

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date: Monday, 30th November, 2015
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2015.

3. **Public Speaking Time**

A total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to make a statement(s) on any matter that falls within the remit of the Committee.

Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes, but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned, where there are a number of speakers.

Note: In order for officers to undertake any background research, it would be helpful if members of the public contacted the Scrutiny officer listed at the foot of the agenda, at least one working day before the meeting to provide brief details of the matter to be covered.

For requests for further information

Contact: Mark Nedderman

Tel: 01270 686459

E-Mail: mark.nedderman@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

4. **Declaration of Party Whip**

To provide an opportunity for Members to declare the existence of a party whip in relation to any item on the agenda

5. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

6. **Children and Young People's Improvement Plan** (Pages 5 - 114)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive.

7. **Summary of Provisional School's Performance 2014-15** (Pages 115 - 126)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive.

8. **School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework** (Pages 127 - 184)

To consider a report of the Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive.

9. **Work Programme** (Pages 185 - 194)

To consider a report of the Head of Corporate Resources and Stewardship.

10. **Forward Plan** (Pages 195 - 202)

To note the current forward plan, identify any new items, and to determine whether any further examination of new issues is appropriate.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

held on Monday, 28th September, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors B Dooley, D Flude, L Jeuda, G Merry, A Moran and J Saunders

Apologies

Councillors L Wardlaw

11 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor J Clowes – Adults health and Leisure Portfolio Holder
Councillor G Hayes – Deputy Cabinet Member.

12 OFFICERS PRESENT

Nigel Moorhouse - Head of Early Help and Protection
Kate Rose - Head of Children's Safeguarding Unit
Gill Betton - Children's Improvement and Development Manager

13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of held on 10 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of the existence of a party whip.

16 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.

17 OFSTED INSPECTION - INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD - 6 TO 30 JULY 2015

The Committee received a presentation from Nigel Moorhouse, together with a report from Ofsted relating to its inspection into the protection of children, looked after and care leavers and a review of the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board which took place over a 4 week period starting on 6 July 2015.

Under the new inspection regime, Ofsted were able to give one of four judgements.

The Executive summary of the Ofsted report stated that:

- Children who need help and protection Requires improvement
- Children looked after and achieving
 - permanence - Requires improvement
 - Adoption - performance is Good
 - Experiences and progress of care leavers - Requires improvement
- Leadership, management and governance -Requires improvement.

This gave an overall performance rating of 'Requires improvement.'

The Committee questioned Nigel Moorhouse on the content of the report and on the process which would follow the publication of the report, the Council's response, the production of actions plans and in particular, the role that this committee would play in overseeing the progress of the Council's formal response.

The committee also expressed its desire to monitor the projected overspend of £400,000 reported in the quarter 1 financial and performance report at Corporate Scrutiny on 3 September 2015 and suggested that this could be undertaken in conjunction with the committee's deliberations on the Ofsted report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be received;
- (b) That the Chairman be requested to liaise with the Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive to determine the level of subsequent Scrutiny activity to monitor action plans in response to this report, and the work programme be amended to reflect this new activity;
- (c) That the Committee also keep under review the projected £400,000 budget overspend;
- (d) That the Director of Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive be requested to ensure that any training for members on Safeguarding be offered to all members of the Council.

18 LSCB ANNUAL REPORT

Kate Rose presented the annual report of the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) which detailed the work of the LSCB for the year 2014/15.

The report commented on the progress the Board had made during the year against each of its strategic objectives and identified key challenges for the coming year and beyond.

The report acknowledged the links between the LSCB and the Improvement Board which had been set following the 2013 Ofsted Inspection and that whilst being independent of each other, the two boards shared the same objectives and determination to improve.

The LSCB had made significant progress to involve young people in its work in 2014/15 and many references to this were made in the report.

The report highlighted that in particular CSE remained one of the board's highest priorities.

RESOLVED – That the report be received.

19 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

The Chairman referred to a consultation document circulated to members outside of the meeting from the Barnados charity and noted that no comments had been received from Members of the committee and concluded that no further action would be required with respect to the consultation.

RESOLVED –

(a) That the following amendments be made to the work programme:

1. That the item relating to the CFPS school attainment project be deleted;
2. That the Chairman be requested raise with the new Director of Children's Services the subject of Performance monitoring with a view to agreeing and including a timetable within the work programme;
3. That the Chairman be requested discuss with the Director of Children's Services the extent to which this Committee will be involved in the monitoring of the Council's response to the Ofsted inspection;
4. That the item relating to public health responsibilities be amended to read '0- 19 year olds'
5. That the item relating to recruitment and retention of staff be linked with the Ofsted item;
6. That the possibility of undertaking a joint piece of work on SEN be explored with Health and Adult Social Care Committee;
7. That a Member briefing be arranged at the informal 26 October meeting on School Improvement and the building of new schools/planning regulations;
8. That a briefing be arranged at the informal 21 December meeting on School Academies;
9. That a new item be added to review mental health jointly with Health and Adult Social Care Committee;
10. That the appointment of additional members, namely: Councillors Rhoda Bailey and Dorothy Flude, to the CSE Task and Finish Group be approved.

20 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee reviewed the forward plan.

RESOLVED – that the forward plan be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.00 pm

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 24 November 2015

Report of: Kath O'Dwyer
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services

Subject/Title: Children and Young People's Improvement Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Rachel Bailey

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report updates the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the proposed action plan to address the recommendations and areas for improvement identified by Ofsted in its inspection report of Children's Services, published in September 2015.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
- a) Note the contents of this report, the draft improvement plan at Appendix 1 and action plan at Appendix 2;
 - b) Propose any suggested amendments to the documents; and
 - c) Endorse the arrangements for submitting the plan to the Department for Education and Ofsted in December 2015.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The Council has a statutory responsibility to co-ordinate arrangements to ensure the effectiveness of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in Cheshire East and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Cabinet agreed at its meeting in October that the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee would provide oversight of delivery against the improvement plan to meet the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection. It is important therefore, that the Committee is appraised of the draft plan to provide 'good' services for these vulnerable children and young people in Cheshire East and to ensure that the proposed actions will address the areas for improvement.

4. Background

- 4.1. The effectiveness of Cheshire East's arrangements for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers was inspected by Ofsted in July 2015. Inspectors also carried out a review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The Inspection report of their findings, published in

September 2015 identified 17 recommended actions for the local authority and partners and a further 8 recommendations for the LSCB to get to a consistently 'good' standard.

- 4.2. Significant engagement has taken place with stakeholders since the publication of the report, including workshops with senior managers, other staff and partners and reports and presentations to Cabinet, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Children's Improvement Board, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Corporate Parenting Board and Children's Trust, involving the views of children and young people.
- 4.3. Discussions are currently underway with Ofsted around holding an improvement planning seminar with them to better understand their findings and the best possible responses to these; the plan will be amended, as appropriate.
- 4.4. The local authority is required to submit an action plan to address Ofsted's recommendations to the Department for Education and Ofsted by 22 December 2015. The current draft Children and Young People's Improvement Plan is attached at Appendix 1. The action plan is at Appendix 2 and sets out the proposed actions to address each recommendation, along with the impact measures that will be used to scrutinise and challenge progress in these areas.
- 4.5. There are a number of supporting documents to the improvement plan, set out below, and these are available on request:
 - Quality Assurance Framework
 - Stakeholder Engagement
 - Risk Register
 - Core Training Offer for Social Workers and Managers
 - Ofsted recommendations from the Inspection in July 2015
 - Ofsted recommendations from the Inspection in March 2013 and Improvement Notice Actions

5. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 5.1. The Children and Young People's Improvement Plan affects a small percentage of children and young people across all areas of Cheshire East, but these are our most vulnerable.

6. Implications of Recommendation

6.1. Policy Implications

- 6.1.1. The new improvement plan will impact on some existing policies and procedures of the Council as a number of these will be reviewed in relation to improving practice, for example those around the recruitment and retention of Social Workers.

- 6.1.2. A focus on working in partnership around early intervention and prevention is key to reduce future need and improve outcomes for young people, in particular around reducing the number of vulnerable young people who are not in education, employment or training.

6.2. Legal Implications

- 6.2.1. Cheshire East is currently under a notice to improve. The decision to lift this notice sits with the Secretary of State based on advice from DfE officials and Chair of the Improvement Board. Until a decision is made, the existing Improvement Board will continue to operate.

6.3. Financial Implications

- 6.3.1. The ambition to ensure that children's services deliver services which are good and outstanding requires an ongoing financial commitment from the Council. In addition, it is important to note that improvements in safeguarding practice have resulted in an increase in the number of children in care. This has significant current and future financial implications for the Council.

6.4. Equality Implications

- 6.4.1. The improvement plan is expected to improve outcomes for the Borough's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families.

6.5. Rural Community Implications

- 6.5.1. None identified at this stage.

6.6. Human Resources Implications

- 6.6.1. The recruitment and retention of high quality Social Workers and managers will continue to be a challenge for the local authority and will require the support from HR colleagues to deliver the strategy in relation to this.

6.7. Public Health Implications

- 6.7.1. The improvement plan will support positive public health outcomes.

6.8. Other Implications

- 6.8.1. None.

7. Risk Management

7.1. The Improvement Plan has a risk register that includes three key risks;

- The recruitment and retention of Social Workers and Practice Managers
- Partnership engagement and pace of improvement; and
- Managing the increased demand for services

7.2. Children's social care service delivery remains an area of high risk both in terms of reputation and costs. The recruitment and retention of high quality Social Workers and front line managers remains a risk on the corporate risk register.

8. Access to Information/Bibliography

8.1. Cheshire East's Ofsted Inspection Report is available on the website <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/cheshire-east>

9. Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:-

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Children and Young People's Improvement Plan

to meet the Ofsted Recommendations
November 2015-2016



Creating a
great place to
be young



Cheshire East
Children & Young
People's Trust



Cheshire East Local
Safeguarding Children Board



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Foreword

Foreword from Kath



Executive Summary

We want to make Cheshire East a great place to be young, where children and young people are happy, healthy, safe, and have lots of opportunities to enjoy life, learn and develop. As a partnership, achieving this is our focus, and this is the basis of everything we do.

In order to achieve this, we need to continue finding ways to put children and young people at the heart of all our activity, which is why a large element of our plan will focus on listening to children and young people.

This plan sets out how children's services in Cheshire East, as a partnership, will continue to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The plan has four priorities:

- 1. Embedding listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people throughout services**
- 2. Ensuring frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused**
- 3. Improving senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people**
- 4. Ensuring the partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East**

The plan details what actions we will take to continue to improve the quality of services and embed a culture of continual learning, support and challenge, where everyone supports each other to get the best outcomes for children and young people. Our staff are passionate and committed, and they are the key to making the changes a success. We will continue to invest in supporting our staff, recruiting the right people, and empowering staff to shape and make changes, as well as celebrating and sharing good practice.

The plan also shows how we will drive, monitor, and continually assess our progress to ensure that we deliver the best service we can. Listening to children, young people, parents and staff will be a key component of evaluating how well we are doing.

The plan addresses our areas for improvement, and the recommendations from the Ofsted inspection in July 2015. The wider plans for Children's Services are contained within the Children and Young People's Plan 2015-18, the LSCB Business Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Cheshire East has been on a continuous upward journey of improvement since April 2013. Understanding where we have come from, what we have achieved, and our strengths, is important to give context on what we know works and how we will continue to operate going forward, so this is also included in our plan.

This plan is focused on activity to improve services over the next year as part of a larger improvement programme over three years. We recognise that our plan will evolve over that time in response to feedback from young people and staff, and audit findings and external review. Our progress and the plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that we are achieving the impact we need for children and young people, and will be revised to include any new activity as needed.

Children and Young People in Cheshire East

Cheshire East is a generally affluent area, and for the vast majority of children and young people it is a good place to grow up; Cheshire East has recently been announced as the 'best place to live in the North West' in the annual Halifax Quality of Life Survey. However, there are pockets of deprivation in Cheshire East where we know that children and young people do not enjoy the same outcomes, and the gap in attainment between more vulnerable groups and their peers, although reducing, remains too large.

There are approximately 74,930 children and young people under the age of 18 in Cheshire East, which is approximately 20% of the total population. Only 5% of children and young people are from minority ethnic groups, compared with 22% in the country as a whole.



A significantly lower proportion of children and young people are eligible for free school meals in Cheshire East, 10% in primary schools compared to 17% nationally, and 7% in secondary compared to 15%. But there is deprivation in Cheshire East, approximately 12% of children and young people live in poverty, specifically in Crewe, which has 40% of all children and young people in poverty in Cheshire East.

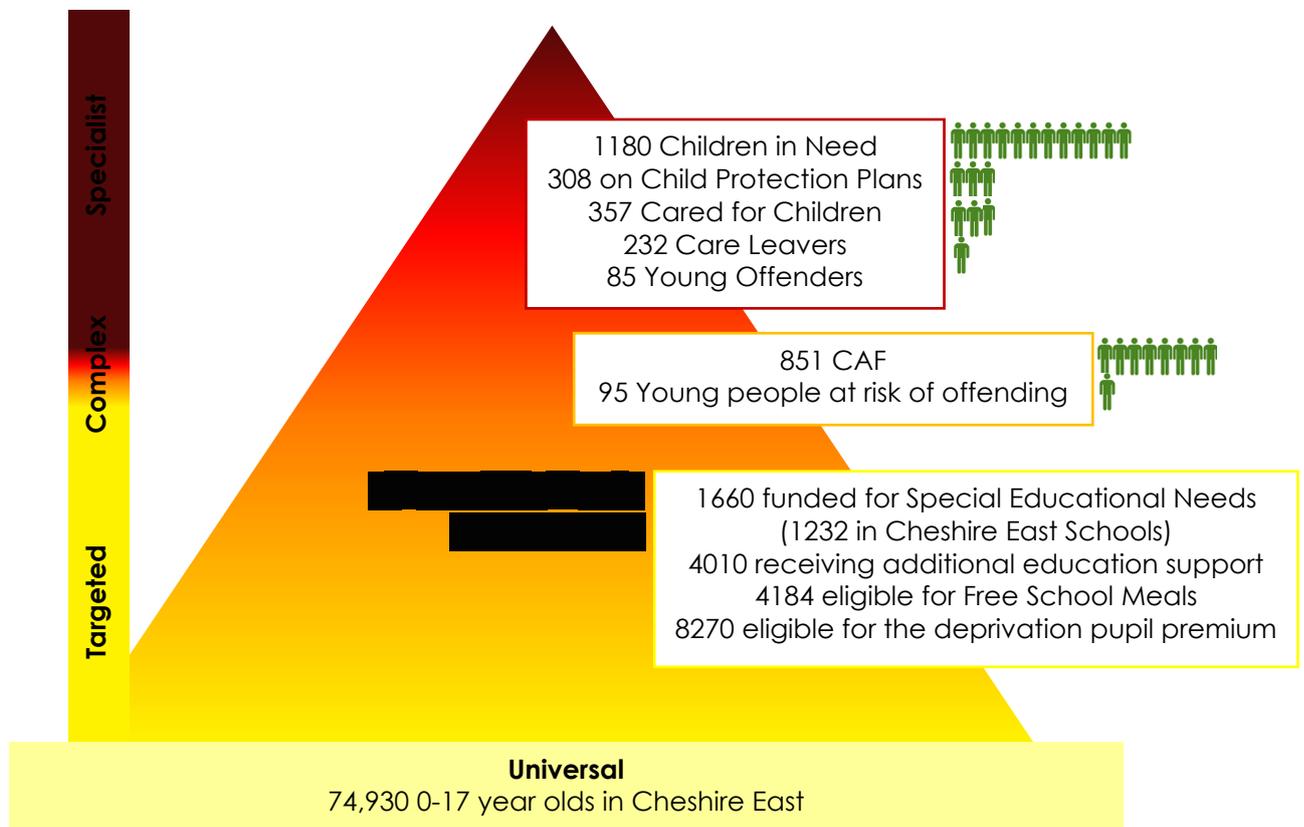
Demand for children's services continues to rise nationally, and this is also true within Cheshire East. At the end of March 2015, 2,217 children and young people in Cheshire East were identified as in need of a specialist children's service, which is an increase from the previous year of 2,116, a 5% increase overall. However, the number of children and young people subject to a Child Protection Plan has increased dramatically since the end of March 2014, from 203 to 308 in 2015, a 52% increase. This is due to better identification of and response to risk, and a greater focus on children and

young people who are at risk of being sexually exploited, reflected in the increase in children and young people subject to a child protection plan under the category of sexual abuse.

357 children and young people were cared for by Cheshire East Council at the end of March 2015. 38% of these live outside Cheshire East. The majority of cared for children and young people, 266 (75%), live with foster families, 29 live in residential children's homes, and 26 live with their parents. 21 children and young people were adopted in 2014-15.

The vulnerability profile below demonstrates the current level of need in Cheshire East from targeted to specialist services as at March 2015.

Cheshire East Vulnerability Profile



The Ofsted Inspection

In July 2015, Ofsted inspected Cheshire East Council's services for children in need of help and protection, cared for children and care leavers. This month long, unannounced inspection was carried out by a team of 10 inspectors and covered the range of local authority services for vulnerable children, young people and families, to understand the impact these are having on outcomes for children and young people, and particularly how professional practice impacts on the journey of the child. The inspection also evaluated the effectiveness of Cheshire East's Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), which is a partnership of key people within services across Cheshire East that work closely with children, young people and their families, working together to effectively safeguard children and young people.

This was the first inspection that Cheshire East Council has undergone that reviewed all the elements of the safeguarding system at the same time.

The inspection focused on the experiences of the child or young person and the effectiveness of the help and protection that they are offered. Inspectors scrutinised case files, observed practice and discussed the help and protection given to these children and young people with social workers, managers and other professionals. Where possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. This was a robust, in-depth and thorough inspection that left no stone unturned.

Ofsted published its Inspection Report¹ on 15 September 2015. The report recognises the significant improvements we have made as a partnership; however, we still have more work to do to make Cheshire East a great place to be young.



¹ Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children, Cheshire East – available at www.Ofsted.gov.uk

The judgements for the following areas of children's services received in the inspection are given below. Services were judged to be requiring improvement to be good overall.

Ofsted's definition of 'requires improvement' is that "there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm" and "the welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted." However, it also means that the local authority is not yet delivering 'good' services to protect, help and care for children, young people and their families.

1. Children who need Help and Protection		Requires improvement to be good
2. Cared for children and achieving permanence		Requires improvement to be good
2.1	Adoption Performance	Good
2.2	Experiences and progress of care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
3. Leadership, management and governance		Requires improvement to be good
4. Review of the LSCB		Requires improvement to be good

Ofsted made 17 recommendations for improvement to Cheshire East Council, and 8 for the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The full list of these is given in the supporting documents, along with an action plan to address each of these recommendations.



Our Improvement Journey

Background

Cheshire East has been on a continuous upward journey of improvement since April 2013.

In March 2013, Ofsted inspected Cheshire East's services for children and young people in need of help and protection and found the effectiveness of these to be inadequate overall. Ofsted made 16 recommendations for improvement, and Cheshire East was issued with a statutory Notice to Improve from the Minister on behalf of the Department for Education.

The key areas identified for improvement were:

- Timeliness of planning and assessment
- The rigour of the front door to Children's Social Care
- Management oversight
- Capturing the voice of children and young people
- Engagement with partners
- Quality and consistency of Social Work Practice

Cheshire East established an independently chaired Improvement Board in June 2013 to monitor and challenge progress against our improvement plan and to ensure the plan and quality assurance measures were robust and were effectively driving improvement to services. Our progress was also monitored by Ofsted during this period; Cheshire East took part in a pilot of Ofsted's Improvement Support programme which included 7 monitoring visits and culminated in a Progress Inspection in November 2014, which found Cheshire East to be making satisfactory progress with our improvements.

Since March 2013, extensive activity has taken place to drive improvement across Children's Services. Cheshire East has made significant progress in improving services for children, young people and families. The Ofsted Inspection Report published in July 2015 states that:

"Since the last Ofsted inspection of 2013, senior and political leaders have worked closely and effectively with the Cheshire East Improvement Board (CEIB) to improve the quality and effectiveness of services for children and their families."

"Senior and political leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses well. They have taken decisive steps to identify, tackle and systematically address the barriers to providing good services."

Improvements we've achieved so far

Considerable improvement has been made to the quality of social work practice and partnership working. Plans are increasingly outcome focused, SMART, and responsive to family circumstances. There is strong commitment to improvement across the partnership, and children and young people are increasingly influencing how we are continuing to develop and improve services at all levels. These improvements have been recognised in the Ofsted Inspection report from July 2015.

“Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the quality of services provided to children in need of help and support, particularly in the identification and assessment of risk within families.”

In order to improve services, since April 2013 we have completed a wealth of activity, which has included but is not limited to the following key achievements:

Improving frontline practice, to ensure it is consistently good, effective and outcome focused

- Launched a new, more robust, front door to Children's Social Care – the Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS).
- Created the Cheshire East Practice Standards for Social Workers, to ensure expectations on the quality of Social Work practice are clear.
- Realigned the Social Care Teams to reduce the number of system enforced transfer points so children and young people experience less changes in Social Workers
- Redeployed staff to ensure there is a permanent Group Manager leading each Social Work Team to provide consistent leadership
- Developed and successfully rolled out a Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Children's Social Care.
- Introduced fortnightly Performance Challenge Sessions, where senior managers analyse the performance of Social Work teams and hold frontline managers to account, in order to improve timeliness
- Introduced the annual Social Care Staff Survey, which is used to gain staff's views on how the service operates, what is working well and what isn't, and what factors would influence them to remain working in Cheshire East to inform our recruitment and retention strategy.
- Introduced a modern case management system which is much more effective at supporting good Social Work Practice.
- Implemented Practice Alerts from Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) to ensure areas of concern are responded to and improved, and making challenge from IROs visible.

- Provided bespoke coaching and mentoring training for frontline Social Work managers
- Delivered Practice Excellence Training to Social Work Staff
- Implemented a robust audit process, including the views of children, young people and parents within Cheshire East Council, and on a multi-agency basis from the LSCB



Improving listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people

- Invested in a service for participation with children and young people, advocacy and independent visiting, which is four-fold increase on the previous service.
- Developed a Children and Young People's Participation and Rights Strategy and standards for Participation in partnership with young people
- Launched the Young Advisors Service, which has a diverse makeup and includes young people from a range of backgrounds, including those who have disabilities, are or were cared for, and have used mental health services
- Introduced November Children's Rights Month to raise awareness of the importance of listening to children and young people, and including them meaningfully in decision making, using a variety of activities and awareness raising across the partnership throughout the month of November
- Provided training on participation with children and young people across the partnership
- Included young people on the panel for the LSCB Sector Specific Challenge Sessions, which challenge organisations and services on the quality of their provision for children and young people
- Implemented a feedback survey for children, young people and parents on their experience of support through Child in Need Plans.
- Improved the involvement of the young people on the LSCB Board and the Children and Young People's Trust

Improving the partnership, so it effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East

- Developed a clear vision and ambition for Children's Services across the partnership – to create a great place to be young
- Appointed a new Chair of the LSCB to improve effectiveness, support and challenge
- Realigned the support to the LSCB with support to the other children and young people's Boards, including the Improvement Board and Children and Young People's Trust, to ensure plans to develop Children's Services are aligned.
- Reviewed and reformed the structure and business of the LSCB Board and its subgroups, including establishing an Executive Group to the LSCB to drive change.
- Revised the thresholds for the levels of need and communicated these across the partnership
- Introduced LSCB Sector Specific Challenge Sessions to scrutinise and challenge service areas on the quality of their provision to children and young people
- Introduced frontline visits by members of the LSCB to each other's services to develop understanding of services across the partnership and bring the views of frontline staff to the LSCB.
- Launched an awareness campaign across the partnership on child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Developed and launched a strategy for addressing neglect, including tools for workers
- Trained elected members on their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities
- Introduced a partnership performance scorecard for the LSCB to monitor and challenge partnership services
- Improved the coverage of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) on children and young people's safeguarding and child protection needs.
- Revised the multi-agency information sharing protocol

The recent Ofsted Inspection confirms what we have found in audits, that these improvements are resulting in improved outcomes for children and young people.

In relation to the key areas identified for improvement from the previous inspection, the Ofsted Inspection confirmed that we have improved:

✓ **Timeliness of planning and assessment**

“Timeliness of assessments is good with timescales appropriate to the needs of the child.”

✓ **The rigour of the front door to Children’s Social Care**

“Children in need of a social work assessment are identified and swiftly provided with appropriate levels of help through new arrangements by Cheshire East Consultancy Service.”

✓ **Management oversight**

“Formal and case supervision are regular and social workers report that managers at all levels are available, visible and take a direct interest in individual children and families.”

“Elected members and senior managers fully understand that establishing a stable and skilled group of first-line managers is fundamental to providing consistently good support to children and families. They are taking appropriate steps to strengthen management skills through a comprehensive management development strategy.”

✓ **Capturing the voice of children and young people**

“The participation of children and young people is a real strength in Cheshire East. Political and senior leaders create meaningful opportunities for young people to join them in strategic thinking and planning. Young people from the youth council, which includes children looked after and care leavers, are consistently represented and exert influence at most key forums such as Corporate Parenting Board, Children’s Trust Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.”

✓ **Engagement with partners**

“The local authority has worked hard to ensure that all partners now take responsibility for the improvement of services for children and families.”

“Partnership working has considerably improved with schools, health and the police working well with the local authority to help protect and support children and young people.”

✓ **Quality and consistency of Social Work Practice**

“Children’s views and ideas are included in assessments and recorded on case files. Social workers see children regularly and speak warmly about them.”

“Senior managers have consciously lowered their tolerance of poor practice, resulting in some social workers and managers changing roles or leaving the local authority. While this purposeful strategy has contributed to high staff turnover, it has also led to improvement in the experiences of children and families.”

The Ofsted recommendations from the inspection in March 2013 and the directions from the notice to improve are outlined in full in the supporting documents.



Our Strengths in Cheshire East

This Improvement Plan will utilise the strengths we have in Cheshire East to continue to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Our strengths in Cheshire East:

- **Strong commitment and ambition** for children and young people to receive the best help and support

“Leaders, managers and partners share a strong commitment and ambition for children and families to receive the best help and support.”

- The **plans, resources and political commitment** are in place to enable us to achieve this
- **Young people are actively involved** in strategic decisions and plans

“Engagement is a real strength, with young people exerting influence at a strategic level in all the key decision-making forums.”

- **We know our own strengths and areas for improvement**, and have strong ways to assess and drive progress through internal and external scrutiny and challenge

“The local authority embraces external scrutiny and challenge through peer reviews and multi-agency auditing, and is fully aware of areas of practice that still require improvement to be good.”

- **Our plans** to address the areas for improvement **have been robust and effective**
- **Staff** are on board with us, **are committed to children and young people and willing to make and shape changes**

“Social workers feel well supported. They are engaged in the improvement journey and can articulate achievements.”

- **Our strategic response to children who go missing or are at risk of child sexual exploitation is strong**
- **Strong Front Door to Children’s Social Care - Identification and referral to children’s services for assessment, intervention and support is swift**

- **Improving stability in Social Work Teams, reduced caseloads** for most social workers, and greater continuity for children.

“The local authority is actively addressing workforce instability and this is a key challenge in providing consistently good services for children and families. The local authority has introduced an ambitious and thoughtful range of recruitment and retention initiatives.”

- Child protection chairs and independent reviewing officers have **good oversight of individual cases**
- **Planning for permanence** is improving with a **good focus on adoption.**
- **Good Adoption Service with good support for adopters**

“Children with adoption plans are now matched with adopters in a timely manner. The local authority has effective collaborative arrangements for recruiting and training adopters and has more than sufficient numbers of adopters for children, leading to appropriate matching.”

Strengths of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB):

- **Clear commitment from everyone to improve effectiveness of the Board**
- **The right support mechanisms for monitoring and challenge are now in place**, resulting in significant progress to the Board's effectiveness and operations, especially over the last year

The Chair “has led significant development work and is a strong and credible chair who has assisted partner agencies to take joint ownership and accountability for safeguarding across Cheshire East.”

- **The Board holds partner agencies to account, causing effective change**

“There is significant evidence of the Board holding partner agencies to account. An independent panel of Board members and young people undertake sector-specific challenge sessions with partners to help identify where they need to improve their safeguarding arrangements and oversight.”

“All board members spoken to were able to provide examples of effective challenge and how this had changed their practice.”

- **The voice of the child is central to the LSCB's work, and is "innovative and influential"**

"The voice of the child is an area of real strength within the work of the board. Engagement with young people is innovative and influential, and there are clear examples of where this has had an impact on policy development and service delivery."

- Arrangements to protect children and young people at risk of **child sexual exploitation (CSE) are well coordinated**, with good intelligence sharing, and are effectively delivering the multi-agency strategy
- We have a **clear learning culture**, and we use external scrutiny and challenge well to help the LSCB's development

"The Board has a clear learning culture using external scrutiny and challenge well to help its development. This has included a recent peer challenge, the use of reflective reviews and the introduction of 'True for Us' reviews."

- **Our training offer is comprehensive** with a good take up of places at 87%
- **The work and priorities of the LSCB is well aligned with the other Children's Boards**
- **Our procedures are comprehensive, up to date and interactive**

"The CESC website is accessible, easy to navigate and well used, especially for details about training. It has a comprehensive, up-to-date set of procedures which are interactive."

- **Good information and resources on the LSCB website**, which is well used by practitioners

Over our improvement journey, we have developed effective ways of planning, driving, delivering, monitoring and challenging, to make change happen. We know ourselves well, and we have the drive and ambition to continue to improve to the next level. We want to create a great place to be young, and we will build on what we have already achieved, using the methods we know are effective, to improve our service so we deliver the very best service for our children and young people.

Our Improvement Plan

Focus for Improvement in 2015-16

We have made considerable improvements as a partnership; however, we still have more work to do to make Cheshire East a great place to be young for all children and young people.

Our new Improvement Plan concentrates on the areas we know we still need to focus on and develop to continue to improve, and will specifically address the areas for improvement highlighted in the Ofsted Inspection Report.

Because listening to children and young people is so important in ensuring we have the right services for them, embedding this throughout all services will remain a priority of our new plan.

The plan has four priorities which set out what we want to achieve to improve outcomes for children and young people:

- 1. Embedding listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people throughout services**
- 2. Ensuring frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused**
- 3. Improving senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people**
- 4. Ensuring the partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East**



1. Embedding listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people throughout services

We have made real progress embedding the voice of children and young people in our services, and this was sighted by Ofsted as a strength for both Cheshire East Council and the Local Safeguarding Board. Children and young people's views are key to helping us to continue to develop our services, so how we will ensure we build on what we have achieved so far, and continue to create opportunities to find out what children and young people think, feel, and want is included within our action plans. The views of children and young people receiving services will also be a main part of assessing how well we are doing in improving the quality of the services we provide.

The key area that Ofsted identified for improvement under this priority was:

- **Strengthening the use of feedback from complaints** to drive improvements to services

2. Ensuring frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused

Although social work practice has considerably improved, overall practice needs to be more consistent to provide a good service to children and young people. We need to support managers to be leaders for good practice, and we need to continue with our successful recruitment programme attracting the right people to work with our families in Cheshire East. Good, effective and outcome focused social work will result in children and young people being safer, having confidence and trust in their Social Worker, and the right support at the right time based on what's important for the child and young person, which will result in better outcomes.

The key areas that Ofsted identified for improvement under this priority were:

- **Management oversight and challenge** – ensuring managers effectively challenge practice to improve outcomes for children and young people, and that evidence of their guidance and challenge is clearly recorded.
- **Consistency in the quality of practice** – we need to ensure that all children and young people get a consistently high quality service – that assessments and plans are clear and action is taken in a timely way.
- **Use of all information to inform planning** – making sure that all relevant information is used to inform our planning for children and young people, so that this is the best possible quality.

- **More timely access to early help** when families do not meet the threshold for social work intervention – reducing delays families sometimes experience
- **Achieving permanence quicker** – we need to ensure permanence for children and young people is a top priority and is achieved as quickly as possible
- **The child's record and the reasons for decisions** – need to be clearer for children and young people so they can understand their stories.

3. Improving senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people

We need to improve how we measure the impact of services on children and young people so that we have a clear picture of this and a joined up approach for all our services. This will help us to effectively target our efforts on the areas that need it most, and help us to learn from the services we know are working really effectively. We need to ensure that all managers have the information they need to know how effectively their service is operating in order to drive improvements day to day within their teams. Senior managers will have oversight of the most complex cases to ensure that where children and young people have a range of needs, the right support is being given to them to support them.

The key areas that Ofsted identified for improvement under this priority were:

- **Scrutiny of performance of services for cared for children and young people** – developing and improving these services, and ensuring that progress is reported to the partnership Boards.
- **Commissioning arrangements** – ensuring children and young people have the right services in place that they need to support them effectively
- **Timely identification, assessment and monitoring of private fostering and connected persons' arrangements** – we need to ensure we have good oversight of children and young people who are in the care of other families

4. Ensuring the partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East

We need to unite our services and continue to develop partnership working by developing one way of working. This will make it clear what is expected from each person's role, and will ensure that everyone is focused on achieving the best outcome for children and young people. We will improve links between the strategic decision making partnership boards, and we will involve practitioners across the partnership in driving changes to services. This will help us to continually improve our services and will make sure that services are joined up.

The key areas for improvement identified by Ofsted for the Local Safeguarding Children Board were:

- **Performance Management** – we need to continue to develop how we capture partnership performance
- **Scrutiny of services for cared for children and young people** – the Board needs to have greater oversight and focus on this
- **Impact of our Neglect Strategy** – we need to assess and evaluate what impact this Strategy has had on outcomes for children and young people
- **Links with the Family Justice Board** and the Board need to be strengthened
- **Quality of Private Fostering casework** – the Board needs to drive improvements to this through the Private Fostering Sub Group
- **Influence at the Health and Wellbeing Board** – the Board needs to ensure that the agenda for children and young people is championed and is a greater focus at the Health and Wellbeing Board
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) strategy** – needs a coordinated plan
- **Protocol around notifications, Serious Case Reviews (SCRs), and the national panel** – needs formalising and agreeing by the Board.

Our Action plan outlining the activity we complete to meet our areas for development and the Ofsted recommendations is sectioned under these priorities.

Our approach

We have used the recent Ofsted Inspection as an opportunity to review and refocus our improvement across the whole continuum of need.

Our previous improvement activity was rightly focused on ensuring that we had the right people, systems and support to keep children and young people in need of help and protection safe. Now that we have achieved this, and services are robust and effective, we can broaden our focus to developing a consistently good approach to all services.

Our Improvement Plan runs from November 2015, but we have not been resting in between then and the Ofsted visit in July. In that time we have implemented a number of improvements in response to the Ofsted recommendations, these have included but are not limited to the following activities:

- Introduced a monthly permanence case tracking meeting, chaired by the Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers, with Group Managers and IROs, the Children and Families' Commissioning Manager and Head of the Virtual School, to ensure clear senior management oversight and drive for permanence
- Introduced a standing item on sharing and celebrating good practice in Practice and Performance workshops – Social Workers and Practice Managers present examples of their own good practice
- Extended the practice coaching audit programme to reflect the practice standards for cared for children's services
- Held focused sessions on Child Sexual Exploitation, Reg 24 and Connected Persons arrangements, and Female Genital Mutilation, in the Social Work Practice and Performance Workshops
- Launched the new Pan Cheshire Missing from Home and Care Protocol
- Held the first LSCB Children and Young People's Challenge and Evidence Panel which challenged key members of the LSCB on changes children and young people want to safeguarding services based on the LSCB Children and Young People's Survey
- Researched good practice in other LSCBs around performance frameworks
- Realigned the support to the Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Parenting Operational Group with the support to the other Children and Young People's Partnership Boards to ensure strategic links and oversight between these Boards is strengthened
- Ensured that Private Fostering is included in the Level 1 Multi-agency Safeguarding Training

Following the publication of the report, we have had conversations and discussions with all the key people who will be involved in delivering and scrutinising the plan, and have gained their views on what action we need to take to develop our services to the next level.

This has included all social work staff, the Improvement Board, the Corporate Parenting Board, the Health and Wellbeing Board, The Children and Young People's Trust, the LSCB, LSCB Executive and Sub Groups to the LSCB – including the Safeguarding Children Operational Group of frontline partnership managers, Cheshire East Council's Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Families' Senior Leadership Team. Young people are members of the Corporate Parenting Board, Children and Young People's Trust, and LSCB, and have contributed their ideas as well, and will be carrying out some of the improvements to services outlined in this plan.



We are always looking for opportunities to learn and develop, so in the production of this plan we have sought an external and independent view of our plan from a consultant with considerable experience quality assuring plans to improve.

As part of our continuing development and improvement, key managers within Cheshire East Council will be attending all the Ofsted 'Getting to Good' Seminars in autumn 2015 and spring 2016. These seminars focus on different areas of practice and look at what common areas for improvement across local authorities contribute to a judgement of 'requires improvement'. They consider contemporary research, inspection and survey findings. The learning from these seminars will be used to develop our services over 2016.

Cheshire East is also part of the North West Working to Improve Group, which brings together other local authorities and shares ways of working to improve services. We will continue to contribute to this group and use ideas from this forum to develop our services throughout 2015-16.



Who we involved in our plan:

Scrutiny and Challenge from independent bodies – Ofsted and the DfE, the Improvement Board and Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Strategic Decision Makers through the LSCB and LSCB Executive, Children and Young People's Trust, and Corporate Parenting Board



Senior Leaders for Children's Services in Cheshire East Council through the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team



Key partners delivering improvements to safeguarding through the LSCB Sub Groups



Frontline Managers across the Partnership through the Safeguarding Children Operational Group



All Social Care frontline Staff at the Practice and Performance Workshops, and the Safeguarding Unit through Team meetings



Children and Young People in Cheshire East – who's views were a key part of the inspection, and are represented on the Partnership Boards



Outcomes

We want all children, young people and families in Cheshire East to receive the best support from our services to improve outcomes for them.

We want all children and young people in Cheshire East to:

- **Be safe, and protected from harm**
- Have a **loving, caring and stable environment** where they can grow and develop
- Have a **permanent home as soon as possible** when they need to become cared for by the local authority
- **Achieve to their full potential**
- Have a range of opportunities for and the **right support to go into employment, further education or training** when they reach adulthood

Children, young people and parents have told us they want:

- **To be listened to**
- **To be included in their plans**, and **understand what the concerns are** and why they need a plan
- For **professionals to be clear with them** about what is going to or could happen

We know that children, young people and parents experience better outcomes when they understand what professionals are doing, how and why.

We want to develop and embed **consistently good practice, and a culture of continual learning, support and challenge**, where everyone supports each other to get the best outcomes for children and young people, and is confident to speak up for young people and challenge any practice that is not putting them at the centre.

We want children, young people, parents and carers to be involved in decision making from the outset, as they are the people best placed to know what works for them.

We want to invest in and recognise the skills of our staff. We have very passionate, committed and creative professionals in Cheshire East, we want to cultivate these people and make the most of their skills, and we want to continue to attract new highly qualified people excited to work with us.



Action!

Our staff are passionate and committed, and they are the key to making the changes a success.

We already involve staff in decision making and planning, and staff understand and are committed to our improvement journey, but we think we can do more to make sure **everyone is a champion for young people and for change.**

So how will we make this happen?



Inspire
Believe
Succeed

We will focus on **empowering staff to make their views heard and to make changes** through:

- Widespread culture change on including staff in decision making across all of children's' services, led by the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team
- Celebrating good practice – this will be a feature in all supervisions and Practice and Performance workshops, and will help staff to identify and call attention to good practice in themselves and others, receive recognition, and create a positive culture of learning and sharing

- Giving more responsibility for making and instigating changes to the Practice Champions Group
- Developing the operation of the LSCB Safeguarding Children Operational Group, consisting of frontline partnership managers, to make this group more interactive and a driver for change
- Improving how we communicate learning and tools directly with frontline workers
- Continuing to use existing effective engagement forums, such as the Practice and Performance Workshop and the annual Social Work Staff Survey

We will empower **managers to be leaders for change** through:

- Modelling constructive support and challenge through the Group Manager role
- Group Managers taking more responsibility for leading and challenging, for example leading Performance Challenge Sessions, and developing Policies and Procedures for their service areas
- Giving Practice Managers the skills and confidence to be good leaders through the management training programme
- Developing the operation of the LSCB Safeguarding Children Operational Group, consisting of frontline partnership managers, using this to develop and raise awareness of tools to support practitioners and managers, and agree one consistent way of working across the partnership

We will continue to **invest in our staff** by:

- Seeking and listening to their views
- Continuing with our successful recruitment strategy, recruiting the right people to work with us in Cheshire East
- Continuing to offer the Aspirant Managers course to develop the next generation of our leaders
- Developing continual professional development opportunities and raising the profile of these
- Continuing to monitor and reduce caseloads
- Continuing to offer ICT support and equipment for remote and mobile working

We also need to focus on improving consistency in practice for children and young people across all our services, so that they receive the right support for

their needs at the right time, and all professionals work together to achieve the best outcome.

We will continue to **improve our quality of practice** through:

- Developing one way of working
- Developing multi-agency practice standards
- Reviewing and revising the Cheshire East Practice Standards so Social Workers are clear on what is expected from their roles in Cheshire East

The core training offer to support good practice for Social Workers and Managers is included within the supporting documents.

This plan is the first stage of a three-year improvement programme to develop consistently good and outstanding services for children and young people.



The plan is focused on activity to improve services over the next year, creating a blueprint for the future. We recognise that the plan and the improvement programme will evolve in response to feedback from young people and staff, audit findings and external review. Our progress and the plan will be regularly reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure that we are achieving the impact we need for children and young people, and will be revised to include any new activity as needed.

Three-Year Improvement Programme Overview

Nov 2015

Sept 2016

Sept 2017

Sept 2018

1. Developing the Cheshire East Way (Year one)

- Researching good practice in other local authorities
- Developing one way of working
- Young people's views driving service development
- Sharing and celebrating good practice
- Increase engagement opportunities with staff
- Empowering staff and frontline managers to lead and make changes
- Responding to the recommendations and areas for improvement from the Ofsted Inspection
- Developing an overarching quality assurance framework for Children and Families Services
- Strengthening governance arrangements and links between partnership boards across children's and adult services

2. Embedding the Cheshire East Way (Year two)

- Embedding the Cheshire East way
- Implement communications strategy to support to embedding the Cheshire East way
- Senior Leaders to monitor performance and impact, completing deep dives of service areas
- Revisit themes from the Ofsted inspection through audit to assess progress
- Refresh Improvement Plan to address areas for improvement from audit, children and young people's feedback and staff feedback (Sept 2016).
- Peer Review of progress (March 2017)

3. Aiming higher (Year three)

- Increase ambition for children's services
- Look wider for best and cutting edge practice
- Consider innovative ways to develop services further
- Increase focus on early help and building resilience
- Refresh Improvement Plan to address areas for improvement from audit, children and young people's feedback and staff feedback (Sept 2017).

Driving, Monitoring and Reviewing our Progress

Measuring our Progress

Assessing and monitoring where we need to improve is one of our strengths in Cheshire East, so our Quality Assurance Framework builds on our existing system, extending it to cover services for cared for children.

“The quality assurance framework is comprehensive and includes a strong emphasis on case auditing.”

An overarching quality assurance framework for Cheshire East Council's Children's Services will be developed in 2015-16 to ensure there is a consistent, joined up and comprehensive assurance process for all Children's Services.

Progress against our plan will be measured on a quarterly basis. We will measure and demonstrate progress through:

- The progress of the activity undertaken to meet the recommendation or area for improvement within the timescale
- Performance on the key measures specified in the plan for each area
- Audit findings and other quality assurance activity
- Feedback from children, young people and parents on our services
- Feedback from staff and partners on improvements.

An overarching Children and Families Performance Scorecard will be developed in 2015-16, which will report on all the key areas of Cheshire East Council's Children's Services. This will be scrutinised by the Children and Families' Senior Leadership Team. This scorecard will include thresholds to judge the standard of performance, and will be based on the Improvement Board Performance Book, which was positively received by Ofsted and the Improvement Board.

“Detailed and comprehensive performance information ensures managers at all levels have a clear and realistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in services for children. Where commentary and analysis are included this is particularly useful, such as the performance book' used by the Improvement Board.”

The LSCB Performance Scorecard will also be further developed, and will incorporate key performance measures around the Improvement Plan in order to effectively monitor and challenge progress across the partnership.

Impact

We are improving our services so that children and young people experience better outcomes. To assess the impact of our improvements on children and young people, we will use information from four different sources.

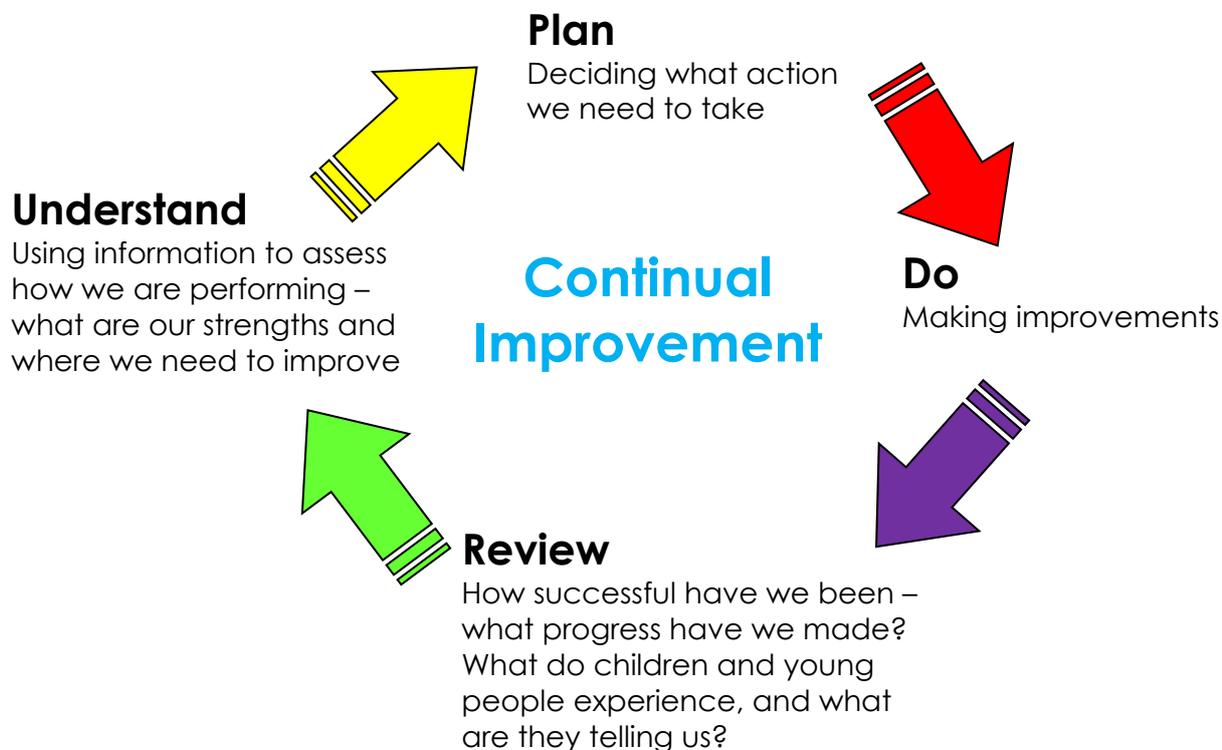
<h3>Performance</h3> <p>An up to date, month by month picture, showing a clear trajectory of progress. Allowing us to set targets and evaluate our performance against our statistical neighbours.</p>	<h3>Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers</h3> <p>What children and young people, parents and carers want and is important to them, what their experience is of our services.</p>
<h3>Qualitative Information</h3> <p>Detailed information on what is working well and areas for improvement for specific services, including what the causes of issues are.</p>	<h3>Feedback from Staff</h3> <p>What staff know would help them to work with families, what is working well, and what could work better.</p>

This will allow us to triangulate the evidence so that we know what impact improvements are making. They will also help us to drive and shape further improvements, as they will tell us more about our service, what we are doing well, and where we can improve further.

In assessing our progress against our action plan we will review information from each of these four sources where possible.



We think it is important to have a continual learning and self-improvement culture, and we will use information from these sources to continually evaluate and improve our services throughout the year.



We will continue to communicate the findings of this activity to staff, children and young people, partners, and other key stakeholders through our e-newsletters, staff forums, and partnership Boards. An overview of the ways we engage with stakeholders is included in the supporting documents.

An overarching children and families Quality and Assurance Framework will be developed in 2016 which will ensure that we have a coordinated and consistent approach to evaluating the impact of all services for children and young people to effectively drive improvements to all services.

More detail on the sources we will use to evaluate impact is given in the Quality Assurance Framework, and our Improvement Action Plan.

Scrutinising, Challenging and Monitoring Progress

The delivery of the Improvement Plan will sit with a number of key partnerships. The Improvement Board has taken the lead role in scrutinising, challenging and monitoring progress, and this will continue until the Minister is satisfied that Cheshire East has made sufficient improvements, and has robust arrangements in place to ensure we continue to improve.

The governance arrangements described below will be put in place once the existing Improvement Board is disbanded, to take up this lead role to ensure that progress is closely monitored and scrutinised, and that the pace of progress is challenged and driven.

The Health and Wellbeing Board will be responsible, as the overarching partnership board, for monitoring, scrutinising and challenging the progress and effectiveness of the plan to address the recommendations and areas for improvement identified by Ofsted, and will take over the role currently occupied by the Improvement Board.

As the accountable body, the Health and Wellbeing Board will receive quarterly updates on progress against actions, performance and quality assurance information.

There will be two levels for sign off of activity against the plan:

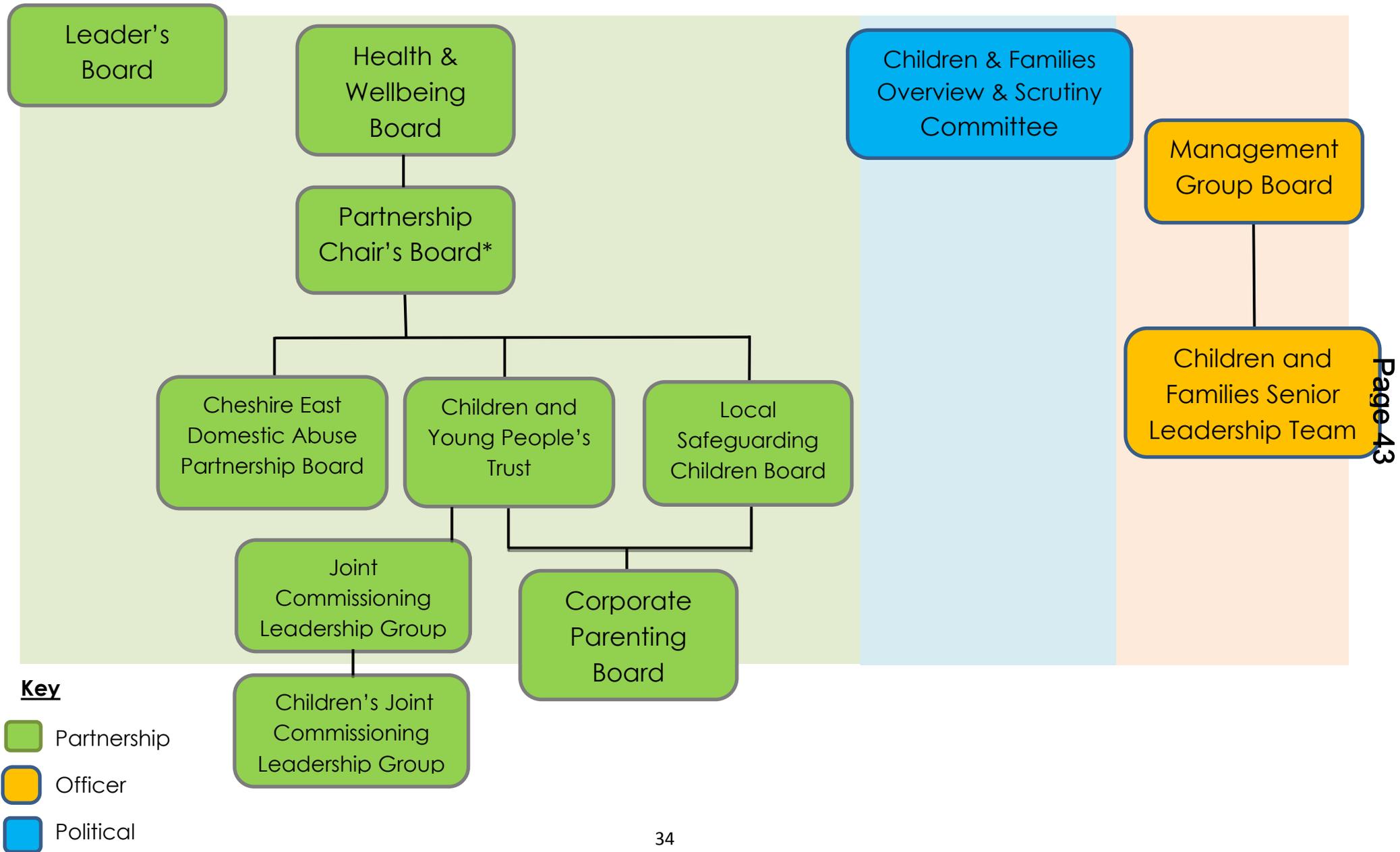
1. **Phase 1 sign off** - the Board is satisfied that the activity to address the recommendation has been completed;
2. **Phase 2 sign off** - the Board is satisfied that the activity has resulted in improvements for children and young people, evidenced by the quantitative and qualitative information, and feedback from children, young people and staff.

The Health and Wellbeing Board will also receive the updated risk register for the plan, and will request further more detailed reports where performance suggests there are risks or issues in delivering on the improvements.

The strategic partnership boards responsible for improving outcomes for children and young people in Cheshire East are the Local Safeguarding Children Board, the Children and Young People's Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board under the priorities of 'Starting Well' and 'Developing Well'. The Corporate Parenting Board is also key for driving improvements for cared for children and young people.

A framework showing the reporting structures and accountabilities between the Boards and sub-groups is included on the next page, and the remits of each Board are explained.

Governance for the Improvement Plan



* New proposed group, subject to approval

Partnership Governance

Leader's Board

The **Leader's Board** is responsible for joint commissioning and integrated delivery. The members of this Board are high level representatives from the Council, Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Fire Authority. Any issues or risks to the implementation of the improvement plan that cannot be resolved by the other partnership boards, will be escalated to the Leader's Board.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The **Health and Wellbeing Board** provides the vision and coordinated drive to address the health and wellbeing needs of the local population of Cheshire East to reduce unacceptable and avoidable variations in health and healthcare. Services for children, young people and their families come under the 'Starting Well' and 'Living Well' priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This Board will hold the other children and young people's partnerships to account for their delivery of the improvement plan.

Partnership Chair's Board

The **Partnership Chair's Board** is a proposed new Board to be made up from the Chairs of the other children and young people's partnership boards, and relevant officers. This Board will ensure that cross-partnership issues are effectively delivered. This Board will also report progress against the improvement plan to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Local Safeguarding Children Board

The **Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB)** is an independently chaired statutory partnership board that works together to ensure that where children are harmed, or at risk of harm, all agencies actively cooperate to safeguard them and promote their welfare. The LSCB is supported by an LSCB Executive Group and a number of sub-groups that progress separate work streams of the LSCB Business Plan. The LSCB will monitor and challenge partnership progress against the improvement plan.

Children and Young People's Trust

The **Children and Young People's Trust** is a partnership Board that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East through strategic leadership and decision making, determining joint priorities, joint planning, and ensuring integrated working. The Trust is responsible for ensuring that the Children and Young People's Plan and the wider partnership supports the improvement plan.

Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

The **Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership Board** co-ordinates the shared work of all key statutory and voluntary sector communities to keep people safe from domestic abuse and make best use of resources.

Corporate Parenting Board

The **Corporate Parenting Board** is mainly made up from officers from across the Council's services and partners that can impact on outcomes for cared for children and young people. The Board will be responsible for ensuring delivery of the improvement plan areas for cared for children and young people.

Joint Commissioning Leadership Group

The **Joint Commissioning Leadership Group** co-ordinates joint commissioning across the partnership for children's and adults' services to ensure this is joined up and the partnership works effectively together to meet the needs of people within Cheshire East.

Children's Joint Commissioning Leadership Group

The **Children's Joint Commissioning Leadership Group** is focused on joint commissioning arrangements for children's services to ensure these are prioritised. It co-ordinates joint commissioning across the partnership for to ensure this is joined up and the partnership works effectively together to meet the needs of children and young people within Cheshire East.

Council Member Governance

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The **Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is part of the Committee structure of the Council and will carry out the overview and scrutiny functions of the improvement plan on behalf of the Council.

Council Officer Governance

Management Group Board

The Council's **Management Group Board** brings together Chief Officers from across Council departments and oversees delivery of the improvement plan across Council services. The Board will also deal with risks and issues that need to be resolved at a wider council level.

Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

The **Children and Families Senior Leadership Team** are senior managers from across the Council's Children's Services and is responsible for ensuring delivery of the improvement plan at a service level. The team will monitor,

challenge and ensure appropriate reports are presented to other bodies in respect of the improvement plan.

Reviewing our Progress

The Boards that are leads for delivery for the action plans will scrutinise and drive progress against their plans on a bimonthly basis. They will recommend when plans are ready for consideration for sign off by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Partnership Chair's Board will review progress against all the action plans, and will coordinate the strategic drive for improvement.

Progress against the plan will be reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on a quarterly basis.

A new Improvement Plan will be developed in September 2016 for the next stage in our improvement journey.



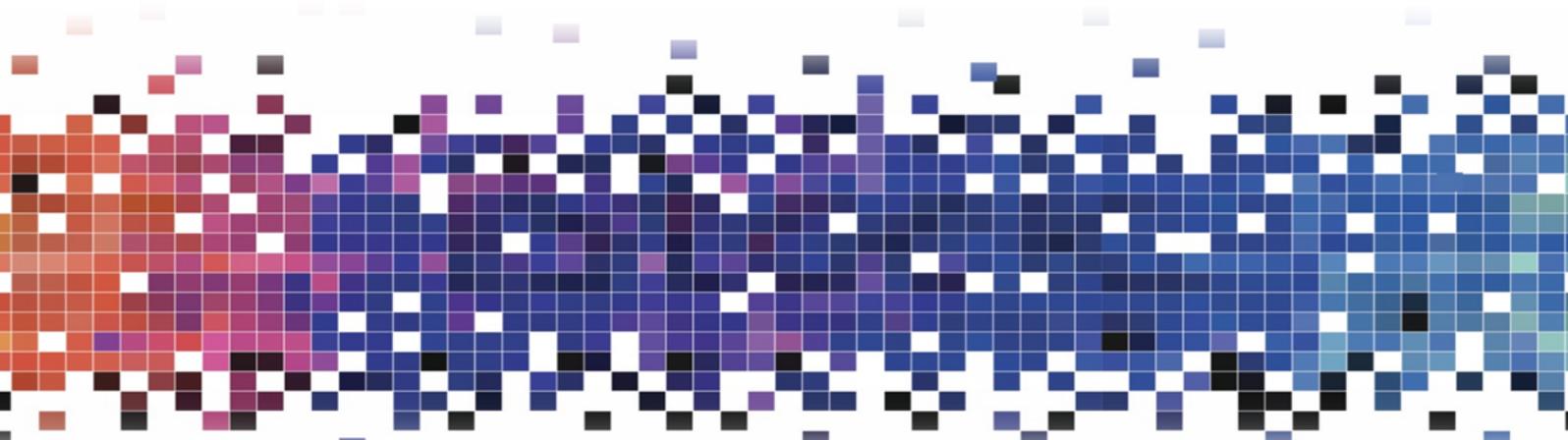
Supporting Documents

There are a number of documents that support this plan and should be read alongside it. These are all available on [our website](#).

- Improvement Action Plan
- Quality Assurance Framework
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Core Training Offer for Social Workers and Managers
- Risk Register
- Ofsted recommendations from the Inspection in July 2015
- Ofsted recommendations from the Inspection in March 2013 and Improvement Notice Actions

Feedback

If you have any thoughts or views on this plan, or how well we are progressing, please do contact us at C&FSpeakUp@cheshireeast.gov.uk



Cheshire East

Appendix 2

DRAFT Children and Young People's Improvement Plan
to meet the Ofsted Recommendations

Improvement Action Plan

November 2015-2016



Creating a
great place to
be young



We want to make Cheshire East a great place to be young, where children and young people are happy, healthy, safe, and have lots of opportunities to enjoy life, learn and develop. In order to achieve this, we need to continue finding ways to put children and young people at the heart of all our activity, which is why a large element of our plan will focus on listening to children and young people. This plan sets out how children's services in Cheshire East, as a partnership, will continue to improve outcomes for children and young people. The plan has four priorities:

- 1. Embedding listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people throughout services**
- 2. Ensuring frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused**
- 3. Improving senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people**
- 4. Ensuring the partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East**

The plan details what actions we will take to continue to improve the quality of services and embed a culture of continual learning, support and challenge, where everyone supports each other to get the best outcomes for children and young people. Our staff are passionate and committed, and they are the key to making the changes a success. We will continue to invest in supporting our staff, recruiting the right people, and empowering them to shape and make changes, as well as celebrating and sharing good practice. The plan also shows how we will drive, monitor, and continually assess our progress to ensure that we deliver the best service we can. Listening to children, young people, parents and staff will be a key component of evaluating how well we are doing.

Cheshire East has been on a continuous upward journey of improvement since April 2013. Understanding where we have come from, what we have achieved, and our strengths, is important to give context on what we know works and how we will continue to operate going forward, so this is also included in our plan. This plan is focused on activity to improve services over the next year as part of a larger improvement programme over three years. We recognise that our plan will evolve over that time in response to feedback from young people and staff, and audit findings and external review. Our progress and the plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure that we are achieving the impact we need for children and young people, and will be revised to include any new activity as needed.

Priority:	Listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people
Recommendation:	15. Ensure that learning from complaints leads to clear action plans and that these are implemented, tracked and reviewed to inform and improve practice (paragraph 142).
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of complaints did not consistently result in effective action to improve practice. • Recommendations from complaints did not sufficiently explore the underlying issues, and did not result in a reduction to the number of complaints received.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We seek feedback from children, young people and families. • The majority of this feedback is positive, but where there are complaints we analyse these to find out where we can improve. • Prompt action is taken to address areas for improvement. • Frontline staff know what the common themes are from feedback from children, young people and families, what they want services to look like, and can explain how this is influencing their work. • The impact of actions taken as a result of feedback on the experiences of children, young people and parents can be clearly demonstrated.
Lead for Delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
15.1	Develop, track and review progress against an action plan from quarterly complaints reports for children's services.	Dec 2015	Alan Ward, Complaints Officer
15.2	Report complaints and compliments, and progress against the action plan for children's services regularly to the Senior Leadership Team Meetings, and embed reporting in the forward plan for SLT.	Dec 2015	Alan Ward, Complaints Officer
15.3	Communicate findings from complaints and compliments to Children's Social Care through Practice and Performance Sessions and Practice Champions Sessions and engage staff in improvement planning	Mar 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
15.4	Changes to Policies and Procedures to be made as necessary in response to complaints and feedback from children, young people, parents and carers	Mar 2016	Group Managers
15.5	Changes to training for practitioners and frontline managers to be made as necessary in response to complaints and feedback from children, young	Mar 2016	Lisa Burrows, Workforce Development Manager

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
	people, parents and carers		
15.6	Themes from complaints and feedback to inform the audit programme	Mar 2016	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of complaints resolved at stage 1	If complaints are resolved at stage 1 this means that the complainant was satisfied with our response.	75-84	85-94	95-100
Number of compliments received to Children's Social Care	The number of compliments should increase as we improve services	High is good		
Number of complaints around key themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Organisation • Factual accuracy 	The number of complaints on key themes should reduce as these themes are addressed.	10% reduction	20% reduction	30% reduction
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Complaints Report – shows themes are not recurring, we have good performance on the number of complaints being resolved at the first stage, compliments are received from children, young people and families.	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them Complaints Report – shows themes are not recurring, we have good performance on the number of complaints being resolved at the first stage, compliments are received from children, young people and families	Practice and Performance Workshop - Staff feel equipped to provide a good service and supported to deal with disputes, staff are aware of what children, young people and parents think about the service, and can explain how their work is influenced by this.		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	2. Ensure the challenge provided by child protection chairs and independent reviewing officers addresses drift and improves planning for children (paragraphs 37, 84)
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 10% of children and young people on child protection plans were on a plan for over 15 months. A sample of these cases during the inspection showed that there was drift and delay in making progress on plans for some children and young people. • Child protection review conferences were not always held within timescale, with 11% taking place later than planned. • Independent Reviewing Officers' (IROs') Practice Alerts were not having sufficient impact on the overall quality of assessment and planning for cared for children.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Reviewing Officers are champions for children and young people, and they ensure that what is best for the child or young person is at the heart of their plan. • They monitor and challenge progress against the plan, especially for those children and young people who have been subject to a plan for over 12 months, to ensure the right action is taken in a timely way so that progress is made swiftly for children and young people. • Conferences are held within timescale and are effective multi-agency forums for monitoring and progressing plans. • Challenge from IROs results in improved outcomes for children and young people, which can clearly be demonstrated.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
2.1	Introduce the Safer Children Model for Child Protection Conferences	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
2.2	Review all child protection plans open over 15 months, and identify those where there has been drift and delay and ensure these cases have robust plans in place	Nov 2015	Safeguarding Managers and Group Managers

2.3	Establish regular meetings between Group Managers and Safeguarding Unit Managers to review the quality of child protection plans and cared for children's plans, and enable improved joint working and challenge	Nov 2015	Safeguarding Managers and Group Managers
2.4	Develop performance information on the IRO service including practice alert tracking, and report this regularly to the LSCB Executive	Jan 2016	Anna Roble and Susanne Leece, Safeguarding Managers
2.5	Introduce a monthly permanence case tracking meeting, chaired by the Principal Manager, with Group Managers and IROs, Commissioning Manager and Head of the Virtual School, to ensure clear senior management oversight and drive for permanence	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
2.6	Strengthen the Legal Tracker to ensure it robustly tracks and monitors cases, is well supported and regularly updated.	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Louise Hurst, Group Manager Macclesfield CIN/CP and Legal Services
2.7	Monitor the use of the Legal Tracker in Performance Challenge Sessions and Legal Liaison Meetings.	Nov 2015	Group Managers

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Number of Practice Alerts made	Practice Alerts being raised demonstrates that IROs are challenging practice			
Number of good Practice Alerts made	Good Practice Alerts show that there is good practice and this is being recognised by IROs. This should increase as practice improves and celebrating and sharing good practice becomes embedded as a culture			

Percentage of Practice Alerts responded to within timescale	Response to Practice Alerts within timescale shows that challenge is being acted on to improve practice. Should improve as Practice Alerts become more embedded and Practice Managers and IROs increase their challenge to practice	80-84	85-89	90-100
Percentage of Child Protection Conferences held within timescale	Child Protection Conferences should be held within timescale to ensure progress is made against the plan, and that there aren't delays for children and young people. Should improve as the new model for Child Protection conferences is introduced.	85-89	90-94	95-100
Percentage of Child Protection Plans open for more than 15 months	Child Protection Plans should not remain open for more than 15 months in the majority of cases. Should remain low.	16-20	10-15	Below 10
Percentage of children and young people's views that are heard at Child Protection Conferences	Children and young people's views are represented at child protection conferences to ensure these are considered by all professionals.	70-80	81-90	91-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
<p>Practice Alert Tracker – demonstrates that Practice Alerts result in timely action to improve outcomes for children and young people</p> <p>Audit report – shows evidence of challenge from IROs driving improvements to practice</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Practice Coaching Audits – Social Workers reflect on practice and what could be done differently, where they have challenged on practice and how they can use this to improve their practice</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	3. Ensure that supervision is reflective, challenging and consistently focuses on continual professional development (paragraphs 33, 130)
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers felt supported by their Practice Managers and supervision was frequent, but they could not describe how their practice was monitored or challenged through supervision. • Practice Managers' oversight of casework was not clear in most of the cases seen by inspectors, and there was little evidence of direction, challenge or support where plans for children had not progressed or work had not been completed in a timely way. Strong challenge of frontline workers was not yet embedded. • Managers were not consistently using personal development plans to drive practice improvement through supervision. • It was difficult for inspectors to see what impact training was making on improvements to practice as explicit links were not made to continual professional development needs.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision is regular, reflective, challenging and supportive. • Social Workers value the support and challenge they receive through supervision, and know how this has improved their practice. • Practice Managers clearly evidence direction, challenge and support in supervision notes as a clear evidence record for all parties to demonstrate learning. • Personal Development Plans (PDPs) are tailored to the individual learning and development needs of Social Workers, which is related to improvements to services as a whole. Progress against PDPs is evaluated in supervision to ensure these outcomes are attained and there is a continual focus on learning and development opportunities. • There is no drift or delay for children and young people, action is timely, plans are effective, and this leads to improved outcomes for children, young people and families. • Supervision is used for staff to explain how feedback from children, young people and families is influencing their work.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
3.1	Establish regular monthly audits of children's social care supervision files by Group Managers. Quarterly report on audit findings to go to Early Help and Protection Leadership Team meetings to identify and address themes.	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
3.2	Ensure that all children's social care managers undertake effective supervision training.	April 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
3.3	Minimum standards on supervision to be included within the Practice Standards for Managers.	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
3.4	Review PDP process to ensure that it is meaningful and embedded in the supervision process	Mar 2016	Lisa Burrows, Workforce Development
3.5	Introduce annual 'next steps' development talks as part of the PDP process for all social care staff	June 2016	Lisa Burrows, Workforce Development
3.6	Promote Aspirant Manager course through supervision and identify potential candidates for this	Jan 2016	Practice Managers
3.7	Review the current social care training programme and offer, and develop a core mandatory training offer for all Social Workers and practice managers.	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
3.8	Develop a menu of opportunities for CPD to use within supervision	Mar 2016	Lisa Burrows, Workforce Development Manager
3.9	Revise the Practice Coaching audits to include modelling of good reflective supervision for Practice Managers	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of supervisions that met the practice standard for frequency and were of a good quality (audit measure)	The amount of supervisions which are of a good quality and are taking place as regularly as they need to.	70-79	80-89	90-100

Percentage of supervisions where there was evidence of reflection (audit measure)	The amount of supervisions that encourage reflection on practice to help Social Workers to learn and develop their practice.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of supervisions where there was appropriate challenge if required (audit measure)	The amount of supervisions where practice that is not timely, not meeting children or young people's needs, or not progressing, is challenged by the practice manager to improve this.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of supervisions that addressed professional development (audit measure)	The amount of supervisions which consider what a social worker needs to develop their skills and knowledge.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of PDPs in place	All staff in post over 6 months should have a personal development plan (PDP) in place.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
<p>Supervision audits – show evidence of challenge and reflection in supervision. Progress against PDPs are reviewed quarterly. Discussion around personal development is evidenced in every supervision.</p> <p>PDPs – address developmental needs in order to improve practice</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Social Work Staff Survey and Supervision Audits – Social Workers report that supervision is reflective and challenging, and that this support has helped them to improve their practice. Social Workers report that they are aware of CPD opportunities and that progress against their PDPs is reviewed in supervision, and that personal development is a key feature of supervision.</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	4. Ensure that where children do not meet the threshold for social work intervention their circumstances are considered promptly and they receive appropriate and timely early help (paragraph 25)
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some contacts that needed further consideration before decisions were made were delayed for up to 10 days due to information gathering and decision making, and there was not evidence of sufficient oversight of these cases by Practice Managers.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people receive the service they need as soon as possible. All relevant information is considered to decide what service they need to best meet their needs, and this decision is overseen by a Practice Manager. The professional making the contact is clear on what they need to do to support the family and what will happen next.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
4.1	Establish the Early Help Brokerage Service, which will ensure timely referrals to early help, and will identify the best service for the child or young person and the family's needs.	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan and Jonathan Potter, Principal Managers
4.2	Revisit the levels of need and promote these across the partnership	Mar 2016	LSCB
4.3	The timeliness of referral to early help to be monitored through Performance Challenge Sessions	Mar 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
4.4	The timeliness of referral to early help to be monitored through the Children and Families Performance Scorecard, which is monitored and challenged by the Senior Leadership Team for Children's Services, and the LSCB Performance Book	April 2016	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Maximum time taken from contact to referral to Early Help Services	The greatest time taken for a decision on what service is right for the child/ young person.	5 working days	3 working days	1 working day
Maximum time taken from referral to receiving Early Help Services	The greatest delay experienced by a family from when the decision is made to when they receive the service. Should decrease with the introduction of the brokerage service.	7 working days	5 working days	2 working days
Percentage of cases where the threshold for contact is applied appropriately by ChECS (audit measure)	Children and young people are referred for the right service that meets their needs.	80-84	85-94	95-100
Percentage of contacts progressed in a timely manner (audit measure)	The amount of contacts that receive a timely outcome – children and young people receive a service without delays	80-84	85-94	95-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audit of contacts shows that referrals are made promptly, and that where there is additional time taken for more complex decisions, Practice Managers have clear oversight and monitor this to keep delays to a minimum.	CAF Audits – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them, and the right service was provided at the right time.	<p>Social Work Staff Survey – Staff feel supported in decision making, and report they receive clear direction and their work is overseen by Practice Managers.</p> <p>Safeguarding Children Operational Group – feedback from partners is that families who need early help receive a good quality and timely service, and that they are notified of the outcome from their contacts quickly</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	5. Ensure that strategy meetings and decisions are informed by relevant partner agencies (paragraph 27).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the majority of cases seen, strategy discussions were telephone conversations between a practice manager and the Police, without the involvement of other agencies, such as health, so decisions did not consistently take account of all relevant information. Agencies were not always asked to contribute so not all the relevant information informed decisions.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy decisions are informed by all the relevant information from the other agencies that are involved with the family, which leads to the right decision being taken for children and young people. All agencies that are involved with the family are invited to contribute.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
5.1	The expectation that all agencies and professionals that have a contribution to make to strategy discussions should be invited to be clearly stated within the Multi-Agency Practice Standards	Nov 2016	Safeguarding Children Operational Group
5.2	Re-issue the S47 protocol and ensure that the importance of multi-agency attendance at strategy meetings/ discussions is emphasised and that this is also emphasised in the S47 training	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
5.3	Develop a model of multi-agency triage at the front door to ensure information is shared in real time.	Mar 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
5.4	Develop performance reports/ dip sample partner attendance at strategy meetings and discussions to investigate themes. Report this to the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team and LSCB Quality and Outcomes Sub Group.	Dec 2015	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager
5.5	Evaluate and report on partner attendance and contributions at strategy discussions and meetings through practice coaching audits	Jan 2016	Independent Auditors
5.6	Review and strengthen information sharing at the 'front door'	Jan 2016	Eifion Burke

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of Strategy Discussions informed by information from Health	Shows that Strategy Discussions are informed by other key partners.	75-84	84-90	90-100
Percentage of Strategy Discussions informed by education (where appropriate)	Shows that Strategy Discussions are informed by other key partners.	75-84	84-90	90-100
Percentage of Strategy Discussions where all relevant partner agencies were invited to contribute (audit measure)	Shows that all the key people are asked to take part in Strategy Discussions.	60-74	75-84	85-100
Percentage of Strategy Discussions where decision making was informed by all the relevant partner agencies (audit measure)	Shows that all the key information informs Strategy Discussions.	60-74	75-84	85-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
<p>Practice Coaching Audits – demonstrate information from all relevant partner agencies is sought and informs decision making for strategy discussions. Records of strategy meetings/ discussions clearly evidence who attended and/ or contributed to the meeting.</p> <p>IRO Thematic Audit on the quality of Strategy Discussions demonstrates the positive impact involving all partners in discussions has had on outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Safeguarding Children Operational Group – Partners report that they are regularly invited to contribute to meetings and discussions and will challenge practice where they have not been asked to contribute</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	6. Improve the quality of recording so that all key discussions and decisions about children and their families, including management oversight, are clearly recorded (paragraphs 21, 23, 25, 33, 50, 55, 59, 86, 107)
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all CAF assessments recorded children and young people's views. • The rationale for closing CAF plans was not always clearly recorded, making it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the help received. • Historical information considered in decision making on contacts was not always recorded in as much detail as it needed to be, which led to delays as Practice Managers needed to request further information to make a decision. • There was not always a clear rationale recorded on contacts for why the decision had been made to proceed without consent for information-sharing. • Practice Managers' oversight of casework was not clear in most of the cases seen, and there was little evidence of direction, challenge or support where plans for children had not progressed or work had not been completed in a timely way. • Key discussions and decisions were not always fully recorded on the child or young person's record. This made it difficult to follow the child's story, to evaluate if further work could have prevented the child or young person becoming cared for, and could mean important information could be missed by new workers to the case. • The work presented to courts was of variable quality. • Recording was not always detailed enough to show the benefits of contact with families for cared for children and young people. • Information recorded on return home interviews was not always comprehensive. • Life-story books and later-in-life letters were of variable quality.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's record gives a clear account of the story and experience of the child or young person, their individual needs, their place and relationships within the family, and what matters to them. • It is clear about why decisions have been taken, and why this is in the best interest of the child or young person, including to children and young people if they want to review their records when they are older. • Management oversight, challenge and direction is clear and evident, ensuring that the quality of practice is high, risk is managed, and action is timely for children and young people.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
6.1	Develop and roll out a Management Training Programme for all Managers	April 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
6.2	Develop a core operating model central to practice across all social work teams and embedded in all work processes as the Cheshire East model of practice based on good practice models. Deliver training for all frontline workers on this covering analysis, planning, recording and risk assessment.	May 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
6.3	Introduce a standing item on sharing and celebrating good practice in Practice and Performance workshops – Social Workers and Practice Managers to present examples of their own good practice	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
6.4	Review the current audit process, including increasing providing development and coaching opportunities for frontline managers and workers to improve the quality of management oversight and recording of management decisions	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
6.5	Continue to embed the process whereby all Social Workers allocate two hours of office based time per week for recording.	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Group Managers
6.6	Performance Challenge Sessions to continue which focus on caseloads, timeliness of assessment and plans, supervision and management oversight down to individual worker level. Social Workers to attend these sessions with Practice Managers.	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
6.7	Continue to audit based on the Practice Standards for CIN&CP and Cared for services	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of cases meeting the Practice Standard for recording (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have good quality recording.	60-74	75-84	85-100
Percentage of cases which meet the Practice Standard for incorporating and recording the views and wishes of children and young people (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have captured the views and wishes of children and young people well.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of cases meeting the Practice Standard for management decision making and oversight (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have evidence of good quality management oversight.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people seen within the expected standard (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have regular visits to children and young people.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people with an up to date plan (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have an up to date plan.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audits – show that recording has improved and the rationale for decisions is clear and management oversight is evident on the child's record	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Practice Coaching Audits – Staff know what the salient issues are to capture and feel confident that the record tells the child's story		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	7. Strengthen frontline practice to ensure effective action is taken to support children at risk of child sexual exploitation and those who go missing (paragraphs 41, 42, 58, 175).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The findings from return home interviews were not always being used to inform on-going work with children and young people, or to explore wider issues such as links with other missing young people. • The response to children going missing from care was variable, the recording of return home interviews was not always comprehensive, and there were delays in these being sent to Social Workers. • Tools to assess the risk of child sexual exploitation were being used, however there was not enough skilled, sensitive work completed with children and young people to understand their individual vulnerability and risk. • Some Social Workers had not had training in recognising and responding to the signs of child sexual exploitation due to the high turnover of staff.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitive work is completed with children and young people who go missing from home or care, or are at risk from child sexual exploitation, to understand their individual needs, vulnerabilities and risks. • Return home interviews are detailed, and inform planning for children and young people to address the issues that cause them to go missing. • Young people are effectively protected from child sexual exploitation – potential risks through peer relationships are identified and addressed at the earliest possible stage. • Young people who are at risk of exploitation are effectively supported to protect themselves. • Links between children and young people who go missing from home or care, and those who are at risk of sexual exploitation, are considered and responded to, to protect all young people who are potentially at risk.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
7.1	Develop a core operating model central to practice across all social work teams and embedded in all work processes as the Cheshire East model of practice based on good practice models. Deliver training for all frontline workers on this covering analysis, planning, recording and risk assessment.	May 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
7.2	Establish a multi-agency Missing from Home and CSE Team	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
7.3	Launch new Missing from Home and Care Protocol	COMPLETED Nov 2015	LSCB Communication and Engagement Sub Group
7.4	Child Sexual Exploitation to be a focus in the Social Work Practice and Performance Workshops	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
7.5	Missing from Home and Care to be a focus in the Social Work Practice and Performance Workshops	Dec 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
7.6	Roll out training on child sexual exploitation to address any training gaps	Mar 2016	Lisa Burrows, Workforce Development Manager
7.7	Develop a checklist for supervision to ensure risks around CSE and missing from home and care are considered	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
7.8	Practice Managers to receive the tracker for cases considered by the CSE Operational Group, flagged as at risk of CSE, and incidents of missing from home or care each month to enable them to have oversight of these cases	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
7.9	Establish regular reports on the quality of risk management and trigger plans for cared for children who go missing	Dec 2015	Anna Roble, Safeguarding Manager
7.10	Develop a performance framework for missing from home and care including quality assurance and sample auditing of plans	Jan 2016	LSCB CSE, MFH&C, and Child Trafficking Sub Group
7.11	Develop best practice standards for CSE conferences, including screening tools, reports, meetings and interventions	June 2016	Susanne Leece, Safeguarding Manager
7.12	Agree standards for missing from home return interviews to evaluate the quality of these, and audit these to assess quality.	July 2016	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
7.13	Review and refresh the template for missing from home interviews, and ensure this includes a section on links to other young people who have been missing, wider issues identified by the young person, and potential areas of risk	Jan 2016	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
7.14	To ensure there is a pathway into the integrated CSE/MFH team from Education to ensure effective identification and action taken for children who are missing within education	Jan 2016	Mark Bayley, Corporate Manager, Standards & Learning

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of Social Workers who have been trained in using the CSE tools for assessment and intervention	The amount of Social Workers who have had the training to support them to work effectively with children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of CSE screening tools completed when appropriate	CSE screening tools should be completed to assess the risk of CSE if risk factors are present	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of plans stepped down where CSE was a factor with an updated CSE screening tool (audit measure)	The CSE screening tool should be completed to assess that the risk of CSE has sufficiently reduced before cases are closed. These should be sent to the CSE Operational Group for information.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of plans that clearly evidence return home interviews have informed the plan (audit measure)	Return home interviews should inform planning to ensure risks to children and young people are considered.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of cases where return interviews have been completed following missing from home or care	Return home interviews are important to ensure the risks and reasons for the young person going missing are understood, however these are voluntary. A high percentage shows good engagement with young people.	70-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of casefiles where a child/ young person has gone missing with an up to date risk assessment (audit measure)	Risk assessments are updated following missing from home or care incidents to ensure they take account of the issues arising due to this.	70-79	80-89	90-100

Percentage of missing from home return interview meeting the standard (audit measure)	The amount of missing from home return interviews which are of a good quality – detailed and considering potential risks.	61-70	71-85	86-100
Number of cases were Social Workers were supported by the integrated CSE & MFH Team in working with a young people who was at risk of CSE	Cases were a Social Worker was supported by the specialist team to complete work with a young person – this work will make use of these specialist skills so would be good quality.			
Percentage of children and young people reporting that they feel safer at the end of the intervention for CSE	Children and young people feel safer as a result of the work that was completed to address the CSE risks	70-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audits – show that findings from return home interviews are being used to update plans, and that sensitive work is being carried out to enhance understanding of the issues.	<p>Feedback from children and young people in receipt of a CSE service - Children and young people report that they feel safer as a result of the work that was completed to address the CSE risks</p> <p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p> <p>LSCB Children and Young People's Safeguarding Survey – Children and young people report that they feel safe, know what CSE is, and know how to access support</p>	<p>Practice and Performance Workshops and Practice Coaching Audits – Staff feel equipped to manage the risks around child sexual exploitation and missing from home and are making use of the expertise in the integrated team. They understand the importance of return home interviews and use them to inform plans.</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	8. Ensure assessments for children in need of help and protection and children looked after are timely, consistently consider the full range of children's needs, contain thorough analysis and are routinely updated to reflect changes in circumstances (paragraphs 29, 30, 51, 54, 59, 82, 98).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all assessments were of a sufficient quality • Not all assessments demonstrated that the risks to children and young people from domestic abuse, parental mental health problems or substance misuse were fully considered and understood. • Adult Social Care was not routinely involved in assessments where factors for adults were present. • The specific needs of each child or young person within the family were not always differentiated. • Issues of diversity and cultural needs were not consistently well explored or responded to. Assessments did not fully explore issues of race and gender and how they impact on children and young people's experiences within their own family. • Assessments were not consistently updated in response to a change in circumstances. • When children and young people returned home from care an updated assessment was not always undertaken to inform this decision and identify the appropriate level of support needed. • In some cases, contact with families for cared for children and young people was not always rigorously risk assessed. • Where cared for children were living with friends or relatives, assessment of those connected persons was not always sufficiently robust. • Timescales for completion of assessments were not always adhered to.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments are a robust analysis of the risks and protective factors for children and young people. • Assessments are thorough, and consider the full range of children and young people's individual needs and what it is like to be them, including any needs relating to diversity, culture, race or gender. • Assessments are timely • Information from specialist workers, such as substance misuse workers and mental health professionals, is used to inform assessments where relevant factors are present • Assessments are updated when circumstances change so risks are considered and responded to • Adult services (mental health, alcohol and drugs, domestic abuse) identify children at risk and there is coordination on these between adult and children's services.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
8.1	Develop a core operating model central to practice across all social work teams and embedded in all work processes as the Cheshire East model of practice based on good practice models. Deliver training for all frontline workers on this covering analysis, planning, recording and risk assessment.	May 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
8.2	Re-issue the Assessment Framework	Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
8.3	Review and refresh the Practice Standards for Children's Social Care	Mar 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
8.4	Produce exemplars for social workers to demonstrate what a good assessment/ plan looks like and how children's views and lived experience should be captured.	Jan 2016	Group Managers
8.5	Review the current social care training programme and offer, and develop a core mandatory training offer for Social Workers and practice managers	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
8.6	Develop and roll out a Management Training Programme for all Practice Managers	April 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
8.7	Quality of assessments to be monitored through supervision	Dec 2015	Practice Managers
8.8	Review the current audit process including development and coaching opportunities for frontline managers and workers	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
8.9	The Practice Standard for completion of Assessment to remain at 15 days, monitor performance through Performance Challenge Sessions	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
8.10	All assessments to continue to be reviewed by day 5 by CSC Practice Managers to ensure child has been seen and confirm timescale for completion, continue to monitor performance through Performance Challenge Sessions	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
8.11	Performance Challenge Sessions to continue which focus on caseloads, timeliness of assessment and plans, supervision and management oversight down to individual worker level. Social Workers to attend these sessions with Practice Managers.	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
8.12	Continue to audit based on the Practice Standards for CIN&CP and Cared for services	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of children and young people seen within 10 days of the combined assessment start date	Children and young people's views and experiences are considered from the start of the assessment.	75-84	85-94	95-100
Percentage of assessments completed within 15 days	The amount of assessments that are completed in a timely way, within Cheshire East's standard for good practice to drive improvement to timeliness for assessments.	30-39	40-49	50-100
Percentage of assessments completed within 35 days	The amount of assessments that are completed in a timely way.	65-70	71-75	76-100
Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days	The amount of assessments that are completed within the national standard for timeliness.	75-80	81-90	91-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audits – show that the quality of assessments has improved, relevant information informs and prompts assessment, and specialist workers are involved where appropriate	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Performance Challenge Sessions and Practice Coaching Audits – Staff reflect on what support they need to strengthen assessments, and that their assessments have improved		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	9. Ensure that plans to help children in need of help and protections, looked after children, and care leavers, are specific, clear, outcome-focused and include timescales and contingencies so that families and professionals understand what needs to happen to improve circumstances for children. This includes improving the clarity of letters before proceedings so that the expectations of parents are clear (paragraphs 31, 32, 34, 36, 52, 55, 57, 65, 115).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Plans and Child in Need Plans were not always specific to individual children, and not always of a good enough quality. • Plans lacked timescales and contingencies. • Plans were not consistently underpinned by a full understanding of whether changes were sustainable. • Direct work with children and young people was not always informed by the assessment or the plan so lacked focus. • Some Social Workers were too slow to respond to the lack of progress against plans for children and young people; some Child Protection Plans showed delays and drift and some children experienced delays with their permanence plans. Some cases took too long to step up to Child Protection. • Not all partners were as involved in planning as they could be. Adult service Social Workers and Housing Providers were less involved, and this meant that there was not always a coordinated multi-agency response. • The quality of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) has improved, but some were not detailed enough and did not contain precise enough targets. • The majority of pathway plans did not have clear and specific targets and actions to help or encourage young people to secure employment, education or training.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All plans are SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time limited, and outcome focused. • Everyone who needs to be is involved in the plan, and everyone knows what is expected of them and why this is important. • Plans are based on individual needs of children and young people and their family. • Contingency plans are in place to mitigate risk and protect children and young people. • Progress against the plan is robustly monitored and the action taken is timely and results in improved outcomes for children and young people.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Please see recommendation 8 for activity, additional activity is outlined below.

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
9.1	Introduce the Safer Children Model for Child Protection Conferences	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
9.2	Develop a multi-agency framework to support professionals when working with substance misusing parents	April 2016	Safeguarding Children Operational Group (SCOG)
9.3	Training on Direct work, informed by the core operating model (9.2) leading to direct work which is better informed by assessment, analysis and planning.	May 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
9.4	Develop a quality assurance process for letters before proceedings to be signed off by Group Managers	Dec 2015	Group Managers
9.5	Review the quality assurance of court work, and roles and responsibilities between Children's Social Care and Legal services.	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
9.6	Establish an Attendance Strategy for cared for children which includes information for carers and social workers, and timely up when attendance falls below the 90% threshold	Dec 2015	Nicola Axford, Head of the Virtual School
9.7	Produce examples of best practice PEPS to share with schools through the Cheshire East virtual school website and inclusion in training for schools this academic year.	Dec 2015	Nicola Axford, Head of the Virtual School
9.8	Embed a new quality assurance process, including local headteachers in the process in order to provide external scrutiny to the quality of PEPS and will provide challenge to schools.	March 2016	Nicola Axford, Head of the Virtual School
9.9	Ensure that Social Worker attendance at PEPS is reviewed and provide scrutiny alongside the Principal Manager Cared for children	Dec 2015	Nicola Axford, Head of the Virtual School
9.10	Increase management capacity and appoint a newly designated lead Group Manager and Practice Manager for Care leavers to improve quality assurance and audit processes for Pathway Plans. This will inform ongoing training and support to staff working with care leavers	January 2016	Anji Reynolds, Group Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of plans which are SMART (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have SMART plans – so these are clear and measurable, and this indicates they are a good quality, and it should be easy for professionals and families to know what is required, and to measure progress.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people with an up to date plan (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have an up to date plan. Should increase as practice improves.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of cases which meet the Practice Standard for incorporating and recording the views and wishes of children and young people (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have captured the views and wishes of children and young people well.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people seen within the expected standard (audit measure)	The amount of cases which have regular visits to children and young people. Should increase as practice improves.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of cases where the plan was shared with the family	The plan should be shared with the family so they are clear on what is expected of them, and what the support is aiming to achieve.	65-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time	The amount of children which have had support from children's social care were there was a high level of concerns, but then need this again at a later date. Demonstrates how well families are able to maintain the changes they have made – a low percentage is an indicator of good performance.	15-20	10-14	5-9

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
<p>Audits – show that the quality of plans has improved, progress against plans is timely and expectations are clear for parents, children, young people and professionals involved.</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Practice Coaching Audits – Staff reflect on what support they need to strengthen plans, and that their planning has improved</p>

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	10. Ensure that decisions to step down or close cases are appropriate and that management rationale to do so is clearly recorded (paragraph 39).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectors saw a number of cases that had been closed to children's social care and stepped down too soon, where not enough progress had been made, and change had not been sustained to secure improved outcomes.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cases are stepped down once there is evidence that changes have been sustained for a period of time and outcomes have improved for children and young people. Families feel confident that they can maintain the changes they have achieved with a lower level of support. Managers monitor cases that are stepping down to ensure this is the right course, and decisions to step down are clearly recorded with a clear rationale.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

See also actions relating to improving management recording (recommendation 6).

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
10.1	Review and update the policy on Step Up and Step Down	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
10.2	Refresh the multi-agency CAF audit process, ensuring appropriate step up and step down is explored as a theme	Feb 2016	Dan Rowlands, Practice Manager ChECS
10.3	Step Up and Step Down guidance to be included within the multi-agency practice standards	Jan 2016	Safeguarding Children Operational Group (SCOG)
10.4	Step up and down to be included within the core training offer for social workers	Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers
10.5	Ensure Managers Chair Step Down meetings	Nov 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
10.6	Family Group conferencing to be mandatory for cases stepping up from CIN to CP and for cared for children returning home as a minimum	Dec 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
10.7	Establish regular reports on the impact of improving practice through audit	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
10.8	Revisit step up and step down as a theme in the LSCB multi-agency audit	Sept 2016	LSCB Business Unit
10.9	Monitor progress against actions from the LSCB Audit on Step Down and produce progress reports to the LSCB Executive	COMPLETED Aug 2016	Audit and Case Review Sub Group

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of appropriate step down decisions (audit measure)	Whether the right decisions are made and children and young people receive the right level of support.	80-84	85-94	95-100
Percentage of step down decisions with a clearly recorded rationale (audit measure)	Whether a clear reason is given for reduction in the level of support and why this is in the child or young person's best interests.	65-79	80-90	90-100
Percentage of step down meetings chaired by Practice Managers (audit measure)	Practice Managers should chair step down meetings to ensure that stepping down is the right decision for the child and young person	80-84	85-94	95-100
Percentage of Family Group Conferences held at the point of step up to Child Protection	Family Group Conferences should be held where cases are stepping up to support family relationships through this time	60-69	70-79	80-100

Percentage of cases meeting the Practice Standard for management decision making and oversight (audit measure)	The amount of cases were there is robust management oversight and decision making – evidence of good practice.	65-79	80-90	90-100
Percentage of repeat referrals	The amount of children which have had support from children's social care, but then need this again at a later date. Demonstrates how well families are able to maintain the changes they have made – a low percentage is an indicator of good performance.	25-30	20-24	Below 20
Percentage of children and young people subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time	The amount of children which have had support from children's social care were there was a high level of concerns, but then need this again at a later date. Demonstrates how well families are able to maintain the changes they have made – a low percentage is an indicator of good performance.	15-20	10-14	5-9
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audits – show that step down is appropriate, and that the rationale for this is clearly recorded.	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Practice Coaching Audits – Staff feel supported in stepping cases up and down		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	11. Improve the implementation of delegated authority so that carers are clear about what decisions they can make and children do not experience delays (paragraph 78).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All foster carers spoken to in the inspection were aware of the delegated decision making process, but they felt that Social Workers still have to complete too many forms for decisions foster carers could make.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster carers have appropriate decision making authority so children and young people can enjoy the same opportunities as their peers, and do not experience delays in decisions. Foster carers are clear on what decisions they can make and which need to be made by the Social Worker.
Lead for delivery:	Corporate Parenting Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
11.1	Review and amend the Fostering Handbook and the policy on delegated authority to ensure these are consistent and complementary	Dec 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
11.2	Produce a simple checklist for Social Workers on delegated authority, setting out what areas carers can make decisions on, which Social Workers make decisions on, and which need to be agreed and specified in the plan.	Dec 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
11.3	Send the checklist on delegated authority to all current foster carers, and include within the fostering handbook.	Jan 2016	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
11.4	Discuss and raise awareness of the delegated authority policy and checklist at the Foster Carer Forum	Jan 2016	Tracy Mese, Group Manager for Fostering
11.5	Promote and raise awareness of the delegated authority policy and checklist through the Foster Carer newsletter	Jan 2016	Tracy Mese, Group Manager for Fostering
11.6	Raise Social Worker awareness of the delegated authority policy and checklist at the Practice and Performance Workshops	Mar 2016	Tracy Mese, Group Manager for Fostering
11.7	Implement process so placement planning meetings are held in a timely way with appropriate representation by the Social Worker, Carer & Fostering Service to ensure issues of delegated authority are clearly addressed.	Jan 2016	Vicky Buchanan and Pete Lambert, Principal Managers

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of Foster Carers that are clear on what decisions are delegated to them (Foster carer annual survey)	Foster carers are clear on the decisions they can make so this does not cause delays for children and young people	70-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Foster Carer Annual Survey and Annual Reviews for Foster Carers – Foster carers report that they are clear about the decisions that are delegated to them	<p>Foster Carer Forum – Foster carers feedback that the delegated decision making process is clearer and that they have the right level of autonomy to meet children and young people's needs</p> <p>Foster Carer Annual Survey and Annual Reviews for Foster Carers – Foster carers report that they are clear about the decisions that are delegated to them and children and young people report that they do not experience delays in decisions</p>	<p>Practice and Performance Workshops – Staff feedback that the delegated decision making process is clearer and easier to communicate to foster carers</p>		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	12. Improve the timeliness of initial health assessments so that children who become looked after have their own health needs assessed within the expected timescales (paragraph 67).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 30% of initial health assessments for cared for children and young people in were completed within timescale in 2014-15.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cared for children and young people's health needs are assessed within timescale so that their health needs can be known and met as soon as possible. Health outcomes for cared for children and young people improve.
Lead for delivery:	Corporate Parenting Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
12.1	Work with Social Care managers to streamline the process for requesting Initial Health Assessments. This will include improvements to the Liquid Logic workflow and communication between key stakeholders to ensure health assessments are completed in a timely way.	COMPLETED Dec 2015	Shelia Williams, Designated Nurse cared for children
12.2	Produce and launch a Health app for cared for children	June 2016	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
12.3	Performance measure on the timeliness of Initial Health assessments to be included on the LSCB Performance scorecard for regular scrutiny	Dec 2015	Curtis Vickers, Quality and Performance Officer
12.4	Regular reports on the health of cared for children and care leavers to be produced to the Corporate Parenting Board and Operational Group and performance measures to be included on the Corporate Parenting Board Performance scorecard for regular scrutiny	Dec 2015	Shelia Williams, Designated Nurse for Cared for Children
12.5	Regular reports on the health of cared for children and care leavers to be produced to the Health and Wellbeing Board	Dec 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of initial health assessments completed within timescale	The amount completed within timescale – assessments should be timely to ensure any health needs are identified and addressed as soon as possible	65-74	75-84	85-100
Percentage of cases where health needs of the child/ young person were clearly identified (audit measure)	Plans and assessments feature and address health needs as this is important to the wellbeing of children and young people	65-74	75-84	85-100
Percentage of cases where health needs of the child/ young person were clearly reflected in the plan (audit measure)	Plans and assessments feature and address health needs as this is important to the wellbeing of children and young people	65-74	75-84	85-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audits – show that health needs are considered and addressed swiftly	Audits and Children in Care Council – children and young people feel their health needs are met and they have the information they need about their health to stay healthy	Practice Coaching Audits – Staff understand the importance of timely health assessments, and how to reflect and capture health needs in planning		

Priority:	Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused
Recommendation:	17. Ensure later-in-life letters provide details of all known information , are written in plain English , and are accessible to children so that they understand their stories (paragraph 107).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Later in life letters were variable in quality.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Later in life letters provide details of all known information, so children and young people have all the information about their stories so they can understand their story. • Later in life letters are written in plain English, and are accessible.
Lead for delivery:	Corporate Parenting Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
17.1	Introduce a tracker for later in life letters to improve timeliness	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
17.2	The Adoption Team to produce later in life letters, overseen by the Group Manager, to develop a consistent approach	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
17.3	Practice Managers, supported by the Adoption Group Manager, to quality assure all later in life letters until the process is embedded, then to dip sample once embedded	Dec 2015	Lisa Jamieson, Adoption Group Manager
17.4	Exemplars of a good later in life letter in plain English to be produced and communicated	Dec 2015	Lisa Jamieson, Adoption Group Manager

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of children and young people with an adoption plan who have a later in life letter on placement (audit measure)	All children and young people with an adoption plan should have a later in life letter available for them on their placement	80-84	85-94	95-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audit and dip samples – show that later in life letters are of a good quality, are clear and accessible	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – children, young people and families feedback that they were clear what was expected of them	Practice and Performance Workshop – Staff feel confident communicating in a clear and accessible way		

<p>Priority:</p>	<p>Senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people</p>
<p>Recommendation :</p>	<p>1. Strengthen senior managers' oversight and monitoring of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complex cases where there are historic drift and delay in taking decisive action (paragraph 36) • private fostering and connected persons' arrangements to ensure that these arrangements are suitable and comply with regulations (paragraphs 40, 83) • care leavers who are homeless (paragraph 112).
<p>Story behind the recommendation:</p>	<p>High Risk cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the inspection, inspectors suggested improving Senior Management oversight of complex cases through implementing a 'high risk' panel of senior managers to consider those young people at the highest risk, which is a good practice model they have observed in another Local Authority. <p>Private Fostering and Connected Persons Arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Manager's oversight of private fostering and connected person arrangements needed to be strengthened. Private Fostering cases sampled during the inspection showed delays in responding to notifications, DBS checks, visits and decision-making. There was no evidence of management oversight identifying or challenging these delays. • Where cared for children or young people live with relatives or friends, assessments of connected persons were not always sufficiently robust, timescales for completion were not always adhered to, and it was not clear in all cases if assessments had been signed off by Group Managers. <p>Care Leavers who are Homeless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Manager's oversight of care leavers who are homeless needs to be strengthened. At the time of the inspection 6 care leavers were refusing appropriate accommodation, all of them had multiple problems, including drug and alcohol misuse, risk of or actual offending behaviour, and emotional health problems. Personal Advisors were making concerted efforts to engage them with services and reduce the risks, however outcomes for these care leavers were uncertain due to the complexity of the needs. Senior managers did not have sufficient oversight of these care leavers who are homeless, and did not routinely monitor the individual circumstances for these highly vulnerable young people.
<p>What 'good' looks like:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior managers have oversight of the most vulnerable children and young people to ensure the right support is in place to support and protect them. • All children and young people receive a good service, appropriate to their needs and within timescales.

Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team
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ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
High Risk Cases:			
1.1	Establish criteria to identify high risk cases to be escalated to the Director of Children's Social Care and the Director of Children's Services	Mar 2016	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
1.2	All children subject to a plan for 15 months to be reviewed by the safeguarding manager to address any delay in the plan and are raised with the manager where there are concerns.	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
Private Fostering and Connected Persons:			
1.3	Improve performance reporting on Reg. 24 arrangements to increase accuracy of reporting and improve monitoring and scrutiny, and include within the Performance Challenge Sessions and within the Children and Families Performance Scorecard, scrutinised by the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team	Jan 2016	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager
1.4	Lead for Private Fostering to deliver further awareness raising on private fostering in Practice and Performance Workshops to all frontline Social Work staff	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
1.5	Update the one minute guide on Private Fostering and circulate to Social Work Teams and through Private Fostering Sub Group Members	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
1.6	Roll out compulsory workshops on Reg. 24 and connected persons to all social work frontline and IRO staff	April 2016	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
1.7	Update the Policy and Procedure, and guidance on roles and responsibilities, for Private Fostering, formalising the process on DBS checks.	Dec 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
1.8	Ensure that Private Fostering is included in the Level 1 Multi-agency Safeguarding Training	COMPLETED Oct 2015	Vicky Moran, LSCB Training Officer

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
1.9	Audits completed of Private Fostering cases and findings are reported to the Private Fostering Sub Group	Dec 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
1.10	Implement a process whereby panel dates are set when Reg. 24 placements are approved	Dec 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
1.11	Establish a tracking system and report for all private fostering cases notified to the Safeguarding Unit Manager and inform the LSCB Performance Book	Dec 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
1.12	Establish an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) pathway for when notification of Reg. 24 arrangements are received from operational services to ensure independent oversight and avoid delay	Jan 2016	Anna Roble, Safeguarding Manager
Care leavers who are homeless:			
1.13	Introduce a monthly permanence case tracking meeting, chaired by the Principal Manager, with Group Managers and IROs, Commissioning Manager and Head of the Virtual School, to ensure clear senior management oversight and drive for permanence	COMPLETED Oct 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
1.14	Strengthen the tracker for care leavers who are homeless	COMPLETED Oct 2015	Anji Reynolds, Group Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
1.15	Include care leavers who are homeless as a measure on the LSCB scorecard to ensure partnership scrutiny and challenge and on the cared for scorecard which is scrutinised by the Corporate Parenting Board, and on the Children and Families Performance Scorecard, scrutinised by the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team	Nov 2015	Curtis Vickers, Quality and Performance Officer

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
High Risk Cases:				
Number of high risk cases escalated	High risk cases are identified and being reviewed			
Private Fostering and Connected Persons:				
Percentage of Reg 24 assessments presented to the fostering panel in statutory timescales (audit measure)	The correct process is being followed within timescale for connected persons	80-89	90-94	95-100
Number of assessments where Private Fostering is identified as a factor	Private Fostering is identified			
Number of open Private Fostering cases	Private Fostering is identified			
Percentage of Private Fostering cases visited in timescales	Visits for Private Fostering cases are timely	80-89	90-94	95-100
Percentage of Private Fostering cases where delay is identified	Delays for children and young people are identified and challenged in order to reduce this	21-25	11-20	0-10
Percentage of Private Fostering cases that are reviewed by the ADM within 45 working days of notification	Private Fostering cases are appropriately overseen within timescale.	80-89	90-94	95-100
Care leavers who are homeless:				
Number of care leavers recorded as homeless	Number of care leavers who are homeless or in unsuitable accommodation			
Percentage of care leavers in homeless accommodation that have an appropriate risk assessment which references the risk presented by older residents	Risk assessments are being completed which consider the risks from other residents in order to protect young people	80-89	90-94	95-100

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
<p>Audit– shows that regulations are complied with, risks are managed and children and young people are effectively supported and don't experience delays</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Practice and Performance Workshop – Staff are clear on regulations for connected persons and feel supported by oversight and support on complex cases</p>

Priority:	Senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people
Recommendation:	13. Ensure audit arrangements have a sharper focus on looked after children (paragraph 140).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The audit programme was focused around the performance and quality of services for child in need and child protection, as these services had been inadequate.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All services are rigorously quality assured and findings are used to drive improvement.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
13.1	Extend the practice coaching audit programme to reflect the practice standards for cared for children's services	COMPLETED Aug 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding
13.2	Practice Coaching Audits, including cared for children's services, to be reported to the LSCB Board	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding

IMPACT

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
Audit – demonstrates improvements to services for cared for children and young people. Audits to include a minimum of 2 audits per Practice Manager each month, 2 Children's Social Care audits per cycle and 20 practice coaching audits per quarter	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Practice Coaching Audits – Staff feel supported to improve their practice for cared for children and young people

Priority:	Senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people
Recommendation:	14. Ensure that comprehensive and clear data and performance information are provided to managers and strategic leaders to enable them to better understand, oversee and scrutinise performance. This includes ensuring the accuracy of the information provided through the electronic recording system so that managers have effective oversight of frontline practice (paragraph 137, 138).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no annual performance report for children's services to outline and explain our progress compared with previous years against national performance and statistical neighbours, which would assist political leaders, partners and staff to understand and follow the improvement journey and demonstrate what performance means for children and young people. • The electronic recording system for Children's Social Care was replaced with a modern case management system to support effective social work practice. • The migration of data from the old system to the new one resulted in some anomalies and unreliable data. As a result, managers were not always confident about what the data was telling them, and managers were unable to readily identify the right data without a time consuming check of individual records or audits of casefiles. This made it difficult for managers to understand and manage performance in their services and teams.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people's needs are met through joined up and good quality services • Managers and strategic leaders have access to comprehensive and clear data and performance information, allowing them to evaluate how well services are performing. • All frontline managers can access up to date performance information for their teams at any time to effectively monitor and drive improvements to services and timely responses.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
14.1	Develop an overarching performance monitoring framework for children's services, with an overarching scorecard to be reported to Children and Families Scrutiny to identify areas of focus. Scorecards to be available to all tiers of management, and performance information to be available to drill down to individual worker level.	Mar 2016	Kath O'Dwyer, Director of Children's Services
14.2	Business Intelligence Team to communicate what management information reports are currently available to team and Group Managers.	Nov 2015	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager
14.3	Business Intelligence Team to develop and communicate an action plan on improving performance reporting.	Dec 2015	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager
14.4	Develop a comprehensive live suite of performance reports on children in need and child protection, cared for children and care leavers	Mar 2016	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Number of cases where domestic abuse is a factor	The frequency and prevalence of domestic abuse as a factor impacting on children and young people			
Percentage of cases where domestic abuse is a factor which are receiving support from commissioned services	The amount of children and young people benefitting from specialist support around domestic abuse			
Number of children referred through the domestic abuse hub	The Domestic Abuse Hub is effectively supporting children and young people			

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
<p>CSC Audit and LSCB Multi-agency Audit – shows that the quality of casework is improving and that children and young people are effectively protected</p>	<p>Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Performance Challenge Sessions – Managers have the information they need to challenge timeliness and performance, resulting in improved performance</p>

Priority:	Senior management oversight of the impact of services on children and young people
Recommendation:	<p>16. Strengthen commissioning arrangements to ensure that services meet the needs of families and children in need of help and protection and children looked after by: (paragraph 150)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the use of foyer accommodation for 16-17 year olds • Ensuring that rigorous risk assessments are undertaken before the placement of young people in foyer or hostel accommodation, and review the practice of using this provision (paragraph 114) • Ensuring sufficient health provision for older looked after children and care leavers (paragraphs 121, 124) • Improving the use of family group conferences so that all possible options for children are consistently explored (paragraph 55) • Increasing the capacity of advocacy services to support children and young people identified as in need (paragraphs 45, 85, 150).
Story behind the recommendation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no joint commissioning strategy in place. • Foyer accommodation was used as a last resort for young people who are not yet adults. Providers of this accommodation completed risk assessments on all young people under the age of 18 at the start of the placement, but did not routinely complete them on older care leavers who could be equally vulnerable. • Assessments for these young people were not detailed enough, and did not specifically address the potential impact of the setting on the young person. • The 16+ Cared for Young People's Nurse post had been vacant since April 2015, and although this post was covered, it was not always provided by the same person which reduced consistency. • There was no specialist health resource for care leavers over the age of 18. • Family Group Conferencing was not used well and its impact was not known. • Not all children in need were offered advocacy. • Some cared for children experienced delays in being matched with an independent visitor.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a joint commissioning strategy in place which sets out the joint commitment of the partnership to improve services for children, young people and families. • High quality services are provided which meet the needs of children, young people and families.
Lead for delivery:	Children and Families Senior Leadership Team

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
16.1	The Children's Joint Commissioning Leadership Group develop a joint commissioning strategy for children's services	Mar 2016	Children's Joint Commissioning Leadership Group
Use of Foyer Accommodation for 16-17 year olds and risk assessments:			
16.2	Review the use of foyer accommodation for 16-17 year olds and produce report for the Corporate Parenting Board with recommendations	Feb 2016	Dave Leadbetter, Commissioning Manager for Children's Services
16.5	Strengthen risk assessments carried out by Social Workers before the placement of young people in hostel or foyer accommodation, and ensure all young people placed have a risk assessment completed before placement	Nov 2015	Pete Lambert, Principal Manager for Cared for Children and Care Leavers
Health provision for older looked after children and care leavers:			
16.8	Write to the CCGs regarding the school nurse for 16+ cared for young people and care leavers to ensure this is progressed	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Kath O'Dwyer, Director of Children's Services
16.9	Update on health of cared for children to be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board	Dec 2015	Kath O'Dwyer, Director of Children's Services
Use of Family Group Conferencing:			
16.10	Family Group conferencing to be mandatory for cases stepping up from CIN to CP and for cared for children returning home as a minimum requirement	Dec 2015	Vicky Buchanan, Principal Manager for CIN&CP
Advocacy Services:			
16.12	Review and revise the current contract monitoring and reporting arrangements around advocacy and independent visiting to make this more outcome-focussed. Review the take up of advocacy and independent visiting services and set target priorities through negotiation with the Children's Society	Dec 2015	Kate Rose, Head of Children's Safeguarding and Gill Betton, Children's Improvement Manager

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Use of Foyer Accommodation for 16-17 year olds and risk assessments:				
Number of young people placed in foyer accommodation	Young people in foyer accommodation are identified and monitored			
Use of Family Group Conferencing:				
Number of Family Group Conferences delivered	Family Group Conferences are being used			
Percentage of Family Group Conferences held at the point of step up to Child Protection (audit measure)	Family Group Conferences should be held where cases are stepping up to support family relationships through this time	60-69	70-79	80-100
Percentage of Family Group Conferences carried out prior to cared for children and young people returning home (audit measure)	Family Group Conferencing should be carried out to support relationships and communication in the family prior to stepping up a level of need	60-69	70-79	80-100
Advocacy Services:				
Number of children and young people using advocacy	Advocacy is being offered and used			
Number of children and young people using advocacy that are at risk of CSE	Advocacy is being offered and used by young people at risk of child sexual exploitation			
Percentage of children and young people that were pleased with the advocacy or independent visiting service they received	Children and young people felt that the service met their needs and their views were represented	75-79	80-89	90-100
Percentage of children and young people offered advocacy or independent visiting where appropriate (audit measure)	Children and young people are being offered advocacy services	75-79	80-89	90-100
Average time young people wait to be matched with an independent visitor	The delay children and young people experience in being matched with			

	independent visitors			
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Audit – shows that the quality of casework is improving and that children and young people are offered advocacy and independent visiting and their views are represented. Family Group Conferencing is being utilised to support families and young people in foyer accommodation have appropriate risk assessments.	Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Practice and Performance Workshops – Staff are aware of the services that are available for children and young people and these are well used		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	151: Complete work to develop the performance management framework so that service effectiveness can be evaluated rigorously across all agencies
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of performance data to analyse and scrutinise partnership performance was not fully developed. • More work was needed to reach an agreement on which data should be included within the framework in order to ensure robust oversight and scrutiny of safeguarding practice.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency practice is strong and results in good outcomes for children and young people • There is a rigorous performance management framework in place that contains the key measures across the partnership that impact on the experiences of children and young people. • Information is displayed in a way which is clear to all agencies on what this means for children and young people, and whether performance is good or needs to be improved.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
151.1	Research good practice in other LSCBs around performance frameworks	COMPLETED Sept 2015	Curtis Vickers, Quality and Performance Officer
151.2	Review the LSCB performance scorecard to ensure that measures to address the recommendations from Ofsted are included	Nov 2015	Quality and Outcomes Sub Group
151.3	Draft proposals for a revised performance scorecard, with additional measures, to be agreed by the Quality and Outcomes Sub Group	Nov 2015	Quality and Outcomes Sub Group
151.4	Revise the Quality Assurance framework, using the quadrant model.	Dec 2015	Curtis Vickers, Quality and Performance Officer
151.5	Establish a performance task and finish group with partner agencies to develop further indicators to measure effectiveness.	Nov 2015	Quality and Outcomes Sub Group
151.6	Revise timescales and focus for proposed sector specific challenges against Ofsted recommendations	Nov 2015	Ian Rush, Chair of the LSCB

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
151.7	Review governance arrangements to strengthen reporting and accountability across partnerships and revise memorandum of understanding.	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit

IMPACT

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
<p>LSCB Quality and Outcomes minutes– show that the LSCB Performance Scorecard is rigorously scrutinised and facilitates challenge across the partnership, which is resulting in improvements to services and outcomes for children and young people</p> <p>LSCB Multi-Agency Audits – show multi-agency practice is improving and resulting in better outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>LSCB Multi-Agency Audits– shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feedback that multi-agency working has improved</p>

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	152: Provide regular scrutiny of services for looked after children. Monitor and review the application by partner agencies of the threshold framework and take appropriate action where necessary.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus of the LSCB's work and scrutiny had been on child in need and child protection services, as these had been inadequate. • Cared for children's services had not received the same level of scrutiny and challenge on their quality. • Consideration and scrutiny of early help services was not sufficiently embedded in the strategic oversight and work of the LSCB. • There were inconsistencies in stepping down to lower levels of intervention. • Escalation processes were underused.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All services for vulnerable children and young people are regularly scrutinised, and are robust and effective. • Children and young people receive the right service for them at the right time. • All practitioners understand the thresholds for services and these are consistently applied.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
152.1	Include additional performance measures for cared for children on the LSCB scorecard.	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Quality and Outcomes Sub Group
152.2	Review governance arrangements to strengthen reporting and accountability across partnerships and revise memorandum of understanding.	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit
152.3	Align business support functions for LSCB and Corporate Parenting Board	COMPLETED Nov 2015	Gill Betton, Children's Improvement Manager
152.4	Schedule key reports to the Board, Exec and subgroups around cared for children.	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit
152.5	Launch the multi-agency practice standards, including application of the threshold framework	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
152.6	Quarterly reports to be provided to the Quality and Outcomes Sub Group on front door activity and relevant agencies	Nov 2016	Quality and Outcomes Sub Group
152.7	Early Help sector challenge to look in detail at application of thresholds for different partner agencies	Nov 2015	LSCB Business Unit
152.8	Ensure all actions from multi-agency audit around step down are completed	Dec 2015	Audit and Case Review Sub Group
152.9	Build evaluation on the application of thresholds into future LSCB multi-agency audits	Jan 2016	LSCB Business Unit

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of cases where thresholds were applied appropriately (audit measure)	Understanding and correct use of thresholds – that children and young people are receiving the right service	75-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
LSCB Multi-Agency Audits – show multi-agency practice is improving and resulting in better outcomes for children and young people	LSCB Multi-Agency Audits – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feedback that multi-agency working has improved, and that thresholds are understood and step up and down processes are robust		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	153. Evaluate the impact of the neglect strategy and disseminate the findings to help agencies improve their practice.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to high numbers of children and young people subject to child protection plans due to neglect, the LSCB launched a neglect strategy in January 2015. • The graded care profile was not being used consistently to assess neglect cases. • Plans were in place to undertake further work to embed use of the tools, and then to audit to assess the impact of the strategy early in 2016, but this had not taken place at the time of the inspection.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The neglect strategy is having a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people who are neglected. • Practitioners are supported to work with families through effective tools, and the use of these is demonstrating sustainable changes for children and young people.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
153.1	Revisit and refresh the roll out of the neglect strategy	Nov 2015	Communication and Engagement Sub Group
153.2	Launch campaign around neglect – awareness raising for practitioners	Dec 2015	Communication and Engagement Sub Group
153.3	Provide quarterly updates to the Quality and Outcomes Sub Group on progress against the neglect performance targets, including number of cases where the graded care profile has been used	Jan 2016	LSCB Business Unit
153.4	Target attendance of key groups and monitor uptake of graded care profile training	Dec 2015	Learning & Improvement Sub Group
153.5	Ensure Cheshire East attendance at Ofsted Getting to Good seminars around neglect	Mar 2016	LSCB Business Unit
153.6	Ensure neglect is included in multi-agency audits forward plan	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
153.7	Include in annual reports expectation for partners to report how they have delivered against LSCB priorities, including neglect.	Jan 2016	LSCB Business Unit
154.8	Agree key strategic multi-agency lead on the Board for Neglect	Dec 2016	LSCB Executive Group

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Percentage of children and young people on child protection plans due to neglect	The prevalence of neglect in Cheshire East	2% reduction	5% reduction	10% reduction
Percentage of neglect cases using the graded care profile (audit measure)	Use of the graded care profile, which supports practitioners to assess and evaluate progress when working with families where neglect is a factor	75-79	80-89	90-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
LSCB Multi-Agency Audits, CAF Audits and CSC Audits – show multi-agency practice is improving and resulting in better outcomes for children and young people, children and young people who are at risk of neglect are protected and families are supported to make sustainable changes	LSCB Multi-Agency Audits and CIN&CP Feedback Survey – shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them	Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feel confident working with families where there is neglect and that the use of tools is embedded		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	154. Develop links with the Local Family Justice Board so that CESC B can monitor how well the needs of children in public and private law proceedings are met.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LSCB had no oversight of or connection to the Local Family Justice Board, so it could not assure itself that young people's needs were being met in relation to public and private proceedings.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are strong connection between the Local Family Justice Board and the LSCB. The LSCB receives regular reports from the Local Family Justice Board Young people's needs are met in relation to public and private proceedings.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
154.1	CAFCASS to provide an annual report to the Board, identifying any areas of concern, themes and trends, that are added to the business plan	Feb 2015	CAFCASS
154.2	Identify Board Members as key links to the Local Family Justice Board	Nov 2015	Ian Rush, Chair of the LSCB
154.3	Add link to Family Justice Board as standing item on Executive agenda	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit
154.4	Include measures on the LSCB performance scorecard that monitor how well the needs of children in public and private law proceedings are met	Dec 2015	Curtis Vickers, Quality and Performance Officer
154.5	Update report to Quality and Outcomes Sub Group on impact of Local Family Justice board	Jan 2016	Nigel Moorhouse, Director of Children's Social Care

IMPACT

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
Quality and Outcomes Minutes – show that the impact of the Local Family Justice Board is considered, scrutinised & challenged in detail to drive improvements to services		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	155: Review the arrangements for monitoring the quality of private fostering work.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arrangements for case management of private fostering were not sufficiently robust. Private Fostering cases sampled showed delays in responding to notifications, DBS checks, visits and decision making.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of Private Fostering casework is effectively monitored by the LSCB, resulting in good services for children and young people.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
155.1	Private Fostering Sub Group to carry out analysis of services through evaluation and feedback of previous privately fostered young people.	Jan 2016	Private Fostering Sub Group
155.2	Report on analysis of previously privately fostered young people to be presented to the Quality and Outcomes subgroup	Mar 2016	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
155.3	Include measures on the performance scorecard that monitor the quality of private fostering work	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit
155.4	Private Fostering subgroup chair to provide chair's report to the LSCB Executive following each meeting	Nov 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
155.5	Audits completed of Private Fostering cases and findings are reported to the Private Fostering Sub Group	Dec 2015	Michelle McPherson, Lead for Private Fostering
155.6	Private fostering annual report to include detail on the monitoring of private fostering work	Mar 2016	Private Fostering Sub Group

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Number of assessments where Private Fostering is identified as a factor	Private Fostering is identified			
Number of open Private Fostering cases	Private Fostering is identified			
Percentage of Private Fostering cases visited in timescales	Visits for Private Fostering cases are timely	80-89	90-94	95-100
Percentage of Private Fostering cases where delay is identified	Delays for children and young people are identified and challenged in order to reduce this	21-25	11-20	0-10
Percentage of Private Fostering cases that are reviewed by the ADM within 45 working days of notification	Private Fostering cases are appropriately overseen within timescale.	80-89	90-94	95-100
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
Private Fostering Annual Report – shows multi-agency practice is improving and that privately fostered children and young people receive a good service	Feedback from Privately Fostered young people – young people are supported in their placements	Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feel confident identifying private fostering cases		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	156. Improve the influence of CESCIB in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that safeguarding is embedded within its priorities.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic links between the LSCB and the Health and Wellbeing Board were not explicit. • As a joint adults and children's Board, the children's agenda within the Health and Wellbeing Board was not given sufficient priority.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health and Wellbeing Board and the LSCB are clearly linked, and the children's agenda for the Health and Wellbeing Board is championed and brought to the fore by the LSCB. • Evidence of joint commissioning arrangements around children's safeguarding.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
156.1	Paper proposing that the Health and Wellbeing Board become accountable body for the Children's Improvement Plan be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board	Oct 2015	Gill Betton, Children's Improvement Manager
156.2	Establish a new Partnership Chairs Board of chairs and key officers from relevant partnerships that feeds directly into the Health & Wellbeing board	Dec 2015	Ian Rush, Chair of the LSCB
156.3	Ensure Cheshire East attendance at Ofsted Getting to Good seminars around leadership	Mar 2016	LSCB Business Unit
156.4	Review governance arrangements to strengthen reporting and accountability across partnerships and revise memorandum of understanding.	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit

IMPACT

Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff
<p>LSCB Multi-Agency Audits – show multi-agency practice is improving and resulting in better outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>LSCB Multi-Agency Audits– shows children, young people and parents feel they have received a good service that has helped them</p>	<p>Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feel multi-agency working has improved.</p>

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	157. Develop and implement a coordinated strategy in relation to female genital mutilation so that the impact of multi-agency work within Cheshire East can be evaluated and understood.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work in relation to female genital mutilation was not yet coordinated. Health agencies record the prevalence of incidents but this was not formally reported to the Board.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a coordinated strategy and approach in addressing female genital mutilation. The LSCB receives information on the prevalence of incidents and the impact of the strategy.
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
157.1	Establish an LSCB task and finish group led by the Named GP working in partnership with local hospital trusts to agree and monitor pathway as part of a Pan Cheshire co-ordinated strategy.	Dec 2015	Naomi Leece, Named GP
157.2	Establish campaign to launch the strategy and related information	Jan 2016	Communication and Engagement Sub Group
157.3	Launch local procedure for FGM	Feb 2016	Communication and Engagement Sub Group
157.4	Launch pan-Cheshire FGM strategy	Mar 2016	Communication and Engagement Sub Group
157.5	Carry out data collection to identify hot spots, combined with deep dive learning, to monitor whether strategy been effective	Mar 2016	LSCB Business Unit
157.6	Develop a plan of learning/training around FGM	Mar 2016	Learning and Improvement Sub Group
157.7	Include key FGM measures on LSCB performance book	Nov 2015	LSCB Business Unit

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Number of FGM cases referred	The prevalence of the risk of female genital mutilation in Cheshire East – evidence that this is being identified			
Number of children and young people where FGM was identified	The prevalence of female genital mutilation in Cheshire East			
Number of professionals who have received FGM training	The number of professionals skilled in identifying signs of risks from FGM and in working with families where this is a potential risk			
Number of Police investigations following referrals for FGM	Female Genital Mutilation is responded to and investigated			
Qualitative Information	Feedback from Children and Young People, Parents and Carers	Feedback from Staff		
LSCB Multi-Agency Audits – show multi-agency practice is improving and resulting in better outcomes for children and young people	LSCB Multi-agency Audit – children and young people feel protected and know how to access support	Safeguarding Children Operational Group and LSCB Frontline Visits – Partners feel confident identifying potential risks from FGM		

Priority:	The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.
Recommendation:	158. Implement a protocol that outlines when the National Panel should be notified about SCRs and incidents in order to strengthen scrutiny of decision-making.
Areas for Improvement:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been no serious case reviews (SCR) commissioned in the last four years and those cases considered for SCR had not been referred to the National Panel. • This meant that there had not been any external monitoring of the thresholds to undertake a SCR.
What 'good' looks like:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear protocol is in place and adhered to which outline when the National Panel should be notified about SCRs. • Decisions on whether to undertake SCRs are externally validated to ensure the right decisions are being made, and the right level of scrutiny is given for reviews
Lead for delivery:	Local Safeguarding Children Board

ACTIVITY

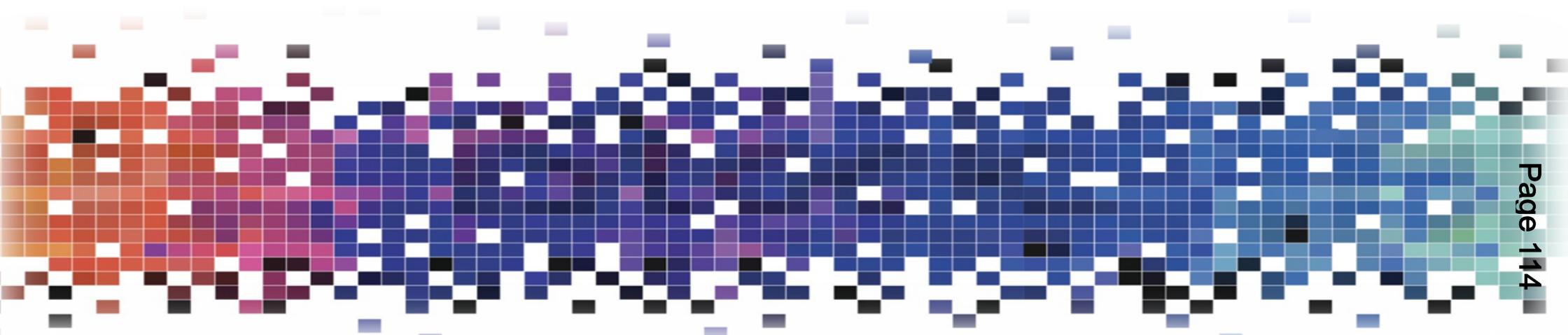
Ref	Action	Review date	Lead
158.1	Review online procedures around SCRs	Dec 2016	LSCB Business Unit
158.2	Develop a protocol that that outlines when the National Panel should be notified about SCRs and incidents in order to strengthen scrutiny of decision-making.	Jan 2016	Policies and Procedures Sub Group
158.3	Launch new protocol	Feb 2016	LSCB Business Unit
158.4	Review research and learning from both local and national SCRs and ensure this is disseminated to all practitioners through LSCB members.	Dec 2016	LSCB Business Unit
158.5	Include measures on the performance scorecard that monitor notifications	Dec 2015	LSCB Business Unit
158.6	Commission external review of notification process to critically assess effectiveness	Mar 2015	Audit and Case Review subgroup

IMPACT

Performance Measure	What does it show?	Thresholds		
		Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
Number of cases referred to Ofsted	Cases are referred to Ofsted			
Number of cases referred for consideration for a case review	Cases are considered for case reviews			
Number of single agency case reviews held	Number of cases meeting this level of review			
Number of reflective reviews held	Number of cases meeting this level of review			
Number of serious case reviews held	Number of cases meeting this level of review			
Number of 'True for Us' reviews held	Number of opportunities for learning we have used to develop services in Cheshire East			
Number of cases referred to the National Panel	Compliance with the protocol and that cases are referred to the National Panel			

Feedback

If you have any thoughts or views on this plan, or how well we are progressing, please contact us at C&FSpeakUp@cheshireeast.gov.uk



CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Report To:- Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 November 2015
Report of: Mark Bayley : Corporate manager, Standards & Learning
Subject/Title: Summary of Provisional School's Performance 2014-15

1.0 Report Summary

Appendix 1 contains an overall summary of the provisional data relating to school's performance in 2014-15. During the coming months, these results will be validated which will allow for the completion of the Annual Education report to be completed and shared with all key stakeholders.

- 1.1 The appendix contains a summary relating to each Key Stage of the educational provision and, where available, shows Cheshire East performance against key indicators – statistical neighbours and national.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 This information is presented to Children & Families Overview Scrutiny Committee for information/discussion only. The final Annual Education report will be presented at a later date for approval.

3.0 Other Options Considered

- 3.1 There are no other options to be considered

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Local Authority is fully committed to providing the best learning opportunities for all young people and the performance of schools is central to this objective. Provisional data is always subject to change so it is essential to consider the information presented as interim.

5.0 Background/Chronology

- 5.1 Each of the Key Stages from early years to post 16 outlines the overall performance and the trend data as currently available. The commentary presented details some of the key themes which have emerged from the 2014-15 results and the actions which have been initiated based upon these results.
- 5.2 Validated data will become available at different points of the coming two months through the performance tables. The ability to share this provisional

data is based upon the availability of DfE First Statistical Release information as recently released.

6.0 Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

5.1 All Wards

7.0 Implications of Recommendation

7.1 Policy Implications

7.1 Validated results may result in changes to policy in relation to key priorities for school improvement service teams

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2 If the performance of a school drops to below agreed national thresholds, there is the potential power within the Local Authority to intervene which can result in legal implications.

7.3 Financial Implications

7.3.1 Schools will utilise available Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to initiative a range of interventions to improve school performance especially for vulnerable learners.

7.4 Equality Implications

7.4.1 Securing the best outcomes for all vulnerable children is a priority for C&F Services.

7.5 Rural Community Implications

7.5.1 N/A

7.6 Human Resources Implications

7.6.1 There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

7.7 Public Health Implications

7.7.1 There are no public health implications associated with this report.

7.8 Other Implications

7.8.1 There are no other implications

8.0 Risk Management

8.1 The risk of schools falling below the national performance thresholds is managed through securing the best interventions for any schools identified as underperforming.

9.0 Access to Information/Bibliography

9.1 Documents attached:

Appendix 1:- Analysis of School's performance – provisional 2014-15.

Appendix 2 : - Maths performance tables

Appendix 3 : - Cared for Children summary tables.

10.0 Contact Information

10.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Mark Bayley

Designation: Corporate Manager

Tel No: 07770 322965

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To : **APPENDIX 1**
 From : Mark Bayley – Corporate Manager

Meeting Date : 30th November

Analysis of Cheshire East School's Performance PROVISIONAL 2014-15

- The following summary information is provided for each key stage based upon current **PROVISIONAL DATA**. Where available, national comparative is provided based upon initial First Statistical Releases (FSR) from the DfE for 2014-15.
- Whilst data is provided for the last two years, comparisons between each year is now considered statistically inappropriate due to the level of changes to assessment arrangements.

1. Early Years Foundation Stage

Currently, the key national indicator for this Key Stage is Good level of Development (GLD) which relates to achieving the expected level within 6 of the key areas of learning – e.g. literacy, communication & language. In total, there are 17 early learning goals which combine to an overall GLD.

Cheshire East Performance	2013-14	62.0%	National	60.4%
Cheshire East Performance	2014-15	68.4%	National	66.3%

The increase in GLD in CE this year is 6.4ppts compared to 5.9ppts nationally.

There is a 15ppts difference in gender this year – in line with national trends

OF NOTE : Term of Birth is significant at EYFS. Results show this year that children born in the Autumn Term achieved 79.2% GLD compared to summer born where only 56.7% achieved this standard.

Children eligible for FSM have improved their GLD rates by 4.5% this year – up to 46.7%

A key measure at EYFS is the achievement gap for learners living in areas of disadvantage (lowest 20%). For 2014-15, the gap has reduced by 1.3% overall to 32.8ppts. This compares to a gap nationally of 33.9% and across the NW region of 37.3%.

Positive outcomes which show improvements better than national for GLD and a continuation of closing the achievement gap for areas of deprivation.

2. Phonics

Year 1 pupils achieving the required standard in phonics :

Cheshire East Performance	2013-14	79.0%	National	74.0%
Cheshire East Performance	2014-15	81.0%	National	77.0%

Year 2 pupils achieving the required standard - 2014-15 : 92% compared to 90% nationally

OVERALL : Positive profile for our young children regarding phonics

3. Key Stage 1

All Key Stage 1 results are based upon teacher assessments which are moderated by LA appointed staff. Assessments are in Speaking & Listening, Reading, Writing, Maths and Science

- a. Performance at Level 2+ : Overall results are down 1 or 2 ppts on the previous year - 92%/92%/89%/95%/93%
- b. Performance at Level 3+ : Overall results are in line with the previous year - 26%/34%/19%/29%/25%

4. Key Stage 2

End of Key Stage 2 results are assessed by TA or Test with the key national indicators being combined scores for Level 4 and Level 5 in Reading, Writing and maths.

Combined Level 4+

Cheshire East Performance	2013-14	84%	National	79%	Gap 5ppts
Cheshire East Performance	2014-15	81%	National	80%	Gap 1 ppt

Combined Level 5+

Cheshire East Performance	2013-14	31%	National	24%	Gap 5ppts
Cheshire East Performance	2014-15	26%	National	24%	Gap 2 ppts

Our drop of 5 ppts this year was unexpected. CE was one of 41 LAs which saw a decrease in L5+ results compared to only 6 in the previous year. National ranking 33rd and 6th against Statistical Neighbours.

Expected progress : All results are in the 90%+ range but Reading is down 2ppts to 92%, writing down 1 ppt to 94% and maths down 3 ppts to 90%

This is the first time in the last 3-4 years where we have seen a clear dip in achievements at the end of KS2.

OVERALL : Significant work commenced to address dips in performance :

- ACTIONS – Primary Conference and work undertaken with Primary Executive to address issues. Agreed focus across all localities on Maths where largest decline. Analysis shows that learners were not accessing higher level marks especially girls. Each Locality is currently submitting Action Plans to identify areas for development

Key Stage 4 Results

There are four key national measures for the end of Key Stage 4

a. 5A*-C including English and Maths

Final 2013-14 Figure	Cheshire East: 61.5%	National : 56.8%	Gap : 4.7ppts
Provisional 2014-15 :	Cheshire East : 61.5%	National : 56.3%	Gap : 5.2ppts

Across the NW region, results show that 17 LAs have seen a decline in results compared to previous year and 5 have increased. Cheshire East is only unchanged LA. CE is ranked 2nd compared to 23 NW LAs and 3rd compared to our statistical neighbours. Further analysis places CE 26th compared to all LAs nationally. This is the same ranking as the previous year.

b. 5A*-C grades

Final 2013-14 Figure	Cheshire East: 71.1%	National : 65.8%	Gap : 5.3ppts
Provisional 2014-15 :	Cheshire East : 71.8%	National : 65.8%	Gap : 6.0 ppts

CE is ranked 25th compared to all LAs nationally and 3rd compared to the 23 NW LAs. CE is ranked first against statistical neighbours.

c. Expected progress in English

Final 2013-14 Figure	Cheshire East: 74.3%	National : 73.0%	Gap : 1.3ppts
Provisional 2014-15 :	Cheshire East : 71.4%	National : 71.4%	Gap : 0.0 ppts

Across the NW region, results show that 19 LAs have seen a decline in results compared to previous year and 4 have increased. CE is ranked 7th compared to 23 NW LAs. Compared to all LAs, CE is ranked 80th and 8th compared to Statistical Neighbours.

d. Expected progress in Maths

Final 2013-14 figure	Cheshire East: 67.1%	National : 66.7%	Gap : 0.4ppts
Provisional 2014-15 :	Cheshire East : 70.5%	National : 67.8%	Gap : 2.7 ppts

Across the NW region, results show that 11 LAs have seen an increase in results compared to previous year. CE is ranked 4th compared to all LAs (up from 71st in the previous year) and 3rd compared to 23 NW LAs. Against our Statistical neighbours, CE is ranked 6th.

OVERALL : Whilst our current 5A*-C figure is unchanged, our overall performance has not seen the trend of decline this year which some LAs have experienced. Some CE schools have been significantly effected by English grade boundaries. Cheshire East tends not to perform as well on progress measures KS2 – 4 compared to other LAs.

5. Post 16 – A level

14 Cheshire East secondary schools have discrete Key Stage 5 provision. Principally, key measures relate to learners achieving Level 3 (mainly A Level qualifications

In terms of learners achieving at least 2 A*-E

Level 3 qualifications –	2013-14 final was 99.2%	National 98.4%
	2014-15 current is 98.8%	National 98.0%

Students achieving 3 A*-A grades in 2014-5 is 9.8% which is the same as national

Students average points score per entry for 2014-15 is 215.6 (C+) which is slightly above the national figure.

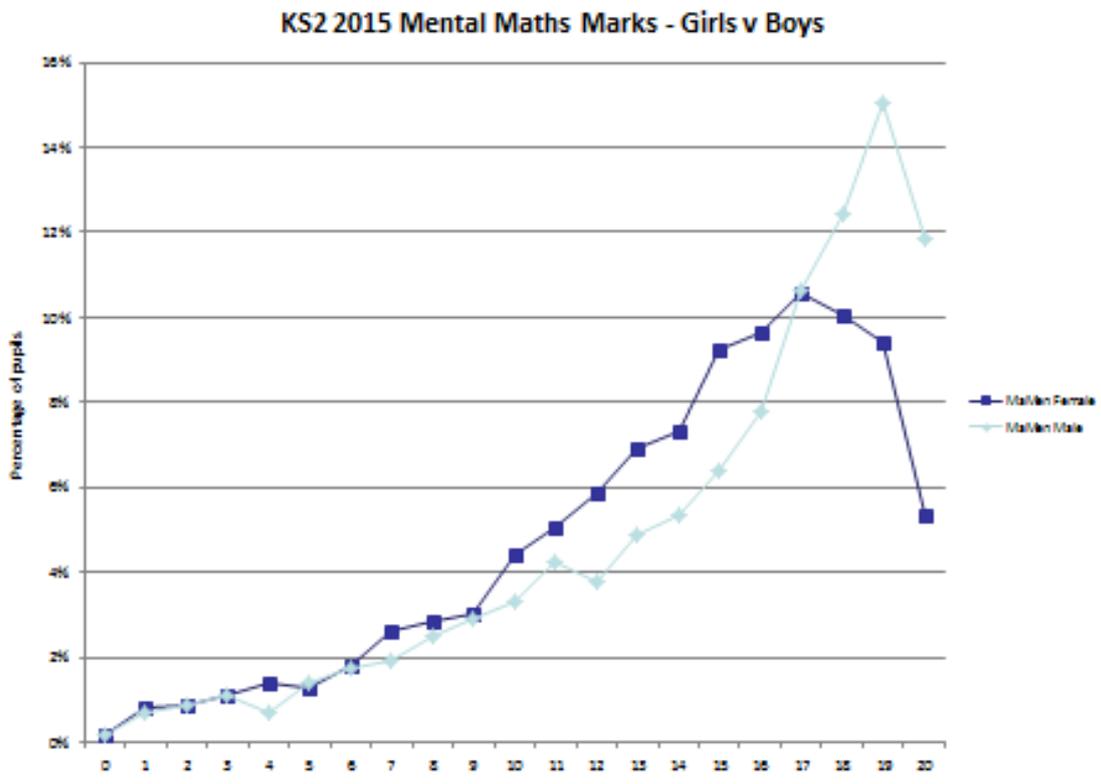
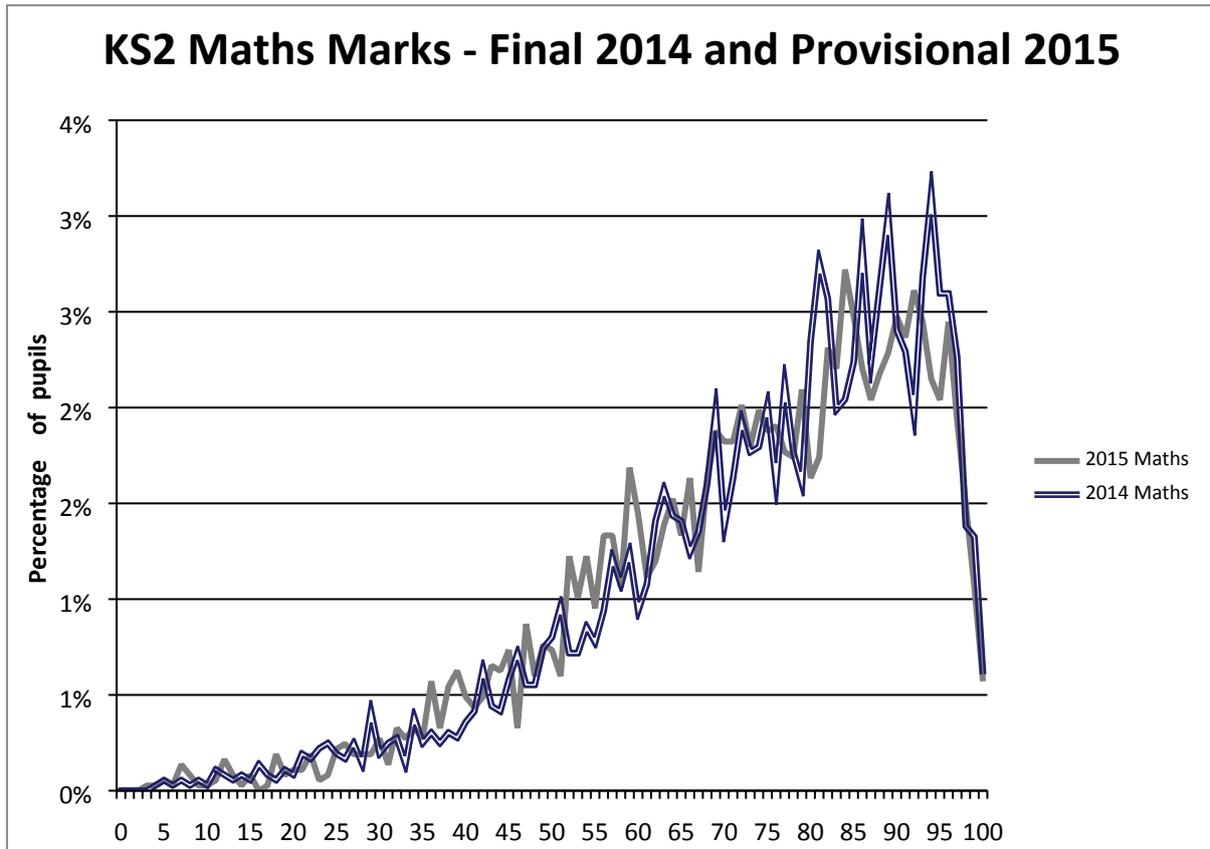
OF NOTE : Key to comparisons at post 16 is the type of institution – national figure includes specialist Post 16 institutions and the entry requirements for students.

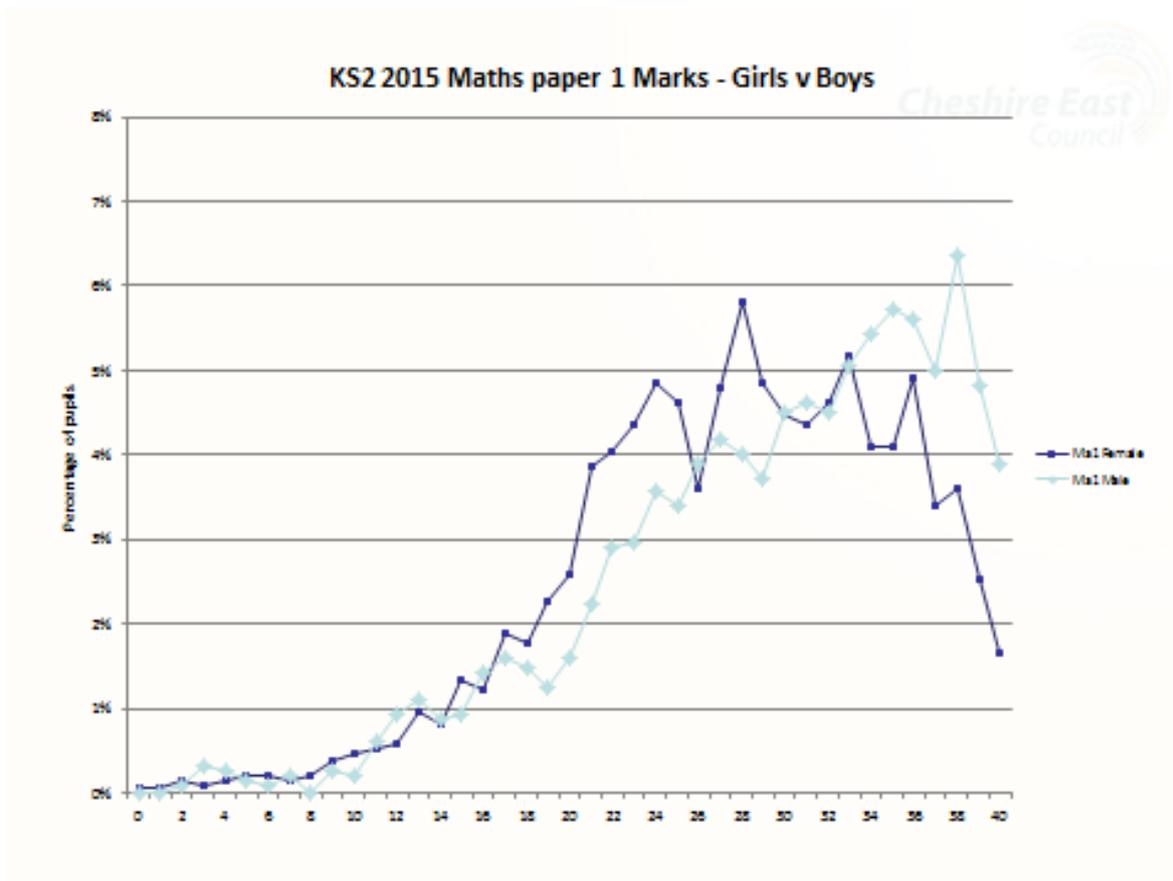
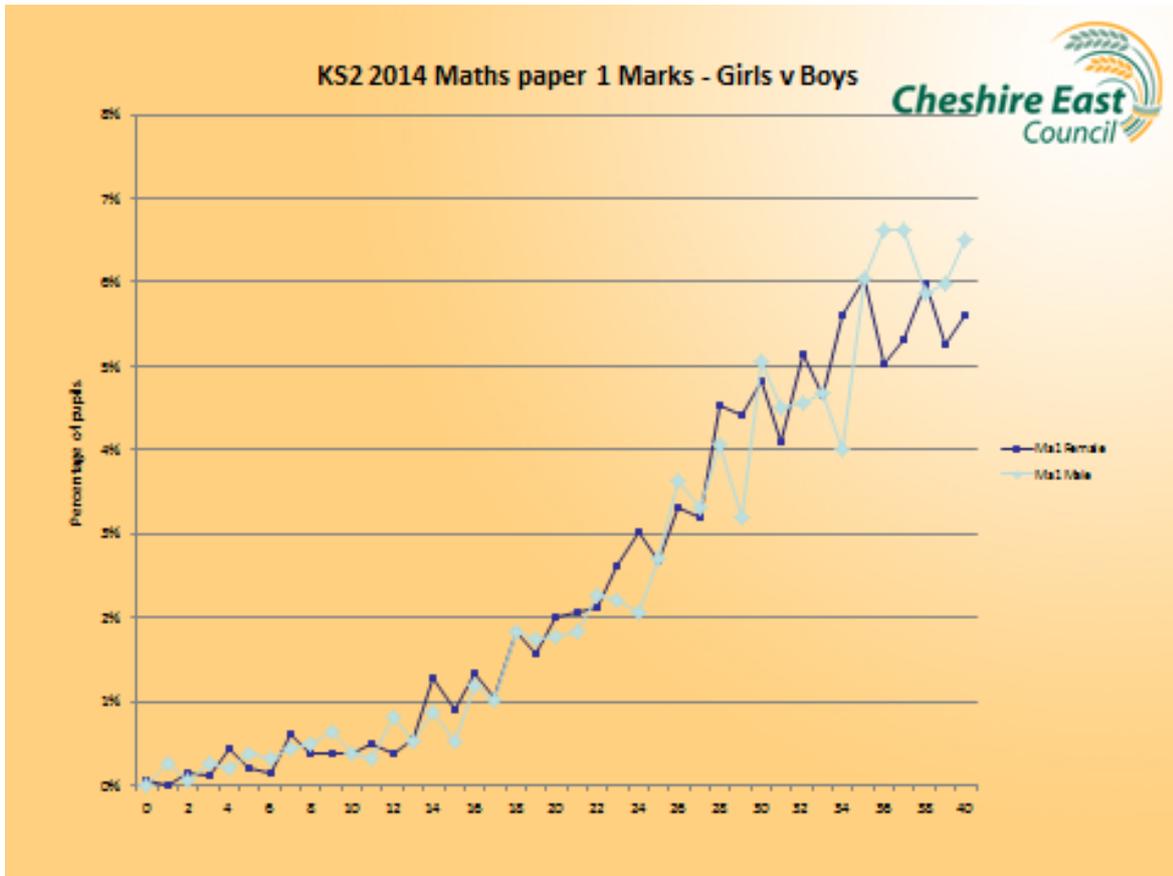
6. Cared for Children – See Appendix 3**7. KEY NATIONAL AGENDA – COASTING SCHOOLS** - Definition important as schools judged as coasting will be eligible for intervention from the government in the proposed Education & Adoption Bill following Summer 2016 results.

Refer to revised Schools Causing Concern Consultation document.

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Appendix 2 : Key Stage 2 Maths Performance





APPENDIX 3 : Cared for Children Outcomes**2. Educational Outcomes**

All cared for children are supported through their tests and exams so that they can achieve their best possible results but the data in these tables relates to the 'eligible cohort', which is those children who have been in continuous care since 31st March 2014 and were still in care on 31st March 2015.

Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5)

Early Years	Cohort	Achieved expected level personal, social and emotional development	Achieved expected level in communication and language	Achieved Good Level of Development in all areas	Percentage achieved Good Level of Development in all areas
Cheshire East 2014	7	4	4	3	43%
Cheshire East 2015	5	3	2	1	20%

Two of the children have SEN and a further two have identified speech and language needs necessitating specialist intervention which has been provided either through Speech and Language Therapy Team or funded by the Virtual School.

KS1 (Age 7)

KS1	Cohort	L2 Reading	L2 Writing	L2 Maths	L2 RWM
Cheshire East 2014	12	67%	50%	58%	50%
Cheshire East 2015	6	50%	50%	56%	50%
Making age expected progress in Y2 2015	6	83%	83%	83%	83%

There were only a small number of children in this group. Based on the outcomes of the EYFS it was predicted that only 2 children (33% of cohort) would attain the expected level at KS1 Four of these children have SEN in this cohort and have made progress although their attainment is Level 1 or below.

KS2 (Age 11)

KS2 tests	Cohort	L4 Reading	L4 Writing	L4 maths	L4 RWM
2014	20	71%	62%	71%	52%
2015	16	75%	60%	69%	50%
Making age expected progress from KS1 to KS2 in 2015	16	88%	75%	88%	69%

All the children have been supported during the year and have had bespoke support packages in place. Some children who did not make their expected progress showed very high levels of anxiety before and during the tests and where this was the case they narrowly missed their target grade.

Seven of the children in this cohort have SEN with six attending special schools.

KS4 (age 16)

	Cohort Size	Number 5+A*-C inc. Eng./ma	% 5A*-C inc. Eng./ma
2014	27	4	15%
England 2014			16%
2015	24	6	25%

All the pupils in this group have received intensive support during the year. At the start of the year there were 7 pupils who had not school due to placement moves and arrangements were made for all of these to have a full curriculum with the opportunity to complete at least 5 GCSE (or equivalent) courses, including English and maths. This included 1:1 tutoring, work experience and vocational courses. Data was collected from school regularly and the predictions made in January suggested that 4 pupils (16%) were on line to gain 5+A*-C including English and maths.

10 pupils (40%) have statements/EHCP for MLD or BESD. Of these 2 were educated in maintained special schools and 2 in independent schools.

KS5 (age 18)

19 Young people have completed FE or A level courses in 2015 - outcomes are shown below

Type of course/venue	Number	Outcomes	Notes
Entry at Special school	7	All making progress	Most to continue to Y14
Entry-L2	10	All completed course	
L3 Vocational/A levels	5	All passes	A level passes – all to HE or next stage of vocational training

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Report To:- Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 November 2015
Report of: Barbara Dale, School Organisation and Admissions Manager
Janine Smart, Capital and Land Development Manager
Subject/Title: School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Children and Families Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider and offer advice on the School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework attached as Appendix 1 together with the Pupil Forecasts based on October 2014 School Census attached as Appendix 2
- 1.2 The strategy will drive the Local Authority's approved Capital Strategy and provide the mechanism for discussions and decisions to be made and acted upon by the Local Authority, the Diocesan Boards of Education, other formal groups as well as individual schools.
- 1.3 The presentation to Scrutiny committee will consist of a range of key documentation which illustrates the process which is followed and allows Scrutiny members to offer feedback. A key part of the presentation will be to raise awareness and explore varying factors which relate to this complex area. Following Scrutiny, this process will then be the subject of consultation with all elected members and schools.
- 1.3 A priority for Cheshire East Council is to work in partnership with its key stakeholders when reviewing pupil forecasts. Agreement has therefore been reached to establish a representative group to facilitate collaborative working at an early stage. The School Organisation Strategy Group (SOSG) will have responsibility for reviewing pupil forecasts and contributing to the identification of basic need requirements; for considering existing school accommodation when formulating options for change and for making recommendations to the Local Authority and other proposers, taking into account all relevant DfE legislation and guidance, which is relevant to all categories of maintained schools unless explicitly stated. The membership will also have a key responsibility for making recommendations to inform school organisation procedures and decision making. The Constitution and Terms of Reference document for SOSG is attached as Appendix 3.
- 1.4 The Local Authority's agreed procedure for decision-making in respect of school organisation proposals is referred to within the document, attached as Appendix 4, including the procedures required in law or government guidance for making changes such as opening, closing or expanding schools.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Children & Families Scrutiny Committee is recommended to approve the School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework and associated documents.

3.0 Other Options Considered

3.1 There are no other options to be considered

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty, as strategic commissioner of schools places, to provide sufficient places for their residents and work within legal requirements in relation to school organisation, which include duties to consult and invite representation in response to public notices. It is therefore essential that the key priorities that underpin this role are accepted.

5.0 Background/Chronology

5.1 As previously stated the Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for their residents and to deliver these within legal requirements in relation to school organisation.

5.2 Annual forecasts are produced and these are used to determine sufficiency of school places across the Borough and highlight the need for change in oversubscribed areas. The forecast data generated annually is submitted to the Education Funding Agency for the purpose of identifying basic need capital allocations. Accurate and consistently derived forecasts of pupil numbers are therefore essential.

5.3 The Local Authority forecasts demand for school places based on groups of schools (planning areas) that reflect local geography, reasonable travel distances and patterns of supply and demand. Officers are in the process of reviewing the current planning areas, which will be presented, in the first instance, to the School Organisation Strategy Group in November 2015 inviting feedback and recommendations before any changes are proposed.

5.4 The Children's Services Capital Strategy sets out the capital investment priorities for Children's Services. Capital funding for the provision of additional pupil places arriving from demographics is provided by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in form of the Basic Need Grant.

5.5 Where new housing has an impact on education provision, developer contributions are requested through Section 106 obligations. Further information regarding the process can be found in Appendix 5 (S106 letter to schools)

5.6 School Organisation considers the impact of pupil numbers as a result of housing and determines the timing and location of capital projects on school sites. Schools sites are reviewed for the suitability for expansion, the process for which is set out in the attached Appendix 6.

6.0 Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

5.1 All Wards

7.0 Implications of Recommendation

7.1 Policy Implications

7.1.1 The School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework will support the authorities statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for its residents and contribute to setting priorities for capital expenditure.

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2.1 Local authorities that fail to comply with the law are in breach of their statutory duty and risk interested parties bringing legal proceedings against them in the High Courts. This can result in a local authority's decision being placed on hold or overturned, which could harm its ability to ensure the availability of sufficient places, its reputation and, if it is obliged to pay excessive legal and other costs.

7.2.2 It is therefore essential that the Local Authority has procedures that demonstrate why it has come to a particular decision and that facilitate compliance with the law. However, it is also important that any such policy is sound, as once the policy is in place, the Local Authority is expected to comply with the policy and its decisions can be challenged if the policy has not been followed.

7.3 Financial Implications

7.3.1 The Local Authority's Capital Programme provides the framework within which Capital spending decisions within the Department will be made.

7.3.2 The Framework will inform and incorporate the strategic capital investment priorities of the Department. These priorities are reviewed each year. The Framework will also inform and incorporate elements of the Section 106 Department Policy. The aim is to maximise all legitimate developer contributions. Therefore, the School Organisation Framework will need to accurately reflect the current surplus school places and illustrate the need for places both across the Borough and by identifying areas requiring particular focus.

7.3.3 In developing the Capital Programme the Council will seek to maintain the principle that the school requirements are funded by grants provided specifically for schools, which has traditionally been funded by a Basic Need Grant from the Department for Education.

7.4 Equality Implications

7.4.1 The School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework is expected to improve outcomes across the borough for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families by ensuring the provision of sufficient school places within a reasonable distance to their home address.

7.5 Rural Community Implications

7.5.1 In order to protect small and rural schools, any identified need for reorganisation involving a small or rural school will include, as a first priority, consideration of the benefits of collaboration and federation, the importance of schools in the communities and distance to other schools.

7.6 Human Resources Implications

7.6.1 There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

7.7 Public Health Implications

7.7.1 There are no public health implications associated with this report.

7.8 Other Implications

7.8.1 There are no other implications

8.0 Risk Management

8.1 The risk of not having an agreed Framework for the planning and provision of school places is that the Local Authority could fail to meet its statutory duty to commission sufficient places for children and young people resident in its area.

9.0 Access to Information/Bibliography

9.1 Documents attached:

- Appendix 1:- School Organisation and Capital Strategy Framework
- Appendix 2:- Pupil Forecasts based on October 2014 School Census.
- Appendix 3:- School Organisation Strategy Group (SOSG)
- Appendix 4:- Decision Making Process (SOSC)
- Appendix 5:- Section 106 letter to schools.
- Appendix 6:- School Sites Assessment

10.0 Contact Information

- 10.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Designation: School Admissions and Organisation Manager

Tel No: 01270 686392

Email: Barbara.dale@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Cheshire East Council School Organisation Framework

DRAFT

If you would like further information about this document, please contact:
socs@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Forward

This framework document supports the six priorities set out in the Cheshire East Children and Young People's Plan (2015-2018), as set out below:

1. Children and young people will be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives and communities;
2. Children and young people feel and are safe;
3. Children and young people experience good emotional and mental health and wellbeing;
4. Children and young people are healthy and make positive choices;
5. Children and young people leave school with the best skills and qualifications they can achieve and the life skills they need to thrive into adulthood;
6. Children, young people and young adults with additional needs have better chances in life.

Its purpose is to provide the framework within which the Local Authority will work to ensure that it meets its statutory duty (under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996) to ensure a sufficiency of school places for children resident in its area.

Following changes introduced in the Education Act 2011, local authorities must seek to commission rather than provide the school places that it identifies are necessary to meet future demands by working alongside a wide range of partners including schools, academy trusts and sponsors of academy chains. The framework provides the mechanism for discussions and decisions to be made and acted upon by the Local Authority, the Diocesan Boards of Education, other promoters and individual schools and will drive the Local Authority's approved Capital Strategy, which is published on the Local Authority's website at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk. The Local Authority's agreed procedure for decision-making in respect of school organisation proposals is referred to within this document, including the procedures required by law or Government guidance for making changes such as opening, closing or expanding schools.

Demographic pressures nationally can impact on existing patterns of cross-border movement. Cheshire East is classed as a 'net importer' of pupils, which is derived from a comparison between the number of children resident in other authorities attending a Cheshire East publicly funded school and the number of Cheshire East resident children attending the same category of schools in other authorities. The proportion of parents and carers accessing school places in neighbouring local authorities may change as unused places reduce in those authorities and create an unknown additional pressure.

'In year' mobility, which includes movement of pupils from one Cheshire East school to another, children transferring from schools in other local authority areas and children from other countries new to the area can only be facilitated where there is a level of operational surplus across the Authority. Operational surplus is considered necessary to accommodate reasonable journey times to school, some degree of parental choice, and flexibility to allow for these mid-year entrants. The Local Authority recognises the need for effective school place planning to deliver sufficient school places to optimise parental preference, but is also aware of the conflict between having too few unused places and the negative impact that this could have

on 'in year' movement and parental preference and on schools and their ability to manage budgets effectively if too many unused places are provided resulting in increased competition and uncertainty.

New housing developments are recognised as an obvious potential source of increased demand for school places. The Council is in the process of preparing a development plan (Cheshire East Local Plan), which will form the basis for planning decisions in the Borough. It will set out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and policies for the development of Cheshire East for the period up to 2030. The Local Plan will provide the 'development strategy' for the Borough, setting out the overall number of homes and employment land that will be needed in Cheshire East to 2030

The Local Authority will only commit to policies and practices which will eradicate discrimination and promote equality for all, regardless of age, gender, disability religion and belief, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation. This policy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. This assessment will be integral to all future policy and guidance reviews.

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Forward

Summary of Key Policies (Priorities)

1. Introduction
2. Capital Investment
3. Housing Developer Contributions
4. Asset Management
5. General Guidelines
6. Working in Partnership
7. Data Sources
8. Forecasting
9. Net Capacity Assessments
10. Primary School Reviews
11. Secondary School Reviews
12. Increasing Capacity
13. Process for Change
14. Decisions on School Organisation Proposals
15. Conclusions

Links to documents referred to within this framework:

Children and Young People's Plan (2015-2018),
Local Authority's approved Capital Strategy
(insert link to the corporate calendar – SOSC decision making process agenda item)
Education Act 2011
School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England)
Regulations 2013 and
(Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013
SOSG Terms of Reference and Membership
School Admissions Code (December 2014)
Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order -
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-primary-schools-designation>

For further information please contact socs@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Summary of Key Policy (Priorities)

The process of school organisation will involve:

- extending existing schools by permanent extensions or exceptionally introducing temporary buildings;
- commissioning new schools, with the priority being for academies and free schools in the first instance, in accordance with legal requirements;
- promoting collaboration - multi academy trusts, amalgamations, federations.
- reducing places at existing schools, for example by removing or relocating temporary buildings or changing the use of spaces;
- reorganising provision by relocating or closing schools, introducing a change in age range or special needs;
- reviewing catchment areas.

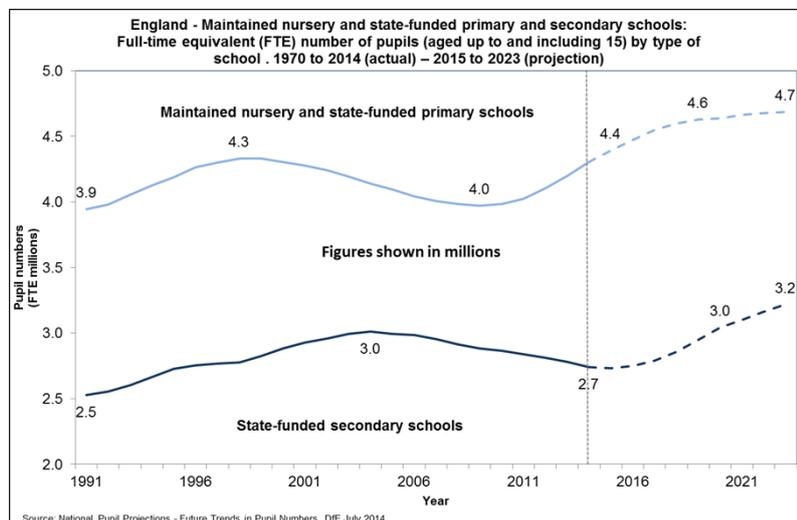
School places will be monitored on an area basis using planning areas, which will be reviewed annually.

Annual reviews of pupil forecasts will be implemented to ensure demand and supply of school places are closely aligned, as far as possible, and in accordance with the targets set out on this document.

The Department for Education basic need capital allocations are made to local authorities to support the capital requirement for providing new pupil places by expanding existing maintained schools, free schools or academies, and by establishing new schools. Shortfalls in capacity are calculated by comparing the forecast pupil numbers in an academic year to capacity in each planning area with uplift by 2 per cent being applied at planning area level to support an operating surplus. The Local Authority will apply a 2 per cent operational surplus for each planning area in line with the level of surplus capacity funded by the Department for Education as part of the basic need calculations.

Maintaining a sufficient level of operational surplus is important to optimise parental preference. Increased demand for places in the primary sector requires changes in some areas due to low levels of unused places and insufficient places in some year groups to meet demand. At secondary level, current unused places need to be protected so that places will be available when primary growth feeds through.

It is therefore prudent to plan for additional capacity over the derived need on the basis that national indications, as shown below, are that demand will continue to grow:



New schools will be established, where possible, as free schools or academies, in line with statutory requirements.

The general presumption will be that any new provision commissioned by the Local Authority will be primary, secondary special or all-through.

As more academies are established decisions about changes to school sizes or organisation will be for those academies to progress and secure through the Education Funding Agency and the Secretary of State with the support of the Local Authority. Cheshire East Borough Council will work with the Church of England and Catholic Dioceses and other stakeholders, including academy sponsors and the DfE, to ensure that there is a balance of provision in its area.

Academy is the legal term which also includes free schools of all types, university technical colleges (UTCs) and some studio schools, including 16-19 and alternative provision (pupil referral units/PRU) establishments

Where it is identified that a new primary school is needed, the first priority will be to consider establishing a school with single aged classes. In some cases this will not be possible due to the number of additional places needed in the area and class organisation. For some areas, mixed aged/vertically grouped teaching arrangements may be necessary to meet demand in rural areas or due to the wishes of the local community.

Any new school built as 1 form of entry (FE) should, if possible, have a site and infrastructure suitable for future development to 2 FE.

The majority of schools in Cheshire East are 2 forms of entry (420 pupil places) or below with only 2 out of 124 primary schools with the capacity to admit beyond this. For most primary schools, expansion beyond 2 forms of entry will be limited due to the size of the school and its site.

Any proposal to reorganise existing provision will involve consideration of many factors, including:

- The pattern of parental preference (popular schools).
- The latest Ofsted inspections (successful schools)
- The extent to which a school actually admits pupils from its local community, taken as the designated catchment or local area generally served by the school;
- The nature of the site, accessibility to it and scope for expansion;
- Whether the community is of sufficient size to sustain the school;
- The school's ability to deliver a full range of curriculum and social experiences;
- Ease of access to other schools;
- Proximity to, and pupil yield from new housing development;
- The physical condition of the school premises.

In order to protect small and rural schools, any identified need for reorganisation involving a small or rural school will include, as a first priority, consideration of:

- The benefits of collaboration and federation
- The community importance of schools
- Distance to other schools

Feedback from key stakeholders on proposals for changes to schools will be implemented to ensure that the Council meets its duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations. Procedures will also be informed by school organisation related DfE guidance and statutory procedures. Separate procedures apply to proposals that involve changes to Academies of all types. The Local Authority is neither the proposer nor the decision maker on such matters but can provide information about the need for additional school places in the area.

Decisions on School Organisation changes proposed by the Local Authority for maintained provision will be made in accordance with the Local Authority's agreed decision-making procedure, which was determined on 27 May 2014. For proposals made by the Local Authority that do not attract statutory objections, these will be determined by Cabinet. Proposals that do attract statutory objections will be presented to a Cabinet sub committee, which will be set up for the Council so that it can exercise its function as the relevant decision maker under Schedule 2 Education and Inspections Act 2006. Objectors will be provided with the opportunity to present their case to the decision makers. Cabinet has also adopted this procedure for the determination of other non statutory education organisation proposals which have attracted objections. This procedure allows representatives from the Chester(CE) Diocesan Board of Education, the Diocese of Shrewsbury Catholic Education and any other body or person the proposer considers appropriate to attend and offer advice to the Sub Committee where the proposals impact on their sector of educational provision. This procedure can be accessed by following the link provided on the contents page.

The Local Authority's Capital Strategy sets out the capital investment priorities for Children's Services. Developer contributions will be sought to fund additional provision arising from new housing.

The Local Plan Strategy, which is currently being prepared, sets out the Council's case for sustainable economic growth and is the strategy that the Council wants to adopt to manage development in Cheshire East up to 2030. The Local Plan Strategy includes the Council's planning policies and sites allocated for development. It is the Statutory Development Plan for Cheshire East and is the basis for deciding planning applications. It will cover a range of matters including the number of new homes that are needed across the Borough and where they should be located and the provision of new infrastructure, including such matters as school places. The new Local Plan, once agreed, will inform the school place planning process.

1 Introduction

All local authorities are under a strategic duty to

- review provision and establish future demands (S14, Education Act 1996);
- commission sufficient school places for CE resident children (Education Act 2006);
- promote choice, diversity, fair access and respond to parental representations when planning school places (Education Act 2006);
- identify and work with sponsors to establish an Academy as first priority when a new school is needed (The Education Act 2011).

The Education Act 2011 explicitly focuses on the role of the local authority as commissioner of school places. This framework is not intended to identify school organisation requirements for specific schools. However, the priorities agreed by the Council, as set out within this document, will provide appropriate information for the Local Authority and other proposers when a need for change has been identified and solutions are being formulated. In compliance with statutory requirements, the first priority for the Local Authority when seeking to establish a new school will be find suitable sponsors to establish an academy or free school.

Current DfE guidance makes clear that local authorities should match school place supply as closely as possible to parental preference and this can require different proposals in relation to unpopular and academically weak schools. The new emphasis on supplying enough good places rather than removing unused places supports the presumption in favour of the expansion of successful and popular schools and a consequence of this is that action may also be necessary to remove unused capacity in nearby schools.

This framework recognises the need to manage places on an area basis and in line with changing demographics. Judgements about how best to manage school places across the Borough are not only concerned with ensuring that there are sufficient places available, but also about enhancing the quality of provision where unused places are considered for removal and promoting the highest possible standards where additional places are required.

The Cheshire East School Admissions Coordination Scheme sets out the Authority's agreed process for coordinating applications for school places. The scheme allows parents three school preferences. All preferences are considered on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria and only if more than one school can potentially be offered is the preference ranking used, with a single offer being made for the school ranked highest. In order to maintain customer satisfaction with the admissions process, the Local Authority will need to carefully monitor demand for school places and align its provision, as far as practicable, to meet any changes.

Schools receive funding based on the number of pupils that are admitted each year. If the supply of school places exceeds demand in an area, falling admissions will reduce funding and this can create challenges for the school in managing class organisation and staffing levels. The Local Authority must therefore assess the risks in delivering too many school places in area against the desire to optimise parental choice through the admissions process.

2 Capital Investment

The Local Authority's Capital Strategy sets out the capital investment priorities for Children's Services. Developer contributions will be sought to fund additional provision arising from new housing. Capital funding for the provision of additional pupil places arising from demographics is provided by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in form of the Basic Need Grant. This along with the Capital Maintenance grant from the EFA forms the Children's Services Capital Funding for schools.

The first consideration for the allocation of this funding is to ensure school place demand and supply is closely aligned, as far as possible.

Wherever practical, pupils from new housing developments are accommodated at existing schools where sufficient permanent capacity already exists. Where additional places have to be provided, with the co-operation of the Local Planning Authority the Local Authority may seek to secure a developer contribution to fund the provision of the additional permanent places needed. This might involve contributions towards the expansion of an existing school or full or part payment of a new school. Housing development will only be taken into account within the pupil forecasts when there is some level of certainty that the development will occur within the timeframe of the Plan. Certainty will be measured as the point at which developer contributions have been agreed. It is important to note, however, that all pupil yields generated from developer enquiries and planning applications will be taken into account in the order they are received when calculating subsequent developer contributions due to their cumulative effect on the demand for school places.

3 Housing Developer Contributions

The need for new housing within Cheshire East is expected to increase as a result of predicted increases in population, changes to family sizes and dynamics and changes to the age profile of the area. The Council is in the process of formulating its Local Plan for the period 2010 to 2030. The Local Plan is made up of several documents including the Local Plan Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Policies document.

The five year housing trajectory figures published by each Local Planning Authority in their Annual Housing Monitoring Reports are used to provide the estimated phasing of housing developments. It must be recognised, however, that the actual developments and the rate at which new houses are built depends on a mixture of economic and social factors. House builders may prove unwilling to develop all the sites identified and may likewise apply for permission to construct dwellings on alternative pieces of land..

Infrastructure (including the provision of extra school places) required directly as a result of new housing development is provided through monies raised from Section 106 Agreements in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). In the future Section 106 is going to be complemented with a CIL charging schedule, a levy which local authorities can choose to charge on new developments in its area to provide infrastructure. The levy is intended to be fairer, faster and more transparent than the current system of negotiating planning obligations between local councils and developers.

It is a statutory responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure the provision of sufficient suitable school places for children residing within its boundary. The Organisation and Capital Strategy Team therefore works in partnership with the Council's Planning Department to monitor development within the Borough. This is to ensure that procedures are implemented to assess the impact on local school infrastructure.

In all cases, a pupil yield will be applied to determine the anticipated number of additional school-aged children to an area. This is an established and widely used methodology for school place planning that estimates the number of pupils generated by development.

If existing schools in areas of growth have insufficient capacity to accommodate pupils generated by development then a financial contribution will be sought to mitigate against the impact of the developments. This contribution is calculated on a per pupil basis using a multiplier issued by the Department for Education.

In some instances it may not be feasible to extend a local school or there may not be sufficient pupil places in the local area to cope with the increase in numbers. In this instance a new school will be required to cater for new development and the Local Education Authority will expect the developer to provide a level, clear, uncontaminated, fully serviced and accessible site free of charge, in addition to the full build cost. New schools, land and buildings will be based on the Department for Education recommendations, which is currently Building Bulletin 103 Building, Framework for Primary and Secondary schools. If required, suitable site checklist is available upon request. In circumstances where the development is not large enough on its own to warrant a new school but is of sufficient size to trigger the need for a new school, then the developer will be expected (as above) to provide the site, plus a proportionate share of the new build costs. For example if the development

generated 50% of the pupils, then a 50% contribution will be sought toward the cost of a new school.

School capacity is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) sufficiency net capacity calculation and reflects the long term organisation of the school.

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4 Asset Management

In order to ensure that capital investment is used efficiently and as effectively as possible the Local Authority maintains Asset Management Plan (AMP) information in partnership with schools and Dioceses. The AMP data provides the means through which likely future needs are assessed, criteria for prioritisation are set and informed decisions on local spending are made. The AMP data for condition and suitability is maintained for those schools for which the LA has liability for capital maintenance, and this excludes academies, free schools and voluntary aided schools. The AMP has the following main elements:

Condition Surveys - These provide a systematic, informed and objective assessment of the physical state of the premises and the work needed to bring the premises up to suitable state of repair.

Suitability Assessment - Suitability is defined as how well premises meet the needs of pupils, teachers and other users, and contribute towards raising standards of education. Assessments also deal with some aspects of health and safety requirements. Suitability assessments focus on how well premises are helping in delivery of the curriculum, and contributing towards the raising of educational standards at the school.

Sufficiency Needs/Capacity - The capacity assessment of a school is the number of pupil places available. Net capacity is the measure of places that applies to all mainstream community, voluntary-aided, voluntary-controlled and foundation schools in England. Net capacity assessments do not apply to academies, free schools, nursery schools, special schools or pupil referral units. The capacity of Academies is based on the number of places the school has agreed to provide as reflected in the school's funding agreement or as subsequently amended.

5 General Guidelines

The DfE statutory guidance accompanies the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that came into force on 28 January 2014. The guidance provides information on the procedures involved in making significant changes to maintained schools, including expansion (enlargement of premises), establishing new provision and school closure. Separate procedures apply to academies and these are set out in the Department's guidance entitled 'Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy Guidance 2014'.

The new school organisation regulations support the Government's aim of increasing school autonomy and reducing bureaucracy. They allow schools to have more control when making decisions about their size and composition and therefore enable them to be more responsive to the needs of parents and local communities.

The 2013 Regulations allow governing bodies of all categories of mainstream school to make the changes listed below without following a formal statutory process. The Local Authority can also make these changes but it must follow the statutory procedures set out within the guidance.

- Expansion (enlargement of premises);
- Alteration of upper or lower age limit by up to two years (except for adding or removing a sixth-form); and
- Adding boarding provision.

There are other significant changes (prescribed alterations) that governing bodies and local authorities may propose, which are listed below, but these do require a statutory process in all cases.

- Alteration of upper or lower age limit by 3 years or more;
- Adding/removing a sixth-form;
- Removing boarding provision;
- Single sex school becoming co-educational or vice versa;
- Transferring to a new site;
- Closure of one site in a split site school;
- Removing selective admission arrangements at a grammar school;
- Changes of category (excluding changes of category to foundation7);
- Establishing/removing/altering SEN provision at a mainstream school;
- Alteration of upper or lower age limit at a special school;
- Increasing/decreasing pupil numbers at a special school; and
- Changing the types of needs catered for by a special school.

The Education Act 2011 sets out the priority for local authorities of identifying and working with sponsors who will take over weaker schools and transform them into academies. In undertaking this role, local authorities will be able to use their wider position in local regeneration, employment and community development and their knowledge of existing schools to seek sponsors and partners who will fit with the character of the local community and help raise aspirations.

Local authorities will also play a role in commissioning new provision and overseeing the transition of failing schools to new management. The Government plans to

consult with local authorities and academy sponsors on what role local authorities should play as strategic commissioners when all schools in an area have become academies.

Where it has the power to do so, the Local Authority will seek to optimise the size of schools to ensure that resources are not wasted by maintaining inappropriately sized provision. However, there are many factors to be considered, such as the distance to alternative provision and the potential for extended school activities within the community.

It will be assumed that some new demand for places can be met in unused capacity. This can be a more cost effective way of providing additional school places and, as such, it is assumed that this will be done whenever possible. However, it is also acknowledged that unused capacity is often not in the right place, for example due to new housing and population movement. Therefore, the assumption is that some growth will need new provision. Factors affecting the extent to which existing capacity can be used include local geography and transport.

It is prudent to plan for additional capacity over the derived need and therefore operational surplus at 2 per cent per planning area will be applied as a benchmark. The purpose of this is to optimise parental preference and provide a level of surplus that provides contingency for pupil mobility and removal into an area, whilst also seeking to ensure that the provision of school places is not only cost effective but also provides good quality education that is sustainable.

School places will be monitored in the first instance on a planning area basis. The purpose of focusing on planning areas is not to restrict pupil movement but to plan provision at a local level. It is recognised within this overall framework that schools form planning areas driven by their location and the pattern of demand from parents for school places. All publicly funded schools, regardless of their status, will be included in this analysis.

Where new schools are needed, careful consideration will be given to the most effective form of organisation, governance and leadership for the new school. This will include consideration of federations and trusts and all through arrangements. In line with the Government's priority, where a new school is needed the priority will be to seek bids from sponsors for the establishment of an academy or free school.

The general presumption will be that any new provision to be commissioned by the Local Authority will be primary, secondary, special or all-through and that a judgement will always need to be made about the size of individual schools, how effectively they can operate and the needs of individual communities, such as whether a school is in a rural or an urban location.

The size of primary and secondary schools will vary across the Borough according to local needs and circumstances. The Local Authority therefore sets no limitations on these factors. However, a key priority for this Local Authority is that all children should be educated, wherever possible, in schools of a sufficient size to ensure appropriate staffing levels for effective curriculum delivery. In making any proposal for closure or reorganisation of school provision, consideration will be given to the ability of the school to provide effective educational and social provision for each child.

Any proposal to reorganise provision will involve consideration of the following:

- The pattern of parental preference (popular schools).
- The latest Ofsted inspections (successful schools)
- The extent to which a school actually admits pupils from its local community, taken as the designated catchment or local area generally served by the school;
- The nature of the site, accessibility to it and scope for expansion;
- Whether the community is of sufficient size to sustain the school;
- The school's ability to deliver a full range of curriculum and social experiences;
- Ease of access to other schools;
- Proximity to, and pupil yield from new housing development;
- The physical condition of the school premises.

In order to protect small and rural schools, any identified need for reorganisation involving a small or rural school will include, as a first priority, consideration of:

- The benefits of collaboration and federation
- The community importance of schools
- Distance to other schools

Notwithstanding the information set out here, when planning the provision of school places, the Local Authority will need to take into account that any changes to academies, free schools, studio schools and UTCs are outside its control and therefore; whilst recommendations can be made, any proposal for change will be the responsibility of the academy trust with a final decision being the responsibility of the Secretary of State.

6 Working in Partnership

In determining the number of school places that will be needed in future years, the first priority will be to review provision through informal consultation with the School Organisation Strategy Group (SOSG). A priority for the Local Authority is to work in partnership with its key stakeholders when reviewing pupil forecasts. The Local Authority has therefore established a representative group to facilitate collaborative working at an early stage. To reflect the needs of local communities and the different types of schools across the Borough, the SOSG membership will consist of representatives of the local authority, schools, dioceses, parents and the local community.

The membership has a key responsibility for making recommendations to the Local Authority to inform school organisation procedures and decision making. The SOSG will take into account the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, which is relevant to all categories of maintained schools unless explicitly stated.

SOSG will receive school organisation information, including the annual pupil forecasts and school site information, in order that a collaborative approach to the planning and provision of school places can be taken. The SOSG will also consider the impact of new housing and its effect on demand for school places.

The SOSG's primary objective is to review school capacity and make recommendations to the Local Authority for ensuring a sufficiency of pupil places; optimising parental preference, as far as possible, whilst avoiding over provision in some schools, and taking into account fluctuations in pupil numbers with associated management and financial impact.

The SOSG will make recommendations to assist the Council in its long term strategy, which will identify demand for places over a five year period. These recommendations will be referenced in decision-making procedures.

A link to the School Organisation and Strategy Group's terms of reference and membership is provided on the contents page.

7 Consultation and Representation

The School Organisation Regulations and Government guidance specify the duties on proposers in relation to school organisation proposals. Where statutory procedures are required, these will be followed. There is no statutory duty to consult but proposers must adhere to the usual principles of public law, which requires that they,

- act rationally;
- take into account all relevant considerations; and
- follow a fair procedure.

The views of the Cheshire East Association of Secondary Headteachers (CEASH) and East Cheshire Association of Primary Headteachers (ECaph), which are headteacher representative groups, will be sought on any school organisation proposals.

Where changes are planned, effective consultation will be undertaken with parents and other interested parties to gauge demand for a proposed change and to provide them with sufficient opportunity to give their views.

Consultation on proposals made by governing bodies will be referred to the Local Authority's SOSG to ensure that, wherever possible, a proposal is aligned with wider place planning/ organisational arrangements.

Although there is no statutory requirement on academies to consult the Local Authority (LA) on changes to its school, it is recognised that the LA will have a view on the need for local places and should therefore be consulted on any proposals for change. The guidance issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) sets out the procedures for academies when undertaking significant changes, which includes an eight weeks consultation period with its key stakeholders, including parents. The consultation should, where possible, coincide with other consultations e.g. on admissions, if it is related to admissions arrangements. The academy will need to submit a business case to the EFA and will need to include information on the consultation undertaken and its outcome.

8 Data sources

It is fundamental to the development and assessment of the School Organisation Strategy to analyse demographic information relevant to the supply of school places. This includes:

- the numbers of pupils in the Borough and projected pupil numbers
- birth rate data and population forecasts
- Pre-school data (Nursery Education Grants 'NEG' data)
- the published admission numbers for each school
- the number on roll at each publicly funded school within the Borough
- catchment area data
- current net capacity
- unused places
- shortfall in places
- cost per pupil
- number of sixth form places

In addition, information will be collated on,

- Projected NOR in five years (primary) and seven years (secondary) time
- Popularity of school expressed as percentage of pupils within the school catchment attending the school
- Ofsted reports and measures
- School site issues
- Proposed and approved housing developments

9 Forecasting

A project undertaken by the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER), and summarised in its April 2012 report entitled 'Report for the Local Government Association - School Place Mapping', aimed to identify how local authorities establish the need for school places. One of its key findings is that many authorities demonstrate detailed knowledge of the circumstances of individual schools in their area, but it is acknowledged that 'it is not possible, and arguably not desirable, to attempt to derive a five-year forecast on the basis of school level data', recognising that forecasting for five years ahead means a significant margin of error.

The report states that in a 'relatively stable environment... the numbers of school age children are obviously an essential basis for planning school places'. But, with recent instability due to population change and movement, 'accurate and detailed forecasts' are needed' (NFER, 2012)

It is also acknowledged that inefficient forward planning also means insufficient notice to put new capacity in place and thereby reducing the number of options for change available to the Local Authority and putting greater reliance on the use of existing accommodation and places.

Pupil forecasts are estimates of the number of pupils that are likely to attend maintained schools and academies/free schools within the Borough over the next five years. The projections are based on School Census data and are reviewed annually. Demand for school places is therefore informed by DfE defined capacity calculations and pupil projections. The number of pupils admitted to a school is also informed by admissions policy, which is determined by the relevant admissions authority. For

academies, free schools, foundation and voluntary aided schools, this is the role of the governing body. The availability of places is therefore influenced by policy choices and decisions on admission at a local level.

The 2012 version of the School Admissions Code delivered greater freedoms for admission authorities that want to increase their intakes with the requirement to consult on increases in published admission numbers being removed and a reinforcement of the presumption in favour of the expansion of popular and successful schools. This was reiterated in the revised School Admissions Code (December 2014) and it is therefore considerably more difficult for local authorities to challenge admissions number decisions made by other admission authorities.

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10 Net Capacity Assessments

The capacity figures for primary and secondary schools have been calculated using the Department for Education's (DfE's) 'net capacity assessment method' of assessing the capacity of mainstream schools to accommodate pupils. The method provides the opportunity for capacities to be set at levels to suit reasonable admission arrangements and organisation of schools (including infant class size limits) and ensures that there is neither too much nor too little space to support the core teaching activities.

For primary schools, the net capacity is calculated on the basis of the number and size of spaces designated as 'class bases'. For secondary schools, it is based on the number, size and type of time-tabled teaching spaces and the age range of the school. In both cases, this is checked against the total usable space. Net capacity assessments do not apply to academies, nursery schools, special schools or pupil referral units. The capacity of academies is based on the number of places the school has agreed to provide as reflected in the school's funding agreement or as subsequently amended.

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11 Primary School Reviews

When reviewing provision and planning for additional schools within an area due to additional demand, the priority will be to deliver all-through primary schools and not separate infant and junior schools. It is considered that this will provide continuity of experiences and ultimately an overall higher quality of educational achievement and experience.

Priority will also be to establish new primary schools with single aged classes, as far as possible. However, when seeking to establish new provision, the minimum size of a school will be informed by the identified need for additional places in the area and taking into account class organisation which may necessitate mixed aged/vertically grouped teaching arrangements in some schools.

The establishment of free schools, which are all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to demand from within local communities, can mean that schools of varying sizes and governance arrangements can be established irrespective of the priorities of the Local Authority.

Any new school built as 1 form of entry (FE) should, if possible, have a site capable of development to 2 FE, and be built with infrastructure (e.g. hall size) that can be added to easily.

The majority of schools in Cheshire East are 2 forms of entry (420 pupil places). For most primary schools, expansion beyond 2 forms of entry may be limited due to the size of the school and its site.

Small schools make an important contribution to the overall provision in Cheshire East, particularly in rural areas, where, without such schools, children could have to travel significant distances to the next nearest school. There is a current Government presumption in favour of keeping small schools open and therefore, where it is identified that changes are necessary, the first consideration will be to the benefits of collaboration and federation.

Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires that relevant bodies must have regard in formulating any proposals in relation to a rural primary school to,

- the likely effect of the discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- the availability, and likely cost to the local education authority, of transport to other schools;
- any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school.

12 Secondary School Reviews

DfE guidance indicates that assumptions should not be made that schools need to be of a certain size before they can be good schools.

The LA would like to see all teaching groups of below 30 pupils. However, a lower maximum size will be needed in the following circumstances:

- Where specialist accommodation has health and safety limits;
- For groups of children with special needs.

Where reviews of secondary school provision are undertaken, consideration should be given, through collaboration with the Cheshire East 14-19 team, to providing opportunities and facilities, where appropriate, to increase the number of post 16 children in education and training.

13 Increasing Capacity

Where a LA considers there is a need for a new school in its area it must seek proposals to establish an academy/free school.

New school proposals are possible outside the academy presumption and competitions, but only in a limited number of circumstances, for which the Secretary of State's consent is required under section 10 of the EIA 2006 except for in a very limited number of special cases, which are listed below.

- a new community or foundation primary school to replace a maintained infant and a maintained junior school;
- a new voluntary-aided school;
- a new foundation or voluntary school resulting from the reorganisation of existing faith schools in an area, including an existing faith school losing or changing its religious designation;
- a new foundation or community school, where suitable academy/free school proposals have not been identified and a competition has been held but did not identify a suitable provider;
- a former independent school wishing to join the maintained sector;
- and
- a new LA maintained nursery school.

In deciding the proposer with whom he will enter into a funding agreement, the Secretary of State will consider the assessments and preferences of the LA carefully. However, she reserves the right to put in place a sponsor of her own choice. The intention is to ensure that the school is always established by the best proposer possible.

The LA is responsible for providing the site for the new school and meeting all associated capital and pre-/post-opening costs. All new academy/free school proposals require the Secretary of State's approval and it is the Secretary of State who will enter into a funding agreement with the academy trust/sponsor.

Where there is a forecast need for additional places in an area, then consideration would first be given to determining whether the increased demand could be met by expanding existing schools in the area concerned. However, not all school sites will be suitable for expansion and, as such, this cannot be guaranteed. Therefore, where

the disadvantages of such a proposal outweigh the advantages, then alternative proposals; which can include the expansion of other schools in the area or the construction of a new school, may be brought forward.

DfE guidance indicates that all proposals should be considered on their individual merits and that decision makers must not make blanket assumptions that schools need to be of a certain size before they can be good schools.

Where additional accommodation is required in schools for a relatively short period of time, for example when an unusually large year group needs to be accommodated, or a school admits additional pupils from a new housing development whilst a new school is built, then temporary classrooms may be provided.

Permanent accommodation will, wherever possible, be provided where growth is likely to be sustained for the foreseeable future, and where there is an identified long-term need.

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14 School Closures

Local authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential.

LAs therefore have the power to close all categories of maintained schools. Where a LA publishes proposals to close a school the Department for Education has no direct role in the decision-making process. All decisions related to school closures are taken locally following a statutory process to allow those directly affected by the proposals to feed in their comments.

The governing body of a voluntary, foundation, or foundation special school may also publish proposals to close its own school following a statutory process. Alternatively, it may give at least two years' notice of its intention to close the school to the Secretary of State and the LA.

The Secretary of State may direct a local authority to close a maintained school requiring special measures (under section 68 of EIA 2006). This will usually be done only where there is no prospect of the school making sufficient improvements and where there is a sufficient supply of alternative school places in the area.

There is a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.

When deciding a proposal for the closure of a rural primary school, the decision-maker must refer to the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order to confirm that the school is a rural school. It is for the decision-maker to determine whether or not a secondary school should be considered as rural.

When formulating a proposal, the proposer must carefully consider:

- the likely effect of the closure of the school on the local community;
- educational standards at the school and the likely effect on standards at neighbouring schools;
- the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase;
- and
- any alternatives to the closure of the school.

In order to assist the decision-maker, the proposer of a rural school closure should provide evidence to the decision-maker to show that it has carefully considered:

- alternatives to closure including the potential for federation with another local school or conversion to academy status and joining a multi-academy trust or umbrella trust to increase the school's viability;
- the scope for an extended school to provide local community services and facilities e.g. child care facilities, family and adult learning, healthcare, community internet access etc.;
- transport implications; and

- the overall and long term impact on local people and the community of closure of the village school and of the loss of the building as a community facility.

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15 Process for Change - New Schools and Expansions

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to plan for and secure sufficient schools for its area in line with its duties under section 14 of the Education Act 1996.

Where there is a need for change, the Local Authority will comply with the current DfE guidance, which accompanies the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that came into force on 28 January 2014. It provides information on the processes involved in making significant changes to maintained schools (e.g. expansion), establishing new provision and school closure.

The School Organisation regulations support the government's aim of increasing school autonomy and reducing bureaucracy. They allow schools to have more control when making decisions about their size and composition and therefore enable them to be more responsive to the needs of parents and local communities. As a consequence of the changes introduced by the 2013 Regulations, governing bodies of all categories of mainstream school can now make the following changes to their schools without following a formal statutory process:

- Expansion (enlargement of premises);
- Alteration of upper or lower age limit by up to two years (except for adding or removing a sixth-form); and
- Adding boarding provision.

Before making any changes governing bodies should ensure that:

- they have secured any necessary capital funding;
- they have identified suitable accommodation and sites;
- they have secured planning permission and/or agreement on the transfer of land where necessary;
- they have the consent of the site trustees or, other land owner where the land is not owned by the governing body;
- they have the consent of the relevant religious authority (as required); and
- the admissions authority is content for the published admissions number (PAN) to be changed where this forms part of expansion plans, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

Although governing bodies are no longer required to follow a statutory process for the alterations set out above, they are nevertheless required to adhere to the usual principles of public law: they must act rationally; they must take into account all relevant considerations; and they must follow a fair procedure. The department expects that in making these changes governing bodies will:

- liaise with the LA and trustees/diocese (if any) to ensure that, where possible, a proposal is aligned with wider place planning/organisational arrangements, and that any necessary consents have been gained; and

- ensure effective consultation with parents and other interested parties to gauge demand for their proposed change(s) and to provide them with sufficient opportunity to give their views.

Once proposed changes have been implemented, the governing body must inform the Secretary of State by ensuring that the department's Register of Educational Establishments (EduBase) is updated.

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16 Decisions on School Organisation Proposals

Decisions on School Organisation proposals for maintained schools will be made in accordance with the Local Authority's agreed decision-making procedure. The exception to this will be where prior agreement has been reached for the governing body **BD to Edit**

Expansions at a mainstream school that do not require a physical enlargement to the premises of the school are not covered by the Prescribed Alterations Regulations. An increase in pupil numbers may be achieved solely by increasing the PAN in line with the School Admissions Code.

Decisions on School Organisation proposals for academies/free schools will be made by the relevant trust.

17 Conclusion

The Local Authority has already experienced difficulties in some areas of the Borough. In particular, pressure on school places at the normal point of entry into the reception classes has necessitated admission above the Published Admission Number for a number of schools for the past two years to ensure that a place can be offered at a school within a reasonable distance. Movement into the area during the school year has also presented problems for these areas with most year groups being full.

The national picture of a rising birth rate over the last six to seven years has already required additional primary provision in many authorities. This is now starting to have an impact on secondary provision.

New housing developments are an obvious potential source of increased demand for school places. However, there is more uncertainty about the pace and impact of housing developments. The issue for the Local Authority is therefore when to introduce additional school places to address any potential change arising from new housing, recognising that increasing capacity in an area too early can impact on local schools and, moreover, if the new housing is not delivered. This risk has to be balanced against the risk of having insufficient places to meet demand arising from any known new housing proposals.

There is general acceptance across local authorities that forecasting by moving cohorts forwards through time, and working from birth data to establish the likely starting population, is a sensible starting point. One of the key issues for this Local Authority is the need to fully understand recent trends, including increasing birth rates and population changes and to produce analysis at a local level in order to plan school places effectively. This involves consideration of when and where growth in the birth rate requires changes to primary and secondary provision, how population movement, both migration (new arrivals) and local (within and between areas) is changing the pattern of demand for places, and how major changes in the housing market and uncertainty over new developments inform planning.

A key priority for the Local Authority must therefore be to improve, as far as possible, accuracy of predictions and the development of effective forecasting methodology. Notwithstanding this, it is recognised that there are difficulties in planning effectively when demand for school places is driven by school reputation and parental preference, which can be volatile. Furthermore, the proportion of parents currently accessing school places in neighbouring local authorities may also change as

unused places reduce in those authorities creating an unknown additional pressure within the home authority. Changes in patterns of housing may also impact on provision in other local authorities.

As more academies are established decisions about changes to school sizes or organisation will be for those academies to progress and secure through the Education Funding Agency and the Secretary of State with the support of the Local Authority. This also has the potential to impact on the Local Authority's ability to plan effectively and therefore close working with the Church of England and Catholic Dioceses and other stakeholders, including academy sponsors and the DfE, is necessary to ensure that there is a balance of provision in the area.

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Appendix 2 – October 2014 Based Pupil Forecasts By Area

Primary Forecasts By Area 2015 to 2019

Area	Net Capacity as at 01.05.2015	Forecast NOR (Basic Need)					Forecast NOR (With Housing)				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Alsager	1,365	1,336	1,382	1,387	1,399	1,411	1,341	1,414	1,462	1,500	1,524
Bollington	622	590	594	580	574	561	590	594	590	590	575
Congleton	2,892	2,709	2,691	2,638	2,607	2,598	2,726	2,723	2,740	2,732	2,721
Crewe	5,510	5,466	5,570	5,605	5,644	5,662	5,486	5,640	5,724	5,787	5,823
Holmes Chapel	1,186	1,028	998	969	959	933	1,042	1,024	1,015	1,011	981
Knutsford	1,522	1,461	1,467	1,492	1,502	1,490	1,461	1,467	1,495	1,505	1,493
Macclesfield	5,092	4,605	4,746	4,801	4,879	4,928	4,605	4,767	4,849	4,933	4,981
Middlewich	1,150	985	1,017	1,024	1,045	1,051	1,018	1,066	1,079	1,104	1,106
Nantwich	2,912	2,695	2,682	2,646	2,639	2,616	2,720	2,758	2,791	2,820	2,814
Poynton	1,438	1,384	1,369	1,356	1,341	1,334	1,384	1,369	1,363	1,354	1,352
Sandbach	2,020	1,941	1,956	1,911	1,912	1,865	1,974	2,070	2,108	2,159	2,140
Shavington	1,330	1,307	1,341	1,370	1,380	1,386	1,307	1,395	1,470	1,509	1,529
Wilmslow	2,946	2,694	2,741	2,798	2,855	2,877	2,694	2,746	2,809	2,872	2,898
Total (Cheshire East)	29,985	28,201	28,554	28,577	28,736	28,712	28,348	29,033	29,495	29,876	29,937

Please note that whilst unit-level data are provided in this report to allow for further calculations and analysis, the forecasts cannot be guaranteed to be as exact as the level of detail implied by unit-level data. It should also be remembered that all forecasts become increasingly inaccurate the further into the future they go.

Source: Cheshire East October 2014 school census based pupil forecasts

Secondary Forecasts By Area 2015 to 2021 (Year 7-11, Basic Need)

Area	Net Capacity as at 01.05.2015 (year 7-11 only)	Forecast NOR Year 7-11 (Basic Need)						
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Alsager	1,125	1,044	1,016	991	1,024	1,009	1,009	1,022
Congleton	1,800	1,452	1,466	1,525	1,609	1,621	1,648	1,645
Crewe	3,138	2,478	2,473	2,493	2,585	2,701	2,741	2,834
Holmes Chapel	1,050	1,035	1,023	1,021	1,030	1,005	989	974
Knutsford	1,450	918	894	876	887	904	916	931
Macclesfield	3,864	3,372	3,397	3,464	3,540	3,607	3,696	3,734
Middlewich	700	652	631	614	617	628	627	637
Nantwich	2,100	1,976	1,994	2,044	2,059	2,075	2,077	2,071
Poynton	1,230	1,235	1,223	1,229	1,247	1,247	1,260	1,276
Sandbach	2,124	2,047	2,057	2,095	2,096	2,205	2,219	2,242
Shavington	850	542	558	568	567	592	605	623
Wilmslow	1,500	1,542	1,559	1,602	1,637	1,675	1,727	1,753
Total (Cheshire East)	20,931	18,293	18,291	18,522	18,898	19,269	19,514	19,742

Please note that whilst unit-level data are provided in this report to allow for further calculations and analysis, the forecasts cannot be guaranteed to be as exact as the level of detail implied by unit-level data. It should also be remembered that all forecasts become increasingly inaccurate the further into the future they go.

Source: Cheshire East October 2014 school census based pupil forecasts

Secondary Forecasts By Area 2015 to 2021 (Year 7-11, With Housing)

Area	Net Capacity as at 01.05.2015 (year 7-11 only)	Forecast NOR Year 7-11 (With Housing)						
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Alsager	1,125	1,048	1,041	1,048	1,107	1,109	1,112	1,125
Congleton	1,800	1,462	1,488	1,602	1,712	1,736	1,767	1,766
Crewe	3,138	2,495	2,528	2,590	2,707	2,841	2,894	2,982
Holmes Chapel	1,050	1,040	1,034	1,049	1,075	1,057	1,042	1,025
Knutsford	1,450	918	894	878	889	906	918	933
Macclesfield	3,864	3,372	3,412	3,507	3,596	3,667	3,757	3,793
Middlewich	700	677	666	657	667	680	677	687
Nantwich	2,100	1,994	2,047	2,153	2,210	2,268	2,311	2,340
Poynton	1,230	1,235	1,223	1,234	1,257	1,262	1,276	1,292
Sandbach	2,124	2,067	2,134	2,239	2,297	2,457	2,508	2,555
Shavington	850	542	597	645	670	713	739	755
Wilmslow	1,500	1,542	1,563	1,612	1,651	1,694	1,749	1,780
Total (CE)	20,931	18,392	18,627	19,214	19,838	20,390	20,750	21,033

Please note that whilst unit-level data are provided in this report to allow for further calculations and analysis, the forecasts cannot be guaranteed to be as exact as the level of detail implied by unit-level data. It should also be remembered that all forecasts become increasingly inaccurate the further into the future they go.

Source: Cheshire East October 2014 school census based pupil forecasts

APPENDIX 3**SCHOOLS ORGANISATION STRATEGY GROUP****CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE****Introduction**

As the strategic commissioner of school places, the Local Authority (LA) has responsibility for ensuring sufficiency of suitable school places for children residing within its boundary and, in accordance with the latest School Organisation regulations¹, supports the government's aim of increasing school autonomy by allowing schools to have more control when making decisions about their size and composition.

The Local Authority's School Organisation Strategy Group (SOSG) is therefore constituted for the purpose of partnership working to allow key stakeholder involvement at an early stage in the planning process.

Government guidance issued for those proposing to open, close or make changes to schools (e.g. governing bodies and LAs), decision-makers (LAs, the Schools Adjudicator and governing bodies), and for information purposes for those affected by a proposal (dioceses, trustees, parents etc.), will inform the SOSG process.

Membership

To reflect the needs of local communities and the different types of schools across the Borough, the SOSG membership will consist of representatives of the local authority, schools, dioceses, parents and the local community.

Members will be appointed to the SOSG by the Local Authority and will comprise of membership, as set out below:

Core Membership	Number	Comments
Representatives of Cheshire East Local Authority	9	To represent the various service areas covering education from 0-25.
Church of England Diocese	1	Nominated by the Chester Diocesan Board of Education.
Roman Catholic Church Diocese	1	Nominated by Diocese of Shrewsbury
ECaph	1	Chair or Vice Chair - East Cheshire Association of Primary Headteachers
CEASH	1	Chair or Vice Chair - Cheshire East Association of Secondary Headteachers
Governors	2	Nominated by the Cheshire East Association of Governing Bodies – 1 primary, 1 secondary.
Representatives of the local community	TBC	TBC - Nominated by Head of Communities TBC

¹ [The School Organisation \(Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#) [The School Organisation \(Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools\) Regulations 2013](#)

Appointment and Tenure of Members

Persons appointed to the SOSG as members will hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of their appointment and, on ceasing to be members of the SOSG, are eligible for reappointment.

No person may be appointed as a member for a period exceeding 4 years

Any member appointed will vacate office if he or she ceases to be a member of the group being represented, or is removed from office following a recommendation of the core members.

Alternate Members

Members can nominate, by giving written notice to the secretary, alternate members as representatives at meetings in their absence, who must also be a member of the group being represented. The alternate member can vote at meetings in the absence of the core member provided they fall into the same category as the member and have the support of the group they represent.

Election to Office

Chair and vice chair are elected at the first meeting and at meetings every year thereafter. Chair and vice chair can resign their office by written notice to the secretary.

Secretary to SOSG

The members must appoint a person, nominated by the Local Authority, who is not a member of the SOSG, to act as secretary.

SOSG Meetings

Procedure at meetings will be regulated by the core members themselves

Meetings must be held at least twice per year. The first meeting will be convened in the spring term and a mid-point meeting in June/July.

It is the duty of the secretary or, in the absence of the secretary, of the Local Authority, to notify every member at least two weeks in advance of the time and place of each meeting. Documentation pertaining to agenda items must, where possible, be provided to members at least two weeks in advance of the meeting to allow members to prepare for the meeting.

In any vote, the vote will be carried by a simple majority of those members present and, in the case of equality of votes, the chair, or in their absence the vice-chair, has a second or casting vote.

Establishment of Sub-Committees

Where a sub-committee is established, the SOSG is responsible for determining the sub-committee's:

- (a) membership and constitution;
- (b) procedure for convening and holding meetings;
- (c) issuing of advice and recommendations.

Purpose and Functions of the SOSG

The SOSG will have responsibility for reviewing pupil forecasts and contributing to the identification of basic need requirements; for considering existing school accommodation when formulating options for change and for making recommendations to the Local Authority and other proposers.

The SOSG will provide advice and recommendations to Local Authority management, in accordance with the agreed internal decision-making procedures and to elected members and publicly funded schools within its area.

The SOSG's objective is to review school capacity and make recommendations for ensuring a sufficiency of pupil places; optimising parental preference as far as possible whilst avoiding over provision in some schools that can lead to higher levels of pupil mobility, fluctuations in pupil numbers with associated management and financial impact; and taking into account all relevant legislation and DfE Guidance.

A key priority for the SOSG will be to consider a review of school place planning areas to ensure these are fit for purpose, reflecting pupil distribution and links between local schools.

Managing the supply of school places needs to be informed by robust evidence of future demand. Detailed analysis of current numbers on roll, current demand for school places (using admissions data) and live birth data will be undertaken to determine projected pupil numbers and future demand in planning areas across the Borough. Outcomes will be presented to the SOSG to begin the annual review process.

The SOSG will consider the impact of new housing and its effect on demand for school places.

The SOSG will make recommendations to assist the Council in its long term strategy, which will identify demand for places over a five year period.

The recommendations of the SOSG will be reported to the Local Authority in accordance with established procedures (Currently EST, SMT, CLB)

Consultation

The School Organisation Regulations and Government guidance² specify the duties on proposers in relation to school organisation proposals. Where statutory procedures are required, these will be followed. There is no statutory duty to consult but proposers must adhere to the usual principles of public law: they must act rationally; they must take into account all relevant considerations; and they must follow a fair procedure. The recommendations of the SOSG will be referred to in any consultation or briefing undertaken.

The outcomes of the SOSG process will, in the first instance, be presented to headteachers via CEASH and ECaph representative groups.

Where changes are planned, effective consultation will be undertaken with parents and other interested parties to gauge demand for a proposed change(s) and to provide them with sufficient opportunity to give their views.

Consultation on proposals made by governing bodies will be referred to the SOSG to ensure that, where possible, a proposal is aligned with wider place planning/organisational arrangements.

Endorsement

The SOSG is the Strategy Group for the area covered by Cheshire East Council. Its Constitution has been agreed by the Council's EST and SMT officer groups on 19 February and 24 February 2015 and the Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults Portfolio Holder.

²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278418/School_Organisation_Guidance_2014.pdf

Cheshire East Council

Procedure for considering statutory school reorganisation proposals and other non statutory education reorganisation proposals

1. Decisions to publish statutory proposals¹

Decisions to be taken by the Individual Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

2. Procedure for considering statutory school reorganisation proposals and decisions on non statutory education reorganisation proposals which do not attract objections

Decisions to be taken by Cabinet

3. Procedure for considering statutory school reorganisation proposals and decisions on non statutory education reorganisation proposals which attract objections

Decisions to be taken by a Cabinet School Organisation Sub Committee under the procedures set out below

School Organisation Sub Committee Procedure

The Cabinet has adopted the following procedure when exercising its function as the relevant decision maker under Schedule 2 Education and Inspections Act 2006 to consider school reorganisation proposals which attract statutory objections. The Cabinet has also adopted this procedure for the determination of other non statutory education organisation proposals which have attracted objections.

Decisions will be taken by a Committee comprising of 3 or 5 Cabinet members sitting as a Cabinet Sub Committee who will elect one member as Chair.

Representatives from the Chester(CE) Diocesan Board of Education , the Diocese of Shrewsbury Catholic Education and any other body or person the proposer considers appropriate will be invited to attend and offer advice to the Sub Committee where the proposals impact on their sector of educational provision. These are referred to within these arrangements as 'invited parties',

¹ Feedback from consultation will be presented to the Portfolio Holder at this stage. Although there is no longer a prescribed 'pre-publication' consultation period for prescribed alterations, there is a strong expectation on schools and LAs to consult interested parties in developing their proposal prior to publication as part of their duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations.

Part 1 - Meeting of the Sub Committee to be held in public.

Introduction

1. There will be a brief introduction by the Legal Adviser to the Sub Committee to explain the business which is being brought before the Sub Committee and how it will be considered.

Presentation of the Proposal

2. The Chair of the Sub Committee will ask the Proposer's Representative/s to present the proposal and responses to it. ²

Objections to the Proposal

3. The Chair of the Sub Committee will invite the Objector's Representative/s to make an oral presentation of their objection/s. ³

Questions/Responses to the Proposer

4. The Chair of the Sub Committee will invite the Objector to ask questions of/respond to the Proposer.

Questions/Responses to the Objector

5. The Chair of the Sub Committee will invite the Proposer to ask questions of/respond to the Objector.

Questions/Responses by Invited Parties to Proposer and Objector.

6. The Chair of the Sub Committee will invite any invited parties to ask questions of/respond to the Proposer and Objector.

Information Seeking by the Sub Committee

7. Sub Committee Members may ask the Proposer any questions about:
 - The case for the proposals.
 - The objections received.
8. Sub Committee Members may ask the Objector any questions about their objections.
9. Sub Committee Members may invite views or comments from relevant parties⁴ as they consider appropriate.
10. Sub Committee Members may invite views or comments from Elected Members.

² No more than 3 presentations and a maximum 15 minutes in total.

³ No more than 3 presentations and a maximum 15 minutes in total. Objectors are therefore invited to work together to co-ordinate their representations and to nominate no more than 3 representatives to speak on their behalf. Objectors are asked to notify the Democratic Services Officer to the Sub Committee of the name(s) of their representative/s in advance of the meeting.

⁴ 'Relevant parties' refers to those persons or bodies that the Sub Committee considers are most likely to be directly affected by the proposal.

Part 2 - Meeting of the Sub Committee to be held in private.

The Sub Committee will then meet in private and everyone else will be asked to leave the meeting at this point, save that elected members of the Council may remain present, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders relating to Council proceedings.

Review of Information

11. The Sub Committee, advised by the Legal Adviser, will consider whether it has sufficient information to come to a decision⁵, or whether more information, not available at the meeting, is needed.
12. When the Sub Committee considers that it has sufficient information to come to a decision, it will consider the issues having regard to each element of the relevant statutory Decision Makers guidance, which it is required to consider before reaching its decision.

Part 3 - Announcement of the Decision in public session

13. The Sub Committee's decision will be made in public following the private review of information session. The decision⁶ and the reasons for it will then be published on the Council's website within one week.

⁵ In exceptional circumstances where **significant additional information** is required which cannot immediately be provided, it may be necessary for the Sub Committee to adjourn whilst the necessary information is obtained.

⁶ Decisions by the Sub Committee remain subject to the Council's call- in procedures under the relevant Standing Order of the Council's Constitution.

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Children and Families

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SANDBACH
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Tel: 01606 271564

mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Date: Friday 13 November

OUR REF:MB/mw/CF75

Dear Headteacher Colleagues

RE: SECTION 106 TOWN & COUNTY PLANNING ACT 1990 (DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS)

In response to a number of school enquiries regarding the process to mitigate the impact of Housing Developments on School places, I write to provide specific information regarding the methodology for claiming Section 106 funds from developers and the process of determination for additional school places.

- Section 106 contributions are sought by Local Authorities as a means of mitigating against the impact of development on local infrastructure. This is a very wide ranging power that covers matters such as affordable housing, recreation, highways, health as well as education, where appropriate.
- The required obligations are contained within a legal agreement which is completed prior to the commencement of a particular development and must comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010.
- The CIL Regulations require that for a contribution to be justified, it must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to this development. CIL also limits the number of contributions which a Local Authority can pool towards a specific piece of infrastructure to five.
- The School Organisation and Capital Strategy seek contributions towards education infrastructure in the event that a development has a detrimental impact on school places.

- Each Local Authority has a Local Plan setting out planning policies and allocations for sites for development. This is a Statutory Development Plan and is the basis for deciding planning applications. Cheshire East Council submitted its Local Plan Strategy to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 20th May 2014 and it is currently undergoing an independent examination to determine whether it is sound and legally compliant.
- The educational requirements as a result of the local Plan will be determined through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- Whilst the Local Authority concludes its Local Plan requirements, developers continue to apply for permissions for unplanned development across the borough. The School Organisation and Capital Strategy team consider all applications made that consist of ten or more 2+ bed dwellings in relation to the educational impact. Since 2011 this has lent the team to review in excess of 250 planning applications.
- A multiplier is applied to the planning application in order for the service to anticipate the number of school aged children that can reasonably be expected. This equates to 19 primary pupils and 15 secondary pupils per 100 dwellings (of 2+ bedrooms). These yields are reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that they reflect the demographics of the borough – a review of this process is currently taking place. The table below demonstrates how Cheshire East methodology compares to other Local Authorities using information collated from the National Census.

Pupil yields		
Council	Primary	Secondary
Cheshire East Council	0.19	0.15
Derbyshire	0.20	0.15
Nottinghamshire	0.21	0.16
Leicestershire	0.24	0.20

- To understand the impact of the additional pupil numbers will have on the existing infrastructure the following methodology is applied; the number of existing pupil places (capacity) in schools within the locality are compared with the forecast demand, including the estimated housing pupil yield. If, as a result of a new housing development, demand is forecasted to exceed the number of pupil places during the planning period, a contribution would be sought from the developer based on a per pupil build cost derived by the Department for Education.

- On an average basis it is expected that 40 dwellings will be completed per developer per year working on a site.
- It should be noted that due to profit margins, it is common for a Section 106 contribution to be paid to the Local Authority through a phased programme related to the completion of the development. This in effect reflects that the phased increase in pupil numbers through the creation of the development.
- Where a need for new capacity has been identified, the school organisation process would involve an assessment of the schools in the area to determine which, if any schools could be expanded. Consultation with schools on the timing and location of capital projects would be undertaken before any final decisions are taken. When seeking to enlarge existing capacity, consideration would be given to the expansion of popular and successful schools and takes into account the potential for development on a school's site and proximity to the new development.
- To ensure a fair and transparent process, the Local Authority has established a School Organisation Strategy Group (SOSG) to facilitate partnership working by inviting key stakeholder involvement at an early stage in the planning process. The membership, which includes representatives of the Local Authority, Schools, Dioceses, parents and the local community, reviews pupil forecasts bi-annually and makes recommendations for change, taking into account a range of data and information including school admissions statistics, Ofsted outcomes, school site information and pupil distribution.
- The first scheduled meeting of SOSG is in March each year and this is to receive interim forecasts, which are based on the previous October's school census count. A further meeting is held in September each year for a review of final forecasts and to undertake further work as part of the options appraisal process.
- The School Organisational and Capital Strategy Framework , which includes the Council's priorities for ensuring a sufficiency of school places, the annual review of school places based on school census data, and schools' site appraisals will be presented to schools in the new year prior to publication on the Council's website. Schools will have the opportunity to feedback on this strategy framework prior to final approval.

In the longer term, the Council is also committed to implementing a Community Infrastructure Levy. Unlike Section 106 obligations which are tailored to individual sites, the Community Infrastructure Levy operates more widely and raises a standard contribution per square metre of development. This is then subdivided amongst the various community needs (such as education, health, recreation etc.) in each area. There will be a full engagement process before this new system is put in place.

I hope that this information proves helpful to you. If you have any specific questions or queries relating to the content of this letter please direct your responses as follows;

Methodology for claiming funds; Janine Smart, Capital and Land Development Manager : Janine.smart@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Determination of additional School Places; Barbara Dale, School Organisation Manager : Barbara.dale@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Bayley'.

Mark Bayley
Corporate Manager, Standards and Learning

School Sites – Impact of Building Expansions

Introduction

The increased demand for school places is a nationally discussed issue; this has already become problematic in some areas of Cheshire East Council. Rising birth rates, pending planning applications and proposed development in the forthcoming local plan will further exasperate the issue.

In light of this increasing demand the Education Funding Agency has carried out a number of reviews and subsequent updates to the guidance and legislation around school buildings and land.

This report considers the land implications of school alterations and expansions to enable the authority to identify the options available for the provision of additional places on existing school sites.

This report has been acknowledged by the School Organisation Strategy Group. The School Organisation Strategy Group's members consist of representatives for Local Authority, Diocese, Schools and Governors. The School Organisation Strategy Group accepted the methodology at the meeting dated 16th March 2015.

Background

There are two key pieces of legislation regarding school sites that must be taken into account, these are;

- **The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012**; these state that “suitable outdoor space must be provided in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum and pupils to play outside.” Replaces the Education School Premises regulations 1999.
- **Section 77 of the school standards and Framework Act 1998**; this framework seeks to protect schools playing field from a change of use or a disposal. The DfE guidance note published on S77 states “Local Authorities and schools will need to apply for consent to build on playing field land, for example when adding classrooms to expand successful and popular schools or to address the demand for pupil places”.

In addition to the legislation the Department also provides a guidance document;

Building Bulletin 103 (BB103) which sets out simple, non-statutory area guidelines for mainstream school buildings and sites. This replaces BB98 and 99.

It should be noted that a number of schools within Cheshire East that do not meet these guidelines for outdoor space.

Method of analysis

First consideration is made to review any class base size rooms that are not utilised for this purpose within the existing accommodation.

When considering playing field requirements all schools are considered within locations specified by School Organisation. Current playing field measurements and existing

accommodation is noted for each school. Schools are taken up to their next nearest half form of entry and analysed against the BB103 guidance. As a school grows, their accommodation and playing field requirements increase. Any shortfalls of build incurred by the desktop expansion (for example; class bases, hall extensions, group rooms etc) are included onto the building's footprint and taken from current playing field.

The analysis of school sites considers expansion to the next 0.5FE each time, i.e. an additional 0.5fe, 1.0fe, 1.5fe and so on. Each expansion is measured against BB103 guidelines for infrastructure and playing field and is recorded on a worst case scenario basis.

As School Premises Regulations do not specify a size with regards to outdoor play, thorough consideration has been made to the impact that changes may or may not have on a school after playing field has been reformed.

To assist in this consideration, the raw data formulated above is then processed to reflect remaining playing field against BB103 and displayed in a RAG rating format.

This process applies a 'tolerance' level to the guidance. Through a desktop review, sites can be categorised into the following four categories;

- 1) Site will remain to be 80% of the recommended playing field after expansion
- 2) Site will remain to be 70-79% of the recommended playing field area after expansion
- 3) Site currently has 70%+ of the recommended playing field area but it will be left under 70% after expansion.
- 4) Site is already below 70% of the recommended playing field area so not suitable for expansion

When the tolerance is applied to each 0.5fe increase it considers the cumulative impact of the expansion.

The desktop area assessment considers the possibility of 'off site' options. At the initial stage it will look for the presence of land that could be of use. Use of public open space and high school playing fields has been discounted as an option due to safeguarding and capacity reasons.

Synthetic Pitches

To comply with Section 77 conditions, mitigation measures will be applied to replace any reduced playing field area with either a rubber crumb area or a synthetic pitch. The legislation states that reconfiguration resulting in 'no net loss' is classified as a change of use and therefore a general consent will apply.

All weather play provision counts as double the area to grass under EFA guidelines due to students being able to utilise the facility twice as much as grounds that are reliant upon weather.

The processed data reflects the amount of synthetic pitch needed to counter-act the loss of playing field due to the expansion. This is presented on a like-for-like basis and calculations have been displayed to show how synthetic pitches could be used as sporting pitches.

Feedback from the School Organisation Sub Group stated that preference should be given to sites within the 80% tolerance.

It has been considered that the area of the synthetic pitch to mitigate the build impact would not just replace the area lost to build but may also increase the playing field area up to the agreed threshold of 70% or 80%.

Research has been carried out on existing schools sites to look at the advantages and disadvantages of having synthetic pitches on primary and high school sites. This research looked at costs, maintenance and hire to the community. It was concluded that synthetic pitches are a benefit to schools and pupils allowing for a greater utilisation of outdoor space for timetabled classes as well as break and lunch times.

A maximum size synthetic pitch was applied, based on Middlewich High school's full size synthetic pitch (6,500m²). It was considered that any pitch needed as a mitigation measure that was bigger than this, would be too extreme for a school and costs would outweigh benefits.

An example of this methodology applied to school sites is attached.

Recommendation

School sites to considered against the criteria and methodology stated above to determine those able to accommodate expansion.

Synthetic pitches or 'rubber crumb' surfaces should be used to mitigate the impact of expansion on school sites where the remaining land remains to be 70% or greater of the BB103 guidelines.

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.CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 30 November 2015
Report of: Head of Corporate Resources and Stewardship
Subject/Title: Work Programme update

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To review items in the 2015/2016 Work Programme listed in the schedule attached, together with any other items suggested by Committee Members.

2.0 Recommendations

That the 2015/2016 work programme be reviewed.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is good practice to agree and review the Work Programme to enable effective management of the Committee's business.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon reduction - Health

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Not known at this stage.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 There are no identifiable risks.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The schedule attached has been updated following an informal meeting of the committee held on 22 October 2015.

10.2 Members are asked to review the schedule attached to this report, and if appropriate, add new items or delete items that no longer require any scrutiny activity. When selecting potential topics, Members should have regard to the Council's new three year plan and also to the general criteria listed below, which should be applied to all potential items when considering whether any Scrutiny activity is appropriate.

The following questions should be asked in respect of each potential work programme item:

- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority;
- Is the issue of key interest to the public;
- Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation;
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends;
- Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports?
- Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service;

10.3 If during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the topic should be rejected:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere
- The matter is subjudice
- Scrutiny cannot add value or is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within the specified timescale

11 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Mark Nedderman
Designation: Senior Scrutiny Officer
Tel No: 01270 686459
Email: mark.nedderman@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Amended 14.10.15

Essential items

Item	Description/purpose of report/comments	Lead Officer/organisation/Portfolio Holder	Suggested by	Current position	Key Dates/Deadlines
Child Sexual Exploitation	Task and Finish group set up in December 2014 which produced Interim report on 10 February 2015. following informal workshop held with partner organisations in Autumn 2014 to ascertain the current situation in Cheshire East	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	The Committee	Task and Finish group now appointed and scoping meeting held.	TBA
Mental Health	To review mental health arrangements in Cheshire East for young people.	Director of Children's Services, Director of Public Health Children and Families Portfolio Holder and Adults health and Leisure Portfolio Holder	The Committee	New item from September 2015. Possible joint item with Health and Adult Social care	TBA

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Amended 14.10.15

Monitoring Items

Item	Description/purpose of report/comments	Lead Officer/organisation/Portfolio Holder	Suggested by	Current position	Key Dates/Deadlines
Performance Monitoring	Quarterly performance reports	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	Ofsted	New arrangements to be scheduled	Quarterly
Ofsted Inspection/ Safeguarding – update/ Recruitment & retention of Staff. Social Workers/Review of HR Policies	Involvement in the action plan to respond to the 2015 Ofsted report	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	Chairman	New arrangements to be considered when the committee has considered the inspection report on the July 2015 unannounced inspection	Report on today's agenda

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Amended 14.10.15

Care Leavers	Formal Cabinet response to the Task and Finish report reported to Committee on 1 December 2014. Further progress report required in December 2015	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	The Committee		21December 2015
Public Health – responsibility for 0-19 year olds	Presentation received on 1 December 2014 relating to how the Council implements public health responsibilities and influences children's lifestyles. This came out of Corporate Scrutiny's review of the Ofsted inspection report in March 2013	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	Corporate Scrutiny Committee	Further progress report required in February 2015	Ongoing
Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) Annual report	To consider the annual report of the Chair of the LSCB as part of measure in place to strengthen the relationship between the committee and Board	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	The Committee		September 2016
Special Education Needs	Possible joint work with Health and Adult Social care and engagement with parent groups on the implications of the SEN policy	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	Director of Children's Services	Progress report required	April 2015

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015/16 Amended 14.10.15

School Improvement/ School capacity		Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	The Committee	Progress report required	Report on today's agenda
Building of new schools/planning regulations	To have an understanding of the planning regulations as they relate to building schools	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder Head of Planning	The Committee	Informal briefing required	Informal Briefing required.TBA
Academies	Awareness session about the scope and detail of the number of academies established, proposed including geographical locations	Director of Children's Services, Children and Families Portfolio Holder	The Committee	Update report	Informal Briefing 21 December 2015

Possible Future/ desirable items

Early Years - Develop policies for engaging with the third sector; and the Council's new commissioning role

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FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

This Plan sets out the key decisions which the Executive expects to take over the period indicated above. The Plan is rolled forward every month. A key decision is defined in the Council's Constitution as:

“an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.

For the purpose of the above, savings or expenditure are “significant” if they are equal to or greater than £1M.”

Reports relevant to key decisions, and any listed background documents, may be viewed at any of the Council's Offices/Information Centres 5 days before the decision is to be made. Copies of, or extracts from, these documents may be obtained on the payment of a reasonable fee from the following address:

Democratic Services Team
Cheshire East Council
c/o Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach Cheshire CW11 1HZ
Telephone: 01270 686472

However, it is not possible to make available for viewing or to supply copies of reports or documents the publication of which is restricted due to confidentiality of the information contained.

A record of each key decision is published within 6 days of it having been made. This is open for public inspection on the Council's Website, at Council Information Centres and at Council Offices.

This Forward Plan also provides notice that the Cabinet, or a Portfolio Holder, may decide to take a decision in private, that is, with the public and press excluded from the meeting. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, 28 clear days' notice must be given of any decision to be taken in private by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder, with provision for the public to make representations as to why the decision should be taken in public. In such cases, Members of the Council and the public may make representations in writing to the Democratic Services Team Manager using the contact details below. A further notice of intention to hold the meeting in private must then be published 5 clear days before the

meeting, setting out any representations received about why the meeting should be held in public, together with a response from the Leader and the Cabinet.

The list of decisions in this Forward Plan indicates whether a decision is to be taken in private, with the reason category for the decision being taken in private being drawn from the list overleaf:

1. Information relating to an individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including to authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal and professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If you would like to make representations about any decision to be conducted in private at a meeting, please email:

Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Such representations must be received at least 10 clear working days before the date of the Cabinet or Portfolio Holder meeting concerned.

Where it has not been possible to meet the 28 clear day rule for publication of notice of a key decision or intention to meet in private, the relevant notices will be published as soon as possible in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made. Any decision made in this way will be published in the same way.

Forward Plan

Key Decision and Private Non-Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-16 Approval of District Heating Joint Venture Partner	To note the outcome of the procurement process undertaken by officers; to approve the appointment of the identified joint venture partner for district heating; and to delegate authority to officers to take all necessary actions to establish the joint venture partnership with the identified partner.	Cabinet	10 Nov 2015			No
CE 15/16-5 Cheshire Skills and Growth	To approve the findings of the options appraisal in respect of skills and growth services, and to authorise officers to take all necessary actions to implement the proposals.	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Assets	30 Nov 2015			No
CE 15/16-20 Temporary Agency Workers Contract Award	To approve the outcome of the procurement process and award a contract for a period of three years, with an option to extend for a further 12 months, commencing 1st April 2016.	Cabinet Member for Performance	7 Dec 2015		Rosie Ottewill	No

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-22 Implementing the Care Act - Moving to a Local and Personalised System of Care and Support	<p>to approve, in line with the requirements of the Care Act 2014, a change in Council policy to commission all care services from the broader care sector. This will facilitate the move to a personalised system of care and support which facilitates the principle of choice and control for residents in the access and purchasing of care services.</p> <p>To delegate the approval of alternate arrangements to provide care services in the independent sector to the Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Care and Health in the Community.</p> <p>To approve a transitional arrangement while alternative care and support services are secured in the market. During this period Care4CE will continue to offer support. Care and support will no longer be provided by Care4CE, once alternative provision is in place.</p>	Cabinet	8 Dec 2015			No

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-21 Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Delivery Framework for Growth	To consider the findings of the recent 'Your Town - Your Choice' consultation and agree proposed revisions to the draft Crewe Town Centre Regeneration Framework for Growth report.	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Assets	15 Dec 2015			No
CE 15/16-17 Print and Post Hybrid Strategy	To seek authority to proceed with a hybrid print and post strategy.	Cabinet	12 Jan 2016			No
CE 15/16-18 Bentley Development Framework	To approve the development framework as a consultation draft document; and to agree to review the development framework following public consultation with a view to considering endorsing the final version of the document as a material consideration when determining future planning applications on the site.	Cabinet	12 Jan 2016		Caroline Simpson, Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity	No

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-19 Peter Mason Leisure Centre (Congleton)	To consider the outcome of a condition survey on the integrity of the pool and whether or not the refurbishment of the pool is feasible and economically viable. In the event that the refurbishment of the pool is not feasible and economically viable, to consider a proposal to deliver a new pool and enhanced dry side leisure offer within the agreed budget.	Cabinet	12 Jan 2016		Mark Wheelton	No
CE 15/16-7 Congleton Link Road - Approval to Proceed with the Compulsory Purchase of Land and Agreement to the Procurement Strategy	To authorise officers to proceed with the steps required to compulsorily purchase land for Congleton Link Road, and to seek approval of the procurement strategy.	Cabinet	9 Feb 2016		Paul Griffiths	No

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-8 Poynton Relief Road - Procurement Strategy	The Poynton Relief Road forms an important part of the Council's strategy of enabling job creation, delivering housing growth and addressing long standing traffic congestion and environmental issues in the town, as well as delivering an important part of the wider SEMMMS Strategy. The report will outline the work undertaken to identify the procurement process to appoint a contractor in order to construct the scheme. The report will also seek authority for the officers to undertake all necessary actions to implement the proposal.	Cabinet	9 Feb 2016		Paul Griffiths	No
CE 15/16-9 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-19	To approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2016-19, incorporating the Council's priorities, Budget, Policy Proposals and Capital Programme.	Council	25 Feb 2016		Alex Thompson	No
CE 14/15-42 Cheshire East Indoor Facility Strategy	To adopt the Indoor Facility Strategy in support of the Council's Local Plan.	Cabinet	8 Mar 2016		Mark Wheelton	No

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 15/16-10 Cheshire East Playing Pitch Strategy	The primary purpose of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches meet the local needs of existing and future residents within Cheshire East. The required decision is for the Strategy to be adopted by the Council and to authorise Officers to take all necessary actions to implement the strategy.	Cabinet	8 Mar 2016			No