



**Notice of a public meeting of
Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny
Committee- Commissioned Slot**

To: Councillors Daubeney (Chair), Webb (Vice-Chair), Baker, Fitzpatrick, Heaton, Hollyer and Orrell

Date: Tuesday, 28 June 2022

Time: 5.30pm

Venue: The George Hudson Board Room - 1st Floor West Offices (F045)

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

2. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 10)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2022 and 03 May 2022.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on 24 June 2022**. Members of the public can speak on agenda items or matters within the remit of the committee.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration

form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The public meeting can be viewed on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts .

During coronavirus, we have made some changes to how we are running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Children's Services Ofsted Report (Pages 11 - 26)

This report presents the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Care under the Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS) framework, which was conducted between 7 and 18 March 2022. Members are asked to consider the council's draft action plan in response to areas for improvement identified and to make any recommendations regarding the council's proposed submission to Ofsted.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Jane Meller

Contact details:

- Telephone – (01904) 555209
- Email – jane.meller@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	13 April 2022
Present	Councillors Daubeney (Chair), Fenton, Fitzpatrick, Heaton and Webb (Vice-Chair)
Apologies	Councillors Baker and Barker

28. Declarations Of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Cllr Webb declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in item 7, Scrutiny Review Update – School Holiday Food, as he was a teacher at Archbishop Holgate’s School in York.

29. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 04 January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

30. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council’s Public Participation Scheme.

Flick Williams spoke in relation to item 4, Cultural Strategy Update, where she raised her concerns regarding the exclusion of Blue Badge holders from cultural events held within the Footstreets.

31. Cultural Strategy Update

Members received an update on the culture sector in York and on the implementation and delivery of the city's Culture Strategy, York's Creative Future, 2020 – 25.

Sarah Loftus, Managing Director at Make it York (MIY) attended alongside MIY's Creative and Cultural Development Manager and the Head of Culture and Wellbeing to present the update and answer questions from Members. It was noted that:

- City of York Council (CYC) had given responsibility for Culture to MIY and this was one of their key priorities.
- Funding was unavailable to implement the entire strategy but work in partnership with other organisations would take place to develop and implement the strategy.

They responded to a number of questions from Members and it was noted that:

- All events were open to residents and a market strategy was under development to connect with more residents. They welcomed suggestions to increase engagement levels with residents. Some events were being held outside the city centre assist with this.
- Events were just one aspect of culture and they were looking to develop a long term connection with culture to improve the well-being of residents.
- They recognised that it was necessary to improve disability access. It was hoped that improvements in digital access and relocating events to venues outside the city centre would assist.
- To date there were 144 members of the cultural forum. Engagement had taken place with residents and local members to make events successful and inclusive. Nominations for the cultural executive, part of the cultural forum, would take place in July with elections in September for two year terms.
- An application to Trailblazers was pending on a basis of celebrating 'surprising things in surprising ways'.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated.

32. Finance Third Quarter Monitoring Report, Children's Services

The Committee considered a report that analysed the latest performance for 2021/22 and forecasted the financial outturn position by reference to the services plans and budgets falling under this committee's responsibilities.

The Head of Finance, Children, Education and Schools presented the report and referred Members to Table 1 of the report. It was reported that similar pressures such as a significant overspend in children's social care, from quarter 2 remained. This was mainly due to the increased numbers of children in care (273 in Q3) over those budgeted for (190-210). Other pressures included the Home to School Transport budget and the higher needs element of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Since publication of the agenda, discussions had concluded with the Department for Education (DfE) and they had provisionally agreed to release an additional £17.1m over the next four years, subject to the council managing the other half of the projected overspend of £35m through their financial recovery plan.

The Interim Director of Children's Services, the Assistant Director of Education and the Head of Finance then responded to a number of questions from Members covering the Safety Valve Plan (SVP), access to school for children with special educational needs, out of city placements, the number of children and young people (CYP) in care and social worker recruitment and retention. It was reported that:

- The provision of home to school transport was one of the areas in which a reduction in spending could be made without compromising outcomes. This would be achieved through appropriate assessment of need, confirmation of eligibility and putting in place the right solution including independent travel. This area formed part of the financial recovery / Safety Valve Plan, the agreement with the DfE to manage the deficit.
- The number of children in care was demand-led. 14/15 young people were due to move to the pathways programme and another 25 children were being worked with to go home. The current budgeted number of 200 children was overly ambitious, in the short term, a number of 250-270 children would allow for some flexibility.

- The recruitment campaign for social workers and managers had recruited 5 practitioners, 3 operational managers and 2 independent review officers. There has been a net increase in social worker levels over the last two years with 40.5 starters and 18.5 leavers, turnover was 18%.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To update the Committee on the latest financial position for 2021/22.

[The meeting adjourned between 18:49 and 18:55]

33. Children And Young People In Care Update

The Head of Innovation and Children's Champion presented an update relating to children and young people in care, key performance information and areas of priority. He highlighted the data regarding the number of children in care within the authority, compared with regional and national data. He also noted the qualitative information within the report which came from the U Matter Consultation and the Corporate Parenting Board, which gave a voice to children and young people in care.

The Officer together with the Interim Director of Children's Services and the Interim Head of Corporate Parenting, responded to questions from Members covering the numbers of care leavers and transitions, changes to the Corporate Parenting Board, the results of the U Matter Consultation, Placements with Parents (PWP), staffing, foster care placements and recognising important dates. It was noted that:

- A high number of children remained with their foster family after their time in care ended.
- There is a need to upskill carers in communication and observation. Action learning was taking place during April 2022.
- Placement With Parent (PWP) information is not nationally available as it is not a DFE return. Work was underway to improve the practice regarding final care plans with the courts, there were currently 28 children in PWP's.

- The care leaver's team had been coping with long term staff absence, However, the previous performance level was expected to return as the member of staff was now back at work.
- There was a recruitment campaign to get more placements for teenagers and sibling groups. Support from Members was welcomed for the fostering fortnight in May 2022.
- Social workers, personal advisors, foster carers aim to celebrate children's milestones with cards or outings etc.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Reason: To keep the committee updated.

34. Scrutiny Review Update - School Holiday Food

The Chair provided an update to the Committee on the progress of the School Holiday Food Task Group. The scrutiny review had been undertaken at the request of Executive as funding for school holiday food came to an end in February 2022. CYC had funded the Easter holiday provision and the review was to examine how this should progress going forward.

The final report was due to come back to the Committee on 03 May 2022 and would go to Executive for their meeting on 19 May 2022.

The Task Group noted the time constraints and difficulty in receiving responses from schools due to school holidays. A general discussion took place amongst Committee Members covering the success to date of the HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) scheme.

The Director of Customer and Communities outlined some points for the Committee to consider, including:

- That the Challenge Poverty, Talk Money information had been reissued to parents through schools. The campaign would take place again at the end of Easter.
- Fuel vouchers were available through Local Area Co-ordinators (LACs) and partners such as charities. It was also possible to provide food vouchers through the same system. The Executive had approved funding of £100,000

with two thirds of this going to the provision of FSM vouchers for one week in the Easter holidays the remainder could go into the voucher scheme to enable debt advisors, Citizens Advice and LACs to directly assist families in need.

- The York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) was also available to residents.
- The Financial Inclusion Steering Group (FISG) were examining a strategy considering the cost of living, fuel and food costs and digital inclusion.

Resolved: That the interim report be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the committee were kept up to date with the progress of the School Holiday Food Task Group.

35. Work Plan

Members considered the committee's work plan for the current municipal year.

Resolved: That the work plan be noted.

Reason: To keep the work plan updated.

Cllr S Daubeney, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.34 pm and finished at 7.41 pm].

Meeting	Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	3 May 2022
Present	Councillors Daubeney (Chair), Fenton, Heaton, Waudby (Substitute for Cllr Barker) and Webb (Vice-Chair)
Apologies	Councillors Baker, Barker and Fitzpatrick

36. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

In relation to item 5, Cllrs Fenton and Webb reported that they were trustees of Foxwood and Tang Hall Community Centres respectively, and both centres were bases for Community Hubs.

37. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 03 May 2022 be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

38. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

39. Children and Young People's Mental Well Being In York Scrutiny Review

Cllr Webb outlined the background to the report on Children's Mental Health and highlighted the recommendations that were to be taken to Executive. He thanked Cllr Baker, the previous Chair of the Committee, for her work in producing the

background report. He also thanked the other members of the task group and supporting officers.

Following questions from Members he responded that:

- System bottlenecks were partly due to a lack of co-ordination between agencies, there was a lack of alternatives to joining long waiting lists. Children should have a unique reference number to assist with tracking between agencies.
- The new Integrated Care Board (ICB) would have oversight of all services within York. There was an opportunity for the Executive to raise questions to the ICB and champion the importance of children's mental health.

Following a discussion of the report recommendations it was:

Resolved: That the 'Children's Mental Health – Review of Referral System' report proceeds to the Executive Committee by September 2022.

Reason: To support the mental health and well-being of children and young people in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

40. Community Hubs Scrutiny Review

Cllr Webb introduced the report from the Community Hubs Review Group. He stated that the Hubs had become increasingly important during the Covid-19 pandemic and emphasised that their sustainability was key.

He thanked Officers for their assistance with the research and highlighted the findings in the report.

The Assistant Director (Customer and Communities) noted that Community Hubs were a key part of ward work and confirmed that the recommendations within the report provided a helpful framework for future development. It was reported that commissioning funds had been kept in order to focus on outcomes of the review.

Following a discussion of the report, it was:

Resolved: That the 'Community Hubs Review Group' report should go forward to the Executive Committee on 19 May 2022.

Reason: So that the Executive can make good and informed decisions regarding community provision in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

41. School Holiday Food Scrutiny Review

Cllr Daubeney introduced the report from the School Holiday Food Task Group. He highlighted the full year cost to the Council of funding school meal vouchers would be close to £750,000. He also noted that the current financial pressures on families were expected to continue to rise.

The Director of Customer and Communities addressed the Committee and explained that the number of families claiming free school meals (FSM) had increased by 30% and this was rising. The increase is understood to be the financial impact of Covid and a better understanding among families of what they were entitled to claim. The council was seeking a wraparound solution that included all partners in a strategy to support families to come out of poverty.

Following discussion, Officers clarified the following:

- The cost of providing food vouchers was approaching £60,000 per week. The financial implications of providing vouchers one week and Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) the following week were to be costed and included in the final report to Executive.
- The £200,000 mentioned in recommendation 3 was a one off Covid government grant.
- Community Involvement Officers (CIO), Local Area Coordinators (LAC) used the Charis voucher system to provide fuel vouchers. This system could also be used to provide food vouchers and could replace FSM vouchers. LACs also have access to another scheme that could provide cash rather than vouchers.

- The York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) budget for this year was £259,000. This had been fully spent for the last few years;
- There was some flexibility in awarding food vouchers, to those who are not entitled to FSM.

The Vice Chair suggested an amendment to the wording of recommendation 3 and amendments were also suggested for recommendations 1, 2 and 6. The specific wording of these were to be agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair following the meeting.

Resolved: That the School Holiday Food report should go forward to the Executive Committee on 19 May 2022.

Reason: So that the Executive can make good and informed decisions regarding School Holiday Food provision in York and to conclude this scrutiny review in line with CYC (City of York) scrutiny procedures and protocols.

42. Work Plan

Members considered the Work Plan and requested that Officers reporting on the Public Health School Survey be invited to the forum on 23 June 2022.

Resolved: That the Work Plan be noted.

Reason: To keep the Work Plan updated.

Cllr S Daubeney, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.31 pm and finished at 7.25 pm].



**Children, Education and Communities Policy
and Scrutiny Committee**

28 June 2022

Report of the Interim Director for Children's Services

Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education

**Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) and
action plan**

Summary

1. This report presents the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Care under the Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS) framework, which was conducted between 7th and 18th March 2022.
2. Members are asked to consider the council's draft action plan in response to areas for improvement identified and to make any recommendations regarding the council's proposed submission to Ofsted.
3. The council is required to submit an action plan to Ofsted within 70 days of the publication of their report (which is 12th August 2022), outlining how the council intends to address each of the areas for improvement and the monitoring arrangements.

Background

4. The last full Safeguarding Inspection of Children's Services was in November 2016 under the previous Single Inspection

Framework (SIF). At this time York was judged to be 'Good' in all areas.

5. In addition to the last full inspection children's service Ofsted has also undertaken a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (November 2018) and a focused visit (2019). As a result of the focused visit in 2019 the need to improve was identified and a local Improvement Board was established.
6. The Single Inspection Framework that York was last inspected against has since been replaced by the 'Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services' (ILACS) framework. The new inspection framework focuses much more on the experience and outcomes for children as the basis for its judgements. The inspection does this by looking at case records and speaking to social workers and other front-line workers directly. The old inspection framework was wider in scope and spent more time considering processes, other agencies and the views from a wider range of staff, partners and elected members.

The inspection outcome

7. The inspection focused on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements in place to help and protect children; the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live including those children who return home; the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after (including adoption); and the experiences and progress of care leavers. In addition Ofsted evaluated the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice.
8. The Ofsted inspection team contacted York on the 28th February 2021. The inspection team then reviewed an extensive range of

data and documentary evidence before undertaking fieldwork in York between the 7th and 18th March 2022.

9. The inspection report was published on the 4th May 2022 and is available through the Ofsted website¹. The inspection confirmed that the quality of children’s services has not been maintained following the last inspection in 2016. The overall inspection judgement was that York ‘Required improvement to be good’. The judgements contributing to this outcome are shown below:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

10. The report identifies that senior leaders and elected members are well informed and clearly sighted on where improvements are needed. Ofsted recognised the work of the improvement board in improving services but also highlighted that the pace of improvement had been too slow. Whilst the majority of services were starting to show improvement it was not yet fully embedded to ensure consistently good services for children.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50182483>

11. The progress of improvement activity has been regularly reported through the Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee since the initiation of improvement activity in 2019.
12. The report clearly identifies as a strength that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, staff and families have been supported. The vast majority of York's improvement activity prior to inspection has taken place against the backdrop of COVID-19.
13. The pandemic presented an unprecedented challenge for children, young people and families, as well as for services working to support them. Despite these challenges improvement activity has delivered significant change for York. This includes:
 - a. The introduction of our new structure in January 2022 represented over £300k of additional investment. The restructure increased the number of established social work posts from 67FTE to 85FTE. A rise of 18FTE social work capacity since 2016.
 - b. The development and launch of a new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and new multi-agency Thresholds (levels of need) document.
 - c. The development of York's early help offer and more recently the development of Targeted Family Support in order avoid the escalation of need or risk.
 - d. The development and implementation of integrated pathways to allow the 'step-up and step-down' of children entering and exiting social care interventions.
 - e. The development and launch of a dedicated Exploitation Team.

- f. The delivery of our workforce strategy to develop new social workers through our Front Line programme, partnership with the University of York, Step-Up to Social Work programme and social work apprenticeships.
 - g. The further development of good quality performance data and management information to help drive improvements in practice and outcomes for children and young people.
14. The Ofsted inspection team recognised the challenges that the pandemic caused. The inspection report did identify that the pace of improvement had accelerated in recent months but that these improvements were not yet fully embedded.
15. Critically Ofsted reported there were no children seen during the inspection who were found to be at immediate risk of harm.
16. The Ofsted inspection team highlighted a number of areas of strength, including:
- a. That there is commitment to ensure that the needs of children are prioritised and corporate investment to support ongoing improvement.
 - b. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub provided an effective single point of contact for all concerns about children and that families access the right level of support as quickly as possible.
 - c. Families are supported by an effective targeted early help service which prevents escalation to statutory service for many children.
 - d. Where children need protection strategy meetings are held quickly and lead to action to safeguard children.
 - e. Private fostering arrangements are effective.

- f. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) oversee children's plans effectively and ensure that realistic plans are progressed.
 - g. Children in Care and care leavers are encouraged to learn and are supported by a highly effective Virtual School.
 - h. Care leavers are supported well by personal advisors who know them well and support them to lead independent lives.
 - i. Assessments for adoptive carers are completed promptly and adopters have access to range of post-adoption support and report high quality support from their adoption workers.
17. The inspection report sets out seven areas that require improvement.
- a. The consistency of written records so that they provide an accurate account of decision-making for all children.
 - b. The quality of assessments to ensure that they consistently inform care planning.
 - c. The effectiveness of social work supervision in progressing plans for children and addressing practice shortfalls.
 - d. The analysis of return home interviews.
 - e. Responses to children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless.
 - f. The pace of planning for children in unregistered children's homes.
 - g. Children's influence and attendance at the corporate parenting board.

The council's action plan

18. The Ofsted inspection team found that senior managers know themselves well and that the self-evaluation provided to ahead of Ofsted provided a realistic assessment of the quality of services and children's experiences. The majority of recommendations made by Ofsted had already been identified locally and work to address these is already underway.
19. The council is required to submit an action plan to Ofsted within 70 days of the publication of their report (which is 12th August 2022), outlining how the council intends to address each of the areas for improvement and the monitoring arrangements. A draft copy of this action plan is provided as Annex A.
20. Under the ILACS framework York should expect to be re-inspected fully within 3 years. In the intervening period inspection activity will take the form of:
 - a. Annual engagement with the Corporate Director of Children's Services and Ofsted.
 - b. Either:
 - i. Two focused visits from Ofsted, or
 - ii. One focused visit and one Joint Targeted Area Inspection
21. The Ofsted Action Plan will be regularly monitored through the council's Children's Service's Assurance and Ambition Board. The purpose of the Assurance and Ambition Plan is to oversee and drive service improvement and ensure children and young people have services which understand their lived experience and deliver positive outcomes. The Assurance and Ambition Board meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and attended by Lead Member for Children, Young People and Education.

22. Alongside the Assurance and Ambition board there are further weekly and monthly oversight of performance and improvement activity driven by the Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Director for Children's Safeguarding.
23. Final challenge and assurance will take place through the Executive and Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee as required.
24. The City of York Safeguarding Children's Partnership will be an important forum to deliver the changes needed across multi-agency partners as well as the Youth Justice board. The work required to improve children's services does not sit in isolation and will be closely linked through the CYSCP to improvement activity undertaken by North Yorkshire Police, health and partners across the city.

Council Plan

25. The delivery of high quality children's services will support the aims of the Council Plan which are to improve the quality of life for residents by supporting good health and well-being and by providing a better start for Children and Young People in York.

Implications

26. Financial – Over recent years there has been significant investment into children's services. The 2022/23 council budget included a total of £4.7m in growth across children and education. There continues to be significant pressure of delivering children's services within budget. The successful delivery of improvement activity will contribute to easing this pressure.
27. Human Resources (HR) – None at this stage.

28. Equalities – The delivery of the Ofsted Action Plan will support the council in its overall duty to promote equality and address the needs of vulnerable or marginalised children, young people and families therefore contributing to the reduction of inequalities across the city faced by children and young people.
29. Legal – The final Ofsted Action Plan must be published within 70 working days of the inspection report being published. The draft action plan is presented as Annex A.
30. Information Technology (IT) – The Ofsted Action Plan includes actions to review the functionality of IT systems used by children’s social care. The full implications of these actions are not fully known at this time and will be managed through existing protocols for change management.
31. Crime & disorder – Delivery of the Ofsted Action Plan will ultimately safeguard children and young people, reduced the number of children exposed to risk and the impact of that exposure.
32. Sustainability None
33. Other implications None

Contact Detail

Author:

Jamaila Hussain
Interim Director Children's
Services

**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:**

Jamaila Hussain
Interim Director Children's Services

**Report
Approved**

Date 20/06/2022

|

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial

Legal

Debbie Mitchell

Janie Berry

Chief Finance Officer

Director of governance

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – Draft Ofsted Action Plan

Ofsted Action Plan (DRAFT)

City of York Council



Background

Children's Services were inspected by Ofsted in March 2022 under the Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS) framework.

The inspection report was published on the 4th May 2022 and is available through the Ofsted website¹.

The overall inspection judgement was that York 'Required improvement to be good'. The judgements contributing to this outcome are shown below:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

This Ofsted Action Plan will be regularly monitored through the council's Children's Service's Assurance and Ambition Board. The dates given in the plan have been set to ensure pace of change for these recommendations. Where the need for further action is identified the plan will be updated to ensure continued progress.

The purpose of the Assurance and Ambition Plan is to oversee and drive service improvement and ensure children and young people have services which understand their lived experience and deliver positive outcomes.

The Assurance and Ambition Board meets on a quarterly basis and is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and attended by Lead Member for Children, Young People and Education.

Alongside the Assurance and Ambition board there are further weekly and monthly oversight of performance and improvement activity driven by the Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Director for Children's Safeguarding.

Further challenge and assurance will take place through the Executive and Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee as required.

The City of York Safeguarding Children's Partnership will be an important forum to deliver the changes needed across multi-agency partners as well as the Youth Justice board. The work required to improve children's services does not sit in isolation and will be closely linked through the CYSCP to improvement activity undertaken by North Yorkshire Police, health, and partners across the city.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50182483>

Version control

Version	Date
0.1 (DRAFT)	17/06/2022

1) The consistency of written records so that they provide an accurate account of decision-making for all children.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Review Children's Social Care practice standards for the quality of written records. Ensure practice standards reflect the quality of written records expected and how these are shared and agreed with families.	Head of MASH, Head of Safeguarding Interventions DCS	01/07/2022	This review is currently underway.
Develop and deliver Action Learning Sets that drive purposeful home visiting and recording.	Head of QA	01/07/2022	Action Learning Sets delivered throughout May with successful attendance and dip sampling to measure progress made is scheduled for October 2022. Further practice development will take through Action Learning Sets as required.
Review the library of good practice to share examples of good quality written records and clear accounts of decision making.	Head of QA	01/08/2022	This review is currently underway. Once completed other sections of the good practice library will reviewed and shared.
Identify any system changes required in Mosaic to drive practice and ensure clear and accurate record decision making. Implementation will be taken forward through the Mosaic Governance Group.	Business Intelligence/HoS QA	01/08/2022	This review is currently underway.
We will be assured of improvements through the Quality Assurance framework (auditing, dip sampling and direct feedback from children, young people and families).	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	The audit framework now specifically requests the auditor to comment on the quality and consistency of written records.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- Written records are up to date, accurate and show clear accountability of decision making for children and young people.
- That our workforce has the skills, knowledge and capability to maintain high quality written records. This will be evidenced through our Quality Assurance framework.
- Children young people and families are fully engaged, part of the completion of plans and can clearly understand and are involved in decision making.

2) The quality of assessments to ensure that they consistently inform care planning.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Review Children's Social Care practice standards in relation to assessments. Ensure practice standards set clear expectations for the quality of assessments and how they inform decision making.	Head of MASH, Head of QA DCS	01/07/2022	This review is currently underway.
Refresh practice standards with Service Managers about what constitutes a good, analytical assessment that informs planning. This includes the expectation of management oversight to ensure assessments are of good quality and inform plans.	Head of MASH, Head of QA	01/08/2022	The session materials are currently being developed ahead of standards being shared in July.
To review and strengthen the care plan and planning process and how it is driven by assessment. This includes identifying any changes required in Mosaic to drive improved practice.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/08/2022	The review of the care plan has begun.
We will be assured of improvements through the Quality Assurance framework (auditing, dip sampling and direct feedback from children, young people and families).	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	The QA framework will report progress to the Assurance and Ambition Board.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- All assessments are succinct purposeful and written in a language that the child and their family will understand. Clear consistency across all teams. This will be measured through the Quality Assurance Framework.
- The findings of assessments inform the plan for the child with clear expected outcomes. This will be measured through the Quality Assurance Framework.

3) The effectiveness of social work supervision in progressing plans for children and addressing practice shortfalls.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Continue to drive social workers to complete reflective supervision template prior to supervision.	All HoS	Performance reviewed weekly	Compliance with practice standards for supervision are monitored weekly. The DCS leads a monthly support and challenge session with Heads of Service which includes the effectiveness of supervision.
The revised supervision template and process to be reviewed.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/08/2022	This review is underway and includes involvement from managers and social workers.

Heads of Service to regularly sample supervisions within their service and act upon their findings. Track the impact of social work supervision through Quality Assurance in line with refreshed practice standards.	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	Supervision is now included in every audit template including thematic audits.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- Supervision demonstrates the child's plan is regularly discussed, updated and progress made.
- The risk of drift and delay against the plan is significantly reduced, where delay has occurred this is clearly documented with mitigating actions.
- Heads of Service will have a better understanding of the quality and impact of supervision in their service areas. This will be addressed through the monthly driving practice and performance sessions led by the DCS.
- Staff will be better supported to make planned, timely and meaningful change. We would see improved performance through our Quality Assurance Framework and case tracking system.

4) The analysis of return home interviews.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Undertake an end-to-end review of our approach to 'missing from home' episodes for all children and young people. As a result of changes introduce a strengthened process and clear expectations for the analysis of missing episodes and how this informs plans.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/08/2022	The review of the missing from home protocol and analysis is currently underway. Action Learning Sets will be used to support social workers use the new protocol and analyse missing from home episodes.
Introduce a regular multi agency review of repeat missing episodes to identify themes and strengthen the response/support available. This will be integrated with exiting mechanisms for exploitation.	Head of Service for MASH, Assessment and Targeted Intervention	01/07/2022	Work has commenced through the Exploitation lead and Multi-Agency Child Exploitation and Missing meetings.
Track the progress of this action through Quality Assurance in line with refreshed practice standards.	Head of QA	Quarterly reporting	Missing from Home and Care is a now thematic item on the QA schedule.
We will ensure external and independent assurance of the progress made against this action as part of programme of regional peer support and commissioned external reviews.	DCS	Ongoing	The schedule for Sector Lead Improvement and regional peer challenges through ADCS Humber and Yorkshire has been recently published.

Expected Outcomes

- A better understanding of why children go missing and the responses that are required.
- A consistent and timely response to all children and young people who go missing.
- Reduced number of repeat missing episodes and a better response to the cumulative impact of harm.

5) Responses to children aged 16 and 17 who present as homeless.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
Extend access to advocacy for this group of young people.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/04/2022	Advocacy for 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless is provided by the Speak Up Service (Children's Rights and Advocacy).
Update the 16- and 17-year-old homeless protocol. This will provide a clear pathway for young people to access independent support and advice.	Head of MASH, Assessment and Targeted Interventions	15/07/2022	Work has begun with partners to update the protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless.
To ensure practitioners across housing and children's social care are aware of the new protocol and their duties and responsibilities.	All HoS	01/08/2022	The roll out of the updated protocol is currently being planned.
Work jointly with young people to review and revise the information made available to young people to advise them of their rights.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/08/2022	Continue to support this through Show me that I matter and show me that I still matter.

Expected Outcomes

- These young people will have a full understanding of their rights and access to independent advocacy.
- That the protocol for 16- and 17-year-olds presenting as homeless is fit for purpose.
- That practitioners are delivering their duties as set out in the protocol.

6) The pace of planning for children in unregistered children's homes.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
To establish weekly oversight from the Director of safeguarding and Head of all age commissioning of any children in unregistered placements and to ensure there is a timely and clear plan to move to a registered children's provision or take timely steps to register provision.	DCS	01/04/2022	Weekly meetings in place and clear escalation through the head of Corporate Parenting. Currently one young person within an unregistered setting.
Increase our placement finding capacity.	Head of Corporate Parenting	01/05/2022	We have increased our placement finding capacity and currently in active recruitment.
To review any historic children in unregistered placements in the last two years to identify learning that would have prevented the use of unregistered placements or resolved them in a more timely manner.	Head of QA IRO Service Manager	01/09/2022	This review is being instigated.

Expected Outcomes

- No children in unregistered or unregulated provision. If children are placed, we will ensure robust contractual management and due diligence.
- Sufficient provision to meet demand. A commissioning framework will be in place and flexible to meet need.

7) Children's influence and attendance at the corporate parenting board.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress
To continue the pilot of using Corporate Parenting Advisors to support children's influence and involvement at the Corporate Parenting Board.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	Ongoing	Corporate Parenting advisors will be full members. This was recommended at the Corporate Parenting Board in May 2022
To update the council's constitution for Corporate Parenting and to drive children's influence and attendance.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	31/05/2022	The council constitution has been updated and agreed by Full Council in May 2022.
To build on the voice and participation work, is taking place to develop a clear strategy for co-production between children and young people and children's social care.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	01/09/2022	
The Corporate Parenting Board to include children and young people from Show Me That I Matter and I Still Matter as well as Corporate Parenting Advisors.	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	12/09/2022	This will be in place for the next Corporate Parenting Board in September 2022.
The Speak Up Service and Corporate Parenting Advisors to develop and deliver corporate parenting training to all elected members (July 2022 and full roll out following local elections 2023)	Head of Innovation and Children's Champion	31/07/2022	The initial training and briefings be rolled out July 2022 are currently in development.

Expected Outcomes

- We are more effective corporate parents and meet the needs of children and young people across the Council and with Partners.
- That children and young people have more influence and control over key decisions and important factors that affect their lives.
- That children and young people's lived experience influences practice. Clear co-production strategy in place to underpin change.