

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 25 February 2021 at 10.00 am

To be held as an online video conference

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Mike Chaplin, Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Anne Murphy, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jack Scott, Jim Steinke, Alison Teal, Garry Weatherall, Sophie Wilson, Cliff Woodcraft and Moya O'Rourke

Education Non-Council Members

Alison Warner, Sam Evans, Peter Naldrett, Vacancy and Vacancy

Healthwatch Sheffield

Alice Riddell (Observer)

Substitute Members

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, policy development and monitoring of service performance and other general issues relating to learning and attainment and the care of children and young people within the Children's Services area of Council activity. It also scrutinises as appropriate the various local Health Services functions, with particular reference to those relating to the care of children.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer on 0114 27 35065 or [email alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk)

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
25 FEBRUARY 2021**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 5 - 8)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 9 - 18)
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st January, 2021
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Multi-Agency Support Teams (MAST) - Update** (Pages 19 - 30)
Report of the Executive Director, People Services
- 8. Elective Home Education** (Pages 31 - 36)
Report of the Director of Education and Skills
- 9. Draft Work Programme 2020/21 and Future Work Programme** (Pages 37 - 42)
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 10. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on a date to be arranged

This page is intentionally left blank

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Audit and Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

This page is intentionally left blank

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 21 January 2021

(NOTE: This meeting was held as a remote meeting in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.)

PRESENT: Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jim Steinke, Garry Weatherall, Cliff Woodcraft and Kaltum Rivers (Substitute Member)

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Chaplin, Anne Murphy and Alison Teal, with Councillor Kaltum Rivers attending as Councillor Teal's substitute, and from Sam Evans (Diocese Representative - Non-Council Voting Member), Peter Naldrett (Parent Governor Representative - Non-Council Voting Member), Alice Riddell (HealthWatch Sheffield, Observer) and Alison Warner (School Governor Representative - Non-Council Non-Voting Member).

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19th November 2020, were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, the Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) reported that further to the attendance by a number of members of the Sheffield Youth Cabinet at the meeting, a number of Members of this Committee had met further with the Youth Cabinet on 13th January 2021, to listen to their views following recent further Government announcements regarding schools, learning and summer assessment.
- 4.2 Ms Nicholson referred to the document circulated to Members prior to this meeting, which set out a number of recommendations of the Youth Cabinet, following the meeting on 13th January, and specifically to the consultation which had just commenced on the arrangements with regard to examinations in Summer 2021.

4.3 The Chair stated that it was important to ensure that the Council was being supportive of the issues currently being faced by young people, both with regard to their education and general wellbeing. He referred to the importance of the Youth Cabinet being able to influence policy and/or participate in some form of event or process in order to highlight the issues they are having to face on a daily basis.

4.4 RESOLVED: That, in the light of the information now reported, the Committee approved the suggested recommendations set out in the paper circulated prior to this meeting, and for the recommendations to be forwarded to Councillors Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills), Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families) and relevant officers for further consideration.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) read out a question received from Jane Wratten, who worked in an early years setting, requesting that nurseries be only open for key workers so as to limit the amount of mixing of households, that funding be made available for private nurseries to keep afloat while children stay at home, and for nursery staff, as key workers in the frontline, to be prioritised for vaccination.

5.2 In response, the Committee agreed that (a) the emails received with the questions be sent to relevant Executive members and officers for consideration and (b) the Executive replies to the individual who posed the question, with a copy of the response being sent to all Members of the Council.

6. SHEFFIELD CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP - ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, People Services, attaching the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report 2019/20.

6.2 In attendance for this item were David Ashcroft (Independent Chair of the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Tina Gilbert (Manager, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Carly Speechley (Director of Children and Families), Dan White (Head of Health and Targeted Services, Sheffield Futures) and Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families).

6.3 David Ashcroft introduced the report, which provided an overview of safeguarding activity in Sheffield, and contained Information on the key achievements during 2019/20, the priorities for the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP), and the joint priorities for the SCSP and the Sheffield Adults Safeguarding Partnership (SASP) for 2020/ 21. The report also attached, as an appendix, a list of the Executive Group members of the SCSP.

6.4 Mr Ashcroft reported on the formal move from the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board to the multi-agency partnership (SCSP), and referred to a number of key

achievements during 2019/20.

6.5 Mr Ashcroft indicated that he wished to formally place on record his thanks to Victoria Horsfield (former lead officer and professional advisor to the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board) for her contribution to the success of safeguarding in the city, and to Tina Gilbert and her staff in terms of sustaining a strong response to safeguarding across the City, both in 2019/20 and through the Covid-19 pandemic this year.

6.6 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- The Partnership was well aware of the problems caused by the increase in online gambling, and had undertaken work in this area. It had been identified as an emerging issue, and the Partnership was looking at the risks and issues such activity presented for young people.
- There was a direct correlation between the increase in the number of young people on Child Protection Plans, as a result of neglect, and the levels of deprivation and poverty faced by many families across the city. This position made it more difficult for many families to protect their children against neglect. The Partnership would continue to scrutinise those young people on Child Protection Plans and, whilst there had been a slight increase in the number of young people on such Plans, following Lockdown 1, such numbers had now stabilised in terms of performance and levels of concern. The Children and Families Service had seen an increase in demand with regard to both children in need and children on Child Protection Plans over the last 12-18 months, and whilst there had been a slight dip in referrals, there had been an increase in the number of such children throughout the pandemic. The increase in the figures was partly due to the Service having decided to keep some children on the Plans for longer than normal as it had not been deemed safe to step them down due to the lack of universal providers available during the pandemic. The numbers now on Plans were currently in comparison with other local authorities. In addition, the Council was currently in the process of renewing its Neglect Strategy, which would be accompanied by a series of training and awareness raising sessions. As part of the Strategy, there was a new neglect assessment tool, which would help practitioners review cases and enable them to understand whether there were signs of neglect.
- The Council made every effort possible to ensure that every adoption arranged was successful, and whilst it was accepted that this sometimes took a long time, it was considered more important in the long-term. Members and officers met regularly with adopters, to listen to their views, with the aim of improving how the Council supported them. Also, the Council had recently become part of a Regional Adoption Agency which, amongst other benefits, would result in the Council having access to a wider variety of adoptees.
- Whilst it was important for the Partnership to continue monitoring the adverse

impacts of online gambling and gaming on young people and their families, the effects should be taken into perspective on the basis that it was not a ubiquitous issue. There was the possibility that the move to online learning, as a result of the pandemic, had resulted in some young people being distracted, and straying onto online gambling and gaming sites, and this needed to be monitored. The Partnership was confident that online learning was being adequately supported in Sheffield. The Partnership would continue to support the positive aspects of online learning, as a means of mitigating the risks of young people being drawn into online gambling or gaming. The Partnership offered training on the risks of young people using social media and other online platforms, which highlighted the risks to them and their families.

- The former SCSP Workforce Development Manager had recently retired, and due to the pandemic, it had taken longer than normal to reappoint to the post. The new postholder was now in the position of reviewing the multi-agency training offer to ensure that there was support for the areas identified following the workforce development questionnaire, where practitioners identified further training and/or development opportunities.
- The Partnership was in agreement with the principle of adopting a more collective voice in connection with safeguarding issues on the basis that there were a number of common issues faced by families. The Children's Commissioner had been a very powerful and effective voice for children's interests over the years, particularly in terms of identifying vulnerability prior to any safeguarding intervention. Independent Partnership Chairs in the Yorkshire and Humber area met regularly to discuss various cross-cutting issues. There was a strong and active network which provided support for the Independent Chairs and Business Managers.
- The Partnership was aware of the adverse effects of the pandemic on young carers, and this would be addressed in more detail in its Annual Report 2020/21.
- Mental health had been a high priority area for the Partnership for some time. There were issues as to whether there were sufficient mental health services in the city, as was the case nationally. The Partnership could work with the Sheffield Youth Cabinet in connection with disseminating messages about the problems and pressures faced by young people linked to the use of social media.
- The Partnership would welcome more involvement with this Committee, although this could be difficult due to time constraints on both the Independent Chair and the Committee. Consideration should be given to the Partnership providing an additional update report, over and above the annual report.
- The regular turnover of senior police officers represented an ongoing challenge for the Partnership in terms of maintaining strong and effective

relationships with such officers. Work had been undertaken to ensure that incoming officers were adequately briefed on all relevant safeguarding issues in the city.

- The Partnership would look at the possibility of producing its Annual Report earlier, so as to ensure it could be submitted to this Committee earlier in the Municipal Year.

6.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - Annual Report 2019/20, together with the comments now made and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks David Ashcroft, Tina Gilbert and Councillor Jackie Drayton for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests that consideration be given for (i) the Annual Report to be produced earlier, so as to enable its submission to the Committee earlier in the Municipal Year, and (ii) David Ashcroft being invited to attend meetings of the Committee as and when appropriate, in connection with the consideration of safeguarding issues.

7. SHEFFIELD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICE - ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Chief Executive Officer, Sheffield Futures, attaching the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service - Annual Report 2019/20.
- 7.2 In attendance for this item were Dan White (Head of Health and Targeted Services, Youth Services), David Ashcroft (Independent Chair, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Tina Gilbert (Manager, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families), Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) and Carly Speechley (Director of Children and Families).
- 7.3 Dan White referred to the introductory report, which contained information on the service user profile for 2019/20, key achievements in 2019/20 and priorities for the Service in 2020/21.
- 7.4 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-
 - The relationship between the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service (SSES) and South Yorkshire Police remained very strong, with a number of police officers being co-located within the Service at Star House. The highest number of referrals to the Service came from the police, and regular, weekly discussions were held between the two parties as a means of sharing information. There had been an increase in the number of referrals of children looked after to the Service in 2019, and the strong relationship

between the Service and the Children Looked After Team had helped to ensure that any issues of concern were identified and dealt with at the earliest possible opportunity. It was believed that such work had helped to ensure that the number of referrals from this cohort had not increased further. Following the issues experienced in Rotherham and other areas of the country, a considerable amount of work had been undertaken to raise awareness and ensure that all partners were aware of how to refer cases to the Service. Relationships between the Service and schools remained very strong, with steps being taken to ensure that all school staff were aware of the correct process, and had a contact number, in terms of referring cases.

- It was too early to tell whether there had been any effects caused by the pandemic in terms of those cases dealt with by the criminal justice system. The Service had identified a reduction in referrals at the start of the pandemic, but once staff had organised themselves in terms of being able to continue to support those cases at the highest need, the next step would be to identify if any such issues were apparent. It was not yet clear whether this had resulted in a knock-on effect in terms of cases further on in the process, and which were going to be referred to the criminal justice system. The SCSP had noticed, when taking reviews of cases, that there had been delays during the pandemic in terms of toxicology reports and post-mortems.
- The work of the Service was largely driven by referrals. As a result of the extensive work undertaken over the last few years in terms of raising the awareness of partners, cases had generally been referred to the Service at the earliest possible opportunity. Despite this, the Service was looking at what could be done to enable more referrals. Further to a drop in referrals after Lockdown 1, in March 2020, the Service had undertaken a piece of work on looking at the pathways for referrals to see if there were any blockages and, although no such blockages had been identified, this work would continue.
- Identifying specific patterns of crime that were not being referred to the Service would require more oversight from other partners, particularly the police, social care and education. It was considered that the Service had a good oversight in terms of current trends, but would include this as an area of work to maintain its focus on.
- As a result of the high profile sexual exploitation cases in Rotherham, and elsewhere in the country, the police had learned a lot in terms of how it should respond to such cases. This had resulted in a profound change, both locally and nationally, in the understanding and willingness of senior police officers to engage in the issue of young people's confidence in coming forward and reporting cases of exploitation. It was considered that extensive progress had been made in this area over the past few years. The Amber Project had been established as part of the contextualised Safeguarding Strategy, the role of which was to help support and develop the wider workforce around their understanding of what contextualised safeguarding was, the risk factors involved and who was included in this cohort, as well as

working with children and young people who had been affected by sexual exploitation. Also, as part of the launch of the Strategy, the Amber Ambassador Scheme had been launched, where children and young people were encouraged to have a trusted adult relationship with an ambassador, to enable them to discuss issues of concern with them.

7.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service - Annual Report 2019/20 now submitted, together with the comments now made and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Dan White, Tina Gilbert, David Ashcroft, Carly Speechley and Councillors Jackie Drayton and Abtisam Mohamed for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests:-
 - (i) that consideration be given for (A) the Annual Report to be produced earlier, so as to enable its submission to the Committee earlier in the Municipal Year, and (B) Dan White being invited to attend meetings of the Committee as and when appropriate, in connection with the consideration of issues regarding sexual exploitation; and
 - (ii) the Director of Children and Families to provide more detailed information for all Members of the Council on the Amber Project, contextualised safeguarding and signs of safety.

8. YOUTH SERVICES - SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

- 8.1 The Committee received a presentation from Laura Hayfield (Head of Service, Youth Services), on an update on the transition of the Youth Services to Sheffield City Council.
- 8.2 Ms Hayfield reported on the work undertaken to date, the aims of the Service, the phase two steps undertaken, work in terms of stabilisation and recovery, current service delivery, youth work, young people's involvement, and the work of the community youth teams and key workers. She also referred to the proposed timeline in terms of the various stages of transition of the Service back in-house.
- 8.3 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-
 - Those cases involving young people deemed to be at the lower end of need with regard to sexual and criminal exploitation were referred to the Community Youth Teams, based in the Youth Service. All staff within the Teams were trained to work with vulnerable young people, and would work through a variety of services and programmes with them, either through direct delivery or through colleagues and/or partners. The Service had

focused on this work during the transition.

- The aim was to co-produce the Vision and the Strategy, with local communities, and the Service was looking to have a wide engagement with partners, including community organisations and young people. Youth Services had recently moved to the Council's Communities Portfolio, with the idea that the Service could work closely with the Local Area Partnerships and community organisations. In addition, a stakeholder mapping exercise had been undertaken, as part of the preparation for engagement, with the youth workers, who had considerable experience in working in local communities.
- The Service was well aware of the need to be more evidence-based, and was using the tracking tools to enable young people to be monitored across different services. The Service would be able to track what worked most effectively and would implement continuous improvement processes into this.
- The Service would be happy to refer the initial proposals, as well as the amended proposals, following consultation, to this Committee for consideration prior to adoption.
- The Council had worked, and would continue to work, very closely with Sheffield Futures throughout the transition period, and would continue to maintain a strong working relationship in order to ensure that both parties were aligning their services for young people in the city. Sheffield Futures would continue to offer some excellent services for young people, which were not part of the Council contract. The survey undertaken of staff has shown that they had all been happy with the transfer, and that they had all been given the relevant equipment required. All staff had been reassured in terms of their positions, having met with senior management and relevant Cabinet Members. All staff were working well, and undertaking a great job, in very difficult circumstances, and had all been fully integrated in the transition process.
- Work to improve the performance regarding return interviews following young people going missing formed part of the improvement plan currently being worked on by the Service. This work would involve the use of the new screening and tracking tools. It was not always easy to make contact with the returning young people within the required 72 hour timescale, with some young people not wishing to engage with the Service. Some face-to-face interviews were still being held, where required, but mainly, at the present time, interviews were held by telephone or by virtual means. The return interview process was very much similar to that used by Sheffield Futures, and potential improvements were being reviewed as part of a wider service review. It was envisaged that now the Service was back in-house, and with the other improvements, such as the Amber Project, there was likely to be an increase in the number of return interviews.

- In terms of the next steps regarding the Make Your Mark ballot, the three local priorities had been voted for. The Sheffield Youth Cabinet would now be asked to draw up a series of action plans in terms of the action they would like to see in terms of the three priorities - Homelessness, Domestic Violence and Improvements to places to go and things to do.
- The 84 young people highlighted as being at potential risk of being NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) were aged between 14 and 16. They had been so identified due to school attendance and other risk of NEET indicators and, whilst schools had the statutory responsibility to support the children through career pathways whilst at school, the Youth Service would provide services over and above this. A number of the children had elected to be home educated, and the Service was also working with them.

8.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information reported as part of the presentation now made, together with the comments now made and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Laura Hayfield for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests that arrangements be made for (i) the Make Your Mark Action Plans to be shared at a future meeting, when completed and (ii) the revised Youth Services Strategy, to be submitted to a future meeting for comment.

9. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

- 9.1 The Committee received a report submitted by the Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) containing the Committee's draft Work Programme for 2020/21.
- 9.2 Ms Nicholson referred to the five items set out in the report that could be scheduled for the meeting on 25th February 2021, and following discussion, Members agreed a preferred selection priority order of Home Schooling, MAST, an update on the pandemic impact work with the Youth Cabinet and the Sheffield Youth Cabinet Action Plans following the Make Your Mark ballot.
- 9.3 RESOLVED: That, subject to the addition of the three items now referred to, on the agenda for the meeting to be held on 25th February 2021, the Committee approves the draft Work Programme for 2020/21 now submitted.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 10.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 25th February 2021, at 10.00 am.

This page is intentionally left blank



Report to Children and Families Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 25th February 2021

Report of: John Macilwraith

Subject: MAST Update

Author of Report: Helen Sweaton, Assistant Director Prevention and Early Intervention, Children and Families.

Summary:

Sheffield City Council are committed to providing early help to children, young people and families. Significant investment and support has resulted in multi-agency working to identify children and families who may need early help and a wide early help offer being available.

Our partnership early help offer operates across the City, providing a whole family key worker model of support delivered out of family centres and link sites, schools, community centres and social care offices.

During the Covid-19 pandemic schools, health professionals and those in the voluntary sector have worked together to ensure children and families have had access to support. This has been especially important to some children and families e.g. those who have been shielding, have experienced additional poverty, live with parental conflict, have struggled as a result of the increased isolation.

Since 2018 we have worked hard with through early years work in children centres, the work with schools and with Voluntary and Community Sector partners to identify and support children and families at the earliest opportunity.

At the same time the number of families experiencing poor outcomes as a result of poverty (including low wage working families) and disproportionality has increased. This has increased the complexity of the work being undertaken with children and families.

Although we continue to invest in Early Help, and lots of fantastic support continues to prevent the escalation of need, the work is often more complex now and we know about more children and families who would benefit. As a result, sometimes families have to wait too long to access early help .

As we have increased our ability to identify need, new ways to access early help have developed. There is always a MAST intervention worker who acts as

the keyworker for a family, but because of the increased complexity, specialist workers may also be involved. Our workforce, Partners and Parents tell us it can be difficult to navigate our early help system.

To address these issues the Lead Member for Children and Families agreed a Review of Early Help. The aim of the review is to articulate an ambition for locality based early intervention services to children and families across Sheffield. This review commenced on 27th February 2020.

The Early Help review aims to:

- Development of one integrated and coordinated offer of early help services delivered in localities which is strengths based and whole family
- Streamlined pathways into the offer based on data and referral information
- Increased case holding capacity whilst maintaining specialist function
- Locality working

The steering group agreed the vision for the review should be the co-produced vision articulated in the inclusion strategy. “Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life”

Five workstreams will focus on data, pathways, interventions, workforce development and locality working. All workstreams commenced activity in July 2020. Engagement with all relevant staff and Unions is ongoing. Planning is underway to ensure appropriate engagement with partners and children and families.

In July 2018, in order to contribute to the delivery of the Inclusion Strategy, Achieving Change no 385 Children & Families, Prevention & Early Intervention Service re-organisation reshaped and refocused the MAST service. Some of the workforce moved to the Commissioning, Inclusion and Learning Service.

From July 2018 MAST, Early Help Services in Children and Families has included Prevention and Intervention workers delivering to children and families and Social Workers for Prevention and Intervention (SWIPI) supporting and screening for Early Help Services.

This update articulates the activity undertaken by the Children and Families MAST service to contribute to the wider early help offer available.

Full time intervention workers are a Key Worker for between 10 and 12 families. Our practice standards are robustly monitored through performance and quality assurance. MAST deliver Early Help Training to schools and other colleagues. In 2019/20 32% of referrals to MAST were from Health partners and 25% were from schools.

Prior to the first Covid-19 lockdown 2,572 children were open to MAST. Since the start of the covid-19 pandemic we have not closed many families. In addition to supporting families who have a MAST keyworker, MAST staff contacted all of the 687 families who had children on the NHS shielded list.

In order to provide the capacity to mitigate some of the impact of covid-19 Cabinet agreed additional funding for one year to mitigate the vacancy savings

target for the next financial year. MAST were able to recruit to 22 vacant posts. It is anticipated that future vacancies will not be recruited to as the additional funding is due to end this year.

The information presented has been requested by the Committee.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to note the work undertaken by the MAST service during the covid-19 pandemic and consider the progress of the Early Help Review and provide' views and comments

Background Papers:



Day in the life of an
intervention worker.p



Early Help Review.pdf

Category of Report: OPEN (please specify)

Report of the Director of John Macilwraith

MAST Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Sheffield City Council are committed to providing early help to children, young people and families. Significant investment and support has resulted in multi-agency working to identify children and families who may need early help and a wide early help offer being available.
- 1.2. Our partnership early help offer operates across the City, providing a whole family key worker model of support delivered out of family centres and link sites, schools, community centres and social care offices. When needs are identified MAST intervention workers coordinate multi-agency plans of support and involve specialists when appropriate. Specialists have detailed knowledge and experience around key issues affecting children and families e.g. school attendance and inclusion, domestic abuse, parenting support, children's and adult's mental health.
- 1.3. During the Covid-19 pandemic schools, health professionals and those in the voluntary sector have worked together to ensure children and families have had access to support. This has been especially important to some children and families e.g. those who have been shielding, have experienced additional poverty, live with parental conflict, have struggled as a result of the increased isolation.

2. Context

- 2.1. In July 2018 Achieving Change no 385 **Children & Families, Prevention & Early Intervention Service re-organisation** reshaped and refocused the MAST service. Prior to the achieving change Early Help was delivered through Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) and Early Years Best Start teams based in localities.
- 2.2. To support the development and delivery of the inclusion strategy the following transferred from Children and Families to Commissioning Inclusion and Learning:
 - Early Years delivering a core family centre offer and infant feeding programme.
 - A Specialist offer delivering support, advice and consultation to the workforce on Attendance and Inclusion, Senior Learning Mentors, Building Successful Families,
 - A Specialist parenting and domestic abuse model.

- 2.3. From July 2018 MAST, Early Help Services in Children and Families has included:
- Prevention and Intervention workers delivering to children and families
 - Social Workers for Prevention and Intervention (SWIPI) supporting and screening for Early Help Services.
- 2.4. Sheffield's Children and Families MAST Service remains committed to enabling and supporting all children, young people and families to be safe, healthy and successful now and in the future.
- 2.5. Since 2018, we have worked hard with through the early years work in children centres, the work with schools and with Voluntary and Community Sector partners to identify children and families who would benefit from early help at the earliest opportunity. This has increased the number of children and families receiving early help from universal services e.g. schools and health services and means we know about families who would benefit from a keyworker earlier.
- 2.6. At the same time the number of families experiencing poor outcomes as a result of poverty increased including low wage working families. The disproportionality in the City means children with less are often left wanting more. This increased the complexity of the keyworking being undertaken with children and families. The number of headline problems being addressed by keyworkers through coordinated action plans, and the time taken to make improvements increased.
- 2.7. In July 2019 Ofsted confirmed "Strong partnership working and the support of a range of specialist services help to improve children's lives."
- 2.8. Although we continue to invest in Early Help and lots of fantastic support continues to prevent the escalation of need, the work is often more complex now and we know about more children and families who would benefit. There is a disproportionate resource allocated to identification and assessment which means there are not enough 'case holding' workers to undertake the keyworker role for families. This has made it difficult for the service to manage the referrals and allocations. Sometimes families have to wait too long.
- 2.9. As we have increased our ability to identify need new ways to access early help have developed. There is always a MAST intervention worker who acts as the keyworker for a family, but because of the increased complexity, specialist workers (who don't undertake the keyworker role)

may also be involved. Partners, parents and our workforce sometimes tell us it can be difficult to navigate our early help system, they aren't always clear how to access services and sometimes there is duplication which is inefficient and means families have to tell their story more than once.

- 2.10. The Building Successful Families: Early Help System Guide has both acknowledged the integration challenge presented by the distinct statutory duties supported through our Early Help Offer and highlighted the maturity of the local strategic partnership responsible for the Early Help System. The development of the system guide has informed the strategic planning and prioritisation for the Early Help Review. It is hoped that this will provide the opportunity to show Sheffield as an exemplar for Early Help delivery through the Troubled Families programme.
- 2.11. To address these issues the Lead Member for Children and Families agreed a Review of Early Help. The aim of the review is to articulate an ambition for locality based early intervention services to children and families across Sheffield.
- 2.12. The Early Help review aims to:
- Development of one integrated and coordinated offer of early help services delivered in localities which is strengths based and whole family
 - Streamlined pathways into the offer based on data and referral information
 - Increased case holding capacity whilst maintaining specialist function
 - Locality working
- 2.13. This review commenced on 27th February 2020. Progress was initially impacted by Covid-19.

3. What MAST do

- 3.1. Intervention and Prevention workers are geographically based across the City. We allocate more workers in the North and West, as demand for Early Help is greatest in these areas. All of the workforce is now all able to work remotely, however they have always operated out of a range of venues based in localities e.g. family centres and link sites, schools, community buildings.

- 3.2. Full time intervention workers are a Key Worker for between 10 and 12 families. We work with families for a range of different reasons:
- Children who are missing school
 - Children at risk of entering/re-entering children's social care
 - Children and adults with emotional and mental health issues
 - Children with challenging behaviour
 - Families affected by domestic abuse
 - Families affected by substance misuse
 - Families experiencing poverty, at risk of homelessness or long term unemployment
 - Families with needs around parenting
- 3.3. Our practice standards are robustly monitored through performance and quality assurance. Children and families are visited, multi-agency plans are coordinated through Team Around the Family meetings and interventions are delivered to meet identified needs.
- 3.4. Early Help Training led by MAST is delivered to schools and other colleagues on TAF meetings, Early Help Assessments, Voice of the Child and Engaging Adults in Meaningful conversations. Evaluation evidences this is valued. The Voice of the Child training is co-delivered by the Young Advisors and their input has been fantastic and given an important insight and depth to the training.
- 3.5. Professionals can refer using any high quality assessment (Early Help Part 1 form, FCAF, Myplan, Social Care assessment) and we also accept professional letters from health (GP and CAMHS usually refer via professional letter). In 2019/20 32% of referrals to MAST were from Health partners and 25% were from schools.
- 3.6. Families can self-refer by telephoning the service, we will discuss what their issues are and how we can best offer support. If there are any services already working with the family, we will establish if the family would work with them and consider if they could undertake an assessment of the family's strengths and needs to establish which services may best meet their needs. Only 2% of referrals to MAST are self-referrals.
- 3.7. MAST also pick up referrals from schools in Vulnerable Learner Review meetings and Early Years Partnership meetings. MAST provide support to children and young people who need a care assessment to contribute to an EHCP when they do not have or need a social worker.
- 3.8. MAST are a key partner in the Secondary and Primary Inclusion Panels to provide the necessary support to children (and their families) who schools identify are at risk of exclusion.

- 3.9. In response to requests for support MAST has developed multi-agency community programmes, linked to schools, to develop robust agency responses to critical issues in communities. These are:
- Chaucer School: Multi-agency response to support the impact of gangs activity and CCE in the local community.
 - Fir Vale School: Multi-agency response to improve community cohesion for the large Roma and Slovak communities on the estate, to reduce community tension and support the school in managing incidents and reducing exclusions.
 - Meynell School: Partnership project to support the school with a high incidence of PX or children at risk of PX, high SEN and children on or awaiting EHC Plans.
 - King Eckberts School: Multi-agency response to support the school with a range of emotional wellbeing and mental health concerns including suicide and threat of suicide.
- 3.10 MAST undertake visits to children (and their families) who are electively home educated and those who are missing from education when this information is provided to us by schools.

4. What MAST has done during the Covid-19 pandemic

- 4.1 Prior to the first Covid-19 lockdown 2,572 children were open to MAST. We have stayed in contact with all of these families during lockdown, making, on average 600 contacts (telephone calls, virtual meetings, door stop visits, food parcel deliveries etc) each week.
- 4.2 Since the start of the covid-19 pandemic we have not closed many families to MAST, usually we would close around 600 families each month, which enables us to allocate around 600 new referrals.
- 4.3 In the first lockdown MAST contacted all of the 687 families who had children on the shielded list who requested support, many of whom had support needs met through the Service.
- 4.4 MAST have maintained contact with all of the primary and secondary schools in the City, collecting and sharing information to accurately identify the vulnerable children and young people in line with the government definitions
- 4.5 MAST have supported some vulnerable families who wanted to take up a school place but were unable to manage to transport their children due to the implications of the pandemic e.g. those who relied on family or friends.

- 4.6 MAST have supported families on the neuro-disability pathway contacting those waiting for autism assessment and signposting to support where appropriate.
- 4.7 We accurately anticipated that the end of the first lockdown would bring an increase in referrals to the service when schools and GPs are seeing all children and families more regularly again.
- 4.8 Based on the available information and referral trends we anticipated an influx of a minimum of 500 additional cases as lockdown eased. These would be a combination of early help referrals and cases stepped down from children's social care.
- 4.9 Cabinet agreed additional funding to mitigate the vacancy savings target for the next financial year. MAST were able to recruit to 22 vacant posts providing the capacity to mitigate some of the impact of covid-19. It is anticipated that future vacancies will not be recruited to as the additional funding is due to end this year. This will further reduce the capacity of the service to meet the current demand.

5. Early Help Review

- 5.1 The Early Help Review commenced on 27th February 2020. Progress was initially impacted by Covid-19. The Steering Group with senior managers across the people portfolio re-commenced on the 9th June 2020.
- 5.2 The steering group agreed the vision for the review should be the co-produced vision articulated in the inclusion strategy. "Sheffield will be an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that all children receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life"
- 5.3 Five workstreams will focus on data, pathways, interventions, workforce development and locality working. All workstreams commenced activity in July 2020. Initially the workstreams have collating the relevant information and evidence to inform needs analysis for the current situation.
- 5.4 The data workstream has identified Education, Health and Local Authority are the key sources of data. In general, data is collected, recorded and reports are generated in silos. The lack of data from health creates barriers, especially for early years. Data is not used for effective predictive analysis.
- 5.5 The pathways workstream has identified more than 20 separate pathways and 69 referral documents (some are old versions of the same document). Around 20 panels operate to identify need or allocate resource. The 5 main

management information systems are all separate and don't talk to each other.

- 5.6 The interventions workstream has identified more than 80 early help interventions are currently delivered by our workforce. In addition, a large number of services are commissioned by Sheffield City Council to provide early help in communities.
- 5.7 The localities workstream has identified that 52 community buildings/spaces let by housing are used for early help. We have 7 well used family centres and 6 outreach buildings. Practitioners have developed networks with other practitioners in the local area.
- 5.8 The workforce workstream has identified there are 371 people delivering early help in Sheffield City Council People Portfolio with an excellent range of knowledge, skills and experience. There are 71 different role and grade combinations. Caseload information is spread across different systems and is not comparable. The Keyworker role appears to be predominantly with the intervention workers in MAST.
- 5.9 Communications and Engagement is led by the Workforce Workstream, Each steering group member has committed to engage through a variety of communication methods, with their workforce – all communications will be in line with the current public health guidance on social distancing. Engagement with all relevant staff and Unions is ongoing. Planning is underway to ensure appropriate engagement with partners and children and families.

6 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 6.1 MAST provides a valuable key worker intervention to support children and families to address problems and improve outcomes without the need for statutory intervention. This benefits the whole community as well as the individual family.
- 6.2 Sometimes children and families have to wait too long to get the support they need. If problems are left to escalate this can put pressure on communities.
- 6.3 Delivery of the Early Help Review will increase the capacity in the current in current system to increase the number of children who will

receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life.

- 6.4 The Early Help Review has been organised to contribute to the co-produced vision set out in the Inclusion Strategy. Although the early help agenda is wider than inclusion in education, the vision articulates the hopes and aspirations of children, parent/ carers, communities and services for all children and families.
- 6.5 Planning is underway to ensure appropriate engagement and consultation with services and communities informs the Early Help Review

7 What does this mean for the young people of Sheffield?

- 7.1 MAST provides a valuable key worker intervention to support children and families to address problems and improve outcomes without the need for statutory intervention.
- 7.2 Feedback from children and young people (collected through direct work and quality assurance activity) indicates they like having a keyworker who gets to know them and works with their family to make things better. Sometimes children and families have to wait too long to get the support they need.
- 7.3 Delivery of the Early Help Review will increase the capacity in the current in current system to increase the number of children who will receive the right support at the right time so that they live a happy and fulfilled life.
- 7.4 Case work is consent based and children and families are at the centre of every Team Around the Family. Both parent and child (where appropriate) voice are collected during quality assurance which directly informs service development.
- 7.5 The Early Help Review has been organised to contribute to the co-produced vision set out in the Inclusion Strategy. Although the early help agenda is wider than inclusion in education, the vision articulates the hopes and aspirations of children, parent/ carers, communities and services for all children and families.
- 7.6 Planning is underway to ensure appropriate engagement and consultation with children and families informs the Early Help Review.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to note the work undertaken by the MAST service during the covid-19 pandemic and consider the progress of the Early Help Review and provide' views and comments.



Report to CYP&FS Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 25.02.2021

Report of: Andrew Jones - Director Education and Skills

Subject: Elective Home Education

Author of Report: Rose Ward | Interim Head of Service – Access and Inclusion |
rosemary.ward@sheffield.gov.uk

Summary:

This report is being submitted at the request of the committee to look at the response to children who are being Electively Home Educated and the rise in children being Home Educated because of the Pandemic.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	/
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

In reading the response and approach to Elective Home Education, including the introduction of policy and additional staffing we welcome the views, comments, and recommendations from the committee.

Background Papers:

- Elective Home Education Departmental Guidance for Local Authorities
- Elective Home Education Policy
- Elective Home Education Data Dashboard

Category of Report: OPEN

Most reports to Scrutiny Committees should be openly available to the public. If a report is deemed to be 'closed', please add: '**Not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph xx of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).**'

Report of the Director of Education and Skills – Elective Home Education

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 Sheffield has always been committed to identifying when children are Electively Home Educated and although we don't have a statutory duty to hold a register of those Home Educated, we have consistently maintained within our education management system children we know to be 'educated other than at school'
- 1.2 Through the Advisory Teacher we have continuously tried to engage with our Home Educating Community to evidence all children we know to be Home Educated are receiving a full time, efficient and sufficient education in line with S7 of the education act 1996.
- 1.3 We have followed the Department for Education (DFE) Guidance for Elective Home Education and have significantly changed our approach in the last 2 years to reflect the review of this guidance published in April 2019.
- 1.4 The Department for Education Guidance for Elective Home Education clearly articulates the Local Authorities' duties, in summary:
 - To have a policy for Elective Home Education which is clear, transparent, and readily available, in different formats when needed.
 - To set aside staffing and resource to carry out the activity of the policy and give a named, familiar person to the family for contacts who is able to discuss suitable education.
 - When children are not on school roll to enquire and ascertain how education is being provided.
 - Safeguarding duties remain the same as for children accessing a school place
 - This safeguarding duty further extends to the welfare and well-being of children
 - The duties of the Local Authority mean that Home Education needs to take a multi-agency approach and should not be managed in isolation.
 - To have an agreement of contact with families at a minimum annually, and / or when there has been a change within the family circumstances (this can include a child's birthday and change of National Curriculum Year)
 - To seek to offer guidance to families on their rights and obligations, including good practice examples and resources when requested.
 - To ensure children have access to an efficient, full time education, in line with their age, aptitude, ability and Special Educational Needs
 - Having a clear escalation route when parents are not able to satisfy the Local Authority of their child's education, including School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders.
 - Although registration is not compulsory it is advisable for Local Authorities' to keep a register of Home Educating Families to ensure duties under S7 of the Education Act are carried out by parents.
- 1.5 Sheffield (as is the national theme) has seen a significant rise in the number of parents requesting de-registration from school for their children so they can Electively Home Educate, this has seen a rise in numbers from 462 – 659.

2. Main body of report, matters for consideration, etc

- 2.1 **To have a policy for Elective Home Education which is clear, transparent, and readily available, in different formats when needed.**
 - In 2018 a multi-agency group was formed across Admissions, Children Missing Education (CME) Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) Attendance, Social Care, and the

Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher to bring together a policy that would cover the response to Home Education. This was agreed by our Portfolio Leads in November 2018 and began being embedded from January 2019.

- As the Department for Education released the revised guidance in April 2019 the policy was reviewed, and our approach amended to follow this new guidance.
- As the numbers of children being home educated began to significant rise from September 2020 the policy was reviewed again, and changes made to reflect the rise.

2.2 To set aside staffing and resource to carry out the activity of the policy and give a named, familiar person to the family for contacts who can discuss suitable education.

- Up until the policy agreement and implementation, families were contacted by the Children Missing Education Team and the Advisory Teacher only.
- From January 2019 there was resource available from The Multi Agency Support Team to complete visits to family as their children became Electively Home Educated to discuss their choice and check this was made without coercion (also responding to the issue of 'Off-rolling')
- At the review in April 2019 the policy was updated to reflect the escalation to the Attendance Legal Team when and if parents were not able to provide evidence of education – this followed the School Attendance Order process.
- After the rise in the number of children being Electively Home Educated, as a result of the Pandemic, we have expanded the support into Elective Home Education, with Business Support, Project Support and an Inclusion Specialist who alongside the advisory Teacher and the work of the Multi-Agency Support Team are all points of contacts for families.
- In January 2021 it has been agreed for a more permanent staffing structure within Elective Home Education, which will result in the employment of 2 new professionals to work with families to help support the education, safeguarding and well being of children who are Home Educated.

2.3 When children are not on school roll to enquire and ascertain how education is being provided.

- We are notified by our schools whenever children are being removed from school roll.
- We have agreements in development with Health Professionals, including the Children's Hospital and GP Surgeries to notify us when they are seeing children who they believe are not on school roll.
- As children arrive in the city, they are met by our Children Missing Education Team who are our first support in ascertaining how families are to educate their children.
- Our policy outlines our approach to ascertain how education is being provided when children are not on school roll. This includes phone calls, letters, meetings, home visits and the support of accessing resources and best practice examples. When needed a template document can be requested to outline educational provision.

2.4 Safeguarding duties remain the same as for children accessing a school place

- When we are not provided with evidence of education for children who are Home Educated, we have clear escalation routes through to the Attendance Legal Team who can issue School Attendance Orders and seek to prevent educational neglect.
- Where we are worried about children, when they haven't been seen and contacts / visits are not responded to, we escalate this appropriately to the Safeguarding Hub.

2.5 This safeguarding duty further extends to the welfare and well-being of children

- Support children and families who are Home Educating is made available at their request from any part of our Early Help Offer, this can include support for children's

health and well-being, parenting support, educational support or can make a request to re-enter their child into education.

2.6 The duties of the Local Authority mean that Home Education needs to take a multi-agency approach and should not be managed in isolation.

- As covered, we have a multi-agency approach, including Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher, Multi Agency Support Team, Social Care, Inclusion & Attendance and the Attendance Legal Team.

2.7 To have an agreement of contact with families at a minimum annually, and / or when there has been a change within the family circumstances (this can include a child's birthday and change of National Curriculum Year)

- All children known to be Electively Home Educated have a risk level assigned linked their circumstances and access to education, for a lot of children there is a minimum risk, meaning contact would fall annually and / or at the point of change in circumstance (usually as children enter a new National Curriculum Year)
- For those children who are deemed at risk of not receiving access to education and where concerns have been raised about other family circumstances, we would offer (alongside an appropriate support offer) to visit the family at more frequent intervals (up to weekly where needed) to support the development of a full-time educational provision.

2.8 To seek to offer guidance to families on their rights and obligations, including good practice examples and resources when requested.

- We have an Elective Home Education email inbox which is monitored by Business Support – this is a way in which families can easily make contact when they would like to access resources or support around their education. If age related resources can be sent by Business Support they will, but those who need further discussion, and more specialist support are passed to the Advisory Teacher.
- Our Multi Agency Support Team and Children Missing Education Team will contact families and explain their rights and obligations at the beginning of Home Educating.

2.9 To ensure children have access to an efficient, full time education, in line with their age, aptitude, ability and Special Educational Needs

- As outlined above we always request evidence of education from all parents who are Home Educating their children.
- When evidence is received this is checked by our Advisory Teacher to ensure the education outline is age related, full time, efficient and sufficient
- When the education is suitable a follow up phone call is made to discuss education and any needs for ongoing support.
- If education isn't suitable this too is followed with a phone call and advice on what needs to be seen to ensure the education is suitable.
- If no evidence is provided, we would follow the escalation route for School Attendance Order (at any points parent can supply their evidence and the legal process would cease)

2.10 Having a clear escalation route when parents are not able to satisfy the Local Authority of their child's education, including School Attendance Orders and Education Supervision Orders.

- We have a clear route into the Attendance Legal Team who are responsible for issuing the School Attendance Orders.

- We have routinely used Education Supervision Orders, however this is something we are working with our colleagues in the Multi Agency Support Team and Social Care to develop.

3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 3.1 The response to Elective Home Education is important for the people of Sheffield, especially our Children and Young People to ensure we have equity in the offer of support for all children and families in need.
- 3.2 Our response offers assurance that we have a robust approach to Home Education, that is proportionate and fair.
- 3.3 As we develop our information Dashboard linked to Elective Home Education it allows us to see where we have higher numbers of children de-registered from the same schools, meaning we can approach the schools to understand better their practices and their inclusion support.
- 3.4 As we develop the post 16 offer and access to careers guidance for young people in Y11 know to Elective Home Education we should see an equity in the opportunities available.
- 3.5 We hope to bring assurance that we are supportive of all families whose children are Home Educated, being proportionate in our communications, but responsive to rising needs.

3.6 What does this mean for the young people of Sheffield?

- 3.7 For our Young People, they can talk to us at the point of coming off school roll within the visits completed by the Multi-Agency Support Team, this means we can hear their voice, respond appropriately and also follow up on any concerns for themselves, their family or about the school they have left.
- 3.8 Our Young people will continue to have access to a full time, efficient and sufficient education when they are not attending school.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 We ask that the committee considers all the information provided and welcome feedback on whether the response of the Local Authority is sufficient.
- 4.2. We welcome questions regarding any of the content of this report
- 4.3 We would like to know if there are identified gaps in our approach to Elective Home Education which we will work to close for the protection of children.

This page is intentionally left blank



Report to Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 25th February 2021

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Work Programme 2020/21 and Future Work Programme:
Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy
Development Committee

Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer
alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk

This report is a summary of the work of the Committee 2020/21. The usual pattern of meetings was disrupted by Covid-19, meetings were held virtually, and this Committee met in May, June, October, November 2020, January and finally February 2021.

The work programme attached at Appendix 1 is the completed work programme 2020/21, it includes potential items the Committee might like to recommend for inclusion in a future draft work programme 2021/22.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Note the work programme completed 2020/21
- Agree potential items to recommend for inclusion in a future draft work programme 2021/22

Background Papers: [Sheffield Council Constitution](#)

Category of Report: OPEN

Work Programme 2020/21 and Future Work Programme: Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 25th February 2021

1.0 What is the role of Scrutiny?

1.1 Scrutiny Committees exist to hold decision makers to account, investigate issues of local concern, and make recommendations for improvement. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (formerly the Centre for Public Scrutiny) has identified that effective scrutiny:

- Provides 'Critical Friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers
- Enables the voice and concern of the public and its communities
- Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drives improvement in public services and finds efficiencies and new ways of delivering services

1.2 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has updated its activity with several blogs and handy advice for scrutiny in Covid-19, and the Covid Act. These can be found on their web pages - <https://www.cfgs.org.uk/> .

1.3 Scrutiny Committees can operate in a number of ways – through formal meetings with several agenda items, single item 'select committee' style meetings, task and finish groups, and informal visits and meetings to gather evidence to inform scrutiny work. Committees can hear from Council Officers, Cabinet Members, partner organisations, expert witnesses, members of the public. Scrutiny Committees are not decision making bodies, but can make recommendations to decision makers.

2.0 Work programme 2020/21 and Future Work Programme 2021/22

2.1 The usual pattern of meetings was disrupted by Covid-19, meetings were held virtually, and this Committee met six times in 2020/21. Each year the Committee determines a work programme, which remains through the year. Appendix 1 is the completed work programme 2020/21.

2.2 In practice with previous years the outgoing Committee will highlight potential items to include in a future work programme 2021/22, examples of these are set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Note the work programme completed 2020/21
- Agree potential items to recommend for inclusion in a future draft work programme 2021/22

Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

Last updated: 17th February 2021

Please note: this version is the completed work programme 2020/21

Children, Young People & Family Support		Thursdays 10am-12pm	
Topic	Reasons for selecting topic	Lead Member/Officer/contact	Agenda Item/ Briefing Paper/Task Group
Thursday 21st May 2020 3:00pm			
Call-in of the Cabinet Decision on Investing in Young People	Scrutinise this decision and agree Committee's course of action	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Abtisam Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; John Macilwraith, Executive director, People, Sam Martin, Head of Commissioning	Agenda Item
Friday 26th June 2020 10:00am			
Request by the Scrutiny Committee for Further Information Following the Call-in of the Decision on Investing in Young People	Consider the further information supplied and as per the Scrutiny Procedure rules determine if it wishes to make recommendations to the Executive on the called-in decision "Investing in Young People"	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families; John Macilwraith, Executive director, People	Agenda Item

Thursday 15th October 2020 2:00pm			
Return to School in Covid-19 - Update on Schools Fully Opening	Consideration of update on schools returning September 2020, support for and issues faced	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Andrew Jones, Interim Director for Education, School Leaders across the city estate	Agenda Item
Draft Work Programme 2020/21	Consideration of draft work programme for remainder of this municipal year	Policy & Improvement Officer	Agenda Item
Thursday 19th November 5:00pm			
Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Young People in Sheffield	Hear from Young People in Sheffield (Sheffield Youth Cabinet) the impact of the pandemic on their education, work, health, and pressing issue that scrutiny could investigate further - future restrictions, educational disadvantage, what do young people want to see happen to minimise impact	Members of Sheffield Youth Cabinet	Agenda Item
Draft Work Programme 2020/21	Consideration of draft work programme for remainder of this municipal year	Policy & Improvement Officer	Agenda Item
Thursday 21st January 2021 10:00am			
Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2019-20	Holding to account - consider Annual Report; and impact of new safeguarding policies and practices	David Ashcroft (Independent Chair of Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership); others TBC - Tina Gilbert (Safeguarding Board Manager); Cabinet Member for Children and Families;	Agenda Item
Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Services Annual Report 2019-20		Dan White	Agenda Item

Youth Services - Sheffield City Council – interim update	Update on Youth Services after bringing in house October 2020	Cabinet Members for Children and Families and for Education and Skills; John Macilwraith, Dawn Shaw, Laura Hayfield	Agenda Item
Thursday 25th February 2021 10:00am			
MAST	Update on provision, now and future, a current position briefing on this service structure, its support role in pandemic response; how does it work in pandemic norm of working from home, such as principle of co-location.	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families; Helen Sweaton	Agenda Item
Elective Home Education	Impact of Covid-19, an alternative to school; and safeguarding of those home schooled; has nature, profile changed in pandemic.	Abtisam Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Andrew Jones, Rosemary Ward	Agenda Item
Potential items for future work programme 2021/22			
CAMHS – legacy of pandemic	CAMHS - impact of Covid-19 pandemic, the legacy of, immediate and future mental health services for children and adolescent		Agenda Item
Educational disadvantage and catch up plans - legacy of pandemic	What are catch up plans for those whose education was, and continues to be impacted by the pandemic; is there evidence of increased educational disadvantage in Sheffield due to Covid-19 /lockdown?		Agenda Item
Education and Skills Strategy	Consider this new strategy		Agenda Item
Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2019-20	Holding to account - consider Annual Report; and impact of new safeguarding policies and practices	David Ashcroft (Independent Chair of Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership)	Agenda Item

Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Services Annual Report 2019-20		Dan White	Agenda Item
Youth Services - Sheffield City Council Strategy and future service	The Council strategy and future service for Youth Services – possible task and finish group	Cabinet Members for Children and Families and for Education and Skills; John Macilwraith, Dawn Shaw, Laura Hayfield	Agenda Item and/or Task Group (Youth Strategy/Youth Services)
Youth Cabinet and Scrutiny	Continued collaboration on important issues for young people in the City, reporting on actions	Sheffield Youth Cabinet, Sheffield young people	Agenda Item and Task Group