

Notice of Meeting

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 6 January 2021 - 7:00 pm
Meeting to be held virtually

Members: Cllr Jane Jones (Chair); Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah (Deputy Chair); Cllr Toni Bankole, Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Olawale Martins, Cllr Simon Perry, Cllr Ingrid Robinson, Cllr Paul Robinson, Cllr Bill Turner and Cllr Phil Waker

By Invitation: Cllr Dominic Twomey and Cllr Maureen Worby

Date of publication: 21 December 2020

Claire Symonds
Acting Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Claudia Wakefield
Tel. 020 8227 5276
E-mail: claudia.wakefield@lbbd.gov.uk

Please note that this meeting will be webcast, which is a transmission of audio and video over the internet. To view the webcast click [here](#) and select the relevant meeting (the weblink will be available at least 24-hours before the meeting).

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declaration of Members' Interests**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.
- 3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December (Pages 3 - 7)**
- 4. General progress update regarding A2020 Scrutiny Recommendations - KLOE 1, 2 and 3 (Pages 9 - 25)**
- 5. Report arising from recommendation 3 of A2020 Scrutiny Review on Best Value (Pages 27 - 36)**
- 6. Children's Care and Support: Corporate Parenting Report (Pages 37 - 54)**

7. **Children's Care and Support: Disabilities Improvement Programme Report (Pages 55 - 73)**
8. **Children's Care and Support: Report requested by recommendation 7 of A2020 Scrutiny Review (Pages 75 - 82)**
9. **Work Programme (Pages 83 - 85)**
10. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
11. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). ***There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.***

12. **Any confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

Our Vision for Barking and Dagenham

ONE BOROUGH; ONE COMMUNITY; NO-ONE LEFT BEHIND

Our Priorities

Participation and Engagement

- To collaboratively build the foundations, platforms and networks that enable greater participation by:
 - Building capacity in and with the social sector to improve cross-sector collaboration
 - Developing opportunities to meaningfully participate across the Borough to improve individual agency and social networks
 - Facilitating democratic participation to create a more engaged, trusted and responsive democracy
- To design relational practices into the Council's activity and to focus that activity on the root causes of poverty and deprivation by:
 - Embedding our participatory principles across the Council's activity
 - Focusing our participatory activity on some of the root causes of poverty

Prevention, Independence and Resilience

- Working together with partners to deliver improved outcomes for children, families and adults
- Providing safe, innovative, strength-based and sustainable practice in all preventative and statutory services
- Every child gets the best start in life
- All children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality local schools
- More young people are supported to achieve success in adulthood through higher, further education and access to employment
- More children and young people in care find permanent, safe and stable homes
- All care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing and employment needs
- Young people and vulnerable adults are safeguarded in the context of their families, peers, schools and communities

- Our children, young people, and their communities' benefit from a whole systems approach to tackling the impact of knife crime
- Zero tolerance to domestic abuse drives local action that tackles underlying causes, challenges perpetrators and empowers survivors
- All residents with a disability can access from birth, transition to, and in adulthood support that is seamless, personalised and enables them to thrive and contribute to their communities. Families with children who have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) can access a good local offer in their communities that enables them independence and to live their lives to the full
- Children, young people and adults can better access social, emotional and mental wellbeing support - including loneliness reduction - in their communities
- All vulnerable adults are supported to access good quality, sustainable care that enables safety, independence, choice and control
- All vulnerable older people can access timely, purposeful integrated care in their communities that helps keep them safe and independent for longer, and in their own homes
- Effective use of public health interventions to reduce health inequalities

Inclusive Growth

- Homes: For local people and other working Londoners
- Jobs: A thriving and inclusive local economy
- Places: Aspirational and resilient places
- Environment: Becoming the green capital of the capital

Well Run Organisation

- Delivers value for money for the taxpayer
- Employs capable and values-driven staff, demonstrating excellent people management
- Enables democratic participation, works relationally and is transparent
- Puts the customer at the heart of what it does
- Is equipped and has the capability to deliver its vision

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 2 December 2020
(7:00 - 9:10 pm)

Present: Cllr Jane Jones (Chair), Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah (Deputy Chair), Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Olawale Martins, Cllr Simon Perry, Cllr Ingrid Robinson, Cllr Paul Robinson, Cllr Bill Turner and Cllr Phil Waker

Also Present: Cllr Cameron Geddes and Cllr Syed Ghani

Apologies: Cllr Toni Bankole

26. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

27. Minutes - 4 November 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2020 were agreed.

28. Progress update on Improving Household Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Scrutiny Review Recommendations

The Council's Director of My Place (DMP) delivered an update on the 'Improving Household Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning' Scrutiny Review Recommendations. The scrutiny review had previously been agreed by the Committee at their 4 September 2019 meeting (minute 15 refers).

Progress had been made against many of the 10 recommendations originally put forward by the Committee, however others had been put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The DMP also updated the Committee as to future plans to continue to respond to the recommendations, such as through the SMART Street proposal, which was a cross-council initiative set up to make visible, measurable improvements to the high levels of waste and low levels of recycling in the Borough, as well as improve its cleanliness and appearance.

The Chair stated that one of the major points to arise from the original scrutiny review was that a lot of waste was being produced by HMOs (Houses in Multiple Occupation) and landlord properties, highlighting the need for more collaborative work to be undertaken. A further update on Recommendations 3, 4 and 5 was also scheduled to be presented at the 12 May 2021 Committee meeting and the Chair thanked the Waste, Enforcement and Communications teams for their work so far.

In response to several questions, the DMP stated that:

- A daily report as to the locations of missed bins was received and the team would then need to pick these up within 24 hours. The team had recently begun work to track missed bins on a monthly basis, to gain an insight as to whether these missed bins were occurring at the same property or street and it was envisioned that this work would be developed further in the long-

- term;
- The Council needed more evidence that they had gone back to a resident to tell them if they had not been able to collect their bin due to contamination. Whilst the Council could write to the resident, this work was a longer-term enforcement issue that the team wished to address after the pandemic. It could often prove difficult to tackle the problem, as the Council would receive phone calls from residents to say that their bin had been missed, with the binmen then stating that they had not been able to collect due to contamination. The DMP also stated that the team was currently procuring in-cab technology for the Waste Crews, which would provide real-time bin collection information that could then be fed back into the Contact Centre once the IT was set up. This work was due to be completed in 2021; and
 - The team had requested tenant information (to be distributed by managing agents to new tenants with refuse and recycling information) from the Private Licensing team and that the team needed to monitor how the landlords passed this information on. The DMP did not yet have the evidence that this had been done. The Waste Minimisation team had been asked to undertake this task, but landlords had not been forthcoming with this information during the pandemic.

The Head of Regulatory Services advised that the Regulatory Services team conducted a compliance inspection on the respective property when they received a licence application from a landlord. As part of the information that the team provided with the licence, the team informed the landlord and tenant of their responsibilities in relation to waste provision and collection dates. Compliance Officers had also been instructed to go through the conditions of the licence when they visited tenants and conducted inspections, highlighting what good tenants looked like, collection dates, how rubbish should be disposed and information around bulky waste and flytipping.

In response to several questions, the DMP stated that daily missed bin updates were currently shared with the Contact Centre. If a resident was to telephone the Council, their missed bin information would be checked and it would be added to the system if it was not already present.

Members noted that the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBB) still provided weekly recycling collections, whereas many other boroughs did not. LBBB bins were much larger than those in other local authority areas and that in these other areas, some of the positive behaviour change that had arisen had been due to having smaller bins, along with fortnightly collections, which had led more people to recycle.

29. The Reviewed Corporate Plan and Single Performance Framework 2020-22

The Director of Policy and Participation (DPP) delivered a report on the Council's Reviewed Corporate Plan and Single Performance Framework 2020-22.

In response to several questions, the DPP stated that whilst there were a lot of deliverables in the Corporate Plan, these had been tested to ensure that they were achievable through existing resources and time. A commitment had been made by the Senior Leadership Team to the Cabinet that these could be achieved and that this was part of the reason why officers had wanted to come back to a revision of

the Corporate Plan six months after its approval at Assembly (minute 9 refers, 13 May 2020).

A Member highlighted that some of the information put forward in the Corporate Plan was too vague to enable the Committee to adequately scrutinise this, emphasising a point around workforce empowerment. The DPP explained the thinking behind this: there had been a previous overemphasis on system and process and residents were often 'chunked' into sections of process for different departments to address, rather than having their whole story listened to. Work had been carried out to support employees to better engage with and thus provide more tailored support to residents.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing built on the words of the DPP, outlining how the Council's Community Solutions service had been established. This had involved questioning the workforce as to why certain processes existed and mapping out resident issues to ensure that they could be addressed by the Council in a more holistic approach. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council had also spoken to staff about remote working and the wants and needs of employees, incorporating these where possible. The DPP also stated that reports presented to the Committee for the rest of the year should try to reference back to connections in the Corporate Plan to enable this to become more of a 'living' document.

30. Working with residents affected by Capital Works

The Council's DMP, the Managing Director for BD Management Services and BD Service Delivery (MDBDM) and the Assistant Construction Director (ACD) for Be First delivered a presentation into how they worked with residents affected by Capital Works.

The Chair questioned why resident satisfaction surveys completed following works were being returned to the contractors rather than to officers within Be First, as this may put residents off from lodging any issues. The ACD stated that this would be amended going forward as a result, with surveys either being returned to Be First or having an option to be sent back to Be First. The MDBDM stated that BD Services had their own Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) who carried out satisfaction surveys with the customer, who was independent from the contractor and any staff who were delivering the work. My Place also carried out their own spot checks and as such, did not just take the word of BD Services on feedback, adding a further level of scrutiny to the satisfaction results.

In response to a question, the DMP stated that they would share a clear ward-by-ward/block-by-block understandable explanation of what the Capital Works programme was with the Committee as soon as possible. Members also noted that whilst Be First was fairly good at sending Ward Members any letters that were due to be sent out to the local community regarding capital works, that sometimes Members received these with too short notice to amend these if necessary.

In response to several questions, the ACD stated that:

- Mistakes had been made historically but that both himself and other colleagues were actively working to improve capital works programmes;
- In relation to the recording of quality, the ACD had been asked to increase

the level of Clerks of Works. He had one clerk of works out at the moment, with another two scheduled to join and that collectively they would be leading on the clerk of works process and providing feedback. The ACD's team would also be going out to speak to residents, ensuring that they were happy with any work carried out and providing feedback;

- He had been given the lead for looking at all of the Be First Freedom of Information requests and complaints, so that he would be able to see these first hand and cross-reference these against the data that the contractors had been supplying;
- All Section 20 works went through a Section 20 framework. This was a historic framework that was due to end between April and May 2021. The team went out and priced quality and it was currently the case that contracts were awarded on a price-quality basis. Whilst historically, the Council was led by price, it was now the case that the winning contractor would not necessarily be providing the cheapest option as this would need to be weighed against the quality required. Once the winning contractor was awarded the contract, the figures that would come through for any capital works to be undertaken would be assessed by a Quantity Surveyor (QS). Be First had an external QS who would analyse the prices presented and would agree or disagree to these offering the best value. There would also be a secondary check from the Be First team, as well as a QS historically from the Council. The prices would therefore go through three rounds of checks before they were finalised and charged to the resident;
- In relation to the external work team, there was a project manager who adhered to the day-to-day running of the project, a clerk of works, a portfolio lead who oversaw the team, an appointed contract administrator and a QS. The contract was being monitored at project level by the project manager, the portfolio lead, the QS and the contract administrator. These four individuals would also hold daily conversations with My Place and the contractor, discussing the contract and its contents. The clerk of works would attend the site two or three times a week;
- He held weekly meetings with his portfolio leads to ascertain progress and performance and hear more about meetings that had been held with My Place colleagues and contractors. His team did a cash flow forecast, where they dealt with the QS and the QS's expenditure from the contractor would be recorded. The ACD also had meetings with BDMS to discuss strategies and share information; and
- If a contractor fell short of delivery, the ACD would discuss this with the Managing Director of that contractor within a week and they would have meetings on site.

31. Work Programme

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed Members of two changes that had been made to the Work Programme:

- The Committee had been due to receive an update on Recommendation 22 of the Ambition 2020 Scrutiny Review in March 2021, which was regarding 'Officers investigating how we can hold developers to account in relation to impacts on air quality'. As the Committee would also be receiving an update

on the implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan in June 2021, it had been decided to move this item to the 9 June 2021 Committee to enable both items to be discussed together; and

- An update on the progress of recommendations 3, 4 and 5 of the 'Improving Household Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing' Scrutiny Review had been added to the 12 May 2021 Committee, following discussions with the Director of My Place.

The Committee also agreed to revisit item 6 ('Working with residents affected by Capital Works') at a future meeting, with the date to be agreed by the Chair.

The Work Programme was noted.

This page is intentionally left blank

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**6 January 2021**

Title: General progress update regarding A2020 Scrutiny Recommendations – KLOE 1, 2 and 3	
Report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer	
Open Report	For noting
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Claudia Wakefield, Senior Governance Officer	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 5276 E-mail: claudia.wakefield@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Mark Tyson, Director of Policy & Partnerships and Statutory Scrutiny Officer	
Summary	
<p>On 9 October 2019, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) agreed to undertake an in-depth scrutiny review on Ambition 2020 and its early impact (minute 20 refers). Between then and February 2020, the Committee took part in a number of formal and informal meetings to scrutinise four key lines of enquiry forming the basis of the review and to make recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>At the 1 July 2020 OSC meeting, the proposed final version of the report to arise from this scrutiny review was presented and agreed (minute 10 refers). The 24 recommendations arising from the scrutiny review report were accepted and an Action Plan outlining the steps to implement them, as well as the target dates for completion, was presented at the 7 October 2020 OSC meeting (minute 19 refers).</p> <p>An updated version of the Action Plan, detailing progress on the recommendations arising from Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) 1, 2 and 3, can be viewed at Appendix 1 of this report.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note this report.	
Reason(s)	
It is good practice to present progress updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as to the recommendations arising from a scrutiny review. This ensures that the Committee's work has added value.	

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 Action Plan to implement recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review into Ambition 2020 and its Early Impact

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1

Action Plan Responding to Overview & Scrutiny Committee's A2020 Scrutiny Review					
Recommendation	Actions required to implement recommendation	Target Date for completion of Recommendation	Progress	Lead	
KLOE 1					
1.	Smaller, local companies be encouraged to bid for more work with the Council and its companies	<p>1. All companies have access to opportunities via our online procurement portal, but a process will be developed in collaboration with Inclusive Growth to engage better with local suppliers on up-coming opportunities.</p> <p>2. We will be able to report data on spend through local suppliers following the procurement of our new ERP system</p>	<p>6 - 9 months</p> <p>12 months</p>	<p>A Social Value Co-Ordinator has been appointed and took up post on 1st August who will work with Inclusive Growth to develop a detailed plan. One example of progress is that The Business Forum Newsletter (a Newsletter that goes out to all known businesses within the borough from Councillor Bright) has highlighted Social Value and the toolkit in 2 editions of the Newsletter sent out recently. We are hoping to feature approx. once a quarter</p>	Hilary Morris

Appendix 1

Action Plan Responding to Overview & Scrutiny Committee's A2020 Scrutiny Review					
Recommendation		Actions required to implement recommendation	Target Date for completion of Recommendation	Progress	Lead
2.	Business plans for the Council's companies be made publicly available (excluding any sensitive commercial information) to allow residents to understand how the companies are aiming to meet their objectives	All Council owned Companies will produce a summary business plan setting out their strategic objectives and how they will meet these as part of the Business Planning process	These documents will be made publicly available annually from 1 st April 21		Hilary Morris
3.	Officers provide assurance to the Committee that there are systems, principles and strategies in place to ensure that the Council gets best value from the companies commissioned to deliver services	Principles and strategy to demonstrate Best Value from services commissioned by the Council to the Companies will be set out in a report for OSC's January meeting as per the OSC work plan	In accordance with O&S work plan		

Appendix 1

KLOE 2					
4.	Following the return of Elevate, contact centre staff receive additional training in dealing with all vulnerable groups (including young people in care and care leavers)	Calls relating to young people in care and care leavers currently go directly to Children's Care and Support and anything relating to a vulnerable adult would be directed to the Adult Intake Team. We have a guide used in training for vulnerable customers and will update this and the training to include young people in care and care leavers specifically.	End of November 2020	We have now reviewed our scripts relating to Vulnerable clients to identify the gaps which could prevent the Contact Centre from providing the most responsive service. Our guides have been updated and full training has also been provided to the Adult Intake Team.	

Appendix 1

KLOE 3					
5.	Working with support of the Insight Hub, commissioners from Inclusive Growth and Care & Support draw on available data to strengthen their understanding of how demand for services is affected by the movement of people in, out and around the Borough, including in response to new development	<p>1) Development of the Residents' Matrix 2019/20; the Council's internal demographic modelling tool</p> <p>2) Development of demand dashboards in the OneView tool to be deployed across Care & Support</p>	End of March 2021	<p>1) The Resident's Matrix 2019/20 will be complete by March 2021. Upon completion, there will be published demographic profiles per ward. These are also being modelled for development areas e.g. Riverside.</p> <p>2) Demand dashboards in OneView are now live for commissioners and operations staff to utilise.</p>	Graeme Cooke, Elaine Allegretti and Mark Fowler

Appendix 1

6.	<p>The Cabinet Member for Social Care & Health Integration rigorously challenges local authorities who place families in the Borough but do not comply with the requirement to inform the Council that they had done so</p>	<p>Part (I): Challenging other local authorities where the guidance for the movement of social care cases is happening – DCS raising concern(s) with their counterpart.</p> <p>Part (II): Vulnerable non-Social Care cases moving into the borough via a housing route with no Social Care involvement and where there is no duty to notify (but is still placing a demand on Council services)- s208 process is adhered to and any breaches of this process are escalated with the placing Borough and through Chief Officer Groups and to MHCLG if required</p>	<p>Part (I): Notifications for Children’s Social Care cases. Completed.</p> <p>Part (II): Notifications for non-Social Care cases (but still vulnerable families): No further action – i.e. process is being applied (but can have only limited impact as there is no further duty to notify).</p>	<p>For Child Protection and Child in Need cases – or those in Care Proceedings – there is a clear and embedded protocol in place for notification and this is being adhered to. Where a child who is in the care of another LA is placed in our borough there is a separate notification process that should be followed – though this is not always followed as rigorously as it should be. Where it is not happening – and is identified – the DCS is writing to their counterpart to raise their concern.</p> <p>There is a statutory process of advising a receiving authority in the case of a homeless placement outside of the host borough (s208 process). This is being adhered to by LBB. Where we become</p>	Elaine Allegetti
----	---	---	--	---	------------------

Appendix 1

				aware other LAs have not followed this process this is raised with the placing authority. Where issues arise under this duty regarding placement in LBBD by others these are raised through the Housing Need Network and through Chief Officers Group.	
--	--	--	--	--	--

Appendix 1

7.	The Committee's 2020/21 Work Programme include an item which facilitates further consideration of the end-to-end process for Children's Care & Support (from early help to placement) so that the complexities of managing this demand can be subject to scrutiny and understood, and progress reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The OSC's 2020-21 Work Programme now includes this report on the agenda list for the meeting on 6 January 2021.	6 January 2021		Elaine Allegretti
----	---	---	----------------	--	-------------------

Appendix 1

KLOE 4 (Housing)					
8.	Early in the development of a housing scheme, relevant ward Members be provided with information on the proposed number of bedroom mix of the units, the type of rent, the approximate cost in monetary terms of those rents, and whether there might be any additional service charges, with information displaying how this relates to local need	Be First colleagues will be asked by Inclusive Growth commissioners to provide this information at feasibility stage. Inclusive Growth will match with local need and circulate with Ward members.	January 2021		
9.	The Council explores the issue of shared ownership and whether people could get 'stuck' in this arrangement, including whether it would be possible for the Council to ask developers to buy back shares to help residents wishing to move on	Inclusive Growth and Reside are currently assessing the experience of residents in Shared Ownership in contributing to a GLA consultation on intermediate housing products, due to close in the autumn. Findings will be shared with Members.	January 2021		Graeme Cooke

Appendix 1

10.	As there is a variety of figures in relation to housing need in the Borough, this information be more widely publicised and clarified	Inclusive Growth team to provide Members with consolidated briefing on different housing need indicators.	January 2021			
11.	Officers develop more detailed communications for residents about the range of affordable housing options such as the Reside offer and shared ownership (including the difference between products, and the eligibility criteria)	New website will include an affordability calculator for potential applicants and allow for uploading of application documents. More information on Reside's existing and upcoming developments will also be added.	January 2021		Graeme Cooke	
12.	Officers work to ensure that the supply of affordable homes, as far as viability allows, contains larger family homes of three and four bedrooms in order to ensure larger families can stay in the Borough, rather than moving to less expensive parts of the country	Inclusive Growth commissioners to work with Be First on an ongoing basis to work homes with more bedrooms into development plans. Will report back to committee in 2021.	Ongoing – June 2021			

Appendix 1

13.	Regular data is collected on the impact of the change in Reside's affordability threshold, and this data be presented to the Committee at an appropriate point in the 2020/21 municipal year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OSC's 2020-21 Work Programme now includes this report on the agenda list for the meeting on 3 February 2021 	3 February 2020		Graeme Cooke
14.	With the Government's Help to Buy scheme potentially coming to an end, further options to support residents in putting down deposits be explored by the Council	Inclusive Growth commissioners to review and report back to committee by 2021.	January 2021		

Appendix 1

15.	Officers consider the feasibility of providing positive landlord references for Council and Reside tenants who are seeking to move or secure a mortgage	Inclusive Growth commissioners to review and report back to committee by 2021.	January 2021		Graeme Cooke
KLOE 4 (Sustainability)					
16.	There is a focus on external communications going forward around parks and leisure so that residents can have sufficient knowledge of community activities being undertaken	Implement actions within the Parks and Open spaces strategy.	Ongoing – the strategy had short, medium and long term targets dates	Changes have been made to the website to ensure that more information is available to residents. A number of friends groups have been established for the parks to help communicate information at a local level.	Mark Tyson

Appendix 1

17.	Officers look into how the Council can incentivise residents to use renewable energy technologies, such as electric cars and solar panels, to make sure these are attractive and feasible	<p>The Low Emissions Vehicle Working Group will be responsible for the Council's long-term roll-out of EV chargepoints across the public realm and will report back on recommendations for infrastructure, home installations and promotion of take-up of electric vehicles</p> <p>Through its Cosy Homes programme and Energiesprong pilots the Council is testing the roll-out of renewables across certain stock, with the aim of devising a 10-year decarbonisation programme for council stock to lead the way to net zero homes by 2030</p>	<p>Ongoing but starting in September 2020</p> <p>Ongoing, but pilots/schemes completed by March 2022</p>		Graeme Cooke
18.	The Council utilises the opportunity presented by our environment to make parks and open spaces deliver wider priorities such as reducing isolation for our older people and supporting young people to get outside and learn new skills	Implement actions within the Parks and Open spaces strategy.	Ongoing – the strategy had short, medium and long term targets dates		Mark Tyson

Appendix 1

19.	Officers ensure that the recommendations of the Biodiversity Action Plan 2017 are acted upon as part of the Council's new Local Plan	The Biodiversity Report forms part of the evidence base of the Local Plan and work is being undertaken to map the Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) against new developments to see whether developer contributions can be requested to support upgrades and improvements, as well as potentially accessing grant.#	Report back to O&S in January 2021 on next steps		Graeme Cooke
20.	Officers look into the possibility of offering more educational partnerships between the parks service and schools, possibly offering parks education as a Barking & Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP) service	The Ranger service to develop its Outdoor Classroom room programme further to enable more schools to access. This will include group programmes at the Eastbrookend Discovery Centre as well as online content.	March 2020	The outdoor classroom programme has been refreshed but the school sign up has been limited due to the lockdown period.	Mark Tyson
21.	Officers utilise section 106 funding to support the deep retrofitting programme	Review of the Local Plan SPDs and section 106 contributions in the autumn to establish if and how carbon offset funds could be used for retrofitting and if not could it support carbon sequestration in other ways	Report back in January 2021		Graeme Cooke

Appendix 1

22.	Officers investigate how we can hold developers to account in relation to impacts on air quality	Review of air quality assessments and energy statements per development and quantify how schemes are contributing to carbon reduction	Ongoing – report back in March 2021 on the impact of schemes over the last six months		Graeme Cooke
23.	Officers report to Cabinet on a quarterly basis on progress against key environmental plans and objectives as set out in the Council's new corporate plan	Under constant review and monitored as part of the Single Performance Framework through the Corporate Performance Group	Ongoing		

Appendix 1

24.	<p>The Leader of the Council consider whether clearer ownership within the Cabinet of climate and sustainability issues would help to deliver on the Council’s ambitions in these areas</p>	<p>The Leader of the Council appointed a Member Champion for Climate Change. This was approved by Assembly on 13 May 2020 (Minute 7 refers).</p> <p>The role of the Member Champion for Climate Emergency is to work with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Social Housing in addressing the pressing issue of climate change. The role includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining a good knowledge of actions being taken by the Council, as well as its peers in London, to address the issue of climate change. 2. Working with Members to advocate for the delivery of a Zero-Carbon B&D, including assisting with the delivery of an effective communications strategy by acting as a “face” for the campaign, alongside the Leader. 3. Working with community groups to promote responsible use of parks and open spaces in the borough. 4. Looking at ways in which the corporate element of the council can learn from public and private sector partners to improve sustainability. 	<p>The action is complete.</p>	<p>The action is complete; however, the OSC is free to request updates from the Member Champion for Climate Emergency on his work.</p>	
-----	---	---	--------------------------------	--	--

This page is intentionally left blank

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 January 2021

Title: Report arising from recommendation 3 of A2020 Scrutiny Review on Best Value	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Hilary Morris, Commercial Director	Contact Details: Tel: 020 227 3017 E-mail: hilary.morris@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Hilary Morris, Commercial Director	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Claire Symonds, Acting Chief Executive	
<p>Summary</p> <p>The report responds to Action 3 of the 2019/20 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Key Line of Enquiry work and sets out the Council's approach to ensuring it has strategies, systems and processes in place to provide Best Value in the commissioning of services from its wholly and partly owned companies.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Committee is recommended to note the report in respect of best value, clienting and contract monitoring arrangements in relation to the Council's wholly and partly owned companies.</p>	
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>The Council has been subject to significant and sustained pressures on its budget and as part of the development of a New Kind of Council, embarked on a comprehensive reorganisation of its services during 2016/17 into a commissioning and delivery model under the Ambition 2020 Transformation Programme.</p> <p>This reorganisation resulted in the creation of several commercial entities which were designed to operate autonomously of the Council whilst some were contracted to provide services to the Council as well as to Residents.</p> <p>Whilst the creation of these companies has incorporated significant changes to the way the services within them operate, successful delivery of sustainable financial outcomes are an important part of the Council's strategy to become financially sustainable over the longer term and delivery of the specific objectives for each company is also an important element enabling the Council to fully achieve its objectives as set out in the Borough Manifesto in relation to the Inclusive Growth objectives.</p>	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 As part of the work plan for 2019/20, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee examined the Ambition 2020 Programme as a key line of enquiry and have requested that Officers provide assurance to the Committee that there are systems, processes and strategies in place to ensure that the Council gets best value from the Council's wholly and partly owned companies commissioned to deliver services. This report responds to that request.
- 1.2 As the Committee is aware, the Council has been subject to significant and sustained pressures on its budget and in 2015/16 carried out a consultation with the community about the challenges facing the delivery of Council services to 2020 and as a result embarked on a comprehensive reorganisation of its services into a commissioning and delivery model under the Ambition 2020 Transformation Programme. A commissioning model means that the Council sets its strategic priorities, in the context of the available resources, and agrees a set of outcomes which reflect the needs of residents and local businesses. Services are then 'commissioned' to deliver these outcomes.
- 1.3 This reorganisation resulted in the development of business cases for the creation of a number of commercial entities. These business cases evaluated the costs and benefits, both financial and non-financial and compared these with existing and alternative options to ascertain the best future operating model. The resulting creation of several trading companies were designed to operate autonomously of the Council and were contracted to provide services to the Council as well as to Residents (where appropriate). These contractual arrangements set out the Services to be delivered and required outcomes which are aimed to support the Council in delivering its strategic objectives as set out in the Borough Manifesto.
- 1.4 Company performance against commissioned and strategic objectives, including financial and performance outcomes are monitored at several levels with the Council setting the goals and strategy through the Shareholder Agreements, Commissioning Mandates, and Business Plans, which the companies are then held to account for performance against through the Shareholder Panel, Commissioner relationships and commissioning frameworks. In practise however the effectiveness of the model is determined by the quality of relationships and communication, so we get the benefits of operational flexibility for our companies and ourselves in the context of a collaborative rather than contractual model. This is not always perfect and will continue to develop and improve as the company's and the Council mature in this new model.
- 1.5 The duty to secure Best Value forms part of the Council's statutory obligations and is the cornerstone of the Council's contract and financial rules. Best Value is secured by balancing price and quality, social value and other broader considerations to form a view as to whether a specific activity, contract or commitment provides the Council with the best outcomes for the money committed. This is not a race to the bottom to secure outcomes at the cheapest possible price. Statutory guidance sets out a general duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and these principles underpin our approach to best value. The services provided for which fees are payable and the principles and processes that govern the commissioning

of those services are set out below, in addition to the wider considerations relevant to determine value for money.

2 The Council's Commercial Entities

2.1 Be First

Be First (Regeneration) Ltd (Be First) was created from the Council's Regeneration and Planning Service which later incorporated Building Control. Be First was supported in its early stages with a Working Capital Loan of £4.3m which was approved by Cabinet in the 2017 Be First Business Plan. This loan has not yet been re-paid but continues to accumulate interest at a state aid compliant rate. Be First was established to deliver the real-estate development of social housing and regeneration schemes more quickly than the capacity of the Council could secure throughout the Borough. As part of its functions, Be First deliver:

- Planning services to residents and developers for which planning fees are payable (the Council retains the planning decision making function). Pre-Be First these services cost the Council £700k pa. Fees are determined in two ways:
 - Where fees and charges apply to mandatory services such as planning fees these are approved by Cabinet as part of the annual fees and charges schedule.
 - Where fees are discretionary, meaning residents and developers are able to use other suppliers these fees are set directly by Be First and these include pre-application consultations and planning promotion agreements.
- Development Management Services are provided to the Council as well as to some external clients and fees are applied according to the type of scheme being undertaken. Standard development management fees for schemes on Council-led development sites were approved by Cabinet in November 2016 as part of the business case for the creation of the company. New categories of fees agreed post that point are being assessed against industry normative levels before being approved. Schemes are individually appraised based on their total development cost (which includes any fees) before being considered for approval at Investment Panel. All schemes must meet the investment hurdles approved by Cabinet as part of the Investment and Acquisition Strategy before being approved.
- Be First also deliver Capital Programme works as part of the portfolio which transferred from the previous Capital Delivery Unit and as was the case then, fees are agreed between the Council and Be First on a scheme by scheme level according to the type of project being commissioned – there is no single fee level applied and this is considered and administered on a project by project basis.

Be First are targeted to deliver 2,748 new homes over the next 4 years which is equivalent to a medium size house builder with 78% of homes built being at affordable rent. They are currently on track to deliver the agreed number of new homes this year. As a result of this significant step change in the pace of regeneration and commercial development activity Be First is targeted, and currently forecasting, to meet the financial target as set out within its agreed Business Plan and original Business case.

The step change in regeneration is also driving skills and training opportunities with Be First's 'Skills at the Heart' ethos providing a drive to long-term, skilled jobs with better prospects for residents attributed to their construction activity. Be First currently assess the real Value of every £1 spent on construction translates into

£1.48 of added social value. 53 new full-time jobs alone were created for local residents in the three months between July and September and £17m of orders were placed with local suppliers; for instance a local concrete provider is providing all the pre-cast concrete items for Crown House.

2.2 Barking and Dagenham Trading Partnership Ltd (BDTP)

2.2.1 The Barking and Dagenham Trading Partnership was created primarily from cleaning and catering services but also took on management of the workforce of the Council's repairs and maintenance service (the DLO) who continue to be employed by the Council. BDTP deliver elements of all these services to the Council as well as to schools and other external clients under a range of different commercial terms and agreements.

- **Cleaning services:** BDTP provide cleaning services to the Council's corporate buildings in line with the service provided pre company creation. This service is contracted through a service agreement and the cost per building has not increased since the company went live in 2017. Notwithstanding, the services provided under this agreement are reviewed in light of any organisational or building changes, for instance increases in scope due to Covid or reductions in service due to rationalisation of buildings and revisions to provision are approved as part of a contractual variation process. Although not required to do so, the Company has implemented the 18/19 LGPC pay award for all staff who have historically been in the lowest paid sector. These pay increases were awarded to staff without applying an increase to the cost of the service paid by the Council – this translates not only into a fairer pay to staff who are predominantly local, but also a real time reduction in service cost to the Council;
- **Catering Services:** BDTP provide a paid for catering service direct to schools under a variety of different commercial agreements. The Council does not commission this service but as with cleaning, the company have applied the 18/19 pay award in both years for all staff in this service who have also historically been in the lowest pay sector. This service faces increasing competition to secure these contracts from other external providers who generally do not pay the LLW therefore the company rely on their ability to provide a quality service as a core partner to schools as they would be unlikely to be able to compete for these services on price alone;
- **Repairs and Maintenance Services:** The responsive and reactive repairs and maintenance service provided to the Council's tenanted and leaseholder properties is delivered by the DLO. The DLO remain Council employees on Council T&Cs, however the service they provide is managed by BD Management Services Ltd (BDMS) (a subsidiary within the BDTP Group) and monitored as a commissioned service via monthly performance meetings. Although there are areas of performance that need to be improved, between 2017-19 the number of repairs being completed per operative has improved from 345 in 2016/17 to 616. For context, the cost of the responsive repairs and maintenance programme has decreased since 2017 from £18.2m to £13.2m;
- **Management functions:** BDMS are contracted to undertake the management of the Council's DLO as a commissioned service and monthly monitoring meetings are undertaken to assess performance. This service is tasked with improving

productivity, improved first time fix rate and quicker turnaround of planned work as well as improved customer and client satisfaction of the R&M services for which the Council pays a fee. This fee is directly comparable to the cost of the service when this was delivered in-house and this has not increased since this service went live two years ago although the Company have continued to apply the national pay award for these staff which would have increased their direct costs. Under their management, the costs of the responsive repairs programme has decreased and productivity has improved with some improvements being made to the turnaround time for voids and compliance works although the service is still not yet performing at the optimum level;

- **Planned Maintenance & the Capital Programme:** As with Be First, fees are agreed between the Council and BDTP on a scheme by scheme level according to the type of project being commissioned – there is no single fee level applied and this is considered and commissioned on a project by project basis; and
- **LondonEast UK Limited:** BDTP also owns LondonEast-UK Limited (LEUK) which owns the science and technical park in Dagenham East. BDTP was given a state aid compliant loan from the Council. This loan will start to be re-paid in the next financial year following the sale of part of the land to the Council to deliver the Film Studio, as well as part of the land to UCL to deliver the Pearl research facility and the asset is already valued in excess of the original sum loaned which over time will provide a return to the Council.

2.2.2 As a company BDTP have financial and non-financial outcomes to deliver for the Council which are achieved primarily through the activities of its subsidiaries. In addition to delivering a dividend to the Council, these include improving employment opportunities for its workforce as well as improving the service. Since the company was established it has already produced a net profit from trading amounting to a cash return to the Council of £2.3m and a further forecast £1.7m from 2019/20 financial year which is not yet released as this is subject to audit. As well as delivering savings in relation to the Council's direct employment cost of the DLO delivered through initiatives such as managing down the proportion of emergency and urgent out-of-hours works the company has delivered additional savings to the Council of £1.3m.

2.2.3 BDTP are able to deliver a dividend from several workstreams, one of which is securing additional work from across the business such as increased capital programme works, which previously would have been contracted out to third parties. These works would always have included an element of private sector profit when contracted out, the only difference being that the profit is now being retained by the Council and utilised to fund much needed public services. Additional work streams that generate profit are additional cleaning and catering commissions from schools and businesses as well as other ad hoc work commissioned from the Council such as the refurbishment of the London road car park in 2019 which was delivered at a competitive price but also generated a financial return for the Council. In addition to securing new work the company generate a surplus by improving productivity, reducing waste and inefficiency and making savings through more commercial management practises. It has also reduced the costs of its support services and purchased new business technology designed to improve the operational efficiency of the company. Although not all of these improvements and new technology are live or have hard evidence to support their effectiveness yet, they are indicative of the type of commercial approach which over time should help to reduce the cost to the

business, support the company to win more non LBBB business and therefore increase the profit to the Council.

2.2.4 In addition to financial benefits the company delivers value through a commitment to local recruitment. Since the company's creation it has focused on building up its permanent workforce and in July - September of this year alone it has recruited 22 permanent employees with 18 of these being local to the borough. These factors however, also have a counter effect in that in supporting the Council's commitment to continue to pay the LLW and by honouring the national pay award it would be unable to compete for some services if they were evaluated on price alone and therefore in line with other contracted services the value provided by BDTP cannot be measured just on the basis of price.

2.3 **BDSIP LTD (BDSIP)**

BDSIP also known as Barking and Dagenham Schools Improvement Partnership is a company limited by guarantee and is owned by the Council and most of Barking and Dagenham schools who chose to be members of the company. It is a not-for-profit company. Its aim is to provide services to schools to improve outcomes for pupils. It absorbed school traded services and continues to deliver these directly to schools. The Council is both a member of the company and a commissioner of statutory and priority services, which are delivered on behalf of the Council through an annual Service Delivery Agreement. Services provided to the Council are paid for from the DSG and are monitored through commissioning frameworks which oversee outcomes. BDSIP is the only company not fully owned by the Council and does not have a financial return target to the Council.

2.4 **Barking and Dagenham Reside Regeneration Ltd (Reside)**

Reside was originally established to buy, build, let and manage affordable/shared ownership housing. It is wholly owned by the Council. It has several subsidiaries and interests in Limited Liability Partnerships also ultimately owned by the Council. In practical terms, this means that Reside or one of its companies takes responsibility for the management of the housing stock which is built by Be First. Reside's allocation policies are agreed by Cabinet, and this ensures that properties are offered to people in line with the council's allocation policy for its own housing stock. Residents are not obligated to rent Reside properties and do not pay for services other than rent and service charges. The rent levels charged to residents are set by Reside, based on the modelling which the Council carries out to ensure each scheme developed is viable. Rent rises are agreed annually by the Reside board, and these are based on government guidance and must be reasonable and in proportion to the cost of managing and maintaining the properties. Officers are currently reviewing the structure of the companies.

2.5 **B&D Energy Limited (B&D Energy)**

Again, this company is wholly owned by the council and is an Energy Services Company (ESCO). The mission of the ESCO is to help deliver the Council's strategic energy and carbon reduction objectives by creating and delivering energy related benefits for the corporate estate, housing, schools, as well as creating wider social and economic benefits for the community. It is also tasked with developing local energy expertise to support local economic development, identifying and delivering

affordable energy projects and over time delivering a financial return to the Council. The Council does not commission any services directly from BD Energy but has part funded the development of two District Heating networks following state aid compliant loans to the Company. The first of which was approved by Cabinet as part of the original investment into the Company in June 2016 and more recently in March 2019 to develop its largest network, the Barking Town Centre District Energy Network.

Since BD Energy was created it has delivered a District Energy Network to Becontree Heath which provides energy to 170 Homes and the Becontree Heath Leisure Centre. It has also been delivering heat to 381 homes at Gascoigne East Phase 1 since March 2018 and this development will be integrated into the larger Barking Town Centre network once built.

The charges for energy are set by the company and BD Energy's commitment is to deliver energy at fair prices which is indexed annually (every April) against wholesale energy costs, labour costs within the industry and cost of living. For heat prices, customers can use the Heat Trust Calculator to compare what they pay to a typical gas fired boiler. For those schemes connected to a Private Wire Network (PWN), the electricity prices are capped to the average of the best deals offered by the "Big Six" energy providers at the time of indexing.

2.6 Beam Energy

Beam Energy was not a company but was set up as a 'white label' partnership with Robin Hood Energy, an energy company owned by Nottingham City Council. This partnership was created to provide an increased range of affordable energy options to residents, without requiring the Council to set up its own independent company. Beam Energy had some initial success particularly in the pre-payment market, where residents often faced highest fuel costs. However, after the initiative was launched Ofgem introduced an energy price cap, which meant that Beam Energy (and Robin Hood Energy) lost its competitive advantage in the market, which is dominated by the 'big six' providers, who began providing lower cost tariffs. This led to financial difficulties for Robin Hood Energy, which ultimately meant Nottingham City council decided to close the company down. All customers of Beam Energy have been transferred to new providers and have had their tariffs protected in the process. There are no immediate plans to relaunch Beam Energy through an alternative provider, and instead the council will now focus on expanding opportunities to residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

3. The Performance and Governance Framework

- 3.1 In order to ensure appropriate governance of the companies and regular oversight of performance against objectives the Council created a Shareholder Panel. This panel monitors performance by way of quarterly (or more regularly if required) performance reports and challenge sessions and provides oversight to the Business Plans prior to recommending these for approval to Cabinet. The Business Planning process enables the Council as the shareholder to set the strategic direction of the Companies within the context of the operating environment, confirms the ambitions as well as the strategic objectives of the Companies during the plan period.
- 3.2 Except for matters which the Council withheld its approval for, and which are set out as the matters reserved for Council approval within each shareholder agreement,

each company is run by a Managing Director or Chief Executive. The Managing Director or Chief Executive exercise all the powers of the company and are tasked with delivering the performance required, in the way they deem fit, to achieve the objectives as set out within the approved Business Plans.

- 3.3 Company performance is then directly overseen by a Company Board which is made up of a number of Executive and Non-Executive Directors. Non-Executive directors are excluded from day to day management obligations but play a key role in providing independent oversight and constructive challenge to the Executive Directors (i.e. the Senior Management of the Company). Their role is to provide assurance over the integrity of the information, the ability of the Company to deliver the shareholder objectives as well as provide assurance that the controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible and that performance is delivered. The Council also includes the Company performance as part of its Risk Register.
- 3.4 In addition to the strategic oversight Council officers provide operational contract management oversight of the specific commissioned services which are set out within the contracts the Council has with each Company. These include contracts for the provision of cleaning services to corporate buildings, the provision of specific school improvement activities as well as contracts to deliver planning and regeneration services to specific standards to the Council and residents. The operational performance of these is overseen by the Clients of these services such as My Place, Education and Inclusive Growth. As such, there are multiple layers of challenge to the performance framework, each with a specific remit.

4. Summary and Conclusion

- 4.1 As with all competitive procurements undertaken within the Council, value for money is not simply evaluated based on price and the same is reflected in consideration of the services provided by the companies. The companies provide a business plan annually which is approved by Cabinet and as part of that consideration is given to the non-financial outcomes and commitments made to ensure each one is delivering against the wider aspirations for them and that they are helping to support the Council to deliver its Borough Manifesto. Once the Business Plans are approved all the company performance against their plan is monitored the Shareholder Panel in the same way that contracted operational outcomes are monitored by the relevant commissioners.
- 4.2 Whilst each individual company has a business plan which sets their strategic vision and key deliverables over the plan period and are demonstrating success in delivering these individual visions, it is the inter-connectedness of the companies' plans and vision which will be a key component to the overall success of the commercialisation model over the longer term. For instance, the successful delivery of additional revenue generated by Reside can only be achieved by accelerating the Council's development programme which has only been able to be achieved through the creation of Be First. This symbiotic relationship continues into delivery of the repairs and maintenance of those properties by BDTP and in some cases the energy provided to them which will be created through the local energy networks built by BD energy. This eco-system of public sector entrepreneurialism is an important part of demonstrating value for money across the companies' portfolios which is in addition to that which has been created by the outcomes they have achieved individually

which holds both financial and non-financial benefits both for the residents and local businesses of Barking and Dagenham.

- 4.3 Whilst the creation of these companies has incorporated significant changes to the way the services within them operate, successful delivery of sustainable financial outcomes are an important part of the Council's strategy to become financially sustainable over the longer term and delivery of the specific objectives for each company is also an important element in enabling the Council to fully achieve its objectives as set out in the Borough Manifesto.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 Cabinet were consulted and approved the creation of each of the Companies on the basis of the arrangements outlined above. Cabinet continue to monitor and are required to approve each Companies' Business Plan on an annual basis.
- 5.2 The Shareholder Panel monitor the detailed performance of each Company against their Business Plan and meet with the Company Managing Directors every quarter to review performance.

6 Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Thomas Mulloy, Chief Accountant

- 6.1 The subsidiaries play an integral role in helping the Council achieve financial sustainability. Both Be First and BDTP aim to make dividend payments which feed into the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. There is a monitoring programme in place to ensure this is achieved.

7 Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Ian Chisnell, Major Projects Solicitor

- 7.1 The Council has various powers to establish companies such as s4 of the Localism Act 2011 and s93 of the Local Government Act 2003, which permit local authorities to trade through companies.
- 7.2 The Council controls its companies through a shareholder agreement with the company and through the Articles of Incorporation of the company. It also has the final say in appointments to the Board of the company although under the Companies Act 2006 ss 172 and 173 the Directors of a company must promote the success of the company and act independently.
- 7.3 The Council also has power to set up limited liability partnerships and limited partnerships under s1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 7.4 In setting up corporate entities the Council must prepare a business case and business plan setting out the proposals for those entities and they must be kept under review.

- 7.5 Under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 trading is permitted between the Council and its companies without competition provided they meet the criteria set out in Regulation 12 which relate to control and no private sector participation.
- 7.6 Most of the Council's Companies are wholly owned, with some exceptions such as BDSIP, which is a company limited by guarantee which has members rather than shares.
- 7.7 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Authorities (Companies Order) 1995 regulate companies in which a local authority has an interest or control, prescribing such matters as statements as to influence or control on company notepaper.
- 7.8 The Council also has power to make loans to its companies but must bear in mind when it does so that it does not breach the Principles of State Aid which is defined as: an advantage in any form whatsoever conferred on a selective basis to undertakings by national public authorities. And could take the form of grants or cheap loans.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices: None

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 January 2021

Title: Corporate Parenting Report	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Vikki Rix, Head of Performance and Intelligence, Children's Care and Support, Commissioning, People and Resilience	Contact Details: Tel: 0208 227 2564 E-mail: Vikki.Rix@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Directors: Chris Bush; Commissioning Director for Children's Care and Support; April Bald; Operational Director for Children's Care and Support	
Accountable Strategic Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director for People and Resilience	
Summary	
<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has requested an update on the key issues for Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers in the borough. The Members' Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG), chaired by the Lead Member of Social Care and Health Integration, is the key strategic group that ensures the Council and its partners are the best possible 'parents' to our Looked After Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>The MCPG produce a detailed Corporate Parenting report annually and the latest report can be found at Appendix 1. This Annual Report has been included as the response to the OSC agenda item as it clearly provides an overview of what we are doing well, the key achievements in the last year, what are our key challenges and our plans to address those challenges in 2020/21 and beyond.</p> <p>In addition, the DfE National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers carried out a two-day virtual visit to the Local Authority on 11 and 12 November 2020. This visit included meetings with the Leader, Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration, Acting Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services, Operations Director for Children's Care and Support and Senior Officers across the Council including partner agencies, and focus groups with some of our Care Leavers. The visit was very positive, and a summary is set out in section 4.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the contents of the Corporate Parenting Annual Report; (ii) Note the improvements and developments for Looked After Children and Care Leavers and our plans for the next 12 months; and 	

(iii)	Note the summary feedback of the DfE two-day formal visit by the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers.
Reason(s)	
The Council is required to produce a Corporate Parenting Report annually, and to present this to elected members in their capacity as corporate parents.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The concept of Corporate Parenting was first introduced in the Children Act 1989 and describes the responsibilities of the Council to provide the best possible care for our Looked After Children and Care Leavers, as any good parent would do for their children. Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs that Councils do and when a child, for whatever reason, cannot safely stay at home, it is up to us as the local authority to step in and give them the care, support and stability that they deserve.
- 1.2 This is not just up to the Lead Member or Director of Children’s Services – we need everyone looking out for our most vulnerable children and young people, and every Councillor has a role to play. Being a corporate parent means doing everything we can for every child in the Council’s care – and every Care Leaver – to give them the opportunities that other children get. This covers everything from keeping an eye on their progress at school, to looking after their health and wellbeing, to preparing them for life as independent adults – and supporting them when they get there.
- 1.3 We have reinvigorated and strengthened the MCPG in the last 18 months, chaired by the Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration, and includes three other elected Members who individually champion education, health, and placement quality. The MCPG also includes representation from Community Solutions including Housing, Homes and Money, Health, Commissioning and Education. Looked After Children and Care Leavers present at each Board and once a year have a take-over where they chair the Board and set our priorities for the year ahead.
- 1.4 The Promises made to our Looked After Children and Care Leavers were refreshed two years ago and remain the focus of the MCPG to shape the Council being the best parent we can be to those who we are responsible for.

2. Barking and Dagenham Context – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

- 2.1 At the end of October 2020, the number of Looked After Children in Barking and Dagenham fell to 383 compared to 402 at the end 2019/20. This corresponds to a rate of 60 per 10,000 children, lower than the England and statistical neighbour rates but higher than London. During COVID-19, the number of children coming into care has been lower compared to pre-COVID-19, for example, 95 children have come into care between April and October 2020 compared to 120 in April to October 2019.
- 2.2 We currently have 281 Care Leavers aged 18 to 25 in Barking and Dagenham of which 98 are former Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC). This compares to 245 at the end of 2019/20 and 82 former UASCs.

3. Corporate Parenting Annual Report

- 3.1 2019/20 has been another busy year with many key achievements and improved outcomes for our Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The MCPG has focused its attention on the Ofsted Inspection carried out in February 2019 and kept a close eye on the subsequent LBBDD Ofsted improvement plan to ensure changes have been made with performance and outcomes improving.
- 3.2 The work of the MCPG has also concentrated on delivering the promises we have made to our Looked After Children and Care Leavers. We are ambitious for children and young people and want them to lead happy, safe, and successful lives.
- 3.3 This Annual Report provides an overview of what we are doing well, our key achievements in the last year, what are our key challenges and our plans to address those challenges in 2020/21 and beyond. The report presents activity and performance data from 2019/20 and identifies the Board's plans and priorities for the year ahead.
- 3.4 The report clearly shows that strong and effective senior leadership is in place with an unrelenting focus on improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. Most of our Looked After Children are placed within family settings and placement stability is good. Our adoption scorecard performance is improving year on year and this has been recognised by the DfE. We are no longer on the adoption task force improvement radar but improving adoption timelessness continues to be a priority area. The Virtual School is strong and demonstrating good outcomes in attainment, attendance, compliance, and quality of PEPs. The majority of Looked After Children are in good or outstanding schools. Our Virtual School supports Care Leavers and in this academic year, we have 20 Care Leavers who are at University and four Care Leavers who have graduated.
- 3.5 The Council's commitment to Care Leavers has been significantly strengthened and currently, 92% of our Care Leavers are living in suitable accommodation – above all comparators. 65% of Care Leavers are in education, employment, and training, up by 3% on the end of year figure and above national, London and statistical neighbours.
- 3.6 Our Children in Care Council is pivotal to the work of the MCPG and we have strengthened their voice and participation in 2019/20. We formally consult with Looked After Children and Care Leavers through an annual survey, and response rates continue to rise. However, we recognise the volume of those participating needs to increase and are exploring young-people friendly digital options. We celebrate our children's achievements at an annual awards ceremony. Due to COVID-19 this year, workers are visiting young people to deliver their trophies and certificates and taking pictures which will be collated to mark the occasion.
- 3.7 Improving health arrangements and outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers have been top priorities throughout 2019/20, an Ofsted recommendation. Since Ofsted, we co-located the NELFT LAC Team with our Social Care team and a new IHA dashboard tracks timeliness and performance. We also set up a multi-agency LAC Health Sub-Group chaired by the CCG tasked to improve health arrangements for LAC and Care Leavers. This Sub-Group reports to the Corporate Parenting Group.

- 3.8 Looked After Children's and Care Leavers' mental health is a priority particularly during COVID-19 where isolation is increased. A good proportion return a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and these are now tracked via improved reporting functions so we can ensure a holistic approach to our Care Leavers' health needs. A CAMHS Hot clinic has supported an improved mental health offer. In addition, the CAMHS Transitions Group has been set up to look at pathways for young people transitioning from children to adults' mental health provisions.
- 3.9 We recognise that health arrangements for Care Leavers still require improvement and are working on addressing health passports. The multi-agency Looked After Children and Care Leavers Health Sub-Group reporting into the Corporate Parenting Group has been tasked to drive forward improvements in this area. All Care Leavers are now encouraged to download the NHS App, by the provider specialist nurses, which has many functions and is regularly updated. The hard-copy version of the health passport is no longer used. Work is ongoing at the LAC Health Subgroup with an audit proposed for January 2021 to assess variation and compliance, led by the provider and Local Authority.
- 3.10 Whilst we have much to be proud of with the improvements we have made and the level of commitment and passion that has been shown to improving the lived experience of Looked After Children and Care Leavers, we still have a way to go. As with all parents, we should be relentless in our efforts to make sure we are doing everything within our gift to help them become resilient, be happy and achieve their full potential.
- 3.11 The Corporate Parenting Annual Report is attached as Appendix 1.

4. Two-day formal visit by National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers

- 4.1 Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers carried out our Improvement Visit (virtual) on 11 and 12 November 2020. As part of this visit, he held various meetings and focused groups with the Leader, the Acting Chief Executive, Lead Member, Elected Members, Director of Children's Services, Operations Director, Strategic Leads, Operational Managers, Front Line Managers, Young Person's Advisors and Care Leavers.
- 4.2 In summary, the visit was very positive and feedback from Mark Riddell states that he was "very impressed by the leadership and management approach that was ambitious, aspirational and I got a real sense of passion and commitment to have a better offer for care leavers across the whole service area". The visit and feedback confirmed the strengthened leadership in this area and the significant progress we have made in our approach to Corporate Parenting, our local offer and the extended duties that apply to Care Leavers up to 25 years. Our Corporate Parenting Board has been strengthened and a recommendation is to extend the membership of this Board to DWP and Probation.
- 4.3 The visit confirmed that our Leaving Care model is operationally good but that the model could be stronger with specialist workers based in the Leaving Care team i.e. a dedicated Housing Officer resource in the team, an Emotional Wellbeing/Mental Health Practitioner and an EET officer. Caseloads were at an acceptable level,

although our Leaving Care Personal Advisors covered many areas, tasks and complex processes that sometimes made them feel out of their depth.

- 4.4 Our Housing Offer was considered as very positive especially given the challenges with supply and demand in the borough. Our leisure offer and Council Tax Exemption for care leavers were also viewed as very good. We have Care Leaver apprenticeships already in our Local Offer, but a recommendation was made for us to set a ringfenced amount as a target (possibly 10).
- 4.5 A key recommendation was to review and strengthen our 'Whole Council' offer by organising an event with each partner agency so that they can set out their Local Offer and "for the test to be applied 'is this good enough for my child' and with a particular focus on: A health offer to Care Leavers from 18yrs to 25yrs; and a Probation offer to Care Leavers entering and leaving custody up to 25yrs". Several other recommendations have been made and these will be incorporated into our improvement plan enabling us to reach our ambition of being 'the best corporate parents' we can be.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 One key element of our work in corporate parenting and in planning for permanence is ensuring that children and young people are involved, both in their own plans and by feeding into broader service development through groups such as Skittlz and the Members Corporate Parenting Group. The Corporate Parenting Annual report outlines activity in this area over the last year and the new strategy will seek to further improve opportunities for children and young people to meaningfully contribute to planning.

6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising because of this report which is largely for noting. However, it may be helpful for the Committee to understand the financial issues of the services.
- 6.2 The cost of the Corporate Parenting and Permanence Service is £27.5m in 2020/21 (P7 forecast). This includes the cost of social work and staffing (£4m including the fostering service) and placements, care, and accommodation for Looked After Children (£19.9m) and Care Leavers (£3.5m). Around £8.1m of the LAC placement cost is spent on foster placements, £4.3m on support for Adoption and £6.3m on Residential care. The balance is for specialist provision (secure, family and baby, UASC).
- 6.3 There is a variance against budget of £5.415m and this is the main overspend in Children's Care and Support. Around £2.9m of the overspend is linked to Residential Care placements for a relatively small number of children with very high needs – including some (c15) with complex disabilities. This year, the number of children requiring residential care has increased (from 26 to 31 at November) and the costs of such placements has grown increasingly expensive. Some of this increase is linked at least in part to the impact of the Covid epidemic and lockdown.

There is also an overspend of £1.6m on support for Care Leavers. As noted above the number of young people supported has been growing.

7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Lindsey Marks, Deputy Head of Law

7.1 All Members have individual and collective responsibility as the Corporate Parents for Barking and Dagenham's Looked After Children.

7.2 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2019/20

Page 43

Councillor Worby

Chair of CPG; Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration

Elaine Allegretti

Director of People and Resilience (Director of Children's Services)



September 2020

1. Foreword	Page 2
2. Introduction and Background	Page 2
3. About the Borough	Page 3
4. Our children in care and care leavers	Page 4
5. Key achievements in 2019/20	Page 5
6. Promises to children in care and care leavers – an evaluation of progress and outcomes in 2019/20	Page 6
7. Our plans for next 12 months	Page 12

Foreword

As Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration and Chair of the Corporate Parenting Group, I am delighted to introduce the 2019/20 Annual Report of Barking and Dagenham's Members Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG).

2019/20 has been another busy year with many key achievements and improved outcomes for our children in care and care leavers. The MCPG has focused its attention on the Ofsted Inspection carried out in February 2019 and kept a close eye on the subsequent LBBDD Ofsted improvement plan to ensure changes have been made with performance and outcomes improving.

The work of the MCPG has also concentrated on delivering the promises we have made to our children in care and care leavers. We are ambitious for children and young people and want them to lead happy, safe and successful lives.

Our children in care council is pivotal to the work of the MCPG and we have strengthened their voice and participation in 2019/20. We highly value listening to our children and young people and want them to be at the heart of service improvement.

This Annual Report provides an overview of what we are doing well, our key achievements in the last year, what are our key challenges and our plans to address those challenges in 2020/21 and beyond. The report presents activity and performance data from 2019/20 and identifies the Board's plans and priorities for the year ahead.

We know we still have a lot to do to improve the lives of our children and young people in care and care leavers, but with our stronger invigorated MCPG and as committed Corporate Parents, we are relentless in our ambition to achieve this.

Councillor Maureen Worby
Chair of the Corporate Parenting Group

Introduction and background

The concept of Corporate Parenting was first introduced in the Children Act 1989 and describes the responsibilities of the Council to provide the best possible care for our children in care and care leavers, as any good parent would do for their children.

Elected Members have a lead role in ensuring that the Council acts as an effective Corporate Parent and have high aspirations for our children and young people to improve their life chances.

Corporate Parenting has been reinvigorated with strengthened arrangements in the last 18 months and are working well with our Lead Member as Chair.

Group membership for our Corporate Parenting Board has been reviewed and all new members have been fully inducted, each committing to uphold and deliver the key promises made to our children and young people in care and Care Leavers. The Board is now well attended, offers challenge and holds all members to account in their role in delivering a quality service. The Board has played a key role in delivering the Enhanced Local Offer.

Our MCPG meets on a bi-monthly basis and in addition to Members, includes representatives from Children's Social Care, Health, Virtual School, representatives from the Children in Care Council (Skittlz), Director of Community Solutions and a Foster Carer representative. The Forward Plan and agendas are set by the MCPG led by young people ensuring our young people in care and Care Leavers are instrumental in the priorities going forward. Young people are represented on the Board and all Board members are expected to attend the training session led by Care Leavers.

The Promises made to our children in care and Care Leavers were refreshed two years ago and remain the focus of the MCPG to shape the Council being the best parent we can be to those we are responsible for. Progress on the Promises is outlined later in this report.

About the Borough

Barking and Dagenham is a young and increasingly diverse borough. The population was estimated to be 212,906 in 2019: an increase of 28% over the last 15 years and 9% over the last five years. National statistics project the population to increase to 237,000 by 2025 and 250,000 by 2030 (ONS subnational population projections migration assumptions 2018).

Alongside population increases, Barking and Dagenham has become a more diverse borough with 66% of the resident population now estimated to be from Black and minority ethnic (BME) ethnic minorities compared with 19% in 2001.

The borough has a higher health and social care need compared to other boroughs, with higher rates of referrals and a higher social care utilisation than London and England averages. Life expectancy is lower than the London average for both males and females in the borough.

We are among the most deprived local authorities in England: 17th highest in England and the highest in London (IMD 2019). Unemployment remains high at 6.1% - highest in London and the borough has 8.3% of residents with no qualifications - higher than London average (6.7%).

30% of households are rented from the local authority or a housing association, and 27% of dependent children in the borough live in a lone-parent household.

Our child population. We are a young borough, with around 63,400 children

and young people under the age of 18 - 30% of the total population, the highest proportion in the UK. The borough also has the largest proportion of children aged under 16 in London (27%).

74% of the 0–17 population are from ethnic minorities compared and the proportion of children and young people who speak English as an additional language is more than 2.5 times than the national average.

26% of children under 16 in the borough are living in low income families, an increasing proportion, and way above England average of 18%. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals in nursery and primary schools is on par with the national average, but the proportion in secondary schools is higher at 17% compared to 14% across England.

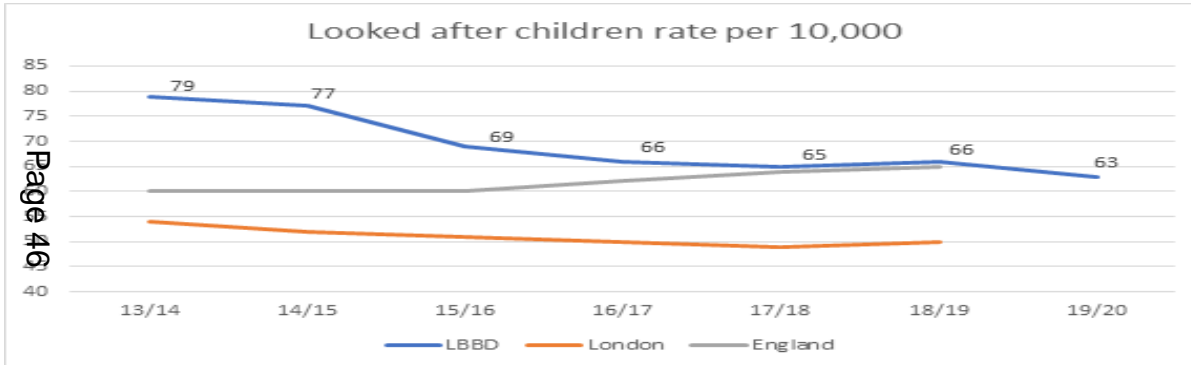
Domestic abuse is a significant issue in Barking and Dagenham and impacts on all service areas - 14.8 domestic abuse offences per 1,000 people - highest in London. It accounts for 37% of violence with injury offences in the borough and is a presenting factor for around 22% of children's social care contacts annually and rising.

This sits in a context of a stretched and challenged health and social care economy, which has struggled to keep pace with changing community needs including the fast-growing child population with increasing diversity, complexity and needs.

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has, and will continue to pose significant challenges for our community, children, young people and families and partner agencies across the board. Continuing to manage the impact of the pandemic will be a top priority for the Council and partner agencies throughout 2020/21.

Our Children in Care and Care Leavers

At the end of 2019/20, the number of children in care decreased to 402 compared to 417 in the previous year. This end-of-year position corresponds to a rate of 63 per 10,000 children, which, has been declining in recent years, but remains higher than the London rates but lower than national and statistical rates. During 2019/20, the number of new children coming into care decreased by 17 from 208 to 191, a decrease of 8% and 204 children left care.



Overall, this is positive when set against the growth in population and demand. The age profile of looked-after children is older than the national average with over two thirds of our children in care aged 10-17 and we have a higher proportion of 16-17-year olds in care compared to the national average.

White children are over-represented in Barking and Dagenham's children in care, comprising 51% of looked-after children at the end of 2019/20, (36% in the local under 18 population). Conversely, Black African and Asian children are under-represented, making up 21% and 11% of children in care, but 25%

and 22% of the under 18 population (2018). Male children are also over-represented, with 232 (58%) males and 170 (42%) females at the end of 2019/20. Of the 402 children in care at the end of 2019/20:

- 275 (68%) lived with foster and kinship carers
- 34 (9%) were in residential care
- 17 (4%) were placed with their parents
- 62 (15%) were in semi-independent placements
- 14 (3%) were placed for adoption

Of these 402 children, 38% were placed in the borough and 62% outside the borough comparable with the previous year.

During 2019/20, 15 children were adopted, the same as 2018/19, representing 7.4% of all children leaving care - above London, but below the national and similar areas averages. 33 children (16%) had become subject to special guardianship orders (SGOs) same as 2018/19, and higher than all comparators.

At the end of 2019/20, 245 young people 18 plus were care leavers, of which 82 were former UASC. This is an increase on the previous year from 207 care leavers (63 former UASC). The number of UASC aged under 18 decreased to 39 (0.06) at the end of 2019/20 compared to 44 (0.07) in 2018/19 and numbers remained below threshold set at 0.08.

Key achievements in 2019-20

Our key achievements led by the MCPG throughout 2019/20 are set out in this section followed by an evaluation of progress and impact against the children in care and care leavers promises.

Strong and effective senior leadership with an unrelenting focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families. In the past two years, the DCS and the senior leadership team has led a reinvigoration of children's services across social care and beyond to drive a strong and strategic approach with an unrelenting focus on improving outcomes for children, and especially our most vulnerable. Much work has been completed to refocus strategic and operational governance and practice around the outcomes and experiences of children and families. Raising the bar on putting children and families first has resulted in getting greater corporate visibility and commitment to children's services, especially children's social care. This sits within the context of the DCS and our Lead Member and Chair of the MCPG taking a system leadership role to vigorously champion children both at the corporate and partnership boards, including Corporate Parenting.

The Council has also demonstrated commitment and ambition by significantly financially investing in Children's Care and Support by funding our 'Children's Improvement Programme'. This includes the Target Operating Model (TOM) for Children's Social Care including a Cabinet and Lead Member championed endorsement of a commitment to caseloads of 1:15. Good progress has been made in delivering the first phase of the Children's Improvement Programme in the last year, with all service restructures completed including a new Corporate Parenting and Permanence Service and Specialist Intervention Service. Our MCPG is fully supportive of the Improvement Programme and sighted on progress throughout the year.

Strengthened Council-commitment to Care Leavers being in suitable accommodation, improved housing offer and an increasing proportion are in education, training or employment. In July 2019, Cabinet agreed the enhanced Local Offer and Assembly agreed that Care Leavers resident in the borough will be exempted from Council Tax up to the age of 25, effective from April 2020. Our enhanced Local Offer and the exemption scheme were launched by the Chief Executive at the Care Leavers' annual awards ceremony held in

October 2019. The enhanced offers, alongside the Vulnerable Housing Panel (VHP) set up in 2019 and the multi agency NEET Panel are impacting on improving care leavers outcomes to above national, London and statistical neighbours.

Strong Virtual School achieving good outcomes. Our Virtual School is strong and demonstrating good outcomes in attainment, attendance, compliance and quality of PEPs. Children in care attainment at KS1, KS2 and GCSE is above the children in care national average, and overall absence from school and fixed-term exclusions for children in care remains below the national children in care averages. The majority of our children in care are in good or outstanding schools.

Strengthened strategic oversight and leadership to improve health outcomes for children in care and care leavers. There have been improvements both strategically and operationally in this priority area but with much still to do. Whilst a high proportion of children have up to date health assessments, initial health assessments has been a cause for concern. In 2019, we co-located the NELFT LAC Team with our social care team and a new IHA dashboard tracks timeliness and performance. We also set up a multi agency LAC Health sub-group chaired by the CCG tasked to improve health arrangements for LAC and Care Leavers. This sub-group reports to the Corporate Parenting Group. The CCG has also established a monthly LAC Quality Improvement Group. Performance on health assessments is improving

We recognise that health arrangements for care leavers still require improvement and are working on addressing health passports. The Health sub-group has been tasked to drive forward improvements in this area.

Most children are placed within family settings and placement stability is good and an improving picture. Placement stability - both short term and long term - has improved further in 2019/20. Short term placement stability improved with only 7% experiencing three plus placements during the year, compared to 10% in 2018/19. We are particularly pleased with the improved performance on long term placement stability improving from 66% to 73% over the last year, above target and higher than national, London and similar areas. This improvement is testament to the well regarded in-house fostering service utilising the successful Mockingbird Programme to help keep children in their placement.

Key achievements in 2019-20

The Fostering Service has increased the number of constellations from one to five during 2019/20, including one specialist Parent and Child constellation, which supports young parents who may or may not be children in care themselves, but their children are. The feedback from the Fostering Network is extremely positive and Barking and Dagenham's model is considered a national leader. There are no plans to increase the number of constellations in 2020/21 due to the impact on COVID-19, but in the latter part of 2021 a further two constellations are planned.

Larger, active and visible Children in Care Council. 'Skittlz' - our Children in Care Council - continues to help shape practice and influence decision-making, through our Member Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG) guided by the Council's 'Children in Care and Care Leaver Promises'.

A new Corporate Parenting and Permanence Service. The Fostering, Adoption and Permanence, Children in Care and Learn2Live Teams were formally restructured in 2019 into this new service which went live in April 2020. There are now four Corporate Parenting Teams responsible for children up until the age of 18 and two Leaving Care Teams responsible for Care Leavers aged 18 through to 25. This new service structure enables flexibility to transfer young people to a Leaving Care Advisor when the time is right for that young person, rather than being dictated by their age, will reduce transition points for children in care and deliver a more seamless and improved service to all of our children in care and care leavers. The service will have a clear focus on early permanence for children and improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers.

Adoption – successful and timely transfer to RAA. The assessment of adopters, family finding and post adoption support roles transferred to the Regional Adoption Agency (Adopt London East) in October 2019, but the Council still has responsibilities for approving adoption care plans and are responsible for the children up until their adoption orders are granted. These children are held within the Adoption and Permanence Team to ensure expertise is maintained for progressing adoption plans alongside ALE. (See separate ALE Annual Report).

Improved planning for children placed with parents. We have improved planning for children placed with parents, an Ofsted recommendation, through the oversight of the Permanence Taskforce set up in the summer of 2019. All children placed with parents were reviewed in 2019 and the placement with parent's assessment form has been redesigned and improved. Children placed with their parents are also reviewed at the monthly LAC Permanence Panel and we are reporting an increase in revocations. An audit of the quality of our arrangements reported that overall children were monitored well and planning had improved.

Priority focus on UASC. LBBDD have not yet reached the amended target set by the Government for the amount of UASC that we should be responsible for which is now 0.08% of the population (increased from 0.07%). It is recognised that many of these young people live in 16+ semi-independent accommodation, whereas a fostering arrangement might be more suitable for some. Due to the pressure on availability of foster placements for this age group, a focus next year will be a specific recruitment campaign to recruit carers who may be specifically interested in supporting young people who are UASC. This initiative has gained further impetus after a presentation at MGPG from a foster carer and 2 care leavers who were USAC and remain in Staying Put arrangements with the carer.

Promises to Children in Care and Care Leavers – evaluation of progress and outcomes in 2019/20

Promise 1: To make sure you get the best care

Good progress is being made and the MCPG is committed to making sure children in care and care leavers get the best care. We have improved representation at MCPG from Members and wider Council Departments to ensure a whole council approach to meeting our children and young people's needs, for example, Housing and Community Solutions.

In 2019/20, we have successfully relaunched and expanded our Children in Care Council - Skittlz - into two groups to comprise a wider age range - a 6 -13 and 14 - 21-year-old group. The Leaving Care team also have a cohort of young people with whom they regularly consult. The younger group has 16 members, and the older group 14, the largest representation we have had in over five years.

As a result of increased participation, children and young people have achieved a number of positive outcomes - examples include; communication skills, participating in consultations, planning activities (including the Takeover Day) and building their confidence. Key achievements over the past year included contributing to the development of the Council's neglect strategy, working with Public Health to address poor health outcomes, MCPG takeover day, and involvement in the London Children in Care Council for the first time. The Virtual School has secured participation in the Jack Petchey Awards Scheme, with Skittlz leading on allocating the awards.

We held a successful 'takeover' of MCPG in July 2019 by Skittlz members and Care Leavers. The 'Takeover' involved 13 children and young people and 10 professionals. Successful discussions in smaller groups enabled participants to work collaboratively to decide the focus of MCPG meetings for the following year. Topics such as support for care leavers, social workers, contact and health were chosen. Issues raised during this event are now agreed priorities. Young people feed into MCPG and attend every meeting to provide specific input around the themes identified in the takeover day.

We also hold annual Children in Care and Care Leavers Awards Ceremonies to celebrate the achievements and successes of our children. An annual Skittlz Summer and Christmas party also serves to celebrate success and in 2019 both events were attended by over 40 children in care and over 20 foster carers and professionals. In October 2019, the 6th Leaving Care Awards ceremony was also held. The event was very well attended and awards covered achievements in formal qualifications, apprenticeships, employment, volunteering, participation in groups and giving back to the community.

We formally consult with our children in care and care leavers through an Annual Survey, and although response rates continue to rise, our priority is to engage and consult with a larger number of children in care and care leavers in 2020/21. Survey findings in 2020 were overall positive with 90% of children in care aged 8-17 feeling listened to (comparable with 2019 and up from 85% in 2018); 92% telling us that they are able to contact their social worker (up from 65% in 2019); and 89% said they know how to make a complaint (up from 85% in 2018 but down on 2019 at 100%). One of the most significant improvements is a reduction in the number of social workers children (aged 8-17) had – only 8% had four or more social workers compared to 26% last year.

Frequent changes of social worker is one of the most significant issues that children in care regularly raise so this improvement is positive.

A MCPG meeting in November focused on hearing from our children and young people on what they want from their social worker. The output was a post-it list which included: kind, smart, helpful, friendly, be very calm and supportive. This feedback is incorporated into senior leadership priorities and work on our practice standards.

In 2019/20, a face to face consultation was undertaken with UASC focusing on education, health and housing. Results have been presented to MCPG and shared with the Technical Skills Academy to improve the ESOL offer and support.

In 2019/20, the IRO service has continued to strive to deliver a high quality service to our children in care despite having caseloads of around 73 children, above the recommendation of 50-70 children. The IRO service has been stable in 2019/20 enabling consistency for children and young people. A high percentage of children participate before and during their care planning review meetings and IROs are using a strength based conversational approach with children to build confidence in attending and chairing their reviews. Children in Care reviews are also timely and in 2019/20 performance improved for another year running increasing to 96% being held in statutory timescales.

In 2019/20, IROs have successfully continued to drive a child friendly review process working with our partners to ensure that the review meetings are focused on and celebrate the progress and success of our children. IROs encourage the participation of children in their Reviews and in some cases, children are supported to chair their Reviews. IROs continue to increase the monitoring and tracking activities between Reviews and ensure that the recording of their monitoring is visible on children's files.

IRO contribution to permanence planning for children has improved. The IRO Manager is part of the strategic Permanence Taskforce, enabling their views to be incorporated in the progress of permanence plans for our children directly with service leads who chair tracking meetings for children in need and child protection. In addition to dispute resolutions, this is an early opportunity to highlight where any drift or delay has been identified.

During 2019/20, there was a significant fall in the number of practice alerts being raised by IROs, demonstrating improved practice - 29 informal practice alerts and 43 formal alerts were raised compared to 102 informal disputes and 207 formal disputes in the previous year. Our senior IRO presented those findings and the IRO annual report to MCPG.

The Principal Social Worker after re-establishing the voice of the child practitioner group into a 'Lived experience of the Child' consultation forum is currently leading, together with the digital team, a project to increase child participation across the child's journey into service design, using a potential web-based platform. The initial budget for a discovery phase has recently been agreed, with the team due to report soon post consultation.

The PSW also facilitates a child practitioner forum, CSW forum and other settings where the reframing of corporate parenting, use of language and experiences of children in our care and leaving our care are discussed and built upon. One such innovation was to bring Lifelong Links into the borough for young people leaving our care to reconnect with their primary attachments. This service now sits within the Specialist Intervention Service in Care and Support.

Promise 2: To look after you and treat you well

Good progress is being made against this promise. The numbers of children coming into care via police protection reduced further in 2019/20 to 9% from 20%, but this is in the context of falling numbers nationally (London has fallen from 16% to 12%, National from 11% to 10% and similar areas from 21% to 16%).

Around 70% of children in care are placed within family settings and we are increasingly creative in our approach to maintain stability and on the cusp of care. The number of children placed in residential care has decreased slightly to 9% (36 children) at end of year 2019/20 compared to 9.4% (39 children) at the end of 2018/19. We have a lower proportion of children placed in residential care than national, London and similar areas. The number and proportion of children placed more than 20 miles from home increased slightly to 22% compared to 20% in the previous year. However, 78% of children live in the borough or in surrounding boroughs enabling them to maintain connections with school, family, and friends – a positive outcome.

During 2019/20, the local authority has prioritised permanence and has introduced a

monthly Permanence Strategic Taskforce that oversees the 'journey' of the child through Child in Need and Child Protection, Family Proceedings and Adoption. The majority of children in care have achieved permanence through 'matching' and long-term foster care, family finding and adoption, a return home to live with parents or relatives, and through court orders such as Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders being granted.

In 2019/20, 15 children achieved permanence through adoption (the same as 2018/19), representing 7% of all children leaving care - above London, but below the national and similar areas averages. 33 children (16%) had become subject to special guardianship orders (SGOs) same as 2018/19, and higher than all comparators. These are permanent care arrangements with reduced likelihood of breakdown compared to children who remain in long term care of the local authority.

The 2019/20 Adoption annual report sets out our adoption scorecard performance, which is now improving year on year, although we know children are still waiting too long to be placed for adoption and experience delay against national targets. Our adoption improvement has been recognised by the DfE and we are no longer on the adoption task force improvement radar. This is very positive. The Permanence Taskforce continues to keep oversight of adoption and the adoption scorecard indicators. Improving adoption timelessness remains a priority area.

Placement stability has continued to improve in the last year. Short term placement stability has improved with only 7% (29 children) experiencing three plus placements during the year, compared to 40 (10%) in 2018/19. Performance is good and better than all comparators.

We are pleased with the improved performance on long term placement stability improving from 66% to 73% over the last year, above target and higher than national, London and similar areas. This improvement is testament to the Mockingbird programme playing a significant role in maintaining placement stability, which has been presented at MCPG.

The feedback from carers and children and the Fostering Network are extremely positive and our model is considered a national leader. We continue to be creative and robust in our approach to ensuring placement stability, engaging with internal and external partners to support fragile placements early to prevent placement breakdown.

In 2019/20, we have also moved the sourcing of placements into a brokerage function to ensure we have the right placements for children and young people – with a focus on maximising and improving commissioning to be more strategic.

Our new Specialist Intervention Service is also designed to support placement stability through the offer of restorative and therapeutic interventions and lasting links work.

Good improvement is also evident in social workers staying in touch and visiting children in care regularly – 97% of children in care were visited every six weeks – up by 14% on last year and 99% were seen every three months (plus 1% on last year).

Compliance with Pathway Plans remains an area for improvement falling to 87% at the end 2019/20 compared to 94% in the previous year. Learning audits in 2019/20 demonstrates improvement in the quality of pathway plans, and evidence of care leaver's contribution and voice are stronger in Pathway Planning. Improving compliance, consistency and the quality of pathway plans remain priority areas for the new Corporate Parenting Service.

Promise 3: To keep you healthy

Improving health outcomes has been a top priority throughout 2019/20, an Ofsted recommendation. 87% of children in care had up to date health assessments at end of year compared to 92% in 2018/19. Performance was impacted upon due to COVID-19 with a high proportion of RHAs due in March 2020 not being completed by end of the reporting year. However, 87% remains in line with all other comparators.

The timeliness of initial health assessments (IHA) remains high priority for the DCS and senior leaders in the Council, CCG and NELFT. A range of actions have taken place in 2019/20 to address performance including the strategic decision to co-locate the NELFT children in care team with our social care team. To support this collaborative working, a new IHA performance dashboard has been produced on the Council's Liquid Logic system and data and activity is now live to ensure compliance and timescales being met.

The multi-agency LAC health sub-group chaired by the CCG has been tasked to drive improvement in health assessments and health arrangements for LAC and Care Leavers and the Zoning Meeting which tracks performance on IHAs and RHAs. This sub-group reports quarterly to the Corporate Parenting Group.

The CCG has also established a monthly LAC Quality Improvement Group covering all aspects of health assessments, including commissioned capacity and resolution of workforce risks.

The timeliness of initial health assessments improved to 26% at the end of 2019/20, and whilst an improvement is not good enough for our children and young people. We are pleased to report that the impact of actions taken are bearing fruit in 2020/21 with IHA timeliness significantly improving to 72% (end of August 2020).

As part of the health assessments, emotional issues are identified, and emotional wellbeing is monitored as part of the annual health check process. A good proportion of children in care return a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and the results of those SDQ scores show good performance. SDQ scores reduced from 12.8 to 12.5 and remain slightly below comparators. Work is underway to set up SDQ scoring on Liquid Logic and that all children who require SDQs have them completed in advance of IHAs and RHAs so that emotional wellbeing will be considered holistically alongside physical health. This means that changes in emotional health over time will also be more clearly tracked and appropriate provisions to support emotional wellbeing will be identified as part of the health assessment process.

We have significantly strengthened the relationship between the CAMHS Service and Children's Care and Support in 2019/20 through our monthly IJOC practice sessions led by the Operations Director and PSW.

Teaching sessions have been delivered and a CAMHS Hot Clinic is in place fortnightly where social workers can drop in and access CAMHS advice and support. This has resulted in an increase of referrals to CAMHS being progressed and dealt with in a timely way.

In addition, the CAMHS Transitions Group has been set up to look at pathways for young people transitioning from children to adults' mental health provisions. This group looks at the strategic changes that are required to ensure seamless transition, but also has individual cases discussions to tackle blockages and unpick 'what went wrong' in some situations.

A dedicated CAMHS worker has been appointed to work directly with a small number of children to ensure their needs are addressed within local CAMHS services liaising with services out of borough when necessary. This worker also offers support to foster carers and is developing alternative ways to engage children and young people with support for their emotional wellbeing.

The DCS is Chair of the 3-borough child health transformation meeting providing greater opportunity for local oversight of CAMHS transformation work.

We recognise that health arrangements for care leavers requires improvement and the MCPG are working on addressing health passports. The multi-agency Children in Care and Care Leavers Health sub-group reporting into the Corporate Parenting Group has been tasked to drive forward improvements in this area. LAC nurses are providing virtual meetings with Care Leavers to provide them with their health passports. Work is being undertaken to ensure that all future passports can be provided in an electronic version and that meetings are offered to go through the information if the young people want this to take place.

Promise 4: To get the best education

Our Virtual School is strong and demonstrating good outcomes in attainment, attendance, compliance, and quality of PEPs. Over 80% of school aged children in care have an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the quality of PEPs is improving.

The majority of our children in care are in good or outstanding schools. Absence from school remains below the borough average and fixed-term exclusions are below the national average.

At KS1, our students performed better than their national LAC peers in three out of the four subjects and by a huge 10%+ in maths and science. KS2 results are strong with our children in care outperforming their national looked after peers. 60% of our students achieved the expected standard in Reading and Maths compared to 37% nationally - placing us second in the country. Performance remains above the national average at Key Stage 4, which is a pleasing result considering that 22.5% of students have an Education, Health & Care Plan compared to 2.5% of all pupils in the borough.

Following the Ofsted inspection in February 2019, an external Peer Review of our Virtual School with a focus on young care leavers with more complex needs accessing EET was undertaken. The Peer Review reported that the quality of the virtual school tracking data at all key stages is good and that the virtual school has developed some effective partnerships. This has broadened the offer and motivated and inspired young people aged 16-18 years and care leavers. This supports services such as the apprenticeship network, university taster days, residential learning experiences and UCAS support meetings. The review reported that the

virtual school team place significant focus on the social and emotional well-being of children. This promotes attachment aware practice for designated teachers and interventions with schools. Pupil premium plus (PP+) is used flexibly to allow focus on children experiencing difficulties or to fund whole school training. Schools understand the impact of trauma and how to strengthen children's resilience and feelings of safety in school.

The following areas were raised as growth opportunities – improve the governance arrangements for the virtual school. The Virtual School in response to this has set out the terms of reference for a Management Committee. This has been presented to the Corporate Parenting Board and was approved this term. In the coming term, members of this Management Committee would be recruited in line with the recommendations.

The relationship between social workers and schools needs to be improved and joint training for social workers and designated teachers organised by the virtual school would be useful. This has now been actioned and every month a joint training is organised for Social Workers and Designated Teachers which is focused on supporting children in education using the ePEP.

There is no regular risk register meeting in the virtual school by which the team comes together to review high risk cases or alert each other to escalating concerns: This recommendation has been adopted by the Virtual School and a termly risk register meeting is now part of the Virtual Schools calendar and it is a forum to discuss high risk cases.

How we act to celebrate young people at the virtual school? The Virtual School has opted to use the current Children in Care Annual Awards ceremony to sponsor education awards and jointly celebrate children alongside the Social Work team to ensure that progress in education has a more prominent focus in the annual celebration event.

Promise 5: To be successful in life

In July 2019, Cabinet agreed the enhanced Local Offer and our Assembly agreed that Care Leavers resident in the borough will be exempted from Council Tax up to the age of 25, effective from April 2020. Our enhanced Local Offer and the exemption scheme were launched by the Chief Executive at the Care Leavers' annual awards ceremony held in October 2019.

The offer is on the LBBD website, which has been revamped to ensure easy navigation of information.

The proportion of care leavers living in suitable accommodation has continued to improve to 87% in 2019/20 compared to 81% in 2018/19 and is above all comparators. We have established a Vulnerable Housing Panel (VHP) to improve housing options for our care leavers. Care Leavers ready for independent move-on accommodation are presented to the VHP to consider appropriate housing options that will meet their needs. Children's Care and Support work in conjunction with the Housing Department to identify and facilitate planned moves, including the care leavers in discussions about the options available to them.

Care leavers are supported in a range of external semi-independent provision which is subject to a Commissioned Framework, and includes shared houses rented from the private sector with bespoke support packages if required. This framework ensures an appropriate, best-value service that delivers excellent outcomes for young people and ensures consistency in the quality of accommodation provided to young people. In 2019/20, a restructure of Adults and Children's Commissioning has resulted in additional resources to quality assure both providers in both Adult's and Children's Care and Support. Young people will also be visiting provisions with commissioning colleagues as part of the drive to improving the quality assurance process. This will be rolled out in 2020/21.

We are very proud of our care leavers in further and higher education and outcomes improved during 2019/20 and our keep in touch figures are over 90%. The multi-agency EET panel, comprising of representatives from the Virtual School, Job Shop, Apprenticeships and Careers Advisors, is having a positive impact - 63% of care leavers were in education, employment or training at the end of 2019/20 compared to 54% in 2018/19 and our best performance ever - above all comparators.

Our Virtual School supports care leavers in preparation for University through group activities, mentoring opportunities, and adventure weeks in different countries. This academic year, we have 20 care leavers who are at University and 4 care leavers graduated.

We have high aspirations for our care leavers and are committed to celebrating their achievements and ambitions. In October 2019, the 6th Leaving Care Awards ceremony was held. The event was very well attended and awards covered achievements in formal

qualifications, apprenticeships, employment, volunteering, participation in groups and giving back to the community.

New Town Culture is an ongoing collaboration between arts and social care agencies, funded between 2018 and 2020 by a London Borough of Culture award from the Mayor of London. A variety of activities were run during the year for 22 foster families and 48 foster children, 18 UASC and 33 Care Leavers which centred around feelings of identity and included making a film. The activities have been well received and further events were planned for 2020-21, but COVID-19 has had a significant impact on delivery and a delay in planning events that are COVID-19 safe.

A further four young people attended the trip to Ghana in summer 2019 and a further six attended a multi-national trip in Austria, offering them a unique experience of another country.

Our plans for the next 12 months – 2020/21

- **Leading and managing the recovery and legacy and new ways of working as a result of COVID-19.** Since March 2020, virtual visiting has effectively enabled social workers and Leaving Care Advisors to regularly contact children and young people. But feedback has been that face to face visits are still the preference of many children and young people. It is essential that all statutory visits revert back to face to face, but virtual means of communication can be used in addition to increase the frequency of contact with our young people in a more relaxed and informal way. This will hopefully improve the quality of relationships as set out in the relationship based-practice approach within the Local Authority. New ways of working will also be considered for other meetings such as health assessments where it is difficult to engage young people, as a way of improving representation at LAC reviews, PEP meetings for example.
- **All Elected Members to continue to be ambitious and passionate corporate parents. Embed the new Corporate Parenting and Permanence Service**, further strengthening Corporate Parenting, permanence and outcomes for LAC and Care Leavers.
- **Refresh the Corporate Parenting Strategy** by the end of the year.
- **Consult with a larger cohort of children in care and care leavers, including those placed further away.** Virtual ways of working during COVID-19 has enabled creative options for engagement and consultation with a larger number of children and young people, including those placed a considerable distance away from the borough. This is a top priority for 2020-21.
- **Strengthening participation in Reviews.** IRO's will engage children and young people more creatively to participate and/or chair their own reviews. This includes ensuring children and young people feel they are being listened to and feeding back children's views, wishes and feelings.
- **Implement Virtual School Peer Review opportunities** and continue to ensure education outcomes improve for children in care .
- **Maintain or further improve performance on placement stability.**
- **Ongoing focus on edge of care work and rehabilitation home** in order to ensure the right children are in care. This will be strengthened through the Specialist Intervention Service.

Page 54

- **A focus on unregulated 16+ placements; maintain fostering post 16 when placements can become fragile and increase foster care options for UASC.** A new fostering recruitment campaign is planned to recruit more foster carers who are willing to consider adolescents and UASC placements, so the reliance on 16+ provisions can reduce
- **Continue improvements in Care Leavers in Employment, Education and Training**, with a focus on older care leavers using cross-Council support and opportunities in challenging COVID-19 times.
- **Sign up to the Care Leavers Covenant** - engaging local businesses and ensuring a 'universal family' approach for our care leavers.
- **Continue to improve the housing offer to care leavers and ensure good performance in suitable accommodation.**
- **Improve and sustain performance on health assessments.** The foundations of improvement have already been laid for sustained improvement in performance, which has been due to a high level of collaboration between Health and the Local Authority. There are already significant signs of improvement in 2020-21.
- **Continue to improve the offer to support children and young people's emotional wellbeing.** Integrate the use of SDQs more holistically into the health assessments so emotional wellbeing is considered alongside physical health.
- **Continue to strive to improve health arrangements for care leavers.**
- **Deliver Lasting Links** with a Lifelong Links project worker working with care leavers supporting them in securing lifelong positive links to support their transitions beyond 25.
- **Listen to our Black and Asian children to understand their experiences of care** in the context of our ambition to drive forward the Black Lives Matter agenda.
- **Undertake inequalities data analysis** to help identify any inequalities including access to services and gaps in service provision; including LAC and Care Leavers.
- **Participate in the DfE Care Leavers Improvement two day visit** scheduled for November 2020.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 January 2021

Title: Disabilities Improvement Programme Report	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Clare Brutton, Head of Commissioning (Disabilities), Care and Support Commissioning, People and Resilience	Contact Details: E-mail: clare.brutton@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Chris Bush, Commissioning Director for Care and Support	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Elaine Allegretti, Director of People and Resilience	
<p>Summary</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has requested an update on some of the key issues affecting the Disability Service, and our response to those (as described in the recently created 'Disability Improvement Programme'). Through the Corporate Plan we describe, in high-level terms, our ambitions for our most vulnerable residents. The strategy made clear, amongst many other things, that we must change how we provide support to those living with a disability in our borough.</p> <p>The Disability Improvement Programme describes how we will deliver our ambitions as outlined in the Corporate Plan through a series of key workstreams. It articulates how we will seek to improve experiences and outcomes for our residents with a disability, whilst responding to growing demand, and how we may best get to grips with increasing cost pressures within the Disability Service. The improvement plan also illustrates the delivery mechanisms and governance of the programmes, and the financial implications – both in terms of one-off 'programme' costs, and the impact on revenue budgets – of doing so. This report provides an outline of the improvement programme for OSC to consider and comment upon and is accompanied by a short presentation to convey the key messages.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the contents of the Disability Improvement Programme; and (ii) Note the improvements and developments for those who receive services from Disability Care and Support, and our plans for the next 2 years. 	
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>Support for the Disability Improvement Programme will assist the council in fulfilling its statutory obligations to provide care and support for residents with a learning disability</p>	

and supports the intention of the Council's Vision and Priorities, including encouraging civic pride, enabling social responsibility and growing the borough.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Our Disability Service is facing unprecedented challenges. The entrenched needs of some of our residents, coupled with emerging risks to children are placing an ever-growing strain on a system that is increasingly unable to cope. The situation has been compounded by a growing, rapidly changing population that is pushing the existing system close to breaking point. To meet these challenges, we needed to consider how we can deliver services in a more efficient and cost-effective way.
- 1.2 Put simply: our population is growing – in both numbers and complexity of need - and this is placing significant pressure on existing service delivery models and generating enormous financial pressure. Doing nothing was not, and is not, an option.
- 1.3 Demand for Care and Support and services to support those living with a disability has been increasing – in some cases alarmingly – and this trend is predicted to continue. There has been a 40% increase in the number of children needing an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); an unprecedented growth that shows no sign of abating. Complexity of need is also increasing, as are those living with Autism and coping with a substance misuse problem.
- 1.4 Extensive conversations with our service users, parents, carers, and staff taught us many things, and the collective evidence confirms their views. They told us that:
 - Services are disjointed with limited synergy across education, health and/or education;
 - That there is not enough support for young people transitioning into adult services – with little in the way of vocational support or specialist ASD day services;
 - That accommodation options are limited for both young and older adults alike;
 - Day services are very traditional with little innovation nor do they run across weekends and evenings for adults; and
 - Currently there is not an all-age behavioural support service to work with families and providers to maintain a service user in the community if their behaviour was to become challenging.
- 1.5 These changes mean that many of our services are no longer fit-for-purpose, by either design or a simple inability to cope with the volume of demand. This is impacting upon quality of delivery (and, therefore, outcomes), but also challenges our ability to discharge some of our statutory duties and, in the case of the Disability Service, threatens our prospects of securing a good SEND OFSTED inspection result (with an inspection expected within the next 12-18 months).
- 1.6 In addition to this our current configuration of services, provision and approach stands little chance of arresting the rising demand in any meaningful way, and we are seeing this manifesting through significant overspends in the Disability Service, a position that is predicted to worsen.

1.7 To arrest this trajectory, change must be made. This was the case at the time that our strategy was written, and is even more the case now following the existing, and expected, impacts of the pandemic.

2. Improvement as part of Recovery and Legacy

2.1 We know that the impact of Covid-19 is being, and will continue to be, felt profoundly in Barking and Dagenham. A population that was battling with social, economic and health inequalities have seen these exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic. We are already seeing emergent evidence (though by no means incontrovertible) that poorer communities are being the hardest hit, and that is before the consequences of a predicted, deep recession.

2.2 Our communities, and in particular the most vulnerable residents within those communities, will need considerable, and in some cases long-term, support to recover from the effects of the pandemic and to weather the storm of an oncoming economic downturn: in short, it will take every ounce of community resilience; collaborative working; system leadership and creative thinking just to stand still. Set against our lofty ambitions for closing the equalities gap, improving the economic and health outcomes for our residents, and making Barking and Dagenham a great place to live, the challenge is stark.

2.3 The challenge of supporting our most vulnerable residents could not be more daunting: years of austerity leading to cuts in vital front line services – the very services that are now being called upon to lead the response to the pandemic – only serves to increase the difficulty of the task at hand. This is a sector that was sadly underprepared in resourcing and capacity terms. However, it is this very environment within which a range of creative and collaborative responses have emerged.

2.4 Work is ongoing within Care and Support to work through the long-term recovery and impact of Covid-19 on our residents, our operational models and our relationships with the community and our partners. We need to plan for the short to medium term as we expect another wave of Covid-19 in the new year and surges in demand for Adult Social Care services as the NHS moves towards resuming much of its business as usual activity. The closure of schools and other key services such as day centres, as well as the change in the way that both social work teams and providers have been operating has seen a significant impact on safeguarding referrals and 'line-of-sight' increasing both the immediate risk (as families are placed under increased stress from proximity and all that goes with it) as well as the medium-to-long term risk of a surge in activity. However, we must also construct a model of delivery for the future that takes the best of what we already have, builds on the creative solutions that have emerged through the pandemic so far, and discards legacy ways of working from the past that plainly have no place in the new world.

2.5 For Care and Support, this has lasting implications for shifting the focus of our resources from the hospital to the community, the way in which we work with the community to deliver social care and our future social work practice, including the role that care technology plays.

3. The Disability Improvement Programme

- 3.1 To respond to these challenges, the Disability Improvement Programme was created. The programme brings together our plans into a single package of improvement work. These plans have been co-produced with core staff in Care and Support and in consultation with residents and service users (in some cases). This co-design of services will be at the heart of all future development and is a core principle of our improvement activity.
- 3.2 The workstreams of the disability programme, and the purpose of each workstream, is described below.

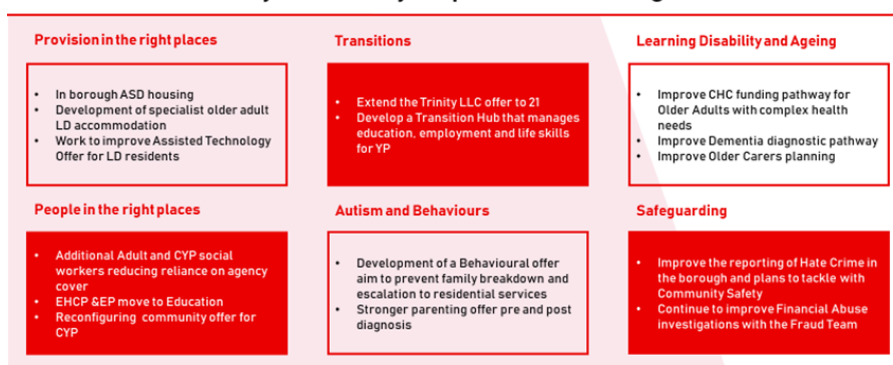
Disabilities Improvement Programme Workstreams

- **Provision in the Right Places:** Ensure that the correct services, that meet current and predicted needs, are in place to improve outcomes and reduce forecast financial pressure through prevention.
 - **People in the Right Places:** Sufficiently resource the correct parts of the system, moving staff around to deliver a properly integrated response.
 - **Getting Transitions Right:** Improving the pathway and support for children and young people with SEND/LD to become independent adults.
 - **Autism and Behaviours that Challenge:** Recommissioning services to respond to the growing pressure that this cohort is placing on the system and improving their outcomes.
 - **Learning Disabilities and Aging:** Improving the dementia pathway, securing appropriate housing options and effective planning for death.
 - **Safeguarding:** Reviewing our Safeguarding Partnership arrangements to ensure that we are clearly responding to the risk in our community.
- 3.3 The accompanying presentation, which will be made to OSC, delves into more detail on each of these workstreams and allows an opportunity for further expansion, and discussion.

4. Benefits and outcomes

- 4.1 To understand whether the programme is working, a bespoke outcomes framework has been developed and is embedded in the Council's Single Performance Framework. This framework sets out the key indicators with a set of success criteria for each outcome to demonstrate what is improving and what is working well throughout the life of the programme. It does not replace the existing performance management framework and is not inclusive of all key performance indicators across the service.
- 4.2 In addition to the intended, specific, and measurable outcomes there are also a cluster of other key benefits that we expect to realise from the programme, as follows:

Benefits summary: Disability Improvement Programme



one borough; one community; no one left behind

**Barking &
Dagenham**

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Improvement Programme was developed in consultation with service users, operational staff, and commissioners. It was extensively discussed with Senior Officers (through Corporate Strategy Group – who endorsed the programme in July 2020) and presented to PIR Members Group in September 2020.

6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Finance

- 6.1 The Disability Care and Support service has been under severe financial pressure for many years – not just in our borough but across the national health and social care system. This is the result of a number of intertwined factors including demographic changes and rising numbers of Adults and Children living with severe disabilities, increasing complexity of need and changed expectations and the rising costs of care (driven in term by increasing labour and property costs.) This resulted in an overspend of £5.2m at the end of 2019/20.
- 6.2 Considerable growth funding (£4.8m) was put into the budget for 2020/21. However, these upwards trends have continued – and have been somewhat worsened by the impact of Covid so that the service is once again forecasting an overspend of £4.8m for this current financial year. The service work with finance to undertake a regular medium-term forecast exercise and this shows a likely forecast increase of expenditure from £24.7m in 2019/20 to £33.9m in 2022/23.
- 6.3 These are services that the Council has a statutory and moral obligation to provide for its most vulnerable residents and the factors driving costs up are largely external to the organisation. This means that expenditure is difficult to reduce significantly through short term management action and so this service represents one of the biggest financial risks to the Council. However, such high levels of year-on-year growth are likely to outstrip any available funding and will become unsustainable. Therefore, deeper, and longer-term strategies to promote independence and resilience and to develop and manage the care market are vitally important.
- 6.4 The Disabilities Improvement Programme has been developed partly in response to this need. There are three main strands of financial implications. Firstly, an initial

investment in the programme is required to ensure successful delivery. Cabinet on 20th October approved funding of £0.727m for Programme Management and related implementation costs across Adults, Disabilities and Mental Health, to be funded from the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts.

- 6.5 The PID shows that revenue investment in the service is also required. Additional staffing is required to deliver the statutory service safely based on the increasing numbers of service users and some new service offers to support a more preventative and approach. It is estimated that this additional requirement will be in the region of £1.5m and this will be written into the MTFS subject to final validation and agreement of the phasing requirement.
- 6.6 Thirdly the PID does include some measures to reduce the cost to the Council. These include the impact of the new preventative model, new provision such as a potential Supporting Living unit at Brocklebank, and improved business processes ensuring that client and continuing health care contributions are received. These are currently forecast as in the region of £1.5m but will also be subject to validation.
- 6.7 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy and 2021/22 budget are currently under development and will include the final new investment and savings targets agreed with the Commissioners and Operational Services in line with the strategies set out in this PID.

7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks, Deputy Head of Law

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Disability Service Improvement Programme Presentation

Appendix 1

People and Resilience

**Barking &
Dagenham**

The Disability Service Improvement Programme

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Authors:

Clare Brutton (Head of Commissioning – Disabilities and Health)

January 2021

one borough; one community; no one left behind

1. Setting the scene: why change?

The need for change

Through the work to develop our Improvement Programmes and the PIR Strategy, service users, parents, staff taught us many things, and the collective evidence confirms their views.

- That residents want to be safe, independent and live their lives with their families and communities;
- There is not enough help earlier. This leads to crisis management and reactive service delivery that is costly, not good for achieving positive outcomes and outside of communities;
- We need more specialist provision to meet fast growing and changing community needs including autism, behaviour that challenges and complex physical disability;
- Transition at all life stages, but especially from childhood to adulthood was one of the most important things for achieving independence and positive life chances and this needed to be much better and work for residents and staff;
- Children, families and adults want to tell their story once, have simplified and modern ways of accessing services and support, and to work together without barriers across community, provision, services and professional boundaries.

The need for change (cont.)

- Projected increase of 45% in those aged 60-69 over the next 10 years, with hospital admissions set to increase by 25% over the same period
- 16% increase in completed Crisis Intervention packages in 2019/20; 10% growth in nursing placements as complexity increases
- 40% increase in the number of children on EHCP plans – an unprecedented growth that shows no sign of abating, with increasing complexity of need

Page 64

Increasing numbers of ASD and Substance Misuse service users – with demand for Mental Health services expected to rocket

- 1 in 4 people between 64 -75 years and half of over 75's live alone in Barking and Dagenham. 1 in 3 carers above 65 years reported social isolation
- Our Design In Social Care Project told us that families are confused by our processes; Healthwatch feedback mirrors this
- Significant financial pressures – forecast to increase in the coming years

Our population is growing – in both numbers *and* complexity of need. This is placing significant pressure on existing service delivery models and generating enormous financial pressure that will continue. To arrest this trajectory, change was already required.

And then...

one borough; one community; no one left behind

**Barking &
Dagenham**

...the pandemic happened

Page 65

We are still only beginning to fully understand the impact of the pandemic on our residents and, by extension, our plans for the future. Whilst it does not look good, there are opportunities as well.

There are however some things that we *think* we do know...

- Structural inequalities have been exacerbated: inequality existed previously, but Covid-19 has magnified and exacerbated it to the extent we run the risk of wiping out the equalities progress we have made.
- Demand will surge in the short term, and may continue to increase: hospital discharges and demand for Mental Health services are likely to increase, as are other elements of need as the impacts of the recession are felt.
- We can be confident as a system leader: the local authority can seize this role as an enabler and orchestrator of change, not just a service provider
- Digital is essential: our digital capabilities made a lot of this possible. The digital disadvantage faced by some of our residents now puts them at further disadvantage to accessing services and opportunities
- Necessity is the mother of all invention: there are many examples of joined up work and innovation that we must build upon for the future.

How this is impacting on the services

Disabilities

- Lack of community provision often means that cases escalate into statutory services as no means of containing and supporting
- Unprecedented levels of demand and complexity – which continues to grow
- Extensive pressure across all budget lines totaling circa. £6m.
- Small numbers of complex children's placements costing a lot (£1.4m)
- Significant pressure associated with packages for adults with learning disabilities (£3.8m)

2. The response: the Disability Improvement Programme

...we are not starting from scratch...

This isn't the beginning, but rather a staging-post on the development – and improvements – that have been underway for 12-months. These plans build on that progress, and set the direction of travel for the next two years.

Page 68

Adults and Disabilities Improvement Boards are well established.

Barking and Dagenham Delivery Group established

We started a different dialogue with the community and voluntary sector

We received support from Mutual Ventures to explore the possibility of a mutual arrangement in Disabilities – learning has shaped the PID

Our Stories project was the beginning of our new model of social work (strengths and asset based)

We undertook significant informal consultation and co-production with Disabilities staff on the future of the service which has informed the PID

Our business process/income maximisation project improved our income and financial forecasting

We have implementation Panels to manage package costs and improve housing options

Adults and Mental Health ended up at a near 'break even' position at year end

one borough; one community; no one left behind

**Barking &
Dagenham**

Disabilities Programme Summary

Scope: Social Care Teams (Disability); Transitions; EHCP and EP; Education Support; SEND Transport; SEND/Autism

Provision in the Right Places: ensure that the correct services, that meet current and predicted needs, are in place to improve outcomes and reduce forecast financial pressure through prevention.

People in the Right Places: sufficiently resource the correct parts of the system, moving staff around to be deliver a properly integrated response.

Getting Transitions Right: improving the pathway and support for children and young people with SEND/LD to become independent adults.

Autism and Behaviours that Challenge: recommissioning services to respond to the growing pressure that this cohort is placing on the system, and improving their outcomes.

Learning Disabilities and Aging: improving the dementia pathway, securing appropriate housing options and effective planning for death.

Safeguarding: reviewing our Safeguarding Partnership arrangements to ensure that we are clearly responding to the risk in our community.

3. The impact: expected benefits and outcomes

Critical Success Factors: Intended Outcomes

Disabilities

- Better quality financially sustainable of Disability Services.
- Earlier interventions in place having a positive impact on demand
- Better, more integrated services with Health.
- A new service offer in place that is multi-disciplinary and multi-agency.
- Practice Framework in place tested through improved QA.
- New Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements in place.
- Renegotiated s75 agreement in place
- Improved outcomes (tracked through the SPF)

Benefits summary: Disability Improvement Programme

Provision in the right places

- In borough ASD housing
- Development of specialist older adult LD accommodation
- Work to improve Assisted Technology Offer for LD residents

Transitions

- Extend the Trinity LLC offer to 21
- Develop a Transition Hub that manages education, employment and life skills for YP

Learning Disability and Ageing

- Improve CHC funding pathway for Older Adults with complex health needs
- Improve Dementia diagnostic pathway
- Improve Older Carers planning

Page 72

People in the right places

- Additional Adult and CYP social workers reducing reliance on agency cover
- EHCP & EP move to Education
- Reconfiguring community offer for CYP

Autism and Behaviours

- Development of a Behavioural offer aim to prevent family breakdown and escalation to residential services
- Stronger parenting offer pre and post diagnosis

Safeguarding

- Improve the reporting of Hate Crime in the borough and plans to tackle with Community Safety
- Continue to improve Financial Abuse investigations with the Fraud Team

End

This page is intentionally left blank

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 January 2021

Title: Report requested by recommendation 7 of A2020 Scrutiny Review	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Vikki Rix, Head of Performance and Intelligence, Children's Care and Support, Commissioning, People and Resilience	Contact Details: Tel: 0208 227 2564 E-mail: Vikki.Rix@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Directors: Chris Bush; Commissioning Director for Children's Care and Support; April Bald; Operational Director for Children's Care and Support	
Accountable Strategic Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director for People and Resilience	
Summary	
<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has requested an overview of how children's social care cases move through the Children's Social Care system so that the complexities of managing this demand can be subject to scrutiny and understood.</p> <p>In response to this request (Recommendation 7) "The Committee's 2020/21 Work Programme include an item which facilitates further consideration of the end-to-end process for Children's Care and Support (from early help to placement) so that the complexities of managing this demand can be subject to scrutiny and understood, and progress reviewed", a short presentation has been produced with a data snapshot as end of October 2020/21 that shows a) how cases move through the system; and b) the volumes applied to each part of the process. This will be presented at OSC on 6 January 2021.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note the covering report and appended workflow presentation.	
Reason(s)	
This has been produced in response to the OSC request related to Recommendation 7.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has requested an overview of how children's social care cases move through the Children's Social Care system so that the complexities of managing this demand can be subject to scrutiny and

understood. This request relates to the OSC Recommendation 7 - "The Committee's 2020/21 Work Programme include an item which facilitates further consideration of the end-to-end process for Children's Care and Support (from early help to placement) so that the complexities of managing this demand can be subject to scrutiny and understood, and progress reviewed."

- 1.2 In response to this request, a short presentation has been produced showing a) how cases move through the system; and b) the volumes applied to each part of the process. Data included is year to date up to end of October 2020/21. This is set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 This will be presented at OSC on 6 January 2021.

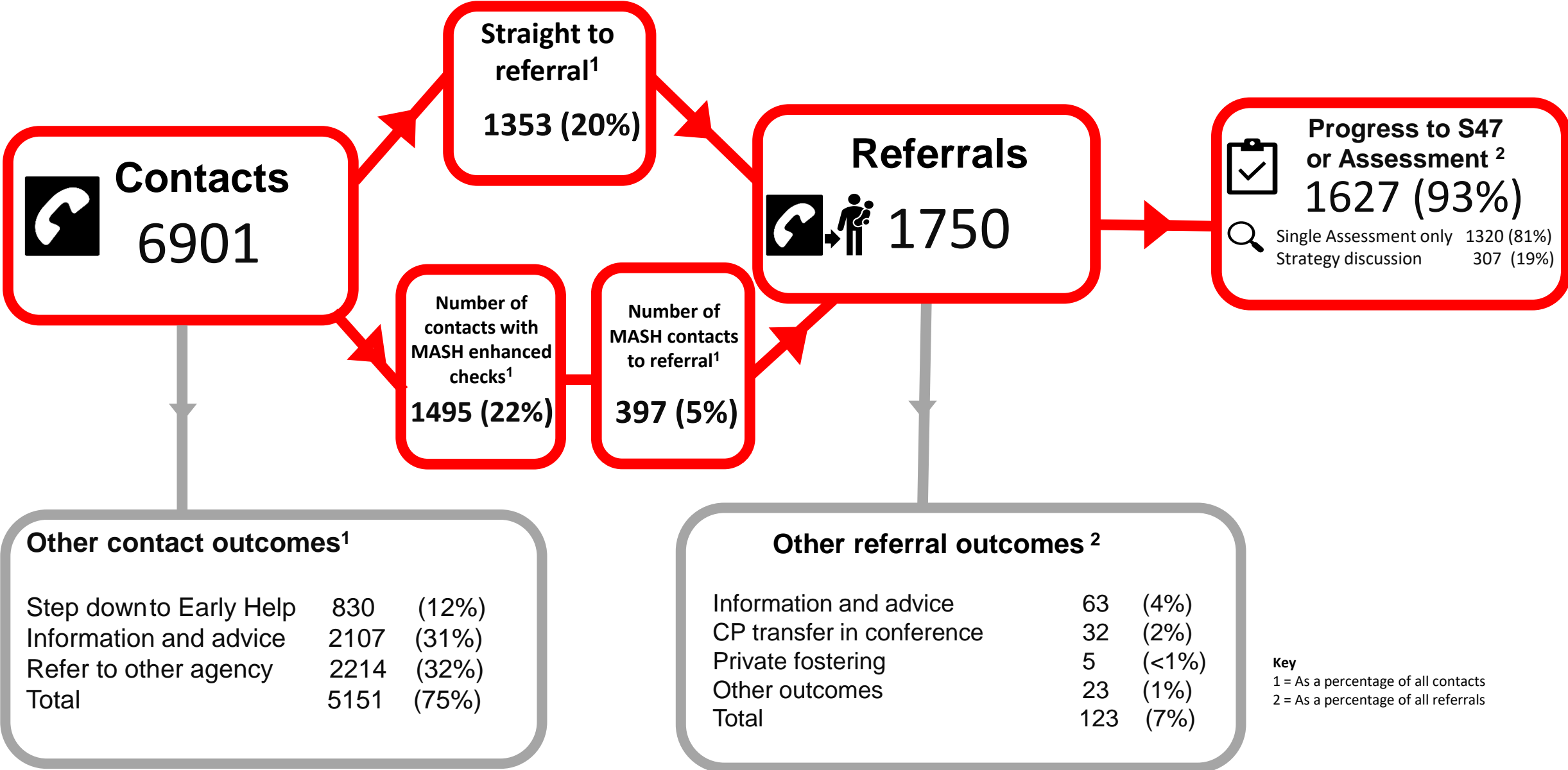
Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: Presentation on the Children's Social Care Workflow

Children's Social care contact and referral flow chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021

Page 77



Contacts
6901

Straight to referral¹
1353 (20%)

Referrals
1750

Progress to S47 or Assessment²
1627 (93%)

- Single Assessment only 1320 (81%)
- Strategy discussion 307 (19%)

Number of contacts with MASH enhanced checks¹
1495 (22%)

Number of MASH contacts to referral¹
397 (5%)

Other contact outcomes¹


Step down to Early Help	830	(12%)
Information and advice	2107	(31%)
Refer to other agency	2214	(32%)
Total	5151	(75%)

Other referral outcomes²

Information and advice	63	(4%)
CP transfer in conference	32	(2%)
Private fostering	5	(<1%)
Other outcomes	23	(1%)
Total	123	(7%)

Key
1 = As a percentage of all contacts
2 = As a percentage of all referrals

S47 and Assessment outcome chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021



Section 47 investigations
523



Assessments completed
2058

Further action required

Child Protection conference	222 (42%)
Continue with single assessment only	226 (43%)
Total	448 (85%)

Closure/Other outcomes

No further action	35 (7%)
Other outcomes	40 (8%)
Total	75 (15%)

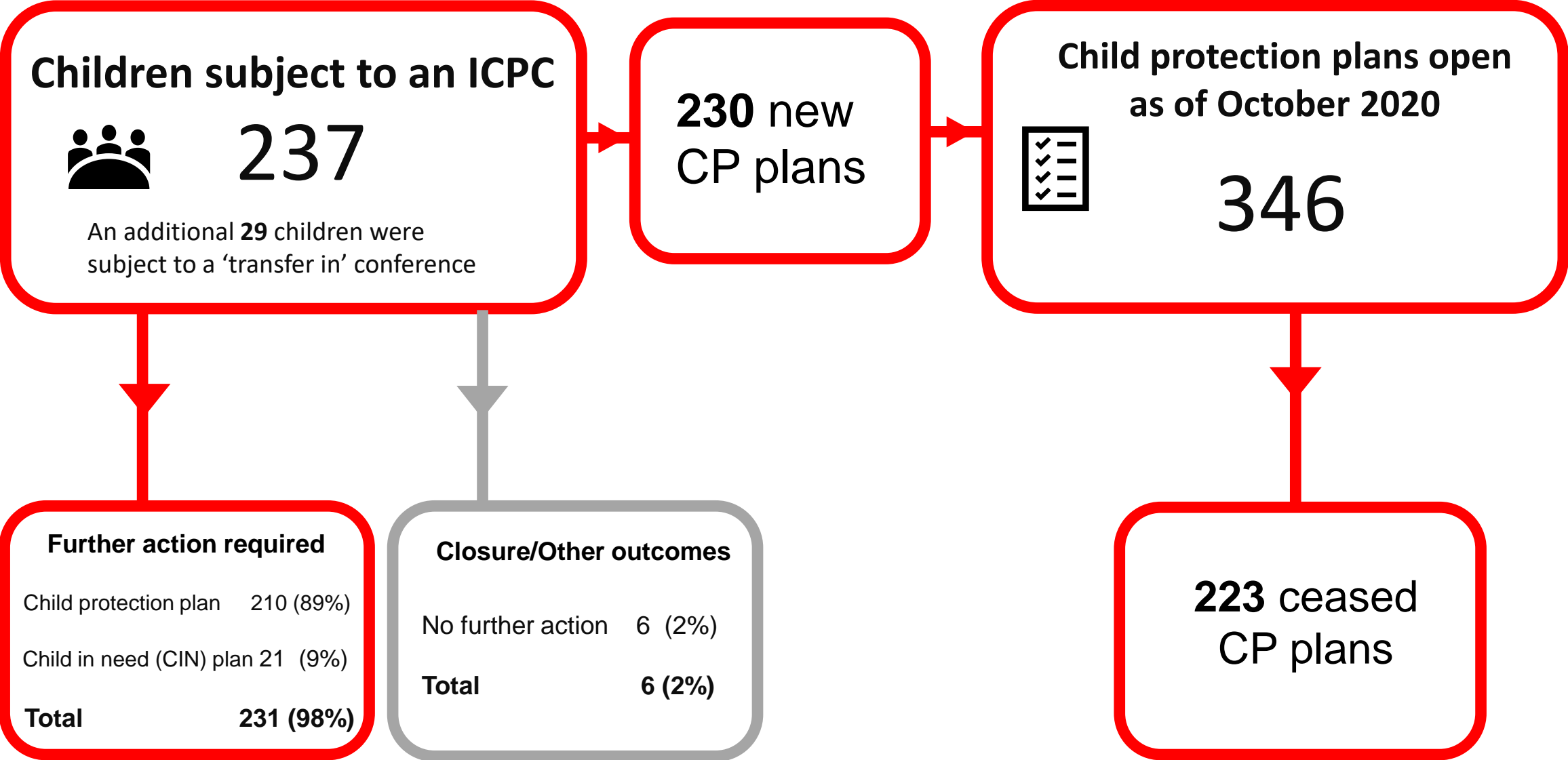
Further action required

CIN plan update	464 (23%)
Continuing work (CP / CIN / CLA)	403 (20%)
Legal Action	8 (<1%)
Specialist assessment	7 (<1%)
Strategy discussion	64 (3%)
Total	946 (46%)

Closure/other outcomes

Information and Advice	88 (4%)
Referral to Early help	270 (13%)
Refer to other agency	97 (5%)
No further action	657 (32%)
Total	1112 (54%)

Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) and Child Protection chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021



Children in Need chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021

Children In Need as of
October 2020



1255

347 new CIN
plans



Of which **677** are
on a Child in Need
plan

358 ceased CIN
plans of which
116 (32%) were
stepped down to
Early Help

Looked after Children flow chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021

95 children entering care

Page 81



Looked after children as of October 2020

383



Of which 35 (9%) are Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

118 children left care

Adoption 6 (5%)

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) 17 (14%)

Remained with Foster carers (Staying put) 23 (19%)

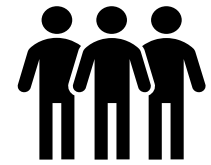
Returned home 34 (29%)

Moved into Semi-independent Accommodation 28 (24%)

Other 12 (10%)

Care Leaver flow chart - year to date as at end of October 2020/2021

62 new care leavers



Care Leavers (aged 18-25) as of October 2020

281

26 care leavers closed



Of which 96 (34%) are former Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme 2020/21

Officers must ensure reports are cleared by the relevant internal board and include legal and financial implications at least

Meeting	Agenda Items	Officer(s)	Cabinet Member/Presenter	CSG Deadline	Governance Service's Deadline
26 January (Extraordinary Meeting)	Covid-19 Financial update: Savings	Philip Gregory	Cllr Twomey and other relevant Cabinet Members	17 December	10am, Thursday 14 January
3 February	Response Times and Clear Up Rates with the Borough Commander OneView: Use, Governance, Ethics & Transparency Work Programme	Andy Opie Pye Nyunt and Mark Fowler Masuma Ahmed	Cllr Mullane Cllr Ashraf	14 January	10am, Friday 22 January
3 March	General progress update regarding A2020 Scrutiny Recommendations – KLOE 4 Report requested by recommendation 13 of A2020 Scrutiny Review – Impact of change to Reside's eligibility threshold	Graeme Cooke Mark Tyson Kristian Melgaard, Reside	Cllr Geddes Cllr Geddes	14 January	10am, Friday 19 February

	Work Programme	Masuma Ahmed			
31 March	Supporting elderly residents – 1) reducing isolation 2) support when discharged from hospital	Elaine Allegretti	Cllr Worby	11 February	10am, Friday 19 March
	Recovering from the impact on education outcomes of Covid-19	Jane Hargreaves	Cllr Carpenter		
	Working with residents affected by Capital Works	Lisa Keating/Kain Roach/Rob Smith	Cllr Geddes		
	Work Programme	Masuma Ahmed			
12 May	Probation Services (to include reoffending)	Andy Opie	Cllr Mullane	8 April	10am, Friday 30 April
	Children's Care and Support: i. MASH Annual Report and update ii. Early Help update on Ofsted Improvement Plan	Elaine Allegretti	Cllr Worby		
	Progress update on recommendations 3, 4 and 5 of the Improving Household Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Scrutiny Review	Lisa Keating and Andy Opie	Cllr Ghani and Cllr Mullane		
	Work Programme	Masuma Ahmed			

<p><i>First meeting of 2021/22 - 9 June 2021</i></p>	<p>Air Quality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Update on implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan including recommendation made at 9 Sept 2020 meeting – TBC ii. Report requested by recommendation 22 of A2020 Scrutiny Review – TBC 	<p>Chris Banks/ Neil Pearce</p> <p>Graeme Cooke</p>	<p>Cllr Mullane Cllr Geddes</p>	<p>13 May</p>	<p>10am, Friday 28 May</p>
--	---	---	-------------------------------------	---------------	----------------------------

This page is intentionally left blank