

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE: Risk Deep-Dive – Safeguarding Children	
REPORT OF: Executive Director Children & Learning	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	DATE: 4 th April 2024
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report provides Members with an overview of the “Safeguarding Children’s” principal risk to enhance the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee’s understanding of how this risk is being managed. The purpose of the risk deep-dive is to enable the Committee to fulfil its duties regarding monitoring the Council’s effective operation of risk management as set out in its Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>No documents that require listing were used in the production of this report.</p> <p>Contact Officer:</p> <p>Rashida Baig Rashida.Baig@camden.gov.uk 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG 020 7974 2701</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>That the committee notes how this risk is being managed.</p>	



Signed: Executive Director Children and Learning

Date: 22nd March 2024

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee (the Committee) is required to monitor the Council's effective development and operation of risk management. In addition to this, the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) position statement on Audit Committees in Local Authorities specifies core responsibilities for audit committees, one of which is to "consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements and the control environment."
- 1.2 The purpose of the risk deep dive is for the Committee to obtain a deeper understanding of the chosen risk area 'Safeguarding children' and develop insight into the risk controls and action plan.

2. Current Risk Context

- 2.1 In November 2023 the principal risk was articulated as the Council being unable to either prevent, identify and/or respond to children who may be at risk of significant harm.
- 2.2 The causes of this were identified as:
- Reporting/monitoring error/oversight
 - Staff oversight/non-adherence to policy
 - Cost of living pressures on families
- 2.3 The consequence were identified as:
- Safeguarding breach
 - Significant harm to child(ren).
- 2.4 This report will extrapolate on each of these risks areas and outline how we are mitigating against these risks.

3. Current Context for Safeguarding in Camden

- 3.1 The Children's Safeguarding and Social Work Service's primary function is to provide high-quality and effective help and protection to children as soon as a need is identified. The aim is to tailor this support to our children's and families' needs and interests, working through partnerships and individual practitioners with clear responsibilities and subject to robust quality assurance.
- 3.2 For our children in care we have a statutory duty to ensure, as far as it is practical, that there is sufficient accommodation for children in care within the local area and address gaps in provision through robust plans and commissioning strategies (Statutory Guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for Children Looked After 2010). This duty is set within the context of significant financial pressures on public sector funding and complex and rapid changes in policy and benefits reform, global unrest, rising cost of living and the longer-term impact of COVID19.
- 3.3 Like the national picture, commissioners of services for children in the care of the London Borough of Camden continue to face some challenges to support the delivery of the promises outlined above. The most pressing of these are:

- Ensuring accommodation of sufficient quality and volume which satisfies our ambition to improve outcomes for children in care and care experienced young adults.
- Ensuring maximum value for money in providing accommodation and support amid significant resource pressures and national challenges.
- Ensuring the needs of children can continue to be met particularly those children and young people with very complex needs.
- Developing the local market for accommodation and support of children in care to ensure children can be cared for in line with our ambitions and as near to home as possible.
- Developing accommodation for parents to care and be assessed to care for their children as safely and as locally to their families and friends.

3.4 The service is in a strong position. In April 2022, Camden's children's services were rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, with the inspectors highlighting a wide range of exceptional practice undertaken within the service. This provides assurance about the quality of practice in the borough. Ofsted found that children and young people in Camden are not only well protected against harm and abuse – with early help services also playing an important role in picking up issues before they become worse - but children in care and care leavers are listened to and given a wide range of opportunities to progress and thrive. Children's social workers in Camden also said they were "proud" to work for the Council.

3.5 Camden also has a nationally recognised early help system and is consistently in the top quartile of local authorities for investment in early help. Camden scores highly in the Department of Levelling up and Communities early help maturity self-assessment. It is worth noting that Camden is reliant on the national Supporting Families grant from central government to partially fund its early help system. This is largely due to the previous reductions by central government of local early intervention grant and affects the majority of local authorities. The Supporting Families grant is time limited, with the programme due to end its current phase in 2025. Withdrawal of this funding presents a risk to the stability of Camden's early help system, which would create pressures within children's social care.

3.6 The National Youth Justice Board also has a Youth Justice Oversight Framework which monitors how local Youth Justice Services (YJS) are performing. It focuses on ensuring priorities across the delivery of YJSs and wider system partners are aligned, identify effective practice or where individual YJSs may require support, providing an objective basis for decisions about when and how intervention is needed and driving improvement across the youth justice system through supporting the promotion of practice that delivers effective practice. Camden has been assessed by this framework as Performance Quadrant one – strong performance. This is the highest ranking. Camden are in the top quartile nationally of relevant oversight metrics, have strong plan and standards, financial compliance Youth Justice terms and conditions and a good or outstanding inspection outcomes. This ensures that we are addressing the risks for children from being drawn into offending, serious youth violence and or gangs.

3.7 Since 2018, the council has developed its understanding of the differences and overlap between serious youth violence, criminal exploitation and gangs. Most serious youth violence is not gang-related, however it is believed that the effects of the most serious gang-related violence set the tone in the borough and has had an impact on children and young people's feelings of safety. Gangs are still active in Camden, which includes violence and the exploitation of children and vulnerable adults. However, inter-gang tensions have not been as visible in recent years compared to before 2020. The wider

context of SYV is believed to be more complex now, which means that the causes of serious violent incidents are varied.

- 3.8 Strong primary prevention of offending work will be embedded in the evolution of our Family Hubs work to include dedicated youth hubs. Camden is one of the 75 LAs in the first wave of family hubs. We have Family Hubs in five localities, broadly coterminous with Central North London health localities, and offering a range of primary prevention services. The longer term vision for family hubs is to develop our current youth centres into youth hubs using an 'affiliate' approach, where other community venues including schools, libraries and community centres are recognised as important local hubs for families and networked together under the Camden Family Hubs umbrella and will all work together to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system.

4 Reporting/monitoring error/oversight

- 4.1 The data analysis function of the Children's Safeguarding and Social Work moved to the Supporting People Strategy Team and under the Head of Data – Supporting People in August 2023. Building on a well-established model, the intention of this change was to enable Children's Safeguarding and Social Work's Data Analysts to be closer to their community of practice, drawing on the support of their peers where needed to increase the team's resilience and to guard against any risks.
- 4.2 The team still maintains a relationship with their service area, the senior members of the team have a dotted line to the Head of Service – Quality Assurance. We also increased the capacity of this function by having four full-time equivalent roles rather than previously three full-time equivalent roles. The team produces and analyses over 75 reports on performance of practice, producing weekly, monthly and quarterly performance reports and these are checked alongside dip sampling of exceptions and a regular programme of auditing to ensure we are following policies and statutory processes to maintain the quality of practice and mitigate risk and need.
- 4.3 The regular production of management information and oversight of Senior Managers at all levels provides challenge and helps to ensure quality and compliance across the service. The monthly Quality Assurance Board scrutinises the exceptions and progresses targeted dip sampling and oversees plans for improvement where necessary.
- 4.4 Complaints from service users or significant partners (School or GPs) are escalated to the Director of Children's Prevention, Family Help and Safeguarding where necessary. The service works closely with the Complaints Unit to respond to complaints in a timely and appropriate manner. Quarterly data is scrutinised and now shared at the Quality Assurance Board.
- 4.5 Data from the Department for Education is utilised In order to undertake benchmarking exercises and shared on a quarterly basis within the Quarterly Safeguarding report produced for DMT and then a quarterly meeting takes place with the Leader and the Lead Council member for Children for on-going scrutiny and discussion.
- 4.6 In February 2022 we undertook a health check of our Integrated Childrens system for case recording – Mosaic. The health checks aims were to identify opportunities for enhanced Mosaic user experience with a view to support Camden's operational and strategic objectives in achieving the following benefits:
- Improving children's workflows and forms in Mosaic to allow for better quality recording in line with business processes, leading to consistent and accurate data capture.

- Adopting supporting configuration in Mosaic to enable easier maintenance of the overall Children's build
- Taking advantage of new functionality in Mosaic, which may not have existed in the past or could not be deployed due to other constraints and dependencies
- Better quality of data for CSSW in Mosaic through consistent monitoring, maintenance and ongoing clean up activity and engagement with service areas
- Where possible, on-board new service areas to record activity in Mosaic to help create a holistic view of CSSW activity in one system.

4.7 The implementation plan started soon after and has now been fully realised. This will ensure better quality recording and case files for children known to Camden's social work service.

4.8 The MOSAIC application (Children's case management system) improvement work started 2 years ago with various strands of activity, with a focus on but not limited to:

- Version upgrades
- Performance of the platform
- Use of existing and new functionality
- Redesign of Children's statutory processes and Mosaic Reports suite
- Move to hosted managed service

4.9 A decision was made to adopt a blended reporting approach for children's social work using a combination of the Mosaic application inbuilt reports and Microsoft's Power BI tool for dashboarding and visualisation. Work is now underway to adopt Microsoft's Power BI tool as part the data intelligent platform for analytics and insight. This improved reporting ensures timely understanding of performance data.

4.10 A robust business continuity plan is in place in the event of the MOSAIC system becoming unavailable.

5 Ways of Working

5.1 Ensuring staff oversight and adherence to policy, processes and the provision of an intervention should mitigate against significant harm to children where possible.

5.2 Having a stable workforce, with a variety of different levels of expertise and length of experience, is key to safeguarding children in Camden and reducing harm, and key to mitigating against staff oversight and non-adherence to policy. To ensure we support our staff to appropriately safeguard the children of Camden the following areas are key and were at the centre of the 2023 service redesign.

- Management oversight
- Recruitment and retention
- Learning and development

5.3 The rigorous self-assessment process undertaken to prepare for the Ofsted inspection presented us with an opportunity to review and reflect on the service's ways of working, culture, and staffing structures. Many of the service's structures were longstanding ones, which had evolved separately from each other and become less coherent over time. Increasingly, they did not reflect the current demands on the service, the reality of our

staffing on the ground, or the changes which have taken place across the wider organisation.

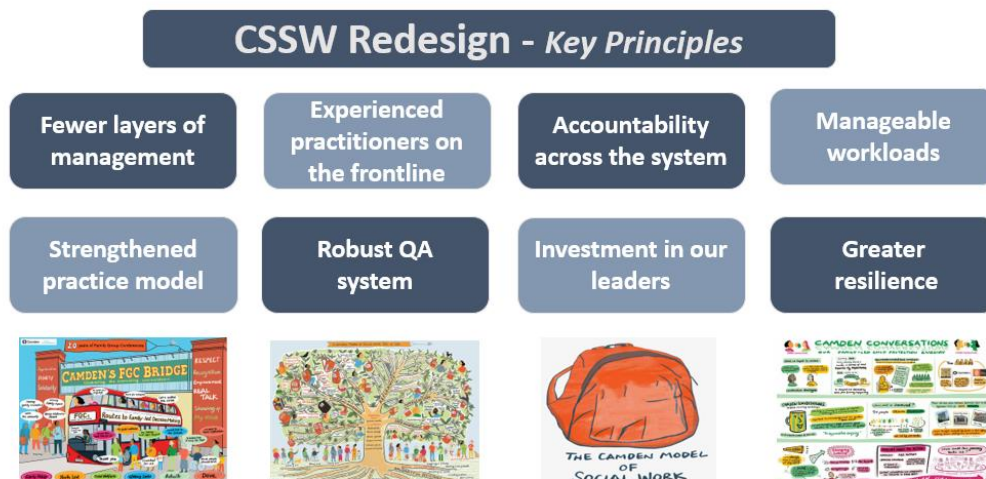
5.4 The review aimed to develop a structure that ensures that Children's Safeguarding and Social Work service delivers the vision set out in both We Make Camden and our Resilient Families approach, as well as delivering and embedding the areas for improvement identified in our Ofsted self-assessment.

5.5 We are aiming for a more effective service structure and culture that is people centred and better aligned to delivering the Camden Model of Social Care. The formal consultation for the proposed restructure of the Children's Safeguarding and Social Work (CSSW) division began on 20th June 2023 and closed on 24th July 2023.

5.6 The drivers for change were condensed into eight key principles. The key principles are:

1. Fewer layers of management: Avoiding duplication across the system and having more efficient services.
2. Experienced practitioners on the frontline: Enhancing the quality of supervision with more experienced managers providing support to case-holding social workers and increasing opportunities for social workers to progress in non-supervisory roles if they choose.
3. Accountability across the system: Ensuring there is scrutiny of performance and quality assurance throughout the system.
4. Manageable workloads: Ensuring frontline workers have manageable casework by having better supervision and supporting with case progression.
5. Strengthened practice model: Ensuring we have in-house systemic mentorship to support the continuous development and embedding of our practice model.
6. Robust quality assurance system: Bringing in more auditing capacity and the ability to embed our quality assurance framework. More audit roles, audit officers and service managers.
7. Investment in our leaders: Continue to provide coaching and leadership development opportunities and ensure staff can make the most of these opportunities.
8. Greater resilience: Increase the capacity of experienced managers so we are best placed to face crises and can increase practitioners' ability to sit in their communities of practice and rely on their peers.

5.7 The slide below highlights the key principles of the redesign in a visual format:



- 5.8 Since the consultation period closed, the Services have been working on the implementation phase. At the end of 2 and through Quarter 3 we saw CSSW successfully progress to the final implementation phase, with the majority of roles recruited to. Internal appointments moved into role in Quarter 3 and external candidates were appointed and most have recently started in Quarter 4. There remain a limited number vacancies in the Academy and systemic roles alongside a higher number in the Children in Need teams, these are currently being covered by agency social workers.
- 5.9 As part of the redesign new capacity has been brought into the Quality Assurance service to ensure that our practice continues to effectively safeguard children. These roles are now fully recruited to and working in the QA Service.
- 5.10 The Quality Assurance Board has met monthly since its inception in April 2022 and has a crucial role in ensuring management oversight of casework. The service, alongside the increased management capacity across the whole directorate, continues to scrutinise practice, outcomes for the children and families in Camden as the new design is implemented. The monthly auditing of case files to check quality of practice and adherence to standards is driven by the QA Service and ensures we are keeping the quality of practice and the outcomes for the children at the centre of the work.
- 5.11 In July 2023 Rashida Biag, previously named Director of CSSW became the Director of Family Help, & Safeguarding bringing together two divisions and giving her oversight of the system from early years, through early help and into safeguarding, ensuring joined up working. Nana Bosu, has been appointed as the new Director of Relational Practice, and will join in early June 2024 to bring further capacity and focus on our practice model, workforce and quality assurance across the whole system.

6 Recruitment & retention

- 6.1 Recruiting and retaining social work and family workers in Camden is a cornerstone to safeguarding. In the recent Ofsted focused visit in October 2023 to review Camden's work with young people that are subject to children in need and child protection plans, inspectors praised staff and their work. Practitioners were recognised for their direct work with children, demonstrating their sensitivity, skill and knowledge in the field.

6.2 In particular, Ofsted inspectors note that:

- Staff enjoy working for Camden
- Social workers understand the child's needs and lived experiences well, and this helps to inform an appropriate response

6.3 "Workers enjoy working for Camden. They appreciate the opportunities of working in a diverse community, with flexible working arrangements and well-managed caseloads, enabling them to spend time with children and to effect change in families. Corporate and political leaders place immense value on social workers and the difficult work they do. They recognise the importance of considering their wellbeing and controlling caseloads. They have secured resources to embed service changes, aiming to strengthen the environment for social work practice to flourish."

6.4 CSSW has a bi-monthly Workforce Development Board established to oversee and scrutinise the recruitment and retention strategy, which include a new communications strategy.

6.5 The service continues to have a significant focus on addressing recruitment and retention issues and vacancy rates have been reduced despite a national shortage of social workers, however we continue to have challenges to ensure a fully permanent workforce across the children in need service. This continues to be an area of focus. A targeted piece of work is currently being undertaken in Quarter 4 regarding further recruitment with a new campaign video being commissioned, an updated website, commissioning an agency called FLIP, and a communications specialist working alongside the teams. There has also been recent advertising through the Guardian, the new London Innovation & Improvement Alliance (LIIA) Social work website, and a targeted response to agency staff to convert to permanent workers.

6.6 We have opened up the advanced social work progression panels to be held twice per year, and started the development of a Learning Academy Model. These opportunities are part of a range of opportunities for social workers to advance and increase their skills and expertise.

6.7 Being open to a range of routes into social work expands our social work talent. Our first Frontline cohort of 8 students successfully moved into permanent roles in September 2023, and we have also increased our number of Units to 3 with 12 new frontline students joined us in September 2023. Our new step up to social work students were identified and started their programme in January 2024, and will join Camden in September 24. We have also created advanced practitioner roles, reviewed salary scales and created professional development pathways to attract, recruit and develop staff. We are currently recruiting for 3 social work apprentices. These routes enhance our ability to recruit social workers.

7. Learning & Development

7.1 Further work in the redesign has been undertaken to bring more workforce capacity into the new Learning Academy so it can deliver on the vision of increased learning and

development opportunities which will ensure our social work staff are developing their skills and expertise, and also encourages retention.

7.2 A robust training programme is informed by an annual training needs analysis which identifies courses to be included in each year's training programme and is based on:

- Performance areas requiring improvement
- Audit and inspection findings
- Serious incident/rapid review recommendations
- Identified service priorities
- Local emerging issues
- Policy and legislative requirements
- Changes to Government guidance and legislation
- Requests from the frontline service
- Previous attendance levels and feedback

7.3 The following picture highlights the social work learning and development context:

Social work learning and development context



7.4 Social workers learning and development needs are met through:

- Attendance on training courses in the in-house SW training programme
- Attendance at workshops, seminars and training provided by our 2 research partners - Research in Practice and Making Research Count
- Attendance at external conferences and courses
- Undertaking Post qualifying and post graduate awards
- Attendance at Camden Safeguarding Children partnership (CSCP) multiagency training courses
- Receiving coaching and mentoring
- Undertaking the Practice educators courses
- Attendance at in house practice workshops and lunch and learn sessions
- Professional supervision and peer group learning

7.5 New initiatives since January 2024 ensures that our learning offer is adapted to different learning styles, including 7 minute briefings, Thinking Thursday sessions, lunch and learn events and protected learning days.

8. CSCP Partnership

- 8.1 The Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) is led by 3 statutory safeguarding partners who hold equal responsibility for safeguarding children in the area. The statutory safeguarding partners are Camden Council, NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Central North Basic Command Unit (BCU) of the London Metropolitan Police Service.
- 8.2 The CSCP provides governance and scrutiny. The vision is that 'All children and young people in Camden are safe, thriving and heard.' Learning from, and strengthening the frontline practice is at the forefront of our working arrangements. The CSCP's aim is to continually improve how we work together to safeguard children and young people, in order to enable them to develop to all their capabilities.
- 8.3 The CSCP safeguards and promotes the welfare of all children through:
- Developing policies and procedures, by proactively identifying and responding to new and emerging safeguarding issues.
 - Communicating to persons and bodies the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.
 - Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies individually and collectively and advising them on ways to improve.
 - Coordinating response to serious incidents and unexpected child deaths.
 - Collecting and analysing information about safeguarding practice reviews and advising on lessons learned.
 - Through reflecting and making recommendations in the planning of services for children in Camden.
- 8.4 Camden's response to the Ukraine and Afghanistan refugee crisis provides an example of how we build on multi-agency working to ensure appropriate safeguarding. The community-led, community-based model was stood up and tested during these crises, with children's services, adult social care, health, housing, community safety, employment services, welfare rights, mental health services, civil society organisations and residents' groups collaborating at pace and at scale to provide 'teams around' refugee children and families. The success of this approach was noted in our most recent Ofsted inspection as "particularly impressive [involving] key partners both inside and outside the borough... this ensured that these families are protected and well informed and are supported quickly... the success of these responses is made possible by solid practice foundations and well-established services that have sustained a high quality over many years".
- 8.5 We are confident that the strength of our multi-agency working will ensure children are safeguarded. Camden's inspection reports have noted our strong multi-agency arrangements for over a decade, indicating a robust level of maturity. Inspectors noted 'an impressive range of partnerships' with services and providers, and 'highly effective partnerships'.

8.6 "Partnerships are highly effective, exemplifying a focus on prevention rather than intervention." (Ofsted Inspection of Camden local authority children's services, April 2022.

9. Cost of Living Crisis

9.1 An increase in activity at the front door following the cost-of-living crisis has been mitigated by an increase in resource at the front door. The primary intention of the redesign of the Children in Need service was to create additional capacity, reduce the layers of management and have more experienced practitioners on the frontline. In the redesign the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) function became a standalone service with a dedicated Service Manager role for the first time, ensuring strong oversight and response to the increase in referrals. Senior Practitioners remained in this service, as they do not supervise case work but do make decisions on complex cases, in short timeframes, which requires practice expertise. The strengthened MASH service ensures that we are able to respond to an increase in activity.

10. Outlook for the next 12 months

10.1 It is possible that pressures on the system will continue as there is an increase in volume of referrals and assessments, and despite a continued focus on staff recruitment and retention there are a number of vacancies in the children in need and protection part of the system. Recruiting experienced social workers is a London wide problem, although Camden is in a relatively strong position compared with London averages for use of agency staff.

10.2 Further focus will be given to the following in the next year:

- HR is undertaking a wider benchmarking exercise to inform our positioning on the recruitment market and whether any changes would support recruitment and retention.
- A new Quality Assurance Executive Board Meeting will commence in April 2024 chaired by the Executive Director of Children and Learning, Tim Aldridge, providing further oversight.
- A new Director of Relational Practice will start in early June 2024. This newly-created role will play a vital role in the development of children and learning services and will be responsible for providing leadership across workforce development, quality assurance and relational practice. They will lead on developing our relational model (based upon systemic principles, and rooted in a restorative, strengths-based approach to working with families) and embedding this approach to practice across the Children and Learning Directorate.
- A Children and Learning Strategic Board met for the first time in February 2024. The Board will oversee Children's priority change projects and a new Head of Service for Transformation has been appointed to provide additional leadership capacity for our transformation work including placement sufficiency which is an on-going risk area.

11. Legal Comments of Borough Solicitor

11.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add.

12. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

12.1 The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and notes that a well performing children's service, with good levels of risk management reduces financial risks to the Council. It should also be noted that this service is being delivered within the context of a challenged financial environment.

13. Environmental Implications

13.1 The proposals do not have environmental implications.

14. Appendix – Risk on a page

REPORT END

Risk Information Risk Title – 16. Safeguarding Children		Risk Scores	Existing Controls			
<p>Risk - There is a risk we are unable to either prevent, identify and/or respond to children who may be at risk of significant harm</p> <p>Cause - Reporting/monitoring error/oversight. Staff oversight/non-adherence to policy, cost of living pressures on families,</p> <p>Consequence - Safeguarding breach, significant harm to child(ren).</p> <p>Risk Update – Camden's children's safeguarding and social work was rated as outstanding in the 2022 Ofsted inspection, which provides assurance of the quality of practice in the borough. The service has successfully addressed recruitment and retention issues and vacancy rates are significantly reduced despite a national shortage of social workers. We created advanced practitioner roles, reviewed salary scales and created professional development pathways to attract, recruit and develop staff. HR is undertaking a wider benchmarking exercise to inform our positioning on the recruitment market. We have just completed a significant restructure of CSSW. The drivers included ensuring the most experienced staff supervise social workers, strengthened the quality assurance and practice development functions. Created additional capacity in the service for care experienced adults and resource to focus on delivering our sufficiency duty.</p> <p>An increase in activity at the front door following the cost-of-living crisis has been mitigated by an increase in resource at the front door, with more experienced staff closer to the triage decision-making, to ensure that the right help is provided at the right time.</p> <p>Being a port- authority we have an increasing number of unaccompanied child asylum seekers. We have created specialist resource to support these traumatised separated children to support them finding physical and psychological safety.</p> <p>As a major transport hub authority, with a prominent nighttime economy, we have increased risk of children vulnerable to sexual and criminal exploitation, going missing and county lines. The local authority takes a multi-agency approach with statutory and community partners to deliver a 5-pillared response: Prevent, Identify, Support, Disrupt and Prosecute. Inner city poverty and social deprivation are drivers of social tension, crime, youth violence, knife crime, gang activity and drug trading. The local authority takes a partnership approach to gather intelligence, monitor emerging trends and mitigate risk or harm to children.</p> <p>There has been a safeguarding focus on children placed in contingency hotels with a tailored offer to connect to community services.</p>		<p>Current Score: L:2 I:5</p> <p>Target Score: L:2 I:5</p> <p>Gap to target: L:0 I:0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly, monthly and quarterly performance reports are produced and checked alongside dip sampling of exceptions and a regular programme of auditing and learning from complaints to ensure we are following policies to maintain the quality of practice and mitigate risk and need. The regular production of management information and oversight of Senior Managers at all levels provides challenge and helps to ensure quality and compliance across the service. Complaints from service users or significant partners (School or GP's) are escalated to the Director of Children's Prevention, Family Help and Safeguarding the DCS. Challenge of the controls and governance is undertaken by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. Staff understanding the process of escalating concerns challenging decisions about children to improve practice. Articulating and communicating a clear vision across the partnership where safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Commissioning services through analysis of local needs that reflects local and national learning and trends. Routine independent scrutiny of safeguarding practice and arrangements to ensure its effectiveness. Ongoing monthly checks are undertaken by the service in which 75 areas of activity are reviewed, the information reviewed is volume and quality. In order to undertake benchmarking exercises data from the Department for Education regional/ statistical neighbours is utilised. Policies, Governance, practice development and training in place. Auditing of case files to check quality of practice and adherence to standards, including how the local authority works closely with its partners to deliver safeguarding duty. Mandatory Safeguarding training in place Hybrid online and face-to-face single and multi-agency training Face-to-face Fostering Panels Ensuring that the lived experience of the child remains central, through actively eliciting their views and wishes in safety planning. Cross council review-the work of the VAWG Board is working will internal and external stake holders Face to face visiting and plans are in place for every child who has had an assessment. Face to face contact for children in care supervised by staff. Liaison with partners for oversight and guidance Coordinating response to serious incidents and unexpected child deaths. 			
Action	Expected impact	Resources required		Owner	Due Date	Status
Continued focus on recruitment and retention, fully operational multi-agency front door	Reduce Likelihood	Financial and staff		Tim Aldridge	Ongoing	In progress

Make all appointments following the restructure with a focus on staff engagement and wellbeing to ensure smooth transitions.	Reduce Likelihood	Staff	Tim Aldridge	Ongoing	In progress
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