

Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Tuesday 19 December 2023 at 2.00 pm

**To be held in the Town Hall,
Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Dawn Dale
Councillor Maroof Raouf
Councillor Mohammed Mahroof
Councillor Nighat Basharat
Councillor Jayne Dunn
Councillor Maleiki Haybe
Councillor Ian Horner
Councillor Ann Whitaker
Councillor Dianne Hurst

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on:

Education and Skills

- Schools
- Mainstream and specialist education (early years, children and young people)
- Learning and Skills policy, programmes and interventions (children and young people)

Children and Families

- Children and family support and social work
- Fostering and adoption
- Children in care, care leavers and corporate parenting
- Residential services
- Youth justice
- Child safeguarding

Meetings are chaired by the Committee's Chair, Councillor Dale.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. 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 Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's webpages](#) 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.

Policy 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 on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk, as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in

advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address:
committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email committee@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.

**EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA
19 DECEMBER 2023**

Order of Business

Welcome and Housekeeping

The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Exclusion of Press and Public

To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting

(Pages 7 - 10)

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on the 2nd November 2023

(Pages 11 - 16)

5. Public Questions and Petitions

To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public.

(NOTE: There is a time limit of up to 30 minutes for the above item of business. In accordance with the arrangements published on the Council's website, questions/petitions at the meeting are required to be submitted in writing, to committee@sheffield.gov.uk, by 9.00 a.m. on 15th of December 2023).

6. Members' Questions

To receive any questions from Members of the committee on issues which are not already the subject of an item of business on the Committee agenda – Council Procedure Rule 16.8.

(NOTE: a period of up to 10 minutes shall be allocated for Members' supplementary questions).

7. Work Programme

(Pages 17 - 38)

Items to Note

8. **Sheffield City Council Draft School Improvement Framework 2023-2024** (Pages 39 - 50)
9. **Developing of a Belonging Framework** (Pages 51 - 80)
10. **Update Report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services** (Pages 81 - 90)
11. **Update on ILACS Inspection and Report** (Pages 91 - 118)
12. **Education, Children and Families Budget report: Options for 24/25 budget** (Pages 119 - 166)
13. **2023/24 Q2 Budget Monitoring** (Pages 167 - 180)

NOTE: The next meeting of Education, Children and Families Policy Committee will be held on Thursday 8 February 2024 at 2.00 pm

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, 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 Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from David Hollis, Interim Director of Legal and Governance by emailing david.hollis@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Meeting held 2nd November 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Dawn Dale (Chair), Maroof Raouf (Deputy Chair)
Mohammed Mahroof (Group Spokesperson), Jayne Dunn,
Ann Whitaker, Maleiki Haybe, Ian Horner and Sioned Mair-Richards
(Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Councillor Nighat Basharat sent their apologies.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 The Chair reported that the presentation relating to item 8 was not available to the public and press because it contained exempt information described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person. Accordingly, if the content of those parts of the reports were to be discussed, the public and press would be excluded from the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee, held on the 27th of September 2023, were approved.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 No public questions or petitions were received from members of the public.

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

6.1 No Members' questions were received on this occasion.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

7.1 The Committee received the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to

enable this Committee, other committees, officers, partners, and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee. Changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, had been made in consultation with the Co-Chairs, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson, via their regular pre-meetings, and these were set out at the beginning of Appendix A of the report.

- 7.2 Members agreed that the Home to School Transport appeal would be added to the Work Programme following a review of Faith Schools and their proximity to homes in response to two referrals from the Admissions Committee.
- 7.3 The addendum 'Investing in Renewal Energy Projects' was presented. It was resolved that this item be placed on the work programme, with consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on Council land and buildings to generate energy and income.
- 7.4 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1, be agreed, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1.

8. 2024 TO 2027 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET

- 8.1 The Head of Service – Resource and Business Planning was in attendance to present a report which set out the budget pressures and challenges facing the services which fall under the Education, Children and Families committee area, and begins to develop a budget and resourcing action plan to mitigate these as far as possible. The report also highlighted emerging trends, growth in demand, and the rising complexity of the level of need for services which are directly impacting on the resource's requirement.

During consideration of this item of business, and in order for Members of the Committee to ask questions of the report, it was **RESOLVED:** That the public and press be excluded from the meeting and the webcast be paused before further discussion takes place on the grounds that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, if those persons were present, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

The meeting was re-opened to the public and press, and the webcast was recommenced, prior to the decision being taken by the Committee.

- 8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:
1. Notes the financial pressures for 24/25 detailed within this report and the new income available to mitigate them.
 2. Notes the measures proposed in the report to mitigate these pressures and that they will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee as part of the Council's budget for 24/25.
 3. Notes that Officers will work to develop any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals in this report so that the proposals,

once agreed, can be implemented as planned before or during the 2024/25 financial year.

4. Notes that it is proposed that there will be a further update at the December committee meeting.

8.3 Reasons for Decision

8.3.1 The recommendations put forward in this paper and appendix 1 are recommended for approval on the basis that they: - Are consistent with our agreed approach to demand management, sufficiency, and meeting our obligations to provide quality statutory services which meet the needs of the child or young person.

- Are consistent with our vision/strategy to provide services and opportunities which support each child and young person within Sheffield to meet their potential.

- Support the ongoing improvement of Education, Children and Family services in Sheffield.

- Are guided by an evidence base, benchmarking and/ or trend data which identifies areas of spend where disinvestment, subject to individual review, can most likely be made without detriment.

- Enable the Council to continue to meet its legal duties.

8.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

8.4.1 Do Nothing: By undertaking none of the proposed actions, we would be unable to contribute to a balanced budget.

8.5 (NOTE: During the discussion of the above item the Committee agreed, in accordance with Council Procedure rules, that as the meeting was approaching the two hours and 30 minutes time limit, the meeting should be extended by a period of 30 minutes)

9. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY

9.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Children and Families which set out how Sheffield City Council would fulfil its role as a Corporate Parent and meet its statutory sufficiency duty by providing good quality homes that support children and young people and care leavers. It described the principles that were applied when seeking to commission the provision of secure, safe and appropriate accommodation and support, to children in care and care leavers over the coming three years. The strategy provided the underpinning principles that would inform how changing demand were to be addressed to ensure that there was the right mix of provision available that met the needs and enhanced the outcomes of children and young people, and balanced value for money for the local authority.

9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

- approve the “Children and Families Sufficiency Strategy”, as appended to this report at Appendix 1.

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9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 The Children and Families Sufficiency Strategy will ensure the Council has set out its commitment in line with its duty to ensure that there is a range of sufficient placements which meet the needs of children and young people in care.

9.3.2 Approval of Corporate Parenting Board to undertake the monitoring and oversight of progress against the delivery plan, and annual review of the aspirations, will ensure consistent oversight of the delivery of the strategy and escalation as appropriate if issues arise.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 Alternative option not to approve the new Strategy, is rejected. This would mean the Council does not have an accurate and up to date strategy that sets out its commitment in line with the sufficiency duty. Governance of the delivery of the strategy will not be articulated and understood and may result in failure to escalate issues as they arise.

10. **UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS ON THE RACE EQUALITY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Children’s Services which showed steps taken to implement the Race Equality Commission’s recommendations. The report and presentation comprised of the following key elements:

- Links to the Corporate Strategy
- How Children’s Services was collaborating with each other, internal services and external partner organisations (such as Education Settings) to deliver to the recommendations of the Race Equality Commission)

10.2 Members asked that an amendment to the recommendations be made, as follows:

‘twice-quarterly’ rather than ‘twice yearly’

10.2.1 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

1. note the progress made, as set out in the presentation to the Committee, and to comment on the direction of travel.
2. agree to receive a twice-quarterly update on the progress made around the recommendations from the Race Equality Commission report

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 To keep this important agenda alive and make it a city-wide pursuit.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

Not Applicable

The Chair asked for a Working Group on this item and stated that an email would be sent to Members regarding this.

11. **SHEFFIELD CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22 AND 2022-23**

11.1 The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services which set out yearly reports of the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP), made up of the following three local safeguarding partners:

- Sheffield City Council: represented by the Director of Children's Services
- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board: represented by the Chief Nurse
- South Yorkshire Police: represented by the Chief Superintendent District Commander

11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

That the contents of the annual reports (appendices 1-3) be noted.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 It is important that the Committee are aware of the work of the Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership and the content of the Annual Reports.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 Not applicable

12. **UPDATE REPORT FROM THE STRATEGY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

12.1 The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on statutory requirements. It also provided an update regarding progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee: -

Notes the Strategic Director of Children's Services report and agrees key activity for the coming months.

12.3 Reasons for Decision

12.3.1 This report provides an update regards Children's Services activities for Members.

12.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

12.4.1 Not applicable



Report to Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

19th December 2023

Report of: Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

Subject: Committee Work Programme

Author of Report: Fiona Martinez, Principal Democratic Services Officer

fiona.martinez@sheffield.gov.uk

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Co-Chairs, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**1.0 Prioritisation**

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information.

2.0 References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

2.2

None received

3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a

position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

3.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date
None to report		

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

New Items	Proposed Date	Note
NEW: Medical Needs Education Service	March 24	The recommissioning of the Medical Needs Education contract which provides education for children medically unable to attend school.
NEW: Developing of a Belonging Framework	December 23	To develop a framework that puts children and young people at the heart of what we do. To promote a sense of belonging in all of the areas where children and young people <i>should belong</i> i.e. families, schools, communities and city itself.
NEW: Update Report from the Strategic Director of Children’s Services	December 23	To provide a Strategic Director’s update regarding the performance and governance of Children’s services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children’s Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council’s Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.
NEW: Update on ILACS Inspection and Report	December 23	The purpose of this report, and a presentation to be made to the Committee, is to provide the findings of the September 2023 Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACs).
NEW: School Admissions	February 24	<p>The Local Authority is responsible for setting admission arrangements for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. It must “Determine” and publish its admission arrangements every year, including the Co-ordinated Admission schemes. There is a requirement to consult on the arrangements once every seven years unless there are significant changes proposed.</p> <p>The arrangements were consulted upon last year for the 2023/24 academic year. There are no proposed changes to the arrangements for 2025/26. The key decision is to <u>determine</u> the Council’s Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2025/26.</p> <p>Schools and Academies that are their own Admission Authority must determine their own Admission Arrangements.</p>

		To ensure that the City Council is carrying out its statutory duty to determine its Admission Arrangements for 2025/26 by 28 February 2024.
NEW: School Calendar 2025/26	February 24	<p>The Local Authority is required to consult annually and determine the school term dates for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools under Section 32 of the Education Act 2002.</p> <p>Schools that are their own Admission Authority usually follow the City Council model calendar but are free to set their own. Religious schools sometimes operate different dates around Easter.</p> <p>To ensure that the City Council is carrying out its statutory duty to set a school calendar for the 2025/26 academic year.</p>
NEW: 16-25 Years Supported Accommodation Framework Contract	February 24	<p>The current contract was extended for a further 18 months from 1st April 2023 until 30th September 2024. The extension was to allow for the Government introducing new national standards for the registration, regulation, and inspection of supported accommodation for Looked after Children, aged 16 and 17 years and Care Leavers, which is being overseen by an Ofsted-led provider registration and inspection regime. It is mandatory that all our current providers obtain Ofsted registration by end of October 2023. Ofsted will commence Ofsted inspections in April 2024.</p> <p>The extension also allows us to conduct a full re-commissioning exercise that is co-produced with young people and Care Leavers.</p> <p>To seek approval to recommission the 16-25 Years Supported Accommodation Service and go out to tender for a 4–5-year contract.</p>
NEW: SEND SEF and Transformation work	February 24	
NEW: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services	February 24	To provide a Strategic Director's update regarding the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.

Rescheduled Item	Proposed Date	Note
MOVED: Sheffield City Council Draft School Improvement Framework 2023-2024	December 23	Moved from November's Committee meeting to December's Committee meeting
MOVED: Corporate Parenting Plan	February 24	Moved from December's Committee to February's meeting

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee's next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	
Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	
Type of item	
Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	

Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	
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Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 4	19 th December 2023	2pm				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <i>This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer</i>
2023/24 Q2 Budget Monitoring	Budget Monitoring	Jane Wilby	Monitoring			Education, Children and Families
MOVED: Sheffield City Council Draft School Improvement	The framework sets out how the authority will carry out its core statutory responsibilities with maintained schools	Patrick Butterell, Bob Cuff and Stephen Betts	Performance/Monitoring	We will need to discuss outline proposals with the Committee's leadership	We will consult with all schools and academies via the Education and Skills Bulletin, and we will	Education, Children and Families

Framework 2023-2024	<p>following the end of the commission to Learn Sheffield in September 2023. It sets out the processes and procedures by which Sheffield City Council (SCC) will work to ensure all maintained schools offer the highest quality of education to all pupils. It reaffirms the statutory roles and responsibilities of school governors and the Local Authority.</p> <p>Learn Sheffield is currently commissioned by SCC to deliver the core statutory duties relating to school improvement. This contract runs until 31 August 2023. From September 1, 2023, SCC will undertake these duties directly to maintained schools.</p>			<p>We will need a further discussion with the committee's leadership once the framework is formulated (post-consultation)</p> <p>We will need a item on the full committee's main agenda.</p>	consult with Learn Sheffield and its Board of Directors.	
<p>NEW: Developing of a Belonging Framework</p>	<p>To develop a framework that puts children and young people at the heart of what we do. To promote a sense of belonging in all of the areas where children and young people <i>should belong</i> i.e. families,</p>	<p>Andrew Jones/Joe Horobin</p>	<p>Strategy/Policy Development</p>	<p>Member Briefing</p>	<p>1. We will review what children and young people have previously</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>

	<p>schools, communities and city itself.</p>				<p>said which relates to Belonging and a sense of self.</p> <p>2. We will engage with children and young people about belonging – to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children who have been excluded from school.• Looked after children and care leavers.• Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities	
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					<p>(SEND) including those with Autism or social, emotional and mental health needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children who are BAME.• Children who are LGBTQ+• The general child population. <p>Our approaches will be developed working with colleagues across Education and Skills, Community Youth Services, and Children and Families.</p> <p>We will use the information we gain to:</p>	
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					Foster a sense of belonging in our children and young people – in all of the areas of their life where they <i>should belong</i> i.e. families, schools, communities, city	
NEW: Update Report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services	To provide a Strategic Director's update regarding the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.	Meredith Teasdale	Performance, monitoring and other			Education, Children and Families
NEW: Update on ILACS Inspection and Report	The purpose of this report, and a presentation to be made to the Committee, is to provide the findings of the September 2023 Inspection of Local	Sally Williams	Update			Education, Children and Families

	Authority Children's Services (ILACs).					
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Questions/ Petitions Work Programme 					

Meeting 5	8 th February 2023	2pm				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
The Childcare Reforms	The likely impact of implementation of the Chancellor's Spring Budget 2023 Announcement of proposed Childcare Reforms.	Cathie Tandy	Strategy/Policy Development	N/A	One key area of work to be undertaken will be to establish levels of expected demand amongst parents/carers, alongside existing capacity within the Early Education and Childcare Market, to help identify any gaps and to determine levels of provision required.	Education, Children and Families

					<p>Other key strands will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information to parents/carers regarding the offer and what they can access • Engaging with childcare providers and schools regarding the new entitlements they plan to offer. 	
<p>NEW: School Admissions</p>	<p>The Local Authority is responsible for setting admission arrangements for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. It must “Determine” and publish its admission arrangements every year, including the</p>	<p>John Bigley</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<p>Member Briefing</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Education, Children and Families</p>

	<p>Co-ordinated Admission schemes. There is a requirement to consult on the arrangements once every seven years unless there are significant changes proposed.</p> <p>The arrangements were consulted upon last year for the 2023/24 academic year. There are no proposed changes to the arrangements for 2025/26. The key decision is to <u>determine</u> the Council's Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2025/26.</p> <p>Schools and Academies that are their own Admission Authority must determine their own Admission Arrangements.</p> <p>To ensure that the City Council is carrying out its statutory duty to determine its Admission</p>					
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	Arrangements for 2025/26 by 28 February 2024.					
NEW: School Calendar 2025/26	<p>The Local Authority is required to consult annually and determine the school term dates for Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special Schools under Section 32 of the Education Act 2002.</p> <p>Schools that are their own Admission Authority usually follow the City Council model calendar but are free to set their own. Religious schools sometimes operate different dates around Easter.</p> <p>To ensure that the City Council is carrying out its statutory duty to set a school calendar for the 2025/26 academic year.</p>	John Bigley	Decision	Member Briefing	None required	Education, Children and Families
NEW: 16-25 Years Supported Accommodation Framework Contract	<p>The current contract was extended for a further 18 months from 1st April 2023 until 30th September 2024. The extension was to allow</p>	Amy B / Isobel Fisher	Decision	Member Briefing		Education, Children and Families

	<p>for the Government introducing new national standards for the registration, regulation, and inspection of supported accommodation for Looked after Children, aged 16 and 17 years and Care Leavers, which is being overseen by an Ofsted-led provider registration and inspection regime. It is mandatory that all our current providers obtain Ofsted registration by end of October 2023. Ofsted will commence Ofsted inspections in April 2024.</p> <p>The extension also allows us to conduct a full re-commissioning exercise that is co-produced with young people and Care Leavers.</p> <p>To seek approval to re-commission the 16-25 Years Supported Accommodation Service</p>					
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	and go out to tender for a 4–5-year contract.					
NEW: SEND SEF and Transformation work		Rose Ward				Education, Children and Families
NEW: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services	To provide a Strategic Director's update regarding the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regards progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.	Meredith Dixon-Teasdale	Performance, monitoring and other	Member Briefing	None required	Education, Children and Families
MOVED: Corporate Parenting Plan	We are currently consulting and developing our new strategy for 2023-2026. We aim to have this presented to our Corporate Parenting Board in November 2023. This will set out our ambition for children and young people over the next	Sally Williams	Performance, monitoring and other	Member briefing / Corporate parenting board	Engagement with Children and Young people / external partners	Education, Children and Families

	<p>3 years and how we will hold ourselves to account. This will be informed by what our children and young people have told us, what our partners have told us, and today we invite you to contribute your thoughts and aspirations too.</p> <p>This strategy is about focusing on what really matters to children - family, love and a safe, stable and reliable place to call home. These are the things that ultimately make a difference to children's happiness and success.</p>					
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Meeting 6	19 th March 2023	2pm				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
2023/24 Q3 Budget Monitoring	Budget Monitoring	Jane Wilby	Monitoring			Education, Children and Families

Medical Needs Education Service	The recommissioning of our Medical Needs Education contract which provides education for children medically unable to attend school.	Polly McKinlay	Decision	None considered.	We will be undertaking consultation with Sheffield Parent Carer Forum as well as with the children and their families who attend Chapel House.	Education, Children and Families
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> 					

Items which the Committee has agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is set.						
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <i>Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>	Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <i>This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer</i>

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its ‘menu of options’ for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what’s worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as ‘hackathons’) led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick ‘how-to’ guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee’s work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Pat Butterell,
Assistant Director of School Effectiveness
Tel: 07785950463

Report of: *Strategic Director of Children’s Services*
Report to: *Education Children and Families Policy Committee*
Date of Decision: *19/12/2023*
Subject: *An approach to School Improvement*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (2461)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to outline what School Improvement consists of both looking at (a) the Councils’ statutory duties (b) any locally commissioned school improvement activities and (c) looking at national considerations when thinking about School Improvement as a whole.

Recommendations:

The Education, Children and Families Policy Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the contents of this report.
2. Agree to receive further updates to any changes in school improvement approaches either on a school, local or national level.

Background Papers:

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>(Kayleigh Inman)</i>
		Legal: <i>(Nadine Wynter)</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>(Bashir Khan)</i>
		Climate: <i>(NA)</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Pat Butterell</i>	Job Title: <i>Assistant Director School Effectiveness</i>
	Date: <i>19/12/23</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This report on the Approach to School Improvement shows how Sheffield City Council and Learn Sheffield work together to support educational settings (schools) in both their (a) self-evaluation and (b) how they conduct / exercise school development activities.
- 1.2 The Council continues to hold a wide range of statutory duties in relation to schools. These are many and varied but can be summarised under the following key headings, some of which apply to maintained schools only, but some of which apply to all schools including academies and private schools:
- School Place Planning
 - School Admissions
 - School attendance
 - Home-to-School Transport
 - Education Funding
 - Home Education
 - Alternative Provision
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - Early Years
- 1.3 None of these statutory duties relate to specific school improvement activity (e.g providing advice on improving phonics outcomes). However, some of these statutory duties impact on the outcomes achieved by children. For example, it is difficult for a child to achieve good outcomes if they aren't in regular attendance at their school.
- 1.4 As well, as framing the statutory duties that we are responsible for, through a broader policy environment, the DfE (Department for Education) has also made it clear that they do not see a role for local authorities in direct school improvement activity. The prevailing view, which has been in place since the 1990s, under different governments, is that the sector - schools and other providers - best place to advise each other on how to improve outcomes. The government's key school improvement intervention, now, is the academies programme. Academies were originally introduced by the 1997/2010 Labour Government, and the number of academies was significantly increased from 2010, onwards by the van coalition government and the subsequent Conservative led government. Individual local authorities are specifically prohibited from setting up or managing Academy trusts.
- 1.5 In the main, the decision as to whether a school should become an academy rests solely with the individual governing body for that school. In some circumstances, where a school's performance is consistently low (a "coasting school") or where it is found to be inadequate by Ofsted, the school, then becomes subject to a 'directive Academy order' and is forced to become an academy by the DfE.

- 1.6 Currently, in Sheffield, about 60% of all schools are academies with over at 75% of the entire school population, now attending an Academy. The proportion of children attending academies is a key indicator because it equates to other resource profiles. So, 75% of children attend academies, which means that 75% of school funding sits in academies and 75% of all staff employed in the city work for Academy trusts.
- 1.7 The funding available to the Council to support schools that wish to remain as maintained reduces every time a school becomes an academy. In reality, this means that for the scores which remain maintained, there are less and less resources available to support them but, the statutory duties held by the local authority remain just as broad.
- 1.8 With this ongoing and continuous change in resources, linked to the lack of statutory duties in relation to school improvement, has led us to take a different approach to school improvement in Sheffield. In 2011 the “City Wide Learning Body” was set up in order to allow all schools and academies to work collaboratively and in partnership with the local authority to help shape the education policy environment, strategy and approach to services. This was superseded in 2015 by the setting up of Learn Sheffield (see below). Learn Sheffield is currently Working with the Council and with schools to further develop a Sheffield “Education Partnership”. This is likely to be a “civic partnership” recognising that some aspects of education strategy, and approach go beyond schools and the Council (also see below).
- 1.9 Learn Sheffield delivers a school improvement commission on behalf of Sheffield City Council. The key elements of this commission is outlined below, alongside the traded school improvement activity delivered as part of their subscription model. The commission includes four specific activities which Learn Sheffield is best placed to continue to deliver.

What does Learn Sheffield Do?



What does Learn Sheffield do?

- **School improvement (commission & subscription)**
 - Project work (including funded programmes)
 - Added value (city infra-structure and capacity)

- **Commissioned school improvement activity:** categorisation, additional targeted support, support for partnership groups, monitoring, moderation, Ofsted inspection & HT recruitment.
- **Subscription activity:** deployed LSIP days + training programmes (including governance, leadership, research, networks, etc.) + packages (including data, Create Sheffield, etc.)
- **Other traded activity** includes governance services, GDPR, etc.

SCC School Improvement Commission

The current commission (£60k pa from September 2023 – August 2025) includes four activities:

- **Monitoring** (primary SATs)
- **Moderation** (primary writing)
- **HT recruitment** (maintained schools)
- **Ofsted inspections** (speaking to inspectors & attending feedback)

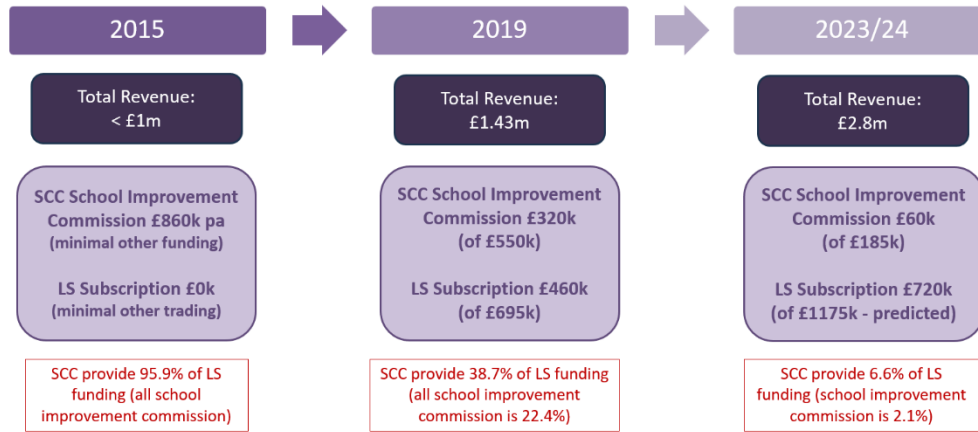
Details of the current [Learn Sheffield subscription](#) can be found on the [Learn Sheffield website](#).

The slide below outlines how the current commission (and other funding from SCC) fits into the overall revenue for Learn Sheffield.

Learn Sheffield Funding



- Level and proportion of LS funding from SCC (including the School Improvement Commission)



2 Moral Purpose & Professional Agency – Areas of best practice EEF

2.1 The EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) is a UK-based charity dedicated to improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged children. Established in 2011, it conducts rigorous research to identify and promote evidence-based practices that enhance learning. The EEF's work matters because it provides educators with valuable insights into effective teaching and educational strategy methods, helping them make informed decisions to bridge educational gaps. By focusing on evidence, the EEF contributes to the development of strategies that can positively impact student achievement, particularly for those facing socio-economic challenges, thereby promoting equity and raising the overall quality of education. The following are the 7 areas of best practice as identified by the EEF

2.2 Beyond the commission, Sheffield City Council and Learn Sheffield work together to promote a culture of improvement in the city through:

- Collaborative practices
- System-wide strategies
- Consistency within and across schools
- Better use of and sharing of data
- Leadership at every level
- Locally owned and supported CPD
- Use of local & national expertise and evidence of best practice
- School-to-school peer reviews
- Multi-academy trusts (MATs) and Maintained schools collaboration
- Flexible support for schools in need
- Moderation of assessments and examinations
- Data sharing for performance evaluation

- 2.3 The Department for Education considers school improvement to be a traded service. For example, schools can buy in school improvement support but can also contract with other schools to share their expertise and to provide support. Examples of this include, Maths Hubs; Phonics Delivery Hubs; English Hubs and Behaviour Hubs.
- 2.4 Local School improvement initiatives continue to be developed including a new Sheffield Strategic Education Partnership. The partnership's focus is still being developed but could include, a will focus on attendance, inviting collaboration from different settings and civic organisations. We would consider attendance to be an obvious priority for Sheffield and suitable for a civic partnership response. This is because:
- The impact of improved attendance would lead to improved attainment and improved life chances for children and young people in Sheffield.
 - This improvement requires a wider partnership response. Each partner (including education settings) can always improve their practice, but unless all partners contribute a significant improvement in attendance outcomes will not be realised.
- 2.5 The footprint of this work may also need to stretch beyond the city and include, for example, transport which is a significant barrier to attendance for some young people.
- 2.6 School improvement is not the sole responsibility of the SCC Education and Skills
- Emphasise that school improvement is not solely the responsibility of educational settings – it's cross-council.
 - The impact of external factors on students' life chances
 - The need for collaboration across various sectors
- 2.7 Below are examples of where Learn Sheffield has contributed to these areas of best practice
- Collaborative practices. ***Promoted by both SCC and LS***
 - System-wide strategies. ***We are currently exploring a new strategic partnership.***
 - Consistency within and across school. ***Part of the School Improvement commission up to August 2023 using a categorisation process***
 - Better use of and sharing of data. ***Data Service is included in LS subscription.***
 - Leadership at every level. ***LS has extensive training for leaders.***
 - Locally owned and supported CPD. ***LS has a wide training offer inside the subscription but is also commissioned for SEND training.***
 - Use of local & national expertise and evidence of best practice. ***LS uses expertise within the subscription but also in projects funded by SCC (for example Mary Myatt on curriculum and Tom Sherrington on teaching).***

2.8 Race Equality Commission (REC)

Our school advisor has led for Education and Skills on the response to the Race Equality Commission, specifically focusing on Action 2, is aimed at fostering racial equality in education.

3. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

- 3.1 The approach will suggest ways to cascade current practice; identify development needs and opportunities for timely collaboration with wider organisations to keep school improvement firmly on the agenda.

4. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 4.1 Previously there have been consultations regarding the funding model and with Learn Sheffield's offer. This consultation has been done with settings (such as schools) to receive their input on what's the most impactful for their students.

5. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

5.1 Equality Implications

- 5.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 5.1.2 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

- 5.1.3 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and identified that having effective school improvement impacts in the life chances of BAME; SEND; LGBTQ+ and other marginalised groups and promotes greater social mobility.

5.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 5.2.1 There are no financial implications for this Committee (December 2023) The decision regarding the Learn Sheffield commission was agreed at a committee earlier this year.

5.3 Legal Implications

- 5.3.1 The approach set out in this report will assist the Council in meeting its various statutory duties. For example, the Council is under a duty imposed by section 13A of the Education Act 1996 to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential of children and young people in its area. Also, when delivering its school improvement function, the Council must have regard to the Schools Causing Concern statutory guidance. This guidance provides clarity about the role of local authorities in delivering school improvement for maintained schools and for academies.

5.4 Climate Implications

- 5.4.1 Using a local company will benefit / reduce climate impacts such as long-distance travel and carbon emissions. School improvement will also equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to address climate related factors and contribute to these as they manifest in the future.

5.5 Other Implications

- 5.5.1 A joint approach to School Improvement will impact on the life-chances of children and young people and promote social mobility & equality.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 Currently the above model in partnership with Learn Sheffield is pro-active and impactful. If the Educational Landscape changes, Education and Skills will work in partnership with Learn Sheffield to assess what we can do to adapt to any changes from either the Department for Education or other accountable bodies such as Ofsted. These would then always go through a process of consultation and considered with Members.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To provide information on an approach to outline what School Improvement consists of through Sheffield City Council; Learn Sheffield and any local or national approaches to School Improvement as a whole.

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Approach to School Improvement

EIA ID: 2461

EIA Author: Patrick Butterell

Proposal Outline: This proposal / report on the Approach to School Improvement shows how two organisations, Sheffield City Council and Learn Sheffield support educational settings (schools) in both their (a) self-evaluation and (b) how they conduct / exercise school development activities. Examples of school improvement include: Sheffield City Council - Exercising its Statutory Duties which includes, • School Place Planning • School Admissions • Home-to-School Transport • Education Funding • Home Education • Alternative Provision • Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) • Early Years Our Commission with Learn Sheffield

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: Meredith Dixon-teasdale

Service Area: Children's Services

EIA Start Date: 22/11/2023

Lead Equality Objective: Break the cycle and improve life chances

Equality Lead Officer: Bashir Khan

Decision Type

Committees:

Policy Committees

- Education, Children & Families

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio:

Children's Services

EIA is cross portfolio:

No

EIA is joint with another organisation:

Yes

Learn Sheffield

Overview of Impact

Overview Summary:

Having effective school improvement impacts in the life chances of BAME; SEND; LGBTQ+ and other marginalised groups and promotes greater social mobility.

Impacted characteristics:

- Age
- Cohesion
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Health
- Poverty & Financial Inclusion
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Sexual Orientation

Consultation and other engagement

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact: No

Impact areas:

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required: No

Review Date: 22/11/2023

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Action plan evidence:

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date: 22/11/2023



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Andrew Jones, Director of Education and Skills, and
Joe Horobin, Director of Integrated Commissioning

Tel: Andrew Jones – 07990 594728.

Joe Horobin - 0114 273 5891.

Report of: *Meredith Dixon-Teasdale, Strategic Director of Children’s Services*

Report to: *Education, Children and Family Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *19.12.2023*

Subject: *Development of a Belonging Framework*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2479				
Has appropriate consultation taken place? This report outlines the approach that will be taken to coproduce the Belonging Framework.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

This paper sets out a proposal to develop a Belonging Framework and use it to drive change - so that everything we do is focussed on developing and deepening children and young people’s sense of belonging.

Belonging is the sense of being somewhere you can be confident that you can be safe in your identity: a feeling of being at home in a place. It is about having a secure relationship with, or connections within, a particular group of people.

Children and young people’s views will lead the development of our Belonging Framework and will be at the heart of all we do.

We are deliberately not framing our work on belonging as an individual/single new strategy. Instead, we are describing it as a **framework**, so that other parts of the council and other organisations can review and “attach” their contribution to it.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Agree that Sheffield City Council develops a Belonging Framework in coproduction with children and young people, families, and stakeholders.
2. Notes the intention of the Belonging Framework is to provide an overarching vision to drive change – so that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people’s sense of belonging.
3. Notes the engagement planned with children and young people to inform the development of the framework.
4. Notes that the development of the framework will be an iterative process as we gain the views of children and young people in ways that work best for them, and review and refine the framework and next steps based on this.
5. Notes the intention for a continued conversation with the Committee about belonging, including a further draft presented at the Committee meeting in Spring 2024.

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

1. Appendix 1 - Draft Belonging Framework
2. Appendix 2 - EIA

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman
		Legal: Nadine Wynter
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Kathryn Warrington
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Andrew Jones</i> <i>Joe Horobin</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Education and Skills</i> <i>Director of Integrated Commissioning</i>
	Date: <i>1.12.2023</i>	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Our proposal is to coproduce a Belonging Framework with children and young people to drive change – so that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people’s sense and experience of belonging. We want the Belonging Framework to become an overarching guide for all work in Children’s Services and further afield in the future. To this end, we intend to talk, with children and young people, to partners including schools, settings, community partners and the voluntary sector.
- 1.2 Our aspiration is that **every child in Sheffield feels they belong and they have a place where they can grow and become who they want to be.**
- 1.3 We want Sheffield to be a place where children and young people:
- feel that they belong in a loving family.
 - have a stable home.
 - feel they belong in their local school.
 - contribute and engage in their local community.
 - are valued in their local community.
 - know their voices are heard and responded to.
- 1.4 We want Sheffield, as a city, to celebrate its growing young population and ensure that children and young people are key to ensuring the city remains a diverse and dynamic place to live and work.
- 1.5 Belonging is a basic human need. It develops a child’s ability to build trust and have confidence in others. Research¹ shows the impact belonging can have. With regards to belonging at school, it has demonstrated:
- Children and young people who have a sense of belonging in school tend to be happier and more confident and perform better academically.
 - A child or young person’s sense of belonging to school is a rich and substantial protective factor against mental health problems such as stress, depression and anxiety.
 - Addressing a sense of school belonging has been found to close the achievement gap by between 50 and 60 per cent.
 - School belonging in adolescence can have a protective effect in adulthood.
- 1.6 Belonging has been identified as the largest known correlate with depression in adolescence.
- 1.7 Currently, we do not have a single strategic framework to ensure we remain child-centred and family focussed – and put the journey of the child at the

¹ Compassionate Leadership for School Belonging 2022, Kathryn Riley; Chapter 3, Section 4, The importance of school belonging – by Kelly-Ann Allen.

heart of what we do, not process.

1.8 Our Belonging Framework will be developed in coproduction with children, young people, families, and stakeholders. It will be an iterative process and will be informed in particular by what children and young people tell us.

1.9 The broader aims of the framework are to:

- Enable the voice of children and young people to be heard and to allow this voice to help shape our policies as we develop them.
- Encourage healthy debate and discussion with our colleagues, teams, service and partners around the concept of belonging and how we can successfully implement this, beginning with children and young people.
- Establish connections with other teams / services within the authority to look at whether they are already actively promoting the concept of belonging for children and young people – and if so, how are they doing this?
- Develop a common language between services that allow us to have a child-centred focus in everything that we do.

1.10 We will use the framework to:

- Provide clear aims and objectives that align with what children and young people tell us.
- Guide our future strategies and commissioning intentions.
- Ensure the way we work is joined up and works together.

1.11 Initial views are that our Belonging Framework should include:

- A set of coproduced principles we should apply in all contexts.
- Commissioning intentions.

1.12 **Draft principles to apply in all contexts** (please note these will be further developed through engagement):

1. We will consider children and young people's belonging in all decisions.
2. We will listen to children and young people's views to understand their wants and needs – and ensure all decisions are informed by this.
3. We will take a strength-based approach and move from process to relationship.
4. We will build on commonalities and celebrate difference.
5. We will consider the needs of different groups of children and young people including those of different races and ethnicities, with care experience and children with a disability.
6. We will think how the language we use would feel to a child, young person, parent, grandparent, or carer if they were reading or hearing it. How easy would it be to understand. Keep concise and simple.

1.13 **Four themes**

We propose that the Belonging Framework overarches four key themes:

- Belonging in a Family
- Belonging at School
- Belonging in your Community
- Belonging in Sheffield

1.14 We will begin by focusing on children's services in education/schools, social care, Children & Families early intervention and prevention services, and youth services.

1.15 As a council, though, we recognise that other services and teams have an impact on children's lives and, on their sense of belonging. For example, community work to encourage cohesion and community engagement impacts whole families, as do decisions about housing. Initiatives to support employment or the cost of living have wider impacts on family life and aspirations.

1.16 As we seek to establish and develop the Belonging Framework, we will talk to other council services and, in time, other organisations beyond the council, to ensure that the ambition of being a city of belonging becomes everybody's business.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 The Belonging Framework will cross-cut a number of the ambitions within the Corporate Plan, not least contributing to our aim of 'happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want'.

2.2 There is also a strong link with our aim of healthy lives and wellbeing for all.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 As adults we have laid out what we think the Belonging Framework might encompass. However, we recognise that, to get it right, we must be led by children and young people.

3.2 Therefore co-producing with children and young people will be crucial. Throughout the development of the framework, and during its implementation, we will keep the voice of children and young people at the heart of our decisions. Their voice will be central to how we shape and amend the framework in future.

3.3 We need to hear what children and young people understand by belonging and to identify what helps them to feel like they do or do not belong. This will help identify what is most important to children and young people and how we will all judge and determine our future success.

- 3.4 We will review what children and young people have previously said which relates to Belonging and a sense of self.
- 3.5 Our engagement with children and young people will include the following group:
- Children who have been excluded from school.
 - Looked after children and care leavers.
 - Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
 - Children from ethnic minority groups and backgrounds.
 - Children who are LGBTQ+.
- 3.6 We understand that multiple experiences, identities and inequalities can overlap, interact and compound a person's disadvantage - intersectionality - and we will be mindful of this throughout our engagement with children and young people.
- 3.7 Our approaches will be developed working with colleagues across Education and Skills, Community Youth Services, and Children and Families.
- 3.8 We have begun conversations with various stakeholders across the council to start pulling together ideas about belonging and how it applies to their areas. We have also begun reviewing what children and young people have said previously that relates to belonging and we are working with colleagues in Children's Services to create a consultation plan for children and young people over the next few weeks and months.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.1.2 This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 4.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.
- 4.1.4 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and highlights

with this framework we will be better able to engage with children and young people, cutting across various characteristics. Specific work should have a positive impact and because it is cutting across several cohorts of young people.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The Council's commitment to the proposed Belonging Framework will assist it to meet its duties towards children and young people under various pieces of legislation as set out below.

4.3.2 These duties include the responsibility to provide education for children of compulsory school age who have been permanently excluded from school and are not yet enrolled in another school or receiving appropriate education elsewhere.

4.3.3 In terms of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), the Council is required to offer support under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which includes the participation of children, their parents and young people in decision making.

4.3.4 For children in care, the Council is responsible for ensuring their welfare, including making decisions about care planning and placements under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989.

4.3.5 The Council is also required to offer support to children who are from people from ethnic minority backgrounds or LGBTQ+ under equality laws.

4.3.6 For the general child population, the Council has a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need within its area.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 We have considered climate impacts as part of the framework and there are none to be considered at present. In future our hope is for less travel as children go to school locally and Children Looked After and their social workers have less distance to travel.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The alternative option is not to develop a Belonging Framework.

5.2 We do not recommend this given the importance a sense and experience of belonging brings to children and young people.

5.3 When children and young people feel a sense of belonging and sense of

pride in their families, their peers, and their communities, they can be emotionally strong, self-assured, and able to deal with challenges and difficulties. This creates an important foundation for their learning and development. Positive messages about their families, backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages help children and young people to develop pride in who they are. These messages also give them confidence to voice their views and opinions, to make choices, and to help shape their own learning, development and future.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 A belonging framework will ensure that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people's sense of belonging. It will be designed so that other parts of the council and other organisations can review and "attach" their contribution to belonging to the framework.
- 6.2 Outcomes for the Belonging Framework will have a qualitative rather than quantitative focus. They will be developed iteratively through the process of coproduction. These outcomes may relate to individual experience, happiness, fulfilment, purpose, stability and will relate back to our vision, however we will be led by what children and young people tell us.

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PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: Belonging Framework

EIA ID: 2479

EIA Author: Eleanor Pryde (NCC)

Proposal Outline:

Our proposal is to coproduce a Belonging Framework with children and young people to drive change – so that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people’s sense and experience of belonging. We want the Belonging Framework to become an overarching guide for all work in Children’s Services and further afield in the future. To this end, we intend to talk, with children and young people, to partners including education settings, community partners and the voluntary sector. Our aspiration is that every child in Sheffield feels they belong and they have a place where they can grow and become who they want to be. The broader aims of the framework are to:

- Enable the voice of children and young people to be heard and to allow this voice to help shape our policies as we develop them.
- Encourage healthy debate and discussion with our colleagues, teams, service and partners around the concept of belonging and how we can successfully implement this, beginning with children and young people.
- Establish connections with other teams / services within the authority to look at whether they are already actively promoting the concept of belonging for children and young people – and if so, how are they doing this?
- Develop a common language between services that allow us to have a child-centred focus in everything that we do.

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: Andrew Jones

Service Area:

EIA Start Date: 04/12/2023

Lead Equality Objective: Leading the city in celebrating and promoting inclusion

Equality Lead Officer: Bashir Khan

Decision Type

Committees: Policy Committees

- Education, Children & Families

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio: Education and Skills

EIA is cross portfolio: Yes

EIA is joint with another organisation: No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summery: The framework should have a positive impact, helping us to reach more children and young people and cutting across multiple characteristics. We expect to continue redeveloping the framework in order to meet the changing needs of children and young people, in the years to come.

Impacted characteristics:

Carers
Cohesion
Disability
Gender Reassignment
Health
Partners
Poverty & Financial Inclusion
Pregnancy/Maternity
Race
Religion/Belief
Sex
Sexual Orientation
Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact:

Yes

We are at the early stages of developing the framework. We still need to do much consultation to develop the content and direction, so although many people are aware, there are people and teams that we have not yet engaged with. We recognise that, to get it right, we must be led by children and young people in the development of this framework. Their voice will be central to how we shape and amend the framework in future. We need to hear what children and young people understand by belonging and to identify what helps them to feel like they do or do not belong. This will help identify what is most important to children and young people and how we will all judge and determine our future success. Our engagement with children and young people will include:

- Children who have been excluded from school.
- Children looked after and care leavers.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and/or additional needs.
- Children who are from minority ethnic groups and backgrounds.
- Children who are LGBTQ+

We understand that multiple experiences, identities and inequalities can overlap, interact and compound a person's disadvantage - intersectionality - and we will be mindful of this throughout our engagement with children and young people. Our

approaches will be developed working with colleagues including from across Education and Skills, Community Youth Services, and Children and Families. We have begun conversations with various stakeholders across the council to start pulling together ideas about belonging and how it applies to their areas. We have also begun reviewing what children and young people have said previously that relates to belonging and we are working with colleagues in Children's Services to create a consultation plan for children and young people over the next few weeks and months. We know that we cannot do this alone and, as a Council, we have seen the amazing work that schools, communities, voluntary, community and faith groups, and others do to foster a sense of belonging. We would like to connect with those who have been successful and share their good practice. We are also mindful of how we support those who do not feel they belong and what we can do, together, to help those children, young people and families.

Impact areas:

Year on Year

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required:

Yes

Review Date:

06/12/2023

PART B - Full Impact Assessment

Health

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

www.theartofpossibilities.org.uk) shows the impact belonging can have on wellbeing. With regards to belonging at school, it has demonstrated: • Children and young people who have a sense of belonging in school tend to be happier and more confident and perform better academically. • A student's sense of belonging to school is a rich and substantial protective factor against mental health problems such as stress, depression and anxiety. • School belonging in adolescence can have a protective effect in adulthood. • Belonging has been identified as the largest known correlate with depression in adolescence. We expect that the Belonging Framework will help health outcomes, especially because this cohort of children and young people has been through a very challenging time in last three or four years, with the Covid pandemic and cost of living crisis and it is well known that there has been a knock on impact on health and wellbeing.

Name of Lead Health Officer:

Comprehensive Assessment Being Completed:

No

Public Health Lead signed off health impact(s):

Age

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

The Belonging Framework is aimed at ensuring all children and young people in the city feel a sense of belonging and is about our commitment to them, so it fully affects them. If we get it right and implement a belonging framework that is built around the views of children and young people, then we will be able to fulfil our vision that Sheffield is an inclusive city where we work together to ensure that children and young people can live a happy and fulfilled life. This will have a positive impact on children and young people. Our research and consultation will include work with children and young people to get their views about

what is important to them. We will continue to consult children and young people to capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months. We will also work with children and young people's services and partners both within and outside the council to gather views and shape the framework.

Armed Forces

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Carers

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Cohesion

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Disability

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

As of November 2023, Sheffield has 5,343 children and young people with an EHCP. School Census data from January 2023 shows that Sheffield had 3,392 children and young people of compulsory school age in school in Sheffield with EHCPs and 12,491 children and young people of compulsory school age in Sheffield with SEN support. There are also children and young people who identify as having additional needs who are not at SEN Support level and whose needs are supported by their school. Research by Professor Kathryn Riley in 'Place and Belonging in School: Why it Matters Today' suggests that children with special educational needs are more likely to be excluded from school than their peers. In the 22/23 academic year in Sheffield, we know that the rate of fixed term suspensions and exclusions is higher for children and young people with SEND than it is for their peers with no identified SEND. We want all children and young people to feel a sense of belonging. This includes children and young people with disabilities and Special Educational Needs. We are already reviewing what children and young people have told us previously and will continue to consult children and young people to capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months. We will also work with children and young people's services and partners both within and outside the council to gather views and shape the framework. If we get this right, then the longer-term adverse impact on young people as they move through life should reduce. This could result in longer term benefits for our partners too.

Gender Reassignment

Staff Impacted:

No

Customers Impacted:

Yes

Description of Impact:

More young people are identifying as non-binary and transgender. This is a particularly vulnerable cohort of young people and we need to make sure we hear their voice about belonging. As already stated, we will engage with children and young people across the city to get their views about what is important to them. We will continue to consult children and young people to

capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months.

Partners

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Pregnancy / Maternity

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: As already stated, we will engage with children and young people across the city to get their views about what is important to them in relation to belonging. This will include young people who are parents or expectant parents. We have already begun discussions with Youth Voice and Influence teams to look at work they have recently done with young parents and how we can feed this into our engagement work. We will continue to consult children and young people to capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months.

Race

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: We know we need to vary our approaches to ensure we engage a diverse range of Sheffield communities. We are already working with Youth Voice and Influence teams to ensure we capture a wide range of children and young people's voices. The Sheffield City Council Annual Equality Report 21-22 shows that in 2021 (according to census estimates) 60-70% of children and young people aged 0-24 identified as White British, with the remaining 30-40% from all other ethnic groups combined. Research by Professor Kathryn Riley in 'Place and Belonging in School: Why it Matters Today' suggests that children and young people from black Caribbean backgrounds are more likely to be excluded than their peers. In Sheffield in 2022-23, the number of fixed term suspensions and permanent exclusions from school was highest for white British children and young people, followed by children and young people from the white Gypsy or Roma ethnic group and from mixed white and black Caribbean backgrounds. As a percentage of ethnic group population in school as a whole, suspensions and exclusions were higher for children and young people from the white Gypsy or Roma ethnic group, Pakistani ethnic group and from mixed white and black Caribbean backgrounds compared to their peers. The Sheffield Race Equality Commission Report states that we will be an anti-racist city within three years and sets out multiple recommendations and actions to achieve this. We will need to carry out ongoing work to make sure we reach all communities and also realise that our communities are in a state of flux and new emerging communities are appearing.

Religion / Belief

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: **Page 69**
As already stated, we will engage with children and

young people across the city to get their views about what is important to them and understand what creates a sense of belonging. This will include children and young people with different religions and beliefs. We will consult children and young people to capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months.

Sexual Orientation

Staff Impacted: No

Customers Impacted: Yes

Description of Impact: We will engage with children and young people across the city to get their views about what is important to them and to understand what shapes their sense of belonging. This will include children and young people with different sexual orientations. We will continue to consult children and young people to capture their views and develop the framework in the coming months.

Voluntary / Community & Faith Sectors

Staff Impacted:

Customers Impacted:

Description of Impact:

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Action plan evidence:

Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date:

06/12/2023

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Belonging Framework - *Draft*

****Please note that this is a working document and will be updated throughout the development of the Belonging Framework****

Aim of Belonging Framework

We want Sheffield to be a place where children and young people feel that they belong in a loving family; have a stable home; feel they belong in education close to home; and contribute, engage and are valued and visible in their local community. We want them to know their voices are heard and responded to, and Sheffield, as a city, celebrates its growing young population and recognises that children and young people are key to ensuring Sheffield remains a diverse and dynamic place to live and work.

Our Belonging Framework is being developed to drive change – so that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people’s sense and experience of belonging.

We know that we cannot do this alone and, as a Council, we have seen the amazing work that schools and other education settings, communities, voluntary, community and faith groups, and others do to foster a sense of belonging. We would like to connect with those who have been successful and share your good practice. We are also mindful of how we support those who do not feel they belong and what we can do, together, to help those children, young people and families.

We have outlined below:

- Why belonging matters
- What we do and don’t want the framework to be
- How we will develop the framework
- Where we will start
- Getting the language and approach right
- Next steps
- Initial views about what the Belonging Framework might include.

i. Why belonging matters

Research shows the impact belonging can have. With regards to belonging at school, it has demonstrated:

- Children and young people who have a sense of belonging in school tend to be happier and more confident and perform better academically.
- A student’s sense of belonging is a rich and substantial protective factor against mental health problems such as stress, depression and anxiety.
- Addressing a sense of school belonging has been found to close the achievement gap by between 50 and 60 per cent.

- School belonging in adolescence can have a protective effect in adulthood.
- Belonging has been identified as the largest known correlate with depression in adolescence¹.

The research also shows how the degree to which school staff feel they belong has a significant impact on children and young people's own sense of belonging². This is because these teachers know that they can make a difference and they have a strong sense of personal and professional agency in their school.

ii. What we do and don't want our framework to be

As we start to develop our Belonging Framework, we do not have a fixed view of the model of belonging that we aspire to, nor a predetermined end point.

What we want is a deep, broad conversation with children and young people, stakeholders and interested parties in the city. This is about how we do things, our values, behaviours, and conversations.

Our Belonging Framework will not be another strategy. As a city, and indeed, as the council, we are not short of strategies and policies. Instead, we are describing it as a **framework**, so that other parts of the council and other organisations can review and "attach" their contribution to belonging to the framework.

iii. How we will develop our framework

We will start with children and young people.

Throughout the development of the framework, and during its implementation, we will keep the voice of children and young people at the heart of our decisions. Their voice will drive the shape and ongoing development of the framework.

Using the approach outlined below (see Next steps), we will gain the voice of children and young people, including those who we feel are particularly vulnerable to not feeling like they belong.

The engagement of children and young people will be crucial. We need to hear what they understand by belonging, identify what makes them feel like they do or do not belong, and understand what is most important to them.

Professor of Urban Education, Kathryn Riley, of the University of Central London, who has done so much work to research and develop the concept of belonging recognises that each area across the country that develops an approach of belonging individually is reflective of the place in which it is being developed and implemented. She describes the process as being "fun" and notes we would want to bring a similar sense of enjoyment and curiosity into our own work.

¹ Statistics included in Compassionate Leadership for School Belonging, Kathryn Riley, 2022.

² Place and Belonging in School: Why it Matters Today, A Research-based Inquiry undertaken by The Art of Possibilities & UCL, Institute of Education Professor Kathryn Riley, Dr Tracey Allen, Dr Max Coates

We want to move quickly so that children and young people can see and feel tangible benefits from this work as soon as possible.

For the impact of this framework to be as broad and as comprehensive as is required, we recognise that we will need to build up and implement the work in stages – in addition to recognising existing work that contributes to Belonging, such as our Early Help Strategy and Inclusion Strategy.

iv. Where we will start

We will begin by focusing on Children's Services in education/schools, social care, Children & Families early intervention and prevention services, and youth services.

We recognise that other council services and organisations outside the council have an impact on children's lives and on their sense of belonging too. For example, community work to encourage cohesion and community engagement impacts whole families, as do decisions about housing. Initiatives to support employment or the cost of living which have wider impacts on family life and aspirations.

As we seek to establish and develop the Belonging Framework, we will talk to other council services and other organisations beyond the council, to ensure that the ambition of being a city of belonging becomes everybody's business.

v. Getting the language and approach right

We stated above that we do not have a fixed view of belonging that we aspire to and that we will be led by the views and voices of children and young people themselves. We acknowledge that belonging and really listening to what this means for children and young people may mean changes in language and approach are needed.

While language can be used to promote belonging, it is all too easy for our language to undermine a sense of belonging, and to alienate children and young people.

We know, for example, that in conversations with Sheffield children who are in care that the generic descriptor "looked after children" (often reduced to the initials/acronym LAC) is offensive to some children in care and the phonetically similar "LEC" compared to the word "lack" is an accidental significant poor choice of language. So, whereas actions will be vital to bringing our Belonging Framework alive, language is also critical to ensuring that the impact of our actions is not diminished.

vi. Next steps

We will work with a range of children and young people to coproduce what belonging means to them. This will cover belonging in a range of settings - i.e. in education, including early years and post-16, as part of a family, in the community etc.

Teams in Education & Skills, Children's Social Care and Community Youth Services will work together to utilise their knowledge, skills and experience of engaging with young people to find out – as a snapshot, almost – how these young people feel about belonging now. Surveys, focus groups and social media will be explored. Our initial thoughts are that we need to include as many children as possible including the following groups of children and young people in the engagement:

- Children who have been excluded from school.
- Looked after children and care leavers.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and/or additional needs.
- Children who are from minority ethnic groups and backgrounds.
- Children who are LGBTQ+.

We understand that multiple experiences, identities and inequalities can overlap, interact and compound - intersectionality - and we will be mindful of this throughout our engagement with children and young people.

The topics we think we will need to cover include: What does belonging mean to you and why is it important? How do you feel when you belong / don't belong? What things help/ hinder?

This is because:

- The framework has to be built on what young people say they feel or need in relation to belonging.
- We need to shape the framework so that it addresses the needs and life experiences of young people.

We will use this information to:

- Help develop the framework – to ensure it covers the issues young people have raised/addressed what is important to them.
- Create a sound research and consultation base for the framework.

We are keen that children and young people steer the engagement process, including methods/approach.

Schools and education settings, including early years and post-16

We think schools and education settings will be key in developing the Belonging Framework, because of the crucial role they play in almost all of our children and young people's lives.

We want the Belonging Framework to reflect how education leaders, their workforce, and children feel and how they nurture a sense of Belonging in their settings. Also, to contribute to the coproduction of the Framework which will enable collaborative discussions about the further work needed to support children and young people's Belonging.

As noted above, we have seen many great examples of how they foster a sense of belonging and we are keen to explore further opportunities which will positively impact our children and young people, including reducing absence from education and exclusion.

Parents, carers and other family members

We will also seek the views of parents, carers and other family members as part of the development of the Belonging Framework – including those of very young children who might not be able to give their own views. We will be open to a range of ways to listen to and seek their feedback including through schools and education settings, and other trusted networks and organisations. Early year settings, Family Hubs and voluntary, community and faith organisations will be key to this.

vii. Initial views about what the Belonging Framework might include

As outlined above, we will work with children and young people to develop the Belonging Framework. Initial views are that it should include:

- A set of principles we should apply in all contexts.
- Work under the four themes: Belonging as part of a family, in school, their community, and within Sheffield.
- Commissioning intentions.
- A set of “I” statements that capture what is important to children and young people, in their own words, that others can use to assess or measure themselves against.

Draft principles to apply in all contexts:

1. We will consider children and young people’s belonging in all decisions.
2. We will listen to children and young people’s views to understand their wants and needs – and ensure all decisions are informed by this.
3. We will take always start with what is working well (a strength-based approach) and will make sure our priority is children, young people and families and our relationships with them - not process.
4. We will build on commonalities and celebrate difference.
5. We will consider the needs of different groups of children and young people including those of different races and ethnicities, with care experience and children with a disability.
6. We will think how the language we use would feel to a child, young person, parent, grandparent, or carer if they were reading or hearing it. How easy would it be to understand. Keep concise and simple.

Draft Commissioning Intentions

We will develop our strategic commissioning intentions with children and young people, working with education, health, social care and voluntary sector services in local areas. By coproducing the design, delivery and continuous improvement of

services we will ensure there is a focus on early intervention and prevention by providing the right support and resources at the right time.

Children and young people will hold us to account for ensuring that our high level commissioning intentions, set out below, translate into detailed commissioning plans for services that underpin their sense and experience of belonging in all its forms:

Prebirth to 5 Years: The best start in life is key to building a successful future. With the right support at the right time, parents bond with their children, there is advice and guidance when required from the right and trusted person, children gain good early language and communication skills, and physical and mental health is already a key feature for all the family. Children start school ready to engage and excited. Children and families are supported at an early stage where this is not the case. Parents are given opportunities to learn and access job opportunities.

Age 5-11 Years: Schools are equipped and funded to ensure that children remain and feel a sense of belonging in their local school. There may be wrap around support with targeted interventions to support a child within school. There are a variety of affordable and enriching activities for children and families to access. Children live in good homes and thriving communities. Children can access strategies that support with anxiety and all provision is accessible, diverse and inclusive: meeting the needs of all children including those who are neuro-diverse and those who suffer from anxiety.

Age 11 – 16 Years: Children can and want to stay in their local mainstream school – some pupils will need targeted support within their school or access to a different curriculum. Special schools will meet the needs of our most complex children. Children can access strategies that support with anxiety and all provision is accessible, diverse and inclusive: meeting the needs of all children including those who are neuro-diverse and those who suffer from anxiety. We work hard to ensure that children can stay in their family and home. We are clear as a city about the need for children to experiment, take risk and become independent and ensure that all professionals are working to ensure this does not turn into exploitation, abuse or criminal activity due to exploitation.

Age 16-18 Years: Young people are equipped to become independent accessing good education, training and job opportunities.

Age 18-25 Years: Young people are supported into adult life with interventions only taking place if and when required to ensure a positive transition to adulthood.

Impacts

Outcomes for the Belonging Framework will have a qualitative rather than quantitative focus. They will be developed iteratively through the process of coproduction.

These outcomes may relate to individual experience, happiness, fulfilment, purpose, stability and so on and will relate back to our vision. However, we will be led by what children and young people tell us.

What do you think of this draft Belonging Framework?

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Meredith Dixon-Teasdale, Strategic Director of Children's Services

Report of: Meredith Dixon-Teasdale, Strategic Director of Children's Services

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 19th December 2023

Subject: Update report from the Strategic Director of Children's Services

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (<i>Insert reference number</i>)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

The paper provides a Strategic Director's update on the performance and governance of Children's services, including progress in meeting DCS (Director of Children's Services) accountabilities and delivering on our statutory requirements. It also provides an update regarding progress in relation to the Council's Delivery Plan, key strategic events and issues on the horizon.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Education Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Notes the Strategic Director of Children's Services report and agrees key activity for the coming months.

Background Papers:

Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Kayleigh Inman
	Legal: Nadine Wynter
	Equalities & Consultation: Climate:
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission: <i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted: <i>Councillor Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
	Job Title: <i>Strategic Director, Children’s Services</i>
Date: 24 th October 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 This report starts with recognition and gratitude for all those working in children's and education system, who continue to work together to ensure our children and young people are safe, healthy, attaining and moving towards an independent adulthood.

1.2 Leadership and Partnership

I have continued to establish good working relationships with Leaders across the system who work for or with children, young people and their families. I continue to lead on a number of Partnership Boards and also to attend others to ensure advocacy for children and young people. We have instigated the work of Impower to support us with changing how we operate for children and young people with SEND. I have taken a paper with Health Colleagues to the Sheffield Health Care Partnership to look at how we prioritise children's health and early intervention looking to prioritise work to ensure children and their families start well – linking to the Safe Sleep work of SYCA; how we ensure there is a good team around the provider to support more children and young people to attend their local school when they have a neurodiverse need of Social Emotional and mental health need; and, how we share risk and resource around providing good children's homes for our most complex and vulnerable children.

Our focus as a Children's Service and also as an authority is on a Belonging Framework where we create a common vision and language to talk about how our children and young people belong in a loving family, in a local school that supports them, in a community that listens to and respects them and in a city that champions them. This paper is within the Committee agenda allowing us all to shape this Policy.

I had an inaugural meeting with headteachers about race equality which has been very productive. We discussed the need for comprehensive training which was grounded in Sheffield and local communities; that we need to focus on recruitment and retention of our staff and leaders of colour in schools. We also discussed how we share good practice across the City on how schools are providing a diverse and appropriate curriculum for our diverse cohort of children and young people in school. This meeting will meet on a 6 weekly. The meeting also highlighted how we also have this discussion in our early years as well.

I am also committed to organising a reverse scrutiny of the Race Equality Plans with the group of young people who visited our Committee – this is still being arranged.

I attended with Cllr Dale and Cllr Argenzio the National Children's and Adult Conference in Bournemouth. We heard from current ministers and shadow ministers on their plans and focus on children and young people over coming years as well as gaining a lot of information about good practice in other places. Sheffield and its work in both children and adults were celebrated in a number of sessions including around our work on early help.

On arriving in the Council I commissioned a piece of work which was to give assurance that whilst children's services duties are spread across the Council that I, as DCS, and Cllr Dale as Lead Member for Children's Services can have assurance that we have line of sight for our duties. This review was undertaken by Edwina Grant and her review is here. Xxxxx

I am working with Democratic Services to ensure that we have both meetings between Cllr Dale and Cllr Williams and planned meetings between Neighbourhoods and ECF particularly where it relates to Youth Services, Family Hubs, Home to School Transport and listening to young people.

Over the coming months

I will continue to develop relationships and work to ensure that we have a common vision and plan for the children and young people in our city linked to the Our City Goals work. I will also continue to be a key advocate for all our children and young people. I am striving to be a clear visible leader where my mantra is that children and young people should belong in a loving family and stable home, they should belong in their local school, be a valued part of their local community where they are listened to and are key to decision making and are celebrated for the dynamism and innovation as key residents in the City of Sheffield.

1.3 Safeguarding

This continues to be a key focus. The overarching Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership' quarterly Executive Group is well attended and creates a focus in this area across the city. A review of the profile and importance of Safeguarding in the City is currently taking place which will ensure we are in a strong position in the future.

Sheffield is doing well. There is a consistent demand for services within the city. The Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (our front door) responds to over 22,000 contacts per year of which over 5,100 are progressed to referral. In our recent Ofsted inspection it was acknowledged the demand on services due to information being shared which had not been subject to police triage. We are working with South Yorkshire police and other South Yorkshire authorities to quality assure the information provided by the police. Quality assurance of all vulnerable child referrals has taken place for 2 weeks starting last week November. The outcome of this will help to plan future ways of working with our partners.

Our ethos is that children should always remain at home when it is safe to do so, working with families means that the number of Looked After Children in the City has continued to decrease.

Sheffield continues have very low numbers of children who are looked after. The good practice in our legal proceedings when a child cannot live at home was recognised by Ofsted and we are currently working with South Yorkshire authorities to progress a regional approach to family courts and have sought funding from the Department for Education (DfE) to support this.

Placement costs continue to be a pressure in children's services. In the last month we have seen the regulation of semi-independent placements which have impacted on placement costs. We will continue to monitor this and are working with colleges nationwide to address the issue nationally.

Additionally, we are working closely with integrated commissioning, developing a needs assessment which will influence our sufficiency strategy. Childrens services and integrated commissioning are developing a clear and robust plan to ensure clear monitoring of all our placements for children and young people including wrap around support and scrutiny for in house children's home.

We continue to actively seek foster carers and currently working on a new communication strategy which will go live in 2024. We continue to be really busy in the fostering service, assessing connected carers. We are proud of our high rates of connected carers ensuring children remain within their natural networks.

As part of Children and Families ongoing commitment to provide children in care with the right homes in Sheffield, Children and Families completed a successful bid to the Department for Education to expand our in-house Children's Residential Home provision. The bid is match funded and the council match was contribution of land to enable the development.

The project will deliver a new build 2 bed children's home which can scale up to 3 beds in space identified at the site in Ecclesall Ward. The home will provide placements for children and young people with complex learning difficulties and disabilities, completing the existing provision on the site.

The development supports Sheffield's Placement Sufficiency Strategy in the following ways:

- The smaller home environment will enable staff to provide closer and more focussed relationship and strengths-based support to our young people. It will provide an environment that has a family home feel to support young people to be safe.
- Increases sufficiency for children with the most complex needs whose presenting risks, vulnerabilities and needs are not compatible with larger group living.
- Addresses shortfalls in the local area. Sheffield does not currently operate any smaller children's homes and over the last 18 months has experienced increasing challenge in sourcing placements for young people with a high level and complexity of need. This has led to young people being cared for in larger homes operating at a reduced capacity further reducing sufficiency in the local area.

Over the next few months

We continue to have a clear focus on ensuring our children and young people live in high quality placements within Sheffield. We are working to create our strategy for children's homes in the city to ensure we are able to meet the needs of children in the coming years.

1.4 Vetting and barring scheme

The lead members for each party for the Education, Children and Families Committee have asked me to work with Democratic Services and Legal to ensure that the right DBS checks are in place for all Elected Members especially as all Members are Corporate Parents. Democratic Services are in the process of completing DBS request forms for HR in order for them to be able to progress the issue. A separate form needs to be completed for each role and should be accompanied by a job description or role profile. Role profiles for Members are currently being created and will need to be agreed by Governance Committee.

1.5 Educational excellence

Early results reported by schools indicate that Sheffield school pupils GCSE results have remained similar to 2019 (the last comparable year due to pandemic changes).

Almost all schools have now provided information and the key headlines are as follows:

- a. Attainment 8 – the average points score is comprised from eight qualifying subjects.

- o Sheffield has reduced slightly compared to 2019: 44.9 in 2019 to 43.9 in 2023. In comparison the National performance in 2019 was 46.7 and in 2023 is 46.2.
- b. Progress 8 – the score establishes whether average progress is above or below the expected level.
 - o Sheffield’s Progress 8 score has remained similar to 2019: -0.03 in 2019 compared to -0.09 in 2023. In comparison the National average has remained the same at -0.03.
- c. English and Maths grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in both subjects.
 - o Sheffield has improved from 59.5% in 2019 to 61.0% in 2023. National performance for this measure in 2019 was 64.6% and in 2023 was 65.0%.
- d. English grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in English.
 - o Sheffield has improved from 70.8% in 2019 to 71.0% in 2023. In comparison National performance in 2019 was 75.8% and in 2023 is 75.0%.
- e. Maths grade 4+ - the proportion of pupils achieving a pass at grade 4 or better in Maths.
 - o Sheffield has improved from 65.2% in 2019 to 66.0% in 2023. In comparison National performance in 2019 was 70.0% and in 2023 is 70.0%.

Please note that these figures are still provisional and subject to change.

For information, grade 4 is the equivalent to a previous grade C and is used as the pass mark. Young people who do not achieve a grade 4 in either English or Maths are required to re-sit the qualification.

Over the coming months

We will be undertaking a full review and working with Learn Sheffield and schools to assess how we continue to improve attainment and opportunities.

1.5.1 Quality of provision in schools

The quality of provision in Sheffield’s schools continues to improve, as reported by Ofsted. The proportion of schools with good or better judgments is above average compared to all schools nationally, all schools in core cities and all schools in local authorities which are statistical neighbours.

% Of All Schools Rated Good or Outstanding at 31/10/2023				
Area	Primary	Secondary	Special	All Schools
Core cities	91.6	77.9	88.1	88.8
National	90.4	81.9	89.3	89.1
Sheffield	94.0	76.7	81.8	89.8
Stat. neighbours	88.8	73.0	88.0	86.2

1.6 Early Years Overview

We continue to maintain an overview of the quality of provision both for the Early Years and Schools sectors. Clearly, funding to the sector is a key factor which underpins quality of provision and sustainability of the workforce.

1.6.1 Overview of PVI (Private, Voluntary and Independent) settings and Ofsted grades (as of 23/11/2023)

Current Group Care settings = 122 (including 2 maintained Schools) Childminders = 196

Ofsted Grade	Outstanding	Good	Require improvement	Inadequate	Newley registered	Met	Not met	Agency childminders
Group care Providers	22	89	2	2	7			
Child-minders	12	141	2	1	13	25	0	9 - @ home childcare 6 – Tiney Community

Group care providers – The 7 newly registered settings are made up of 4 new registrations and 3 re-registrations.

Childminders – Included in the figures above are 14 childminders who are on the early years register but are either not minding early years children at the moment or have no early year's children on their register at the moment. 4 childminders are not receiving support or engaging with Local Authority – they are not FEL (Funded Early Learning) providers. We have 3 childminders who are temporarily inactive and 2 offering wraparounds only, 4 of these childminders are planning to resign their registration this year. The Quality Improvement Team monitor this by contact calls as well as working with Ofsted and Childcare Planning, sharing updates of resignations or information shared by the provider.

Annual reviews are offered and being carried out by the Quality Improvement team to ensure all providers are seen and offered support across the year. These are proving to be useful for both providers and Quality Improvement Team, reconnecting with all our providers and offering them one to one support (previously only offered to newly registered providers and those who were in an Ofsted category). Reviews are an opportunity to work with the provider of on EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) Statutory Requirements, learning and development opportunities (including learning environment and provision), signpost or support referrals to other agencies as well as signpost to or offer CPD (Continuous Professional Development) opportunities.

One funded place for every childminder, nursery, and school across the city to access the 'Understanding the Needs of Babies and Young Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability SEN (Special Educational Needs) Level 2 Qualification' has been offered and our first cohort of learners have begun their training. We have 3 members of the Early Years Quality teams licenced to deliver this training to support the sector with the increasing SEND demand within settings. We are also funding 13 places on the Level 3 SENCo Award Qualification to the PVI sector. We have 1 member of the team licenced to deliver this qualification (this is our 8th cohort of delivery since 2019).

1.6.2 Overview of school early years settings and Ofsted grades (as of 23/11/23)

2 schools with EYFS requiring improvement are continuing to decline support from the Early Years Quality and Access Team, choosing to work with their academy quality improvement networks.

1 school is receiving bespoke support since receiving their requires improvement grading. The school have accessed whole staff training, support, and action planning for their EYFS lead and have regular contact calls and visits from their allocated Quality and Access Officer. The school are accessing training for their team to access through our traded service subscription.

2 schools who were in an Ofsted category have converted to academy status, however they are still receiving long arm support from our team and are subscribed to the traded service subscription.

All schools have an allocated Quality and Access Officer who contacts them termly to check in and offer support if needed outside of the traded subscription offer. EYFS Leads and coordinators across the city are engaging well with allocated officers, they are more informed of the Early Years Quality and Access team offer, we have carried out more face-to-face visits therefore developing relationships between us and schools. Attendance on training and briefings has increased and information is being shared regularly with the sector (for example, LA specific information, local and national headlines as well as opportunities and key messages from the DfE).

Traded subscription – 22 PVI settings, 1 childminder, 37 academies and 43 maintained schools subscribed to our training offer. A few settings are purchasing additional training days as well as those purchased through subscriptions.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1** This gives line of sight to committee members about activity being undertaken in children Services, specifically the work being undertaken by the DCS and priorities for the next period between committees.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1** The purpose of this report is to provide an update in relation to Children Services.
- 3.2** Consultation is undertaken during the development of proposals for the budget and implementation of proposals for the budget as appropriate.
- 3.3** An overall approach to coproduction and involvement is also a key element of the delivery plan, ensuring that the voice of our children and Young People is heard and young people are happy who have the start they need for the future they want

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1** Reducing risk of committee members not being aware of the activity undertaken in children Services. Providing clarity and purpose and ensuring assurance whilst highlighting any risks

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 No financial and Commercial implications

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 No legal implications as no formal policy and proposals

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 No Climate implications

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There are no specific other implications for this report

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Not applicable – no decision or change is being proposed

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 This report provides an update regards Children’s Services activities for Members.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Sally Williams,
Director of Children and Families

Tel:

Report of: Strategic Director of Children’s Services

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 19th December 2023

Subject: Update on ILACS inspection and report

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?	2456			
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”				

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report made to the Committee, is to provide the findings of the September 2023 Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACs)

Recommendations:

The Education Children and Families Policy Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the progress made since the 2019 inspection through both the Inspection Report (appendix 1) and the action plan (appendix 2)
2. Highlight the importance of the council-wide response to providing Good and Outstanding services for children and families within the city

Background Papers:

- None

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman
		Legal: Patrick Chisholm
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: N/A
	Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Dawn Dale
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Sally Williams	Job Title: Director of Children and Families
	Date: 20/11/2023	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 September 2023 Sheffield Children’s Service received ILACs Inspection (inspection report attached appendix 1) the overall outcome was Good with children in need of care Outstanding. Whilst this is a good outcome for Sheffield our aim is that every child receives an Outstanding service. The action plan enclosed (appendix 2) articulates the areas we intend to improve to take our remaining services from Good to Outstanding.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

A key priority as part of this work is that we identify and cascade current good practice and identify development needs and opportunities for timely collaboration within our Children and Families directorate, the local authority and wider organisations to keep the service to children and families in Sheffield at ‘Good’ whilst aiming for an Outstanding judgement in all areas.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

No formal consultation, but collaboration with external partners.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 The report highlights that ‘participation is a strength’ for the directorate. In the next 3-year cycle we will be maintaining our focus on participation and child voice

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

There are no Financial and Commercial Implications at present.

4.3 Legal Implications

There are no Legal implications arising directly from this report.

4.4 Climate Implications

There are no Climate implications.

4.5 Other Implications

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To keep this important agenda alive and make it a city-wide pursuit.

PART A - Initial Impact Assessment

Proposal Name: ILACS briefing

EIA ID: 2456

EIA Author: Kate Dymond

Proposal Outline: To brief Education Children and Families Policy Committee on the 2023 Ofsted report, where we have been graded Good, and received Outstanding for Children in Care

Proposal Type: Non-Budget

Year Of Proposal: 23/24

Lead Director for proposal: Meredith Dixon-teasdale

Service Area: Children and Families

EIA Start Date: 20/11/2023

Lead Equality Objective: Leading the city in celebrating and promoting inclusion

Equality Lead Officer: Bashir Khan

Decision Type

Committees: Policy Committees

Portfolio

Primary Portfolio: Children's

EIA is cross portfolio: No

EIA is joint with another organisation: No

Overview of Impact

Overview Summary: This is the briefing for Elected Members on the September 2023 Ofsted inspection. No equality impacts identified.

Impacted characteristics:

Consultation and other engagement

Cumulative Impact

Does the proposal have a cumulative impact: No

Impact areas:

Initial Sign-Off

Full impact assessment required: Page 96

Review Date:

20/11/2023

Action Plan & Supporting Evidence

Outline of action plan:

Action plan evidence:

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Changes made as a result of action plan:

Mitigation

Significant risk after mitigation measures:

Outline of impact and risks:

Review Date

Review Date:

20/11/2023

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Inspection of Sheffield local authority children's services

Inspection dates: 11 to 22 September 2023

Lead inspector: Rachel Griffiths, His Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Good
The experiences and progress of children in care	Outstanding
The experiences and progress of care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

Many services for children and families in Sheffield have improved since the previous inspection in 2019, when the local authority was judged to be good overall, but requires improvement in help and protection. Children now receive good help and protection, and children in care receive an outstanding service. This improvement has been supported by a child-focused, stable, consistent and skilled workforce, who share senior leaders' commitment to supporting children to remain living within their family network if possible, and a well-embedded practice model. These aspects, as well as investment in and implementation of high-quality early help, are making a tangible and positive difference to the lives of children and families in Sheffield.

Variability remains in respect of the quality and impact of return home interviews for children who go missing, and in relation to the use of chronologies to inform assessments and planning. While services for care leavers remain good overall, the wide range of services previously available to them prior to the pandemic has reduced. After a period of senior leadership churn, the now stable and permanent leadership team is taking action to address this.

What needs to improve?

- The consistency of the use of chronologies to inform assessments and planning.
- The quality and impact of return home interviews for children who go missing.
- Timely access and support for care leavers in relation to their mental health.
- The quality and consistency of the recording of case supervision to promote reflection and learning for workers.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: good

1. Children in Sheffield receive consistently effective and responsive help and protection.
2. Children and families in Sheffield who need early help receive skilled and impactful support from an extensive and accessible range of services across the spectrum of children's ages and diverse needs. Early help teams provide targeted support, often designed with families, that addresses children's needs and builds on their families' strengths.
3. When children's needs change, processes for stepping up to and down from statutory social care are understood and carefully applied. Consequently, children receive the right support at the right time. The breadth and depth of early help provided to children and their families help to reduce the numbers of children requiring intervention by statutory services.
4. Skilled and experienced social workers in the safeguarding hub screen contacts and referrals thoroughly and quickly. Thresholds are well understood. Parental consent is carefully considered and overridden when children's safety requires this. Children receive sound and well-informed initial assessments, resulting in well-evidenced decisions and the right type of help being promptly provided.
5. The police do not pre-triage their contacts before sending them into the safeguarding hub. This gap has required children's services to provide significant additional resources to screen the high volume of police referrals and this places pressure on a busy service.
6. Daily multi-agency domestic abuse meetings held in the safeguarding hub carefully consider the level of risk, the impact of abuse on the victim, and the lived experiences of the children. Interim safety-planning is prompt and effective.
7. Experienced workers and managers in the out-of-hours team provide effective emergency help and protection to children.

8. Initial responses in the safeguarding hub to children who go missing from home are timely. Return home interviews usually take place promptly for children in need and children in care. The quality of information gathered and recorded in interviews is mixed. The interviews do not consistently consider push-and-pull factors. This means that decisive action at an earlier stage is not always taken to prevent risk from escalating.
9. Children who frequently go missing, and are at risk of exploitation in the community, receive determined and impactful support from specialist multi-agency workers in the Amber service. Inspectors saw examples of children who have been exploited by criminal gangs being helped to successfully exit the gangs through persistent social work and police disruption activities. The language used by some workers to describe children who are sexually exploited is occasionally inappropriate. Leaders have plans to provide further training in this area.
10. Social workers act quickly when they become aware of allegations of significant harm against a child. Well-attended strategy meetings and effective information-sharing result in rigorous safety-planning. Social workers see children promptly. Timely child-protection enquiries provide a thorough analysis of children's needs and the risks that they face. Decisions to hold an initial child-protection conference are carefully considered and appropriately applied in line with assessed risk. When appropriate, children benefit from the support of an independent advocate at their child-protection conferences.
11. Social workers' visits to children are prompt and consistent with the level of presenting issues. Strong engagement with children, families and partner agencies leads to a good understanding of children's needs and unique characteristics.
12. Most assessments of children's needs, including disabled children, are thorough and include sensitive analytical explorations of children's individual needs. Assessments are not consistently informed by a detailed chronology of children's experiences to better inform the impact of significant and cumulative incidents or events. Pre-birth assessments are comprehensive and thorough.
13. Most child-protection and child-in-need plans, including those for disabled children, are detailed and clear about the changes required to improve children's safety and experiences, and they are dynamically reviewed. Plans have clear actions and timescales that help parents to understand what they need to do to improve their children's lives. Regular child-protection core-group meetings and child-in-need reviews measure progress and reassess risk. This results in appropriate and timely amendments to plans that improve children's lives.
14. Stability in the workforce means that most children and their families develop trusting relationships with a consistent social worker, who they know they can rely on. This helps parents to understand professionals' concerns and what

needs to change. Frequent and sensitive direct work carried out with children and families helps to address concerns and improves many children's circumstances.

15. Direct work with disabled children is thoughtfully tailored to their unique communication profiles. Disabled children with significant mental health difficulties receive skilled help from experienced advanced social workers in a dedicated specialist mental health team.
16. When children's circumstances are not improving quickly enough, or if risks remain or increase, children are appropriately escalated to the pre-proceedings stage of the Public Law Outline (PLO). While leaders know that there is work to do to improve the tracking of children in PLO, practice in this area has remained effective since the previous inspection. Many children are successfully diverted away from court proceedings. As a result of this impactful work undertaken with families during pre-proceedings, children's safety and experiences have improved.
17. Children who have experienced harm, and those at risk of harm from adults and volunteers working with children, are safeguarded by a competent and responsive local authority designated officer service, which has improved since the previous inspection.
18. Children who live in private fostering arrangements are safeguarded by knowledgeable and skilled social workers, who support them, visit them regularly and know them well.
19. Children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless receive a responsive service. Children's housing needs are promptly addressed, resulting in children being provided accommodation in line with their needs. While children's records demonstrate that children's right to become looked after is considered, where it is refused, the records do not offer assurance that their right to become looked after has been fully explained.
20. Leaders are keenly focused on ensuring that children are in school and receiving suitable education. Where families opt for elective home education (EHE) for their child, EHE officers or family intervention workers meet with parents to explain what this entails. Any children missing education for other reasons are located and supported to return to school quickly.

The experiences and progress of children in care: outstanding

21. Children in care receive an outstanding service that results in their life experiences significantly improving.
22. Children only come into care when it is necessary and appropriate for them to do so. Specialist edge-of-care workers provide a high level of help and support to children who are at risk of coming into care. As a result, many children have been able to remain safely living at home. Likewise, some children who have

entered care have been very well supported to safely reunite with their parents in line with their best interests.

23. When admissions to care are necessary, most are planned, with thorough management oversight, via a panel. This ensures that all avenues have been explored and the most appropriate placement is identified.
24. When it is not possible for children to remain living with their birth parents, social workers secure alternative permanence plans for them as quickly as possible. Social workers explore a full range of permanence options for children and plan concurrently until permanence is achieved. Rigorous consideration is given to whether children can remain within their family and friends network. A high number of children who have exited care in the last six months have done so via special guardianship orders granted to kinship carers. This has been a positive outcome for many children. It is enhancing children's sense of identity and belonging.
25. When it is not possible for children to live within their family and friends network, achieving permanence via adoption is considered early, parallel to other plans. Sheffield is part of a regional adoption agency (One Adoption South Yorkshire). When adoption is the right plan for a child, the child and their adopters are extremely well supported through their adoption journey. As a result of well-matched placements and careful transitions, children successfully settle with their new parent(s).
26. Many children in Sheffield achieve permanence through long-term fostering. The confirmation of permanence via a panel helps to give children the sense of belonging that they need. Matching processes are thorough and fully informed by children's views.
27. Arrangements for children in care placed under Placement with Parent regulations are regularly reviewed to ensure that the placement remains the right one for the child. Timely actions to discharge care orders when they are no longer required mean that children and families can continue their lives without unnecessary statutory intervention.
28. Most children in care enjoy trusting, enduring relationships with social workers who know them well. Social workers visit children in line with their individual needs and they speak about them with pride. Sensitive and beautifully presented life-story work is helping children to understand their life histories. The timing of this work is thoughtfully planned around life events and any therapeutic needs children may have.
29. In consultation with children, social workers update assessments of children's needs before their looked after reviews. These assessments are of high quality, and they inform day-to-day and longer-term planning. Minutes of reviews, written to children, help children to understand who is doing what to help and support them. Independent reviewing officers know children well. They provide

appropriate and effective challenge and advocacy for children. This ensures that plans are progressing and children's needs are being met.

30. Social workers have an excellent oversight of children's physical and emotional health needs. The support of an in-house psychologist based in the fostering service helps support children and their carers through challenging times. Children have access to a specialist child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS). On occasion, where need is very specialised, and there is a delay, private resources are drawn on to ensure that children receive this help quickly and within the child's timescale.
31. Most children are doing well at school. The virtual head has clear oversight of children's educational progress. Most children's personal education plans are comprehensive and capture the actions needed to help children reach their full potential. The outcomes for children in care at the end of key stage 4 have recently improved.
32. Children spend quality time with those who are important to them. Social workers maintain close oversight of family-time arrangements to ensure that these arrangements are best meeting children's needs.
33. Social workers meet their statutory responsibilities to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who are in care. These children live in homes and accommodation that meet their needs, in supportive communities, and they are assisted to secure their immigration status.
34. Social workers undertake proactive work with children who are at risk of exploitation. Multi-agency responses to risks in this area are helping to keep children safer.
35. Most children in care live in high-quality, stable foster placements that are located within, or close to, Sheffield. Children are supported to participate in a range of enjoyable activities to help develop their interests, skills, confidence and self-esteem. Foster carers feel well supported. This helps promote stability and consistency for children.
36. Most children living in residential homes, either in or outside Sheffield, are settled and making progress. These children are visited in line with their needs, they have access to education and health specialists, and they take part in a range of activities of their choosing. Improvement to the quality of Sheffield City Council's children's homes is now being prioritised, following a period where the quality of care had deteriorated.
37. Due to sufficiency challenges, Sheffield has a very small number of children aged under 16 with complex needs living in unregistered children's homes. There is regular and effective multi-agency oversight of these unsuitable arrangements, while the local authority actively seeks more suitable registered arrangements or supports providers to become registered with Ofsted.

38. Participation and engagement with children in Sheffield is a real strength. Children have a solid influence in shaping the local authority's provision of services. Children report feeling listened to and valued by social workers, managers and leaders. Participation activities, such as a recent care leavers' barbecue and other celebratory events and activities for children in care and care leavers, reflect the senior leaders' ambition to get things right for children in Sheffield.

The experiences and progress of care leavers: good

39. Most care leavers are receiving a good service. The early allocation and involvement of personal advisers to children at the age of 16 enables children to build positive and trusting relationships with their personal adviser before their transition to adulthood.
40. Personal advisers know their care leavers very well. They provide practical and emotional support, which helps care leavers in times of challenge. Personal advisers maintain regular contact with care leavers in line with their needs and wishes. They visit care leavers regularly, and often more frequently than their targeted timescales, including daily, if required. This also includes care leavers up to the age of 25. Regular, warm and friendly text communication from personal advisers to care leavers supports the continuation of positive relationships and encourages care leavers to keep in touch with their personal advisers.
41. Pathway plans, sensitively written with care leavers, explicitly detail the support that will be provided to help care leavers meet their goals and aspirations. Care leavers' unique characteristics inform their plans. In a minority of cases, pathway planning is hindered by plans not being updated when circumstances have changed.
42. Vulnerable care leavers who are at risk of exploitation are well supported by their personal advisers. Comprehensive risk assessments and safety plans help to keep care leavers safer.
43. Personal advisers build strong relationships with care leavers who are parents. Joint working between personal advisers, social workers, early help workers and care leavers is helping to ensure that care leavers' needs are met, at the same time as supporting them to develop skills to become successful parents.
44. Care leavers in custody are visited regularly by their personal advisers. Close links with probation help to ensure that appropriate support is in place when care leavers leave custody.
45. Most unaccompanied asylum-seeking care leavers experience proactive support to help them achieve their goals and succeed in education and training. Their identity needs are well considered and supported.

46. Personal advisers support care leavers who are LGBTQ+ to explore their identity and find peers in local support groups.
47. A good number of care leavers benefit from continuing to live with their foster carers via 'staying put' arrangements. Some care leavers who attend university appropriately return to their foster family at any time, such as holidays and weekends.
48. Personal advisers support care leavers to develop emotional resilience and independence skills prior to taking on their own tenancies. The use of a 'staying close' flat and a 'tenancy ready' programme helps care leavers to develop the skills they need to successfully live independently. Most care leavers live in accommodation that meets their needs.
49. Overall, care leavers are made aware of their rights and entitlements. The care leaver offer is explained in informative leaflets and on a website. The offer is not sufficiently clear in respect of council tax exemptions and the Wi-Fi offer.
50. Care leavers are provided with their health histories when they turn 18 years of age. This means that they have important information about their lives and where to access health advice in the future should they need this.
51. Care leavers open to CAMHS prior to their 18th birthday receive a smooth transition to adult mental health services. However, for those care leavers who are not receiving mental health support prior to turning 18, there are limited mental health services available to them. For a small number of care leavers, this has impacted on their emotional well-being. Youth Voice and Influence Service workers and some personal advisers have shared their concerns about the lack of specialist mental health services for care leavers. As a starting point in addressing this, leaders have appointed a mental health nurse one day a week to increase the support available to personal advisers supporting care leavers with emotional difficulties. Leaders know that more needs to be done to meet the higher-level mental health needs of care leavers.
52. Despite the best efforts of personal advisers to support care leavers in Sheffield to engage and succeed in employment, education and training, the results of these efforts remain mixed. In response to this, a three-year initiative funded by the Department for Education is underway, with a dedicated resilience and transitions coordinator, and a wraparound menu of support to help increase employment, education and training opportunities. It is too early to see the full impact of this initiative.
53. An impressive group of care-experienced young adults who work in the Youth Voice and Influence Service has been instrumental in making changes and improvements to children's services. This group has a strong voice and its experiences, opinions and feedback directly influence service delivery.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: good

54. The recently formed permanent leadership team, together with corporate and political leaders, has high aspirations to build on the already solid foundations of social work practice in Sheffield, to ensure that every child and young person from Sheffield has a strong sense of belonging and excellent experiences.
55. Senior leaders model a clear child-focus. This shines through children's services at all levels of the workforce. Like leaders, staff have an impressive commitment to getting things right for Sheffield children. This is exemplified by an ethos and the concerted work by all staff to support children to remain living with their birth family if it is safe to do so, and the prioritisation of family and friends networks to help ensure that, wherever possible, children can remain within networks familiar to them.
56. A highly effective workforce strategy has resulted in there being a committed and stable workforce in Sheffield. As a result, most children benefit from having consistent workers who they, and their family members, learn to trust. This is having a positive impact for families and it has ensured the sustainability and improvement in service delivery.
57. The operation of the early help and edge-of-care services provides good examples of children's social care, the police and health partners working well together and keeping children at the heart of practice. The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service and designated family judge are also complimentary about the improving quality of practice in Sheffield and the constructive relationships held that contribute to improvements in practice. While strategic partnerships are mostly effective, the local authority is aware that more needs to be done to support better engagement by the police service in triaging contacts that go into the safeguarding hub, and to provide a better response to care leavers to support good mental health.
58. Child-focused planning and the delivery of services that aim to build on family strengths underpin the model of practice in Sheffield. The model of practice is well understood and used by staff and partners. This is helping to ensure consistent and effective responses to children that make a positive difference to most children's lives.
59. Political and corporate leaders are ambitious corporate parents. The corporate parenting board has continued to provide oversight and challenge on behalf of children. Leaders recognise and understand the ever-changing and more complex issues children in care and care leavers face. As a result, they are in the process of updating Sheffield's corporate parenting strategy. This is being informed by a recent 'Bright Spots' survey (a survey of the views of children in care in Sheffield).

60. A focus on participation in Sheffield is a strength. The views of children in care and care leavers inform service development to help ensure that leaders get things right for children. Sheffield's impressive Youth Voice and Influence Service workers actively and influentially hold leaders and corporate parents to account through reverse scrutiny and challenge. Examples of challenges made include the quality of housing for care leavers, access to mental health services for care leavers, and the language used in social work records, all of which are priorities for the council.
61. Senior leaders have a good understanding of services in Sheffield. A recently updated self-evaluation accurately reflects the quality and impact of practice and informs service priorities, such as placement sufficiency for children with complex needs and the quality of in-house children's homes.
62. A well-developed range of quality assurance activities, including auditing alongside social workers, with moderation, provides senior leaders with an effective line of sight to frontline practice. Learning and themes from audits, shared with the workforce via a monthly 'quality matters' newsletter, which celebrates excellent practice as well as reporting on areas for improvement, is well received by staff. A lack of reflective discussions regarding audit findings in case supervision hinders learning opportunities for workers.
63. Leaders and managers use a range of performance information at different tiers of the organisation to understand performance and respond to any identified areas for improvement. In some discrete areas of practice, this is not enabling leaders to have a comprehensive and accurate oversight of practice, for example regarding children in the PLO process, use of return home interviews, and systems to ensure that all children have an up-to-date chronology. Leaders are aware of this and credible plans are already underway to address these areas for improvement.
64. Frontline management oversight of children's assessments and plans is effective. Frequent case supervision provides social workers with guidance regarding case progression. Staff report feeling well supported by their line managers and the oversight provided helps prevent children's plans from drifting. Supervision records do not always evidence opportunities for reflection. This can inhibit more creative and innovative practice.
65. Staff retention is enhanced by social workers having mostly manageable workloads and a comprehensive training and development offer. This includes a strong offer for newly qualified social workers, and opportunities for staff to develop their practice and skills to a high level and move into specialist or leadership roles. Senior leaders have created an environment where good social work practice is nurtured and celebrated.
66. The vast majority of staff are extremely positive about working in Sheffield. Staff report that leaders are visible and accessible. They feel valued and are proud to work in Sheffield.



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Ofsted Action Plan

September 2023 Sheffield children's service received ILACs Inspection the overall outcome was Good with children in need of care outstanding. This was a good outcome for Sheffield however the aim for Sheffield is that every child receives an outstanding service. The action plan below is areas we intend to Improve on to take our services to outstanding.

What needs to improve?

Area for improvement	Actions to date	Actions for next six months	Responsibility
<p>The consistency of the use of chronologies to inform assessments and planning.</p> <p>Page 111</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation to October Whole Service Event on Chronologies and their use in assessments and planning by Principal Social Worker. ▪ Chronology working group established with representatives from across the workforce. Group has met on 3 occasions to date. ▪ Revisions to chronology form developed. Presented at SLT on 21/11/23 and version agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of a specific development training package for staff in relation to changes to chronology form. Training package to demonstrate the use of analytical chronologies in informing assessments and planning. ▪ Audit activity in relation to use of chronologies to be planned to evidence impact of workforce development activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ QAIS – Amanda Boughton-Brown
<p>The quality and impact of return home interviews for children who go missing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already in place – we have recruited using an underspend an experienced RHI practitioner who sits under the Contextual lead role in Community Youth Services to deliver training and mentoring on Return Home contexts and services both within our own service team and also external support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action1 – From Jan 2024 the Service manager and Head of Service will be holding quarterly quality assurance case dip sampling particularly reviewing case communication on persistent missing young people episodes – asking key questions 	<p>Chelsea Renehan and Terri Mee</p>

	<p>to partners to understand the push pull factors for young people going missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service manager has written and launched practice standards with all of prevention service which includes RHI Team. We have also allocated named RHI workers to Childrens Homes. • Joint work continues with Amber service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024 all prevention services will be trained in AMBIT practice by the Anna Freud Centre which will provide a consistent and clear methodology for communicating across all our Community Prevention Service 	
<p>Timely access and support for care leavers in relation to their mental health.</p>	<p>The Corporate Parenting Objective 3 Workstream focus on partnership work to improve the health and emotional wellbeing of care experienced children and young people. The work of the Corporate Parenting Objective 3 meeting feeds into Sheffield’s Corporate Parenting Strategy.</p> <p>A working group with Health partners is looking at the new model development of CAMHS/MAPS service.</p> <p>Voice and Influence workers are working with Service Managers to gather views of care leavers and looked after young people about what they feel currently does and doesn’t work within MH services for children in care and care leavers. This group of young people have been able to secure funding to design and produce a bespoke mental health service for 18+ care leavers.</p> <p>The work with partners, community groups and the young people themselves is supporting the co production of this service and also feed this into the new model development of the CAMHS/MAPS service to ensure that planning and transitions from mental health services for</p>	<p>Develop a vision for the 18+ MH service, alongside work with partners and community groups, gain commitment to be able to make further progress with planning. This is to include the transition process from children to adults' mental health.</p> <p>This will be led by the Care Leavers Steering group</p> <p>Longer term: Successful mental health services being in place for care leavers will be demonstrated through positive feedback in this area in the Bright Spots surveys.</p>	<p>CLA- Fieldwork Izzy Fisher, Beckly Towle</p>

	children in care into services for care leavers is completed early to allow for this to be as smooth as possible.		
The quality and consistency of the recording of case supervision to promote reflection and learning for workers.	-Discussion at service manager meetings -Discussion at managers city wide meeting to look at how we can ensure reflective discussions are recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of a specific development package for all managers to attend on a mandatory basis. ▪ Working group to be established to review supervision forms to promote reflection and learning in supervision. 	Qais -Amanda boughton-Brown Fieldwork – Terri Mee, Becky Towle

<i>The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection: good</i>			
Areas for improvement	Actions to date	Actions for next six months	Responsibility
<p>The police do not pre-triage their contacts before sending them into the safeguarding hub. This gap has required children's services to provide significant additional resources to screen the high volume of police referrals and this places pressure on a busy service.</p>	<p>Information shared with Police.</p> <p>South Yorkshire quality check has started end of November and is about to complete looking at this area all South Yorkshire authorities working with South Yorkshire police to quality assure vulnerable child referrals</p>	<p>Continue to meet with the police for them to consider the pre-triage of referrals.</p> <p>Consider the findings of both Sheffield and South Yorkshire referrals that are currently being audited</p>	HUB – Mark Storf
Ensuring the use of language is appropriate and clearly understood	<p>Leaders have plans to provide further training in this area.</p> <p>Work with voice and influence workers to look at language and the impact on young people when reading their files as adults</p>	<p>January Language Day set up</p> <p>Whole service event with examples of language and the impact</p>	Terri Mee, Amanda Boughton-Brown , Lindsey Knight
Most child-protection and child-in-need plans, including those for disabled children, are detailed and clear about the	Meeting have taken place to look at planning and how the plan on liquid logic (recording system) can improve to make them more parent friendly	January 2024 - Options paper presented to SLT to analyse all options available in the recording system	QAIS- Amanda Boughton-Brown

<p>changes required to improve children's safety and experiences, and they are dynamically reviewed.</p>	<p>Working group set up to look at planning options and paper to identify best options</p>		
<p>When children's circumstances are not improving quickly enough, or if risks remain or increase, children are appropriately escalated to the pre-proceedings stage of the Public Law Outline (PLO). While leaders know that there is work to do to improve the tracking of children in PLO, practice in this area has remained effective since the previous inspection. Many children are successfully diverted away from court proceedings. As a result of this impactful work undertaken with families during pre-proceedings, children's safety and experiences have improved.</p>	<p>PLO tracker Improved- 2 separate trackers running until new processes are embedded to ensure there is no drift.</p> <p>Trackers are up and running, regular information is sent out to ensure information on the system is up to date and reviewed within timescale.</p> <p>Weekly review of trackers in place.</p> <p>Ongoing work across South Yorkshire Authorities to create consistency in court proceedings.</p> <p>Trailblazer bid submitted to DfE to strengthen Family Justice work on a regional basis.</p>	<p>PLO Officer to be recruited and to sit within QAIS alongside IRO's. – February</p> <p>Outcome of Bid to be considered moving forward</p>	<p>Mark Storf</p>
<p>Children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless receive a responsive service. Children's housing needs are promptly addressed, resulting in children being provided accommodation in line with their needs. While children's records demonstrate that children's right to become looked after is considered, where it is refused, the records do not offer assurance that their right to become looked after has been fully explained</p>	<p>Homeless and prevention worker in post in Edge of Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaflet reviewed and re launched By Edge of Care - homeless and prevention service with input from voice and influence workers. To be completed and launched February 2024 	<p>Edge of Care Service – Becky Towle</p>
<p><i>The experiences and progress of children in care: outstanding</i></p>			

Areas for improvement	Actions to date	Actions for next six months	Responsibility
To continue to sustain current standards and beyond	Continue to audit cases and learn from audits Learn from complaints Learn from scrutiny panel		Izzy Fisher
Most children living in residential homes, either in or outside Sheffield, are settled and making progress. These children are visited in line with their needs, they have access to education and health specialists, and they take part in a range of activities of their choosing. Improvement to the quality of Sheffield City Council's children's homes is now being prioritised, following a period where the quality of care had deteriorated.	Improvement plan for in house residential services. Implementation of a Challenge Borad co-chaired by the lead member and the Executive Director of Children's Services. Updated Sufficiency Strategy presented to Education, Children and Families Committee.	Continue to improve residential service with a clear plan Joint work with Integrated Commissioning to develop robust needs assessment. Updated Children's Homes Strategy	Lindsey Knight
Due to sufficiency challenges, Sheffield has a very small number of children aged under 16 with complex needs living in unregistered children's homes. There is regular and effective multi-agency oversight of these unsuitable arrangements, while the local authority actively seeks more suitable registered arrangements or supports providers to become registered with Ofsted.	Regular meeting with Ofsted all children reported to ofsted when in unregistered placements. Complex case meeting where all children are discussed and reviewed. Increased visits to all unregistered provision in place Clear process in place by commissioning service for any concerns raised regarding any placement. Commissioning working alongside 16+ providers to ensure early identification of those provision that Ofsted do not progress registration	Continue to source regulated placements Joint training for commissioning with social workers and IROs to launch process for identifying concerns. As well as what to look for on visits and how to escalate concerns	Jo Horibin, Izzy Fisher, Becky Towle, Amanda Boughton-Brown
<i>The experiences and progress of care leavers: good</i>			

Areas for improvement	Actions to date	Actions for next six months	Responsibility
In a minority of cases, pathway planning is hindered by plans not being updated when circumstances have changed.	Advanced social work practitioners agreed to maintain consistency of practice Quality Assurance – audit of case filese.	Remodelling service to include advance practice to support consistently good practice . Ongoing recruitment to appoint advance practitioners. – January - March	Izzy fisher
Overall, care leavers are made aware of their rights and entitlements. The care leaver offer is explained in informative leaflets and on a website. The offer is not sufficiently clear in respect of council tax exemptions and the Wi-Fi offer	Strengthening current offer for digital access for all care leavers and ways to improve the offer via commissioning and direct provision where required Financial audit currently taking place awaiting recommendations in respect of Council Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to ensure that all care leavers have digital access - Implement any findings from the council tax audit - Clear policies on digital access for care leavers and council tax- April 2024 - Ensure the offer is clear with support of the Voice and Influence Team 	Izzy Fisher
Most unaccompanied asylum-seeking care leavers experience proactive support to help them achieve their goals and succeed in education and training. Their identity needs are well considered and supported.	New team in place to improve the quality of provision specifically for care leaver. UASC will have workers that will see them through Pas identified early to enable that transition for those arriving in the system late into their care experience a continuity of service they will have the expertise in this specialist area.	Continue links within the community and within education and training to ensure all UASC receive a good service	Izzy fisher
Despite the best efforts of personal advisers to support care leavers in Sheffield to engage and succeed in employment, education and training, the results of these efforts remain mixed. In response to this, a three-year initiative funded by the Department for Education is underway, with a dedicated	DFE funded project in place work in place with local business to offer work to care leavers	Continue with DFE project	Izzy fisher

resilience and transitions coordinator, and a wraparound menu of support to help increase employment, education and training opportunities. It is too early to see the full impact of this initiative			
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The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families: good

Areas for improvement	Actions to date	Actions for next six months	Responsibility
A well-developed range of quality assurance activities, including auditing alongside social workers, with moderation, provides senior leaders with an effective line of sight to frontline practice. Learning and themes from audits, shared with the workforce via a monthly 'quality matters' newsletter, which celebrates excellent practice as well as reporting on areas for improvement, is well received by staff. A lack of reflective discussions regarding audit findings in case supervision hinders learning opportunities for workers.	Plans in place for learning from audits to be discussed in reflective supervision as stated above working group in place. SLT oversight at SLT meetings to ensure progress	Training implemented Audit by SLT in June 24 once training rolled out specifically on supervision	SLT
Leaders and managers use a range of performance information at different tiers of the organisation to understand performance and respond to any identified areas for improvement. In some discrete areas of practice, this is not enabling leaders to have a	Feedback to SLT and within action plan on improvements made as stated above	PLO tracker up and running with PLO officer in place Audit of return home interviews to ensure improvements	SLT

<p>comprehensive and accurate oversight of practice, for example regarding children in the PLO process, use of return home interviews, and systems to ensure that all children have an up-to-date chronology. Leaders are aware of this and credible plans are already underway to address these areas for improvement</p>			
<p>Frontline management oversight of children's assessments and plans is effective. Frequent case supervision provides social workers with guidance regarding case progression. Staff report feeling well supported by their line managers and the oversight provided helps prevent children's plans from drifting. Supervision records do not always evidence opportunities for reflection. This can inhibit more creative and innovative practice</p>	<p>Implementation of new supervision record on liquid logic</p>	<p>Audit of reflective supervision as sated above</p>	<p>SLT</p>



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Mark Sheikh, Head of Service – Resourcing and Business Planning

Report of: Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
Strategic Director of Children’s Services

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 19th December 2023

Subject: Education, Children and Families Budget report: Options for 24/25 budget – update on November Position

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2415				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below: -				
Appendices 1 and 2 are not for publication because they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).				

Purpose of the report:

This report sets out the budget pressures and challenges facing the services which fall under the Education, Children and Families committee area, and provides an update to the budget and resourcing action plan considered by the Committee on 2nd November 2023.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Education Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Notes the financial pressures for 24/25 detailed within this report and the new income available to mitigate them.
2. Notes the measures proposed in the report to mitigate these pressures and that they will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee as part of the Council's budget for 24/25.
3. Notes that Officers will work to develop any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals in this report so that the proposals, once agreed, can be implemented as planned before or during the 2024/25 financial year.
4. Notes that it this is an update on the position presented to the committee on 2nd November 2023.

Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

1. *Appendix 1: Education, Children & Families Savings Proposals 24/25 (Closed)*
2. *Appendix 2: Presentation on the budget position and savings proposals (Closed)*
3. *Appendix 3: Education, Children and Families Budget report: Options for 24/25 budget (November 2 2023)*

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman
		Legal: Sarah Bennett
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate:
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Dawn Dale
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name:	Job Title:
	Mark Sheikh	Head of Service – Resourcing and Business Planning
Date: 19/12/2023		

1. Background

- 1.1 This report is a continuation of the report provided on 2nd November 2023 and provides an update as agreed at committee. The November report provided detailed information on our business model and a quick summary is provided here for reference.
- 1.2 The Children and Families Business Model outlines a strategic budget management approach to address challenges. Emphasis is placed on Demand Management through Early Help and Edge of Care services, contributing to lower Children in Care rates. Connected care, focusing on positive relationships.
- 1.3 Sufficiency of Provision remains a concern, with challenges such as a lack of family-based care and rising costs of placements. Private providers' excessive profits pose a challenge, requiring national government policy reform.
- 1.4 Investments for 2023/24 include £36.7m for placements, with a £6m overspend. High-cost placements are under review to improve the budget. Service reviews and zero-based budgets aim for efficiency, reducing agency spend and legal support costs by £6m.
- 1.5 Key Partners' contributions, including Health, Police, Housing, and Adult Social Care, are essential. Analysis to establish partner-supported costs is ongoing. External funding applications target £1m, and we await the outcome of our applications. New Burdens may arise from aligning kinship carers' payments with fostering rates, potentially costing £3.2m.
- 1.6 Sheffield, Home to School Transport is a significant budget pressure due to the growing demand for SEND support and EHCP plans. The 2023/24 budget is set at £14.9m, with an expected spend of £18.5m. An additional £3.2m is needed to cater to the existing cohort's transport needs, with potential upward pressure due to in-year admissions and rising EHCP demand.
- 1.7 In conclusion, the Children and Families Business Model addresses challenges through strategic budget management, emphasizing early intervention, efficiency improvements, and collaboration with key partners. Ongoing reviews and funding applications aim to ensure financial sustainability amid external challenges.

2 Overview of Pressures and Risks for Education, Children and Families Committee

- 2.1 The committee oversees work carried out by three main areas:
- Children and Families (Table B)
 - Education and Skills (Table C)
- 2.2 The tables below give a high-level overview of general fund pressures, and financial risks. They have been updated since November 2nd to show the current position.

Pressures for Children's Services (Table A)	General Fund 24/25 £'000	New Income 24/25 £'000	Net Pressure 24/25 £'000
Children and Families (Table B)	10,721	(7,300)	3,421
Education and Skills (Table C)	3,472	(992)	2,480
Total	14,193	(8,292)	5,901

Children and Families – (Table B)	24/25 £000
Pay Award	2,303
Placement Growth/inflation	6,888
Insurance Premium Non-Schools	219
Fostering /SGO Maintenance Allowance	280
Shortbreaks (expansion and transition)	250
Regulating Semi-Independent 16+ accommodation	411
Teaching Partnership Funding	120
Direct Payments (inflationary Pressure)	250
TOTAL Pressures	10,721

Education and Skills – General Fund (Table C)	General Fund 24/25 £000
Pay Award	226
Home to School Transport **	3,246
Total Pressures 24/25	3,472

* This will need to be revised based on current academic year numbers

3 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

3.1 Detail of savings proposals is in **Appendix 1**.

Pressures and Mitigations to date for Children’s Services	Pressures Total 24/25 £000	New Income 24/25 £’000	Mitigations Total 24/25 £000	GAP
Children and Families	10,721	(7,300)	(3,421)	0
Education and Skills	3,472	(992)	(2,480)	0
Total	14,193	(8,292)	(5,901)	0

4. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

4.1 The purpose of this report is to set out proposals that will allow the Council to deliver its Children Services within available resources in 2024/25 whilst making improvements to the way services are delivered. At this stage we are sharing our overall pressures and initial mitigations with the committee as well as an expected increase in income levels.

4.2 The recommendation in this report is to agree to progress further work to develop fully costed savings proposals and plans.

5. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

5.1 While none of the elements within this report require statutory consultation, at this stage, they are being proposed following consultation with senior management teams, and elected members for the Committees consideration.

6. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

6.1 Equality Implications

6.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.1.2 This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

6.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

6.1.4 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out. It highlights that individual EIAs and a cumulative EIA are being prepared in relation to the measures proposed to mitigate these pressures and for the development of any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals. These will assess the impact across different groups and mitigate as necessary.

6.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

6.2.1 Each Committee is required to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25, which requires them to find mitigations for any Service pressures over above the targets set out in the MTFAs, outlined in paragraph 1.1 above.

6.2.2 The pressures, and savings proposals to address this are set out in this paper. Further work will be required to address the budget gap shown within this paper and to ensure delivery plans are in place. All Committees savings proposals will be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee before final sign off to ensure a balance 2024/25 budget for the Council as a whole.

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 By law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions. This can consider cost savings and/or local income growth strategies, as well as use of reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves. The

recommendations in this Report contribute to the process of setting a budget but do not otherwise have any immediate legal implications.

6.3.2 Implementation of the specific proposals outlined in this report may require further decisions in due course, which will need to be made in accordance with the council Constitution. It is important to note that in making these decisions, full consideration of the Council's legal duties and contractual obligations will be needed. This will include satisfying itself that it can continue to meet its statutory duties. However, the proposals in this report have been drawn up on the basis that they will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duties.

6.4 Climate Implications

6.4.1 No climate implications arise from the committee decisions arising from this report.

6.5 Other Implications

6.5.1 None at this stage

7. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 **Do nothing.**

By undertaking none of the proposed actions, we would be unable to contribute to delivering a balanced budget.

8. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 The recommendations put forward in this paper and appendix 1 are recommended for approval on the basis that they:

- Are consistent with our agreed approach to demand management, sufficiency, and meeting our obligations to provide quality statutory services which meet the needs of the child or young person.
- Are consistent with our vision/strategy to provide services and opportunities which support each child and young person within Sheffield to meet their potential.
- Support the ongoing improvement of Education, Children and Family services in Sheffield.
- Are guided by an evidence base, benchmarking and/ or trend data which identifies areas of spend where disinvestment, subject to individual review, can most likely be made without detriment.
- Enable the Council to continue to meet its legal duties.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Mark Sheikh, Head of Service – Resourcing and Business Planning

Report of: Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
Strategic Director of Children’s Services

Report to: Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 2nd November 2023

Subject: Education, Children and Families Budget report: Options for 24/25 budget

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2415				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below: -				
Appendices 1 and 2 are not for publication because they contain exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).				

Purpose of the report:

This report sets out the budget pressures and challenges facing the services which fall under the Education, Children and Families committee area, and begins to develop a budget and resourcing action plan to mitigate these as far as possible.

The report also highlights emerging trends, growth in demand, and the rising complexity of the level of need for services which are directly impacting on the resources requirement.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Education Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Notes the financial pressures for 24/25 detailed within this report and the new income available to mitigate them.
2. Notes the measures proposed in the report to mitigate these pressures and that they will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee as part of the Council's budget for 24/25.
3. Notes that Officers will work to develop any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals in this report so that the proposals, once agreed, can be implemented as planned before or during the 2024/25 financial year.
4. Notes that it is proposed that there will be a further update at the December committee meeting.

Background Papers:

1. *Appendix 1: Education, Children & Families Savings Proposals 24/25 (Closed)*
2. *Appendix 2: Presentation on the budget position and savings proposals (Closed)*

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Keyleigh Inman
		Legal: Sarah Bennett
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Mark Sheikh
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	Meredith Dixon-Teasdale
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Dawn Dale
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Mark Sheikh	Job Title: Head of Service – Resourcing and Business Planning
	Date: 02/11/2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

An updated medium term financial analysis was presented to Strategy & Resources committee in September to give members an early view of the forecast financial position for the Council for the next 4 years and to set the financial constraints within which the budgeting and business planning process will need to work to achieve a balanced budget position over the medium term. [MTFA & Committee Budget Savings Targets](#)

Over the 4-year period the forecast budget gap for the Council is estimated to be £61m. For 2024/25 the forecast budget gap is £18m that will need to be bridged by services to set a balanced budget for 2024/25.

In 2023/24 at the end of September, Children services is forecasting an overspend budget position of £8.8m with Children and Families contributing an overspend of £5.5m and Education and Skills £3.3m. This includes home to school transport overspend of £3m.

2 CONTEXT and APPROACH

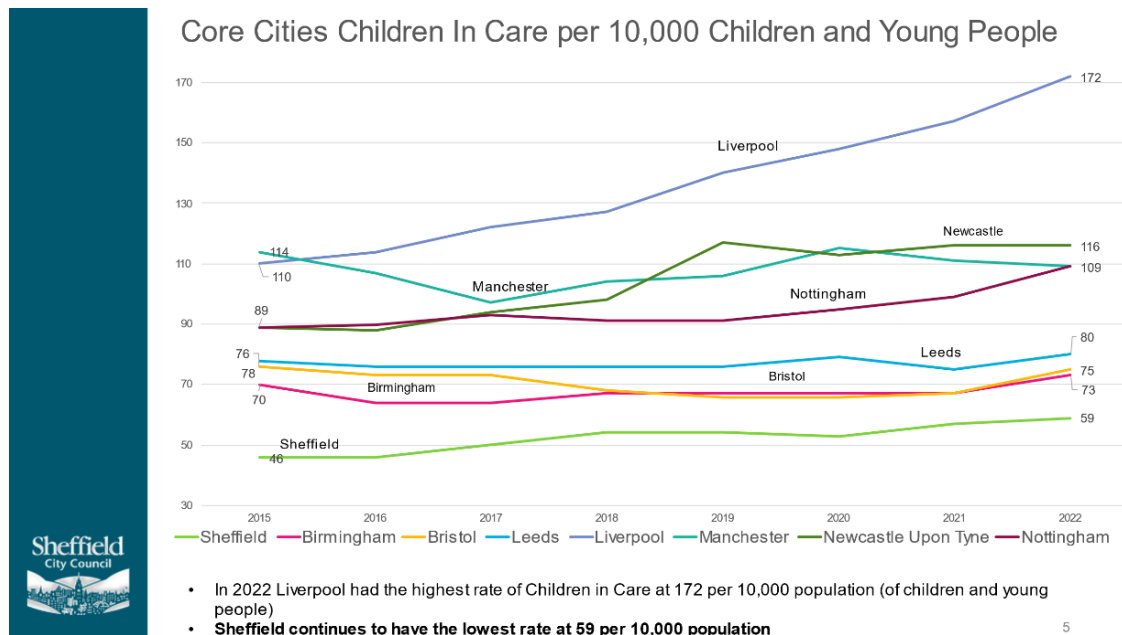
2.1 Children and Families Business Model

To tackle the challenges of the Children and Families budget over the years, we have organised our strategic approach to budget management as represented below to address those areas which contribute most to the cost of the service.



2.2 Our approach to **Demand Management** is through Early Help and effective Edge of Care services. This is the most effective way to manage demand coming into social care. Our investment in Early Help and in a skilled workforce is not only the right thing to do for children and families, but it has also enabled us to continue to have a substantially lower Children in Care as compared to other core cities, as evidenced in the following chart.

If a child or young person cannot live with their parent(s), connected carers can take on the responsibility of looking after them on a temporary or permanent basis. Connected care is aimed at anyone who has a positive and pre-existing relationship with the child or young person. In Sheffield, we have increased the number of children supported and looked after through connected care and this will remain our focus for next year.



2.3 **Sufficiency of Provision** is an area which will continue to require more focused attention. The challenges faced by Sheffield are similar to other Local Authorities, namely more children requiring specialist support, a lack of foster carers/connected carers leading to a growth in use of residential homes, and instability in the placement market.

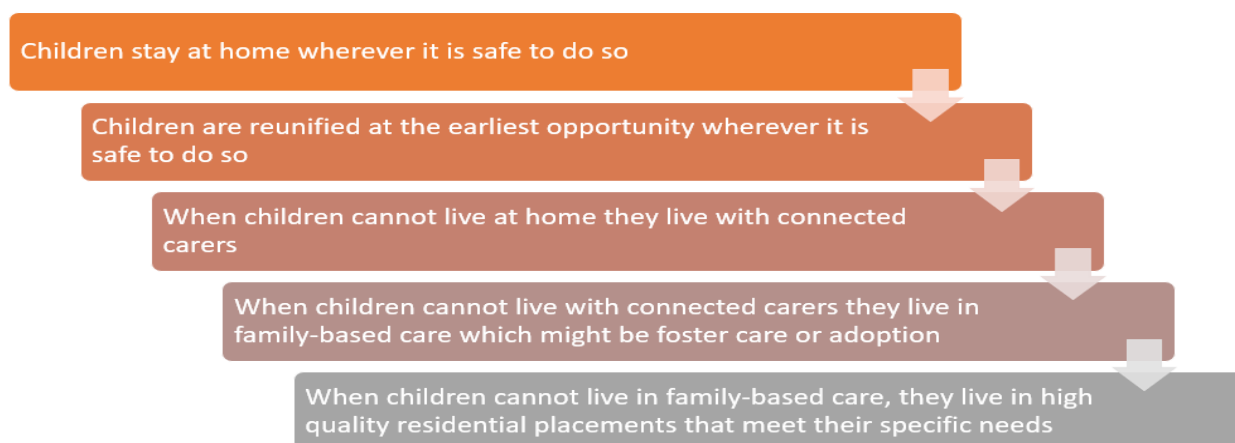
The challenges to provide the right homes for children in care at an affordable price are becoming ever greater. A lack of placements of the right kind, in the right places, means that children are not consistently getting access to care and accommodation that meets their needs.

Private providers of placements are making materially higher profits, charging higher prices than we would expect if this market were functioning effectively.

More complex needs and a system that is permitted to make “higher profit” has increased the cost of delivery. The external market is not working well and will not improve without focused policy reform by the Government. The national government has recognised the need to review the sector and have launched a large-scale policy programme.

Our sufficiency principle is based on our children belonging in a family, a good quality home, a local school and being a key part of their community in Sheffield.

Sufficiency principle



In 2023/24 we are investing £36.7m to provide placements for children in care. We have a current net overspend position of approx. £6m in our placement budgets. Regular work is ongoing to review all our placements but specifically high-cost placements and to deliver the 23/24 BIPs to improve our placement mix.

Average weekly external residential placement has seen an increase of 6%. The current weekly cost is £5,268 compared to a weekly cost of £4,987 in 22/23.

Private providers are charging excessive profit margins and being selective in the type of placements they will accept. Further realignment of funding contribution for tripartite placement is required to have a fair split of joint placements across all partners,

To meet the rising demand, complexity of need and higher costs we need to increase our investment by a further £7.3m, taking our total placement requirement to £44m. This level of funding could support the existing cohort of children and maintain the same placement mix and provide some mitigation against 24/25 costs increased. We will continue to work to improve our placement mix in line with our sufficiency principle.

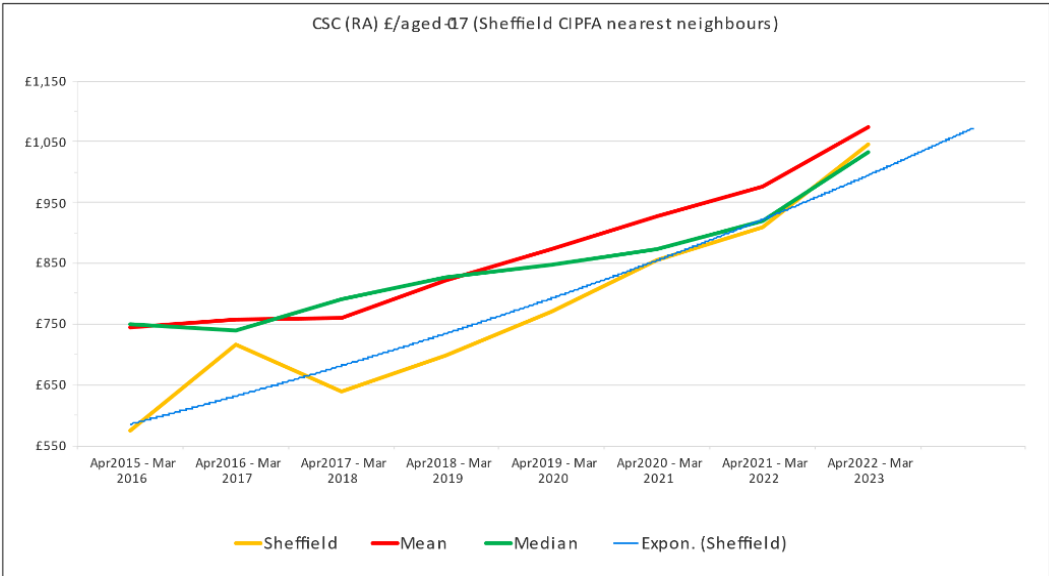
2.4 **Service Review** - Several services reviews were carried out which looked at both fundamental changes and service improvement. These have improved both efficiency and cost. Across the service, we have embarked on a zero-based budget approach to deliver more transparency and efficient use of funds to produce savings.

The main objective of service reviews and zero-based budgets is to ensure that our delivery is effective and efficient. We will continue to look at ways to improve how we deliver services; the following chart shows how our budgets in Children's Social Care compare with our statistical neighbours.

We have reviewed the use of our agency staff and reduced our agency spend by £6m by recruiting to a permanent structure. We have examined the use of external barristers and legal support and reduced wherever practical.



Total Children Social Care (RA) £/aged 0-17 (Sheffield & Nearest Neighbours)



6

2.5 Contributions from our Key Partners – One of our key focus areas is to ensure that partners are making appropriate contribution for services we provide on their behalf. This will include contribution from the following sectors:

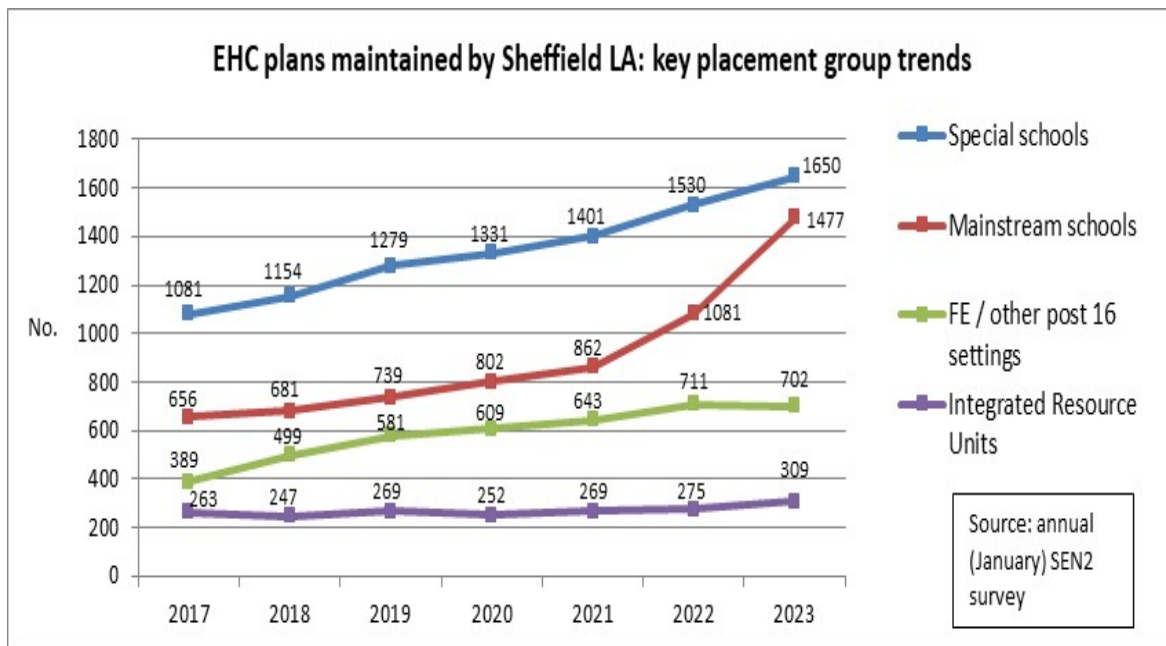
- Health – referrals into the Safeguarding Hub, therapy and associated support provided to children with medical needs.
- Police – referrals into the Safeguarding Hub
- Housing – Cost picked by Social Care for homes for families to live in
- Adult Social Care – Agreeing transitional arrangements.

In-depth and forensic analysis is being carried out to establish costs currently supported by our services that need to be supported by our partners. A further update will be shared at the December committee meeting. A provisional target of £3.2m has been proposed in the current paper. It is pertinent to highlight that at this stage, these proposals have not yet been agreed with partners.

2.6 External Funding – We are exploring applying for external funding from DfE and other relevant funding bodies. We are actively progressing applications for Family First for Children pathfinder and Family Justice trailblazer. Our current expectation is that we will be able to generate £1m in external funding to support delivery of services. Committee needs to note that the success of these funding bids is not guaranteed.

2.7 New Burdens – The national government is considering aligning kinship carers payments with fostering funding rates, and this could be implemented from the end of the current financial year. This national development will place an additional burden on our existing budget, and appropriate funding will need to be identified to implement national policy. Our current assessment is that this could be in the region of £3.2m.

2.8 SEND DSG - Growth in this area has implications for General Fund. Implementation of the 2014 SEND reforms has resulted in an over-emphasis on securing an EHCP to access support. In line with the national picture we see an increasing number of EHCPs as evidenced in the following chart.



The implementation of the SEND reforms has also contributed to a drift away from inclusion in mainstream education. Mainstream schools are often unable to take pupils with EHCPs, citing a lack of funding, resources, or training, meaning that pupils must attend special schools. The increase in demand for SEND requires additional special school places, integrated resources, and independent specialist placements, with a corresponding increase in transport provision.

2.9 Home to School Transport - One of the major budget pressures identified is Home to School transport, which is a statutory duty. In line with national trends, in Sheffield we see growth in SEND support requirements and EHCP plans, and a lack of local places which necessitates transport to multiple locations and extended journeys. In 2023/24 the total budget for home to school transport is set at £14.9m with £6m provided through General Fund. Based on the latest number of children who require home to school transport, we expect to spend £17.9m in 23/24.

The existing cohort of children will require an additional £3.2m to continue to provide transport to all eligible children. This pressure was based on information available at the end of the last academic year. At the start of the new academic year, in-year admissions and rising demand for EHCP indicate there is likely to be an upward increase in the £3.2m pressure. Work is currently underway and will be reported to the December committee meeting.

The needs of children being transported to school are becoming increasingly complex, parental expectations have also changed in recent years. There has been an increasing number of requests for individual transport. This shift in expectations of individual transport is both expensive and environmentally unsustainable, is often not aligned to the needs of the child and is continually challenged.

Home to school transport is a statutory function and needs to be funded through the general fund. Within Education and Skills, we invest £10.9m to support delivery of several statutory functions. (Transport, Education Psychology, SEND) There is limited scope to identify mitigations from within the £10.9m investment to absorb the currently anticipated £3.2m transport pressure. Therefore, this challenge needs to be shared with Strategy & Resource Committee to help identify a solution and increase our income level.

We have been carrying out analysis into our home to school travel service, and trialled a few innovative solutions including route planning optimisation, independent travel training and reviewing eligibility criteria. More work is planned as we have engaged an external consultant to review our policy practice and linkages across various teams within the council. We will keep committee informed of any learning as it arises from the review, with a view to implement any solutions to reduce our spending.

3 Overview of Pressures and Risks for Education, Children and Families Committee

3.1 The committee oversees work carried out by three main areas:

- Children and Families (Table B)
- Education and Skills (Table C)
- Integrated Children’s Commissioning (Table D).

The tables below give a high-level overview of general fund pressures, and financial risks. This represents the best assessment of the data and risks currently known.

Pressures for Children’s Services (Table A)	General Fund 24/25 £’000	New Income 24/25 £’000	Net Pressure 24/25 £’000
Children and Families (Table B)	13,641	(7,300)	6,341
Education and Skills (Table C)	3,872	(992)	2,880
Total	17,513	(8,292)	9,221

Children and Families – (Table B)	24/25 £000
Pay Award	2,303
Placement Growth/inflation	6,888
Insurance Premium Non-Schools	219
Shortbreaks (expansion and transition)	250
Regulating Semi-Independent 16+ accommodation	411
Teaching Partnership Funding	120
Direct Payments (inflationary Pressure)	250
Kinship Carer Allowance Uplift	3,200
TOTAL Pressures	13,641

Education and Skills – General Fund (Table C)	General Fund 24/25 £000
Pay Award	226
Home to School Transport **	3,246
Capita One System Replacement	400
Total Pressures 24/25	3,872

* This will need to be revised based on current academic year numbers

Integrated Children's Commissioning (Table D)	General Fund 24/25 £000
Pay Award	87
Total Pressures	87

4 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

4.1 Detail of savings proposals is in **Appendix 1**.

Pressures and Mitigations to date for Children's Services	Pressures Total 24/25 £000	New Income 24/25 £'000	Mitigations Total 24/25 £000	GAP
Children and Families	13,641	(7,300)	(5,265)	1,076
Education and Skills	3,872	(992)	(190)	2,690
Total	17,513	(8,292)	(5,455)	3,766

A total of £13.7m of mitigations including new income of £8.2m has been identified so far leaving a gap of £3.8m. The two main areas contributing to this gap are:

Anticipated new burden (kinship carers) and increase in Home to School Transport.

5. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

5.1 The purpose of this report is to set out proposals that will allow the Council to deliver its Children Services within available resources in 2024/25 whilst making improvements to the way services are delivered. At this stage we are sharing our overall pressures and initial mitigations with the committee as well as an expected increase in income levels.

5.2 The recommendation in this report is to agree to progress further work to develop fully costed savings proposals and plans.

6. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

6.1 While none of the elements within this report require statutory consultation, at this stage, they are being proposed following consultation with senior management teams, and elected members for the Committees consideration.

7. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

7.1 Equality Implications

7.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

7.1.2 This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.1.3 The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

7.1.4 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out. It highlights that individual EIAs and a cumulative EIA are being prepared in relation to the measures proposed to mitigate these pressures and for the development of any necessary detailed implementation plans for the proposals. These will assess the impact across different groups and mitigate as necessary.

7.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

7.2.1 Each Committee is required to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25, which requires them to find mitigations for any Service pressures over above the targets set out in the MTFAs, outlined in paragraph 1.1 above.

7.2.2 The pressures, and savings proposals to address this are set out in this paper. Further work will be required to address the budget gap shown within this paper and to ensure delivery plans are in place. All Committees savings proposals will be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee before final sign off to ensure a balance 2024/25 budget for the Council as a whole.

7.3 Legal Implications

7.3.1 By law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions. This can consider cost savings and/or local income growth strategies, as well as use of reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves. The recommendations in this Report contribute to the process of setting a budget but do not otherwise have any immediate legal implications.

7.3.2 Implementation of the specific proposals outlined in this report may require further decisions in due course, which will need to be made in accordance with the council Constitution. It is important to note that in making these decisions, full consideration of the Council's legal duties and contractual obligations will be needed. This will include satisfying itself that it can continue to meet its statutory duties. However, the proposals in this report have been drawn up on the basis that they will enable the Council to continue to meet its statutory duties.

7.4 Climate Implications

7.4.1 No climate implications arise from the committee decisions arising from this report.

7.5 Other Implications

7.5.1 None at this stage

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Do nothing.

By undertaking none of the proposed actions, we would be unable to contribute to delivering a balanced budget.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The recommendations put forward in this paper and appendix 1 are recommended for approval on the basis that they:

- Are consistent with our agreed approach to demand management, sufficiency, and meeting our obligations to provide quality statutory services which meet the needs of the child or young person.
- Are consistent with our vision/strategy to provide services and opportunities which support each child and young person within Sheffield to meet their potential.
- Support the ongoing improvement of Education, Children and Family services in Sheffield.
- Are guided by an evidence base, benchmarking and/ or trend data which identifies areas of spend where disinvestment, subject to individual review, can most likely be made without detriment.
- Enable the Council to continue to meet its legal duties.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Philip Gregory,
Director of Finance and Commercial Services

Tel: +44 114 474 1438

Report of: *Philip Gregory, Director of Finance & Commercial Services*

Report to: *Education, Children & Families Committee*

Date of Decision: *19th December 2023*

Subject: *2023-24 Q2 Budget Monitoring Report*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

This report brings the Committee up to date with the Council's General Fund Revenue outturn position for 2023/24 as at Quarter 2

Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to:

Note the updated information and management actions on the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Outturn as described in this report.

Background Papers:
[2023/24 Revenue Budget](#)

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Philip Gregory, <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
		Legal: Sarah Bennett, <i>Assistant Director, Legal Services</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: Adele Robinson, <i>Equalities and Engagement Manager, Policy, and Performance.</i>
		Climate: n/a
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Philip Gregory, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Zahira Naz, Chair of the Finance Committee</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Philip Gregory</i> <i>Jane Wilby</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i> <i>Head of Accounting</i>
	Date: 30 th November 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1. This report provides an update on the current outturn position for Sheffield City Council's revenue budget for 2023/24.

2023-24 Q2 Financial Position by Directorate

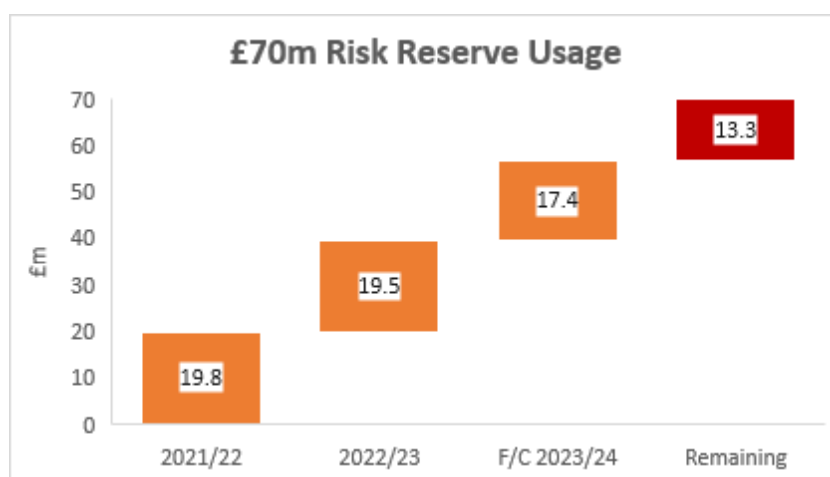
1.2. At the end of the second quarter of 2023-24, the Council's revenue budget shows a forecast overspend of £17.4m. This was a movement of £200k from the previous quarter's outturn position.

Full Year £m	Q2 Outturn	Q2 Budget	Q2 Variance	Q1 Variance	Move- ment
Neighbourhood Services	149.2	145.9	3.3	3.2	0.1
Adults	146.8	143.4	3.4	3.5	(0.1)
Children's	138.9	130.1	8.8	8.7	0.0
City Futures	49.1	48.2	1.0	0.6	0.3
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	14.2	12.4	1.8	(0.2)	2.0
Strategic Support	14.1	9.7	4.4	4.7	(0.3)
Corporate	(494.9)	(489.7)	(5.2)	(3.0)	(2.2)
Total	17.4	(0.0)	17.4	17.6	(0.2)

1.3. This overspend is due to a combination of factors. Agreed Budget Improvement Plans ("BIPs") are not forecast to fully deliver within the year. There are underlying cost and demand pressures faced by services that are partially offset by one-off items. These "one-offs" consist of grant income, draws from specific reserves or provisions and income from central government or external sources.

Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Neighbourhood Services	(4.0)	2.5	4.8	3.3
Adults	(9.9)	2.7	10.7	3.4
Children's	(3.9)	4.0	8.8	8.8
City Futures	0.5	0.4	0.0	1.0
Public Health & Integrated Commissioning	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.8
Strategic Support	(0.2)	0.0	4.6	4.4
Corporate	0.0	0.0	(5.2)	(5.2)
Total	(17.5)	9.6	25.4	17.4

1.4. In 2021/22, the Council set aside £70m of reserves to manage the financial risks associated with delivering a balanced budget position. Overspends against budgets in 2021/22 and 2022/23 have meant we have drawn almost £40m from this reserve already leaving just over £30m to manage any future budget deficits. If we overspent by £17.4m as this current forecast outturn position suggests, just £13m would be left to mitigate future budget pressures.



1.5. 2023-24 Q2 Financial Position by Committee

1.5.1. The major budget risk areas are in Childrens & Adults Social Care and in Homelessness services:

Full Year £m	Q2 Outturn	Budget	Q2 Variance	Q1 Variance	Move- ment
Adult Health & Social Care	155.4	152.3	3.1	3.2	(0.1)
Communities Parks and Leisure	47.4	46.6	0.8	0.3	0.5
Economic Development & Skills	10.9	10.9	(0.0)	0.1	(0.1)
Education, Children & Families	142.9	132.1	10.9	8.9	2.0
Housing	11.2	8.1	3.2	3.2	(0.0)
Strategy & Resources	(459.4)	(460.0)	0.6	3.1	(2.5)
Transport, Regeneration & Climate	43.1	43.1	(0.0)	(0.4)	0.4
Waste & Street Scene	65.8	66.9	(1.1)	(0.8)	(0.3)
Total	17.4	(0.0)	17.4	17.6	(0.2)

1.5.2. In 22/23, the Council's overspend improved by over £14m from the first quarter's forecasts to final outturn. This was mainly due to additional income received rather than underlying improvements in budgets and cost reductions. A big contributor to this was the Government's £500m discharge fund announced in November 2022.

Many underlying budget issues in social care services still remain and this is reflected in the current forecast position. Following the chancellor's Autumn Statement, our expectation is that no further funding will be available for local government. Services must continue to work hard to deliver within the budgets available and work pro-actively to deliver on the savings we have committed to.

1.5.3. Most of the overspend is due to underlying cost and demand pressures in services. We estimate that £26m is embedded in the baseline costs but is somewhat mitigated by one-off income, this includes the in-year social care grant:

Full Year Variance £m	One- off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Adult Health & Social Care	(9.9)	2.7	10.3	3.1
Communities Parks & Leisure	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.8
Economic Dev & Skills	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	(0.0)
Education, Children & Families	(3.9)	4.0	10.9	10.9
Housing	(1.7)	0.2	4.7	3.2
Strategy & Resources	(2.0)	2.2	0.4	0.6

Transport, Regen & Climate	0.0	0.1	(0.2)	(0.0)
Waste & Street Scene	(0.5)	0.3	(0.9)	(1.1)
Total	(18.0)	9.6	25.9	17.4

1.5.4. Balancing the General Fund 2023/24 budget was only possible because the Council identified £47.7m of savings:

General Fund Budget Improvement Plans (in £m)

Committee	Total Savings	Financial Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Financial Savings Deliverable Next Year (Slippage)	Undeliverable Savings
Adult Health & Social Care	31.6	28.9	2.7	3.3	0.6
Comm, Parks & Leisure	2.0	1.9	0.2		0.2
Economic Dev & Skills	0.5	0.5	0.0		0.0
Ed, Children & Families	6.9	2.9	4.0	0.3	3.6
Housing	0.6	0.5	0.2		0.2
Strategy & Resources	4.1	1.9	2.2	2.1	0.2
Transport, Regen & Climate	0.8	0.7	0.1		0.1
Waste & Street Scene	1.1	0.8	0.3		0.3
Grand Total	47.7	38.1	9.6	5.7	3.9
Delivery %		80%		12%	8%

The current forecasts show £9.6m savings plans are undeliverable this year. This represents an in-year delivery rate of 80% against target. A further 12% of targeted savings will be made in 24/25 leaving just 8% undeliverable.

In 22/23, less than 65% of savings targets were delivered. Whilst we are improving upon overall delivery performance, we are still falling short of targets meaning further draws could be required from our financial contingency reserve to meet these overspends if they are not proactively managed and mitigated. Delivering in year budgets must be a key focus for all services for the Council to retain financial sustainability.

1.5.5. Inflation is continuing to fall; from April 2023 CPI at 7.8% to 6.3% in September (month 6). This fall in inflation does not mean that our cost base will now reduce, higher costs are now embedded in baseline expenditure. There is an increased demand for services alongside cost pressures in social care, home to school transport and homelessness services.

1.6. Key Committee Overspends:

1.6.1. **Adult Health and Social Care are forecast to overspend by £3.1m** The high cost of packages of care put in place during covid increased our baseline costs and this carries into 23/24. A huge amount of work has been done as part of an investment plan to tackle the underlying issues. One off funding has mitigated the position this year leaving a £0.5m overspend in the purchasing budgets. Work continues on the package reviews to reduce the baseline costs for the future. Recovery work is underway including establishment of Task & Finish groups and the development of business cases around invest to saves including focus on enablement, day services, reviewing high cost 1 to 1 support and maximising income.

The main area of overspend in the service now sits in staffing budgets. Service improvements in the Short -Term Intervention Team (STIT) are underway to deliver a stable position.

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- 1.6.2. **Education, Children and Families are forecast to overspend by £10.9m** The key overspends in the service relate to placements with external residential placements a particular issue which are forecast to exceed the previous year's costs by £6.6m. The average placement cost is £5,400 per week but due to a limited number of places in the city, placements for the most complex children can cost a much more. Actions are being taken to ensure that the right costs for placements are being met by all elements including education and where possible health. High-cost placements are also being reviewed.
- The savings proposal for £1.6m to increase fostering placements this year is forecast to not be delivered. Marketing is taking place, but our number of foster carers remains static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decided to exit the market and there has not been the like for like recruitment to new foster carers.
- Further demand in home to school transport costs are forecast to create a £3m overspend against budgets this year. Whilst not included in the month 6 position, the new school year has increased this overspend with a further 89 children now requiring transportation to school. Sheffield City Council are now supporting over 2,360 children with transportation to school, this has increased by almost 1,000 children in 4 years. An overarching review of this area will commence in 2024.
- Integrated Commissioning budgets are forecast to overspend by £2m in recognition of the unachieved saving from 2022/23 relating to leveraging additional funding from Health partners.
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- 1.6.3. **Homelessness support in temporary and exempt accommodation is forecast to cost the Council £8.4m** The Government does not fully subsidise all housing benefit payments made by the Council even though it sets the rules that determine the amount the Council has to pay. In 2022/23, the Council incurred a loss of £5.9m as a result of the legislation relating to temporary homelessness and supported accommodation. The Council is essentially bridging the gap between the amount the accommodation costs to procure and the amount we are able to recover via housing benefits.
- In 2023-24, this is forecast to cost the Council £4.9m for temporary accommodation and £3.5m for supported accommodation. The shortfalls are split between the Housing General Fund and Strategy and Resources budgets respectively.
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- 1.6.4. This current forecast in-year overspend must be urgently managed and mitigated to avoid the risk that the Council has to look to our available financial contingency reserve (£30m) to balance at year end. Maintenance of a prudent level of contingency reserves is critical to ensure stability and sustainability for 2024/25 onwards.

The Budget Implementation Group

- 1.6.5. **A working group has been set up to drive improvements in budget delivery** A senior officer working group has been established to help drive delivery of the budget. The purpose of the Budget Improvement Group (BIG) is to improve the delivery of the Council's annual Revenue Budget (both General Fund and Housing Revenue Account) and in particular the delivery of the Budget Improvement Plans (BIPs). It will look to facilitate Council wide learning. The group is jointly chaired by the Director of Finance and Commercial Services and the Chief Operating Officer. The group has a nominated core member from each Directorate: Adults, Children's, City Futures, Neighbourhoods and Strategic Support Services.
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Transformation Funding

- 1.6.6. **The Council identified £4m to support transformation activity** As part of 2023-24 budget setting, the Council identified a £4m fund that would be used to support programmes of change in the organisation, expedite the delivery of savings plans or support where delivery of savings has become "stuck". The "BIG" group has provided advice, challenge, and recommendations for allocation of the transformation funding to the Council's Performance and Delivery Board.

In August 2023, the Performance & Delivery board approved bids to support delivery of programmes in Adult Social Care, Housing, Children's services, ICT, HR, and Organisational Strategy to build upon the Future Sheffield programme. These key projects will help stabilise the organisation and bring budgets back to a steady footing for the future. Each programme of work will be monitored, and progress reported to the Council's Performance & Delivery board to ensure activity remains on track. Overall performance will be reported to S&R committee and finance committee as part of in-year budget monitoring, with relevant policy committees overseeing progress on programmes in their areas.

Medium Term Financial Analysis (MTFA)

- 1.6.7. **The MTFA presented to S&R Committee on 7th September detailed committee budget savings targets** The Council is facing a challenging financial position. The Strategy and Resources Committee on 5th September received the Council's Medium-Term Financial analysis, highlighted the financial pressures facing the Council over the coming 4 years and the potential gap of £61.2m in resources.
- Each Committee was set a target to ensure a balanced budget for 2024/25, which requires them to find mitigations for any service pressures over above the additional resources allocated to them. The purpose of this is to allow the Council to achieve a balanced position for 2024/25 by the time the Strategy and Resources meets on 21st December 2023.
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Timetable to 2024/25 Budget Setting

- 1.6.8.
- Services have been developing solutions to bridge the budget gap for 2024/25 and brought forward proposals recent policy committee meetings.
 - All Policy Committees will make their final decisions in December.
 - Consultation on the existing proposals and overall budget will need to take place.
 - Further budget balancing options will need to be developed.
 - The impact of the Local Government Financial Settlement to be assessed and reported.
 - On December 21st 2023, Strategy and Resources will be asked to make a recommendation on savings to date to Council.
 - On February the 21st 2024, Strategy and Resources will be asked to recommend the full Budget Report to Council
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23-24 Q2 Committee Budget Outturn Position

1.7. Education, Children & Families Committee - £10.9m overspend

1.7.1.	The Education, Children & Families General Fund is overspent by £10.9m	Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
		Children & Families Education & Skills (Access and Inclusion; Business Support; Operational and Portfolio Wide Budgets; School Budgets; Schools and Learning; SEN, EMTAS)	119.6	114.1	5.5
		Integrated Commissioning (Commissioning; Children's Public Health; Early Help and Prevention)	18.4	15.2	3.3
			4.9	2.8	2.1
		Total	142.9	132.1	10.9

1.7.2.	The 2023/24 settlement provided additional "one-off" funding for social care	Full Year Variance £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
		Children & Families Education & Skills (Access and Inclusion; Business Support; Operational and Portfolio Wide Budgets; School Budgets; Schools and Learning; SEN, EMTAS)	(3.9)	3.5	5.9	5.5
		Integrated Commissioning	0.0	0.4	2.8	3.3
			0.0	0.0	2.1	2.1
		Total	(3.9)	4.0	10.9	10.9

In February 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) approved the 2023/24 settlement for Local Government. Included within the Settlement were some funding and taxation commitments for 2024/25. These included details of Council Tax thresholds and additional funding for social care.

Beyond 2024/25 the picture is less clear. However, there is a general acknowledgement that due to fiscal constraints, there will be very little, if any, increase in public sector spending in unprotected services such as Local Authorities over the remaining period of the Medium-Term Financial Analysis. This settlement has been treated as "one-off" in year due to future uncertainty.

1.7.3. Budget Savings (BIPs) £m

Service	Financial RAG	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
CHILDREN & FAMILIES	Red	4.6	1.3	3.3	0.3	3.0

	Amber	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	
	Green	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	
CHILDREN & FAMILIES Total		6.0	2.4	3.5	0.3	3.2
EDUCATION & SKILLS	Red	0.4		0.4	0.4	
	Amber	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	
	Green	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	
EDUCATION & SKILLS Total		0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	
INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING	Green	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	
INTEGRATED COMMISSIONING Total		0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	
Grand Total		6.9	2.9	4.0	0.3	3.6

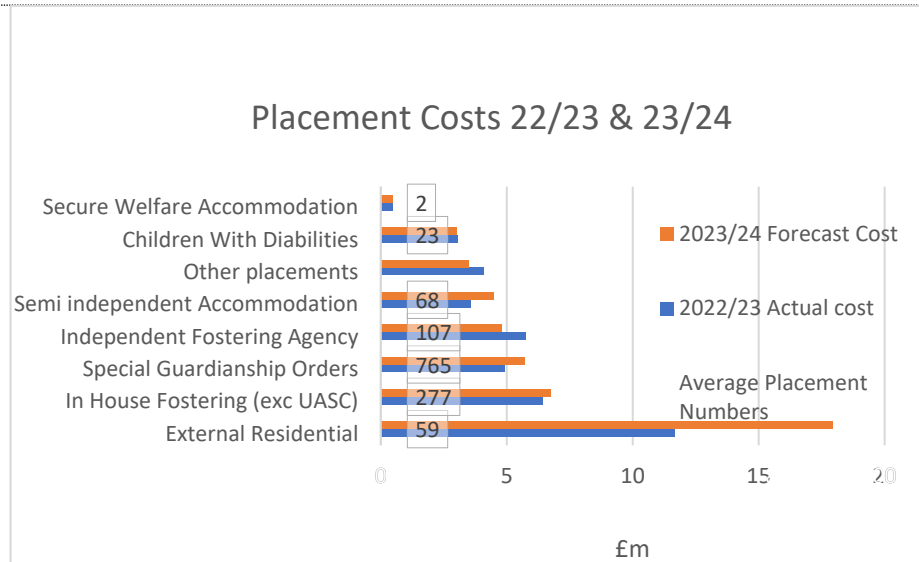
Of the committee's £6.9m Budget Implementation Plans (BIP) £4m are forecast to fall short this year representing a 42% delivery rate.

1.7.4. Details of the BIPs set to fall short of the target are shown below:

Financial RAG	Description	Total Savings	Savings Deliverable in Year	In Year Gap	Savings Deliverable Next Year	Undeliverable Savings
Red	A targeted campaign to increase numbers of fostering places available by 40 by OCT 2023	1.6		1.6		1.6
	Engage with partner to more cost effective way of working	0.3		0.3		0.3
	Edge of Care Staffing	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
	On-call service review	0.3		0.3		0.3
	Rebase the MAST budget	1.2	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
	Review care leaver offer to ensure access to support continues post 21	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0
	Sufficiency and Placement Mix - identify and transition 18 year-old Care expedite transfer to Council / Social Housing	0.5		0.5		0.5
	Decentralise funding to increase efficiency	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2
Children & Families Total		4.6	1.3	3.3	0.3	3.0
Red	Max opportunities across TS, C&F and SENDSARS for collaboration work to drive efficiencies in Home to School transport	0.4		0.4		0.4
Education & Skills Total		0.4		0.4		0.4
Total RED BIPS		4.9	1.3	3.7	0.3	3.3

- 1.7.5. **Placement costs continue to create overspends for the service** The key overspends in the service relate to placements with external residential a particular issue. These are forecast to exceed the previous year's costs by £6.6m. This sits alongside undelivered targets from the previous year of £2m.

The average placement is £5,400 per week. However, due to a limited number of places in the city, the most complex children can cost much more. Actions are being taken to ensure that the right costs for placements are being met by all elements including education and where possible health. High-cost placements are also being reviewed.



1.7.6. The number of children in care is fairly stable Even though there is an increase in demand at the front door, we are maintaining our number of children in care that is with a backdrop of increased Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children. The number of looked after children has reduced from 674 (2021), to 666 (2022) to 653 (2023). This is low in contrast to comparators. This impacts on the cost of placements given the cases tend to be more complex and therefore more expensive.

1.7.7. We are struggling to recruit foster carers The savings proposal for £1.6m to increase fostering placements this year is also forecast to not be delivered. Marketing is taking place, but our number of foster carers is remains static. Nationally this has been an issue since the pandemic as older foster carers decided to exit the market and there is not the like for like recruitment to new foster carers.

Foster placements has dropped from 71.0% to 65.1%, this has caused the major rise to the number of children placed in children’s homes, secure units, and hostels (including semi-independent living) from 19.0% to 25.1%, which is largely higher than comparators (range 12% to 16%).

This needs to be seen in the changes to our placement mix- more young people who we look after are young asylum-seeking children – who historically have been less likely to be placed within family-based care. A project is underway to increase Supported Lodgings – which should impact the use of semi-independent living. Whilst we want to increase the offer across the city, we are specifically working to target communities who have expressed an interest in supporting

young people from asylum seeking backgrounds and who we have not historically reached effectively.

1.7.8. **£2m undelivered savings proposal from 22/23 adds to the committee overspend** Integrated Commissioning budgets are forecast to overspend by £2m in recognition of the unachieved saving from 2022/23 which reduced the base budgets this year. The saving related to leveraging additional funding from Health partners.

1.7.9. **Home to school transport is set to cause a £3m overspend this year** Further demand in home to school transport costs are forecast to create a £3m overspend against budgets this year. Whilst not included in the month 6 position, the new school year has increased this overspend with a further 89 children now requiring transportation to school. Sheffield City Council are now supporting over 2,360 children with transportation to school, this has increased by almost 1,000 children in 4 years.

An overarching review of home to school transport has now commenced to drive actions to reduce costs and no of trips provided. The impact of this work is unlikely to deliver measurable results this year but should reduce the overspend in the longer term.

1.7.10.	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is forecast to overspend by £0.6m	DSG Full Year Forecast £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
		Children & Families	6.9	6.9	(0.0)
		Education & Skills	231.4	230.9	0.5
		Community Services	0.6	0.6	0.0
		Integrated Commissioning	3.4	3.3	0.1
		Organisational Strategy P&D	0.2	0.2	0.0
		Total	242.6	242.0	0.6

The main cause of overspend in Education & Skills is due to increases in Early Years EHCP plans and Special Educational Needs.

The integrated commissioning overspend relates to back dated costs of increased Medical Services contract.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The recommendations in this report are that the Policy Committee notes their 2023/24 budget forecast position and takes action on overspends.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the budget process itself will involve significant consultation as the Policy Committees develop their budget proposals

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will use equality impact analyses as a basis for the development of their budget proposals in due course.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The primary purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the City Council's revenue budget monitoring position for 2023/24.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer of an authority is required to report on the following matters:

- the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of determining its budget requirement for the forthcoming year; and
- the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

- 4.3.2 There is also a requirement for the authority to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer when making decisions on its budget requirement and level of financial reserves.

- 4.3.3 By the law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels and regard must be had to any report of the Chief Finance Officer on the required level of reserves under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will consider climate implications as they develop their budget proposals in due course.

4.4 Other Implications

- 4.4.1 No direct implication

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To record formally changes to the Revenue Budget.