027 is a separate document which provides more detail on the location, content, funding and partnerships needed to implement the Strategy.

## 3.0 Setting the Scene

A useful statistical profile of Blackpool's population, economy, health and wellbeing is regularly updated on the Lancashire County website<sup>7</sup>, allowing comparisons with county and national trends.

### Urban Fabric

Blackpool is intensely urban and compact in form. Almost 75% of land is developed. At its heart is the Town Centre and the adjoining Resort Core. Elsewhere in the Inner Area, there is very little open space apart from the promenade and beach. The following nine wards fall seriously short of the standard of 4 hectares of open space per 1,000 population, as proposed in the emerging Open Space Assessment<sup>8</sup>: Claremont, Talbot, Brunswick, Tyldesley, Victoria, Hawes Side, Waterloo, Highfield and Squires Gate.

Elsewhere, Blackpool is predominantly residential in character and largely built up to its boundaries, apart from small pockets of Green Belt which extend into Fylde and Wyre districts. In Blackpool the designation of Countryside Areas in conjunction with the Green Belt defines the limit of urban development and provides much needed amenity and open space.

Blackpool and Fleetwood have the lowest tree canopy cover in the UK, with only about 4% of the towns supporting trees, compared to a national average of 16%<sup>9</sup>. This is a consequence of exposure to coastal weather, the dense Victorian urban fabric, the extent of privately-rented property and the demand for car parking. Over the past few years, the Council's Parks team have planted 3,000 trees in suburban road verges and some parks, but it will require the planting of tens of thousands of trees to bring the town's cover up to even half the national average.

| Key   |  |
|---|--|
|  | Agricultural Land                            |
|  | Allotment or Community Garden                |
|  | Amenity Greenspace                           |
|  | Beach  |
|  | Cemetery, Churchyard or Burial Ground        |
|  | Civic and Market Squares                     |
|  | Grass Verge                                  |
|  | Grassland or Scrubland                       |
|  | Institutional Grounds (Health and Education) |
|  | Institutional Grounds (Other)                |
|  | Outdoor Sports Facilities                    |
|  | Parks and Gardens                            |
|  | Private Domestic Gardens                     |
|  | Promenade                                    |
|  | Provision for Children and Young People      |
|  | Street Trees                                 |
|  | Waterbody                                    |
|  | Watercourses                                 |
|  | Wetland                                      |
|  | Woodland                                     |



Green and Blue Infrastructure Typology

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## Seascape

Blackpool's coastline is 7 miles long. Blackpool's promenade and seascape is characterised by coastal defences which have received major investments within the past decade. These give the seafront a characterful urban feel. Whilst the defences limit opportunities for greening the seascape, the designed headlands along the promenade provide civic spaces for congregation and art.

Blackpool South beach has Blue Flag status after the Environment Agency classed it as having 'excellent' sea water quality in 2015. Seaside Awards have been granted to three other areas of beach in Blackpool, giving the resort an entire coastline of award-winning beaches. Despite the quality of the seafront, some residents report that they feel somewhat disconnected from the promenade, perhaps because of the stark urban environments in the Inner Area, perhaps because of a perception that the promenade is an area for tourists.

## Green and Blue Infrastructure

A quarter of the town's open space is provided in and around Stanley Park, which is one of the largest parks of its kind in the country. It is historically important and has Grade II\* status on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. It comprises a designed landscape with play areas, a lake and a café. The Park facilitates sport through its provision of outdoor sports space, tennis courts, flat and crown green bowling and all weather pitches. It hosts many regional and national events, for example it is a UK centre of excellence for BMX racing.

Opposite Stanley Park is a commercially-operated zoo directly to the east and is next to Marton Mere, the town's principal wildlife site.

**In 2017, Stanley Park was voted Best UK Park by Fields in Trust. Parks and Green Spaces Minister, Marcus Jones MP, said: "Many congratulations to Stanley Park on being voted the UK's Best Park 2017 in the Fields in Trust Awards. The public support shown for this park highlights just how much the residents of Blackpool care about their treasured green space."**

Blackpool has several other principal parks, numerous playing fields and other small recreation grounds, providing important recreational, sports and visual amenity benefits for local communities.

There is very little GBI in the Inner Area or the Town Centre. Its major GBI resource is the coast and beach.

Route 62 of the National Cycle Network runs the length of the promenade and inland to Stanley Park and Heron's Reach.

## 3.0 Setting the Scene

### Health and Wellbeing

Blackpool has a population of 139,195 and is the seventh most densely populated borough in England and Wales outside Greater London. The population is heavily concentrated in Blackpool's Inner Area which experiences considerable transience as people move in for short-term employment or simply to attempt a new start in life; the inexpensive housing encourages this.

The health of people in Blackpool is generally worse than the national average. The town records one of the lowest life expectancy rates nationally and there are inequalities by deprivation and gender. Problems prevalent in Blackpool include alcohol and drug misuse, poor mental health, smoking and obesity. Blackpool has the fourth highest rate of antidepressant prescriptions in the country, and psychological therapy services are very over-subscribed. A high percentage of working age residents claim Incapacity Benefit (over 12%), almost double the national average.

Improving the public's health is now a clear responsibility for local authorities. Blackpool Council is developing a range of approaches to tackling the underlying causes of poor health and promoting healthier lives. Examples include linking GPs to social prescribing alternatives for patients to improve their health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation; debt counselling; volunteering opportunities; and Living Streets "Walk to" projects in primary schools and workplaces.

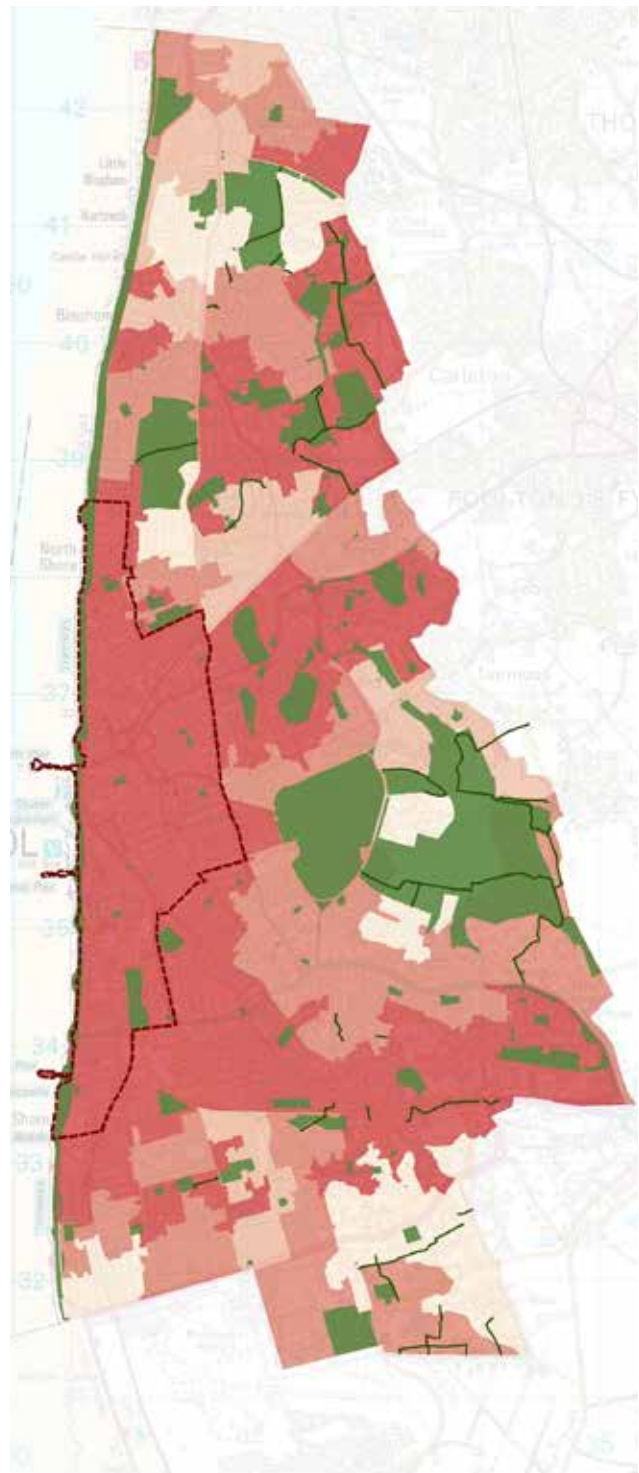
In 2017, Blackpool Council was the first local authority in England to sign a Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight. The Declaration includes a commitment to make the most of planning and infrastructure opportunities to positively impact on physical health.

Revoe Park, is one of the key parks for the Defined Inner Area, has undergone a number of improvements to meet the needs of the community, including a community garden using disused bowling greens; renovation of the park buildings using attractive timber cladding (which has withstood vandalism); and natural play. The Park has benefited from financial and human resources provided through the Better Start programme.

**"Revoe Park is a really important green space in the heart of a built up area, which we can use to help develop a local community around. These improvements should help make it a safer place to visit, while the park rangers and community garden will help families to get outside, learn new skills and make new friends" Cllr. Cain, speaking at a Betterstart event in the park in 2016**

**Key**  
Defined Inner Area  
Open Space

**Health Deprivation Score**  
1 - Most Deprived  
2  
3  
4 - Least Deprived



Health Deprivation in Blackpool

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## Tourism

Blackpool is England's largest and most popular seaside resort attracting 17m tourism visits (13.5 million day visits, 3.5 million staying<sup>11</sup>). Whilst Blackpool remains at the heart of the UK tourism and visitor economy, it has experienced a significant decline in visitor numbers from the 1980's onwards, a consequence of growing consumer affluence, enhanced consumer choice and perceived obsolescence of the town's visitor offer.

In recent years there have been positive signs that Blackpool is beginning to revitalise the visitor economy and attract a new generation of families and visitors. Significant new public sector investment has improved the quality of the resort offer and the urban environment; however, Blackpool still has some way to go in providing a high quality resort offer which appeals to a 21st century tourist market and supports a sustainable visitor economy.

## Quality of Place

Blackpool's world renowned British Seaside has developed around its iconic Victorian architecture including Blackpool Tower, Winter Gardens, theatres, hotels and many other civic buildings. The built heritage of Blackpool is something which people are proud of and identify with.

The downside of the intensive development of visitor and residential accommodation is that it has resulted in creating many of Blackpool's low income and vulnerable households, in Blackpool's inner area, which has a negative effect on forming stable and cohesive communities. The high levels of crime, anti-social behaviour, worklessness and low educational attainment coupled with significant transience presents one of the most testing social and economic challenges in the country.

**"You can't do welfare reform separately from having some sort of place-based economic strategy as well" Jonathan Portes, Chief Economist, Dept. of Work and Pensions, 2002-2008, (quoted in "On the Edge", a Financial Times article about Blackpool, November 2017)**

Although not always causative, the lack of GBI in the Inner Area correlates strongly with wards suffering lowest levels of mental health and physical wellbeing. The Council has strategies to improve the worst quality housing and promote further family based tourism development, reducing the negative connotations associated with day-tripping.

Blackpool is committed to growth and regeneration in several key areas, as expressed in the Core Strategy Key Diagram<sup>12</sup>. The Town Centre, Resort Core and neighbourhoods within the Inner Area are the primary focus for transformation. In terms of housing, this means restricting multiple occupancy and poor landlord behaviour, with targeted demolition and building of new family homes, such as the new Foxhall Urban Village. Outside the Inner Area, housing estates such as Mereside, Grange Farm and Queens Park will be restructured to improve the quality of the housing offer; and new housing in south Blackpool around Whyndyke Farm and Moss House Road.

## 3.0 Setting the Scene

### Economic Growth and Investment

Blackpool Town Centre is the main retail and cultural centre for the Fylde Coast and employs over 6,000 people, generating a retail turnover of around £300 million per annum. However, the Town Centre is under performing as a sub-regional retail centre. Jobs in Blackpool are generally low skill and low wage and small businesses predominate. Furthermore, reliance on the tourism industry means there is high seasonal unemployment in the winter months.

Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (EZ) is a 144ha site incorporating Blackpool Airport which is now in the control of the Council. The EZ is a key employment site with potential to support nearly 140 new businesses and up to 3,000 new jobs over the next 25 years. The EZ has a strong emphasis on creating a green and attractive environment.

Blackpool Council alongside with Blackpool Housing Company and Blackpool Coastal Housing are also pro-actively enabling development and working with developers and investors to shape and facilitate regeneration and new development.

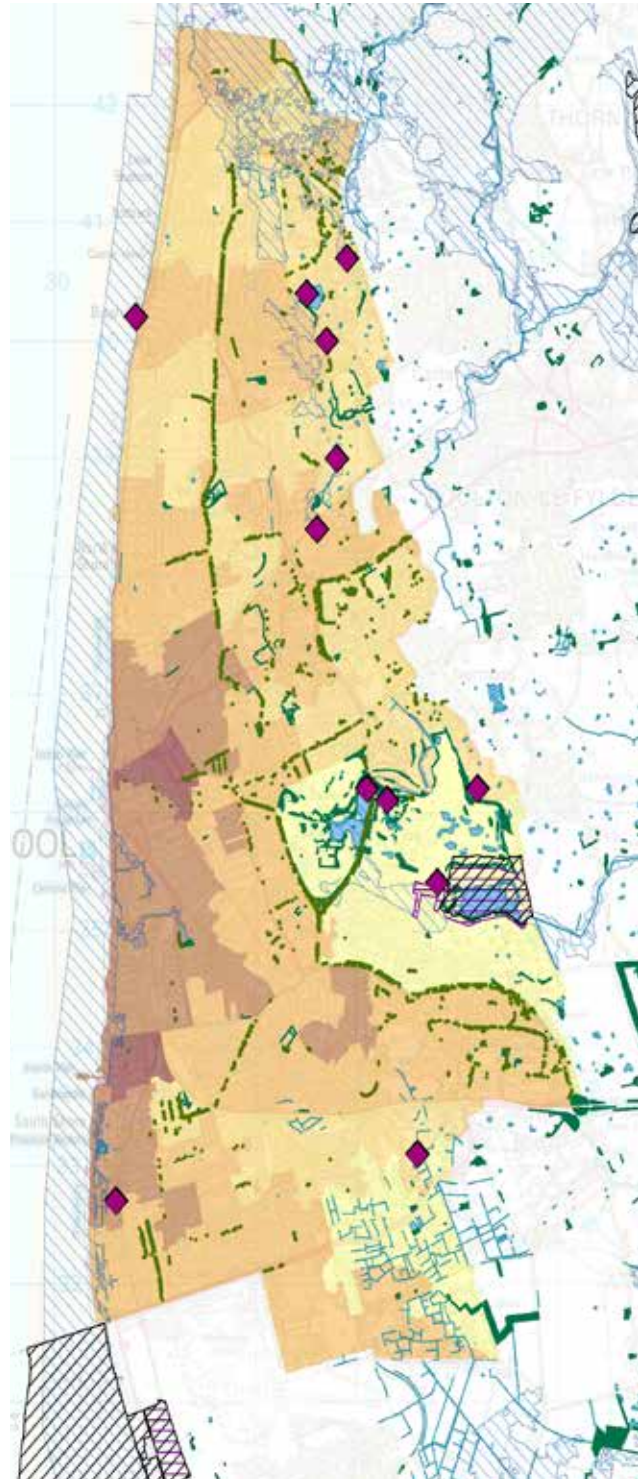
Gateways are a key economic priority and include Yeadon Way, Preston New Road, and Progress Way leading to the Enterprise Zone. The tourist entry points at Blackpool North Station and Central Corridor also provide potential for introducing added value through GBI.

### Land and Biodiversity

Undeveloped open land in the east of the town is made up of protected public open space, sites of nature conservation value, Green Belt and Countryside Areas. Blackpool's intensely built-up urban area means this open land has important landscape, nature conservation and environmental value.

Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve, located on the eastern edge of the town, is one of the few remaining natural freshwater sites in Lancashire covering an area of 39 hectares. The reserve was once associated with a former rubbish tip, but is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its bird populations.

With a wardened visitor centre, Marton Mere is the hub of nature conservation activity and volunteering in the town.



Land and Biodiversity

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Blackpool has a number of Biological Heritage Sites (BHS); these are part of a network of key wildlife sites across Lancashire. Within Blackpool nearly all the BHS's are ponds which form part of land allocated as open space. The North Blackpool (or Kincaig) Pond Trail is an example of how nature assets are linked together and used as an educational asset.

Fylde's arable growing systems require healthy populations of pollinators and the urban greenspaces within Blackpool can provide a reservoir of plants and habitats suitable for these vital insect species.

Agricultural land on the eastern boundary of Blackpool is level, fertile and open. Extending into neighbouring Wyre and Fylde, the field boundary systems (ditches, hedges and shelterbelts) have become fragmented and have lost distinctiveness due to urbanisation.

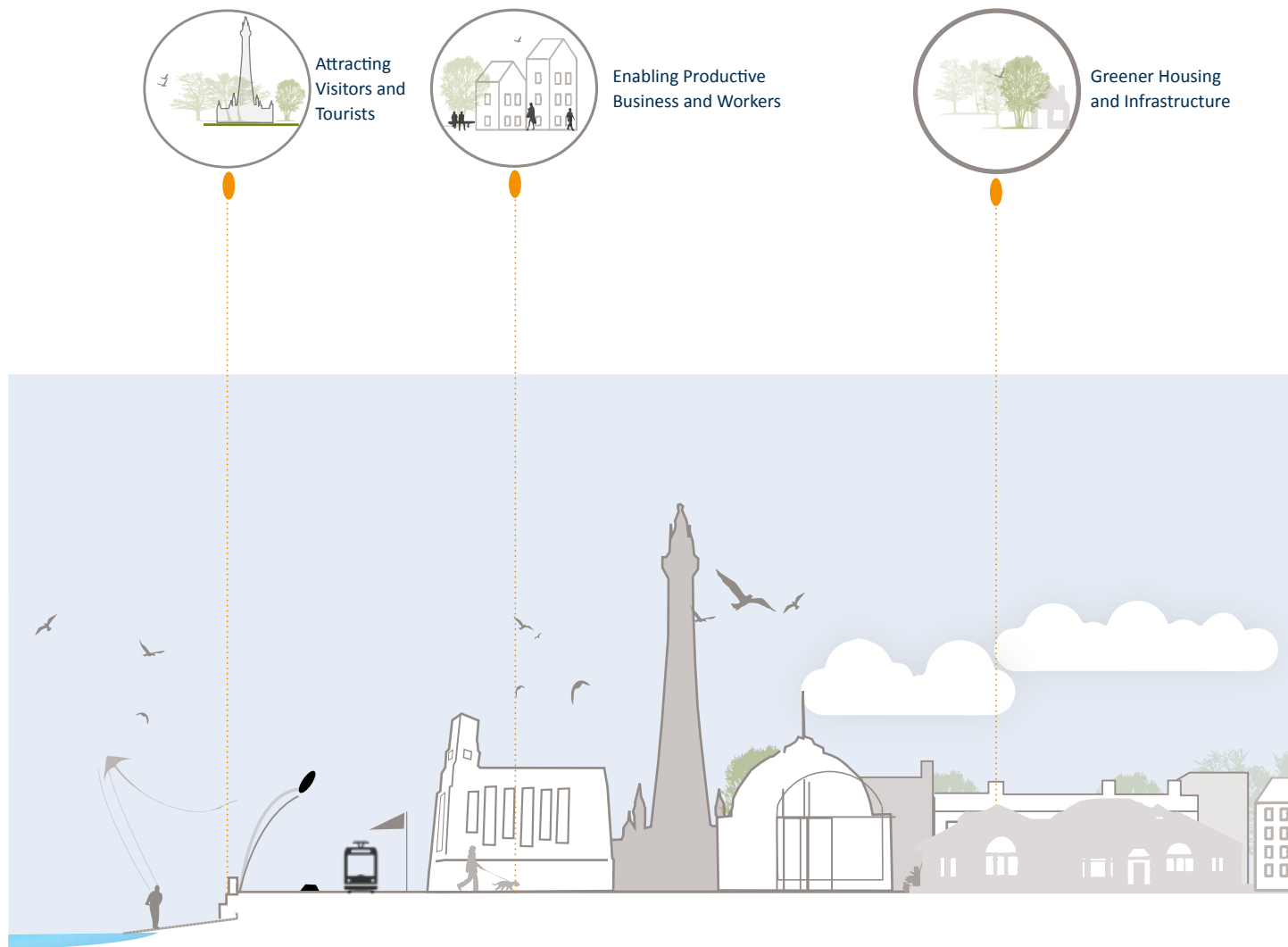
Blackpool's urban areas have a very high proportion of hard or 'sealed' surfaces which can cause flash flooding after heavy rain resulting in nuisance, economic damage or pollution.

# 4.0 Goals

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## GBI Goals

The graphic below highlights Blackpool's six main GBI Goals, which have been identified from consultation and a review of evidence. Investment in GBI will of course benefit other areas of public life such as heritage, climatic resilience and education







Engaging people in Health and Well-being

Promoting a Green Image and Culture



Habitats for Wildlife and Pollinators





## Goal 1: Engaging People in Health and Wellbeing

### Our Goal

Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure is the setting for people to meet, exercise, play and recharge their batteries. Contact with the natural world reduces stress, helps recovery and builds community cohesion, particularly through volunteering together. Our Green and Blue Infrastructure can help Blackpool's residents live long, happy and healthy lives.

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### Early Years and Family Groups

Through initiatives like Better Start, Blackpool is already diversifying its parks to create natural play opportunities which build mental resilience amongst children<sup>13</sup>. Our parks are used by adults learning parenting skills through horticultural and craft activities in family groups.

#### Schools and Routes to Schools

Greener school grounds and well treed routes to school are shown to improve mental health of children using them<sup>14</sup>.

#### Adult Life and Older Years

Urban parks provide a natural health service which is worth many millions to the local economy<sup>15</sup>.

#### Investing in Parks saves Health Service money

**In Sheffield (population 575,000) parks provide a substantial contribution to health, through reduced circulatory disease and reduced burden of depression. In fact, they provide £700 million of savings to the health service through "avoided cost" of physical and mental health treatments. This equates to £1,217 per person. If replicated in Blackpool this is an avoided cost of £173 million. Improving participation levels and investing in measures that encourage people to visit parks and feel secure would result in further savings.**

#### Inner Area

The open space audit shows there are massive deficiencies of accessible greenspace in the Inner Area. This has a particularly negative effect on young families, the elderly and those less mobile who may not be able to easily access the parks and promenade. Planning policy can resist any further losses of vegetation and encourage creation of pocket parks, street trees and doorstep green infrastructure in regeneration and new development proposals.

#### Blackpool Outdoors

Blackpool has a low rate of participation in outdoor activity<sup>16</sup>. About 18,500 Blackpool people use the outdoor environment each week. This is 5,000 people less than the national average for a town of our size. To get another 5000 people outdoors each week in Blackpool would mean:

- 17 more "Parkruns"; or
- 167 school groups; or
- 250 new walking groups; or
- 400 new sports teams; or
- 1,250 more families using our parks.

Quite a challenge! Obviously not all these activities need to happen at the same time – nevertheless our parks and promenade are good enough and big enough to deliver!

#### Cycling and Walking

Blackpool has the opportunity to become a highly walkable and cyclable town. These activities immediately improve health and wellbeing. To encourage more "green travel" for recreation and commuting we can promote:

- *The "Blackpool Activity Trail"; a project to establish walking and cycling routes involving the promenade and a chain of parks and open spaces.*
- *The "Quality Corridors" where investment in public realm, street scene management and street trees will enhance walkability.*
- *New "Greenways" (routes connecting people on foot or bike to facilities and open spaces in and around towns and the countryside, which can encourage people to travel sustainably).*

#### Volunteering and Training

Blackpool has a very active volunteering culture particularly in the fields of social care and rehabilitation. Parks provide excellent volunteering opportunities for businesses and for individuals. GP's can prescribe green gym therapies and participants report the mental health benefits they gain from social contacts.

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## Case Studies

### Grow Blackpool

Grow Blackpool is a Groundwork led initiative funded by Blackpool Council to promote the benefits of eating fresh fruit and vegetables daily and enabling people to grow it themselves. Saving money, learning new skills, becoming more active and making new friends are all outcomes of the scheme. One of the achievements from Grow Blackpool is the formation of the Friends of Jubilee Gardens. The group care for the 100 year old Promenade Sunken Gardens by Gynn Square in Blackpool. They want the gardens to be well maintained and to play their part in supporting other Agencies and Council Departments in achieving this aim, particularly with cuts to Council budgets and the realisation that the way public spaces are funded and managed in the past has now changed. To make this happen, involvement from the local community is vital and needs to be nurtured and encouraged.

### Revoe Park

Blackpool's Better Start programme has funded Early Years Park Rangers to promote learning through play. The programme has funded works to improve security, create a natural play area and convert disused bowling greens into training areas for woodwork and horticultural skills. These are used by parent and toddler groups and by adults seeking to rebuild their skills and self-esteem following personal difficulties. The park is a vital green lung in the Inner Area.

### East Pines Park, Anchorsholme

This small greenspace had become prone to antisocial behaviour and drug use until parents joined forces officers to improve security, replace hedges with railings and create better managed play facilities. The group made grant applications to local businesses and charities and the park is now an active hub for the local community.

## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

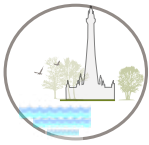
1. Blackpool Council Plan 2015 to 2020, Priority Two: Creating Stronger Communities and Increasing Resilience
2. Local Plan Core Strategy objectives 4, 5, 8, 11, 12.
3. Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Blackpool
4. Blackpool Better Start
5. "Steps to Health" – Blackpool's community health walking scheme and Living Streets: Walk to 2017-2020
6. Blackpool Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
7. Local transport plans and associated the Rights of Way Improvement Plan
8. Solaris Centre and links to nature-based health initiatives explored by Lancaster University

*Revoe Park Horticultural Scheme by Better Start*



*East Pines Park Volunteers*





## Goal 2: Enhancing the Visitor Experience

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### Our Goal

Blackpool is renowned for the quality of its parks and public realm which have become visitor destinations in their own right. Landscape quality is enhanced along the main road and rail corridors and at gateways into the town centre. The town becomes a hub for coastal walking and cycling tours.

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### Stanley Park, Zoo and Marton Mere

Now the park is recognised as the Best in the UK we can promote it widely within the town and to broader audiences across the UK. The park development plan will maintain a focus on quality and continuous refreshing of its visitor offer, including events, attractions, festivals, performances, art and horticulture. Connectivity with the town centre, the promenade and other principal parks in Blackpool, Fleetwood and Lytham St Annes will be promoted, which will help visitors navigate throughout Blackpool and encourage a longer visitor stay.

#### Horticultural Excellence

The town's tradition of horticultural excellence has been under threat due to public sector funding cuts but the popularity of Royal Horticultural Society Gardens and the Eden Project shows the economic value of having a horticultural attraction. This could be centred on Stanley Park, but in any case maintaining horticultural excellence is critical for the landscapes of our corridors and gateways.

#### Walking and Cycling

The promenade is already a national cycle route, part of the England coastal path and the Lancashire Coastal Way. Blackpool is a possible Trans Pennine trail starting route and implementation of the Blackpool Activity Trail would add a local element, perhaps encouraging additional bike hire and café businesses. Implementation of greenways along corridors radiating from the town centre would also add to the visitor experience.

#### Beside the Seaside

The Central Business District, the Leisure Quarter and the Resort Core are all areas where green and blue infrastructure would uplift quality and sense of arrival. The dense and compact urban fabric means innovative and sometimes artist-led approaches are needed to ensure street trees, planters and green walls are seen as assets rather than maintenance liabilities.

### Arrival Experience

There is scope for significant uplift in the presentation and consistency of green infrastructure along the tourist getaway and some scope for inserting additional greening within the main parking areas without affecting overall capacity (for example pleached trees). This would improve visual quality, civic pride and sense of arrival.

### Volunteering, Sponsorship and Partnership

We can do more to connect local environmental volunteers with additional human resources, finance and equipment that can be provided by the many businesses, expatriates and groups that have a special affinity with the town.

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## Case Studies

### Stanley Park and Zoo

As Blackpool's largest and most prestigious Park, Stanley Park provides a wide variety of events and activities throughout the year generating income for the town. In summer 2017 the Park hosted a Dinosaur Festival, the first outdoor festival of its kind in the UK. Life sized replica animatronic dinosaurs were placed around the Park as well as a simulated archaeological dig scene. Other events at Stanley Park and its visitor centre include pumpkin carving, Macmillan coffee mornings, Christmas carols, high ropes course, music events at the bandstand, weekly Parkrun and an annual motorcycle show.

Blackpool Zoo is an award winning zoo housing over 1,500 animals ranging from sea lions to orangutans to giraffes. In 2017, the Zoo celebrated its 45th anniversary which was marked with a number of celebrations including welcoming its 15 millionth visitor.

### Bank Hey Street Improvements

Merlin Entertainments who operate the Blackpool Tower complex, partnered with the Council to fund streetscene enhancements near the Tower.

## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

1. Blackpool Council Plan 2015 to 2020, Priority One: The Economy
2. Local Plan Core Strategy Objectives 14 and 15
3. Town Centre Strategy, 2013
4. Destination Blackpool, Resort Placemaking Prospectus



Public Art St Johns Square

Music event at Stanley Park Band Stand





## Goal 3: Greener Housing and Infrastructure

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### Our Goal

New housing has ready access to high-quality green spaces. The historic trend of loss of greenery in the Inner Area and South Shore is reversed and new multifunctional green spaces are opened up for locals to enjoy. Blackpool's transport corridors and built-up areas use green infrastructure to improve the town's resilience to pollution, flooding and climate change.

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### New Housing

Blackpool is determined to improve the quality of its overall housing offer. Blackpool is to deliver 4,200 new homes between 2012 and 2027. New housing offers opportunities to create pocket parks, play areas, civic trees, community food-growing areas and other imaginative landscapes. Robust arrangements for long-term landscape management are just as important as good design of housing areas. Developer checklists can stimulate creative approaches to GBI provision.

A key development as an exemplar for other housing developments will be the Whyndyke Garden Village, one of NHS England's Healthy New Towns. Where GBI is designed into the masterplan from the beginning to promote health and wellbeing.

#### Housing Area Transformation

Several established residential areas will be renewed over the next decades. Our Core Strategy is clear that the town's housing mix must be rebalanced to make the Inner Area, South Shore and certain other housing estates more attractive for family life. The Inner Area has a significant deficiency in all types of green infrastructure which depresses property values and discourages family life.

The urban fabric can be restructured so it is fit for 21st century family life with new green spaces created in areas of deficiency. Elsewhere new development can release funds to make existing green spaces more versatile and user-friendly. All possible policy instruments and funding streams should be deployed to direct resources towards a comprehensive renewal of these neighbourhoods. Foxhall Village and Queens Park are examples of radical housing transformation resulting in much better GBI.

#### Corridors and Gateways

The three principal road corridors into the town and the designated Quality Corridors into the town centre are our "shop window" and each has scope for tree-planting and green infrastructure enhancement to create a distinctive and mature setting for the town.

#### The "Green Line"

The car parks and public spaces, including George Bancroft Park, that form a pedestrian movement corridor from Blackpool South station towards the town centre could be further enhanced with vegetation, green walls, pleached trees and pocket allotments

#### Weather Proofing

Blackpool's dense urban fabric means we have too many "sealed surfaces" which cause flash flooding after heavy rain. In the public realm, parks and road verges can be remodelled slightly to act as rain gardens, soakaways and swales. Gardeners and landowners can play a part in weather-proofing the town through retaining greenery and planting trees.

#### Involving Residents

Blackpool's people are proud of the town. Alongside physical transformation of our housing areas, we should involve residents in design and management of green infrastructure on their doorstep and in the principal parks.

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## Case Studies

### Queens Park and Layton Rec.

The redevelopment of Queens Park has enabled the enhancement of Layton Rec, a Blackpool Council owned greenspace. The landscape improvement works are being carried out alongside the second phase of development. Layton Rec now has new pedestrian and cycle paths along with soft and hard landscaping. Within the housing area, quality greenspaces and play facilities are provided.

### West Rhyl Housing Regeneration Project and the Gerddi Heulwen Park

Rhyl's Victorian-era housing in neighbourhoods behind the promenade has similarities to Blackpool in terms of a dense urban fabric, patterns of transient occupancy, and a fierce neighbourhood loyalty amongst long-established residents. In consultation with residents, a new green space, Gerddi Heulwen, was created in 2014 after demolition of a hundred properties, as part of a programme of neighbourhood renewal.

### Manchester City of Trees

Over a sustained period, spanning several transport and public realm projects, Manchester City Council has invested in civic trees, street art and furniture and roadside raingardens to uplift the environmental quality and user-friendliness of Oxford Road and the Town Hall environs.

## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

1. Blackpool Council Plan, Priority One: The Economy and Priority Two: Creating Stronger Communities and Increasing Resilience
2. Core Strategy Objectives 2,5,7,8,9,16,18,19,20,21 and future SPD on design quality
3. Blackpool and the Fylde: Our Strategy for inclusive wealth and prosperity
4. Blackpool's Built Heritage Strategy 2016-2020
5. Lancashire Flood Risk Management Strategy (refreshed 2018 onwards) will promote SuDS



*West Rhyl Housing Regeneration Project (Tobermore Ltd)*

*Layton Recreation Ground Visualisation*





## Goal 4: Enabling Productive Businesses and Workers

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### Our Goal

High quality Green Infrastructure adds value to business environments, notably in the Enterprise Zone, the Central Business District and the Leisure Quarter. Our parks are a setting for people to learn skills and gain self-confidence to enter the workplace.

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### Town Centre and Leisure Quarter

In this dense and compact setting, green infrastructure needs to be carefully designed into the public realm and sometimes artist-led approaches can turn street trees and planters into an asset rather than a maintenance liability (see London case study). Comprehensive redevelopment can create an opportunity for a rooftop park which can be a versatile space for events or rest and relaxation (see Chavasse Park case study).

#### Quality Enterprises

Attracting and retaining quality enterprises to Blackpool is an important component of growing and diversifying the local economy. High-value businesses have an expectation of high quality premises and business environments from which to operate, in order to attract the best staff and to project a leading corporate image. Green spaces within a business park is a key component of this, enabling businesses to operate in an attractive setting and staff having an outdoor lunchtime/recreation location.

Attractive business environments can add a premium to the value of business premises, which benefit the economy and help spur investment in development projects that support employment.

#### Enterprise Zone

The Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone is the principal node for industrial and commercial office growth in Blackpool. This important business park aims to be a leading destination for advanced manufacturing and energy-related businesses. The masterplan for the EZ includes opportunities for green infrastructure along boulevards within the business park and the redevelopment of sporting fields. Using green infrastructure to highlight messages about the circular economy and to create a prestigious environment can attract creative start-ups and mature businesses.

#### Key Corridors and Gateways

Green infrastructure can create a sense of arrival and prestige, important in attracting and retaining businesses. Much depends on the quality of landscape management. Fortunately Blackpool has considerable horticultural expertise and interventions such as wildflower verges, street trees and hedging can all create a sense of destination. Inconsistency of existing roadside landscapes currently creates a slightly disjointed arrival experience.

#### Business Involvement

Volunteering days and corporate social responsibility links can help engage more people in Blackpool's great outdoor spaces. From clean-ups to nature reserve management, volunteering can be promoted widely, to the benefit of the Council and local businesses.

#### Benefits of Employee Volunteering

A well-structured business volunteering programme benefits individuals and employers<sup>18</sup>:

- 97% of volunteers said activities help develop a strong team
- 95% felt that volunteering had a positive influence on them
- 76% said it had a positive influence on how they feel about their employer

#### Skills Development

Working with local colleges, our parks can offer apprenticeships along with horticultural and construction skills training which boost confidence amongst people seeking to re-enter the workplace.



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## Case Studies

### London: Bringing Creativity and Green Infrastructure Together

In Oxford Street, London some shops have sponsored illuminated tree guards which provide an attractive feature while protecting the tree from vandalism. At London Bridge, a group of young architects designed a pop-up bench/planter system which brought seating and greenery to a busy public space.

### Chavasse Park, Liverpool One

As part of the Liverpool One retail development, a new park was created over an underground carpark. The park features grassed areas for general use along with hard surfaced areas for events, Christmas markets, pop-up restaurants, etc. Situated on rising ground it forms a visual gateway into the retail area from the waterfront and provides vistas over the Albert Dock.

### Business Improvement Districts

Businesses in several towns and cities are establishing Green Infrastructure Strategies for town centres e.g. Northwich, Stockport and Winckley Square, Preston. Greening initiatives, public realm improvements and sustainable drainage schemes are seen as contributing to economic growth and retail footfall.

## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

1. Blackpool Council Plan, Priority One: The Economy
2. Core Strategy Objectives 3,8,15,17,21
3. A Better Blackpool (prospectus for transformation of the Town Centre and transport links)
4. Blackpool and the Fylde: Our Strategy for inclusive wealth and prosperity
5. Walk 2017-2020: Walking and Cycling Access for everyday journeys

Grizedale Forestry Apprenticeship Scheme

London Bridge Planter - WMB Studio





## Goal 5: Promoting a Green Image and Culture

### Our Goal

Blackpool will be known for the quality of its parks and public realm, and they host events and public art of which its townspeople are proud. Green Infrastructure provides a setting for the best of the town's Victorian and Twentieth Century architectural heritage

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### Parks Development Plans

We are rightly proud of Stanley Park as the Best UK Park in 2017. We can continue to build on its reputation as a centre of excellence through encouraging niche businesses, education facilities, sports and events that add social value, income streams and training opportunities. By linking Stanley Park to other parks in Blackpool, Lytham St Annes and Fleetwood, we will build civic pride. Park Development Plans for all our parks would include attention to boundaries, gateways, railings, civic trees and other measures which enhance their contribution to quality of place.

#### Arts in the Public Realm

Parks, public realm and the promenade headlands can provide a setting for public art, performance, theatre and community activity.

#### Townscape

Particularly in the Inner Area, policy should resist removal of vegetation and encourage new development to incorporate significant green infrastructure and street trees to improve quality of place and contribute to climatic resilience of the urban fabric.

#### Gateways and Transport Corridors

Green infrastructure approaches such as green walls at the main point of arrival and civic trees, hedging and wildflower verges alongside road corridors can enhance the sense of arrival.

### Exemplary Coastal Regeneration

Blackpool is one of many coastal towns in Britain and Ireland addressing long-term decline through physical re-structuring of the urban environment and building a strong cultural brand. As the UK's leading coastal resort, Blackpool can export its expertise in creating and managing Green and Blue Infrastructure as part of a transformation programme.

#### Blackpool Activity Trail

Despite its name, this is in fact a proposal for series of linked footpaths/cycleways that allow people to explore the coast, the town centre, heritage assets, the countryside and Stanley Park. The route is mapped, but there is still much signposting and surfacing and awareness-raising work to do.

#### Small Town Big Profile

**Blackpool is a small town with a big profile. Millions of people come from all over the United Kingdom every year to enjoy our unique environment and attractions, and tourism continues to dominate our town like no other place in the country. The Council's Plan (2015-2020) embraces this fact, recognising the increasing contribution which our cultural and creative economy can make to pulling in new types of visitor and providing the fun and spectacle for which we are renowned**

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## Case Studies

### Green Walls

Green walls have been established near two British railway stations, Birmingham New Street and Deansgate, Manchester. These help to obscure some unattractive facades and also create a sense of arrival and a point of interest in a confined urban space.

### Stanley Park

The park is known for its national role in various sports and was voted the Best Field Day 2017. It is served by a management team which actively seeks opportunities for revenue generation and involvement of national sports and leisure bodies. More locally it encourages culture and educational events such as the Wordpool Festival aimed at stimulating children's interest in poetry and reading.

## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

1. Blackpool Council Plan, Priority Two: Creating Stronger Communities and Increasing Resilience
2. Core Strategy Objectives 5,12 and 14
3. A Better Blackpool
4. Blackpool Town Centre Strategy 2013
5. Blackpool's Built Heritage Strategy 2016-2020
6. Fields In Trust

*Birley Street Public Art  
Deansgate, Manchester (AnsGlobal)  
Stanley Park Boating Lake*





## Goal 6: Improving Habitats and Benefiting Pollinators

### Our Goal

Blackpool's Wildlife Sites are well-managed and used by volunteers and wildlife-watchers. Our parks, school grounds and main road verges are biodiverse, supporting bees, butterflies and other pollinators which in turn sustain the Fylde's arable farming economy. Vegetation in the town and rural fringe helps filter pollution and improve quality of water before it reaches the Irish Sea. Our parks have healthy soils. Our townspeople can easily get to the coast and countryside. The rural fringe is of high visual quality, with well-managed field edge ditches, verges and hedges typical of open farmland.

### Our Priorities

These are our implementation priorities:

#### Wildlife Sites and Green Corridors

Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest is the hub of much nature conservation activity and can act as a centre of excellence to ensure all our Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) are well-managed and linked to community volunteers who help with site stewardship. BHS's, urban wildlife, green corridors and coastal habitats are designated in planning policy and new development ensures that their continuity and educational value is protected.

#### Bugs Life!

We will develop a pollinator strategy with actions for main road verges, parks, school grounds, places of worship, farmland and private gardens. The Fylde's agricultural economy is very important with over 3000ha of arable and cereal crops<sup>19</sup>, all dependent on pollination. The UK agricultural economy receives £430m benefit from bee pollination<sup>20</sup>.

Urban environments and private gardens can be a refuge for bees and butterflies. At a local scale, deficiencies in allotments and community orchards are addressed, particularly in the Inner Area. Stanley Park Zoo and Forest Schools curricula offer the opportunity for learning about invertebrates and their value to society.

#### Fylde Farmland Edge

Blackpool's rural edge is visually disjointed and is losing its distinctive landscape character<sup>21</sup>. Restoring "typical" field boundaries such as ditches, reedbeds, hedges, flower-rich verges and shelterbelts would also improve wildlife connectivity and water quality by filtering diffuse source pollution from farmland and roads.

#### What is Natural Capital?

**Natural capital is 'the stock of our physical natural assets (such as soil, forests, water and biodiversity) which provide flows of services that benefit people (such as pollinating crops, natural hazard protection, climate regulation or the mental health benefits of a walk in the park). Natural capital is valuable to our economy. Some marketable products such as timber have a financial value that has been known for centuries. In other cases (e.g. the role of bees in pollinating crops), we are only just beginning to understand their financial value.'** (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2011)

#### Retrofitting green and blue infrastructure into the urban fabric

Blackpool has a high proportion of "sealed surface". Development and estate regeneration offers the opportunity to protect existing vegetation and introduce new green infrastructure, swales and soakaways, thus improving biodiversity, reducing local flood risk and improving the quality of water flowing into the Irish Sea, helping maintain our Blue Flag beach status.

#### "Meantime Greening"

Short-term greening of vacant urban land can maintain biodiversity and offer temporary allotments and food-growing. At Revoe Park, disused bowling greens have been taken over for skills training and early years play.

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## Case Studies

### Green Infrastructure Action Plan for Pollinators (GIAPP) in South-east Wales

The GIAPP is a landscape-scale project addressing the decline in biodiversity and providing benefits to the economy and communities through creating the environments that favour the creatures that help to pollinate plants.

The GIAPP produced long term action plans for publicly-owned land, focussing on how public organisations can embed sustainable management principles in their daily activities. The GIAPP places an emphasis on the intrinsic value of pollinators to the public, aiming to provide a more colourful, artistic and functional environment.

### Marton Mere and North Blackpool (Kincaraig) Pond Trail

Marton Mere is literally the “natural gateway” to Blackpool. It has a dramatic lake and reedbed with a very diverse birdlife and views of the Tower and the Fylde Countryside. With a Visitor Centre and an adjoining Holiday Park, it is a hub for wildlife-watching and outdoors volunteering. It has walking and cycling links to Stanley Park. With the future development of the nearby Whyndyke urban village its role in the environmental consciousness of the area will increase.

Rangers based at Marton Mere co-ordinate volunteering in many of the town’s other parks and also manage the Kincaraig Pond Trail, a locally important wildlife corridor which provides accessible semi-natural greenspace for residents in the north east of Blackpool.

*Marton Mere wading volunteers*

*Bees as pollinators*

*New hedge on arable land near Blackpool*



## Key Policy Links and Partnerships

1. Core Strategy Objectives 5,6,11 and 20
2. National Pollinator Strategy (Defra 2014)
3. A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire (Lancs. County Council, 2000)
4. Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
5. Lancashire Wildlife Trust (e.g. Living Seas and Living Landscapes projects)
6. Lancashire Ecological Network, 2015
7. Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group



# 5.0 Objectives and Actions

## Introduction

Blackpool is an ambitious place and our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is a “call to arms” for the Council, businesses, the community, funders and landowners to play a role in enhancing, creating, connecting and promoting our GBI.

The GBI Strategy aims to create a greener setting for the future growth of Blackpool and address some of the environmental deficiencies which impact on the town’s health, biodiversity and economic performance.

The Key Diagrams for the town and the Inner Area illustrate the principal areas to be affected by the GBI Strategy. The rest of this chapter lists the headline actions, grouped in terms of four objectives:

- *Protect and Enhance GBI*
- *Create and Restore GBI*
- *Connect and Link GBI*
- *Promote GBI and Change Behaviour*

A separate detailed Action Plan sets out our ten-year programme to achieve these objectives.



Blackpool GBI Key Diagram

- Key**
- Inner Area Boundary
  - Town Centre
  - Resort Core
  - Countryside Areas and Greenbelt
  - Parks and Gardens
  - Institutional Grounds
  - Marton Mere SSSI and LNR
  - Other Green Infrastructure
  - Blue Infrastructure
  - Industrial and Business Areas
  - Enterprise Zone
  - Blackpool Activity Trail
  - ↔ Gateways
  - Railway Network & Stations
  - Outer Housing Estates
  - Inner Housing Estates
  - Healthy New Town
  - M55 Junction
  - National Cycle Network
  - ↔ Promenade



Blackpool Inner Area GBI Key Diagram

- Key**
- Inner Area Boundary —
  - Central Business District ■
  - Leisure Quarter ■
  - Winter Garden ■
  - Resort Core ■
  - Town Centre Boundary ■
  - Parks and Gardens ■
  - Institutional Grounds ■
  - Other Green Infrastructure ■
  - Blue Infrastructure ■
  - Piers ★
  - Headlands ▲
  - Potential 'Green Line' ↔
  - Inner Housing Estates ★
  - Local Cycle Route ⋯
  - Quality Corridor →
  - National Cycle Network - - -
  - Promenade ↔











# Objective 1: Protect and Enhance Green and Blue Infrastructure

## 'Protecting the Best, Enhancing the Rest'

### Actions

1. Celebrate Stanley Park, voted the UK's Best Park in 2017, as Blackpool's most prestigious heritage and visitor destination and promote links to other parks in Blackpool, Fleetwood and Lytham St. Annes.
2. Enhance GBI in housing areas, accepting that during housing transformation, greenspaces may be restructured to improve estate design and security, but overall GBI functionality should be enhanced.
3. Invest in Blackpool's parks to acknowledge their importance in each local area, and ensure they are meeting Blackpool's quality benchmark associated with Green Flag criteria.
4. Maintain investment in Marton Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as the premier site for promoting nature conservation across Blackpool.
5. Ensure all Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) and green corridors are protected for nature conservation, then the planning reference would be appropriate
6. Invest in the promenade and headlands to connect people with the natural seascape.
7. Protect and enhance GBI in streetscapes, quality corridors and the town centre.
8. Safeguard and manage GBI in school, college, hospital and healthcare sites.
9. Protect and manage GBI in corporate, business and industrial settings, enhancing it for biodiversity, sustainable drainage, and to create an attractive setting for the Enterprise Zone, the Town Centre, the Inner Area and other corridors and gateways identified in the GBI Strategy report.

### Key

-  Inner Area Boundary
-  Town Centre
-  Parks and Gardens
-  Institutional Grounds
-  Marton Mere SSSI and LNR
-  Other GBI
-  Biological Heritage Site
-  Promenade
-  Preston New Road
-  Main road networks
-  Piers
-  Railway network and stations
-  Outer Housing Estates
-  Inner Housing Estates



Protecting and Enhancing GBI



## Objective 2: Create and Restore Green and Blue Infrastructure



Creating and Restoring GBI

*‘Greening the Grey, and Creating new GBI in areas where it is most needed’*

### Actions

1. Incorporate the creation of new GBI into the Town Centre Strategy Update and emerging Sustainability Strategy to ensure a greener town centre where each part of the public realm is considered as an opportunity for civic GBI.
2. Increase the overall tree canopy in Blackpool to 10%, starting with planting of 10,000 trees in the ten year period 2018 to 2027.
3. Ensure multifunctional GBI is incorporated in new residential developments.
4. Incorporate GBI into the master plan for the Enterprise Zone to create a welcoming place for businesses.
5. Identify opportunities in the Leisure Quarter to embed GBI.
6. Use GBI at the gateways and corridors into and around Blackpool (e.g. the ‘Green Line’) to provide attractive routes for residents, commuters, visitors and tourists and to encourage walking and cycling.
7. Adopt a Planning and Development checklist to ensure GBI is incorporated in all new developments, linked to existing assets, and where on-site provision is not possible, an appropriate contribution is made to off-site GBI assets and networks.
8. In the Green Belt and Countryside Areas, restore elements of the landscape that contribute to character and biodiversity.
9. Continue to expand and support the Allotment Society.

| Key                                |                                |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Inner Area Boundary                | Yellow line                    |
| Town Centre                        | Pink area                      |
| Potential Green Line               | Green double-headed arrow      |
| Enterprise Zone                    | Brown area                     |
| Main Industrial and Business Areas | Red area                       |
| Central Business                   | Purple area                    |
| Leisure Quarter                    | Red area                       |
| Promenade                          | Orange double-headed arrow     |
| Main roads                         | Brown double-headed arrow      |
| Piers                              | Blue circle                    |
| Headlands                          | Red triangle                   |
| Railway and stations               | Black dashed line with red dot |
| Countryside Areas and Greenbelt    | Yellow area                    |
| Quality Corridor                   | Blue arrow                     |

## Objective 3: Connect and Link Green and Blue Infrastructure

### *'Making the Links, Improving Connectivity and Accessibility of GBI'*

#### Actions

1. Ensure the Council obtains maximum input to GBI from businesses and services.
2. Create and/or upgrade the Blackpool Activity Trail which incorporates Gateways and Green Corridors to connect key GBI for people and wildlife, including the walking and cycling route from the Town Centre to Stanley Park, Zoo and Marton Mere.
3. Promote and support initiatives that encourage active travel such as 'Steps to Health' and 'Cycle for Health' scheme.
4. Work with neighbouring local authorities to promote links to cross-boundary GBI provision.

#### Key

-  Inner Area Boundary
-  Town Centre
-  Route from Leisure Quarter to Stanley Park and Zoo
-  Whyndyke Healthy New Town
-  Public Right of way Network
-  Gateway to the Countryside
-  National Cycle Route
-  Promenade and Lancashire Coastal Way
-  Piers
-  Headlands
-  Blackpool Activity Trail
-  Biological Heritage Site



Connecting and Linking GBI

## Objective 4: Promote Green and Blue Infrastructure

*‘Changing behaviour, Promoting the benefits of GBI and Encouraging greater uptake of Outdoor Activity and Volunteering’*

### Actions

1. Provide topical and user-friendly information on GBI, parks, open spaces and nature conservation sites, and how to get involved in activities and volunteering.
2. Encourage and support Parks Friends Groups, Beach Guardians, Tree Wardens and other community led environmental stewards.
3. Continue to support and promote the outdoor aspects of the Better Start and HeadStart Programmes and work with health professionals throughout the town to promote “green prescribing”.
4. Appoint a GBI Officer to take ownership and to deliver the GBI Strategy and Action Plan, forming partnerships with health, housing, town centre, schools, cultural and arts specialists.
5. Continue to deliver GI projects that promote food growing, gardening and stewardship of local green spaces.
6. Promote the use of GBI by educational institutions and incorporate GBI into the curriculum e.g. through Forest Schools.
7. Incorporate GBI into the Blackpool Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2013-2018 when updated.
8. Encourage GBI implementation through the Arts and Culture Strategy.
9. Monitor the outcomes of this Action Plan from the residents perspective.



Promoting GBI

| Key                  |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Green Gym            | ● |
| Allotment            | ● |
| Urban Farm           | ■ |
| Children's Centre    | ■ |
| Schools and Colleges | ■ |
| Medical Centre       | ■ |
| Library              | ■ |
| Promenade            | ↔ |
| Main roads           | ↔ |
| Piers                | ● |

## 6.0 Next Steps

---

### Roles and Responsibilities

The Strategy diagrams in Chapter 5 show the many opportunities for GBI to transform the quality of the urban environment, the seascape and the countryside of Blackpool. The proposed comprehensive and connected networks of GBI will deliver many benefits to residents, employees, investors and visitors to the town. Some actions will be led by the Council, some by the community, some by the third sector, some by developers, some by health and regeneration specialists and all will need partnership working.

### Detailed Action Plan

More detailed actions, funding and stakeholder responsibilities based on the Objectives at Chapter 5 are listed in the GBI Action Plan 2018 - 2027.

### Green and Blue Checklist

We have set out a checklist of requirements for planners and developers to help ensure that GBI is considered in all decisions affecting Blackpool's environment.

GBI should be seen as critical infrastructure in the same way as utilities or local transport networks. If it can be incorporated at the start of a project it is possible to achieve substantial cost savings through combining uses and creating multifunctionality. It can also improve the design, layout and appearance of a scheme.

Developers should be engaged in early discussions with the local authority regarding on site GBI provision so the costs of the expected high standards of quality and quantity of GBI can be accounted for by the developer in their land purchase negotiations.

The checklist provides a summary of the Green Infrastructure (GBI) requirements for development in Blackpool. It consists of strategic and site specific considerations. These requirements will contribute to the greening of the urban area and in particular new development. This will stimulate investment and economic growth; contribute to an attractive and healthy living and working environment; enhance biodiversity; and increase opportunities for tourism leisure and recreation. Maintenance of any new and enhanced GBI is integral to its success and implementation plans need to detail how maintenance will be secured in the long term

### Overseeing the Implementation of the Strategy and Plan

Cllr Graham Cain, Cabinet secretary will oversee the implementation of the strategy through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

### Resourcing the Plan

In such difficult financial times for Local Authorities and other Public Sector bodies, we will need to be innovative and work in partnership with business and other funding bodies to piece together resources, action by action, to deliver the Strategy.



*Victoria Park community involvement, Stafford*



*Solaris Centre Garden Opening*

# Blackpool's Green and Blue Checklist

---

## Step 1: Consider the GBI opportunities and benefits that the proposed development could bring to Blackpool

- It is important to consider the users of the development and the of GBI benefits that could be provided.
- Different types of development provide different opportunities for GBI (including SuDS).
- Residential development provides the opportunity for open space creation for recreation, connectivity to wildlife and flood resilience.
- Other types of development may present opportunities to link to strategic cycle routes and footpaths to encourage visitors and workers to use sustainable modes of transport

## Step 2: Identify the GBI assets within and near the proposed development

- Identify GBI assets within 1km of the proposed development, including aquatic and terrestrial habitats, ecological designated sites, heritage sites, Public Rights of Ways (PRoW), cycle routes.
- Maps of all GBI assets can be found in the GBI Technical Report.

## Step 3: Review the Local Plan and its evidence base e.g. Blackpool GBI Strategy, Blackpool's Open Space Assessment, Supplementary Planning Documents

- Review the Blackpool Council's local plan and evidence base to understand development requirements as well as opportunities to contribute to projects within local plans and strategies.
- Planning policies and strategies can be found here: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-policy/Planning-policy.aspx>
- The evidence base is saved here: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-policy/Blackpool-local-plan/Evidence-base.aspx>

## Step 4: Identify opportunities for meeting Blackpool's GBI goals

- Consider the information gathered from Steps 1 - 3 to understand how the proposed development can deliver the GBI goals for Blackpool:
- Engaging People in Health and Wellbeing
- Enhance the Visitor Experience
- Greener Housing and Infrastructure
- Enabling Productive Businesses and Workers
- Promoting a Green Image and Culture
- Habitats for Wildlife and Pollinators

## Step 5: Carry out pre-application discussions with Blackpool Council

- Blackpool Council recommends applicants engage with the Council prior to submitting a planning application so that they can provide feedback and advice regarding the type of development, design and layout. Pre-application discussions provide the setting to discuss opportunities to improve the quality of GBI where low quality GBI assets are reduced in size due to proposed development. Post implementation maintenance arrangements for GBI schemes should be discussed.
- Details about pre-application discussions can be found here: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-applications/Pre-application.aspx>.

## Step 6: Carry out pre-application community involvement if the proposed development is significant

- Consulting with the local community early in the design stage of significant developments provides the opportunity for feedback about the development and GBI proposals.
- Further details about public consultation can be found here: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-applications/The-planning-application-process.aspx>

## Step 7: Submit planning application

- GBI proposals should be clearly outlined within the planning application.
- Information about what to submit with your application form is here: <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Planning-environment-and-community/Planning/Planning-applications/Local-validation-checklist.aspx>

# Annex One - Evidence Base

---

This section signposts the reader to relevant maps in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Technical Report (TEP Document Reference 6272.030) and the Updated Open Space Assessment 2018 (TEP Document Reference 6272.067).

The evidence is organised in terms of the goals and priorities described at Chapter 4 of the Strategy. In all cases, the maps should be read alongside all the other maps in the technical report as they form part of a suite of evidence. Decisions should not be based solely on one map, given the nature of GIS data underpinning each map, and the fact that GBI is a multi-functional concept.

Similarly, all the maps should be interpreted alongside the commentary in the Technical Report, especially chapters 4 and 5 which summarise consultations and spatial analysis.

## Goal: Engaging People in Health and Wellbeing

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Aesthetic Function and Aesthetic Assets Map (G6272.004)*
- *Need for Recreation Function and Recreation Assets Map (G6272.005)*
- *Need for Green Travel Route Function and Green Travel Route Assets Map (G6272.006)*
- *Need for Shading Function and Shading Assets Map (G6272.007)*
- *Need for Evaporative Cooling Function and Evaporative Cooling Assets Map (G6272.010)*
- *Need for Trapping Air Pollutants Function and Trapping Air Pollution Assets Map (G6272.009)*
- *Need for Noise Absorption Function and Noise Absorption Assets Map (G6272.012)*
- *Need for Food Production Function and Food Production Assets Map (G6272.017)*
- *Need for Learning Function and Learning Assets Map (G6272.008)*
- *Health and Wellbeing Needs Map (G6272.023)*
- *Recreation and Leisure Needs Map (G6272.025)*

The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where parks, play and sports facilities fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on health and wellbeing. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Play Area Quality Scores (G6272.060)*
- *Accessibility to Parks and Gardens (G6272.055)*
- *Accessibility to Provision for Children and Young People (G6272.056)*
- *Accessibility to Outdoor Sports Facilities (G6272.054)*

## Goal: Enhancing the Visitor Experience

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Aesthetic Function and Aesthetic Assets Map (G6272.004)*
- *Need for Recreation Function and Recreation Assets Map (G6272.005)*
- *Need for Green Travel Route Function and Green Travel Route Assets Map (G6272.006)*
- *Need for Heritage Function and Heritage Assets Map (G6272.015)*
- *Need for Culture Function and Culture Assets Map (G6272.016)*
- *Tourism Needs Map (G6272.029)*

The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where parks, play and sports facilities fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on health and wellbeing. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Play Area Quality Scores (G6272.060)*
- *Accessibility Maps (G6272.048-55)*

## Goal: Greener Housing and Infrastructure

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Aesthetic Function and Aesthetic Assets Map (G6272.004)*
- *Need for Shading Function and Shading Assets Map (G6272.007)*
- *Need for Evaporative Cooling Function and Evaporative Cooling Assets Map (G6272.010)*
- *Need for Trapping Air Pollutants Function and Trapping Air Pollution Assets Map (G6272.009)*
- *Need for Noise Absorption Function and Noise Absorption Assets Map (G6272.012)*
- *Need for Heritage Function and Heritage Assets Map (G6272.015)*
- *Need for Culture Function and Culture Assets Map (G6272.016)*
- *Need for Wind Shelter Function and Wind Shelter Assets Map (G6272.018)*
- *Quality of Place Needs Map (G6272.024)*

# Annex One - Evidence Base

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The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where open spaces fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on Quality of Place. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Play Area Quality Scores (G6272.060)*
- *Accessibility Maps (G6272.048-56)*
- *Accessibility to Natural Green Space Over 2ha (G6272.058)*
- *Accessibility to Natural Green Spaces Over 20ha (G6272.059)*

## Goal: Enabling Productive Businesses and Workers

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Aesthetic Function and Aesthetic Assets Map (G6272.004)*
- *Need for Recreation Function and Recreation Assets Map (G6272.005)*
- *Need for Learning Function and Function Assets Map (G6272.008)*
- *Economic Growth and Investment Needs Map (G6272.026)*
- *Labour Productivity Needs Map (G6272.028)*

The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where open spaces fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on Productive Businesses and Workers. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Play Area Quality Scores (G6272.060)*
- *Accessibility Maps (G6272.048-56)*

## Goal: Promoting a Greener Image and Culture

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Recreation Function and Recreation Assets (G6272.004)*
- *Need for Aesthetic Function and Aesthetic Assets Map (G6272.005)*
- *Need for Heritage Function and Heritage Assets Map (G6272.015)*
- *Need for Culture Function and Culture Assets Map (G6272.016)*
- *Need for Green Travel Route Function and Green Travel Route Assets Map (G6272.006)*
- *Quality of Place Needs Map (G6272.024)*
- *Recreation and Leisure Needs Map (G6272.025)*
- *Tourism Needs Map (G6272.029)*

The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where open spaces fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on Image and Culture. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Play Area Quality Scores (G6272.060)*
- *Accessibility Maps (G6272.048-56)*

## Goal: Improving Habitats and Benefitting Pollinators

### Evidence Base

Key maps in the technical report are:

- *Need for Trapping Air Pollution Function and Trapping Air Pollution Assets Map (G6272.009)*
- *Need for Habitat for Wildlife Function and Habitat for Wildlife Assets Map (G6272.013)*
- *Need for Connectivity for Wildlife Function and Connectivity for Wildlife Assets Map (G6272.014)*
- *Need for Food Production Function and Food Production Assets Map (G6272.017)*
- *Need for Water Infiltration Function and Water Infiltration Assets Map (G6272.021)*
- *Products from the Land Needs Map (G6272.030)*
- *Land and Biodiversity Needs Map (G6272.031)*

The 2018 open space audit also highlights areas where parks, play and sports facilities fall below standards for quantity, quality and accessibility, which can impact on health and wellbeing. Key maps in the Open Space Assessment are:

- *Open Space Provision by Ward Map (G6272.065)*
- *Quality of Open Space Spaces (G6272.057)*
- *Accessibility Maps (G6272.048-56)*

## Annex Two: References

---

1. Blackpool Council Plan 2015 to 2020
2. Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural Environment (Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 8-027-2160211)
3. HM Government (2018), A Green Future, our 25 year plan to improve the environment. Defra.
4. TEP (2017) Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy: Technical Report (report reference 6272.030) produced for Blackpool Council)
5. TEP (2018) Updated Open Space Assessment (report reference 6272.067) produced for Blackpool Council)
6. Adapted from Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural Environment (Paragraph: 030 Reference ID: 8-030-20160211)
7. Lancashire County Council Local Authority profiles, at <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/area-profiles/local-authority-profiles/blackpool.aspx>
8. TEP (2018) Updated Open Space Assessment – as reference 4 above
9. Forest Research and Treeconomics (2017) <http://www.urbantreecover.org/comparison-table/>
10. [www.blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk](http://www.blackpoolbetterstart.org.uk)
11. Destination Blackpool: Resort Place-Making 2015-2017
12. Blackpool Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012 to 2027): Policy CS1 Strategic Location of Development
13. Dadvand, P. et. al. Green Spaces and Cognitive Development in Primary Schoolchildren <http://www.pnas.org/content/112/26/7937.full.pdf>
14. Sustrans has collected a review of evidence in <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/policy-evidence/related-academic-research/health-and-active-travel>
15. Vivid Economics (2017) Natural Capital Accounting in Urban Parks. <http://www.vivideconomics.com/publications/natural-capital-accounting-in-urban-parks>
16. Blackpool Council (2016) Public Health Annual Report 2016
17. Blackpool Council Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS2 (Housing Provision)
18. Data from Employee Volunteering (a Community Interest Company) <http://www.employeevolunteering.co.uk/benefits-to-business.html>
19. Lancashire County Council (2016) Summary of the County Agricultural Sector
20. Defra (2014) National Pollinator Strategy
21. Lancashire County Council (2000) A landscape strategy for Lancashire







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|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>           |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | Nancy Palmer, Independent Chair of Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | 15 November 2018   |

## BLACKPOOL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

1.1 To receive and consider the annual report of the Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1
- To review the report, asking questions of content.
  - To identify any further information and/or actions required.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To fully consider the content of the annual report and raise and discuss key information.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

Other alternative options considered: None

### 4.0 Council Priority:

- 4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

### 5.0 Background Information

5.1 All Local Safeguarding Children Boards have a statutory responsibility to publish an annual report that "provide[s] a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services... [to] identify areas of weakness, the causes of

those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them”.

5.2 The full report is attached at Appendix 7(a). Ms Nancy Palmer, Independent Chair of the Blackpool Safeguarding Children’s Board will be in attendance at the meeting to present the report.

6.0 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7(a): BSCB Annual Report 2017-2018

**8.0 Legal considerations:**

8.1 None

**9.0 Human Resources considerations:**

9.1 None

**10.0 Equalities considerations:**

10.1 None

**11.0 Financial considerations:**

11.1 None

**12.0 Risk management considerations:**

12.1 None

**13.0 Ethical considerations:**

13.1 None

**14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

14.1 None

**15.0 Background papers:**

15.1 None

# BLACKPOOL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2017–2018



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# FOREWORD FROM THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR

I am pleased to present the Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) Annual Report for the reporting year 2017-18.

This has been a year of change for BSCB, starting with the retirement of the Independent Chair David Sanders at the end of October 2017 and my appointment to replace him with effect from 1st November. I would like to take this opportunity to thank David, on behalf of all BSCB partners, for his valuable contribution to the work of the Board.

In the latter half of the year a review of the subgroups was undertaken in order to rationalise the work and enable partner contributions to become more proportionate by reducing their time commitment. The subgroups were reduced from ten to four, without losing any of the key work undertaken.

Attendance has remained problematic for some BSCB partners, particularly in relation to the subgroups where the LSCB's strategic aims and work programme are progressed. I am hopeful that the reduction in subgroups and attendance demands on time will enable improved attendance to be reported in our next annual report.

2017-18 has been another year of progress for BSCB. All key priority areas have been advanced alongside all other areas of regular business. The BSCB has responded effectively to all new local and national challenges. Another successful training programme has been delivered and evaluated. The Board has responded appropriately to all serious incidents and lessons have been identified.

This report gives a clear reflection of the totality of the work undertaken by BSCB in the 2017-18 period and the multi-agency working to safeguard children is brought to life in the practice examples outlined in the report.

As we move into another challenging year and another year of great change for the Board, I would like to thank all colleagues for their contribution to another good year and their continued commitment to keeping children in Blackpool safe.



**Nancy Palmer**  
**Independent Chair**  
**Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board**

## Executive summary

This is the statutory annual report of Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) in which we are required to review our work in 2017-18 and make an assessment as to the effectiveness of the services that have a statutory duty to keep children safe in Blackpool.

The report begins with an overview of **Who we are and what we do** which covers the statutory framework under which we operate, our governance and financial arrangements and how we plan our business. This has been a year of change with a new Independent Chair coming into role and BSCB members agreeing to a new governance structure and business plan.

An understanding of **Blackpool: the place and its people** is central to the effectiveness of our work. Demographically, we continue to be characterised by a stable child population, primarily of white British origin. Blackpool, as a whole, continues to experience long-standing high levels of deprivation that mean that nearly a third of our children will grow up in poverty. The population of Blackpool does however, enjoy good access to housing and services.

An understanding of **Safeguarding in Blackpool: need, demand, pressure and performance** gives some cause for optimism in that the number of children in need of help and protection declined during the latter months of the reporting period. This has been due to a concerted effort by the Children's Improvement Board to understand and manage demand at each stage of the system. The need for ongoing effort in this respect is underscored by a rate of children, at each stage of the safeguarding system, considerably in excess of national and statistical neighbour comparators.

Having considered the system as a whole, the report continues to review **How we are doing as a partnership** in respect of some key priority areas. During the reporting period BSCB re-launched its thresholds document and agreed a pan-Lancashire continuum of need, which provide the framework for the partnership's response to children who require early help and protection. A significant number of practitioner briefings were delivered as part of the launch, with the processes now forming an integral part of our ongoing training programme. While we have reviewed the use of the new assessment and referral forms as part of an audit, the need for more robust data in respect of the number of children receiving early help is acknowledged. The partnership response to children at risk of child sexual exploitation and of going missing from home or care is reviewed, with a particular reference to awareness raising activity and our work to develop our understanding of the effectiveness of the partnership response and the experiences of children.

BSCB had agreed a neglect strategy prior to the start of the year and has continued to offer training in respect of neglect assessment tools. We have sought to measure the use of these during the year and continue to work to embed a consistent and robust approach to neglect. Finally, considerable progress is noted in the development of the partnership response to domestic abuse, including our being part of the first county to achieve white-ribbon accreditation to promote our work to end violence against women and girls.

We also highlight the work of our partner agencies on an individual basis in reviewing **Our partner's activities**. This includes new models of delivery from a Children's Centre, an enhanced health visiting offer and the ongoing development of the Better Start programme through which the Baby Steps programme is now offered to all new parents in Blackpool.

The **Learning and Improvement Framework** is central to the work of the Board as the means by which we collate all our review and audit work. While we have not published any new serious case reviews during the reporting period, we have made good progress to deliver actions from previous published reviews, including through improved practices in strategy meetings and child protection planning. Our audit programme has similarly driven changes to pre-birth child protection processes and resulted in the commissioning of intra-familial child sexual abuse training. Our training programme continues to be in high demand, with more practitioners trained this year than in any beforehand. This is supported by work to better understand the effectiveness of our training in making changes to practice and the lives of children in Blackpool.

Finally, we review **Participation** work in which we seek to understand the experiences of children growing up in Blackpool. Our Pupil Voice Group reached a natural conclusion at the start of the year, however this was not before the views of the children involved, including where they did and did not feel safe, were reported to the appropriate forums. We will seek to re-establish this area of work in forthcoming months and use this to complement the work of our Multi-Professional Discussion Forums in which we explore the experiences of frontline practitioners in Blackpool.



# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

## What is an LSCB?

A Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a multi-agency body whose role is to oversee, co-ordinate, challenge and scrutinise the work of all professionals and organisations in Blackpool to protect children in the town from abuse and neglect, and to help all children grow up safe, happy, and with the maximum opportunity to realise their potential. It is a statutory body, established under the Children Act 2004. Under the Act every upper-tier local authority in England is required to establish an LSCB with two primary purposes:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local authority area; and
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for these purposes.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), which is statutory government guidance, further expand the role and responsibilities of LSCBs. In particular, the Regulations set out the functions of LSCB as being:

- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area;
- Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
- Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
- Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

However, Working Together also makes clear that “LSCBs do not commission or deliver front line services though they may provide training. While LSCB do not have the power to direct other organisations they do have a role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board partner retains its own existing line of accountability for safeguarding”.

Every LSCB is required to publish an Annual Report. The purpose of the Annual Report, as set out in Working Together, is to “provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the actions being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period”. The report should include information on the LSCB’s assessment of the effectiveness of Board partners’ response to child sexual exploitation (CSE), and appropriate data on children missing from care, and how the LSCB is addressing the issue.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 received Royal Assent in April 2017. The Act replaces LSCBs with Safeguarding Partnerships that are the joint responsibility of the local authority, clinical commissioning group and chief officer of police for the area. Following the publication of the revised version of Working Together to Safeguard Children in the summer of 2018, the safeguarding partners have been given until the 29th June 2019 to publish their plans for future multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, with an expectation that they will be implemented within three months of publication. Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) has actively engaged in consultations in respect of the new arrangements and has supported the safeguarding partners to begin to explore successor arrangements for Blackpool.

## Who are we?

BSCB comprises of a range of partner agencies (full membership is detailed in appendix A), all of whom have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Blackpool. They are all committed to the effective operation of BSCB.

A number of our partner agencies have a statutory responsibility to sit on BSCB (for example the local authority, police, health organisations, probation and Cafcass), while others have been invited to do so due to the significance of their work in Blackpool (for example Blackpool Coastal Housing and NSPCC). While there were a number of in year changes in schools' representation on the Strategic Board, BSCB was compliant with statutory requirements in respect of partner agency membership throughout the reporting period.

BSCB is led by an Independent Chair who is able to provide an external perspective, by which impartial challenge can be brought to any member agency. Our Chair of three years, David Sanders' term of office ended in October 2017 and the role was assumed by Nancy Palmer. Nancy has considerable experience of this role in other local authority areas and is currently also the Chair of Blackburn with Darwen LSCB. She promotes the work of BSCB through regular attendance at other strategic boards and through regular meetings with senior managers in partner agencies, schools and other bodies that have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

It is a statutory requirement that LSCB should take reasonable steps to appoint two lay members to make links with community groups, support stronger public engagement and improve local understanding of safeguarding children. Lay members act as independent voices within the Board to question decision making and hold agencies to account. Both BSCB lay members resigned during the reporting period and, given the forthcoming dissolution of the LSCB, a decision was taken not to recruit successors.

## Relationships

Nancy Palmer is accountable to Blackpool Council's chief executive, Neil Jack, for the effective functioning of BSCB. In turn, political oversight is provided by Cllr Graham Cain, who sits as a participating observer on the BSCB Strategic Board.

BSCB is part of the broader local partnership architecture which promotes the health and wellbeing of all Blackpool residents. As well as BSCB, this includes the statutory bodies of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB), of which Nancy Palmer is also chair. In addition, Blackpool Council's multi-agency Children's Improvement Board drives the ongoing development of broader children's services. There is understandably a degree of overlap between the work (and membership) of these boards and their chairs have regular meetings to co-ordinate their work and to avoid duplication. BSCB and BSAB meet on the same day which means that a joint session of the two boards can consider items of mutual interest, when necessary.

The Independent Chair and business manager also regularly participate in meetings with their counterparts from Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire to ensure that a co-ordinated response is taken to issues that extend beyond Blackpool. This assists our partner agencies, the majority of whom have a geographical footprint that extends beyond Blackpool. A pan-Lancashire Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) has been in place since 2011, while formal arrangements are in place for the sharing of multi-agency policies and procedures, including, from 2017, a shared continuum of need.

## Structure

The work of BSCB is driven by the Strategic Board, which met on a quarterly basis during 2017-18 (this represents a reduction from bi-monthly meetings during previous years). Strategic Board members are senior managers from partner agencies who are able to make decisions on behalf of their agency and ensure that their agency abides by the decisions of the Board.

The delivery of specific elements of the BSCB Business Plan and other statutory functions are delegated to subgroups, some of which are held on a joint basis with BSAB, or with Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire LSCBs. Subgroups are chaired by Strategic Board members with the necessary expertise to tackle the area in question, while members are drawn from the agencies considered necessary for the subgroup to meet its objectives. All subgroup chairs are members of the Business Management Group (BMG), which co-ordinates their work and monitors business plan delivery.

Following the appointment of Nancy Palmer and a new Director of Children's Services, Diane Booth, BSCB took the opportunity to review its scope and functioning. It consequently reduced the number of subgroups from eleven to four (albeit with the Multi-Agency Audit Group becoming a subgroup of the Performance Management and Evaluation Group). This has allowed an increased focus on the core business of LSCBs and building its effectiveness in these roles. The work of disbanded subgroups had either reached a natural conclusion, was handed on to other strategic boards or continued within the new structure. The work of the subgroups is referenced throughout this report and a structure chart is included as Appendix B.

## Business Planning

During the reporting period BSCB worked to a two year business plan which had been agreed in March 2017. The plan was split into five priority areas:

- Understanding safeguarding needs
- Early help and thresholds of need
- Safeguarding children with specific needs
- Addressing specific risk factors
- BSCB governance and statutory functions.

Progress against the business plan was reviewed at every BMG meeting, with slippages identified and corrective actions agreed. The business plan was always intended to be a dynamic document, with some areas of working being completed in a way that was not originally envisaged and with others assuming greater or lesser degrees of importance. At the end of the reporting period 75% of the original 81 actions due to be completed within the reporting period had been signed off. The bulk of actions not completed related to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and the delivery of early help.

As previously noted, BSCB took the opportunity to review its structure and the scope of its work during the autumn period. This resulted in a decision to develop a new business plan for 2018-19 (Appendix C) which focuses on the core LSCB functions of the co-ordination of work to safeguard children and holding partner agencies to account for the effectiveness of their work. This represents a stepping back from more operational concerns and has been made possible by a confidence in the Children's Improvement Board to progress work in relation to the front door and early help (see Chapter 4, below), coupled with a recognition that the SEND board can and will report any concerns in respect of safeguarding.

## Attendance at Board Meetings

The acceptable minimum attendance rate for the named representative at board and subgroup meetings is 75%. The Independent Chair and subgroup chairs challenge attendance likely to fall below the acceptable rate throughout the year. The attendance of the named representative at Strategic Board and subgroups is recorded below; although on many occasions when the named representative was unable to attend a deputy did so. In order to focus on those statutorily required to attend and for the sake of brevity, agencies that solely attend subgroups have been omitted. The majority of agencies met the acceptable attendance threshold for Strategic Board, and while subgroup attendance was less satisfactory it is envisaged that the rationalisation in the number of subgroups will improve this position.

| Agency  | Board | BMG  | PMEG | CSE  | Training |
|---|-------|------|------|------|----------|
| Blackpool Council – Elected Member                              | 100%  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Council – Director of Children’s Services             | 75%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Council – Children’s Services (other representatives) | 100%  | 100% | 100% | 100% | 40%      |
| Blackpool Council – Early Help                                  | 50%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Council – Youth Offending Team                        | 25%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Council – Schools Improvement                         | 100%  | 25%  | 20%  | n/a  | 20%      |
| Blackpool Council – Public Health                               | 100%  | 50%  | 80%  | 75%  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Council – Leisure, Catering and Illuminations         | 75%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Lancashire Constabulary – Western Division                      | 50%   | 75%  | 40%  | 25%  | n/a      |
| Lancashire Constabulary – HQ Public Protection Unit             | 25%   | n/a  | n/a  | 75%  | 60%      |
| Blackpool CCG – Chief Nurse                                     | 50%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool CCG – Designated Nurse                                | 100%  | 75%  | 80%  | n/a  | 60%      |
| Blackpool CCG – Designated Doctor                               | 100%  | 50%  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust               | 75%   | 50%  | 40%  | 75%  | 60%      |
| Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust                            | 75%   | n/a  | 20%  | n/a  | 100%     |
| NHS England   | 75%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Company         | 100%  | n/a  | n/a  | 75%  | 20%      |
| HM Prison and Probation Service                                 | 75%   | 50%  | n/a  | 75%  | 100%     |
| Blackpool Coastal Housing                                       | 100%  | n/a  | 60%  | n/a  | 60%      |
| Schools   | 50%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| NSPCC   | 75%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |
| Cafcass   | 75%   | n/a  | n/a  | n/a  | n/a      |

## Budget

Funding for BSCB continues to be provided by a core group of partners, with some income generated through charging for non-attendance at training courses. Increases in contribution from Blackpool Council and Lancashire Constabulary are gratefully acknowledged at a time of financial constraint. The contribution of other resources 'in kind' by the wider partnership is likewise acknowledged and consists of time taken by staff to attend and chair meetings, participation in our pool of trainers and the use of buildings.

### Income and Expenditure Summary

| Income                          |         | Expenditure          |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|
| Blackpool Council               | 104,183 | Staff costs          | 142,425 |
| Blackpool CCG                   | 51,867  | Independent Chair    | 20,709  |
| Lancashire Constabulary         | 30,975  | Training             | 18,081  |
| Blackpool Coastal Housing       | 5,000   | Board support costs  | 12,157  |
| Cumbria and Lancashire CRC      | 2,565   | Serious Case Reviews | 35,284  |
| HM Prison and Probation Service | 1,710   |                      |         |
| CAFCASS                         | 550     |                      |         |
| Training income                 | 4,049   |                      |         |
|                                 | 200,899 |                      | 228,656 |

Board staffing costs remain the greatest area of expenditure and have remained stable throughout the reporting period. The overspend noted above was anticipated in our last annual report and has primarily arisen due to the number of serious case reviews that we have been required to commission (see Chapter 6). This is also likely to be the case in 2018-19 and will be met out of reserves.

### The LSCB team

The work of BSCB is supported by a small business unit, which is merged with that of BSAB to provide additional resilience. The staffing structure and personnel have remained the same throughout the reporting period. The BSCB element of the team consists of:

- A Business Development Manager
- 0.8 Full-time equivalent (FTE) Training Co-ordinators
- 0.95 FTE Democratic Governance Advisors to support meetings
- 0.5 FTE Analyst
- 0.5 FTE Training Administrator

# BLACKPOOL: THE PLACE AND ITS PEOPLE

Blackpool is a seaside town in the north-west of England. Its population of 139,195 people, living within an area of just under 13.5 square miles, renders it one of the most densely populated areas outside London. Transience is a significant feature of the town, with 6% of the population estimated to have moved out of the area in 2016 and the equivalent of 5.5% having moved in. According to the 2011 census 8% of the population had also moved within the town during the past year.

Blackpool experiences considerable levels of deprivation, which have increased in recent years. The English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2015) record that 38.3% of smaller areas within Blackpool are within the most deprived 10% nationwide, while 20.2% are within the most deprived 1%. In contrast, none is in the most affluent 20%. The impact of this is that 22% of children live in workless households and 32% in poverty (in a household with an income of less than 60% of the median), compared to 20.1% nationally. The one area within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in which Blackpool ranks amongst the most favourable in England is Barriers to Housing and Services, and some of the wealth of service provision is reflected throughout this report.

There are approximately 28,605 children aged under 18 resident in Blackpool, making up 20.5% of the population. Overall, the 65+ age group is the most over-represented in Blackpool and is expected to further increase in the forthcoming decade, while the child (and overall) population declines. Life expectancy for children born in Blackpool between 2014 and 2016 is estimated to be 74.2 and 79.5 for boys and girls respectively, compared with 79.5 and 83.1 nationally.

Within Blackpool there were 1,873 children in need as of 31st March 2018 (2017: 2,119), equating to 641 per 10,000 of the population (2017: 739). This is considerably in excess of both the national average of 330 and that our statistical neighbours of 512 (2017 figures). Put in different terms, in Blackpool, in every class of 30 children, two will have a social worker.



# SAFEGUARDING IN BLACKPOOL: NEED, DEMAND, PRESSURE AND PERFORMANCE

The vast majority of children in Blackpool will grow up to be happy and healthy and make a successful transition from education into employment and adulthood. These children will only ever come into contact with universally provided health and education services. When it becomes apparent that extra intervention is needed to keep a child safe and promote their welfare, that decision is based on the pan-Lancashire Continuum of Need, which was introduced in September 2017 (see Chapter 4 below). A guiding principle to working with children and families who do need extra help is that the minimum level of intervention necessary should be provided at the earliest possible opportunity.

BSCB seeks to monitor activity at each stage of the safeguarding system to assure itself that interventions are effective and that children are kept safe. The overall picture is, and has been for some years, one of considerably more children in the system, at every stage, than would be expected in comparison to national averages and our statistical neighbours (a comparator group of local authorities with similar demographics).

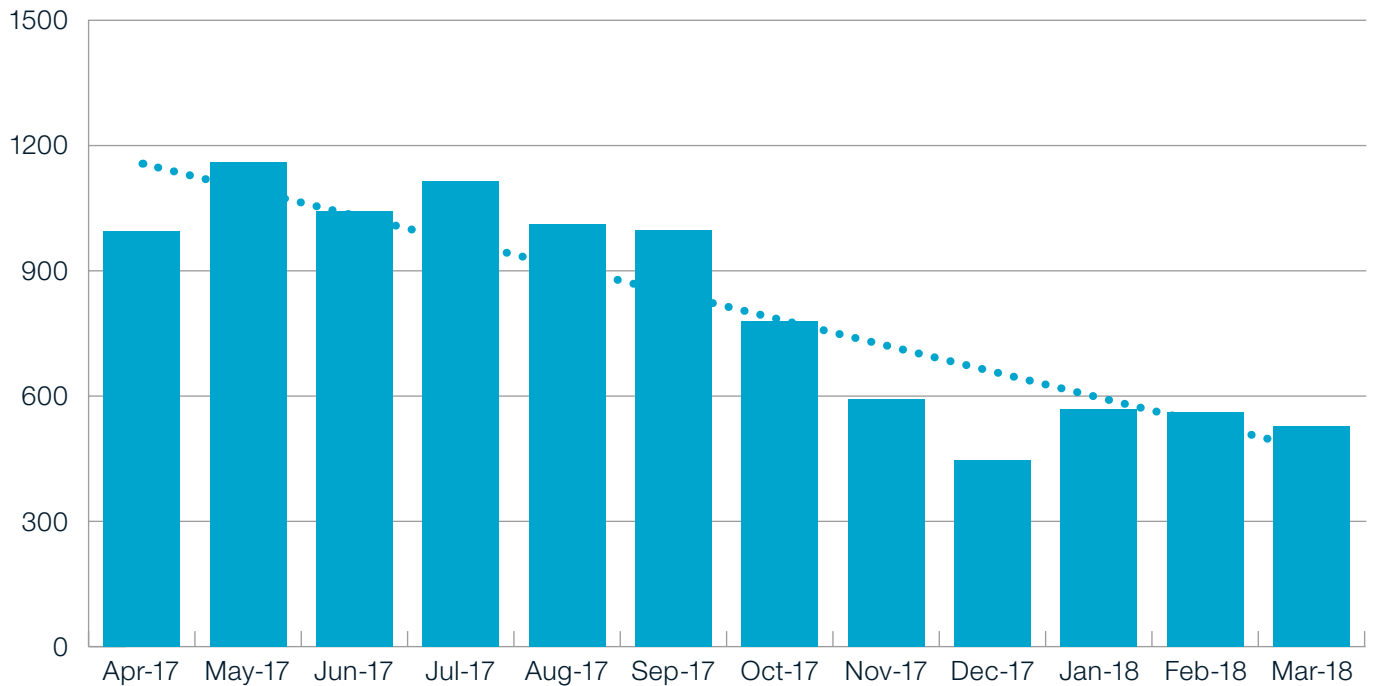
The reporting period has seen a concerted effort led by Children's Services, and supported by the partnership, to change the systems and culture that have fostered the current position. This work has been predicated on the basis that while Blackpool's demographics are such that a higher rate of children might be expected within the safeguarding system than the national average, it is not unique and should not be conspicuously out of line with all other areas. Work has therefore focussed on developing a better understanding of the demand for services and how this can be safely reduced, while keep the best interests of children at heart. By the end of the reporting period there were clear signs of progress, however this is a piece of work that will take a longer period to produce stable and sustainable outcomes.



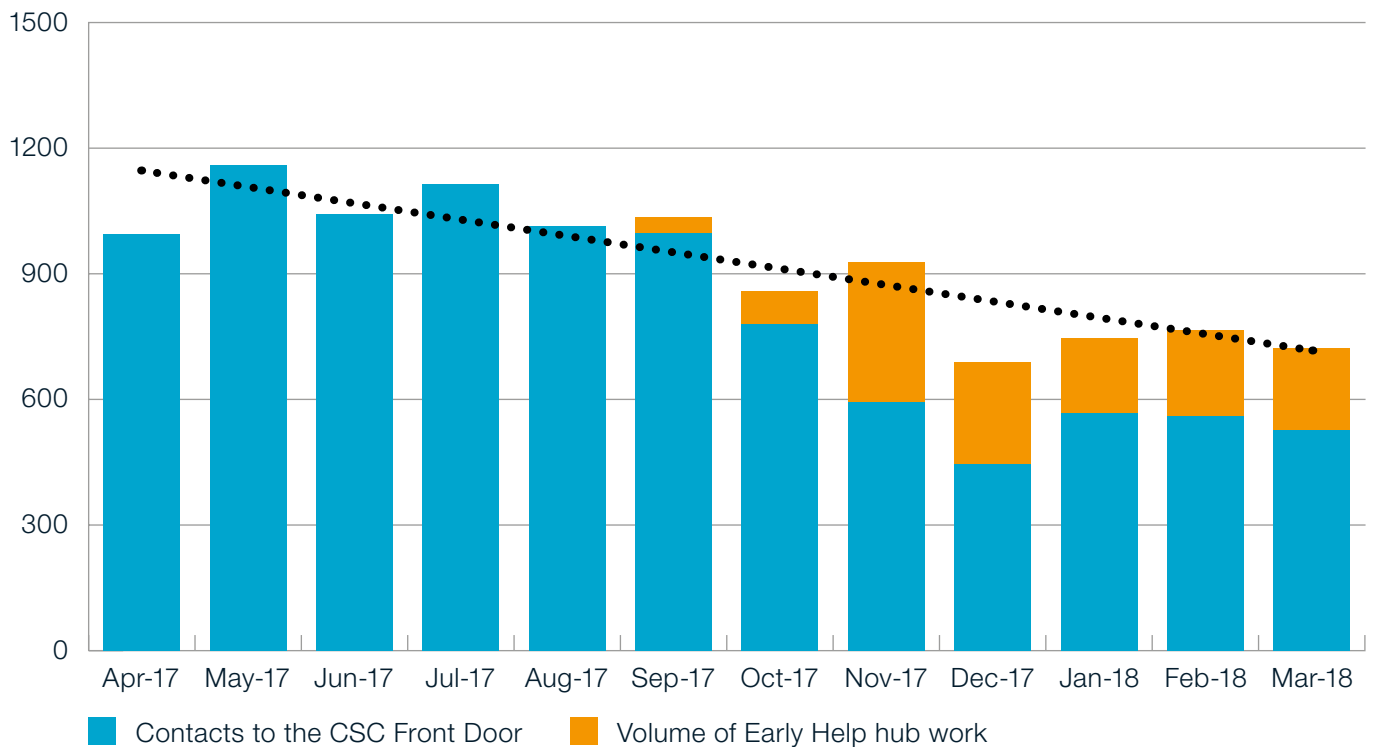
## Early Help

Early Help is the level of provision between universal services and statutory intervention under the Children Act. It is expected to be provided by the best-placed professional already involved with the family, in partnership with whichever other agencies are needed to support the family to make the necessary changes. A lack of overall data in respect of early help provision remains a significant gap in our understanding of safeguarding need in Blackpool and consequently the effectiveness of the whole system. Without understanding the numbers of children in this part of the system, the conclusion that high demand for statutory services stems from ineffective early help provision cannot be discounted.

An early outcome of the work to manage and reduce demand was the creation of the Early Help Hub, which receives standard risk Police Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) referrals and has more recently become a point of support and advice for all agencies delivering early help. Its creation has resulted in a reduction in the number of contacts to the Children's Services Front Door to 9,798 in 2017-18 from 12,519 in 2016-17 (2015-16: 10,115). The annual figure masks a more pronounced monthly reduction though:



However, when the volume of work received by the early help hub is included, it becomes evident that the reduction in the level of demand is more modest:



The introduction of the Early Help Hub has clearly reduced pressure on the Front Door and provided a means by which agencies can receive appropriate support to deliver early help. However, work remains to be done to change the culture of high demand for support. This requires a longer-term approach to empower both families and practitioners to make and sustain changes without the need for higher tier services.



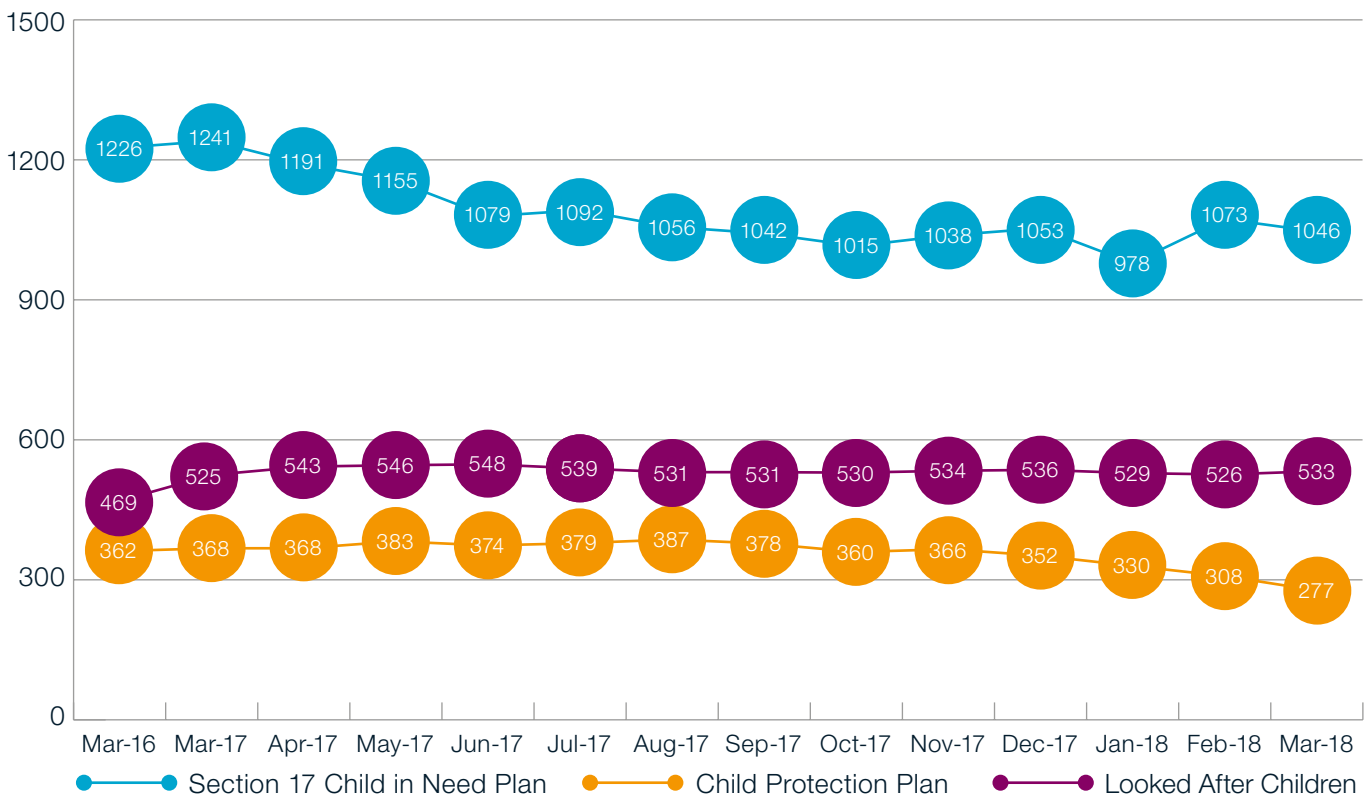
## Referrals and assessments for statutory services

More effective triaging at the Front Door, and signposting to the Early Help Hub, has also resulted in a reduction in the number of referrals to 2,726 (2017: 3,347), which represents annual conversion rate from contacts of 27.8%. While the annual rate remains in line with the last five years, the monthly rate has steadily increased and averaged 38% in quarter 4. This indicates that contacts to the Front Door are increasingly meeting the threshold for a referral, which suggests that work is being more effectively triaged to the parts of the system where it should be and that partner agencies are making more effective threshold judgements. In turn, this frees up practitioners at the Front Door to concentrate on the work that needs their intervention. The rate of referral at 953 per 10,000 child population (2017: 1,167) does remain significantly higher than in England (548) and our statistical neighbours (618) though. The proportion of repeat referrals (within 12 months of a previous referral) remains unchanged at 24%, which is higher than national (21.9%) and statistical neighbour (16.6%) comparators. This is an area that requires further work to understand and address.

Further assurance in respect of the judgements of referring practitioners is provided by 83% of referrals resulting in a Child and Family Assessment (2017: 56%), although 35.5% were subsequently deemed not to be in need of further intervention which suggests that some assessments are being undertaken unnecessarily. When there are indicators that a child has been or is at risk of being significantly harmed the referral will trigger a section 47 enquiry. The rate of section 47 enquiries undertaken in Blackpool has consistently been the most disproportionately high indicator, at 690 in 2016-17 compared with 157 nationally and 226 in our statistical neighbours. A Children's Services internal audit of decision making and practices around section 47 enquiries has resulted in changes to practices, particularly in respect of enquiries on open cases and has resulted in a reduction in the number completed to 1,463 (2017: 1,978), which represents a rate of 511. The need for ongoing work in this respect is emphasised though by the conversion rate from section 47 enquiry to initial child protection conference (ICPC) of 33.7% (2017: 33.5%), set aside statistical neighbour (40.1%) and national (41.5%) comparators.

## Children in Need

A concerted effort has also been made to safely reduce the number of Children in Need, which has been successful, insofar as the overall number has reduced from 2,119 on 31st March 2017 to 1,834 on 31st March 2018. This overall reduction hides the relative changes in those subject to section 17 Child in Need plans, Child Protection plans and Looked After Children:



<sup>1</sup> All comparator data in this report is for 2016-17

An initial reduction was therefore achieved in the number of children subject to a section 17 Child in Need plan, while Child Protection plans and Looked After Children peaked in May and June, respectively. A more recent reduction in the number of children subject to Child Protection plans has been achieved by reviewing thresholds, earlier escalation of plans that are not progressing and the introduction of the Risk Sensible model, which promotes a clearer focus on high risk indicators in decision making. However, this has resulted in more children being subject to section 17 Child in Need plans, which would be expected. There continues to be a disproportionately high, albeit reducing, proportion of child protection plans open for less than three months (22.2%, compared to 20.2% nationally) and children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time (22.4%, compared to 18.7% nationally). The former could be indicative of children being made subject to child protection plans unnecessarily, or that they are ending too early, while the latter suggests that some plans are ending at a too early stage for changes to have been embedded.

The number of Looked After Children has proved more difficult to reduce, although the number starting to be looked after has reduced to 212 during 2017-18 from 267 in 2016-17. This did not reduce the overall number though due to the number ceasing to be looked after also reducing from 215 to 208. It is anticipated that the number of Looked After Children will start to reduce though in forthcoming months though, with discharge plans having been put in place, and additional resources provided to the relevant teams, to secure permanent arrangements for appropriately identified children who are already in care or going through care proceedings.

Further assurance that children receive interventions at the right level has been provided by a Children's Services audit of children subject to section 17 Child in Need plans, completed shortly after the end of the reporting period. This found that of the 343 children audited, 278 were at the right level, 6 should be stepped up and 59 stepped down to early help or universal provision (this judgement is based on current levels of need so does not reflect on the initial decision making).

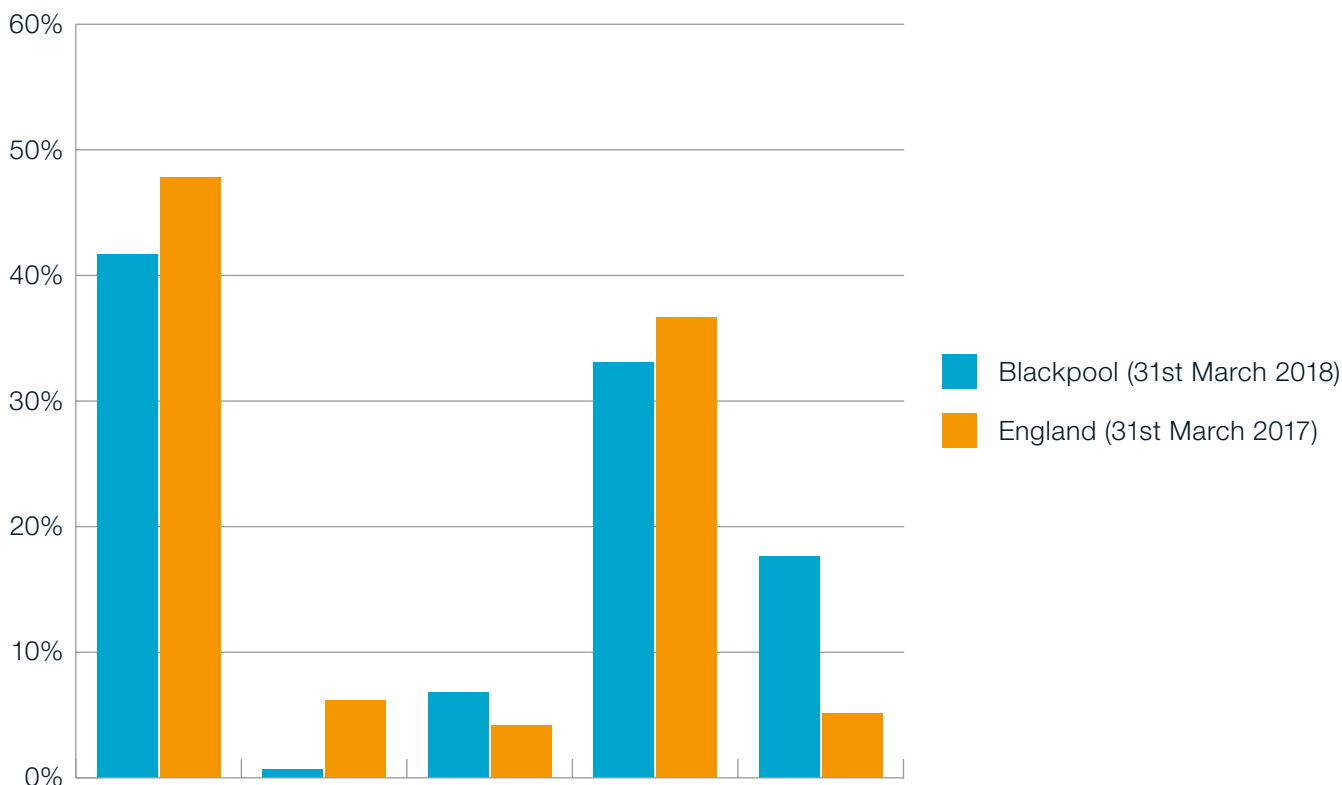
After a number of years of increasing levels of demand and numbers of children in receipt of statutory services the above analysis does provide some cause for optimism. However, when set aside national and statistical neighbours (SN) the need for ongoing work in this respect remains evident.

| Rate per 10,000 child population of | Blackpool (2018) | England (2017) | SN (2017) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Child in Need (all)                 | 641              | 330            | 512       |
| Child Protection Plan               | 97               | 43             | 67        |
| Looked After Child                  | 188              | 62             | 97        |



## Characteristics of children subject to Child Protection plans

All child protection plans record one or more categories of abuse which, when viewed as a whole, enables an understanding of the risks that children face. The following graph provides a breakdown of the latest recorded category of abuse for children subject to a child protection plan on the 31st March 2018:



Blackpool had had a long-standing practice of routinely recording multiple categories of abuse, which was stopped during the reporting period. This has resulted in an in year reduction from 48.2% of plans having multiple categories to 17.6% and it is anticipated that this should eventually reduce to nearer the national average of 5.1%, at which point more meaningful comparisons will be possible of the prevalence of the types of abuse and neglect. This changing practice renders comparisons with earlier years in Blackpool invalid, although the long-standing dominance of plans for neglect and emotional abuse (which is reflected nationally) continues. An earlier BSCB audit of plans for emotional abuse suggested that the vast majority were due, at least in part, to domestic abuse and the prevalence of this as an issue has remained with domestic abuse flagged as an issue on 57.8% of child protection plans.

We can say with a greater degree of certainty that the age range of children subject to child protection plans in Blackpool coincides with that expected nationally, as indicated below. The increase in unborn children and babies subject to plans potentially reflects work to improve practice in this respect as a consequence of recent serious case reviews and BSCB audits (see Chapter 6 below). There remains a slightly higher number of boys subject to child protection plans (53.6%), which is reflected nationally, although this has tended to fluctuate (in Blackpool) over the longer term. Our last annual report could not reach any conclusions as to whether the ethnicity of children subject to child protection plans in Blackpool reflected the local population due to poor recording. This has improved in the last year and it is now possible to say that the 93.5% of White British children subject to plans does reflect the local population.

| Age of children subject to child protection plan at year end | Blackpool 2017/18 | Blackpool 2016/17 | England 2016/17 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Unborn   | 2.9%              | 1.1%              | 2.2%            |
| Under 1 year   | 11.2%             | 8.4%              | 9.7%            |
| 1 – 4 years  | 25.9%             | 24.4%             | 26.5%           |
| 5 – 9 years  | 26.3%             | 29.3%             | 29.6%           |
| 10 – 15 years  | 29.9%             | 32.5%             | 28.0%           |
| 16 – 17 years  | 4.0%              | 4.3%              | 3.9%            |

## Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one in which a child under 16 (or 18, if disabled) is looked after, or planned to be looked after, for over 28 days by someone other than a close relative. Any such arrangement should be notified to the local authority, in order for them to be satisfied that the child is safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

From a starting position of 8 private fostering arrangements that were in place in April 2017, 11 commenced and 10 ended during the year, leaving 9 in place at the end of March 2017. The majority of private fostering arrangements are of older children staying with members of their wider family, with no dominant themes evident amongst the reasons for the arrangements.

The number of reported private fostering arrangements in Blackpool during the last five years has remained low and fairly static, which mirrors the position in the wider region. Research undertaken by Ofsted suggests that raising the awareness of practitioners is more effective than public awareness raising campaigns in increasing the reporting of private fostering arrangements. BSCB therefore continues to promote the reporting of private fostering arrangements through its inclusion in the thresholds document and in a number of our training courses. We have additionally discussed the topic in our schools' twilight meetings and started collecting private fostering data in our s175 audit programme (see Chapter 6 below). As the Ofsted research suggests, the lack of a public awareness raising campaign during the reporting period had no apparent impact on the number of reported arrangements, in comparison to 2015-16 when an awareness raising campaign was last delivered.

## Performance

Despite the number of children receiving statutory safeguarding interventions, indicators in respect of the performance of the system continue to compare favourably to those seen nationally and amongst our statistical neighbours. This is evident from the point of initial assessment, through to children leaving care and in the services delivered by our health partners.

|  | Blackpool 2017/18 | England 2016/17 | SN 2016/17 |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Child and Family Assessments completed within 45 working days  | 77.9%             | 82.9%           | 77.0%      |
| ICPC held within 15 working days of the start of the s47 enquiry   | 93.6%             | 77.2%           | 79.3%      |
| Proportion of children ceasing to be looked after who were adopted in the year                               | 17.3%             | 14.0%           | 17.5%      |
| Proportion of children ceasing to be looked after who were subject to Special Guardianship Order in the year | 21.2%             | 11.3%           | 10.5%      |
| Looked after children with a completed annual health assessment  | 93.7%             | 90.0%           | n/a        |
| Looked after children with a completed annual dental assessment  | 96.1%             | 84.1%           | n/a        |

## Other safeguarding indicators

There is less data available in respect of the demands of safeguarding work in other agencies, although the children, at each stage of the system noted above, do require a multi-agency response to ensure that they are safe. More generally, we know that children and young adults in Blackpool are more likely to be admitted to hospital as a consequence of alcohol and substance misuse, mental health conditions and self-harm, and that the rate in the latter three categories is the highest nationally (although the most recently available data relates to 2016-17). This area has been subject to long standing BSCB monitoring and challenge and while we do understand that admissions practices in our acute hospital trust have played a part, it does remain an area of concern. It is therefore encouraging to note reduced admissions in respect of self-harm which is, in part, due to the success of the Child and Adolescent Support and Help Emergency Response (CASHER).

| Rate of hospital admissions per 100,000 population | Blackpool 2016/17 | Blackpool 2015/16 | England 2016/17 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| As a result of self-harm (10-24 year olds)         | 1,156.8           | 1,444.7           | 404.6           |
| Due to mental health conditions (0-17 year olds)   | 188.8             | 149.9             | 81.5            |
| Due to substance misuse (15-24 year olds)          | 339.0             | 345.3             | 89.8            |
| Due to alcohol misuse (under 18 year olds)         | 74.3              | n/a               | 34.2            |



# HOW WE ARE DOING AS A PARTNERSHIP

## Early Help

The provision of early help to children and families is a key means by which longer term harm to children can be forestalled and the demand for higher tier, more invasive, interventions can be reduced. The need for effective early help in Blackpool is emphasised by the high number of children who require protection, as outlined in Chapter 3, above. BSCB consequently needs to assure itself that early help is available to all children and families with emerging needs and that only those in genuine need of statutory intervention are referred and worked with at a higher level.

## Continuum of Need

Working Together requires LSCBs to publish a thresholds document that sets out the process for the assessment and delivery of early help, together with the criteria for statutory intervention. Work had been underway for a number of months at the beginning of the reporting period to develop and pilot an updated thresholds document, including a shared continuum of need (CON) with our pan-Lancashire colleagues. The adoption of a shared CON means that children will receive the same level of intervention to meet their needs irrespective of where they live, or move, within the wider Lancashire area. This simplification of matters for practitioners who work across local authority boundaries is further enhanced by the adoption of common information sharing guidance.

## Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool

The revised thresholds document, Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool, was agreed by BSCB in May 2017 with an implementation date of 1st September. In addition to the pan-Lancashire CON, the document provides the process that multi-agency practitioners are required to use to deliver early help. Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool utilises the Resilient Therapy approach that underpins the Head Start programme. Practitioners are consequently expected to identify, and build on, positive resilient factors and to weigh these against needs and risks in making their decision as to where a child sits on the CON.

BSCB also responded to the overwhelming feedback from professionals that the existing Getting it Right (combined early help assessment and referral) form was overly long and complicated. We consequently developed separate and shorter Early Help Assessment (EHA), Early Help Meeting Record and Multi-Agency Referral Forms, which were introduced alongside Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool. The new documentation was predicated on the availability of support for multi-agency practitioners to deliver early help. This was initially provided through the Children's Services Front Door and has subsequently been transferred to the new Early Help Hub. Peer support for practitioners has also been provided through the development of the Early Help Support Network, which has initially been led by the local authority Families in Need team. The one meeting during the reporting period was attended by 45 practitioners from a wide range of agencies. They have agreed to meet on a quarterly basis to network, share good practice and discuss common challenges.

During the months preceding, and subsequent to, the launch of Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool, BSCB delivered briefings to 78 managers and 704 practitioners. This has been supported by Board members promoting its use within their own agencies and briefings that have been included within newsletters for General Practitioners and School Governors. The documentation is integral to all ongoing BSCB training and will be covered in a more detailed course, entitled The Blackpool Way, that will also cover Resilient Therapy and Risk Sensible and is due to be launched in autumn 2018.

In order to ascertain the effectiveness of the new approach an audit of EHA was completed by the BSCB Multi-Agency Audit Group in March 2018. This reviewed 25 EHAs that had been completed by a range of partner agencies, which did provide an initial positive indication that the forms were being widely used and early help delivered. Examples were identified of good quality EHA that provided holistic assessments of all children and family members and which drew on multi-agency information that flowed through into action plans. However, it was disappointing to note that only 7 were considered to be good, with 13 requiring improvement and 5 inadequate. Common areas of concern were the use of the form solely as a referral to statutory services and a seeming lack of understanding as to the nature of early help. The findings of this audit will form the basis of a practitioner briefing that will be published this summer while work will continue through the Early Help Support Network to support effective practice.

### Early Help Data

BSCB's lack of understanding of the number of children and families in receipt of early help has already been noted in Chapter 3, above, and in earlier annual reports. Without this data BSCB cannot properly understand the flow of children through the safeguarding system or receive assurance that effective early help is being provided to children who are then stepped down to universal services, without the need for statutory intervention. BSCB has previously received information from the local authority, some schools and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals in this respect and incorporated a question in the section 175 audit of schools to capture the number of children that they provided early help to during the preceding academic year. This has indicated that up to 1,000 children are receiving early help from local authority or Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (BTHNHSFT) at any one time. Approximately two thirds of schools provided data, which indicated in that early help was provided to in the region of 2,000 children during the 2016-17 academic year. However, the variations between individual schools suggests a lack of consensus as to what constitutes early help, which is thought to stem from some schools recording solely behavioural interventions as early help. Sourcing data from individual agencies will also result in a considerable degree of double counting and there remains no systematic way to capture this data (either in terms of completed EHA or open cases), which remains a weakness. A web based version of the EHA remained in development at the year-end which, if successfully implemented, would provide a means of capturing EHA completion.

### Early Help Strategy

Our last annual report noted that a partnership Early Help Strategy was in development. After carefully considering the scope and nature of its business plan (see Chapter 1.4 above), BSCB determined that it was not the best placed strategic body to develop and own this strategy. BSCB will consequently seek assurance that an appropriate strategy is in place and that its delivery is monitored.

### What we will do next

- Continue to drive improvements in the use and quality of EHA through our training programme, publications and other appropriate means
- Challenge partners to develop the means to understand the scale and effectiveness of early help provision
- Seek assurance that an Early Help Strategy is in place and delivered against
- Work with pan-Lancashire colleagues to develop shared documentation wherever possible, including the launch of a shared referral form for statutory services.

### Front Door

There are two means by which children can be referred to higher tier services in Blackpool: the Children's Services Front Door and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. The former handles multi-agency referrals to both Children's Social Care and the Families in Need team, while the latter receives Police Protecting Vulnerable Person Referrals only (although, in practice, some referrals may effectively be from other agencies, but entered on a PVP). Both teams benefit from co-located multi-agency practitioners, which enables the rapid sharing of information and joint responses. Blackpool has its own MASH, although the process is replicated in the two other LSCB areas in which Lancashire Constabulary operates. The response received depends on the initial risk grading, determined by the referring police officer. Where a child is considered to be at high risk the PVP is passed to the Front Door. Other PVPs are shared with partner agencies to build a multi-agency chronology to ensure that the child (and/ or adults involved) are referred to the most appropriate service to meet their needs. The number of PVPs received in Blackpool is significantly higher than elsewhere in Lancashire which has proved a long term challenge to the management of the MASH. As noted in Chapter 3, above, standard risk referrals are now passed directly to the newly constituted Early Help Hub, which has significantly reduced the volume of work received by the Front Door.

Blackpool Council Children's Services commissioned a peer review of the Front Door in February 2018. This review tracked approximately 50 cases, observed multi-agency meetings and met 40 multi-agency staff over a two day period. The review found that partners submitted well evidenced referrals, that there was good input from schools, good access to health and police information through the MASH, that social workers know their children well and that the Families in Need (FIN) team is a strength. Areas for improvement were more systematic in that the front door was judged to be fragmented with multiple point of entry and too many handover points where responsibility for a child was transferred to other practitioners or teams. This coincides with the findings of a longer term Police review of the MASH which has concluded that the process is overly bureaucratic and process-driven. At the time of writing a more extensive review of the journey of the child through Children's Services is underway, which will ultimately include a revised Front Door structure and process.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (HM Government 2017 Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners)

### **Our response to CSE in Blackpool**

Blackpool is a party to the pan-Lancashire CSE strategy and has a local operational action plan (the reporting period formed the second year of the 2016-18 plan). Oversight is provided by a pan-Lancashire strategic group and local operational subgroup, which regularly reports to the Strategic Board. Practitioners throughout Lancashire are expected to work in accordance with the Standard Operating Protocol that has been extensively reviewed during the reporting period.

The operational response to CSE in Blackpool is provided by the multi-agency Awaken team. At the year end this constituted 6 practitioners from Children's Social Care, 7 Police officers (representing an in year increase in capacity), 1.5 health practitioners and an education worker. Children will be key worked by the practitioner most able to effectively engage with them (although those requiring statutory social care intervention will always have a named social worker). Children who are considered to be at a high risk of harm are discussed at monthly Multi-Agency CSE (MACSE) meetings which are attended by the wider partnership and utilised to develop multi-agency risk management plans. MACSE meetings also review high risk perpetrators and premises or geographical areas in which children are known to be at particular risk.

### **What we know about CSE in Blackpool**

The CSE subgroup monitors the volume of activity and nature of CSE in Blackpool. At the year-end there were 52 children open to Children's Social Care in Awaken (this is not a definitive number of children at risk of CSE as Awaken may also hold siblings of children who are at risk, and others at risk of CSE may be held by more appropriate teams to their needs, for example looked after children or children with disabilities) and 74 ongoing Police investigations. During the year there were 318 PVPs submitted in which CSE was recorded to be a factor, which is a reduction from the 431 recorded in 2016-17, but in line with longer term averages (note that PVPs may be in respect of one or more children and that CSE may not be the primary concern). Throughout the year there were typically between five and seven children graded as being at a high risk of harm and therefore discussed in MACSE meetings. The nature of CSE in Blackpool remains as noted in previous annual reports, in that there is no evidence of organised or group exploitation, grooming, trafficking or offending. The only established links are between victims and their mutual associations. Victims continue to primarily be aged between 13 and 15, with a greater number of girls than boys.



## Summary of activity to address CSE in Blackpool

BSCB has an ongoing programme of awareness raising which centres on CSE Awareness Week each November. During this week there were two Lancashire wide conferences, one of which was specifically for schools. BSCB delivered two new training courses, Teen Dating and To See or Not To See (covering the impact of pornography on teenagers) and there was a range of public awareness raising activity. New leaflets for children, designed by children, were produced for the week, while a range of materials have been made available to support school practitioners working with children across the age ranges. Elected members for three wards also provided funding to deliver Chelsea's Choice and Crashing, which are awareness raising plays, to approximately 3,000 children in secondary schools in their wards. Additionally, Awaken team practitioners will provide assemblies to all year 6 pupils on online safety and to all secondary school pupils on sexting during the current academic year. During the reporting period we have made a significant effort to engage with parents and a member of Awaken staff, together with a representative from O2, has attended parents' evenings to raise awareness of CSE and online safeguarding.

BSCB continues to provide briefings to private businesses to improve staff recognition and increase the reporting of CSE. During the reporting period we have engaged with licensed premises through the local Pubwatch scheme and provided briefings to a significant number of staff at a local takeaway chain. The Blackpool Council licensing department additionally targets interventions at businesses who have given cause for concern. Having provided briefings for all existing taxi drivers in previous years, BSCB reviewed the means by which the activity could become a sustainable part of the licensing process. This was still in progress at the year end, however it is envisaged that CSE and wider safeguarding input will be included as part of the customer care course that all new drivers are required to complete prior to receiving their licence.

In addition to monitoring the work of the Awaken team, BSCB seeks wider assurance as to the availability of services to protect victims of CSE from harm and to facilitate their recovery from any harm that has been caused. During the reporting period a directory of therapeutic services for victims of CSE has been produced and incorporated within the Family Information Service (now called FYI Directory) website. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Lancashire has recognised the need for effective early help for children at risk of becoming victims of CSE and for younger children displaying signs of harmful sexual behaviour. It has therefore funded the pilot Enlighten project in Blackpool, which was launched in February 2018. This provides a key worker who can work with schools to support their delivery of assessments and interventions to children, together with bespoke therapeutic support which is delivered by Core Assets.

A range of measures, short of prosecution, are available to disrupt perpetrators. Blackpool has been at the forefront of developing the use of Community Protection Warnings and Notices which can be served on suspected perpetrators and require them to cease from specified behaviours. Any interventions of this nature are always co-ordinated with the Awaken team to ensure that they do not create unintended consequences for children involved. During the reporting period 26 Community Protection Warnings were issued which related to CSE. The fact that these largely achieve their intended consequence is evidenced by there only having been two Community Protection Notices issued, which follow a failure to comply with the requirements of a warning. Measures against individuals are also supported by others that can target premises, while the Police continue to issue section 2 abduction notices where this is considered to be appropriate.

During the reporting period BSCB has developed a CSE and Missing from Home dataset, which has enabled us to better understand the scale of need, however this does not allow us to understand the effectiveness of interventions or, most importantly, the outcomes for children. Exit questionnaires are in place for children whose case is closed to Awaken, however a review of the findings of these by the CSE subgroup, has suggested the need for a change in the questions asked as the findings were not considered to be consistent with more informal feedback received from the children. This has now been done and will be routinely reported to the CSE subgroup. CSE did not form part of BSCB's cycle of audits during the reporting period, however one serious case review was completed in respect of a child who had been the victim of CSE (and intra-familial sexual abuse). Given the vulnerability of the victim this was not published, however an action plan was completed and a practitioner briefing published (see Chapter 6 below).

## What we will do next

- Incorporate child criminal exploitation (CCE) into our strategic and operational responses to CSE in recognition of the need for a consistent response to all forms of child exploitation
- Develop the means to better understand the outcomes of our work to address CSE
- Continue to deliver CSE Awareness week, with a focus on raising public awareness in 2018
- Undertake a multi-agency audit of responses to CSE and CCE

## Missing children

Children missing from home, care or education are vulnerable at that time, quite simply because those responsible for their care are unable to ensure that they are safe. The correlation between missing children and CSE has been a feature of previously reported audits and case reviews, and was again a factor in the unpublished SCR, noted above. As corporate parents, Blackpool Council are particularly anxious to address the over-representation of the already vulnerable group of children in its care amongst those who go missing (although this may, in part, reflect a greater willingness on the part of residential homes and foster carers, over parents to report children as missing).

The multi-agency response to children missing from home and care (MFH) has been incorporated within the local and pan-Lancashire structure for CSE and is therefore the subject of the same action plan. Operationally, children who are considered particularly vulnerable as a consequence of repeated MFH episodes are discussed at multi-agency MFH panels. Following the year end these were moved to be held immediately after MACSE meetings to promote attendance at both. Children who are missing from education are currently reviewed by the Blackpool Education Registration and Admissions (BERA) panel and further work is required to ensure that information is shared between these fora.

## What we know about missing children in Blackpool

On average, during the reporting period 64 children who were not open to Children's Social Care were reported as missing from home each quarter (2017: 47), with the proportion of boys and girls fluctuating on a quarterly basis. The most common age likewise varies between 13 and 15. The numbers recorded as missing from home on three or more occasions each quarter averaged 4.5 (2017: 1.0). BSCB will continue to monitor this data to ascertain whether recent rises continue and what action might need to be taken as a consequence.

In contrast, the proportion of looked after children going missing from care on one or more occasion in a quarter had reduced from a peak of 10% to 6% at the year end, which is the lowest since June 2015. A similar reduction was seen in those reported missing on three or more occasions in a quarter from a peak of 5.5% to 2.4%, which is also the lowest rate since June 2015. Boys do tend to outnumber girls in this cohort and again the 13 to 15 age range is the most common. The reduction in missing episodes has been attributed to better work to engage with children who go missing to understand their concerns, review the suitability of placements and work with providers to improve their practices in the management and reporting of missing episodes. A very small cohort of children are reported missing from home on nine or more occasions during a quarter (an average of 4.5 per quarter in the reporting period (2017: 8.75)). They were all already open to Children's Social Care at the time which indicates that appropriate oversight was being provided to manage the risks that they face.

When a child who has been reported MFH returns to their place of residence they are expected to receive a safe and well check from a Police officer in order to identify if they have been harmed whilst missing (in residential homes this does not always apply). BSCB has raised the lack of any systematic means of evidencing that these checks are being undertaken, beyond reviewing on individual cases, with Lancashire Constabulary. In order to better understand the reasons why children go missing from home, whether they have been harmed while missing and what might stop them from going missing in the future, all children who go missing are also expected to be offered a return home interview (RHI) by an independent person within 72 hours of their return home. This is an area that BSCB has repeatedly raised in its annual reports and throughout its meeting cycles as being of unsatisfactory performance with only 28% completed in 2015-16 and 33% in 2016-17. This increased to 35.6% in 2017-18, however the rate during quarter 4 was 45% (a further 35.1% were completed outside the 72 hour timeframe throughout the year). BSCB has received further assurances that the ongoing review of Children's Services' structures will include a dedicated resource to support the completion of return home interviews, while another provider has been commissioned to complete those for looked after children placed outside Blackpool. It is essential that these changes do translate into improved performance to ensure that the needs of children who go missing are understood and responded to.

Our understanding of MFH has been strengthened by a Children's Services audit in this respect, completed shortly after the year end. The audit reviewed the cases of 42 children who had been reported as missing five or more times in the last quarter. In addition to reviewing practice this allowed for an analysis of the reasons stated by children for going missing, the most common of which were:

- Not wanting to be in care
- Not wanting to continue to live with their parents
- Wanting to spend time with family or friends when this has been prohibited
- Simply wanting to spend time with friends etc. in which context they did not regard themselves as being missing.

Social workers were assessed to be making good use of historical information and effectively assessing risk, however their use of multi-agency information was less effective and the quality of RHI was not consistently as good as it should have been. Challenges in completing timely RHI were noted to be getting children to engage in the process and responding to repeated missing episodes in quick succession.

During the forthcoming year the outcome of a Police systems review on MFH processes is expected. Preliminary findings have already indicated the need to better understand the reasons why children go missing, rather than just returning them to the place from which they have been missing, although the response to high risk missing children was seen to be effective. BSCB continues to await the Department for Education response to a College of Policing recommendation that the absent category should be scrapped to enable it to fully review its missing procedures.

### What we will do next

- Continue to hold partners to account for the completion of Safe and Well check and Return Home Interviews
- Ensure that effective information sharing systems are in place to share intelligence about children who are MFH and those who are missing from education
- Seek assurance that reviews of Children's Services' structures and Police systems produce better outcomes for children who are reported MFH
- Revise pan-Lancashire policies and procedures and the MFH protocol once definitive advice in respect of the absent category is received.

### Neglect

Neglect has been a long standing area of focus for BSCB as a consequence of a succession of audits and reviews, including the Child BW SCR that was published shortly before the start of the reporting period (the Child BY SCR, which will be published during the autumn 2018, will likewise include learning in respect of neglect). The Blackpool Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) was updated during the reporting period to include a chapter on neglect. Based on national research this estimates that almost 2,500 children (1 in 14 of the child population) in Blackpool are currently likely to be experiencing neglect, although this provides the caveat that other known factors present in Blackpool are such that this is likely to be an underestimate. As of the 31st March 2018, 48.2% of the 278 children subject to child protection plans had a current category of neglect, although a longer term analysis cannot be provided due to changes in the recording of categories, outlined in Chapter 3 above.

The multi-agency response to neglect in Blackpool is delivered in accordance with a three year BSCB strategy that was agreed in 2016. Oversight was provided by the Neglect subgroup, which evolved into a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) preparation group and has since been disbanded, passing responsibility back to BMG. The following overview of activity to address neglect is based around the five strategic intentions.

BSCB works to ensure that the multi-agency workforce in Blackpool is properly equipped to identify and respond to neglect through the provision of training and materials. A bespoke suite of neglect assessment tools, including the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) was developed, in conjunction with the NSPCC, and roll out started during the previous reporting year. The use of the tools is supported by a protocol that was launched in September 2017, alongside Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool, which requires the completion of a neglect screening tool for all referrals for statutory services on the grounds of neglect. It is likewise expected that children subject to a child protection plan for neglect will have a GCP2 completed. BSCB provided training in the use of the full suite of tools to 280 practitioners during the reporting period, including two large scale events for Children's Services and others geared specifically to managers, early years, health and substance misuse services. Resources (other than the licensed GCP2) are made freely available on the BSCB website. Training continues to be provided, albeit at a reduced frequency given that demand has now tapered off.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the suite of assessment tools, BSCB undertook a survey of the 280 practitioners who had been trained in the use of the tools in December 2017. We received 81 returns (29%) of whom 20 (25%) had used GCP2. The most common reason for not having done so, was that the need had not arisen, although this did have the consequence of a reported lack of confidence to use the tool, should the need arise. The tool had most commonly been used by Children's Social Care and schools and at an early help level. Feedback provided suggested that families had engaged well in the process and that the use of the tool had informed decisions taken to step cases up and down. The following examples of the positive impact of the use of GCP2 were provided:

*"Home environment and meeting the children's needs has improved, also parents' awareness of the impact on their children"*

*"Family can see the benefits and fully engage in the process as they have identified what needs to change".*





This survey clearly presents BSCB with something of a challenge in that, where used, GCP2 is seen to be effective. However, the majority of people trained have not used the tool and will therefore become gradually less confident in doing so as time progresses. Further work is therefore needed to understand the experiences of practitioners and to embed the use of the assessment tools.

Once practitioners have identified and assessed neglect, BSCB needs to be confident that adequate interventions are available to address the underpinning factors. In addition to the statutory interventions provided under child protection plans there are a number of interventions available to all children and families in Blackpool. These include programmes delivered by Better Start, including Baby Steps and Safe Care. The revised Health Visiting offer provides additional interventions to promote school readiness, while Head Start works with older children to develop their resilience. Two of our adult facing organisations, HM Prison and Probation Service and Blackpool Coastal Housing, have provided specific training and resources to enable their staff to respond to neglect. Further details in respect of all these interventions are provided in Chapter 5, below.

BSCB seeks to ensure that it understands neglect in Blackpool. This has been done on a global scale through the JSNA chapter and routine data collection, noted above, and on a case by case basis through audit activity. An audit of five children subject to child protection plans was completed by the MAAG in September 2017, as a follow on to one completed in January 2017. This identified better multi-agency working and information sharing, including joint working between FIN and CSC, than had been evident in an earlier neglect audit. GCP2 was seen to be used, and used effectively, in one case, but would have been expected in more (although this was prior to the introduction of the protocol noted above). There was however, evidence of drift in two cases and limited evidence of improved outcomes as the result of interventions provided. CSC commissioned further neglect training (about the nature of neglect) as a consequence of this audit.

The final strand of the strategy, to challenge providers for the commissioning of appropriate levels of services to address neglect, has not been implemented due to the evidence, outlined above, that interventions are available to meet the needs of families where neglect is an issue.

#### **What we will do next**

- Conduct a further survey of practitioners to ascertain the levels of use of GCP2 and the wider suite of neglect assessment tools

#### **Domestic Abuse**

The prevalence of domestic abuse (DA) in Blackpool and its frequency as a safeguarding issue for children has rendered it an issue in which BSCB has taken a close interest for a number of years. The multi-agency response to DA cuts across the agendas of a number of strategic boards and, at the beginning of the reporting period, was overseen by the Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence Partnership Board (DAIV). During the course of the year this board formally became a subgroup of BSCB and BSAB however, after further review, it was agreed that it was better sited within the Community Safety Partnership governance structure, with its more operational remit. Irrespective of the ultimate ownership of this group, BSCB will continue to seek assurance that appropriate priority is given to the safeguarding of children from DA. Work to address DA is delivered in accordance with a four year strategy agreed in 2016 and an action plan agreed in year.

## What we know about domestic abuse in Blackpool

Our understanding of DA in Blackpool has been enhanced by the completion of a strategic needs assessment and dataset during the reporting period. The rate of reported DA incidents in Blackpool has exceeded that of the wider Lancashire area for a number of years. With 50% of Blackpool residents within the most deprived quintile of the national population, in which women and men are more likely to be victims of DA, higher than average rates can be expected. During the year both the number of calls to the Police and PVP referrals in respect of domestic abuse in Blackpool decreased on a quarter by quarter basis. However, the annual figures of 3,958 and 5,426 respectively represent the highest rate in Lancashire by some way. It is notable that a third of calls relate to incidents in just three (of 21) wards. Children are recorded as being present at the time of the incident in 2,628 PVP, or 48% of the total. This is below the Lancashire average of 56%, which may reflect Blackpool's older population or be reflective of variable police practice across the county. The Lancashire-wide percentage of successful DA prosecutions is stable at 79%. During the reporting period 44 people presented as homeless as a consequence of fleeing domestic abuse, which represents 6% of the total homeless presentations.

Cases heard at Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) are those where a Police officer attending an incident assesses it as high risk, or those referred in the professional judgement of practitioners in other agencies. MARAC meetings provide a forum for multi-agency risk assessment and planning. During the reporting year the Blackpool MARAC heard 604 cases (2017: 523; 2016: 442), of which 31% (2017: 29%; 2016 19%) were repeats (heard within the previous 12 months), and included 741 children within the households (2017: 558; 2016: 456). This represents 93 cases held per 10,000 adult female population, compared to a national average of 36.

Aspects of the foregoing data, such as the decrease in Police call outs and PVPs and the increase in MARAC cases, initially appear to be contradictory and BSCB will seek to better understand the underpinning factors to these in the forthcoming year. That said, a degree of caution must be applied to all this data due to the reliance on the judgements of practitioners in identifying an incident as being one of DA and grading it consistently. Likewise, there will be differing MARAC practices nationally.

## Work to address domestic abuse in Blackpool

BSCB continues to seek assurance that appropriate interventions are commissioned for children who experience domestic abuse, together with adult victims and perpetrators, who will often be their parents or people with whom they live. The underpinning basis for DA provision in Blackpool is a whole family approach and one public sector offer, to avoid fragmentation and duplication in service delivery. Blackpool has a comprehensive DA offer, which is fully recorded within the JSNA, including the following interventions commissioned specifically for children or within the reporting period:

- A children's independent domestic violence advocate service, delivered by Empowerment, for 3-21 year olds providing individual support to explore feelings, safety planning, support networks, develop understanding of healthy relationships etc.
- Complex needs refuge pilot, funded by the Home Office, to provide wrap around support to DA victims with complex needs (including to their children), including refuge spaces, employment and healthy lifestyle advice. This is a 12 month pilot which will inform the provision of future services.
- Targeted work, linked to the national Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, with older children to break cycles of abuse, in which children who live with DA, grow up to be perpetrators of DA.
- Ongoing funding from Blackpool Council and the OPCC for the Inner Strength perpetrator programme has been agreed. This has now been delivered to groups of male and female perpetrators, who have volunteered to attend. External evaluation of the programme is now being sought.
- The Tavistock Foundation Parents as Partners programme is now being delivered. This provides intensive interventions to couples who want to remain in a relationship and their children.
- Blackpool was part of the bid which led to Lancashire becoming the first white ribbon accredited county. This is an ongoing campaign to raise awareness that violence and abuse is never acceptable. The campaign is supported by a wide range of local organisations and public awareness raising centred on 16 days of action in November, in which Blackpool Tower was lit up white.

## What we will do next

- BSCB is assured that a wide range of interventions are available for children and others affected by DA. Partners will however, be held to account for the effectiveness and outcomes of these interventions.
- Complete a multi-agency audit and multi-professional discussion forum to better understand the experiences of children affected by DA and the perspective of frontline practitioners.

## Managing allegations against staff

Working Together requires organisations and agencies working with children and families to have clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Allegations are distinct from complaints or concerns and relate to situations in which a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Upper tier local authorities are required to ensure that responses to allegations are co-ordinated with activity to safeguard involved children and to have in place a designated officer (colloquially known by their old title as a LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations.

Organisations are required to report allegations to the designated officer within one day of them being made. The designated officer, in turn, is expected to provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations as to how to deal effectively with allegations and ensure that appropriate links are made to related police investigations. Effective investigations would be thorough and fair, but also timely. In Blackpool, the role of the designated officer is combined with the equivalent role for allegations against practitioners who work with adults.

The BSCB Strategic Board receives an annual report from the designated officer in which trends in referrals are monitored and recommendations may be made to improve the identification and management of allegations. It is anticipated that revised multi-agency procedures will be adopted later in 2018. During this reporting year there were 68 recorded referrals to the designated officer. This compared with the figure

of 74 reported last year represents a decrease in referral numbers of 8 %. As was the case last year this figure of 68 does not count cases that were carried over from the previous reporting year. It is the case that some referrals that enter the formal process can stay open for many months and this is often the case with lengthy criminal investigations that result in prosecution and trials at Crown Court.

Of the 68 referrals received 60 were progressed within the formal allegations process and resulted in at least one formal initial consideration or allegations meeting. This represents a conversion rate of 88.2% of all allegations appropriately referred to the designated officer. In comparison to last year's conversion rates of 74.4% this represents a significant increase upward of cases referred that meet the existing criteria for the allegations management process. This can be viewed as a positive in terms of it being evidence of reasoned discernment being applied to the individual circumstances on the part of the referring agency prior to submission of the referral.

In terms of employment role people are more likely to be referred (and an allegations meeting held) as employed in education than in any other sector. Nevertheless, the total is down from 13 to 12 such cases with the percentage overall remaining consistent with last year. These education referrals include teachers, teaching assistants, technicians and other support staff. Foster carers remain the second most prevalent with a total of 10 (14.7%) cases which is an increase of 2 from last year where 8 (10%) of all referrals concerned foster carers. Residential care workers are the next most prevalent group with 6 (8.8%) of referrals, an increase of 1 (1.4%) on last year but still considerably less than the year 2015 to 2016 where the figure was 65% higher. NHS referrals are hard to discern by job role but it is the case that referrals have included front line practitioners in Accident and Emergency and this has involved both doctors and nurses by job role. In total there were 5 (7.3%) of such referrals. Faith Group worker or volunteer status recorded no referrals. There has been a drop of 2 referrals (3.8%) in Early Years referrals. Other job or volunteer role account for 20 (29.5 %) of all referrals and this group of individuals includes the grass roots sports, Cadet and entertainment sectors. As a percentage of overall referrals this diverse group has increased from the 12 (16.2%) reported during the year 2016 to 2017.

# OUR PARTNERS' ACTIVITIES

## Children's Services

This has been a year of change for Children's Services, not least starting with the appointment of a new Director, Diane Booth, in April and further significant changes to the senior management team. The re-constituted Children's Improvement Board has sought to drive improvements to services on a multi-agency basis, reflecting the fact that all work within Children's Services involves multi-agency working to keep children safe and promote their welfare. As such, a number of the changes made, for example the development of the Early Help Hub, are covered elsewhere within this report.

The Blackpool Young People's Service (BYPS) was established in July 2017 to bring together youth offending, leaving care, substance misuse, sexual health and careers advice services to provide an integrated service for 10-25 year olds. Service delivery is on a multi-agency basis, with health, probation and police colleagues working alongside local authority practitioners. BYPS aims to reduce the need for young people to be open to multiple services and practitioners by assigning one key worker and providing services from one venue. By sharing expertise it is envisaged that problems will be more readily identified and addressed before they become entrenched. An early focus for the service has been the care leaver's offer which has been expanded to include interventions to improve readiness to work, financial maturity and ability to maintain a tenancy.

A new model of multi-agency service delivery has also been trialled in the Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre, with a view to providing a series of community hubs throughout Blackpool. They will provide a broad range of services, moving beyond the pre-school age group and aligned with neighbourhood models being introduced by BCCG and Lancashire Constabulary. In practice this has resulted in services as diverse as birth registrations, DA perpetrator programmes and health appointments being delivered from Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre, together with youth groups and leisure activities for all ages. By co-locating services they can provide peer-support for practitioners and enable children and families to more readily engage with other service provision. Given that the vast majority of children of a relevant age who are subject to child protection plans engage with children's centres this is a means by which these children can access services that they may otherwise be marginalised from.

Children's Services have introduced a new risk management operating model, Risk Sensible, which aligns to the pan-Lancashire footprint and allows agencies across Blackpool boundaries to work to the same operating model in respect to risk which provides a more consistent approach to children, young people and families. All staff in Children's Services will be trained in the use of this model to improve understanding and decision making in respect to the management of risk. It has also been rolled out on a multi-agency basis and forms part of the ongoing BSCB training programme.





An early Improvement Board priority was to develop an effective quality assurance framework to enable changes in practice to be based on a robust understanding of the needs of children and families in Blackpool and of the effectiveness, or otherwise, of current practice. This has resulted in an improved use of data and performance information, both at a strategic level in the Improvement Board and operationally by first line managers. An audit team has been established, with findings from this and all other learning activity being reviewed and incorporated within the training programme. As a result of the audit programme learning circles have been introduced for practitioners, together with reflective group supervision. A direct work tool resource pack has been developed and a care planning protocol introduced which ensures management oversight. Future plans include seeking the views of children as part of the audit process and live audits of practice.

Children's Services continue to listen to the views of children through the Just Uz group which brings together looked after children from the age of five upwards. A separate care leavers' group has been established during the reporting period, which has been influential in the ongoing development of the care leavers' offer and housing pathways, while they continue to be involved in the recruitment of staff, including the new director. Their input has resulted in increasing use of social media by social workers to maintain contact with children. Just Uz continues to provide social activities and peer support for its children and young people, with various specific groups, for example for older girls.

## Health

The health economy in Blackpool is relatively uncomplicated with the majority of provision commissioned by Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) and Blackpool Council's Public Health department, with more specialist services being commissioned by NHS England. Acute and community (for example health visiting and midwifery) services are provided by Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (BTHNHSFT), while Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust (LCFT) provide some adult mental health services, including in-patient treatment for 16 and 17 year olds. General Practitioners are all independent contractors and link into BSCB through BCCG.

## Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group

BCCG requires all its providers to complete an annual safeguarding self-assessment audit to demonstrate compliance with safeguarding standards. Where a provider is not fully compliant and action plan is put in place and monitored through quality meetings and site visits. This provides assurance that providers have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place and where they can be improved that this is done.

Each GP Practice has an identified safeguarding lead who completes the annual self-assessment audit, while the CCG provides a safeguarding help line for GP practice staff to provide advice and support. A Deputy Designated Nurse was appointed shortly after the year end with a specific focus on Primary Care. A pilot has also been commissioned to improve two-way information sharing between GP Practices and MARAC.



BCCG commissions safeguarding resources for the wider health economy, with the contract used to provide health practitioners in MASH and Awaken.

BCCG has undertaken an internal supervision audit, which identified that all staff who work directly with children have access to regular peer group supervision, together with ad hoc supervision from the Head of Safeguarding. Deviations from best practice in the recording and frequency of supervision have been addressed. Compliance with safeguarding training has been reviewed and Prevent training made mandatory for all staff. All new starters complete safeguarding training within their first few weeks in post.

BCCG's Communications and Engagement strategy places the views and experiences of local residents at the centre of their work to improve local health outcomes. This includes seeking the views of children and other people who would not ordinarily engage with BCCG. A young people's mental health champions' panel contribute to work on mental health for young people, while joint work with Public Health is in progress to undertake a citizens' inquiry in each neighbourhood. These include children as part of the group and make recommendations as to how to improve health and wellbeing in the local area. To date these have resulted in changes to the GP's contract to stipulate the need for same-day appointments for children.

Given their integral role in successor arrangements for LSCB, BCCG's safeguarding priorities for the year ahead are the implementation of Safeguarding Partnerships and Child Death Review panels. Within the health economy BCCG aims to align safeguarding arrangements to the integrated care system and local integrated care partnership.

## Public Health

This year has seen a unique opportunity for Blackpool Council's Public Health and Better Start partners to enhance the Health Visiting service offer, so that it makes a stronger contribution to improving the outcomes for children in Blackpool. From April 2018 families will be offered a service that aims to ensure a comprehensive universal offer that enables additional needs to be identified and addressed at an early stage; and interventions provided for families to address current or anticipated issues that will impact on positive outcomes for children.

It is envisaged that family engagement with this comprehensive service will increase, leading to improved outcomes for families. At the universal level the model consists of eight home visits to all families, six within the first year of life plus two additional health reviews, including a school readiness child health review. Additional contacts will be available for children where there are identified safeguarding needs.

The enhanced health visiting model was developed from consultation with a wide range of stakeholders as part of the Health Visitor review led by Public Health in partnership in 2016, with Better Start. The model was jointly developed by stakeholders representing the Better Start Partnership. The Centre for Early Child Development will lead on work to measure its impact by ensuring that the service can develop a systematic way in which data is routinely captured and analysed so that population needs can be better understood and quality of delivery assessed and improved.

## Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

BTHNHSFT has introduced an increased flexibility into review health assessments for children looked after, which are now provided where and when the child wants. This allows medicals to be completed around other activities, for example during weekend leave for a young person in the army.

Specialist nurses embedded within the CSE teams develop a hand holding/ trusted relationship with children, for example, supporting them to attend consultant and specialist services. This work can be over significant periods of time, including through court processes.

The CASHES service (also see Chapter 3 above) offer out of hours support to children and young people referred from Accident and Emergency (A&E) and Paediatric wards, seeing an average of 23 children and young people a day throughout the reporting period. This service was a finalist in the 2017 Nursing Times awards.

BTHNHSFT also provide a weekly drop in at Talbot and Brunswick Family Hub, alongside a youth group. This provides an opportunity for children to receive emotional health and wellbeing support while engaging in fun and creative activities, with one to one support also being available. Importantly, this can act as an alternative point of contact to A&E for former CASHER users and those currently open to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Youtherapy. Weekend drop in clinics are also provided in the Women and Children's Unit for follow up and new self or GP referrals, while Youtherapy are the provider of a DA Integrative Therapist within the DA complex needs pilot, noted in Chapter 4 above. BTHNHSFT continues to provide an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) and Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) to support victims of DA who access its services and for staff members who experience DA.

BTHNHSFT also supports safeguarding in primary care, with the internal safeguarding team now providing safeguarding advice and guidance to GP surgeries. Nine GP surgeries have also agreed to participate in a pilot in which the BTHNHSFT safeguarding team acts as a conduit for them to share information with MARAC.

BTHNHSFT seek the views of children on an individual basis when they are open to CSE, Youth Offending Team (YOT) and CLA practitioners and have recently undertaken a wider CLA survey. The incorporation of YOT into BYPS has allowed the YOT nurse to engage with wider service users to promote health and engage with young people.

During the forthcoming year, BTHNHSFT will renew their training needs analysis and training standards, following the publication of new intercollegiate guidance, and provide enhanced leadership and management development for the named nurses for safeguarding. The forthcoming incorporation of child criminal exploitation into the CSE response will also necessitate a review of the health role in Awaken.

### **Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust**

LCFT predominantly provides services to adults in Blackpool, however the internal safeguarding team visit the Harbour (in patient mental health provision in Blackpool) on a weekly basis and provide support and guidance to all teams to ensure that safeguarding needs are met and that practitioners consider the needs of children in households and are aware of Blackpool processes.

Annual safeguarding priorities are determined with reference to LCFT's own three-year safeguarding vision and the business plans of the three pan-Lancashire LSCBs under which it operates. In year priorities include the implementation of the CP-IS system at urgent care sites, which ensures that health professionals can identify children open to CSC.

LCFT is also the provider for the Sudden and Unexpected Deaths in Children (SUDC) service, which is covered in more detail in Chapter 6, below.

During the reporting period safeguarding support has been provided to nursing professionals in section 136 suites following changes to the Mental Health Act, following the introduction of the Police and Crime Act 2017. LCFT has also strengthened domestic abuse routine enquiry within mental health services and integrated it into risk assessments. A revised pathway for Female Genital Mutilation has been devised and incorporated into pan-Lancashire policies and procedures, while LCFT has agreed that their practitioners will make voluntary 'Duty to Notify' human trafficking notifications.

Overall safeguarding activity across the organisation is increasing and demonstrated by increased information sharing, referrals, concerns and contacts to the safeguarding team, with a total of 3,113 recorded across the Trust.



## Health Inspections

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) published their Review of health services for Children Looked-after and Safeguarding in Blackpool in late 2017. The inspection covered the work of BCCG, BTHNHSFT and LCFT and the subsequent action plan was developed by BCCG with the providers. The action plan has been scrutinised and will continue to be monitored by BSCB. It has resulted in the appointment of a Deputy Designated Nurse to work with primary care providers by BCCG. BTHNHSFT have strengthened health plans for CLA, provided a pro-forma for DA routine enquiry and put in place a new protocol for children who do wait for treatment in A&E. Other actions were addressed by existing work to re-design A&E to give nurses a full view of children in the area. Trigger cards have been provided to staff to help them identify children at risk, while a new recording system captures and ensures the availability of safeguarding information. Work has been undertaken with midwives to strengthen referrals to CSC and they have been provided with access to community health records. LCFT reviewed current cases in the services inspected to ensure safeguarding assessments were up to date and introduced a programme of dip sampling, auditing and targeted work to ensure continued compliance with areas raised. During the reporting period BSCB has also reviewed action plans implemented by LCFT and North West Ambulance Service in response to their CQC inspections and will review the BTHNHSFT inspection that was published shortly prior to the year end.

## Schools

There are 32 primary, 6 secondary, 1 through (primary and secondary) and 3 special schools, together with a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and 2 further education providers in Blackpool. Their representation on the BSCB has been somewhat unstable during the reporting period however, at the time of publication, they were represented by the local authority Head of School Improvement, head teachers from secondary and special schools and the PRU along with a primary school deputy head teacher. BSCB has a long established programme of half-termly schools' twilight meetings that are typically attended by representatives from around thirty schools. During the reporting year these have included presentations on Keeping Children Safe in Blackpool, the Risk Sensible Model and DA provision, while schools are also given the opportunity to feedback and network with other agencies.

Schools typically spend longer with and know children better than any other agency. They are consequently a critical part of the multi-agency safeguarding system and often best placed to spot early signs of unmet needs and risks. In order to support this role, seven families of schools have been established to facilitate partnership working and effective safeguarding and pastoral work. Each school family has been provided with a named CSC service manager, and each school with a team manager, to promote collaborative approaches. This model will be supported by over £1 million of Opportunity Area funding which has been approved and will be used to employ practitioners to support early help and safeguarding provision within the clusters of schools.

While not always subject to statutory safeguarding interventions, children outside mainstream education are clearly vulnerable and, if nothing else, disproportionately represented amongst recent Blackpool serious case reviews. The number of children being excluded from Blackpool schools and educated in the PRU has been a long-standing concern of BSCB and subject to a degree of progress during the reporting period. The number of permanent exclusions has reduced from 48 to 35, while the number in the PRU has reduced from 330 to 290. There has been a reduction in the number of children moving to Blackpool who have directly entered the PRU, rather than mainstream schools, from 26 to 10. Progress in all of these areas has been supported by the employment of a local authority inclusion officer, with a brief to reduce exclusions and bullying and to promote inclusion.

During the reporting period 17 schools have been inspected by Ofsted, with 1 graded as outstanding, 14 as good and 2 requiring improvement to be good. Within these inspection reports there were no adverse comments in respect of safeguarding practice, while no schools are in special measures. Amongst Blackpool's early years settings (including nurseries and child-minders) 31.8% were graded as outstanding, 65.9% as good, 1.2% as requiring improvement to be good and 1.2% as inadequate at their most recent inspection.

## Lancashire Constabulary

The direction of Lancashire Constabulary's safeguarding work during the reporting period has been significantly influenced by its National Child Protection inspection, which was undertaken in October 2017 and reported shortly prior to the year end and, to a lesser extent, its inspection on custody suites that had been published in late 2016. Both reports and their subsequent action plans are subject to ongoing scrutiny by BSCB.

As a consequence of the former report 87 child protection coaches have been appointed across the constabulary to advise immediate response teams. All officers will now be required to assess if children are present at every incident and, where they are, to speak to them and assess the home environment, to allow a judgement to be made as to where they sit on the CON. By recording what a child said at the time of an incident the wider partnership obtains a better picture of their needs in any subsequent safeguarding processes. This process is being supported through the auditing of ten cases each month, while every PVP is now reviewed and feedback provided to the completing officer, where necessary.

All officers have attended child protection briefings which promote the need to take immediate individual responsibility for actions to safeguard children and not rely on the submission of a PVP. While student officers in Blackpool are all seconded to the Family Protection Unit and Awaken to provide them with the opportunity to shadow staff members and to attend Child Protection conferences and MARAC. Briefings and more in-depth training is also being provided in respect of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) to improve understanding of cycles of abuse and neglect.

Where children are not willing to engage following an incident, but where concerns are evident, the Police Early Action Team can follow up an incident and ensure that the right agencies are involved on a longer term basis.

### **HM Prison and Probation Service**

HMPPS is the public sector provider of probation services and does not directly work with children, but does have contact with many adults who have parenting responsibilities or who offend against children. Safeguarding is at therefore at the forefront of practice, beginning at Court when details are collated about any children who have contact with defendants and multi-agency safeguarding information is requested. After sentence, the risk to children is continually assessed and monitored and any concerns discussed with partner agencies.

Work is delivered to support service users who have children to be the best parents they possibly can be and for children to be safe and thrive in their care. Service users are encouraged to work with child centred organisations who can offer interventions and early help to the whole family, while HMPPS delivers individual work to address the issues that hinder their parenting capacity.

HMPPS held a month of activities to highlight the 'National Probation Service Best Practice in Safeguarding Children guidance'. This included mandatory half-day briefings for all practitioners and managers, with a focus throughout the month on child criminal exploitation, neglect and sexual abuse to provide staff with information and toolkits to aid practice. A performance improvement tool was introduced to ensure child safeguarding referrals meet a quality threshold, thus supporting other agencies in their decision making.

As part of a divisional audit, a random selection of 97 cases from across Lancashire, including Blackpool, was reviewed. These consisted of child protection and child in need cases and were subject to peer on peer scrutiny. This exercise identified good practice but also areas for improvement. This led to a revision of the Delivery Plan for 2018/19 to incorporate the learning from the audit. This included inconsistent quality in case recording and flagging registration of child protection or child in need cases. An aide memoire for staff and has therefore been developed to improve the quality of case recording and the registration of cases.

### **Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Company**

CLCRC is the private sector provider of probation services and therefore not a direct provider of services of children, however many of its service users are parents or carers, or have offended in a way that has the potential to cause harm to children. All assessments therefore consider risks to and contact with children and managerial oversight is expected on all cases where there is a risk to children. CLCRC also delivers interventions to its own and HMPPS service users including a court mandated DA perpetrator programme, which complements the voluntary programme, noted in Chapter 4 above.

Safeguarding quality assurance is provided by a routine programme of case audits that has a safeguarding element. A recent specific safeguarding audit has resulted in the introduction of practice development workshops to discuss live cases, professional practice workshops for targeted staff and a revised induction process. Home visits are now expected within four weeks of a safeguarding concern being identified. The Blackpool element of CLCRC has not been subject to inspection during the reporting period, although an HM Inspectorate of Probation report on CLCRC provision in Cumbria noted that its child safeguarding work (and overall provision) was good.

## Cafcass

Cafcass is a national organisation which represents children in family court cases to ensure that their voice is heard. They provide services to Blackpool children from their Blackburn office, but will make referrals to and participate in safeguarding activity within Blackpool in accordance with local procedures. All practitioners routinely receive safeguarding supervision, while overall safeguarding practice is reviewed on a minimum of an annual basis.

Cafcass was inspected on a national basis in early 2018 and received an outstanding judgement, with strong safeguarding practice being highlighted.

## NSPCC

NSPCC delivers evidence-based interventions as part of the broader Better Start programme to families who have a child aged between 0 and 4. The offer includes the universally available Baby Steps programme and other targeted interventions.

Baby Steps is offered to all prospective parents and focuses on building positive relationships between parents and their babies, as well as between the parents themselves. It is delivered by an NSPCC family engagement worker and a midwife or health visitor.

Video Interactive Guidance is a 10-12 week programme that provides parents with recorded footage of positive interactions that they have with their children with a view to developing confidence in their ability to parent successfully. Evidenced outcomes are a reduction in children's emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Parents under Pressure is an intensive parenting programme for parents who misuse substances. It has been shown to have a positive impact on child abuse potential and to improve parent-child interactions.

Safe Care is a programme offering support and training to encourage, inform and promote improved parenting. It is a 20 week programme and covers areas of child health and nutrition, home safety and organisation, and supervision and positive parent child interactions. The intervention is offered to parents where there are concerns in respect of neglect.

The Survivor Mums Companion is for any pregnant woman who has experienced trauma or abuse. It is a psycho-education programme that aims to help women with a maltreatment history as they go through pregnancy, birth and becoming a parent. The programme gives information through provision of a workbook and teaches women new skills, as well as providing emotional support via regular telephone contact. Access is by self-referral with literature about the programme provided to all women when their pregnancy is confirmed. This programme has been delivered on a pilot basis to date, however it is anticipated that this will be scaled up following a current evaluation.

All of the above programmes will be subject to external evaluation, while individual cases are dip sampled locally and subject to audits by the NSPCC centrally, with findings fed back to staff locally. Internal findings, together with emerging lessons from SCRs have resulted in enhanced processes to capture information on referral, thereby allowing appropriate programmes to be offered.

## Blackpool Coastal Housing

During the reporting period Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) has taken on young people's settings and work that other partners were no longer able to deliver, including the Clare Street homeless hostel and the programme for providing housing for children leaving care.

In recognition of the unique access that its own staff and contractors have to homes in Blackpool, BCH has provided training and developed flip books to help them recognise signs of abuse and neglect of children and adults. Part of this work has included the development of a tool to enable practitioners identify and assess hoarding which has been rolled out to the wider partnership and is available on the BSCB website. This work has resulted in an increase in the number of safeguarding alerts being received from contractors, which are followed up by BCH neighbourhood teams.

# LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board is a learning organisation. It therefore seeks to review the work of agencies, both individually and as a partnership, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Learning and actions taken as a result of reviews and audits is collated in the Learning and Improvement Framework which allows for the identification of themes and trends that can be utilised to inform further activity.

The approach enables BSCB to investigate, better understand and respond to the safeguarding environment in Blackpool. For example, the Child BW SCR identified that the multi-agency Pre-Birth Protocol had not been implemented as would have been expected. The Multi-Agency Audit Group subsequently undertook a wider scale audit of unborn children subject to child protection plans which, in turn, has resulted in revised practice guidance being issued. On other occasions learning activity can arise from an identified need to understand an area of practice more fully as a consequence of local or national priorities. This was the case with the multi-professional discussion forum and subsequent audit that we undertook in respect of intra-familial child sexual abuse and which has resulted in the commissioning of a new training offer.

BSCB promotes good practice through the publication of SCRs on its website, together with practitioner briefings. We offer practitioner workshops to promulgate learning from SCRs which, together with findings from our audit and review programme, is also incorporated within our wider training programme. Board members are likewise expected to promote learning within their own agencies. This is nevertheless an area of work which we recognise we could be more effective in and during forthcoming months we will start to publish regular newsletters and practitioners briefings covering the findings of our wider review activity.

## Serious Case Reviews

LSCBs are required to undertake a serious case review when abuse or neglect is known or suspected and either a child dies, or is seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way that professionals have worked together to safeguard the child. SCR should establish what happened and why, and whether there are lessons to be learned from the case about the way in which local professionals and organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. LSCB are required to publish SCRs and their response to the findings.

BSCB continued to manage high levels of SCR activity, relative to its size, throughout the reporting period. By the end of the year we had commissioned 12 SCRs in the past five years, which equates to 8.4 per 100,000 child population annually, compared to a national average of 0.97 (based on SCRs commissioned between 2011 and 2014).

## The Year in Numbers

|  |    |
|--|----|
| SCRs underway at 1st April 2017          | 2  |
| SCR Referrals received in year           | 10 |
| SCRs commissioned                        | 3  |
| Multi-Agency Learning Panels agreed      | 1  |
| Referrals resulting in no further action | 6  |
| SCRs completed in year                   | 2  |
| SCRs ongoing at 31st March 2018          | 3  |

The Multi-Agency Learning Panel (MALP) noted above is a means of quick review that BSCB has introduced. It involves a one-off meeting with practitioners involved in a case to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of multi-agency interventions (based on the chronology compiled for the referral consideration process), after which a brief report with recommendations is compiled. A further two MALPs were agreed toward the year end on cases that were not accepted as meeting the criteria for consideration for SCR, but where there was felt to be learning. All three MALPs are scheduled for summer of 2018.

Of the three ongoing SCRs at the year-end two, commissioned in March and April 2017 respectively, had been significantly delayed by criminal investigations, while the third was on track to be completed as expected. One of the two SCRs completed in year was published in April 2018 and will therefore be reported in our next annual report, together with the outcomes of actions resulting from the review.

Finally, the Child BX SCR was completed in year, however a decision was taken not to publish the report to protect the identity of the victim. BSCB nevertheless developed an action plan to implement changes as a result of the learning obtained within the review and published a practitioner briefing to disseminate learning from the review. The practitioner briefing highlighted the need to analyse what underlying issues risk-taking behaviour in teenagers was communicating, to ensure that what a child is saying properly informs assessments and subsequent plans, and to escalate concerns when a plan is not progressing.

### Outcomes of Serious Case Reviews

It was noted in our last annual report that a significant number of actions remained underway from previous reviews, some of which had significantly exceeded their timeframe for implementation and were effectively stuck. The position at the end of this reporting period was more positive with the action plans from all completed reviews having been implemented. We are therefore in a position to report the following outcomes from recent review activity:

The quoracy, recording and effectiveness of **Strategy Meetings** had been highlighted in a number of reviews (and audit activity). Children's Services consequently undertook a more in depth audit of strategy meetings and section 47 enquiries that has resulted in changes in practices within the Front Door and the revision of recording templates used. This finding, coupled with ones from other review activity in respect of core group meetings, has resulted in BSCB publishing Multi-Agency Standards for Safeguarding which forms a reference guide for practitioners as to what is expected of them at each stage of the safeguarding process.

Three recent SCRs had identified a failure to complete **Early Help Assessments**, together with other shortcomings in respect of the thresholds and assessment documentation of the time. These findings influenced the development of the new documentation, outlined in Chapter 4.1, above, for example resulting in the inclusion of specific indicators around parental substance misuse and harmful sexual behaviour.

**Return Home Interviews** following missing episodes had been found to be ineffective, or simply not completed. The templates used by practitioners have subsequently been revised to include specific questions about CSE, while work is ongoing to improve completion rates with some more recent success (see Chapter 4.2 above).

Two SCRs identified that actions on **Child Protection Plans** were not effective in driving core group activity and therefore achieving change. These influenced a broader review by Children's Services of working practices that has resulted in the introduction of the Risk Sensible model. This requires practitioners to base plans on direct risk factors, resulting in fewer but more effective actions. BSCB has supported the multi-agency roll out of the model through the delivery of training and materials.

Following the publication of two SCRs in which parents did not follow safer sleep guidance, a **Home Safety Risk Assessment** has been developed to support practitioners to make enquiries as to where babies sleep in practice, together with a number of other home safety factors. A co-ordinated multi-agency timeline for the delivery of safer sleep materials and messages has also added routine enquiry as to where the baby will sleep into ante-natal appointments. Assurance has been received that these are used by health visitors and children's centres in Blackpool, which will be tested in a forthcoming audit.

A number of reviews had noted that the **Voice of the Child** either was not recorded, or that there was no evidence that it informed subsequent assessments or plans. Children's Services have subsequently introduced a requirement to record children's views verbatim and have introduced a programme of Learning Circles to develop practice in this respect.

Findings of reviews have also resulted in revised policies launched during the year in respect of Resolving Professional Disagreements and the commissioning of Harmful Sexual Behaviour training. BSCB equally learns from the process of conducting reviews and commissioned a workshop for staff members who complete chronologies for reviews to develop effective practice.



## Child Death Overview Panel

The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is a subgroup of the three pan-Lancashire LSCBs and undertakes the Boards' statutory functions in relation to child deaths.

By its very nature the death of a child is distressing for parents, siblings, carers and professionals involved with the family. CDOP carries out a systematic review of all child deaths to help understand why children die and reduce the risk of future deaths in similar circumstances. By identifying modifiable factors the panel can recommend measures to improve child safety and prevent future deaths. Broader findings can be used to inform strategic planning and the commissioning of services. By sharing the findings throughout Lancashire there is a greater ability to identify themes and trends.

There were 11 deaths of children ordinarily resident in Blackpool during the reporting period (2017: 14). CDOP reviewed 11 deaths, with five completed within nine months of the death and the remainder taking one year or longer (a CDOP review occurs after all other legal and review processes are completed, so can be subject to lengthy delays).

### Of the 11 deaths reviewed:

- 6 were male and 5 female
- 9 were aged under one year of which 8 were under four weeks old
- 7 were expected (predictable 24 hours prior to death)
- 5 were recorded as chromosomal, genetic and congenital anomalies, the most commonly recorded category (in 2016/17 it had been peri-natal/ neo-natal events)
- 2 were deemed to have modifiable factors (circumstances that, if changed, would reduce the risk of future child deaths), however there were no common themes in these

The weakness of data derived from CDOP is that the number of deaths considered (even pan-Lancashire only 128 were considered in year) is statistically insignificant. Consequently, while a review of an individual case may cast a light on risk factors or service provision, extreme caution has to be utilised in the drawing of general conclusions. This can be overcome by larger scale analysis and thematic reviews. A recent analysis of ethnicity by category of death of 591 children pan-Lancashire reviewed between 2012 and 2017 identified a disproportionate overall number of deaths amongst the Asian Pakistani ethnic group compared to their proportion within the community. It likewise identified differences in the proportion of death in each category according to ethnic group, which can be used to inform future public health activity. Blackpool recorded a lower proportion of deaths in non-white ethnic groups than its overall population, although on this smaller scale again a degree of caution has to be exercised.

CDOP undertakes a range of awareness raising activities as a consequence of its findings. Its most prominent is the Safer Sleep campaign that has been recognised as effective practice by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and continues to be delivered to all prospective parents by health professionals and children's centres. A safer sleep conference entitled "Making Every Contact Count" was delivered to 120 practitioners in May 2017, including drama based workshops and presentations from a coroner, police and the SUDC service. CDOP publishes an occasional newsletter which has covered learning from pan-Lancashire and national CDOPs and holds meetings with groups of professionals to improve engagement with the overall process, with a particular emphasis on GPs during the reporting period.

### What we will do next

- Complete thematic reviews into deaths attributed to trauma and to infection, together with a review of recent deaths by suicide.
- Consider the findings of a recently completed audit of ACEs identified in reviews
- Build links to the local suicide reduction programme and the national review of deaths of children and adults with learning difficulties
- Ensure a smooth transition to new Child Death Review processes

## Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Childhood

Working Together requires that LSCBs ensure that a multi-agency rapid response process is in place to review the circumstances of any unexpected death of a child. Multi-agency colleagues work together to share information to ensure a thorough investigation (of whatever type is required), that the bereavement needs of the family are met and that lessons are learned from the death wherever possible. The pan-Lancashire SUDC service is provided by LCFT and during the reported period consisted of two dedicated nurses who work in conjunction with multi-agency partners, including children's services, acute hospital trusts, primary care providers, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service. The service responded to 42 deaths during 2017-18, which was the lowest number for four years, but within the expected range.

We reported in our last annual report that an external review of the SUDC service had been undertaken, by a Public Health registrar, to assess its conformity with Working Together and the strengths and weaknesses of the current model. The review concluded that the nurse led response, within working hours, was effective and generally ran smoothly, but that the out of hours response which disproportionately relied on the on-call acute paediatrician was not of sufficient quality. The quality of this initial response was assessed to be critical due to the influence that it has on the ensuing process. While the demand on the service in terms of the timing of deaths fluctuates, as many as two thirds of deaths in a given period can be outside office hours and therefore receive a lower standard response. The report was endorsed by the three pan-Lancashire LSCBs and the CCGs responsible for commissioning the service were asked to review the identified options for expansion. This has resulted in a seven day a week nurse led model being commissioned that will ensure that all parents receive a response within 24 hours of the death, this is projected to commence prior to the end of 2018.

A more full analysis of the work of CDOP can be found in its Annual Report that is available on the BSCB website.

## Audit activity

When a specific issue is identified by review, data analysis or inspection regimes and it is agreed that further information is needed to fully understand its implications, BSCB will undertake an audit of practice to inform its next steps. Our own Multi-Agency Audit Group (MAAG) audits are complemented by audits that we occasionally request from other agencies.

During the reporting period the MAAG has undertaken audits in respect of safeguarding unborn children, intra-familial child sexual abuse, neglect and Early Help Assessment forms, with the findings of the latter two having already been outlined in Chapter 4 above. We also requested that Children's Services audited multi-agency involvement in child protection conferences and core groups. Our audit processes have been influenced by the requirement of JTAs for partnerships to evaluate a small number of cases within a five day period. We have consequently implemented a standard process and audit tool by which we aim to focus on the outcomes for children of multi-agency interventions.

## Safeguarding Unborn Children

This audit was commissioned as a consequence of the Child BW SCR and reviewed the multi-agency response to five unborn children who were subject to child protection plans. We found that referrals were made in a timely way, but that the subsequent assessments were not which resulted in late Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs), although post birth review conferences were timely (this finding was subsequently supported by the CQC inspection noted in Chapter 5, above). There was a lack of multi-agency planning prior to ICPC, with inordinate strategy meetings noted in three cases. There was nevertheless good multi-agency attendance at conferences and core groups and evidence of management oversight, although this did not result in challenges to delays in processes. As a consequence of this audit, more detailed guidance has been provided to practitioners in respect of pre-birth processes and monthly multi-agency meetings, between CSC and specialist midwives, are being introduced to review pre-birth children with safeguarding concerns.

## Intra-Familial Child Sexual Abuse

This audit was prompted by increasing national attention applied to the topic due to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse and a recognition that it had been overshadowed by CSE in recent years. The audit of five children subject to child protection plans under the sexual abuse category identified good multi-agency working and information sharing, including to manage perpetrators. Decision making around thresholds was seen to be appropriate. A number of the findings of this audit coincided with those from earlier audit and review activity in that all the strategy meetings were inquorate, child protection plans were not viewed to be sufficiently risk focussed and core groups were not minuted as expected. Work in respect of the former two findings has already been reported in Chapter 6.1 above. In two cases the ICPC was not timely, although this finding does not coincide with our wider auditing or data, so is not considered to be representative of a wider issue.

## Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups

This audit was undertaken by the Children's Services Safeguarding, Quality and Review service, at the request of BSCB, and reviewed 20 child protection cases with recent conferences, evenly split between Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences (ICPC and RCPC). The audit concluded that multi-agency attendance at ICPC was good, although there was more room for improvement at RCPC. There was clear evidence of defensible decision making in respect of thresholds in the majority of cases. Core group dates were agreed at conference, however attendance was less positive and in ten cases deemed inadequate, with a further eight requiring improvement. Shortcomings were identified in a number of the supporting processes with three quarters of conference minutes distributed outside the expected timescale, a significant number of reports to conference having not been shared with the parents beforehand, partner agencies not assisting with the minuting of core groups and minutes not being distributed. The audit has resulted in ongoing monitoring of a number of the issues noted and the agreement of revised conference paperwork. Processes for inviting individual agencies have been reviewed and those whose attendance fell short of expectations have been challenged accordingly. The recently published Multi-Agency Standards for Safeguarding document will additionally support this work by making it clear what is expected of all agencies.

## Section 11 audits

Section 11(4) of the Children Act 2004 requires every LSCB partner to have arrangements in place to ensure that "their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". LSCB partners are therefore asked to complete annual Section 11 audits to self-evaluate their compliance with this duty, these are subsequently scrutinised by PMEG and partners are held to account for the completion of any required improvements.

During 2017-18 audit returns were requested and received from nine partner agencies. The audit is split into nine sections against which agencies are asked to evaluate themselves as red, amber or green. There was an increase in the number of areas self-evaluated as amber with 10 of 81 areas done so this year, compared to four the previous year. PMEG subsequently moderated these self-evaluations and agreed that 26 areas should have been graded as amber on the basis of the evidence provided (an amber grading reflects appropriate policy and procedures being in place, but evidence not being provided of their application). Partner agencies were written to in respect of areas graded as amber and further evidence or assurance that plans were in place to remedy shortfalls was received (most commonly in terms of safeguarding training). The one area in which partner agencies were least likely to be able to provide appropriate assurance was that of safeguarding supervision. All had appropriate policies and procedures in place, however none could provide systematic evidence of their implementation, although some undertook surveys of staff to capture their experiences of supervision. The need for further assurance in this respect is emphasised by a lack of management oversight being identified in a number of recent SCRs and audits and supervision being identified as an area of weakness in the recent CQC safeguarding and children looked after and HMICFRS Lancashire Constabulary child protection inspections.

BSCB routinely undertakes frontline visits to partner agencies to meet practitioners and test whether their experiences tally with what has been reported within their agency's Section 11 return. During the reporting period BSCB representatives visited the Blackpool offices of Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Company (CLCRC) and HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). During the CLCRC visit practitioners who directly supervise offenders were spoken to, alongside unpaid work and programmes staff. Evidence was seen of effective safeguarding practice, including multi-agency working and information sharing across the company. Staff spoken to reported receiving safeguarding supervision and training. HMPPS practitioners reported effective multi-agency information sharing to support court processes. Staff reported receiving supervision, while awareness of safeguarding issues had recently been raised through a 'safeguarding awareness month'. While HMPPS do not deliver services directly to children they are developing a care leavers' offer, which will support the particularly vulnerable group of care leavers in custody.

### **Section 175 audits**

Under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 schools are required to ensure "that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children". In a similar process to the Section 11 audits noted above, schools are asked to self-evaluate their safeguarding practices on an annual basis through Section 175 audits. At the request of our schools, the timing of this process was changed to the autumn term to allow for the inclusion of any statutory guidance and the submission of safeguarding data for the previous academic year. We received returns from 36 of our 44 schools this year (82%), which continues to fall below our target of 100% returns. Seven primary and one secondary school failed to submit returns, including three schools within a multi-academy trust which has consistently refused to engage in the process.

Returns received provided assurance in respect of compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the provision of safeguarding training, policies, recording (almost all now have electronic safeguarding systems), recruitment and allegations management. All schools reported undertaking surveys or using their pupil councils to assess whether children feel safe. Safeguarding data has been requested as part of the audit process for three years to date and it is evident that schools are increasingly able to respond to the challenge of evidencing their safeguarding activity, with only three unable to provide any data this year. The data provided evidenced early help and safeguarding activity at each stage of the system, including allegations made against staff members. There was a wide range in the reported number of instances of early help provision which is thought to result from some schools including solely behavioural interventions in this category. However, the broader data matched expected patterns of increased safeguarding activity in schools situated in areas of greater deprivation. There was no evidence of any one school making a disproportionate number of referrals to the Front Door and while a greater number of private fostering cases was reported than expected, this has since been clarified to result from misunderstandings in respect of the definition. The self-evaluation programme increases the understanding of both schools and BSCB of their ability to keep their pupils safe, while confidence in the validity of the self-evaluation process is provided by the ongoing programme of audit visits undertaken by the Schools' Safeguarding Advisor. It is similarly noted that no school has received adverse comments from Ofsted in respect of safeguarding practice for three academic years to date.

## Dataset

Working Together requires that the local authority and partner agencies provide the LSCB with data and performance information in order to allow it to assess the effectiveness of services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

During the reporting period BSCB utilised a model developed by Greater Manchester LSCB that is used more widely across the region. The dataset contains a suite of indicators that is structured around the overall child population, children with specific vulnerabilities, those at each stage of the safeguarding system and the children's workforce. The dataset was produced on a quarterly basis and monitored by PMEG, with the full report being submitted to the Strategic Board on a six monthly basis. Having previously struggled to develop more in depth datasets in respect of areas of particular concern, BSCB appointed a half-time analyst shortly before the start of the reporting period. This has allowed us to develop the CSE/ MFH and DA datasets that are noted in Chapter 4 above, along with greater detail being provided to the overall dataset.

Toward the end of the reporting period BSCB reviewed its use of data and identified an over-reliance on Children's Services data, at the expense of the wider partnership, and a need for greater analysis and understanding as to what the data tells us about outcomes for children in Blackpool. During 2018-19 BSCB will start to use a model in which all partner agencies are asked to submit summaries of safeguarding activity, data, audits and outcomes on a six monthly basis. These returns will be scrutinised by PMEG and challenge provided, where necessary. By doing so it is hoped that a more holistic understanding of the partnership's safeguarding activity can be developed.



## Training

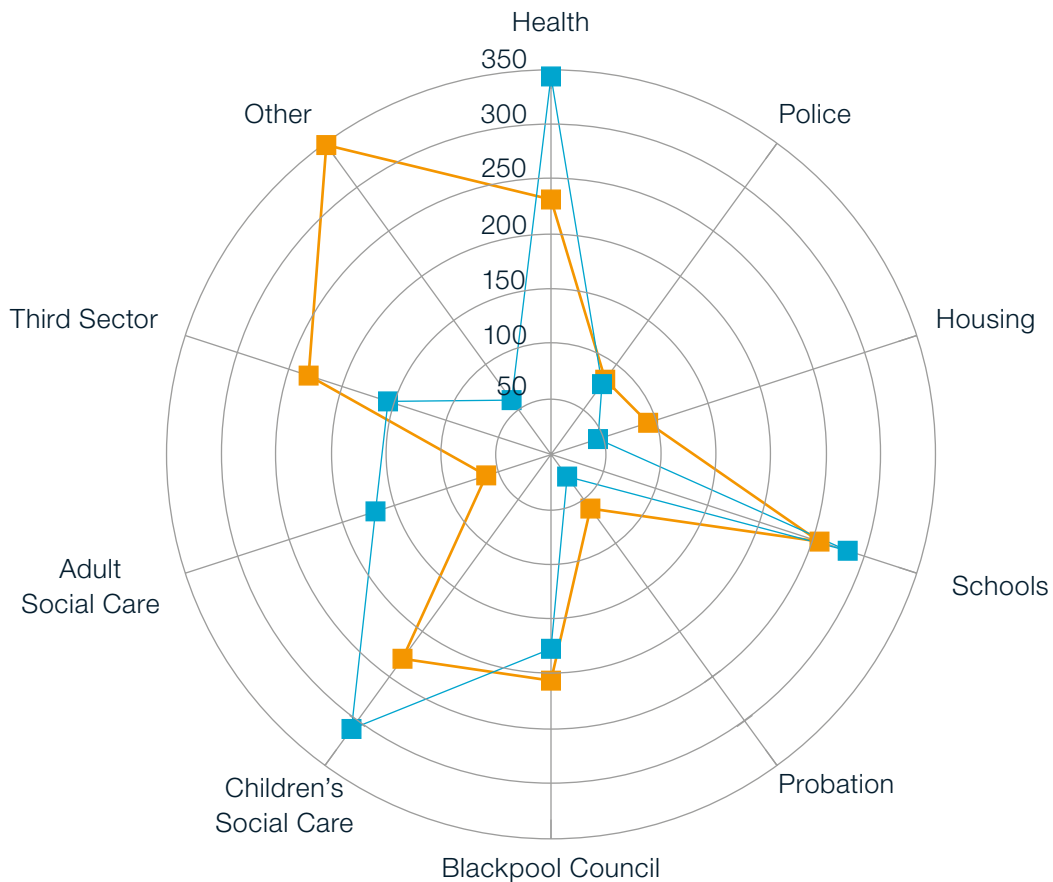
Working Together requires LSCBs to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training. Like most other Boards, BSCB also chooses to deliver its own training as a means of ensuring the availability of good quality, multi-agency training. This training offer forms the crucial final link in the Learning and Improvement Framework, in that improvements in practice can be promoted.

Our approach to training and development is set out in our Training Strategy 2016-19 and underpinned by our Operating Framework. BSCB delivers a shared training programme with BSAB which allows us to provide courses that cover the full safeguarding spectrum to the children’s and adults’ workforces, while also maintaining a number of child specific courses. Our two training co-ordinators (1.6 FTE) develop and deliver the programme, with the support of a pool of multi-agency and commissioned trainers. Operational oversight is provided by the Training and Communications subgroup.

During 2017-18 we delivered training to 2,552 practitioners on 130 courses (this omits attendance at courses with solely safeguarding adults content), with a further five courses were cancelled due to trainers becoming unavailable and five due to low numbers of applicants. This represents an increase of 904 attendees on 2016-17, although if the one off series of Early Help Assessment form briefings are discounted there is a more modest increase of 157 attendees. This increase masks variations in attendance by sector with declines in attendance in excess of 25% recorded by the health sector, Adult Social Care and CSC balanced by significant increases in attendance from the third sector, early years settings and residential settings. A number of our core courses have been offered for lengthy periods of time now and attendance is declining, while new courses tend to be over-subscribed. This is an issue that BSCB will seek to address in 2018-19.

### Training attendance by sector

—■— 2016-17      —■— 2017-18 (excluding Early Help Assessment briefings)



BSCB training is made freely available, although a charge is levied in respect of participants who fail to attend without prior notification. Paradoxically, an increase in overall attendance (and therefore bookings) increases income received, which is re-invested to fund external trainers and conferences. The non-attendance rate during the reporting period declined to 6.2% (2017: 8.0%), which yielded income of £9,570. CSC practitioners remain the most frequent non-attenders with a rate of 12.7%. Of greater concern is that 16.3% (2017: 21.9%) of participants cancel prior to the day of training, this carries an additional administrative burden for the Board and wastes spaces that we are not always able to fill at short notice.

The training programme is continually reviewed in light of changing practice expectations and learning from audits and reviews. During the reporting period the Resilient Therapies and Risk Sensible models that have been adopted in Blackpool have been incorporated throughout the training programme; with a new course, entitled the Blackpool Way, in development to specifically cover their underpinning theory and application, together with the early help process. A number of new courses have been introduced including New Psychoactive Substances, a generic Designated Safeguarding Lead, Teen Dating, To See or Not to See (pornography and adolescent development), Understanding Child Sexual Abusers and Understanding the Impact of Sexual Abuse on Children.

The Training and Communications subgroup has been grappling with how to measure the impact of training throughout the reporting period. A paper based evaluation system had been in place for a number of years which required participants to fill in pre- and post-course evaluations on the day of training. A review of evaluations from six courses delivered between April and October 2017 provided average scores (graded from 1 to 5, with 5 being most positive) of 4.68 for the training meeting stated aims and objectives, 4.64 for being relevant to the participant's professional role and 4.39 for confidence to apply the material. Participants were also asked to score their knowledge of specific elements of the course content prior to and after the course, with an average increase of 1.61. The review also demonstrated the time consuming nature of analysing paper returns and the limited amount of qualitative feedback provided (although we had acted on feedback in respect of one course that too much content was covered in the day). These findings, together with a recognition of the need to develop an evaluation system that can evidence the impact of training on practice and ultimately the children of Blackpool, has led to the introduction of a web-based evaluation system that will be able to provide aggregated data on returns. This will be supported by the introduction of telephone calls to participants a number

of weeks after completing a course to assess the impact of training on practice. Outcomes of this process will be included in our next annual report.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of evidencing the impact of training on practice and the lives of the children with whom the attendees work, on the day feedback is overwhelmingly positive with the following comments made during the year:

*"Extremely relevant to my role and it was beneficial to have the training delivered by a health professional"*

*"The information presented during the course was informative, as well as the presenter being engaging and interesting. The information was delivered well, and this showed by involving the group in group work to demonstrate understanding. The involvement of the fire service put a different perspective on the course, and I believe this to have been extremely useful and informative"*

*"I really enjoyed this course and found it very useful in my role as a foster carer, the trainers were excellent and very knowledgeable!"*

#### **What we will do next**

- Undertake a training needs analysis of our partner agencies to inform the development of our ongoing training programme
- Embed the new evaluation process and use this to evidence the impact of training and develop our training programme
- Continue to review demand for our training programme and develop our training offer accordingly

# PARTICIPATION

## Children

BSCB seeks to understand the experiences of children on an individual and group basis in order to assure itself that safeguarding provision is effective and meets their needs. Until the end of the 2016-17 academic year we had an established Pupil Voice Group which had been attended by children from all Blackpool secondary schools and one special school. Feedback from this group suggested that children predominantly felt safe at home and in school, but less so online, on public transport and in public places. All children nevertheless reported having received online safety input in school. Many of the environmental issues raised are outside the remit of BSCB, however these issues were reported in appropriate forums and work has subsequently been delivered to improve children's safety and confidence on public transport. This group reached a natural conclusion as many participants left the schools that they represented.

This is consequently an area of work that BSCB needs to re-establish and it was agreed shortly prior to the year-end that this would be done in conjunction with the Young People's Engagement Group of the Head Start project. This has the benefit of being an established group with representation from a range of ages and backgrounds. In the meantime BSCB will continue to seek assurance that the views of individual groups of children are captured, for example those open to Awaken and Looked After Children. BSCB will also continue to include routine questions in audits as to whether the views of children are evidenced and acted on. We have seen improved recording of the views of children in the last year, however evidence of it being considered in assessments and acted on is weaker.

## Practitioners

BSCB similarly seeks to understand the experiences of frontline practitioners to ensure that multi-agency systems and training enables them to effectively safeguard children. During the reporting period we have moved from a model of a standing Shadow Board that was used to comment on issues considered by the Strategic Board and disseminate Board documents, to one of Multi-Professional

Discussion Forums (MPDF) in which bespoke groups of practitioners are drawn together to discuss their experiences of working with a particular issue or group of children, thereby enhancing BSCB's understanding of how systems could be improved.

Our first MPDF considered the issue of Intra-Familial Child Sexual Abuse and was attended by 18 practitioners from a range of agencies. Aspects of good practice were identified, including information sharing once children were within the child protection system, together with the difficulties faced by voluntary agencies in engaging with children who might have been abused. One specific issue in terms of the distance children are required to travel to access therapeutic interventions has subsequently been raised with the commissioner, while BSCB has commissioned training on the issue as a result of feedback received on the day. Subsequent MPDFs will be linked to our audit activity to enable audit findings to be tested against the wider experiences of practitioners, with a joint report being produced.

## Communications

LSCBs have a statutory responsibility to communicate with "persons and bodies in the areas of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". A range of activity in this respect has already been noted, including our training programme and practitioner briefings arising from reviews, together with public awareness raising work during CSE awareness week. During the reporting period we have also established a Twitter account which is promoted through our training programme with a primary audience of practitioners. From April 2018 we will also be starting to publish a monthly seven minute briefing, in conjunction with our colleagues in Lancashire, and a newsletter.

We recognise that we could do more to raise public awareness of safeguarding issues and have consequently become part of a pan-Lancashire Communications and Engagement group. This has enabled us to develop a communications strategy and planned series of public awareness raising campaigns for the forthcoming year. An overview and evaluation of these campaigns will be included in our next annual report.



# EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE MULTI-AGENCY WORK

## Parents as Partners programme

Dan and Chloe have five children who were referred for a CSC assessment following a domestic abuse incident. At this point they had ended their relationship and there was not felt to be the need for statutory intervention, however the family was referred to a children's centre for support. When they chose to resume their relationship the children's centre referred them to the Parents as Partners programme. This is a 16 week programme that facilitates discussions between the parents to encourage them to resolve issues that they are having. Participants look at their own relationship, that with their children and their wider family and social relationships.

Through the programme Dan and Chloe have developed strategies to resolve disagreements, including talking away from the children and not shouting. They have developed ways to take time out from each other and to recognise good and bad times to talk. Chloe has gained the confidence to discipline the children, while Dan has started to discuss his own childhood experiences and see how these affect him now. These changes have meant that their children are safer and that they can live together as a family without the need for CSC involvement.

## Awaken

Alice is a 13 year old girl who was referred to Awaken following concerns that she was being groomed by an 18 year old male. She had been reported missing from home returned under the influence, while her school attendance was also slipping. She was seen by the Awaken health worker who identified unresolved issues surrounding her dad leaving the family home when she was much younger, the recent death of a friend, alcohol abuse and a considerable degree of immaturity which made her more vulnerable.

As is often the case with Awaken, Alice has required a lengthy period of support which has been mostly provided by the health practitioner as the practitioner able to develop the most effective working relationship with her. She has gradually been supported to access mental health and substance misuse services and did accept emergency contraception. Individual interventions have increased her knowledge of CSE, healthy relationships and sexual health. As underlying issues have been addressed she has also been able to access suitable educational provision.

## SUDC Service

Following Peter's tragic death a joint SUDC response was provided by the SUDC nurse and Police, initially meeting the parents, who were understandably very distressed, in A&E.

The following day the SUDC Nurse undertook a home visit and saw both parents and met Peter's siblings. The role of the SUDC Nurse was discussed and the child death process was explained. His parents had lots of questions regarding how this could have happened and were anxious to know when they would find out why their child had died.

Regular support visits were offered in the weeks following the child's death. Mum needed a lot of emotional support and requested regular visits. Initially these were weekly and after several weeks became monthly, with regular telephone contact throughout. The SUDC Nurse provided compassionate support to the mother, father and children.

In addition, the SUDC Nurse supported mother to see her GP and to be referred for mental health support. The SUDC Nurse also referred mother for bereavement counselling and referred the children to Winston's Wish for bereavement support.

The SUDC Nurse liaised with all agencies and professionals known to the family. Peter's parents did not feel able to meet any professionals and declined any follow up appointments once they received the cause of death. The SUDC Nurse liaised with relevant professionals and acted as an advocate for the family in obtaining explanations regarding the cause of death and answering any queries the family had.

The SUDC Nurse continued to offer home visits until mother felt able to deal with her grief and the necessary support was in place for all family members.

### Out of area looked after child

Aisha is 17 and living in semi-independent accommodation in Blackpool, but under the care of another local authority. She has been in care since the age of 4 and had numerous different placements. She has a number of physical and mental health needs, and concerns were emerging about her ability to maintain her tenancy. Concerns have been expressed that she is in an abusive relationship and that she has been physically assaulted by her birth mother, with whom she remains in contact.

Following her move to Blackpool she was seen by the CLA team here who supported her to access health appointments and ensured that information was shared between the midwifery team and her placement when she thought that she was pregnant. While this was not the case, she was then referred to BYPS for further support and a Multi-Agency Risk Management meeting was convened to share information and concerns about her partner and the risk that he was assessed to present. As Aisha has not felt able to access formal mental health services the CLA nurse has provided additional individual support. She has been helped to maintain her tenancy which has helped reduce the pattern of repeated breakdowns of placement.

### MASH

By piecing together multi-agency information the MASH can enable a fuller picture of risks to be developed. PVPs are graded by Police Officers on the basis of what they identify at an individual incident. Following the submission of a PVP graded as standard the health practitioner in MASH identified that this was the third DA incident between two parents within a few months and that their young baby had been present on each occasion. By seeking health visitor information it was identified that maternal grandmother had expressed concerns about dad's aggressive behaviour and that dad had been making false allegations about mum's mental health to Police Officers. This sharing of information has resulted in CSC starting a full assessment which will ensure that the baby is kept safe.



# CONCLUSIONS

On coming to the end of a report of this nature, it is important to step back from the detail and focus on the overall purpose of the report and to consider its overall message. The report has sought to meet the statutory requirement to “provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services... [to] identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them”. Perhaps a more significant question to ask though is what impact has the LSCB and its partners through their operational safeguarding activity had on the lives of children in Blackpool?

The report has highlighted areas in which definite progress was made during the reporting period. We have agreed a pan-Lancashire Continuum of Need that provides the framework by which practitioners can make judgements about the level of intervention that a child needs, while the introduction of the Risk Sensible model allows better informed decision making at child protection conferences. There is early evidence from audit activity that both are becoming embedded in practice. The rate of children receiving statutory interventions in Blackpool continues to be well in excess of those seen nationally. However, reductions have been evident in recent months, notably in terms of child protection plans. This is a positive outcome for children in that it means that more are receiving the right level of intervention to meet their needs, which has been demonstrated in more recent audit activity. This is not the end of the story though and more work is needed to understand the volume of early help work in Blackpool and to obtain assurance that early help is being effectively provided by all agencies at the earliest stage at which unmet needs are identified. Similarly, there remain indications that too many contacts and referrals are being made for statutory intervention and subsequent assessments undertaken. This would suggest wider cultural changes are needed to increase practitioner confidence to deliver early help, in addition to the structural changes already made to establish the Early Help Hub.

A range of multi- and single-agency activity to safeguard children has been showcased, including the ongoing multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation and missing from home. We have been able to demonstrate a better understanding of the scale of each issue in this report, together with a significant volume of multi-agency activity to address them. We do, however need to better understand the outcomes for children of this work. Similarly, new interventions for children living with domestic abuse and means to assess neglect have been outlined, but will need to be judged by the difference that they make to the lives of children in Blackpool in the longer term.

BSCB has continued to experience high levels of serious case review activity, despite not publishing any reviews in year. What has been positive though is emerging evidence of changes made in response to review and audit activity. This has been evident in the work to address repeat findings about strategy meetings, return home interviews and the safeguarding of unborn children. Work in this respect is very much in progress at the year end, but should provide a longer term means by which agencies are able to respond more effectively to children and keep them safer. Reviews have also produced changes in practice on a single-agency basis, with significant changes being made by the NSPCC to their recording processes for Baby Steps as the consequence of issues that they identified as part of the process of developing their chronology.

It can be concluded that BSCB itself remains compliant with statutory requirements in terms of membership and that the majority of strategic board members have met the attendance requirement, which has not been the case in recent years. We have taken the opportunity provided by a change of chair to review the scope of our activities and re-focus on core statutory objectives of seeking assurance that work to safeguard children is effective. Our Section 11 and Section 175 audit activity has continued to provide assurance that partners meet their statutory obligations in respect of safeguarding and these have been triangulated against inspection findings where possible. During the forthcoming year, we aim to enhance our understanding of our partners' activities through our new quality assurance process. We will also seek to step up our engagement with children to better understand their concerns and ensure that they are at the centre of our thinking and that of the successor body to BSCB, which will emerge in 2019.

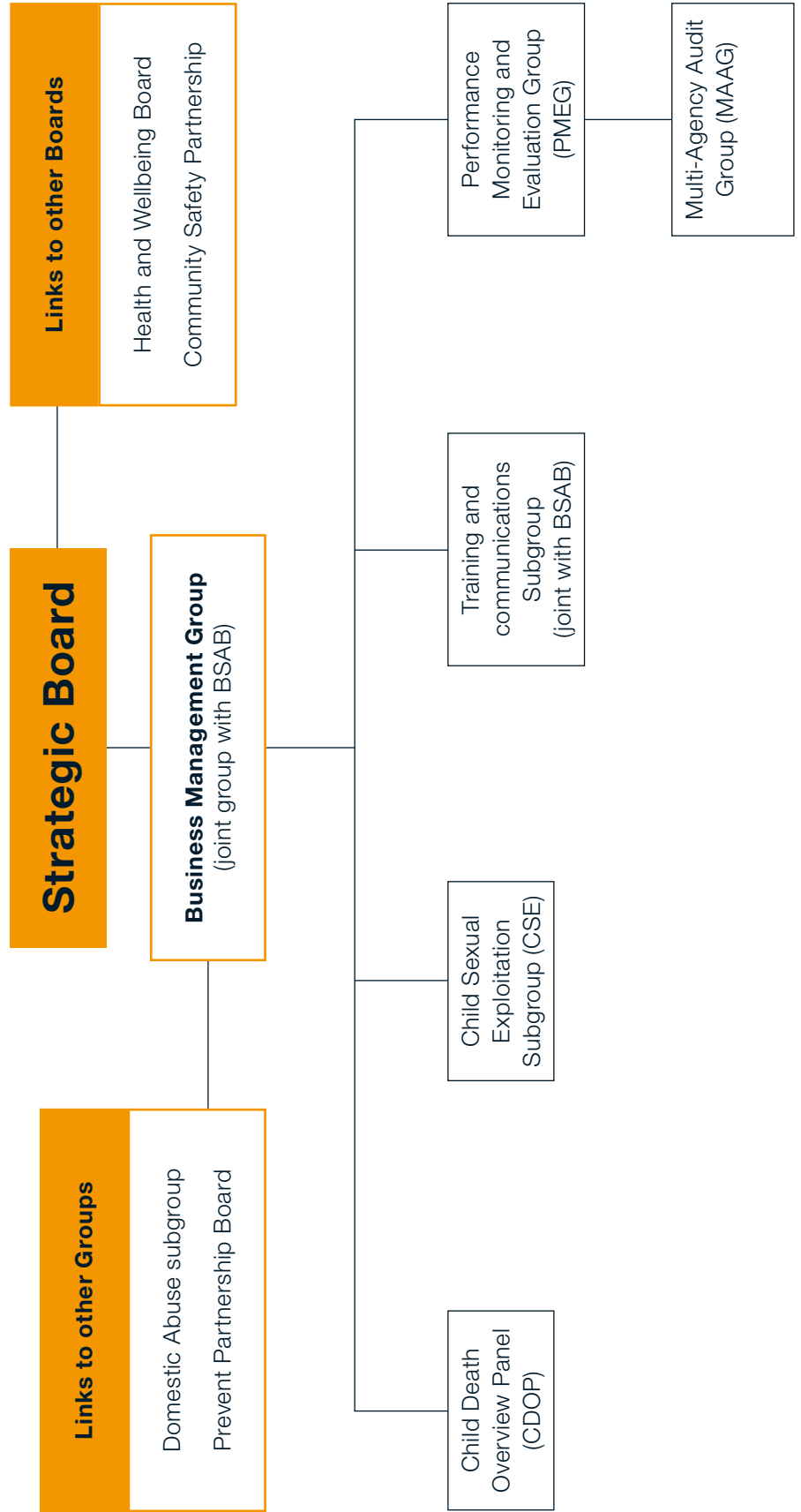
# APPENDIX A

## Strategic Board members at the time of publication

| Name                   | Title  | Agency  |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Nancy Palmer           | Independent Chair  |   |
| Cllr Graham Cain       | Elected Member   | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Diane Booth            | Director of Children's Services                          | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Dr Arif Rajpura        | Director of Public Health                                | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Tony Morrissey         | Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principal Social Worker | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Moya Foster            | Head of Early Help                                       | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Louise Storey          | Head of Children's Social Care                           | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Paul Turner            | Head of School Improvement                               | Blackpool Council                                     |
| John Hawkin            | Head of Leisure and Catering Services                    | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Kate Barker            | Early Years Improvement Officer                          | Blackpool Council                                     |
| Lesley Anderson-Hadley | Chief Nurse  | Blackpool CCG   |
| Cathie Turner          | Designated Nurse   | Blackpool CCG   |
| Dr Nigel Laycock       | Designated Doctor  | Blackpool CCG   |
| Dr Sujata Singh        | GP Representative  | Blackpool CCG   |
| Marie Thompson         | Director of Nursing                                      | Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust     |
| Hazel Gregory          | Head of Safeguarding                                     | Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust     |
| Bridgett Welch         | Associate Director of Nursing                            | Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust                  |
| Alison Cole            | Deputy Director of Nursing                               | NHS England   |
| Amanda Wooldridge      | Deputy Headteacher                                       | St John Vianney's RC Primary School                   |
| Graham Warnock         | Headteacher  | St George's Secondary School                          |
| Cole Andrew            | Headteacher  | Woodlands Special School                              |
| Wendy Casson           | Headteacher  | Educational Diversity                                 |
| Sheena Tattum          | Superintendent   | Lancashire Constabulary                               |
| Eric Halford           | Detective Chief Inspector                                | Lancashire Constabulary                               |
| Stephen Dunstan        | Director of Finance and Resources                        | Blackpool Coastal Housing                             |
| Jackie Couldridge      | Service Manager  | CAFCASS   |
| Sonia Turner           | Head of North West Lancashire                            | HM Prison and Probation Service                       |
| Elaine Seed            | Deputy Director  | Cumbria and Lancashire CRC                            |
| Amanda Quirke          | Senior Service Manager                                   | NSPCC   |
| Faye Atherton          | Head of Services   | Blackpool Carers Centre (Third Sector representative) |

# APPENDIX B

## BSCB Structure Chart



# APPENDIX C

| <b>Priority 1: In the context of the Children and Social Work Act and the removal of statutory LSCBs to ensure continuity, clear governance and strategic arrangements during the transition period.</b> |                        |                  |               |
|--|------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Leads</b>           | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Update</b> |
| 1. To ensure that the LSCB continues to deliver through the transition period.   | Chair                  | March 2019       |               |
| 2. To participate in the development of new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.  | Chair/ LA/ CCG/ Police | March 2019       |               |
| 3. To work with Pan-Lancashire and Cumbria LSCB to achieve greater consistency in multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and practice.   | Chair                  | March 2019       |               |
| 4. To develop reporting and mutual challenge within the LSCB and to other strategic boards in Blackpool.   | Chair                  | September 2018   |               |
| 5. To ensure the full engagement of schools in current and future multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.  | Chair/ Paul Turner     | March 2019       |               |

| <b>Priority 2: Develop a joined up multi-agency learning and outcomes framework.</b>   |                   |                  |               |
|--|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Leads</b>      | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Update</b> |
| 1. To co-ordinate all multi-agency learning and review activity to ensure that emerging themes are explored and that learning is implemented.                  | PMEG              | March 2019       |               |
| 2. To implement a programme of multi-agency practitioner review panels for cases that do not meet the SCR threshold, but where there is likely to be learning. | BMG               | September 2018   |               |
| 3. To implement a programme of multi-professional discussion forums to explore the frontline response to safeguarding themes.                                  | PMEG              | September 2018   |               |
| 4. To develop an understanding of the impact of BSCB training.   | Training subgroup | September 2018   |               |
| 5. To develop a programme of concise practitioner briefings.   | Training subgroup | September 2018   |               |
| 6. To implement a new quality assurance reporting framework.   | PMEG              | December 2018    |               |

**Priority 3: Understand the impact of multi-agency safeguarding activity on children and families in Blackpool.**

| <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Leads</b>      | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Update</b> |
|--|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. To seek the views of children and families within the multi-agency audit group process. | MAAG              | September 2018   |               |
| 2. To develop and understanding of the impact of training on children and families.        | Training subgroup | March 2019       |               |
| 3. To understand the experiences of children in Blackpool who need safeguarding.           | BMG               | March 2019       |               |

**Priority 4: To develop the multi-agency response to all forms of child exploitation.**

| <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Leads</b>            | <b>Timescale</b> | <b>Update</b> |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. To ensure that Blackpool and pan-Lancashire strategic arrangements enable an effective response to all forms of exploitation.     | CSE subgroup            | September 2018   |               |
| 2. To develop a local multi-agency action plan to address exploitation in all its forms.   | CSE subgroup            | June 2018        |               |
| 3. To deliver effective multi-agency training (or a conference) that enables practitioners to recognise and respond to exploitation. | CSE/ Training subgroups | December 2018    |               |

## Glossary of acronyms

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| ACE      | Adverse Childhood Experiences                                   |
| BCCG     | Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group                          |
| BCH      | Blackpool Coastal Housing                                       |
| BMG      | Business Management Group                                       |
| BSAB     | Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Board                             |
| BSCB     | Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board                           |
| BTHNHSFT | Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust               |
| BYPS     | Blackpool Young People's Service                                |
| CAFCASS  | Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service          |
| CASHER   | Child and Adolescent Support and Help Enhanced Response service |
| CCE      | Child Criminal Exploitation                                     |
| CDOP     | Child Death Overview Panel                                      |
| CLA      | Children Looked After   |
| CLCRC    | Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Company         |
| CON      | Continuum of Need   |
| CQC      | Care Quality Commission   |
| CSC      | Children's Social Care  |
| CSE      | Child Sexual Exploitation                                       |
| DA       | Domestic Abuse  |
| DAIV     | Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence (subgroup)            |
| EHA      | Early Help Assessment   |
| FIN      | Families In Need (team)   |
| GCP2     | Graded Care Profile 2   |
| HMICFRS  | HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services    |
| HMPPS    | HM Prison and Probation Service                                 |
| ICPC     | Initial Child Protection Conference                             |
| IDVA     | Independent Domestic Violence Advocate                          |
| ISVA     | Independent Sexual Violence Advocate                            |
| JSNA     | Joint Strategic Needs Analysis                                  |
| JTAI     | Joint Targeted Area Inspection                                  |
| LADO     | Local Authority Designated Officer                              |
| LCFT     | Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust                            |
| LSCB     | Local Safeguarding Children Board                               |



|       |  |
|-------|--|
| MAAG  | Multi-Agency Audit Group                                     |
| MACSE | Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (meeting)             |
| MALP  | Multi-Agency Learning Panel                                  |
| MARAC | Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference                      |
| MASH  | Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub                                |
| MFH   | Missing From Home  |
| MPDF  | Multi-Professional Discussion Forum                          |
| NICE  | National Institute for Health and Social Care Excellence     |
| OPCC  | Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (for Lancashire) |
| PMEG  | Performance Management and Evaluation Group                  |
| PRU   | Pupil Referral Unit  |
| PVP   | Protecting Vulnerable People                                 |
| RCPC  | Review Child Protection Conference                           |
| RHI   | Return Home Interview  |
| SCR   | Serious Case Review  |
| SEND  | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities                   |
| SUDC  | Sudden Unexpected Deaths in Childhood                        |
| YOT   | Youth Offending Team   |

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|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services                   |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | 15 November 2018   |

## EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

1.1 To inform Scrutiny Committee of the educational outcomes and improvement strategy in Blackpool.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To review the information provided, identifying any areas for questioning, further scrutiny review or improvement.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure that the strategy put in place for improvement is robust demonstrating and impact.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

None.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

### 5.0 Background Information

#### 5.1 School Improvement Systems

Blackpool has an established school improvement board that has been working

collaboratively on the town-wide improvement strategy for two academic years. It was previously known as Blackpool Challenge Board. It has formal Governance through the main Blackpool School Improvement Board meetings, which are held once a half-term, and strategic oversight through a separate “strategy” group that meets once a half-term. Information flows into and out of the Board through the Joint Consultative Group, which includes Headteacher and local authority representatives, and from the Primary and Secondary Headteacher groups. Equally, information flows from the “School Family Groups” which are cross-phase collaborations between Primary and Secondary Headteachers, discussing ways to improve transition across Blackpool.

5.2 The “Research school” based at St Mary’s Catholic Academy provides support for the Blackpool School Community, looking at sharing evidence to improve teaching practice, in association with the Education Endowment Foundation. A number of events have been held that have been well attended by Blackpool school leaders and teachers.

5.3 All the activity and information that comes out of the Blackpool school-led system feeds into the Blackburn, Blackpool and Lancashire (BBL) network, where good practice is shared further and strategic work on bids to funding streams such as the Strategic School Improvement Fund and the Opportunity Area fund is discussed, ie:

Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) Maths project.

Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) Leadership project.

Opportunity Area (OA) KS3 literacy project.

Opportunity Area (OA) KS4 English GCSE project.

Essential Life Skills programme, through the Department for Education (DFE), funding extra-curricular activities in Blackpool, focusing on offering children greater access to the same opportunities as are available to those attending the highest achieving schools.

5.4 Transitions – A Primary to Secondary transition week has been held for the second time, with a good level of success. All the Primary and Secondary schools in Blackpool were involved and the feedback has been fed into the Blackpool School Improvement Board to improve the process even further.

5.5 Attainment and Progress from Early Years to Key Stage 5

In the Early Years Foundation Stage the percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development increased from 66% to 68% against a national average of 72%.

- 5.6 Standards at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have been largely static, showing a slight decline, albeit against a national increase in the numbers of children achieving the expected standard. There has been a very small decline in outcomes in every area, except for reading. In Maths, Blackpool schools, cumulatively, achieved the national average, despite a decline in performance from 2017. The decline in performance was around 1% to 2%.
- 5.7 In every indicator, performance (attainment) improved at Higher / Greater depth, although remained stubbornly distant from the national average figures. Progress from KS1 to KS2 remained high in the majority of schools. Performance at expected levels and above is likely to still represent above average progress based on KS1 performance for the cohort, especially in Maths and in the composite Reading, Writing and Maths measures.
- 5.8 Performance at higher levels remains weaker and is likely to be in line or slightly beneath average progress in Reading and Writing and slightly better than that in Maths. Maths remains clearly the strongest subject. Reading remains the key main area for improvement. Most Primary Schools continue to perform well – two thirds are doing well or very well.
- 5.9 At expected levels, schools that are struggling perform noticeably more weakly in Maths and the weakness in Maths is a good marker for overall weakness. At higher levels, schools that are not strong struggle across all three core subjects, although, again weakness in Maths is a strong marker for weak overall performance.

In addition, there is a softness in Reading performance at higher levels across most schools:

- Only a third (at most) have better than average progress.
- A significant number of the stronger schools look to have underachieved this year at Reading (around 10).
- There is also considerable volatility in performance in Reading at higher levels year on year, even at some strong schools.

Maths is much stronger overall – with around half of schools clearly making better than expected progress & consistently so.

- 5.10 At GCSE level, performance in every indicator, except % English 4+ improved. However, the gap to national average in these indicators remained stubbornly wide.

Average attainment 8 scores improved in:

Four out of seven secondary academies.

Maths 4+ improved in 3 out of 7 secondary academies.

English 4+ improved in 5 out of 7 academies.  
Maths 5+ improved in 4 out of 7 academies.  
English 5+ improved in 5 out of 7 academies.  
Two of five Academies improved the level of EBacc pass rate.

In some cases these improvements were from low starting points, but green shoots of improvement are evident. There is much to do to ensure all our children and young people receive the quality of education they deserve.

5.11 At Key Stage 5 it is very pleasing to note that there was a 99% pass rate at A-Level and BTEC.

5.12 Inspection judgements – current position and trends

Blackpool schools have maintained the previous level of performance as rated by Ofsted.

All three of the local Special Schools are either Outstanding or Good.

- 2 Special Schools are Outstanding.
- 1 Special School is Good.

In regards to the 31 Primary schools, including 13 maintained Primary Schools -

- 3 Primary Academies are Requires Improvement.
- 15 Primary Academies are Good.
- 11 Maintained Primary Schools are Good.
- 2 Maintained Primary Schools are Outstanding.
  
- 1 Secondary Academy is Good.
- 1 All-Through Academy is Good.
- 4 Secondary Academies are Requires Improvement.
- 2 Secondary Academies are yet to be inspected.

5.13 **Performance of specific/vulnerable groups:**

Our Children

Blackpool children looked after attainment at KS2 has improved in every measure except for reading and reading, writing and maths combined. At Key Stage 4 every child achieved at least two qualifications from entry level upwards.

Special educational needs pupils

One hundred percent of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan go on to a positive destination, eg; Project Search or Further Education.

Special School placements and high needs out of borough placements are still placing the High Needs Block of the designated schools grant under significant financial pressure. Park and Highfurlong special schools are approaching capacity. Sufficiency is under review to include the opportunity to open our free SEMH school sooner than anticipated.

A new special educational needs strategy is to be written this year including an Early Years and Early Years intervention strategy. Also included will be a new “quality first” teaching strategy for the town, in relation to pupils who have special educational needs.

#### 5.14 Behaviour, Attendance and Inclusion

The last reported attendance data for Spring 2018 shows –

##### National Absence

Primary was 3.9%  
Secondary was 5%  
Combined 4.3%

##### Blackpool Absence

Primary was 3.7%  
Secondary was 6.2%  
Combined was 4.7%

##### National Persistent Absence

Primary was 10.1%  
Secondary was 13.3%  
Combined was 11.5%

##### Blackpool Persistent Absence

Primary was 9.6%  
Secondary was 17.6%  
Combined was 12.8%

Blackpool data for all schools from 2012/2013 – 2016/2017 academic years has reduced from 6.3% to 4.9% in terms of total absence compared to 4.7% nationally.

For persistent absence it has reduced from 19.5% to 12.2% whereas national average reduces slightly from 13.6% to 10.8%.

5.15 Inclusion

The pupil referral numbers are down from a high of 313 in June 2017 to a high of 306 in June 2018. The Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) began the 2018/2019 academic year with 208 pupils. In 2016, this was 244 pupils. In 2017, this was 238 pupils. The pupil referral unit cohort has changed as it is now recognised as an SEMH hospital school cohort, SEND cohort and PRU cohort. There has been a reduction in full-time pupils and an increase in dual registration. This places shared responsibility between both establishments for outcomes.

5.16 Fixed term exclusions

In 2016/2017 there were had 1,293 fixed term exclusions this reduced in 2017/2018 to 1,274

5.17 Permanent exclusions

In 2016/2017 there were 42 permanent exclusions, rising to 44 in 2017/2018.

5.18 Elective Home Education

Elective Home Education numbers are rising, as is the case across the country, increased scrutiny has been put in place.

September 2016/2017 - 121

September 2017/2018 - 162

September 2018/2019 - 187

5.19 Short-term goals

To reduce the levels of fixed term and permanent exclusions and to reduce the numbers of young people educated at Educational Diversity on a single registration, whilst accepting that the pupil referral education is right for some children and young people.

To reduce the numbers of 'our children' in the Pupil Referral Unit.

Progress towards these aims is being seen and work will continue to move forwards with this goal. Early indicators in 2018/2019 academic year have shown a significant decrease in fixed term and permanent exclusions and a reduction in numbers in the



Pupil Referral Unit.

5.20 Long-term goals

To improve the levels of attainment and progress for the young people of Blackpool at all stages within their education and to improve and enhance the educational provision within Blackpool.

This includes widening the variety of educational options for Blackpool children and young people to incorporate more examples of quality Alternative Provision and a quality vocational pathway.

6.0 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

None

**8.0 Legal considerations:**

8.1 There are no legal issues to consider

**9.0 Human Resources considerations:**

9.1 There are no human resource issues to consider

**10.0 Equalities considerations:**

10.1 Planning for every child is at an individual level and based on analysis of risk and need.

**11.0 Financial considerations:**

11.1 There is a financial pressure on childrens services budget which is predominantly linked to external care placements and designated schools grant.

**12.0 Risk management considerations:**

12.1 Planning around demand management brings with it a level of risk relating to predictions. It is not possible to take into consideration every eventuality.

**13.0 Ethical considerations:**

13.1 This update does not contravene any of the council's values, morals or beliefs.

**14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

14.1 The school led improvement system facilitates consultation in respect of strategy and finance.

**15.0 Background papers:**

15.1 None.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b> |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services                   |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | 15 November 2018   |

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE REPORT

1.1 To inform Scrutiny Committee of the work undertaken by Children's Services on a day to day basis and to update on the progress and implementation of developments within the service.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the contents of the report, provide challenge and identify any issues for further scrutiny.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Scrutiny Committee to be fully informed as to the day to day work of the Children's Services Directorate and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its obligations.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

Services are subject to national and statutory frameworks.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## **5.0 Background Information**

- 5.1 As per previous reports the high demand for services, which are amongst the highest in the country continue to be addressed. The North West Regional Information Group recently published its end of year (2017/2018) report which provided the following positive analysis.
- 5.2 Blackpool – in terms of data trends, 2017/2018 has been a remarkable year in Blackpool. Numbers of contacts, referrals, s47 enquiries and Early Help Assessments have each fallen by at least a fifth on the previous year. With open cases down -12% and CP plans reduced by almost a quarter, it is clear that planned, coordinated action has been undertaken to respond to demand differently in the borough.
- 5.3 In a context where the outlier status of the LA had become increasingly distant in recent years, this significant shift brings Blackpool into a more comparable level of activity, albeit often higher than all other NW LAs. Whilst arguably demonstrating clearer and more appropriate application of thresholds for intervention, there are some indications of a system which is still adjusting. Conversion rates from contact to referral, at 28% across the year as a whole are in line with North West averages.
- 5.4 This masks, however, a significant uptick in the latter part of 2017/18 suggesting some testing of thresholds within the partnership. Similarly with re-referrals, assessments resulting in No Further Action and repeat CP plans all remaining at levels above NW and England averages, there appears to be further work required for the whole partnership to support a less interventionist approach.
- 5.5 Given the shift in volumes of activity, it is likely that the quality and effectiveness of statutory intervention will be brought into sharper focus for scrutiny. With demand falling to more manageable levels, leaders across the partnership may well raise expectations of the improved impact of services in improving outcomes. Of some concern in this context may be the continued increase in numbers of Looked After Children, albeit of 2% - well below the regional increase.
- 5.6 Whilst numbers of children becoming Looked After have fallen by 20%, a gap remains with numbers ceasing to be LAC by achieving permanence or leaving care. For those who remain Looked After, placement stability has worsened from an already challenging position with 14.4% (77 children) experiencing 3 or more placements in the year. As the authority moves forward, demonstrating purposeful intervention and positive impact on children's lived experience is likely to be its most pressing challenge as it seeks to establish a sustainable future.
- 5.7 The Council continues to work with partners via the Improvement Board to monitor the effectiveness of plans to manage demand and through the Board challenging targets remain in place to bring Blackpool more in line with the national, regional and statistical neighbour picture. In addition the Improvement Board is moving its focus on measuring impact and outcomes which aligns to the NW Regional

Information Group narrative.

- 5.8 The Committee asked for further information following the completion of the journey of the child work on the changes to the front door being planned, namely our move from a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) to a MATH (Multi-Agency Triage Hub) and this can be found later in this report.
- 5.9 The following outlines performance against key indicators in respect to demand, child protection and looked after children. This gives an indication of progress against targets and this, in conjunction with audit findings, gives a holistic picture of quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Plans are also in place to meet with Committee Members to agree a performance dashboard which the Committee can scrutinise/monitor at each meeting. In addition the Committee was also encouraged to ascertain frontline practitioners feedback on the changes being made and support they were receiving. Arrangements have been made for Members to meet with the shadow improvement board to facilitate this.
- 5.10 In addition to performance information the committee also asked for information on a number of other areas, including information regarding an update on the Children Centre proposals and an update on the work of the Opportunity areas work programme. An outline on all these areas is included below. Our sufficiency plans will be submitted to next committee.
- 5.11 **Front Door Demand**
- There continues to be a decrease in the number of referrals being made to Children's Social Care (CSC). In the second quarter of 2018/2019 there were a total of 574 referrals, which is 86 less referrals than in Quarter 1. The percentage of the referrals that are repeat referrals has remained similar to Quarter 1 at 19%.
- 5.12 Positively we are seeing the conversion of referrals to assessment increase with this quarter seeing 88% of referrals progressing to a Children's Social Care assessment. 5% higher than last quarter.
- 5.13 **Child Protection**
- Children become subject to Child Protection (CP) Plans following a Section 47 enquiry having established a child(ren) are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and are in need of protection via a CP Plan. Not all Section 47 enquiries result in the need for a child(ren) to become subject to CP Plans.
- 5.14 The number of Section 47s undertaken has decreased in Quarter 2 by 19 on Quarter 1, but the figure remains high against national and statistical neighbours.
- 5.15 The number of children and young people subject to a CP Plan has increased to 304 in September 2018. This is 37 more children subject to a CP Plan than in June 2018. This in part has been due to a number of large families becoming subject to CP

Plans and a number being transfer-in cases from other local authorities.

**5.16 CP Statutory Visits**

All children subject to a CP Plan should receive a visit every four weeks. The average visited for the second quarter was 88%.

5.17 This is a slight increase (1.5%) on previous performance in Quarter 1. Work is undertaken with Team Managers to understand why visits are not completed in time and explanations are provided to the monthly performance improvement meetings. The majority of visits out of timescale are due to no access visits, but further visits are undertaken and the child(ren) seen within a short timeframe.

**5.18 Open Cases**

The number of cases open (including CP and Looked After Children (LAC)) has increased to 1,690 in September 2018 from 1,649 in June. There were fluctuations in the second quarter months, with September being less than in August which was 1,709

5.19 As expected in line with the above a similar pattern emerged for open cases (excluding CP and LAC) with the number in September being 842, lower than the March figure of 952. As outlined in previous reports some of these cases are cases stepping down from a child protection plan to a child in need plan and also includes open assessments.

**5.20 Looked After Children**

The total number of children looked after has decreased slightly to 552 in September from 566 in July 2108. This is 14 less children than at the end of July 2018.

The number of children and young people entering care reduced during the second Quarter, with it being (1) in July, (9) in August and (13) in September 2018.

The number exiting care showed an increase in the second Quarter with the figure being (8) in July, (21) in August and (15) in September 2018.

**5.21 LAC Statutory Visits**

All looked after children should receive a statutory visit. These visits vary in frequency depending upon their length of time in care and stability of placement. These visits are completed by all teams with the Permanence Team having the majority of cases. The performance at the end of the second Quarter was that 96%

of visits were completed within the timescale. This is an increase of 4% on the first Quarter. All cases that did not meet the timescale are discussed at the monthly performance improvement meetings and Team Managers are able to explain the reason for any outside of the statutory timescale.

**5.22 Care Leavers**

All care leavers should be kept in touch with at least every three months. In order to ensure the quality of these keep in touch meetings we have insisted that these should be face to face meetings unless there is good reason for this not to take place. Recent performance shows 89.5% of care leavers received face to face contact as at 12th October 2018. This means that 19 out of 181 had not had face to face contact. Reasons for those not in contact include young people having moved and not passed on details and young people expressing a wish not to be contacted.

5.23 Work continues to provide care leavers with opportunities for Education, Training or Employment. The Council is presently supporting 19 care leavers through university which is excellent performance. There are three care leavers in apprenticeship/positions within the Council, one within the Chief Executive Office, one as a Children's Engagement Officer, one in Children's Commissioning. The Council continues to look at increasing these opportunities and systems have been put in place to alert care leavers to vacancies within the Council through the Greater Jobs website. At the 12 October 2018 we had 48.8% of care leavers in employment, education or training.

5.24 Work to look to secure suitable accommodation for our care leavers with Blackpool Coastal Housing, Blackpool Housing Company and others continues. The Blackpool Young People's Service (BYPS) is a member of the Positive Transitions Group which leads on this work. A review of the plan has taken place to look at how we can ensure a range of accommodation options. In addition a further meeting has taken place with Blackpool Coastal Housing and Blackpool Housing Company to look at future projections to ensure suitable accommodation is made available to post 18 year olds.

5.25 Unfortunately some care leavers are presently in custody which impacts on the overall percentage in suitable accommodation. As at 12 October 2018, 92% were in suitable accommodation. 13 care leavers were deemed to be in unsuitable accommodation, 9 of which was due to them being in custody.

**5.26 MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) to MATH (Multi-Agency Triage Hub)**

As part of the journey of the child work the Council has reviewed with partners the multi-agency team at the front door and moved from a MASH to a MATH. As a

result the new front door in to children's services will be a MATH working together to ensure that only contacts and referrals that meet the threshold for preventative or statutory intervention will be referred onto Family Hubs or Children's Social Care Assessment and Planning Teams for an immediate planned response. This will reduce demand on children's services and ensure that interventions in family life only occur when absolutely necessary.

5.27 This is because there are some key changes happening in MATH which differs from the current MASH team:

- MATH will be a team of dedicated social workers, key workers, an admin support officer and a Team Manager completing triage, screening, support and advice in conjunction with the police, and health colleagues to communicate to agencies and members of the public concerned about children. This is a significant increase in resources targeted to ensure thresholds through to services are consistent and considered against the continuum of need (CoN)
- The demand will not be only the police work but all information and work coming to children's services where there is a perceived need of support or a safeguarding concern.

5.28 This means the Council will have a team of people with the time and focus to create chronologies, undertake in depth screening, and have relationship based conversations with other agencies in order to develop shared understandings of threshold as set out in the continuum of need.

The role of the team in detail will be to receive information about families and children who are considered a concern, to consider this information, share as appropriate and utilise a shared screening tool to apply the CoN before either –

1. Exploring the concern with the referrer and providing reflective conversations where necessary.
2. Supportively directing work back to the referring or another agency already involved with the family for early intervention at level 2 of the CoN.
3. Directing work that is identified as appropriate to our Targeted Intervention Services
4. Directing work that is identified as appropriate that requires a statutory assessment to our Children's Social Care Assessment and Planning Teams
5. Directing work that is identified as appropriate to other Children's Social Care teams e.g. safeguarding teams preventing unnecessary handovers
6. Provide oversight of trends and themes and supporting targeted action where



required.

7. If following application of the CoN the case requires a section 47 child protection enquiry this will be allocated to the appropriate Children's Social Care team
8. For cases where there is no informed consent and no significant harm issues the case cannot be accepted into the LA statutory assessment or early help and prevention process
9. For cases where there is no consent but the referring agency requires a case discussion to share information to ensure appropriate application of threshold consent **is not** required at this stage and the characteristics of the case can be discussed anonymously
10. Following information sharing and application of CoN it is identified that the child and family may benefit from LA early help and prevention services the case cannot be accepted by the LA until the referring agency has gained informed consent

#### 5.29 **Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report**

The corporate Parenting Panel receives an annual report which outlines the work of the panel and its successes. Below is a summary of the full report which can be found in Appendix 9(a).

- 5.30 There are five Corporate Parent Panel meetings held annually, one of which is a 'Take Over' by members of the Justuz Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum. Young people chair this meeting and set the agenda.
- 5.31 The Corporate Parent Panel is chaired by Cllr Graham Cain and members include Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Service Managers from Children Services, Blackpool Young People's Service, Early Help and representatives from Health, Headstart, Commissioning, Virtual School, Justuz and Fostering.
- 5.32 All reports that are presented at panel have been scrutinised by panel members and the Justuz Children in Care Council. There is an expectation that all reports submitted to the panel will have had consultation with our children and young people and their views incorporated into the findings.
- 5.33 Reports are discussed and any actions agreed are added to an Action Tracker which can result in development of action plans which are then reviewed at each meeting until completed.
- 5.34 There are set agenda items which include housing, communication, the action

tracker, feedback from Justuz Children in Care Council which informs the panel of any ongoing work, consultations and general feedback.

5.35 Examples of work that has been actioned through Corporate Parent Panel:

- 16/17 yr old Positive Transitions Support and Accommodation Pathway
- Council Opportunities for Young People
- Developed a new leaflet called 'Have your say' – a customer relations feedback form
- Use of language and terminology to be more in line with young people's understanding
- Carer profiles to be updated to include who currently lives in the house including other children.
- A Family Profile template has been developed and is updated before a young person is placed.
- Child friendly minutes are now being documented by IRO's and sent to children following review
- Foster Carer reviews improved through consultation with carers
- Recruitment of Care Leavers into internal vacancies
- Involvement of young people in the recruitment process for Children's Service staff
- Young people being actively involved in delivery of training to staff and foster carers'

5.36 Ongoing work by the Justuz Children in Care Council

- Developing information packs for any young person who becomes looked after
- Pocket money policy
- Consultation on Contact – how they see their families
- Consultation on the Pledge
- Creation of a Jargon Buster
- Involvement in the co-production of our Care Leaver Offer through the Care Leaver forum
- Use of Social Media/technology for better communication between young people and their workers
- Development of a version of The Pledge which is more 'user friendly' for our younger children aged eight and under

### **5.37 Children’s Centre Review update**

The £1million contribution from the Department for Education via the Dedicated School Grant which contributes to Blackpool School Based Children’s Centre’s is unwinding. A review and consultation have been undertaken, to support Schools and Academies, to find a way forward without reliance on the grant and in order to enhance delivery using a Family Hub model. The proposed Family Hub model consists of an enhanced offer, including evening and weekend delivery, with a full range of services for residents of all ages. The Family Hub model will be led by the needs in each locality, shaped by the community and will evolve over time. The Family Hub approach has been trialed within Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre which serves two of the most deprived wards in the country and has seen improved outcomes for local children, young people and their families. A wealth of partners, across services and sectors are working together to remove barriers for families to support access to Prevention and Early Intervention services within the Family Hub in their neighbourhood. The consultation details and a proposed way forward are still under consideration.

### **5.38 Blackpool Opportunity Area Programme Update**

The Blackpool Opportunity Area Programme is a three year Social Mobility programme, funded by the Department for Education and delivered through a local partnership involving the Department for Education and key organisations including Blackpool Council. The three year Delivery Plan has three main priorities –

- Priority 1      Raise attainment and progress
- Priority 2      Support for vulnerable children and families
- Priority 3      Improve advice and support for young people when moving between schools/colleges and into work

5.39 The programme is now in its second year of delivery with the following activity underway:-

- The transition of pupils between primary and secondary phases has been improved through a collaborative approach working within families of schools.
- English practice in Key Stage (KS) 4 in all Blackpool’s secondary schools and the Pupil Referral Unit has been reviewed which was followed up by the delivery of packages of support tailored to each school to improve English outcomes in 2018 and 2019.
- KS 3 reading project has just been launched which will systematically enhance the reading abilities of students in Key Stage 3.

- Two Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) projects are underway focused on Maths, and Leadership and Governance. Over 114 fully-funded aspiring leaders have applied to undertake a National Professional Qualification funded by the Teaching and Leadership Innovation fund (TLIF).
- Enterprise Advisers are working in all secondary schools, 6th forms and colleges to ensure that all young people are receiving four high quality experiences of the world of work. In 2017/18, 26, 337 encounters have been achieved against a target of 14,000.
- Community consultation has been completed to understand the views of the Blackpool community on what works and what doesn't work in Blackpool and what they believe are the burning issues we need to address to improve social mobility across the town. The recommendations have been cross checked against the existing Delivery Plan.

5.40 Future plans include the development of a literacy strategy, the roll out of a ground breaking inclusion package which will seek to reduce the number of young people not in mainstream education and in partnership with Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, the delivery of a Careers Hub which will support schools develop good careers guidance for young people using nationally recognised benchmarks.

6.0 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**7.0 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 9(a): Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report

**8.0 Legal considerations:**

8.1 There are no legal issues to consider.

**9.0 Human Resources considerations:**

9.1 There are no Human Resources issue to consider.

**10.0 Equalities considerations:**

10.1 Planning for every child is at an individual level and based on analysis of risk and need.

**11.0 Financial considerations:**

11.1 There is a financial pressure on children's services budget which is predominantly linked to placements.

**12.0 Risk management considerations:**

12.1 Planning and demand brings with it a level of risk relating to predictions. It is not possible to taken into consideration every eventuality.

**13.0 Ethical considerations:**

13.1 This update does not contravene any of the Council's values, morals or beliefs.

**14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

14.1 None

**15.0 Background papers:**

15.1 None

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# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018



# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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## Overview of Panel

There are five Corporate Parent Panel meetings held annually, one of which is a 'Take Over' by members of the Justuz Children in Care Council and Care Leavers Forum. Young people chair the meeting and set the agenda.

The Corporate Parent Panel is chaired by Cllr Graham Cain Lead Member for Children's Services. The Director of Children Services Diane Booth also attends.

The meetings have been attended by representatives from Children's Services, BYPS, Early Help, Foster Carer's, Health, Education, Headstart, Commissioning, Justuz and Elected Members.

The corporate parent panel has been working to an Action Tracker which will result in the development of an Action Plan.

During the meetings individuals representing organisations are invited to present annual reports which give detailed accounts of the work being done to deliver services to our children and young people. Our Children and Young people are presented with the reports and invited to give their feedback, which is included in the finalised reports.

There are set agenda items which include the Young People's update which allows representatives of the Justuz Children in Care Council the opportunity to report on the work they are involved and consulted on and the events our children and young people will have the chance to be involved in for the coming year.

Further set agenda items include housing, communication and the progress of the work plan. From this individuals are tasked with actions to complete and report back on at the next panel. It is imperative that tasks are completed in order to improve the services delivered.

It is an expectation that all reports submitted to the panel will have had consultation with our children and young people and their views incorporated into the findings.

## Work Undertaken

During this year work has been undertaken on the following:-

- 16/17 yr old Positive Transitions Support and Accommodation Pathway
- Council Opportunities for Young People



# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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- Developed a new leaflet called 'Have your say' – a customer relations feedback form
- Use of language and terminology to be more in line with young people's understanding
- Carer profiles to be updated to include who currently lives in the house including other children. A Family Profile template has been developed and is updated before a young person is placed.
- Child friendly minutes are now being documented by IRO's and sent to children following review
- Foster Carer reviews improved through consultation with carers
- Recruitment of Care Leavers into internal vacancies
- Involvement of young people in the recruitment process for Children's service staff
- Young people being actively involved in delivery of training to staff and foster carers'

## Work Ongoing

- Care Leaver Offer
- Memory boxes and storage for personal ID
- Development of a video for staff training which will look at real life experience of what it is like to be a Looked After Child in Blackpool Council
- Work on 'Contact' and improving the quality time young people have with their families
- Development of the Core

## Work undertaken/ongoing by Justuz

- Developing information packs for any young person who becomes looked after
- Pocket money policy

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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- Consultation on Contact – how they see their families
- Consultation on the Pledge
- Creation of a Jargon Buster
- Involvement in the production of Care Leaver Offer through Care Leaver forum
- Use of Social Media/technology for better communication between young people and their workers
- Development of a version of The Pledge which is more ‘user friendly’ for our younger children 8 and under

## Training and Development

There has been training delivered to staff and elected members for Corporate Parenting update. There are further dates available later in the year.

Our young people have been involved in training for foster carer’s.

Work is underway with our Professional Lead to identify where young people can contribute to our training offer.

Our young people are involved in co -production with Headstart.

There is a plan in place to produce a film that will be used for training purposes. It will be co-delivered with young people and used for staff training purposes.

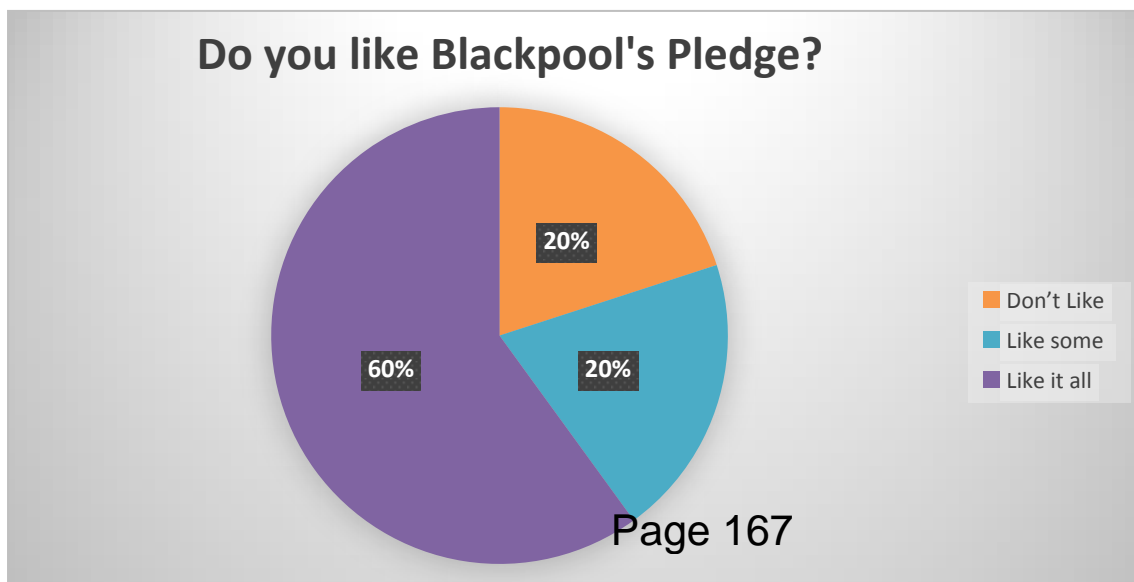
# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

## The Pledge Consultation 2018

Justuz members were consulted about Blackpool's Pledge.

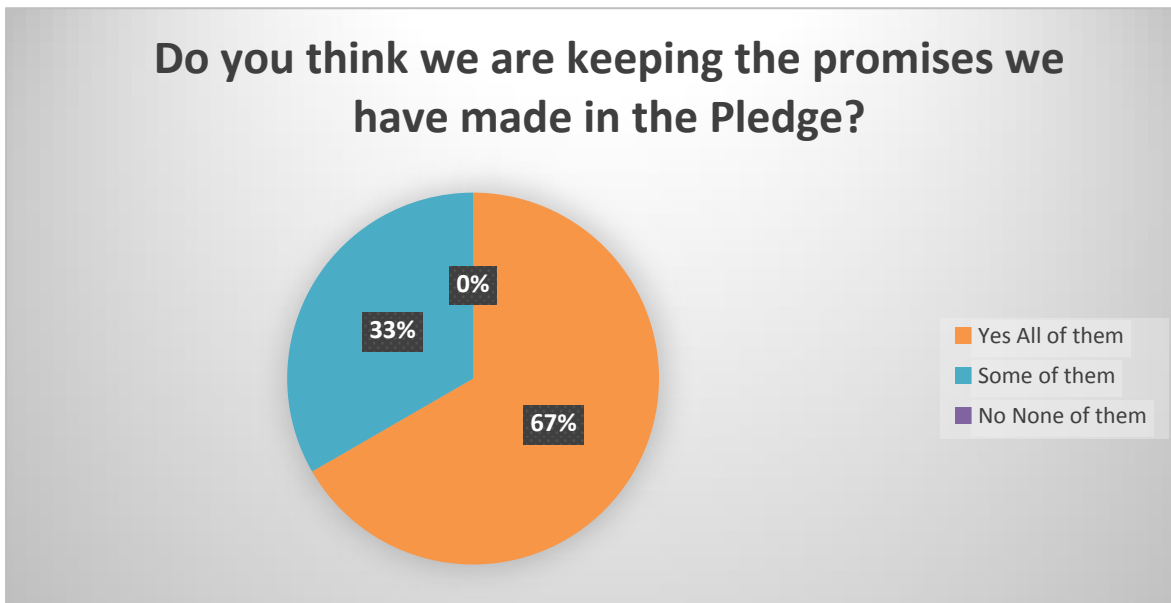


We simply asked them...



## Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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We also asked which promises in the Pledge are most important to them:

Justuz told us:

- Keeping us safe
- Staying in touch
- Listen to us
- Give us choices
- Help us prepare for the future
- Making sure we are happy with the people looking after us
- Being honest with us
- Showing up on time
- Caring for us and treating us with respect

Justuz told us that they didn't think we had missed any important promises that should be written in the pledge and were happy with our promises.

Justuz told us that we need a younger friendly version of the Pledge, one that is easier to understand and more appealing to younger children.

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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## **Actions from Pledge Consultation**

Justuz to help create a more appealing, younger, colourful and fun to read version of the Pledge for our children for children age 8 and under.

To put our pledge to the Test!

Justuz will be doing some mystery shopping over the next few months to check out how we are keeping the most important promises to them. They will report their findings back to The Corporate Panel.

## **Future work**

As above there is a plan in place to look at production of a Film co- produced by our young people. This will be an exciting piece of work that will bring the experience of our Young people to life.

Development of the Google Platform is ongoing to reach more of our children and young people to inform of service development, consultation, recruitment and promote a culture of open two way discussion.

Work needs to be undertaken with our young people to consider how the Corporate Parent Panel is run and to ensure that it is inclusive of all its members.

Our yearly Celebration of Achievement award will be once again held in March 2019. This is a very enjoyable event where we celebrate the achievements of our children and young people.

There is a programme of yearly events that are co-ordinated by our Participation Team and Justuz. See attached to Panel Agenda.

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2018

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## Document Control

|                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
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| Document number:   | 1                |
| Document category: | Report           |
| Document location: |                  |
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| Last edited:       | July 2018        |

## Record of Amendments:

| Date | Version | Amended by | Description of changes |
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## Approved By:

| Name | Title | Signature | Date |
|------|-------|-----------|------|
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**Report to:** **RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Relevant Officer:** Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.

**Date of Meeting:** 15 November 2018

## SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the Workplan, together with any suggestions that Members may wish to make for scrutiny review.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the Committee Workplan, taking into account any suggestions for amendment or addition.

2.2 To monitor the implementation of the Committee's recommendations/actions.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Workplan is up to date and is an accurate representation of the Committee's work.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

## **5.0 Background Information**

### **5.1 Scrutiny Workplan**

- 5.1.1 The Scrutiny Committee Workplan is attached at Appendix 10(a). The Workplan is a flexible document that sets out the work that the Committee will undertake over the course of the year.
- 5.1.2 Committee Members are invited, either now or in the future, to suggest topics that might be suitable for scrutiny in order that they be added to the Workplan.

### **5.2 Scrutiny Review Checklist**

- 5.2.1 The Scrutiny Review Checklist is attached at Appendix 10(b). The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

### **5.3 Implementation of Recommendations/Actions**

- 5.3.1 The table attached to Appendix 10(c) has been developed to assist the Committee to effectively ensure that the recommendations made by the Committee are acted upon. The table will be regularly updated and submitted to each Committee meeting.
- 5.3.2 Members are requested to consider the updates provided in the table and follow up questions as appropriate.

### **5.4 Children's Services Dashboard**

As agreed at the last meeting of the Committee, a workshop has been set up for Members to develop a dashboard to allow for improved identification of topics to be considered by Scrutiny. The workshop was held on 12 November 2018 and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

### **5.5 Staffing Support**

It was also agreed, at the last meeting, to undertake a piece of work on Staffing Support. This piece of work will be undertaken in two parts. The first is a presentation before the Committee meeting on 15 November 2018 about the policies and procedures in place to support staff. The second will be a small group of Members (Councillors O'Hara, Mitchell, Mrs Scott and Scott have nominated themselves) meeting with the Shadow Improvement Board, which is a group of frontline members of staff regarding their views on the support in place.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 10(a): Resilient Communities and Children's Scrutiny Committee Workplan

Appendix 10(b): Scrutiny Review Checklist

Appendix 10(c): Implementation of Recommendations/Actions

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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| <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2018/2019</b> |  |
|---|--|
| 7 June 2018   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Annual Council Plan Performance report on relevant Priority Two projects</b> - complete with 'Blackpool Outcomes'</li> <li>2. <b>Leisure Services Update Report</b></li> <li>3. <b>Children's Services' Update Report</b> – including Opportunity areas update, neglect update</li> <li>4. <b>Journey of the Child</b></li> </ol>   |
| 13 September 2018   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Children's Services Update Report</b> – including MASH update, Demand Management Plan update, CSE, young people NEET</li> <li>2. <b>Head Start</b> – action planning, evidence and outcomes</li> <li>3. <b>Key priority report:</b> to be determined</li> <li>4. <b>Youth Justice</b> – including PVP, Early Help, non-criminalising young people, required support, community orders/court involvement. Joint report with Police.</li> </ol>   |
| 15 November 2018  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy</b></li> <li>2. <b>Children's Services Update Report</b> – including Opportunity areas update, Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report, Placement Sufficiency Strategy</li> <li>3. <b>School Improvement</b> – to include latest attainment data, have the short term goals been met, progress against long term planning, school readiness, employment readiness, transition to secondary school</li> <li>4. <b>Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report</b></li> </ol> |
| 7 February 2019   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Children's Services Update Report</b> – including MASH update, Demand Management Update, child neglect</li> <li>2. <b>Better Start</b> outcomes, value for money</li> <li>3. <b>SEND and Inclusion Strategy</b></li> <li>4. <b>Leisure Services Update Report</b></li> <li>5. <b>Parks, Ecological Areas, Grounds Maintenance and Friends Groups</b></li> </ol>   |
| 20 June 2019  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Annual Council Performance Plan</b></li> <li>2. <b>Community Engagement, Volunteer Strategy and Fairness Commission</b></li> <li>3. <b>Children's Services Update Report</b> – including Opportunity Areas update, CSE, MASH update, Safeguarding</li> </ol>  |
| Tbc September 2019  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>HeadStart Annual Report</b></li> </ol>  |

| <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY REVIEW WORK</b> |  |
|--|--|
| November 2018  | <p>12 November 2018 – <b>Children's Services Dashboard development workshop.</b></p> <p>15 November 2018 – Presentation by Head of HR and Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principal Social Worker on policies and procedures in place to support staff.</p> <p>27 November 2018 – Meeting of the Shadow Improvement Board to discuss <b>staff support with frontline staff.</b></p> |
| Tbc January/February 2019  | Piece of work on the dangers present in Blackpool to children and young people.  |
| July 2019  | Proposed joint piece of work with Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee: <b>Child and Adolescent Mental Health</b> to include prevalence, performance of CAMHS, emotional health, looked after children, additional educational needs  |

**SCRUTINY SELECTION CHECKLIST****Title of proposed Scrutiny:**

The list is intended to assist the relevant scrutiny committee in deciding whether or not to approve a topic that has been suggested for scrutiny.

Whilst no minimum or maximum number of 'yes' answers are formally required, the relevant scrutiny committee is recommended to place higher priority on topics related to the performance and priorities of the Council.

Please expand on how the proposal will meet each criteria you have answered 'yes' to.

|   | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| The review will add value to the Council and/or its partners overall performance:       |        |
| The review is in relation to one or more of the Council's priorities:                   |        |
| The Council or its partners are not performing well in this area:                       |        |
| It is an area where a number of complaints (or bad press) have been received:           |        |
| The issue is strategic and significant:   |        |
| There is evidence of public interest in the topic:                                      |        |
| The issue has potential impact for one or more sections of the community:               |        |
| Service or policy changes are planned and scrutiny could have a positive input:         |        |
| Adequate resources (both members and officers) are available to carry out the scrutiny: |        |

**Please give any further details on the proposed review:**

**Completed by:**

**Date:**



**MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

|   | DATE OF REC | RECOMMENDATION  | TARGET DATE      | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER                                      | UPDATE  | RAG RATING  |
|---|-------------|---|------------------|--|---|-------------|
| 1 | 29.06.17    | To request that a precis of school Ofsted reports be sent to Members outside of Committee meetings.   | Ongoing          | Director of Children's Services                          | Recommendation amended following Committee meeting December 2017. First document received.  | Green       |
| 2 | 12.04.18    | To receive the Placement Sufficiency Strategy in late 2018.   | November 2018    | Director of Children's Services                          | Consideration of the Placement Sufficiency Strategy has been included on the workplan for November 2018.<br><br>Update: Mrs Booth, Director of Children's Services has advised that the Strategy is not yet completed and that it will be circulated to Members of the Committee as soon as possible. | Red         |
| 3 | 13.09.18    | To create a dashboard of data to use as a tool to identify areas of concern requiring scrutiny. To include data on staffing in the dashboard. | November 2018    | Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principle Social Worker | A workshop has been set up with Members on 12 November 2018 to create the dashboard.  | Green       |
| 4 | 13.09.18    | That a future piece of work be carried out on the dangers present in Blackpool to children and young people.                                  | February 2019    | Tbc  | Colleagues at the Police have been contacted to assist with the work, no response received to date.   | Not yet due |
| 5 | 13.09.18    | That Mrs Booth be requested to report on partners who did not engage.   | N/A              | Director of Children's Services                          | Members are requested to consider how to implement and monitor this recommendation.   | N/A         |
| 6 | 13.09.18    | To receive an update performance report on HeadStart in 12 months.  | September 2019   | Programme Leader, HeadStart                              | Added to workplan.  | Not yet due |
| 7 | 13.09.18    | To receive information relating to the changes to the multi-agency safeguarding hub.  | 15 November 2018 | Director of Children's Services                          | Included in the Children's Services Update report on agenda for 15 November 2018.   | Green       |

|   | DATE OF REC | RECOMMENDATION  | TARGET DATE   | RESPONSIBLE OFFICER                                      | UPDATE   | RAG RATING |
|---|-------------|---|---------------|--|--|------------|
| 8 | 13.09.18    | To undertake a piece of work on the support provided to members of staff within Children's Social Care. | November 2018 | Interim Head of Safeguarding and Principle Social Worker | Members of the Committee have been invited to attend a meeting of the Shadow Improvement Board to speak to frontline members of staff on 27 November 2018 at 4.00pm. A presentation will then be provided by the Head of HR and Principal Social Worker on the policies and procedures that are in place to support staff. | Green      |