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Scrutiny & Overview Committee Agenda

To: Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair)
         Councillor Jan Buttinger (Vice-Chair)
         Councillors Carole Bonner, Patsy Cummings, Stephen Mann and
         Vidhi Mohan

         Reserve Members: Sherwan Chowdhury, Mario Creatura, Bernadette Khan,
         Joy Prince, Sue Winborn and Callton Young

A meeting of the **Scrutiny & Overview Committee** which you are hereby
summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 12 December 2017** at **6.30 pm** in
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

JACQUELINE HARRIS-BAKER   Michelle Gerning
Director of Law and Monitoring Officer   020 8239 4246
London Borough of Croydon   michelle.gerning@croydon.gov.uk
Bernard Weatherill House   www.croydon.gov.uk/meetings
8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA   Monday, 4 December 2017

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting.
If you require any assistance, please contact the person detailed above, on the
righthand side.

N.B This meeting will be paperless. The agenda can be accessed online at
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AGENDA – PART A

1.   Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from any members of the Committee.

2.   Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2017 as an accurate record.

3.   Disclosure of Interests

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) and gifts and hospitality to the value of which exceeds £50 or multiple gifts and/or instances of hospitality with a cumulative value of £50 or more when received from a single donor within a rolling twelve month period. In addition, Members and co-opted Members are reminded that unless their disclosable pecuniary interest is registered on the register of interests or is the subject of a pending notification to the Monitoring Officer, they are required to disclose those disclosable pecuniary interests at the meeting. This should be done by completing the Disclosure of Interest form and handing it to the Democratic Services representative at the start of the meeting. The Chair will then invite Members to make their disclosure orally at the commencement of Agenda item 3. Completed disclosure forms will be provided to the Monitoring Officer for inclusion on the Register of Members' Interests.

4.   Urgent Business (if any)

To receive notice of any business not on the agenda which in the opinion of the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, be considered as a matter of urgency.

5.   Children Improvement Plan (Pages 13 - 102)

To update the Committee on the Improvement Plan

6.   Leader's Question Time (Pages 103 - 104)

7.   Budget 2018-19 (Pages 105 - 132)

To share with the Committee the budget plans for the municipal year 2018/19.

8.   Work Programme (Pages 133 - 136)

To consider and approve the Committee's work programme for the

municipal year 2017/18.

9.   Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion is to be moved and seconded where it is proposed to exclude the press and public from the remainder of a meeting:

"That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within those paragraphs indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended."

PART B

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Scrutiny & Overview Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 31 October 2017 at 6.30pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katherine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present:	Councillor Sean Fitzsimons (Chair);
	Councillor Jan Buttinger (Vice-Chair);
	Councillors Carole Bonner, Patsy Cummings, Stephen Mann and Vidhi Mohan
Also Present:	Councillor Alisa Flemming, Timothy Godfrey and Shafi Khan

PART A

49/17   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2017 were agreed as an accurate record.

50/17   **Disclosure of Interests**

There were none.

51/17   **Urgent Business (if any)**

There were no items of urgent business.

52/17   **Fairfield Halls Update Report**

Officers updated the Committee on the development of Croydon's Fairfield Halls. The Committee learned that progress of the main contract work had completed which was accomplished in Fairfield Halls in June 2017. The main contractor, Vinci Construction Ltd, was on site undertaking construction work including removal of Asbestos and demolition work was underway. The Committee was shown a video evidencing the work completed to date.

Future plans outlined that during February to July 2018 the external work of the building, the roof top work fit in and commission would begin. Vinci Construction Ltd proposed to complete the work in November 2018. The Council was also within the original budget that they had set with Vinci Construction Ltd.

The Committee was impressed with the progress of the site and the plans for Fairfield Halls. In a discussion of the achievability and timing of the completion of Fairfield Halls, officers highlighted that the challenges had all been uncovered. The officer felt confident that the main challenges would be removed within the contingency budget. There had been ongoing discussion with the contractor following consideration of the technical challenges seen on site that included the condition of the concrete.

The Committee further learned that the potential forthcoming risks included the condition of the ground, the removal of concrete and the foundations in parts of the building that had been there for such a long time. Planning permission allowed changes in getting equipment in to deliver the entertainment scheme. The team was working closely with BH Live to deliver a practical approach to the main concert hall and the Ashcroft Theatre, and to add an additional hoist to get on stage quicker, all of which would be cost effective. This major change mitigated the risk and lowered cost in the entire scheme. The BH Live team was to begin work on the fitting i.e. furniture, kitchen, IT equipment for the functioning of the building; and the operational work such as employment, marketing and communications, community engagement and hospitality. The Committee commended the update on timescale and budget.

The Committee was pleased to hear that there was disability access included in the planning to all areas in Fairfield Halls. The access included disability access to lifts, lobbies and doors with double access and all other amenities area.

The Committee was informed that Fairfield Halls was scheduled to be completed in November 2018 where the local community would see the opening in accordance to the operational plan. A full calendar for events in 2019 would be available as Fairfield Halls started its phased opening towards the end of 2018.

The BH Live presentation illustrated the vision of Fairfield Halls to which the new opening of the Halls would see better engagement with the community. The Halls would be good for the consumer and for business. Customer Service would also be delivered by means of a contact centre setting to convey better communication and quality with the community.

Officers from BH Live shared with the Committee that their vision was also around building community engagement by networking with a number of organisations such as schools, colleges, artists, buildings and having initial conversations getting to know what the local community would want to implement into the programme. Collaboration approaches had been made with Croydon College, The Brit School, Glenthorne School, Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation and Savvy Theatre Company. Their vision was also about the opportunity to attract different audiences attending different concessions inside the building including a VIP Experience, and as Croydon is a multicultural society, Fairfield Halls would need to appeal to audiences of all ages across a variety of genres. BH Live would also be keen to work very

closely with Croydon Council to identify opportunities to develop and encourage more stakeholders to participate in the rebirth of Fairfield Halls.

The Committee learned that BH Live was a social enterprise, the more profit BH Live made the more money there would be to spend on other activities. There was a budget which had been allocated for outreach programmes. The Committee heard that there were many ideas that would be arranged and programmed for 2019. This included a new website with integrated ticket line and other innovative concepts to generate more income, such as own-branded coffee sold on site.

BH Live reassured the Committee that they were an ambitious organisation and had a great opportunity to be part of the recreation of Fairfield Halls. The officers recognised that many of the attendees to Fairfield Halls may go to eat or drink at the bar and as Fairfield Halls would be an entertainment venue from afternoon through to the evening, it would be a destination for members of the public to "hang out" or relax and observe, as well as attend for events. Lots of concepts had been taken and adapted into Fairfield Halls, and BH Live had spotted gaps in developing the opportunity to deliver a service. In view of that, the Venue Director would be leading on the management of the day-to-day operations, event programming, community engagement, events and business events.

Officers from BH Live highlighted that the affordability of tickets for events at Fairfield Halls had been considered to include discounted rates for the local community of the young and the more mature.

The Members of the Committee welcomed the presentation as it covered all areas including the engagement with the community which was now reassured. Members of the Committee wanted to see that the BH Live dates were being achieved and that more information on the final design of Fairfield Halls and the programme was received in due course.

53/17   **Update on the Response to the OFSTED Inspection of Children's Services**

The report considered by the Committee provided an update on the actions taken by Children's Services following Ofsted's Inspection Report in September 2017 and an update on all key performances and practice improvements.

The Committee learned that post-Ofsted a new Commissioner had been appointed. The Transitional Action Plan was created and this followed and included the appointment of the Independent Chair. There had been a reduction of the executive director's span of control for six months to allow greater focus in implementing the improvement recommendations that had come from the Ofsted Report and for Children's Services to be reshaped overall. There had been managerial changes in Children's Services as a new director had been appointed to the position of Early Help and Children's

Social Care. An Independent Chair had also been appointed for the Local Children's Safeguarding Board, and a number of workforce actions had been taken including providing an additional social work team and a surge team to better ensure all children were safe.

The Draft Improvement Plan had been presented to the Committee to review and comment before it would be sent to the Improvement Board for ratification, and also to Cabinet for sign off, before it was presented to Ofsted in December.

The Committee was informed that appendix three in the agenda highlighted the top key indicators of improvement and the Improvement Board may add more to it. The list in appendix three set out the journey of a child, therefore the key indicators would be what was expected to be seen throughout a child's journey.

In detail, the Committee was to become aware of the plan which was focused on immediate action to ensure the safety of children. The Committee learned that significant pressure had been put on the service in particular the front door service, and as Children's Services were bringing more children into child protection, additional investment had been secured. Considerable investment to the Children With Disability Team and management had been highlighted and an additional social work team had been placed within the Care Planning and Assessment Service. The Committee learned that recruiting a new social work team had relieved pressure off other social work teams across the service. The Committee heard that two additional children's reviewing officers had been brought into the service, and due to the significant rise in legal proceedings, the service had requested for two additional lawyers.

The Committee heard that following the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Sub-Committee recommendation of the deep dive review on missing children and Returned Home Interviews, additional resources had been agreed to support the work. The business support staffing had also been resourced to reduce the administrative workload for social workers to focus more of their time on children and families.

In light of the Draft Improvement Plan, the Committee learned that this plan was a three year journey for Children's Services to move towards "Good" from where the Service sat currently. With a range of demands and challenges in Croydon, Children's Services objective would be to reach a "Good" standard within three years.

The officers had informed that Scrutiny was to hold them to account on delivery of the whole plan and specific actions that came out of the plan.
The Plan was based on four key areas:

- Practice
- People and Performances
- Partnerships
- Platforms

The development of the plan included significant staff engagement. Croydon Children's Services is known to have a high workload of children at risk of sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation, therefore the conditions for success would be to put children's lives at the centre of social workers' thinking.

The Committee considered the report, appendices and addressed issues on performance indicators, staffing, strengthening leadership, accountability and forward planning.

The Committee learned that Children's Services budget was £2.2 million. The service would be going through the budget process through 2018/19 to have an increased base budget for children and adults to get capacity and strengthen. There is a request to increase the budget to address the service improvement required. The Committee learned that what the service needed to focus on was prevention and intervention. The Local Government Association had looked at the spending of Children's Services and it would seem that Children's Services of other Local Authorities that are Ofsted rated as "good" spent a proportionately higher amount on prevention and intervention. Croydon Children's Services need to look at their funding to support families from the beginning of their journey before there was crisis. As such, a lot of funding had gone into the Care Planning and Looked After Children Services. The Early Help Team had also been created to help with the prevention of families going through hardship. Service performance would be monitored using the key performance indicators that would highlight the impact of interventions. Officers further outlined that development of the Early Help strategy was due by April 2018 and this would be when Children's Services would see how effective the Early Help strategy had been.

Members in the Committee highlighted that there had been difficulty in recruiting permanent social workers in the Children In Need Service. This was acknowledged by officers who informed the Committee that the Looked After Children Service and Leaving Care Service had stable staffing. The Children in Need Service was predominantly agency staffed. It was understood that there had been more agency staff due to the demand of staff required within teams.

The service however benefited from the Assisted and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) social workers who would become permanent staff at the end of their year, and current agency staff who would be encouraged to become permanent staff. The Committee heard that there had been a new Director of Human Resources appointed who was supporting help to the department with recruitment campaigns and pathways to ensure that social workers who joined Croydon Children's Services would receive the right level of training. The ASYE social workers assigned to Croydon Children's Services were due to complete their training, and these newly qualified social workers would have a protected workload of cases. The twenty-four ASYEs would graduate at the beginning of December 2017. Following findings from the Ofsted Report, clear and regular structured meetings would be held with

ASYEs and also with social workers in social worker forums. Additionally, a new cohort of ten ASYEs had been accepted to start within the coming week.

Members of the Committee heard that there was an expectation for caseloads to be manageable especially in the Children In Need Service.

The Committee learned that the service could not entirely eliminate any risk to every child across the Borough, but the challenge was to reduce risk by improving practise and performance.

Members of the Committee highlighted that the report noted social workers found navigating around the IT system difficult when completing assessments, to which officers shared some clarity that a small number of system improvements had been put in place to help with the configuration of records and reports; in addition, high level staff engagement post-Ofsted had recognised that additional service from Business Support was required. Officers addressed the point of assurance and accountability and noted that 'staff space' had been designed for all staff to confidently speak out and provide feedback which would identify areas within the service to review. There was an increase in staff engagement which formulated a staff reference group where eighteen members of social worker staff nominated themselves to represent all staff; and there were further plan for a staff survey to be completed four times a year.

In response to a question from the Committee, Cllr Flemming discussed her role included attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee and sitting on the Improvement Board. Cllr Flemming informed Members that she would have regular one-to-ones with the Executive Director of Children's Services, the Chief Executive and the Independent Chair to discuss progress on the Improvement Plan. Cllr Flemming had a direct sight of frontline practitioners and how the Improvement Plan would not only change the service for children but also for social workers. Cllr Khan discussed his membership on the Improvement Board, had attended meetings and had briefings with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning and the Leader.

The Committee felt that Members needed further information on some key performance indicators for the Children's Improvement Plan, particularly around the management and supervision of staff, and the nature of complaints within the service. The Committee acknowledged that officers behind the scenes had put a lot of work into the plan which should not go unrecognised.

The Committee proposed that more in-depth training for Members was required to increase their underpinning knowledge, particularly around the Children's Improvement Plan. Members also requested that external experts be identified to support the scrutiny of the plan.

Members concluded that the Committee should focus on specific areas and short term objectives of the plan. To this end, a formal request would be made for additional datasets to be provided for the Committee.

54/17   **Cabinet Responses to Recommendations**

The Committee **NOTED** the Cabinet responses to recommendations made by the Committee relating to the Community Safety Strategy, at its meeting held on the 7 March 2017; and relating to the implementation of 20mph limit zones at its meeting held on 24 May 2017.

55/17   **Work Programme**

The Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny guided the Committee through the proposed work programme for the municipal year. It was noted that the schedule would be subject to change in light of the Ofsted report.

The Committee **NOTED** the work programme.

56/17   **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Not required.

The meeting ended at 9:51pm.

Signed:

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Date:

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REPORT TO:	Scrutiny and Overview committee 12 December 2017
SUBJECT:	Update on Children's Improvement Activity
LEAD OFFICER:	Barbara Peacock Executive Director (People)
CABINET MEMBER:	Alisa Flemming Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item follows the recent OFSTED inspection of the council's children's services.
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are invited to: i) To note the completion of the final Children's Improvement Plan ii) To note progress on delivering the actions outlined in the improvement plan in November iii) To note the priority performance indicators for October and development of the workforce data dashboard

1.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   On 4th September 2017, Ofsted published its report providing an overall judgement that Children's Services in Croydon are inadequate. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) was also judged inadequate, as inspectors found that the LSCB had not fully established effective arrangements to discharge its statutory functions. The Council fully accepts the findings of the report.

1.2   On 4th September 2017, the Minister for Children and Families at the Department for Education (DfE) issued Croydon Council with a Direction which requires the council to co-operate with a commissioner. The Secretary of State has appointed Eleanor Brazil as commissioner for Children's Services in Croydon for an initial three-month period, who will make recommendations to the Minister on the best course of action for the service going forward. The Commissioners Report was submitted to the Minister on 4 December. It will not be a public document at this point and the decision when to publish the Commissioners Report and the Ministers response sits with the Minister. There is no standard agreed timeframe for publication.

1.3   At its meeting on the 31st October 2017, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee were

provided with an update on the action the council has taken since the inspection and an update on all key performance and practice issues. In addition to this the the committee were given the opportunity to comment on the draft improvement plan and priority performance indicators.

1.4   Since the meeting on the 31st October amendments from the committee on specific actions in the Children's Improvement Plan have been made. The Children's Improvement Plan (November 2017) was signed off by the Children's Improvement Board on the 7th November and approved at Cabinet on 20th November. The plan was submitted to Ofsted on 8th December, ahead of the submission deadline (11th December). All previous improvement plans, including the Transitional Action Plan and Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) plan have now been closed down and ongoing actions brought forward into this single improvement plan.

1.5   This report provides the final version of the Children's Improvement Plan (November 17) see Appendix 1 and seeks to provide an overview of children's improvement activity in November, including the delivery of the actions outlined in the plan and the overall status of the four key work streams; Practice, People and Performance, Partnerships and Platforms.

1.6   On the 31st October the Scrutiny and Overview committee commented that the performance indicators were too process focused and suggested that more information about the workforce be made available to understand the staff pressures staff face and how they are feeling. In response to this a workforce dashboard of key information has been developed (see Appendix 3).

2.   PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

2.1   Overview of progress in November

2.1.1   The table below provides a high level overview of performance across the different work streams of the children's improvement programme. The overall status of the programme is 'on track'. The RAG methodology used to monitor progress is outlined on page 5 of the Children's Improvement Plan (see Appendix 1).

Work stream	SRO	Progress RAG
Practice	Philip Segurola	On track
People and Performance	Barbara Peacock	On track
Partnerships	Barbara Peacock	On track
Platforms	Richard Simpson	On track

2.1.2 There has been activity across all four work streams of the plan in November, and key achievements for the month are outlined below;

- A new social work practice model has been agreed and a mobilisation plan developed to roll it out across the workforce

- The Lead Member for Children and Families and Executive Director of People visited Dudley to learn from their improvement journey

- Croydon hosted a stand at the Compass Jobs Fair on 13th November and a recruitment microsite for children's services is now live

- A 'takeover day' took place on 24th November where 68 young people shadowed senior managers and Elected Members across the Council. Young people had a focused task to provide input on how to better support young people who go missing, or those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence and criminal exploitation (see priority 5 of the Children's Improvement Plan)

- Corporate Parenting Panel has met and agreed a re-launch with revised membership including Children in Care Council (CiCC) representative, a care leaver and a foster carer, alongside new terms of reference, more frequent meetings and a clear data set that will form a 'score card' to ensure the focus remains strongly on driving outcomes for children.

2.1.3 Despite the overall good progress against actions in November there are also a number of key challenges that should be noted, set out below. Areas of underperformance, in line with the key priority performance indicators, are set out in section 3 of this report

- High caseloads: Increased demand and complexity of work means that high caseloads in assessment and care planning remain, despite additional capacity. This is being mitigated through the agreement of a further team in care planning and the redeployment of best start social workers into the assessment service.

- Staffing: creating a stable workforce remains a major challenge with high levels of agency staff and difficulties getting a strong enough supply of good agency staff when needed.

- Serious youth violence: There were 38 incidents of serious youth violence (Defined as a count of victims of any offences of Most Serious Violence or Gun Crime or Knife Crime, where the victim is aged 1-19) since 1 November and this has added to the pressure on the front door and assessments as referrals relating to youth violence, gang associated activity, County Lines and risks of CSE have been significant. There

is not as yet a strong enough preventative approach to address these very serious challenges for our young people in Croydon.

- Care proceedings: The numbers of care proceedings, including emergency proceedings are increasing, with numbers now standing at 95. This is approximately 24% higher than the average taken over the 12 months prior to the Ofsted inspection. This increase means that we are addressing issues of drift and delay and ensuring our children are kept safe with secure legal protection when necessary. However, the number of emergency proceedings illustrates that we have not yet got a strong enough system in place to deal with issues in a preventative way.

2.2 Practice actions

2.2.2 In relation the first priority outlined the Children's Improvement Plan; 'Ensuring consistent, high quality social work', a new social work practice model, Strengthening Families as been developed with staff and agreed. A plan has also been developed to roll it out across the service, and was presented to the Children's Improvement Board on 5th December. A tool for assessing neglect (the Graded Care Profile) has also been agreed and a partner briefing on this took place in the week commencing 27th November.

2.2.3 Actions to improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection (priority 2 of the Children's Improvement Plan) included holding focus groups with staff on developing a single front door across Early Help and MASH, and reducing the work loads of staff in the assessment service, in light of rising demand, by transferring some of their responsibilities to other teams and creating an additional assessment team through redeployment of the Best Start social work team.

2.2.4 Steps have also been taken to start improving outcomes for looked after children (priority 3), including a holding a regular panel to agree permanent matches of children with long term foster carers. In November, 7 young people attended the panel in person with their carers, to celebrate their permanent placements [see action 3.1.The Director also met with foster carers to explore with them ways in which they can be more actively engaged in service development and ensure their support needs are identified and responded to. These meetings will be scheduled through the year.

2.2.5 With regards to improving outcomes for care leavers (priority 4) a task and finish group has been established to improve accommodation options for care leavers, to ensure that more young people can live independently if they wish to do so and they have the right support in place. The Council has also agreed to open a consultation on giving care leavers nomination rights to social housing. This sits alongside an earlier agreement to exempt care leavers from Council Tax.

2.2.6 In order to better protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation (priority 5) a new

team to support children missing from home or care is now in place. Processes for undertaking Return Home Interviews (RHIs) for children who go missing are under review, with additional capacity in place to carry out interviews.

2.3   People and performance actions

2.3.1 With regards to strengthening leadership and governance (priority 6) three new Heads of Service are now in post (Early Help and MASH, Targeted Services including work with vulnerable adolescents and Safeguarding and Quality Assurance). This has increased the management capacity and will support focused work on these areas of practice. In addition to this a 'Line of Sight' document has been written, outlining what the DCS and Lead Member for Children and Families will do to ensure they have a clear understanding of the quality of frontline practice for children and young people.

2.3.2 Staff engagement is taking place through a variety of mechanisms including staff reference group, practice development group, ongoing 'sprint sessions' and publication of a monthly programme newsletter which is disseminated to all staff. A copy of the Improvement Plan will also be provided to each member of staff in the week commencing 4th December.

2.3.3 As set out above, additional capacity has been brought in to reduce workloads in the assessment and care planning teams, however a rise in demand and more complex cases (e.g. an increase in court work) means that this action is not yet having an impact to reduce caseloads. Despite this there has been good progress on actions to develop a more stable and skilled workforce in November, including;

- A recruitment microsite managed by Jobs Go Public has gone live with a rolling recruitment campaign underway and strong branding
- Croydon hosted a stand at the Compass Jobs Fair, which generated in excess of 70 interested contacts
- All agency staff have been offered an interview to explore the possibility of converting to a permanent position. There has been success in converting staff from CWD and Permanence
- Work is underway to review the process of career progression and clarify roles and responsibilities of different grades of social worker to link to the Professional Capabilities Framework and maximise retention of staff
- Workforce data, including caseload levels, is being collated and analysed monthly and headline data is being incorporated into the key performance indicator data suite
- Arrangements for the training and support programme for the new cohort of NQSWs has been reviewed and strengthened. A detailed implementation plan for rolling out the social work practice model is in place which includes a section on training requirements [see action 7.8]

- Consultant Practitioners are facilitating 'bite size' workshops on practice themes and Unit Manager training is taking place monthly with additional lunchtime sessions to embed learning

2.3.4 In order to strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management (priority 8) a set of priority indicators has been agreed aligned to practice priorities (see Appendix 2), service based meetings are held with unit managers and service leaders to review performance and the Children's Leadership Team has a monthly agenda item to scrutinise and comment on performance indicators across the whole service. The Quality Assurance Framework has also been reviewed and updated, and was taken to the Children's Improvement Board on the 5th December for endorsement.

2.4 Partnerships actions

2.4.1 The Interim Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) presented an update the Board's activity in November, highlighting partnership work around the neglect and supporting vulnerable adolescents as the areas they are focusing on.

2.4.2 With regards to the actions outlined in the Children's Improvement Plan, the first meeting of the CSCB Executive Group was held on 19th October. The remit, role and responsibilities are under review in light of proposed changes to statutory guidance.

2.5 Platforms actions

2.5.1 The 'Platforms' work stream of the Children's Improvement Plan is about establishing sufficient organisational (corporate) support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work, including sufficient resource, administrative support and recording systems.

2.5.2 Since the Ofsted inspection a corporate support team, chaired by the Chief Executive has met regularly (typically weekly) to provide support and oversight, and additional capacity has been brought into the Children's Improvement Team in order to support the board infrastructure and improvement work, including specific projects.

2.5.3 £2.9m investment has been agreed on a range of measures to support improvement and the council has asked Impower to support work around developing a sound financial baseline for Children's Services.

2.5.4 Activity to improve the level of administrative (business) support to the service has included; 14 temporary business support posts, a scanning amnesty (with a total of 39,622 pages scanned to date) and a visit to Achieving for Children to inform a new business support model, with further visits to Sutton and Lambeth planned.

2.5.5 In order the improve the children's recording system (CRS) a new document management function went live on 1 December to remove barriers to good recording practice identified by staff, automatic alerts to social workers have been expanded (e.g. visits) **a**nd a Legal workspace in CRS is now live to improve oversight around care proceedings.

3. UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE PRIOIRITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3.1 The priority performance indicators for October have been included as an Appendix to this report (see Appendix 2). This document includes a summary from the Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help, Philip Segurola, on key areas and strength and underperformance in October (see page 2).

3.2 In should be noted that the council continues to see a significant increase in the volume of contacts and referrals into Children's Services, which is having a detrimental impact on some performance indicators, including caseload figures in the assessment service.

3.3 Areas of strength or improvement for the month of October include;

- A reduction in re-referral rates (-5%), although there is continued volatility with this indicator [indicator FD8]
- An improvement in the percentage of children subject to a CIN plan who were visited within timescales (+12%) [indicator CIN 4]
- Placement stability figures for looked after children remain strong [indicator LAC 20]
- Good progress in respect of foster carer annual reviews with a +13% improvement on completion month on month [indicator F3]
- Performance outcomes for care leavers are continuing to hold up with some further improvement in NEET figures [indicator CL1, CL1a and CL2].

3.4 Areas of underperformance include:

- Significant workload pressures, particularly across the assessment and care planning teams [indicators W1a and W1b]
- Vacancy levels stand at 43% against an outer London average of 25% [indicator P1]
- A decrease in the % of assessments completed within 45 working days has decreased (-11%). [indicator AMT 2]
- A significant reduction in the percentage of initial child protection conferences (ICPC) held within 15 days of strategy discussion, and this is now a high risk indicator [indicator CP5]
- Inconsistencies in the regularity with which children are being seen across the service areas

4. OVERVIEW OF THE WORKFORCE DASHBOARD

4.1 Following comments at the 31st October Scrutiny and Overview Committee a workforce dashboard has been attached to this report (see Appendix 3). The dashboard provides an overview of the Children's Services workforce, including the number of permanent and agency staff.

4.2 The table below sets out the indicators contained in the workforce dashboard and explains what they mean, this information is also included on page 2 of the dashboard.

Indicator	Description
Total No of Social Workers in Nov	Count of ALL Social Workers within CSC that are case holding
Establishment Staff (Gr11+)	All Social Workers employed directly by LBC
Establishment Staff (Gr11+) (12m+)	All Social Workers employed directly by LBC for more than 12 months
Staff (Gr11+) Non Case Holding	Social Workers employed directly by LBC who are currently not holding cases e.g. Maternity Leave/Long term sick
Agency Staff	Count of all Agency staff
% Social Workers with Personal Supervision in the month	% of Social Workers who have received Personal supervision in the last 30 days.
Management Establishment to Agency Ratio (also includes vacant posts)	Proportion of Managers who are direct LBC employees compared to agency staff
Agency Staff (12m+)	Count of all Agency Staff employed for more than 12 months
NQSW	Count of Newly Qualified Social Workers
Leavers	Count of SW who have left LBC within the month.
Starters	Count of SW who have started at LBC within the month
Unfilled Posts	Posts where no one is currently working
Vacant Posts	Posts where there are no directly employed staff. This is used to calculate the Service's vacancy rate.

4.3 The workforce dashboard shows that Croydon has a high number of agency social workers (41%) and creating a more permanent workforce will be a key priority, going forward (as set out under of priority 7 of the Children's Improvement) in order to provide better continuity of relationships for children and young. Actions to tackle this are already well underway, as set out in section 2.3.3 above, and a workforce strategy setting out a clear employee value proposition for working in Croydon is due to be completed in December.

5. NEXT STEPS

5.1 Key priorities and actions for December include;

- Preparing for and coordinating the first Ofsted monitoring visit on the 12th and 13th of December, which will be focused on the Front Door and assessment
- Recruiting an additional care planning team to ensure workloads are increasingly manageable and monitor the impact of the additional capacity in the assessment service
- Continuing to drive improvements in performance to ensure more children are seen and that assessments are increasingly timely

Actions timetabled for December include;

- Strengthen oversight of the quality of social work for children with disabilities through representation at CSMT and performance meetings [action ref 2.10]
- Review the systems and processes for undertaking return home interviews (RHIs) when children go missing from home, and identify and implement improvements to ensure that all young people are offered an RHI and that appropriate support can be put in place [action ref 5.5]
- Create a Workforce Strategy with timely and measurable targets [action ref 7.3]

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The Sub-Committee is asked:

i) To note the completion of the final Children's Improvement Plan
ii) To note progress on delivering the actions outlined in the improvement plan in November
iii) To note the priority performance indicators for October and development of the workforce data dashboard

_____

CONTACT OFFICER: Sarah Warman, Programme Director

Appendices: Appendix 1. Final Children's Improvement Plan
Appendix 2. Priority performance indicators
Appendix 3. Workforce dashboard

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Children's Improvement Plan

November 2017

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CHAMPIONS for Children

cscb
Croydon Safeguarding Children Board

Introduction

The Ofsted inspection of Croydon's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers took place between 20th June and 13th July 2017. The report was published on 4th September 2017. The inspection judged services to be inadequate; with poor quality social work practice and weak managerial oversight leaving too many children at risk of harm.

This Improvement Plan for Children's Services and the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board has been developed in response to the Ofsted report findings, including the 21 specific recommendations, and in recognition of our ambition to improve our services for vulnerable children. It has also been informed by learning from Serious Case Reviews and engagement with staff, which will continue throughout the plan's implementation.

Our ambition is to deliver good services for our children and young people, however we recognise that 'getting to good' will be a three year journey and will require wider activity from the council and partners outside of this plan. This plan outlines the actions that we will take in the first year to address the weaknesses that were identified during the Ofsted inspection and ensure that children in Croydon are supported and protected. This plan will be updated annually and sets out our milestones, 'what good looks like' and the things that we would expect to hear from children, staff and partners if we are improving.

This plan will also be reviewed after 6 months to ensure we continue to focus on the right priorities at the right pace, and respond to changing needs in order to deliver good services for our children. The plan set outs high and medium level activity, which will be underpinned by a series of detailed project and action plans.

Prior to the inspection, the council had developed an improvement plan and worked with partners to develop a multi-agency action plan, in response to the findings of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI), which were addressing the right areas, but without sufficient pace or focus on children's experiences. A Transitional Action Plan was also put in place immediately after the inspection to resolve the most urgent issues. These plans have now been closed down and ongoing actions brought forward into this single improvement plan.

Successful implementation of this plan will depend on a significant cultural change within Children's Services, the wider council and our partners, with a focus on;

- Creating an open system where challenge is welcomed and views are respected
- Inspiring staff to feel passionate about the work that they do and the difference they make
- Understanding the lived experiences of children and young people
- Listening to staff, children and families
- A culture of performance management that drives improvements for children

Our plan

The plan has been structured into four work streams; **Practice**, **People and Performance**, **Partnerships** and **Platforms** (colour coded for ease of reference) and 11 priorities which have been aligned to Ofsted's recommendations and the findings set out in the report. These are outlined in the table below, and the visual on the next page. A focus on the lived experiences, wishes and feelings of children and young people is central to our efforts and cuts across all priorities in the plan.

WORK STREAM	PRIORITY	OFSTED RECOMMENDATIONS	PAGES
Practice	1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work	Recommendations 5 and 12	7-10
	2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection	Recommendations 6, 7, 9 and 11	11-14
	3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence	Recommendations 13, 14 and 16	15-19
	4. Improve outcomes for care leavers	Recommendations 17, 18, 19	20-22
	5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation	Recommendations 3 and 4	23-25
People and Performance	6. Strengthen leadership and governance	Recommendation 20	26-29
	7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce	Recommendation 2	30-33
	8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management	Recommendations 1, 8, 10 and 21	34-38
	9. Strengthen strategic commissioning	Recommendation 15	39-41
Partnerships	10. Improve Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) and strengthen partnership working	Recommendations 13-17	42-47
Platforms	11. Establish organisational support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work	Recommendation 2	48-49

Our vision

Our vision has been developed in consultation with our staff and reflects our priorities for 2017-2020. In order to be effective, there must be clear actions which will help us to achieve the vision, and the plan sets out what these are.

The Vision:

'All Children and young people in Croydon will be safe, healthy and happy, and will aspire to be the best they can be. The future is theirs.'

What we will do to achieve this:

- Ensure this vision is for all children, not just those involved with Children's Social Care
- Work with our partners to make sure that children, young people and families receive the right help at the right time when they experience difficulties
- Support families to care for their children where safe to do so
- Identify and manage risks to children and young people and maximise family and community strengths to reduce impact of risk
- Work with children, young people and families, listen to their views, and be clear with them about what we want to achieve
- Give our looked after children and young people the best opportunities to reach independence and support them into successful adulthood

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

Our conditions for social work to flourish

Croydon's conditions for social work to flourish, set out below, were developed with senior council officers, and children's social care staff following the Ofsted inspection. These will be a public commitment to our staff and children moving forward and ensure that our plan enables us to put in place the necessary conditions for good social work to flourish in Croydon and to keep children at the heart of everything we do.

A common understanding of what 'good' social work practice looks like, using clear and evidence based models

Clear vision and values, alongside an operational culture of curiosity and continuous improvement

Manageable caseloads, both in number and complexity

Streamlined structure which minimises transfer points, and offers children more continuity of relationships

Partners who work tirelessly with us to support children

Focus on the lived experiences of children and young people

Robust operational oversight and challenge

Managers who listen to staff and care about them; staff who listen to children and families and take their views into account

Our staff say they get high quality supervision, support and training

Our staff say they are confident and proud to work for Croydon

A relentless focus on recruitment and retention of skilled staff

Governance

The Croydon Children's Improvement Board will provide effective oversight of the Children's Improvement Plan and programme in order to ensure delivery of all recommendations outlined in the Ofsted inspection report. This will be chaired by Edwina Grant OBE, and will bring together officers, the Lead Member for Children's Services and other Elected Members from the council, partners, external support, the LGA and the Department for Education's representative who will meet on a monthly basis to provide oversight and challenge. In addition, the Board will have representation from front-line staff who will provide feedback on whether the improvement programme is having the desired impact on the ground.

The Board will also receive monthly monitoring reports on the implementation of the improvement plan and its impact on front-line delivery, including the experiences of children and young people, which will be used to track progress and hold sponsors to account for the delivery of the improvement priorities.

There will be oversight from Elected Members at Cabinet, with progress against the plan reported to Scrutiny and Overview Committee. In addition, Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee will consider and challenge impact in specific areas at each meeting. The revised Corporate Parenting Panel will focus on improving outcomes for our looked after children and care leavers, as set out in this plan.

Progress RAG ratings

The improvement plan is accompanied by a performance dashboard which will be used to monitor the impact of the plan on frontline practice and outcomes for children and young people, using the measures outlined in Appendix 1 (pages 52-57). Progress on delivering actions will be monitored using the following RAG ratings. The hardest challenge, and our continual focus, will be on ensuring that actions are having a positive impact on the lived experiences of children and young people.

Complete
On track
At risk
Overdue

Senior Responsible Officers

Each of the 11 priorities will have a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), who will be held to account on progress and successful delivery by both the Council and the Board. These are outlined in the table below. Each action within the plan will have a Lead Officer who will be held to account on progress and successful delivery by the relevant SRO. These are outlined at the back of the plan on page 50.

WORKSTREAM	PRIORITY	SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (SRO)
Practice	1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work	Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care (PS)
	2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection	Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care (PS)
	3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence	Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care (PS)
	4. Improve outcomes for care leavers	Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care (PS)
	5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation	Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care (PS)
People and Performance	6. Strengthen leadership and governance	Barbara Peacock, Executive Director (People, Director of Children's Services) (BP)
	7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce	Barbara Peacock, Executive Director (People, Director of Children's Services) (BP)
	8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management	Barbara Peacock, Executive Director (People, Director of Children's Services) (BP)
	9. Strengthen strategic commissioning	Richard Simpson, Executive Director of Resources and s151 Officer) (RS)
Partnerships	10. Improve the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB)	Barbara Peacock, Executive Director (People, Director of Children's Services) (BP)
Platforms	11. Establish organisational support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work	Richard Simpson, Executive Director of Resources and S.151 Officer (RS)

Practice

1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Philip Segurola (PS)

1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues
Recommendation 5 – '*Ensure that all plans for children contain achievable, realistic goals and that timescales and contingency planning are specific, and include sufficient support for children who return home. Ensure that the individual needs of brothers and sisters are identified and met.*' **Recommendation 12**. '*Improve the quality of assessments to take account of individual children's needs, including historical information, and ensure that all information is rigorously analysed and updated when circumstances for children change.*' • *Clear social work practice model, standards and tools* • *Quality of assessments* • *Quality of plans* • *Support for children who return home*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
Social work practice model, standards and tools						
1.1	Model, standards and tools [Para 32, 40 & 110]	Develop and agree an overarching social work practice model in collaboration with staff.	PS	CSCB	Dec 17	
1.2	Model, standards and tools [Para 32, 40 110]	Revise social work practice standards, aligned to the new practice model, to ensure all social workers and managers are clear about what is expected of them. To include: • Timescales • Recording practices	PS	CSCB	Mar 18	
1.3	Model, standards and tools	Develop a clear set of social work practice tools, templates and exemplars aligned to the social work practice model and revised standards. To include: • Assessment tools (e.g. graded care profile)	PS	CSCB	Mar 18	

	[Para 32 & 40, 110]	• Planning tools • Chronologies • Best practice exemplars (anonymised) • Direct work tools • Child Permanence Reports • Supervision tools				
1.4	Model, standards and tools [Para 32, 51 & 65]	Review and update policies and procedures, and make changes to CRS to conform to the new practice model and standards and launch with staff. Establish a single location for materials around the model, standards and associated tools to be accessed.	PS	CSCB	Mar 18	
1.5	Model, standards and tools [Para 32 & 40]	Deliver a comprehensive training programme and communication events to launch and roll out the new social work practice model, standards and tools to all staff (see action 7.8).	PS	CSCB	Mar 18	
1.6	Model, standards and tools [Para 32 & 40]	Work with HR colleagues to integrate the practice model, standards and tools in induction, recruitment and appraisal procedures.	PS	N/A	Apr 18	
Assessments						
1.7	Assessments [Rec 12, Para 22, 31, 66]	Ensure that the core skills training programme (see action 7.7) covers assessment skills, including specialist risk assessments. Monitor impact of training through staff feedback, case audits and performance indicators.	PS	CSCB	Apr 18	
1.8	Assessments [Rec 12, Para 59]	a. Produce guidance on all elements of pre-birth assessment and intervention to promote early permanency. b. Review and update procedures and formats for pre-birth assessments, as part of the implementation of the new social work practice model (see action 1.4)	MK	Health Legal Courts Cafcass	Dec 17 Apr 18	
Planning						
1.9	Plans [Rec 5 Para 33, 66]	Work with L&D to ensure that initial core skills training programme (see action 7.7) covers planning skills, including reviewing plans. Monitor impact of training through staff feedback, case audits and performance indicators.	PS	N/A	Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

1.10	Plans [Rec 5] Para 33, 66]	Review permanency pathways and terms of reference of permanency panel to ensure all permanency plans are progressed without delay and; • Permanency planning meetings (PPMs) are held within timescales • All under 5's have a PPM within 10 days of becoming looked after • A permanency plan for all children is in place by the second PPM Implement a system for monitoring the time it takes from a permanence option being identified for a child, and that placement being formally recognised as a permanent placement (e.g. long term fostering at the fostering panel) so that children understand who their permanent family will be at the earliest possible time.	PS	N/A	Feb 18	
Support for children who return home						
1.11	Support for children who return home [Para 33]	Update and re-issue guidance on ending Section 20, to include a formal review of the plan to ensure sufficient support is in place for the child and family.	PS	N/A	Nov 17	
What good looks like:						

What good looks like:

- Assessments are timely, proportionate to risk, informed by research and historical context, and address the needs and experiences of each child
- Assessments result in a direct offer of help to address any identified needs
- Assessments and plans are dynamic and change in the light of emerging issues and risks
- Children in need have a plan setting out the help that is offered
- Children who need protection are subject to a child protection plan that identifies the work that will be offered to help the family and the necessary changes to be achieved within appropriate timescales for the child or young person
- Plans address all the identified needs from assessments. They are clear and easily understood. Families understand what is expected of them, and others, and by when and what will happen if they fail to make the expected progress
- Decisive action is taken when necessary to avoid drift and delay and to ensure that children are appropriately supported and protected
- Children's care plans address the individual needs and experiences of each child, including the need for timely permanence

What we hope children will say:

- My social worker listens to my worries and acts on them
- My social worker tells me what is going on and why
- My social worker is honest and sensitive with me
- I am involved in discussions about my future

What we hope staff will say:

- I know what is expected of me
- I understand what Croydon's social work practice model is and have received good training so I can use it in my work
- I have the tools and training to conduct a thorough assessment and implement an effective plan

• I know why good assessment and planning is important for children

- I understand Croydon's practice model
- I have contributed to assessments of need and felt my thoughts were reflected
- Plans are clear, and I understand my role in implementing them

Page 34

Practice

2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Philip Segurola (PS)

2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues

Recommendation 6. *'Ensure that thresholds are rigorously applied at all levels, including care thresholds and the timely and proportionate use of the pre-proceedings phase of the PLO, so that children who cannot live with their parents find permanent alternative homes as quickly as possible.'*

Recommendation 7. *'Ensure that strategy discussions include information gathered from all partners, and result in clear planning and recording of actions and the rationale for decisions.'*

Recommendation 9. *'Ensure that there is routine and comprehensive oversight of all decisions and actions relating to children who are subject to pre-proceedings or court proceedings, to eliminate all avoidable delay in deciding permanent arrangements for children.'*

Recommendation 11. *'Strengthen the provision of early help support for children and families and ensure that partner agencies have a shared understanding of the early help strategy and associated thresholds'.*

- *Understanding and application of thresholds across agencies*
- *Strategy discussions*
- *Use of the pre-proceeding phase of the PLO and improved court work*
- *Planning for permanency, including oversight*
- *Early help services*
- *Children with disabilities*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
Early help and the front door						
2.1	Early help services [Para 27]	a. Review the Early Help screening and assessment process and the MASH interface. b. Make necessary changes to ensure that; • Triage decisions are made promptly and children do not wait for social care assessments when needed	IL	CSCB, Executive, CCG	Jan 18 Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

			Action				
			• Referral processes are streamlined so that there is one front door with multi-agency input and responses • The quality of referrals improves so that all available information is collected early c. Agree mechanisms for auditing cases on threshold boundaries, as part of the quality assurance framework, to ensure consistency of practice. d. Carry out a review of the single front door.			Apr 18 Jul 18	
2.2		Early help services [Rec 11, Para 26]	a. Engage widely with all partners including schools, health services and community sector as part of the refresh of the Early Help Strategy to develop a cohesive all-age Early Help offer. To include; • Defining Early Help • Scoping what is available • Designing a clear pathway for all professionals b. Publish the Early Help Strategy, distribute and promote the strategy and Pathway Guidance across a wide range of partners.	IL	CSCB Education CCG Police Voluntary sector	Feb 18 Jun 18	
2.3		Thresholds [Rec 6]	Support the CSCB to promote a shared understanding of thresholds across all agencies, including clarity around Early Help and MASH. (See action 10.14)	BP/DS	CSCB Executive Education Health Police	Jun 18	
Children in need of help and protection							
2.4		Strategy discussions [Rec 7]	a. Agree protocols for attendance at strategy meetings with police, health and education partners to and seek agreement through CSCB. b. Monitor attendance and report to the CSCB as part of regular data set.	MK	CSCB CCG Police Education	Mar 18 Jun 18	
2.5		Thresholds [Rec 6] PLO and court work [Rec 6, Para 47, 48, 49]	Test application of internal thresholds, including the use of Section 47 and the Public Law Outline (PLO) through audit and supervision as part of revised quality assurance framework.	PS	Courts Cafcass	Ongoing from Dec 17	

2.6	PLO and court work [Rec 6, Para 47, 48, 49]	Develop targeted training and mentoring of staff to improve the quality and timeliness of court assessments and reports, and presentation of evidence in court so that children are not subject to unnecessary delays.	MK	Courts Cafcass	Jul 18	
Children with disabilities *[Please note that all practice improvement actions apply to all children, including those with disabilities]*						
2.7	Children with disabilities [Para 34]	Ensure that professionals working with children with disabilities (CWD) access the core skills training programme so that they have the skills and knowledge to identify and address safeguarding concerns (see action 7.7)	CB	N/A	Apr 18	
2.8	Children with disabilities [Para 34]	Develop clear criteria for access to service for children with disabilities, as part of the design of a single front door (see action 2.1). Consult with parents and partners and publish.	CB	Parents Health Education Voluntary sector	Apr 18	
2.9	Children with disabilities [Para 34]	Ensure that all services for vulnerable children, including the CWD service, operate as one system and that CWD teams feel part of the wider children's services through; • Joint management meetings • Representation on Staff Reference Group and the Practice Development group	BP	N/A	Dec 18	
2.10	Children with disabilities [Para 34]	Strengthen oversight of the quality of social work for children with disabilities through representation at Children's Services Management Team (CSMT) and performance meetings.	CB	N/A	Dec 17	
2.11	Children with disabilities [Para 34]	Develop and deliver a programme of cultural change in the CWD service to promote purposeful co-production to ensure that the service works with parents and carers to improve outcomes for children with disabilities, and promote greater independence.	CB	Parents Health Education Voluntary sector	Sep 18	
What good looks like:						

- The interface between early help and statutory work is clearly differentiated and families and practitioners know what is available to support them
- Children, young people and families are offered help promptly when needs and/or concerns are first identified
- Thresholds are well understood and rigorously applied by professionals and partners in work with all children
- Decisions about children's lives are based on clear, effective, comprehensive and risk-based assessments, involving where appropriate, other professionals working with the family
- Disabled children and their families receive effective, proportionate and timely interventions which improve their lives

What we hope children will say:

- My social worker is helping my family
- I am kept informed about what is going on, and why

Page 37

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

• Decisions aren't made without my opinion

What we hope staff will say:

- I understand what Early Help is and how it supports my work
- I understand what the PLO is and why it is important for children
- I am more confident in preparing documents for court and presenting evidence
- I am confident in my ability to communicate with children with disabilities

What we hope partners will say:

- I understand what Early Help means and my role in delivering the Early Help Strategy
- I understand thresholds and know when to make a referral
- I am confident that strategy meetings result in decisions being informed by all relevant partners

Practice

3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Philip Segurola (PS)

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<tr>
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3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues

Recommendation 13. '*Ensure that the fostering service appropriately supports foster carers, and that the work of this service meets all relevant regulations.*'

Recommendation 14. '*Improve permanence planning across the wider service to ensure that the planning and timeliness of adoption improve for all children. Ensure that there is focused family-finding activity for children with adoption plans, to minimise delays.*'

Recommendation 16. '*Ensure that appropriate assessments identify children living in private fostering arrangements.*'

- *Improve the quality and consistency of practice for looked after children*
- *Support for foster carers*
- *Compliance with fostering regulations*
- *Planning for permanence, including adoption plans*
- *Private fostering arrangements*

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<tr>
<td>**No.**</td>
<td>**Issue**
[Ofsted Ref]</td>
<td>**Actions**</td>
<td>**Lead**</td>
<td>**Partner involvement**</td>
<td>**By when**</td>
<td>**Progress RAG**</td>
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<tr>
<td colspan="7">**Looked after children**</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Planning for permanence [Rec 14]</td>
<td>Issue guidance about taking children's cases to fostering panel for a permanent match and ensure compliance.

Monitor the timeliness of agreements for long term fostering, so that children understand who their permanent family will be at the earliest possible time.</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>Fostering panel chair Foster carers</td>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Quality and consistency [Para 65]</td>
<td>a. Manage and oversee notification processes for initial health assessments within three working days of children becoming looked after.</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>CCG</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

		b. Continue to seek assurance from the CCG of long term commitment to commission sufficient capacity to meet estimated future demand for initial and review health assessment for looked after children.			Mar 18	
3.3	Quality and consistency [Para 60]	With the introduction of e-PEPs, work with the virtual school to refresh and reissue guidance on developing PEPs. Provide training and support to ensure that staff understand the purpose and content of PEP's.	GM	Education	Jan 18	
3.4	Quality and consistency [Para 60, 61]	Audit PEPs on a bi-monthly basis to ensure that: • Plans are increasingly SMART • Plans are increasingly child-led	GM	Education	Ongoing from Nov 17	
3.5	Therapeutic support [Para 65]	Identify looked after children waiting for therapeutic support and work with the CAMHS service to put in place resources to meet the needs of these children.	WT	CCG	Apr 18	
3.6	Children in Care Council [Para 107]	a. Launch the Children in Care Council. b. Develop consultation mechanisms with representative groups of Children and Young People to ensure their views are reflected in our service development and the lived experience of the child is known and understood.	DB	Education	Oct 17 Mar 18	
3.7	Corporate parenting [Rec. 20]	Implement the provision of the Children and Social Work Act (see action 6.9), including; • Working with schools to embed the role of the designated member of staff for looked after children, and former looked after children.	WT	Education Health	Aug 18	
3.8	Quality and consistency [Para 60, 61]	Ensure that the council collates and analyses information about children placed in Croydon from other boroughs and that risks are understood and communication arrangements with placing authorities are clear.	WT	Other LAs	May 18	
3.9	Quality and consistency [Para 60, 61]	a. Ensure that other local authorities are made aware of Croydon children placed in their area, and that these children's' needs are fully understood and they receive sufficient protection and support. b. Analyse information about out of borough placements and use this knowledge to inform commissioning practices to ensure more children and young people can live locally if they wish to.	WT	Other LAs	Jan 18 May 18	
Fostering						
3.10	Compliance [Rec 13]	Ensure that the fostering service meets all national minimum standards. To include: a. Develop a fostering service action plan to deliver a good quality service that values foster carers.	WT	LAC CAMHS	Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

		b. Schedule quarterly progress reports on fostering service to be presented to CSMT.			Jan 18	
3.11	Support for foster carers [Rec 13, Para 59]	Engage in house foster carers to monitor progress on the fostering service improvement action plan. Work with foster carers to better understand the support that they need and improve the service, through management attendance at the Foster Care Association and a foster carer representative on Corporate Parenting Panel. Use the Children in Care Council to engage looked after children in drawing up a charter of their expectations of foster care and foster carers	WT	Foster carers	Jan 18	
3.12	Support for foster carers [Rec 13, Para 59]	Conduct an annual foster carer survey as part of the quality assurance framework. Ensure that feedback from foster carers, including complaints, is monitored, responded to appropriately and is used to drive service improvements.	WT	Foster carers	Feb 18	
3.13	Private fostering [Rec 16]	a. Deliver a programme of events and communications to raise awareness around private fostering arrangements and how to access support. To include: • Sessions for all partners • Sessions for the wider community, including faith groups • Sessions for staff b. Test the quality of private fostering assessments as part of the quality assurance framework, including an annual themed audit.	SH	Education, health Faith communities	Jun 18 Ongoing from Jul 18	
Adoption						
3.14	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Ensure that adoption staff are represented at Legal Planning Meetings, so that adoption is considered as an option for children, where suitable, at the earliest possible time.	WT	N/A	Dec 17	
3.15	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Put in place a regular programme of adoption awareness sessions for social workers across the service, to improve understanding and increase the number of children for whom adoption is considered.	WT	N/A	Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

3.16	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Ensure the core skills training covers good practice around adoption including writing Child Permanence Reports (CPRs) (see action 7.7) and collate good examples of CPRs to feed into the templates and tools work (see action 1.3)	PS	N/A	Apr 18	
3.17	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Put sufficient administrative support into the adoption service to enable the adoption service to meet statutory requirements and increase access to the adoption support fund.	WT	Adopters	Dec 17	
3.18	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Strengthen post-adoption support to ensure a joined up approach across the council and partners to meet the needs of children and young people and support adoptive parents [n.b. Croydon is working towards a regionalised adoption model with other London boroughs so this deadline may be subject to change].	WT	Education Health CAMHS	Sep 18	
3.19	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Establish a process to track children identified as potentially suitable for adoption to avoid delay.	WT	N/A	Apr 18	
3.20	Planning for permanence [Rec 14]	Ensure readiness for participation in regionalisation of adoption services. [n.b. Croydon is working towards a regionalised adoption model with other London boroughs so this deadline may be subject to change].	WT	London Councils	Sep 18	

What good looks like:

- Permanency achieved in child's timeframe (appropriate to age)
- Fewer permanency breakdowns (adoptions, special guardianship orders and long term foster care)
- Looked after children have positive relationships with professionals and carers
- Looked after children feel safe and receive help to reduce the risk of harm or actual harm, including from going missing, being sexually exploited offending and misusing drugs or alcohol
- Looked after children are in good physical and mental health, or are being helped to improve their health
- Looked after children make good educational progress at school (or other provision) and have access to a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities

What we hope children will say:

- My social worker helps me understand my life
- My social worker thinks about my ambitions and supports me to be able to try new experiences
- My carers are like a family to me
- I am involved in discussions about my future

What we hope staff will say:

- I understand the importance of early permanency planning and the impact that this can have on children
- I have a strong relationships with my looked after children and am proud to see them succeed in life
- I am kept informed of what is discussed at the Children in Care Council and can see that it is starting to have an impact on what we do

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

What we hope partners will say:
• Croydon Council is a good corporate parent • Croydon Council takes the safety of looked after children seriously • Achieving a permanent family for looked after children is a priority for Croydon Council

Page 43

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

Practice

4. Improve outcomes for care leavers

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Philip Segurola (PS)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6" style="background:green;color:white">4. Improve outcomes for care leavers - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="6">

Recommendation 17. '*Ensure timely pathway planning and ensure that plans are specific, accurate and detailed, and include contingency planning, to support good outcomes for all care leavers.*'

Recommendation 18. '*Ensure that staying-put arrangements are promoted to all care leavers and foster carers, so that care leavers who want to stay with their former foster carers can benefit from greater permanency and support as they move towards independent adulthood.*'

Recommendation 19. '*Ensure that young people move on to independent accommodation only when it is the right time for them to do so. Improve the help/assistance provided during their transition to independent living through more consistently good preparation and support. This should include accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information about young people's rights and entitlements.*'

- *Pathway planning and preparation for adulthood*
- *'Staying Put' arrangements*
- *Care leaver accommodation and transition to independent living*
- *Care leavers rights and entitlements*

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</table>

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
4.1	Pathway Planning [Rec 17, Para 82]	Ensure that pathway planning for care leavers starts prior to a young person's 16th birthday. To include: • Reviewing and streamlining the plan structure • Creating a trigger system for planning at the young person's final review	WT	N/A	Mar 18	
4.2	Preparation for adulthood [Rec 19, Para 84]	Engage children in care and care leavers in a programme of work to find out what things they would like to support them to live independently.	WT	N/A	Sep 18	
4.3	Preparation for adulthood and	Provide training, support, guidance and challenge to personal advisers to enhance their skills, ability and knowledge to properly prepare care leavers for independence and ensure they can access entitlements.	PS	N/A	Sep 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

			Put in place a formal handover between social workers and personal advisors, at the point of transition to the leaving care service, to include a joint meeting with the young person.	WT	N/A	Jan 18	
		Rights and entitlements [Rec 19, Para 88]					
4.4		Pathway Planning [Rec 17, Para 82]	Put in place a formal handover between social workers and personal advisors, at the point of transition to the leaving care service, to include a joint meeting with the young person.	WT	N/A	Jan 18	
4.5		Staying Put [Rec 18, Para 85]	Work with the fostering service to develop training, support and guidance to foster carers, social workers and other professionals about staying put arrangements and monitor through supervision how many care leavers want to take up this option.	WT	Foster carers	Jul 18	
4.6		Accommodation for care leavers [Para 89]	Work with commissioning and housing colleagues to source the appropriate accommodation for care leavers to ensure they can live independently if they are ready to do so and have a place to call home. (see action 9.5)	WT	Housing providers Voluntary sector	Apr 19	
4.7		Preparation for adulthood [Rec 19, Para 84]	Issue guidance and revise procedures to ensure that all care leavers who are pregnant, or have children under 4, have had an assessment of their needs to ensure that they and their children are adequately supported.	WT	Health	Jan 18	
4.8		Preparation for adulthood [Rec 19, Para 84]	Implement the provision of the Children and Social work act for care leavers, including; • A published 'local offer' to care leavers • Support from a Personal Adviser to all care leavers to age 25 (see action 6.9)	WT	N/A	Aug 18	
4.9		Rights and entitlements [Rec 19, Para 88]	Develop clear policy and protocols with the Home Office for those unaccompanied and asylum seeking care leavers for whom all rights exhausted (ARE)	PS	Home Office	Sep 18	

What good looks like:

- Care leavers actively contribute to their pathway plans at an early stage so that they know what is going to happen in the future
- Care leavers have positive relationships with professionals and carers who are committed to protecting them and promoting their welfare
- Care leavers feel safe and receive help to reduce the risk of harm or actual harm, including from going missing, being sexually exploited, offending, and misusing drugs or alcohol
- Care leavers are in good physical and mental health, or are being helped to improve their health
- Care leavers' good educational progress at college (or other training provision) and have access to a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

• Care leavers have access to good quality accommodation and employment opportunities which support them to gain independence and fulfil their aspirations

- I know what support I am going to get, and am supported to become more independent
- My personal advisor encourages me to do well in school/college and in my adult life
- I am involved in decisions about my future, and asked about my ambitions
- [Professionals] … get to know me now, not my past

- I understand the importance of good pathway planning for care leavers so that they get the right help and support when leaving care
- I have high aspirations for the young people with whom I work and am able to work with them to help them achieve success in life
- I have good relationships with the young people that I support and am proud to see them succeed in life

- Croydon's care leavers are seen as valued citizens of croydon
- Care leavers are well supported by Croydon Council
- Care leavers are empowered and supported to achieve in education

Page 46

Practice

5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence and criminal exploitation

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Philip Segurola (PS)

5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence and criminal exploitation - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues
Recommendation 3 *'Ensure that there is appropriate and timely action with regard to understanding and reducing risk to all children, especially those at risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing from home or care. Ensure that social workers have the necessary skills and knowledge to help children at risk of sexual exploitation.'*
Recommendation 4. *'Ensure that children missing from home or care have every opportunity to speak to an independent person about the reasons they go missing so that appropriate action can be taken to effectively support them, and reduce risk.'*
• *Response to CSE and missing from home or care*   • *Return to Home Interviews (RHIs)*   • *Practice standards for social workers, including training*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
Children and young people that go missing						
5.1	Missing [Rec 4]	Review the systems and processes for undertaking return home interviews when children go missing from home, and identify and implement improvements.	HD	CSCB, Police, NSPCC, Safer London	Dec 17	
5.2	Missing [Rec 4]	Incorporate responses to missing children into the social work practice standards and create visual tools to help social workers to understand and follow procedures. Launch with staff and partners.	HD	CSCB, Police NSPCC, Safer London	Mar 18	
5.3	Missing [Rec 4]	a. Offer a return home interview to all children missing from home or care and ensure that findings are clearly recorded on case files.	HD	Police, NSPCC, Safer London	Jan 18	

5.4	Missing [Rec 4]	b. Take appropriate actions to support children and young people and prevent them going missing, and reduce repeat missing episodes.	HD	Police	Ongoing / test impact in May 18	
5.5	Missing [Rec 4]	a. Track completion of Return Home Interviews b. Ensure all children and young people are offered the appropriate support.	HD	CSCB Police, NSPCC, Safer London	Dec 17 Jan 18	
5.6	Missing [Rec 4]	Ensure all missing children's data is recorded, collated and analysed to understand and oversee the most vulnerable cohort of young people and use this information to inform service development and what actions should be taken by the council and partners to try and prevent incidents re-occurring.	HD	CSCB Police,	Mar 18	
Children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation						
5.7	CSE [Para 40]	Incorporate responses to CSE into the social work practice standards.	HD	CSCB	Mar 18	
5.8	CSE [Para 40]	Ensure the initial core skills and social work practice model training supports practitioners to understand the potential vulnerabilities of adolescents and young people, including those vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and identify and address the risks, and de-escalate situations.	HD	CSCB	Mar 18	
5.9	CSE [Para 40]	Introduce and promote the use of tools and models for assessing risk and creating safety plans for adolescents, including those at risk from sexual exploitation. Test application through the Quality Assurance Framework.	HD	CSCB	Jul 18	
5.10	CSE [Para 40]	Continue to strengthen the MASE panel so that partners share information and intelligence, engage in joint decision making and co-ordinate responses to children at risk of CSE and going missing.	HD	CSCB Police Education Health	May 18	
5.11	CSE [Para 40]	Ensure better connection and use of Early Help services to support vulnerable adolescents as part of single front door and integrated all age Early Help offer. (see action 2.1)	HD	CSCB Police Education Health	Jun 18	
Children at risk of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation						
5.12	Missing [Rec 4] CSE [Para 40]	Work with youth offending service (YOS) colleagues and the police to understand links between CSE, missing, county lines and serious youth violence in order to better protect vulnerable young people. Agree actions with these partners to improve services.	HD	Police LSP Community Safety Partnership	Jun 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

		Identify young people known to be at risk of serious youth violence and work with YOS and the police to take action reduce risks and victimisation. Support YOS to deliver the serious youth violence action plan.				
5.13	Learning from SCRs [Para 128]	Ensure learning from the thematic vulnerable adolescents SCR is disseminated and embedded to reduce risks to children.	DS	CSCB	Oct 18	
5.14	Missing [Rec 4] CSE [Para 40]	Work with the police and YOS to better understand county lines activity, identify young people who may be at risk, and provide effective responses to protect children from criminal exploitation.	HD	Police LSP Community Safety Partnership	Ongoing from Feb 18	

What good looks like:

- Social workers recognise the factors that can make adolescents more vulnerable and tailor their interventions appropriately, including children at risk of radicalisation or exploitation or gangs, children who go missing and children at risk of sexual exploitation
- The CSE tool is being used effectively to help staff to assess the risks for young people
- Young people are enabled to reduce their levels of risk with support from staff
- Social workers and other professionals build lasting, open relationships with vulnerable young people that allow young people to make better life choices and improve their outcomes

What we hope children will say:

- People listened to me and helped me when I was going missing
- Social workers understand my history and what motivates me
- I was supported to stop putting myself in risky situations and I can now see the harm this did to me

What we hope staff will say:

- The training I have had and the introduction of the CSE tool has helped me to make better assessments of risk when it is thought that young people might be placing themselves in risky situations
- I understand why young people engage in risky behaviour, including going missing, and I have the skills and support to allow me to reduce it
- We now work much more closely with partners when we think children and young people are at risk of CSE

What we hope partners will say:

- I understand my role in identifying risk and supporting vulnerable adolescents
- I understand and follow the agreed multi-agency procedures to support vulnerable adolescents which are used consistently across the Partnership
- I am confident that training and available tools improve practice in this area

People and performance

6. Strengthen leadership and governance

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Barbara Peacock (BP)

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="7">6. Strengthen leadership and governance - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues

Recommendation 20. 'Ensure that elected members, as corporate parents, prioritise and focus on improving all areas of poor practice for children looked after and care leavers.'

Clear line of sight from senior leaders to frontline practice
Clear vision and strategy, with appropriate prioritisation of action
Involving children and young people and understanding their lived experiences, wishes and feelings
A more streamlined structure which minimises transition points and offers children and young people better continuity of relationships
Stronger corporate and partnership governance arrangements, including the relationship with the judiciary
Stronger corporate parenting arrangements
Improved scrutiny and oversight, including improving evidence of accountability and challenge

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Issue
[Ofsted Ref]</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Partner involvement</th>
<th>By when</th>
<th>Progress RAG</th>
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<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Clear line of sight
[Para 91]</td>
<td>Reduce the span of control of the Executive Director People & Director of Children's Social Care to ensure the DCS can fully discharge their statutory responsibilities and has a clear line of sight around the quality and effectiveness of frontline practice. To include:
a. Interim arrangements
b. Permanent arrangements</td>
<td>JN</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Oct 17
April 18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Clear line of sight
[Para 91]</td>
<td>Establish protocol which sets out how the DCS and Lead Member will have a clear line of sight to frontline practice.</td>
<td>BP</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td></td>
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6.3	Clear line of sight [Para 91]	Embed regular staff forums, informal engagement channels and 'pulse' surveys (as part of a broader culture change exercise) to ensure: • the organisation understands how staff feel (e.g. staff morale) • Staff feedback informs practice improvements • Staff feel valued and listened to Actions resulting from this will be clear, detailed and implemented within timescales. Any immediate concerns of staff are addressed, documented and followed up to ascertain if things have improved. Ensure staff receive regular communications on a 'You said, we did' basis.	BP	N/A	Ongoing from Oct 17	
6.4	Streamlined structure [Exec summary, Para 65]	Undertake an end to end review of the case transfer processes to ensure children are at the heart of decision making, support continuity of relationships with the adults responsible for their care and ensure that any impacts of delay for children are understood and minimised.	PS	N/A	Jan 18	
6.5	Partnership governance [Para 95]	Strengthen governance arrangements between key strategic bodies so that partners, senior leaders and Elected Members can demonstrate how they hold each other to account for the quality of practice and services to children and understood their respective roles in keeping children safe. Written protocols between formal partnerships and partner agencies will be drawn up and agreed.	JE	LSP CSCB Health Police Health & Wellbeing board Community Safety Partnership Safeguarding Adults Board	Feb 18	
6.6	Scrutiny [Para 94]	Undertake a review of Elected Members' training needs and their knowledge of Children's Services. To include; a. New Members induction programmes including training for May 2018 election b. LGA training for two scrutiny chairs c. A monthly series of open sessions for Elected Members to meet social workers and understand a child's journey through the system	JHB BP	LGA Democratic services	 Jun 18 Nov 17 Dec 17	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

6.7	Scrutiny [Para 94]	Strengthen how we record, circulate and follow up on action agreed at CYP Scrutiny and Corporate Parenting Panel. To include: a. Action sheets produced and circulated within 2 working days b. Formal minutes produced and circulated in draft within 10 working days c. A discussion around the question: 'What difference has this meeting made to Croydon's Children' as a standing agenda item	JHB	Democratic services	Nov 17 Nov 17 Feb 18	
6.8	Corporate parenting [Rec. 20]	Review the current Corporate Parenting Panel, including the terms of reference, membership, and work programme and how it is held to account to ensure stronger challenge and focus on key practice areas.	BP	LGA	Dec 17	
6.9	Corporate parenting [Rec. 20]	Implement the provision of the Children and Social Work Act for care leavers, including; • Embedding the seven corporate parenting principles	WT	Health Education	Apr 18	
6.10	Relationship with the judiciary [Para 49 & 101]	Hold quarterly meetings with Children's Leadership team and the judiciary and agree an action plan with specific measurable targets.	PS	Cafcass Judiciary	Ongoing from Oct 17	
6.11	Involving children and young people [Para 107]	Implement the Youth Engagement Strategy setting out the Council's vision for children and young people in the Borough and how they will be involved and heard through all service delivery. Develop feedback mechanism so that children and young people can see how they have been heard and what changes will be made as a result, including making Croydon a more child friendly community.	DB	Education Community Voluntary sector Business LSP UNICEF	Ongoing from Oct 17	
6.12	Involving children and young people [Para 107]	Explore creative ways in which to encourage and increase children's participation at reviews and conferences, which will include use of advocacy and use of technology.	TS	N/A	Jul 18	
What good looks like:						

- There are clear lines of accountability and governance with a clear distinction between political, strategic and operational roles
- Leaders, including Elected Members and managers, have a comprehensive and current knowledge of what is happening at the 'front line' and how well children and young people are helped, cared for and protected
- Elected Members are strong and committed corporate parents, challenging partners and poor practice, when necessary, to ensure that children and young people have every opportunity to succeed

What we hope children will say:

- I receive the help I need without having to ask too many people
- I know there is a children in care council and can join in

• I feel like my voice is heard in meetings about me

- Senior managers (e.g. Heads of Service, Director and Executive Director) are more visible and accessible
- Senior managers have a better understanding of what it is like to be a social worker in Croydon
- I feel like senior managers listen to my opinions and I can influence change

- I understand the roles and responsibilities of the key strategic partnerships
- I know how I can make a contribution
- I can see that practice issues are being addressed

Page 53

People and performance

7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Barbara Peacock (BP)

7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues
Recommendation 2 – '*Establish a stable workforce through purposeful recruitment and retention activity that includes targeted training for frontline staff and managers so that they have the skills and knowledge to better protect and care for children. Take steps to ensure that the workloads of social workers are manageable, and that they have sufficient time to complete essential work.*' • *Stable workforce and more permanent staff* • *Skilled workforce with effective induction, training and support* • *Manageable caseloads* • *Child centred and proud to work for Croydon*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
Recruitment and retention						
7.1	Manageable caseloads [Rec 2, Para 23]	Provide a regular, up to date, suite of workforce and caseload data and analysis to inform workforce and caseload planning, and a tracker to measure impact and progress.	SM	N/A	Nov 17	
7.2	Manageable caseloads [Rec 2, Para 23]	a. Take immediate action, where necessary, to reduce excessive caseloads, and undertake an exercise to understand current caseloads across to service. b. Model optimum staffing requirements and team sizes.	BP	N/A	Ongoing from Nov 17 Jan 18	
7.3	Stable & permanent workforce [Rec 2, Para 112]	Create a Workforce Strategy with timely and measurable targets that reflects the ambition for children's services and align this with a clear employee value proposition for working for Croydon, including; • Attraction • Value/recognition • Retention • Reward/benefits	SM	N/A	Dec 17	

		• Career development • The professional capabilities framework with a view to meeting the new registration requirement				
7.4	Stable & permanent workforce [Rec 2, Para 112]	a. Partner with Jobs Go Public, to launch a recruitment campaign to attract experienced social workers to careers at Croydon and keep this live for 12 months, capturing performance activity and reviewing impact quarterly. b. Redesign recruitment processes to develop the role of children and young people could play in recruitment going forward.	SM	Jobs go public	Nov 17 Sep 18	
7.5	Stable & permanent workforce [Rec 2, Para 112]	Implement a new exit interview process to gather timely and robust feedback from both contracted and locum staff on the reasons they leave so that improvements can be made for future recruitment, retention and professional development. Provide regular reports to the DCS and improvement board on leavers and reasons for leaving and capture learning to inform the recruitment and retention activity.	SM	N/A	Ongoing from Nov 17	
7.6	Stable & permanent workforce [Rec 2, Para 112]	Review and develop a revised pay and benefits offer for children's social work to ensure we are competitive and offer attractive and supportive career opportunities and meet the new registration requirements.	SM	N/A	Apr 18	
Learning and development						
7.7	Skilled workforce [Rec 2]	Equip social workers and managers with the skills, interventions and tools necessary to effectively refocus and improve the delivery of services to our children and young people. This will include delivering an initial core skills training programme that addresses all basic social work skills such as; • Assessment • Planning and reviewing plans • Chronologies and Genograms • Assessing the impact on children of parental behaviours such as domestic abuse, mental health, drug and alcohol use and neglect • Working with vulnerable adolescents • PLO and court work • Direct work with children, including Life Story work	PS	Training providers	Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

		• Safeguarding training for SWs working with children with disabilities				
7.8	Skilled workforce [Rec 2]	a. Design and deliver a training programme on the new social work practice model, in consultation with the Principal Social Worker, in order to improve delivery of services to our children. b. Incorporate into core skills post implementation.	PS	Training providers	Mar 18 Ongoing from Apr 18	
7.9	Skilled workforce [Rec 2]	Deliver a development programme for all managers which covers; • Reflective Supervision • Performance management (including the use of data) • Managing poor performance	PS	Training providers	Ongoing from Sep 17	
7.10	Skilled workforce [Rec 2, Para 110]	Develop a comprehensive future-focused Learning & Development (L&D) strategy/plan for Children's services as part of a corporate L&D plan. To include: • The requirements of compulsory accreditation for Children's social workers • Develop strong programme to support ASYEs • Links with universities • Links with new registration body • Clear continuous professional development (CPD) programme	JE	Universities Training providers Social Work England DfE	Mar 18	
7.11	Skilled workforce [Rec 2, Para 110]	Establishing an integrated L&D Board which will collaborate to shape and oversee the delivery of the L&D strategy in order to ensure social workers and managers are equipped to deliver high quality services.	JE	N/A	Feb 18	
7.12	Skilled workforce [Rec 2, Para 110]	Ensure that the induction programme for all council staff covers safeguarding and corporate parenting, to raise awareness of the importance of keeping children safe across the organisation.	JE	CSCB Safeguarding adults board	Jan 18	
7.13	Skilled workforce [Rec 2, Para 110]	Deliver rolling programme of basic safeguarding training for all frontline council staff.	MF	CSCB Safeguarding adults board	Ongoing from Sep 18	

What good looks like:

• The workforce is sufficient, suitably qualified and accredited to deliver high-quality services which improve outcomes for children and their families
• Managers and practitioners are experienced, effectively trained and supervised and the quality of their practice improves the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families
• There is effective organisational support for the professional development of social workers and managers

• Leaders provide the right environment for good social work to flourish

What we hope children will say:

- My social worker is a stable person in my life
- My social worker knows me well
- I see my social worker regularly and he/she has time for me

What we hope staff will say:

- I am proud to work for Croydon
- I can see a clear career path here/opportunities to progress
- I know who to turn to if I need help

What we hope partners will say:

- There is consistency in who I speak to as staff turnover is low
- I am able to develop effective working relationships with Children's Services staff to support and protect children
- I have confidence in the skills of my social work colleagues

Page 57

People and performance

8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Barbara Peacock (BP)

8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues

Recommendation 1. '*Ensure that managers have sufficient oversight of practice, and provide social workers with effective, clearly recorded supervision to support good social work practice.*'

Recommendation 8. '*Review the roles and responsibilities of managers at all levels in relation to decisions about children's permanent care, to ensure that they are confident and competent enough to make these decisions. Establish robust tracking processes to ensure that plans are progressed and delay is minimised.*'

Recommendation 10. '*Ensure that child protection conference chairs and independent reviewing officers (IROs) provide appropriate challenge that prevents drift and delay in planning for children. Ensure that formal escalation systems are used to record and monitor actions raised, to make sure that purposeful work is done in order to achieve improved outcomes for children.*'

Recommendation 21. '*Strengthen training and work on complaints and embed a culture of feedback. Improve the analysis of complaints and the understanding of the reasons why children, families and foster carers complain, in order to address issues raised.*'

- *Management oversight of practice*
- *Supervision*
- *Decision making for permanency*
- *Robust tracking leads to less drift and delay*
- *Quality assurance framework*
- *IROs and child protection conference (CPC) chairs challenge effectively and timely action is taken*
- *Performance management*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
Management oversight, supervision and decision making						
8.1	Supervision [Rec 1]	a. Refresh the supervision policy and recording template so that social workers and managers are clear about the expectations and standards for the frequency and quality of supervision.	TS	N/A	Jan 18	
		b. Undertake regular audits to ensure compliance.			Ongoing from Jan 18	
8.2	Timely decision making [Rec 8]	Produce and implement a revised scheme of delegation to ensure manager at all levels understand the roles and responsibilities of managers in relation to decisions making for children.	PS	N/A	Jan 18	
Quality assurance, including performance information						
8.3	Quality assurance [Para 103]	a. Produce a new quality assurance framework in line with the proposed social work practice model, with support from Achieving for Children (AfC) Ensure that all quality assurance activity leads to recommendations for improvements in practice and service development, and that these recommendations are followed and formally monitored to ensure that they have an impact on outcomes for children and families. b. Undertake an external review to assess how well this work is embedding.	PS	AfC	Dec 17 Jan 18	
8.4	Quality assurance [Para 103]	Deliver a series of communication and training events to launch the revised quality assurance framework and processes to all staff. To include: • In person communication such as presentations at team and service meetings and an all staff launch event • Written communication (e.g. an email or letter to all staff from the DCS) • Physical and electronic materials (e.g. accessible version of quality assurance framework booklet and posters) Feedback from staff and actions taken from feedback.	PS	AfC	Jan-Apr 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

8.5	Quality assurance [Para 103]	Establish and embed a regular programme of auditing which is reported to senior officers and all Elected Members. Establish regular moderation to validate the quality and judgements.	TS	N/A	Ongoing from Dec 17	
8.6	Clear line of sight [Para 91 & 102]	Strengthen the current performance data set to include information around the experiences of children and ensure that accurate performance information informs an up to date understanding of the council's and partner agencies effectiveness	TS	AfC CSCB Health, Police	Jan 18	
8.7	Clear line of sight [Para 91 & 102]	Ensure that the current performance data set is aligned to practice priorities and that senior leaders and managers use the current performance data set to have effective oversight and scrutiny of practice that leads to swift action to address priorities.	PS	AfC	Jan 18	
8.8	Operational data [Para 98, 102]	Further develop, deliver and embed systems improvements to ensure the provision of effective operational data to support day-to-day decision making and risk management alongside strategic performance data.	TS	AfC	Ongoing from Nov 17	
8.9	Operational data [Para 98, 102]	Support first line managers and service leaders to proactively use data to drive performance and reduce drift and delay for children. To include: • Convening weekly service-based performance meetings • Monthly whole-service performance discussions at the Children's Leadership Team (CLT) meetings	PS	AfC Link with good LA	Ongoing from Nov 17	
8.10	Clear line of sight [Para 91 & 102] Operational data [Para 98, 102]	All unit managers to attend practice development group quarterly, where team-level performance data will be reviewed, challenged and actions agreed to improve areas of underperformance.	BP	N/A	Feb 18	
Challenge from IROs and CPC chairs						
8.11	IRO & CPC Chair challenge [Rec 10]	Relaunch the process of IRO and Child Protection Conference (CPC) chairs challenge to promote understanding and ownership. IRO and CPC Chairs to publicise with teams. Develop a tracker to monitor all challenges and progress in resolution. Ensure that the challenge role of the IRO and CPC Chairs is monitored as part of the audit/quality assurance process.	PS	N/A	Feb 18	

8.12	IRO & CPC Chair challenge [Rec 10]	Report quarterly to CSMT and CLT on use of the escalation system for IROs and CPC chairs, identify practice themes and take remedial action.	TS	N/A	Ongoing from Feb 18	
8.13	Complaints [Rec. 21. Para 109]	Corporate complaints team to report quarterly to CSMT on progress on complaints and positive feedback, and key emerging themes, which can be built onto service development and Learning and Development plan. Heads of Service to establish a tracking system to ensure complaints are responded to in a timely way. Corporate complaints team to present their annual report to CSMT and Improvement Board	RS	N/A	Ongoing from Feb 18	

What good looks like:

- Children are protected from harm, in a timely way, through effective and well-documented management oversight which details good quality decision making and ensures that children and families are offered the appropriate support without delay that minimises risks
- Social workers have access to effective support, supervision and challenge which enables them to manage risk, reach good decisions, be open about their difficulties and be supported to make the necessary steps that will improve outcomes for children and families
- Effective and timely planning, support and decision-making occurs during pre-proceedings work and this work is tracked and overseen by managers
- CPC chairs ensure that child protection conferences are effective forums for timely information-sharing, planning and risk-based decision-making so that children and young people are protected thorough effective multi-agency arrangements
- IROs quality assure the care planning and review process and monitor the performance of the local authority as a corporate parent, challenge lack of progress and use the escalation policy to quickly resolve any identified issues
- The local authority uses performance management and monitoring to create a detailed and up to date understanding of its effectiveness and uses this to drive improvement

What we hope children will say:

- I receive help when I need it
- Decisions aren't made without my opinion
- I know how to make a complaint, and that people will respond/do something
- My IRO meets me before meetings, listens to me and helps me get my voice heard

What we hope staff will say:

- My supervision is more regular, reflective and relevant, and helps me to do my job
- I get good support from my manager, who helps me to understand what I need to do to move cases forward
- Where cases are drifting, managers intervene to make thing happen
- IRO's and CPC chairs are challenging at times, they make sure that we are doing the right things in a timely way for children and young people
- I understand the purpose of audits and they help me to improve my work
- People are generally more open to feedback about their work than before, and are challenging one another more

- I know how to escalate things where I have concerns
- I know how to use performance information (data) better to manage my team/service

What we hope partners will say:
- Child protection conferences are more effective and challenge is taken seriously
- Reviews for looked after children are more effective and challenge is taken seriously
- If I raise concerns about children they are heard and responded to

People and performance

9. Strengthen strategic commissioning

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Richard Simpson (RS)

<table>
<tr>
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9. Strengthen strategic commissioning - Ofsted recommendations and identified issue

Recommendation 15. '*Review the provision and take-up of advocacy and independent visitor services to ensure that all children who would like this can access these services.*'

- *Commissioning of Advocacy, Independent Visitor and Return to Home interviews (RHIs)*
- *Accommodation and 'Staying Put' arrangements for care leavers*
- *Therapeutic support services*
- *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)*

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Issue
[Ofsted Ref]</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Partner involvement</th>
<th>By when</th>
<th>Progress RAG</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Commissioning RHI's
[Para 39]</td>
<td>Review services to support children missing from home and care. To include:
a. Ensuring short term solution of increasing capacity of RHIs

b. Develop new in house model and mobilise service</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Oct 17
Sep18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>Commissioning advocacy and independent visiting
[Rec 15, Para 38, 56]</td>
<td>a. Review the provision and take-up of advocacy and independent visitor services, and put in place short term measures to increase capacity.

b. Recommission a new Advocacy and Independent visiting support services to ensure they meets the needs of young people.</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Oct 17

Sep 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>Commissioning health visiting
[Para 64]</td>
<td>a. Review and strengthen the commissioning, service delivery and efficacy of the health visiting service to ensure that it meets the needs of vulnerable children.

b. Invest both short term resources for 2017/18 and confirm additional investment for 2018/19 with clear expected outcomes

c. Recommission new services as part of the Early help strategy.</td>
<td>RF</td>
<td>CCG/CHC</td>
<td>Mar 18

Mar 18

Apr 19</td>
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Page 63

9.4	Therapeutic support [Para 65]	d. Work with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) commissioners and the looked after children CAMHS team manager to improve social workers' awareness of, and access to, therapeutic support for children and young people. E Review the capacity and provision of looked after children CAMHS, ensuring it is responsive and meets the needs of children and young people, including how the CAMHS pathway with social care works.	ST	CCG Health and Wellbeing Board Joint Commissioning Executive	Apr 19 Apr 19	
9.5	Accommodation for care leavers [Para 89]	Increase the supported living capacity within the borough for care leavers, specifically for young people who are living in houses of multiple occupancy. Provide regular reports on the impact of improving accommodation for care leavers to the Corporate Parenting Panel.	MM	Housing providers Voluntary sector	Ongoing from Dec 17	
9.6	JSNA [Para 104]	a. Review and strengthen the JSNA to ensure that it accurately reflects the needs of children who need help and protection, looked after children, care leavers and children with disabilities. b. Evaluate the impact of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) in commissioning decisions and strategy development	RF	Health and Wellbeing Board Joint Commissioning Executive	Mar 18 Sep 18	
9.7	JSNA [Para 104]	Develop ways to better involve children, young people, carers and families in the commissioning process, learning from best practice elsewhere.	SI	CCG Joint Commissioning Executive	Jun 18	

What good looks like:

- All children that go missing from home or care are offered a return home interview and the majority are completed
- Children and families can access advocacy and independent visiting services
- The JSNA and sufficiency statement outline the needs of local children and young people in need of early help and protection, looked after children, care leavers and children with disabilities
- Commissioned services respond to and meet the needs of local children, young people and families in need of help, care and protection
- All providers have shared understanding of the outcomes they are seeking to achieve and how that supports children and families

What we hope children will say:

- When I was going missing, people stepped in to help me and make me safer
- When I felt unwell someone from the mental health team helped me get back on track
- When it is was time for me to leave care, I was able to move into accommodation that suited me

What we hope staff will say:

- We understand how providers support the work we do and how to access their services

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

• We commission enough services to meet the needs of children and families
• When we need to get access to CAMHS for looked after children we can do this quickly
What we hope partners will say:
• Services for children and young people in Croydon meet local needs
• I understand my contribution and how other services support the work we do with children and young people
• I understand how to access services for children and young people

Partnerships

10. Improve Croydon Children Safeguarding Board (CSCB) and strengthen partnership working

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Barbara Peacock (BP)

10. Improve Croydon Safeguarding Children Board and strengthen partnership working - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues

'The CSCB is inadequate. It has not fully established effective arrangements for discharging its statutory functions. In particular, it does not understand the experiences of children and young people locally, and has failed to sufficiently monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of frontline practice.' [LSCB executive summary, p. 33].

Ofsted recommendations 113-117

- *Discharge of statutory functions and responsibilities*
- *Understanding the lived experiences of children and young people*
- *Monitoring and evaluation of front-line practice*
- *Early Help Strategy*
- *Embedding learning from serious case reviews*
- *Use of procedures around CSE and Missing among practitioners*

No.	Issue [Ofsted Ref]	Actions	Lead	Partner involvement	By when	Progress RAG
10.1	Discharging statutory functions [Para 118]	Review the membership of the Board and Executive Group to ensure that the CSCB is fit for purpose, meets statutory functions and that the work is focused on clearly identified priorities. To include: a. Establish Executive Group with senior level representation from 3 safeguarding partners, local authority, police, clinical commissioning group and Education b. Agree remit of Executive Group including strategic leadership and oversight of CSCB improvement plan and transition to new local safeguarding arrangements (Children and Social Work Act 2017)	DS	All partners	Oct 17 Dec 17	

		c. Executive Group to review the CSCB and Sub Groups to ensure compliance with 'Working Together 2018'.			Feb 18	
		d. Review and rationalise sub-groups. Establish clear remits and terms of reference to ensure these are focussed on the priorities and outputs/outcomes are evidenced and impact positively on front line and families.			Apr 18	
		e. Evaluate the impact on frontline practice through: • Neglect Audit • CSE Audit • SCR Action Plans • Thematic Reviews			Apr 18	
10.2	Discharging statutory functions [Para 118]	a. Strengthen the Board's relationships with other key partnerships/groups and identify cross-cutting issues and priorities. Ensure active links are maintained with the; • Safeguarding Adults Board • Community Safety Partnership • Health and Wellbeing board b. Clarify the CSCB's role in overall partnership approach to vulnerable adolescents. See action 6.5 and link to outcomes of Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) review.	DS	LSP Independent Chair Health and Wellbeing Board Community Safety Partnership Safeguarding Adults Board	Feb 18 Mar 18	
10.3	Discharging statutory functions [Para 118]	Establish and agree clear expectations for all CSCB partners and ensure senior level engagement. Support and encourage all board members to robustly monitor, scrutinise and evaluate the work of all partners, establishing a climate of constructive challenge. To include: • Agree and clarify understanding of 'constructive challenge' • All partners to recommit to CSCB Compact agreement • Identify and agree with partners data to be routinely provided as part of CSCB multi-agency data set • Secure partnership commitment to multi-agency audit	DS	All partners	Mar 18	
10.4	Discharging statutory functions [Para 118]	Introduce an induction programme for Board members, which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of board members (e.g. challenge and monitoring impact on outcomes for children). • Board awareness induction pack and presentations offered to all agencies		All partners	May 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

					All partners	Nov 17	
			• Board member induction				
10.5	Discharging statutory functions [Para 118]	a. Introduce a culture change approach at the 2017 CSCB Development Day to promote increased rigour, challenge and prioritisation. Engage the CSCB in development of, and commitment to, the Children's Improvement Plan.			All partners	Nov 17	
		b. Implement a culture change programme through a series of CSCB development events to improve the effectiveness of the CSCB.				Jul 18	
10.6	Learning from SCRs [Para 128]	a. Review and revise the learning improvement framework to ensure that it is focused on the priorities of the Board and the learnings from serious case reviews.		MF	All partners	Feb 18	
		b. Ensure that learning from SCR's informs improvements in frontline practice and establish arrangements for evaluating the impact.				May 18	
10.7	Monitoring practice/impact [Rec 113 & Para 120]	Establish effective quality assurance arrangements, ensuring a balance between quantitative performance information and qualitative learning from audits, practice information and feedback from children, young people and families. • Establish regular feedback loop from CYP and frontline staff including the use of existing forums • Single agency audit reports to include quantitative and qualitative information • Triangulate information from CYP, agency feedback and performance data		MF	All partners	Jul 18	
10.8	Monitoring practice/impact [Rec 113 & Para 120]	Revise the multi-agency dataset to include appropriate information so that board members can actively quality assure, evaluate and challenge the effectiveness of services. • Establish agreed performance indicators • Executive to scrutinise over-arching data • Dataset to include demographic data, performance data and priority improvement data • Link with Public Health and Croydon Observatory to provide triangulation and additional source material for the dataset • Relevant data to be provided to and monitored by sub-groups		MF	Council Police CCG	May 18	
10.9	Monitoring practice/impact	Ensure that the multi-agency audit programme is sufficiently targeted on priority areas and enables the board to monitor, evaluate and challenge frontline practice and its impact on children and families. • Agree multi-agency audit programme for 2018		MF	All partners	Feb 18	

Page 68

	[Rec 113 & Para 120]	• Audit programme linked to priorities and learning from SCRs • Re-audit in place to measure effectiveness and improvement				
10.10	Monitoring practice/impact [Rec 113, 117 & Para 120]	Use the refreshed Section 11 (s.11) audit tool to develop an accurate understanding of how well partners are safeguarding children, so that essential improvements can be supported and challenged, and quickly put into effect. • S.11 Tool introduction to wider partners and agencies • S.11 Challenge Day achieved • S.11 incorporated into commissioning processes • Introduce engagement tools with frontline staff to test effectiveness	MF	All partners	Apr 18	
10.11	Monitoring practice/impact [Rec 113, 117 & Para 120]	Maintain a challenge log which clearly details expected improvements, with tight timescales, and offer support and challenge to effect rapid improvements. Clearly record and challenge any blocks so that barriers to improvement are removed.	MF	CSCB Executive	Apr 18	
10.12	Early help services [Rec 11, Para 26]	Ensure all partners are fully engaged in, and committed to, the development of an Early Help Strategy (see action 2.2)	DS	CSCB All partners	Feb 18	
10.13	Early Help Strategy [Rec 116]	Secure partnership support and commitment to the implementation of a new all age Early Help Strategy. Clarify each organisation's contribution to an integrated and joined up approach to early intervention and prevention. (see action 2.2)	DS	All partners	Jun 18	
10.14	Thresholds [Rec 116]	Develop a shared understanding across all partners represented on the board around the application of thresholds and pathways across the partnership. • Thematic Review on Neglect, incl. m/a audit & analysis of previous SCRs and Audit • Analysis of no further action (NFA) decisions from MASH by agency • Increase awareness of pathways to support, EH or CSC • Continued delivery of threshold awareness training • Use feedback information and contact analysis to develop further training proposals • Delivery and awareness raising at safeguarding lead meetings	DS	All partners	Jun 18	
10.15	CSE and missing	Expand and clarify the remit of the child sexual exploitation (CSE) and missing sub-group to provide oversight and improve coordination of all	DS	All partners	Jan 18	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

	[Rec 114. Para 123]	vulnerable adolescents at risk of exploitation, gang affiliation, county lines and those who go missing. • Revise and expand membership • Provide regular data on relevant groups of young people at risk of missing, CSE and harmful behaviours • Analysis of patterns and trends, plus emerging themes • Establish link between strategic and operational activities • Ensure escalation of risk				
10.16	CSE and missing [Rec 114. Para 123]	Ensure that agreed procedures to support vulnerable adolescents (e.g. those at risk of CSE and going missing) are applied consistently across the partnership and the Board is able to identify and challenge where required. • New London CSE procedures introduced & disseminated • Analysis of the CSE procedures application • Undertake audits to assess impact on children's lives	DS	All partners	Apr 18	
10.17	CSE and missing [Rec 114. Para 123]	Target workforce learning to increase knowledge, skills and confidence to understand and identify children at risk of CSE and missing. Introduce a system of monitoring and evaluation of training to focus on impact on practice.	MF	All partners	Apr 18	

What good looks like:

• The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) complies with its statutory responsibilities in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006 and The Children and Social Work Act 2017
• The LSCB co-ordinates the work of partners in helping, protecting and caring for children and there are mechanisms in place to monitor the effectiveness of those local arrangements
• Regular and effective monitoring and evaluation of multi-agency front-line practice to safeguard children identifies where improvement is required in the quality of practice and services that children, young people and families receive

What we hope children will say:

• Adults know how to spot when I need help (e.g. my teacher, social worker)
• When I am worried, people listen to me and take me seriously
• When I started to have problems, I was offered help quickly by school and other people
• I am given information about staying safe and know where to get help if I need it
• I feel like my safety and happiness really matters to the people and services who work with me (e.g. my teacher, social worker)

What we hope staff will say:

• I am aware of the purpose and function of the CSCB and I know how it links to my work
• I understand the role of partners (e.g. schools) in safeguarding children and can see that they are actively doing this
• Where failures to protect children occur, we learn (and teach others) so it doesn't happen again and the CSCB provides us with a lot of multi-agency training about these issues

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

• I feel confident to escalate professional concerns

• I understand my role in keeping children safe in Croydon
• I understand the priorities of the CSCB and how my agency contributes
• I feel that the CSCB is effective in challenging the quality of safeguarding in Croydon

Platforms

11. Establish organisational support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work

Senior Responsible Officer (SRO): Richard Simpson (RS)

	11. Establish organisational support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work - Ofsted recommendations and identified issues **Recommendation 2** *'…Take steps to ensure that … social workers … have sufficient time to complete essential work.'* • *Organisational support for children's improvement; creating the conditions for social work to flourish* • *Sufficient resource to deliver the improvement plan* • *Enabling administrative support* • *Fit for purpose recording systems* • *Available and accurate operational data*				
No.	**Issue** [Ofsted Ref]	**Actions**	**Lead**	**Partner involvement**	**By when**	**Progress RAG**
11.1	Creating the conditions for social work to flourish [para 110]	Ensure there is sufficient organisational (corporate) support for children's services, in order to deliver the actions outlined in the improvement plan at the required pace. This will be focused on creating the conditions for social work to flourish in Croydon.	JN	CSCB	Ongoing	
11.2	Creating the conditions for social work to flourish [para 110]	Ensure that the children's improvement programme and children's services is adequately resourced in order to invest in the necessary improvements, and deliver these at the required pace. To include; a. Initial investment in 2017/18 in key areas b. Commissioned financial modelling to support the development of sustainable budget c. Ongoing resource allocation through future budgets	RS	N/A	Nov 17 Feb 18 Feb 18	
11.3	Enabling support [Rec 2, Para 64, 67]	Provision of high quality business support which enables social workers to maximise time spent on direct work with children and families. To include: a. Implementation of quick wins	GC	N/A	Nov 17	

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

		b. Design and implement new business support model			Apr 18	
11.4	Fit for purpose systems [Rec 2, para 27]	Develop fit for purpose electronic recording systems, processes and workflows that are aligned to the new social work practice model and support good social work practice.	PS	N/A	Oct 18	

What good looks like:
• Social workers are freed from undertaking administrative tasks allowing them to spend more time with children and families • Business support processes are streamlined, with manual processes automated where appropriate, resulting in reduced time spent on administration for social workers and on specific tasks for business support staff • Business Support is flexible to meet the needs of the services • Social workers and Business Support processes are automated and linked to CRS as far as possible • Management and performance information provides ongoing assurances that key actions and support are timely and effective and in timely manner areas requiring focus and review
What we hope children will say:
• I see my social worker more often and they keep in contact • My social worker is easy to get hold of when I need him/her • My social worker has time for me
What we hope staff will say:
• Business support helps me to do my job • Business support responds to the changing needs of my team/service • I can do my job quicker allowing me to do more for the social care team I support (business support staff) • I am happy with the case recording system (CRS), it is easy to use and helps me do my job • My case records are up to date • Documents are uploaded to CRS easily • I have been trained in using CRS

Lead Officers

Each action within the plan will have a lead officer who will be held to account on progress and successful delivery by the relevant SRO. These are outlined in the table below.

LEAD OFFICERS
PS, Philip Segurola, Interim Director, Early Help and Children's Social Care
JE, Julian Ellerby, Director of Strategy and Partnerships
IL, Iain Low, Head of Early Help and MASH
BP, Barbara Peacock, Executive Director (People-Director of Children's Services)
DS, Di Smith, Interim CSCB Chair
MK, Moira Keen, Head of Children In Need
CB, Caroline Baxter, Assistant Director, 0-65 Disability Service
WT, Wendy Tomlinson, Head of Looked After Children and Resources
DB, David Butler, Director of Education and Youth Engagement
Gill Manton, Head of the virtual school
HD, Hannah Doughty, Head of Targeted Services
JN, Jo Negrini, Chief Executive
SI, Sarah Ireland, Director of Commissioning and Improvement
JHB, Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Director of Law and Monitoring Officer
TS, Tom Stevenson, Head of Quality Assurance
SM, Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources
MF, Maureen Floyd, CSCB Board Manager
RS, Richard Simpson, Executive Director of Resources and s.151 Officer
SI, Sarah Ireland, Director of Commissioning and Improvement
RF, Rachel Flowers, Director of Public Health
ST, Sam Taylor, Head of Integrated Commissioning Children and Families Partnership
MM, Mark Meehan, Director of Housing Need
GC, Graham Cadle, Director of Customer and Corporate Services

Appendix 1

Our success measures

The tables below set out some of the qualitative and quantitative measures that we will use to monitor the impact of the actions in our plan on children and young people, staff and partners. There is one table for each of the four work streams. These measures include information from performance data (e.g. key performance indicators), practice audits, scrutiny and challenge and, most importantly, the voices of children, staff and partners.

Practice success measures

Practice success measures (Quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the impact of actions)
1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work practice
• Feedback from children that they have been supported, listened to and have a good relationship with their social worker • Feedback that staff understand Croydon's practice model, are clear about expectations and have the right tools • Regular auditing to understand practice • % of child and family assessments completed within 45 days • % of children in need (CIN) for whom a visit has taken place in the last 4 weeks • % of children subject to a child protection plan for whom a visit has taken place within the last 4 weeks • % of looked after children for whom a visit has taken place in statutory timescales • % of children in need who had a review in timescales • % looked after children who have had reviews in timescales
2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection
• Feedback from children that there worries are being heard and they understand why Children's Services are involved • Feedback from partners that they understand the Early Help Offer • Audits evidence greater partner involvement in strategy meetings • % of completed contacts received in month actioned within 1 working day • % of re-referrals within 12 months • % of children for whom CPC was held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion • % of child protection plans lasting 2 years or more • Number of cases in PLO • % of cases in legal proceedings concluded within 26 weeks of issue
3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence
• Feedback from children and young people around participation in the Children in Care Council

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

- Feedback from Corporate Parenting Panel that outcomes for looked after children are improving
- % of looked after children with up to date PEPs
- % looked after children who have had reviews in timescales
- % of looked after children under 16 in care for more than 2.5 years in the same placement for 2+ years
- % of annual reviews of foster careers completed on time
- Average time between a child entering care and moving in with adoptive family

4. Improve outcomes for care leavers

- Feedback from care leavers on the support they receive from personal advisors
- Audits show that the quality of pathway plans has improved
- Feedback from Corporate Parenting Panel that outcomes for care leavers are improving
- % of care leavers with an up to date pathway plan
- % of care lavers in employment, education or training
- % of care leavers in suitable accommodation

5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation

- Feedback from children and young people that they have been supported to stay safe
- Audits show that information from RHIs is used to reduce risks of future missing episodes
- Audits show increased use of risk assessment and safety planning for children at risk of CSE
- **%** of missing episodes that result in an RHI
- **%** of children offered an RHI
- Feedback from IROs and CPC chairs that risks around CSE, missing and youth violence are discussed in conferences and reviews and sufficient support is in place

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

People and Performance success measures

People and Performance success measures (Quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the impact of actions)

6. Strengthen leadership and governance

- Feedback from staff around leadership, communications and involvement
- Positive feedback from children and young people around increased engagement and involvement
- Feedback from partners on improved strategic relationships
- Feedback from the judiciary around improved relationship and quality of court work
- Scrutiny and Corporate Parenting Panel minutes demonstrate robust challenge, follow up on actions and discussions on the impact for children and young people

7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce

- Feedback from staff that they are proud of their work and proud to work for Croydon
- Feedback from ASYE's that they are well supported
- Feedback from children and young people about their social worker
- **%** of looked after children that have been in care for 12+ months, that have had same social worker for last 6 months
- Average caseload per social worker (and breakdowns for each team/service)
- Average caseload per newly qualified social worker (ASYE)
- Social worker vacancy rate
- % of permanent staff across workforce

8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management

- Staff receive regular supervision
- Feedback from staff that feedback from audits helps to improve their practice
- Feedback from managers that they are able to use data effectively to improve team/service performance
- % of cases with management footprint in last 90 days
- % of cases with supervision record in last 90 days
- Audits show increased management footprint on case files, including supervision and better recording of key decisions
- Audits show increased challenge from CPC chairs and IROs to reduce risk and prevent drift and delay

9. Strengthen strategic commissioning

- % of missing episodes that result in an RHI
- Number of missing episodes in the month
- Practice audits show that information from RHIs is used to reduce risks of future missing episodes
- Uptake of advocacy services
- Uptake of independent visitor services
- Feedback from children who have accessed advocacy and independent visiting services

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

- Health visiting data (e.g. increase in no. of families seen)
- Increase number of children accessing therapeutic support through looked after CAMHS
- % of care leavers in suitable accommodation
- Feedback from care leavers on supported living accommodation

Partnerships success measures

10. Partnerships success measures (Quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the impact of actions)
• Minutes from board, executive and subgroup meetings demonstrate evidence of robust monitoring, scrutiny and evaluation of safeguarding practice of all partners • Partners feedback that they are clear about their role and that the culture of CSCB promotes effective challenge, rigour and evaluation of impact • CSCB's multi-agency data set provides accurate and timely information that enables accurate evaluation of the effectiveness of services • Practice audits provide evidence that enables CSCB to scrutinise, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of frontline practice and the impact on outcomes for children and young people • Challenge log identifies issues of concern that have been raised and evidence of the impact on improvement • Reduction in % referrals that result in no further action (NFA) • Minutes show improved partnership understanding of patterns and trends relating to vulnerable adolescents and better understanding of effective early intervention and prevention • Practice audit and performance data demonstrates consistent application of CSE and 'missing' procedures • Practice audit and training evaluations show that learning from SCRs and learning and development activity is having an impact on frontline practitioners across the partnership

Croydon Children's Improvement Plan November 2017

Platforms success measures

11. Platforms success measures (Quantitative and qualitative measures to monitor the impact of actions)
• Positive feedback from staff on the level of corporate/oranisational support for Children's Services • Finance data evidencing investment in improvements (e.g. finance tracker) • Future budget allocation (2018/19) • % of looked after children reviews in timescales • % of children subject to a child protection plan for whom a visit has taken place within the last 4 weeks • % of looked after children for whom a visit has taken place in statutory timescales • Practice audits show improved record keeping (e.g. more documents scanned onto CRS) • Practice audits show improved minute taking in key meetings (e.g. child protection conferences and panels) • Positive feedback from frontline staff on improvements to business support • Positive feedback from business support that they feel there are making a difference • Positive feedback on recording system (CRS) and mobile technologies

Appendix 2

CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT PLAN ON A PAGE

OUR WORK STREAMS ▶▶▶

PRACTICE	PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE	PARTNERSHIPS	PLATFORMS

OUR VISION ▶▶▶

CHAMPION FOR CROYDON'S CHILDREN – THE FUTURE IS THEIRS

OUR PRIORITIES ▶▶▶

PRACTICE	PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE	PARTNERSHIPS	PLATFORMS
1. Ensure consistent, high quality social work	6. Strengthen leadership and governance	10. Improve Croydon Safeguarding Children Board and strengthen partnership working	11. Establish organisational support and fit for purpose systems that enable high quality social work
2. Improve the quality of practice for children who need early help and protection	7. Develop a stable and skilled workforce	Including;	Including;
3. Improve outcomes for looked after children, including planning for permanence	8. Strengthen management oversight and ensure robust quality assurance and performance management	• Understanding the lived experiences of children and young people	• Organisation-wide support for children's improvement
4. Improve outcomes for care leavers	9. Strengthen strategic commissioning	• Monitoring front-line practice	• Sufficient resource to deliver the improvement plan
5. Protect vulnerable adolescents, including those who go missing and those at risk of CSE, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation		• Partnership engagement in Early Help	• Enabling administrative support
		• Embedding learning from SCRs	• Fit for purpose recording systems
		• Multi-agency approach to neglect	
		• Vulnerable adolescents strategy	

OUR ACTIONS ▶▶▶

Develop new social work practice model	Deliver recruitment campaign	Engage partners in developing Early Help Strategy	Streamline CRS workflows

OUR SUCCESS MEASURES ▶▶▶

What children say ▶ What staff say ▶ Audit feedback ▶ Performance indicators ▶ What partners say ▶ Self assessment

CHAMPIONS for Children

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FOCUS

Appendix 2

Children's Improvement Priority Indicators

October 2017

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Directors Summary

Workforce Indicators

The service continues to experience significant workload pressures, particularly across the assessment and care planning teams.

The Best Start social work team has been put on rota in November as an additional assessment team to alleviate pressures in that service. Two additional care planning teams are now in place, with a third being recruited to. This additional capacity should start to impact upon caseloads by the end of November. With consolidation of the staffing establishment, we are now able to report upon vacancy levels. This stands at 43% against an outer London average of 25%. Interviews are being undertaken with all locum staff to confirm those who are interested in being substantive employees for Croydon.

Contact and Referral

We are experiencing an upward trajectory in volumes which has contributed to a slight downturn in contacts actioned within 24 hours. October has also seen a reduction in re-referral rates month on month (-5%), although there is continued volatility with this indicator.

Assessments

Assessment volumes are continuing to rise which is placing pressure on completion timescales. This, combined with a reduction in the number of overdue assessments (current figure 119), has resulted in a reduction in compliance for completion within 45 working days (-11%).

Child in Need (CIN)

October evidenced an improvement in the percentage of children subject to a CIN plan who were visited within timescales (+12%), but a reduction in CIN reviews on time (-6%).

Safeguarding

The acceleration in the number of children subject to child protection plans and care proceedings has slowed, but it is too early to say if this will be sustained. There has been a significant reduction in the percentage of initial child protection conferences (ICPC) held within 15 days of strategy discussion, and this is now a high risk indicator.

Management action on visiting patterns for children on child protection plans is having an impact with a +11% improvement on compliance. Continuous rigour is being applied to the review of long-term child protection plans.

The missing/return home interview team is now in place and undertaking interviews. We expect to see evidence of impact from November returns.

Children in Care and Permanence

There has been no change in performance for LAC visits in timescale which remains at 90%. The additional business support capacity is now in place to assist in the administration and co-ordination of reviews, but as this is a rolling year indicator, the full benefit of this will not become apparent until 2018/19. Placement stability figures remain strong.

There have been no significant month on month variations in respect of adoption performance and dialogue is progressing regarding options for a regional adoption agency (RAA). October has seen good progress in respect of foster carer annual reviews with a +13% improvement on completion month on month. Work currently being undertaken by iMPOWER is looking at capacity and vacancy levels within the fostering service.

Performance outcomes for care leavers are continuing to hold up with some further improvement in NEET figures.
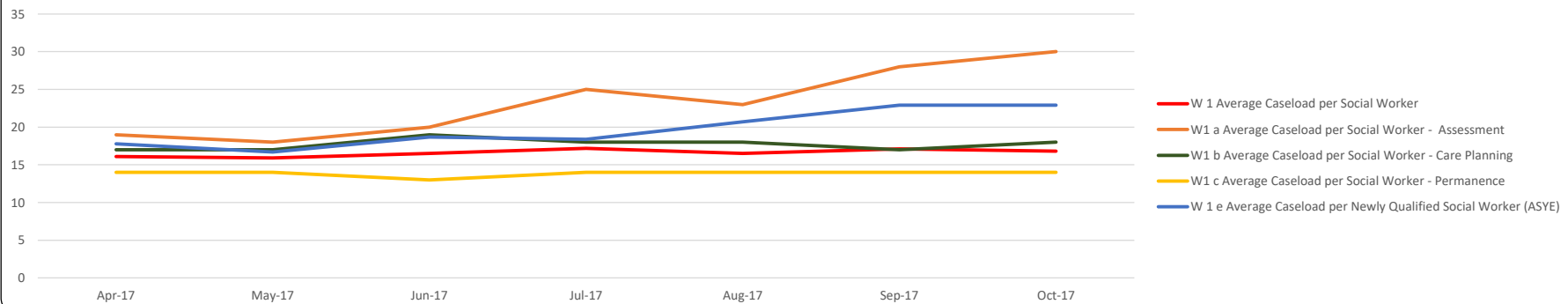
Priority Indicators Action Log

REF	ACTIONS	WHEN?	COMPLETE?
Oct-01	Two additional care planning teams in place and third being recruited to. Additional Unit Manager is being sourced for permanence.	Dec-17	Ongoing
Oct-02	Audit activity on contacts and referrals has been undertaken as part of our Ofsted monitoring visit preparation.	Nov-17	Y
Oct-03	Re-referrals have been added to the audit programme for 2018	Nov-17	Y
Oct-04	The Best Start social work team has gone on rota as a sixth assessment team until the end of March	Nov-17	Y
Oct-05	Transfer process and cases remain subject to review.	TBC	Ongoing
Oct-06	Management scrutiny on CIN visiting and plans continues.	TBC	Ongoing
Oct-07	The two additional CP Chairs are in place and arrangements are being made for off line review of 12+ months CIN cases between January – March 2018.	Mar-18	Ongoing
Oct-08	Review of all 12+ month child protection cases is being led by the conference chair manager.	TBC	Ongoing
Oct-09	Authorisation levels for re-scheduling of LAC reviews has been re-set with Head of Service	Nov-17	Y
Oct-10	Additional business support capacity is in place for initial health medical notifications and this will be monitored going forwards.	TBC	Ongoing
Oct-11	Work in relation to completion of PEPs and link to CRS is ongoing.	TBC	Ongoing
Oct-12	Meeting scheduled for 1st December to discuss introduction of fostering reviewing officers as part of 2018/19 budget build.	Dec-17	Ongoing
Nov-01	Analysis to be undertaken of delayed ICPCs to identify and address causal factors for delays.	Feb-17	Ongoing

Ref	Indicator Title	RAG
WORKFORCE		
P1	Vacancy Rate	🟥
W 1	Average Caseload per Social Worker	🟩
W1 a	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Assessment	🟥
W1 b	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Care Planning	🟧
W1 c	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Permanence	🟩
W1 d	Average Caseload per Social Worker - CWD	🟥
W 1 e	Average Caseload per Newly Qualified Social Worker (ASYE)	🟥
FRONT DOOR		
FD 3	Percentage of completed contacts received in the month which were actioned within 1working day	🟧
FD 8	Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	🟩
ASSESSMENT		
AMT 2	Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days	🟥
CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION		
CIN 4	Percentage of CIN* for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks	🟥
CIN 5	Percentage of CIN* for who had review on time (excludes those allocated to CWD teams)	🟥
CP 5	Percentage of children for whom CPC was held in the month within 15 working days of the Strategy discussions	🟥
CP 13	Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks	🟥
CP 10	Number of current Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	🟩
CP 10a	Number of current Child Protection Plans lasting 18 months or more	🟩
MC 1	Number of missing episodes in the month	⬜
MC 6	Percentage Missing Episodes that result in a completed RHI	🟥
LE 2	Percentage of cases concluded within 26 weeks of issue	⬜
LE 3	Number of cases in proceedings	⬜
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN		
LAC 10	Percentage of LAC for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales	🟧
LAC 11	Percentage of LAC cases which were reviewed within required timescales	🟥
LAC 19	Percentage of LAC that have been in care for 12+ months, that have had same social worker for last 6 months	🟥
LAC 20	Percentage of LAC under 16 in care for more than 2.5 years: in the same placement for 2+ years	🟧
FOSTERING AND ADOPTION		
F 3	Percentage of Annual Reviews of Foster Carers completed on time	🟥
AD 7	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with the adoptive family (days)	🟩
CARE LEAVERS		
CL 1	Number of Care Leavers in employment, education, or training (EET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday	⬜
CL 1a	Percentage in employment, education, or training (EET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday	🟧
CL 2	Number not in employment, education, or training (NEET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday	⬜
CL 3	Number of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation on their 17th to 21st Birthday	⬜
CL 3a	Percentage in suitable accommodation on their 17th to 21st Birthday	🟧
QUALIY ASSURANCE		
QA 1	Percentage of children who had their supervision and was within the timescales	🟥
QA 2	Number of Cases Audited that are Good or Outstanding	⬜
QA 3	Percentage of Cases Audited that are Good or Outstanding	⬜

WORKFORCE

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
P1	Vacancy Rate	SIB							43%	24%	PS		24% or below Green 25%-34% Amber 35% and above Red
W 1	Average Caseload per Social Worker	SIB	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	PS		17 or below Green 18.1-20 Amber 20.1 and above Red
W1 a	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Assessment	SIB	19	18	20	25	23	28	30	20	PS		20 or below Green 20.1-22 Amber 22.1 and above Red
W1 b	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Care Planning	SIB	17	17	19	18	18	17	18	16	PS		16 or below Green 16.1-18 Amber 18.1 and above Red
W1 c	Average Caseload per Social Worker - Permanence	SIB	14	14	13	14	14	14	14	16	PS		16 or below Green 16.1-18 Amber 18.1 and above Red
W1 d	Average Caseload per Social Worker - CWD	SIB	18	18	18	16	16	19	20	17	PS		16 or below Green 16.1-18 Amber 18.1 and above Red
W 1 e	Average Caseload per Newly Qualified Social Worker (ASYE)	SIB	18	17	19	18	21	23	23	14	PS		14 or below Green 14.1-16 Amber 16.1 and above Red

| Improvement Activity	Assessment service caseloads have gone up – a result of an increase in referrals and new assessments. This is being addressed through the relocation of the Best Start team into the assessment service. ASYE – the new cohort of NQSWs started in October and were not yet case holding during this month. There are only 6 NQSWs from the previous year's cohort yet to complete their ASYE (due to complete by January). As such they are carrying full caseloads in their final two months.
Next Steps	Additional staffing resource is being recruited into care planning to manage surge in proceedings and enable cases to transfer through from assessment service in line with eh transfer protocol. The Best Start Team has been re-located into the Assessment Service to enable a 6 week duty cycle giving workers additional time to complete assessments.

Graph 1

FRONT DOOR													
Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
FD 3	Percentage of completed contacts received in the month which were actioned within 1 working day	BIB	86%	86%	87%	86%	89%	92%	86%	90%	IL		90% or above Green 85%-89% Amber 84% and below Red
FD 8	Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	SIB	21%	10%	28%	19%	24%	23%	18%	22%	IL		22% or below Green 21% - 25% Amber 26% and above Red
Improvement Activity	FD3 - performance in October dropped slightly, while remaining on the right trajectory to the agreed 2017/18 target, performance is monitored on a weekly basis. MASH continues to deliver a timely response to contacts from agencies and residents and will meet the agreed 2017/18 target. FD8 - performance has improved in that the % of re-referrals has reduced from 24% in August 2017 to 18% in August 2017; this needs continued monitoring and the QA Programme will include re-referrals in the audit programme.												
Next Steps	(1)From Monday 27 November 2017, the responsibility for children, young people and families presenting at Children's Social Care Reception will transfer to the MASH, all contacts will be added to CRS by the MASH Social Worker, this will ensure the timely completion of contacts. (2) Focus Group are taking place in November 2017 with MASH and Early Help Practitioners as part of the move to a Singe Front Door for Early Help and Children's Social Care.												

Percent of completed contacts received in the month which are actioned within one working day.
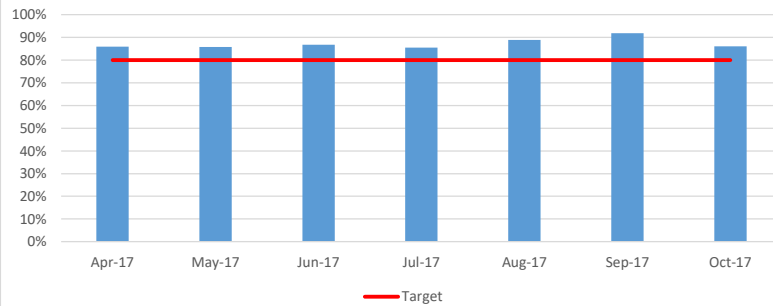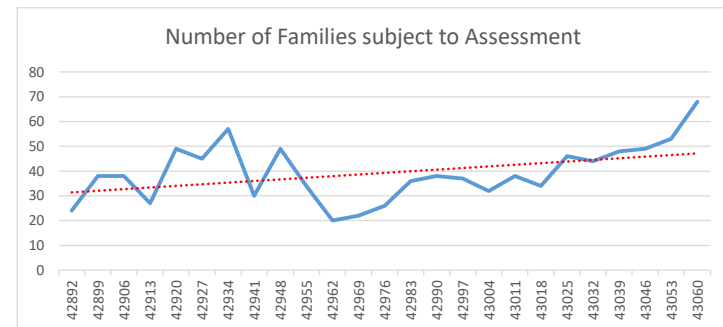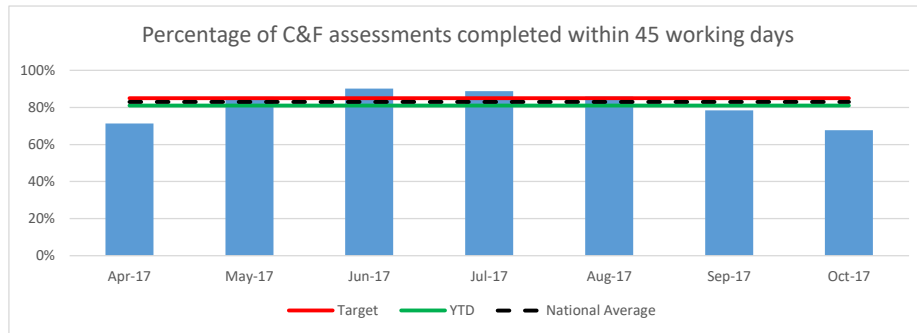

Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months
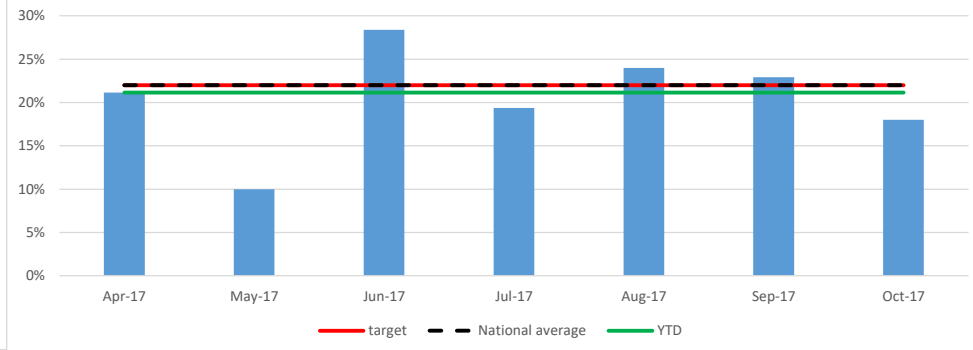
Note: Columns BELOW the target line are "good" performance

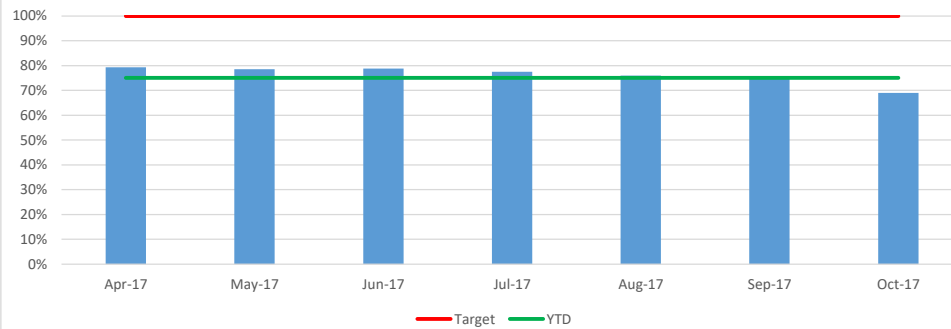|	ASSESSMENT													
Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
AMT 2	Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days	BIB	71.3%	85.8%	90.1%	88.8%	85.8%	78.5%	67.7%	95.0%	MK		95% or above Green 85%-94% Amber 84% and below Red
Improvement Activity		AMT2 – increase in timescales for completing assessments is as a result of the increase in numbers of assessments, and the implications on managers to sign off wok in a timely way. This is being addressed through the relocation of the Best Start team into the assessment service to enable a six week cycle of duty.											
Next Steps		A scoping exercise is underway to map the workflow and ensure the structure as size of the workforce is adequate to respond to the inflow of work.											

Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days

Number of Families subject to Assessment

CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
CIN 4	Percentage of CIN* for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks	BIB	70%	58%	67%	59%	49%	50%	62%	75%	MK		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red
CIN 5	Percentage of CIN* for who had review on time (excludes those allocated to CWD teams)	BIB	79%	79%	79%	78%	76%	75%	69%	98%	MK		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red
Improvement Activity		CIN4 – gradual improvement in visit timeliness as a result of targeted focus on improvement in this area and increase social work capacity in care planning.											
Next Steps		Further work to do on ensuring CIN reviews take place within agreed timescales. Exploration of using IROs to undertake the CIN review at 9 months to offer some external challenge and oversight to minimize drift in these cases.											

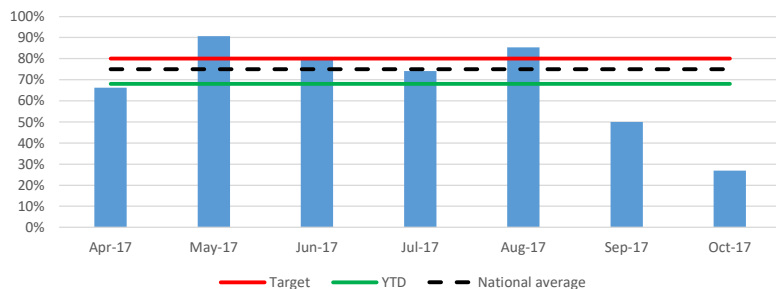Percentage of CIN* for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks
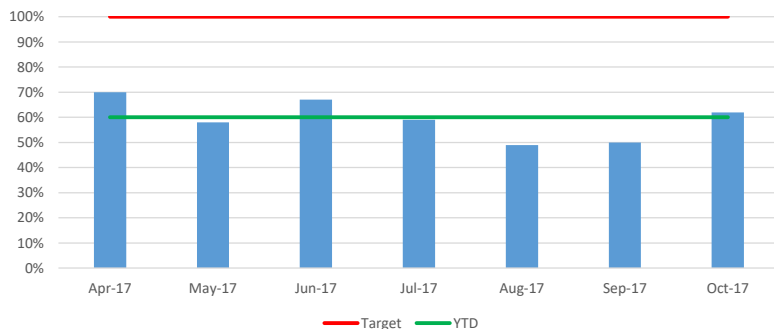
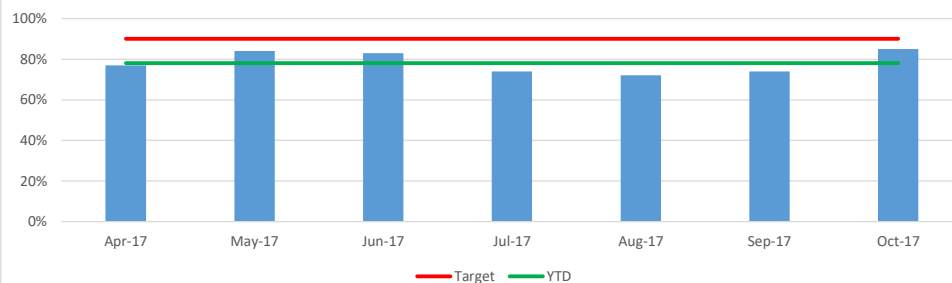Percentage of CIN* for who had review on time (excludes those allocated to CWD teams)

CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
CP 5	Percentage of children for whom CPC was held in the month within 15 working days of the Strategy discussions	BIB	66%	91%	81%	74%	85%	50%	27%	80%	MK		80% or above Green 70%-79% Amber 69% and below Red
CP 13	Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks	BIB	77%	84%	83%	74%	72%	74%	85%	98%	MK		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red

Improvement Activity	CP5 – rise in numbers of ICPC and children subject to CP plan has placed additional pressure on QA service. The significant reduction in performance of ICPCs held within 15 days is being further explored, one factor is the increased volume in casework but recording and system issues also need to be explored. CP 13 – increase in timeliness of visits due to targeted focus on improvement and increase in capacity of care planning
Next Steps	Work underway to map timeliness of notification to ICPC

Percentage of children for whom CPC was held in the month within 15 working days of the Strategy discussions
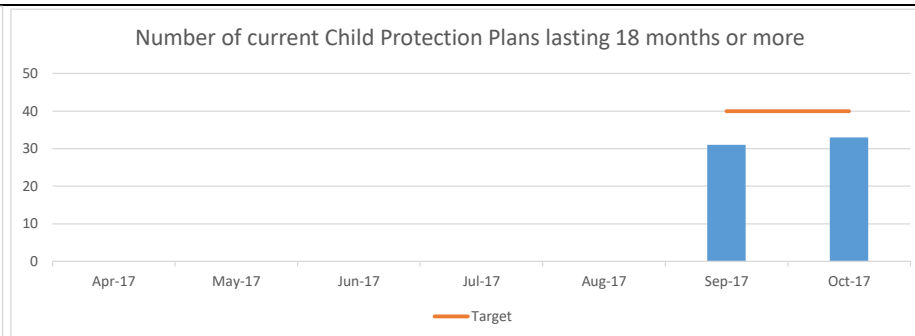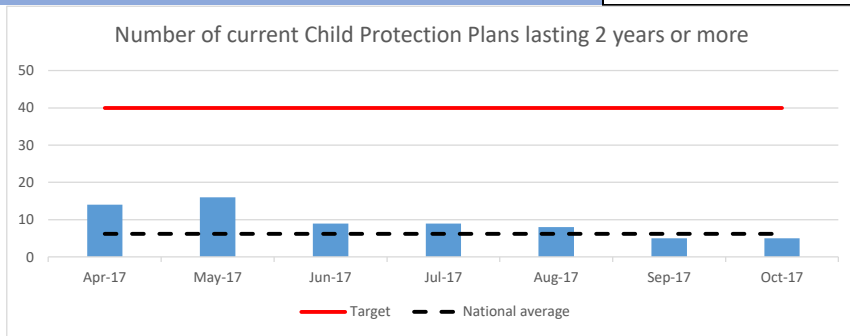
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan for whom a visit has taken place within last 4 weeks
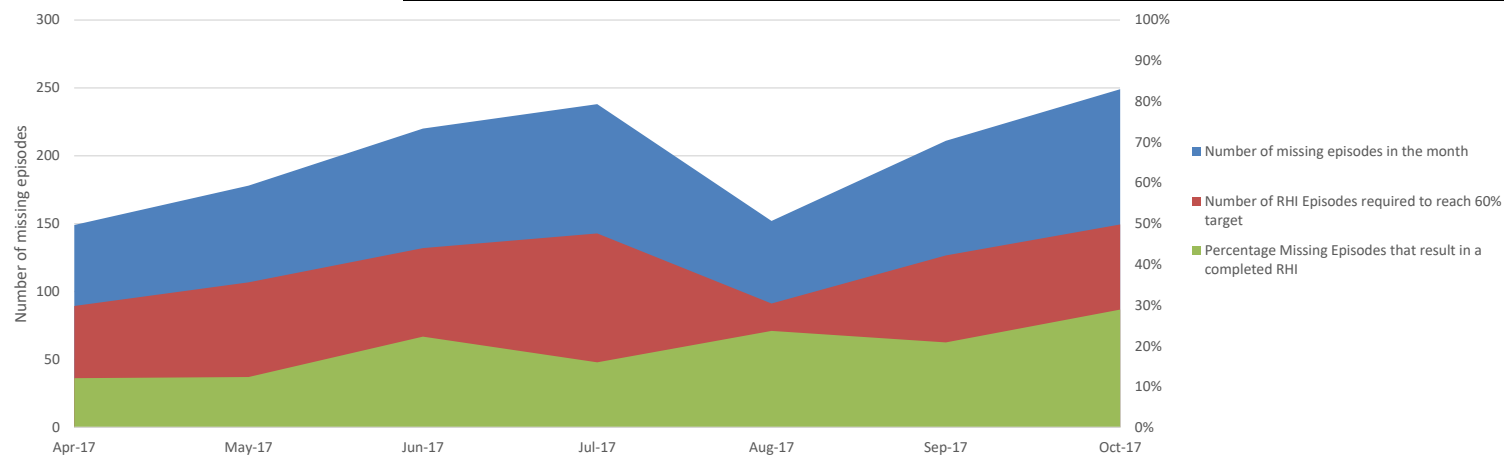
CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
CP 10	Number of current Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	SIB	14	16	9	9	8	5	5	<10% of Cohort	MK		10% of cohort or below Green 10-15% Amber 16% and above Red
	Improvement Activity												
	Next Steps												

Number of current Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more

— Target   - - National average

Number of current Child Protection Plans lasting 18 months or more

— Target

CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION													
Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
MC 1	Number of missing episodes in the month		149	178	220	238	152	211	249		HD		
MC 6	Percentage Missing Episodes that result in a completed RHI	BIB	12%	12%	22%	16%	24%	21%	29%	60%	HD		60% or above Green 50%-59% Amber 49% and below Red

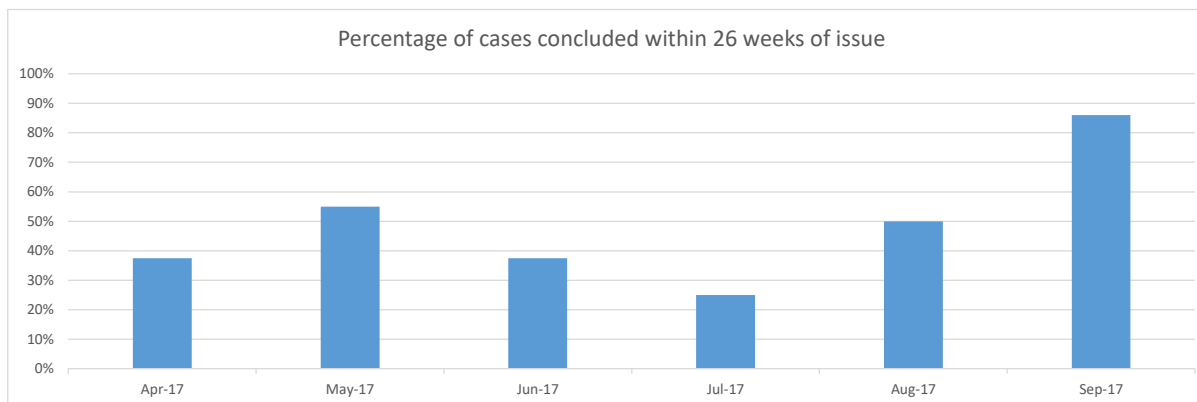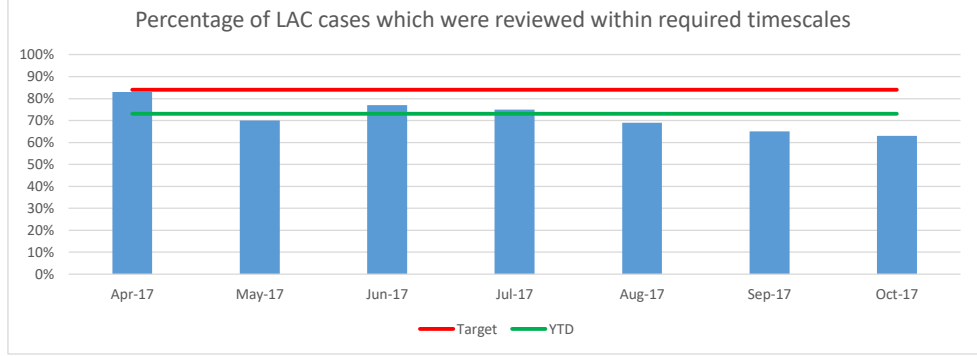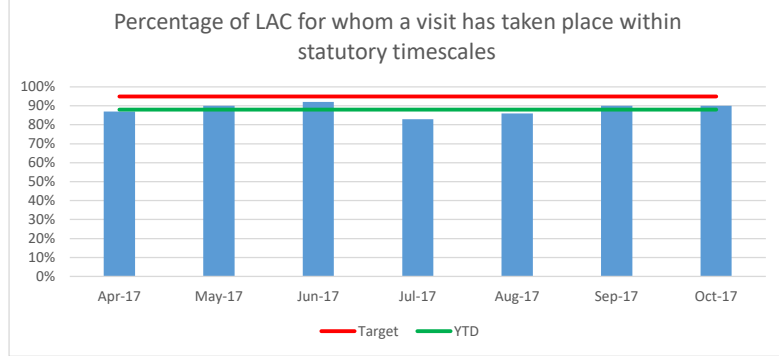| Improvement Activity	MC1 There has been an exercise to examine and ensure that the data is correctly recorded. This has included analysis of different codes i.e. unauthorised absence. MC6 – there are an increased number of return home interviews RHIs being completed, daily missing meetings to discuss which children and young people have been found and support offered to social workers who are undertaking RHIs.
Next Steps	MC1 Next steps will be to look at repeat missing episodes for children and young people and then offer short targeted interventions by independent workers or referral to early help to reduce these. MC6 there has been a review of the missing and RHI process to clarify the process in line with the London Child Protection Procedures: children missing from care, home and education, this will be communicated to social workers and appropriate training will be offered in November and December. There is a proposal to offer more independent workers to complete RHIs and to increase the percentage that are being offered to 50% for November. The CSE/missing team are scrutinising return interviews and prompting workers to ensure that they are completed and entered on the system, they are also ensuring that recording, and classification, is accurate.

CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION

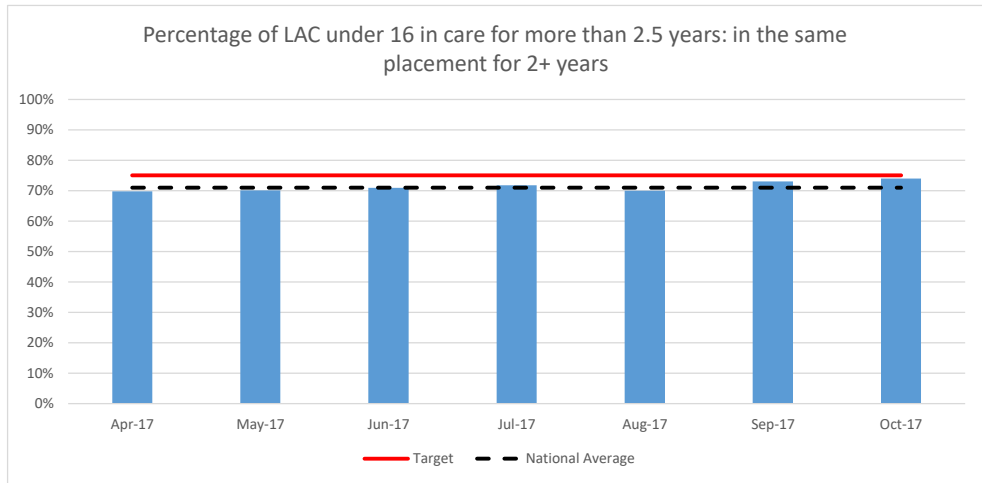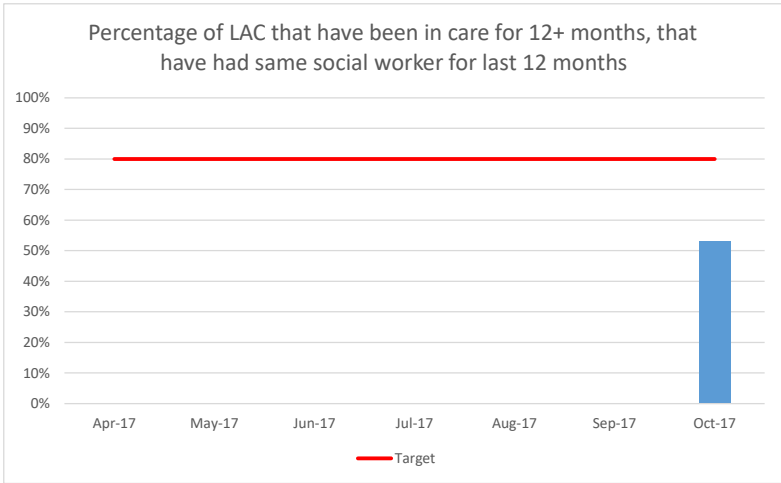| Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
LE 2	Percentage of cases concluded within 26 weeks of issue		37.5%	55.0%	37.5%	25.0%	50.0%	86.0%	55.0%		TS		
LE 3	Number of cases in proceedings				67	80	87	98	98		TS		
Improvement Activity		Cases in proceedings have continued to rise over the last few months. This is due to more focused management attention on children subject to plans, thus reducing drift, closer attention to thresholds and taking cases to LPM, rising number of pre-birth assessments resulting in court applications at birth, including those where mothers have had previous children removed. The decline in cases concluded in October was a result of a small number of legacy cases ending during the month										
Next Steps		October figure has been impacted by legacy cases. Whilst percentage concluded fluctuates the average number of weeks in proceedings shows a steady downward trend despite the sharp upturn in proceedings.										

Percentage of cases concluded within 26 weeks of issue

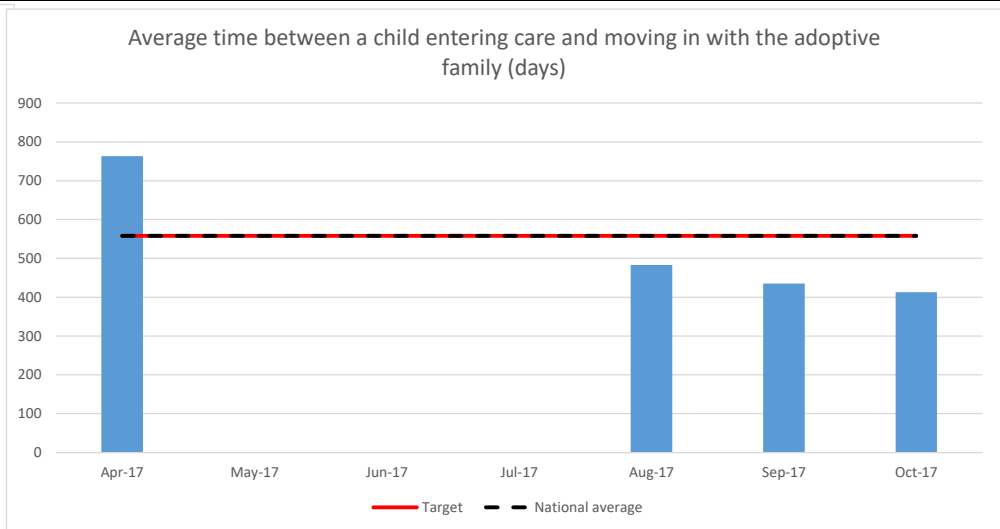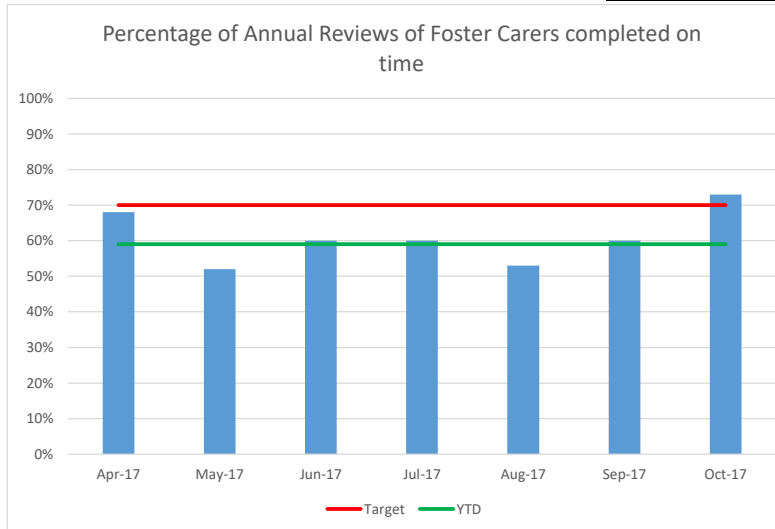|	LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN												
Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
LAC 10	Percentage of LAC for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales	BIB	87%	90%	92%	83%	86%	90%	90%	98%	WT		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red
LAC 11	Percentage of LAC cases which were reviewed within required timescales	BIB	83%	70%	77%	75%	69%	65%	63%	98%	WT		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red
Improvement Activity	LAC 10 – increase in visits but further work required to bring these up to target. LAC 11 – concerns that LAC reviews are not held in timescales. Review of these has shown that here is a system blockage – minutes not being uploaded in a timely way even of the LAC review has taken place.												
Next Steps	There is increased business support capacity in the QA service which should improve the administrative process to ensure arrangements for LAC reviews are in place, and minutes uploaded other system in timely manner.												

Percentage of LAC for whom a visit has taken place within statutory timescales

Percentage of LAC cases which were reviewed within required timescales

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

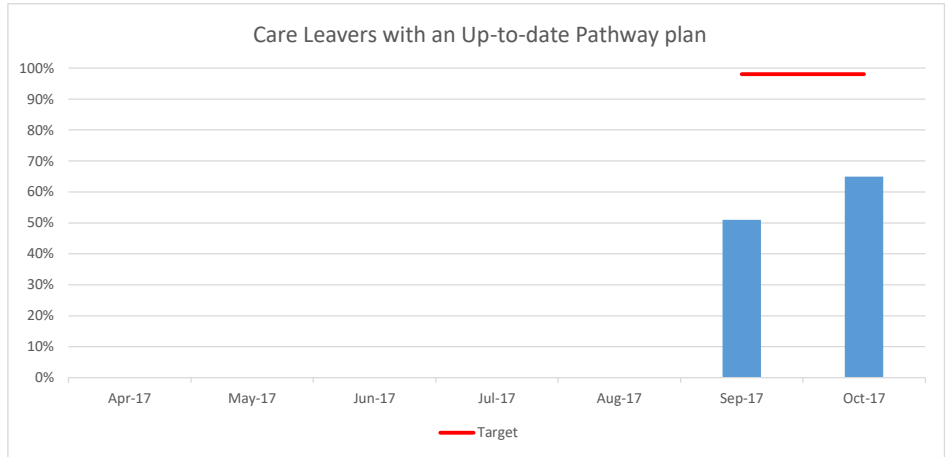| Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
LAC 19 (12m)	Percentage of LAC that have been in care for **12+ months,** that have had same social worker for last 12 months	BIB	79% (6m+)	82% (6m+)	78% (6m+)	72% (6m+)	71% (6m+)	71% (6m+)	53%	80%	WT		80% or above Green 75%-79% Amber 74% and below Red
LAC 20	Percentage of LAC under 16 in care for more than 2.5 years: in the same placement for 2+ years	BIB	70%	70%	71%	72%	70%	73%	74%	75%	WT		75% or above Green 65%-74% Amber 64% and below Red
Improvement Activity		LAC 19: The methodology changed from Oct 17 onwards. April to September data is not comparable.											
Next Steps													

Percentage of LAC that have been in care for 12+ months, that have had same social worker for last 12 months

Percentage of LAC under 16 in care for more than 2.5 years: in the same placement for 2+ years

FOSTERING AND ADOPTION

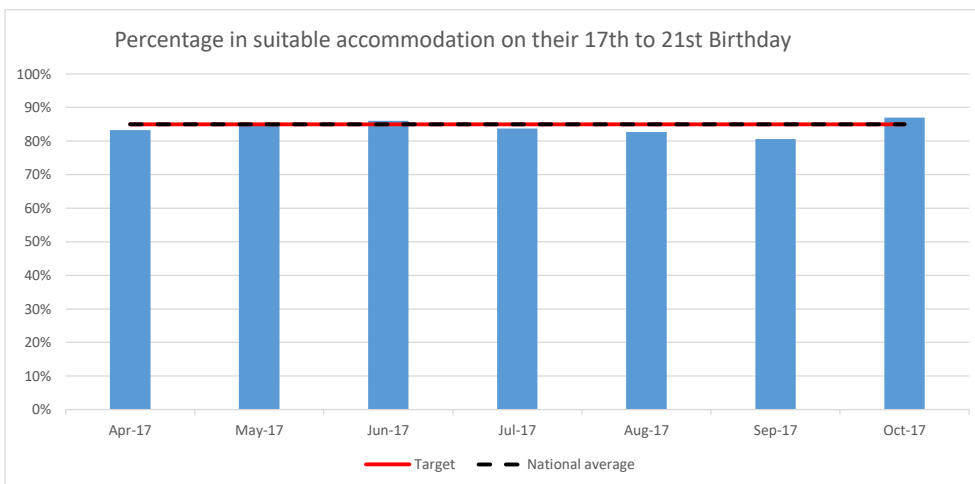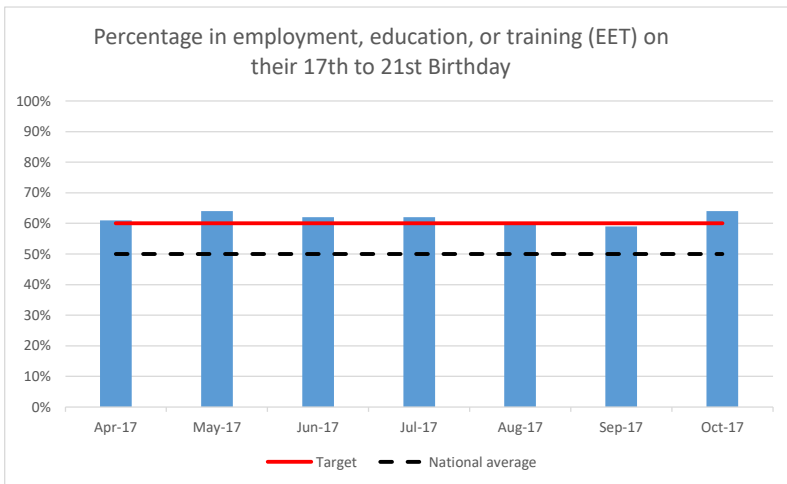| Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
F 3	Percentage of Annual Reviews of Foster Carers completed on time	BIB	68%	52%	60%	60%	53%	60%	73%	95%	SD		95% or above Green 85%-94% Amber 84% and below Red
AD 7	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with the adoptive family (days)	SIB	763	0	0	0	483	435	413	558	HD		558 or below Green 559 to 608 Amber 609 and above Red
Improvement Activity		F3 – rise in percentage f fostering reviews on time											
Next Steps		Additional resource allocated to increase capacity and ensure statutory duties in elation to foster carers are met.											

Percentage of Annual Reviews of Foster Carers completed on time

Average time between a child entering care and moving in with the adoptive family (days)

Note: Columns BELOW the target line are "good" performance

CARE LEAVERS

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
CL a	Care Leavers with an Up-to-date Pathway plan							51%	65%	98%	WT		98% or above Green 90%-97% Amber 89% and below Red
Improvement Activity		CLa- pathway plan completion is improving but remains an areas requiring further attention and focused effort.											
Next Steps		The CRS workflow is being streamlined to simplify the process of completion of pathway plans.											

Care Leavers with an Up-to-date Pathway plan

CARE LEAVERS

Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
CL 1	Number of Care Leavers in employment, education, or training (EET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday		350	354	363	374	364	358	388	NA	WT		
CL 1a	Percentage in employment, education, or training (EET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday	BIB	61%	64%	62%	62%	61%	59%	64%	60%	WT		60% or above Green 50%-59% Amber 49% and below Red
CL 2	Number not in employment, education, or training (NEET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday	SIB	243	221	223	242	238	248	219	NA	WT		
CL 3	Number of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation on their 17th to 21st Birthday		494	486	504	505	498	489	531	NA	WT		
CL 3a	Percentage in suitable accommodation on their 17th to 21st Birthday	BIB	83.3%	84.5%	86.0%	83.7%	82.7%	80.6%	87%	85%	WT		85% or above Green 75%-84% Amber 74% and below Red
Improvement Activity													
Next Steps													

Percentage in employment, education, or training (EET) on their 17th to 21st Birthday

Percentage in suitable accommodation on their 17th to 21st Birthday

QUALIY ASSURANCE													
Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	2017-18 Target	Target Owner	RAG	RAG Methodology
QA 1	Percentage of children's cases subject to Supervision within timescales	SIB						64%	67%	90%	TS		90% or above Green 80%-89% Amber 79% and below Red
QA 2	Number of Cases Audited that are Good or Outstanding					Awaiting Data - under development					TS		
QA 3	Percentage of Cases Audited that are Good or Outstanding									50%	TS		50% or above Green 40%-49% Amber 39% and below Red

Percentage of children who had their supervision and was within the timescales
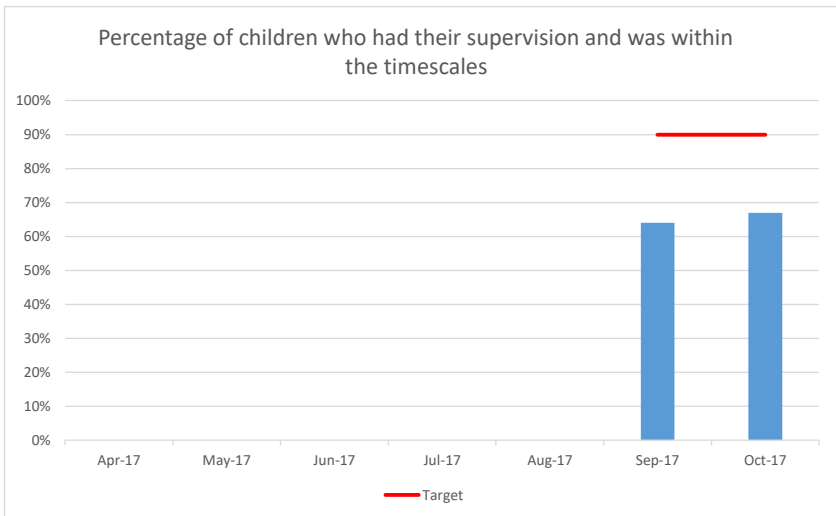
Appendix 3 - Children's Social Care – Workforce Data

	Total No of Social Workers Caseloading Nov	Establishment Staff (Gr11+)	Establishment Staff (Gr11+) 12m +	Staff (Gr11+) Non Case Holding (absent)	NQSW	Agency Staff	Agency Staff 12m+	Salaried Leavers	Salaried Starters	Management Establishment to Agency /Vacancy Ratio	Unfilled Posts Social Workers	Vacant % Agency +Unfilled Posts	% SW with Personal Supervision in the month
Assessment	39	14	9	0	5	20	8	1	0	2:5	2	56%	
Care Planning (Unit 1-9 &YP)	64	24	24	2	10	30	4	0	0	4:5 (2 vacant)	0	47%	
Permanence	44	33	26	5	0	11	3	1 (Unit Manager)	0	5:1	0	25%	
Children With Disabilities	20	5	2	1	2	13	1	0	0	3:0	0	65%	
Other teams *	53	36	34	2	0	17	5	0	0	10: 3 vacancies	1	32%	
Total	**220**	**112**	**95**	**10**	**17**	**91**	**21**	**2**	**0**	**26:11**	**3**	**43.6%**	

*not including Consultant Practitioners, Specialist, IROs & CP Chairs
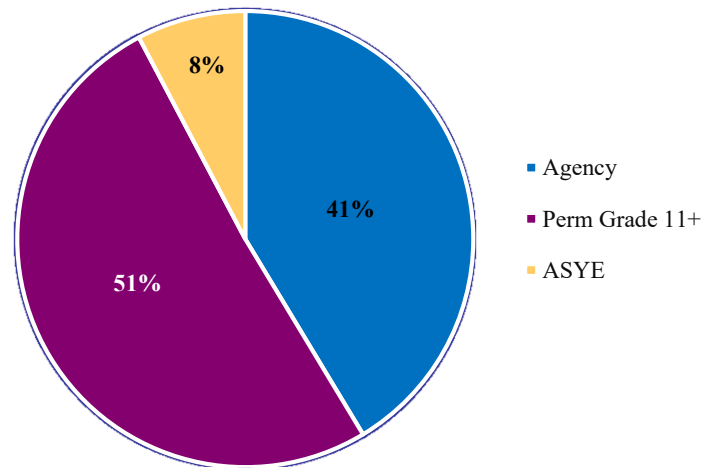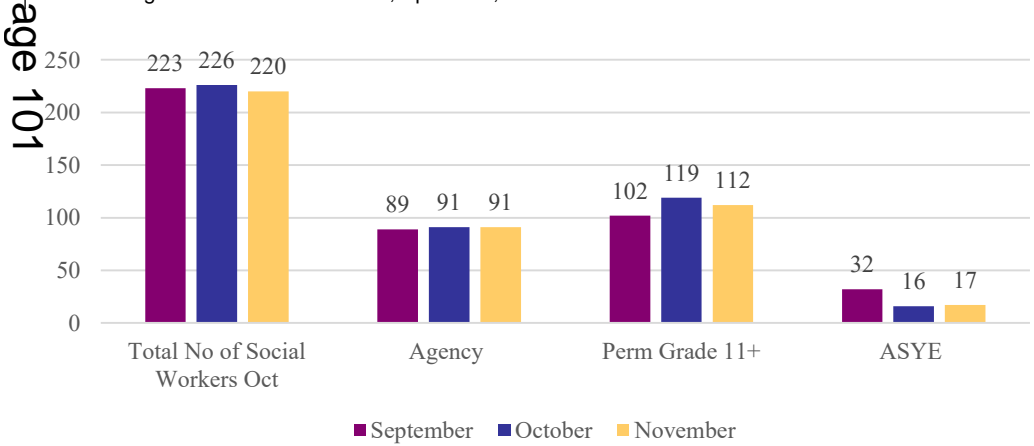
Pulse Survey Feedback

The results of the first pulse survey feedback will be available in December 2017

Children's Social Care – Workforce Data

Indicator	Definition	Indicator	Definition
Total No of Social Workers Nov	Count of ALL Social Workers within CSC that are caseloading	Agency Staff (12m+)	Count of all Agency Staff employed for more than 12 months
Establishment Staff (Gr11+)	All Social Workers employed directly by LBC	NQSW	Count of Newly Qualified Social Workers
Establishment Staff (Gr11+) (12m+)	All Social Workers employed directly by LBC for more than 12 months	Leavers	Count of SW who have left LBC within the month.
Staff (Gr11+) Non Case Holding	Social Workers employed directly by LBC who are currently not holding cases eg. Maternity Leave/Long term sick	Starters	Count of SW who have started at LBC within the month
Agency Staff	Count of all Agency staff	Unfilled Posts	Posts where no one is currently working
% Social Workers with Personal Supervision in the month	% of Social Workers who have received Personal supervision in the last 30 days.	Vacant Posts	Posts where there are no directly employed staff. This is used to calculate the Service's vacancy rate.
Management Establishment to Agency Ratio (also includes vacant posts)	Proportion of Managers who are direct LBC employees compared to agency staff		

Tony Newman
Leader of the Council

Responsibilities

- Policy and Strategy Development
- Strategic Budget Overview
- LGA Environment, Housing and Economy Board
- London Council's Leaders Board
- Coast to Capital Board
- South London Partnership
- Local Strategic Partnership
- Corporate Projects

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REPORT TO:	SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 12th DECEMBER 2017
SUBJECT:	PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: PROPOSED GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2018-19
LEAD OFFICER:	RICHARD SIMPSON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESOURCES (SECTION 151 OFFICER)
CABINET MEMBER:	COUNCILLOR SIMON HALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND TREASURY
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	COUNCILLOR SIMON HALL, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND TREASURY AND RICHARD SIMPSON EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESOURCES (SECTION 151 OFFICER)

ORIGIN OF ITEM:	This item is contained in the Committee's work programme
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To scrutinise the proposed 2018/19 Council Budget.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This report sets out the context and challenges faced by the council in setting a balanced budget for the two financial years 2018 to 2020, and gives an update on the key issues from the Chancellor's budget on the 22 November 2017.

1.2 This report looks at the changes and challenges faced by local government and particularly Croydon in terms of its continued reduction in funding and the financial resources available to deliver the key services for the authority.

1.3 The report highlights the key areas of spend and it also identifies the main areas where there are pressures on services. The draft savings plans for 2018/20 are then set out in appendix 2. The report also gives details of the forecast financial performance of the Council for 2017/18.

1.4 This report is in advance of the final budget report and budget setting decision being made by Council in February 2018.

2.0 The 2017 BUDGET

2.1. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made his 2017 Budget to the House of Commons on the 22 November 2017. The Council's briefing document on the budget is attached at appendix 1 to this report.

2.2 There were disappointingly few announcements in the statement that will impact local authorities and specifically Croydon. The announcements that will impact are as follows:-

Housing

2.3 The Chancellor announced a number of measures and investments for housing including £2bn for the Affordable Homes Programme, £34m to develop construction skills and £44bn of capital funding over the next five years to support the target of 300,000 net additional homes per year by mid 2020's and the lifting of the HRA borrowing cap. More details are contained in appendix 1 to this report.

2.4 The key impact of the housing announcements for Croydon is the potential lifting of the HRA borrowing cap for areas with highest need. We are yet to see the criteria government will apply to allocate the additional £1bn headroom, which will have to be bid for. £1bn is only 3% of the total level of the borrowing cap nationally.

Local Housing Allowance

2.5 The Chancellor announced that the Government will increase the Targeted Affordability fund by £125m over the next two years in areas of greatest pressure. This may ease the rate of migration of housing benefit claimants to Croydon from inner London and other areas with higher rents.

Empty Properties

2.6 Legislation to be changed to allow local authorities to charge 100% council tax premium on empty properties. Due to the need to change legislation there will be no immediate impact however in due course this could generate in the region of £100k additional income, based on the current volume of empty homes.

Planning and home ownership

2.7 There were a number of planning consultations announced including consultation on policies to increase density in urban areas, support for the conversion of empty space above high street shops and the speeding up of some development processes.

2.8 A further £10bn has been made available for help to buy and it is hoped that this will be enabling for Croydon residents and in turn free up some of the rented accommodation in the borough.

Education and Learning

2.9 Additional funding was announced for Maths, Computer science, the new T levels and teacher development and training. However, at this stage there has been no announcement on the specific details and therefore we do not know if there will be additional funds for Croydon.

Business Rates

2.10   It was announced that the Government will be providing a further £2.3bn of funding over the next five years to support small businesses. This includes switching indexation form RPI to CPI. There was no detail of how or whether local authorities will be protected from the impact of this. Confirmation of the London Pilot for 100% business rates retention in London was also announced, with local government being compensated for any loss of income.

Universal Credit

2.11   A £1.5bn package to address concerns about the delivery of universal credit and a £8m fund to trial innovative approaches to help individuals on universal credit to earn more. With Croydon having been a Universal Credit pilot we have played a significant role in lobbying the government for this funding and changes to the scheme.

Other Announcements

2.12   There were a number of other announcements around the environment, wages and the NHS. These will all have minimal direct impact for Croydon and are detailed further in appendix 1 to this report.

Areas not mentioned in the budget

2.13   As mentioned above there were a number of key items that we would have hoped would have been mentioned in the budget but were not. These include :-

2.14   Adult Social Care – There was no additional funding for adult social care and the adult social care green paper has been moved back to summer 2018.

2.15   Children's Social Care – There was no additional funding announced for children's social care services.

2.16   Fire Safety – There was no commitment to fund essential fire safety works.

2.17   Local Government Funding – There was no change to the funding formula for local government.

2.18   Welfare Benefits reform, notably Local Housing Allowance – Apart from limited help on universal credit, there were no changes on welfare benefits and the freeze on working age benefits was confirmed

2.19   Public sector pay - There was no change to the policy on public sector pay (except for nurses) and no commitment to fund pay pressures.

3.0   2018/20 Budget

3.1   Funding for Local Government has been reduced significantly since 2011 and it is set to continue to reduce until at least 2020.

3.2   For Croydon it is anticipated that there will been a 76.6% cumulative reduction in funding during the period 2010 to 2020. Graph 1 below shows the loss of grant funding since the start of austerity until the end of the current comprehensive spending review period in 2020.

Graph 1: Croydon's Grant Reductions 2011/20
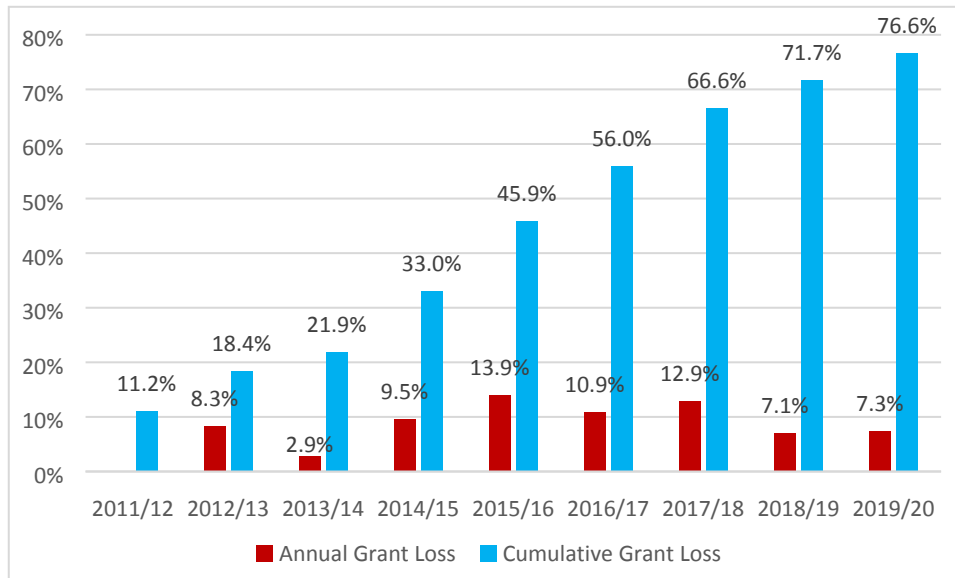
3.3   With ever decreasing funding there is a need to continue reviewing our services and delivering efficiencies across the organisation, alongside managing the growing demand for some services.

3.4   Graph 2 below details the overall funding received over the last 8 years and the projections to 2019/20. It shows that our share of funding from central government is declining and is a decreasing proportion of our overall funding. Council tax and Business rates therefore becomes key to the future sustainability of our budget. Table 1 below gives detail of council tax as a proportion of our overall funding.

Graph 2: Funding 2010/20

Overall Funding 2010/20
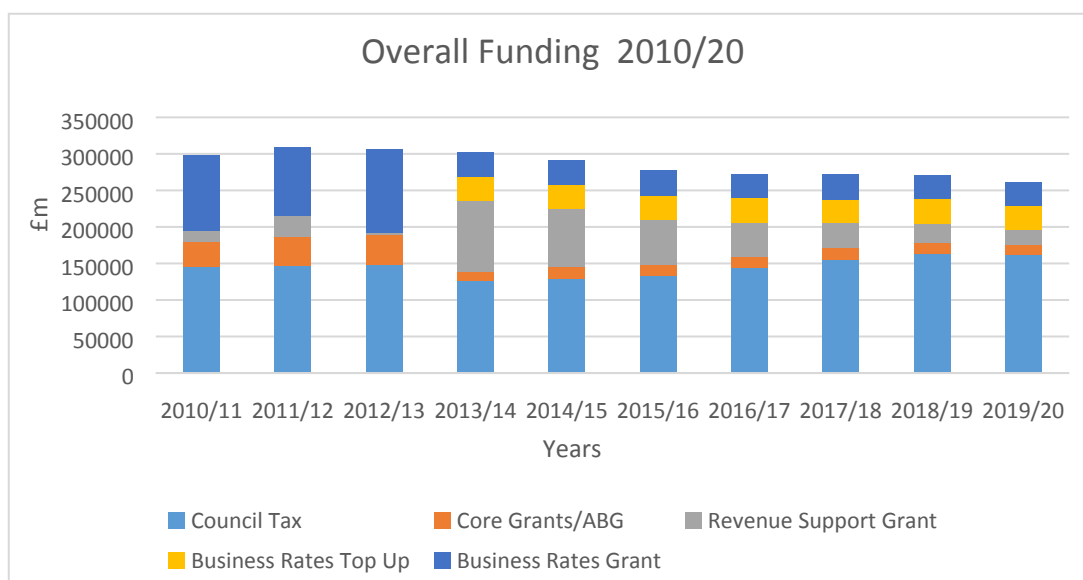
Table 1 – Council Tax as a proportion of our overall funding

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
55.11%	53.73%	55.48%	43.07%	46.34%	49.78%	55.19%	59.97%	63.20%	65.74%

3.5 The 2018/19 budget will be based on a number of key assumptions, including grant reductions, demographic growth, inflation increases and increases to the council tax base. It also contains a number of service specific savings and efficiencies as well as growth. This is the third year of the four year funding settlement that was made available as part of the December 2015 Spending Review for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

3.6 As shown in graph 1 there continues to be a reduction in grant funding in 2018/19. This has partially been offset by additional Improved Better Care funding for Adult Social Care, resulting in a net pressure of £3m for Croydon.

3.7 The budget also contains an assumption for inflationary cost increases on our contracts and pay. Negotiations are continuing to take place and the final pay settlement remains unresolved which creates a level of uncertainty for setting the budget. Based on indications from the negotiations the budget contains a 2% assumption which equates to an additional cost of £2.5m.

3.8 The main other demands on the Council's budget continue to arise from services within the People Department, as detailed below:-

People Department – Demand and issues

3.9 The projected People department overspend in 2017/18 is **£4.694m** excluding the exceptional items detailed in paragraph 3.10 below. The main areas of overspend continue to derive from demand led services; Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and the 0-25 SEND service. These pressures are a continuation of pressures experienced in previous years, although the scale has been reduced by a combination of improved demand management, and growth allocated in the 2017/18 budget.

5

3.10 The exceptional items as a reported to Cabinet in the quarter 2 financial monitoring report relate to UASC and NRPF, both of which we are continuing to lobby the government to fund. The UASC pressure is £3.3m and there is an unachievable £1m savings target for No Recourse to Public Funds. The UASC increase is as a result of the Home Office continuing to only fund a fixed rate per child. While our numbers of UASC are decreasing, direct and indirect service provision costs are not decreasing at the same rate. Options to reduce this funding gap through the reduction of costs and maximising Home Office income continue to be explored. The NRPF pressure remains due to the impact of the failure of Central Government to implement the provisions of the Immigration Act. In addition to these exceptional items Croydon also funds in excess of £4m of other costs relating to NRPF across Adults, Children's and Gateway services from our own resources.

3.11 **Adult Social Care** has continued to see increases in demand for services above budget and is projecting an overspend of £1.9m in 2017/18. This is as a result of rising demand and increased complexity of cases, especially within the 25 to 65 year old service. In the last six months there has been a 6% increase in the number of care packages and an 8% increase in the number of contacts and referrals to the Council. Along with an increase of 14% in social care assessments. Graph 3 below shows the overspend for the Older People and 25-65 service.

**Graph 3: Adult Placement overspend for Older People service and the 25 to 65 service.**
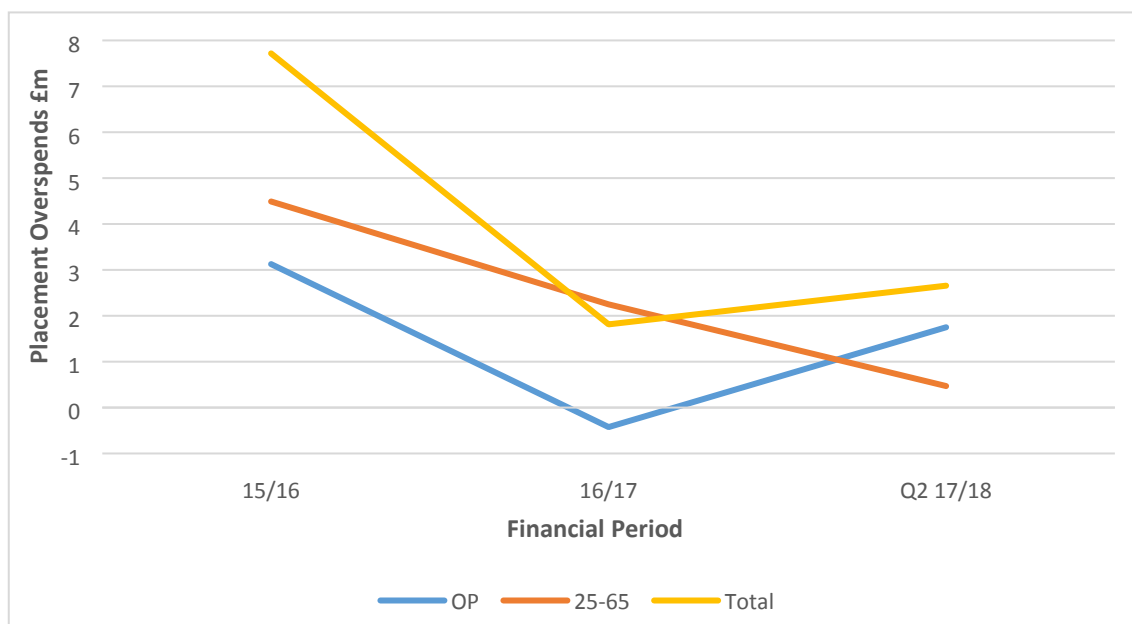
3.12 **Children's Social Care** continues to experience rising demand and we are continuing to experience an increase in the numbers of looked after children and children in need. The division is projecting an overspend of £5.845m in the current financial year.

3.13 The numbers of looked after children are far greater than budget and have been rising significantly in the first half of the year. The budget was set based on 390 cases which at the start of this year this was accurate, however since then demand has grown rapidly to 441 in September as shown in graph 4 below and

6

is forecast to continue to increase at a significant rate during the reminder of the financial year.

Graph 4: Looked after children case numbers compared to budget


Looked After Children - Local
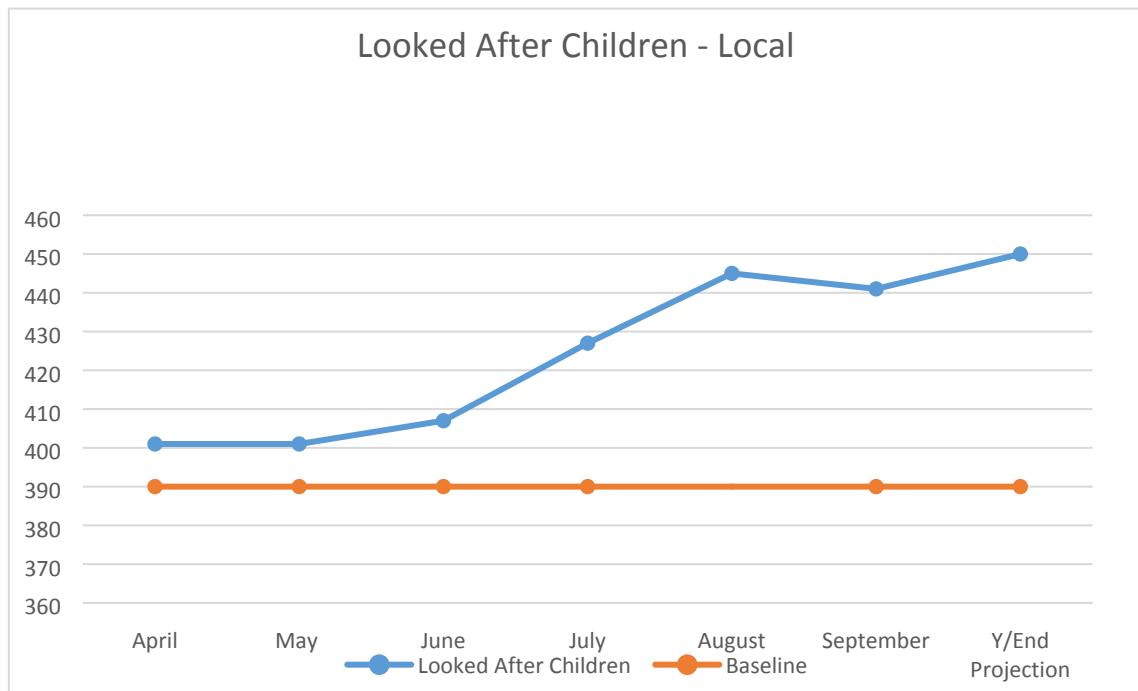
3.14   In the first half of this financial year the number of children in need cases was lower than the budgeted number. However, since the results of the Children's Social Care Ofsted Inspection demand has increased and is expected to increase for the remainder of the year. To manage this and other areas of increased demand and to implement other recommendations from the Ofsted inspection £3m of transformation funding has been allocated to Children's Services in year.

3.15   **Gateway and welfare services** continue to focus on managing demand for homelessness services and helping residents with prevention measures. At the start of the financial year there were 825 households in emergency accommodation and half way through the year this has fallen to 762 and is expected to continue to fall to 650 by the end of the year, this is shown in graph 5 below. The number of Households in temporary accommodation has reduced from 2,460 at the start of the year to 2,355 in September, and is predicted to fall to 2,200 by the end of the year. This is shown in graph 6 below.

3.16   The Homelessness Reduction Act is expected to drive an increase in people qualifying for homelessness support in 2018/19. This will be covered by New Burdens funding from DCLG and the second year of the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

3.17   The council has continued to lobby for changes in relation to universal credit and the unfair way in which customers that reside in emergency and temporary accommodation are affected. Whilst we have recently been advised our lobbying has been successful this will not change until April 2018. The consequence of which mean our collection rates will continue to fall, moving

7

from over 90% to just over 50%, until housing support reverts back to housing benefit. Over the coming months the council will assess the financial impacts in regard to its bad debt provision and seek financial support from the DWP. It is estimated that the impact of universal credit, in terms of bad debts and discretionary housing payments amounts to some £3m in 2017/18.

Graph 5: number of households in emergency accommodation

No. of Households in Emergency Accommodation
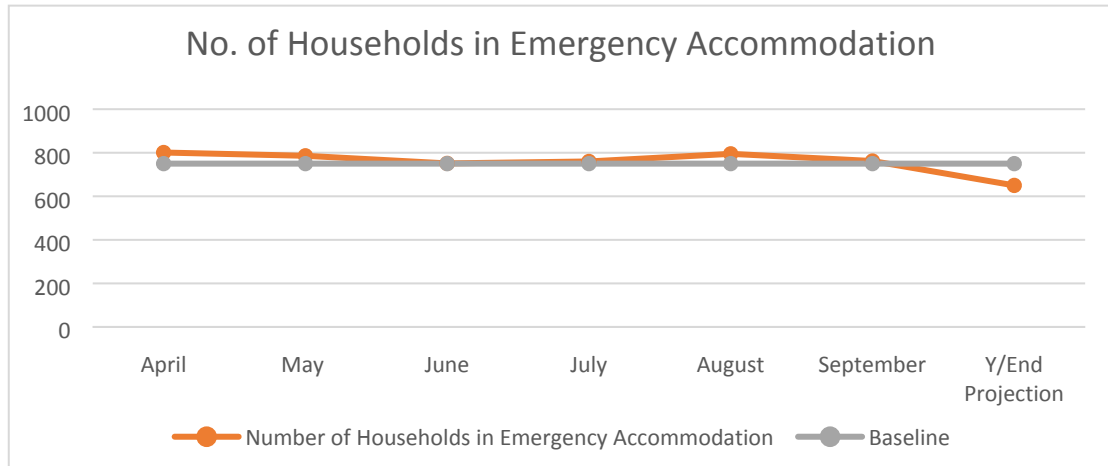
Graph 6: number of households in temporary accommodation

No of Households in Temporary Accommodation
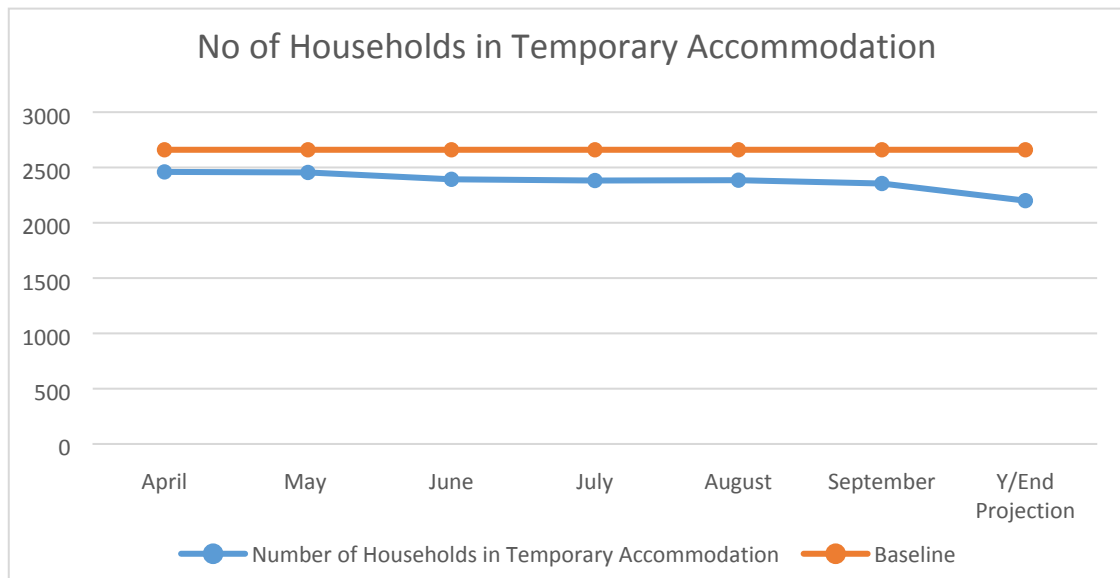
Budget Growth

3.18   In preparing the 2018/19 budget the major areas of demand listed above have been recognised and indicative additional growth has been allocated to mitigate against further in year overspends. Children's service have been allocated

8

indicative growth of £10m to cover costs associated with placements, additional staff resources for social work and business support staff and for legal costs.

3.19 Adults Social Care services have also been allocated indicative growth of £6m to fund costs associated with rising demand and complexity of placements, the 0-25 SEND service increased demand, mental health and government legislation around Deprivation of Liberty.

3.20 It should also be noted that we are awaiting the finance settlement which is due later this month, which could impact on Croydon. Whilst we wait for the announcement work continues to review both savings and growth options and set a balanced budget.

3.21 To help achieve a greater level of certainty we accepted the four year funding settlement and had to produce and approve an efficiency strategy. This strategy was approved in the Autumn 2016 Financial Review Cabinet Report. The efficiency strategy sets out the key principles that we will target to deliver savings and includes;

- Getting the most out of our assets
- Better commissioning and contract management
- Managing Demand
- Prevention and early intervention
- Integration of health and social care
- Delivering growth
- Commercial approach
- Digital

3.22 Table 2 below details the efficiency programme by category for the four year period of the funding settlement. Year 3 of the funding settlement period, 2018/19 will be approved at Cabinet in February 2018 as part of the budget setting process. Details of these options by department are contained in appendix 2 to this report.

Table 2 - Efficiency programme

	16/17 £m	17/18 £m	18/19 £m	19/20 £m Illustrative	16/20 £m

Getting the most out of our assets	-2.000	-1.500	-0.572	-1.368	-5.440
Better commissioning and contract management	-1.281	-6.722	-6.676	-0.563	-15.242
Managing Demand	-0.935	-2.497	-0.440	-0.430	-4.302
Prevention and early intervention	-2.026	-0.222	-4.158	-5.045	-11.451
Integration of health and social care	-1.259	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.259
Delivering growth	-0.750	0.000	0.000	-3.370	-4.120
Commercial approach	-5.403	-4.365	-1.382	-1.806	-12.956
Digital	-1.036	-0.662	-0.321	-0.232	-2.251
Efficiency	-1.586	-2.016	-1.768	-1.761	-7.131
	-16.276	**-17.984**	**-15.317**	**-14.575**	**-64.151**

3.23 The total efficiencies over the 4 year efficiency plan are forecast to be £64.151m, with better commissioning, prevention and early intervention and a commercial approach making up a substantial element of the total programme.

3.24 The savings set out will help achieve a balanced budget for the period 2018/20. Given we don't yet have the local government settlement this cannot be assumed to be the final position for the budget in February 2018.

4.0 2017/18 Financial Forecast

4.1 The revenue outturn forecast at the end of the second quarter of 2017/18 is **£797k,** this is before exceptional items of **£4.3m**, resulting in a total overspend of **£5.097m**.

4.2 This total overspend is made up of Departmental over spends of **£3.840m** and exceptional items **of £4.3m,** these exceptional costs relate Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and the impact of the failure of Central Government to implement the provisions of the Immigration Act. These costs are offset by non-departmental underspends of **£3.043m**. Further detail is shown in table 3 below.

Table 3 – Summary of forecast revenue outturn position at Quarter 2

Department	Quarter 2 Forecast Variance £'000s
People	4,694
Place	0
Resources	396
Chief Executives	750
Council wide recruitment freeze - (except Children's improvement posts/ HRA funded/ capital funded & transformation funded posts)	(2,000)
Departmental Overspend	**3,840**

Corporate Items	**(3,043)**
Sub Total	**797**
Exceptional Items	**4,300**
Total Projected Over-spend	**5,097**

4.3   The 2017/18 budget was set with the inclusion of growth to help manage known pressures as well as ambitious savings targets. Despite this growth there continues to be increasing demand for the services provided by the people department in the key areas of, adult and children's social care and gateway and welfare services.

4.4   As in previous years we have continued to implement a number of programmes and projects aimed at reducing both demand and cost and is anticipated that the greatest impact of these programmes will continue to be within the People Department.

4.5   Alongside these programmes there continues to be monthly People Department governance boards that focus on the areas of highest risk and the actions being implemented to manage them. The other departments are also continuing to review spend and deliver efficiencies in the short term to help bring the budget back in line. As in previous years one of these measures is a review of agency works over the Christmas Period.

4.6   We have also implemented a recruitment freeze for the remainder of the financial year for all but the most essential posts, and those posts funded from other resources, i.e. Capital, Transformation and HRA. It is anticipated that this freeze will generate savings of £2m

4.7   The findings from the recent Children's Social Care Ofsted inspection have put increased pressure on our financial resources. £3m has been allocated from earmarked reserves to support the targeted improvement work in 2017/18 and further investment as detailed in para 3.17 will be made in the budget for 2018/19.

4.8   This year to date Children's Social Care Assessments have increased by 16%, and the number of children with a child protection plan has increased by 10%.

5.0   Mitigation Actions

5.1   As previously reported to cabinet there are a number of actions in place to manage spend this financial year and in future years.

        In the short term, there are a range of immediate actions in the people department, including:-

- Improved commissioning, contract management and brokerage including a new framework for independent foster care placements.
- A further review of the use of and cost of agency staff, with a reduction in the use of agency staff over the two week Christmas period.
- A council wide recruitment freeze for all but essential posts.

- A recruitment and retention strategy for social workers is in place and achieving results with 6 social workers having converted from agency to permanent posts since July this year, and a further 5 currently converting
- The transformation of adult social care continues, which includes a detailed review of high cost care packages alongside the implementation of the Outcome Based Commissioning (OBC) programme for over 65's with health partners.
- The successful Gateway programme continues to deliver savings and support the most vulnerable residents to become more independent.
- The continuation and further growth of the Family Link workers team to assist families.
- Boosting the supply of affordable housing by committing to purchase a further 250 street properties.

6   2017/20 Budget

6.1   In order to help understand the makeup of the council's revenue budget, table 4 below provides a detailed analysis of funding and expenditure by service over the period 2017/19, as calculations currently stand, although there are still discussions going on regarding options. This clearly shows the balance between central government grant and locally raised income (Council Tax and Business Rates).

6.2   Table 4 shows that the most significant reductions have been made in the Place and Resources Departments and that growth is being allocated to the People department to manage the growing demand for services.

Table 4: Detailed budgets 2017/19

Funding	2017/18 Budget £'000	2018/19 Budget £'000
Revenue Support Grant	32,577	25,527
Business Rates Top up and income	67,262	TBC
Council Tax	158,711	TBC
Core Grants - Education Support services/New Home Bonus/ Council Tax and Admin Support	16,317	TBC
Total	**274,867**	**TBC**

PEOPLE		
Early Intervention and Family Support Service	8,356	8,747
Children in Need Service	9,455	10,601
Looked After Children	19,876	28,196
Safeguarding and Looked After Children Quality Assurance	2,951	3,751
School improvement places and admission	2,533	2,601
0-25 Send Service	10,210	12,290
25-65 Disability	40,907	42,590
Older People	31,837	34,095
Disability including Commissioning and Brokerage	4,746	4,474
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance - Adults	2,543	2,693
Mental Health	6,892	7,311
Temporary Accommodation/Housing Needs	5,051	5,009
Enablement and Welfare	5,989	5,609
Gateway and Welfare Improvements	2,907	2,905
Bereavement and Registrars	-1,282	-1,313
People Total	**152,971**	**169,559**
PLACE		
Regulatory Services	803	1,265
Parking and Highways	-4,356	-4,943
Streets and Waste Collection	11,590	6,574
Waste Disposal	13,699	15,023
Leisure Services and Green Spaces	4,738	4,369
Planning, development and Regeneration	2,618	2,591
Adult Learning (CALAT)	-756	-849
Museums and Culture	3,693	3,754
Place Total	**32,029**	**27,785**
RESOURCES		
Customer and Corporate Services	28,281	26,972

13

Commissioning and Improvement	1,145	665
SEN Transport	6,925	9,542
Human Resources	1,418	1,371
Governance	3,429	3,307
Legal	-1,003	-1,320
Finance Investment and Risk	6,013	5,506
Public Health (Expenditure £20.698m)	0	0
Resources Total	**46,208**	**46,043**
CHIEF EXECTUIVE	**2,812**	**2,666**
Corporate items		
Pensions Deficit	8,097	8,097
Concessionary Fares	15,598	15,598
Levies	1,446	1,446
Interest Payable on Borrowing	14,237	15,237
Carbon Credits	255	255
Contingency	1,000	1,000
Doubtful Debt	180	180
N I Changes	1,434	0
Apprentice Levy	600	600
Contracts review	-2,000	-2,000
Utilities	0	1,000
Corporate Items	40,847	41,413
Total Expenditure	**274,867**	**287,466**

7.0 Education Funding

7.1 The Government has confirmed the implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) from 2018/19 financial year with a commitment to ensuring that no school will be worse off as a result. The NFF methodology divides the funding for education into four blocks rather than 3 (Schools Block; Early Years Block; High Needs Block and the new block for Central Services). The Department for Education (DfE) intend for the full implementation of the NFF for Schools Block and High Needs funding to be in place for 2020/21.

7.2 2017/18 School funding is currently allocated via The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), from 2018/19 the new NFF factors will determine an amount per pupil which will be allocated to each school via the DSG.

7.3 NFF funds all aspects of education that relates directly to children. It is split into blocks, a Schools Block, a High Needs block and an Early Years block. The new additional block to the NFF is the Central Services block, which replaces the previous ESG funding and funds historic and prudential borrowing costs.

7.4 The DSG allocation for Croydon for 2017/18 is £327.79m (£312.58m in 2016/17). The DSG is reduced by recoupment for academy funding. This is currently estimated to be £126m but will be subject to change throughout the year as schools convert to academies. The increase in 2017/18 is mainly due

to an increase in pupil numbers and the transition to the implementation of the National Funding Formula.

7.5   In previous years, ESG was allocated to Local Authorities to fund services to schools, such as admissions, exclusions, appeals, historic and prudential borrowing costs. For 2017/18 funding changed and the majority of funds for admissions, exclusion and appeals services are being transferred directly to schools with the expectation that they would purchase these services from the Local Authority themselves. To ensure funding is sustainable in future years Croydon will continue to review and reduce non-statutory services provided to schools.

7.6   The government has also announced a further £140 million 'Strategic School Improvement Fund' for academies and maintained schools "most in need of support to drive up standards, use their resources effectively and deliver more good school places". There is an application process and criteria which applicants must fulfil in order to apply for this funding. Croydon will be working with one of our secondary maintained school to make an application for these funds.

7.7   The 2018/19 school and high needs funding is due to be announced in mid-December along with provisional early years figures and this will be reported in detail to the February Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny subcommittee. Early indications are that funding for Croydon will be £4,239 per primary child and £5,318 per secondary (funded in 2017/18 at £4,794 per pupil).The indicative allocation for Croydon is £307.4m. This does not include the early years funding as in previous years due to the implementation of their own funding formula.

8.0   Risks

8.1   As always there is a level of risk associated with the assumptions made within the budget and the period 2018/20 is no different. At this stage the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19 is still to be announced and some of the announcements in the budget last month are still to be fully developed. These national uncertainties are in addition to local risks, with the key ones listed below :

8.2   **Adults and Children's Social Care and Health**. The lack of additional funding for these services are continuing to be a pressure nationally and in Croydon we are continuing to experience rising demand and complexity of need. While a number of measures have been put in place to manage these demands there still continues to be a growing level of overspend in these services. Growth has been allocated based on known costs and expected future impacts. There is always the ongoing risk that growth may be greater than anticipated and work will need to be ongoing to review and manage budgets.

8.3   The recent Children's Social Care Ofsted inspection has resulted in a rise in demand for services and therefore an increase in costs. This is alongside the cost to implement our improvement plan. Investment in this essential service area is being made but there remains a risk that the £10m investment from 2018/19 detailed earlier in this report may still not be sufficient.

8.4 **Demand Growth**. The budget assumptions for future years contain a level of growth based on current demand and anticipated expectations. As with all models there is a level of uncertainty and if demand were to be greater than modelled this will have an impact on the budget. Demand for services will continue to be managed closely and the projects that have been developed as part of the Managing Demand Programme will continue to be developed and embedded within services. This includes the Think Family approach, which focuses on a number of key areas of spend/ demand pressures.

8.5 **Universal Credit and Welfare Reform.** As a result of work undertaken by Croydon, changes to the national policy for Universal Credit have been announced. However, these changes only take effect from 1 April 2018. While these changes are welcomed news there continues to be the risk that these changes may not be fully funded and could continue to have a financial impact on the Council.

8.6 **UASC and Immigration.** Funding for UASC Immigration remains a risk, and we are continuing to make a concerted drive for fairer funding for Croydon. The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury met with the Immigration Minster on the 16th November and follow up discussions are taking place between council officers and the Home Office to ask for a re instatement of our Gateway funding which would increase our funding by £2m in 2017/18. We have also highlighted a number of other areas where prioritisation by the Home Office could result in a saving to Croydon, including prioritising unresolved appeals for families with no recourse to public funds and a co-ordinated approach to enforcement action with individuals where appeal rights are exhausted. Until the agreement is reached to fund these services these remain a financial risk to Croydon.

8.7 **DSG High Needs Funding.** As detailed in section 7 of this report schools funding is changing in 2018/19 as a result of the National Funding Formula being implemented. This is welcomed news but does not wholly address the issue of under resourcing for the High Needs block. In recent years funding has been provided at a lower level that need and this has resulted in an overspend. A review of high needs provision is taking place in the borough and the increase in the number of in borough school places will help reduce costs. However there remains a risk that funding is not sufficient to meet demand resulting in an annual deficit.

8.8 **Legislative Changes**. There continues to be a risk that the Government could make other policy changes that could impact on Croydon over the period of this budget. These changes if they occur will need to be managed as they arise.

9.0   Summary

9.1 There are a number of significant savings options factored in to the budget model and as with all future years there remains a level of risk around the delivery of these options which will need to be carefully managed and reported.

10.0   CONSULTATION

All Departments have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

11.0 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 The report is submitted by the Executive Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)

12.0 COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR & MONITORING OFFICER

12.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that the Council is under a duty to ensure that it maintains a balanced budget and to take any remedial action as required in year.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate Law for and on behalf of Jacqueline Harris-Baker Director of Law and Monitoring Officer.

13.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

13.1 In addition to a previous Council-wide voluntary severance scheme, a recruitment 'pause' and the review of long term agency/interim resource there will be other savings packages and action plans that need to be developed in response to the report that are likely to have significant HR impact. These can vary from posts not being filled or deleted, through to possible redundancies. Where that is the case, the Council's existing policies and procedures must be observed and HR advice must be sought.

Approved by– Sue Moorman Director of Human Resources

14.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT

14.1 Croydon Council recognises the important role it has in creating a fair, inclusive and cohesive society through its functions as:

- A community leader
- A provider and commissioner of services
- An employer

Serving one of the most diverse boroughs in outer-London the Council's aim is to make the borough a place where people want to live and work - a place where everyone has fair and equal opportunities and life chances.

14.2 The Equality Act, 2010, also requires the Council to have due regard to the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (the Equality Duty) in designing policies and planning / delivering services. In reality, this is particularly important when taking decisions on service changes. The three aims of the Equality Duty are to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good community relations between people who share any of the defined Protected Characteristics and those who do not.

14.3 The Act lists nine Protected Characteristics as age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil

partnership and pregnancy and maternity. However, it is highly unlikely that these "protected characteristics" will all be of relevance in all circumstances.

14.4   Whilst the council must have due regard to the Equality Duty when taking decisions, there is a recognition that local authorities have a legal duty to set a balanced budget and that council resources are being reduced by central government. However, where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic it must be justified objectively. This means that the adverse impact must be explained as part of the formal decision making process and attempts to mitigate the harm need to be explored. If the harm cannot be avoided, the decision maker must balance the detrimental impact against the strength of legitimate public need to pursue the service change to deliver savings.

14.5   In developing its detailed budget proposals for 2018-20 the Council aims to achieve best practice in equality and inclusion. The Council recognises that it has to make difficult decisions to reduce expenditure to meet Government cuts in grant funding and to deliver a balanced budget that meets the specific needs of all residents, including those groups that share a "protected characteristic". Through its budget proposals, the Council will also seek to identify opportunities to improve services and the quality of life for all Croydon residents while minimising any adverse impacts of decisions, particularly in regard to protected groups. It will be guided by the broad principles of equality and inclusion that recognise the need to:

- Engage communities
- Narrow the gap between equality groups that share a "protected characteristic" and the majority of the population in relation to services and employment.
- Support active citizenship to enable residents to participate more fully in civic life
- Build community capacity and strengthen cohesion and trust
- Display robust community leadership using diversity as a driver for social and economic growth and prosperity.
- Address inequality and social exclusion
- Provide differentiated services designed and delivered in such a way that they meet the individual need of residents and are accessible

A detailed analysis will be presented alongside the Cabinet report on the budget in February.

REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTACT: Richard Simpson, Executive Director Resources (S151 Officer)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has delivered the autumn budget statement. Detailed below are the main announcements that will impact upon local authorities. Click here for the budget documents and here for the Chancellor's speech.

KEY HEADLINES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- London business rate retention pilot - the government has agreed a 100% business rate retention pilot in London in 2018/19
- Business rates RPI to CPI indexation – this will happen from April 2018 and local government will be fully compensated for the loss of income. Council tax – power to raise empty property charge to 100% from 50%
- HRA borrowing cap (limited to £1bn nationally) will be lifted in areas of highest need but not until 2019/20 and will be based on a bidding process
- Changes to Universal Credit: 1 week reduction in waiting time; continuation of housing benefit for two weeks for claimants transitioning to universal credit.
- NHS – additional £2.8bn available over the next 3 years with £335m available immediately for this winter.

NOT MENTIONED IN THE BUDGET
- No additional funding for Adult Social Care – the adult social care green paper has been pushed back to the summer of 2018
- No additional funding for Children's Social Care
- No change to the funding formula for local government
- No commitment to fund essential fire safety works
- No action on the status of Temporary Accommodation within Universal Credit

DETAIL

Housing funding

- An additional £15.3bn of new financial support will be made available in total from the policies below for housing, creating a total of at least £44bn of capital funding over the next five years (including grant, loans and guarantees) to support the target of 300,000 net additional homes per year by mid-2020s.
- HRA borrowing caps can be lifted in areas of high demand to get councils building. Local authorities will be invited to bid for increases in their caps from 2019-20, up to a total of £1 billion by the end of 2021-22.
- The Budget confirms the extra £2bn promised by the Prime Minister in October for the Affordable Homes Programme.
- An additional £1.5bn will be put forward for the Home Building Fund to support SME builders.
- £630m small sites fund – to unlock 40,000 homes through investment in infrastructure and remediation.
- £2.7bn to more than double Housing Infrastructure Fund
- £400m of loan funding will be made available for estate regeneration
- £1.1bn for a new Land Assembly Fund to help unlock strategic sites – including new settlement and urban regeneration
- Government will explore options with industry to create £8bn of new financial guarantees for house builders and purpose built PRS
- £34m to develop construction skills by scaling up existing training models.
- The HCA will expand to become Homes England – bringing together money, expertise and planning and CPO powers to facilitate the delivery of new homes where they are needed.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

What it means for Croydon
- The increase in funding will support progress towards the Council's Local Plan target of 32,880 homes and the proposed minimum requirement of 30% of new homes on larger sites being affordable.
- The council expects to reach its borrowing cap in the next 12/18 months on the delivery of our core stock investment programme. Depending on the criteria this opportunity to bid for an increase in the head room could support the delivery of additional new affordable housing above that already planned
- There may be opportunities to further extend construction skills training so that Croydon residents are able to benefit from job opportunities created by the major construction projects in the town centre.

Local Housing Allowance

- Government will increase the Targeted Affordability Fund by £125m (£40 million in 2018-19 and £85 million in 2019-20) in areas of greatest pressure.

What it means for Croydon
- This measure may ease the rate of migration of housing benefit claimants to Croydon from inner London and other areas with higher rents.

Homelessness

- Government will provide £20 million of funding for schemes to support people at risk of homelessness to access and sustain tenancies in the private rented sector.
- The government will launch a new taskforce to advise it on its target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicate it by 2027. This is targeted at three regions outside London.

What it means for Croydon
- This funding provides an opportunity to bid for resources to reduce the loss of private rented accommodation, which is the largest cause of homelessness in Croydon. Given the relatively small social housing stock, the private rented sector remains the main option for people facing homelessness.

Grenfell Tower fire response

- Local authorities are expected to undertake essential fire safety works. Councils should contact DCLG if they cannot afford to undertake essential work.

What it means for Croydon
- Croydon is spending £10m on the installation of sprinklers in blocks of flats with 10 or more storeys, reducing delivery of the decent homes programme. A bid for government funding was unsuccessful.

Empty properties

- Government will legislate to allow local authorities to charge a 100% council tax premium on empty properties.

What it means for Croydon
- As legislation is required, there is no immediate impact. In due course this would bring in the region of £100,000 in additional revenue based on the current volume of empty homes.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

Private rented sector
- A consultation will be launched on barriers to landlords offering longer private rented sector tenancies, and how to encourage landlords to offer them.

Planning
- Green belt protection will continue.
- Government will consult on policies to increase density in urban areas, including:
  - Minimum densities for housing development in city centres and around transport hubs
  - Greater support for the use of compulsory purchase powers for site assembly
  - Support the conversion of empty space above high street shops
  - Making it easier to convert retail and employment land into housing
  - A permitted development right to allow commercial buildings to be demolished and replaced with homes.
- On delivery, a consultation will be launched on:
  - Strengthening the Housing Delivery Test by amending the presumption in favour of development to apply at 75% of housing delivery by 2020
  - Expecting local authorities to bring forward 20% of their housing supply as small sites
  - Speeding up the development process by removing the exemptions from the deemed discharge rules.
- A central register of residential planning permissions from local authorities will be developed to improve information on where permissions are held and progress towards delivery.
- There will be a review of unbuilt planning permission and if there is evidence of land banking then government will intervene through CPO and direct intervention.
- Restrictions on pooling Section 106 funds will be removed in certain circumstances where a local authority has adopted the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- CIL levels will be indexed to house price inflation rather than build costs.
- It will become easier to set and revise CIL levels to help react to changing market circumstances. Councils will also be able set different rates for properties changing between land uses.
- The government will consult on a new policy around first-time buyer led developments. Local authorities will be expected to give permission for land outside their plan on the condition that a high proportion of the homes are offered for discounted sale for first –time buyers, or for affordable rent. This excludes green belt land.

What it means for Croydon
- Proposals to increase density in urban areas align with Croydon's plans for 10,000 homes in the Growth Zone and the Croydon Partnership redevelopment of the Whitgift Centre recently approved. However, Croydon saw significant loss of office space due to office to residential conversions when permitted development was first introduced and would be concerned about the effect on the ability to retain jobs and attract new investment in central Croydon. The Council took steps in 2015 to require planning permission for any change from office to residential use.
- Measures to tackle land banking would be welcome as this practice is used to keep prices high and reduces the number of new homes built.

Right to Buy

- Government will proceed with a £200 million largescale regional pilot of the Right to Buy for housing association tenants in the Midlands.

What it means for Croydon
There is no impact at this stage, although the funding for this may come from the previous proposal to force the sale of high value council properties.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

Home ownership

- A further £10bn will be made available for Help to Buy.
- The government will launch a £2 million competition to support FinTech companies developing innovative solutions that help first-time buyers ensure their history of meeting rental payments on time is recognised in their credit scores and mortgage applications.
- From today, Stamp Duty abolished for first time buyers purchasing a home up to £300,000. In London, it will also be available on the first £300,000 on properties valued up to £500,000.

What it means for Croydon
- More residents will be able to buy their home, freeing up some rented accommodation. Ultimately, however, these measures may contribute to drive house price inflation.

Education and Learning:
- **Maths –** £27 million will be provided to expand the Teaching for Mastery maths programme into a further 3,000 schools. £600 will be given to schools for every extra pupil who decides to take Maths or Further Maths A levels or Core Maths. £18 million is committed to fund an annual £350,000 for every maths school under the specialist maths school model, which includes outreach work.
- **Computer science –** £84 million is committed to upskill 8,000 computer science teachers by the end of this Parliament.
- **T levels –** government will invest up to £20 million to help teachers prepare for this change.
- **Teacher Development Premium –** £42 million will be invested in piloting a Teacher Development Premium.
- **National Retraining Partnership** – The government will enter into a formal skills partnership with the Trades Union Congress and the Confederation of British Industry, to develop the National Retraining Scheme.

What it means for Croydon?
We await further details on these measures to see the impact on Croydon.

Transport:
- **Ultra-low emission vehicles** – To support the transition to zero emission vehicles, the government will regulate to support the wider roll-out of charging infrastructure and invest £200 million, to be matched by private investment into a new £400 million Charging Investment Infrastructure Fund

What does this mean for Croydon?
There may be an opportunity for Croydon to bid for part of this funding to extend our programme of installing charging points.

Business Rates:
- In light of inflation rises the government will be providing a further £2.3B over the next 5 years to support businesses. This includes:
  - A planned switch in indexation from RPI to CPI being brought forward to April 2018.
  - Businesses with more than one office linked by a communal lift, corridors or stairs who were liable to pay a so-called 'staircase tax' having their bills recalculated.
  - Pubs a rateable value of up to £100,000 continuing to receive a £1000 business rate discount for a year from April 2018.
  - Increasing the frequency which the Valuation Office Agency revalues non-domestic properties.

  Local government will be fully compensated for the loss of income as a result of these measures.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

- **London Pilot –** The government has agreed a pilot of 100% business rates retention in London in 2018-19.

What does this mean for Croydon?
- Changes on business rates from RPI to CPI will be neutral financially for the council.
- The London Business Rates Retention Pilot will mean Croydon keeps a greater share of its business rates and will provide extra income in 2018/19 for the council.

Environment:
- **Air quality** - £220M provided for a new Clean Air Fund to allow local authorities with the most challenging pollution problems help individuals and businesses adapt as measures to improve air quality are implemented. A consultation will be launched looking at options that could be supported by this fund.
- **Pothole fund –** an additional £45 million in 2017-18 to tackle around 900,000 potholes across England.

What does this mean for Croydon?
There may be an opportunity for Croydon to bid for the Clean Air Fund and the Pothole Fund.

NHS and Social Care:
- **NHS Funding** - The Government has provided £6.3 billion of additional funding to the NHS.
- **Social Care Funding** - No funding announcements for Social Care.
- **Mental Health** - In December a green paper will be published setting out the government's plans to transform mental health services for children and young people.
- **Disabled Facilities Grant** - £42 million of additional funding for the DFG in 2017-18 increasing the total budget for this year to £473 million.

What does this mean for Croydon?
The increase in Disabled Facilities Grant is a potential opportunity for additional income for Croydon.

Wages and taxes:
- **National Living Wage** - to rise in April 2018 by 4.4%, from £7.50 an hour to £7.83
- **Tax free personal allowance** will increase from £11,500 to £11,850 and the higher rate tax threshold will increase to £46,350. By 2020 they will have increased to £12,500 and £50,000 respectively.

What does this mean for Croydon?
As Croydon is a London Living Wage borough the rise in the National Living Wage will not have an impact on the Council's budget.

Public sector productivity

- **Public Service Leadership Academy** - will be established to complement existing provision, create networks and share best practice across the public sector.
- **Public sector pay** - no major announcement.The Secretary of State will shortly write to Pay Review Body (PRB) Chairs to initiate the 2018-19 pay round, before later submitting evidence outlining recruitment and retention data and reflecting the different characteristics and circumstances of their workforce. Each PRB will make its recommendations in the spring or summer, based on the submitted evidence.

What does this mean for Croydon?
Croydon awaits further details from the PRBs in Spring/Summer 2018.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

Universal Credit:

- £1.5bn package to "address concerns" about the delivery of universal credit
- £8 million to trial innovative approaches to help individuals on universal credit earn more
- Seven-day initial waiting period for processing of claims to be scrapped
- Claimants to get 100% advance payments within five days of applying from January 2018
- Typical first payment will take five weeks rather than current six
- Repayment period for advances to increase from six to 12 months
- New universal credit claimants in receipt of housing benefit will continue to receive it for two weeks

What does this mean for Croydon?

- In Croydon claimants in receipt of UC totalled 17,194 (DWP data end of September 2017) of which over 11,000 are in receipt of housing costs, of which just 1,600 are council tenants.
- UC has had a major impact on rent arrears. At the end of June 2017 the total value of rent arrears for council tenants claiming UC was £1,403,000, 48% of all tenant arrears. 72% of all council tenants claiming UC were in rent arrears, compared with 28% of all council tenants in arrears. The average rent account balance for tenants on HB was £42.00 in credit, compared with the average balance for UC claimants of £722 in arrears. 1,068 of council tenants claiming UC had rent arrears equivalent to more than 3 months' rent at the end of June 2017 and were at risk of homelessness
- Croydon had requested the removal of seven day waiting period for housing costs in UC and the introduction of a Housing Benefit run period of at least two weeks for those already claiming Housing Benefit, so these changes are welcome. However, the lack of action on the status of Temporary Accommodation within UC is disappointing. In emergency accommodation alone, UC claimants owed £2,370,357 at14 September 2017
- There may be an opportunity for Croydon to bid for the £8m fund for innovative approaches to help UC claimants earn more.
- Ensuring new claimants can still receive housing benefit for two weeks will help residents, including council tenants, who are experiencing bad debt.
- There is no information provided on whether pilot sites (like Croydon) that rolled out UC early, will receive recognition or compensation for some of the costs incurred under that scheme where government is now taking a different policy approach.

OBR Economic Forecast

- GDP has been downgraded to 1.5%, reflecting weaker growth than expected, with the slow growth predicted to continue into 2018 and 2019 with GDP growth of 1.4% and 1.3% in subsequent years before rising to 1.6% at the end of the forecast period.
- Consumer Price inflation is forecast to fall from a peak of 3% to 2% later this year.
- Annual borrowing is forecast to be £49.9bn this year and public sector net borrowing is forecast to fall from 3.8% of GDP last year to 2.4% this year, reaching 1.1% in 2022-23.

Chief Executive's Office Policy Unit

Director	Division	Description	FTE Impact	2018/19 (£m)	2019/20 (£m)
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	Workforce reform and transformation. Creating a permanent workforce with less agency cover and costs, reducing management costs and creating more holistic team structures around our residents.	tbc	(1.000)	(1.000)
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	All age disability day opportunities - Reconfiguring our offer to people, enhancing life and well-being opportunities through more efficient use of our contracts.	0.00	(0.125)	(0.100)
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	Commissioning - Creating savings through efficiency in contracts.	0.00	(0.095)	0.000
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	25-65 disability transformation - creating efficiency through better outcomes for people reducing expensive care packages	0.00	(0.750)	(1.500)
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	Mental Health Transformation - Creating efficiency through better outcomes for people reducing expensive care packages.	0.00	(0.125)	(0.100)
Pratima Solanki	Adults and All Age Disability	One Croydon Alliance - Managing the increased demand through better partnership working within the Alliance.	0.00	(2.283)	(2.445)
Mark Meehan	Enablement & Welfare	Restructure of four teams to align functions with future legislative changes in Universal Credit, Discretionary Support, Employment Support and Debt.	0.00	(0.149)	(0.273)
Mark Meehan	Enablement & Welfare	NRPF cases to be closed in an efficient and timely manner, and tighter management of court cases	0.00	(0.090)	0.000
Mark Meehan	Service Development	Decommission domestic violence accommodation with support; retain some funding for floating support in Private Rented Sector.	0.00	0.000	(0.130)
Mark Meehan	Enablement & Welfare	Review of the travel service to identify errors and duplication in the provision Blue Badges	0.00	0.000	(0.200)
Mark Meehan	Enablement & Welfare	Fundamental review of commissioned services for young people	0.00	(0.112)	(0.130)
Mark Meehan	Service Development	NRPF - introduction of new immigration regulations	0.00	(0.050)	0.000
Mark Meehan	Housing Solutions	Savings to be delivered by managing vacancies; reviewing recharges and minimising void periods	0.00	(0.093)	(0.047)
Mark Meehan	Temporary Accommodation	Additional empty property officer who will generate savings through reducing void periods	0.00	(0.137)	(0.067)
		Total	**0.00**	**(5.009)**	**(5.992)**

PLACE DEPARTMENT BUDGET OPTIONS

Director	Division	Description	FTE Impact	2018/19 (£m)	2019/20 (£m)
Steve Iles	Waste	SLWP Contract Saving - Environmental Services (Street Cleansing and Refuse Collection Service)	0.00	(5.170)	0.000
Steve Iles	Leisure	Re-procurement of Leisure Services Contract	0.00	0.000	(0.231)
Steve Iles	Highways Network Management	Co-Ordination and Management of Utility Companies on the Highway to minimise disruption/congestion. This will include Coring, Traffic Management and New Roads and Streets Works Act (NWSRA) inspections.	0.00	(0.192)	0.000
Steve Iles	Highways Network Management	Traffic signals - Savings on charges from TFL for Signal Maintenance and Operational Costs	0.00	(0.050)	0.000
Steve Iles	Leisure	Increasing income from parks events	0.00	0.000	(0.050)
Andy Opie	Parking	Review of Commercial Suspension Charges	0.00	(0.060)	0.000
Andy Opie	Parking	ANPR Traffic Controls	0.00	(0.162)	(0.162)
Andy Opie	Parking	Increase in street P & D charges	0.00	(0.100)	(0.149)
Andy Opie	Parking	Footway parking enforcement	0.00	0.000	(0.062)
Andy Opie	Partnership & Intelligence	Crossfire contribution to become grant funded	0.00	(0.008)	0.000
Andy Opie	Partnership & Intelligence	Youth Prevention Project (YPP)	0.00	(0.007)	0.000
Andy Opie	Public Protection	Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) for Housing Enforcement	0.00	(0.010)	0.000
Andy Opie	Public Protection	Statutory notices - introduce charge per hazard	0.00	(0.005)	0.000
Andy Opie	Public Protection	Cease cost subsidy rat treatments	0.00	(0.005)	0.000
Andy Opie	Public Protection	Introduce charge for Food hygiene re-visits	0.00	(0.003)	0.000
Andy Opie	Partnership & Intelligence	Review Safer Croydon Radio provision	0.00	(0.005)	0.000
Heather Cheesbrough	Strategic Transport	Supplies & Services Savings	0.00	(0.013)	(0.012)
Heather Cheesbrough	Development Control	Increased Planning Fee recovery	0.00	(0.009)	(0.008)
Heather Cheesbrough	Spatial Planning	Additional income recovery	0.00	(0.018)	(0.019)
Heather Cheesbrough	Spatial Planning	Supplies & Services Savings	0.00	(0.018)	(0.019)
Heather Cheesbrough	Building Control	Increased Building Control fee income	0.00	(0.005)	(0.005)
Emma Lindsell	CALAT	Increased Apprenticeship Levy income	0.00	(0.080)	(0.080)
Paula Murray	Culture	Reduction in Cultural Fund (reduce % of LBC contribution to partnership activity)	0.00	(0.026)	(0.025)
Regeneration	Regeneration	Reduction in various budgets (including contractors, consultancy, memberships and training)	0.00	(0.017)	(0.018)
Homes & School Improvement	Homes & School Improvement	Efficiency savings (incl. capitalisation opportunities)	0.00	(0.006)	0.000
Development	Development	Dividend paid to the Council by BxB Ltd based on operational profit	0.00	0.000	(3.370)
Development	Development	Increased overheads charged to BXB	0.00	(0.005)	(0.002)
		TOTAL	**0.00**	**(5.974)**	**(4.212)**

Director	Division	Description	FTE Impact	2018/19 (£m)	2019/20 (£m)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Further automation and self serve for business support services, including PA support and improvements from business process reengineering	TBC	(0.145)	(0.235)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Customer contact centre reduction in customer contact from further channel shift across a number of services.	TBC	(0.132)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Revenues & Benefits - Process review and introduction of automation technology	0.00	(0.044)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	ICT Services - consolidation and reduction in licencing and software costs.	0.00	(0.075)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Business Efficiency through implementation of Oracle Cloud	1.00	(0.030)	(0.230)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Payroll insourcing	0.00	(0.030)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduced frequency of cleaning across corporate estate including windows and general cleaning.	0.00	(0.110)	(0.140)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Restructure of the Energy and Sustainable Development Team in FM to include the outsourcing to a data bureau specialist.	TBC	(0.049)	(0.081)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Develop commercial offer for Facilities Management services traded to schools	0.00	(0.030)	(0.033)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduced costs from further channel shift in revenues services	0.00	0.000	(0.029)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduced costs from further channel shift in benefits services	0.00	0.000	(0.029)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduction in corporate resources through reduction in complaint and process automation	0.00	0.000	(0.029)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduced training costs aligned to reduction in staffing levels	0.00	0.000	(0.032)
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Reduction in basic capita contract price due to rebaselining and service credit.	0.00	(0.400)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Capitalisation of client staff costs where supporting capital projects	0.00	(0.835)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	A review and reduction in the number of mobile phones provided to staff across organisation	0.00	(0.100)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Leasing of BWH data centre - initially agreed with LB Brent	0.00	(0.100)	0.000
Graham Cadle	Customer and Corporate Services	Savings from ongoing review and renewal of systems and software contracts	0.00	(0.050)	(0.100)
Graham Cadle	Facilities Management	Further reduction in LBC use of BWH - releasing one further mid size floor for rental income	0.00	TBC	(0.600)
Jacqueline Harris Baker	Legal	Managing Demand of legal expenditure via the new Legal Services strategy, and appointment of the new contractor to deliver services from January 2018.	0.00	(0.300)	(0.300)
Simon Maddocks	Governance	New Internal audit contract	0.00	(0.047)	(0.009)
Simon Maddocks	Governance	Reshaping election services	(1.00)	(0.038)	(0.037)
Simon Maddocks	Governance	Restructure resulting in the deletion of the division and the services merging into other divisions, accompanied by a reduction in the corporate governance support to the organisation.	(2.30)	(0.075)	(0.077)
Simon Maddocks	Governance	Planned national efficiencies by the External Auditor and a local reduction in the cost of validating key grants.	0.00	(0.020)	(0.040)
Lisa Taylor	Finance Investment and Risk	Further transformation of team and processes.	(6.00)	(0.216)	0.000
Lisa Taylor	Finance Investment and Risk	Management of estate - various options inc. surrendering leases, lettings and different use of assets.	0.00	(0.362)	(0.628)
Sue Moorman	Human Resources	Redesigned Occupational Health Service	0.00	(0.050)	0.000
Sue Moorman	Human Resources	Delete Vacant post	0.00	(0.021)	(0.010)
Sue Moorman	Human Resources	Review of HR model	(1.00)	0.000	(0.057)
Sarah Ireland	Commissioning and Improvement	Additional income from trading travel training model	0.00	0.000	(0.050)
Sarah Ireland	Commissioning and Improvement	Additional income from trading - equipment services	0.00	(0.150)	(0.250)
Sarah Ireland	Commissioning and Improvement	Review of the Travel Policy to maximise use of Personal Travel Budgets & Independent Travel Opportunities	0.00	(0.350)	(0.750)
Sarah Ireland	Commissioning and Improvement	Maximising Use of In-house bus service including using double shifting approaches	0.00	0.000	(0.150)
Sarah Ireland	Commissioning and Improvement	Developing new model of travel service delivery for a range of special schools	0.00	(0.300)	(0.200)
		Total	(9.30)	(4.059)	(4.096)

Chief Executives Office Budget Options   **Appendix Two**

Director	Division	Description	FTE Impact	2018/19 (£m)	2019/20 (£m)
Julian Ellerby	Chief Executives Office	Review the efficiency of the team and increase income.	(8.00)	(0.275)	(0.275)
		Total	**(8.00)**	**(0.275)**	**(0.275)**

REPORT TO:	SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
	12 December 2017
SUBJECT:	**WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18**
LEAD OFFICER:	**Stephen Rowan**
	Head of Democratic Services & Scrutiny

ORIGN OF ITEM:	The Council constitution requires Scrutiny and Overview Committee to agree the scrutiny work programme for the municipal year.
PURPOSE:	To agree the scrutiny work programme for future meetings.

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee has a constitutional responsibility to monitor the scrutiny programme each municipal year.

2. **WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18**

2.1. The Scrutiny Procedure Rules (extracted from the Constitution) state that:

"6.01 …the Scrutiny and Overview Committee shall be responsible for setting its own work programme and the initial work programme of its Sub-Committees.

6.02 A balanced work programme should be developed including pre- and post-decision scrutiny, monitoring and external scrutiny. As far as reasonably practicable, there should be wide consultation on the work programme with Councillors, Chief Officers, external agencies and the wider community prior to its consideration by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee."

2.2. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee work programme 2017-18 is attached as **Appendix A.**

3.   RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

3.1.   Members are asked to agree the Work Programme.

CONTACT OFFICER: Michelle Gerning
                                            Democratic Service Officer
                                            020 8239 4246
                                            michelle.gerning@croydon.gov.uk

APPENDIX A: Scrutiny and Overview Work
                                            Programme 2017/18

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

Draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2017/18

SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE			
12 December 17	30 January 18	6 March 18	17 April 18
Leader Q&A Budget 18/19 Children's Improvement Plan	**Economy & Jobs Q&A** **Culture, Leisure and Sport Q&A** Growth Zone Good Employer Scheme Small Business Commission Children's Improvement Plan	**Communities, Safety & Justice Q&A** Community Safety Strategy Culture Plan Children's Improvement Plan	Devolution Children's Improvement Plan

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