

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee Agenda



To: Councillor Andrew Price (Chair), Councillor Maddie Henson (Vice-Chair), Councillors Tamar Barrett, Danielle Denton, Mark Johnson, Holly Ramsey, Manju Shahul-Hameed and Catherine Wilson

Co-optee Members

Elaine Jones (Voting Diocesan Representative (Catholic Diocese)), Paul O'Donnell (Voting Parent Governor Representative) and Nicole Williams (Non-voting Teacher representative)

Reserve Members: Adele Benson, Louis Carserides, Samir Dwesar, Jessica Hammersley-Rich, Patricia Hay-Justice, Endri Llabuti, Eunice O'Dame and Fatima Zaman

A meeting of the **Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee** which you are hereby summoned to attend, will be held on **Tuesday, 10 September 2024** at **6.30 pm. The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX**

Katherine Kerswell
Chief Executive
London Borough of Croydon
Bernard Weatherill House
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Monday, 2 September 2024

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AGENDA – PART A

1. Apologies for absence

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

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 20)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2024 as an accurate record.

3. Disclosures of Interest

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act 2011, they are required to consider in advance of each meeting whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), some other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer in good time before the meeting. If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they must urgently complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required in general to disclose any relevant DPIs, ORIs or NRIs at the meeting –

- Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the room unless granted a dispensation.
- Where the matter directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation.
- Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to or affects their or a relevant person's financial interest or wellbeing, whether they can participate in any discussion or vote on the matter or stay in the room depends on the detailed rules in paragraphs 7 of Appendix B of the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Chair will invite Members to make their disclosure of interests orally at the meeting and they will also be recorded in the minutes.

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, Young People and Education Directorate Transformation Update (Pages 21 - 26)

For the Sub-Committee to receive an update on the Children, Young People and Education Directorate's transformation work, including an update on the indicative outcomes from the diagnostic work of the Council's strategic delivery partner.

6. Family Hubs Transformation Programme update

For the Sub-Committee to receive a presentation providing an update on the Family Hubs Transformation Programme.

7. Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard (June 2024) (Pages 27 - 36)

For the Sub-Committee to receive the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard.

8. Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25 (Pages 37 - 44)

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

1. Note the draft work programme for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
2. Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

9. What Difference has this Meeting made to Croydon's Children

This item is an opportunity for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee, at the conclusion of the meeting, to review the difference made to Croydon's children from the meeting.

10. 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."

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

Scrutiny Children & Young People Sub-Committee

Meeting of held on Tuesday, 16 July 2024 at 6.30 pm in Room 1.01 and 1.02 - Bernard Weatherill House, Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Andrew Price (Chair), Councillor Maddie Henson (Vice-Chair), Councillors Tamar Barrett, Adele Benson, Mark Johnson, Manju Shahul-Hameed, and Catherine Wilson.

Co-optee Members

Paul O'Donnell (Voting Parent Governor Representative)

Also

Present: Councillor Maria Gatland (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)
Councillor Ola Kolade (Cabinet Member for Community Safety)

Apologies: Councillors Holly Ramsey and Danielle Denton
Nicole Williams (Non-voting Teacher representative), Elaine Jones (Voting Diocesan Representative (Catholic Diocese))

PART A

19/24 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Holly Ramsey, for who Councillor Adele Benson was in attendance as substitute, and Councillor Danielle Denton.

Apologies were received from Nicole Williams (Non-voting Teacher representative) and Elaine Jones (Voting Diocesan Representative (Catholic Diocese)).

20/24 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 19 March 2024 were approved as an accurate record with the following amendments:

Item 14/24 Health Visiting, first paragraph, page 4; change:

'The Director of Education explained that the first Family Hub had been launched at Woodlands Children's Centre, with conversations ongoing about where the remaining three would be located' to 'The Director of Education explained that the first Family Hub had been launched at Woodlands

Children's Centre, with one planned for Selhurst, and conversations ongoing about where the remaining two would be located.'

Item 15/24 Education Standards 2023, page 10; add conclusion:

'The Sub-Committee concluded that the Council should ensure that the voice of the child is embedded in its data collection on attendance, particularly where children were refusing to attend school as a result of dissatisfaction with SEND provision. The Council should look to engage with the lived experiences of parents and children to see how this compared with collected data on attendance.'

21/24 Disclosures of Interest

Councillor Shahul-Hameed declared an interest in relation to Item 6, Youth Justice Plan 2024/25, and stated that their charity worked closely with the Council to provide volunteering opportunities for young people in the borough.

Councillor Henson declared an interest in relation to Item 6, Youth Justice Plan 2024/25, and stated that one of the members of the charity they worked for was Croydon Drop-In.

22/24 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

23/24 Cabinet Paper - Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice and Action Plan to Prevent Reoccurrence

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 17 to 42 of the agenda, which provided the March 2024 Cabinet Report and relevant action plan in response to the recommendations of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman. The Children & Young People was asked to review the Cabinet Paper on the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice to monitor the Action Plan and to ensure lessons learned were embedded. The Director of Education introduced and summarised the paper, and the SEN Tribunal Manager took the Sub-Committee through the action plan at Appendix 2. The Director of Education highlighted that the Council had apologised to the parent and also highlighted that processes around the responsibilities of schools had been strengthened through regular ongoing conversations with head teachers, and distribution of the 'children not being able to attend school due to medical needs or otherwise' policy to all schools in the borough. The Chair enquired what else had been done and was informed that the Council was now also liaising with schools and that it was receiving some letters directly from parents applying under Section 19 of the Education Act.

The Vice-Chair asked how schools had been made aware of the policy and the Director of Education explained that it had been a topic during conversations with head teachers, and that the policy would be highlighted to all new head teachers during their induction. The SEN Tribunal Manager explained that the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Senior Leadership Team was working with most schools on a locality basis through Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo), where conversations highlighting the policy were also taking place.

Members asked about follow up and ongoing support for the family in question, and were advised that the child was now attending school. The Sub-Committee asked how many other current requests under Section 19 of the Education Act there were and whether there were a sufficient number of staff to manage these. The Director of Education responded that there were sufficient staff, with the Access to Education team following up on all requests, and that she did not have the exact numbers to provide but the number of Section 19 cases directly applied to the Council were in the single to double digit range. The Sub-Committee were informed that, where there was a request under Section 19 of the Education Act, this was referred to 'Springboard' (an education service that provides educational support to children and young people of school age whose education has been interrupted for a period of time). Individual schools can and should refer to Springboard directly.

The Sub-Committee asked about the training provided to head teachers and queried whether there were a number of new or inexperienced head teachers in the borough who may not have experience with the Council's 'children not being able to attend school due to medical needs or otherwise' policy. The Director of Education responded that there was not a high number of new head teachers annually, but that the Council was doubling in its efforts to spread awareness of the relevant policies and procedures.

Members highlighted anecdotal reports that there were a number of children 'falling through the cracks' due to the length of time required for a diagnosis who were being penalised by schools for non-attendance. The Director for Education responded that, for children with an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), attendance would be a focus for the school where the child was on roll and during the annual review process. The Sub-Committee heard that the Council has an Early Intervention locality SEN support model (CLSS), with three members of staff working with clusters of schools, to provide early intervention and support for children. Members queried what was being done for children awaiting a diagnosis or EHCP who were not able to attend school in this period, and the SEN Tribunal Manager highlighted that a diagnosis was not required for an EHCP. The Sub-Committee raised concerns that this was not what some parents were being told, and the SEN Tribunal Manager asked that Members inform the Council of these cases where they were aware of them. The Corporate Director of Children Young, People & Education (CYPE) suggested that a separate briefing be provided to the Sub-Committee around the locality SEN support offer.

The Sub-Committee asked for reassurance that the action plan was being effectively implemented in schools and highlighted anecdotal evidence suggesting there were areas where the issues raised in the report were ongoing. The Director of Education stated that they could look to provide evidence of the implementation of the specific points, but that the action plan was clear on which actions had already been delivered and which were ongoing. Members acknowledged this but raised concerns that the action plan did not show the impact for children and families where actions had been completed. The Director of Education responded that the Council's response to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision acknowledged that a mistake had been made and that the Council was following up on this; the evidence would be that there would not be a repetition of this mistake and that the Council had clear oversight of Section 19 requests. Members heard that school leaders were now familiar with the 'children not being able to attend school due to medical needs or otherwise' policy and that discussions on this were ongoing through the Locality SEN Support team and in a number of other forums.

Members highlighted the importance of incorporating the voice of the child and parents into the Council's processes and the implementation of the action plan, and discussed the possibility of looking at how the lived experiences of children and parents had been incorporated into the Special educational needs and disability (SEND) Strategy at a later meeting. The Director for Education explained that there had been close work with Croydon Active Voices during the development of the SEND Strategy, and that the five priority areas of the strategy had been agreed in collaboration with parents. The Sub-Committee heard that the Council was looking at establishing a 'Shadow Board', comprised of children and young people, to provide a clear way to incorporate the voice of the child into governance processes alongside existing feedback from schools. Members heard that this work was being progressed by the Transformation Manager, and that a young people's panel had been used in the recruitment process for the new Head of SEND as an additional way to embed the voice of the child. The Director of Education explained that they were trying to seek the voice of the child wherever possible, and that the Council was open to any other suggestions of how this could be achieved. The Vice-Chair responded that the 'Shadow Board' was a positive idea and that they would be keen to see an update on this at a later date as the Sub-Committee monitored the implementation of the action plan.

Members raised some concerns that the actions in the plan were not sufficient remedy to ensure another child did not end up in a similar situation. The Chair highlighted that Child B had been outside of school for over a year and asked what timeframes were like for other children to be out of school where a Section 19 request had been received. The Director for Education explained that there was a difference between children who fell under Section 19 of the Education Act, where children could not access education, and a child not attending school. Where a child was not attending school, the school would take responsibility for attendance through an attendance officer; there were also a team of attendance officers within the Council who worked with families

where children were significantly absent from school and additional support was needed. The Chair requested clarity on the timeframes for follow-up and support being put in place for children who were subject to a Section 19 request, and Members heard that referrals were put in to Springboard who then worked with the family to agree a bespoke plan to support the child as quickly as possible. The SEN Tribunal Manager added that Department for Education guidance stated that support under Section 19 of the Education Act should be considered after three weeks of consecutive absence from education.

The Vice-Chair asked about cases of school refusal as a result of mental health concern, and why this did not necessarily fall under Section 19 of the Education Act. The Director of Education explained that some of the responsibility for ensuring children attended school lay with the schools, with an expectation that additional support was provided where this was the case; after three weeks of a child not attending school, the parent could specify that they were unable to attend school for specific reasons and therefore they were making a request under Section 19 for alternative provision to be put in place. Members heard that it was dependent on individual circumstances and there was an expectation, that if a child is not attending school, that the school would follow up on that and look at ways of putting in alternative provision; there would be schools that would have their own ways of supporting children's mental health and well-being. The Director of Education stated that a number of Croydon schools were part of the 'Trailblazer', which provided universal support for children with mental health and well-being concerns. The Vice-Chair asked whose responsibility it was to ensure that the support offer was communicated to parents, and was informed that this was available on the Local Offer website which was promoted in the SEN newsletter, through Croydon Active Voices and Croydon's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS). The Director of Education acknowledged that some families may not be aware of the Local Offer and explained that the Council worked with schools and members of the SEND Board to ensure that they had this information and could share it with parents and families. The Sub-Committee heard that the SEND Board was constituted of officers from across Council departments, as well as parents and external partners, which helped to spread this information as widely as possible.

Members asked how schools were monitored given that they all operated differently. The Director of Education responded that every school had a Link advisor who provided support and challenge, but highlighted that many schools were academies, free schools and religious schools who may operate under their own policies and procedures. The Council would follow-up where concerns were raised by parents directly or through the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) and the Croydon Education Partnership has developed priorities in the borough to promote support for all children. The Director of Education stated that the Council had good working relationships with the borough's schools, but acknowledged that mistakes had been made in this case and processes have since been strengthened. The Director of Education encouraged any Members who were

hearing concerns from parents about SEN provision or access to education to share these with the Council.

The Sub-Committee raised concerns that some parents were not as informed as others about how to navigate systems around education and referrals, and that not enough support was in place to support these families. Members highlighted that mandatory attendance reporting would be in place from September 2024 and asked what checks and balances would be in place to ensure this data reflected the lived experiences of parents. The Director of Education explained that parents were interacting with schools on a daily basis and that schools passed on this information. Currently, not all schools were sharing attendance information and that the Council was focused on following up, using its limited statutory powers and resources, with the schools and parents of the highest concern. The Sub-Committee heard that attendance was also something considered by the Link advisors and it was highlighted that schools had overall authority for ensuring that children were attending school but that Council oversight was in place where appropriate and where there were concerns.

The Chair highlighted the bullet point 'ensure that any parent/carer whose child is not attending school due to medical reasons or other otherwise knows the provision contact and has a named council contact to check in with monthly' from 4.16 in the report and action plan, and asked whether monthly was a sufficient frequency and for the definition of 'check in with'. The Director of Education responded that the Council would be reaching out to families, but it was hoped that parents would also be in contact with the Council if this was not taking place. Once a referral had been sent to Springboard, Springboard would then be in regular contact with families to ensure that provision was in place; where there were any issues, it was expected that either the family or Springboard would contact the Council. The exact frequency of the contact with Springboard would depend on the bespoke offer put in place for each family and child. The Director of Education stated she could provide an update at a future committee meeting.

The Vice-Chair asked how often policies and processes around Section 19 requests would be reviewed to ensure these were fit for purpose, and heard that this would usually be annually unless there were changes to legislation or in response to a Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman decision.

The Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education acknowledged that this was an area of significant interest to the Sub-Committee and nationally, and assured Members that where parents were raising concerns these were being addressed, with the Council seeking to be as responsive as it could be given the current demands and pressures on services.

Members highlighted that schools could give incorrect information to parents and that some parents often did not realise that they could seek support elsewhere. The Director of Education explained that schools had a responsibility to publish their complaints policies on the school website, and

that parents did often speak to the Council on such matters. The Sub-Committee highlighted evidence that schools had strong working relationships with the Council, and noted that OFSTED did also review school websites. Some concerns were raised about the funding available for SENCos both in-borough and nationally.

The Chair thanked officers for attending the Sub-Committee and for their open responses to Member's questions. The Director of Education offered to provide a briefing to the Sub-Committee on the SEND Strategy and SEN Locality offer.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that the Attendance Data in the Education Standards 2024 report, scheduled for March 2025 meeting, should include information on 'managed moves' in the borough reported through the 'Inclusion Network'.

Conclusions

1. The Sub-Committee thanked officers for their attendance and noted the report and Action Plan, and agreed to add an item to update the Sub-Committee on the implementation of the action plan to the Work Programme for 2024/25 to include the number of Section 19 requests.
2. The Sub-Committee acknowledged that it required some additional training on the SEND Strategy and Locality SEN Support offer in order to provide more effective scrutiny on these topics, and thanked the Director for Education for offering to provide this.
3. The Sub-Committee concluded that SEND provision in the borough needed to be a greater area of focus in its work over 24/25.

24/24 Youth Justice Plan 2024/25

The Sub-Committee considered a paper set out on pages 43 to 220 of the agenda, which provided a draft of the Youth Justice Plan 2024/25. The Youth Justice Plan 2024/25 forms a part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, and as such it is required that Scrutiny have not less than four weeks to respond to the initial proposals. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee was asked to review the Youth Justice Plan 24/25 with a view to considering whether there are any concerns that should be raised or recommendations that should be made. The Director for Children's Social Care introduced the item and the Children's Youth Justice Service Manager summarised the report.

The Sub-Committee asked for the learnings from the Youth Justice Plan 2023/24 and the key risks and mitigations to the delivery of the 24/25 Plan. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that the Youth Justice Service was always looking to improve and had had undertaken training around Domestic Abuse, which included Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) processes, as well as safeguarding principles, and sexually harmful behaviour. There had been a considerable learning around serious youth violence and 'child first work' to focus on the needs of children as a means to encouraging behavioural change, alongside work with partners to become better at the identification of those children much earlier on, as well as improvements in what interventions looked like for those children. There had been work looking at localities and closer relationships with schools, understanding the changing cohort of young people, contextual safeguarding, and adopting learnings from the thematic review on serious youth violence, particularly on keeping children in education. A sophisticated health offer had been progressed (with a physical health nurse, sexual health clinic, speech and language therapist, and mental health practitioner) to provide a holistic package for children entering into the criminal justice system. The prevention offer was making use of partnership working with the Custody Suite Team and Turnaround Project, as well as data to improve prevention outcomes.

The Sub-Committee heard that the risks to the delivery of the plan included resourcing and staff retention, but consistency was stated as a strength of the service. The level of serious youth violence was highlighted as an ongoing challenge, as well as competing priorities around protecting the public and safeguarding vulnerable young people.

There had been progress made with the 16+ youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) cohort, by providing help with life skilling and interview preparation, but Members heard that there could be challenges matching provision with the needs of some young people, especially during the transition from year 11 to 12 or to mainstream colleges due to disrupted education histories or special educational needs. Members heard that there was a dedicated 'Entry to Employment' officer who focussed on working with young people on transitioning from year 11 to 12, but that there were challenges where young people had not been in full time education for some time. The Youth Justice Service were working closely with the 16+ team to share available resources in and outside of the borough for that cohort.

The Vice-Chair raised the topic of disproportionality and queried whether there had been progress in tackling this since the Sub-Committee reviewed the 23/24 Plan. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that this had been discussed at the Youth Crime Board, but that the service sat within a larger system with systemic issues. The Youth Justice Service looked to challenge and address disproportionality wherever it could and to keep young people out of the criminal justice system. There was a disproportionality action plan and the service tried to ensure that interventions met the needs the cohort and their characteristics, with a male group and a female group that focussed on specifics around identity. It was acknowledged that disproportionality was an ongoing challenge.

The Chair asked whether the demographics of the cohort were reflected in the Youth Justice Service and whether this was considered during recruitment to the team. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that applicants to vacancies in the team were disproportionately female. The service was making use of male staff from the Youth Engagement Team to reflect the demographics of the male cohort, as well as representation from the Community and Voluntary sector. The Chair highlighted the 2017 Lammy Review, and quoted that *'over half of Black boys have grown up in lone parent households and would benefit from male mentors in their lives. For many, these mentors will have credibility only if they understand the communities they live in'* and asked what the Council could do to improve black male representation within the Youth Justice Team. The Director of Children's Social Services explained that the Council undertook blind recruitment and the Chair asked what was being done to ensure that those applying for roles reflected the cohort the team was working with, to ensure the service was effective and relatable to the young people it worked with. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that decisions around recruitment, such as specifically encouraging males to apply for a role, would be a larger decision for the Council and not one they would be able to make unilaterally. Members heard that other characteristics, such as staff being local residents could be just as important in relating to young people as other characteristics. The Youth Justice Service Manager highlighted the high satisfaction and feeling of safety the cohort had fed back to the team and stated that community and partner relationships were used as effectively as possible.

The Sub-Committee asked why it was thought that men were not applying for these roles, and the Youth Justice Service Manager explained that this reflected the national picture for care roles and explained that additional work had been put in to the recruitment of male volunteers, including through canvassing barbershops and other local businesses. The Chair acknowledged that these roles required a qualification and that this was likely gender imbalanced, but that the Council needed to do as much as possible to hire staff that reflected the demographics of the cohort.

Members highlighted the importance of role models and mentors that had similar life experiences to the cohort, including those who had experience of the criminal justice system. The Youth Justice Service Manager confirmed that the Council could employ staff with a criminal record, and this was the case within the Youth Justice Service. The Director of Children's Social Services explained that the Council had to consider the effect of the criminal record on the present through a risk assessment, and that it was not necessarily a barrier to employment. The Sub-Committee asked whether people with this experience, but who did not necessarily have relevant qualifications, could be employed into the service, and the social work apprenticeship scheme was highlighted as was the assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) offer. The Director of Children's Social Care highlighted that local social workers working in their own communities often delivered better outcomes for young people. The Youth Justice Service Manager highlighted the comprehensive workforce development plan and the

training it offered to inform others about the Youth Justice Service and its multiagency partners, which also promoted the service as a career opportunity.

Members asked about the overall number of interventions on page 66 of the agenda pack, and the Youth Justice Service Manager stated that they could come back with this information. The Sub-Committee commented that more support for children with SEN could be an effective prevention measure. The Youth Justice Service Manager agreed and praised the work of the speech and language therapist and explained that, whilst some young people already had an EHCP, the whole cohort were screened to ensure nothing had been missed. The Sub-Committee heard about the development of 'communication passports' to assist in working with young people. Members were informed that external assessors had awarded the Council a Lead Award for its joint work on SEN.

The Sub-Committee referred back to disproportionality and highlighted the importance of black male representation in the leadership of the service. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that the Council had launched a leadership programme, 'Black on Board', and Children's Social Care had commissioned an organisation called 'Solve' to do some work around identify within youth justice and exploitation. Members heard that partnerships with community leaders were important in addressing disproportionality in the balance between gender and race in the leadership in the system. Members asked if there were positions available specifically to black men and the Director of Children's Social Care responded that it was a question of how to encourage black men to apply for positions and removing barriers to entry, with it also being important to consider intersectionality, accessibility and neurodiversity. It was acknowledged that this was an area of constant learning and the importance of all to be open to challenge was highlighted.

Members asked how the Plan could reduce stigma for younger black boys in having their needs met to access early education. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that the Plan did pick up on prevention and diversion and identifying children at the earliest possible opportunity. Members heard that the service were providing information on universal services and local resource from children's first contact with the police (such as in 'community resolutions') as well as asking children and families what they felt would be most helpful. Social Care, Early Help and schools were proactively engaged with the Youth Justice Team, with Youth Justice taking responsibility for directly contacting young people to see what help could be offered. The Youth Justice Manager explained that efforts were being made to listen to what it was that children and families felt they needed, and this had been facilitated through a 'parents evening' to discuss the needs that parents felt were not being met. The Youth Engagement Team, as well as a number of Voluntary and Community sector projects, delivered workshops to talk about the challenges facing young people in Croydon. The Youth Justice Team had been attending strategy meetings across the Council to provide advice, expertise, and knowledge on local resources. The Sub-Committee heard that the service was well embedded in the community.

The Sub-Committee asked about the increase in Asian children entering the service, and the Youth Justice Service Manager responded that there did not seem to be a pattern to explain this, although it was only a moderate increase. Members asked about encouraging more young people to participate in the service and the Youth Justice Service Manager explained that this fit with the emphasis on a 'child first' principle, to ensure the service could meet the needs of the young people and to provide an offer that young people wanted (e.g. sports, mentoring, work with animals).

Members asked how the service was collaborating with other local authorities and the Youth Justice Service Manager explained that they met with peers from neighbouring boroughs every six weeks, and that they attended the Youth Justice Board Heads of Service Regional Meeting, South London Group, National Conference, and were involved in informal group chats with peers. The Sub-Committee heard that these were all useful forums to share expertise and best practise.

The Sub-Committee asked about plans to increase counselling provision and closer work with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that they worked closely with a clinical team with a mental health practitioner, and the service had a consulting relationship with Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (FCAMHS) for high-risk children, as well as spaces with Off the Record (with a dedicated resource for the Youth Justice Team) and Be Inspired's box therapy. Members highlighted that these services were oversubscribed and heard that there were reserved spaces for the Youth Justice Service through a grant linked to the custody suite and Engage Programme. The Sub-Committee queried whether the team was finding that the oversubscription to these programmes was meaning that young people engaged with the Youth Justice Service were not able to participate, and heard that this was not the case with counselling due to the reserved spaces and co-location. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that the mental health practitioner helped young people with containment work whilst young people were on CAMHS waiting lists, as well as a crisis team available through the custody suite where escalation was required. The Youth Justice Service Manager explained that there was a low number of the cohort with acute mental health needs, but that there were higher than average counselling needs, especially around bereavement. The Sub-Committee raised concerns that young people needed to be involved with the Youth Justice Team to get these slots and suggested that, were the services not oversubscribed, access would be an effective prevention measure to involvement with the criminal justice system. The Youth Justice Service Manager agreed and commented that many schools were now embedding counselling services and mental health practitioners to this end. Members asked if there was scope to helping children who were not part of the Youth Justice cohort and heard that referrals could be made through the prevention offer for those with a 'community resolution', arrest with no charge, or some other minor contact with the criminal justice system. The Director of Children's Social Care acknowledged that the thematic review on serious youth violence

had stated that the Youth Justice services available were high quality but should be implemented earlier. The Vice-Chair commented that the lack of access to early help and pre-intervention work had been a theme over the last few meetings of the Sub-Committee.

The Chair asked what the Director of Children's Social Care thought the Council should do to try to identify young people at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Members heard that children were being picked up earlier through Social Care and consideration was being given to how the i-THRIVE Programme could be rolled out in schools. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that the Council should be doing everything within its reach at the earliest point at which it came in contact with families, using the limited resources available to deliver and maximising resources in the community and voluntary sector. The Corporate Director for CYPE stated that prevention and diversion work in Croydon was better and more integrated than in many other places, but acknowledged that mental health and early intervention services outside of the youth justice service were oversubscribed. Members heard that the focus had to be on statutory provision, but that signposting and prevention work happened wherever possible.

The Chair asked about the low number of volunteers for Community Panels and heard that a recruitment campaign on this would be launched very soon and that children would be involved. Members highlighted the difficulty of making people aware that these positions were available.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety praised the work of the Youth Justice team and their collaboration on the Youth Safety Plan and Safer Croydon Partnership. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety highlighted the borough-wide approach of the Safer Croydon Partnership, looking at how the Council could influence broader themes, such as disproportionality. The Sub-Committee heard that the police were looking at a 'race action plan' and Members were encouraged to engage with this. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety highlighted the importance of partnership working with statutory organisations as well as Voluntary and Community Sector Groups. Members heard that the tackling violence against women and girls plan would be heard at Cabinet in July 2024.

Conclusions

1. The Sub-Committee noted the report and thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety for their open discussions with the Sub-Committee.
2. The Sub-Committee concluded that the Youth Justice Plan 2025/26 include additional evaluation of the Youth Justice Service through hypothetical case studies and tracking of where service users are in their lives.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that the Youth Justice Plan 2025/26 include hypothetical case studies, which included community and intervention work, to make the information in the report more accessible.
2. The Sub-Committee recommended that the Youth Justice Plan 2025/26 include some information on high-risk young people have been tracked through to where they have ended up now, including information on higher education and employment, by collaborating with the Probation Service where necessary.

25/24 Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard (April 2024)

The Sub-Committee considered a report set out on pages 221 to 226 of the agenda, which provided the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard, and updated additional 'Red' indicators reviewed at the previous meeting.

On M37, the Director of Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that this was a persistent 'Red' which was monitored closely at both the Director of Children's Services monthly performance meetings and Children's Social Care Leadership performance meetings. The Sub-Committee heard that there was consideration of whether the target of 22% was set at the correct value with ongoing challenge from the Performance Analyst. The Chair queried the timeline and actions for improvement and heard that a firm prediction was difficult as it was predicated on individual children and the risks in each instance determined when a case could be closed. The Director of Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that they would be looking for the indicator to improve over the next year as work progressed with Islington Partners in Practice and as cases took time to close.

The Vice-Chair asked how a new target would be determined and the Director of Quality, Commissioning & Performance explained that current data indicated that performance was at 23% but that they would like to see this sustained before any conclusions could be drawn as individual children on child protection plans sat behind this number. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were not considered when decisions were made about whether a child needed to be on a child protection plan, and that safeguarding was always the first priority.

The Director of Children's Social Care explained that benchmarking data could take a long time to produce and that statistical neighbours used for comparison could have different demographics and funding to Croydon. The Sub-Committee heard that ideally children should not be on a child protection plan for over a year, but that this did happen, and the actions being taken during the plan was the most important thing to consider. The Director of

Children's Social Care stated that where children were on a second plan, it needed to be considered whether this was as a result of a recurrence of previous concerns, or whether things had changed significantly (if the previous plan had been years previous). The Safeguarding Quality Assurance Team looked at each of these cases monthly and wrote a detailed report to Children's Social Care to provide insights and to help practitioners consider whether initial plans had been sufficient in their actions and length.

The Chair asked about the risks of longer child protection plans, and the Director of Children's Social Care responded that the quality of challenge in reviews was vital, as was multi-agency work and challenge from the Safeguarding Quality Assurance Team. The Chair asked, for children who were on a child protection plan for a second time, if reviews of the initial plan were showing the correct work had been done in the first instance. The Director of Children's Social Care explained that there had been a cohort of children where the work during the initial plan had not been done as effectively as it could have been, but that this was not the case for children who were made subject to a child protection plan more recently. Members heard that there were currently over 600 children on child protection plans, and that this was higher than neighbouring boroughs; children on a child protection plan required a visit every 10 days, and children on a child in need plan required a visit every 20 days. The Chair asked if the frequency of visits was being met, and the Sub-Committee heard that work was underway to improve performance on child in need plans.

The Chair queried indicator W1a, and the Director of Children's Social Care explained that higher caseloads were a result of increased demand, even against the provision of additional capacity. Members heard that demand had increased as a result of housing insecurity, post-COVID impact on family functioning, and economic downturn; these factors negatively affected parent and child mental health and exacerbated cases of domestic violence. In Croydon there was a high proportion of temporary housing, with other boroughs placing families into Croydon, which had led to greater demand in Croydon than in other boroughs for child in need services.

The Corporate Director of CYPE explained that these were complex issues but assured the Sub-Committee that all of the figures were monitored rigorously through a number of performance meetings, but that the numbers were also informed by various national issues and the availability of funding. The Chair acknowledged this, but raised concerns at the number of caseloads given the complexities involved for every child. The Director of Children's Social Care responded that overall average caseloads for June 2024 had reduced to 22.7 following a provision of additional resource. This area is closely monitored

The Sub-Committee asked if it would be feasible to include persistent absence data to the Dashboard and the Director of Education stated that this would be possible.

Recommendations

1. The Sub-Committee recommended that persistent absences from education be added as an indicator to the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard.

Conclusions

1. The Sub-Committee agreed that work on M37 to consider whether the target was set at the right value was helpful and noted the information provided to Members on how the value for statistical neighbours was set.
2. The Sub-Committee concluded that they would like to review the inclusion of M37 in future Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboards to determine whether this was helpful and reflected useful information about what was happening in Children's Social Care.

26/24 Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25

The Sub-Committee noted the report and discussed adding the following to the Work Programme:

- An update report on the implementation of the action plan resulting from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice.
- A review of the indicators on the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard, and specifically M37.
- The possibility of adding the SEND Strategy to the Work Programme following a briefing provided by the Director of Education.

The Sub-Committee also discussed:

- Arranging a previously offered tour of a Family Hub from the Director of Education in the first week of September 2024.
- That the briefing on the SEND Strategy and Locality SEN Support offer from the Director of Education should be arranged for the end of September 2024.
- That the Sub-Committee was keen for the police to attend the September 2024 meeting of the Sub-Committee to speak to the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report, and for the Clerk to ascertain which officer would be in attendance.
- The need for scrutiny to be outward looking and to consider which of the Council's partners could be invited for other items on the Work Programme.

The Chair commented that there might need to be better auditing of what the available offer was for young people in different localities in the borough and for different types of young people with varying needs.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm

Signed:

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Date:

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Agenda Item 5

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Children & Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee
DATE OF DECISION	10 September 2024
REPORT TITLE:	CYPE (Children, Young People and Education) Transformation
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Debbie Jones Corporate Director – Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICER:	Simon Townend Head of Performance & Business Improvement Email: simon.townend@croydon.co.uk
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO
WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 IMPOWER have been commissioned as the strategic delivery partner for the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) directorate. This report provides an update to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the Strategic Delivery Partnership work, including an overview of the three-year programme, governance, work to date, the quick wins plan and feedback from staff. The report also includes information about the impact of IMPOWER's work in other local authorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in the report (and its appendices), the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee is recommended to:
- 2.1.1. Note the update provided on the CYPE (Children, Young People and Education) Transformation Programme

3. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

3.1 To accelerate the pace and increase the impact of the transformation the Children, Young People and Education Directorate (CYPE) has engaged a strategic delivery partner, IMPOWER Consulting, to work with colleagues across the directorate, the wider council, its partners, and the community. IMPOWER bring additional capacity, skills, and knowledge to the transformation programme to help CYPE identify opportunities and address challenges it faces to deliver effective services for children, young people and families within in the future funding envelope to ensure a sustainable and effective future for Croydon.

3.2 Overview of CYPE Strategic Delivery Partnership

3.3 The IMPOWER team has rapidly mobilised since the programme started in mid-June 2024. The work is divided into a number of phases over three years:

- **Amplified Analysis (June – September 2024):** looking across the service from the work to date to identify opportunity and inform a robust transformation plan. This includes utilising a range of IMPOWER's Applied Analytics tools to support this insight.
- **Quick wins (August 2024 – January 2025):** Immediately identifying, agreeing and beginning delivering on opportunities for early impact and 'quick wins'. Combining Croydon's context with those areas, such as placements, where we know that immediate cashable savings can be realised.
- **Delivery (November 2024 – March 2026):** Following the Amplified Analysis phase, a robust transformation will be agreed. IMPOWER will deliver interventions across the agreed area, with the aim of scaling and spreading change, better outcomes and savings in as much as the service as possible.
- **Sustainability (April 2026 – March 2027):** For the final year of the contract, IMPOWER will be ensuring that the impact to date is sustained and that different ways of working are embedded into business as usual by Croydon Council.

3.4 **Social value:** In addition to this work, IMPOWER are proud to have committed to an ambitious programme of social value for Croydon including volunteering in local community projects, readiness for work workshops and work placements.

3.5 The following objectives have been agreed for the Amplified Analysis phase of the programme:

- Develop a collective understanding of the CYPE (Children, Young People and Education directorate) budget, how that benchmarks and the influencing factors driving spend and cost
- Identify opportunities for cashable savings
- Understand CYPE demand and workflow and opportunities to do things differently to improve outcomes and reduce demand / costs
- Robustly quality assure existing opportunities and transformation activity to validate plans and identify opportunities to do things better, differently, and/or to go further and faster

- Identify, agree and mobilise quick win interventions that will deliver cashable savings and build confidence in the programme by January 2025

3.6 Governance

3.7 Governance arrangements have been confirmed for the CYPE Strategic Delivery Partnership. Key decisions related to the programme will be made by the CYPE Transformation Improvement Oversight Group (TIOG). This is supported by weekly meetings between IMPOWER and the Senior Responsible Officer for the programme, and regular 1-1s with key senior leads within CYPE and the wider Council.

3.8 IMPOWER also meet regularly with the other two Strategic Delivery Partners (BCG and Newton) to ensure alignment across all transformation activity.

3.9 Amplified Analysis update and activity

3.10 The Amplified Analysis activity has included:

- Establishing robust governance arrangements for the programme.
- Extensive stakeholder engagement including: Lead Member, Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer, Eleanor Brazil, senior leaders across the Council and CYPE and attendance at Mayor's Advisory Board, CMT, CYPE DMT (Directorate Management Team), and the leadership teams of Children's Social Care, Education, and Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement. As well as attendance at service and team meetings across CYPE, and involvement in all staff and CYPE webinars to ensure staff are aware of the programme and have the opportunity to be involved.
- Detailed data analysis and review of information about transformation and improvement activity in Croydon to date.
- Operational service reviews across the CYPE directorate.
- Prevention spend mapping activity within the CYPE directorate and across the Council to better understand the broader spend on prevention activity across the whole Council. This will enable a clear picture of what prevention activity is currently being provided, at what cost and highlight opportunities to improve in specific areas.
- A number of deep dives focused on agreed priority areas: children's social care placements, fostering, traded services, maximising income/funding, early intervention, workforce, and travel to school.
- Detailed analytics activity including journey mining to understand CYPE demand and workflow, and opportunities to do things differently to improve outcomes and reduce demand/costs.
- CYPE budget review and benchmarking activity, including linking with Croydon's Department for Education statistical neighbour authorities to compare and contrast key budget lines where Croydon is an outlier (above or below).

- Bringing subject matter experts into the IMPOWER core team where relevant, for example related to travel to school and the budget review and benchmarking activity.

3.11 The Amplified Analysis work will continue during September, alongside the quick wins delivery activity.

3.12 Quick wins plan and current activity

3.13 The quick wins programme plan was agreed by the Transformation Improvement Oversight Group on 1st August. The quick wins programme (August 2024 – January 2025) is focused on children's social care placements, using IMPOWER's tried and tested Valuing Care approach.

3.14 Valuing Care is an approach to better understand the specific needs of children in care and the level of needs. It has been developed in partnership with a number of local areas and has helped to:

- Understand how needs and outcomes change over time
- Prevent entry into care
- Support children out of residential and into family settings
- Improve matching with foster carers

3.15 On an individual level Valuing Care provides a holistic, nuanced picture of a child's needs. At a population level Valuing Care provides an understanding of the needs of all children as well as different cohorts of children. By using the Valuing Care approach it is possible to better understand the needs of children in care and compare this to cost. This analysis has helped re-shape placement sufficiency and has driven down spending in numerous local authorities.

3.16 There has been excellent engagement from the CYPE management team to enable progress in the rapid mobilisation and delivery of the Valuing Care activity focused on reducing spend on children's social care placements. The first cohort of 150 children has been agreed with the service and training sessions for social workers on the Valuing Care approach started in mid-August. Following the completion of Valuing Care profiles for this cohort, IMPOWER will undertake analysis of these profiles to identify and support the progression of opportunities for individual children within this cohort. This may include opportunities to support children to move from residential placements to family based (foster) placements, or to progress reunification with family members.

3.17 Feedback

3.18 Social workers and other staff have shared positive feedback following their involvement in training sessions on the Valuing Care approach. A selection of this feedback is included below.

"I can really see the value of doing this. None of the information we're putting into the tool should be new to us or come as a surprise, but articulates it in a better way"

"I'm so glad I came to this session. I'm hopeful that this will make a lot of good changes and I'm curious about seeing how it will make positive outcomes"

“I love the language in the guidance descriptions”

“It's really good for children to see the visual element, we can use it with care leavers to set goals and for them to see outcomes over time”

“I can really see the value of doing this. None of the information we're putting into the tool should be new to us or come as a surprise, but articulates it in a better way”

“I love how it focuses not just on the needs, but also on the strengths for each of the areas, it refocuses the conversation”

“I think it would be really helpful to identify cohorts who need the most attention.”

“This will give us a shared and consistent language”

“I can see why the tool is needed now, I'm having to look through loads of notes to find out what her needs are, I could see them at a glimpse”

3.19 IMPOWER are currently linking with the Participation Team to plan engagement with children and young people to ensure the child's voice is included in the programme.

3.20 Examples of impact in other local authorities

3.21 In 2023/24 IMPOWER delivered improved outcomes and life chances for a wide range of children and families, alongside reductions in cost:

Local authority	Children and young people's lives positively impacted	Cost savings delivered	Timescale
Cornwall Council	9	£2m	12 months
East Sussex County Council	9	£1.5m	9 months
Leicester City Council	24	£2.4m	18 months
North / West Northamptonshire Councils	48	£4.2m	18 months

“IMPOWER's work has been hugely valuable in reinforcing a positive strengths-based approach to understanding children's needs and setting out a way forward designed both to better meet those needs and reduce excessive spend by the council. The project has helped colleagues within and outside children's services, and members of the council, to understand what has been driving levels of spend on children's services and the most appropriate way to address this. Culturally, Valuing Care resonated with our relational 'Connected Practice' approach to social care and the tools are now helping to reinforce a strengths-based approach to care commissioning.”

Alison Jeffery, former Director of Children's Services, East Sussex County Council

3.22 The impact of the Valuing Care approach has also been recognised by Ofsted – for example in Lincolnshire County Council's Ofsted ILACS report:

“Before every review, social workers update the child’s assessment using the ‘valuing care’ tool. This assessment, undertaken jointly with and written to children enables an analysis of children’s changing needs.

Assessments are of a high quality and feed into meetings to review children’s progress and planning for children’s day-to-day and longer-term needs.

[This supports] Beautifully produced profiles, in which children’s strengths and needs shine through, are shared with foster carers at these events. Prospective carers are provided with information about the skills they will need and the support that will be provided to help the child to thrive.”

Section of Ofsted ILACS report for Lincolnshire County Council (where the Valuing Care approach is fully embedded in practice)

- 3.23** A short case study is included below from another local authority to show how Valuing Care helps individuals like Emily (*not her real name*) to reconnect with their families and return home.

Emily first came into care 12 years ago and, after a brief return home, came back into the care system in 2015 where she remained until earlier this year.

By the end of 2016, Emily had lived with five foster families; each placement breaking down. By 2023 she had also moved through four residential placements.

In 2023, a Valuing Care profile was completed for Emily and a comprehensive and detailed support plan was designed to help her return home which was in line with her and her birth family’s wishes. This plan involved a co-ordinated approach from early help, virtual school, outreach support from her residential home and support from an independent visitor as well as partnership working between the child and the family’s social workers.

In January 2024, Emily returned home. Within two weeks, the outreach support was removed as it was not needed. The family continue to be supported but both Emily, her mother and the team around them are confident this is a life-long move home.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 None

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee
DATE	10 September 2024
REPORT TITLE:	Early Help, Children Social Care and Education Performance Dashboard & Health Visiting KPI Data
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones - Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education
PERSON LEADING AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING:	Kerry Crichlow - Director Quality, Commissioning & Performance (Deputy DCS)
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Maria Gatland Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	Performance dashboards are provided for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee as a standing item on the work programme.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to review the performance dashboard provided for Early Help, Children Social Care and Education and consider whether there are any areas of concern that may need to be scheduled for further scrutiny at a future meeting.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 EARLY HELP, CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE & EDUCATION PERFORMANCE DASHBOARDS

- 1.1 In order for the Children & Young People Sub-Committee maintain an overview of the performance of the Early Help, Children Social Care and Education services, performance data is provided in dashboard form at most meetings.
- 1.2 The performance dashboard is appended to this cover report at Appendix A.
- 1.3 The indicators contained in Appendix A are aligned with the KPIs included in the [Mayor's Business Plan 2022-26](#).

- 1.4 If in reviewing the data provided the Sub-Committee identifies any area of concern that it feels may require further investigation this will be reported to the Scrutiny Work Programming Group by the Chair for further consideration.
- 1.5 The Sub-Committee has been provided with the additional 'Red' KPIs from the wider department at Appendix B.
- 1.6 The Sub-Committee requested that school absence data be provided with the next dashboard, and this has been included at Appendix D.

2 HEALTH VISITING KPI DATA

- 2.1 The Sub-Committee received an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting at its meeting on 19 March 2024. Members concluded that commissioning data on Health Visiting should be shared with Members on a regular basis, and that an update on Health Visiting would be a recurring item on the Sub-Committee's Annual Work Programme.
- 2.2 Quarterly Health Visiting KPI Data for Q1 2024/25 is included at Appendix C.

3 APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix A: Early Help, Children Social Care & Education Performance Dashboard (June 2024)
Appendix B: Early Help & Children's Social Care Additional Red Indicators (June 2024)
Appendix C: Quarterly Health Visiting KPI Data (Q1 24/25)
Appendix D: Absence published data

4 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 4.1 None

Performance Report Overview - CYPE

Red - Performance has not met target / performance differs from comparators by more than 10%

- Percentage of current Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more

Amber - Performance has not met target but is within 10% / performance differs from comparators by 10% or less

- Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (ever)
- Rate of local CLA per 10,000 under 18 years population

Green - Performance has met or exceed target / performance has matched one or more comparators

- Percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21
 - Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'
 - Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)
 - Percentage of referrals to children services actioned within 2 working day
 - Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC
- Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds

CROYDON CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK										CROYDON www.croydon.gov.uk					
KEY															
Red	Amber	Green	Data but no target	No data	↑	Getting better	↓	Getting worse	↔	Same					
REF.	INDICATOR	Bigger or Smaller is better	Frequency	LATEST DATA				PREVIOUS DATA		BENCHMARKING				COMMENTS ON CURRENT PERFORMANCE	
				Timeframe	Target	Croydon position	Change from previous	RAG	Timeframe	Croydon position	Timeframe	Statistical Neighbours	London		England
M27	Permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population	Smaller is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	0.06	0.04	↓	Green	2021/22 Academic Year	0.03	2022/23 Academic Year	0.05	0.06	0.11	In 2022/23, permanent exclusions from schools as a percentage of the school population was 0.04 which is below our statistical neighbours (0.05), London (0.06) and England (0.11).
M28	EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) - Percentage of children achieving a good level of development	Bigger is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	69.1%	69.1%	↑	Green	2021/22 Academic Year	67.4%	2022/23 Academic Year	68.9%	69.1%	67.2%	In 2022/23, the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development in Croydon was 69.1% which is in line with London and above the national average (67.2%) and our statistical neighbours (68.9%).
M29	KS2 - Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics	Bigger is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	65%	63%	↔	Amber	2021/22 Academic Year	63%	2022/23 Academic Year	65%	67%	60%	In 2022/23, the percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics in Croydon was 63% which is above the national average (60%) but below London (67%) and our statistical neighbours (65%).
M30	KS4 - Average Progress 8 score per pupil	Bigger is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	-0.03	0.01	↑	Green	2021/22 Academic Year	-0.02	2022/23 Academic Year	0.22	0.27	-0.03	In 2022/23 the average Progress 8 score in Croydon was 0.01, slightly better than the national average of -0.03. As most secondary schools in Croydon are academies there are some limitations in the LA's influence. The establishment of the Croydon Education Partnership will enable a collegiate approach to improving outcomes at all key stages.
M31	KS4 - Percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and Maths	Bigger is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	45.0%	44.9%	↓	Amber	2021/22 Academic Year	48.9%	2022/23 Academic Year	48.8%	54.1%	45.5%	In 2022/23, the percentage of pupils achieving grades 9-5 in English and Maths in Croydon was 44.9%. This is the 3rd lowest compared to our statistical neighbours, and slightly below the national average. 64.5% of pupils gained at least a grade 4 in English and Maths in Croydon. As most secondary schools in Croydon are academies there are some limitations in the LA's influence. The establishment of the Croydon Education Partnership will enable a collegiate approach to improving outcomes at all key stages.
M32	KS5 - Percentage of students achieving at least 2 substantial level 3 qualifications	Bigger is better	Annual	2022/23 Academic Year	92.6%	84.3%	↓	Amber	2021/22 Academic Year	89.1%	2022/23 Academic Year	94.6%	92.9%	92.6%	Level 3 (KS5) results in Croydon have been below benchmark comparators for many years, partly due to the extensive FE offer in the borough below level 3 which attracts high proportion of young people undertaking a more hybrid programme of study, e.g. a combination of L2 and L3 quals, rather than a traditional full level 3 programme. Support to schools is offered by 2 specialist secondary improvement advisers, predominantly on a traded basis. However, as most post-16 establishments in Croydon are academies or colleges, there are some limitations in the LA's influence – The establishment of the Croydon Education Partnership will enable a collegiate approach to improving outcomes at all key stages.
M20	Proportion of 16 and 17 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	Monthly	Apr-24	2.6%	2.8%	↓	Amber	Mar-24	2.6%	Average of Dec 22, Jan 23 and Feb 23	1.6%	1.6%	2.8%	In April, we had a significant number of Early Leavers reported therefore an increase in NEET and Not Knowns and a decrease in In learning in addition to the existing NNK. Our NEET Tracking & Engagement worker had a 49% rate for failed contacts (wrong contact number, no answer, etc.) for April.
M23	Percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training (EET) now aged 19 to 21	Bigger is better	Monthly	Jun-24	60%	61%	↔	Green	May-24	61%	2022/23	59%	60%	56%	The proportion of care experienced young people who are in Employment, Education & training remains slightly above target. The development of the Virtual College framework for supporting young people into Education, Training & Employment as part of the Care Leavers Strategy will we anticipate increase the proportion within this measure.
M26	Percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding'	Bigger is better	Monthly	May-24	88%	94%	↓	Amber	Apr-24	95%	May-24	95%	96%	90%	In May 2024, the percentage of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' was 94% which is above the national average (90%) but slightly below our statistical neighbours (95%) and London (96%).
M33	Percentage of Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Bigger is better	Monthly	Calendar year to June 24	62%	68%	↓	Amber	Calendar year to May 24	69%	2022	55%	55%	49%	Performance calendar year to June is 68% which is a decrease of 1% compared to the previous month. In June there were 101 EHCPs issued of which 67 (66%) were issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions). We continue to monitor on weekly basis the service delivery against the 20 week KPI measure. We are aware of the continued pressures and take a whole service approach to the quality assurance of plans before they are finalised and distributed to our SEND families. With the number of plans regularly requiring QA processing this is imperative to supporting delivery. At this point of the calendar the SEND service is focused on placements and issuing confirmed EHCPs with named schools and settings. Early Years Nursery children are assessed and placement activity undertaken as well as those transitioning to year 7. At the same time requests for assessments continue to be received with 49 at the most recent panel and annual reviews are underway. The caseload per coordinator is now 209. The 0-11 team has also had a period of new staff induction and this has impacted upon capacity.
M34	Percentage of referrals to children services actioned within 2 working day	Bigger is better	Monthly	Jun-24	90%	99%	↑	Green	May-24	98%	No comparable data available				The target for this indicator changed from 80% to 90% in April 2024, which for the month of April saw performance 1% under target at 89%. However, as anticipated, performance has continued on a positive trajectory, increasing by 8% in May and a further 1% in June to 99%, giving this indicator a RAG rate of Green.
M35	Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 of under 18 population	N/A	Monthly	Jun-24		492.5		N/A	May-24	507.1	2022/23	374.6	369.8	342.7	This indicator reflects the rate of children in receipt of services from Children's Social Care via assessment, support or intervention which can be short, medium or long term. The service takes account of this rate considering comparisons with statistical neighbours and trends over time to track the level of need in the borough.
M36	Percentage of current Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	Smaller is better	Monthly	Jun-24	<2.8% of CP Cohort	5.6%	↓	Red	May-24	3.2%	2022/23	3.9%	3.2%	2.2%	The number of children subject of a CP plan for 2 years or more has been increasing recently. This cohort is reviewed fortnightly by the relevant heads of service to ensure the CP plans are progressing appropriately, threshold is still met and work is being progressed to ensure there is a clear plan to safely end the CP plan or to escalate in to a legal area. In this cohort 20 children are within a legal framework, 2 children are due to step down at their next RCPC and 2 other children are transferring to another LA. For one family the children have become looked after so the CP plans have ended. This means that the cohort will remain high whilst the legal processes conclude for these children (3-6 months). Delays in court timetabling impacts on ending some plans. In order to ensure close oversight going forward the heads of service are reviewing CP plans over 15 months every 2 weeks and the service managers and SQA service manager are also reviewing children subject of a CP plan over 9 months on a regular basis to ensure a clear direction of travel to safely end the CP plan at an earlier stage in a timely way.
M37	Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (ever)	Smaller is better	Monthly	Jun-24	22%	23%	↑	Amber	May-24	24%	2022/23	18%	20%	24%	Performance in this area has remained broadly the same since autumn 2023. There has been increased scrutiny over this cohort and there has been slow but positive progress over the past few months both in terms of the size of the cohort but also in the reduced number of children newly subject of a CP plan where the previous plan ended under 5 years ago. Islington Partners in Practice are being funded by DfE to support the Child Protection services to better understand this cohort and consider new initiatives to reduce the number of children subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time. This work should enable the progress being made to be continued and improved performance sustained.
M38	Rate of local CLA per 10,000 under 18 years population	Smaller is better	Monthly	Jun-24	47.0	47.1	↑	Amber	May-24	45.9	2022/23	50.5	43.9	64.4	There has been an increase in the proportion of children in care in the month of June. Overall the council need to ensure that care is provided to those children where no other option will provide safety. Performance is slightly above the target of 47/10,000, however is stronger than that of statistical neighbours and England. A focus to drive down timeframes in care proceedings for children looked after, especially those on the adoption pathway and those living with their families will further strengthen performance in this area moving forward.
M40	Percentage of the under 18 years population who are UASC	N/A	Monthly	Jun-24	0.105% - 0.114%	0.106%		N/A	May-24	0.106%	2022/23	0.062%	0.073%	0.061%	The proportion of under 18 children in care who are unaccompanied and separated children remains in line with the expected proportion for all Local Authorities. The National Transfer scheme continues to be effective.
M41	Percentage of Care Experienced young people who were formerly UASC	N/A	Monthly	Jun-24	Monitoring indicator	52%		N/A	May-24	54%	No comparable data available				There is no target because this is a monitoring indicator to follow the progress in delivering M40.
M49	Juvenile first time entrants to the criminal justice system per 100,000 of 10-17 year olds	Smaller is better	Monthly	Rolling year to June 24	262	222	↑	Green	Rolling year to May 24	232	2021	207	184	147	The Youth Justice Service has seen a steady and gradual decline in first time entrants since 2021 and can in part attribute this to the increasing prevention offer and projects within the Service. Projects such as Turnaround and Engage now provide a much earlier offer to intervene with children who come to the attention of the authorities. The increase in the use of community resolutions (on the spot cautions) have also diverted children from Court proceedings and formal sanctions for low gravity offences. The Service continues to strive to meet with the London average by regularly reviewing decisions made by Police and by advocating at Court for children to receive support outside of the Criminal Justice System.

2024

		2023-24																		2024-25			
Indicator Number	Indicator Number	Indicator Title	Polarity	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Trend	RO	2024-25 Target	Rolling 3 month average (RTMA) or latest	RAG
C&F Assessments	AMT 5	Percentage of children with open assessments for whom a visit has taken place within 20 working days (excludes CWD Family Support cases)	BIB	74%	78%	73%	66%	58%	66%	69%	65%	63%	62%	53%	61%	64%	66%	62%		AA	90%	62%	Red
Children in Need (CIN)	CIN 4	Percentage of children with active Child in Need plan and not allocated to CWD Teams for whom a visit has taken place within 20 working days (excludes CWD Family Support)	BIB	84%	87%	76%	80%	75%	76%	75%	84%	80%	81%	79%	77%	77%	75%	77%		MT	90%	77%	Red
Caseloads	W1 a	Average Caseload per Worker - Family Assessment Service	SIB	20.6	22.9	25.6	28.7	26.1	26.5	26.9	30.9	30.4	33.4	36.0	35.8	30.6	27.8	22.7		RM	20	22.7	Red

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Ref No.	Area	Key Performance Indicator	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Trend	Q1	Target Q1	24/25 YTD
2	NEW BIRTH VISIT								
2.1	NEW BIRTH VISIT	C2: Total number of infants who turned 30 days in the month	407	445	375		1227		1227
2.2		C2: Total number of infants who turned 30 days in the month and who received a face-to-face New Birth Visit (NBV) within 14 days of birth by a health visitor with mother (and ideally father)	358	407	336		1101		1101
2.3		C2: National Metric: Percentage of New Birth Visits within 14 days	88.0%	91.5%	89.6%		89.7%	83.0%	89.7%
3	6 TO 8 WEEKS CHECK								
3.1	6 TO 8 WEEKS CHECK	C8i: Total number of children due a 6-8 week review by the end of the month	405	431	425		1261		1261
3.2		C8i: Total number of children due a 6-8 week review by the end of the month and who received a 6-8 week review by the time they turned 8 weeks	314	372	353		1039		1039
3.3		C8i: National Metric: Percentage of children who received a 6-8 week review by the time they were 8 weeks	77.5%	86.3%	83.1%		82.4%	71.0%	82.4%
5	12 MONTHS REVIEW								
5.1	12 MONTHS REVIEW	C4: Total number of children who turned 12 months in the month	387	423	439		1249		1249
5.2		C4: Total number of children who turned 12 months in the month and who received a 12 month review by the age of 12 months	48	298	324		670		670
5.3		C4: National Metric: Percentage of children turning 12 months in the month who received a 12 month review	12.4%	70.4%	73.8%		53.6%	54.0%	53.6%
5.4		C5: Total number of children who turned 15 months in the month	382	386	429		1197		1197
5.5		C5: Total number of children who turned 15 months in the month and who received a 12 month review by the age of 15 months	231	319	373		923		923
5.6		C5: National Metric: Percentage of children turning 15 months in the month who received a 12 month review	60.5%	82.6%	86.9%		77.1%	71.0%	77.1%
6	2-2.5 YEAR REVIEW								
6.1	2-2.5 YEAR REVIEW	C6i: Total number of children aged 2.5 years in the month	431	414	398		1243		1243
6.2		C6i: Total number of children due a review by the end of the month who received a 2 - 2.5 year review by the age of 2.5 years	208	296	286		790		790
6.3		C6i: National Metric: Percentage of children aged 2.5 years who received a 2 - 2.5 year review	48.3%	71.5%	71.9%		63.6%	61.0%	63.6%

(Universal Plus and

Universal Partnership Plus)

Ref No.	Area	Key Performance Indicator	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Trend	Q1	Target Q1	24/25 YTD
10 NEW BIRTH VISIT									
10.1	NEW BIRTH VISIT	Total number of infants who turned 30 days in the month (UP and UPP only)	13	8	13		34		34
10.2		Total number of infants who turned 30 days in the month and who received a face-to-face New Birth Visit (NBV) within 14 days of birth by a health visitor with mother (and ideally father) (UP and UPP only)	8	6	13		27		27
10.3		Local Metric: Percentage of New Birth Visits within 14 days (UP and UPP only)	61.5%	75.0%	100.0%		79.4%	90%	79.4%
11 6 TO 8 WEEKS CHECK									
11.1	6 TO 8 WEEKS CHECK	Total number of children due a 6-8 week review by the end of the month (UP and UPP only)	10	11	16		37		37
11.2		Total number of children due a 6-8 week review by the end of the month and who received a 6-8 week review by the time they turned 8 weeks (UP and UPP only)	7	8	12		27		27
11.3		Local Metric: Percentage of children who received a 6-8 week review by the time they were 8 weeks (UP and UPP only)	70.0%	72.7%	75.0%		73.0%	90.0%	73.0%
11.4		Total number of children due a 6-8 week review by the end of the month minus exceptions	10	11	16		37		37
11.5		Local Metric: Percentage of children who received a 6-8 week review by the time they were 8 weeks minus exceptions	70.0%	72.7%	75.0%		73%		73.0%
12 12 MONTHS REVIEW									
12.1	12 MONTH REVIEW%	Total number of children who turned 15 months in the month (UP and UPP only)	14	12	15		41		41
12.2		Total number of children who turned 15 months in the month and who received a 12 month review by the age of 15 months (UP and UPP only)	8	9	13		30		30
12.3		Local Metric: Percentage of children turning 15 months in the month who received a 12 month review (UP and UPP only)	57.1%	75.0%	86.7%		73.2%	90.0%	73.2%
13 2-2.5 YEAR REVIEW									
13.1	2-2.5 YEAR REVIEW	Total number of children aged 2.5 years in the month (UP and UPP only)	20	9	8		37		37
13.2		Total number of children due a review by the end of the month who received a 2 - 2.5 year review by the age of 2.5 years (UP and UPP only)	9	7	4		20		20
13.3		Local Metric: Percentage of children aged 2.5 years who received a 2 - 2.5 year review (UP and UPP only)	45.0%	77.8%	50.0%		54.1%	90.0%	54.1%

Absence published data



LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Children & Young People Sub-Committee
DATE	10 September 2024
REPORT TITLE:	WORK PROGRAMME 2024-25
LEAD OFFICER:	Tom Downs, Democratic Service and Governance Officer- Scrutiny T:020 8726 6000 x 63779
ORIGIN OF ITEM:	The Work Programme is scheduled for consideration at every ordinary meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
BRIEF FOR THE COMMITTEE:	To consider any additions, amendments, or changes to the draft work programme for the Committee in 2024/25.
PUBLIC/EXEMPT:	Public

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This agenda item details the Sub-Committee's draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee has the opportunity to discuss any amendments or additions that it wishes to make to the work programme.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee is able to propose changes to its work programme, but in line with Constitution, the final decision on any changes to any of the Committee/Sub-Committee work programmes rests with the Chairs & Vice-Chairs Group, following consultation with officers.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sub-Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the draft work programme for 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- 2.2 Consider whether there are any changes to the work programme that should be considered.

3 WORK PROGRAMME

3.1 The work programme

The proposed work programme is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members are asked to note that the lines of enquiry for some items have yet to be confirmed and that there are opportunities to add further items to the work programme.

3.2 Additional Scrutiny Topics

Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to suggest any other items that they consider appropriate for the Work Programme. However, due to the time limitations at Sub-Committee meetings, it is suggested that no proposed agenda contain more than two items of substantive business in order to allow effective scrutiny of items already listed.

3.3 Participation in Scrutiny

Members of the Sub-Committee are also requested to give consideration to any persons that it wishes to attend future meetings to assist in the consideration of agenda items. This may include Cabinet Members, Council or other public agency officers or representatives of relevant communities.

4 APPENDICES

- 4.1** Appendix 1: Draft Work Programme 2024/25 for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

5 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 5.1** None

Children & Young People Sub-Committee

The below table sets out the working version of the Children & Young People Sub-Committee work programme. The items have been scheduled following discussion with officers and may be subject to change depending on any new emerging priorities taking precedent.

Meeting Date	Item	Scope	Directorate & Lead Officer
16 July 2024	Cabinet Paper - Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice and Action Plan to Prevent Reoccurrence	To receive the relevant action plan and ensure the lessons learned from this and the previous complaint are 'embedded'. The Sub-Committee should monitor the implementation of the Council's action plan.	Children, Young People & Education Debbie Jones
	Youth Justice Plan 24/25	The Youth Justice Plan 24/25 forms a part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, and as such it is required that Scrutiny have not less than four weeks to respond to the initial proposals. The Children & Young People Sub-Committee Scrutiny Sub-Committee has asked to review the Youth Justice Plan with a view to considering whether there are any concerns that should be raised or recommendations that should be made.	Children, Young People & Education Róisín Madden

10 September 2024	CYPE Transformation	To receive an update on the Children, Young People and Educations Department transformation work, including an update on the outcomes from the diagnostic work of the Council's strategic delivery partner.	Children, Young People & Education Debbie Jones Deborah Crossan, Jamie McMahon, Deborah Ennis (IMPOWER)
	Family Hubs Transformation Programme update	For the Sub-Committee to receive an update concerning the Family Hubs Transformation Programme.	Children, Young People & Education Shelley Davies
20 January 2025	Budget Scrutiny Challenge	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to review the information provided on identified budget proposals and reach a conclusion on the following:- 1. Are the savings deliverable, sustainable and not an unacceptable risk. 2. Is the impact on service users and the wider community understood. 3. Have all reasonable alternative options been explored and do no better options exist.	Children, Young People & Education Debbie Jones
	Cabinet Report - Education Estates Strategy	For the Sub-Committee to consider whether there are any considerations or concerns it may wish to submit to the Cabinet during its consideration of the Strategy.	Children, Young People & Education Shelley Davies

18 March 2025	Update on Health Visiting	To receive an update on Antenatal and Health Visiting on the KPI trends since the last update in March 2024, as well as information on changes and improvements in the service.	Children, Young People, Education and Health Croydon Health Services/Kerry Crichlow
	Education Standards 2024	For the Sub-Committee to receive the summarised performance of children and young people in Croydon schools for the academic year 23/24. This report should also include information on 'managed moves' in the borough reported through the 'Inclusion Network'.	Children, Young People & Education Shelley Davies
	Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual Report 2023-24	The Children & Young People Sub-Committee is asked to: - Note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2023-2024 Consider whether there are any concerns it may wish to raise as to whether the Annual Report provides sufficient reassurance on the performance and effectiveness of the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership. Consider whether the Sub-Committee has any comments or suggestions on the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024-2025 ahead of its development in the following year.	Children, Young People & Education Donna Swirski

Standing Items:

Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard & Health Visiting KPI Data - To receive the Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education Dashboard and quarterly Health Visiting KPI Data.

Items of Interest

The following items haven't been scheduled into the work programme but are highlighted as potential items of interest to be scheduled during the year ahead.

Unallocated Items	Notes
Recruitment and Retention	<p>To review Staff Caseloads, AYSE Caseload Sharing and the number of supervisions carried out.</p> <p>To receive a breakdown of vacancies and caseloads by individual teams and to look at London Councils best practise for recruitment and retention.</p> <p>To undertake direct engagement with social workers</p> <p>To look at how feedback from exit interviews can be incorporated into retention strategies</p>
Apprenticeships & Youth Unemployment	To look at the offer of available apprenticeships in the borough and data on youth unemployment.
OFSTED Inspection	To review the outcome from the OFSTED inspection as and when they are available.
Delivery of Early Years Strategy	To review the delivery and implementation plan of the Early Years Strategy
SEND Strategy	To review the implementation of the SEND Strategy
Surplus Schools Places	To review the Surplus Schools Places report
Free School Meal offer in Croydon	To scrutinise the provision of free school meals in the borough through the Mayor of London scheme.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice and Action Plan to Prevent Reoccurrence	An update report on the implementation of the action plan resulting from the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Decision Finding of Fault Causing Injustice.
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