



## 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:** 8<sup>th</sup> February 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 (<b>report/appendix</b>) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (<b>insert relevant paragraph number</b>) 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

| <b>Lead Officer to complete:-</b>   |   |
|---|---|
| 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 (24/01/24)  |
|   | Legal: Nadine Wynter (25/01/24)   |
|   | Equalities & Consultation:<br>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   | <b>SLB member who approved submission:</b> <i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>   |
| 3   | <b>Committee Chair consulted:</b> <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. |
|   | <b>Lead Officer Name:</b><br><i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>   |
|   | <b>Job Title:</b><br><i>Strategic Director, Children’s Services</i>   |
| <b>Date:</b> 25/01/24   |   |

## **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.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 I presented with Kate Josephs to Leaders in Education at a Learn Sheffield event. This was an opportunity to both set out the City Goals, the Council Corporate plan and our areas of priority over the coming few years. These are ensuring that children and young people are in school and attending and supporting our schools with the increase in of children with neurodiversity and social emotional and mental health issues. We are also looking at focusing on communication and speech and language development.

I have also met with Stephen Betts and had a very productive working afternoon looking at our areas of priority and areas of focus we want to collaborate on. This will feed into the Sheffield Education Strategy we are looking to work on over the coming year.

I also attended the Education Strategy Partnership where we focused on how the right group of leaders in the education system could work in partnership to help deliver elements of the City Goal. The initial focus for the group whilst developing the Governance and Strategy based on the City Goals once agreed is attendance and how we reaffirm the social contract with families about the importance of being in school every day and engaging with a curriculum which ensures the feeling of belonging.

I continue to work with health colleagues through the Children's Delivery Group and Health Care Partnership to both look at joint commissioning services and also raising the profile of children and young people's needs in the health system. Our priorities for the coming few years are: Best Start in Life; Neurodiversity, SEMH and Speech Language and Communication; and how we share risk and resource to ensure our children with most complex needs are placed in a local home in Sheffield. A recent and relevant issue which we are working together on to support individual children and schools is the scarcity of ADHD medicine which is having a profound impact for a significant number of our children and young people.

Exciting work about how we engage with our children and young people around Belonging is being planned and we hope to be able to showcase some exciting work at a future Policy Committee meeting. The Belonging Framework is how 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.

Work on Race Equality is ongoing. We had a successful inspection of Aldine House which moved us from inadequate to requires improvement which shows the journey we are taking to improve our focus on children in our homes. Feedback from the inspection was particularly impressed with our work on equality and diversity which again helpfully shows

our focus on this area and on addressing inequalities. The next meeting of the Education Race Equality meeting is taking place this term.

### **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 Children and Families Commissioning**

### **1.3.1 Quality of placements for children who are Looked After and Care Leavers**

The monitoring of external providers who provide residential care for our children who are looked after is a key element of the maintain and sustain workstream within our placement sufficiency strategy. The External Placements Commissioning team are responsible for undertaking quality assurance monitoring visits to our contracted providers. This continuous process of quality assurance provides assurance on the quality of care being provided.

Quality assurance visits are undertaken to all providers and the team offer enhanced visits and will work restoratively with providers and offer on-going support if a provider is judged 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' by Ofsted. In the event of safeguarding concerns or an inadequate judgement Children's Social Care will be immediately informed, and the Action Planning process will be implemented.

In the period February 2023 – January 2024 a total of 63 External Residential Providers were visited by Commissioning Officers. This includes visits to children in specialist residential settings for children with complex needs and disabilities identified as being in scope of the National Review. The furthest provider visited was 150 miles from Sheffield. Visits were prioritised by age of child placed, Ofsted rating, social care concerns or new providers. Regulation 44 & 45 Reports are also now reviewed offering additional intelligence for visit planning.

In respect of semi independent provision the team have visited 18 providers most of whom have had multiple visits to support with service improvement in preparation for Ofsted registration. All of the 16+ accommodation is either in Sheffield or within close proximity to the City.

### **1.3.2 Regulations for providers of supported accommodation for children who are Looked After**

From October 2023, all providers of supported accommodation for children who are looked after or care leavers up to the age of 18 have to be regulated by Ofsted. The application process has three stages (stage 1: application, stage 2: references and checks, stage 3: site visits and fit person interviews) providers were required to complete stage one before 28<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Ofsted are aiming to register providers before April 2024 when the new graded inspection regime for supported accommodation will come into effect.

In Sheffield we currently have young people placed with 13 providers on the 16+ Supported Accommodation Framework. All 13 providers have successfully completed stage 1, two providers are at stage 2 and have not yet been allocated an inspector. Six providers have been allocated an inspector but have not yet had site visits/fit person interviews. Two providers have had their site visits and are awaiting a decision from Ofsted. Three providers have been successfully fully registered.

Throughout 2023 the External Placements Commissioning and Children's Commissioning Team have supported providers to understand the registration process and complete stage 1 of the process. From November 2023 weekly panel meetings have been held jointly with Children's Social Care to assess provider progress and co-ordinate support to all providers with the remaining stages of the process. The meetings are chaired by the Director of Children and Families. The External Placements Commissioning Team have carried out site visits and produced reports / action plans for all providers with placements. Progress has been RAG rated and co-ordinated action is taken to support providers to make improvements and better understand the regulations before Ofsted site visits take place.

## **1.4 Safeguarding**

### **1.4.1 Early Help Assessment**

We have developed a new Early Help Assessment designed to be the main assessment tool for the Sheffield Early Help System. There has been a long-standing ambition to create one Early Help Assessment form to be used as the main assessment tool across the Sheffield Early Help System. Following consultation with multi-agency partners, we now have a new form agreed and ready to use. It will replace the FCAF, the Early Help Part 1 form and many other assessment and referral forms.

The SEND Graduated Response is also evolving to incorporate the Early Help Assessment. The current Extended support plan is being replaced with the "Early Help SEND Assessment" which is essentially a two-part document, with Part 1 being the new Early Help Assessment and Part 2 being the essential additional elements of the Extended Support plan. Citywide SENCOs will be providing coaching sessions for locality SENCOs to support with this transition.

#### **The benefits of the new Sheffield Early Help Assessment are:**

- Will reduce bureaucracy for frontline workers who identify additional support needs for children & families.
- The new assessment form should produce better quality referral information for targeted early help services.
- Families should not need to have multiple assessments to complete slightly different referral forms for early help provision – in line with Trauma Informed principles.
- More trauma informed design and with prompt to identify young carers and significant events impacting on the child/family.
- Signs of Safety based format spanning education, health & care, family & community factors.
- Specific section for child's voice including asking their view on their hopes & wishes for the future.

## **1.4.2 Residential Service**

The work on the DfE New Build 2 bed children's home continues in partnership between Children's Services and CDS, and the planning application has now been submitted. There have been some slight changes to where the new build will be situated on the Rushey Meadows site due to some of the trees but, this has been resolved. Communication about the new build has taken place with Holt House School and Ofsted. The timeline for completion is Feb 2025, with the building work due to commence Summer 2024. The home's statement of purpose will be for 2 children/young people to reside there.

Our children's homes are coming to the end of the Ofsted Inspection cycle (March) and currently have just two inspections outstanding and a monitoring visit. We will then move into the next inspection cycle which we welcome as we are keen to show how the development work over the last year across all the homes will be embedded.

Since Autumn Mulberry Lodge has re-opened as a Short Break home. This has been a fantastic development for our children and families in Sheffield. The home has undergone some renovation work, with new bathrooms and flooring being fitted. The bedrooms have been decorated to a lovely standard which each room having a different theme which the children can choose. Children have now started to access respite and they enjoyed a lovely Christmas party in December. There are on-going plans for Rushey Meadows to re-open as short breaks this year.

## **1.5 Short Breaks**

The Short Breaks Framework Agreement has been extended for 12 months to March 2025. Upscaling activity has commenced, with 40 additional places being secured through existing Providers and this has reduced the waiting list to around 10 children. There are 12 current providers on the Framework, with 2 new Providers joining next month. This will create at least 20 additional places aimed at further reducing the waiting list, providing capacity for new referrals and offering some children an enhanced package based on need.

Work is required to take place alongside education to ensure that short breaks and Alternative education provision is being looked at in conjunction with each other.

Continuing health care needs to be examined and the tripartite funding agreement needs to be reviewed.

Transitions with children with mental health need to have a clear pathway. Developing a working group to look at this.

## **1.6 Race Equality**

Children's Services have an anti-racist action plan and subgroup who meet on a monthly basis with representatives from across Children's Services. We have a plan in place for Race Equality Week and starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> February all services will be taking part in the 5 day challenge. There are various ways this will be delivered. In Children and Families, it will be cascaded down via Service Managers to be delivered in smaller team groups as feedback from last year identified this as working better than larger groups. Education will be leading on how it is delivered in their area.

**Other upcoming actions:**

- The Fostering Service are identifying a provider to work specifically with the service (including foster carers) to deliver training around anti-racism and cultural competence.
- The Family Intervention Service have a day set out Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May with an identified facilitator looking at anti-racism and how to become an ally.
- Residential managers will be going around to the individual homes to do the 5-day challenge with staff groups.
- Mentorship – we are exploring working with Nottingham university to provide mentorship training however we are also looking at what is being delivered by the rest of the council around mentorship.

**Plans to be completed by March 2024:**

- Interviews with BAME staff in area of social work where they are underrepresented and interviews with staff from BAME background where they are in managerial positions.
- Experiential days to start February 2024- for staff to come and work in areas they may not have generally applied for to experience what it would be like working in this field.

**1.7 Educational excellence**

Pat Butterell, Assistant Director of School Effectiveness at Sheffield Council, and Bob Cuff, School Advisor have been actively engaging with schools on a regular basis, fostering positive relationships both directly within schools and through the Learn Sheffield initiative. Meanwhile, Bob has been dedicated to advancing the cause of the Race Equality Commission (REC) and is actively involved in a project aimed at supporting BAME school leaders. Additionally, Bob has been collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce and the Sheffield universities to enhance representation at the school governance level.

Addressing attendance challenges remains a top priority, and collaborative efforts with Learn Sheffield have led to the development of city-wide strategies. We are pleased to note that the Department for Education (DFE) has expressed a keen interest in joining our efforts to tackle attendance issues.

**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.

**1.7.1 Lifelong Learning and Skills – post-16 and adult education.**

Within the Education Directorate, our council run post-16 SEND education provision at Sheaf Training was inspected as part of Lifelong Learning and Skills (LLS) in May 2023. We received a "Good" report for this whole service, however Sheaf Training and our Adult Learning provision (FACES) were both identified as providing Outstanding education provision to some of the most vulnerable young people and adults in the city.

Sheaf Training enrolled 172 learners in September 2023 with complex needs and SEND, whilst our LLS Apprenticeship team supported and taught 191 apprentices during 2022/23. Family, Adult and Community Education, through direct delivery teaching and working with

subcontracted community organisations, recorded 2,776 enrolments onto adult or community learning courses during 2022/23 and a further 676 enrolments onto the national adult numeracy based “Multiply” programme. LLS continues to work closely with SYMCA, colleagues in Opportunity Sheffield and in other areas of the Council to develop learning and progression pathways for young people post-16 and for adult learners.

## 1.8 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.

### 1.8.1 Overview of PVI (Private, Voluntary and Independent) settings and Ofsted grades (as of 11/1/2024)

Current Group Care settings = 122 (including 2 maintained Schools) Childminders = 190

| Ofsted Grade         | Outstanding | Good | Require improvement | Inadequate | Newley registered | Met | Not met | Agency childminders                         |
|----------------------|-------------|------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|-----|---------|---|
| Group care Providers | 22          | 90   | 2                   | 1          | 7                 |     |         |   |
| Child-minders        | 12          | 140  | 2                   | 1          | 14                | 22  | 0       | 9 - @ home childcare<br>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 21 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)

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. There are 5 childminders who have informed us they may retire or de-register with Ofsted this year.

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).

To support early years practitioners, teachers and professionals across the city Speak up for Sheffield free training is being delivered by Community Early Years Practitioners at least 3 times per term applying different delivery models to suit all sectors. The Introduction to training sessions help practitioners to understand brain development in relation to Speech, Language and Communication skills on a universal level. A record of setting attendance is kept and maintained, since the launch of the training in 2020, 255 early years professionals have accessed this training. To further develop practitioner knowledge and therefore enhance the outcomes for all children, the Speak up for Sheffield Language Champions is



delivered over a 6-month period, looking at specific language difficulties and disorders, it explores the impact of the environment and shares strategies for practitioners to put in place. The training also supports the identification of speech, language and communication needs and appropriate onward referrals.

### 1.8.2 Overview of school early years settings and Ofsted grades (as of 11/01/24)

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. These two schools were inspected by Ofsted November / December 2023, yet I have no knowledge of the Early Years inspection outcome.

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, however due to retirement we have 1 vacancy to fill by April 2024.

Current workload being carried out by EY Quality, Access and Moderation Manager and 1 EY Quality and Access Officer.

EYFS Leads and coordinators across the city are engaging well with us, 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).

Our own High Needs post-16 education provision at Sheaf Training was inspected as part of Lifelong Learning and Skills in May 2023 and within a Good report, was identified as providing Outstanding education provision.

### 1.8.3 Early Years Good Level of Development 2022/23

| Sheffield headline data.  | National headline data.  | Comparison (Sheffield to National) |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Good Level of Development (GLD)<br>64.9%                              | Good Level of Development (GLD)<br><b>67.2%</b>                              | <b>-2.3%</b>                       |
| Highest Scoring area –<br>Physical Development – Gross<br>Motor 94.3% | Highest Scoring area –<br>Physical Development – Gross<br>Motor <b>92.1%</b> | <b>+2.2%</b>                       |
| Lowest Scoring area –<br>Literacy – Writing 68.9%                     | Lowest Scoring area –<br>Literacy – Writing <b>71%</b>                       | <b>-2.1%</b>                       |
| Boys –<br>58.5%   | Boys –<br><b>61%</b>   | <b>-2.5%</b>                       |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Girls –<br>71.2%                           | Girls –<br><b>74%</b>  | <b>-2.8%</b>                                      |
| Disadvantaged –<br>48.9%                   | Disadvantaged –  | <b>NA</b>   |
| EAL – 50.4% / not EAL –69.8%               | Known or believed to be other than English <b>69%</b><br>First language known or believed to be English – <b>62%</b> / | <b>EAL – -18.6%</b><br><b>Not EAL - +7.8%</b>     |
| SEN – School Support – 22.7% / EHCP – 2.8% | SEN – SEN Support – <b>24%</b> / EHCP – <b>4%</b>  | <b>SEN support – -1.3%</b><br><b>EHCP – -1.2%</b> |

### Regional headlines

Yorkshire and Humber – 66.8% (+ 2.3% from 2021/22)

#### 1.8.4 What are we doing to support schools this year?

Specific areas of training linked to results

- Maths based training (e.g. Making Maths Marvellous, maths all around us)
- Literacy based training (e.g. drawing club, mark making to writing, squiggle me into a writer)
- Stepping into English EAL focus
- Reception Assessment Networks
- EAL Champions – funded
- Level 2 SEND Qualification Understanding Babies and Young children with SEND (funded place for every early years provider to access)
- Focus on ELG (training delivered earlier to raise awareness and understanding) - New to EYFS Profile (delivered earlier and both online and face to face)

Allocated Quality and Access Officers

- EYFS Coordinator / lead mailing list
- EYFS Briefings with standing agenda items – transition, assessment, safeguarding, training updates
- Reception Assessment Networks

#### 1.8.5 Early Years Childcare Reforms

The Childcare Reforms were announced in the Spring 2023 Budget and include a range of measures, with two central programmes:

- Extended Entitlement
- Wraparound Care

Currently, parents who work more than 16 hours a week and earn less than £100,000 are entitled to 30 hours a week funded childcare for children aged 3-4.

- From **April 2024**, working parents of 2-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours of free childcare.
- From **September 2024**, 15 hours of free childcare will be extended to all children from the age of 9 months.

- From **September 2025**, working parents of children under the age of 5 will be entitled to 30 hours free childcare per week

The Wraparound Programme aims to ensure that all children of primary school age (Reception to Year 6 inclusive) receive wraparound care between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday in term time, where demand is evidenced.

The underlying aim of both these programmes is to improve economic performance and productivity by enabling more parents/carers to access work, or return to the labour market after having a child.

The Local Authority considers the reforms an invaluable opportunity to improve outcomes for Sheffield children. Early Years are critical for a child's development and children who use a Funded Early Learning place show greater levels of achievement in their school years. Through play activities children benefit by learning language, developing physical and social skills and being prepared for the routine of going to school.

## 1.9 Measles Outbreak

As members will be aware, in November and December 2023 we had cases of measles linked to a school in North Sheffield. Measles is a very infectious disease with potentially serious health consequences. There are also significant issues for school attendance if an outbreak escalates as children can be asked to stay away from school. We can see from the West Midlands (where they are currently have a significant measles outbreak) that this can lead to serious ongoing issues for health and education.

In Sheffield we have successfully contained the outbreak though intensive work between our Council Public Health Team, UK Health Security Agency, the school, colleagues from Sheffield Children's hospital, Primary Care and wider partners. The Mass Vaccination Plan was activated promptly by the Director of Public Health and system partners across health and education delivered additional vaccination in the school in a coordinated and successful way which will have prevented further cases.

Public Health have worked over a number of years to have cross-system plans for these scenarios. Public Health Grant funding is set aside for these eventualities so that we can respond promptly to protect the health and education of our children and young people. Our schools often have trusted and long-standing relationships with the families and communities they serve and in this situation that was a valuable and important part of reducing the ongoing spread of this measles outbreak.

## 1.10 Special Educational Needs

- 1.10.1 The area of SEND has been on a significant improvement journey since the Ofsted of 2018 where seven areas of significant weakness were identified. In 2022 the Ofsted revisit evidenced that six out of seven areas of weakness had made sufficient progress, with a seventh area of multi-agency transitions deemed to have made insufficient progress. This led to the Accelerated Progress Plan linked to Multi-Agency Transitions. This was monitored by the Department for Education from May 2022 until May 2023 when the Sheffield SEND Partnership was stepped down from monitoring, due to the demonstration of multi-agency working and accelerated progress in the area.

From June we have been working on the SEND partnership improvement programme, in line with the new Area SEND and AP Ofsted Framework as released in January 2023.

The Self Evaluation Framework has been discussed at the committee and does show the priorities we are working on both strategically and operationally. Due to the speed of the transformation the SEF is undergoing a significant update in line with recommendations from the Children Young People Delivery Group and clear priorities on Early Years, Neuro-Disability and considering our most complex children.

We have seen success in the work that we are doing on taking a relational approach across Statutory Assessment, this includes:

- The introduction of a Joint Assessment Process which puts children and families at the heart of assessment and allows a 'tell it once approach' – this approach is gaining momentum and receiving positive feedback from families who are feeling empowered and heard.
- The Joint Assessment Process has also reduced the waiting times for Educational Psychology, reducing the cost to the council and also helped to increase the 20 weeks compliance from 30% - 80% over the last 3 months – this should be a sustainable model.
- The support that is being delegated from needs assessment decisions is helping more children to be supported within a graduated approach, which has seen a reduction in the number of needs assessments coming through.

More work is needed in this space and is being supported and motivated by:

- The consultation report which shows the need for change and makes appropriate recommendations, feeding into
- The work we are completing with IMPOWER linked to transformational change in this space, linked to joint decision making, including transport, how we support our children with neurodiversity and SEMH and introduce the Valuing SEND Tool to change the conversation.

We are clear we need better relationships in this space across the partnership and with children, young people, and families.

We need to enable education providers from 0-25 to support children and young people to achieve their outcomes and aspirations which will come through the maturing SEND Transformational Change Programme.

## **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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