

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **12 February 2019**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL

Membership:

Councillors Bukky Okunade (Chair), David Potter (Vice-Chair), Alex Anderson, Abbie Akinbohun, Garry Hague and Elizabeth Rigby

Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative
Lynda Pritchard, Church of England Representative
Paula Robinson, Parent Governor Representative
Kim James, Chief Operating Officer, HealthWatch Thurrock

Substitutes:

Councillors Steve Liddiard, Joycelyn Redsell and Luke Spillman

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

	Page
1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes	5 - 18
To approve as a correct record the minutes of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 4 December 2018.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	

4	Declaration of Interests	
5	Youth Cabinet Update	
6	Items Raised by Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board	
	This item is reserved to discuss any issues raised by the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board.	
7	Thurrock New Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements	19 - 52
8	Update on Recommendations from Social Care Services Review	53 - 58
9	Post - 16 Landscape in Thurrock	59 - 64
10	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Update	65 - 76
11	Update on Brighter Futures Children's Centres Service	77 - 102
12	Update Report On Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children	103 - 112
13	Work Programme	113 - 116

Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **4 February 2019**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

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What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4 December 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Bukky Okunade (Chair), David Potter (Vice-Chair), Alex Anderson, Abbie Akinbohun, Joycelyn Redsell and Elizabeth Rigby

Nicola Cranch, Parent Governor Representative
Lynda Pritchard, Church of England Representative

Apologies: Councillors Garry Hague
Paula Robinson, Parent Governor Representative

In attendance: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Elozona Umeh, Senior Public Health Programme Manager
Jason Read, Operations Manager of Youth Offending Service
David May, Management Accountant
Jane Foster-Taylor, Local Safeguarding Children Board Vice-Chair
Adam Shea, Youth Cabinet Representative 1
Joshua Aldwinckle-Povey, Youth Cabinet Representative 2
Wendy Le, Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting may be filmed and was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

24. Minutes

The Parent Governor Representative referred to the second paragraph on page 8 of the agenda and stated that she did not work in a school. The sentence would be amended as follows:

"The Parent Governor Representative 1 explained Ofsted visits within her school and queried whether the service felt they were in a position of never achieving a 'good' rating as the rating moved with each visit."

The minutes from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 October 2018 were approved subject to the changes made.

25. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

26. Declaration of Interests

The Church of England Representative declared a non-pecuniary interest on agenda item 12 as she was the Chair of the Music Club.

Councillor Redsell

27. Youth Cabinet Update

The Youth Cabinet had been busy in their preparation of their conference 'Youth Con' which would be taking place on 13 December 2018 at High House Production Park in Purfleet. They were also working on a workshop called 'Funky Finance' and was working with partners to complete the 'Make Your Mark' ballot.

Councillor Redsell asked the Youth Cabinet to elaborate on the details of the 'Funky Finance' workshop. The Youth Cabinet Representative 1 explained the workshop covered the meaning of money and the cost of living expenses. Within the workshop, there was a game for participants in which money had to be balanced over a 12 month period to help them understand taxes and expenses. In response, Councillor Redsell mentioned a similar activity that had taken place when she had been Mayor and welcomed the idea as youths did not have finance subjects in their school curriculum.

28. Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Presented by the Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) Vice-Chair, the annual report for 2017/18 reflected the priorities set within the LSCB Business Plan for 2017/18, the progress achieved and areas for further development during 2018/19.

The report concluded that LSCB's priorities for 2018/19 were:

- To continue to develop a Board fit for change with the introduction of a Strategic Group to oversee the changes to the new safeguarding arrangements.
- To support the development of the changes in outcomes of the refreshed early help provision of the Brighter Futures programme.
- To support the implementation and roll out of Signs of Safety and Graded Care Profile 2 processes.
- To develop our workforce to be more effective in safeguarding.

The LSCB ended by saying that this type of report would be delivered one last time before it changed to reflect the new safeguarding arrangements in the future.

Referring to the 'Schools' section on page 35 of the agenda, the Church of England Representative queried the methods the LSCB used to encourage

schools to participate in the termly Safeguarding Leads Meeting for Schools and Academies. The Corporate Director explained the meetings were held with schools to communicate with each other in terms of safeguarding accountability. There were also annual meetings held with schools regarding performance and safeguarding issues. Adding on to this, the LSCB Vice-Chair said education meetings were also held on a quarterly with LSCB and representatives would feedback on their cohorts of schools.

The Church of England Representative went on to ask about the 'additional business processes' mentioned on page 36, third paragraph under Learning and Improvement Programme. Explaining this referred to the strengthening of processes, the LSCB Vice-Chair said the business team were placed on training programmes which were audited through the Board.

Pointing out the graph for Multi Agency Training on page 37, Councillor Redsell questioned why attendance appeared low. The LSCB Vice-Chair answered there were areas that required strengthening but the graph had not captured the full picture of safeguarding. It did not clearly reflect attendance numbers and the training that had been delivered through primary care forums. The process would need to be reconsidered in the next year so the results would give a clearer picture.

Under LAC reviews on page 32, Councillor Anderson queried the 84% given and asked if this was an increase or decrease on previous years. The Corporate Director explained 84% was not the expected number for performance and the ideal number would be between 90 – 95% which would mean a good performance. This was an area that the service was improving in and children in care were expected to have reviews every 6 months.

Councillor Redsell asked the Corporate Director if meetings should take place more often rather than every 6 months. Explaining that this was the minimum statutory requirement, the Corporate Director went on to say that it applied to the first year. Once there was a change of child care placement, the child care plan would need to be looked at again.

On page 42, under Voice of the Child, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 sought clarification on the sentence 'the Board has strong links with the Youth Cabinet'. The LSCB Vice-Chair explained the Board had worked with the Children in Care Council and one of the results had been a Health Passport for children aged 13. This enabled children of those ages to record vaccinations, dental records and other health records. The Health Passport was currently in its testing stages and it would be rolled out to children in care if it effective. The Youth Cabinet Representative 2 said the Youth Cabinet would welcome any suggestions on how the Board could work with the Youth Cabinet as suggested in the report.

Referring to page 22 of the agenda under section 6, the Chair questioned if it was true that the report had no impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community. The Corporate Director confirmed this was not

the case and would take this back to the report author to ensure it would be incorporated in the future.

The Chair asked how education would fit into the future of LSCB after the new safeguarding arrangements took place. The Corporate Director answered that schools were fully involved with their representative bodies and engaged in wider safeguarding strategies. It was also part of schools' statutory duties to fulfil safeguarding obligations and Thurrock's schools were good at this.

Councillor Redsell voiced concern on schools and looked after children where sometimes issues 'slipped through the net' and schools had to have more control over this. Referring to schools and councillors, she said all were corporate parents and they were all accountable.

Referring to the changes of LSCB, the LSCB Vice-Chair said the other agencies were partners and the Chair of LSCB should be independent and was there to observe the 3 partners. There was no guidance or script for LSCB so they had been resolving issues when presented.

RESOLVED:

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Committee noted the report and progress made on children's safeguarding.

29. Schools Funding Formula 2019/20

The report was introduced by the Management Accountant which outlined the new national funding formula from 2018/19 by the Department for Education (DfE). From consultations with the Thurrock Schools Forum, it was agreed that Thurrock schools would move towards the National Funding formula but maintain some localisation to support schools in this transition period. Local discretion may end in 2021 when the full funding formula was expected to be implemented.

The Parent Governor Representative questioned if the Thurrock funding formula was sustainable when compared against the national funding formula due to the amount of the money. The Management Accountant answered that the same amount of money was distributed but a different formula had been used so that each school would be impacted differently. Thurrock's formula would target money to schools with additional educational needs to ensure they received the much needed resources to raise standards. This was on par with the national funding formula. The formula would be able to be delivered within its funding allocation as there was a mechanism in place that would only distribute the money that was available.

In response, the Parent Governor Representative sought further clarification if this would be sustainable going forward due to the significant difference in the figures. Referring to appendix A, the Management Accountant explained that the figure within the Schools Block Formula showed the same amount of

money distributed but the only difference was the formula used. He went on to say that the report asked for the basic principles to be agreed as a different outcome could be formulated with new data that would be available in mid-December 2018. The new data would be from a school census that had taken place in October 2018.

Referring to page 49, paragraph 7.2, the Chair sought clarification on 'maintain some localisation' during the transition period. Pointing out the National Funding Formula (NFF) 2019/20 column in appendix A, the Management Accountant explained that the idea was to not distribute the £1.4 million for the free school meals but instead to build it in as protection so the amount that schools could use per pupil was reduced. This would give schools time to adjust to the reduction funding and implement change which would then enable them to better manage the resources they would have in the next year.

The Chair asked if the schools had agreed to the suggested formula to which the Management Accountant answered that the schools had agreed. Consultations had taken place with Schools Forum and the formula had been presented as the safer option. The Chair went on to ask who had the power to make the decision on the school formula. Explaining that it was Cabinet, the Management Accountant went on to say that school were consulted beforehand. Cabinet would also be aware of the recommendations from Schools Forum.

As the report was going onto Cabinet in the next week, 12 December 2018, the Chair asked why the report was going so soon after the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Management Accountant said approval was needed in December 2018 due to the release of new data mentioned earlier. This would enable the service to work through the funding formula before submitting to the DfE on 21 January 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and provided comments on the consultation responses made by Schools Forum to Thurrock Cabinet on changes to the local funding formula to be implemented from April 2019:

- **The National funding formula to be implemented in full from April 2019 with the exception of Free School Meals;**
- **Minimum Funding Guarantee to be implemented at 1.5%, in line with the National funding formula guidelines. Any unallocated funds once the National funding formula has been implemented will be used to reduce the Minimum Funding Guarantee to the lowest possible figure to afford more protection to schools. The options presented showed this as -0.57%; and**

- **A revised calculation for Notional Special Educational Needs to be implemented consistent with the new funding formula.**

30. Youth Offending Service Report

The report was presented by the Operations Manager for Youth Offending Service (YOS) which outlined the current performance levels of the YOS. There were highlights on the work the YOS had been undertaking that included gang crime, knife prevention and child exploitation.

Councillor Redsell declared a non-pecuniary interest as she sat on the Essex Police and Fire Crime Panel. She mentioned using the YOS on previous occasions and suggested that councillors should be made aware of the services the YOS could offer. The Operations Manager for YOS said they were involved with community based projects in which they supervised young people to undertake. There had been good work carried out with past offenders who were making reparations. On reparations, the Chair queried if the YOS worked with probation officers to which the Operations Manager for YOS answered that the YOS worked with vulnerable young people and not adult offenders.

The Church of England Representative congratulated the YOS on the low re-offending figures. She went on to question how the YOS selected their providers to work with. The Operations Manager for YOS replied that schools would approach the YOS as the YOS did not choose. At the start of each academic year, the YOS would send an offer out to secondary schools on issues they could help with such as grooming and gangs. This was part of the Essex Police and Fire Crime Commissioner (PFCC) bid (a partner agency that funded the YOS) which was undertaking prevention work to place these issues as part of the national curriculum.

Welcoming the prevention work idea, the Church of England Representative queried if this would be available to primary schools. She had heard of knives found in primary schools as well. In response, the Operations Manager for YOS said the YOS was involved in a project on transition from primary to secondary school. However, care had to be taken on phrasing words to young children due to peer pressure.

The Youth Cabinet Representative 2 thanked the Operations Manager for YOS for attending a recent Youth Cabinet meeting. Referring to page 59, paragraph 2.11, he asked how the successes of programmes were measured. In reply, the Operations Manager of YOS said feedback would usually be sought from the local community. Also with reparations, it would help the young person to feel a part of the community and for them to give back to the community.

Referring to paragraph 2.18 on page 60, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 queried if there were plans to expand the programmes. With a firm 'yes' in response, the Operations Manager of YOS explained it was part of the PFCC bid as mentioned earlier. There was also training given on issues such as

gangs and the YOS' offer of help was also available to the community on such issues. He went on to encourage the Committee to recommend the YOS to anyone within their community and portfolios who would benefit from the YOS.

Going on to congratulate the YOS on the low 5% re-conviction rate in paragraph 2.13 on page 60, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 sought clarification on 'better generic prevention programmes' mentioned in the same paragraph. The Operations Manager for YOS explained that this was also part of the PFCC bid as mentioned earlier. Being exploited or involved in gangs was no different to any safeguarding issue for children despite the risks presented. There was a lack of national research on successful programmes that worked with young people involved with gangs. The YOS was currently with Gangs Line which will be audited to measure the success of the work and used as evidence for the PFCC bid.

Councillor Redsell commented that the Youth Cabinet had the venue and place to discuss the issues mentioned within the report. The reason was because young people would be within their own peer groups. Looking to the Operations Manager for YOS, Councillor Redsell questioned what plans were in place to prevent children buying knives. The Operations Manager for YOS mentioned that recent tests on knife purchases had been carried out by Community Safety Partnership. These tests had been carried out on small and major retailers and those who had failed would be going through the Licensing Sub Committee for hearing. Councillor Redsell stated the need to tighten control over the sale of knives.

Speaking to Councillor Redsell, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 stated that knife crime had been the biggest issue in the Youth Cabinet's 'Make Your Mark' ballot. The Youth Cabinet Representative 2 asked the Operations Manager of YOS whether the test purchase of knives was enough to control the sale of knives to young people. In response, the Operations Manager of YOS said this needed to be on a bigger agenda across the country. However, Thurrock had been ahead on knife prevention for a while. Adding to this, Councillor Redsell encouraged the Committee to attend the Essex Police and Crime Panel who would be able to answer questions on these types of issues. The Chair also encouraged this.

Councillor Rigby queried the ages of young people that the YOS worked with. The Operations Manager of YOS answered that statutory work was with the ages of 10 – 17 year olds but this would sometimes go over 17. Prevention work was with 8 – 18 year olds who had not gone through the criminal justice system yet.

The Parent Governor Representative congratulated the YOS on the outstanding work they had done. She went on to say the biggest challenge was knife crime as people were afraid to involve themselves in knife prevention. Safeguarding was mentioned in organisations but knife crime and gangs were not categorised in safeguarding so needed to be incorporated.

Agreeing with this, the Operations Manager of YOS said the issue was on language and a solution to move children away from these issues.

The Chair said that the acquisition of knives could also be from the home kitchen. There was a need to advise parents to be vigilant on knives taken from home as well. Questioning the Operations Manager of YOS, the Chair queried how successful the work with Gangs Line was and if the exit programme was doing well. The Operation Manager of YOS answered there had been issues with Gangs Line as they had been pan commissioned by the PFCC to undertake the work. However, Gangs Line had been successful in a recent case and the YOS had been offering support in this as well. Regarding knife prevention, the YOS was currently working with Thurrock's Communications Team on advertising campaigns around anti-social behaviour and knives. Young people were giving their stories which were another example of restorative justice.

Councillor Rigby questioned whether there were statistics on adults passing knives to younger people. In answer, the Operations Manager of YOS said there was none as it was part of grooming issues where evidence would show this happened.

Referring to the test of knife purchases mentioned, the Vice-Chair queried if it was possible to name and shame the major retailers. The Operations Manager of YOS replied this was not within the remit of YOS and that Community Safety Partnership did not name and shame either. Adding on to this, the Corporate Director said there were risks to naming and shaming. However, enforcement action would be taken and the service would work with young people to prevent them from re-offending.

RESOLVED:

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and provided comment on the update and information provided within the report.

31. Children and Young People's Emotional, Wellbeing and Mental Health - Schools Wellbeing Service

Introduced by the Senior Public Health Programme Manager, the report highlighted the progress made so far on the School Wellbeing Service (SWS). The proposal was for the School Wellbeing Service to develop its work within each school based on its existing provisions. The ethos was to create a mentally healthy school environment in each school.

Stating the importance of mental health, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 was also pleased to see funding for the SWS from several sources. Referring to paragraph 3.5 on page 70 where it was stated the current service was not suitable for low level mental health issues; the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 queried if SWS would resolve this. The Senior Public Health Programme Manager explained the SWS would identify the needs through each school's

self-assessments and then co-ordinate the support required. The SWS was expected to have knowledge of all services across the Borough and allocate accordingly.

Continuing on, the Youth Cabinet Representative 2 questioned the pathways into the SWS once a need was identified. Answering that the pathways were an operational detail to smooth out, the Senior Public Health Programme Manager hoped the SWS would provide the support to meet identified needs. The Youth Cabinet Representative 2 went on to ask clarification on the meaning of 1.5 School Wellbeing Worker to which the Senior Public Health Programme Manager answered 1 full time whole time equivalent worker and .5 was half time.

The Church of England Representative welcomed the report and stated the importance of mental health. There were some schools that were already good at identifying needs and in making referrals but did not have the services available. She expressed concern on the 6.5 WTE suggested as there was not enough facilities for mental health support so she could not understand how 6.5 WTE would make any difference.

Referring to 'employing an educational psychologist and developing systems of working' on paragraph 3.4 on page 70, the Church of England Representative questioned who would be working together. She expressed further concern on the need for mental health services in Thurrock schools. Explaining that mental health was a national concern, the Corporate Director explained the rationale behind the SWS was to shift the culture and thinking of mental health. Schools were not receiving the service needed but service providers were still doing well. However, the need for mental health services was being driven by the Mental Health Summit.

Regarding the 6.5 WTE, the Corporate Director said this would give a broader impact of the SWS. A number of schools had their own set of initiatives on mental health and the next step was how this could be brought together so the service would be working with schools. The service was trying to change to incorporate better mental health services into their system which may end up with ideas that may or may not work but the service had the ambition and drive to ensure the SWS would work.

On counselling, the Chair asked if this would be offered or whether there would be referrals for this. The Senior Public Health Programme Manager replied the service was working with London South Bank University (LSBU) on a mental health strategy and the impact of the SWS. Counselling would be on a case by case basis and would be referred to services across Thurrock.

Going back to an earlier point made by the Church of England Representative, the Youth Cabinet Representatives commented that not all schools were good at identifying mental health issues as this was not the case in their schools.

Councillor Redsell mentioned that if a designated mental health lead was placed in schools, it would help to take some of the workload off teachers who already had too much work. She went on to say that in a lot of schools that she had dealt with, bullying was not addressed and there was a need to ensure schools handled these issues. The Senior Public Health Programme Manager explained a designated mental health lead was not part of the SWS as schools were responsible for interventions in bullying which was a national directive. If bullying was identified within the SWS in a school, an anti-bullying programme would be delivered in the school to address the issue. Councillor Redsell went on to say that teachers would still be taking responsibility in identifying bullying issues as they were present within the schools. She expressed concern on how well the SWS would work as the services available would be the same as before so could not understand how casework would be facilitated.

Sharing the same concerns, the Parent Governor Representative said staff in her school were already overstretched on workload and would not be able to take on the role of a designated mental health lead. The Corporate Director explained out that the service would not be placing a designated mental health lead in schools. However, there was a role on looking at the environment within a school and issues that had a broader impact on schools.

Continuing on, the Corporate Director stated the SWS would open dialogue up with the commissioning service and new ways of thinking on how processes could operate differently. Some schools did have a designated mental health worker and had been able to work with local mental health services. This enabled schools to adapt the mental health service to the schools' needs. The SWS could help to bring in activities to help build impact onto children's mental health and wellbeing so it was not adding to teacher's workloads but instead encouraging them to think of different ways to work.

On the 6.5 WTE, Councillor Redsell asked if this would be led locally or advertised nationally. The Corporate Director answered the roles were for anyone who was suitable.

The Church of England Representative commented there was not a single solution to mental health issues as children were in stressful environments. She felt politicians needed to look at the national curriculum and hoped to see a future report to update the Committee on the SWS.

Councillor Akinbohun queried if the service had thought of using volunteers instead of the 6.5 WTE. The Senior Public Health Programme Manager replied the idea of volunteers had not been considered. However, volunteers would need to be trained which would take up more time and resources. Volunteers could be considered as supplementing the proposed 6.5 WTE.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny discussed the strategic direction of travel for implementing a School Wellbeing**

Service as a preventative offer to improving Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.

1.2 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny discussed the funding required to implement a School Wellbeing Service in Thurrock.

32. Update on the Free School Programme

Presented by the Corporate Director, the report gave an update on the 3 new schools which were Osborne Trust, South East Essex and Treetops. The land for the schools had been acquired and the head of terms had been agreed. The next stage was for the schools to go through the planning process.

Welcoming the plan of the 3 new schools, the Church of England Representative was also pleased to hear of the extension of Thameside Academy. She went on to question whether the levels of pollution had been assessed and if other risk assessments had been carried out. The Corporate Director replied no risk assessment had been carried out yet but the land chosen was the only areas available to build on due to the red lines of the Lower Thames Crossing proposal.

As the schools would be within Councillor Redsell's ward, she declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item. She went on to say that her residents may petition against a new school in the ward due to the congestion of roads with buses. There was already a school and a rugby club within her ward which already caused congestion on roads within its surrounding area. Sympathising with this, the Corporate Director agreed that placing a school into an already congested area was not straightforward. However, it was for the Council to provide schools by law and it was a complex process when acquiring a new school as there were planning applications and mitigations to consider. The schools were very much needed but the service could try to influence.

The Chair queried if the temporary accommodation for the schools would still be built regardless of actions taken by residents and whether other options of available land would be explored. The Corporate Director explained that all options of available land had already been explored. If there had been no available land to build on, the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA) would not have agreed to the temporary accommodation of the school. The process had begun back in 2016 to find available land.

Councillor Redsell commented that there had been other available land but the Lower Thames Crossing proposal had taken these. She went on to mention congestion problems on the A13 due to children being taken to school via this route.

As a resident of one of the affected wards, the Parent Governor Representative thought the acquirement of new schools were great but was concerned that residents were not informed about the infrastructure. She supported the new schools as there was a need for these despite being

affected by the placement of Treetops. However, safeguarding issues should be looked at in the surrounding areas of the new schools e.g. safe crossings.

The Committee further discussed the need for new schools and the problems posed for residents in the areas regarding congestion. The Chair asked that the report be brought back to the Committee as an update on 12 February 2019.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted and provided comment on the Free Schools Programme progress to date and the partnership working with the ESFA;**
- 1.2 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the update in relation to the Thames Park Free School; and**
- 1.3 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the Councils plans for temporary accommodation at Orsett Heath Academy and Thames Park prior to the opening of the Free Schools**

33. Children's Social Care Performance

The report was presented by the Corporate Director and gave an overview on:

- Children Looked After (CLA) that were consistently in the region of 300 in Thurrock;
- Increased demand in the number of referrals; and
- The reduction in the number of children on child protection plans and was in line with comparator groups.

An outline was also given on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) which had increased to 44 due to the breakup of a camp in Calais in the previous year. However, these UASC would eventually be moved around the eastern region based on agreement terms. This was the service's biggest challenge due to the significant cost to Thurrock in holding UASC.

On UASC, Councillor Redsell commented that some were not children and asked what processes were in place to reunite them back home with their families. In reply, the Corporate Director said UASC that were found to be not children would usually end up staying. The service would work with the Home Officer on these cases and ensure these people would go into employment, education or training as long as they headed down a positive route. Councillor Redsell went on to ask if the UASC were reunited with their parents. Explaining that there was no contact information, the Corporate Director went on to say that relatives could appear to claim the child. In these circumstances, the appropriate checks would be carried out to verify the identity of the person claiming the child. This was done to prevent trafficking.

Referring to paragraph 3.11 on page 106, Councillor Anderson pointed out that the figures showed incidences of missing children but there was no context on the length of time a child was missing for. Stating that some missing incidences were short, the Corporate Director said carers were advised to report all incidences. The Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Co-ordinator would analyse the patterns and scrutinise these cases in multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings. The Corporate Director said a report on CSE and action plans on missing children would be brought to the Committee on 12 February 2019 which would give more details.

The Chair referred to page 108, paragraph 4.1 and queried the position of the action plan following on from the Ofsted inspection. Explaining that the action plan looked at quality assurances, the Corporate Director said each manager audited cases every 6 months in terms of purposefulness and cons. There were also practice workshops in place and ongoing training was provided. The service was commissioning work on advocacy and children in care but they would need to work with families as some parents may feel threatened since they were the natural advocates for their children.

Continuing on, the Corporate Director referred to workload pressures and said there had been more incoming work in the system and the service had just created an Edge of Care team that looked to reduce the number of children coming into care. There was also the SWS and if effective, there was expectation that there workload would be reduced as there would be referral pathways in place. There were also additional staff to oversee and manage casework in safeguarding children in need and care. A number of other proposals had also been put forward.

Regarding CLA, Councillor Redsell asked if a child's opinion was considered if they wanted to go back to their parents. In response, the Corporate Director said the Chair of the review would seek the child's view and if it was safe for the child to return, then it would be considered.

Referring to whistleblowing allegations, the Chair sought confirmation of a report on the learning outcomes and action plans to follow on. The Corporate Director confirmed a report would be brought to the Committee on 12 February 2019.

RESOLVED:

1.1 That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented on the areas of improvement in Children's Social Care and work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services.

34. Fees & Charges Pricing Strategy 2019/20

Presented by the Corporate Director, the report highlighted changes to nursery charges and Grangewater fees which had risen with inflation.

The Church of England Representative sought clarification on recommendation 1.2. Explaining that Fees and Charges reports were similar, the Corporate Director said these all passed through Overview and Scrutiny before arriving at Cabinet. Some of the fees within the report did not necessarily apply to Children's Services but would apply to other departments within the Council. These enabled Directors to vary the charges if required.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised fees and charges proposals including those no longer applicable**
- 1.2 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that director delegated authority will be sought via Cabinet to allow Fees & Charges to be varied within a financial year in response to commercial requirements**

35. Work Programme

The following reports were added to the work programme for the 12 February 2019 meeting:

- Children's Centres Update
- Learning Outcomes and Action Plan
- Update on the Free School Programme
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children

An update on the School Wellbeing Service would be brought back to the Committee in the next municipal year.

The meeting finished at 9.28 pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

12 February 2019	ITEM: 7
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Thurrock New Multi – Agency Safeguarding Arrangements	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Alan Cotgrove, Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children and Families	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director, Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2018 dissolves the requirement for Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards and requires new arrangements to be put into place. It is the responsibility of Local Authorities to ensure that the new safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements of these new arrangements. Government Guidance has been published to assist in the transitional process during 2018.

The three Strategic Partners, determined under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, comprise Thurrock Council, Essex Police and Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The three Partners are required to publish an Implementation Document setting out the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) three months prior to its implementation.

The document has to be published no later than June 2019 and implemented no later than September 2019. Thurrock’s new arrangements will be published in February 2019 and come into effect on 1st May 2019

A Strategic Group of the three Partners was set up in November 2017 and have been developing the new arrangements during 2018 to ensure they meet the statutory requirements. The new arrangements will be referred to as Thurrock Local Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (Thurrock LSCP). The Implementation Plan (see appendix) sets out the changes for Thurrock.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 The Childrens Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and provide comment on the new safeguarding arrangements.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (Thurrock LSCB) was introduced following requirements set out in The Children Act 2004 and has been supporting multi-agency safeguarding arrangement and their statutory responsibilities for Thurrock.
- 2.2 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 Bill received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017 and requires changes to the current local safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.3 The Government (DfE) has provided guidance to support partners during the transitional arrangements and Working Together 2018 was published in April 2018 setting out the final details expected of the new arrangements
- 2.4 Thurrock LSCB set up a Strategic Group of the three Partners in December 2017 to develop the new safeguarding requirements as Government guidance became available during 2018
- 2.5 The current Child Death Review process moves from the responsibility of the LSCB to separate arrangements between the Local Authority and the CCG and are not subject of this plan.
- 2.6 The new arrangements will be referred to as Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children partnership (Thurrock LSCP)
- 2.7 Summit meetings were held with Essex and Southend Safeguarding Children Board during 2018, where it was agreed to adopt three new safeguarding arrangements covering Essex, coterminous with the exiting Authority boundaries. A joint partnership approach was also agreed for strategic areas of safeguarding across Essex in line with existing safeguarding procedures for Southend, Essex and Thurrock. (SET Procedures)
- 2.8 The main areas of change under the new arrangements are:
 - The name changes to Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Thurrock LSCP)
 - Statutory partners change from five to three
 - Serious Case Reviews change to become Local or National Practice Reviews
 - The Child Death Review process is now a separate arrangement
 - No requirement for an Independent Chair
 - Multi-function independent scrutiny process to be introduced
 - Some structure changes to the existing LSCB

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 This is a statutory requirement

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To ensure the Council meets its statutory duties with regard to Childrens Safeguarding

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 A consultation process with agencies involved in safeguarding children in Thurrock has been taking place during the transitional arrangements
- 5.2 Two safeguarding summits have taken place with Essex and Southend Safeguarding Children Board to agree working across Essex arrangements

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 This report impacts on the following corporate priorities:
- People: a place where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay;
 - Place: a heritage rich Borough which is ambitious for its future;
 - Prosperity: a Borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.
- 6.2 There are no Local Authority policy changes proposed as part of the new arrangements

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no additional financial implications for the new safeguarding arrangement. The Local Authority contribution currently to the safeguarding arrangements remain in place and will be reviewed during the next financial year.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Stephen Smith**
Team Leader, Social Care

The Council are required to ensure that the new safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements. No other legal implications have been

identified. The document is owned collectively by the newly formed Local safeguarding Childrens Partnership. (Thurrock LSCP)

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
**Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer**

The new safeguarding arrangements and implementation Plan applies to all Children and families. There are no known negative implications arising for groups or individuals with protected characteristics.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None relevant.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Working Together 2015 (Government Document)
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Legislation)
- Child Death Review – Statutory guidance October 2017 (Government Document)
- Changes to Statutory Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children and new Regulations February 2018 (Government Document)
- Local Safeguarding Transitional Arrangements April 2018(Government Document)
- Working Together 2018(Government Document)
- Local Safeguarding Partner (Relevant Agencies) (England) Regulations 2018 (Government Document)
- SET Procedures

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Thurrock Safeguarding Children Arrangements May 2019

Report Author:

Alan Cotgrove

LSCB Manager

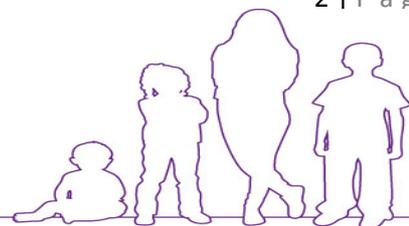
Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board



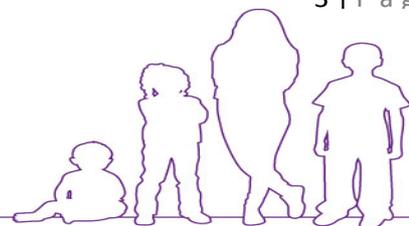
Thurrock Safeguarding Children Arrangements

May 2019

Foreword.....	4
Background to the changes.....	5
Working across Essex.....	5
Partnership Arrangements.....	6
Legislative Framework.....	6
Transitional Arrangements.....	8
Serious Case Reviews.....	8
Training and Development.....	8
Threshold Document.....	8
Website.....	8
Child Death Review.....	8
Purpose.....	8
The Structure and role of Thurrock LSCP.....	10
Partnership Support.....	11
Principles.....	11
The Scope of Thurrock LSCP.....	11
Thurrock LSCP Functions.....	13
Requests for information.....	15
Operational Accountability.....	15
Independent Scrutiny.....	15
Thurrock LSCP Membership.....	16
Statutory Safeguarding Partners.....	16
Relevant Agencies and Members.....	17
Lay Member.....	18
The Thurrock LSCP Strategic Group.....	18
Thurrock LSCP Learning & Improvement Framework.....	19
Learning & Practice Review Group.....	19
Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.....	19
Training & Development.....	20
Individual Practice Review Group.....	20
Audit Group.....	20
MACE.....	20



Task and Finish Groups	21
SET Meeting Arrangements	21
Meeting Attendance	21
Meetings Performance Criteria	21
External Reporting Mechanisms	22
Decision Making	22
Urgent Matters	22
Thurrock LSCP Performance Management Framework.....	23
Data Protection/Confidentiality and Freedom of Information.....	23
Equal Opportunities/Discrimination/Human Rights.....	24
Dispute Resolution Process and Complaints.....	24
Complaints	24
Thurrock LSCP Business Plan and Annual Report.....	25
Relationships with other Strategic Partnerships.....	25
Local Practice Reviews	26
Part 2 – Working Across Essex	26
Introduction.....	27
Strategic Relationships.....	27
SET Principles	27
Business Planning.....	28
Existing Good Practice.....	28
Glossary of Terms.....	30



Foreword

Dear Colleagues,

Working Together 2018 (WT2018) and the Children & Social Work Act 2017, sets out the accountability and responsibilities of the Safeguarding Partners in discharging their duties in respect of the new safeguarding arrangements for children being introduced in Thurrock.

The new safeguarding arrangements will be referred to as the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Thurrock LSCP) covering the geographical area of Thurrock, coterminous with the designated area of the Unitary Authority.

This Implementation Plan will be available on the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (Thurrock LSCB) website three months in advance of the new arrangements coming into effect on 1st May 2019.

The document will assist members of the new Partnership in interpreting their role and contribution to the new arrangement and securing effective inter-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people living in Thurrock. Also that all staff involved in the important work of the welfare and safeguarding of children are made aware of the changes taking place.

It is really important that these arrangements become proactively embedded, retained by the agencies involved and passed throughout organisations and the community for greater awareness of the process in place.

This Implementation Plan will provide the baseline for the subsequent partnership constitution which will be reviewed annually as the arrangements develop. It will form part of the annual reporting and business planning process to reflect any local strategic partnership developments and new structural arrangements.

We look forward to embarking on our journey to improve further the welfare and safeguarding of Thurrock children.



Rory Patterson

Corporate Director

Children's Services

Thurrock Council



Jason Hendy

Head of Public Protection

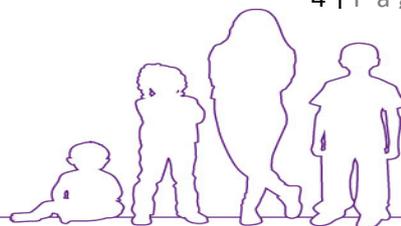
Essex Police



Jane Foster- Taylor

Chief Nurse

Thurrock CCG



Background to the changes

To facilitate the transition to our new safeguarding arrangements, Thurrock LSCB established a Strategic Group on 4th October 2017 comprising of the statutory Safeguarding Partners (SP) under the new arrangements along with the LSCB Independent Chair and the LSCB Business Manager to agree a shared vision for Thurrock.

A consultation process took place with the LSCB partner agencies of the current Board to ensure the views of all agencies were considered. This Implementation Plan was agreed and signed off by the Safeguarding Partners on 9th January 2019.

The document will be presented to the Chief Executive and Directors Board for approval and presented to the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Health and Wellbeing Board. It has also been made available to Essex Police and Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for relevant internal and external communication.

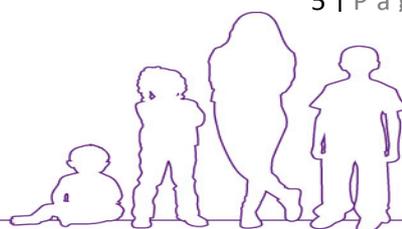
Working across Essex

Recognising the demographics of Essex with three existing LSCBs, the Strategic Group met with their Essex and Southend LSCB colleagues on 6th June 2018 and 11th October 2018 to agree how the new arrangements would be implemented across Essex.

It was agreed that under the new arrangements there would be three safeguarding arrangements coterminous with the existing County and Unitary Authority geographical areas of Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET).

The Safeguarding Partners identified opportunities to develop a "Working across Essex" strategy as part of the new safeguarding arrangements building on the existing good practice that has developed through the Safeguarding Boards.

Part 2 of this document sets out those areas of joint working.



Partnership Arrangements

The new arrangements will be referred to as Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (Thurrock LSCP).

A framework for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) to operate effectively has been agreed by the Safeguarding Partners. There will be an Annual Plan and Report published that will be informed by the strategic objectives of those agencies involved in safeguarding children and young people in Thurrock. The Partnership will take into account national and locally agreed safeguarding children priorities and safeguarding practice as set out in the statutory guidance Working Together 2018.



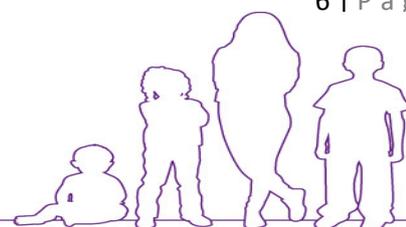
Legislative Framework

Whilst it is parents and carers who have primary care for their children, Local Authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, have specific duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out the specific duties.

Section 30 of The Children & Social Work Act 2017 removes the requirement for LSCB's and Section 16 – 23 sets out the accountability and responsibilities framework of the Safeguarding Partners in discharging their duties in respect of the new safeguarding arrangements for children. Working Together 2018 (WT 2018) and transitional guidance supporting the changes, sets out the requirements to have in place an Implementation Plan three months before the new arrangements are put in place.

Working Together 2018 replaces previous guidance set out in Working Together 2015. This guidance applies to all organisations and agencies that have functions relating to children. Specifically, this guidance applies to all Local Authorities, CCG, Police and all other organisations and agencies as set out in Chapter 2.

The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, sets out the requirements for the new safeguarding arrangements which replace LSCBs. The Children Act 2004 still remains in place (as amended) to reflect the changes. Other existing legislation



remains in place supporting the new safeguarding arrangements. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners required to establish the new safeguarding arrangements - referred to as the Safeguarding Partners as defined in the Children's Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) are:

- ❖ The Local Authority
- ❖ A CCG for an area any part of which falls within the Local Authority area
- ❖ The Chief Officer of Police for an area any part of which falls within the Local Authority area

The Safeguarding Partners have agreed on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a Strategic Leadership Group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from Serious Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (WT 2018 Chapter 4).

All three Safeguarding Partners have equal and joint responsibility for the local safeguarding arrangements. In situations that require a clear, single point of leadership, all three safeguarding partners have agreed under their local arrangements who will take the lead on issues that arise.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. Many local organisations and agencies have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out their functions.

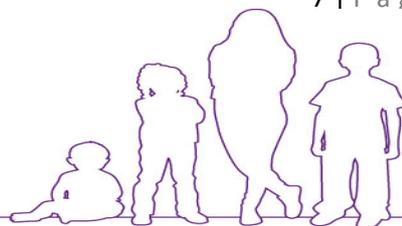
The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will comprise of the Safeguarding Partners and representatives selected from the agencies as listed within the Local Safeguarding Partners (Relevant Agencies) Regulations 2018, which are those organisations and agencies whose involvement, the Safeguarding Partners considered, are required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children.

The safeguarding arrangements will comprise of those partners which have regular contact with children, or have responsibility for services for them in the local area.

Early years, Schools, Colleges and other educational providers have a pivotal role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare and will be included as relevant agencies within the safeguarding arrangements. A process has been agreed locally on how best to achieve the active engagement of individual institutions in a meaningful way.

The relevant agencies, selected by the Safeguarding Partners to be part of the local safeguarding arrangements, must act in accordance with the arrangements (WT 2018) and are under a statutory duty to co-operate with the published arrangements. The relevant agencies will be reviewed annually.

The Safeguarding Partners will set out locally any contributions agreed with relevant agencies, including funding, accommodation, services and any resources connected with the arrangements. They will ensure relevant agencies have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.



The Partnership reserves the right to co-opt onto its meetings any agency, representative or specialist professional involved in the welfare and safeguarding of children for the purpose of supporting the partnerships aims and objectives.

Transitional Arrangements

Serious Case Reviews

Thurrock LSCB is formally handing over two cases to the new Safeguarding Partnership arrangements. These reviews will be completed in accordance with existing LSCB procedures and Working Together 2015.

Training and Development

Training activity commissioned by the LSCB has been agreed to be progressed by the Safeguarding Partners into the new arrangements. Future training will be reviewed within the new learning provision framework.

Threshold Document

The current LSCB Threshold Document was refreshed in October 2018 and has been agreed to be transferred to the new safeguarding arrangements and refreshed as part of the Safeguarding Partners work programme.

Website

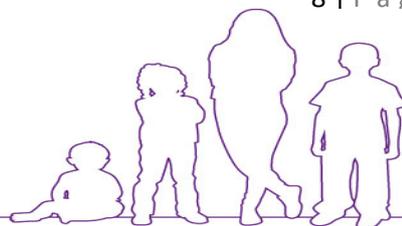
The LSCB website will transfer to the new safeguarding arrangements on the agreed date changing the web address to www.thurrocklscp.org.uk, with management of the site being administered on behalf of the Safeguarding Partners by the Thurrock LSCP Business Team.

Child Death Review

During the transition to the new Child Death Review arrangements which are scheduled to take place in September 2019, the Safeguarding Partners have agreed to retain the existing SET Child Death Review process. The new Child Death Review arrangements are subject to a separate process.

Purpose

The MASA will be the key statutory mechanism that brings together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals from other agencies responsible for promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people. It is an inter-agency partnership for agreeing how the different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children and for making sure that safeguarding arrangements work effectively to promote



better outcomes for children (WT 2018).

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- ❖ Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted;
- ❖ Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children;
- ❖ Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively;
- ❖ There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats;
- ❖ Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- ❖ Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- ❖ Protecting children from maltreatment;
- ❖ Preventing the impairment of children’s health or development;
- ❖ Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provisions of safe and effective care;
- ❖ Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child Protection

- ❖ The activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

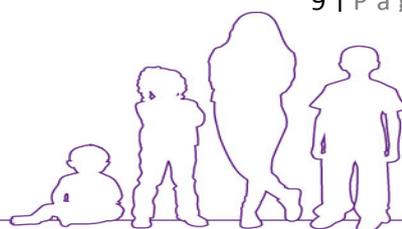
The Thurrock LSCP has a unique statutory role and a clear responsibility to undertake a scrutiny, quality assurance and challenge role in respect of how agencies individually and collectively promote the welfare and safety of children living in Thurrock.

The Safeguarding Partners are accountable and responsible for ensuring the new Thurrock LSCP safeguarding arrangements are effective.

The Thurrock LSCP Business Plan and Report, agreed by the Partnership, will be published and made available to all relevant partner members on an annual basis. The role of partner agencies is to hold their organisation and its officers to account for their contribution to the effective functioning of Thurrock LSCP.

Our Vision

Thurrock children and young people are happy, healthy, safe and can achieve their full potential, by providing effective support to all, with special attention given to those who are most vulnerable and at risk

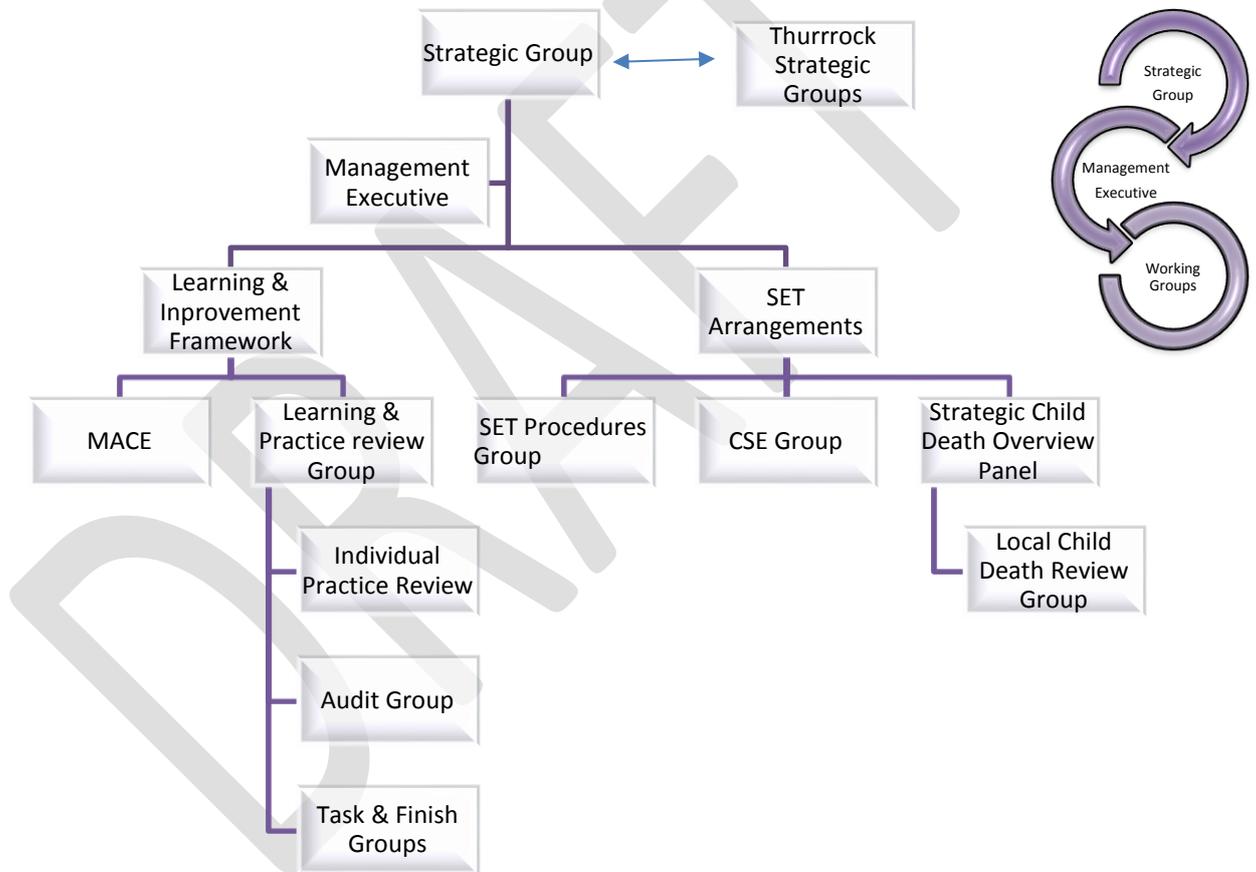


Our Strategic Aims

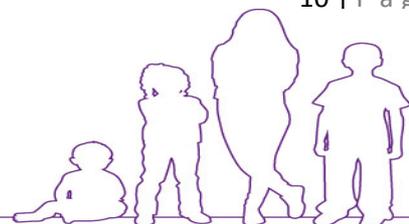
1. Safeguarding is everybody's business
2. Reduce the number of children in need of responsive safeguarding through effective help and support at an earlier stage
3. Voice of the child
4. A Partnership fit to meet future demands

The Structure and role of Thurrock LSCP

The Thurrock LSCP will function through a hierarchal structure led by the Safeguarding Partners through a Strategic Group.



The Partnership structure will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose to safeguard Thurrock's children.



Partnership Support

The Thurrock LSCP will be supported by a Business Support Team led by a Business Manager that previously supported the LSCB.

The Thurrock LSCP Manager is accountable to the three Statutory Safeguarding Partners in meeting their statutory duties. The Support Team is responsible for providing day to day business support, coordinating the Business Plan, managing and coordinating the Local Safeguarding Practice Review process and monitoring and evaluation of work resulting from the Plan and partner contributions to achieving its outcomes.

During the transition, the Local Authority will continue with its existing responsibility for the funding of the Business Team staff. In accordance with the existing employment terms and conditions the Manager is responsible operationally to the Assistant Director Childrens Social Care and strategically to the Corporate Director Childrens services. A review will be undertaken by the Manager and Strategic Partners during 2019 of the support function.

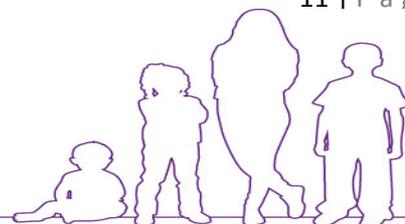
Principles

The following principles will underpin the work of the Thurrock LSCP. The Partnership will:

- ❖ Keep the safeguarding and welfare needs of children at the centre of everything it does;
- ❖ Operate a challenge and assurance function to both partner members and external organisations;
- ❖ Involve children, families, carers and frontline practitioners and managers in its work;
- ❖ Develop strong working relationships with Strategic Partners to promote clear roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements;
- ❖ Be open and transparent in the work that it undertakes;
- ❖ Be a learning and development Partnership that seeks continuous improvement.

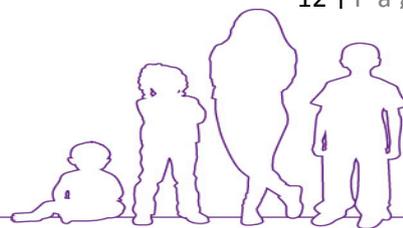


The Scope of Thurrock LSCP



Thurrock LSCP will support the safeguarding and the welfare of children across three broad areas of activity, **Prevent, Proactive & Responsive**, which should all take into account the need to promote equality of opportunity and to meet the diverse needs of all children living in our communities. Specifically:-

1. To identify and **prevent** harm and impairment of health or development and ensure that all children are provided with safe and effective care as they are growing up. This would include ensuring the Partnership:
 - a. Has mechanisms in place to identify abuse and neglect wherever they may occur;
 - b. Works to increase the understanding of safeguarding children issues in the professional and wider community, promoting the message that **'safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility'**
 - c. Helps to ensure that organisations working or in contact with children operate safe recruitment and safe workforce practices that take into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
 - d. Monitors the effectiveness of organisations' implementation of their duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and 157/175 Education Act 2002;
 - e. Helps to ensure that children know who they can contact when they have concerns about their own or others' safety and welfare;
 - f. Helps to ensure that adults (including those who are harming children) know who they can contact if they have a concern about a child or young person.
 - g. Lead in the Local Safeguarding Children Practice Review (previously SCR) process, and
 - h. Supports the development of effective local safeguarding strategies.
2. To be **proactive** and undertake targeted work:
 - a. To safeguard and promote the welfare of groups or particular groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable than the general population, for example, children living away from home, children who have run away from home, children in the Youth Justice System including custody, young carers, disabled children, Looked after Children and children and young people affected by gangs or Serious Youth Violence.
 - b. Through the development and evaluation of a Threshold Document, provide the framework and procedures for work with children and families where a child has been identified as being 'in need' under the Children's Act 1989, but where the child is not suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.
3.
 - a. To be **responsive** and undertake work to protect children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Chapter 47, Children Act 1989), including:
 - i. Children abused and neglected within families, including those harmed, in the context of domestic abuse; as a consequence of the impact of substance misuse or parental mental ill health;



- ii. Children abused outside of families by adults known to them; including those in fear of, or subject to forced marriage and honour based violence and FGM;
- iii. Children abused and neglected by professional carers; within an institutional setting, or anywhere else where children are cared for away from home;
- iv. Children abused by strangers;
- v. Children abused by other young people;
- vi. Young perpetrators of abuse;
- vii. Children abused through sexual exploitation and child trafficking;
- viii. Young victims of crime, and
- ix. Children of offenders.

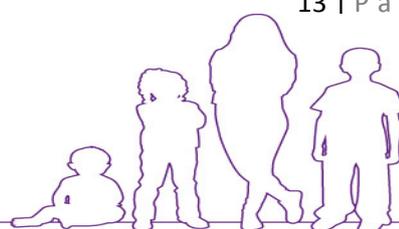
Thurrock LSCP Functions

The core functions of the Partnership are set out in Section 3 Working Together 2018 and the Child & Social Work Act 2017. Without prejudice to the generality of the objectives, the Thurrock LSCP functions are to generate more effective arrangements throughout the whole partnership in relation to:

- ❖ Protecting children from maltreatment;
- ❖ Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ❖ Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- ❖ Enabling children to have optimum life chances in entering adulthood successfully, particularly in terms of being healthy and staying safe;
- ❖ Ensuring that lessons are learned by sharing best child protection and safeguarding practice generally; and in particular, from episodes including when a child dies, or suffers serious harm when maltreatment is considered to have been a contributory factor; and
- ❖ Ensuring that work to protect children from harm is properly co-ordinated and effective is the primary function of the Partnership.

These functions will be performed by:

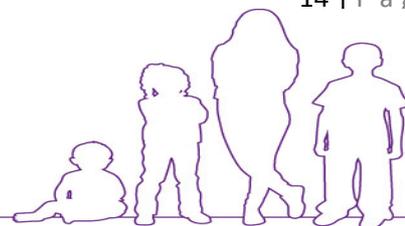
- ❖ **Participating in the planning of services** for children in the authority to help ensure that the safeguarding of children is a primary consideration. This will include contributing to the development of safeguarding arrangements and establishing effective strategic arrangements with the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- ❖ **Developing policies and procedures** for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including: refreshing the SET Child Protection Procedures, establishing clear thresholds for access to services – from early intervention through to specialist services; as well as promoting safe recruitment practices, supervision and the investigation of any allegations made against people working with children;



- ❖ **Communicating and raising awareness** of wider safeguarding issues with practitioners, children, families and carers and the wider community, helping the Partnership in shaping its strategic agenda. This will include:
 - Consulting with our Youth Council and Children in Care Council to ensure that their views are taken into account in the planning and delivery of services
 - Young people and families have the opportunity to engage in the work of the partnership and offer their views on the support we are providing
 - The provision for collecting feedback from children, young people and families through our education establishments and other existing mechanisms
 - Where possible, we will involve families in learning reviews
 - Asking our relevant agencies and other partners how they ensure they have captured the voices of children, young people and families in their work
 - Identifying other innovative ways to gather feedback through the partnership
 - Working alongside and with the Voluntary and Community Sector, supporting our understanding and identifying local needs
- ❖ **Supporting** the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) during the transition to the new Child Death Review Process, collecting and analysing information about child deaths raising awareness of preventable deaths;
- ❖ **Monitoring the effectiveness** of what is done to safeguard and promote the welfare of children through monitoring, evaluation and audit activity and offering advice with regards to making improvements.

All “relevant” Partnership members must have effective arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with their duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 or Section 157 or 175 of the Education Act 2002. These arrangements include organisations having in place and being able to evidence:

- ❖ Senior management commitment
- ❖ A statement of accountability
- ❖ Clear lines of accountability
- ❖ Service development
- ❖ Staff training
- ❖ Safer recruitment practices
- ❖ Effective inter-agency working
- ❖ Information sharing
- ❖ Working with individual children
- ❖ Monitoring and Inspection arrangements
- ❖ Undertaking Learning & Practice Reviews in accordance with WT2018 where a child has died or has been seriously harmed in circumstances where abuse or neglect is known or suspected
- ❖ Through identifying Serious Incidents relevant to the area and advising on lessons that can be learned (this includes multi-agency learning reviews or audit activity to learn from incidents and improve local safeguarding children arrangements or practice) through local practice reviews.
- ❖ Delivering and evaluating relevant multi agency training



- ❖ Helping to ensure the coordination and implementation of services for children who are privately fostered; and
- ❖ Helping to ensure that children within Thurrock have access to appropriate and understandable information when they have concerns about staying safe.

The effective implementation of Thurrock LSCP's objectives will contribute to an overall outcome of helping to ensure the well-being of Children and Young People.

Requests for information

Information sharing is at the core of good safeguarding outcomes. Existing protocols and information sharing agreements are being reviewed to ensure they meet the new legislative framework of the new safeguarding arrangements and agreed processes are in place for the sharing of information with relevant agencies.

The Safeguarding Partners may require any person, organisation or agency to provide them or a reviewer or another person acting, on behalf of the Safeguarding Partners, with specified information. This will be information which enables and assists the Safeguarding Partners to perform their functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, including Local and National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

The person or organisation to whom a request is made must comply with such a request made by the Thurrock LSCP and if they do not do so, the Safeguarding Partners may take legal action in order to obtain relevant information.

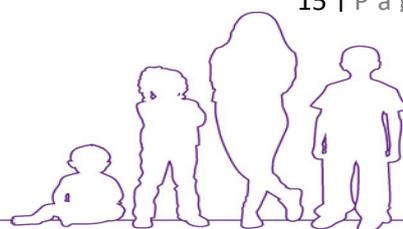
Operational Accountability

Whilst Thurrock LSCP has a role in coordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by individuals and organisations, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each Thurrock LSCP agency retains their existing lines of accountability for this area of work within the own services.

Independent Scrutiny

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Partners to put in place an independent scrutiny process to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases (Working Together 2018).

A multi systems approach will be taken to the independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the new arrangements. This will comprise of a number of functions which will include



independent scrutiny through, peer reviews, audits, individual scrutineers and ensuring the voice of children, young people and families is heard.

These functions will:-

- Consider how effectively the new arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners;
- Ensure the Safeguarding Partners are providing strong leadership
- Provide reports to the Safeguarding Partners on relevant areas of safeguarding;
- Review the Annual Report of the Thurrock LSCP before publication;
- Promote an effective strategic safeguarding challenge and reflection to drive continuous improvement



Thurrock LSCP Membership

The Lead representatives for the three Statutory Safeguarding Partners for Thurrock are:

Chief Executive – Thurrock Council

Chief Constable – Essex Police

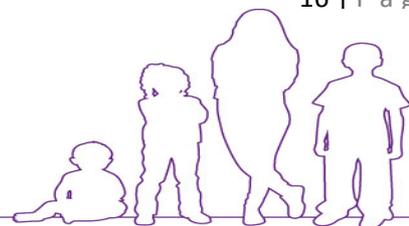
Accountable Officer – Clinical Commissioning Group

As set out in Working Together 2018 the lead representatives can delegate the functions whilst holding accountability for actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency. The Thurrock LSCP will comprise of representatives acting on behalf of those lead Safeguarding Partners.

The agencies and representatives which will form the core group for Thurrock LSCP will comprise of:

Statutory Safeguarding Partners

- ❖ Corporate Director of Children's Services - on behalf of Local Authority
- ❖ Head of Child Abuse Investigation – on behalf of Essex Police



- ❖ Chief Nurse – on behalf of Thurrock CCG

Relevant Agencies and Members

The Safeguarding Partners have selected those agencies which are to be relevant agencies and members involved in the new safeguarding arrangements as shown below. These have been determined as those partners which have regular contact with children, or have responsibility for services to them in the local area. (Local Safeguarding Partners Relevant Agencies Regulations 2018)

- | | |
|--|--|
| ❖ National Probation Service | ❖ Adults Social Care |
| ❖ Local Authority Housing | ❖ Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital |
| ❖ Youth Offending Team | ❖ Essex CRC |
| ❖ NELFT | ❖ CAF/CASS |
| ❖ Essex Fire and Rescue Services | ❖ All Primary Education Establishments ² |
| ❖ All Secondary Education Establishments ² | ❖ Specialist Schools/PRU |
| ❖ All Further Education/Colleges Establishments ² | ❖ Voluntary Sector |
| ❖ East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust | ❖ Early years Settings |
| ❖ Local Authority Lead member Children Services ¹ | ❖ Lay Member |
| | ❖ Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) |

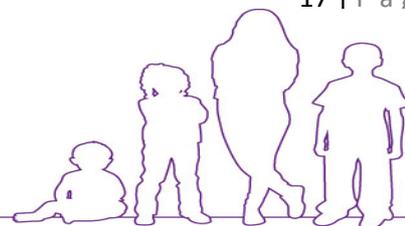
¹ Attend the Management Executive Board as a participating observer.

² Education establishments and early years' settings will be represented by a designated member as agreed by each education setting for core meetings. Each individual education establishment within Thurrock will have a duty to comply with the terms of reference of any relevant agency of the partnership.

Funding

Thurrock LSCP need an adequate budget and sufficient resources to enable it to effectively carry out its role and function, to comply with guidance, and to meet inspection standards and costs associated with conducting Local and National Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. The funding will comprise of contributions from the Safeguarding Partners and relevant agencies as determined locally by the Safeguarding Partners to meet the requirements of the new arrangements. The contributions will be equitable and proportionate, based on an agreed local formula. Thurrock LSCP income will also be generated through the provision of Thurrock LSCP multi-agency learning programmes.

The budget will be set annually by the Safeguarding Partners and managed on behalf of the Thurrock LSCP by the Business Manager using the financial systems of Thurrock Council and will provide finance reports to the Partnership twice yearly. Following the transition, future funding arrangements will be subject to a review of the pooled budget arrangements.



Lay Member

The Thurrock LSCP will recruit two lay members to sit on the Management Executive Board and contribute to the work of the Partnership. Lay members should promote the work of the Partnership within the wider community and bring a 'lay' perspective to the Partnership. Lay members will help to:

- ❖ Support stronger public engagement in local safeguarding children issues and contribute to an improved understanding of the role and work of the Thurrock LSCP within the wider community.
- ❖ Support the scrutiny function on the accessibility, clarity and transparency of Thurrock LSCP plans, priorities and achieved outcomes to children and the public;
- ❖ Help to improve working relationships between the Thurrock LSCP and community groups.

The Thurrock LSCP Strategic Group

The Strategic Group will take place six times during the transitional year and four times a year thereafter. The group will comprise of the Strategic Safeguarding Partners and the Thurrock LSCP Business Manager. The group will be responsible for the strategic direction of the partnership and decisions regarding Local Learning Practice Reviews ensuring learning outcomes are embedded into practice. The LSCP Business Manager will report to the group on the effectiveness of the safeguarding and scrutiny arrangements.

The Thurrock LSCP Management Executive Board

The Management Executive Board meetings will be led by the three Safeguarding Partners and will be the decision making body overseeing the multi-agency plan. It will review progress and assess areas for development in local safeguarding processes. This will inform the priorities and strategic direction of the partnership Strategic Group. It will take place four times a year and will be half day duration. The agenda for the meetings will be agreed by the Thurrock LSCP Strategic Group.

The Board is responsible for:

- Carrying out the strategic policy and priorities of the Thurrock LSCP, ensuring that the Thurrock LSCP meets its statutory functions receiving any reports from partner agencies as required.
- Responsible for evaluating the performance of all Partnership Sub-Groups and any Task and Finish Group in carry out their functions.

Standard areas for inclusion on agendas will comprise:

- Child deaths (until the new arrangements come into effect)



- National and Local Learning Practice Reviews
- Progress of the multi-agency plan/performance report
- Updates from other strategic groups
- Updates from Thurrock LSCP Sub Groups
- Finance (October & March)

Thurrock LSCP Learning & Improvement Framework

Learning and improvement is at the heart of the role of the safeguarding arrangements examining a range of information relating to safeguarding practice and procedure.

The Partnership will be supported in its role of improving and supporting better outcomes for children by the Learning & Practice Review Group (LPR) which oversees the dedicated groups and short life Task and Finish groups convened on behalf of the Partnership to co-ordinate the aims and objectives of the Partnership's work and hold partner agencies to account (previously the Performance Improvement Panel).

Each established Group has work plans which support those of the main Partnership and will be maintained to operate under the direction of the Management Executive Board. The groups will be made up of representatives of the Safeguarding Partners and relevant partner agencies drawn from within the partnership arrangements.

The following Thurrock LSCP established groups and functions will be accountable to the Management Executive Board;

- Learning & Practice Review Group (LPR)
- Individual Practice Review Group (IPR)
- Multi Agency Child Exploitation Group (MACE)
- Multi Agency Audit Group (MAG)

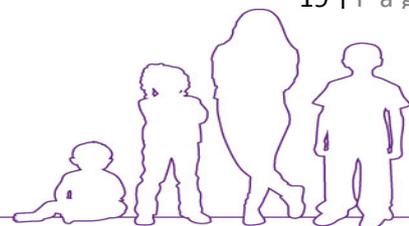


Learning & Practice Review Group

The LPR Group will examine frontline challenges and successes making suggestions and recommendations to improve multi agency working. It will act on behalf of the partnership in supporting the areas of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Training and Development and the Audit process.

Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

The Safeguarding Partners will determine whether a case meets the criteria to be either referred to the National Panel, a LPR or that a single agency or alternative type of case review may be required.



The LPR led by the Safeguarding Partner's representatives will lead on the commissioning of individual case reviews and will oversee all open serious incidents and LPRs by the partnership, through its individual case review Panels or Task & Finish groups. It will consider National and other reviews for practice learning that may benefit local arrangements. Members will be encouraged to bring examples of good practice from within their own organisations and other safeguarding areas.

Training & Development

The LPR Group will support the Thurrock LSCP through a Training Strategy, and implement and publicise an annual training programme managed by the Business Team, reflective of learning that supports better outcomes for children. It will consider:-

- National and Local practice reviews
- Audits
- Identified multi agency training needs
- Change in practice
- Responding to local need

Individual Practice Review Group

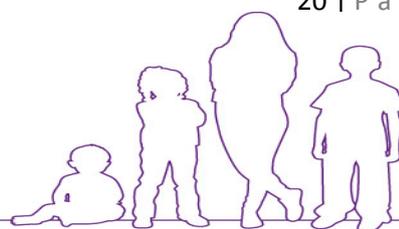
The role of the IPR Group is to work with an Independent Author in conducting a review of an individual case that has been determined by the Safeguarding Partners as either a serious incident or one which has met the criteria for a Local Safeguarding Practice Review. The Group will comprise of the Safeguarding Partners representatives and relevant agencies from across the partnership arrangements that have not had any direct involvement with the case and has the authority to co-opt any agency that can support the learning of a case. It will reflect on the quality of the services provided, with learning and improvement at the centre of its aims to improve the welfare and safeguarding of Thurrock's children.

Audit Group

The Audit Group role supports the Thurrock LSCP to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of work done by all Partner Agencies individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve. It will audit and evaluate the effectiveness of inter-agency working within Thurrock and undertake key tasks as identified within the Thurrock LSCP Business Plan. The focus of this Group is to review cases in a multi-agency arena to evaluate effectiveness of inter-agency working and to review agencies safeguarding performance. It offers an opportunity to reflect on safeguarding practice and identify any lessons learnt to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

MACE

MACE is a strategic partnership group led by the Safeguarding Partner's representatives to ensure a tactical response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and other identified areas of



exploitation including gangs and trafficking. It is responsible for developing the local multi agency response to exploitation in Thurrock linking across with the activities undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and other strategic groups to ensure that contextual safeguarding form a part of the understanding of the impact of exploitation and how to respond.

Task and Finish Groups

Thurrock LSCP Task Groups/Task and Finish Groups will be created in order to undertake a specific, time limited piece of work as directed by the Thurrock LSCP Business Plan and Strategic priorities.

SET Meeting Arrangements

As part of the Thurrock LSCP commitment to working together with the safeguarding partners across Essex the partnership will support and represent Thurrock in our working across Essex Strategy (see Part Two).

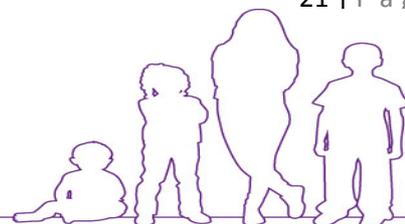
Meeting Attendance

Members are expected to attend all agreed Partnership meetings and should only send their designated deputy in unavoidable circumstances. Non-attendance of the Partnership Member or their Designated Deputy for two consecutive meetings will be highlighted to the Strategic Group who will consider appropriate actions to be taken.

Member attendance at Partnership meetings and Sub-Groups will be reported by the Business Team to the Partnership Management Executive meetings.

Meetings Performance Criteria

- Sub-Groups should be chaired by a Partnership member of Thurrock LSCP
- Chairs of the Sub-Groups will have a one year tenure.
- It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Sub-Group to help to establish, monitor and drive the Sub-Group work plans and to provide a written update to the Management Executive Board on any key developments of the Group and any exception reports.
- All papers for the Partnership will be circulated one week prior to the meeting by the Business Team.
- It is the responsibility of all Partnership members to ensure that they have read all of the relevant documentation prior to their attendance at the Partnership, to help to promote their full understanding and involvement within Partnership discussions and decision-making processes.
- All Thurrock LSCP meetings will be minuted and forwarded to the meeting Chair for approval within 10 working days.
- The agreed minutes are then circulated within a further five working days.
- Minutes will be agreed for accuracy at the next Partnership meeting.



- Any partner who receives an action from any of the Thurrock LSCP groups are expected to comply with the agreed standard working practice of a response to the Thurrock LSCP Business Team within 10 working days of receiving the Action Matrix from the meeting concerned.
- Failure to comply with agreed practice on two or more occasions will result in a letter being sent to the executive member of that agency by the Business Manager and the Strategic Partners informed.

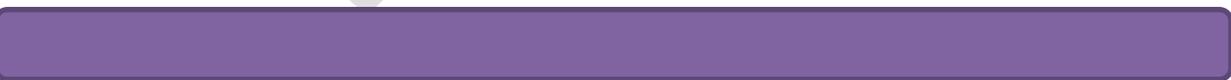
External Reporting Mechanisms

The Safeguarding Partners will present the Thurrock LSCP Annual Report and reports of other matters arising to their relevant corporate bodies. The Business Manager will assist in supporting the statutory partners as required.

Decision Making

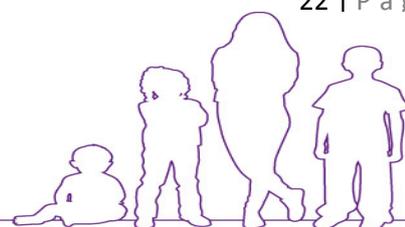
Members of the Partnership will operate according to the governance arrangements of their organisation. Some decisions that the Thurrock LSCP will need to make can be made with the delegated authority that members hold on behalf of their agencies. Some matters will however need to be referred into their own agencies decision-making frameworks. Wherever possible, decisions will be made by consensus.

- All decisions must be recorded in the minutes.
- The minutes of the Partnership will include the date on which the decisions taken should come into effect (the implementation date).
- The implementation date must give reasonable notice to the partner agencies so they have the opportunity to discuss the issues in their own agencies before the decision is due to be implemented.
- Decisions will be implemented on the date given unless a partner agency sends written notice to all Partnership members before that date requesting a further meeting of the Thurrock LSCP for the matter to be reconsidered, and gives the reasons why this is requested.
- In any case where a consensus cannot be reached, the decision should be deferred to a future meeting or submitted to the Strategic Group for a decision



The Thurrock LSCP Manager is authorised to speak on behalf of the Thurrock Safeguarding Partners in relation to all urgent matters, after liaison with the Strategic Group members.

In exceptional circumstances the Thurrock Business Manager may call an Extraordinary meeting of the Strategic Group or Management Executive Group.



A Partnership member may request an exceptional meeting by submitting to the Business Manager a written request which is supported by at least two partner members. Such Extraordinary meetings will be held within 15 working days of the request being received.

Thurrock LSCP Performance Management Framework



The performance arrangement of the Partnership is critical to assessing the effectiveness of what is done by Safeguarding Partners to collectively safeguarding children. The Thurrock LSCP therefore has a wide remit for monitoring and evaluation from both an internal and external perspective.

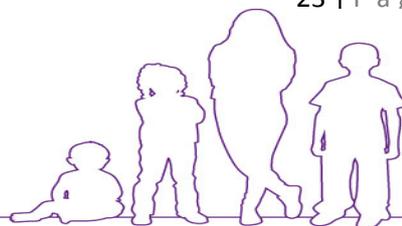
The Thurrock LSCP aim is to ensure the achievement of high standards in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It has introduced a new Thurrock LSCP Performance Management Framework to help develop a system of organisational self-evaluation and peer review within an agreed quality assurance framework. This new system is designed to assess how well agencies perform to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The framework takes into account multi-agency inspection standards and outcomes and the effectiveness of joint working, as well as the internal functioning of the Partnership.

The Thurrock LSCP will include in its monitoring arrangements, accountability from those individuals and organisations that have a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 or Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002. Self-evaluations on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements from partner agencies will be sent to the Partnership and reported on in its Annual Report.

Multi-agency work will be subject to quality assurance case files audits, which will assess quality of work undertaken and enable learning to be shared with all relevant agencies.

The Thurrock LSCP is committed to continuous improvement and will therefore make recommendations for developments and wherever possible, assist relevant organisations to improve their practice. Such recommendations are likely to arise from any of the monitoring functions outlined above.

Data Protection/Confidentiality and Freedom of Information



Members of the Partnership shall ensure that their own organisation's Data Protection Registration and requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) meets the requirements for Partnership's activities.

All Partnership members will adhere to the provisions of the Data Protection requirements as amended by the GPDR 2018 and maintain confidentiality at all time, other than where a specific exemption under the Act arises: this principle will apply during a member's participation in the Partnership, and will continue after the individual is no longer a member of the Partnership, or following the Partnership's dissolving.

If any member who has access to confidential information or data, knowingly breaches the law relating to particularly (but not limited to) the unauthorised disclosure of confidential information, they may be personally liable.

Members of the Partnership will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are properly complied with.



Equal Opportunities/Discrimination/Human Rights

All members of the Partnership will adhere to equal opportunities principles and adopt and maintain anti discriminatory practices in the Partnership's functions. All members of the Partnership will also adhere to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.

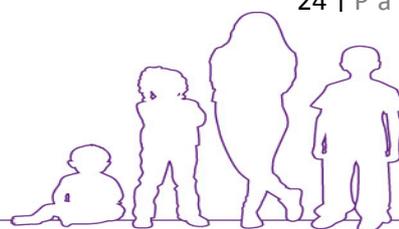
Dispute Resolution Process and Complaints

Generally there is a good working relationship amongst the safeguarding partners and agencies. All partner agencies have a responsibility to resolve any dispute between them promptly and amicably in accordance with the SET Procedures. Disputes that cannot be resolved between Partnership members in this manner will initially be resolved by discussion at a meeting of the Partnership. If no agreement can be reached the matter will be referred to the resolution mechanism as determined by the SET Procedures taking account of the:

- ❖ Type of complaint; and
- ❖ The knowledge, expertise and seniority required in resolving the matter.

Where a dispute remains unresolved despite the arrangements, it shall be referred to an independent professional advisor.

Complaints



Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships are not identified as having a statutory function in relation to the investigation of complaints. Complaints concerning Child Protection Conferences reaching stage 2 will be dealt with as defined in the SET Procedures. Panels convened to consider complaints at stage two of that procedure will be identified on a case by case basis, as required.

Thurrock LSCP Business Plan and Annual Report



The Thurrock LSCP is committed to ensuring that its work is properly planned and reviewed and that its priorities and objectives both inform and are informed by the local safeguarding children needs assessments and any national trends or themes.

The Thurrock LSCP will agree a clearly defined Business Plan on an annual basis, which includes identified work streams, the responsible member(s) and Sub Groups.

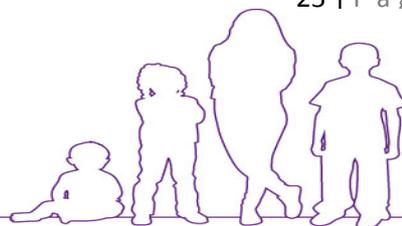
Each year a Thurrock LSCP Annual Report will be published. It will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements by all agencies within Thurrock and will outline key achievements and the challenges that remain. The report will be presented to Children's Overview and Scrutiny, Chief Executive, Office of Fire, Police and Crime Commissioner (OFPCC), Chief Constable and Health and Wellbeing Board in the autumn of each year to help to inform local planning. The Thurrock LSCP Annual Report will be made publicly available on the Thurrock LSCP website.

The Thurrock LSCP Strategic Group will ratify an annual Business Plan prepared by all members of the Thurrock LSCP Management Executive, in the fourth quarter business planning period. This will detail all work streams required by Thurrock LSCP in order to fulfil its statutory functions, as well as areas for progression identified as a result of local needs analysis and/or national developments.

Relationships with other Strategic Partnerships

The relationship between the Thurrock LSCP and other Strategic Partnerships will be set out in a joint protocol agreed between the partnership bodies. This will be reviewed annually with key members of the Strategic Partnerships. This will include:

- The Health and Wellbeing Board
- Adults Safeguarding Board
- Community Safety Partnership
- The Channel Panel
- Local Family Justice Board
- MAPPA



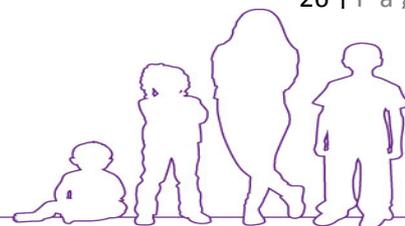
- SET Domestic Abuse Board



Local Practice Reviews

1. A LPR will be conducted in accordance with statutory guidance and managed on behalf of the Strategic Partners by the LPR Group.
2. A copy of all published reports will be sent to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and The What Works Centre for Children's Social Care within seven days of publication.

Part 2 – Working Across Essex



Introduction

The three existing Local Safeguarding Children's Boards covering the Essex area - referred to as SET (Southend Essex & Thurrock) met at a summit on 6th June 2018 and 11th October 2018 to discuss the new safeguarding arrangements.

It was agreed at the summit that there would be three local safeguarding arrangements coterminous with the designated authority areas of Southend Council (Unitary Authority), Essex County Council and Thurrock Council (Unitary Authority).

The Boards already have strong collaborative working arrangements and agreed to develop this further through a "Working across SET" strategy, supporting those areas of safeguarding most effectively tackled and having the greatest impact on practice and services for children across the SET area.

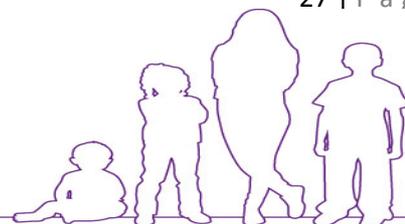
The purpose of this section is to set out how the new arrangements will operate on matters affecting SET, how decisions are made, and to detail what inter-agency arrangements are in place to help ensure that individual agencies effectively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people across Essex.

Strategic Relationships

There will be an agreed "Working Together across SET" Strategic Plan agreed by the Safeguarding Partners across SET, providing guidance for the three MASAs. This will provide a consistent strategic direction which all three MASAs will embrace and provide the platform to develop local strategies and plans. The current SET Procedures will also be refreshed to take into account the new statutory requirements and provide opportunities to further develop collaborative working across Essex. The Safeguarding Partners across Essex will meet twice a year.

SET Principles

- Children and young people are at the heart of what we do
- Working across SET becomes an integral part of local MASA arrangements
- Seek opportunities to improve practice through SET processes
- That at each stage of developing the new arrangements in each area consideration is given to what could be aligned across SET
- That collaboration across SET will be a key part of business planning whilst recognising also the differences between each area
- That the three key agencies participate fully in the development of the MASA in each area
- That best practice and learning is shared across SET



- That the MASA also work with other Boards locally and across SET in areas of cross cutting work
- That each MASA decides its own constitution and plans but that the overarching SET arrangements are an integral part of these plans
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Partner organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- Learning is promoted and embedded across SET in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families
- A consistent performance management framework is developed across each MASA
- Peer review and independent scrutiny forms an integral part of the new SET arrangements.

Business Planning

It is recognised that each MASA will have its own arrangements and independence as outlined in their individual constitutions and that the Business Plans of each MASA will need to reflect local priorities and demographics in each area.

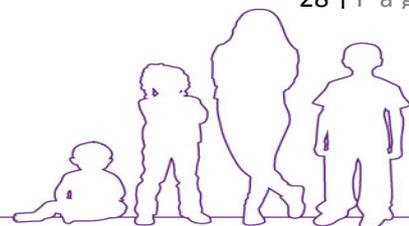
It is agreed that there will be areas of collaboration and cooperation across SET for particular pieces of work that are most effectively tackled SET wide to have the greatest impact on practice.

The SET MASAs have agreed areas of cooperation for business planning when developing their individual plans and prioritise which are the key areas of a focus for the planning period.

Existing Good Practice

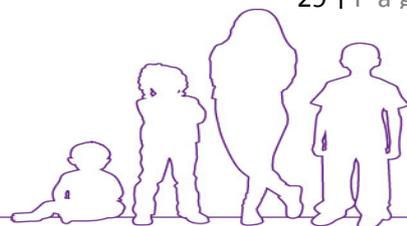
- ❖ Strategic Child Death Overview Panel*
- ❖ South West Child Death review Group*
- ❖ SET Procedures Group*
- ❖ SET CSE Strategic Group*
- ❖ SET Domestic Abuse Board*

*representative of the Thurrock LSCP will attend on behalf of the partnership.



Further areas will be explored as the MASA develop Increasing Collaboration – Areas for consideration

- CDOP
- Section 11 Children Act 2004
- 157/175 Education Act 2002
- Mental Health & Well-being
- Learning and development
- Domestic Abuse
- Neglect
- Child exploitation
- Joint campaigns



Glossary of Terms

CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview panel
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CSPRP	Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
IPR	Individual Practice Review
LCSPRC	Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review Coordinator
LPR	Learning & Practice Review
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MASA	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements
NSPR	National Safeguarding Practice Review
OFPPC	Office of Fire, Police and Crime Commissioner
Practitioner	The term 'practitioners' is used throughout the guidance to refer to individuals who work with children and their families in any capacity
RA	Relevant Agencies -the agencies required to be a partner in the new arrangements selected from the list
SET	Southend, Essex and Thurrock
SP	Safeguarding partners. The three statutory partners of the Local Authority, Police and Clinical Commissioning Group
TLSCP	Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. The overarching body that is responsible for the new safeguarding arrangements in Thurrock
WT2018	Working Together 2018 – Statutory guidance document

Reference Material

Child and Social Work Act 2017

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

Working Together 2018

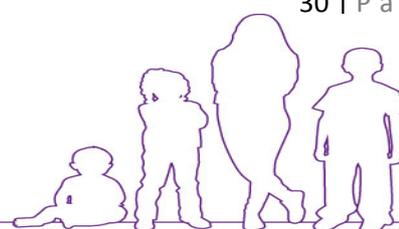
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2018>

Local Safeguarding Partners Relevant Agencies Regulations 2018

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111167540>

SET Procedures

<https://www.thurrocklscb.org.uk/lscb/professionals/set-procedures>



12 February 2019	ITEM: 8
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Update on Recommendations from Social Care Services Review	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director Children’s Services	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children and Families	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report updates Members on the outcome of the recommendations arising from the independent investigation into Whistleblowing allegations in 2018 and reports progress against the actions. An anonymous Whistleblowing letter was received in September 2018 and investigated by an independent safeguarding barrister. The outcome of the investigation was that none of the allegations were substantiated. Ofsted was informed of the letter, the review and findings of the independent safeguarding barrister and confirmed to the council that they were comfortable with the approach taken and had closed down the case. There were however a number of recommendations arising from the review which were made by the independent safeguarding barrister and these are detailed below. Learning outcomes are expected in every case review of this nature.

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the progress made in implementing the recommendations from Whistleblowing Review.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Recommendation 1.

Liaise with the LSCB regarding the terms of reference for the Serious Case Review to ensure these include consideration of the 2 points of closure identified.

This recommendation was considered by the LSCB Executive and the terms of reference for the Serious Case Review now include the period referred to in the report. This work will be overseen by the Serious Case Review Sub-Group which has an independent chair and independent report author. The action associated with this recommendation has now been implemented.

2.2 **Recommendation 2.**

Consider any issues that may arise from the ongoing Court Proceedings regarding the child's accommodation. In any event to consider whether additional training or guidance for staff would be appropriate.

The child is in care proceedings where issues about the child's accommodation by the local authority have been addressed. Further training is being provided to social workers to ensure they are clear about the appropriate use of accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. This will take place on a rolling basis this year through supervision and as part of the service's regular practice workshops. Quality of practice is monitored through our regular case auditing process. Implementation of this recommendation will be reported to the next committee.

2.3 **Recommendation 3.**

Explore whether the nature of the communications between staff are effective in promoting good outcomes for children or whether there are any concerns about how professionals interact with each other which may impact on the Council's ability to fulfil its duties under Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004.

Working Together 2018 has established new safeguarding arrangements and this has addressed concerns about how professionals work together by ensuring there is a clear dispute resolution process. A programme of multi-agency training is in place to ensure services continue to work together effectively. All staff are being reminded of the dispute resolution procedures and the effectiveness of this will be monitored through the new safeguarding arrangements. Progress will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.4 **Recommendation 4.**

Explore whether there is clarity within the current processes, and those to be implemented, to capture and disseminate learning both on a single agency and multi-agency basis.

The process for disseminating learning has been reviewed as part of the move to new safeguarding arrangements in Thurrock. These include regular learning events across all agencies. This recommendation has now been implemented. Further details on this is provided under recommendation 5 below.

2.5 Recommendation 5.

Ensure that the criteria for a Serious Case Review or a Local Safeguarding Practice Review are widely understood.

Under new safeguarding arrangements, safeguarding partners must make arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases which, in their view, raise issues of importance in relation to their area. They must commission and oversee the review of those cases, where they consider it appropriate for a review to be undertaken. Clear criteria has been published for undertaking such reviews which are designed to draw the learning from serious safeguarding incidents involving a child. This information is being distributed to all safeguarding partners to be disseminated more widely to the partnership.

There is a two part process for Local and national reviews which will continue under the new arrangements.

- a) The NSPCC sends the Business Team a monthly alert of the latest published national reviews for that month. They assess them for local relevance and cascade anything of note that would apply to any authority area. We also have sent the link to the NSPCC SCR website page to our partner agencies so they can also get the updates direct and I know health, for example, check them as well for any internal learning.
- b) For each of the multi-agency reviews the Board has action plan for each review, split as generic actions for all agencies and then individual action plans for the relevant agencies. This is then followed up by the SCR sub-group for completion and then the Board conducts an annual audit through the Audit Group to assess impact. This is enhanced with two face to face multi agency learning events each year (next one in February) where the learning from our local reviews and anything of national interest is also shared. Where the Board publishes an anonymous review, it makes reference to a similar national review findings. The Board also sends out a mini booklet of the reviews with just a summary of the case, which is designed in this way for front line staff, who do not have the time and capacity to read a full review.

This recommendation is implemented.

2.6 Recommendation 6

Explore whether the procedures and processes for record keeping are operating effectively in relation to access to records, timeliness of updating and inputting information in LCS.

Additional resources have been provided to ensure that LCS is regularly upgraded. Workflow has been arranged to ensure information on the files is updated in a timely manner. This is monitored through our quality assurance framework. This recommendation has now been implemented.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested an update of findings from the investigation into the Whistleblowing allegations in Children's Services. This reports details the recommendations and action taken by the department and partners.

4. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 4.1 Senior Members in the Council have been briefed on the allegations and outcomes. Overview and Scrutiny Committee will oversee implementation of the recommendations.

5. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 5.1 The council with its partners has a statutory duty to have a multi-agency Safeguarding Board to oversee the arrangements for safeguarding children in the local area. It is critical that partners work effectively together to ensure that children in Thurrock are effectively safeguarded.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no financial implications arising from the report.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the report. However any costs associated with this report need to be met from existing resources.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**

Community Development and Equalities Manager

There are no diversity and equality implications arising from the report.

- 6.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

N/A

7. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

N/A

8. **Appendices to the report**

N/A

Report Author:

Rory Patterson
Corporate Director
Children's Services

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12 February 2019	ITEM: 9
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Post – 16 Landscape in Thurrock	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Kate Kozlova-Boran, Interim Strategic Lead of Learning	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Interim Assistant Director of Skills, Learning and Inclusion	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

The Post-16 landscape in Thurrock is providing a very positive picture.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorse and support the current approach to the Post-16 provision in Thurrock.
- 1.2 That Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee review and evaluate the current approach around the current services to vulnerable, SEND, LAC learners through an innovative individualised, young person led and sustainable targeted support programme.

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Local Authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training. Specifically they are:
 - To secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996.
 - To make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training under Section 68 of ESA 2008.

- Local Authorities are required to collect information about young people (i.e. maintain a tracking system) so that NEET young people can be identified and given support to re-engage (ESA 2008).
- Local Authorities, under the ESA 2008, must promote effective participation in education and training of 16-17 year olds.

2.2 There are large differences in youth unemployment and inactivity across countries; reducing NEET rates is a great challenge for governments, as youth who remain jobless for long periods typically come from more disadvantaged backgrounds, have low levels of educational attainment, and are in many cases inactive. There is substantial evidence, however, that even the most disadvantaged youth can benefit from a variety of targeted interventions, including for instance special education programmes and mentoring.

2.3 Internationally, the United Kingdom as a whole appears to perform poorly in rates of participation in education and training beyond the age of 15. The OECD measures participation rates in member and partner countries and produces comparative tables. Although any such data are dogged by differences in terminology and classification, only six countries (Spain, Italy, Mexico, Colombia, Turkey and Costa Rica) had a higher NEET percentage than the UK in 2017 (OECD, 2018)

3. Performance

3.1 Thurrock NEET and Unknown is ranked at 2 in the national rankings. (Fig.1)

(Fig.1)

NEET /Unknown	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	June 18	July 18	Aug 18	Sept 18	Oct 18	Dec 18
Thurrock	9.0%	2.4%	1.9%	2.0%	2.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%	2.0%	1.8%	2.0%	8.8%	2.0%	1.6%
SN	18.5%	9.8%	8.1%	7.4%	7.1%	7.4%	7.3%	7.4%	7.3%	7.7%	21.4%	26.4%	13.7%	7.8%
East of England	12.5%	6.0%	5.1%	4.7%	4.6%	4.8%	4.9%	5.2%	5.3%	6.8%	9.4%	20.6%	9.4%	5.5%
England	15.8%	8.4%	6.7%	5.8%	5.5%	5.6%	5.7%	5.8%	6.0%	6.7%	13.0%	31.2%	14.2%	8.3%

Data source NCC

3.2 Department for Education released characteristics of young people who are long-term NEET (DfE: 'Characteristics of young people who are long-term NEET, February 2018) as well as identifying the most relevant groups in the NEET cohort: Looked After Children (LAC) (NEET constituted 37% of the total LAC cohort), those who attended PRUs/alternative provision/excluded and SEND learners were other groups where approximately a fifth of the cohort were NEET.

3.3 Thurrock performance figures support this data and provide evidence for a need of a more targeted support to the above vulnerable groups.

3.4 Thurrock SEND (EHCP and statemented)

Young people with SEND make up 4.5% of the total 16 – 18 cohort.
Performance figure of 3.6% NEET/Unknown, though substantially lower than national indicators, is still double compared to mainstream NEET.

December 2018	Yr 12	Yr 13	Total Yr 12 – 13	Yr14	Yr 15	Yr 16+	Yr 14 to 16+	Total ALL
SEND Total Cohort	83	84	167	91	75	46	212	379
SEND Education	72	67	139	56	38	18	112	251
SEND Employment	3	11	14	23	23	16	62	76
SEND Training	3	3	6	3	2	1	6	12
SEND Re engagement	2	0	2	2	1	1	4	6
SEND NEET available	3	2	5	6	7	8	21	26
SEND NEET not available	0	1	1	1	4	2	7	8
SEND NEET Total	3	3	6	7	11	10	28	34
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lapsed EET and Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
In Learning %	94.0%	91.7%	92.8%	72.5%	66.7%	67.4%	69.3%	79.7%
NEET %	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	7.7%	14.7%	21.7%	13.2%	9.0%
NEET/Unknown%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	7.7%	14.7%	21.7%	13.2%	9.0%

SEND Comparative data Year 12 to 13

This is the latest comparative data available. Thurrock's In Learning % is higher than all national indicators. Unknown and NEET/Unknown is lower than all comparators.

September 2018	% In Learning	NEET %	Unknown %	% NEET/Unknown
East of England	79.6%	5.3%	15.6%	20.9%
England	64.4%	4.4%	29.9%	34.0%
SN	70.8%	3.2%	25.3%	28.5%
Thurrock	83.3%	3.6%	8.3%	11.9%

3.5 Thurrock LAC (Looked After Children)

21.1% of Thurrock LAC young people are NEET – the figure indicates that LAC young people are more than 10 times likely to be NEET than mainstream young people.

	Apr '18	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec '18
EET (%)	71.4	70.7	68.9	72.1	70.5	69.3	70.1	70.4	69.6
NEET (%)	28.6	26.8	26.2	24.4	25.7	24.4	23.1	21.6	21.1
Unknown (%)	0.0	2.4	4.9	3.5	3.8	6.3	6.1	7.4	8.2
Missing Data (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.6	1.2

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 In recent years Thurrock has completed substantial progress in reducing its NEET (from 13.8% in 2008 to 1.7% in 2018) which is demanding a change in focus of the work. Young people who are NEET in 2018 differ from NEET young people in 2008 – as Thurrock Careers are working with young people and children from Year 7 and onwards, young people are now identified early and placed into provision. The 1.7% who are still NEET are furthest removed from the job market and training provision due to the extent of their vulnerability - a traditional Careers service is unable to meet the demands of these young people.
- 4.2 23.7% of all NEET in Thurrock is classed as ‘unavailable’, i.e. in categories of carer, pregnancy, teenage parent, illness. The young people in this cohort are hardest to reach, furthest from the job market and often require a multi-agency and targeted support.
- 4.3 It seems that additional resource is needed to be identified to support the targeted work with the 1.7% NEET, with a focus on the vulnerable groups of SEND and LAC, whilst maintaining the mainstream careers provision to keep the NEET and Unknown overall figure low and in the top 5% of the country.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 Reducing the number of young people not in education employment and training is a key element in reducing long-term child poverty. Thurrock is performing well in ensuring that more young people will have an opportunity to fulfil their potential. Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to comment on the current performance position and endorse a more targeted approach to the work.

6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

N/A

7. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

N/A

8. Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Management Accountant – DSG and Schools

There are no direct financial implications in this report. This report requires the Committee to note its contents only. No decision is required. However, there are relevant general duties on the Council, as identified by legal below, which have the potential to have financial implications with no identified resource available.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

There are no direct implications in this report.

This report requires the Committee to note its contents only.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities

Thurrock Council is committed to working with vulnerable young people - we recognise that for many of our young people a range of barriers does not allow them to progress into employment opportunities. Thurrock has some large regeneration programmes and we would want to ensure that we provide opportunities to all young people recognising that for some of our more vulnerable learners a different range of support needs to be provided to ensure that they can engage and take part in the opportunities available locally.

We work hard to ensure that SEND, Care Leavers and other vulnerable groups have more tailored individual support packages by identifying the range of barriers young people face that call for individualised support to ensure that this cohort can access the vast range of local education, employment and training opportunities.

8.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

N/A

9. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- OECD (2018), Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) (indicator). doi: 10.1787/72d1033a-en (Accessed on 02 January 2019)

- Characteristics of young people who are long-term NEET, DfE, February 2018
- Participation of young people in education, employment or training, Statutory Guidance for local authorities, DfE, September 2016
- Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England, DfE, June 2018
- Child Poverty Strategy 2014-2017, DfE, June 2014

10. Appendices to the report

N/A

Report Author:

Kate Kozlova-Boran

Interim Strategic Lead – Learning

Learning and Skills

Children's Services

12 February 2019	ITEM: 10
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Update	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Malcolm W Taylor, Strategic Lead of Inclusion / Principal Educational Psychologist	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Interim Assistant Director of Learning, Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the services for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It provides a summary of the Self Evaluation that has been carried out by the Local Authority in conjunction with the CCG to ensure that the key SEND reforms and duties brought in under the Children and Families Act 2014 are being appropriately met.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the self – evaluation of the support for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock Local Authority has in place an ongoing self-evaluation of the work across Health, Social Care and Education in relation to the SEND responsibilities covered in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2014. This statutory guidance covers the key areas of SEN reforms introduced in the Children and Families Act 2014.

2.2 The Local Authority (Children’s social care, SEN services, Adults services) has worked closely in co-production with parents and carers, schools, colleges, CCG, Health Providers (NELFT) , and third sector providers to develop a Strategic Vision for SEND across the Local Area and to ensure work is being carried out across all agencies to realise this.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 A highly successful conference SEND Inclusion conference was held in Thurrock in November 2018 to reflect on both National priorities and issues, with contributions from the National Association of Special Educational Needs and from the DfE, and included presentations of outstanding inclusive practice in place across Thurrock. This conference was co –produced with Thurrock’s Parent Carer Forum and worked on the next stage of work under the 6 key Strategic Priorities.
- 3.2 The Local Authority has close and positive working partnerships with the Thurrock Carer Forum (CAPA) and co-chairs the strategic partnership board which brings together the work on SEND across all agencies and settings.
- 3.3 The Local Authority commissioned a Peer Review in 2017 which was previously reported to Children’s Overview and Scrutiny in September 2017 and March 2018 alongside the resulting action plan and update.
- 3.4 The self-evaluation of SEND brings together information from a wide range of partners and agencies and has been developed through a range of consultation co-ordinated through the SEND Strategic Board.

3.5 Key Areas within the Self Evaluation

3.5.1 SEND Population

- 3.5.2 Based on the 2018 Benchmarking report Thurrock has a school population of 28,410, and 4,207 (14.8% children are identified as having special educational needs with 1004 (3.5 %) having a statutory Education Health and Care Plan.
- 3.5.3 The total percentage of pupils with SEN (14.8 %) is in line with National and Regional averages but the split between those with EHC plans and those with SEN (but are at SEN Support), show that Thurrock has comparatively more pupils with EHC plans.
- 3.5.4 There is a particularly high identification of pupils under the category of moderate learning difficulties at Primary school at SEN support and this is being worked on with schools to ensure appropriate categorisation is being used. The most common category for pupils with EHC plans is Autistic Spectrum Disorder in line with the National picture.

3.6 Placement

- 3.6.1 In Thurrock there are proportionally more pupils with EHC plans placed in mainstream Primary and Secondary schools rather than Special Schools in comparison with statistical, regional and national figures. This evidences the high identification of needs of children in school and the commitment to an inclusive education system in Thurrock.

3.6.2 We have high demand for places in both of our special schools and for places in our mainstream resource bases due to their outstanding reputations.

3.7 Participation in Decision Making

3.7.1 There is a strong positive relationship between the Local Parent Carer Forum and the Local Authority with clear examples of co-production in all areas of SEND strategic development.

3.7.2 There are good examples of work carried out in the early years such as the Early Years Panel and the Portage work on children's views as part of an Open University Research project. Feedback from parents on services and collaborative work has led to the development of new services such as the post 19 Autism support and extension of Primary Bases from HI and the new Treetops Special Free School. There are good examples from work across all ages of Children and Young people, being actively involved in their person centred planning meeting leading to their EHC Plan.

3.7.3 Advice is provided to parents/carers clearly through a wide range of activities including the Local Offer web site, the SEND information advice and guidance service, with further advice such as the Social care services directly from the Children and Disabilities members and through the Sunshine centre for Disabled children. Other support is provided from a range of staff including the Early Support Co-ordinator, Preparing for Adulthood Team and additional specialist Personal Advisors as part of Thurrock careers.

3.8 Identifying Children and Young People's Needs

3.8.1 The system for identifying pre-school children who may have SEND is good as evidenced in our Peer Review. There is strong multi-agency working through the early years panel.

3.8.2 The delivery of Education Health and Care Plans within the statutory timescales has improved from a rate of 13% in 2017 to 50.1% in 2018, with the current monthly performance rate now running at 71%. To achieve this, a major review and restructuring of the SEND service has taken place with new performance management and quality assurance processes introduced.

3.8.3 Education Health and Care plan formats have been carefully revised and developed through consultation with all agencies including carers and parents to ensure best practice. There are regular quality assurance workshops to ensure the content of the EHC plans is effective in identifying needs and support arrangements for all children. This process is also supported through the termly SENCo Forums.

3.8.4 Additional work is in place to ensure effective support arrangements are in

place for Children at SEN Support including the application of the Assess/Plan Do/Review process. The Peer Review in 2017 was focussed on SEN Support resulting in an effective Action Plan being completed.

3.9 Making High Quality Provision

3.9.1 Children and Young People (CYP) with Education Health and Care Plans make good progress above National averages at all key stages and have a higher rate than National of being in Education Employment or Training at the end of their schooling. There is clear identification and monitoring of vulnerable groups such as Looked after Children.

3.9.2 Thurrock has outstanding Special Schools (Beacon Hill and Treetops), and Mainstream Resources delivering high quality support to CYP with SEND. The performance of Early Years settings and schools with regard to SEND provision is carefully monitored through analysis of Key Stage data for Children at SEN Support and with EHC plans.

3.10 Transition to Adulthood

3.10.1 There are clear processes to support children to adulthood through the multi-agency Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) process. The work in Colleges supporting students with SEND supported by the Educational Psychology service was identified as a strength in the Peer Review. There is new innovative work taking place to ensure CYP not only make progress as adults but have all opportunities to ensure that they have access to good health support, community engagement and meaningful employment. This has included close work with 3rd sector agencies developing new resources such as the My Life programme, and supported housing schemes to promote independence and community engagement. The use of a multi-agency transitions panel with representation from all children and adults agencies has ensured effective transition work.

3.11 Information advice and Guidance

3.11.1 The Local Authority commissioned Information Advice and Guidance service known as Parent Advisory Team Thurrock, which provides a comprehensive offer of advice and guidance including working closely with other agencies and as a key strategic partner in planning SEND developments.

3.12 The Local Offer

3.12.1 There is a comprehensive local offer in place providing a range of information which is undergoing a process of development with the engagement of all key partners and specific parent and CYP groups to ensure it is easily accessible and that further areas for support are identified.

3.13 Joint Commissioning

3.13.1 There are close working arrangements between Social Care, the CCG and SEN services to ensure an effective child/family centred approach to all areas of SEND are in place. The SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been produced with the participation of all partners to ensure all areas of need and future development are identified. There are close arrangements through joint panels and processes such as Continuing Care and Transforming Care to ensure the joint commissioning of individual packages of support for children. There is an Integrated Commissioning Strategy in place identifying key areas of joint commissioning.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 To provide the Committee with an update.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

N/A

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The areas of activity covered in the SEND self-evaluation contributes directly to the delivery of the Council's statutory duties in relation children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Management Accountant – DSG and Schools

This report covering issues in relation to the support for Children and Young People with SEND includes services which are funded by the Direct School Grant. The effectiveness of this support has a direct impact on the demand for Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Needs, High Needs Support and the consequent financial implications of this.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**
Education Lawyer

The statutory duties in relation to SEND are imposed by the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
**Community Engagement and Project
Monitoring Officer**

This report covers children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and therefore the arrangements across the local area are in the context of SEND legislation and the Equality Act 2010. The details of the arrangements set out in this report, evidences the way in which the Local Authority in conjunction with other agencies ensures equitable access to resources and protects children and young people with SEND from discrimination

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

N/A

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Thurrock Local Area SEND Strategy 2018 – 2020

Report Author:

Malcolm W Taylor
Strategic Lead Inclusion / Principal Educational Psychologist
Children's Services

Thurrock Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategy 2018-2020

SEND Strategic Vision

Our vision is that all that all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities across the Local Area access outstanding support in their early years , school, college and at work that enables them to fully achieve their potential and have happy, healthy and fulfilling lives

Inclusion in Thurrock

Thurrock has a long standing commitment to an inclusive system of education health and care support that actively enables access and full participation to all aspects community life. This is in compliance with the Salamanca Statement and Framework for action on Special Education Needs (1994) , the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is embedded in the Equality Act 2010.

Thurrock SEND Key Strategic Priority Areas

Developed through a process of co-production with partners in order to fulfil our shared vision for SEND .

1. Ensure that children and families are at the heart of an effective SEN system

2. Ensure every child and young person is making good progress and attends a good place to learn

3. Ensure children and families are well supported

4. Ensure an effective and responsive approach to assessing and meeting children and families' needs.

5. Ensure the early identification of and early support for children with SEND

6. Ensure young people are well prepared for adulthood

Thurrock Key SEND Priorities 2018-2020

Background

Thurrock Local Area has carried out a programme of activities between 2014-2017 to implement the new Special Education Needs requirements set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 in line with the guidance from the SEND Code of Practice 2015. This work has included the establishment of a new system of Education Health and Care Plans ; the implementation of the transfer review process of existing Statements of Special Educational Needs to Education Health and Care Plans; the establishment of the new Local Offer and Independent Advice and Support services; the establishment of new joint commissioning arrangements across Health, Social Care and Education; the establishment of a person-centred SEND process to ensure the views of parents children and young people are at the centre of all activity; and the implementation of a focus on outcomes and improving progress for children and young people with SEND through clearly targeted plans and new monitoring arrangements.

To review progress on the implementation of these changes the Local Authority , the Clinical Commissioning Group, Parents , Carers , Schools , Settings, Colleges and all involved agencies, have worked on an ongoing process of self-evaluation, monitoring statutory processes, and using additional regional peer review and Audit tools to monitor developments and identify new areas of priority.

This process of ongoing evaluation has led to the identification of key priority activities under the established areas of strategic priority for the next phase of the SEND implementation to ensure we are meeting our vision for SEND across the Local Area.

Key Priorities for 2018-2020

Key Priority Area 1 Ensure that children and families are at the heart of an effective SEN system

- Develop a new engagement strategy for children and young people to ensure they are fully engaged in all aspects of SEND developments. Including the joint commissioning strategy.
- Develop a broad representation of child and young person's views on all areas of Local Area support through targeted activities with different age groups and service users reviewing the Local Offer.
- Develop the Parent Carer Forum through a range of new engagement activities to broaden the phases and types of schooling represented by the Forum.
- Implement a comprehensive process of feedback from parents and young people on the EHCP and annual review process leading to a published report and a co-produced action plan for developing the statutory processes.

Key Priority Area 2 Ensure every child and young person is making good progress and attends a good place to learn

- Implement a comprehensive review of the current and future predicted need of SEND resources and placements leading to the introduction of a capital programme of development of high needs placements based on the review to ensure appropriate placements are in place to meet needs.
- Implement the ongoing support and challenge programme in schools to ensure the use of a graduated response to SEND is carried out in all educational settings including the emphasis on the Assess, Plan Do, Review cycle at all levels of SEND identification.
- Develop and implement a new model and framework of monitoring the outcomes of pupils with SEND across all schools and settings, linked to existing School Improvement processes ensuring all educational settings continue to focus on the progress and outcomes of pupils with SEND as a key performance indicator.
- Implement a new programme of inclusive arrangements for children at risk of exclusion in the Primary education including access to new mainstream inclusion support programmes.

Key Priority 3 Ensure children and families are well supported

- **Implement a consultation and engagement programme with children, young people and parents to design and implement a new web site platform to improve the accessibility and engagement by all with the Local Offer.**
- **Carry out a comprehensive review of Local Offer content and School and Setting SEN information and implement an ongoing programme of update and advice as part of the Local Offer Development Plan.**
- **Review the Information Advice and Support Service to ensure the ongoing availability of high quality advice and support services to parents.**
- **Review with parents and carers the offer of support to Disabled Children including access to the Sunshine centre, short breaks and personal budgets including access to any other support services included under Brighter Futures and develop new arrangements to ensure these are included in the EHC Plan.**

Key priority 4 Ensure and effective and responsive approach to assessing and meeting children and families' needs

- **Implement a co-produced development plan of statutory assessment processes to include threshold guidance and evidence of a graduated response to ensure accurate and timely assessments.**
- **Implement a review of statutory SEND services to ensure staffing capacity, efficiency of process and effective performance management is in place to fully meet the statutory process and deliver an outstanding service to children and families.**
- **Implement a further programme of activity to embed health and social care components into EHC plans including role of SEND champions, standardised Health templates and quality assurance of Health components in plans and quarterly audit of Health and Social Care components to plans.**
- **Implement new arrangements for ensuring the quality assurance of support arrangements for different areas of special educational needs including the quality assurance of EHC plans, the specific programmes used to support various types of SEND , the qualifications of SENCo's and other staff supporting children with SEND.**

Key Priority 5 Ensure the early identification and early support for children with SEND

- **Introduce additional support arrangements for advice to Early Years settings focussing on the use of the 3 step SEN Checklist for Early Years including support commissioned from a local Nursery.**
- **Implement the Early Support , Portage , Early Years Panel , linking Health, Social Care and Education staff to develop SEN support at pre-school and clear and timely access to early statutory assessments where EHC plans are required.**
- **Implement a programme of peer support and challenge covering SEN support arrangements in pre-schools, schools and colleges to ensure early identification of need and access to appropriate services at an early stage**
- **Carry out a review of outreach services and targeted programme of development activity to ensure that services are focussed on appropriate needs leading to maximum impact on outcomes.**

Key Priority 6 Ensure Young People are well prepared for adulthood

- **Develop comprehensive arrangements with the Disabled Children's Team, the Transition Team and the Personal Advisors to ensure that the Transition Planning includes all elements of Preparing for Adulthood and leads to clear measurable improvements to outcomes for young people undergoing transition to adult services.**
- **Strengthen the offer to young people with SEND aged 16-25 years through consultation on appropriate programmes of education and support in colleges including access to Educational Psychology and specialist outreach services.**
- **Review the specialist programmes of support and implement a targeted programme of co-produced specialist options for young people over 19 wishing to access a range of learning activities.**
- **Deliver a comprehensive Health Offer to young people with SEND supporting clarity of routes of transfer into adult services and enabling continuity and high quality support for Health needs.**

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12 February 2019	ITEM: 11
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Update on Brighter Futures Children’s Centres Service	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Andrea Winstone, School Improvement Manager	
Accountable Assistant Director: Michele Lucas, Interim Assistant Director of Learning, Inclusion and Skills	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This paper is to give members an update on the earlier paper ‘Review of the Children’s Centre Service January 2017’.

The Brighter Futures Children’s Centres form a large part of Thurrock Council’s Early Offer of Help, working to reduce referrals to MASH, Troubled Families, Education Welfare Services, and to divert families from unnecessary statutory interventions.

1. Recommendations

1.1 The committee is asked to note the improvements to the Brighter Futures Children’s Centre Services.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The transfer of Public Health functions and the development of a 0-19 Wellbeing model, now known as Brighter Futures, provided the impetus to develop a more sustainable Children’s Centre delivery model. This presented an opportunity to redesign the delivery model for Children’s Centres whilst ensuring that the core work of the service continued to be delivered to the same high standard.

2.2 The Core purpose of the Brighter Futures Children’s Centres (further information in Appendix 2 and 3) is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness

- Parenting aspirations
 - Parenting skills
 - Child and family health and life chances
- 2.3 There are five main Brighter Futures Children’s Centre sites (BFCC), across three localities (East, Central and West), with a number of ‘outreach’ sites also in development (see **Appendix 1** for the lists of sites and associated outreach sites in each locality).
- 2.4 In the East Locality there are two BFCCs: Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary, in the West Locality there are two BFCCs: Purfleet and Ockendon and in the Central Locality one BFCC: Thameside.
- 2.5 Each locality is staffed by one BFCC Manager, one Reception and Engagement Officer, two Facilitators and two Parent Outreach Workers. There is also an additional .4FTE BFCC Manager and a relief facilitator to cover periods of annual leave as well as to add capacity to deliver more programmes.
- 2.6 We have also created a post for an apprentice Reception and administration assistant in the West locality.

3. Update, current position and outcomes

- 3.1 The Brighter Futures Children’s Centre offer is delivered by Children’s Centre staff and a wide range of partners (for the complete list see Appendix 2). There are approximately 45 different services available currently, delivered by Children Centre Staff and over 17 partners/ professionals. Brighter Futures Children’s Centres also refer and signpost families to a wide range of different services and providers as well as offering work and volunteer placements.
- 3.2 Brighter Futures recognises that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer, Early Offer of Help, Prevention and Support Services (PASS), Public Health and Children’s Centres are key partners in contributing to improving outcomes for young children and their families. The BFCCs contribute widely to all of the above and have worked to further develop partnerships to deliver services to meet the core purposes (see appendix 3).
- 3.3 Services include: stay and plays, Play and Learns, Baby Massage, Fun, Food & Fitness, Parenting (Patch, PEEP, Pyramid), Chatterbox, Bookstart Corner, Parent Outreach Services, Speech and Language, Early Interaction Advice services, English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) Conversation, Go Girls, Dental sessions, child-minder led sessions to name but a few.
- 3.4 The Brighter Futures Children’s Centre offer has always been available to all parents across the borough with children aged 0-5. This offer is now being extended to families with older children (0-11) with new targeted services

designed to support the above core purposes as well as other Early Offer and local offer services.

- 3.5 BFCC have increased the health and medical services on offer through working with partners in Public Health, CCG and North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT). There is now a new medical room at Purfleet Children's Centre. Every Children's Centre now offers child health clinics, including baby weighing, one and two year development checks, introductions to solids and infant feeding. Immunisation clinics are held at Tilbury Children's Centre for all of Thurrock families to access.
- 3.6 By working closely with partners the service is able to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in the greatest need and their peers and, as such, see them as equal partners. To ensure we have the greatest range of targeted and universal services available for families, no partner or organisation is charged to use the space at Children's Centres (except for early education and childcare businesses that rent parts of Children's Centre sites).
- 3.7 Children's Centre staff receive a rolling programme of training to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver the services on offer and to support families with information. Some of this is in-house information, some by the Council and some by external partners provided free of charge. For example: Thurrock Adult Community College staff trained BFCC staff to deliver English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL); NELFT provided training on infant feeding; and Wize Up provided training on drug awareness.

4. Improvements to the Children's Centre Buildings and Environment

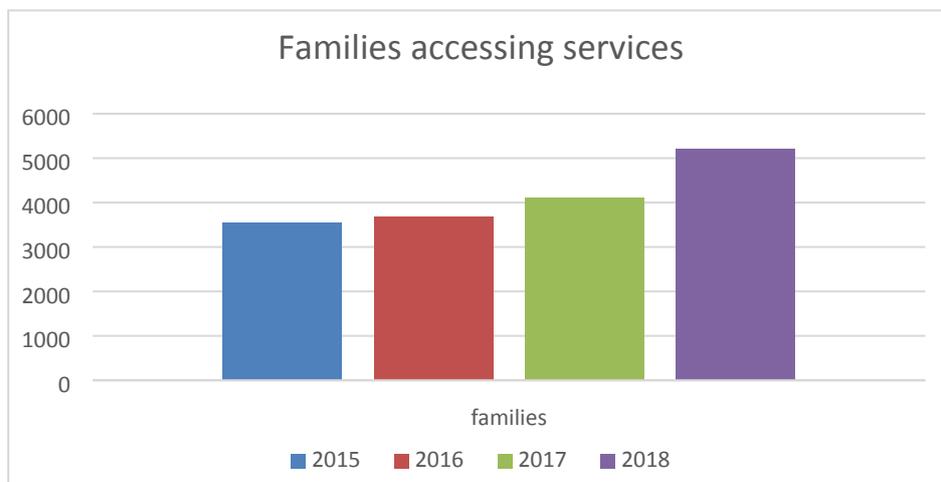
- 4.1 The service has remained within budget each year due to robust financial management whilst improvements to sites have been carried out – these include:
- Updates to CCTV and security systems: CCTV systems have been installed in all BFCCs and comply with the wider council's protocols and procedures.
 - A locking and unlocking service has been commissioned to ensure key holders are registered and secure.
 - A rolling programme of redecoration has been started which has seen Reception areas, medical and playrooms and offices redecorated in every main site.
 - Gardening services across all sites.
 - New fencing, windows and pipework and essential roofing works.
- 4.2 New Brighter Futures Branding has been used to ensure consistency and new noticeboards have been provided for Health & safety, Safeguarding, Children's Centre services and timetables, Health, Breast Feeding, Adult Learning and staff notices.

- 4.3 A continual programme of Health and Safety and environment walks ensure all Health & Safety standards are met and that inside and outside areas are clean and fit for purpose. Car parks and perimeters have been tidied up and parking bays marked at Aveley CC and Stanford le Hope where numerous outreach services are still delivered.
- 4.4 A training room has been developed at Aveley CC which is freely available to Council teams and is used widely by the School Improvement Team.
- 4.5 Through working with the Corporate Assets and legal teams – new leases have been negotiated and some unused buildings have been let. These leases contribute to a small income of approximately £50,000.

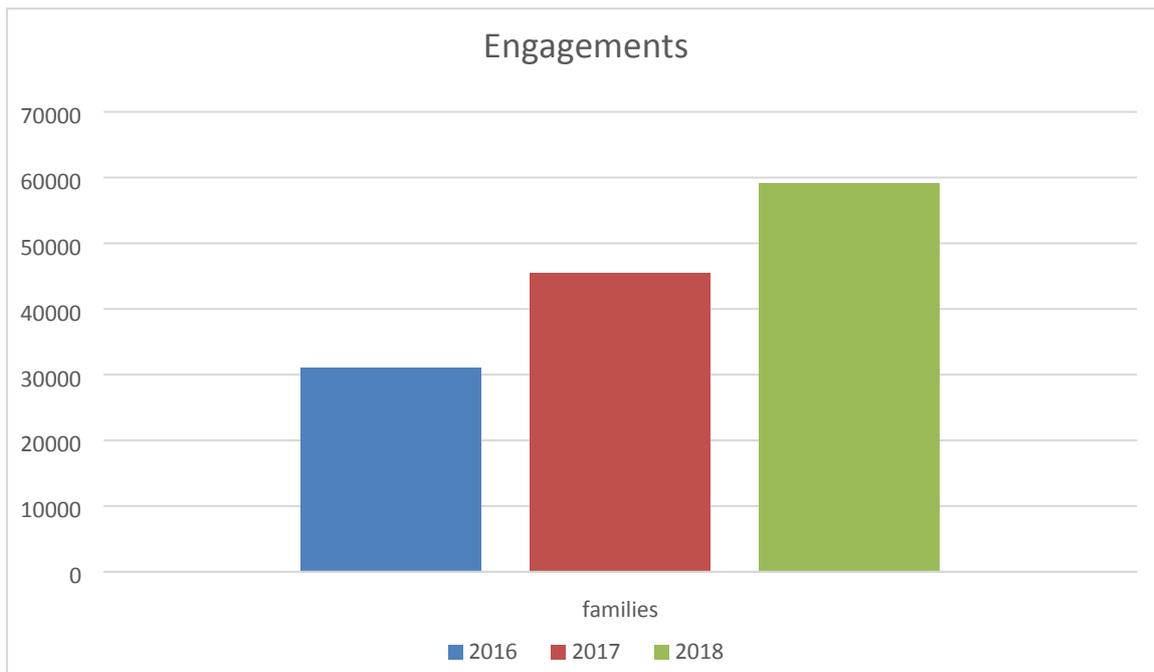
5. Improvements to the services evidenced through data:

5.1 Children’s Centres have a target to register 100% of families with children between the ages of 0-5 within their ‘reach’. The ‘reach’ is limited to surrounding postcodes within the locality. The number of families with children aged 0-5 registered with the Brighter Futures Children’s Centre service has increased by 10% since September 2017 from 63% to 73% at end of December 2018. In Ofsted terms this would be rated as good (Ofsted good 65-79%).

5.2 The number of families accessing BFCC services has increased:



5.3 The number of occasions users have engaged with BFCC services (engagements) within BFCCs has increased by over 28,000 in 3 years:



Each locality has identified two wards with the lowest income deprivation affecting children index scores (IDACI) to focus on the improvement in registration and engagement of families, ensuring targeted services in areas of need. Since the restructure the registrations in these targeted areas has increased by 22% from 48% to 70%.

5.4 Children’s Centres Facilitators are trained to deliver a wide range of services to support the needs of the families in the borough (see appendix 4 for the full range). The Facilitators have had a target of delivering 4 sessions per day, this is in the context of delivering 20 sessions each across the locality they are based in, including BFCC outreach sites, partner sites, schools and community sites. The six facilitators now deliver on average 94% of the target.

5.5 Examples of increased attendances by families to sessions;

	2017	2018
Stay and plays	17,022	22,529
School readiness sessions	15,220	39,010
Health sessions	9,917	9,954
Ante-natal appointments	4,743	7,174

5.6 Evaluation and impact of Facilitator-led sessions takes place after each session and at the end of courses. Here are just a few examples of evaluation and impacts gathered. The BFCC managers have this data for all sessions delivered at BFCCs.

5.7 **Baby Massage Evaluations 2017:** Parenting skills – developing relationships and communication

- 79% of parents understood the importance of baby massage for both parents and baby
- 75% of parents understood the right time to massage their baby
- 87% of parents said they were able to respond to their baby's needs/cues as a result
- 80% of parents said they now understood the importance of talking and singing with their baby
- 95% of parents said they recognised the importance of 'tummy time'
- 92% of parents said they understand how to massage their baby
- 100% of parents said they were satisfied with the service
- 100% of parents said the sessions helped them to understand about baby massage

5.8 Evaluation and impact of Fun, Food and Fitness: improve outcomes for children, healthy eating and fitness - Child and Family Health Chances;

- 69% of parents felt confident in providing a healthy meal/snack for their child/family.
- 77% of parents know the recommended amount of exercise their child should do each day.
- 75% of parents felt aware of what household objects can be used to make exercise fun for their child.
- 100% of parents felt they were aware of suitable portion sizes for toddlers and small children.
- 100% of parents were satisfied with the service.

5.9 Evaluation and Impact English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL); Parenting aspirations and skills;

- 69% of parents said they can use the English language to talk about themselves.
- 54% of parents said they can use the English language to understand and answer questions about their family.
- 64% of parents said they can understand text to gain information.
- 69% of parents said they can use English language to fill in basic forms.
- 68% of parents said they can use the English language to access facilities in their local community.
- 68% of parents said the peer support in the group was important.
- 85% of parents said they were satisfied with the service.

6. Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential: A plan for improving social mobility through education to close the word gap in early years. (DfE 2017)

6.1 The Children’s Centres have contributed widely to the first ambition in the above action plan: Close the word gap in early years. Whilst the Good Level of development in Thurrock at the end of the reception year is above the national average, therefore the borough is not eligible to benefit from additional funding available for this ambition, our schools still record poor speech and language skills on entry to school. The Children’s Centres provide a number of services to support closing the word gap;

- Let’s Talk with your baby.
- Language focused play.
- Baby Massage.
- Bookstart activities.
- Bookstart Corner.
- Chatterbox.
- Keeping up with your children’s literacy.
- Phonics workshop.
- Speech and language drop in.
- Speech and language therapy.

There has been over 800 referrals to these services in 2018 alone.

7. Services for families with children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

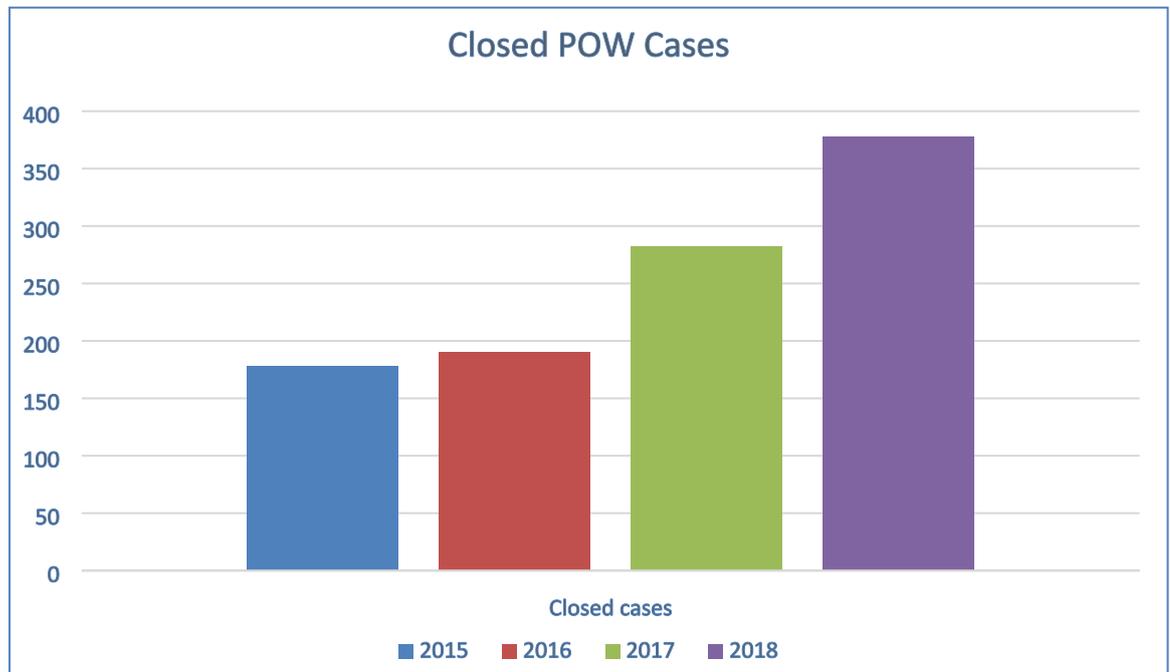
7.1 BFCCs commission external evaluation and monitoring from an independent Children’s Centre Improvement Partner, to ensure improvements continue and their self-evaluations are rigorous and accurate. These reports also ensure that the Children’s Centres advisory boards have an expert external evaluation of the service. The Children’s Centre Improvement Partner commented in the 2018 summer term visit: *“ I think this visit demonstrated how much has improved and become embedded especially for children with additional needs, SEND and their families”*.

SEND	2017	2018
Families	17	67
Individuals	36	124
Attendances	41	494

8. Parent Outreach Workers

8.1 The six Parent Outreach Workers (POWs) previously worked with a family for anything from 6 weeks to 2 years. It became evident that families were not being encouraged to make the transition from targeted, individual support to accessing more widely available universal services quickly enough,

encouraging a sense of dependency. POWs now work in a much more focused way, ensuring families are supported to complete a focused plan in approximately 6 visits over 12 weeks. This has allowed POWs to deliver the early offer of help to many more families. Early indications are that POWs worked with 377 families in 2018, meeting the target for each POW to work with 60 families.



8.2 Figures are not yet available for 2018 as the data is still being analysed but in 2017 54% of families open to POW support who were subject to Child Protection Plans were de-escalated and 63% of families open to POW support who were subject to Child in Need plan were de-escalated (2018 estimated all cases).

8.3 Evaluation and impact parental/carers surveys of POW support evidence that:

- 89% felt that the support received had helped them in some way as a parent/carer.
- 76% felt that the support received helped with their personal confidence.
- 82% felt that they had been given new ideas to help their children learn at home.
- 98% felt safe working with a POW.
- 95% felt satisfied with the support they received.

9. Risks and Opportunities

9.1 There are a few potential risks to the ongoing success of the BFCCs and a number of opportunities.

9.2 BFCCs currently have 6 facilitators across a number of main and

outreach sites (28 in total). The BFCC has a number of services it could deliver and develop but does not have any additional capacity within its current staffing numbers. Therefore it will continue to look to increase the number of partners to deliver services within the Children Centres from the business, voluntary and community sectors as well as other professionals.

10. Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the Brighter Futures Children's Centre Service to confirm better services are being provided for less money.

11. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

None.

12. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

None.

13. Implications

13.1. Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no financial implications.

13.2. Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Legal

Legislation about children's centres is contained in the Childcare Act 2006 Act as a place or a group of places:

- which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way;
- through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
- at which activities for young children are provided.

Children Centres will continue to provide early childhood services and activities.

Efficiencies in buildings and staffing will be implemented in line with the Council's HR and Assets policies and procedures.

13.3. **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
**Community Development and Equalities
Manager**

The Children's Centres by their very nature have targets to reduce the inequalities and improved outcomes for the most disadvantaged families. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed before any changes are made to service delivery.

13.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder.

None.

14. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Report to Children's Overview & Scrutiny on the Children's Centre Review
- Report to Children's Overview & Scrutiny on the 0-19 Wellbeing Model.

15. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 – Mapping of Brighter Futures Children's Centres and Associated Outreach Sites in Thurrock
- Appendix 2 – Core Purpose of Children's Centres in Thurrock
- Appendix 3 – Service Delivery against Children's Centres' Core Purpose
- Appendix 4 – Brighter Futures: Children's Centre Offer

Report Authors:

Andrea Winstone; Elizabeth Morrison,

School Improvement Manager; Early Education Improvement Officer Lead for Children's Centres

Children's Services.

Appendix 1: Mapping of Brighter Futures Children’s Centres and associated outreach sites in Thurrock

LOCALITY	MAIN CC SITE	OUTREACH CC SITE	OTHER OUTREACH SITES	WARDS
WEST	Ockendon CC	Aveley CC	Holy Cross Shaw Kenningtons	1. Belhus 2. Aveley and Uplands 3. Ockendon
	Purfleet CC		St Clements Hall Purfleet School West Thurrock Primary	4. West Thurrock and South Stifford
CENTRAL	Thameside CC	Belmont CC	Warren School Stifford Clays Social Club Deneholm School Seabrook Rise Ruth House Belmont Hall	5. Chafford and North Stifford 6. Grays Thurrock 7. Stifford Clays 8. Little Thurrock Blackshots 9. Little Thurrock Rectory 10. Grays Riverside 11. South Chafford
EAST	Tilbury CC		East Tilbury School Tilbury Pioneer Academy East Tilbury Village Hall New Library East Tilbury	12. Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park 13. Tilbury St Chads
	Chadwell CC	Stanford Le Hope CC Abbotts CC	Chadwell Primary School Herringham Primary George House Abbotts School	14. Chadwell-St-Mary 15. Stanford East and Corringham Town 16. Corringham and Fobbing 17. East Tilbury 18. Orsett 19. The Homesteads 20. Stanford-Le-Hope West

Red denotes targeted wards – lowest 2 IDACI per locality

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Appendix 2

“CORE PURPOSE” OF CHILDREN’S CENTRES IN THURROCK

GOVERNMENT VISION:

The Government has worked with sector leaders to consider evidence and good practice, resulting in a co-produced Statement of Intent about how the core purpose can be achieved by:

1. **Improving outcomes for children.**
2. **Assessing need across the local community.**
3. **Providing access to universal early years services in the local area including high quality and affordable early years education and childcare.**
4. **Providing targeted evidence based early interventions for families in greatest need, in the context of integrated services.**
5. **Acting as a hub for the local community, building social capital and cohesion.**
6. **Sharing expertise with other early years settings to improve quality.**
7. **Respecting and engaging parents.**
8. **Working in partnership across professional/agency boundaries.**

1. Improving outcomes for young children and their families and reducing inequalities.

This is the overall aim of children’s centres. The purpose around which children’s centres should frame their activities is to identify, reach and help the families in greatest need to support:

- **Child development and school readiness** - supporting personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language from pre-birth to age 5, so *children* develop as confident and curious learners and are able to take full advantage of the learning opportunities presented to them in schools.
- **Parenting aspirations and parenting skills** - building on strengths and supporting aspirations, so that *parents and carers* are able to give their child the best start in life.
- **Child and family health and life chances** - promoting good physical and mental health for both children and their family; safeguarding; supporting parents to improve the skills that enable them to access education, training and employment; and addressing risk factors so that *children and their families* are safe, free from poverty and able to improve both their immediate wellbeing and their future life chances.

2. Assessing strengths and need across the area to inform local commissioning of services

This means children's centres influencing local strategic needs assessments, and commissioning decisions taken forward by the local authority, in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing Board.

3. Providing access to high quality universal (available to all families who wish to use them) services in the area

The statutory definition of a children's centre includes making available early childhood services.

Universal services (i.e. available to all families who wish to make use of them) make a difference to children and families, when delivered in an integrated manner:

- **High quality, inclusive, early learning and childcare**, particularly for disadvantaged families or those with particular needs (for example disabled children) or in disadvantaged areas. This includes supporting families to access the offer of free early learning for 2 year olds, support for childminder networks and sessional and crèche facilities appropriate to meet local need. Where early learning and childcare is delivered by the children's centre (or by a third party on behalf of the children's centre), it should be supported by someone with either Qualified Teacher or Early Years Professional status.
- **Information and activities for families**, so that parents can make informed choices. This will include provision of family activities to improve outcomes (for example, learning through play or healthy eating) and could involve access to wider sources of support for example benefit or debt advice.
- **Adult learning and employment support**; this may include language, literacy and numeracy support, family learning, access to apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities as steps toward employment and links to Jobcentre Plus. It is supported by good quality, inclusive childcare.
- **Integrated child and family health services**; to include Health Visitors delivering the Healthy Child programme, engagement with midwives and GPs and use of the Family-Nurse partnership where appropriate.

4. Using evidence-based approaches to deliver targeted, family-centred support

This means children's centres combining evidence with professional expertise – in order to decide which early interventions work best for local families, and help ensure families receive the services they really need and that will make a difference to their lives. The following **targeted services** can make a difference for families with the greatest needs:

- **Parenting and family support**, including outreach work and relationship support (the quality of the relationship between parents is linked to positive parenting and better outcomes for children). Provision of integrated support in response to identified strengths and risk factors within individual families.

- **Targeted evidence-based early intervention programmes** (such as those recommended by Graham Allen MP, the NAPR and C4EO) where published evaluation demonstrates that particular interventions can help families make accelerated progress in improving outcomes where they are at greatest risk of falling furthest behind.
- **Links with specialist services** for families where there are the most complex health or social care needs (e.g. disabled children, children with major health difficulties, or children likely to be “in need” or where there are safeguarding concerns as in the Children Act 1989).

5. Acting as a hub for the local community, building social capital and cohesion.

This will involve children’s centres capitalising on their role as a welcoming environment for families, for example by welcoming older people’s groups to use the facility for community activities or by supporting siblings or older children’s activities where this is appropriate locally. It is about children’s centres using their facilities creatively so the whole community can benefit and using the skills within the community to the benefit of the children’s centre (e.g. members of the community volunteering their skills). It links to the Health Visitor Building Community Capacity work and the Health Visitor Early Implementer Sites.

6. Sharing expertise with other early years settings to improve quality.

This is not about taking on the quality improvement role of the Local Authority but could involve sharing expertise, brokering relationships, sharing (and learning from) good practice, support for childminding networks, shared training and joint planning. National College are developing work in this area.

7. Respecting and engaging parents

Respecting the views and wishes of all parents, with local families at the heart of inclusive decision making. This may involve a role for parents in governance. It will involve local families a greater say in how services are delivered (with transparency about what money is being spent on and what difference it is making), actively engaging them in delivery through volunteering opportunities, as well as working with health visitors to build the capacity of local parents to help each other and form informal networks of support.

8. Partnership working

The core purpose puts an onus on a cross-sector approach and effective local partnerships, particularly between social workers, health visitors and children’s centre outreach workers, so that vulnerable families are supported into appropriate interventions. Reducing child poverty and increasing social mobility Centres will also work with a range of other partners to help them deliver this core purpose for example other early years providers, Jobcentre Plus, GP consortia, information and advice organisations, schools and voluntary and community sector organisations.

Acknowledgement:

[www/http:shareville.bcu.ac.uk/index.php?.../sure_start_childrens_centres_core_purpose](http://shareville.bcu.ac.uk/index.php?.../sure_start_childrens_centres_core_purpose)

Appendix 3

SERVICE DELIVERY AGAINST CHILDREN'S CENTRE CORE PURPOSE

Session Aim = CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS (ECM = Enjoy and Achieve)	Session Aim = PARENTING ASPIRATIONS (ECM = Economic wellbeing and Staying Safe)
<p>ACTIVITY NAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult and Family Learning Bookstart Corner Bookstart Activities Chatterbox Childminder Led Session Crèche Facility IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) Keeping Up With The Children's Literacy Keeping Up With The Children's Numeracy Language Focused Play Let's Talk With Your Baby Non engagement Parent Outreach Service Phonics Workshop Play and Learn School Readiness Parent Sessions SEND Session Speech and Language Drop In Stay and Play 12 to 24 months Stay and Play 0 to 12 months Stay and Play 24 to 60 months Special Events 	<p>ACTIVITY NAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult and Family Learning Abuse Support Services CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) ESOL Functional Skills English Functional Skills Maths Getting Ready For Work Go Girls Housing Advice Support Service Introduction to Childcare IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) IT Job Centre Plus Job Club Literacy Assessment Keeping Up With The Children's Numeracy Keeping Up With The Children's Literacy My Money Matters New Directions Non engagement Numeracy Assessment Paediatric First Aid Parent Outreach Service Volunteer Special Events
<p>Session Aim = CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH CHANCES</p>	<p>Session Aim = PARENTING SKILLS (ECM = Positive Contribution)</p>

(ECM = Being Healthy)	
<p>ACTIVITY NAME</p> <p>1 year Development Assessments 2 year Development Assessments Abuse Support Services Adult and Family Learning Ante Natal Midwife Appts Ante Natal Blood Testing Ante Natal Classes Baby Massage Breastfeeding Support Child Health Clinic (Baby Weighing) Chatterbox Counselling Dental Session Essential Living Fund Food Bank Fun Food and Fitness Health and Development Drop In IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) Infant Feeding Introduction to Solids Keep it Clear (Anglian Water) Language Focused Play Let's Talk With Your Baby Newborn Screening Checks Non engagement Paediatric First Aid Parent Outreach Service Post Natal Checks Special Events Speech and Language Drop In</p>	<p>ACTIVITY NAME</p> <p>Adult and Family Learning Baby Massage Fun Food and Fitness Go Girls IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) Infant Feeding Introduction to Solids Language Focused Play Let's Talk With Your Baby Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Mellow Parenting Non engagement Parent Outreach Service Paediatric First Aid Play and Learn PATCH PEEP Pyramid Special Events</p>

CORE OFFER

Activity	Description	Ages	Details	Delivered by	Booking
Stay and Play	Fun activities for you and your baby. The sessions promote social skills and stimulation to support your baby’s development. The session also aims to offer ideas to support your child’s learning at home	0 to 12 months	Individual sessions	Children’s Centre staff	All welcome- no booking needed
Stay and Play	Fun activities for you and your child. The sessions promote social skills and stimulation to support your child’s development. The session also aims to offer ideas to support your child’s learning at home	12 to 24 months	Individual sessions	Children’s Centre staff	All welcome- no booking needed
Stay and Play	Fun activities for you and your child. The sessions promote social skills and stimulation to support your child’s development. The session also aims to offer ideas to support your child’s learning at home	24 to 60 months	Individual session	Children’s Centre staff	All welcome- no booking needed
Play and Learn	A structured six week programme for families to support their child’s learning through play. The sessions will also provide you with ideas on how to support your child’s learning at home.	24 to 60 months	6 week programme	Children’s Centre staff	Contact the Children’s Centre to book a place.
Baby Massage	The baby massage course offers a wonderful opportunity for you to bond and learn how to communicate with your baby through nurturing touch and massage in a relaxed and welcoming environment.	0 to 12 months	6 week programme	Children’s Centre staff	Contact the Children’s Centre to book a place.
Fun, Food and Fitness	Fun, physical activities and ideas to keep your child healthy and fit. An opportunity for your child to try different types of food each week and for parents to receive advice on healthy eating including fussy eating and portion sizes.	18 to 60 months	6 weeks programme	Children’s Centre staff	Contact the Children’s Centre to book a place
Fun, Food and Fitness	Fun, physical activities and ideas to keep your child healthy and fit. An opportunity for your child to try different types of food each week and for parents to receive advice on healthy eating including fussy	5-11 years	6 weeks programme	Children’s Centre staff	Contact the Children’s Centre to book a place

	eating and portion sizes.				
Patch	A parenting course which provides support with everyday challenges of parenting young children. The sessions will cover topics such as being a parent, play, temper tantrums and praise. Parents have the opportunity to discuss other areas of concern if they wish to do so.	Parents and carers who have children between the ages of 18 to 60 months	6 weeks programme	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre to book a place.
Pyramid Parenting	A parenting course which raises parent's awareness of the role they play in promoting a positive self-image and resilience in their children. The course also provides parents with the knowledge, skills and positive experiences that can be used to enhance their relationship with their children.	Parents and carers who have children between the ages of 5-11 years	6 week programme	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre to book a place.
Empowering Parents Empowering Communities	EPEC is a parenting group delivered by parents to parents. Parents will learn how to use a range of parenting skills, understand their children's feelings and develop a closer parent-child relationship.	Parent and carers who have children 2-11 years	8 week programme	EPEC Parent Facilitators	Contact the Children's Centre to book a place.
Chatterbox	A structured language group running for six to eight weeks providing support, advice and guidance to help your child develop their communications skills.	18 to 60 months	6 to 8 weeks programme Referral only	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Bookstart Corner	A Booktrust programme to support families to develop a love of stories, books and rhymes to help their children's early reading skills.	12 to 24 months	4 week programme	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Parent Outreach Service	Parent Outreach Workers provide high quality support and parental outreach services to families in their own home with a series of home visits. Parent Outreach Workers will also support parents to access and use services at the Children's Centre and in the community.	Parents and Carers	Visits to the home.	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Speech and Language Drop in	Speech and language therapists will be available to provide advice and support to families who feel their child might be experiencing	18 to 60 months	Individual sessions	Speech and Language Therapists	All welcome- no booking needed

	some delay in their speech and language development.				
Let's Talk With Your Baby	A programme to promote positive adult-child interaction and communication skills, attachment, stimulation in a rich environment through interactive, fun activities.	0 to 12 months	6 weeks course	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Language Focused Play	An evidence based therapy for children with expressive or receptive language delay	24 to 60 months	Individual sessions Referral only	Speech and Language Therapists	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Early Interaction Advice Sessions	The advice sessions provide parents with practical strategies to use at home with your child to help develop their early interaction skills/ social skills which includes attention and listening, eye contact, turn taking, copying and body language.	24 to 60 months	Individual sessions Referral only	Speech and Language Therapists	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
SEND-ADHD Group	This group is to support parents who have children with ADHD, ADD, Asperger and autistic spectrum disorders.	Parents of children 0-19 years	Individual sessions	Prevention and Support Service	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
SEND- Early Years Communication Group for Sensory Impaired Children	A session for families with children who have hearing impairment or visual impairment.	0 to 60 months	Individual session Referral only	Thurrock Sensory Service staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
PEEP	A programme to support parents and carers to value and build on the home learning environment and relationships with their children, by making the most of everyday learning opportunities – listening, talking, playing, singing and sharing books and stories together.	Parents and carers	6 weeks course	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Go Girls	A programme to support parents and carers with practical approaches for supporting girls' emotional development and building their self-esteem. Packed with ideas for activities, exercises, group-work, games and helpful hints on supporting girls' and young women's personal development.	Parents and Carers	6 weeks course	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information

ESOL Conversation Club	A club for parents and carers to develop their speaking and listening skills in English with friends.	Parents and Carers	Individual sessions	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Dental Sessions	Sessions to help families gain knowledge and understanding about supporting their children with good dental hygiene the frequency of sugars, the importance of brushing teeth and how to manage dental visits.	0 to 60 months	Individual sessions	Children's Centre Staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Special Events	Events throughout the year to support families with learning and playing with their children.	0 to 11 years	Individual sessions	Children's Centre staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Child minder Led Session	Sessions led by Child minders to support children's learning and development who are in the care of a child minder.	0 to 11 years	Individual sessions	Child minders	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Phonics Workshop	A one hour workshop to help parent and carers develop their children's early reading and writing skills.	24 to 60 months	One hour	School Improvement Team Officer	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Anglian Water-Keep It Clear Campaign	Sessions to support families to learn about the correct disposal of waste, such as fats, oil, grease and un-flushable items, wipes, nappies and sanitary waste and to support financial awareness by avoiding big repair bills.		Individual sessions	Anglian Water	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Adult and Family Learning	Accredited and non-accredited training courses which aim to help families return to volunteering and/or employment		Individual to each course	Children's Centre staff and Thurrock Adult Community College	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Job Centre Plus	Information, advice and guidance for families who are receiving working age benefit. Appointments with a work coach are on an individual basis.	Families who have children aged 0-5 years.	Individual sessions	Job Centre Work Coaches	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
On Track	A programme to support families back into training and employment through individual sessions and mentoring support.	16-29 year olds	Individual sessions	TCHC	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Employment and	Thurrock Council community	18 years	Individual	Community	Contact the

Work Related Support	based employment and work-related support and guidance provision, to help people towards getting into paid employment, volunteering, training or education. CV support	upwards (working aged adults to pension age)	sessions	Support Employment Officer	Children's Centre for more information
Volunteering Project	If you would like to volunteer at the Children's Centre, please contact us to find out more.				Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Food Bank Vouchers	Food Bank Vouchers. Please contact the Children's Centre to speak to a member of staff to arrange a visit and for more information.				Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Breastfeeding Support- Parents 1 st	Peer support and information focused on pregnancy, birth and becoming a parent. For families who are due to have their baby or who are new parents.	Ante natal up to 3- 6 months	Individual sessions	Parent 1st Peer Support workers	All welcome- no booking needed
Blood screening	Blood screening for those in the early stages of pregnancy	Ante natal up to 10 weeks gestation	Individual sessions	Community Maternity Assistants	Community Maternity Assistants
Midwife Clinic	Antenatal midwife checks, advice and support	Ante natal up to birth	Individual sessions	Midwife	Contact your midwife
Glucose Tolerance Test	Blood Screening	Antenatal 24-28 gestation if applicable	Individual sessions	Community Maternity Assistants	Community Maternity Assistants
Blood test 28 weeks	Blood Screening	Antenatal 28 Weeks	Individual session	Community Maternity Assistants	Contact Maternity Bloodline 01268 524900 ext 8300
New Born Screening	Postnatal new born screening includes baby weighing and heel pricks	Postnatal day 5 to day 8	Individual sessions	Community Maternity Assistants	Contact your midwife/ Community Secretaries
Teenage Midwife Clinic	Antenatal checks , advice and support	Antenatal up to birth for mums to be under the age of 19.	Individual sessions	Midwife	Contact your midwife
Introduction to Solids	A programme to support parents and carers with introducing solid	0 to 8 months	Individual sessions	Health Service	Contact the Children's

	foods to their baby.			Nursery Nurses	Centre for more information
Infant Feeding	Support sessions for you to discuss any matters relating to feeding your baby, e.g. breastfeeding, formula feeding and introducing solid foods.	0 to 12 months	Individual sessions	Health Visitors	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
1 and 2 year old Developmental Assessments Checks	Health and development assessment to check your child's weight, height, learning, diet and behaviour etc.	12 to 24 months	Individual sessions	Health Visitors	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Child Health Clinic (Baby Weighing)	Baby Weighing and support advice and guidance on your child's health	0 to 60 months	Individual sessions	Health Visitors	Contact the Children's Centre for more information.
Child Immunisations	Vaccinations for children of school age	4 to 11 years	Individual sessions	Immunisation Team	Contact the Children's Centre for more information

SERVICES WE REFER TO

Activity	Description	Details	Delivered by	Booking
Mind The mental health charity	Counselling services are available to make sure no one has to face a mental health problem alone.	Individual sessions	Mind	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS NELFT)	If at any time you feel that you cannot cope with life and things around you can ask for support.	Individual sessions	EWMHS NELFT	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
St Luke's Hospice Bereavement Service	A bereavement and Counselling Support service for young people	Individual sessions	St Luke's Hospice	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Careers Advice	Providers, such as Go Train and National Careers work in partnership with Thurrock Children's Centres to provide information, advice and guidance to families to support them to return to work.	Individual sessions		Contact the Children's Centre for more information
CAB	Free, confidential information and advice to assist people with money, legal, consumer and other problems.	Individual sessions	CAB staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more

				information
Benefit Advice	To support council tenants who have rent arrears and are struggling financially.	Individual sessions	Financial Inclusion Officers	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
St Mungo's Floating Support Service	St Mungo's helps people recover from the issues that create homelessness, such as rent arrears, debt and benefits, and support families with employment and education.	Individual sessions-appointment only	St Mungo's staff	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Well Homes	A project to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents in the borough who are home owners or non-council tenants to support with repairs and safety in the home as well as referrals to a range of health and lifestyle services e.g. stopping smoking, free NHS health checks, exercise, debt advice etc.	Variety of support available	Thurrock Council's Private Housing Team	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Housing Solutions Team	For all those of risk of homelessness aged 16 and above. The sessions include assessment of housing needs, provision of housing advice and sign posting to relevant services.	Individual sessions,	Thurrock Councils Housing Solutions	See CC for info
Thurrock Healthy Lifestyles Service	Thurrock adults who may need health improvement intervention. Includes mental health screening, alcohol and consumption screening. There are 3 main health improvement programmes from Thurrock Healthy Lifestyle Service: Smoking Cessation, NHS Health Checks and Weight Management.	A range of sessions available	Thurrock Healthy Lifestyles Service	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Local Area Coordinators (LAC's)	Local area coordinators (LACs) help people find ways to make a better life. Based in towns and villages around Thurrock, they know the local people – those who need help, and those who can offer different types of help.	Individual sessions	LAC's	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Parenting Programmes	Helping parents who need additional support with parenting – parents of children aged 0 to 19	13 week parenting programme (once per week)	Coram	Referral only via Children's Services – should be discussed with Children Centre staff
Domestic abuse and violence support	Supporting victims (female and male) of domestic abuse and violence	Drop-in sessions / telephone help and advice	Changing Pathways	01268 729707
Sexual abuse and violence support	Supporting victims of sexual abuse and violence	Variety of support available	SERICC	01375 380609
Wize Up	Substance misuse service for young people	Structured	Wize Up	Contact the

	using substances and support for young people whose lives are affected by parental/carers substance misuse	intervention and hidden harm interventions.	Recovery Workers	Children's Centre for more information
Breastfeeding Support- BRAS	A breastfeeding and reassurance support group for families who are due to have their baby or who are new parents.	Individual sessions	Qualified BRAS Volunteers	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
Thurrock Carers Service	Information, advice and support for unpaid carers caring for someone in Thurrock to help with carer assessments, signposting to relevant organisations, returning to work, volunteering, support groups, respite, training and counselling.	Individual sessions	Thurrock Carer Service	Contact the Children's Centres for more information

WORK PLACEMENTS

Activity	Description	Details	Delivered by	Booking Arrangements
Prince's Trust	The Prince's Trust provide free programmes that give young people the practical and financial support they need to stabilize their lives. The Prince's Trust helps them develop key skills while boosting their confidence and motivation. The Children's Centres support the Prince's Trust programmes by having work placements/volunteer opportunities.	Arranged according to the need of the individual	Prince's Trust	Contact the Children's Centre for more information
TCHC	A private company that work in partnership with Thurrock Council to run government initiatives and programmes to support families back into training and employment. Children's Centres will support work placements/volunteer opportunities	Arranged according to the need of the individual	TCHC	TCHC

12 February 2019	ITEM: 12
Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Update Report On Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Claire Pascoe, Child Exploitation and Missing Children Manager	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children and Families	
Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report sets out the actions being taken by Thurrock Social Care and our response to CSE and associated exploitative harms. Thurrock Children’s Social Care continues to take steps to identify and tackle exploitation in the Borough. Most effective outcomes are achieved via collaboration with a range of partners in identifying potential victims, and prevention of further harm; equally, in the identification, disruption and prosecution of perpetrators. The Local Government Association’s *‘Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation, A resource pack for councils’*, 2014, is attached to this report.

To set the context of this report, the definitions of the harms referred to here, are as follows:

Child Sexual Exploitation: ‘CSE 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.’ (Department for Education, 2017)

- *Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE): ‘Child Criminal Exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18.*
- *Missing: ‘Anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the*

person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another’.

(Essex Police, 2017)

- Trafficking: *“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the ... recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons ... for the purpose of exploitation”.* (Modern Slavery Act, 2015)

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Committee are asked to note the work being carried out by Children’s Social Care to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Previous reports have been presented to Elected Members about the progress and impact of steps taken by Children’s Social Care and partner agencies to tackle, disrupt and address Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), and Missing Children.

2.2 Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested a further update on progress within Thurrock pertaining to CSE and Missing Children.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 This update report on CSE and Missing Children will highlight the key strategic, operational, technological, partnership and practice developments relating to the inter-related areas of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Exploitation (CE), Missing Children and Child Trafficking, as led and progressed by Thurrock Council.

3.2 Key Achievements:

Thurrock Council have taken significant steps to identify and tackle Child Sexual, and wider Exploitation. Given exploitation and perpetrators are not contained by geographical boundaries, the steps outlined are both those taken internally, and more broadly across the professional partnership in Thurrock, and across the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock). Not exhaustively, these include the following:

3.2.1 Ofsted 2018 Focused Visit:

The Focused Visit letter made reference to CSE, and indeed, CE: Positively, Ofsted reported:

‘Social workers are alert to concerns about child sexual exploitation; they use specific assessment tools appropriately to assess and manage risks. Oversight and review of these arrangements by frontline and senior managers is effective, managing and protecting children at an individual level and informing strategic planning’.

3.2.2 Awareness Raising Training Within the Council and Local Community:

Thurrock Social Care in collaboration with partners, have responsively and intensively invested in training and awareness-raising. All training sessions aim to maximise opportunities to identify vulnerabilities and risks associated with CSE, CE and Trafficking, focusing equally, upon perpetrators, and using the multi-agency group to galvanise collaboration and provision of services to children. All training is bespoke, and includes advice on gathering evidence, local and national help and support and the pathways via which professionals and possible victims can share their concerns, make referrals and report abuse. (Department for Education, 2017).

- 3.2.3 Coordinated by the CSE CE and Missing Children Manager, bespoke CSE, Missing and Trafficking awareness training has been written and delivered in collaboration with Essex Police, Open Door and South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC). Training has been provided to: Social and Support Workers: 343; Adult Social Care: 47; Thurrock Foster Carers: 91; Essex College students; 25; Thurrock Housing staff: 201; Independent Fostering Association Providers and Residential Staff: 71; Thurrock GPs: 27; Music Service Staff: 25; Hotel industry staff: 10; Thurrock currently Licenced Taxi Operators, Drivers and Passenger Assistants: 345 out of 362 have been trained: 13 of the remaining Taxi Drivers 16 are due to undertake the training in March, with the 3, due to sign up. Adherence to this being a condition of Thurrock Taxi Drivers being licensed can be evidenced in there being one driver who was not permitted to automatically renew until he had completed the training.
- 3.2.4 Impact in practice of the training, can be illustrated in a disclosure to the CSE CE and Missing Children Manager by a Thurrock Licenced Taxi driver immediately following a training session. The training, the driver said, helped him understand the significance and gravity of what he had seen. With the support of the CSE CE and Missing Children Manager and in collaboration with Essex Police CSE Triage Team, the driver made a comprehensive disclosure to Essex Police, which resulted in the matter becoming a live criminal investigation.
- 3.2.5 In response to the impact and prevalence of gang-associated trafficking and exploitation nationally (Home Office, 2017) and locally, focused Trafficking and Modern Slavery Training was co-written, with the Essex Police Trafficking Lead, and delivered by the CSE CE and Missing Children Manager to 66 Thurrock Social Workers in the last quarter of 2018, as part of the Practice Development Programme.

Words repeatedly used in response to all of these training sessions include: "Shocking", "Powerful", "Informative", "Enlightening", "Relevant" and "Insightful"

- 3.2.6 **'I Didn't Know' CSE Campaign, 2018:** In order to better equip adult and child residents of Thurrock in spotting indicators of online abuse and youth-

produced sexual imagery, and to know how to report this, given the increase internationally and nationally, (NSPCC, 2019) and locally (Essex Police, 2017) of online grooming and exploitation, the March 2018, the '*I Didn't Know*' Child Sexual Exploitation campaign focused specifically, upon online CSE and youth-produced sexual imagery. It primarily focused towards parents / carers and children and young people.

3.2.7 **'#BeAVoice for Victims of Trafficking and Modern Slavery' Campaign**

The Thurrock CSE CE and Missing Children Manager, in collaboration with Essex Police and equivalent partners in Southend and Essex launched this Campaign in October 2018. It coincided with Anti-Slavery Day. The campaign aimed to raise the awareness of professionals, parents, young people and public, of the indicators of this harm, and reporting pathways.

3.2.8 **Development of the Missing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU):**

To clarify and strengthen the collective professional response to missing children, The MoU seeks to improve the quality and timeliness of information sharing between carers and providers with Essex Police relating to children at risk of going missing from care, being trafficked, who are gang associated and at risk, or who have been and / or are victims of CSE. This document has been sent by the Thurrock Commissioning team to accommodation providers used by Thurrock Social Care. Expectations around preparing for a child going missing, searching for a missing fostered children, reporting to Police and support of the child upon return, is now included in the contracts of Thurrock Foster Carers.

3.3 **The Thurrock Picture:**

3.3.1 **CSE:** The CSE report run from Liquid Logic, our children's information system, on 14th January, 2019, identified 28 Thurrock children currently assessed to be at High risk of CSE, including 1 boy assessed as being exploited. Of the 28 children, 16 are girls, and 12 are boys. The average age of the 16 girls is 15.3 months. The girls' legal statuses comprised: 8 Looked After Children: 4 girls supported under Child Protection Plans and 4 girls being supported under Child in Need Plans. The average age of the 12 boys is slightly older, at 16.9 years. Their legal statuses comprised: 5 Looked After Children, 1 boy supported under a Child Protection Plan and 6 boys supported under Child in Need Plans.

3.3.2 Given the widely-publicised 'invisibility' of boys as being at risk of CSE in professional perception, it is positive to see that this unconscious bias against boys is not immediately apparent in Thurrock, with boys being potential victims of CSE and wider criminal exploitation, being 'on the radar' (Barnardos, 2016).

3.3.3 The models of CSE currently most apparent in Thurrock, appear not to reflect the models illustrated in Rotherham and Telford, which is primarily the Organised / Trafficking model of CSE; rather, the models appear to remain, primarily, the 'Boyfriend' model and Gang model of CSE. While children can

be moved through a range of different CSE models, the 'Boyfriend' model of CSE is typified by perpetrators, who can be of similar age, and who target children posing as 'boyfriends / girlfriends', showering the child with attention, 'love' and gifts, activating the child's attachment system. Initiating a sexual relationship with the child, the child is effectively told that they owe the perpetrators money for cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, car rides etc. and that sexual activities are one way of repaying the 'debt' (PACE UK, 2017).

- 3.3.4 The gang model of CSE is used variously, to exert power and control over children to initiate children into gangs; exchange sexual activity for status / protection; used to entrap rival gang members by exploiting girls and young women, often related to or associated with them, and inflict sexual assault as a weapon in conflict. The majority of CSE within gangs is committed by teenage boys and men in their twenties (Berelowitz et al. 2012). The SET CSE Strategic Board is researching risk assessment tools which take account of wider exploitative contexts including but also beyond CSE, such as grooming / threatening children into 'running drugs' (being groomed, and exploited).
- 3.3.5 **Missing children:** The Risk Assessment Group, (RAG), a sub-group of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and operational arm of the Strategic Multi Agency Child Exploitation, chaired by the Service Manager for Looked After Children, meets every 2 weeks. It is attended by a range of statutory and voluntary partners. All of the children who have been reported and accepted as missing to the Police, are discussed at the Risk Assessment Group, regardless of length of time missing, or apparent circumstance. There is no minimum time for a child to be missing before they are reported to the Police. Therefore, the times children have been reported as missing before they are found, can range from minutes upwards. A trigger for presentation to the RAG is their experienced 3 missing episodes in three months, or having had a high risk missing episode. Also presented are those children assessed to be at high risk of CSE, and Child Exploitation in the context of gangs. The Risk Assessment Group facilitates challenge, oversight and development of plans to reduce the vulnerability of children, and equally, identify opportunities to target / investigate possible / perpetrators.
- 3.3.6 Open Door are commissioned by Thurrock Children's Social Care to undertake Return Home Interviews for children who go missing from home or care, regardless of whether or not they are receiving a service from Social Care, or length of time missing. Open Door report some of the reasons children go missing from home or care to be attributable in part to children having been placed out of area and 'running to' their parents, friends and extended family members.
- 3.3.7 **Multi Agency Child Exploitation Group (MACE):** With strategic responsibility for developments in Thurrock around Child Exploitation and Missing Children and overseeing the RAG, the LSCB's MACE Group, is attended by 13 statutory, criminal justice and voluntary agencies.

- 3.3.8 **Trafficking:** Awareness of indicators of child trafficking, both as an offence in itself, and as part of wider exploitative contexts, is reflected in 8 children having been referred by Thurrock Children's Social Care to the National Crime Agencies' National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in 2017: end of year statistic for 2018 are yet to be published. Referrals to the NRM are made by Social Workers when they suspect the children they are supporting may be at risk of, or experiencing trafficking for the purpose of Sexual, and / or Criminal Exploitation.
- 3.3.9 The types of concerns leading to referrals to the NRM primarily include children who have been located in different counties, at addresses to which they have no connection, in possession of Class A drugs. Referrals have included instances where a child has been assessed likely to be victim of sexual, as well as criminal exploitation by gangs or groups. The NRM process encourages multi-agency collaboration which enhances a multi-agency safeguarding response.
- 3.3.10 **CSE, Missing, Gangs and Trafficking themed audits:** Children's Social Care Managers completed thematic audits in December 2017 to benchmark understanding and practice. This themed audit was repeated in August 2018 when strengths and areas for organisational improvement in response to CSE, Missing Children, Child Trafficking and children groomed and exploited within the context of Gangs, was undertaken. The audits reflected some areas of strength, and equally, areas both operationally and strategically, areas which need to be developed, which Senior Managers are addressing.
- 3.4 **Future Plans:**
- 3.4.1 Thurrock Social Care's approach to safeguarding children vulnerable to CSE has been tenacious and persistent. Commitment to understanding, and proactively responding to the developing nature and scale of Exploitation in the Borough, in light of learning from research and inquiries combined with evolving local trends, is unswerving. Following on from the 2017-2018 '*CSE, Missing Children and Trafficking Action Plan*', Key highlights of the 2019-2020 Action Plan will include:
- 3.4.2 **Reducing time between missing children being found and referral for Return Home Interviews:** We will establish and embed within the Thurrock Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, dedicated administrative resource to coordinate and ensure consistently timely referrals of children who have been missing and are found, to Open Door so that Return Home Interviews can be completed.
- 3.4.3 **Listening to survivors:** To strengthen Thurrock's response to survivors of sexual exploitation, the independent South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) in collaboration with the ASCB and LSCB, will be asked to coordinate the direct consultation with victims of CSE, to inform Social Care and wider partnership strategic and operational planning and approach.

- 3.4.4 **Training:** CSE, CCE, Missing Children and Trafficking training has been offered to Thurrock Councillors. Further training is planned for 2019.
- 3.4.5 Training will continue to be offered by the CSE CE and Missing Children Manager to Thurrock Children's, Adult and Housing Service staff, Members and key partners outlined above, to widen and embed awareness of indicators of exploitation and reporting pathways.
- 3.4.6 An online training package is being finalised for Taxi Drivers. This will ensure Taxi Drivers are aware of indicators of exploitation and trafficking, and Thurrock expectations in relation to these harms from the outset.
- 3.4.7 Further training with the Hotel Industry, developing further, the Borough-wide response to exploitation will take place.
- 3.5 **Continuing to test professional response in practice:** A further audit with the theme of CSE and Child Exploitation in the context of Gangs, is scheduled for July 2019.
- 3.6 **Embedding the revised SET CSE Risk and Vulnerability Assessment:** The revised CSE Risk and Vulnerability Assessment co-written by the CSE CE and Missing Manager, her counterparts, Essex Police, National Working Group and University of Essex will be embedded within Liquid Logic to enable further, local analysis and informed response. It intentionally includes the different models of CSE to enable us to better understand the profile of CSE being perpetrated in Thurrock.
- 3.7 **Operation Goldcrest:** Essex SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and Mountain Healthcare, in partnership with Essex Police, Thurrock Social Care (SC), Health and SERICC (South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre) are piloting a project targeting young people at risk of and/or currently victims of child sexual exploitation (CSE). The operation will be for those children who decline to engage with statutory services. Thurrock Social Care is the Pilot authority for the SET. The target age range for this pilot is children aged 13 to 18. The pilot is planned to run for 12 to 18 months and if successful, it is envisaged it will be rolled out throughout Essex, and potentially nationally.

4. **Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To further enhance our collective understanding of and response to CSE, CE and Trafficking profile in the Borough, and ensure our response is informed by the experiences of victims.

5. **Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

None

6. **Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 Ensuring that children and young people are safe and free from exploitation is a central part of the statutory duties of the Council.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no additional financial implications at this stage; however any costs associated with this report need to be met from existing resources.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Legal

Section 17 Children Act 1989 imposes a general duty on local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities

The needs and protected characteristics of children are considered and supported throughout the delivery of the services outlined in this report to ensure that the Council continues to uphold Equality Act 2010 duties and responsibilities.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

<https://www.local.gov.uk/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-resource-pack-councils>

9. Appendices to the report

None.

Report Author:

Claire Pascoe

CSE CE and Missing Children Manager

Thurrock Children's Social Care

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**Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2018/19**

Dates of Meetings: 3 July 2018, 9 October 2018, 4 December 2018, 12 February 2019

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
3 July 2018		
Children's Social Care Development Plan	Rory Patterson	Officers
Social Care Performance	Rory Patterson	Officers
Youth Cabinet Update	Pat Kielty	Members
9 October 2018		
Items Raised by Thurrock LSCB	Alan Cotgrove	Standing item
Children's Social Care Performance	Rory Patterson	Standing item
Short Breaks and Support Services for Disabled Children	Sue Green	Officers
Safeguarding and Performance Management Children's Social Care	Rory Patterson/Sheila Murphy	Members
Children's Transport: Re-procurement of Service	Sue Green / Sharon Bayliss	Officers
Schools' Performance Report	Andrea Winstone	Officers
2017/18 Annual Complaints and Representations Report	Tina Martin	Officers

4 December 2018

Youth Cabinet Update	Pat Kielty	Standing item
Thurrock LSCB Annual Report 2017-2018	Alan Cotgrove	Standing item
Schools Funding 2019/20	David May	Officer
Youth Offending Service Report	Clare Moore/Jason Read	Members
Emotional, Wellbeing and Mental Health for Children and Young People – Schools Wellbeing Service	Elozona Umeh	Officers
Update on the Free School Programme	Sarah Williams	Officers
Children’s Social Care Performance	Rory Patterson	Standing item
2018/19 Fees & Charges Report	Andrew Austin	Officers

12 February 2019

Youth Cabinet Update	Pat Kielty	Standing item
Thurrock LSCB Update	Alan Cotgrove	Standing Item
Thurrock New Multi – Agency Safeguarding Arrangements	Alan Cotgrove	Officers
Update on Recommendations from Social Care Services Review	Rory Patterson	Members
Post – 16 Landscape in Thurrock	Michele Lucas/Kate Kozlova-Boran	Officers
SEND Update	Malcolm Taylor	Officers

Update on Brighter Futures Children's Centres Service	Andrea Winstone	Officers
Update Report On Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children	Clare Pascoe	Members
TBC for next municipal year 2019/20		
Update on the Free School Programme	Sarah Williams/Rory Patterson	Members
Update on the School Wellbeing Service	Elozona Umeh	Members

Updated November 2018

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