

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	24 November 2020
<b>Title:</b>	Annual Safeguarding Report – Children’s Services 2019-20
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children’s Services

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### Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update to Cabinet on safeguarding children activity within Children’s Services during 2019/20.
2. This report identifies key national developments, summarises performance and activity levels, and details a number of key local developments and future priorities.
3. The report provides assurance that whilst demand for children’s social care services continues to increase year on year, the response to the safeguarding of vulnerable children is both robust and timely.
4. Whilst this report is ostensibly for the period of 2019/20, given the Coronavirus crisis and its impact on services, the report covers key issues up to the end of September 2020.

### Recommendations

5. That Cabinet notes the positive progress and continued consistently high performance with regards to safeguarding children in Hampshire
6. That Cabinet note the commitment of a wide range of Children’s Services officers in achieving this level of performance.
7. That Cabinet receives further updates on safeguarding on an annual basis.

### Background

8. Cabinet will recall under the new Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Service’s (ILACS) introduced in January 2018 and amended in March 2019, local authorities are subject to standard and short inspections depending on their previous Ofsted judgement
9. In April and May 2019 Hampshire was subject to a ‘short’ ILACS inspection. Report to Council dated 15 July refers to this inspection. The summary at the front of the report read, *‘Children’s Services in Hampshire are outstanding. Since the last full inspection in 2014, the director and his leadership team have resolutely focused on continuing to improve the help, care and protection provided to children. Social*

*workers are highly skilled at building meaningful relationships with children; engaging them in their assessment and plans..... Children's lives consistently improve as a result of the help they receive. Strong political and corporate support ...have helped the leadership team to implement an ambitious transformation programme.'*

10. This inspection judged Hampshire to be outstanding overall and across the other three areas of judgement, including '*The experiences and progress of children in need of help and protection*'. At the time of writing, Hampshire is one of only a very small number of authorities to be judged outstanding across the board.
11. Members can be assured by the fact that the inspection was intrinsically rooted in safeguarding and fully tested all aspects of Hampshire's safeguarding practice, alongside testing the front door process within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The Ofsted report evidenced this with, '*Children in need of help or protection benefit from high-quality services that improve their lives, whatever the level of need*' and '*when children need protection, swift, proportionate and authoritative action is taken during and outside office hours.*'
12. Ofsted temporarily suspended inspection during the Covid-19 lockdown and have now restarted 'Assurance Visits' from September through to at least December 2020. The aim of these three week, non-graded inspections is to focus on the things that matter most to children and their families '*on their safety and well-being, the key decisions made about them, plans to support them as restrictions are eased, and the effectiveness and impact of leaders and managers*'.
13. The annual conversation with Ofsted scheduled for 30 March 2020 was postponed, with a virtual conversation held on 3 July 2020.

## **National Developments**

### Covid-19

14. In May 2020, the DfE published updated guidance to inform local authorities and other children's social care providers, of the temporary changes to regulations governing children's social care services, made to support the delivery of services to children and their families during the lockdown. The statutory duties remained the same, however, they allowed for very specific circumstances where changes can be made to the use of secondary legislation. Amendments allowed for flexibility in some circumstances, only to be used when absolutely necessary, with senior management oversight and consistent with overarching safeguarding principles. A report went to the Children's Services Departmental Management Team examining the implications for the amendments. In September 2020, the temporary changes were removed with some minor exceptions, the most notable being the retention of the use of technology to support some non-face to face visiting.
15. In managing the service through the lockdown period and during the pandemic, the Children and Families branch took a three phased approach, with each phase being based on increased numbers of staff absence. We have remained in phase one to date.:
16. **Phase One – 'Business as usual but doing it differently'**
  - Statutory timescales for visits and meetings remain the same

- Using technology to ensure we see children and families through digital means i.e. WhatsApp, Teams
  - Face to face visits undertaken where we know our staff can safely socially distance themselves, in relation to urgent child protection work
  - Guidance provided for visits, meetings (with children and professionals), training, events etc
  - Staff drafted in from the Residential Children's Homes to ensure minimum staffing levels at Swanwick Lodge Secure Unit were maintained
  - 2 open homes closed meaning that there was additional resource to be deployed
17. The ability to respond quickly and communicate change has been imperative, along with staff embracing new innovative ways to carry out tasks and to ensure that children were safe. We did this by:
- Issuing new guidance promptly
  - Daily senior management Covid-19 meetings, and weekly District Manager meetings, sharing good practice, what was working well, as well as lessons learned
  - Maintaining statutory timescales (monitored through weekly data reports, including to DfE)
  - Maintaining management grip including oversight of staff supervision
  - Quality assurance work continued, monitoring the quality of social work practice
  - Using technology to carry out daily tasks in order to be able to continue to keep children safe, for example using Zoom, MS Teams, WhatsApp and Skype to undertake virtual visits
  - As of the end of September 2020, over 90% of visits to children and families were being carried out face to face, with the use of PPE where necessary. All children have been seen face to face unless they are symptomatic. It should be noted that if local lockdown measures return or infection rates and staff absences increase, the service is well placed to maintain its 'business as usual but doing it differently' approach and revert to a more blended approach. The service has evidenced that it is adaptable, that children continue to be seen and kept safe despite the implications of the pandemic.

Child exploitation:

18. There are clear links between child exploitation and those children who are trafficked and/or that go missing. Agencies cannot address these issues alone or in isolation from other related safeguarding issues. In making reference to the term 'exploitation' it includes the following risk areas; child sexual exploitation (CSE), online exploitation, criminal exploitation (CCE) including 'County Lines', drug related harm, knife crime and serious violence; as well as other forms of exploitation that involve coercion and control such as radicalisation and extremism; forced marriage, female genital mutilation.

19. The Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton (HIPS) Child Exploitation Group is a strategic multi-agency group. This was established to ensure the work of the safeguarding children partnerships meet legislative requirements, governmental guidance and implements recognised best practice to protect children from all forms of exploitation. The HIPS Child Exploitation Group includes representation from multi-agency partners and the members of the Youth Commission who ensure the group includes the voice of the child.
20. A HIPS Operational Child Exploitation Group has been established to provide strong operational links and disseminate best practice to frontline practitioners. This group ensures the identification, support, safeguarding and diversion of children who are at risk of, or being exploited locally within Hampshire.
21. The latest available data for children who go missing in Hampshire, be that from home or for those in care, shows a continued improving position. Fewer children are going missing and when they do, there is a robust and effective response from children's social care and Hampshire Constabulary. Each district team tracks, and risk assesses their children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences. This is an important area of work and one that Ofsted give significant scrutiny to.
22. 'County lines' remains an increasing concern for Hampshire Children's Services and all agencies concerned with children in the area. In essence, it is the supply of drugs, predominantly from inner-city gangs to suburban areas, and targets rural and coastal towns as well as major cities, as part of widening the drug market. For Hampshire much of this activity is supported by good transport links and close proximity to London.
23. This activity involves child criminal exploitation as criminal gangs use children and vulnerable adults to move drugs and money. Gangs establish a local base or can send adults into a local area, who actively recruit vulnerable children.
24. Whilst all agencies and professionals contribute to tackling this new form of exploitation, more specialist work is undertaken by the pan-Hampshire Police Missing team and the Hampshire Children's Services specialist Willow team. The Willow team is a multi agency team consisting of specialist social workers and health professionals, working closely with Hampshire Constabulary to protect the highest risk children. Together with Hampshire Constabulary there is a coordinated deployment of these specialist resources to identify networks, ensuring the safeguarding of the most vulnerable children and the disruption of county lines activity.

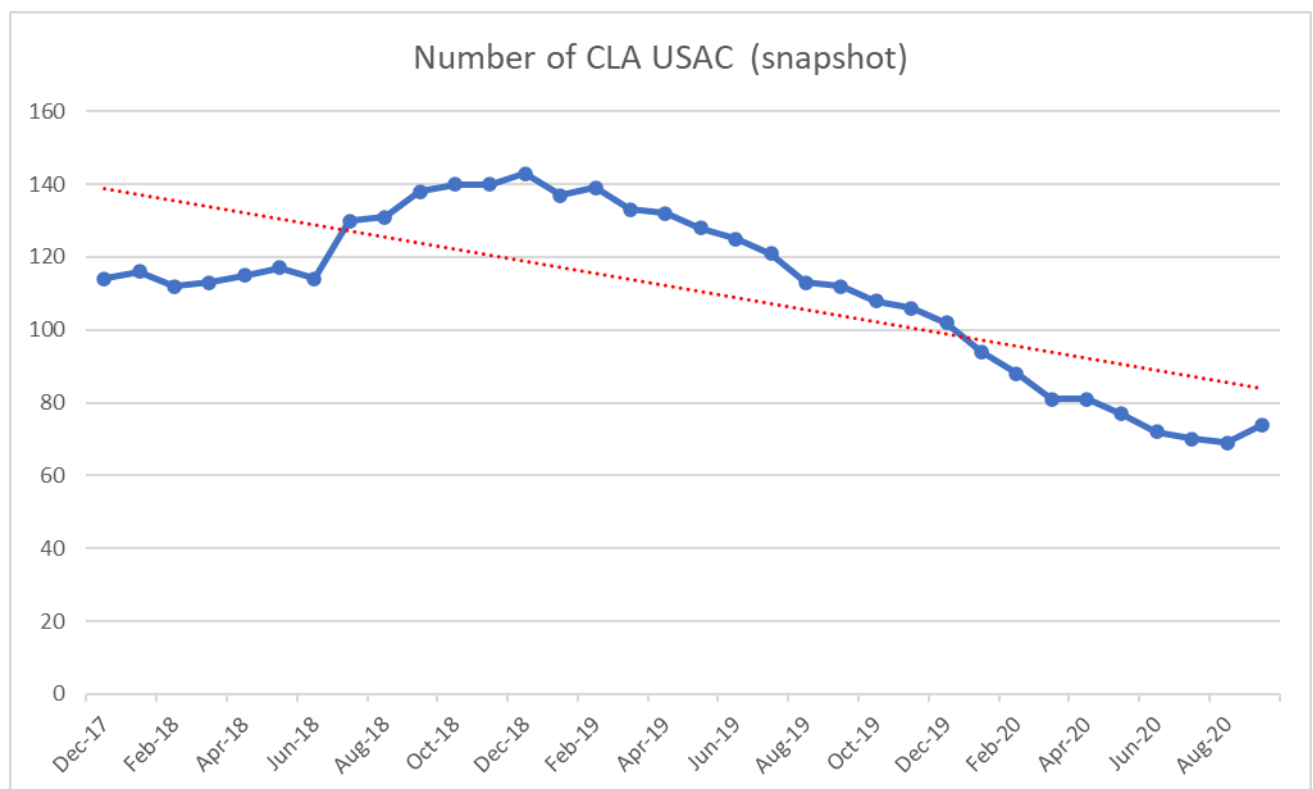
#### Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC):

25. There are two means by which UASC come to Hampshire. Firstly, as spontaneous arrivals, most frequently disembarking from lorries along the M27/M3 corridor. UASC become the responsibility of the local authority where they first alight and become Looked After Children. The second means is through the National Transfer Scheme, which aims to equitably re-distribute UASC from Kent who have far in excess of the Government set target of 0.07% child population. The scheme is voluntary, and Hampshire has been one of the strongest supporters of the scheme receiving UASC over several years. However, it should be noted that a number of local authorities across the country do not participate, meaning an unnecessary and unfair burden falls upon those who do.

26. During the summer of 2020 Kent County Council ceased to fulfil their statutory duty to care for newly arrived UASC coming in through Dover, citing the fact they had no placements left and no staff to service the ever increasing arrivals. Hampshire Children's Services worked with the National Transfer Scheme and received 12 newly arrived UASC from Kent, as well as undertaking age assessments of new arrivals in Kent and assisting with their onward placement with other local authorities. This work has now come to an end as those social workers are required in Hampshire.
27. The Home Office has begun a national consultation on the future of the National Transfer Scheme and Hampshire Children's Services has responded expressing the strong view that the scheme must be mandatory for all local authorities if it is to work as intended and must be properly funded.

### Hampshire UASC Arrivals

28. As of 30 September 2020 the total number of UASC (under 18 years) looked after by Hampshire is 74. The number rises and falls because when UASC become 18 years of age they do not count against the 0.07% target as they become care leavers. 0.07% equates to 192 for Hampshire.



29. The table below sets out the number of care leavers who were previously UASC. The table evidences that there has been a 145% increase in the number of UASC care leavers since June 2017, which is to be expected given the age demographic of arrivals, typically 16/17 year olds. The Government funding for UASC, whilst recently increased, still falls far short of what is required, particularly in relation to care

leavers. The funding for care leavers is £240 per week. However UASC, as with all Looked After Children, are encouraged to 'stay put' in their foster placement post 18 years of age, encouraged to attend university and a percentage (approximately 30% at any one time), will have no recourse to public funds whilst their right to remain in the UK is resolved. This means the local authority is then responsible for all their living costs potentially until they reach 25 years of age.

UASC Care Leavers	Jun-2017	Sep-2017	Dec-2017	Mar-2018	Jun-2018	Sep-2018	Dec-2018	Mar-2019	Jun-2019	Sep-2019	Dec-2019	Mar-2020	Jun-2020
Period End	137	148	171	246	247	270	294	308	328	329	327	334	335

### Working Together 2018

30. On 30 September 2019, the previous Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) transitioned into new arrangements under the Working Together 2018 regulations. In reality the newly constituted Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) was largely unchanged in these arrangements. The HSCP provides the framework under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate their safeguarding services, identify and respond to the needs of children in Hampshire, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.
31. Working Together 2018 explains that there are three safeguarding partners who have overall responsibility to establish the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, and, assure themselves of the effectiveness of the arrangements. These partners are:
  - Hampshire County Council Children's Services
  - West Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group
  - Hampshire Constabulary
32. The HSCP continues to have an Independent Chair, who also acts as an Independent Scrutineer. The Chair is appointed by, and accountable to, the three Safeguarding Partners.

### **Performance and Activity levels**

33. Demand, as evidenced in contacts, referrals and safeguarding activity, continues to be high and as predicted, post lockdown has seen a 15% increase over and above what would be expected.
34. The table below sets out the trends over the last four years including the source of referrals received via Hantsdirect.

### Contacts and Referrals

35. The total number of contacts as at 31 March 2020 (125,413) is 7% higher than the total received at 31 March 2019 (117,188), which was 11% higher than the previous

year. The 2019-20 is a 61% increase on the 2015-16 number. This is indicative of the continuing pressures across the child protection system which is reflected nationally.

Contact and Referrals	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value
<b>Number of initial contacts</b>		77934		87235		106010		117188		125413
<b>Number of Referrals</b>		35339		37831		35953		40014		44434

36. Child and Family Assessments

Assessments	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
<b>C&amp;FA Timeliness</b>	16931	88.30%	19841	89.60%	18496	87.90%	18003	90.90%	19712	92.61%

37. The timeliness of completing a Child and Family Assessment (C&FA) since their introduction in 2014-15, is a very positive picture given the large number of social work assessments undertaken over the last year. This has not fallen from the high 80s for the last five years and is higher than the majority of other local authorities in the region.

38. Child Protection Plans (CPP)

Child Protection Plans (CPP) and visits	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
<b>No of children on CPP</b>		1441		1263		1293		1097		938

39. As detailed above, work within the child protection planning process remains robust with numbers showing a decline from the end of March 2017. The positive reduction is considered to be as a result of more effective interventions with children and families at the Child in Need level, meaning less cases are escalated to a child protection plan because risks are addressed earlier. It should be noted that during and post lockdown numbers of children on a child protection plan have started to increase. This reflects the increased complexity of work coming into children's social care as a direct result of the pandemic. Families have in some cases simply not being able to cope with the impact of the pandemic.

40. A low percentage of child protection 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 remains a significant strength of the service and reinforces that children are being seen and kept safe.

41. Full Time Looked After Children (LAC)

Children Looked After (LAC)	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 Q1 Apr-Jun
No of full time LAC	1267	1339	1305	1440	1592	1664	1602	1640

42. With regards to Looked After Children, the number had decreased by 62 (4%) during 2019/20, against a national increase of 4%. However, as with children subject to a child protection plan, since lockdown and then post those restrictions, numbers have steadily increased as demand for children’s social care services increases. As at the end of September there were 1,664 Looked After Children, an increase of 4%. The numbers of Looked After Children is impacting significantly on the financial challenges the Council is facing and the capacity of the service. It should be noted that Cabinet approved significant short term funding to support Children’s Services in meeting the expected rise in demand for services.

43. There is of course significant churn throughout the year of the Looked After Children population. Additionally, changes in court practices are placing more children 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.

44. Nationally the picture of demand continues to outstrip the supply of placements for Looked After Children, and the costs of placements are rising significantly. The increasing complexity of the children coming into the care system has meant additional costs associated with their placements.

45. The Children & Families branch has a robust and well established quality assurance framework in place enabling the department to make sure that we maintain quality standards whilst dealing with the continuing increases in demand. This includes a detailed case file auditing programme that audits circa 1000 cases during the year, with managers giving detailed face to face feedback to practitioners on their casework. This equates to 10% of casework. This is supported by a programme of annual internal peer reviews of every operational area, involving frontline staff in assessing the effectiveness of services. A comprehensive programme of practice observations and thematic audits, as well as feedback from service users, helps to triangulate performance information to provide insight into the quality of frontline practice. Ofsted commented in the 2019 inspection ‘effective quality assurance and performance systems support leaders to maintain strong oversight of practice’.

**Local Developments**



### Social Worker Recruitment and Retention:

46. A key issue, both nationally and locally, continues to be the recruitment and retention of social workers. Nationally vacancy rates continue to be around 20% of all posts. Following significant work to improve recruitment and retention in Hampshire and a strategy of growing our own social workers for the future through our Graduate Entry Trainee Programme, vacancy rates in Hampshire are around 13% (n.b. these vacancies are covered by agency staff – see below). With three significant cohorts of Newly Qualified Social Workers joining Hampshire during this Autumn we aim to reduce vacancy rates to reduce to 10% or less by the end of 2020.
47. Hampshire continues to require agency social workers as part of our overall workforce capacity, to cover vacancies and also to balance levels of experience within social work teams while our graduate entry trainees build confidence and competence in role. Our own Hampshire Agency (Connect to Hampshire) is gaining traction in the social work market and as a result the use of off-contract agency social workers has reduced from 50% of our total agency requirement to 25%. This is helping to reduce the cost and increase the stability of our social work workforce overall. However, the draw of social workers to agency work is still an important issue, particularly for experienced social workers who report work flexibility and better pay as key reasons for moving to agency work.
48. Flexible working arrangements are a key priority in the retention of social workers. Significant progress has been made on this in the last two years in Hampshire, with flexible working arrangements available to almost all of our social workers. Our recent social work survey confirmed that our social workers understand and know how to access the flexible working opportunities we can offer. However, the importance of pay as a factor in retention is continuing to rise nationally and work is underway to review market supplement arrangements for Hampshire's children's social workers. This work is essential to ensure the long term success of our strategy for growing our own social workers for the future and reducing reliance upon agency staff.

### Transforming Social Care (TSC) in Hampshire

49. Hampshire was one of only a small number of high performing local authorities chosen by the Department for Education to become a Partner in Practice to innovate and test new ways of delivering social work to vulnerable children and families. This led us to introduce a radical whole system change and Hampshire Children's Services' vision is to deliver a service around five key principles:
  - A family service - a system focusing 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 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.

### TSC Phase 1 delivered:

50. Creation of Child Assessment and Safeguarding Teams - the joining of Reception and Assessment teams with Child in Need teams, creating a more seamless service for families.
51. The Hampshire Approach - we have developed and rolled out in depth training in the 'Hampshire Approach', a resilience, strengths-based way of working with families grounded on academic research. In support of the 'Hampshire Approach', we have developed an online toolkit that provides the tools and resources staff need to work with children and families to enable the best possible outcomes.
52. To achieve positive and sustained change for children, young people and their families we have invested further in multi-disciplinary, intensive working with children and families who present with certain characteristics
53. Ofsted were very positive in 2019 in our inspection report regarding the evidence of the impact of our transformation stating that, *'A highly successful large-scale transformation programme has included the creation of additional social work posts and an innovative pathway of support for newly qualified social workers. The implementation of children's assessment and safeguarding teams (CAST) and specialist multi-disciplinary teams supports an increasingly holistic approach to children's needs...'*

*'The appointment of personal assistants to support social workers, combined with improved technology and the implementation of the strengths-based social work model, the Hampshire Approach', have equipped social workers with the tools, skills and time to work directly with children and families. Consequently, children's needs are better understood, intervention is purposeful, and children and families are being helped to become resilient'.*

54. Further to the success of Phase 1 and the need to continuously improve, funding has been secured for a further two years of Transforming Social Care activity. Phase 2 will take a similarly transformative approach to the remainder of the Children and Families branch.

### Modernising Placements Programme

55. A further scheme of transformation work is also underway, our Modernising Placements Programme (MPP). The aim of the Programme is to develop a continuum of care which can provide the right accommodation and support at the right time for our Looked After Children in Hampshire. Approaches to care need to be more fluid, offering different pathways to children at various points in their childhood that pull on the different skills and experiences of carers and staff in all settings who share a common understanding and language around trauma. These approaches aim to offset the impact locally of the national shortage of placements referred to at 4.13 above.
56. The overall programme objectives are to:
  - Increase the number of in-house foster carers in Hampshire
  - Ensure that we have sufficient placement opportunities that are able to offer high quality, flexible, stable and local support to meet the needs of our young people

- Ensure that there is equivalency and parity of esteem across the different care environments
- Maximise in house children's homes occupancy

#### Youth Offending Service:

57. Hampshire Youth Offending Team (YOT) aims to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people aged 10 - 17 years. The YOT works with children and young people who are subject to Pre-Court and Court Orders. The Youth Crime Prevention (YCP) arm of YOT works with children who are at risk of receiving a formal disposal to prevent this happening. The YOT provides reports to the Hampshire Courts and undertake specialist assessments for children who commit Harmful Sexual Behaviour. The YOT achieves its objectives through working in partnership with Health, Children Services, Police and Probation. It also provides specialist services in relation to Restorative Justice; Parenting; and Education, Training and Employment.
58. At any one time, Hampshire YOT is working with 450-500 children and young people across the county, this figure has remained consistent over the last two years. Similarly, the numbers of children subject to YCP remains constant at around 200. To deliver this service, Hampshire YOT employs 80 staff across Case Management, YCP, and in its specialist Restorative Justice and ETE services.
59. In August 2019, the Government announced that Hampshire were one of fourteen areas to be allocated funding to develop a Violence Reduction Unit. Led by Public Health, HYOT were given specific monies to work with the Willow Team (see 3.15) and develop a Prevention Service for the Hampshire Pupil Referral Units. The focus of this project is to prevent children from becoming criminally exploited. This funding has now been extended to 2020/21.
60. Hampshire YOT has continued to focus on reducing the number of First Time Entrants (FTE) into the Youth Justice System. Currently standing at 180 per 100,000 children it remains below the average for England and Wales. These improvements have been made through partnership working, the oversight of a small team to ensure consistency, and good processes.
61. The second key performance indicator is the reducing the numbers of children under our supervision who commit a further offence. The latest available figure puts this at 34.5% which is a reduction from 45.8% in the previous twelve months. This is lower than the average for England and Wales, the South East, and the rest of the pan Hampshire authorities.

#### Sector Led Improvement Work

62. As a Partner in Practice local authority with the DfE, Hampshire provides improvement support and advice to other local authorities across the region, and more widely as requested, and have funding currently until March 2021. In addition, we are also involved in supporting the following local authorities.

#### Buckinghamshire

63. Hampshire's Chief Executive remains the formal Commissioner role appointed by the DfE and he continues to chair the Buckinghamshire Children's Improvement Board. Hampshire Children's Services have been supporting Buckinghamshire's

improvement journey formally since 2018, and recently agreed a plan with the DfE to deliver a further 87 days of support in 2020/21.

### West Sussex

64. Hampshire's Chief Executive is appointed as the Commissioner for West Sussex and Hampshire Children's Services is their formal improvement partner. The Commissioner's report and recommendations which were published in September 2019; since then Hampshire has been providing extensive improvement support and assurance for the Commissioner and the Improvement Board across all service areas, as West Sussex plan to establish a Trust model, as confirmed by the Secretary of State following the Commissioner's recommendations.

### Isle of Wight

65. Hampshire Children's Services continue to manage Isle of Wight Children's Services and a formal strategic partnership agreed in 2018 has extended that until 2023. The service has continued to make positive improvements and in the Inspection of Local Authorities Children's Services in November 2018 was judged to be 'Good'. This was a remarkable achievement since being judged inadequate in 2012 and a testament to the joint working to improve the service.
66. 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 authorities, there is no detriment to the oversight and management of Hampshire Children's Services as evidenced by the recent Ofsted report. Hampshire receives full financial recovery for Sector Led improvement, either directly from the Department for Education, or through the Partners in Practice grant funding by the DfE. A small team using Partners in Practice grant funding has been established to further support capacity in this area and ensure that the work in Hampshire maintains due focus. As with all work undertaken in other authorities, there is always positive learning gained to further improve services in Hampshire. These benefits to Hampshire are significant and enable both staff and services in Hampshire to be continuously developed. Ofsted commented that, '*Leaders recognise the benefits that come from being an improvement partner, not only in creating income, but also in the learning that is gained from other local authorities and from keeping its own staff stimulated and stretched.*'

### **Future Challenges and Operational Priorities**

67. 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). Hampshire Children's Services is well placed to meet these challenges, as set out above, but they will be key areas of focus over the next year.
- Continuing to meet the increasing demands for children's social care services.
  - Maintaining operational effectiveness of the service amidst the pandemic.
  - The costs associated with the placements for looked after children will continue to be a significant pressure for the County Council. Significant additional corporate funding has already been given to the department, but as

demand increases and the supply of placements comes under further pressure, inevitably costs will rise.

- Child exploitation, in all its forms, continues to be an increasing area of work, particularly the 'county lines' issues. Although Hampshire is well placed to meet these challenges, it is important that we remain vigilant and responsive, working in tandem with partners to protect children.
- The recruitment and retention of social workers will continue to need to be addressed.
- Tactical changes have been made to the current social care IT system to ensure that the system continues to be fit for purpose. A new system will be implemented following successful procurement, which will free up social work capacity and reduce administration. The new system is expected to be in place late 2021.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

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

**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.

### **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.

### **3. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

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

### **4. 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?

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