

Public Document Pack



NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting	Children and Families Advisory Panel
Date and Time	Tuesday, 4th February, 2020 at 1.30 pm
Place	Chute Room, Ell Court, The Castle, Winchester
Enquiries to	members.services@hants.gov.uk

John Coughlan CBE
Chief Executive
The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

FILMING AND BROADCAST NOTIFICATION

This meeting may be recorded and broadcast live on the County Council's website. The meeting may also be recorded and broadcast by the press and members of the public – please see the Filming Protocol available on the County Council's website.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. DEPUTATIONS

To receive any deputations notified under Standing Order 12.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements the Chairman may wish to make.

6. CHILDREN'S RECEPTION TEAM AND MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB UPDATE (Pages 7 - 16)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the Children's Reception Team and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

7. UPDATE ON HAMPSHIRE FOSTERING SERVICES (Pages 17 - 26)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services with an update on Fostering Services within Hampshire.

8. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT (Pages 27 - 34)

To receive a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of Hampshire County Council's Violence Reduction Unit.

9. UPDATE ON CHILDREN IN CARE AND CORPORATE PARENTING (Pages 35 - 48)

To receive a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Children in Care and Corporate Parenting within Hampshire.

ABOUT THIS AGENDA:

On request, this agenda can be provided in alternative versions (such as large print, Braille or audio) and in alternative languages.

ABOUT THIS MEETING:

The press and public are welcome to attend the public sessions of the meeting. If you have any particular requirements, for example if you require wheelchair access, please contact members.services@hants.gov.uk for assistance.

County Councillors attending as appointed members of this Committee or by virtue of Standing Order 18.5; or with the concurrence of the Chairman in connection with their duties as members of the Council or as a local County Councillor qualify for travelling expenses.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

AT A MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Tuesday, 15th October, 2019

Chairman:
p Councillor David Keast

p Councillor Martin Boiles
p Councillor Fran Carpenter
p Councillor Pal Hayre
Councillor Robert Taylor

p Councillor Ann Briggs
p Councillor Peter Edgar MBE
a Councillor Jackie Porter
p Councillor Malcolm Wade

66. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies were received.

67. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were received.

68. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed.

69. **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations received.

70. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman asked if any members had visited a Children's Home and wanted to feedback.

Cllrs Briggs & Carpenter shared details of a recent visit to Berryview, noting how modern and child friendly the home was and that the care was at a high standard.

71. UPDATE ON THE PREVENT STRATEGY

The Children and Families Advisory Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the PREVENT strategy. This included an overview of how the County Council safeguard children when identified as posing a potential risk in relation to extremism or radicalisation.

Members noted that despite several high-profile incidents in the UK in recent years, referral rates in Hampshire have remained stable. Officers explained that there are extremist groups operating in Hampshire including animal rights and extremists left/right wing groups.

Members noted that of the individuals referred, the majority were male and under the age of 20. It was also highlighted that more children and young people were referred than adults and these were mainly received from schools. Officers detailed how all PREVENT referrals are referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub via the Children's Reception team (CRT). A strategy discussion is held to enable information to be shared across partner agencies to inform the decision-making process.

In response to questions members found that;

- PREVENT was a statutory responsibility for the County Council.
- Agencies have processes in place to cover the transition to adulthood to guard against individuals being missed once outside of Children's Services remit.
- Counter-Terrorism updates are received but they are unable to forecast, although active areas can be identified.
- Referrals in relation to children lead to direct engagement for adults when necessary and appropriate.
- There are process to enable joined up working with other counties.

Resolved: That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the update provided in this report regarding the progress made in embedding the PREVENT strategy across Hampshire County Council's Children's Services Department.

72. HAMPSHIRE YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM (HYOT) SERVICE PLAN

The Children and Families Advisory Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on Hampshire's Youth Offending Team's (YOT) Service Plan. This plan is a statutory requirement of the Youth Justice Board.

The Panel noted that Hampshire's YOT worked with approximately 500 children at any one time, some of which can be subject to a statutory order while others are managed under Youth Crime Prevention.

The Panel heard how the Service Plan combines both Youth Justice Board and Hampshire County Council requirements and includes an overview of the previous year's achievements and the risks to future delivery and how they will be managed.

Cllrs also received the YOT priorities which had been created with reference to the Serving Hampshire Strategic Plan 2017-21 and the Children and Young People's Plan 2019-21.

Resolved: That the panel note the work of Hampshire Youth Offending Team and Youth Justice Plan for Hampshire 2019/20.

73. **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - RESTRUCTURE**

The Children and Families Advisory Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services proposing a restructure to its sub-committee, the Corporate Parenting Board.

Members noted the two core reasons for the proposed restructure. Firstly, there were issues raised in the recent Ofsted inspection surrounding the Board's effectiveness at engaging with outside agencies such as Health, Police & District Councils. Secondly, the Board had been established for two years and there are lessons learnt this establishment period.

The current membership of the Corporate Parenting Board were present, and noted the positive role the Board had in playing a real role in Corporate Parenting and welcomed the suggested changes to strengthen this role.

Members considered the proposed Terms of Reference and noted that the new Corporate Parenting Board structure is designed to strengthen the principle that Corporate Parenting is a responsibility for all Councillors and Officers.

Resolved:

- To dissolve the existing Corporate Parenting Board arrangements as a sub-committee of the Children and Families Advisory panel with immediate effect.
- To consider the draft Terms of Reference for a newly constituted Corporate Parenting Board and recommend to Cabinet and the County Council that a new Board is established.
- (Subject to agreement of above recommendation) To consider the draft update to the Children and Families Advisory Panel Terms of Reference and recommend to Cabinet and the County Council that these be agreed.
- To delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, to update the draft Terms of Reference identified in paragraphs 3 and 4 as required to ensure consistency with the County Council's Constitution prior to their submission to Cabinet.

74. **VIRTUAL REALITY LEARNING**

The Children and Families Advisory Panel received a verbal update and demonstration from the Director of Children's Services in relation to Virtual Reality Learning.

Cllrs took part in an interactive session with the Virtual Reality technology which has been used at recruitment and training events for Adoption & Fostering. Members noted how immersive the technology was and the impact this would have on prospective carers.

Resolved: That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the use of Virtual Reality Learning.

Chairman, Children and Families
Advisory panel

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Child and Families Advisory Panel
Date:	4 February 2020
Title:	Children's Reception Team (CRT) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Update
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Marston, Service Manager

Tel: 023 92244096

Email: Sarah.marston@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update members on activity within the Children's Reception Team (CRT) and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This update will include information on the number of contacts and referrals received by Children's Services Department (CSD), as well as the findings of a recent review of the service.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the update provided in this report in respect of CRT and MASH and the role that this service undertakes for Children's Services.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to update members of CFAP on how CRT/MASH works and the role that it performs for Children's Services. This report will outline staffing levels and the level of activity in terms of contacts and referrals to the service. A comprehensive review of the service has recently been completed, which has led to a number of action points to further improve the service. In addition to this review CRT and MASH are always scrutinised as part of any OFSTED inspection, either for Hampshire or the Isle of Wight. CRT and MASH are considered by OFSTED to be strong and effective, ensuring that contacts and referrals are efficiently managed. It is imperative that there is a strong 'front door' to Children's Services as it is here that the direction of a child's case is determined.

Contextual Information

4. CRT and MASH make up the front door to Children's Services with all new contacts and referrals being managed by these two teams. CRT manage contacts and MASH manage referrals.
5. A contact is any piece of information that relates to a child or a family that comes into Children's Services. A contact can be in the form of an Inter-Agency Referral Form (IARF), a police notification, a telephone call or an email. In addition to these types of notifications there are child death notifications, requests for information for court reports, notifications of vulnerable children moving into Hampshire, or requests for information in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) etc.
6. CRT is staffed by non-Social Work qualified Child and Family Support Workers (CFSW); these workers all have some experience of working with children and families. They receive the contact and where appropriate will offer advice to the person making the contact. CRT will undertake some research on the family from CSD records and where possible they will also check the records of any adults within the household. The worker will write a case summary onto CSD records identifying any strengths and risks for the family which is then sent electronically to a team manager or assistant team manager for oversight and a decision.
7. It can be seen from the performance information below that CRT work on between 7000 -9000 contacts each month, with the majority of these contacts being on unopened cases. CRT are able to deal with 60-70% of contacts, with the remaining 30%-40% being progressed to a referral by the team manager.
8. If a team manager identifies a particular level of risk or need within a contact, then it is progressed to a referral and allocated to a MASH social worker for further investigation and enquiry. The MASH social worker has two working days to complete a child in need referral. The social worker will contact the parents, school health, police and where known, any voluntary agency that are working with the family. The information obtained is then analysed and a recommendation about future intervention is made by the social worker. This intervention could be that the case is closed within MASH with some advice being offered, the case transferred to the Family Support Service for early help or the case is progressed to a district Child Assessment and Support Team (CAST) for an assessment to be completed.
9. All child protection cases are managed within 2-4 hours depending on the nature of the concern. The information gathering process and analysis is the same as all other cases, however within the 2-4-hour timescale a strategy meeting involving police, a MASH manager and safeguarding nurse will take place. This discussion determines whether a referral meets the threshold for a child protection investigation. There are usually 10-20 strategy discussions each day. Once the strategy discussion is held the case transfers to the relevant district for a Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Team (CAST)

to undertake the investigation. The investigation can be undertaken jointly i.e. police and social worker, or single agency i.e. by a social worker or a police officer alone.

10. Please see Appendix 1 which shows data which indicates the volumes of contacts and referrals for Hampshire Children's Services. CRT and MASH also provide the front door for Isle of Wight Children's Services as part of the partnership. There are usually an additional 1500 contact per month for the island.

High Risk Domestic Abuse Meetings (HRDA)

11. In January 2019, MASH along with partner agencies introduced a daily High-Risk Domestic Abuse (HRDA) meeting. This is a daily meeting that considers the most serious domestic violence incidents that have taken place within the last few days. Attending this meeting are police, health, Children's MASH, Adult MASH and domestic abuse workers. The aim of the meeting is to identify risk and to put into place immediate safeguarding plans for the victim and the family. These meetings have been very successful in identifying unknown risk, formulating safeguarding plans and ensuring that the victim's voice is heard at an early stage. Children's MASH is notified of the cases being discussed at HRDA and an Assistant Team Manager will undertake research in order to be able to share with other partners and contribute to the decision making at the meeting. The HRDA meeting will consider cases that are new contacts/referrals as well as cases that are already open to Children's Services and have an allocated social worker.

Staffing

12. The staffing establishment for CRT is 20 CFSWs; it is generally not problematic to recruit to these posts. There is a wide range of experience within the current staff group including members of staff who have previously been police officers, youth workers and teachers. Given the volume of contacts and referrals the established staff team are currently supported by an extra five agency workers and some casual workers. There are some long-standing members of staff within the team however staff usually move onto other CSD posts after 2 -3 years for their own career development.
13. The staffing establishment for MASH is 17 qualified social workers, like other teams within Children's Services there is some reliance on agency social workers who cover for sickness absence, maternity leave, secondments and acting up and occasionally for vacancies until recruitment can take place. Currently there are 7 agency social workers within the MASH team with a recruitment campaign currently running.
14. All contacts and referrals managed by CRT/MASH are closely overseen by the management team which consists of 5.5 assistant team managers and 4 team managers.

15. Some of the factors that contribute to the challenges of retention of social workers in MASH are the lack of opportunities to undertake face to face work with children and families. During very busy periods it is also often difficult to enable staff to attend training courses and at times the flow of work is relentless.

OFSTED/Quality Assurance

16. In recognition of the fact that all Children's Services work commences in CRT/MASH, the service benefits from regular quality assurance through the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) who support with 4 multi agency MASH audits per year on specific themes. The audit panel always involves staff and managers from CRT/MASH and provide valuable learning opportunities. As well as learning opportunities the audits assist with OFSTED preparation. CRT/MASH are inspected by OFSTED both for the services provided for Hampshire and for the Isle of Wight. In the recent inspections for both local authorities OFSTED considered CRT/MASH to be strong, safe and efficient, providing a timely response to concerns and risks about children and families.

Front Door Review

17. As part of the wider transformation of Children's Services, the transformation team have undertaken a comprehensive review of CRT/MASH. This review was completed over several months considering contact/referral volumes, performance, staffing and processes within the service. The review was extremely useful and made a number of recommendations in respect of improving the service. Managers within CRT/MASH are working with the Service Development Team in order to implement these recommendations. This included initiatives such as automating referral feedback, working with police to reduce the number of 'unnecessary' police notifications, improving the interagency referral form and information on the website.

Conclusions

18. CRT/MASH are strong established teams forming the front door to Children's Services. All new Children's Services work starts within CRT/MASH and the team are managing high volumes of contacts and referrals.
19. Police and Health are co-located alongside MASH social workers and there is good interagency working with partners. It does however have to be acknowledged that pressure on partner resources does at times have a negative impact on Children's MASH. This is raised and challenged through appropriate channels such as Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
20. Like other social work teams in Children's Services MASH does have some reliance on agency workers however there are current recruitment campaigns to try to reduce the number of agency workers.

21. CRT/MASH is considered to be a strong, safe and efficient service by OFSTED and this is supported by findings from multi agency audits.
22. The introduction of HRDA has been successful in providing a prompt and efficient safeguarding response to victims of high-risk domestic violence.
23. The recent review of the service has identified a number of improvements that could be made and managers within the service are working on these recommendations.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment was completed at the start of the service

Appendix 1 - Contact, Referral, Sources and Outcomes

January 2018 – November 2019

Contacts 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of contacts on open cases	356	274	341	276	335	356	420	312	344	446	364	373
Number of contacts on new cases	6743	6279	7244	7109	7366	7410	8291	6597	7101	8308	8502	6572
Total	7099	6553	7585	7385	7701	7766	8711	6909	7445	8754	8866	6945

Contacts 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Number of contacts on open cases	415	401	525	363	355	337	401	383	409	438	530
Number of contacts on new cases	7411	6782	7891	6932	7831	6893	8293	6368	7262	8803	7548
Total	7826	7183	8416	7295	8186	7230	8694	6751	7671	9241	8078

Contact Sources 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Education	1397	1150	1680	1003	1287	1545	1249	96	1393	1515	1930	1424
Health	724	622	663	787	696	702	746	799	694	842	818	600
Police	3132	3011	3192	3397	3641	3288	3994	3328	2947	3534	3333	2667
Other	1490	1496	1709	1922	1742	1875	2302	2374	2067	2417	2421	1881
Total	6743	6279	7244	7109	7366	7410	8291	6597	7101	8308	8502	6572

Contact Sources 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Education	1474	1333	1991	939	1607	1493	1232	82	1177	1744	1575
Health	778	700	797	1198	1205	1125	1547	1378	1324	1650	1331
Police	2911	2715	2866	3103	3067	2735	3433	3000	2997	3427	2984
Other	2248	2034	2237	1692	1952	1540	2081	1908	1764	1982	1658
Total	7411	6782	7891	6932	7831	6893	8293	6368	7262	8803	7548

Contact Outcomes 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Closed	3514	3318	3765	3762	3886	3937	4280	3442	3786	4465	4317	3180
Progress to Referral	2120	2074	2423	2151	2441	2436	2883	2154	2269	2679	2820	2303
Other	1109	887	1056	1196	1039	1037	1128	1001	1046	1164	1365	1089
Percentage Resolved	69%	67%	67%	70%	67%	67%	65%	67%	68%	68%	67%	65%

Contacts Outcomes 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Closed	3755	3082	3460	3358	3438	3302	4317	3790	4077	5257	4087
Progress to Referral	2238	2156	2507	2341	2660	2418	2946	2079	2295	2723	2570
Other	1418	1544	1924	1233	1733	1173	1030	499	890	823	891

Percentage Resolved	70%	68%	68%	66%	66%	65%	64%	67%	68%	69%	66%
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Referral Sources 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Education	601	591	777	396	680	815	654	35	580	639	925	714
Health	418	318	381	399	425	351	399	372	316	402	394	325
Police	822	785	664	909	827	821	1032	886	686	928	762	721
Other	933	886	1050	998	1101	1272	1460	1372	1156	1278	1199	1002
Total	2774	2580	2872	2702	3033	3259	3545	2665	2738	3247	3280	2762

Referral Sources 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Education	669	673	914	494	880	567	634	37	702	992	950
Health	317	301	351	559	541	414	722	686	654	677	586
Police	714	651	633	937	709	576	772	921	644	696	664
Other	1082	1037	1267	1015	1085	863	1317	1154	1076	1142	1115
Total	2782	2662	3165	3005	3215	2420	3445	2798	3076	3507	3315

Referral Outcomes 2018	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Closed	1542	1366	1520	1404	1498	1569	1722	1389	1368	1785	1560	1386
Other	77	86	107	83	113	113	198	162	291	187	182	139
Progressed to Assessment	1155	1128	1245	1215	1422	1577	1625	1114	1079	1275	1538	1237
S47	224	217	170	188	209	242	300	113	218	166	308	169
C&F	915	899	1049	995	1195	1301	1305	970	844	1089	1215	1055
Timeliness	85%	88%	93%	94%	83%	80%	74%	90%	75%	88%	87%	94%
Percentage Progressed to Assessment	42%	44%	43%	45%	47%	48%	46%	42%	39%	39%	47%	45%

Referral Outcomes 2019	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Closed	1416	1236	1585	1406	1580	1174	1678	1396	1561	1945	1626
Other	151	158	210	276	105	74	118	104	178	150	204
Progressed to Assessment	1215	1268	1370	1323	1530	1172	1649	1298	1337	1412	1485
S47	148	147	219	183	245	210	266	199	223	254	273
C&F	1058	1095	1123	1356	1088	1099	1132	1192	1114	1253	923
Timeliness	96%	95%	95%	93%	93%	87%	88%	93%	84%	91%	94%
Percentage Progressed to Assessment	44%	48%	43%	44%	48%	48%	48%	46%	43%	40%	45%

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Children and Families Advisory Panel
Date:	4 February 2020
Title:	Update on Hampshire Fostering Services
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Sarah Smith, Service Manager – Fostering & Adoption

Tel: 01256 405982

Email: Sarah.smith2@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update for the Children and Families Advisory Panel on the work of the fostering service over the past twelve months. This report will look at the progress and developments made within the service, to support stable and appropriate placements for children in care, with in house foster carers. Lastly, the report considers plans for continued improvements to the service.

Recommendation

2. That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the update on Hampshire Fostering Services.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to;
 - Provide an update of progress over the last twelve months of the performance of the fostering service.
 - Provide headline data from the 2019 foster carers' survey.
 - Inform the Panel of the current work regarding fostering under the Modernising Placements Programme in foster carer payments, recruitment and marketing and culture and values work.
 - Provide an update of the work of placement stability workers within the fostering service.

Contextual Information

4. In April 2019, the launch of the new Regional Adoption Agency, Adopt South, required us to make changes to the Fostering and Adoption Recruitment Team. Previously, the team was responsible for the recruitment of both foster carers and adopters, whilst this change resulted in the adoption function transferring to Adopt South and a new team dedicated to the recruitment and assessment of foster carers for Hampshire. The changes also saw the recruitment of a new Team Manager and a new Marketing Officer.
5. Fostering Service Structure
There are four teams under the Fostering Service:
 - Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Team – this team is responsible for marketing, recruiting new foster carers and completing assessments for foster carer applicants.
 - Fostering Team East – this team is responsible for supporting foster carers, following their approval, in the East of the county.
 - Fostering Team West - this team is responsible for supporting foster carers, following their approval, in the West of the county.
 - Connected Carers Assessment Team – This team consists of an Assistant Team Manager (ATM) and a Children and Families Support Worker. The team coordinates all of the assessments of those wider family members, such as aunts, uncles and grandparents, who offer to look after children when their parents cannot. The assessments themselves are undertaken by either Social Workers based in our area social work teams or by Independent Social Workers. The ATM is responsible for allocating work to the assessing Social Workers and working with the Team Managers in the districts to provide expert advice regarding fostering regulations. The ATM also oversees all work completed by the Independent Social Workers.

Performance Data

6. The performance of the service is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that the care that our children receive is of high quality and that carers are receiving the support that they need in order to provide this. Below is a summary of some of the main performance areas for the service.
 - At the end of June 2019 there were 480 registered foster carers in Hampshire compared to 493 last quarter. This is a decrease of 13 foster carers between June 2019 and September 2019. This is made up of County Foster Carers (who are not related to or have an existing relationship with a child prior to placement), Connected Foster Carers (who have a relationship with the child) and Specialist Respite Carers (who provide short break care to disabled children). This decrease in

the number of foster carers mirrors the national shortage of foster carers and a challenging time for foster carer recruitment. This has been discussed in depth in both Sir Martin Narey's report 'Foster Care in England' 2018 and the 'State of the Nation' Report 2019. In Hampshire in the past 12 months (September 2018-September 2019) there was a decrease of 42 fostering households, (28 County Carers, 12 connected carers and two specialist respite carers). The majority of the reasons for carers leaving Hampshire however is not due to dissatisfaction with the service they received but mainly due to personal circumstances such as moving out of area, family commitments and retirement.

- Foster carer approvals have fallen over the last 3 years with 35 new fostering households approved in 2018-19. The recruitment of foster carers is a primary focus for the service and forms a significant part of the Modernising Placements Programme later discussed in point 7.
- Foster Carers are required to have an Annual Household Review to review their fostering registration under the fostering regulations to ensure they continue to meet the required expectations under the fostering standards. The completion of Household Reviews has improved to 82.5% within timescales; this compares to 57% in September 2018 demonstrating a significant improvement.
- Foster carers are required to receive regular supervision with the minimum frequency in Hampshire set to every six weeks. 83% of foster carer households received timely, recorded supervision in December 2019; this compares to 74% in December 2018, again a significant improvement.
- The service is also required to undertake annual unannounced visits to carers. The performance for this indicator has seen a dramatic improvement since last year with only 24 households overdue due an unannounced visit in September 2019 compared to 111 the same time in 2018.

Foster Carers Survey results 2019

7. In May 2019, the Fostering Service undertook the annual foster carers' survey.

Highlights of this survey were:

- Overall, 75% of carers reported they were able to access the training that is needed to support children in their care.
- 64% of foster carers were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality and quantity of support from the Fostering Service, this is equal to the response last year regarding satisfaction with the Fostering teams.

- There has been an increase in the satisfaction reported from foster carers in relation to the support they receive from children's social workers. In 2017/18 foster carers were asked how they rated the Children's teams' ongoing support. 29% rated this support as 'good' or 'very good' with 45% rating this support as 'okay'. In comparison for this year, 47% of foster carers rated their satisfaction with children's social workers as 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' which is a significant increase on last year. These responses are not exactly comparable due to the different response options; however, it does provide an indication of an improvement in an area that remains a high priority for focus for the year ahead. A number of initiatives are planned to support this improvement going forward.
- Another related area within the results of the annual survey where we need to focus our efforts is the relationships between the department and foster carers with this year's annual survey results showing that 41% of respondents felt 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' when rating whether they felt valued as a professional. A further 22% rated their satisfaction as 'neutral' and 31% 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'. This has informed the culture and values work discussed in point 10.1 of this report.

Modernising Placements

8. In House Fostering is a specific area of work within the wider 'Modernising Placements Programme'. This programme is being led by a dedicated senior manager to look at how we meet the care needs of our children across all placement types. This programme commenced in October 2019 and follows on from work that was undertaken since 2017 including foster carer surveys, work with Hampshire Fostering Network (HFN) and a foster carer workshop that was held in June 2019. Foster carers have been very positive about this programme of work to date and are actively involved in the development. Further reports providing detail about this work will be provided when the programme has matured.
9. The main objective for the fostering review project is to increase the number of Hampshire foster carers through improving and enhancing the offer from Hampshire from the very first point of contact through to the point where a foster carer leave. The project is divided into the following workstreams:
 - Enquiry – including marketing messages that are optimal to attract potential applicants and our customer service
 - Assessment – including reviewing our process, timescales, criteria for being a foster carer in Hampshire
 - Placement – including skills fees (payments to carers), reviewing what other local authorities and national agencies are doing from which we

can learn, and our partnerships with independent fostering agencies

- Retention – including the training and support we provide
- Culture and Values

Culture and Values Work

10. The area of culture and values has been included in the Modernising Placements Programme in recognition of foster carers stating that they want to feel more valued and a part of the professional team around the child.

11. An action plan has been identified which includes;

- Foster Carer involvement in district participation events.
- Improving relationships between Districts, Fostering and Foster Carers through joint training and foster carer involvement in Children's Services peer inspections.
- Increased understanding of roles/joint working.
- Improved working together at the start of new children's placements through placement planning meetings.
- Shared learning opportunities.
- Increased understanding of the fostering role.

10. This action plan is in its implementation stage, and has started to be delivered in several areas through:

- Foster carers have now joined peer inspection teams.
- New guidance created and issued regarding placement planning meeting recording and information that needs to be provided at the start of new Children's placements.
- District participation events have included foster carers.
- A presentation of the fostering role has been delivered to all managers and district staff.
- Bite-size learning in the districts have been extended to include foster carers.

- A new communication distribution list is being set up to improve direct communication with foster carers.
- A planned quarterly newsletter for foster carers to start in April 2020.

Foster Carer Payments

11. Foster carers had previously communicated to the department that accurate and timely foster carer payments were a problem for several foster carers and were impacting retention. Under the Modernising Placements Programme a Rapid Improvement Event was held in November 2019 to tackle this specific issue.
12. There are several recommendations from this event that are currently in process to improve the timeliness and accuracy of foster carer payments which include shorter term improvements as well as longer term planning for the future.

Marketing

13. In Quarter 2 (July-September 2019) there were some branding changes implemented. Whilst Finding Homes for Hampshire Children remains the overarching identity for fostering and adoption, the Fostering Recruitment and Assessment team are utilising a tweaked branding logo - Fostering Hampshire Children. This is to reflect the specific role of this service following the separation of the fostering and adoption recruitment functions.

14. Hampshire Fostering team introduced a 'Foster Focus' week in October 2019. During this week there was increased marketing online, on the radio and in print. There were daily events at different venues across the county. This resulted in a higher number of enquiries that week that have converted into a number of assessments.



28 October – 3 November 2019

15. Further changes to the recruitment strategy and marketing material are in progress as a result of work from the corporate Insight and Engagement Team. They have undertaken Mosaic profiling to support the team to market recruitment messages to the most likely household that match values, skills and experience that we are looking for to meet the needs of Hampshire children.

Placement Stability Workers

16. In February 2019, a new role was developed using existing staff to support foster carers and improve the placement stability of children. It was envisaged that these Placement Stability workers (PSW) would be tasked to provide time limited support, at times when carers needed it most and focussed on

the presenting need or behaviour that had the potential to cause the placement to become unstable.

17. Reporting in October 2019, it was found that they had effectively stabilised placements in 53% of the cases that had been referred. These are all children that may have otherwise needed a placement move. The feedback on the work from foster carers and professionals has been positive. There is still more work to do to continue building relationships with teams and foster carers and encourage referrals at the earliest opportunity to enable support.
18. The service has aims for future working that will allow PSWs to reach more foster carers at earlier stages. The aim over the next six months is for PSWs to become involved with foster carers at an earlier stage of difficulty rather than at crisis to work towards a higher level of placements stabilising following PSW involvement.

First Fostering Get Together

19. In November 2019, the Fostering Service held a 'Foster Carer Get Together' event. This was a social event for foster carers to come together from across the county in a relaxed environment. We were joined by over 45 foster carers and some managers from the service for social activities and lunch. We were able to provide foster carers with an update on our development work within the service under the Modernising Placements Programme as well as provided foster carers with an opportunity to socialise and build peer relationships. We are aware that many independent fostering agencies provide opportunities for social gatherings and this was very well received. Here are a few feedback comments from foster carers:

- *'Amazing event yesterday. So much effort and thought had gone into it, from shopping, catering, quiz, bingo, activities for children - all was fantastic. Loved that managers socialised with everyone, not just those they knew'.*
- *'A great big thank you for your idea of today, it was a great success, many carers agree it was so needed to meet up and share'.*
- *'This was fantastic I thought. Great turn out considering the weather and out of the way location. HCC put in so much effort to make it a fun and relaxed get together. Feeling the love'.*
- *'Was a real breath of fresh air from HCC. Please send our thanks through HFN and let them know that it would be nice if it was more regular!'*

Conclusion

20. The performance of the Fostering Service continues to be a focus of the department, and whilst there has been improvement made in the timeliness of Household Reviews and supervision recording, there has been a decline in

the number of approved foster carers over the past twelve months. Therefore, recruitment and retention is a current priority and is at the forefront of all the current development work.

21. The Foster Carers' Survey evidenced some improvement in foster carer satisfaction in regard to working relationships with Children's Social Workers with more work to do. It also highlighted that further work is required on foster carers feeling that they are treated as professionals and this had led the action planning in the culture and values workstream. A further survey will be conducted in May 2020.
22. A programme of work 'Modernising Placements' commenced in October 2019. This is a 12-month programme which has already informed marketing, website and branding refresh and has started work on foster carer payments and culture and values work.
23. The Fostering Service introduced Placement Stability Workers in February 2019, which has been positive and seen intensive work to stabilise children's placements at times of difficulty, preventing children's placement moves where possible.
24. The Fostering Service held its first foster carers' 'get together'; a social and networking event for foster carers which was very well received, and a further event will be planned this year.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report provides an update on the overall work of the fostering service and is not proposing changes that would lead to an impact on groups with protected characteristics.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Panel:	Children and Families Advisory Panel
Date:	4 February 2020
Title:	Hampshire County Council's Violence Reduction Unit
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Nikki Shave, Head of Hampshire Youth Offending Team

Tel: 07793 308996 **Email:** Nikki.Shave@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to brief the Children and Families Advisory Panel on the background, progress and plans for the development of a Violence Reduction Unit in Hampshire County Council.

Recommendation(s)

2. That the Children and Families Advisory Panel notes the progress made in developing a Violence Reduction Unit and receive progress reports at suitable intervals.

Executive Summary

3. This report seeks to:
 - Provide the background to Violence Reduction Units and their link to the Government's Strategy on Violent Crime.
 - Describe the Public Health approach to creating Violence Reduction Units.
 - Identify how the money is being spent for the year 2019/20
 - Detail the requirements for developing the Violence Reduction Unit 2020/21

Contextual Information

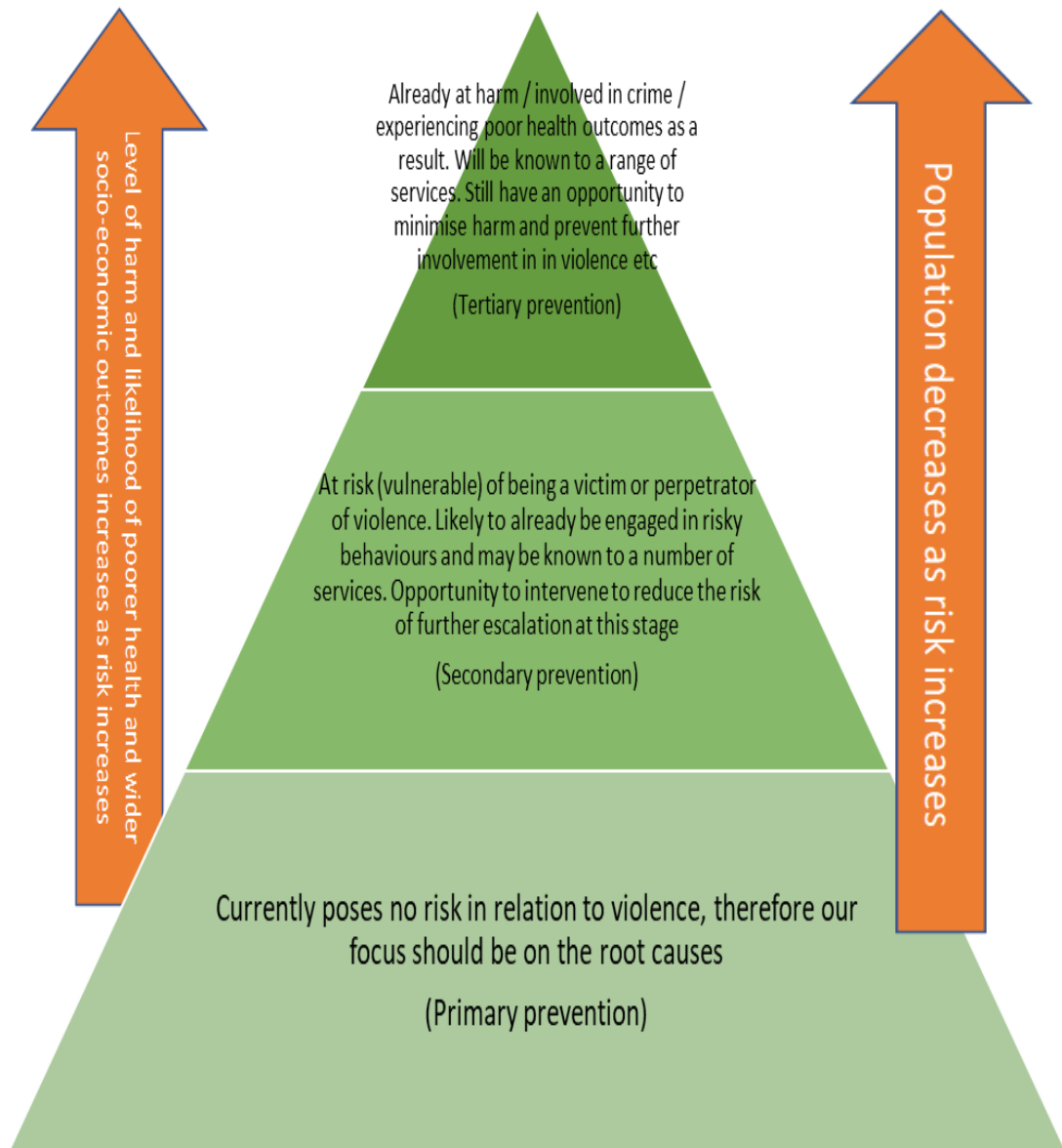
4. In April 2018 the government published its Serious Violence Strategy which set out the response to serious violence including knife crime, gun crime and homicide. The strategy places emphasis on early intervention and prevention, recognising the need to tackle the root causes of violence and prevent young people from becoming involved in crime in the first place. The strategy also recognised that the key to achieving good outcomes is with a partnership approach.

5. On 12th August 2019 the government announced that Hampshire's Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) was one of 18 areas to be granted a share of £35m to set up a Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). This share was in the region of £880,000.
6. Violence Reduction Units are designed to work with children and young adults between 14 and 25 years. They bring together different organisations, including the police, local government, health, community leaders and other key partners to tackle violent crime. This initial allocation of £880,000 must be spent by March 2020.
7. Violence Reduction Units take a Public Health Approach to understand and prevent violence. It uses evidence to understand the underlying causes and then targets interventions to address these causes. The Diagram below identifies the *steps of a Public Health Approach*:



Source: Adapted from World Health Organisation, 2019

8. These interventions are directed towards three distinct groups: a broad section of the population (universal or primary prevention), specific groups who are at risk (targeted selected or secondary prevention) and those who have already experienced violence (targeted indicated or tertiary prevention). The graphic below provides a visual description of the approach:



9. Accordingly, Violence Reduction Units will be required to allocate their resources in accordance with the above model.
10. Hampshire's OPCC share was £880,000, this was to be divided between the four Local Authorities with a proportion of the money going to the OPCC to oversee the development of the VRUs. Each Local Authority was allocated a proportion of the money to set up its own Violence Reduction Unit. These units were required to have a coordinator, analyst and administrator. Hampshire County Council was awarded £65,000 to set up its unit.
11. The remaining money was to provide the interventions. This money was distributed between the four authorities in accordance with the amount of violent crime committed in the area over the previous three years. Hampshire Local Authority was awarded £233,000 to provide these interventions. As this money must be spent by 31 March 2020, Local Authorities were advised to spend on interventions already commissioned or being delivered provided the

interventions linked to what was known to impact on violent crime.

12. Following consultation with partners the £233,000 is to be spent in the following way:

- Extension of Youth Crime Prevention to provide workers to Hampshire Pupil Referral Units in order to prevent children becoming involved in serious violence and criminal exploitation. This project will link with Children's Services specialist Willow Team that supports/protects children at risk of sexual/criminal exploitation.
Money allocated = £58,000
- Extension of Targeted Family Support currently commissioned by the Supporting Families Programme. 33 additional Intensive Family Support places will be funded delivered by current providers.
Money allocated = £80,000
- Money to the Willow Team to spot purchase mentoring from the St Giles Trust. This is for young people who are already being criminally exploited.
Money allocated = £25,000
- Money to Hampshire and the IOW Community Rehabilitation Company to develop a programme to target those 18 to 25-year olds who are at risk.
Money allocated = £12,000
- The development of education packages for both children and parents on the risks around violence and criminal exploitation.
Money allocated = £10,000
- Funding an additional training course to enable staff in Children's Services to deliver an intervention on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to children and their parents. In addition, the funding of a 'train the trainer' course for Stop Domestic Abuse.
Money allocated = £21,172
- A series of small grants to organisations supported by Community Safety Partnerships.
Money allocated = £25,000

13. Given the requirement to spend this money by 31 March 2020 and the challenges this presents it is likely that there will be some flexibility to move money around the different strands in order to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved.

Performance

14. There is a series of requirements that Local Authorities must adhere to in setting up its Violence Reduction Unit. This includes taking a Public Health Approach and the nature of the Core Membership.

15. Public Health are managing the grant and are responsible for providing quarterly narrative updates to the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC). These reports must cover; progress on the delivery of the core function of the Violence Reduction Units, including its core membership, adherence to delivering a multi-agency public health approach, the number of young people supported by the identified interventions, and details of the money spent against the allocated funding. Any underspend is to be repaid at the end of the year.
16. Regarding the interventions specific performance information is in part dependent on the area where the money is allocated and the existing frameworks of the intervention. For example, the Intensive Family Support workers will report under the existing Supporting Family Programme contractual framework. In other areas, additional data is sought to measure outcomes, for example each of the young people in the Youth Crime Prevention Service will undertake a distance travelled tool.
17. There is also a requirement to involve the OPCC's Youth Commission in consulting with the any young people receiving a service. This includes consideration of one to one session and focus groups.

Consultation and Equalities

18. No public consultation has been required at this stage. However, key partners have been fully involved in setting up the Violence Reduction Units, including decisions on how the money for interventions was spent.
19. One overall Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed and has not been submitted as part of this report today. This is because any impact on equalities would be specific to each the organisations receiving the monies, and one overarching assessment would not capture the detail required. Further, the current year's spending plan is aimed at enhancing existing activity of County Council and partner services which will address the known protective and risk factors for serious violence.

Other Key Issues

20. It is expected that Violence Reduction Units will continue to be funded from 2020/21. However, at this stage it is not clear how much money will be available. It is possible that the same money will be allocated but will cover the full year rather than the last five months of 2019/20.
21. To decide how this money will be spent in future, the OPCC oversees a process whereby Local Authorities are required to undertake an analysis of relevant data. They are required to produce a 'Problem Profile' which identifies where resources should be directed to address the risk of violent crime and build resilience in communities and individuals.

22. Hampshire's Problem Profile was submitted to the OPCC on 31st December 2019. This is a dynamic document with more data being added as it is provided.

23. From the Problem Profile a response strategy is to be completed and submitted to the OPCC by 29th February 2020. This includes the services to be commissioned from 1st April 2020 which are key to addressing violent crime.

Conclusions

24. The announcement that Hampshire OPCC was one of 18 areas selected to receive funding to set up Violence Reduction Units (VRU) came in August 2019. Hampshire Local Authority was awarded a total of £300,00 to set up its VRU and deliver interventions which will have an impact on violent crime. Significant progress has been made in a short space of time. However, there is much more to be done. Therefore, the panel is invited to note this report and to request an update within a suitably defined time frame.

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Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
The Governments Serious Violence Strategy https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/698009/serious-violence-strategy.pdf	<u>Date</u> April 2018

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
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2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or
- (b) will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions