

# Blackpool Council

18 December 2019

To: Councillors Clapham, D Coleman, Collett, Critchley, Farrell, Mitchell, Owen, Stansfield and Wing

The above members are requested to attend the:

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 9 January 2020 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 10 OCTOBER 2019** (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee held on 10 October 2019 as a true and correct record.

#### **3 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

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

**4 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER** (Pages 9 - 12)

The Committee to consider the appointment of Dr Elaine Allen as a Roman Catholic diocesan co-opted member to the Committee.

**5 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS** (Pages 13 - 18)

To consider the Executive and Cabinet Member Decisions within the remit of the Committee, taken since the last meeting.

**6 FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 19 - 24)

To consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan, January – April 2020, within the remit of the Committee.

**7 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT** (Pages 25 - 36)

To inform the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on the progress and implementation of developments within the "Getting to Good" Journey for Children's Social Care.

**8 YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM IMPROVEMENT** (Pages 37 - 44)

To update on the progress and implementation of developments within the Youth Offending Team focussing on the "Getting to Good" Journey for Youth Offending.

**9 CORPORATE PARENT PANEL ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 45 - 54)

To consider the Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report.

**10 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN** (Pages 55 - 64)

To consider the contents of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme.

**11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note the date of the next meeting of the Committee as Thursday 13 February 2020 at 6pm.

**Venue information:**

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

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Elaine Ireland, Senior Democratic Governance Adviser, Tel: 01253 477255, e-mail: [Elaine.ireland@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:Elaine.ireland@blackpool.gov.uk)

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## MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019

### **Present:**

Councillor Collett (in the Chair)

Councillors

Clapham

Farrell

Mitchell

R Scott

D Coleman

Hugo

Owen

Wing

### **In Attendance:**

Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration

Councillor Graham Cain, Deputy Leader of the Council (Children)

Councillor Mrs Maxine Callow, Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board

Mr Robert Arrowsmith, Head of Performance and Systems

Mr Steve Ashley, Independent Scrutineer of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board

Ms Moya Foster, Head of Targeted Intervention Services

Mrs Jeanette Richards, Head of Partnerships and Improvement

Mr Philip Thompson, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability

Mrs Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Mrs Elaine Ireland, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Debbie Coleman declared a personal interest in Item 7 'Children's Social Care Improvement', the nature of the interest being that she was employed by a residential children's home which dealt with Blackpool children.

### **2 PERMISSION TO SPEAK**

The Committee agreed that Councillor Mrs Callow, Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board, be given permission to speak at Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee meetings due to her role on the Scrutiny Leadership Board.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2019**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the last meeting held on 20 June 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

### **4 PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The Committee noted that there were no applications to speak by members of the public on this occasion.

### **5 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER**

## **MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019**

The Committee agreed to approve the appointment of Ms Helen Sage as a diocesan co-opted member to the Committee.

### **6 EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

The Committee noted that four Executive decisions had been taken within the remit of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee since the previous meeting.

Members asked a number of questions pertaining to PH41/2019 'Temporary Closure of 331 Bispham Road and Review of Residential Services' and in response Councillor Graham Cain, Deputy Leader (Children) advised that the provision of the service was under review. Mrs Jeanette Richards, Head of Partnerships and Improvement, advised that the independent review of the provision was expected to reach its conclusion by the end of October 2019, following which next steps would be determined. In the interim, affected staff had been deployed within Children's Services. Mrs Richards reiterated the complexity of the needs of the young people accessing the residential provision and stressed that the provision would need to address those specific individual needs in the best way possible.

The Chairman questioned why the establishment had not been full prior to its closure despite the need within Blackpool for residential provision. He went on to ask whether it was foreseen that the outcome of the review would result in the provision being permanently closed. Mrs Richards responded that she would not like to pre-empt the outcome of the review and that the outcome would be reported to the Committee once the findings had been received and the next steps identified.

Councillor Mrs Callow noted that the service had been identified as 'Inadequate' following an Ofsted inspection in June 2019 and she queried the delay in the accommodation being closed by the Council. Councillor Cain acknowledged that the accommodation had not been closed as quickly as it could have been, however action had now been taken to address any underlying concerns.

### **7 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan, October 2019 – February 2020 relating to the portfolio of the Deputy Leader of the Council (Children) and the Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration. The Committee noted that the Forward Plan contained three items relevant to the Committee: The School Organisation Plan 2020-2028; Review of Residential Children's Home Provision and the Implementation of a Regional Adoption Agency.

The Committee requested that the findings of the review of the residential children's home provision be reported to the next meeting of the Committee. Mrs Richards, Head of Partnerships and Improvement confirmed that following the review a plan would be formulated, with the resulting plan being made available to the Committee at its meeting in December 2019.

### **8 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT**

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019**

Mrs Jeanette Richards, Head of Partnerships and Improvement presented the Committee with an update on the progress and implementation of developments within the "Getting to Good" Journey for Children's Social Care.

The Committee was informed that in August 2019 Children's Services had its first monitoring visit from Ofsted, the outcomes of which were shared with the Committee. As part of the monitoring process the inspectors had asked for information in advance, reviewed case audits and case files and during their visit had sat with workers and managers from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Assessment and Planning teams. Overall the findings reported that the inspectors had seen improvements in the way the work of the 'front door' had been managed since their last visit, although they shared the view of the Director of Children's Services that further work was required with the partnership to ensure that the service was as effective as it could be.

Members were informed that demand for Children's Social Care assessment had remained very high, with 4,200 children and young people having been the subject of a reported concern to Children's Social Care over the past six months. In the same period 2,000 assessments had been completed by Children's Social Care. Issues remained regarding the quality of the referrals received from partner agencies, with particular reference being made to the seeking of parental consent and the impact this had on the Council's ability to take decisions within the expected timeframe of 24 hours. Mrs Richards pointed out that two thirds of referred assessments did not require further services, which highlighted that large numbers of referrals had been made unnecessarily. The Committee was informed that the total number of children and young people open to Children's Social Care in Blackpool remained slightly over 2,000 at the end of September 2019, with most of the children and young people being subject to child protection plans or in care. Mrs Richards stressed that the steady increase in the number of children in care had been putting pressure on placement stability and there had been an increase in placement breakdown and in the number of children and young people living in high-cost placements.

A question was asked regarding the location of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team, with Mrs Richards confirming that all agencies had now been located in one building which had resulted in beneficial co-location working and significant improvements in understanding the full picture of children's needs. The Chairman asked whether some partners were more effective than others in addressing the requirements of the improvement plan, with Mrs Richards reiterating that improvements had been made but that further work was still required. The previously identified issue of a delay in the sharing of information by police was discussed and Mrs Richards confirmed that the Director of Children's Services had been addressing and challenging the problem with the police.

Discussion was held around the shortage of foster carers. The Committee was informed that an increase had been seen of foster carers applying for special guardianships of the children in their care, which then reduced the number of foster carers available. The Committee heard that a new service manager was in post who was working to raise awareness of the need for foster carers in Blackpool as well as implementing a focused recruitment drive looking at creative ways to encourage new foster carers and the resulting reduction in the number of looked after children.

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Within the feedback of the Monitoring Visit, reference had been made to an increase in audit activity. The Committee requested specific details of the audit activity cited, with Mrs Richards confirming that this had related to the Ofsted framework, Social Care practices and the associated audit processes, which had all provided adequate assurances.

The Committee raised concerns over the increased budget required to address the Ofsted recommendations, with reference being made to the large scale recruitment of social workers. The question was raised of the potential budgetary impact across other areas of the Council as well as whether an issue with the retention of social care staff had been identified. Mrs Richards informed Members that the Council had been utilising agency staff due to the national shortage of qualified social workers, caused in large part by the stressful and distressing nature of the job. The successful recruitment drive had been able to bring a level of stability to the workforce. With regards to the overall impact on the budget, the Committee considered the possibility of undertaking a separate focused review of the budget implications associated with the improvement journey. Mr Arrowsmith, Head of Performance and Systems confirmed that only a quarter of the budget had been allocated to staffing costs, with a further quarter spent on the provision of out of area residential placements. He pointed out that such placements were extremely costly and impacted on approximately 50-60 children, with the longer-term aim being to reduce the need for such placements.

[Mr Ashley, Independent Scrutineer for the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board joined the meeting during consideration of this item.]

## **9 YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM IMPROVEMENT**

Ms Moya Foster, Head of Targeted Intervention Services updated the Committee on the progress of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) improvement plan. Data indicated that incremental improvements had been made and the service manager and duty manager posts had been filled. The Committee was informed that work with the Youth Justice Board had been ongoing, with a peer review scheduled for January 2020 and an anticipated re-inspection in the next six to eight months.

Committee Members requested more detailed budgetary information to be included within future update reports, with Ms Foster confirming that whilst some of the YOT budget had been integrated into Blackpool Young People Services it would be possible to provide a breakdown of funding which had been received through grants. Ms Foster confirmed that this data would be included in the YOT improvement report for the December 2019 meeting of the Committee.

A question was asked regarding the support offered to care leavers, with Ms Foster advising that care leavers received support up to 25 years of age, with a specifically tailored plan around positive transitions being offered. In addition, in conjunction with Blackpool Coasting Housing, semi-independent and independent living accommodation had been provided as an option for care leavers via the Housing Clinic scheme.

Discussion took place around the relatively high reoffending rates with Mr Arrowsmith,

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Head of Performance and Systems asserting that the number of first time offenders entering the justice system had reduced over the past ten years, but that the offences committed were more likely to be serious in nature which in turn raised the likelihood of reoffending. Success in keeping young people out of the justice system altogether had been reported as a result of the implementation of beneficial diversionary activities.

**10 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND EDUCATION RESULTS UPDATE**

Mr Philip Thompson, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) updated the Committee on schools' educational results and provided an overview of SEND provision. He reported that provisional data released by the Department for Education had showed that Blackpool's primary schools had enjoyed their strongest ever year, performing two per cent above the national average in the main accountability measure 'The percentage of children performing at or above expected levels in Reading, Writing and Maths'.

The achievement of children identified as having Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) was also particularly strong at the end of Primary school, performing at 10 per cent above the national SEND cohort in 'reading, writing and maths at expected levels'. Mr Thompson also pointed out that the positive performance of primary schools was not an isolated exception with Blackpool's primary schools having performed relatively strongly at the end of Key Stage 2 since 2017. Members were informed that provisional school level GCSE data would be published on 17 October 2019 but that early indications of secondary school performance at GCSE showed continued weakness in aggregate performance, with improvements at some schools being offset by falls at others.

Mr Thompson reported that national data concerning Post-16 engagement with education, employment and training showed substantial improvement in Blackpool, with figures up nine per cent on the results from March 2018 and standing at 90.2 per cent of all 16 and 17 year olds. The Committee was informed that this was still one per cent beneath the average for the North West and two per cent beneath the national average, but was now above the figure for Lancashire.

The Committee noted the excellent results from Blackpool's primary schools and the Chairman reminded the Committee that some elements of secondary school education would be looked at further as part of the focused Scrutiny review of inclusion in education.

In response to a question on the low levels of apprenticeships, Ms Foster informed Members that a newly commissioned service in the area would be targeting apprenticeship programmes to young people, with substantial work being undertaken to tackle this area.

[Councillors Benson and Cain along with Mr Thompson and Ms Foster left the meeting on conclusion of this item.]

**11 BLACKPOOL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD - FINAL ANNUAL REPORT**

Mr Steve Ashley, outgoing Independent Chair of Blackpool Safeguarding Children Board

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(BSCB) and newly appointed Independent Scrutineer for the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board presented the Committee with the final BSCB annual report. In summarising the work of the Board over the previous year, Mr Ashley identified two key areas for focus for the coming year under the new Lancashire Board arrangements. He stressed to members that Early Help and Neglect were two areas of importance which would require a multi-agency approach, with the high volume of referrals being made to Children's Social Care and the associated financial strains requiring significant changes to multi-agency working.

Mr Ashley reiterated to the Committee that Early Help and Neglect needed to be priorities for all partners if real changes were to be achieved. He stated that Children's Social Care should only be supporting those families identified as top tier cases, when currently they had been in receipt of referrals for all manner of issues not requiring their specialist high level support. In his role as Scrutineer, Mr Ashley stated that he would be holding the agencies to account and ensuring that improvements were implemented. He stressed that the focus would be shifted from primarily being on Children's Social Care and would instead also include all relevant partners.

A number of issues which Mr Ashley felt required particular attention from the Committee were identified. Firstly he identified the need to focus on how grants were being spent and suggested that assurance should be sought to ensure that funding was being appropriately targeted at addressing issues of neglect and being spent in areas to protect children. Secondly he identified the need to seek assurance that safeguarding partners were working together appropriately to adequately safeguard Blackpool's children. He also urged members to invite certain partners to speak to the Committee on the work they were doing, in particular citing the police and the Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group.

A question was asked in relation to the poor attendance figures reported as part of the annual report, with assurance sought that Mr Ashley would be addressing the issue going forward. Mr Ashley was confident that he would be reporting improved attendance figures at future meetings due to changes being implemented and the obligations of agencies to ensure that an appropriate decision-maker would be in attendance.

[Mrs Richards and Mr Arrowsmith left the meeting on conclusion of this item.]

## **12 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN**

Committee members considered their annual workplan and discussed the addition of a specific review focusing on the budgetary implications associated with the Children's Social Care improvement plan. The Committee agreed that feedback would initially be sought from the Scrutiny Budget Panel, as this would include representation from the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee, following which a decision would be reached as to whether the Committee should undertake further work scrutinising the budget.

Members noted that the expected update on the Placement Sufficiency Strategy was overdue and requested that Mrs Booth, Director of Children's Services be asked to provide an update on the development of the strategy as soon as possible.

**MINUTES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING -  
THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2019**

The Committee reviewed and agreed the proposed scoping document for the review of Inclusion in Education.

**13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as Thursday, 5 December 2019, commencing at 6pm.

**Chairman**

(The meeting ended at 7.50 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	9 January 2020

## APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBER

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the appointment of Dr Elaine Allen as a Roman Catholic diocesan co-opted member to the Committee.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the appointment of Dr Elaine Allen as a Roman Catholic diocesan co-opted member to the Committee.

2.2 To note the remaining two Parent Governor co-opted member vacancies.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the scrutiny process continues to be fully accountable and an important part of the democratic process.

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:

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 School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council to have Parent Governor Representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny body dealing wholly or partly with education functions. The representatives are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue but are only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.
- 5.2 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and the Education Act 1996 require the Council to have Church representatives on the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considers education matters. Like the Parent Governor representatives, they are entitled to participate in discussions on any issue, but only able to vote on any question which relates to the education functions of the Council.
- 5.3 The Council's Constitution allows for membership of the following representatives in order to comply with the statutory requirements:
- One Church of England diocese representative
  - One Roman Catholic diocese representative
  - Two Parent Governor representatives; and
  - Such other representatives of other faiths or denominations as may be agreed
- 5.4 At the meeting of full Council on 22 May 2019 it was agreed that the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee should appoint two diocesan co-opted representatives and two governor co-opted representatives.
- 5.5 The Scrutiny Manager is continuing to seek appointments to the remaining statutory positions.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

None.

## **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>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	9 January 2020

## EXECUTIVE AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the Executive and Cabinet Member decisions within the portfolios of the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members taken since the last meeting of the Committee.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the Deputy Leader of the Council 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: 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.

**5.4 Witnesses/representatives**

5.4.1 The following Cabinet Member is responsible for the decision taken in this report and has been invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 5(a) Summary of Executive and Cabinet Member decisions taken.

**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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DECISION / OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER	DATE	CABINET MEMBER
<p><b>SCHOOL ORGANISATION PUPIL PLACE PLAN 2020-2028</b></p> <p>The Executive agreed the recommendations as outlined below namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve the School Organisation Plan 2020-2028 for the period up to 31 August 2028 and endorse the conclusions summarised at paragraphs 5.7.</li> <li>2. To agree that officers seek to work with primary schools and academy trusts to reduce the number of primary school places in Blackpool to achieve an optimal level of surplus capacity during the lifetime of this School Organisation Plan.</li> <li>3. To agree that officers seek to work with multi academy trusts to identify opportunities to temporarily increase the number of secondary school places in Blackpool, should this be required, in order to ensure sufficient capacity for Blackpool pupils.</li> </ol>	<p>To present the School Organisation Pupil Place Plan for 2020 to 2028 and seek the approval of the recommendations for action.</p>	<p>EX36/2019</p>	<p>14/10/2019</p>	<p>Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration</p>

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	9 January 2019

## FORWARD PLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the content of the Council's Forward Plan January to April 2020, relating to the portfolios of the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 Members will have the opportunity to question the Deputy Leader of the Council and/or the relevant Cabinet Member in relation to items contained within the Forward Plan within the portfolios of the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration.

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 recommendation(s):

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: 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 6(a) is a list of items contained in the current Forward Plan. Further details appertaining to each item is contained in the Forward Plan, which has been forwarded to all members separately.

## **5.4 Witnesses/representatives**

5.4.1 The following Cabinet Member is responsible for the Forward Plan items in this report and has been invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Graham Cain, Deputy Leader of the Council (Children)

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 6(a) Summary of items contained within Forward Plan January to April 2020.

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

**(JANUARY TO APRIL 2020)**

<b>Anticipated Date of Decision</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>	<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>
February 2020	To progress the acquisition of the former Job Centre Plus building at 43 Queens Street to accommodate Children's Services in a single location, in line with the preferred delivery model following the Ofsted review	35/2019	Executive	Cllr Cain
February 2020	The implementation of a regional adoption agency with Lancashire County Council in November 2019, in accordance with the regionalising adoption agenda	16/2019	Executive	Cllr Cain
January 2020	Review of residential children's home provision	17/2019	Executive	Cllr Cain

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	9 January 2020

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT

1.1 To inform the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on the progress and implementation of developments within the "Getting to Good" Journey for Children's Social Care.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1
- To note the contents of the report and to ensure that current work continues to meet statutory obligations, is delivering change in Children's Services and that work to prepare for external inspections continues.
  - To continue to meet statutory monitoring, challenge and support obligations.
  - To identify any further information and actions required.

### 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 statutory obligations for future inspection requirements.

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 Performance Overview**

#### **Children's Social Care Overview at Month End – November 2019**

Blackpool's children's social care services face three particularly pressing issues:

1. The volume of presenting concerns from partner agencies (Health, Police, Schools) felt to require children's social care input/assessment.
2. The quality of work undertaken with children and families across the partnership to remedy concerns and to prevent escalation; and the quality of partnership support for those children and families; and
3. The number of children open to children's social care, in particular those in local authority care, and the financial pressure this places on the Council.

All three of these issues are intrinsically related to each other: the volume of new work places pressure on the capacity of the service and the time social workers have to build the effective relationships with children and families to support positive change. This then leads to less effective interventions and long-term escalation of some children and families, which, in some cases, leads to entry of children into our care. Equally, the high numbers of children in our care places significant constraints on the local authority's ability to provide other services.

#### **Progress since December 2018**

Far in advance of the inspection in November 2018 the Council recognised the need for transformative change in children's services and this led to the appointment of a new Director of Children's Services (DCS) in July 2017 and the setting up of a multi-agency improvement board. It has also led to an almost total overhaul of the senior leadership in the department over the past two years, with many significant new arrivals during 2019.

Since December 2018, the leadership team has been working to address the issues raised during the inspection. The significant and sustained investment in Children's Social Care to support the improvement of outcomes for children and families now amounts to £4.3 million of additional expenditure in extra staffing, with the vast majority of this focused on strengthening social care teams: increasing the number of frontline social workers, reducing caseloads and building managerial capacity to develop and support consistency and quality in practice.

In recognition of the 'whole system' nature of the issues, there has been a complete reconfiguration of children's social care services, to achieve a clearer delineation of

area of practice: Assessment and Support, Strengthening and Supporting Families, Supporting Families. Structures that better support relationship-based practice have been created – flatter structures, smaller teams, encouraging experienced practitioners to continue to practice and have a direct impact on children and families (conversion of the Practice Development Manager into the Senior Social Work role). Practice standards have also been raised, such as the frequency of visits to children subject to child protection plans or children placed at home with parents, to emphasise the additional support the service wishes to offer the children that the Council is most worried about. Finally, working with local children and families, Headstart and other local agencies, the Council has reviewed how children’s social workers work with children and families and co-produced a way of working – “Blackpool Families Rock”(a review that also has considerable resonance for statutory local partner agencies as well).

Change of this scope and scale takes time to embed and deliver measurable positive impact for children and families. Positive changes are being seen in key outcomes at the front door. Considerable time and energy have been invested in working with partner agencies to improve the quality of information provided to the front door, and the Council has worked with social workers and managers to improve the consistency, depth and breadth of decision making with families. The Council has provided a professional consultation line enabling professionals to discuss concerns with a social worker before a referral is formalised. Children’s Social Care has stressed the importance across the partnership of working transparently and openly with families, as a basis for developing a constructive relationship and the need for consent from the family/child in circumstances where there are needs/concerns that do not cross the significant harm threshold.

It can be seen that this has had an impact and the first monitoring visit from Ofsted confirmed that a significant improvement had been made at the front door since the inspection. Following on from the visit, there have been further signs of the Council’s impact on the behaviour of partner agencies – contacts from other agencies have fallen and this is providing the opportunity for better screening and fewer referrals leading to assessment. Children’s Social Care is also more effectively moving work into Early Help services where appropriate, the number of children supported in Early Help services has risen by 36% since the end of April 2019 (200 children).

In summary, the evidence shows that the Council is now providing a better, safer, more proportionate approach to its early work in support of the help and protection of local children and families. In spite of all of this, as noted in performance reports, contact and referral rates from local agencies remain much, much higher than in comparably deprived local authority areas in the region, so there is still a considerable distance to go with partners about their perception of, and work with,

the local community.

However, the front door, while the critical starting point for children and families, is only one part of the overall system. At base we are seeking to transform the work undertaken across the service as a whole and across the partnership as a whole.

New arrangements for planning and tracking support for Children and Families who are working with the service in a statutory framework have been introduced, providing an opportunity for the Principal Social Worker and Assistant Director to coach and mentor managers, several of whom are relatively new in role, in more restorative approaches and on how best to consider and manage the work with children and families by maintaining focus and clarity on key issues - the purpose of our intervention and each process and the relevant questions for social workers and families.

Understanding of our performance in the improvement journey is not focussed on the key performance indicators and compliance statistics, but is shaped and informed by the regular and focussed audit of the work being undertaken across the service. Evidence is being sought of improving practice in this activity, with key areas of improvement including:

- The lived experience of the child is more evident within assessments
- More direct work is taking place with children and this is becoming more evident on the case file records
- Assessments and plans are becoming better informed by wider partnership knowledge and expertise
- The footprint of Child Protection Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers is starting to be more evident on children's files
- There is some evidence of improved management oversight, including reflective supervision, although this is not consistent

In the New Year, we will continue with the panel approach and extend it to cover other groups of children. We will also:

- Use the Partnership Implementation Group, reporting to Blackpool's 'Getting to Good' Board and the Children's Safeguarding Arrangement Partnership (CSAP), to emphasise the importance of core groups to all partner agencies
- Roll out training to staff on the use of Public Law Outline Pre-proceedings
- Provide further training for our staff concerning neglect
- Use the appointment of a Performance and QA service manager as an opportunity

to further revise the QA framework, in the light of the experience of the past year, while also seeking to develop the skills of managers in auditing through the use of audit clinics and training from an experienced external auditor.

## **5.2 Recruitment and Retention**

Since the last report the Council has welcomed two new Service Managers (arriving in October and November 2019) to oversee the Supporting and Strengthening Families (SSF) Teams.

Recruitment remains a key challenge for the service. We are committed to ensuring that we have the right quality and experience in our senior managers to support the degree of change required, and the Head of Service for Strengthening and Supporting Families remains unfilled because of a lack of suitable applicants following two recruitment exercises.

Currently there are 31 permanent qualified vacancies in the children's social care structure to fill, including the Head of Service role above and three team manager roles. Use of agency staff has decreased a little – currently down to 22% - but this conceals churn within the agency worker group. Since January 2019, 67 agency workers in HCPC posts have started with the Council and subsequently left, half of which were in post for less than three months. This turnover in workers creates disruption within teams and has a negative impact on children and families.

## **5.3 Conclusion**

In summary, the capacity to drive forward improvement in practice at the rate that the Council would wish has been compromised by staffing sufficiency and stability. The staff group is growing and strengthening through change and requires support and development to enable them to deliver good quality, purposeful social work to children and families. A skills gap/training analysis for staff has been undertaken and a training offer has been developed with Workforce Development and the Council is engaging with partners in practice across the country to bring the right expertise to bear in Blackpool.

Our children and young people are a fantastic asset, and their commitment, passion and ambition is inspirational and should be mirrored in our workforce.

Overarching all of the above is a commitment to keep going– building on the positive evidence that is emerging in key areas. Maintaining a consistent focus on critical issues and a consistent approach to our practice, while progressively overhauling the whole system. Effectively, children's services in Blackpool need to be rebuilt from the ground up and this will only be achieved through sustained consistency of purpose, focus and approach.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**6.0 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 7(a) - Revenue Summary - budget, actual and forecast for Children's Social Care.

**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 At Month 4 (reported to the Executive)**

Children's Social Care is forecast to overspend by £8,989k, due to ongoing pressures relating to Looked After Children (LAC). When budgets were set, £3,570k was earmarked to cover the forecast overspend. Since that time, there has been an increase in LAC numbers and an adverse change in the mix of LAC placements, resulting in an additional pressure of £4,625k.

In addition to this, an amount of £4,364k is included in the forecast relating to the Directorate's Ofsted Improvement Plan, which is being implemented following the recommendations outlined in the Ofsted report published in December 2018. This figure includes the cost of a number of ongoing interventions which were put in place immediately following the review, but also reflects the outcome of a detailed evaluation of the service model, which has taken place in the early part of the current financial year and which has resulted in the introduction of a new staffing structure for the longer term. The new structure represents a fundamental shift in the management of Children's Social Care in Blackpool – a shift from managing the problems to addressing the source of them. It proposes additional capacity to enable social workers to spend more time with children and families to build better relationships, have more effective interventions, building on the strengths within each family and thereby preventing escalation. Independent analysis suggests that the approach should result in a long-term reduction in the number of cases open to Children's Social Care at any one time and through the year. It will also reduce the

number of children on child protection plans or in the care of the Local Authority.

Attached at Appendix 7(a) is the full revenue summary as reported to the Executive in October 2019.

**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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## Blackpool Council – Children’s Services

### Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2018/19 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000
	2019/20					
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - JUL £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000	
<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>						
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>						
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - ISB	82,501	6,171	76,330	82,501	-	-
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - NON DELEGATED	340	12	328	340	-	-
EDUCATION	21,163	4,509	17,425	21,934	771	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	182	61	121	182	-	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	9,114	3,158	5,956	9,114	-	-
DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT	(113,093)	(16,357)	(96,736)	(113,093)	-	-
CARRY FORWARD OF DSG UNDER/(OVER) SPEND	(1,207)	-	(1,978)	(1,978)	(771)	-
<b>TOTAL DSG FUNDED SERVICES</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>(2,446)</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPRECIATION	1,754	-	1,754	1,754	-	-
EDUCATION	3,328	1,047	2,853	3,900	572	-
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	5,713	112	5,404	5,516	(197)	-
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	29,705	9,736	28,958	38,694	8,989	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	1,229	(85)	1,264	1,179	(50)	-
LOCAL SERVICES SUPPORT GRANT	(18)	(6)	(12)	(18)	-	-
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT	(158)	-	(208)	(208)	(50)	-
<b>TOTAL COUNCIL FUNDED SERVICES</b>	<b>41,553</b>	<b>10,804</b>	<b>40,013</b>	<b>50,817</b>	<b>9,264</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>40,553</b>	<b>8,358</b>	<b>41,459</b>	<b>49,817</b>	<b>9,264</b>	<b>-</b>

### Commentary on the key issues:

#### Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual service within the Children’s Services Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 4 months of 2019/20 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each Head of Service.

#### Children’s Social Care

The Children’s Social Care division is forecasting a significant overspend due to ongoing pressures relating to Looked After Children (LAC) numbers.

When budgets were set, £3.570m was earmarked to cover the forecast overspend in Children’s Social Care. Since that time, there has been an increase in LAC numbers and an adverse change in the mix of LAC placements, resulting in an additional pressure of £4.625m.

In addition to this, an amount of £4.364m is included in the forecast relating to the directorate's Ofsted improvement plan, which is being implemented following the recommendations outlined in the Ofsted report published in December 2018. This figure includes the cost of a number of on-going interventions which were put in place immediately following the review, but also reflects the outcome of a detailed evaluation of the service model, which has taken place in the early part of the current financial year, and which has resulted in the introduction of a new staffing structure for the longer term.

The new structure represents a fundamental shift in the management of Children's Social Care in Blackpool – a shift from managing the problems, to addressing the source of them. It proposes additional capacity to enable Social Workers to spend more time with children and families to build better relationships, have more effective interventions, building on the strengths within each family, and thereby preventing escalation. Independent analysis suggests that the approach should result in a long-term reduction in the number of cases open to Children's Social Care at any one time and through the year. It will also reduce the number of children on child protection plans, or in the care of the Local Authority.

### **Dedicated Schools Grant Funded Services**

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is the funding stream that supports the Schools Budget, which includes amounts that are devolved through the Individual School Budget (ISB), together with centrally-retained pupil-related services as listed in the revenue summary. Any under or overspends against services funded by the DSG will be carried forward to 2020/21 and, in the case of overspends, become the first call on the grant in that year.

### **Education**

The overspend in the Education division relates primarily to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Service and is partly due to demand pressures and partly due to the savings target of £320k that was applied in 2017/18 but not achieved.

### **Summary of the Children's Services financial position**

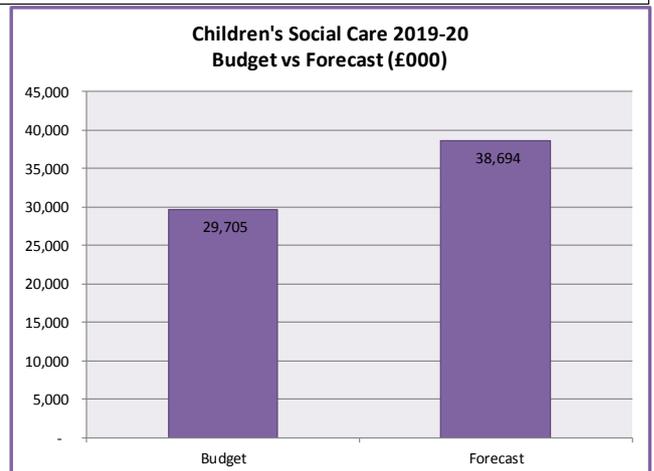
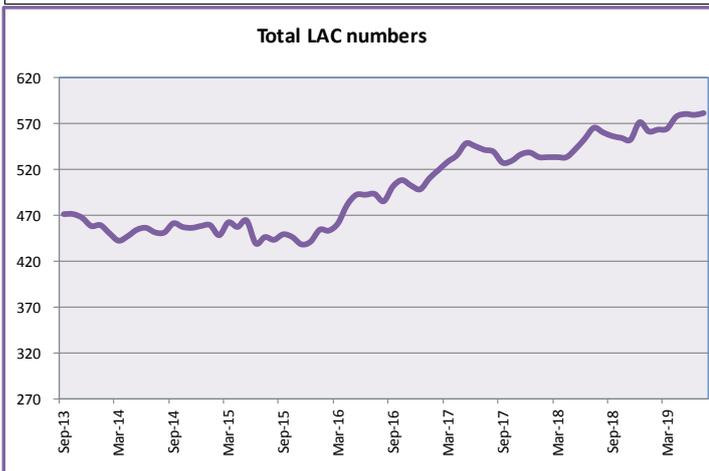
As at the end of July 2019 the Children's Services Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £9.264m for the financial year to March 2020.

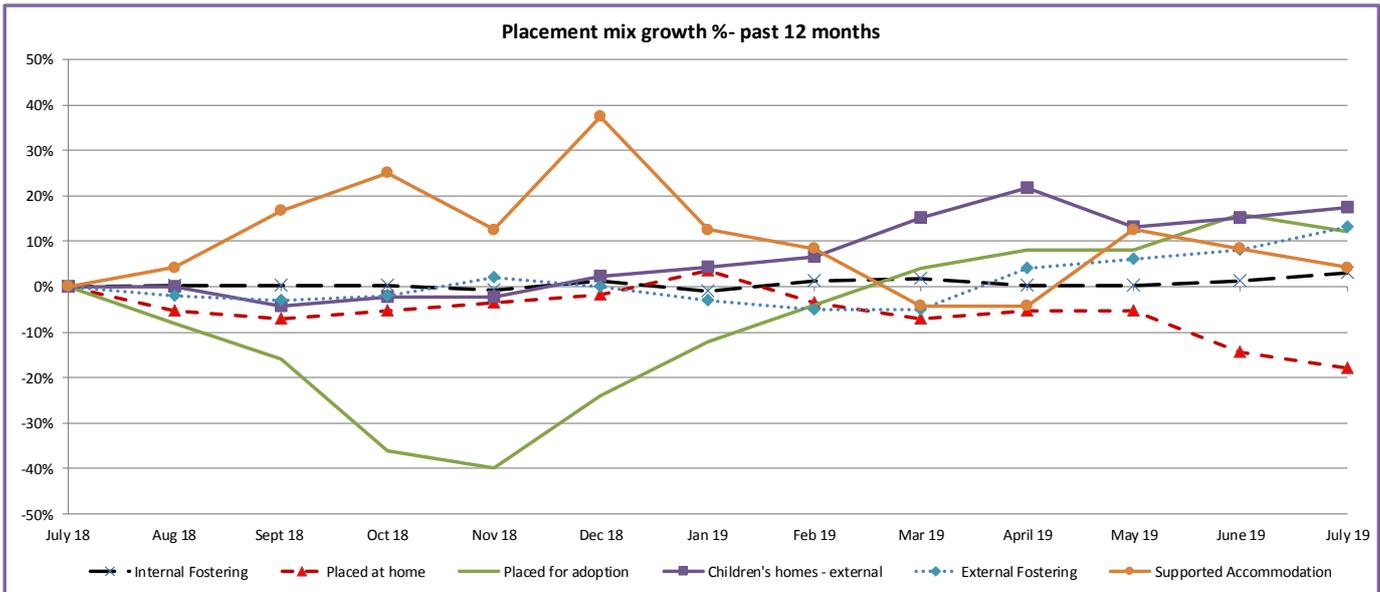
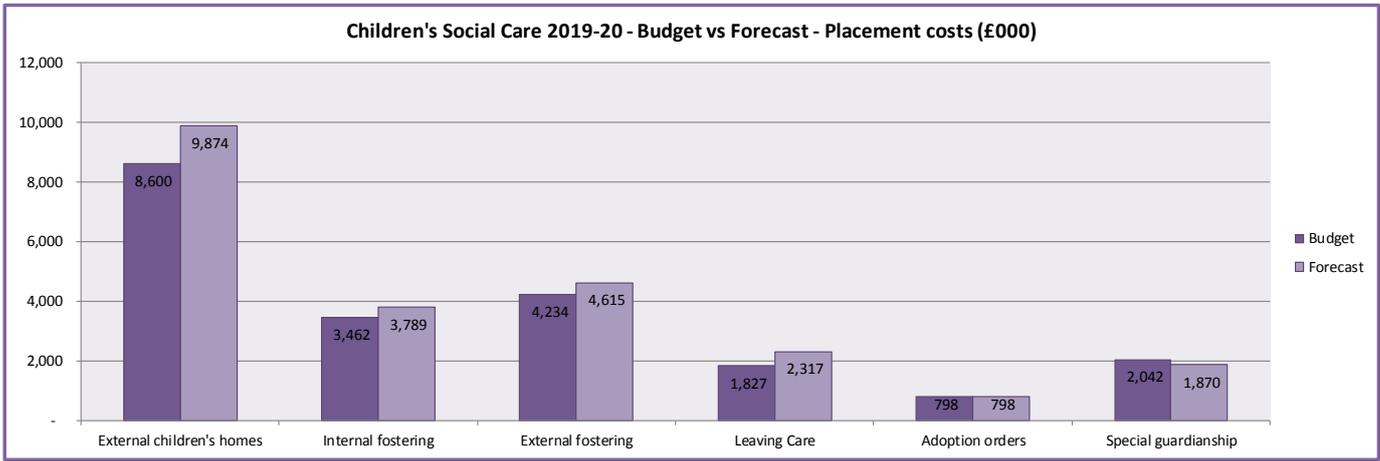
### **Budget Holder – Mrs D Booth, Director of Children's Services**

Children's Social Care Trends

Date	External Placements Projection						Supported Accommodation			Internal Fostering			LAC numbers
	Fostering			Residential			Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	No.
	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement							
Jun-13	72	15%	36,202	41	8%	111,596	16	3%	no data	263	53%	11,887	492
Sep-13	66	14%	35,667	33	7%	111,523	17	4%	no data	272	58%	11,908	472
Dec-13	69	15%	36,560	30	7%	117,073	17	4%	no data	260	57%	11,828	459
Mar-14	64	14%	34,058	27	6%	118,473	15	3%	no data	248	56%	11,757	443
Jun-14	74	16%	35,928	25	5%	102,561	18	4%	no data	250	55%	12,833	457
Sep-14	75	16%	37,655	21	5%	121,210	27	6%	no data	237	51%	12,570	462
Dec-14	70	15%	38,760	18	4%	124,281	23	5%	no data	243	53%	12,474	459
Mar-15	73	16%	40,155	23	5%	128,868	19	4%	no data	244	53%	12,374	463
Jun-15	74	17%	40,625	25	6%	147,777	20	5%	no data	219	50%	12,541	440
Sep-15	73	16%	40,040	25	6%	142,934	16	4%	no data	225	50%	12,549	450
Dec-15	70	16%	41,243	27	6%	145,196	17	4%	no data	217	49%	12,428	442
Mar-16	69	15%	42,215	29	6%	146,120	22	5%	no data	257	56%	12,453	462
Jun-16	77	16%	42,145	34	7%	157,136	28	6%	38,608	259	53%	12,630	493
Sep-16	84	17%	42,750	32	6%	169,996	27	5%	41,376	254	51%	12,688	502
Dec-16	89	18%	43,038	36	7%	175,954	28	6%	41,037	258	52%	12,857	499
Mar-17	103	19%	43,502	44	8%	179,669	26	5%	42,416	269	51%	12,872	529
Jun-17	100	18%	40,933	49	9%	151,450	26	5%	60,946	272	50%	13,227	546
Sep-17	95	18%	40,991	35	7%	161,487	36	7%	57,928	270	51%	13,213	528
Dec-17	103	19%	41,277	43	8%	162,623	36	7%	58,358	272	50%	13,169	539
Mar-18	98	18%	41,099	44	8%	165,935	30	6%	55,728	273	51%	13,116	534
Jun-18	97	18%	40,083	45	8%	164,794	24	4%	48,006	297	54%	13,403	554
Sep-18	97	17%	40,425	45	8%	159,388	28	5%	46,073	302	54%	13,441	557
Dec-18	99	17%	40,227	47	8%	169,287	33	6%	46,167	305	53%	13,430	572
Mar-19	94	17%	39,536	53	9%	177,477	23	4%	45,845	306	54%	13,289	565
Jun-19	107	18%	42,426	53	9%	172,929	26	4%	68,367	305	53%	13,014	580
Jul-19	112	19%	42,610	54	9%	174,971	25	4%	56,700	310	53%	12,949	582

**Note:**  
The variance between the current total number of Looked After Children (582) and the total internal fostering and external placement numbers (501) is children with care orders, adoption placements etc. They are still classed as LAC but do not incur any commissioned costs.





<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	9 January 2020

## YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM IMPROVEMENT

1.1 To update on the progress and implementation of developments within the Youth Offending Team focussing on the "Getting to Good" Journey for Youth Offending.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1
- To note the contents of the report and to ensure that current work continues to meet statutory obligations, is delivering change in Youth Offending and that work to prepare for external inspections continues.
  - To continue to meet statutory monitoring, challenge and support obligations.
  - To identify any further information and actions required.

### 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 Youth Offending Service and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its statutory obligations for future inspection requirements.

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 Introduction**

There are 62 young people who are working with the Youth Offending Team (YOT). Over the first two quarters of this year an average of six interventions have closed per month, with the majority of these being completed successfully. Just under a quarter of the caseload have been cases which have transferred to Blackpool from other local authorities on a caretaking basis. This is when a young person is looked after by another authority and placed in Blackpool with a private provider.

### **5.2 Governance**

For the past year the governance structure for the YOT Executive Board has been supported by a shadow board and a number of operational groups led by key members of the partnership who have accountability within the plan.

The Executive board met monthly, and regularly reviewed progress against the plan and received reports from the operational leads by exception.

Over the past year the joint work and operational scaffolding for the YOT service has been significantly strengthened. To reflect this, it has now been agreed to introduce an operational group which brings together the key leads for each of the strands of work in the plan and supports them to share and coordinate their work, minimises duplication of effort and resources and maximises the opportunity to work to common goals and outcomes. The operational group will be chaired by the Head of Service and made up of the YOT manager, operational leads for each of the YOT National Standards and key representatives from all partner agencies involved in the operational activity of the YOT.

The National Standards Youth offending work streams are :

- Out of Court Disposals
- At Court
- In the Community
- In Secure
- On transition and resettlements

The operational group will meet monthly and monitor, challenge and support activity to further the plan in each of the group areas. The Executive will meet bi-monthly and as a minimum standing agenda receive update reports on:

Outcomes and Impact (including Key Performance Indicators)

Exceptional items from the plan (achieved, not achieved in timescale, proposed variations)

Feedback from the shadow board

The Executive will also review any actions which were outstanding from two consecutive

operational boards. Minutes from the operational group will be shared with the Executive membership and reciprocated.

### 5.3 Staffing

During the last two quarters, the team has had two vacant YOT officer posts. The new YOT Team Manager started in September 2019 and they have successfully appointed to two new YOT Officer posts to commence in January 2020. Sickness has improved, with no members of the team having long periods of absence between April-September 2019.

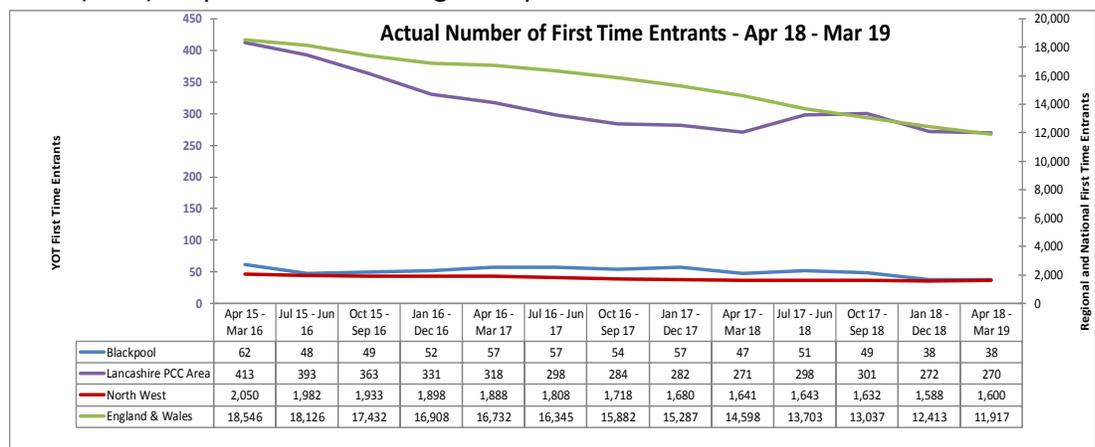
### 5.4 Diversion

A new diversion pathway for Blackpool has been developed alongside Lancashire Police. This preventative work will see Blackpool children and young people being referred through to the Early Help Hub for screening and the development of a bespoke package of intervention developed to meet their individual needs. The new pathway is being launched on Monday 16 December 2019.

### 5.5 Key Performance Indicators

#### First time entrants

There were five young people who entered the criminal justice system as first time entrants (FTEs) in quarter one and eight in quarter two.



As the graph above shows Blackpool continues to see a decline in the number of young people exposed to the criminal justice system as first time entrants.

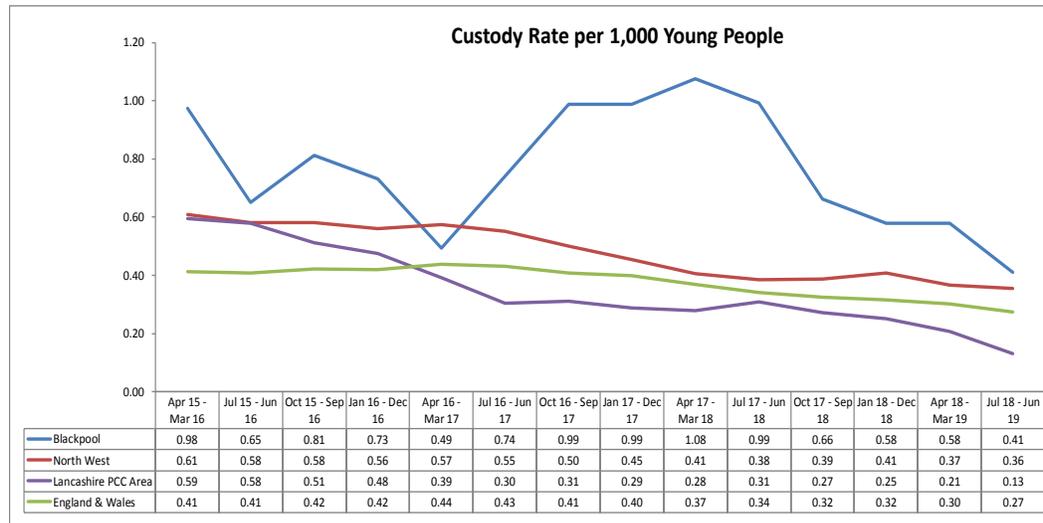
Although there has been a slight increase in the numbers of FTEs during quarter two, the YOT Police Officer has recently started to facilitate sessions with Blackpool police officers to help them explore alternative Out of Court Disposals, rather than bringing

young people unnecessarily into the criminal justice system.

**Reducing demand for custody**

During quarter one the YOT had five young people in custody. By the end of quarter two this had reduced to two. There have been no remands (open or secure) made during the periods.

As the graph below shows, Blackpool’s custody rate continues on a downward trajectory and at its lowest rate since April 2015.



**Cross Cutting themes**

**Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Multi-Agency Risk Management Meetings (MARMM)**

During quarter one there were six young people who were MAPPA eligible and five during quarter two.

By the end of quarter two there were 21 young people open to the service assessed as either high or very high risk of serious harm to others and 19 assessed as high or very high risk regarding safety and wellbeing concerns. These cases are reviewed through the YOT MARMM process.

MARMMs are currently being chaired by the YOT Service Manager, with monthly dates to discuss and review all cases in a timely manner. A review of the MARMM approach including attendees, paperwork and recording is currently underway. This will ensure a more effective and timely approach to risk management oversight.

### **Accommodation**

Data shows that the majority of young people open to the YOT were deemed to be in suitable accommodation during the two quarters. The young people whose accommodation was assessed as unsuitable were in custody.

### **Education, Training and Employment (ETE)**

The data shows that education, training and employment for children and young people open to the YOT is low. Quarter one and two data indicates that, on average, less than a quarter of children open to the service are recorded as receiving 25 hours per week education. For those young people aged over 16, again there is, on average, less than a quarter of young people recorded as receiving 16 hours or more education, training or employment per week. Work has commenced with the Head of School Improvement and over the next quarter work will be completed with the YOT ETE officer to analyse the data further to establish whether the current ETE data is reflective of the current position, or whether this is a recording issue.

### **Audits**

In July 2019 the YOT Service Manager completed an audit of Team Manager's supervision records. Some of the areas of concern related to the lack of monthly supervision; newly qualified social workers not receiving fortnightly supervision; lack of evidence of reflective supervision taking place; a lack of management direction being evident within records; staff learning and development needs not being fully explored; a lack of practice observations taking place and a lack of performance issues being discussed in supervision.

There have been changes in the YOT Management group since this audit and ensuring improvements in the quality of supervision is a main priority. The YOT Service Manager has arranged a date with Team Managers to discuss the quality of Supervision to ensure standards are raised. The YOT Service Manager will complete quarterly audits of Team Manager's supervision records and will report progress to the Board.

### **Case study of effective practice**

The case study relates to a young male, aged 17 years old who had appeared before the Youth Court for an offence of threatening a person with a blade (kitchen knife) and received an 11 month Referral Order. At his initial panel his referral order contract was developed and included sessions around knife crime, anger management, substance misuse, victim awareness, healthy relationships and

indirect reparation sessions.

This was the young man's first experience of the YOT and he engaged well throughout his order, developing a positive and supportive working relationship with his YOT Worker.

Shortly after the start of the Referral Order the young male experienced a huge upheaval in his life, resulting in him becoming estranged from his family and moving to live in a semi-independent living facility. Despite this he continued to fully engage with his YOT sessions. During his order he completed all aspects of his contract; he secured employment in a hotel in the local area; he assisted with the YOT Team Manager interviews and actively engaged with the candidates by asking them questions. Most importantly, he did not re-offend and he started to re-build his relationship with his family.

As a result of the excellent progress this young person had made, the YOT returned the order to court for early revocation. The young person attended the court hearing and appreciated the positive feedback he received from the Magistrates.

## **5.6 Summary**

Whilst the data over the first two quarters has evidenced improvements in national measures of reducing first time entrants and reducing custody, there are clearly further improvements the service can make. The introduction of the new diversion pathway should reduce the overall YOT caseload, providing case manager's more time to focus on working with our most complex children and young people at highest risk of re-offending and receiving custodial sentences.

There are clearly improvements required regarding accommodation and education, training and employment opportunities available to our children and young people. These two areas will be a priority for the service during the next quarter to really understand where the issues lie.

A peer review is planned for February 2020 which will see partners from the National Association of Youth Justice Managers coming to Blackpool to examine the work of the YOT. This will provide some rigour and external overview of the improvement journey experienced by the YOT over the past 12 months, and support the development of priorities and plans for the next stage of partnership development. In addition the developments of case audits over the next six months will assist the service with identifying specific improvements required.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**6.0 List of Appendices:**

None

**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 At the last scrutiny, the meeting requested more detailed information about the funding of the YOT. This is broken down in the table below:

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police	43,674		41,941	85,615
Probation	40,000		5,000	45,000
Health	39,974		15,444	55,418
Local Authority	696,887		597,425	1,294,312
YJB	357,141		54,251	411,392
Other				0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,078,214</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>714,061</b>	<b>1,891,737</b>

10.2 The budget breakdown in the table is YOT specific, as requested. However this contributes to a wider Blackpool Young People's service budget which covers Care Leavers, Not in Education Employment and Training and Substance Misuse and Sexual Health Services. Taking account of the vacancy factor across the whole service, the budget allocation across the service is projected as being within budget at this point in the financial calendar.

**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

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	9 January 2020

## CORPORATE PARENT PANEL ANNUAL REPORT

1.1 To consider the Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report 2019.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 

- To consider the contents of the report.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Scrutiny Committee to be aware of the Corporate Parent Panel annual report.

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 Working With Our Children

The Just Uz Council is a group of young people who give up their time to work with the Council to ensure that children and young people looked after by Blackpool are well represented and are influencing positive change. They have been incredibly

productive this year and some of the highlights of the work they have undertaken include:

- **The Shake It Up Conference 2019** took place on 24 July 2019 at Blackpool Winter Gardens. Around 100 children aged 10 to 25 came together to take part in a full day of consultation, activities and of course to have fun. They had lots of things to tell us to help the Council shake things up and have their say on how the future of Children’s Services is shaped. The conference voted for Shake It Up to be an annual event, so it will be happening again in 2020 and building on the success of 2019.
- **Take over Challenge Week 2019** 40 of our children and young people took part this year taking over various roles within the Council and our partner companies. The week was a huge success with lots of positive feedback from the young people and the adults whose roles they took over.
- **The Care Leaver Week** took place in October half term. This was well attended by our Young People and the feedback was extremely positive.
- **The “War against Words” Continues** with more words being added to the Banned list. The Council is promoting this message far and wide encouraging all to use a language that cares. The names of teams across children’s social care reflect the new model of practice and our War Against Words.
- **Ring fenced jobs for Our Care Leavers** Our young people can now apply at the internal stage of application one week before it goes out to anyone else for all grade C roles and below.
- **You’re Hired Crew** The ongoing involvement of our children and young people in the recruitment process for Children’s Services staff. Our young people are having a real say in who the service employs, they are sitting alongside team managers, heads of service etc. on the interview panels as well as holding their own group interview evening sessions.

The full Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report is attached at Appendix 9(a).

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**6.0 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 9(a) – Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report 2019.

**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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# Corporate Parent Panel Annual Report 2019



# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2019

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## Overview of Panel

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 along with representatives from the Justuz group and Heads of Service. The meetings are also attended by Elected Members representing all parties.

There are five Corporate Parent Panel meetings held annually, from June 2019 the Justuz Children in Care Council now take over the first hour of every meeting. They use this time to update the panel on any ongoing work, activities and events they have attended as well as raising any new issues and challenging panel members.

The corporate parent panel continues to work to a work plan this outlines the reports that are required for consideration by panel members to monitor progress and support the development of children service.

During the meetings individuals representing children services teams and organisations are invited to present their annual reports which give detailed accounts of the work being done to deliver services to our children and young people. The young people from the Justuz CICC are presented with the reports prior to the panel and invited to give their feedback, which is included in the finalised reports to ensure we capture the views and opinions of our children and young people. 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.

The corporate parent panel works to an Action Tracker any issues raised which need further development or information to be gathered is recorded on the action tracker. This is reviewed at each meeting to make sure actions are carried out and there is no drift and delay.

Set agenda items include:- Young People's Update, Action Tracker, Foster Carer's Update, Children's Social Care Update, Work Plan and Calendar of Events.

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.

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2019

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## Work Undertaken

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

- **The Shake It Up Conference 2019** took place on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at Blackpool Winter Gardens. Around 100 children aged 10 to 25 came together to take part in a full day of consultation, activities and of course to have fun. They had lots of things to tell us to help us Shake things up and have their say on how we shape the future of Children's Services. The conference voted for Shake it up to be an annual event, so we will doing it all again in 2020 and hopefully build
- **Take Over Challenge Week 2019** ... 40 of our children and young people took part this year taking over various roles within the council and our partner companies. The week was a huge success with lots of positive feedback from the young people and the adults whose roles they took over.
- **The Care Leaver Week** ... took place in October half term. This was well attended by our Young People and the feedback was extremely positive.
- Lots more Council and wider partner **Opportunities for Our Young People**
- **Our War against Words Continues** ... with more words been added to the Banned list. We are promoting this message far and wide encouraging all to use a language that cares.
- **Ring fenced jobs for Our Care Leavers**... our young people can now apply at the internal stage of application 1 week before it goes out to anyone else for all grade C roles and below.
- **Your Hired Crew**...the ongoing involvement of our children and young people in the recruitment process for Children's service staff. Our young people are having a real say in who we employ, they are sitting alongside team managers, heads of service etc on the interview panels as well as holding their own group interview evening sessions.

## Work Ongoing

- **Development and launch of a new App for Our Children and families** ... to support the implementation of the New Model of Practice Blackpool Families Rock. The app will aid us to communicate in a smarter and speedier way with our families and children. We will be able to send notifications to their phones, alerting them to new opportunities, reminders for meetings, keep them updated or just check in to see how they are.
- **Co-production group with Headstart** to look at child exploitation in Blackpool

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2019

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- **Consultation on Our Children's Health Assessments** Justuz have presented their recommendations to CP Panel further work is to be done.

## Justuz Consultation 2019 – review of Our Childrens

We were asked to find out the views of our children and young people about their review meetings and the role of their Independent Reviewing Officers in their lives

The Tell us what you think questionnaire was produced with the support of Justuz and was sent out to 330 of Our children and young people between the ages of 8 to 18.

60 questionnaires were returned. Justuz took the results and created a short film to present the views of all of our children in a fun and engaging way. The film has been shared at Corporate Parenting Panel and with the IRO service.

### Their Recommendations to us were...

**IRO's need to** ..... come and see us before our review so you get to know us really well.

**IRO's need to** ..... explain to us more about your job so we know you are not just someone who chairs our reviews.

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure that all of us know how to contact you and we have your contact us card.

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure we get invited to our review and check out if we want to come to all or some of it.

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure we have a say in how, when, where and who, when our reviews are being planned. **Plan our reviews with us!**

**IRO's need to** ..... give us the choice of a themed review and ask us if we want to chair it.

**IRO's need to** ..... add a free text section to our review booklets so we have a space to ask any other questions we want and add a new section on Our Future!

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure we all know we can fill out our review booklet online.

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure our reviews are individual to us!

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2019

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**IRO's need to** ..... make sure that our reviews are Friendly, Fun, not Formal, we can have Food and they are not too long. **Remember it's OUR review not yours!**

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure everyone in the meeting uses words that we understand...NO Jargon. **Remember the War Against Words!**

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure everybody focuses on the positives and that we leave our reviews feeling good about ourselves. **Difficult conversations can be had outside of our review.**

**IRO's need to** ..... make sure we get the minutes of our review, write to us in a way we understand and make sure we get a copy of our plan.

## Training and Development

- Justuz have been asked by the teaching partnership to be involved in the training of social work students.
- Justuz are helping to deliver key messages to our ASYE during their induction week.
- Continuing to develop new ways of informing our workers about key messages from children.
- Our young people have been involved in training for foster carer's and social workers

## Celebrating Our Children's Achievements

Our yearly Celebration of Achievement awards will be once again held on Friday 6th March 2020. In line with our Blackpool Families Rock model of practice the Justuz group have requested we re-name the awards

### **THE YOU ROCK AWARDS 2020.**

Nomination forms have been circulated to carers, social workers, IRO's, personal advisors, schools so they can nominated their children and young people for 2020 awards.

# Corporate Parenting Panel Report 2019

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## Document Control

Document owner:	
Document number:	1
Document category:	Report
Document location:	
Issued by:	
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## Record of Amendments:

Date	Version	Amended by	Description of changes

## Approved By:

Name	Title	Signature	Date

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	9 January 2020

## COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the workplan and to monitor the implementation of Committee recommendations, together with any suggestions that members may wish to make for scrutiny review topics.

1.2 To provide an update on the scrutiny review of Inclusion in Education.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

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/action.

2.3 To appoint three Members of the Committee from across political parties to participate in community engagement policy development.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure that recommendations/actions are being monitored, 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 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 to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist which 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.

##### **5.2 Monitoring Implementation of Recommendations**

5.2.1 The table attached at Appendix 10(c) has been developed to assist the Committee in effectively ensuring that the recommendations made by the Committee are acted upon. The table will be regularly updated and submitted to each Committee meeting.

5.2.2 Members are requested to consider the updates provided in the table and ask follow up questions as appropriate to ensure that all recommendations are implemented.

##### **5.3 Inclusion in Education Scrutiny Review**

5.3.3 A meeting of the working group undertaking the review is scheduled to take place on 15 January 2020, which all interested Committee Members are invited to attend. Following this fact-gathering meeting, next steps will be determined and an update provided to the Committee at its meeting on 13 February 2020.

##### **5.4 Community Engagement Policy Development**

A piece of work is ongoing, led by Chloe Shore, Community Engagement and Partnership Manager to produce a policy/strategy on community engagement. Scrutiny Members have been requested to feed into this policy development and due to its cross-cutting nature it is suggested that representatives from all three Committees be appointed to participate in this piece of work. It is suggested that each Committee appoint three Members from across political parties, however, this can be flexible should additional Members wish to participate.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**5.7 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 10(a) – Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee Workplan

Appendix 10(b) - Scrutiny Review Checklist

Appendix 10(c) – Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee Action Tracker

**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.

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<b>Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2019-2020</b>	
9 January 2020	<p><b>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>3. Corporate Parent Panel</b> – To receive the annual report from the CPP.</p>
13 February 2020	<p><b>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>3. Education/SEND</b> – To receive a full report of confirmed results data.</p> <p><b>4. Pan-Lancashire Partnership</b> – To receive an update on the new safeguarding partnership arrangements.</p> <p><b>5. Review of Residential Children's Home provision</b> - To receive the plan resulting from the review of residential children's home provision.</p>
23 April 2020	<p><b>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>3. Education/SEND</b> – To receive an overview of results data.</p> <p><b>4. Headstart Annual Update</b> – To receive an annual update on Headstart.</p>
18 June 2020	<p><b>Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p>
10 September 2020	<p><b>Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p>
19 November 2020	<p><b>Youth Offending Team Improvement</b> - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p><b>2. Children's Social Care Improvement</b> – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p>

<b>Scrutiny Review Work</b>	
15 January 2020	Scrutiny review of <b>Inclusion in Education</b> to include issues faced by parents of children requiring an in-year school place, schools' admissions procedures to ensure pupils are offered a suitable place in a timely manner and the associated impact on the number of children being placed within the Pupil Referral Unit.
TBC	Scrutiny review of <b>Partnership Arrangements</b> focusing on monitoring the outcomes of the new partnership arrangements implemented in September 2019, with an emphasis on Early Help provision.

2 March 2020	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services Redesign. Joint meeting to be held with Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee. To determine whether further review is required.

<b>Future Items</b>	
June 2020	Analysis of impact of SEND Strategy – as agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Board September 2019.

**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.

	Yes/No
<b>The review will add value to the Council and/or its partners overall performance:</b>	
<b>The review is in relation to one or more of the Council's priorities:</b>	
<b>The Council or its partners are not performing well in this area:</b>	
<b>It is an area where a number of complaints (or bad press) have been received:</b>	
<b>The issue is strategic and significant:</b>	
<b>There is evidence of public interest in the topic:</b>	
<b>The issue has potential impact for one or more sections of the community:</b>	
<b>Service or policy changes are planned and scrutiny could have a positive input:</b>	
<b>Adequate resources (both members and officers) are available to carry out the scrutiny:</b>	

Please give any further details on the proposed review:

Completed by:

Date:

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## APPENDIX 10(c)

### MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
1	12.04.18	To receive the Placement Sufficiency Strategy in late 2018.	November 2018	Director of Children's Services	<p>Consideration of the Placement Sufficiency Strategy has been included on the workplan for November 2018.</p> <p>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.</p>	
2	13.09.18	That a future piece of work be carried out on the dangers present in Blackpool to children and young people.	2019	Tbc	Colleagues at the Police have been contacted to assist with the work, no response received to date.	
3	13.09.18	That Mrs Booth be requested to report on partners who did not engage.	Ongoing	Director of Children's Services	Review of partnership arrangements identified for inclusion on Committee workplan.	
4	13.09.18	To receive an update performance report on HeadStart in 12 months.	April 2020	Programme Leader, HeadStart	Added to Committee workplan.	
5	20.06.19	To receive key performance data in relation to A Better Start.	February 2020	Merle Davies, Director, Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development	Ms Davies confirmed that the first full set of key performance indicators would be available for consideration by the A Better Start Executive Board in October 2019. Ms Davies has agreed to provide the report for circulation to Members after the information has been through the appropriate governance channels.	
6	10.10.19	To receive the plan resulting from the review of the residential children's home	January 2020	Jeanette Richards, Head of	The review is due to be completed by the end of October 2019, following which the resulting plan	

	DATE OF REC	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	UPDATE	RAG RATING
		provision.		Partnerships and Improvement	will be circulated to the Committee in January 2020.	
7	10.10.19	To receive the Positive Transitions report (as part of the next YOT update report or circulated outside the meeting.)	December 2019	Moya Foster, Head of Targeted Intervention Services		
8	10.10.19	To receive a detailed breakdown of grant funding as part of the budgetary data included in the next YOT update report.	December 2019	Moya Foster, Head of Targeted Intervention Services		