

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Committee:	Cabinet
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Title:	Annual Safeguarding Report – Children’s Services
Report From:	Director of Children’s Services

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update to Cabinet on safeguarding children activity within Children’s Services during 2016/17. Cabinet will recall that in 2014, Ofsted carried out an inspection of Hampshire Children’s Services’ safeguarding practice and associated arrangements for children in care and adoption services under their new, explicitly tougher, Single Inspection Framework. The outcome of that inspection was that the local authority’s performance was assessed as being ‘good’ with ‘outstanding’ leadership and management and adoption services. This report provides an update on national developments, local performance and activity data and ongoing challenges during 2016/17.
- 1.2. The outcome of the December 2016 Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to abuse and neglect in Hampshire, was an exceptionally positive report, and although no graded judgements are given in such reports, it reads as one of the most positive JTAI feedback letters written nationally. There is recognition of the strong performance of the Children’s Services in tackling the issue of domestic abuse and is also particularly positive in respect of the mature multi agency children’s safeguarding partnership arrangements across Hampshire.
- 1.3. Inspectors found that the overall standard of practice by Hampshire’s agencies in their response to domestic abuse is strong, and that strategic arrangements for responding to domestic abuse are robust and highly effective. Their view was that “all partners are dedicated to improve outcomes for all vulnerable children, including those experiencing domestic abuse.” HSCB was also praised as being “dynamic and forward thinking”.
- 1.4. Inspectors highlighted that frontline social workers were knowledgeable about individual children and ensure that their needs are met at an appropriate level. Equally strong, is the way in which managers oversee and analyse the work of social workers - with Inspectors stating they had seen how this was improving outcomes for children.

- 1.5. A clear commitment to partnership working by HCC was acknowledged and the Inspectors reported that the “open style of leadership and innovation is creatively driven by the Director of Children’s Services. Considerable support for this innovation is offered from both the Lead Member and the Chief Executive.’ Feedback highlighted the impact of the Family Intervention Teams based on improving outcomes for children and families as well as citing this as “one of many examples where the strategic intention of the partnership has been successfully translated into practice.”

2. National Developments.

- 2.1. Child sexual exploitation: Following consultation, the government published in February 2017 a new definition of child sexual exploitation and non-statutory practice guidance for those working with children and families. The new definition is as follows:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- 2.2. New guidance has been published which seeks to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation, ensure all areas are working to a similar understanding, and spread best practice in how to deliver effective services for children who have been exploited and in combatting the crime.
- 2.3. Local priorities in response to the risks that children across Hampshire face in relation to child sexual exploitation are captured in the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board’s (HSCB) child sexual exploitation strategy and action plan, in summary these are:

Understand and identify - strengthen the identification and assessment of children at risk

Prevention - raise awareness of missing, exploited and trafficked issues across agencies, children and their families and the wider Hampshire community.

Intervene and support - improve safeguarding of vulnerable children deemed to be at risk of exploitation and trafficking. Provide direct therapeutic support and access to specialist services.

Disrupt and bring to justice - lead in disrupting perpetrator behaviour and bringing those offenders to justice by building an accurate and clear picture of local trends and networks.

- 2.4. Progress in implementing the child sexual exploitation strategy and action plan is overseen by HSCB’s missing exploited and trafficked subgroup chaired by Children’s Services. Since the last annual safeguarding report to Cabinet, HSCB has undertaken an assessment of partners’ responses to

child sexual exploitation as required by statutory guidance set out in Working Together 2015 (Department for Education statutory guidance). The self assessment presents a good position with many strengths and positive actions taken in individual agencies ranging from improved awareness and understanding through to reviewing commissioning arrangements to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. A good example of this work is reflected in the improved training of taxi drivers to ensure they are aware of the issues of child sexual exploitation.

- 2.5. Missing children: Two all party parliamentary groups (APPGs) undertook an inquiry into the safeguarding of the thousands of children nationally who run away or go missing from care every year during 2015/16. The APPGs collected evidence from ministers, national agencies such as the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Agency (CEOP) and Ofsted, the voluntary sector, police forces and local authorities. The final report from this inquiry was published in May 2016 and put forward recommendations in relation to improving data collection and information sharing between the police and local authorities.
- 2.6. In response to this the Department for Education (DfE) and the National Crime Agency (UK Missing Persons Bureau) with the support of the NSPCC and the Home Office, looked at the data held by the DfE and local authorities on children who have gone missing from care. It was noted through this that there were considerable differences in the numbers returned to the DfE by local authorities and those returned to the UK Missing Persons Bureau by police forces. As part of a national initiative, Hampshire Children Services volunteered to be part of a one-off exercise to work with Hampshire Constabulary during October 2016 to compare data returns (for a specific period of time), identify any differences, and provide feedback to the DfE and Missing Persons Bureau on any differences. The robustness of the local response to missing children is quality assured through HSCB's missing exploited and trafficked subgroup.
- 2.7. The key themes that emerged for Hampshire from this are in relation to improving the accuracy of recording within both Children's Services and the Police; the need for a joint approach to agreeing the level of risk for individual missing incidents; and the impact of other local authorities placing their looked after children in Hampshire without always notifying Children's Services as required by regulation. Children's Services and the Police are undertaking further work together on these themes to continue to improve the accuracy of the data recorded and reported.
- 2.8. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC): There are three groups of asylum seeking children: those who enter the UK illegally, those who enter according to the DUBS¹ amendment and Syrian refugees who travel legally to the UK. These children become looked after children and are the responsibility of the Local Authority but the implications are wide reaching and complex. Health services and education are impacted as are Child and

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/unaccompanied-asylum-seeking-children-to-be-resettled-from-europe>

Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as many of the children are traumatised. There are also issues around the availability and cost of translation services alongside a significant national shortage and lack of suitable placements for looked after children.

Hampshire UASC Arrivals

	Apr-Jun 2016	Jul-Sept 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017
	7	19	17	8	2	4	7	9
Quarterly data	7	19	27			20		

2.9. As at 31 March 2017 the total number of UASC (under 18 years) looked after by Hampshire is 73. Since July 2016, Hampshire has been accepting children through the South East National Dispersal Team. The transfers through this scheme and from the closure of the Calais camp account for the large increase in UASC from July 2016 onwards. The majority of the children are placed in independent fostering agency (IFA) placements and a significant number are placed outside of Hampshire, in order that we can better meet their cultural and individual needs. The age range is from 11 years old and the majority are males. They will need to be looked after by the local authority until they reach 18 years and will then have care leaver status with continuing support from the local authority until they are 21 years of age. Whilst the Home Office provide set funding for UASC, a recent Association of Directors of Children's Services report² evidenced that the funding only covers 50% of the actual costs to the local authority. It should also be noted that approximately 40% of UASC will not be given leave to remain in the UK and as such will have 'no recourse to public funds' requiring the local authority to entirely fund all of their living costs until they reach 21 years of age.

2.10. The Social Work Innovation Fund programme: this is a national programme funded by the Department for Education, which Hampshire was successful in applying for in 2015 and again in 2016. The findings from the 2015 pilots are set out below and were encompassed in Hampshire's subsequent innovation programme which has become one of the government's Partners in Practice programmes. The first round of innovation funding encompassed seven individual projects and commenced in September 2015. All projects were pilots to test out new and innovative ways of delivering services. The programme has been externally independently evaluated by Oxford – Brookes University and their formal evaluation report was completed in December 2016. The programme incorporated six individual projects with a seventh strand of training and development of the workforce which was crosscutting. The individual projects and the impact they achieved are described below.

² http://adcs.org.uk/assets/documentation/ADCS_UASC_Report_Final_FOR_PUBLICATION.pdf

- 2.11. Developing a cohort of volunteers: The target of recruiting 200 volunteers was exceeded, and this was a highly successful pilot with positive feedback from both the volunteers and those they supported. A DVD is being produced to support the ongoing recruitment of volunteers which has now been mainstreamed and there are plans to expand to work of the volunteers further.
- 2.12. Social Worker Personal Assistants: 32 posts were recruited for the pilot period. The independent evaluation evidenced Social Workers spent up to 20% less time on admin tasks and there was improved communication with both families and external professionals. Social Workers were able to visit families more frequently and staff reported an improvement in their morale. Consequently, these roles have been mainstreamed within the Children in Need and Disabled Childrens Teams across all districts as these are our hardest to recruit to teams.
- 2.13. Family Intervention Teams: Throughout the pilot period 537 families received services from one of three specialist posts (domestic abuse, substance misuse and adult mental health). This improved information sharing between agencies which in turn impacted positively on the quality of assessments and plans. In some cases the level of risk de-escalated along with the need for Children's Social Care intervention given the success of the focused intervention being delivered to support change within a family. The posts have been extended for a further 12 months from 31 March 2017 given the development of multi-disciplinary teams within the Partners in Practice programme. The Partners in Practice programme is described in more detail later on in this report.
- 2.14. The Edge: A well received service by both families and young people with positive change seen by schools and social care staff. The service aimed to stop children coming into care. For young people, their involvement with the project led to improved attendance at school or re-engaging with education after a complete break down. Elements of this project are being integrated into the support offered by children's social care's Intensive Support Service.
- 2.15. Willow Team: The success of this project has been in bringing together a number of agencies and organisations to work together as a multi-agency team with a shared goal to tackle child sexual exploitation. This has led to new services and resources being in place to actively support some of Hampshire's most vulnerable children. This innovation has been the platform from which other external funding has been secured to provide more specialist therapeutic support for those who need it. The team has now been mainstreamed within social care.
- 2.16. Children's Services Surgeries: Outcomes from working with two schools initially in the Havant area were an improved knowledge of education staff in understanding children's social care thresholds and processes. This led to a reduction in the number of inappropriate contacts to the Children's Reception Team (CRT) and has improved the quality of referrals. Whilst the specific function will not continue post March 2017 some of the tasks will be integrated within the new Family Support Service going forward.

- 2.17. The Wood Review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards: In December 2015, the DfE asked Alan Wood, CBE, to lead a review of the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in England. As part of the review he also looked at serious case reviews and Child Death Overview Panels. The DfE has published the Wood report along with the government response to the review with explanations of how the proposed new arrangements will be implemented.
- 2.18. A new statutory framework will be introduced, which will set out clear requirements, but give local partners the freedom to decide how they operate to improve outcomes for children. The three key local partners, the so called triumvirate of local authority, the police and the health service, will be required to make and publish plans showing how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local area. So that the key partners have the flexibility to respond to existing and emerging needs, the requirement for LSCBs to have set memberships will be removed. However, if they see the current arrangements as the most effective form of joint working they will be able to continue them. In light of the recent JTAI outcome, Hampshire is in a strong position to progress partnership arrangements as and when it is necessary to do so.
- 2.19. HSCB appointed a new Independent Chair, Derek Benson, in December 2016 following the incumbent Chair stepping down at the end of their term of office. HSCB is well placed to respond positively to the expected new guidance for LSCBs which is expected shortly from the DfE.

3. Performance and Activity levels

3.1. Workloads, as evidenced in contacts, referrals and caseloads, continue to be high with 10,379 cases open to Children's Social Care at the time of writing this report. The table below sets out the trends over the last four years including the source of referrals received via Hantsdirect.

3.2. Contacts and Referrals

Contact and Referrals	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value
Number of initial contacts	N/A	61174	N/A	68789		71591		77934		87235
Number of CIN referrals	N/A	10297	N/A	16217		16749		16666		19435
Referral source: Individual	N/A	N/A	1809	11.2%	1834	10.9%	1835	11.0%	2165	10.5%
Education	N/A	N/A	3038	18.7%	3633	21.7%	4149	24.9%	4559	22.2%
Health Services	N/A	N/A	2225	13.7%	2312	13.8%	2148	12.9%	2603	12.7%
Housing	N/A	N/A	0	0.0%	277	1.7%	277	1.7%	233	1.1%

Contact and Referrals	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value
Local Authority Services	N/A	N/A	1816	11.2%	1447	8.6%	1596	9.6%	1606	7.8%
Police	N/A	N/A	4719	29.1%	4745	28.3%	4346	26.1%	5360	26.1%
Other legal agency	N/A	N/A	527	3.3%	496	3.0%	370	2.2%	447	2.2%
Other	N/A	N/A	1194	7.4%	1364	8.1%	1255	7.5%	1765	8.6%
Anonymous	N/A	N/A	364	2.2%	419	2.5%	400	2.4%	478	2.3%
Unknown	N/A	N/A	290	1.8%	222	1.3%	290	1.7%	219	1.1%
Not recorded	N/A	N/A	230	1.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0%

3.3. The total number of contacts as at 31 March 2017 (87,235) is 11.9% higher than the total received as at 31 March 2016 with the number of those converted onto referrals growing by 23%. This is indicative of the continuing pressures across the child protection systems which are being seen nationally. Police remain the highest referrer (26.1%) followed by education (22.2%) and then health services (12.7%). This trend has remained consistent over the last three years. National benchmarking highlights that the referral rate from schools are higher in Hampshire than in comparable areas.

3.4. Section 47 and Assessments

Section 47 and Assessments	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
% of S47 going to ICPC	2315	53.3%	2755	53.5%	4623	45.7%	4182	44.9%	4,211	43.7%
Initial Assessments Timeliness	9119	64.9%	8689	68.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Core Assessments Timeliness	6044	66.8%	4714	66.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
C&FA Timeliness	N/A	N/A	5849	91.4%	17096	79.4%	16931	88.3%	19841	89.6%
Assessments Total	15163	65.7%	19252	74.8%	17096	79.4%	16931	88.3%	19841	89.6%

3.5. With regards to assessments, as can be seen in the table above, the percentage of child abuse investigations (section 47 investigations) which progress to an initial child protection conference has remained at the same level compared to a year ago. This continues to reinforce the fact that thresholds are being consistently applied by social workers and has been the picture locally for the last three years since the introduction of MASH.

3.6. The timeliness of completing a Child and Family Assessment (C&FA) since their introduction in 2014-15, is a positive picture given the large number of assessments undertaken over the last year. This has remained in the high 80s for the last two years.

3.7. Child Protection Plans (CPP)

Child Protection Plans (CPP) and visits	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	No of children on CPP	N/A	909	N/A	1111		1354		1441	
New CPP in the Year %: Neglect	534	46.6%	656	49.0%	1043	56.7%	1005	60.1%	977	61.8%
Physical	308	26.9%	289	21.6%	280	15.2%	219	13.1%	123	7.8%
Sexual	87	7.6%	66	4.9%	101	5.5%	122	7.3%	124	7.8%
Emotions	216	18.9%	329	24.6%	414	22.5%	326	19.5%	358	22.6%
New CPP in Year Rate Per 10,000 : Neglect		19		20.7	1043	37.0	1005	35.7	977	34.7
Physical		10.9		8.2	280	9.9	219	7.8	123	4.4
Sexual		3.1		1.9	101	3.6	122	4.3	124	4.4
Emotional		7.7		8.7	414	14.7	326	11.6	358	12.6%
CPPs ending after 2 or more years	54	5.2%	36	3.2%	43	2.7%	65	4.1%	86	4.9%
Current CPs lasting 2 or more years	19	2.1%	20	1.8%	26	1.9%	20	1.4%	27	2.1%
Children requiring a repeat CPP	161	14.1%	233	17.4%	300	16.3%	336	20.1%	384	24.3%
Children requiring a repeat CPP within 2 yrs		N/A	133	10.0%	144	7.8%	165	9.9%	227	14.3%
Visits made in accordance with CPP - 14 days		N/A	2093	84.4%	2515	81.2%	3131	86.8%	3258	89.7%

3.8. As detailed above, work within the child protection planning process remains robust with numbers showing a slight decline and as of the end of March 2017, stood at 1263. There has been a small percentage rise in the number of children subject to a plan for neglect (although a word of caution in that categorisation between neglect and emotional abuse can be variable). HSCB launched its Neglect Strategy in October 2016 and this is helping professionals better identify neglect. The proposed toolkit and resources being developed for frontline staff will assist in putting the right interventions and support in place for children and families to ensure sustainable change can be achieved.

3.9. A low percentage of plans are lasting beyond two years (which is good as it indicates proactive work) and relatively few require a repeat plan within two years. The number of timely visits made within the required dates has improved in relation to children being seen in accordance with the child protection plan requirements and is a significant strength of the service.

3.10. Full Time Children Looked After (CLA)

Full Time Children Looked After (CLA)	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
No of full time CLA		1131		1267		1339		1305		1440
% of CLA with 3+ moves during the year	183	16.2%	174	13.7%	187	14.0%	234	17.9%	236	16.4%

Case Closure following CPP / CLA	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
% of child in need cases closed within 6 months of CLA Ending		18.6%		24.5%		23.0%		19.3%		16.4%
% of child in need cases closed within 6 months of CPP Ending		45.5%		54.4%		58.1%		56.0%		59.4%

	Jan-March 2016	April-June 2016	July-Sep 2016	Oct-Dec 16	Jan-March 17	April-June 2017
Entering full time care	133	160	204	169	152	156
Leaving full time care	141	158	137	136	117	121
Net inc/decrease	-8	2	67	33	35	35
Minus children PwP	2	11	25	6	26	33
Minus UASC	n/k	7	19	27	20	13
Adjusted to	-10	-16	23	0	-11	-11

3.11. With regards to children in care, the number has increased by 135 (10.5%) over the last 12 months which is impacting significantly on the financial challenges the Council is facing and the capacity of the service. The rise in the number of UASC has contributed to the overall rise in children becoming looked after by Hampshire. Paragraphs 2.9 and 2.10 above describe this impact in more detail. If the numbers of new UASC (73) are removed from this figure, then the actual percentage rise is 5%, which is in line with the national average increase. Additionally, changes in court practices are ensuring that more children are placed at home whilst on a Care Order (and thus 'in care') whilst previously such children would probably have remained the subject of support in the community without entering the court (and care arena). This is primarily due to a complex set of changes relating to the

'Public Law Outline'. The table above shows the quarterly rise in numbers of children being placed with parents by the courts. Nationally the picture of demand continues to outstrip the supply of places, and the costs of placements are still rising significantly.

3.12. Despite the pressures in the system, the increases in referrals, contacts etc. the 'real' (removing UASC and those placed with parents by the courts), number of CLA has reduced by 25 since January last year and by 22 this calendar year.

3.13. The latest available data for missing children is given below. This reflects an improving picture in terms of accuracy and timeliness of recording. Hampshire, similar to other areas, has more children in care who go missing than children who live at home. The percentage of children in care who go missing (but do return it should be noted) has been between 7% and 8% since April 2016. Each district team tracks and risk assesses their children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences.

Indicator	Oct-15 - Dec-15	Jan-16- Mar-16	Apr-16- Jun-16	Jul-16- Sep-16	Oct-16- Dec-16	Jan-17- Mar-17
Number of children missing from home	68	55	63	69	129	161
Number of Looked After Children that went missing from care	86	70	100	113	104	87
% of Looked After Children that went missing from care	6.5%	5.4%	7.6%	8.2%	7.4%	6%

3.14. Managers in Children's Services use a range of qualitative data to ensure that services continue to deliver good outcomes for children. In particular there is a regular programme of case audits. The outcomes from these are used to highlight and share good practice as well as taking action to maintain the standards expected in Hampshire. In addition to this Children's Services take part in the multi agency case audits undertaken by HSCB.

3.15. In 2015/16 (latest available data), 96% (compared with 97% in 2014/15 and 99% in 2013/14) of 165 statutory stage one complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales (10 working days with a possible extension to 20 working days). The number of case concerns has remained stable (increase of one) from the previous reporting period.

- 3.16. Children's social care, perhaps unsurprisingly, continues to register quite low numbers of direct customer compliments. As in previous years one of the reasons for this could be the large number of interventions which are unsought and often unwelcome by families. In addition, many compliments are delivered verbally and often not captured.
- 3.17. The proportion of complaints received directly from children and young people remains low and has decreased since 2014/15. Work continues with local teams to try and establish the reasons for this alongside potential solutions. Seven complaints were received from children and young people in 2015/16 compared to 19 received in 2014/15. On the few occasions that young people did raise concerns they complained about the quality of service and poor communication. In the main young people were seeking an explanation as a result of their complaint.
- 3.18. Advocacy is used where a child or young person requests an independent advocate to represent them over a particular issue. Children and young people can be referred by their social workers or other key workers or can self refer.
- 3.19. As well as the Ofsted inspections referred to above, Hampshire's children's homes are routinely subject to inspection twice per year by Ofsted. The latest outcomes for these are as follows, which show an improved picture since the last report to Cabinet:
- Swanwick Lodge secure unit: Good (May 2016), sustained effectiveness (November 2016)
- The Mead: Good with Outstanding Leadership & Management (February 2017)
- Cypress Lodge: Good (September 2015), sustained effectiveness (September 2016)
- Milesdown: Good with Outstanding Leadership & Management (May 2016), sustained effectiveness (February 2017)
- The Green House: Good with Outstanding Leadership and Management (April 2016)
- Godbey House: Outstanding (February 2017)
- 3.20. Respite care units for disabled children were also inspected:
- Firvale: Good (February 2017)
- Merrydale: Good (April 2016), sustained effectiveness (November 2016)
- Sunbeams: Good (October 2016)
- a) The Residential Strategy comprising new, smaller homes and the Pillars of Parenting Emotional Warmth Model of Care provide the foundations for the provision of quality residential child care in Hampshire. The transition process has resulted in lower numbers of children in the existing homes and this, combined with increases in staff competence and confidence, is already resulting in greater capacity to care for children with complex needs and achieve improved outcomes. Three of the new homes are now occupied, a fourth is in the process of introducing their first long term

placement. A fifth home is scheduled for completion later in August. Building work has yet to commence on the sixth home.

- b) The children and staff are extremely pleased with the new homes; they appreciate the quality of the build and the homely atmosphere.
- c) New build on the Green House site opened in July 2017. The site has been renamed Candle Lodge.
- d) New build in Havant to replace Godbey House and named Crofton House is now open.
- e) New build in Fareham named Ferne Lodge has been opened for emergency placements whilst awaiting the first planned admission.
- f) New build in Dibden Purlieu called Amani, is now open.
- g) New build in Andover named Berry View is anticipated to be available for occupation in September
- h) Milesdown has closed and the staff team and children have relocated to Crossways pending the completion of the new build on the Milesdown site.
- i) The Mead and Cypress Lodge continue to operate as before

4. Local Developments

- 4.1. MASH: The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is now embedded since it became operational in 2014. It operates alongside existing services provided by Hantsdirect and the CRT. MASH provides multi-agency assessment and triaging of all children's safeguarding concerns at the point of referral, protecting vulnerable children from harm, neglect and abuse. CRT was managing in excess of 5,100 contacts per month and in total received 87,235 over the last 12 month period (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017).
- 4.2. Referrals meeting the threshold for statutory intervention from Children's Social Care are transferred into the MASH for a multi agency decision regarding the level and type of intervention required. MASH includes Children's Services, Hampshire Constabulary and Southern Health with virtual partners including Hampshire Probation, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Southern Central Ambulance Service and district councils.
- 4.3. Referrals that do not meet the threshold for a statutory service are transferred into the Family Support Service. Increases in referrals progressing to assessment are attributable to the good information sharing within MASH and the improved quality of referrals following a review of re-launch of the Inter Agency Referral Form.
- 4.4. Family Support Service (FSS): This new integrated service brings together the work of children's centres and the Early Help Hubs, including youth support services, into a single service. The service commenced in December 2016 and will support vulnerable families with children aged 0-19 years (or up to age 25 for young adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities). It will also better align with the Supporting Troubled Families Programme. Help and support will be targeted specifically to vulnerable families with children who have multiple needs, often requiring the involvement of more than one agency, but who do not meet the criteria for statutory, level 4 intervention. Tailor-made support will be provided at a local level, in order to respond to the needs of local families. With one point of contact, families will no longer need

to go to different early help services, as is currently the case. A total of 2,787 children (1,247 families) were open to the FSS as at the end of March 2017.

- 4.5. Recruitment and Retention: A key issue continues to be the recruitment and retention of social workers. Nationally vacancy rates are now at around 20% of all posts and, at times, there have been similar rates in Hampshire.
- 4.6. In part this has been due to aggressive recruitment tactics by agencies which have played on the insecurity in social work posts brought about by critical Ofsted judgements (sometimes in neighbouring authorities) or national reports. Social workers report being offered very high hourly rates to switch to an agency and to then work in a neighbouring authority. The recruitment and retention strategy implemented by the department is beginning to address these issues and create a more stable workforce in Hampshire.
- 4.7. A Memorandum of Co-operation (MoC) agreed by the South East Regional Assistant Directors meeting came into place over 12 months ago. This is shifting the price and command of the agency market away from private agencies towards local authorities. Pay rates for agency social workers are agreed, based on London rates, although in Hampshire we are yet to see any reduction in agency social workers usage. The introduction of IR35 is causing some uncertainty amongst agency social workers as across the South East, it has been agreed that agency social workers fall within IR35 and this will impact on their pay.
- 4.8. We have seen a continued steady rise in demand across social work services in line with the national picture, which is increasing the caseloads of our social workers and they are now at the point where they are higher than Ofsted would recommend. In light of this significant work is underway to address these increasing pressures in the system to improve capacity.
- 4.9. Strengthening Troubled Families Programme (STFP): The second half of 2016 saw an 11.5% reduction of families nominated to the Supporting (troubled) Families Programme on average each month compared to the previous year, although activity is still significantly higher than it was in phase 1. It is notable that Early Help Hubs, a significant source of family nominations for phase 2, also showed a slowdown in activity during this period, likely to be the result of the consultation and the subsequent changes to the service. However, in the final quarter of 2016/17, following the launch of the restructured FSS, the nominations into STFP increased significantly against the nominations in the same period the previous year. By the end of the year Hampshire had identified 963 families against a target of 1334. The average nominations per month in the quarter January to March 2017 was 96 families, compared to an average of 65 in the quarter October to December 2016. This increased rate of nominations has continued into 2017/18. Work continues to identify additional families and encourage partners to nominate into the programme, including increased focus on supporting Children's Services with families stepping down from Level 4, and increasing flexibility in relation to nomination paperwork from agencies such as YOT/CRC to encourage other partners to engage with the programme.

- 4.10. Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) rules require positive family outcomes to be sustained for at least six months (an academic year for school attendance) against all of the family issues that apply (up to six rather than two or three in phase 1). This means there is a higher success threshold in phase 2 compared to phase 1. The only exception remains where a family member claiming an out of work benefit enters and continues in employment for a least six months for which a claim can be made in its own right. To date 216 claims for positive family outcomes have been submitted to and accepted by DCLG under the new and more challenging phase 2 reward criteria.
- 4.11. Southampton Solent University has started work as independent academic evaluators of phase 2 of the programme and are due to provide an interim report in early 2018 and a full report a year later.
- 4.12. Partners in Practice (PiP): Hampshire is one of only eight good /outstanding local authorities chosen by the Department for Education to innovate and test new ways of delivering social work to vulnerable children and families. This is a radical whole system change and Hampshire's vision is:
- A family service – a system focussing on improving outcomes for the child in the context of their family
 - A social work led, integrated, multi-disciplinary service, from the front door through to specialist services
 - Social workers are supported to deliver meaningful interventions based on an underpinning methodology of resilience that creates lasting change
 - A service where good practice is free to flourish unfettered by bureaucracy and unnecessary regulatory demands
 - Children are supported by and within their own family/community wherever possible. Where children do come into care longer term their experience will be life changing for the better.
- 4.13. The grant from the DfE to Hampshire County Council (HCC) will help create a social work led, integrated, multi-disciplinary service, from the front door to specialist services. Interconnecting components will introduce new systems of delivering social care and trialling new ways of working with families. These are:
1. The protection and support service offering an enhanced 24/7 co-located multi-agency initial response and intervention
 2. Multi-disciplinary specialist family intervention service and a multi-disciplinary permanence service
 3. Integrated multi-disciplinary disabled children's services
 4. Contribute to a national PiP support service
 5. De-regulating to create capacity, reduce bureaucracy and improve outcomes
 6. Teaching partnership and graduate entry and training scheme
 7. Social care education professional to improve the educational achievement of children in need, children in care and care leavers.
- 4.14. The implementation of PiP is now gathering pace and work is well underway with Adult Services and Public Health as well as the five CCGs,

Police and CAMHS on the development of a new operating model for delivering services to the County's most vulnerable children.

- 4.15. Hampshire is working closely with the DfE to explore amendments to current regulations without the need to change primary legislation, and is confident of identifying areas for deregulation and removing bureaucracy that will improve the efficient delivery of a high quality children's social care service.
- 4.16. Youth Offending Service: Hampshire Youth Offending Team (YOT) aims to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people aged 10 -17 years. This aim involves significant criminal justice statutory functions which include the assessment and supervision of children and young people subject to out of court disposals, court orders, custodial sentences and bail and remand. YOTs also have statutory duties to co-operate under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement framework (MAPPA), and a duty under the 2004 Children Act to promote the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people. Hampshire YOT is geographically represented across the county in four teams in addition to the 'prevention arm' of youth crime prevention being present in all districts. Hampshire YOT staff and service the three Youth Courts in the county in addition to the Crown Court sitting in various locations. Alongside this they work with children in custody from Hampshire accommodated across England and Wales.
- 4.17. At any one time, Hampshire YOT is working with 250-300 children and young people across the county; during 2016/17 they worked with just over 930 in total. Furthermore, the Youth Crime Prevention Team is working with around 200 children at any one time. In addition, Hampshire YOT works with both the victims and the parents of those children and young people. All victims of youth crime are contacted by specialist trained Restorative Justice staff within the YOT and offered the opportunity to participate in a restorative intervention if they wish. Hampshire YOT was awarded the Restorative Services Quality Mark by the Restorative Justice Council in April 2016. In 2017 the Hampshire YOT has been commended by the Youth Justice Board for its positive progress in reducing first time entrants to the criminal justice system, with Hampshire's performance being described as 'exceptional'.
- 4.18. Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI): Between 5 and 9 December 2016, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), HMI Constabulary (HMIC) and HMI Probation (HMI Prob) undertook a joint inspection of the multi-agency response to abuse and neglect in Hampshire. This inspection included a 'deep dive' focus on the response to children living with domestic abuse. The letter of findings was published on 1 February 2017 in which the Inspectors praise the way in which HCC and partners work together in Hampshire in keeping children across the county protected from abuse and neglect at home.
- 4.19. Inspectors found that the overall standard of practice by Hampshire's agencies in their response to domestic abuse is strong, and that strategic arrangements for responding to domestic abuse are robust and highly effective. Their view was that "all partners are dedicated to improve outcomes for all vulnerable children, including those experiencing domestic abuse." HSCB was also praised as being "dynamic and forward thinking".

- 4.20. Inspectors highlighted that frontline social workers were knowledgeable about individual children and ensure that their needs are met at an appropriate level. Equally strong, is the way in which managers oversee and analyse the work of social workers - with Inspectors stating they had seen how this was improving outcomes for children.
- 4.21. A clear commitment to partnership working by HCC was acknowledged and the Inspectors reported that the “open style of leadership and innovation is creatively driven by the Director of Children’s Services. Considerable support for this innovation is offered from both the Lead Member and the Chief Executive.’ Feedback highlighted the impact of the Family Intervention Teams based on improving outcomes for children and families as well as citing this as “one of many examples where the strategic intention of the partnership has been successfully translated into practice.”
- 4.22. Torbay: HCC has been supporting the improvement of Torbay Children’s Services following their Ofsted inadequate judgement in November 2015. Hampshire’s Chief Executive, has taken on the formal role of ‘Commissioner’ with Hampshire Children’s Services senior managers acting as ‘expert advisers’ for the service. This means HCC has a responsibility for supporting and directing Torbay’s improvement journey. The agreement between the Department for Education and HCC was extended for a further six months from February 2017.
- 4.23. This is not the same role as HCC have with the Isle of Wight Children’s Services, where a partnership has been established whereby HCC lead and manage those services. In the case of Torbay, HCC is not as intensively involved with staff and providing management time as it is with the Isle of Wight Children’s Services. Senior managers and frontline practitioners have been providing support, challenge and direction on-site and remotely over the last year. This has included the short term secondment of an Area Director from Hampshire to work alongside Torbay’s Director of Children’s Services for six months to bring about the pace of change expected from the Department for Education as set out in the ‘Government Direction’ issued after the inadequate judgement.
- 4.24. Isle of Wight: The Isle of Wight has continued to make positive improvements and in a recent pilot Ofsted focussed visit, the feedback reflected our own positive assessment of the improvements made across the service
- 4.25. Members can be assured that, even with the work of the Director of Children’s Services and some of his senior managers in the above two authorities, there is no detriment to the oversight and management of Hampshire Children’s Services. As with all work undertaken in other authorities, there is always positive learning gained to further improve services in Hampshire.

5. Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

- 5.1. The future challenges and priorities can be summarised as follows (this is not an exhaustive list and the history of this type of work is that new priorities will emerge such as CSE and domestic abuse have done).

- 5.2. There continues to be an upturn in the over all numbers of children becoming looked after, although when UASC and those children placed at home with parents by the court are removed (both cohorts of which we have little influence over), we are starting to see a slight decrease. Whilst numbers of children on a child protection plan appears to be slightly decreasing there is an ongoing financial risk to HCC which remains considerable.
- 5.3. The recruitment and retention of social workers will continue to need to be addressed. Nationally vacancy rates are now at around 20% of all posts and, at times, there have been similar rates in Hampshire, although in the main we have less churn than other authorities in the region. The South East MoC is now in operation and it is anticipated this will have a positive impact on the level of agency social worker pay rates. Further work on promoting resilience within the workforce and attracting experienced social workers is underway, in support of the new operating model for children's social care.
- 5.4. Caseloads across the Children & Families branch are relatively high and there is a growing need to create capacity in the system. This is compounded by the vacancy rates and churn created by the use of agency social workers. It is anticipated that the redesign of children's social care under the PiP programme will assist in addressing this but it should be noted as an ongoing risk and challenge for the service.
- 5.5. Transforming children's social care under the PiP banner will be a significant challenge but will deliver a modern social work service fit for the future challenges over the next decade. 'Putting Children First' is the government's strategy to transform children's social care. The ambition is that by 2020 all vulnerable children, no matter where they live, receive the same high quality of care and support, and the best outcome for every child is at the heart of every decision made. Government have put forward a Children and Social Work Bill as part of this strategy which will introduce a number of changes ranging from a new assessment and accreditation system for the social work profession, changes to local safeguarding children boards and a new power to innovate to test where legislation, regulations and guidance might be getting in the way of excellent practice.
- 5.6. New Inspection Framework: Ofsted published its response to the consultation on the future of social care inspections in February 2017. The intention is for there to be more inspections along with focused visits in-between inspections. The inspections will be shorter however at this stage there is no detail available with the framework expected to be published later in 2017. Feedback from the Ofsted pilot on the Isle of Wight in August 2017 provided a helpful steer in respect of the focus, scale and burden of this new approach to inspection.
- 5.7. A new social care IT system will be created and implemented via a development partnership rather than an 'off the shelf' solution. This continues to develop and roll out is expected in 2018. There is a significant staff input required in the design and testing phases of the project. The benefits are a modern, fit for purpose system, reducing administration time required by social workers.

- 5.8. Continuing to develop capacity and sustain improvement in the Isle of Wight and develop options for future arrangements beyond the end of the partnership agreement in 2018.
- 5.9. Continuing the DfE appointment as improvement advisers for Torbay Children's Services.
- 5.10. Ensuring that Hampshire is well placed to lead on sector improvement work across the region

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That Cabinet notes the positive progress and continued consistently high performance with regards to safeguarding children in Hampshire.
- 6.2. That Cabinet note the commitment of a wide range of Children's Services officers in achieving this level of performance.
- 6.3. That cabinet endorses the future direction of travel identified in this report
- 6.4. That Cabinet receives further updates on safeguarding on an annual basis.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

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

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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. 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 under the Act;

Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic 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 characteristic connected to that characteristic;

Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic 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 which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This report is for Cabinet to note Hampshire County Council's progress and performance with regards to safeguarding vulnerable children. As such it creates no disadvantage or inequality and the activity described serves to reduce inequality for some of the county's most vulnerable children

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

The report is for Cabinet to note and so does not create any impact on crime and disorder although the activity described herein serves to reduce the impact of crime on the most vulnerable children.

3. Climate Change:

How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

3.1 It is not anticipated that this decision will have any impact on Climate Change.