Addressing the Financial Challenge in LBBD: Children’s Services

December 2014

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Final Draft
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Executive Summary

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) is facing a very real financial and operational challenge. The current levels of demand within the system and related expenditure are unsustainable, driven by increasing demand, a complex profile of need, and a lack of workforce capacity and stability.

Our hypothesis is that this is compounded by limited capacity to ensure that cases receive the attention they require to be supported through to closure. As a consequence, the demand within the system continues to swell, and the application of thresholds is distorted towards child protection as there is a lack of confidence in the system that CiN cases will receive timely and adequate attention and support.

LBBD is doing a number of the right things to support system change and address the impact of the aforementioned issues, including building the Early Help Pathway and focusing on the recruitment of permanent staff. However, at the same time the current savings options proposed are not aligned to the longer term sustainability of the service.

This report sets out a number of recommendations for LBBD to progress. In order to future-proof Children’s Services and LBBD, a borough-wide programme of whole-system change is required. We have set out three opportunity areas in the main body of this report, namely:

• The expanding and targeting of Early Help, to ensure a targeting of those families not currently touching Early Help.
• Secondly, a re-design of the child’s journey, to address the inappropriate demand within Child Protection and a greater role for Early Help in working with CiN cases outside of social care. This is designed to reduce the work within social care, including assessments, tackle drift, and enable families to benefit from direct support.
• Finally we endorse the service’s efforts with regards to recruitment, but this must accompany strengthening a positive culture within LBBD children’s social care.

These initiatives will deliver some benefits in the short-term, however, the Council must recognise that full benefits realisation will take up to three years, and it is important that the service is able to demonstrate progress and provide assurance regarding progress and deliverability.

Alongside these initiatives are a number of supporting enablers which we have outlined in the report; these include a need to outline the service vision, a corporate commitment to demand management, and the need for support and capacity to deliver the programme and support the service at a strategic level.

Whilst some of the foundations are in place, the capacity to support & deliver change on this scale is slim
## Scope of this report

iMPOWER were commissioned by London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) to review the current response to the financial and demand pressures facing LBBD and to work with the Council to identify potential opportunities to address their financial and demand challenges. This report coincides with the development of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy.

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<th>Where these are addressed</th>
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<td>Review and critically evaluate LBBD current options</td>
<td>Slides 9 to 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyse the current volumes of activity, workflow and expenditure in Children’s Social Care, and identify opportunities for savings through key changes in processes, practice and provision.</td>
<td>Slide 23, Appendix</td>
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<td>Identify opportunities for cultural change within Children’s Services and behavioural change with service users to assist in achieving savings.</td>
<td>Slide 25 to 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the extent to which the approach to financial planning corporately is sufficiently attuned to the challenges arising from a rising population in the borough</td>
<td>Slides 21, 22, 35, 36</td>
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The content of this report has devised collated from desk top analysis of performance and budget information and a workflow analysis exercise. The scope of opportunity development was agreed in a group discussion attended by the Chief Finance Officer, Director of Children’s Services and Assistant Directors; this was followed up in a series of 1:1 interviews.
Section A

Understanding your situation
The current financial context

As part of the development of its medium term financial strategy (MTFS) LBBD has to identify and deliver £53m to £55m of savings over the next three years. These savings represent a 32% budget reduction from £165m to £111m. For Children’s Services growth funding of £4m has been secured for 2015/16.

The 2014/15 budget for children’s services in LBBD is £61.8m, however, current pressures could lead to a possible overspend in children’s services of £4.6m by the end of the financial year. In previous years, the budget overspend was addressed by a flexible use of reserves and government grants.

Children’s Services realise the urgency of the situation and have developed a series of options to reduce pressure on current expenditure, in addition to building on the strengths of Early Help Offer. However, the context of increasing demand pressures on the system mean that the financial proposals are insufficient and they don’t go far enough in terms of genuine transformation.

The system is under extreme pressure, the environment within which it was developed has changed, and it will need to be more agile and responsive in the future. Short term initiatives identified by LBBD can address some financial pressures, but ultimately a whole-system view should be taken to design a service that is affordable and sustainable in the longer term.

National context for children’s services:
As a consequence of the current austerity measures, all local authorities are having to significantly reduce the resource requirement for their services. Where many of the easier savings options and cuts have already been taken, Councils are now having to take a much more transformational approach if they are to be affordable and sustainable for the future.
To do this, authorities need to not only address the cost of supplying or delivering services, but work to proactively reduce demand. Our clients are planning to deliver savings of up to 30% by preventing demand, reducing inappropriate demand, and responding to demand in more effective or innovative ways. This can only be achieved through whole-system transformation, tackling demand through behaviour change, and preventative spend that delivers a return on investment.
Within Children’s Services we need to ensure that achievement of savings does not increase the risk to (or impact outcomes for) children and families. An understanding of system structures, workflows and behaviours is crucial if children's’ services are to have any chance of reducing demand and costs in the current financial climate. Cutting services may feel like the more deliverable option for reducing budget pressures, however, this can lead to unforeseen consequences which cost more in the long term.
A sustainable system focused on prevention & permanence

This diagram illustrates, conceptually, how resources can be shifted within children’s services to achieve savings and an affordable, sustainable budget. The core principles include reducing the work that takes place within social care and ensuring that universal and early help services are driving a reduction in demand.

As is: Elongated child’s journey, poor outcomes and high cost to the system

Better use of universal resources to complete early targeted work with children & families

More targeted activity – specifically focused on the needs that lead to children becoming ‘Looked After’

Multi-Agency to reduce inappropriate demand

Driving planning & permanency

Increase the availability of permanency options including internal placement provision

As is

Universal services

Early help

Entry

Care and support

Permanency and exit

To be:

Universal & Universal Plus

Early Help

(Targeted) Early help

Entry

Care and support

Permanency and exit

Savings

To be: Emphasis on a safeguarding and early help, better outcomes, reduced cost to the system
**Net budgets across the child’s journey**

This diagram illustrates how the controllable net budget has been split across the child’s journey into the separate service areas. LBBD is broadly inline with how resources are allocated on a national basis. However, as authorities are looking to transform they are looking to shift resources from social care and placements through expanding and targeting the Early Help offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget (£’000)</th>
<th>Education, early years and youth service</th>
<th>Safeguarding early intervention and commissioning</th>
<th>Social care and complex needs</th>
<th>Management and Central</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,663</td>
<td>7,109</td>
<td>£29,085</td>
<td>3,670</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of overall net controllable budget</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranking of budget spend against statistical neighbours</td>
<td>In the lowest third</td>
<td>In the middle third</td>
<td>In the middle third</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Families</td>
<td>Number of 10-19 year olds from the 2011 census: 58,400</td>
<td>Number of CIN: 4,456</td>
<td>Number of CP cases: 352</td>
<td>Number of CIN: 392.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services provided</td>
<td>• School estates and organisations • Attendance service • Education inclusion • School improvement • 14-19 education and training • Adult college</td>
<td>• Children’s centres • Commissioning and safeguarding management • Performance. statistics, research and analysis • quality and reviews • CAMHS • Information sharing and assessment • Commissioning and health and wellbeing • Catering services</td>
<td>• Care management • Community educational psychology • Children with disabilities • Placement service • prevention (family group conferencing, crisis intervention, and restorative justice teams • Learn to live • Assessment and MASH • Education, Health and Care Plans</td>
<td>• Capital costs • Central support costs • Other management costs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment of LBBD’s current radical saving proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LBBD’s proposed saving options</th>
<th>Estimated impact (£k)</th>
<th>iMPOWER Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Alter caseload levels to above 1:20 leading to an immediate reduction in agency staff and staffing structure</strong></td>
<td>£500k/£1m Full year, caseload of 21/22</td>
<td>• Altering caseloads so that the staff to CIN ratio becomes even more exaggerated would affect the time that each social worker would be able to spend working with each case. LBBD’s latest Ofsted report raises this as something that LBBD are already struggling with: ‘Some children in need and some who are looked after wait too long to be seen and spoken with by a social worker, which affects the timeliness of assessing and addressing their needs’.    • High caseloads per staff member will not help in attracting high quality social workers    • Current caseload ratios are already under pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Refuse to meet NRPF demands at current levels and immediate move to monthly spend limits</strong></td>
<td>£50k</td>
<td>• This is a consistent challenge for a number of boroughs.    • Legal risk of judicial review if refuse to meet demand.    • Need to stem the flow, and work with the Home Office to manage cases out of the existing system.    • Other authorities are building targeted reduction plans to tackle this issue and making a short term investment in resource to reduce the number of cases in the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Refuse to fund beyond agreed contract with legal services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• This will not provide sustainable cashable savings for the Council budget as a whole    • Critical to have good relationships with legal and courts to support work of children’s services.    • The review of legal processes and expenditure should be used to highlight potential to reduce cost.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **4. Stop all case audit activity**  
*Not all services are being evaluated through audit. This means the local authority does not yet have a full understanding of the impact all services have on children*  
Ofsted 2014 inspection | £70k | • As Ofsted highlights, stopping audits will mean that LBBD do not have a clear understanding of workflows across the system. This understanding is crucial if they are to design a service that is flexible to meeting the frequent changes in the local demographics.    • Audit is critical to the quality of work delivered with children.    • There is also a recruitment and retention risk associated with this option; with no case audit activity LBBD may become perceived as a bad place to work.    • Rather than stopping audit activity it can be used as a tool to ensure the right cases are in the right place in the system. |
| **5. Stop all tier 2 family services and delete family support posts**  
The range of services targeted at children who are on the edge of care are effective and make a positive difference in many individual cases. Family group conferencing supports children and families well. Ofsted 2014 inspection | £1.2m cost reduction brought | • The latest Ofsted inspection listed tier 2 support as a particular strength of LBBD.    • Only 1 in 10 tier 2 cases escalates to tier 3. The risk attached to this option is that there will not be services in place that prevent demand from escalating to tier 3 or 4. |
## Assessment of LBBD’s recommended short/medium term actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LBBD’s proposed saving options</th>
<th>Estimated impact (£k)</th>
<th>iMPOWER Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **6. Freeze the following posts and save the following amounts:** | £470k | • An assessment of the impact on service delivery (prior to deletion of posts) is required, including an assessment of the impact of the pressure on other staff and areas in the system and potential retention risk.  
• This may be a short term solution, but longer term LBBD should focus on ensuring the service has the right allocation of resources across the service rather than alleviating pressures within social care at the expense of early help and intervention services. |
| - family support worker post (£50,000) | | |
| - SEN strategic post (£20,000) | | |
| - educational psychologist post (£60,000) | | |
| - early years and school improvement vacancies (£340,000) | | |
| **7. Reductions in agency forecast** | £200k | • LBBD have 46 FTE agency social workers which makes up 35% of the SW team. This is high when you compare this figure to the average percentage for the UK: 12%  
• However a thorough plan needs to be behind how this will be achieved. and how the workload can be transitioned.  
• The service impact risk of reducing agency staffing if permanent staff are not filling the posts must be assessed.  
• Estimated £3.3k per month saving if achieved Jan to March per staff member. On this basis there would be no replacement staffing. |
| - Target of reducing agency staff by 10 each month | | |
| **8. Reductions in legal forecast** | £150k | • Legal costs continue to increase year on year.  
• A plan needs to be behind how these savings will be achieved.  
• Support and demand management techniques will need to be employed to reduce demand/address behaviour that drives unnecessary use of legal services. |
| **9. Health contribution to complex placements** | £250k | • Should be explored to ensure that all contributions are obtained.  
• A plan needs to be behind how this will be achieved.  
• There may be broader approaches to reducing placement expenditure, including strengthening controls on placement commissioning. |
| **10. Housing offer being developed to encourage long term permanent staff** | Enabler | • This offers a powerful incentive to potential recruits, and acts as a differentiator to other authorities; essential in the current competitive market for social workers.  
• Visibility of these scheme needs to be increased and this will be partly achieved by the newly implemented ‘landing’ web page  
• The business cases for the scheme needs to be tested to understand the costs the authority.  
• The opportunity can be used to attract temporary staff to take a permanent post. |
| **11. Working with churches and community organisations** | Not set | • LBBD needs to specify how they plan to work with these community organisations and churches and how this will help to relieve the pressure on the current budgets.  
• Capacity limitations within the VCS in LBBD are considerable, yet acknowledged. |
## Assessment of LBBD’s recommended short/medium term actions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LBBD’s proposed saving options</th>
<th>Estimated impact (£k)</th>
<th>iMPOWER Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Stop all transport for children of non-statutory school age and stop all escorts for children attending schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>• It may be more sustainable to manage demand and expectations rather than cut services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Reduce placement costs by 1%</td>
<td>£170k</td>
<td>• This is a reasonable target; preventing escalation of need would be an effective way to manage placement caseloads and costs • A thorough plan needs to be behind how this will be achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. CIN proposal</td>
<td>£500k</td>
<td>• LBBD have recently implemented the MASH, and are proposing to implement more robust thresholds for non urgent referrals • A further review of this savings proposal would need to take place in order to access test the targeted savings, this includes actions to support/ strengthen this proposal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment of options

The diagram below maps out the financial impact of each of LBBD's current proposed options, and where these options sit on a scale of deliverability and risk. Our assessment is that LBBD should not progress the options on the table, and but that children’s services scope the financial impact of some of the initiatives current underway and re-focus on more appropriate medium-term budget recovery opportunities.

- **Do not Progress**
- **Review potential to mitigate risk**
- **Assess potential to increase deliverability**
- **Progress**

= size of circle equates to the size of the immediate financial savings for each option.
## Alternative short term options

Through our discussions with you and desktop review we would flag the following areas of focus in the short term. Some of these actions are already underway but we would recommend that the financial benefits are quantified and the activity is accelerated wherever possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>What would enable this to happen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children in Need (CiN) Caseloads</strong></td>
<td>CiN audit to enable those cases that can be closed to contribute to reduction in caseloads. This would also enable those families where risk is escalating to be identified and worked with. This could be extended to CP cases given the high proportion of cases and limited case closures that have taken place.</td>
<td>May require additional temporary resource to undertake audits or resource staff on a temporary basis to delivery of audits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Care - Processes and Procedures</strong></td>
<td>With a high proportion of agency staffing and limited organisational knowledge, staff would be supported by having clear, set out processes and procedures to follow. This may enable staff to feel more supported, reduce re-work and unproductive use of time.</td>
<td>Resource allocated to collate guidance and map processes. IROs as a coaching and supporting approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Care - step down to Early Help</strong></td>
<td>Review of open cases in order to ensure cases that can be stepped down are passed to Early Help. Use the stability and strength of Early Help service to reduce pressure on Social Care.</td>
<td>Clear processes are in place, however, there is a need to build knowledge and confidence in the approach (linked to the above) IROs to support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal</strong></td>
<td>Following the review of legal processes currently in train the service should quantify the financial impact of implementing the recommendations. Potential opportunities would be to strengthen the controls in place prior to passing cases to legal, avoiding re-work, tracking officer resources. Supporting the implementation of recommendations should be feedback and training opportunities for staff to support changes to ways of working.</td>
<td>Court Officer resource Allocation of resource to support communication and training with staff. The new threshold of care planning meeting is in place and acts as a control through to legal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NRPF</strong></td>
<td>Progress the action plan, track impact and quantify the financial impact of tackling NRPF demand. Tackle existing and potential new demand through tightening gatekeeping, Implement models similar to Lewisham at front door and ensure any backlog in existing cases can be unblocked. Develop a tracker and actively monitor the impact</td>
<td>Performance tracking May benefit from resource to tackle existing cases, e.g. conduct human rights assessments, UK Border Agency and fraud prevention on site support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Placements</strong></td>
<td>Tighten control on placement commissioning. Tackle existing placements and risk of drift through a high cost placement review</td>
<td>Before placements are signed off costs must be provided to senior officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workforce</strong></td>
<td>Continue work underway on recruitment and retention strategy including the targeting of temporary staff to transition to permanent.</td>
<td>Identify an invest to save case if additional resource would enable benefits to be realised earlier.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Recommendations

We have reviewed the proposed options for savings, and conclude that they largely outline structural changes, service cuts or reductions. The options are focused on short-term issues which are driving LBBD’s budgetary pressures. These must be addressed, but it is also important to ensure financial sustainability of the model, and this will require an approach to tackling the significant demand pressured on the service and changing current behaviours of staff, partners and families themselves.

We recommend that LBBD work to deliver a series of options that:
• Are more sustainable;
• Will not have an adverse impact on other areas of delivery;
• Have a positive impact on outcomes, and;
• Focus on demand management and behaviour change.

Furthermore, we believe that:
• LBBD have an approach to generating savings that is consistent with most authorities; a common challenge is the identification, quantification and delivery planning for longer-term savings within the constraints of the MTFS and budgeting processes.
• In order to proceed with ambitious transformation-led targets, children’s services frequently have to build confidence in the viability of transformational proposals as well as in their ability to delivery them. This applies in LBBD.
• LBBD’s radical options have been proposed in response to a need for quick-fixes and a focus on short-term pressure. As a consequence a number of savings pose longer-term risks.
• Although the MTFS carries a three-year outlook, the savings proposal focus on the immediate term, and understandably on managing the current financial pressure. An MTFS should take into account the impact of demand over the longer term and how this will influence the expenditure of available resources rather than focus on the achievement of savings.
• Whilst reducing the pressure is essential in order to secure affordability in the future, the service needs to also develop its approach for the medium term and beyond, in order to avoid being in the same position in the next budgeting cycle.
• Whilst it may be a challenge gaining support, children’s services should also consider whether longer-term savings opportunities require investment in order to optimise the level of savings, and this should be factored into financial planning.
Section B

Trends and Challenges
The challenge

LBBD faces a significant challenge in managing demand and resources efficiently in a borough with a rapid population increase. The Borough has also experienced fast changing demographic mix of the area and an exceptional pressure of rising demand in complex needs.

The following figures represent the scale of increase in demand for LBBD over the last few years. These figures raised a series of questions about the reasons for such an increase in demand in particular areas of the system, such as the ever increasing number of children with Child Protection plans. It is these factors that have prompted the service to propose budgetary growth within the MTFS.

The scale of the challenge in LBBD is much greater than the majority of other authorities, however, other authorities are having to reduce their budgets by 25% to 30% over the next three years. Where this is being achieved is with the recognition that the current configuration of services is no longer aligned to the demand profile and adequately managing those demand pressures.

- Population growth of 29% in the last 10 years, 54% increase in 0-4s
- 74% increase in real term increase in open social care cases
- LAC increase of 19% since 2008
- 89% increase in the number of children with CP plans since 2008
- 79% increase in the number of S47 since 2008
- High caseload per staff member
- High number of LAC per 10,000
- Challenge of domestic violence and homelessness- 60% increase in homelessness approaches in the last 12 months
- Whilst only 1 in ten cases open in tier 2 escalate to tier 3, 85% of cases that are referred into social care are not known by tier 2 services.
- Impact of the relative increase in poverty
- Local challenge of no recourse to public funds (93 cases)
How does LB Barking and Dagenham compare to others?

We frequently come across local authorities who are struggling to manage their demand. Currently many are experiencing a spike in referrals which is placing pressure on the front door and social care.

As noted in the previous slide, demographic growth is a particular pressure for LBBD, however, when comparing population increase against cost, it is clear that there are other factors in play.

There are a number of factors which can influence an increase in demand:

- A genuine increase in families reaching the point of crisis as a result of increasing pressures driving an escalation in need and risk
- Poor understanding and application of thresholds
- A lack of partner confidence in Early Help services
- A reluctance of partners to hold and work directly with cases
- A change in the population so that services are no longer in tune with the profile of need or designed to maximise access by the families who need early support most.
- A lack or perceived lack thereof of alternative provision

We understand from children’s services that social work in Barking and Dagenham is challenging and that the levels of need are comparatively high. However, if Barking and Dagenham do not address behaviours, costs may continue to rise with demand at a rapid rate year on year. This includes the behaviours of families themselves as well as partners and staff.

Data Sources:

- **Cost**: Appendix E cost increase of £3,200,000 since 2012/13 (£61,613,000-£3,200,000= £58,413,000. 58,413,000 as a percentage of 2014 budget)
- **Population Increase**: Setting the scene—demand and pressures (1.7% annual increase)
How can children’s services produce significant savings?

As previously stated, Barking and Dagenham are not alone in the financial challenge they face. As a sector, children’s services are looking to shift the expenditure on protection towards prevention as an important opportunity for children’s services to reduce cost by proactively managing demand. However, focussing resource on prevention requires effective targeting of resource to ensure it is generating a return on investment.

2012-13 England children’s spend: protection v prevention

- **Quite a lot of money is spent on prevention services** – usually 25-40% of children’s budgets.
- Most councils underestimate this figure – often ‘hidden’ under a ‘statutory’ label.
- How can savings be extracted from this budget when prevention is a huge legal and reputational risk?

- **Challenge care thresholds?** – *Risky / Low likelihood of payback.* Most are appropriate (some are too low!). OFSTED risk
- **Reduce social work staff?** – *False economy.* National shortage of quality social work staff. Overall Need more contact time with families, not less. Hiring back expensive and hard. CP costs going up anyway
- **Reduce placement costs?** – *Worth pursuing but limited in medium term* Commission better; fully utilise paid-for places, more in house foster carers – definitely worth doing but budget likely to continue to rise from LAC pressures
- **OR - save money on prevention. Cut – or Invest?**
Demand is preventable if tackled effectively

We know from our work in other authorities that demand is preventable, however, to achieve this preventative expenditure must be targeted in the right way.

Avoidable demand by authority and type (iMPOWER and service data and case reviews)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of demand</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>MBC (a)</th>
<th>MBC (b)</th>
<th>MBC (c)</th>
<th>London borough (a)</th>
<th>London borough (b)</th>
<th>London borough (c)</th>
<th>County council (a)</th>
<th>County council (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looked after children (LAC)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15-30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection Plans (CPP)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children in Need (CIN)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals to social care (NFA)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>AT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Early Help’ is not having a strong enough impact on demand
What are LBBD already doing to prevent demand?

The work of the ISOS partnership highlighted that in comparison to other similar authorities, LBBD has a lower rate of children within social care per 10,000 and a low percentage of children re-referred to social care, potentially as a reflection of the impact of Early Help and that these families are well supported when they are “stepped down” to tier two. LBBD have an appetite to address demand pressures whilst improving outcomes. Listed below are sixteen areas where LBBD are demonstrating positive behaviour listed in their most recent Ofsted report and discussions with iMPOWER:

- Early help supports a large number of children and their families. Good early provision of support for young people requiring services
- Help and prevention services are responsive for families diverse needs
- Good effective range of service supporting those who are on the edge of care
- Social workers are inventive and considerate in the way they engage with children
- Care leavers feel well prepared for leaving care
- Creative care packages
- Strong work in Children’s centres and support networks
- Good high end relationships with social workers
- Recent introduction of MASH
- Strong front door services are a strength
- Continuing to source innovative methods to reduce demand and costs
- NFPF work
- Threshold of care planning meeting
- CIN case reviews
- Cultural change work underway
- Work underway on procedures

In addition to the above LBBD has introduced a clear quality framework for Early Help that will support the system to understand demand and continue to learn and develop with respect to how we work with families. There are clear processes in place and a strong performance framework that is critical to a strong Early Help approach.

Furthermore progress is being made at a partnership level, with the launch of the GP pilot, active engagement in the multi-agency pathway and sign up to action taking place within the LSCB.

The engagement of supporting resource to progress recruitment of staff is also bringing expertise to the service in order to enable it to stand out in a competitive market. We have confidence that the initiatives underway will yield a significant return on investment.
### Barriers to progress and savings delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Recommended Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid increase in population</td>
<td>• Rapid rise in demand on all tiers in LBBD’s Children’s Services which consequently puts pressure on staff and efficiencies</td>
<td>• Focus on understanding the drivers of a demand increase that has outstripped population increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant change of local demographics</td>
<td>• Services need to constantly adapt to manage the demand pressures created by varying populations.</td>
<td>• Aligned to the above, undertake needs assessment and perform gap analysis against existing services • Undertake engagement with cohorts of families to co-produce service design and optimise access by those who need it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of a common narrative and vision.</td>
<td>• Without a common “naming” and understanding of the change required it will continue to be challenging to move forward with transformation</td>
<td>• Our experience of children’s transformation has taught us the difference it makes when there is a shared agenda between the corporate centre and children’s services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce instability</td>
<td>• The child’s journey is affected as the child see’s frequent social workers and consequently may not be given the chance to build strong relationships. • It is challenging to achieve long term sustainable change without a stable workforce. • Quality of work suffers as organisational memory is lost. • It is challenging to create a positive, supportive culture with motivated staff where there are high levels of temporary staffing.</td>
<td>• Progress workforce and recruitment and retention strategy, including the investment in developing the value proposition to prospective employees, including potential conversion of agency staff. • Support the recruitment approach through improvements to supporting processes • Track the impact of recruitment initiatives, including retention within the process, capture feedback, including exit interviews to feed into organisational change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofsted reported that LBBD had a strong front door but unclear thresholds</td>
<td>• Unnecessary referrals – 35% of level three police referrals to social care were referrals that could have been more effectively handled in early help. • High number of referrals meaning that a significant amount of time is spent conducting assessments. Assessment timeframes are under pressure leading to delay in working with families</td>
<td>• Feedback to referring agencies, • Supported threshold training through LSCB • Referrer survey to understanding application of thresholds and confidence in Early Help. • A detailed analysis of the spike in CP rates is currently being undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High proportion of agency staff</td>
<td>• Expensive for the council • Hard to embed change • Lack of organisational memory with regards to process</td>
<td>• Tackle current lack of organisational memory • Focused strategy to reduce pressure on social care through reduction of cases • Targeted recruitment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Barriers to progress and savings delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Recommended Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not targeting the correct families (or enough families)</td>
<td>• Too many families are developing complex and multiple needs</td>
<td>• Gap analysis of services against presenting needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only 1 in 10 cases on a CAF escalate to social care but 85% of those</td>
<td>• Higher than necessary demand on social care</td>
<td>• Engagement with families to identify opportunities to strengthen engagement</td>
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<td>entering at tier 3 have not previously been on a CAF. There are</td>
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<td>families that are bypassing the early help system for whom their needs</td>
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<td>may be prevented from escalating.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Too many families are developing complex and multiple needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Higher than necessary demand on social care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not working collaboratively with both internal services and other</td>
<td>• High caseloads (as cases are not stepped down from social care)</td>
<td>• Corporate response to tackling demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services outside of the council</td>
<td>• Overspend and tensions between services as a result of competition</td>
<td>• Cross Council engagement in gap analysis.</td>
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<td>for resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Approach to developing future model is done in silos and therefore</td>
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<td></td>
<td>limited potential impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tight timeframe to come up with financial savings</td>
<td>• Due to pressure to reduce overspend as soon as possible, plans were</td>
<td>• Identification of initiatives where invest to save required and determine clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-LBBD are predicting an overspend of £4.65m in 2014/15.</td>
<td>rushed and the options are focused on cuts.</td>
<td>business case.</td>
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<td>• Revisit initiatives underway, such as workforce and link to reduction of</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>budget pressure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genuine transformation is challenging as the focus is on the immediate</td>
<td>• It is important to note that this is a problem that all local</td>
<td>• In line with corporate priorities establish a roadmap for delivery of the vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>term</td>
<td>authorities encounter.</td>
<td>for the service</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The challenge of balancing risk of unsettling established system.</td>
<td>• Afford the time out for senior management to develop this vision</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Ensure the programme infrastructure can be put in place to support delivery.</td>
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<td>• Ensure there is capacity and capability to deliver a change of this scale.</td>
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# Highlights from our workflow analysis

As part of the review, we have undertaken workflow analysis on cases that have been open to social care in the period from 31 October 2013 to 1 November 2014. The data enables us to get a picture of the activity preceding and following each stage of the child’s journey and helps to identify inefficiencies or unproductive staff activity within the system. The workflow analysis is including in the appendix, however, Our analysis of the data (based on the assumption that data is an accurate representation of activity) gives rise to the following two significant hypotheses:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
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| • There is a low number of cases closing in comparison to the number of cases entering the system  
  • (2351 contacts and 572 closures) | **System drift**  
  • This may indicate drift in the system as the volume of cases coming in, social work time is being focused on assessments and not on successfully closing down cases.  
  • This would be exacerbated by the high level of CP cases |
| • CiN is a low percentage outcome for assessments;  
  • a high proportion of assessments go on to have a strategy discussion. (31%).  
  • However, 60% of CiN cases arise as a result of step down from a CPC.  
  • Only 42% of Section 47s progress to ICPC | **Inappropriate Child Protection**  
  • There may be inappropriate child protection cases in the system. Possible explanations could be that the risk level of cases is emphasised to ensure case attention which may be limited for CiN cases due to caseload pressures.  
  • Many CiN cases seem to step down from a high level of need assessment (ICPC, assessment, S47), this signifies that theses cases may have been referred to these previous assessments unnecessarily. This may indicate a problem with thresholds in LBBBD where they are conducting an unnecessary number of S47s. |
Section C

Potential opportunities for improvement
Savings Opportunities

Based on the intelligence gleaned from LBBD’s data, workflow analysis and our various conversations with key stakeholders; highlight the following three potential opportunity areas to make sustainable savings. These opportunities are aimed at supporting sustainable transformation of the service and are supplementary to the proposed medium/long term efficiency plans:

1. Expanding and targeting Early Help
2. Improving the child’s journey
3. Workforce

It is important to note that all three of these options are interlinked and complimentary with one another. However we have divided them into three separate options to illustrate the benefits associated with addressing various individual issues.

Implementation of these savings is estimated to deliver between £2.7m and £4m over the next three years if adequately supported.
Opportunity A: Expanding and targeting of Early Help

### Cost Drivers
- Reduce CP caseload
- Address domestic abuse issues
- Reduced number of children entering social care

### Relevant to LBBD
CP numbers have increased by 43% since the previous financial year. We know that at Tier 2 services are working well with the families they work with. (only 1 in 10 cases escalates). We also know that there are a significant cohort of families that enter at Tier 3 that are not accessing Early Help. Our discussion with the children’s team has highlighted the high prevalence of domestic violence issues. LBBD can build on the strength of existing early help provision, including the Early Help pathway that has been rolled out. The new Early Help performance and quality framework will be key to building accountability into Early Help, critical to embedding behaviour change and achieving a lasting impact.

### Timescale
- Gap Analysis - January to March 15
- Target Early Help Offer - next 6 months
- Domestic Violence initiative - Longer term

### Budget in Scope
- Education, early years and Youth Services (£3,663k)
- Safeguarding, early intervention and commissioning (£7,109)

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<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Potential suggestion / solution</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
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</table>
| Targeting Families: Gap Analysis on the Early Help Model Model redesign. Child Sexual Exploitation | • Identify cohorts that are entering the system and undertake needs analysis.  
• Identify those families that are not engaging with Early Help and entering directly into social care.  
• Map out existing provision across, the council and partners  
• Undertake gap analysis against presenting needs.  
• Gain an understanding from case reviews and engagement with those families to understand what alternative approaches may have prevented need from escalating.  
• Through co-production with families, design an alternative  
• (Essex, Reading, Hertfordshire are all examples of Councils that have taken this approach) | • Need to encourage families who may not have engaged with children’s centres to access early help  
• Target services that will influence individuals to change harmful or risky behaviours, e.g. domestic violence in order to tackle the root cause of demand. |
**Opportunity A: Expanding and targeting of Early Help**

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<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Potential suggestion / solution</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Capacity of Early Help to work</td>
<td>• Strengthen the Early Help model through building capacity/ capability to avoid unnecessary referrals to Social Care. • Focus early help to work intensively with CiN cases in order that social care focuses on child protection and drift and escalation of CiN cases is avoided. • This would shrink the work within social care but also enable the work to be delivered at a lower cost • In the short term would need to ensure any issues preventing step down of cases were unblocked.</td>
<td>• Social workers actively step down cases to early help • Thresholds applied consistently to ensure cases worked in right service. • Families to engage with early help outside of statutory intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CiN cases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continue to develop partner role in Early</td>
<td>• Ensure that partners are delivering the work within early help in order to maximise capacity across the whole system and not place an over-reliance on Council services. • A starting point may be a referrer survey, launched through the LSCB which would improve understanding of partner behaviour in referring to social care and support the identification of ways to influence behaviour as well as support partnership conversations. • Additional work with partners to clarify thresholds, partner responsibilities within early help should support the development of the Early Help offer.</td>
<td>• Consistent and correct application of thresholds • Build confidence in the wider Early Help System • Early Help solutions sought where there is no immediate safeguarding risk • All multi-agency workers take responsibility for working with families rather than passing on the case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on issues of domestic violence as a</td>
<td>• Domestic violence is a critical issue to be tackled if LBBD are to address the root cause of demand. In strengthening the Early Help Offer this requires a system leadership approach by the Council. • As an issue this cannot be tackled within children’s services alone and will require a corporate and partnership approach to comprehensively address the issue. • Develop a multi-agency response to domestic violence • Pilot new approaches and targeted initiatives. • MINDSPACE? Behavioural science technique. A proven theory of change that looks at innovative ways to changing behaviour. • <a href="http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/tackling_violence_strategy.pdf">http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/tackling_violence_strategy.pdf</a></td>
<td>• Giving a voice to those who are victims of domestic violence. • Tackling perpetrator behaviour • Targeting the drivers behind domestic violence • Collaborative working between departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on issues of CSE as a partnership</td>
<td>• Encourage schools and community organisations to have a significant role in identifying CSE • Develop a multi-agency response to CSE within the Early Help Offer and Pathway • Develop a programme to tackle the issue such as Safe and Sound Derby: <a href="http://www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk/">http://www.safeandsoundderby.co.uk/</a></td>
<td>• Collaborative working between departments • Tackling perpetrator behaviour • Supporting victims to access help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our recommendation for improvement

Based on the insight we have developed through work with clients, we believe that the best route to transformation is a three-phased approach. LBBD already have some of the building blocks in place, however, the next steps are to commission focus the investment in the right places.

**Creating the infrastructure**
- Understanding the current demand and issues in the system
- A strong multi-agency strategy and governance, based on an understanding of strategic priorities and objectives
- Accountability structures from strategic performance down to individual families
- Performance frameworks to measure demand and the impact of services

**Making the most of current investment**
- Clarifying the financial strategy and investment
- Designing, commissioning and decommissioning services based on (inter)national best practice and local requirements – targeting root causes
- Creating the flexibility to commission based on local trends and needs
- Developing systems and processes for information sharing, identification and targeting of families

**Influencing the wider system**
- Creating an effective multi-agency pathway and front door
- Negotiating for re-targeting of partner resources
- Designing integrated, multi-agency services and finance structures – using locality models where appropriate
- Supporting and challenging universal services to take a greater role in identification and prevention

Principles:
- Transparency and clarity of aims and approach
- Decisions and design based on good evidence and data
- Focused on addressing root causes
- Flexibility and responsiveness of services, based on local need
- Ensuring sustainability

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### Implementation requirements
- Common agreement on approach
- Senior Management sponsorship of programme of change
- Commissioning/ business analyst resource to undertake gap analysis
- Access to relevant data and information
- Resource to support and coordinate engagement with families in design of new offer.
- Potential additional resource to support system whilst transition to early help takes place.
- Resource to conduct, and analyse survey and scope recommendations
- Training and development of materials to support threshold initiatives (potential for LSCB backing)

### Financial Benefits
- Achievement of a 25% reduction in demand over three years, would enable LBBD to reduce the workforce, especially the reliance on agency staffing.
- We would recommend that this approach is used to manage down the overspend in year one and then to save £2m-£2.5m in years 2 and three. This takes into account that some savings may need to be reinvested to support targeted interventions through Early Help.

### Non Financial Benefits
- Address the family’s needs before they progress to child protection or needing to become looked after
- Tackle root causes of entry into LAC and becoming a case of CP, leading to improved outcomes
- Children are supported within the community
- Intensive interventions can enable family resilience longer term and reduce the time which cases are within social care.

### Timescale for Benefits Realisation
We would estimate a 3 to 6 month timeframe for reduction in referrals to social care, this would then continue on a downward trend. A reduction in work within social care can happen as soon as cases are stepped down, a reduction in the level of need as a result of the preventative impact of a better targeted early help offer will take place within a year of implementation.

### Risks
- Cost savings are reliant on a stable workforce in social care stepping down cases to Early Help
- Families may chose not to engage with Early Help services
- Staff across early Help services will need to be positive towards the changes
## Opportunity B: Improving the child’s journey

### Cost Drivers Relevant to LBBD

- Reduce system inefficiencies
- Reduce assessment rates
- Reduce CP caseloads

- Over 5 years there has been a considerable increase in the number of child protection procedures, indicating an actual or perceived increase in risk.
- The spike in section 47s is recent with a doubling between 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- Workflow analysis tells us that Child protection is becoming the default in LBBD and that cases are drifting within the system with limited step down.
- There are clear inconsistencies with referrals into the MASH with only 35% of police referrals becoming a tier 3 service

### Timescale

- Scope to address this immediately with regards to process and thresholds
- System change to commence within six months

### Budget in Scope

Complex Needs and Social Care budget £29,085k

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Potential suggestion / solution</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Thresholds** | • A change in the way that partners are applying thresholds may be in part a reason for the increase in referrals, this may also be linked to changes in presenting needs which may mean application is less consistent.  
• There is an opportunity to both understand the behaviours that are driving the referrals and also to work with the LSCB and partners to improve the application of thresholds | • A key element to changing behaviour will be supporting staff and partners to feel safe and confident in the system.  
• Ensuring provision of feedback following contact with the front door will support the reinforcement of behaviours |
| **System inefficiencies** | • Ensure that processes and procedures are made clear to all staff and that staff are supported to understand key processes, including step down from social care. | • Encourage compliance with existing procedures.  
• Remove duplication of work, re-work and avoidable delays. |

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Page 30
Opportunity B: Improving the child’s journey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Potential suggestion / solution</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
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</table>
| Focus of acute and highly complex cases within Social Care | • Support a focus on child protection and looked after children within social care by enabling lower level CiN cases to be supported within early help.  
  • This means that delay for cases within the assessment process can be reduced and earlier support can be provided to families.  
  • This also alleviates the level of cases within social care, enabling the service to reconfigure its staffing and tackle the agency staffing pressures. | • Staff behaviours with regards to focus on direct work with families  
  • Encourage retention of staff  
  • Requires staff within the front door to social care to manage cases. |
| Implementation requirements | • Common agreement on approach  
• Senior Management sponsorship of programme of change  
• Business analyst resource to undertake analysis of workflow and cases.  
• Access to relevant data and information  
• Project team to support the redesign of child’s journey and implement changes  
• Support to map out processes and supporting guidance and communicate with staff.  
• Training and development of materials to support threshold initiatives (potential for LSCB backing)- Cross over with Early Help  
• Resources to undertake case audits to identify those that have can be closed, stepped down or require attention.. This could be a short term investment |
| Financial Benefits | Shrinking the inappropriate work within the system will support the savings outlined in the opportunity above.  
In addition, it is estimated that a significant proportion of CIN work and delivery with families can be supported within Early Help  
On the basis that 20-40% of work could be transferred and reduced (impact of assessment time etc.) and could be delivered 20% to 30% cheaper through lower staff costs the savings range may be from £200k- £500k full year impact once implemented. |
| Non Financial Benefits | • A reduction in cases held within social care would likely support recruitment and retention  
• Greater workforce stability will result in improved morale within the workforce and an improved experience with children having fewer hand offs  
• Improved quality of assessments and social care interventions.  
• Reduce drift where cases are having delays in assessment and need is escalating.  
• Address the imbalance in the system of child protection cases by increasing confidence. |
| Timescale for Benefits Realisation | Short term: tackle thresholds and cases, case audit  
Medium term: Transition of CiN cases so that fewer families drift within the system  
Long term: Structures and practices in place which manage demand effectively, whole service transformation that reduces demand to a manageable amount in each part of the system. |
| Risks | • Implementing large scale change needs time and stable resources.  
• A whole system transformation can be complicated, hard work and time consuming, staff engagement is key but will be challenging with temporary workforce. |
### Opportunity C: Workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Drivers</th>
<th>Relevant to LBBD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Staffing turnover</td>
<td>• A high percentage of the staff within social care are agency staff. Vacancy rates are 80% and 50% in assessment and care management services respectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agency staffing</td>
<td>• Agency staff usage increases in line with caseload increase which has continued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vacancy rates</td>
<td>• Recruitment with in the sector is currently very competitive and challenging. For LBBD this is exacerbated by geographical proximity to numerous other authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Caseloads</td>
<td>• LBBD are already looking to save £400k in year and £1m to £2m full year impact by reducing agency staffing by 10 per month.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mix of qualified and non qualified staff</td>
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<tr>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Immediate action underway. Management of overspend in 14/15 and 15/16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget in Scope</td>
<td>Staff Budget in Complex Needs and Social Care: £9,339k</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of focus</th>
<th>Potential suggestion / solution</th>
<th>Targeted Behaviours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment process for permanent staff</td>
<td>Based on initial understanding of current attraction and recruitment, we believe that the approach to developing the employee value proposition, attracting staff and improving the processes to bring them in are all on the right track. We recommend that the actions underway are supported to continue and benefits are tracked. The challenge for LBBD is to build on the strengths in the service to support the growth of a positive culture which reinforces the brand and encourages retention.</td>
<td>Staff motivation is raised as a result of a stable workforce that feel valued, safe and supported.</td>
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<td>Social care task review</td>
<td>There may be potential for redressing the balance of activities undertaken by social care staff. This could be done through use of technology, improving systems and looking at the role of support staff. A review of the system and opportunity for alternative approach may be well received by staff who have frustrations with current systems or who would be motivated by the opportunity to spend more time working directly with families. This could also support staff to ensure more families were supported to the point of being able to close the case.</td>
<td>Reconnect staff with their core motivations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Implementation requirements | • Senior Management sponsorship of programme of change  
• Project Lead to continue the delivery of the recruitment programme  
• Set up of benefits tracking  
• Incorporation into a programme of change within children’s services.  
• Project team to identify potential changes in ways of working, resource requirements and implementation plan.  
• Behaviour change to support the culture to be integrated into improvement programme. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Benefits</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Non Financial Benefits | • Stable workforce  
• Improved staff morale  
• Easier to embed change  
• Stable relationships between child and social worker  
• Improved consistency in application of policy and process |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Timescale for Benefits Realisation | Short: some immediate benefits as staff are recruited.  
Medium: relief of financial pressure and some improvement in morale and practice.  
Long: Stable workforce of permanent staff who work collaboratively with services inside and outside of the council to manage the caseload demand and adapt to the changing local demographics |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risks</td>
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Overarching recommendations

In addition to the specific opportunity areas that have been highlighted, there are a number of overarching recommendations that we believe would help LBBD to be fit for the future:

**Financial Management:**
Strengthen the awareness of all levels of staff to the issues of limited resources and empowering staff to hold financial responsibility for their budgets, in order that we can continue to afford to work with families in need of support. Examples include, incorporation of Finance into performance management of services, alignment of financial and case work systems, strengthening the process for commissioning of placements.

**Business Intelligence:**
Build on some of the good performance and analysis already in place. Use it to get to grips with local presenting need and inform service design. Encourage team managers to use to their best advantage in supporting and planning service delivery. This should include the monitoring of demand and workflow within the system so that the impact of change can be tested.

**Invest to save:**
There will be a need for some invest to save activity in order to support the service to deliver on ambitious plans. It will be essential to track and monitor the impact of each project and feedback on the impact on outcomes and savings.

**Programme Management:**
There will be a number of initiatives underway, all of which are part of a system transformation. There will be a number of risks and interdependencies which will need to be managed as well as a need for effective programme, design, support and management. This includes the need for a programme of engagement with staff to support the programme. Savings will be overseen by the financial efficiency board, however, it is important to see these initiatives from the perspective of the impact on children’s services, supported by appropriate governance as well as financial savings.

**Corporate Support**
Children’s Services cannot transform on their own. There needs to be support from across the Council and an ability to focus on designing the best service based on the need of LBBD’s families rather than the existing service boundaries. Examples include, ensuring there is a single corporate narrative, placing people within regeneration strategies, supporting children’s to engage with other agencies on their role in supporting this agenda.
A checklist: Delivering change with Children’s Social Care

Our experience of delivering complex change within children’s services has taught us that there need to be some key things in place in order to succeed.

<table>
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<th>You need to have....</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strong corporate leadership, including Chief Executive level</td>
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<td>• Strong Leadership from the DCS on the transformation agenda, ensuring embedded leadership throughout the Directorate</td>
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<td>• A clear understanding of what success will look like</td>
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<td>• Agreement on what the truth / problem / issues are – effective baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A clear governance model from the outset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clear roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sufficient capacity &amp; capability to support &amp; deliver change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An immediate communication &amp; engagement plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Real performance management consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A focus on getting permanent staff in place and building a culture of support and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Permanent staff involved in the programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engagement &amp; support of members – particularly the Leader &amp; Lead Member / Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some ‘quick wins’ to build momentum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next steps

This report has identified a number of recommended actions for LBBD. In the short term there is a need to continue to deliver on some work already underway, including recruitment. However, in order to achieve the required transformation over the medium to longer term we believe that LBBD should put a programme of activity in place.

In the run up to the next financial year LBBD should:

- Agree corporately the ambition for services for children in Barking and Dagenham, build the narrative.
- Identify the capacity and capability required to support the achievement of that vision.
- Continue to support the improvement activity already underway
- Undertake the short term recommendations including the audit of CP and CiN cases, action on thresholds and beginning to shift cases to be worked within Early Help
- Refine the Financial Efficiency Programme to ensure it includes actions to deliver ambition, including ensuring the right capacity and skills are in place to deliver, and the programme is supported by the right governance.
- Engage staff on the transformation agenda, including identification of their roles within the programme.
- Establish the roadmap for the transformation of services for children, in conjunction with the wider Council and partners.
- Develop the mechanisms by which the service/ programme is able to evidence progress and impact.
Appendix: Workflow Analysis
Background to the analysis

In order to manage demand and pressure on children’s services, it is necessary that LBBD first understand why there are current pressures on certain areas of the system. Workflow analysis aims to show what activities immediately precede and follow certain activities, to understand where the process works well, and where there are opportunities to improve practice.

This analysis draws upon data provided by the Performance Team, covering activity from January – October 2014 collected under the following headings:

- Contacts
- Referrals
- Re-referrals
- Strategy Discussions
- S47
- Assessments
- ICPC
- Rev CPC
- New LAC
- New CIN
- New CPP
- Closures

Data Limitations
- The data that was provided only covers cases from January 2014-October 2014
- There may be some issues with data recording, these are evidenced by a number of anomalies within the workflow, highlighted in the pie charts.
Contacts

This slide summarises the activities that follow a contact when another activity is recorded against that case number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 28% of contacts are followed by another contact | • There may be a lack of feedback (or appropriate signposting) to earlier contacts?  
  • There could be a potential data recording issue |
| 63% of contacts go on to referral    | • Does this meet LBBD’s expectations. Are NFAs recorded?  
  These may help to understand low level need |

For each slide, the ‘N’ number refers to the total number of records for this type of activity.
Referrals

This slide demonstrates where the majority of referrals are coming from and the range of activities that fall out of a referral.

### Activity prior to referral (N=3449)

- 98% of referrals were previously contacts
- 60% of cases have an assessment following referral
- 26% of cases have a strategy discussion following referral, with an additional 7% subject to section 47.
- 7% of cases become contacts after a referral

### Activity following referral (N=2562)

- 60% of cases have an assessment following referral
- 26% of cases have a strategy discussion following referral
- 7% of cases become contacts after a referral

### Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98% of referrals were previously contacts</td>
<td>This is in line with expectation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% of cases have an assessment following referral</td>
<td>Many CIN cases could be given appropriate attention in Early Help, this would enable the service to reduce the time spent on assessments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26% of cases have a strategy discussion following referral, with an additional 7% subject to section 47.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% of cases become contacts after a referral</td>
<td>Potential data recording issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Re-referral

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding a re-referral and the next activities for re-referral cases:

### Activity prior to re-referral (N=332)
- 96% of re-referrals were preceded by a contact
- Referrals: 4%
- Strategy discussion: 2%
- Assessment: 2%
- S47: 1%

### Activity following re-referral (N=170)
- Assessment: 61%
- Strategy discussion: 12%
- Contact: 23%
- New CIN: 2%
- Closures: 1%
- New LAC: 1%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96% of re-referrals were preceded by a contact</td>
<td>In line with expectation. Was feedback given at the point of previous contact as to why thresholds were not met?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170 out of 332 (51%) progressed to further activity following re-referral. The majority of re-referrals (61%) progress to assessment whilst 23% progress to a strategy discussion</td>
<td>This is a high proportion given these cases were not previously referrals. Has need escalated in that time as a result of no intervention? Have thresholds been held on a consistent basis?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategy Discussion

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding a strategy discussion and the next activities following a strategy discussion:

**Activity prior to Strategy Discussion** (N=1533)
- Referrals: 43%
- Assessment: 26%
- Strategy discussion: 10%
- S47: 7%
- New CIN: 4%
- Contact: 3%
- Re-referrals: 3%
- New LAC: 2%
- New CPP: 1%
- Rev CPC: 1%
- Closures: 1%

**Activity following strategy discussion** (N=1594)
- S47: 78%
- Strategy discussion: 9%
- Assessment: 9%
- New LAC: 1%
- Rev CPC: 1%
- Contact: 1%
- Referrals: 1%
- New CIN: 1%

**Finding**
- 43% of cases come from referral and 26% come from an assessment

**Comments**
- Could be a cycle for some cases that defer decisions being made and create drift in cases?
- What is the outcome of this secondary strategy discussion?

- 10% of cases have another Strategy Discussion after a Strategy discussion

- 78% of cases go on to S47 following a strategy discussion

- This suggests that strategy discussions are making an assessment of risk consistent with thresholds. However, this is not supported by conversion to ICPC which suggests more cases than necessary are progressed.
This slide demonstrates the activities preceding an S47 and the next activities for each case following an S47:

### Finding

89% of cases had a strategy discussion prior to an S47, however theoretically all S47s should be preceded by a strategy discussion

- is there a recording issue?
- Is there an issue with compliance?

42% of S47 cases then go on to an ICPC

- This is lower than expectation, more cases should progress to ICPC if these cases are S47 level of need.

34% of cases go on to have assessment

- Could these cases should be concluded rather than being sent on to assessment?
Assessment

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding an assessment and the next activities for each case following an assessment:

### Activity prior to assessment (N=2367)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S47</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy discussion</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-referrals</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New CIN</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev CPC</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New LAC</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closures</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Activity following assessment (N=1284)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy discussion</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closures</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New CIN</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S47</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICPC</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New LAC</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev CPC</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Finding

- **Finding**: The majority of assessments (65%) are preceded by a referral.

- **31% of assessments go on to a S47 and 15% of assessments are preceded by a S47 (expect this to reduce with the recent introduction of MASH)**

- **Why are 5% of cases going on to ICPC as their next step without a strategy discussion/S47**
  - Potential inaccurate triaging as this is a large number of assessments that are escalating up towards CP
  - Compliance?
  - Data recording

- **23% of assessments go to contacts following an assessment**
  - Inaccurate data recording. Contact would not be expected as next activity

### Comments

- Potential inaccurate triaging as this is a large number of assessments that are escalating up towards CP
- Compliance?
- Data recording
- Inaccurate data recording. Contact would not be expected as next activity
ICPC

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) and the next activities for each case following an ICPC:

**Finding**
- 76% of cases go on to have a CP plan following an initial child protection conference
- 86% of cases of ICPC are preceded by an S47

**Comments**
- This is in line with expectation
- This is in line with expectation. Performance data highlights that LBBD perform well with regards to timescales for ICPC but that this slips for having a Core Group Meeting for a Child Protection Plan.
Review Child Protection Conference

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding a review Child Protection Conference and the next activities for each case following a the RCPC:

Activity prior to Rev CPC (N=725)

- New CPP: 40%
- Rev CPC: 30%
- Assessment: 6%
- New LAC: 6%
- Referrals: 3%
- S47: 2%
- Strategy discussion: 2%
- ICPC Closures: 1%
- Contact: 1%
- New CIN: 0%

Activity following Rev CPC (N=597)

- Rev CPC: 48%
- New CIN: 30%
- Closures: 6%
- Assessment: 6%
- New LAC: 5%
- Strategy discussion: 2%
- Contact: 1%
- New CPP: 1%

Finding

- 30% of children become CIN following a child protection conference review
- 48% of cases go on to have another CPC following their rev CPC

Comments

- As a next step it would be helpful to investigate the length of time children are on a child protection plan before being referred on to CIN- this would give you insight into whether they should have had a CPC in the first instance.
New LAC

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding a LAC case and the next activities for each case following LAC:

**Finding**

- 35% of LAC cases come from assessments and referrals
- The pie chart on the right illustrates the huge variety for the next activities following LAC - a low % of cases close following LAC (4%)
- 18% of LAC cases are followed by a strategy discussion

**Comments**

- Expectations would be for the majority of LAC cases to be preceded by a CPC or S47 rather than just an assessment or referral.
- The low proportion of cases closing may reflect the pressure on the system and focus on achieving permanency. However, there has been a reduction in the number of LAC in the year so there may be a discrepancy on reporting. Performance data doesn’t detail step down from care, which may support management oversight of the cases.
- We would not expect so many looked after children to be having a strategy discussion at this stage. Could this be due to Inaccurate data recording?
New CIN

This slide demonstrates the activities preceding a CIN case and the next activities for each case following a CIN case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60% of CIN cases were preceded by either a revised or initial child protection conference</td>
<td>• Many CIN cases seem to step down from a high level of need assessment (ICPC, assessment, S47), this signifies that theses cases may have been referred to these previous assessments unnecessarily.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 64% of cases close after a CIN plan                                     | • This could be evidence of good early help or step down services.  
• Suggested further work: detail behind why those cases that close go next-family support? No further support? |
| 14% of cases go from CIN plan to Strategy Discussion, and 13% go on to assessment | • This could be as a result of lack of early clarity about the needs of these children and young people. |

[Charts showing activity prior to CIN and activity following CIN]
**Finding** | **Comments**
---|---
89% of child protection plans are referred from initial child protection plans | • As expected.
79% of CPP go on to have a CPP review | • This is in line with expectation, there may be some mis-recording with referrals and contacts captured in this data.
Only 6% of CPP cases go on to become LAC | • This may reflect that risk is being managed at the right level.
Referrals to activities other than CPC, strategy discussion and LAC | • Illustrate that there may be an issue with data recording at LBBD.
Closures

This slide illustrates what precedes a case closure on the system and further activity after closure:

Activity prior to closures at all levels (N=572)

- 44% New CIN
- 33% Assessment
- 6% Rev CPC
- 4% Referrals
- 2% Contact
- 2% Closures
- 2% ICPC
- 1% New LAC
- 1% New CPP
- 1% Re-referrals

Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are only 572 closures recorded in the year in comparison to 2562 referrals leading to an activity.</td>
<td>• There is a risk the demand within the system will continue to grow as cases are not being closed at the rate they are being opened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33% of cases close following assessment</td>
<td>• Are assessments being undertaken unnecessarily? There may be scope to support direct work with CiN in Early Help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearly half the closures (44%) are from CiN cases.</td>
<td>• Are CP and LAC cases drifting within the system rather than being worked and closed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the 572 closures, there are 248 which are followed by a contact. (43%)</td>
<td>• The re-referral rate post case closure is relatively high. It should be tested that cases when closed are supported effectively including by Early Help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% of activity is recorded after closure other than contacts or referrals</td>
<td>• Is due process being following in regard to case recording and/or practice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>