



## **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date** Thursday 6 July 2023

**Time** 9.30 am

**Venue** Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

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### **Business**

#### **Part A**

#### **Items during which the Press and Public Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chair's agreement and if registered to speak**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 April 2023 (Pages 3 - 16)
4. Declarations of Interest, if any
5. Any items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties
6. Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Programme (Fun with Food) in County Durham
  - a) Report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services (Pages 17 - 32)
  - b) Presentation by The Child Poverty Operations Manager (Pages 33 - 42)
7. Update of the Starting Well Partnership
  - a) Report of the Chair of the Starting Well Partnership (Pages 43 - 46)
  - b) Presentation by Commissioning Delivery Manager County Durham Care Partnership (Pages 47 - 56)
8. Performance Management Quarter 4 2022/23 - Report of the Chief Executive Officer (Pages 57 - 72)
9. Refresh of the Work Programme 2023/2024 - Report of the Corporate Director of Resources (Pages 73 - 92)
10. Such other business as, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration

**Helen Lynch**  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall  
Durham  
28 June 2023

To: **The Members of the Children and Young People's Overview  
and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor A Reed (Chair)  
Councillor J Cosslett (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Bell, R Crute, S Deinali, K Fantarrow, J Griffiths,  
K Hawley, C Hunt, L Kennedy, C Lines, L Mavin, M McGaun,  
D Mulholland, K Rooney, J Scurfield, M Simmons, S Townsend,  
C Varty, E Waldock and M Walton

**Faith Communities Representatives:**

Mrs L Vollans

**Parent Governor Representatives:**

Mr P Debrett-Watson

**Co-opted Members:**

Ms R Evans and Ms A Gunn

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**Contact: Paula Nicholson      Tel: 03000 269710**

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## DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 26 April 2023 at 9.30 am**

#### Present:

**Councillor A Reed (Chair)**

#### Members of the Committee:

Councillors J Cosslett, R Charlton-Lainé, M Currah, S Deinali, J Griffiths, O Gunn, C Hunt, B Kellett, C Martin, L Mavin, D Mulholland, K Rooney, A Sterling, C Varty and E Waldock

#### Faith Community Representative:

Mrs L Vollans

#### Co-opted Members:

Ms R Evans and Ms A Gunn

#### Also Present:

Councillors P Jopling and M Simmons

### 1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Bell, I Cochrane, S Townsend and M Walton.

### 2 Substitute Members

Councillor B Kellett substituted for Councillor S Townsend.

### 3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2023 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

#### **4 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **5 Any Items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties**

There were no items from Co-opted Members or Interested Parties.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that responses to the questions from the last meeting had been circulated to Ms Evans and to Members of the Scrutiny Committee for information.

#### **6 Draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2023-2028**

The Committee considered the Joint Report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change and Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services that presented the draft refresh of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS) for comment. A copy of the draft strategy was circulated with the agenda (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships was in attendance to deliver a presentation that provided details of the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JLHWS). This noted the focus of the work of the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board's; four priority areas: Making smoking history; Enabling healthy weight for all; Improving mental health, resilience and wellbeing; Reducing alcohol harms, as well as concentrating on the impact of Inequalities and the wider determinants of health which contribute to our overall health and wellbeing. The Role of Health & Wellbeing Board and how it influences resources across the system was also noted. (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

Mrs A Gunn referred to the vision statement and what stood out was tackle unfair difference in the health of wider contributor factors that she misunderstood when read in isolation compared to some of the information later in the report and asked the Officer when producing the strategy to look at the wording carefully and provided details of some of the wording used. She then referred to engagement and consultation and asked how much coverage they were achieving of the population and was there a statistical representation. She referred to tobacco and alcohol and asked if there were any emerging issues with illegal substances, healthy weight focus on food and was a big drive on movement and tying this in, quality of school meals that can have a significant impact on children's health in particular in deprived areas where they rely on that food for nutrition. She asked for further information on suicide and the dynamics.

The Interim Strategic Manager – Partnerships responded that they had worked with the community champions around the wording used so it was easy to understand, and that wording had already been amended as part of consultation feedback. With

regard to the representation for the consultation, she advised that they had shared with a number of partners, for comment, including, Area Action Partnerships, VCS Organisations, the Poverty Action Steering Group, Youth Council and Investing in Children but she did not have statistical figures on the consultation responses but when they were developing the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, they took the views of those representatives who had been involved throughout the process. She then referred to the four areas and their detailed plans that had been developed through sub-groups of the Health and Wellbeing Board such as the tobacco control alliance and the healthy weight alliance. With regard to suicide more detail was in the partnership plan that supported the strategy and stated that more detailed work was in the action plans.

Ms R Evans indicated that what was said was more adult based rather than children and young people based, and they wanted to look to the future and have a healthy population in the future. She then referred to smoking and that there was no mention of vaping and indicated that there was a lot in the press about young people taking up vaping and were becoming hooked and was becoming a mental health issue. In the older population people who had been smoking a long-time vaping improved their health, but she was not sure this was the case for a young person. The healthy weight was more about what you eat than activity and there were opportunities to get people moving such as access to swimming through schools that had been impacted due to COVID, she commented that schools were key to get children moving and were a key partner.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that the sub-groups were established, and a lot of work was underway and gave an example of the tobacco control alliance where vaping was included as one of their actions and that the focus of healthy weight was through the life course. She commented that the groups had action plans in place and the strategy was an opportunity to review those and add anything extra or add value. She stated that she would ensure that the comments were picked up.

Councillor C Hunt asked how long the waiting times were for alcohol services and how they were moving forward and commented that they required more information on vaping as children have started smoking after vaping as a means of being trendy and should be high on the agenda.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships stated that she would find out the waiting times for alcohol services and feed this back to the committee. She indicated that at the end of March the Health & Wellbeing Board had a development session on vaping and she could share this information with the committee.

Councillor A Sterling indicated that she would like to see a bigger commitment into looking into vaping properly as huge numbers of children were taking up vaping that was socially acceptable and normal. The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that she would take this back to Public Health Colleagues.

Councillor P Jopling referred to the difference between the success they have had with smoking and non-success with alcohol and obesity and commented that the increase in alcohol and obesity run in line with the increase in takeaways and the abandonment of alcohol regulations. She stated that the legislation needed to be changed where you cannot buy drink at every shop, but she was worried how successful the Council were going to be with the easy access and temptation available. She continued that obesity and alcohol were linked to mental health and was not sure if they could make a significant difference.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that they were working closely with colleagues in spatial development and the County Durham Plan with regard to hot food takeaways to ensure they had planning restrictions on takeaways, particularly in more deprived areas and near schools. There was also work progressing to restrict the advertising of foods that are high in fat, salt and sugar on Durham County Council platforms.

Councillor R Charlton-Laine indicated that she would like to see more emphasis on energy drinks, and in her school, they confiscated more energy drinks than vapes. She continued that children were spending their lunch money on energy drinks and when confiscated were not eating or drinking anything and would like to see energy drinks included in the strategy.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that she would take this back to colleagues.

Councillor O Gunn indicated that Mrs Gunn had mentioned in a previous meeting about the use of the word unfair which she supported and would again as many other words could be used such as inequitable. She then referred to page 30 of the pack in relation to the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age have a greater impact on health outcomes and stated that there should be an addition of government policies, government action and government funding which had a great impact on the conditions described in the report and had a huge impact on health outcomes. She agreed that the strategy was adult based, there was mention of access to a good education and she thought they were moving more forward in terms of the inclusion of children and young people in all the issues in relation to good healthy outcomes but access to a good education was the only thing she could see. With regard to consultation and that sectors of communities do not engage with consultations and if they wanted to reach those sectors then they needed to include voluntary organisations, town and parish councils, schools and family hubs and if they did not include these, they were ignoring a sector of communities which are important and who health and inequalities impact on the most.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships indicated that she would take back the comments on the wording of the strategy and stated that when they spoke to

the community champions, they did not like the word inequitable and thought it was not plain English but could look at this again. With regard to consultation, the town and parish councils were included in the consultation exercise. The development of the action plans that support the delivery of the strategy would also be subject to consultation and coproduction with service users in those particular areas.

Councillor O Gunn responded that it was communities where voluntary organisations take the role and support communities where those sectors of the community do not engage in consultation.

In response to questions on advertising vaping products and hitting adults who were purchasing alcohol for children the Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that she would speak to Public Health Colleagues and the Lead Officer for drugs and alcohol.

Councillor S Deinali asked if any work had been done promoting a positive healthy weight and positive mental health and asked what work had been done to ensure that promoting a positive healthy weight does not impact on mental health in terms of body image.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that healthy weight and mental health colleagues worked closely together to ensure that there would be no detrimental impact in another area.

Mrs A Gunn referred to the impact the Council could make through school meals and how providers got around this by saying that they offered a healthy meal option and asked what the uptake was of the healthy food and asked if this was monitored.

The Interim Strategic Manager - Partnerships responded that she would feed this back to colleagues.

**Resolved:** (i) That the report and presentation be noted.

(ii) That Members comments be incorporated into a formal response to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **7 Response to The Children's Social Care Review**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services that provided Members with an overview of the Government's response to the Children's Social Care Review, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's review into the deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, and the Competition and Markets Authority review in relation to the provision of children's homes (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services was in attendance to deliver a presentation on Children's Social Care National Framework; Child and Family Social Worker Workforce and the current position (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services referenced the government's children social care reform consultation "stable homes, built on love" and advised members of the six pillars around which this strategy had been written including reference to the 12 Families First for Children pathfinders and the associated £45 million funding stream. In respect of the children social care national framework, members were advised that much of the detail within the framework was awaited and further information was anticipated upon the associated performance management arrangements within which this would operate.

In terms of the development of the child and family social worker workforce mechanism members were advised of the proposed 8 national rules which would be applied.

Councillor C Martin indicated that there were positive things contained in the strategy such as taking action before a person ends up in care and commented that numbers of people in care was not sustainable and cost the council a lot of money. He continued in relation to the use of agencies and asked if there was any risk or fear of hammering the agency sector or increasing costs dramatically by enforcing more regulations on them. He indicated that they still needed an agency sector as there were gaps but was glad that this was referenced and the government solution of having social workers who work for the Council and asked if there was any risk of killing the agency sector.

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services responded that there was always a need for an agency sector but at the minute this was dysfunctional and the lowest it had even been due to being unable to get workers to fill the gaps. He indicated that they needed a different model and moving some of the profiteering that was happening and put some price caps and rules around it. There would always be staff who wanted to work for an agency and have the flexibility and what was needed was a level playing field and some rules to regulate. One of the recommendations in the care review was having a regional bank of staff and commented that this was not possible at the minute as staff could get paid three times as much going into a project team so they could not look at other models. They were not saying there was not a need for agency workers they just needed a set of rules around it.

Mrs A Gunn referred to the impact of courts and the case where the court overruled the advice of social workers and asked if this was a significant factor in County Durham and what degree of influence the Courts had over cases.



The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services responded that they work within a legal framework and decisions to take a child into care was made by judges and they needed to work with Cafcass and the family guardians and judiciary to ensure consistency of the decision making and the application of risk was appropriate. Over the last few years, they had seen an increase in the use of independent expert social work assessment that varies. They would like a system and the strategy does cover the judiciary and the court system and would like to see consistency within the courts and they had trust in the credibility of social worker assessments and recommendations and take them on board and are not dependent on independent views.

Councillor O Gunn indicated that the Josh MacAlister review had a number of good points in it and commented that the Ofsted outcome was evidence of good work of the Council. She stated that the issues were national and affecting all local authorities not just affecting Durham. One of the major issues was the increase in the number of children looked after and the issues around finding accommodation for challenging children that was costly. There were lots of good things in the review, particularly around looking at issues relating to kinship carers that needed to be addressed. She then referred to page 56 of the report, the last bullet point that was a crucial issue and the authority had been under pressure for a considerable time in terms of been able to implement services in children's social care. She then referred to the conclusion and they required significant investment from central government to affectively implement and stated in the words of Sam help and please listen.

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services responded in terms of resources that they were in a much better position than they had been in recent times in making the case for financial investment. The financial modelling that sat alongside the Josh MacAlister review was detailed and compelling, the case was very well built and the need for investment to make this work.

Mrs A Gunn asked if the Corporate Director could provide an update on the recruitment of social workers.

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services responded that they were challenged on a local level particularly in recruiting experienced social workers and indicated that over the last eighteen months the turnover and rate of vacancies had started to decrease again and was on trend. They have some strong routes into social work such as the academy and they were hoping to have 35 starting in September. They were also part of the step up to social work programme that was a targeted fast track programme. They were having a major expansion of apprenticeships and were taken a minimum of 12 apprenticeships this year and commented that they had won the supportive employer of the year at the national social work awards last year and was good recognition of the work of the team.

Councillor O Gunn referred to the social work apprenticeship scheme that sounds interesting and asked who could access that route and the age range and experience required.

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services indicated that there was a national standard, and a lot of staff would come through this route based on their experience and staff who would not meet the qualification requirements through the academic route. He continued that you were more likely to get people applying who were already embedded in place and committed to Durham which was a positive in terms of retention. They were working with Durham University which takes away a lot of the barriers in relation to access requirements and opens up a different route for people and commented that the applications were currently out, and the applications so far have been fantastic.

Councillor C Hunt commented that she had been part of the full review and had a good input into this. She stated that the new strategy for support work around social work was fantastic, and she welcomed the review on kinship caring. One of the things discussed was how it should all be done as a whole instead of stages as you would have a better chance of achieving the outcomes and obtaining the funding. She then referred to Children In Care Council (CICC) and stated that they should be creating their own panel so that children have their own voice in this review. She stated that a better package for social workers would go a long way for the retention of staff.

The Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services indicated that they were continually looking at packages for social workers and the wrap around support. He referred to the voice of children and young people and the children in care council was huge and the video of the story of Sam was powerful. He stated that the pathfinders were going to be limited to three chosen by government that would go live in September and commented that Durham would unlikely be one of the three but there would be an open competition for the other nine. He stated that a number of the pathfinder requirements had already been done and even if Durham were not a pathfinder this was not going to slow the authority down, the limiting factor was the resources barrier.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services for his presentation.

**Resolved:** That the report and presentation be noted.

*Councillor A Sterling left the meeting at 11.20 am*

## 8 The Pause Programme

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services that provided Members with an update on Pause Durham (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Strategic Manager, Children and Families First was in attendance to deliver a presentation that provided the Strategic Priority; Durham Pause Journey; Previous and current cohort; One Woman's Story and Pause Graduation – July 2022 (for copy of presentation, see file of minutes).

Councillor P Jopling referred to the Pause Graduation video and indicated that there were irresponsible fathers who do not know how to treat women or their children. She asked if the authority look at fathers and stated that the women who have joined the programme were amazing and what the programme had achieved was amazing and congratulated the service. She then referred to alcohol and drug abuse and asked if they worked with the police about the availability of drugs in local communities.

The Strategic Manager indicated that they did carry out a lot of joint working with the police and agencies in relation to substance misuse and there were a number of forums. In terms of fathers, they did work with fathers during the assessment and intervention, including care proceedings and offered them the same intervention as they would do mothers. The Pause programme worked with mothers' pro proceedings to try and give them a break to look after their needs and address those needs, she would love to offer this service to fathers, but their current focus was on mothers.

Councillor O Gunn indicated that she was a huge supporter of the Pause programme and praised the project. She indicated that the service was putting women's lives back together saving their lives and asked the Officer to pass on her comments.

Councillor C Martin referred to the criteria changing from one child to two children and asked who would not qualify for the programme.

The Strategic Manager indicated that the criteria were any women that had lost a child through care proceedings on a permanent basis, but the women had to agree to contraception for 18 months to give them a break but not all women were in the right place in terms of addressing some of their issues. Loosing one child is too much, therefore we have changed the criteria to loosing one child rather than two children or more. This means we can hopefully support change to prevent removals. They were looking at a referral route to make it easier so that they could start conversations prior to concluding care proceedings to get the intervention early. They were working with Barnardo's who are delivering the Start Well programme and the criteria for that programme was working with women who had

lost one child and were on a second set of proceedings. Start Well worked with women during the early stages of the pregnancy and support them to make those changes or move to the Pause programme following that. She advised Members that they had three Practitioners, a Pause Manager and the maximum they could work with was around 22 women, but they were looking at this as not all women required the 18 months and they had supported women who had moved to the other side of the country to get away from the perpetrator. They were also looking at having a more rolling programme so that they could target more women, but they were currently limited in the numbers they could work with.

The Chair referred to drugs in communities and indicated that she had read the government's policy 'from harm to hope' that was a 10-year programme to drop crime that was worth a read.

Councillor C Hunt congratulated the team, and the work of Pause could not be underestimated, and she personally knew someone who had used the service and it had turned her life around which had also saved the authority money. She commented that she would like to see the programme rolled out to more people.

The Strategic Manager referred to the cost savings but was about women themselves.

Mrs L Vollans asked about the referral process and those people who had left care and the trauma this caused which was in their DNA and asked if there was anything in place to stop this trauma.

The Strategic Manager indicated that anyone could make a referral for the Pause programme, and they were looking into more specifics as the majority of referrals would come through a social worker, permanent team or care leavers team but they were looking at how they could ensure they were working with the right women. She then indicated that they have the care leavers service who work with young people up to the age of 25 who have left care, the Pause Team work closely with this service in relation to the pathways such as sexual health and were looking at a route into mental health. They were always looking at how they can improve the services for children who have left care.

The Chair thanked the Officer and indicated that the programme was very successful, and they had not just helped the women but also the children and asked the Officer to pass on her congratulations to the team.

**Resolved:** That the contents of the report and presentation be noted.

*Councillor O Gunn, P Jopling and D Mulholland left the meeting at 11.32 am*

## **9 Quarter 3 2022/2023 Performance Management Report**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director of Resources, which provided progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the Council's corporate performance framework and highlighted key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes. The report covered performance in and to the end of quarter three, October to December 2022 (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Corporate Equalities and Strategy Manager was in attendance to present the report.

Councillor R Charlton-Laine referred to paragraph 18(b) of the report and asked why those three areas were considered and if other schools could be incorporated next time.

The Corporate Equalities and Strategy Manager responded that he was not sure of the criteria and would obtain this information from the service.

Mrs A Gunn referred to educational psychologists and asked if there had been any progress in recruitment and the ability for schools to tap into these services beyond statutory points. She then referred to the increase in SEND numbers that would have a significant impact financially and commented that if they needed specialist provisions this would impact financially and stated that there was already an overspend this year and additional costs can be extremely high and asked what work had been done around this.

The Head of Early Help, Inclusion & Vulnerable Children responded that there was a small pool of Educational Psychologists in the system, and stated that there was a national training programme, but they were not enough new Educational Psychologists coming through the regionally and nationally so was a continued challenge to recruit Educational Psychologists. They had some success with recruitment, but they still had some gaps that had impacted their ability to provide timely educational psychology advice. They wanted a model where quality was important and still had contact with schools and Educational Psychologists were going into schools to do some direct work with young people. They were not happy with virtual assessments, but this had impacted on the waiting list, but quality advice was more important. They had issues with getting advice from social or health care and they had continued to see an increase in the number of people requiring SEND support, but this was less than other parts of the region. They were carrying out a lot of work to support children without the need for a Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) but a lot of schools and parents preferred to go through the formal process. A lot of young people were supported before the ECHP was put into place, sometimes there was no difference in costs as they had a strong graduated offer in County Durham. They were carrying out some work alongside 55 other local authorities regarding higher needs spend and a survey was going out shortly.

**Resolved:** That the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter three performance, the impact of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the external international factors driving inflation and cost-of-living on the council's performance, and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic be noted.

*Mrs L Vollans left the meeting at 11.45 am*

## **10 Quarter 3 Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23**

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director of Resources that provided details of the forecast outturn budget position for Children and Young People's Services highlighting major variances in comparison with the budget for the year, based on the position at the end of quarter three December 2022 (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Finance Manager was in attendance to present the report.

Mrs A Gunn referred to special schools' provision and asked how much a placement cost and how many children the £1.2 million related to.

The Finance Manager responded that an average special school place cost between £20,000-£23,000 per place and they had around 1600 children in special schools within Durham. Whilst they had an overspend in terms of the higher needs budget, they had prevented costs in terms of out of County Durham placements which would be £60,000-£70,000 if they were an independent school. By providing more places within County Durham at a lower cost they were spending more money than in the grant allocation but were preventing spending more on those independent places outside of County Durham.

The Head of Early Help, Inclusion & Vulnerable Children indicated that the growth in demand was adding pressures in terms of spends but the special schools were on track for that period and the biggest area of spending was top up funding for children in mainstream schools.

Councillor L Mavin asked for confirmation that a special school placement was still £10,000 base rate plus top ups or if the base rate had increased.

The Finance Manager responded that the base rate was still £10,000 but there was an addition to the base rate of £660 but this was to cover teachers' pay award.

Councillor C Hunt asked what measures were being taken to reduce the home to school transport costs.

The Head of Early Help, Inclusion & Vulnerable Children indicated that a report went to Cabinet a couple of months ago and stated that the consultation had just concluded, and a further report would be submitted to Cabinet June or July with a number of proposals based on the consultation to help control costs of home to school transport.

Mrs A Gunn stated that it would be helpful to know the engagement for that consultation and how they were reaching those groups and if it reached all those groups of children who were receiving those services.

The Head of Early Help, Inclusion & Vulnerable Children responded that this could be something to consider as part of the work plan of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor R Charlton-Laing stated that she had attended a meeting where they talked about the Council's digital strategy and in that meeting, she mentioned that surveys and consultation were hard to access and the website was hard to navigate and that it should only take you two clicks to reach your destination, so there should use this strategy for consultations.

The Head of Early Help, Inclusion & Vulnerable Children advised Members that he would pass on the comments to consultation colleagues.

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the work programme would be considered at the next meeting, where Members would be invited to agree the work programme for the coming year and as part of that process, they would incorporate the request for feedback from home to school transport consultation as part of that process.

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

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## Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 July 2023

### Holiday Activities with Healthy Food (Fun and Food) in County Durham

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#### Report of John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

#### Purpose of the report

- 1 The report accompanies a presentation to Durham County Council's Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny members on the progress of Durham's Fun and Food programme during 2022.

#### Executive Summary

- 2 The Department for Education (DfE) provided all Local Authorities with funding to provide free holiday activities and healthy food for children that are eligible for benefits related free school meals during Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday periods in 2022. Half term school holiday periods are not funded by DfE. Durham was allocated £2,338,740.00, to provide free 'holiday clubs' and committed offering all eligible and other vulnerable children access to a range of enriching activities with healthy food.
- 3 Recognising the need and demand for holiday activities with healthy food remains during half term holidays an additional £80,00 from Public Health for February half term and £150,000 was secured from the Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG) for May and October half terms 2022.
- 4 Holiday Activities with Healthy Food has been branded as 'Fun and Food in County Durham'. A dedicated webpage is now available for families and providers [www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood](http://www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood) and also a Facebook Group [Fun and Food County Durham | Facebook](#)
- 5 A central coordination team lead on the programme and have developed a partnership delivery model working together with the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to develop, administer and distribute funding for enriching holiday activities with healthy food over the holiday periods 2022.
- 6 Funding was allocated to a range of partners including Voluntary and Community, private providers, schools, family hubs, leisure services and libraries.

- 7 Nearly 35,000 children and young people engaged with the Fun and Food programme in Easter, Summer and Christmas 2022 (DfE funded holidays). Over 11,000 children and young people engaged in the half term holidays (DCC funded holidays February, May and October 2022). Throughout 2022 a total of 46,000 children and young people engaged in Fun and Food provision.
- 8 Partners delivering projects have been particularly creative and all activities were delivered face to face and included arts and crafts, environmental and wildlife activities, STEM activities and sports & physical activity, yoga and wellbeing. Healthy meals and snacks were provided with each activity.

## **Recommendation**

- 9 Members of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the content of the report and presentation and comment accordingly.

## **Background**

- 10 The Department for Education (DfE) provided all Local Authorities with funding to provide free holiday activities and healthy food for children that are eligible for benefits related free school meals during Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday periods in 2022. Half term school holiday periods were not funded by DfE. Durham was allocated £2,338,740.00, to provide free 'holiday clubs' and committed offering all eligible and other vulnerable children access to a range of enriching activities with healthy food.
- 11 The Child Poverty Working Group is responsible for coordinating the programme in County Durham. The aim of the programme is for children and families who attend provision to:
  - a) eat healthily over the school holidays
  - b) be active during the school holidays
  - c) take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with their wider educational attainment
  - d) be safe and not to be socially isolated
  - e) have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition
  - f) be more engaged with school and other local services
  - g) develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting
  - h) are signposted towards other information and support, for example, health, employment, and education

## **County Durham Model**

- 12 The Social Inclusion Operations Manager provides programme leadership and coordination of the Fun and Food Programme, supported by two Development Officers. A Funding Support Officer was appointed and aligned to the AAP Funding Team.
- 13 Governance and steering of HAF is through the multi-agency Child Poverty Working Group. The following organisations are represented:
  - a. Early Help
  - b. Children's Social Care
  - c. Culture and Leisure
  - d. Cabinet Member
  - e. Housing
  - f. Education
  - g. Public Health
  - h. Neighbourhoods and Climate Change
  - i. Progression and Learning
  - j. VCS/Faith Communities
  - k. 0-19 Community Family Health
  - l. Police
  - m. Communications and Marketing
  - n. Assessment and Awards

- 14 A delivery model for the provision and distribution of funding has been developed and includes:
- (a) locality based provision funded through Area Action Partnerships (AAPs). Funding is distributed via AAPs to local providers based on the % of children on FSM. An uplift is provided to support rural localities.
  - (b) the procurement of contracted provision to fill gaps in local provision/ or gaps for specific age groups such as adolescents (area based and countywide provision) with larger providers.
  - (c) internal service providers (schools, leisure services and Family Hubs, libraries and community arts).
- 15 Each delivery partner is required to work towards DfE national standards:
- (a) Healthy meals: provide at least one healthy meal a day and must meet the School Food Standards throughout the day.
  - (b) Enriching activities: provide fun and enriching activities that provide children with opportunities to develop or consolidate skills or knowledge, to consolidate existing skills and knowledge.
  - (c) Physical activity: provide physical activities which meet the Physical Activity Guidelines on a daily basis.
  - (d) Nutritional education: improve children's knowledge and awareness of healthy eating and offer advice and training to parents on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food.
  - (e) Signposting and referrals: provide information, signposting or referrals to other services and support that would benefit the children who attend their provision and their families.
  - (f) Safeguarding: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. We want every project to be a safe and happy place for children to be and for parents, carers and families to feel confident that their child is well looked after and that robust safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- 16 A workforce development programme is in place to support delivery partners to meet these standards.

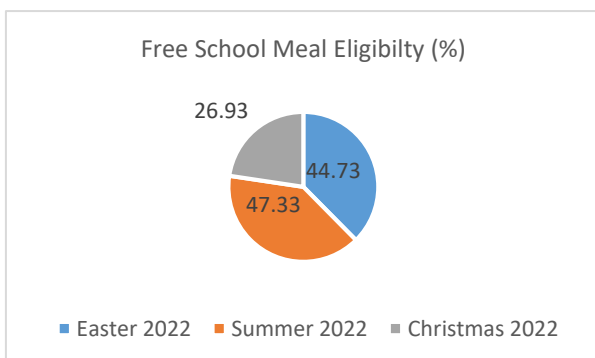
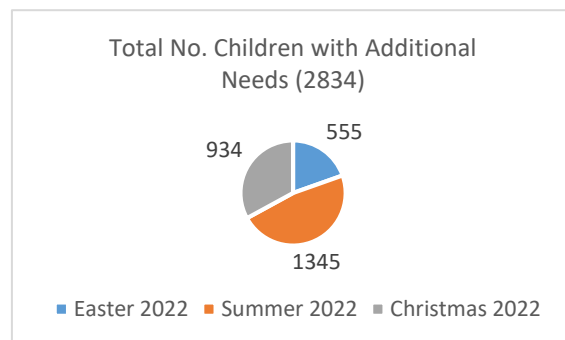
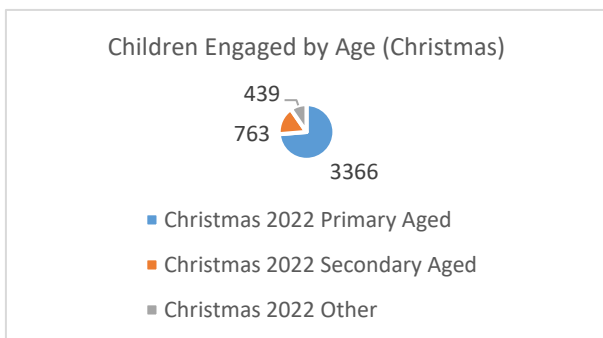
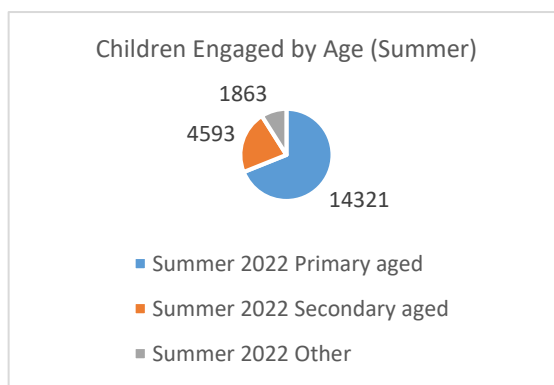
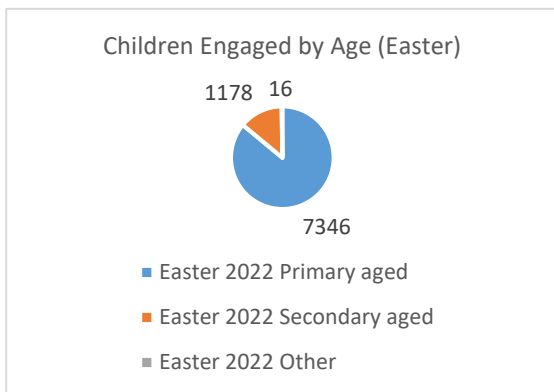
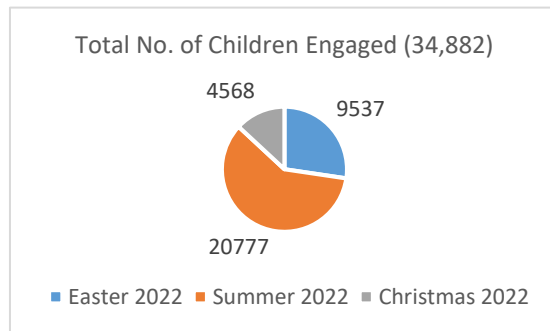
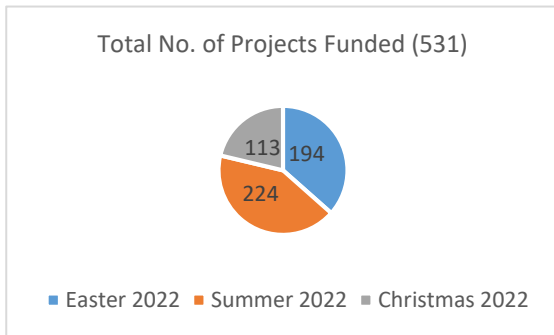
## **Data and Intelligence**

- 17 Data and intelligence developed by the Public Health Intelligence Team provided a rich source of information for the programme to target localities and allocate funding proportionately to localities across the county with the highest level of children on free school meals.

## **Programme Data**

- 18 After each holiday period the DfE require a robust data return as part of the grant conditions. The data and information collected is in strict adherence to General Data Protection Regulations.

19 In 2022 the Fun and Food programme has delivered:



**Programme Activities**

20 A range of partners including VCS, schools, leisure centres, libraries and family hubs delivered projects which included the production of an interactive performing arts experience, treasure trails, multi skills activities, gorge walking, woodwork, laser quest, dance, tennis, sailing and ice skating.

- 21 The Fun and Food programme has been very positively received by children, young people and families and providers and we are keen to further develop and upscale in 2023. (See appendix 2).

## **Flexibility in Grant Arrangements**

- 22 DfE granted Durham the facility to utilise 15% of the grant to widen the offer to other vulnerable children and young people. The groups support included:
- (a) children on EHCP plans
  - (b) young people on a child protection plan
  - (c) young people living in areas of high deprivation
  - (d) children and young people known to social care
  - (e) younger siblings of school age FSM eligible children, who are eligible for Early years pupil premium YPP
  - (f) children and young people residing in Domestic Abuse refuge
  - (g) families being supported within Early Help
- 23 This resulted in wider societal impacts (Appendix 3 case studies)

## **Workforce Development**

- 24 To support all delivery partners meet DfE standards a training offer has been developed and includes the following sessions:
- (a) School Meal Standards and nutritional education
  - (b) Physical Activity Standards.
  - (c) Signposting Standards.
  - (d) Safeguarding (DSCP online training).
  - (e) Financial Ability.
  - (f) Capturing the Voice of the Child.
  - (g) Youth Mental Health Awareness.
  - (h) Physical Activity Support.
  - (i) Fire Safety Awareness.

## **Communications and Marketing**

- 25 A communications and marketing plan has been developed to ensure the programme is promoted and that children, young people and families know what provision is available near to where they live. The programme has been branded as 'Fun and Food' in County Durham. A dedicated webpage is now available for families and providers [www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood](http://www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood) and has received over 45000 unique views since it was launched in March 2021.
- 26 All activities are listed on the County Durham Families Information Service so that families can find out about activities taking place across the county and we have various press releases and social media campaigns.

- 27 A number of short videos have been compiled to showcase the range of activities provided for children and young people. These are available on the Fun and Food web page: [Fun and Food Videos](#)
- 28 A Facebook Group was launched in February 22 and now has over 3500 members.
- 29 A link to the 'Help with your Money' web page is also available on the Fun and Food web page. This has a wide range of information to support families to manage their money including access to hardship grants, debt advice, credit union, healthy start vouchers and how to apply for free school meals.  
[Help with your Money - Durham County Council](#)
- 30 Branding for both 11 – 16 year olds and children with SEND has been designed and will be used in all communications for projects working specifically working with these groups (Appendix 4)

## **Half Term Holidays**

- 31 Within the terms of the DfE funding half terms holidays cannot be funded. Recognising the need and demand for holiday activities with healthy food during half term holidays an additional £80,000 was secured from Public Health for February 22 half term and an additional £150,000 was secured from the Poverty Action Steering Group (PASG) for May and October half terms 2022.
- 32 Fun and Food recognises the importance of offering enriching activities with healthy food across all holiday periods. Delivery partners are keen to be able to offer consistency to families throughout the year.
- 33 Across February, May and October 2022 half term holidays DCC funded 163 projects, engaging with 11,083 children, 1256 who had additional needs.

## **Challenges**

- 34 Delivery partners reported a significant number of 'no shows'.
- 35 The Christmas holidays were challenging to coordinate due to schools in Durham having inconsistent holiday dates - break up dates ranged from 16th - 23rd Dec and then a number of bank holidays meant that the days available for provision was limited. A number of partners that have delivered during easter and the summer chose not to deliver as they closed for the holidays.
- 36 Collecting data from partners remained a significant challenge in all holiday periods. A family friendly data privacy notice has been produced, and this is available online for project leads and families. The central team continue to support groups with this.
- 37 Groups do not always provide details of children as they are registered at school e.g. use nick names/different surnames which means data matching is difficult.

- 38 The central team continue to work with partners to overcome these challenges and consideration is currently underway to procure an online management information system/booking system.

## **Programme Developments**

- 39 A Development Worker role has been appointed to work with stakeholders and partners across the County to scope and develop an integrated, county wide, community based, physical activity programme targeting 11–16-year-old children and their families linked to the Fun and Food Programme.
- 40 There will be a clear focus on engaging more schools to be part of the Fun and Food programme supporting them to develop partnerships to deliver projects on school sites.
- 41 The programme has begun to look to expand specialist provision for children and young people with SEND and will work with universal providers to ensure that provision is accessible for all children and young people.
- 42 The programme currently encourages all delivery partners to access the Advice in County Durham portal to signpost families to a range of advice services. It is hoped that some more focussed support will be available in Summer 2023 working together with Northeast First Credit Union to attend Fun and Food activities and enable families to maximise income and encourage responsible borrowing and savings.

## **Conclusion**

- 43 Poverty continues to be a key and growing concern for children and families living in County Durham. We understand the negative impact living in poverty has on a child's life chances.
- 44 Fun and Food is one of the initiatives in County Durham that helps to mitigate the negative impacts of child poverty and support families affected by the cost of living crisis.
- 45 The programme continues to develop the good practice demonstrated in 2022, build on existing partnerships, develop new partnerships and upscale on what has been delivered to date.
- 46 Feedback from children, young people, parents/carers and delivery partners has been very positive. It demonstrates the level of need for this programme within our communities and the impact that enriching holiday activities with healthy food can have.
- 47 Ongoing support and oversight from elected members are welcomed.



**Author(s)** Lindsey Davison, Social Inclusion Operations Manager, Tel: 03000 261763 [lindsey.davison@durham.gov.uk](mailto:lindsey.davison@durham.gov.uk)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Deliver DfE Holiday Activities with Food in line with DfE expectations and sign-up conditions.

### **Finance**

Probity of DfE Holiday Activities with Food Funding.

### **Consultation**

Consultation with children and families will take place in developing Holiday Activities with Healthy Food programme.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Equality of opportunity for children and families most at risk of negative impact of poverty

### **Climate Change**

None

### **Human Rights**

Equal opportunities

### **Crime and Disorder**

Research shows families living in poverty are more likely to be involved or victims of crime and anti-social behaviours.

### **Staffing**

None

### **Accommodation**

None

### **Risk**

None

### **Procurement:**

Procurement of Fun and Food provision is undertaken within strict procurement regulations.

## **Appendix2**

### **Parent/Carer Feedback**

“Money has been tight lately and I was worried what we would do when the kids were off school, we haven’t had to worry as we have had stuff to do every day and the food has been great, we have had so much fun”

“I can’t believe you have put all of this on and food to go with it – its great knowing they will have lunch, one less thing to think about as a parent”

“we had a great day out spending quality time as a family”

“This has been an amazing opportunity, the kids have loved it”

“Thanks to everyone who helped make this happen, to see their little faces is priceless”

“I was able to go to work and not worry about my child. Knowing he was having fun and being fed was the best feeling”

“It allows my daughter to socialise and gain independence and confidence away from me”

“Can’t believe all of this is free, especially at Christmas time when we all need a little help”

“Thank you, this has filled the gap from school to Christmas, otherwise they would have been at home climbing the walls”

“My son loved the teen cook club, there isn’t many sessions for older children during the holidays, It was such a great opportunity for him to meet friends outside of school and make new friends while cooking real food, he’s taken so much away with him.”

### **Children and Young People Feedback**

“I have liked all of the centre sessions but the best have been animals day because we got to hold lots of different small animals and learn about how to look after different pets. The money skills day was really good too and helped me learn how to order my own meal and budget my money”

“I’ve had a brilliant Summer with lots of things to do every week”

“I wish I can come to this every week”

“The place is so fun and good”

“Loved having somewhere to go through the holidays, and things to do

“The slime activity was so fun. It was calming to play with and meeting new people has been fun too”

“My best part of today was everything!”

“Wow, this is amazing” when we pulled up to the museum”

“Thank you for today. I was a bit scared but everyone was really good and kind.”

“We did lots of stuff. They recorded my voice and I sounded dead good!”

“I loved today. It was fun! I loved writing! I would definitely recommend.”

“I love today, my favourite thing was the train ride and drawing.”

“I’m tired and happy. It has been a fun day.”

## **Provider Feedback**

### Feedback from a school setting

M is one of our regular children in holiday club and really enjoyed the tag rugby and the tug of war, he now attends tag rudy classes every Wednesday within school.

D told his mum he had been on holiday as he had been in the pool and played in the sand and he had ice cream (hadn’t been off school property).

Our hampers were a great help we had one grandad in tears as he has 3 grandchildren who live with him and his wife and remarked that the hamper was almost half a week’s shopping for him and was very much appreciated.

## Appendix 3

### Wider Societal Impacts

#### Feedback from parents/carer of children with SEND

“You have provided something really special for my little boy who is unable to attend many holiday clubs or camps. The experience from start to finish has been superb. The social story was clear and easy to understand and helped us both prepare for the day. The warm welcome meant my little boy felt at ease from the start and could be left. I think autistic children who have particular difficulties around social, emotional and communication can feel more at ease with animals and this is certainly the case for E. E has been able to communicate about the day. He has told me about the dogs and what they were like. He told me about helping the dogs to do the obstacle course and making the treats. He came back happy and confident and even visited our neighbours to give their dog some homemade treats”.

“It was great to meet other families who are in the in similar situations, I felt it was a safe environment for my child”

“The staff were really friendly and helped the children to bounce especially those who are less able.”

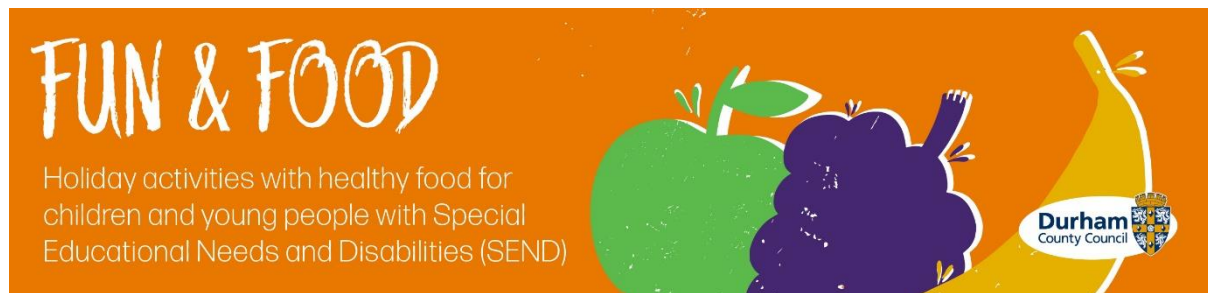
#### Feedback from a women’s refuge

“The activities have allowed the families to spend quality time together and rebuild relationships and make lasting memories. A lot have said without this project they wouldn’t have been able to do what they have over the summer with their children. We have had families go to places that they had never been before and a number of families have commented on how they now recognise and understand the importance of spending time together as a family whether this is getting involved in activities or simply sitting down and eating freshly prepared meals together. With guidance from worker’s mum’s have said they now feel much more confident in preparing healthy, nutritional, well balanced meals for their families. Most importantly all of the women and children involved have enjoyed the activities and socialising with other families. It has been an amazing summer holidays and it has been wonderful watching the families and children have fun and be provided with lots of new opportunities. We had one family who was struggling with being away from their family and friends, initially they were really reluctant to engage with support staff as they really wanted to go back to the area in which they were from. There was concerns that the family would return to the perpetrator also, however with encouragement from staff the family attended their first activity session and then from then onwards they engaged in all of the sessions and days out. The family thoroughly enjoyed it and began to interact with other residents too and started to form relationships. The mum said

when we got here I couldn't settle I just wanted to be back were we were from but now we are settled and the kids are happy and the support has been amazing. The summer holidays have been great and we are so grateful for everything including the food which has also been a huge support".



## Appendix 4



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# FUN & FOOD

## Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Programme

FUN & FOOD

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



Durham  
County Council

# Fun and Food in Durham

- The Holiday Activities and Food programme expanded in 2021 so that children on free school meals in England will be offered free healthy meals and enriching activities over the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.
- DfE funding can not be used for half term holidays
- **2021** DfE investment of up to £220 million
- **2022 – 2025** DfE investment of £200 million per year for 3 years
- DCC allocation: **2021: £2,383,860** **2022: £2,338,740** **2023: £2,338,210**
- DCC have an inclusive offer for all children and young people
- Coordination Team
- Multi Agency Child Poverty Working Group Governance

**FUN & FOOD**

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



# County Durham Delivery Model

- AAP locality based provision
- We greatly value the important role that voluntary and community sector partners play
- Contracted provision (area based and countywide provision started from Summer 21)
- DCC service providers (Culture, Leisure and Sport, Schools, 0-19 Family Centres, Libraries, Short Breaks, Community Arts, Aycliffe Secure Children's Home, GRT Engagement teams, SENDIASS, children's residential homes)
- Local attractions/days out
- The holiday provision should meet the DfE National programme standards.
- Support is available to help partners to work towards achieving the DfE national standards.

**FUN & FOOD**

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



# Fun and Food in Durham 2022 (DfE funded)

	2022
Projects Funded	531
No. of Children Engaged	34882
No. Children with additional needs	2834

# FUN & FOOD

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



# Half Term Fun and Food

£80,000 secured from Public Health for Feb 22

£15000 secured from the PASG for May/Oct 22

£425000 secured from PASG for Feb 23 – Feb 24

	2022
No. of projects	163
No. of children engaged	11083
No. children with additional needs	1256



# FUN & FOOD

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



## Other Developments

- Provider Forums
- Workforce Development
- School Welfare Right Campaign
- Family Friendly Data Privacy Notice
- Appointed a dedicated 11 – 16 year old Worker

**FUN & FOOD**

Holiday activities with healthy food

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# Challenges

- 'no shows'
- Families reluctance to share children's details
- Collecting data from partners
- Changing expectations of the DfE for data collection
- Evaluating Impact

**FUN & FOOD**

Holiday activities with healthy food

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## Communications and Marketing

- Dedicated Fun and Food Webpage with over 44500 unique page views since it was launched in March 2021

[www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood](http://www.durham.gov.uk/funandfood)

- Facebook Group launched Feb 22 – over 3500 members

[\(13\) Fun and Food County Durham | Facebook](#)

**FUN & FOOD**

Holiday activities with healthy food

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[Fun and Food Easter 2023 - YouTube](#)

# FUN & FOOD

Holiday activities with healthy food

Funded by the Department for Education



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6 July 2023

## Update of the Starting Well Partnership

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### Report of John Pearce, Chair of the Starting Well Partnership, and Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

#### Purpose of the Report

- 1 To update Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of the Starting Well Partnership.

#### Background

- 2 A presentation accompanying this report covers:
  - (a) What the partnership does and who is part of it
  - (b) Updates from the previous annual presentation.
  - (c) Projects and programmes delivered in 2022/23
  - (d) Partnership priorities for 2023/2024
  - (e) Ongoing projects and programmes
  - (f) Overview of the challenges faced within the Partnership

#### Conclusion

- 3 The Starting Well Partnership brings together colleagues across key agencies in County Durham to focus on working together to improve outcomes for children and young people. The differentiated meetings allow for discussion of the individual projects overseen to ensure delivery of the Growing up in County Durham strategy as well as providing strategic discussion about partnership issues to support a whole system approach to improvement.

#### Recommendations

- 4 Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note and comment on the content of the presentation.

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**Contact:** Alison Ayres email: [a.ayres@nhs.net](mailto:a.ayres@nhs.net)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

There are no direct legal implications relating to this presentation or report.

### **Finance**

This report or presentation do not have any direct financial implications.

### **Consultation**

Whilst there has been no consultation undertaken to produce this report or associated presentation, individual projects and work programmes are undertaken in consultation with residents.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

There is no direct impact relating to equality or diversity within this report or presentation. Each project undertakes an Equality and Diversity impact assessment individually.

### **Human Rights**

There are no direct impact relating to human rights within this report or presentation.

### **Crime and Disorder**

There are no crime and disorder considerations relating to this report or presentation. County Durham Constabulary are represented on the Starting Well Partnership.

### **Staffing**

There are no direct staffing implications relating to this report or presentation.

### **Accommodation**

There are no direct accommodation implications relating to this report or presentation.

### **Risk**

Each project has it's own risk and issues log. Risks and issues are reported to each sub-group where appropriate and escalated to the Partnership as required. The Partnership also holds it's own risks and issues log which Partners can add too.

### **Procurement**

There are no direct procurement implications relating to this report or presentation.

# Annual update from Starting Well Partnership

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee

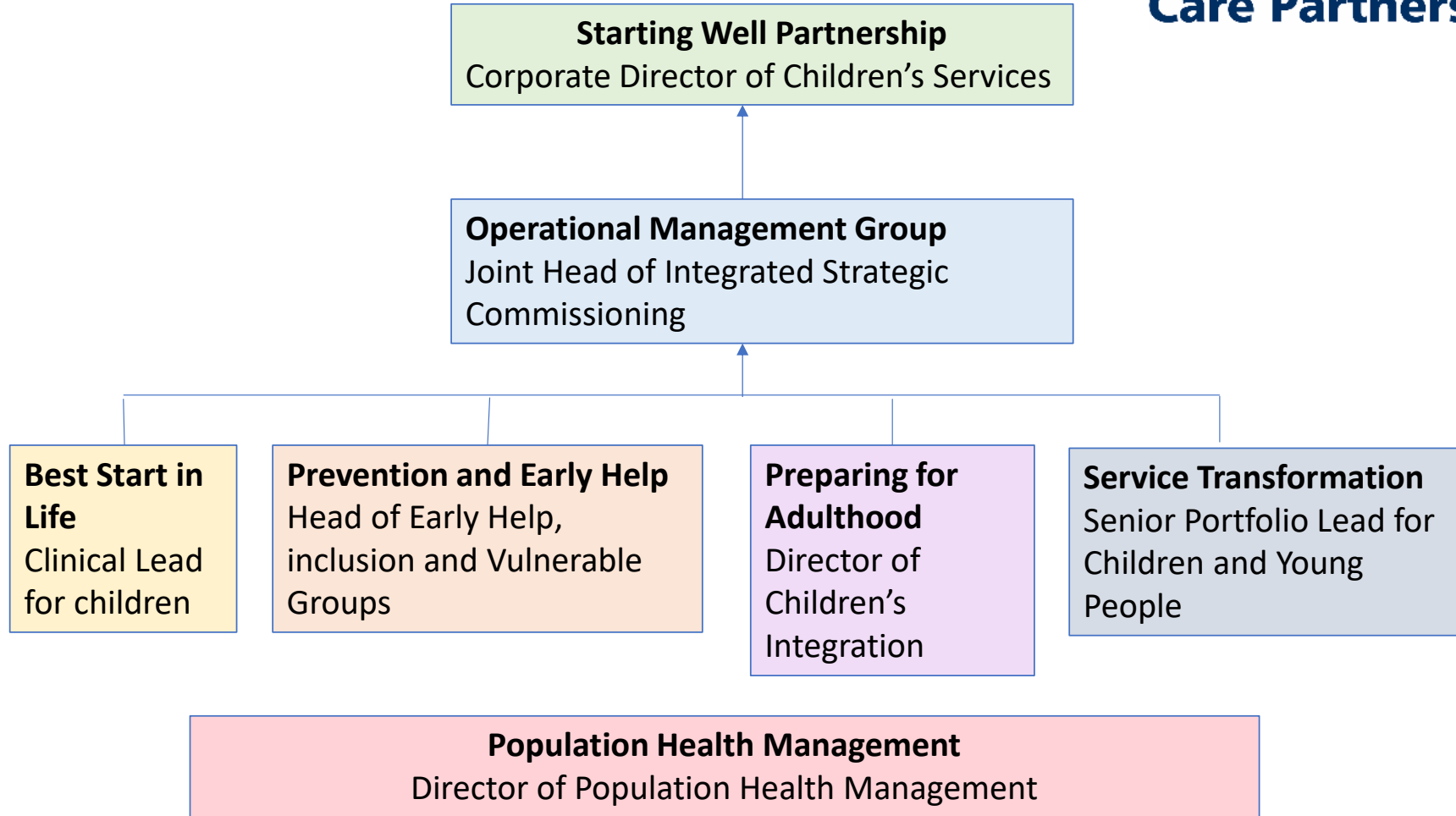
Alison Ayres, Commissioning Manager  
for Children's Services, County Durham  
Integrated Commissioning Team

# Who are the Starting Well Partnership?

- To work to improve pathways of care and activities for children and young people.
- Whole system working
- Recognising that we all impact on the lives of our children and young people







# Updates from previous presentation



- COVID
  - Waiting times
  - Widening inequalities
- Maternity
  - Ockenden reports
  - Continuity of Carer
- Under 1's
  - Proportion of under 1's coming into care has reduced
- Growing Up in County Durham strategy
  - Approved and in delivery

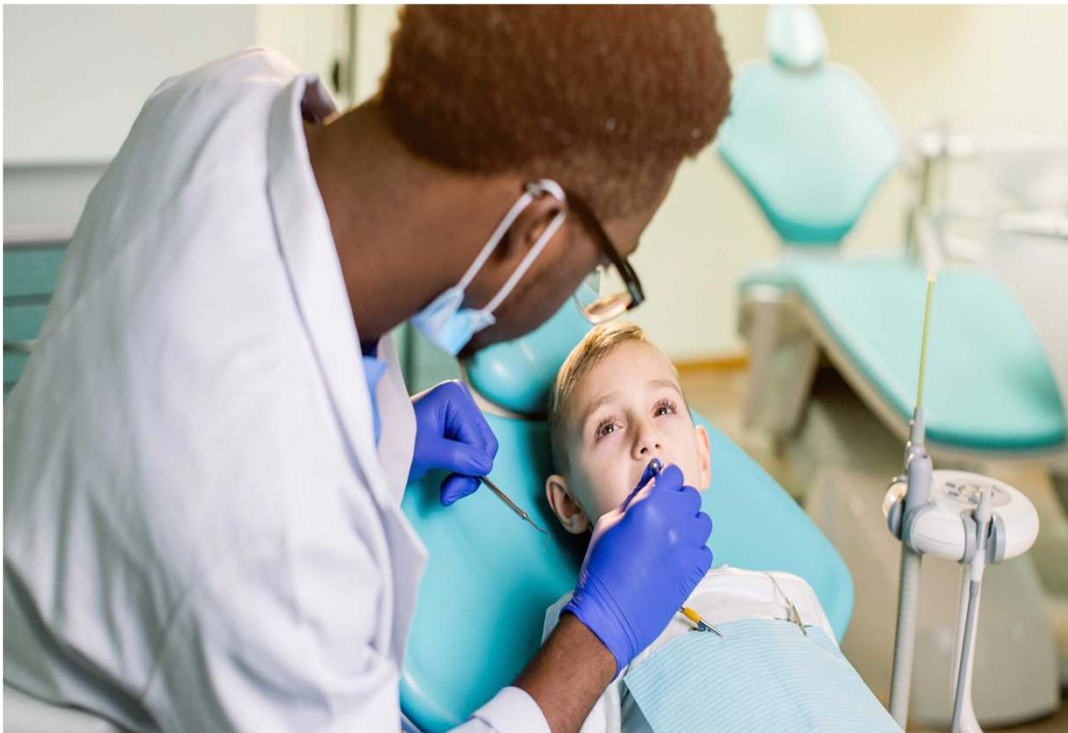


# Projects and programmes from 22/23



- Piloting integrated therapies in special schools
- PAUSE – secure longer term investment

# Partnership Priorities for 23/24



- Mental Health
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
- 'know your place'
- Preparation for adulthood
- Care Review response
- NHS dentistry

Working together to help keep the people of County Durham happy, healthy and at home



# Operational Management Group priorities for 23/24

- Delivery of GuiCD
- Service Transformation
- Best Start in Life
- Early Help and Prevention
- Preparation for adulthood



# Ongoing projects and programmes



- Delivery of Sufficiency Strategy
- Supporting families with neurodivergent children and young people
- Family Hubs and Start For Life Programme
- Redesigning the Children's Community Nursing team
- Implementing & extending Personal Budgets and Direct payments
- Improvements to the short breaks offer



# Key Challenges

- Increases in demand for services across the system and increases in complexity and acuity
- Resources across the system
- Workloads and staff capacity







Working together to help keep the people of  
County Durham happy, healthy and at home





**Children and Young People  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**6 July 2023**

**Quarter Four, 2022/23  
Performance Management Report**

**Ordinary Decision**



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**Report of John Hewitt, Chief Executive**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide.

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To present an overview of progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework and highlight key messages to inform strategic priorities and work programmes.
- 2 The report covers performance in and to the end of quarter four, 2022/23, January to March 2023.

**Executive Summary**

- 3 This report is structured around a performance framework which reflects our current [Council Plan](#) (2022-2026), and its format has been developed to provide greater focus on how the council is contributing to achieving the people's vision.
- 4 The performance report is structured around two main components.
  - (a) State of the County indicators to highlight areas of strategic importance and reflected in both the [County Durham Vision 2035](#) and the [Council Plan](#).
  - (b) Performance of council services and progress against major initiatives as set out in the [Council Plan](#).
- 5 Performance is reported on an exception basis with key messages against the five thematic areas within the Council Plan 2022-2026: our economy, our environment, our people, our communities, and our council. It is broken down into national, regional and local picture, things that are going well, areas which require attention and other areas to note.
- 6 The [Council Plan](#) has undergone its annual refresh and the plan for 2023-2027 was approved by Council on 22 February. The performance framework is now being adjusted accordingly and will form the structure of this performance report from quarter one, 2023/24.

## Context

7 2022/23 continues to be a challenging period and this report sets out the council's continued strong performance. COVID-19, the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis have all impacted on our residents, our businesses and the council. The current cost-of-living crisis has steadily worsened over the last 12 months. High inflation, currently at 10.1%<sup>1</sup>, has largely been driven by the rise in the cost of fuel and energy bills, which is being impacted significantly by world events, including the war in Ukraine. This is having a triple impact.

- (a) Impact on our residents. High inflation is outstripping wage and benefit increases, so income is falling in real terms. This is driving demand for services which support people facing financial hardship or who are in crisis, as well as services provided to vulnerable people such as social care for children and adults.

We are receiving more contact from households seeking financial assistance, with a continuing high volume of applications for Welfare Assistance. Both elements of our scheme increased during 2022/23, although the increase in claims for Daily Living Expenses<sup>2</sup> was more significant (10,812 this year, compared to 4,875 last year) than the increase in claims for Settlement Grants<sup>3</sup> (1,576 claims this year, compared to 1,310 last year). We are continuing to support residents through the crisis with various initiatives and funds, including our Council Tax Reduction Scheme, food and fun initiatives, food surplus activity and 'cutting the cost of the school day' initiative.

- (b) Increased costs for the council. Premises and transport increased in line with higher energy costs and fuel prices, most noticeably across service areas such as waste and Home to School Transport. Contract prices were also affected, and more contracts reflected changes in demand.

We created a £10 million Budget Support Reserve to assist with inflationary pressures within 2022/23.

- (c) Reduced income for the council. Users of council services may seek to save money resulting in a fall in income from discretionary services such as leisure centres and theatres. We estimate that during 2022/23 our income will be under budget by £1.858 million.

8 The council's low tax raising capacity continues to place pressure on our budgets. If core spending power 'per dwelling' across the county was raised

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<sup>1</sup> UK Consumer Price Index for 12 months to March 2023. Indicative [modelled consumer price inflation estimates](#) suggest that the CPI rate would have last been higher in October 1981, where the estimate for the annual inflation rate was 11.2%.

<sup>2</sup> helps people whose circumstances change unexpectedly and who do not have access to money. It provides help with daily living expenses (for up to seven days) – includes food, travel and some clothing (restrictions apply).

<sup>3</sup> helps people stay in their home, or move back into housing, after living in supported or unsettled accommodation, e.g., when leaving care of having been made homeless. It includes help towards beds and/or bedding, furniture, white goods (for example, cooker, fridge, washing machine), kitchen equipment, floor coverings, curtains, removal costs.

to the England average of £2,360 (+£167), the council would receive an additional £42 million each year.

- 9 Budget pressures of around £79 million are expected during 2023/24. This is due to factors such as the 9.7% uplift in the National Living Wage, energy costs, pay awards, high levels of inflation and higher demand across social care services.
- 10 Pressures will be partly financed by the additional £57 million received from the Local Government Settlement and from council tax and tax base increases, with the remainder split £12 million from savings and by utilising £10 million from the MTFP Support Reserve.
- 11 Despite this challenging financial environment, the 2023/24 budget includes:
  - support for low-income households through our Council Tax Reduction Scheme
  - maximisation of health and social care funds for the benefit of our vulnerable clients
  - significant investment in capital expenditure with a £770 million capital programme, the most ambitious the council has ever agreed.

## **Recommendation**

- 12 That Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes:
  - (a) the overall position and direction of travel in relation to quarter four performance;
  - (b) the continuing impact of COVID-19 pandemic recovery and the external international factors driving inflation and cost-of-living on the council's performance; and
  - (c) the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance including the significant economic and well-being challenges because of the pandemic and other external factors.

## **Analysis of the Performance Report**

- 13 The areas identified in this section are contributory indicators linked to the priorities of the Council Plan. Performance is reported on an exception basis with key messages against the five thematic areas within the Council Plan 2022-2026.

### **Our people**

- 14 The aim of this priority is to help our residents live long and independent lives and remain in good health for as long as possible. We will protect and improve health by tackling the leading causes of illness and early death, inequalities and the challenges around mental health. We will ensure a sustainable high-quality care market and will invest in a multi-million pound programme to transform our leisure centre venues.

### **Going Well**

- 15 Referral rates per 10,000 0-17 year olds have reduced slightly and remain below benchmarks. Improved practice over the last few years has led to better performance in key areas such as our re-referral rate, which has reduced from 28% (and in the top 20 highest in the country in 2019/20) to 17% in 2022/23 and this is now consistently below our national (22%), regional (21%) and statistical neighbours (20%).
- 16 Between April 2022 and March 2023, 1,384 families were turned around through the Stronger Families programme, 1,286 attained significant and sustained outcomes, and 98 maintained continuous employment. Performance surpassed our annual national target of 760 families turned around.

### **Areas which require attention**

- 17 Our caseload policy (for children and young people) states that a full time equivalent (FTE) social worker should have no more than 22 cases, and we regard 25 cases as being very high. Although fewer children are requiring statutory children's social care support, staff vacancies across the service means that more than one in three social workers has more than 25 cases.
- 18 Caseload pressures arise from an increasing number of vacancies for children's social work practitioners. This is a national issue with most English councils struggling to recruit and retain their workforce. In Durham there were 12 FTE fewer case holders this quarter compared to the same period last year, and at the end of March, 62 social work vacancies. This equates to a vacancy rate of 18.3%, the highest recorded since monitoring began in 2018, lower than the latest national vacancy rate of 20%, also the highest recorded. We are undertaking a significant amount of activity to improve social work recruitment and retention which we expect will reduce the number of vacancies over the next 4-6 months but caseloads are likely to remain a challenge in this period.

- 19 Increases in children in care (currently 1,071), and changes to the composition of children entering care, continue to cause placement pressures. Our rates of children in care (105 per 10,000 children population) remain higher than national averages (70) but below our regional (110) and statistical neighbours (107). Our transformation plans aim to increase capacity within our in-house children's homes, recruiting more foster carers and working with children and their families to prevent them entering care.
- 20 In Special Education Needs and Disability Services (SEND), we continue to see sustained growth in requests for EHCP assessments, with significant increases over the last few years which are also evidenced nationally. In 2022/23, the service received 948 requests for an EHCP, 14% higher than in 2021/22 and 71% higher than the same period last year, and more than prior to COVID (554 in 2019/20).
- 21 Pressure is compounded by high levels of demand in partner organisations, such as health who are a key part of the assessment process. We have invested in and restructured our SEND Casework Teams and Educational Psychologists, however, there are national shortages for this specialist role. More requests for EHCP assessments is affecting our ability to meet the 20-week statutory timescale, with none completed within timescale in the year to date. The service has 602 open assessments, 194 of which are already outside of the 20-week timescale. Work has begun to investigate this further and establish where the delays are occurring in the system.

## **Risk Management**

- 22 Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's agenda. The council's risk management process sits alongside our change programme and is incorporated into all significant change and improvement projects. The latest report can be found [here](#).

## **Background papers**

- County Durham Vision (County Council, 23 October 2019)  
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s115064/Draft%20Durham%20Vision%20v10.0.pdf>

## **Other useful documents**

- Council Plan 2022 to 2026 (current plan)  
<https://www.durham.gov.uk/media/34954/Durham-County-Council-Plan-2022-2026/pdf/CouncilPlan2022-2026.pdf?m=637969523673600000>
- Quarter Three, 2022/23 Performance Management Report  
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s171720/Item%205%20Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q3%202022-23.pdf>
- Quarter Two, 2022/23 Performance Management Report  
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s166398/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q2%202022-23%20v2.1.pdf>

- Quarter One, 2022/23 Performance Management Report  
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s161902/Corporate%20Performance%20Report%20Q1%202022-23%20Revised.pdf>
- Quarter Four, 2021/22 Performance Management Report  
<https://democracy.durham.gov.uk/documents/s157533/Year%20End%20performance%20report%202021-22.pdf>

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Finance**

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

### **Consultation**

Not applicable.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Equality measures are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

### **Climate Change**

We have declared a climate change emergency and consider the implications of climate change in our reports and decision-making.

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable.

### **Crime and Disorder**

A number of performance indicators and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

### **Staffing**

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health indicators has been included to monitor staffing issues.

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable.

### **Risk**

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly performance management report.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable.



# Durham County Council Performance Management Report Quarter Four, 2022/23





## 1.0 Our People: National, Regional & Local Picture

- 1 During 2022/23, we received almost 20,000 contacts for early help and children's social care at First Contact (children's services front door), a reduction of nearly 2,000 on 2021/22. The Children Services Portal was launched in October 2022, and this has also had just over 1,000 forms submitted. The partner led early help assessment, child and family plan and making requests for additional early help all require use of the Children Services Portal.
- 2 Over the same period, almost 4,800 statutory children's social care referrals were received, a slight reduction on last year. The rolling annual rate per 10,000 children (468, n=4,775) is lower than in our benchmarks (England: 538, Statutory Neighbours: 608 and North East: 644).
- 3 Rates of children in need, children on child protection plans and children in care per 10,000 children population remain higher than national averages but below our regional and statistical neighbours.

	2022/23	2021/22		
	County Durham	England	Statistical Neighbours	North East
Children in need	381	334	445	471
Children on a child protection plan	53	42	62	63
Children in care	105	70	107	110

## 1.1 Council Activity: Going Well

### Children's Social Care

- 4 Referral rates per 10,000 0-17 year olds have reduced slightly and remain below benchmarks. Improved practice over the last few years has led to better performance in key areas such as our re-referral rate, which has reduced from 28% and in the top 20 highest in the country in 2019/20 to 17% in 2022/23 and this is now consistently below our national (22%), regional (21%) and statistical neighbours (20%). This means fewer children and their families require further support from safeguarding services following support.
- 5 The national transfer scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) continues with 59 of our children in care having a UASC status; this will further increase over the rest of the year, as we take UASC into the care of the council in line with national Home Office targets.

- 6 Despite increasing caseload pressures, our social workers continue to see children in line with statutory timescales through regular performance monitoring and our managers have oversight of children's cases. Latest data to March 2023 shows 87% of children open to our Families First Teams on the day had been seen within the last four weeks. For children with a child protection plan, 96% had a visit and were seen in the last four weeks.
- 7 We continue to see an increasing trend in children in care (n=1,071), and whilst this is high for County Durham the rate of 105 per 10,000 0-17 population remains lower than in our regional and statistical neighbours. We continue to experience placement pressures and are focusing on increasing capacity within our in-house children's homes, recruiting more foster carers, and working with children and their families to prevent them entering care.
- 8 As we haven't seen an increase following COVID-19 like some of our neighbouring local authorities, a multi-agency audit is ongoing, led by the Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership, to assure ourselves that we are receiving the right referrals at the right time from our partner organisations.
- 9 While caseload and capacity issues remain a key concern, we are undertaking a significant amount of activity to improve social work recruitment and retention which we expect to will reduce the number of vacancies over the next 4-6 months.
- 10 Our long-term investment in supporting social work qualification programmes has brought us six Step Up to Social Work participants who are already with us as family workers, and are expected to be in social work posts in May and six social work apprentices who are completing their programme and are expected to commence in social work posts in late summer/autumn. We are building on this by working within our regional partnership to recruit up to ten further Step Up to Social Work participants who will qualify in spring 2025. We have also changed our model for allow us to support apprentices and are on track to recruit 20 social work trainees who will be able to support our teams as they train from the autumn, qualifying as social workers in autumn 2026. The programme has exceeded all expectations, with 41,859 advert views, 564 people booked onto/attended briefings and 420 applicants. Shortlisting is now underway.
- 11 The introduction of a £2,000 welcome payment for newly qualified social workers in March 2023 made our offer more competitive in the region and increased the number of applicants for roles. This year 32 applications were received (approximately double the number we received in a similar recruitment process the previous year). Following the interview process a further 15 newly qualified social worker are expected to commence in late summer/autumn. Although this will fill gaps in some our teams who have been struggling, we have not yet managed to find the number of newly qualified social workers we would have liked to, and a further recruitment exercise is expected to commence at the end of May.

- 12 All of our development and recruitment activity targeting newly qualified social workers is currently expected to bring us 41 new social workers, more than double the number we were able to recruit last financial year.
- 13 We continue to recruit very actively to a range of permanent posts and are finding that social media promotion is the most useful way to increase the number of potential applicants we reach. We have advertised posts in our Children in Care teams through a contract with a social media specialist. The advert had a very wide reach with 51,704 video views but led to only one candidate of the calibre we need. We have learned from the process and are now planning adverts for our Families First and ASET teams.

### **Stronger Families Programme**

- 14 During the 12 months ending 31 March, 1,384 families were turned around via the Stronger Families programme. Of these, 1,286 attained significant and sustained outcomes, and 98 maintained continuous employment. We have already surpassed our annual national target of 760 families turned around.

## **1.2 Council Activity: Areas which require attention**

### **Children's Social Care**

- 23 More children are being supported in statutory safeguarding services resulting in some of our children's social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers having higher caseloads than we would like. More than one in three have a high caseload, over 25 cases, but there are 12 FTE fewer case holders than the same period last year.
- 24 Caseload pressures arise from an increasing number of vacancies for children's social work practitioners. This is a national issue with most English councils struggling to recruit and retain their workforce. In Durham there were 12 FTE fewer case holders this quarter compared to the same period last year, and at the end of March, 62 social work vacancies. This equates to a vacancy rate of 18.3%, the highest recorded since monitoring began in 2018, lower than the latest national vacancy rate of 20%, also the highest recorded. We are undertaking a significant amount of activity to improve social work recruitment and retention which we expect to will reduce the number of vacancies over the next 4-6 months but caseloads are likely to remain a challenge in this period.

### **Special Education Needs and Disability Services (SEND)**

- 15 Requests for Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments have significantly increased over the last few years - a trend which is also evidenced nationally. In 2022/23, the service received 948 requests for an EHCP, 14% higher

than in 2021/22 and 71% higher than the same period last year, and more than prior to COVID (554 in 2019/20).

- 16 Pressure is compounded by high levels of demand in partner organisations, such as health services which are a key part of the assessment process. Although we have invested in and restructured our SEND Casework Teams and Educational Psychologists, there is a national shortage for this specialist role.
- 17 More requests for EHCP assessments is affecting our ability to meet the 20-week statutory timescale, with none completed within timescale in the year to date. The service has 602 open assessments, 194 of which are already outside of the 20-week timescale. Work has begun to investigate this further and establish where the delays are occurring in the system.

## 6.0 Data Tables

### Key to Symbols

Performance against target and previous performance		Performance against comparable groups		Direction of Travel	
✓	meeting or exceeding	✓	Performance is better than national or north east	↑	higher than comparable period
○	within 2%	×	Performance is worse than national or north east	→	static against comparable period
×	more than 2% behind	S	Performance is the same as national or north east	↓	lower than comparable period

*NB: oldest data in left column*

### Types of indicators

There are two types of performance indicators throughout the report:

1. Key target indicators – targets are set as improvements can be measured regularly and can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
2. Key tracker indicators – performance is tracked but no targets are set as they are long-term and / or can only be partially influenced by the council and its partners.

### National Benchmarking (N)

We compare our performance to all English authorities. The number of authorities varies according to the performance indicator and functions of councils, e.g., educational attainment is compared to county and unitary councils, however waste disposal is compared to district and unitary councils.

### North East Benchmarking (NE)

The North East comparator is the average performance from the authorities within the North East region - County Durham, Darlington, Gateshead, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, Northumberland, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

More detail is available from the Strategy Team at [performance@durham.gov.uk](mailto:performance@durham.gov.uk)

## Our Economy

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
% uptake of free early education entitlement for 3-4-year-olds	93.7% (2022)	Tracker -	92.8% ✓	96.1% x			→	↑	↓	↑	No
Improve the proportion of children achieving expected standards in maths and reading at KS2 in line with 2030 ambitions <sup>4</sup>	65% (2018/19)	Tracker -	67% x	65% ○			n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No
Improve the average grade of achievement of all our pupils within GCSE English and Maths to a Grade 5 (in line with 2030 ambitions)	new PI	5 by 2030	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No
Improve the educational attainment of our most disadvantaged cohorts to meet basic threshold measures in English and Maths	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	-	-	new PI	new PI	new PI	new PI	No
Increase proportion of young people in education, employment and training to be consistently higher than regional and national levels	94.7% (March 2023)	above N / NE ○	94.6% ✓	85.6% ✓			↑	↓	↑	↑	Yes

## Our People

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieving a good level of development (reported as academic year)	64.5% (2021/22)	Tracker -	N/A	-			↓	n/a	n/a	n/a	No
% of pupils attending an Ofsted judged 'good or better' school – all	86.5% (at 16 Jan 23)	Tracker -	n/a	-	x	✓	↑	↑	↑	n/a	Yes

<sup>4</sup> Not reported for 2019/20 or 2020/21 academic years as no Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or Key Stage 2 (KS2) assessments took place

<sup>2</sup> 2021 figures include Lumiere visitors

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
% of pupils attending an Ofsted judged 'good or better' school – primary	94.3% (at 16 Jan 23)	Tracker -	n/a	-	✓	✓					Yes
% of pupils attending an Ofsted judged 'good or better' school – secondary	75.3% (at 16 Jan 23)	Tracker -	n/a	-	✗	✓					Yes
No. of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan	4,366 (Mar 2023)	Tracker -	4,065 -	3,496 -	-	-	↑	↑	↑	↑	Yes
No. of Children Looked After per 10,000 population	105 [1,071] (at 31 Mar 23)	Tracker -	96 [Mar 22]	-	-	-	↑	↑	↑	↑	Yes
No. of Children in Need per 10,000 Population	381 [3,885] (at 31 Mar 23)	Tracker -	386 [Mar 23]		-	-	↑	↑	↑	↓	Yes
% of Children Looked After placed within 20 miles of their home address	85% (at 31 Mar 22)	Tracker -	87% [2020/21] ○	89% ✗	✓	✓	↓	↓	→	↑	No
No. of families on our Stronger Families Programme attaining significant and sustained outcomes	1,384 (Apr 22-Mar 23)	760 [2022/23] ✓	693 ✓	311 ✓	-	-	↑	↑	↑	↑	Yes
Increase the % of children aged 4-5 who are of a healthy weight <sup>5</sup> <i>Confidence intervals +/-1.2pp</i>	75.5% (2021/22)	90% ✗	Not reported	74.6% ○	○	○	-	-	-	→	No
Increase the % of children aged 10-11 who are of a healthy weight <i>Confidence intervals +/-1.2pp</i>	59.2% (2021/22)	79% ✗	Not reported	61.5% ○	○	○	-	-	-	→	No

<sup>5</sup> National Child Measurement Programme ceased March 2020 when schools closed due to the pandemic, therefore, north east and nearest neighbour comparators should be treated with caution due to missing data from some LAs. Whilst the data for the academic year 2020/21 has been published, local authority data is not available as only a 10% sample of data was recorded.

## Other relevant indicator

Performance Indicator	Latest data (period covered)	Performance compared to:					Direction of Travel - last four reporting periods				updated
		Period target	12 months earlier	Pre-COVID	N	NE					
Increase the % of 16-17-year-olds in an apprenticeship	7.1% (March 2023)	Tracker -	8.5% x	6.8% ✓			↑	↓	↓	↑	Yes
Reduce % point gap in breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks between County Durham and national average	18.7pp (2021/22)	Tracker -	17.4pp x	20.2pp ✓	-	x	↑	↑	↓	↑	No
	12.7% (Oct-Dec 22)	0% x	14.0% ✓	16.3% ✓	x	x	↑	↑	↓	↓	Yes



**Children and Young People's  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**



**6 July 2023**

**Refresh of the Work Programme  
2023/24 for Children and Young  
People's OSC**

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**Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

None

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CYP OSC) with an updated work programme for 2023/2024.

**Executive summary**

- 2 CYPOSC review their work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan and in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035.
- 3 The proposed CYPOSC work programme has been framed around the shared County Durham Vision 2035 which has been developed with partners around three strategic ambitions – 'more and better jobs', 'long and independent lives' and 'connected communities.
- 4 Overview and scrutiny work programmes are designed to be flexible to accommodate items which may arise throughout the year. This flexibility is particularly important as we have an extensive work programme and we must ensure we are able to accommodate issues that may arise during the term of the work programme.

**Recommendations**

- 5 Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- a) Receive and comment on the proposed CYPOSC work programme for 2023/2024.
- b) Agree the work programme for 2023/2024 as attached at appendix 2 and the flexibility it offers to respond to emerging issues.
- c) Identify a topic for in-depth or light touch review activity

## Background

- 6 Scrutiny committees adapted to the change during the pandemic and some of those adaptations have become a part of business as usual for the committee such as briefing reports being used to provide information to members of the committee. The CYPOSC work programme is refreshed annually and takes into consideration the priorities of the Committee and areas identified by the service.
- 7 The overview and scrutiny committee's work programmes are informed by:
  - Council Plan
  - County Durham Vision 2035
  - Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions
  - Partnership Plans and Strategies
  - Performance and Budgetary control data
  - Changes in government legislation
  - Key questions for improving performance.
- 8 The County Durham Partnership agreed a Vision for County Durham 2035 which sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve over the next 15 years and is written around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham:
  - More and better jobs
  - People live long and independent lives
  - Connected communities
- 9 Each ambition contains a number of objectives together with some council specific objectives. The Council Plan is structured around five objectives which capture the three ambitions:
  - Our Economy
  - Our People
  - Our Communities
  - Our Environment
  - Our Council

## **Council Plan 2023/24 – 2026/27**

- 10 The Council Plan is the primary corporate planning document for the county council and details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Vision for County Durham 2035 together with its own change agenda. It aims to provide a readable and accessible summary for members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main programmes of work that we will undertake over the coming three years to help achieve these priorities.
- 11 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around the three ambitions which are mentioned above and below are the relevant objectives that apply to CYPOSC.

### **More and Better Jobs**

- a) Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment.

### **Long and Independent Lives**

- a) Children and young people will enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional wellbeing.
- b) Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities will achieve the best possible outcomes.

### **Connected Communities**

- a) All children and young people will have a safe childhood.
- 12 The Council Plan has been structured around five objectives: Our Economy; Our People; Our Communities; Our Environment and Our Council. The key Council Plan objective for CYPOSC is Our People

## **Current Work Programme**

- 13 During 2022/2023 the CYPOSC prioritised items to be considered at formal meetings due to the size of the work programme. Reports on other items were circulated via email to members. The committee has also undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring and considered overview and progress monitoring reports and presentations in relation to the following:

## **Scrutiny Review Activity**

- MTFP13 Consideration of income generation and efficiency savings in Children and Young People's Services

## **Consultations**

- Home to School Transport Proposals
- Draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2023 - 2028

## **Areas of Overview and Monitoring Activity**

- Children, Young People and Families Partnership Priorities
- Growing up in County Durham – Children, Young People and Families Strategy
- OFSTED ILACS - Durham
- Child Poverty
- Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report
- School Funding Update
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Update
- Sufficiency Strategy
- Early Years Overview
- Reducing Parental Conflict
- Schools Ofsted Update and Educational Attainment
- Response to Children's Social Care Review
- The Pause Programme
- Teenage Conceptions Briefing Report
- County Durham's Youth Council Briefing Report
- Stronger Families Briefing Report
- Support for Young Carer's Briefing Report
- Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report
- Director of Public Health Annual Report
- Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report.

## **Budgetary and performance monitoring:**

- Quarterly budgetary monitoring for the Children and Young People's Service Grouping.
  - Quarterly corporate performance monitoring for the Children and Young People's Service Grouping.
- 14 In addition, the CYP OSC has also considered the following areas which cut across objectives in the Council plan or cut across the remit of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees including:
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – Waiting Times
  - 0-25 Family Health Services Update
  - Best Start in Life
    - Support for Young People Not in Education, Employment and Training
  - I – Thrive Workshop

## **Areas for Consideration in the CYP OSC Work Programme**

- 15 Members of the CYP OSC are asked to agree the proposed work programme for 2023/24 that has been prepared and is attached at appendix two. The work programme is very comprehensive drawing on topical areas across the remit of the committee and it should be noted that it is also flexible. The draft work programme can be found appended to this report at appendix 2
- 16 Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report identifies the activity undertaken by the committee during 2022/23. The committee is asked to consider areas for inclusion in the draft work programme for 2023/24 considering the current Council Plan and the Vision for County Durham 2035. It is also important that members receive information on OFSTED inspections and the results on the recent inspection report are factored into the draft work programme.
- 17 Members are encouraged to identify areas of scrutiny investigation (in-depth and light touch) from the work programme.

## **Conclusion**

- 18 The work programme identifies areas of work that fall within the remit of CYP OSC and is flexible in its delivery.

## Background papers

- [Council Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27](#)
- [County Durham Vision 2035](#)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable

### **Finance**

Not applicable

### **Consultation**

Not applicable

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Not applicable

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable

### **Climate Change**

Not applicable

### **Crime and Disorder**

Not applicable

### **Staffing**

Not applicable

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable

### **Risk**

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is an important element of the Council's governance and risk management arrangements.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable

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<p><b>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/2024</b></p> <p>Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Stephen Gwilym</p> <p><b>Overview and Scrutiny Officer:</b> Ann Whitton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More and better jobs</li> <li>• People live long and independent lives</li> <li>• Connected communities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Note:</b></p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Review – A systematic six-monthly review of progress against recommendations/action plan</p> <p>Scrutiny/Working Group – In-depth review/light touch review</p> <p>Overview/progress – Information on an issue; opportunity to comment, shape, influence, progress with a scrutiny review</p> <p>Informal Information Sessions - Presentation via Teams on areas that fall within the remit of the committee</p> <p>Briefing Reports – Reports for information on areas within the remit of the work programme</p> <p>Performance/Budget – Ongoing quarterly monitoring performance reports/budgets</p>
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<b>Item</b>	<b>When (Subject to confirmation of OSC meeting arrangements)</b>	<b>How</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Formal Committee</b></li> <li>• <b>Circulated electronically as a briefing report</b></li> <li>• <b>Informal Information Session</b></li> </ul>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Overview and Scrutiny Review					
New area for focused review TBC	The committee will need to consider and	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC

	determine an area for focused review				
<b>Overview/Progress</b>					
Partnership Priorities	7 July 2023	Report to Committee	Julie Bradbrook/ Alison Ayres	Members will be aware of the partnership's priorities and how their work aligns to the committee's.	The Committee will receive information on the work of the Partnership and their priorities for the year ahead.
Holiday Activities with Healthy Food Programme (Fun with Food) in County Durham	7 July 2023	Report to Committee	Lyndsey Davison/ Karen Davison	Members will have an understanding of the work being done to help families during holiday periods and promotion of events taking place over the school holidays.	The Committee will receive detail of how the Fun with Food Programme has impacted on the lives of families and promotion of upcoming events taking place
Home to School Transport Proposals Feedback	22 September 2023	Report to Committee	Keith Forster	Members will be aware of the feedback from the consultation and the proposals the service is taking forward	Members will receive information on the feedback from the recent Home to School Transport proposals.
Child Poverty	22 September 2023	Report to Committee	Karen Davison/John Mitchell	Members will be aware of the work being done by DCC to support families	Members will continue to monitor and scrutinise the

				who are experiencing poverty.	various projects and schemes to address child poverty in County Durham and comment accordingly.
Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report	22 September 2023	Report to Committee	Cllr Simmons/Jayne Watson	Members will be aware of the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Panel during 22/23 and their plans for the future.	Report for information
CAMHS Waiting times Data	22 September 2023	Report for information to CYPOSC		Report for Information	Report for Information
Youth Vaping	Special Meeting TBC (Oct)  Members of AWH and S&SC OSCs invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	Katie Bewick	Members will understand the work with children and young people to discourage the use of vapes and with Public Protection Service to address availability to children.	Members will receive information on what work is being done with Children and young people to discourage them from vaping and work being done in schools and colleges and with DCC's Public Protection Service

Neurodivergence	Special Meeting TBC (Oct)  Members of AWH OSC will be invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	Alison Ayres	Members will be aware of the partnership work on neurodivergence.	Members will receive information in relation to partnership work on neurodivergence
High Needs Block Sustainability	Special Meeting (late Oct) TBC	Report to CYPOSC	Martyn Stenton/Paul Shadforth	Members will be aware of the work being done regarding sustainability of the High Needs Block and other SEND areas	The committee will receive information on how the service is addressing the challenges associated with High Needs Block funding
Best Start in Life	13 November  Members of AWHOSC invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	Julia Bates/Michelle Baldwin	Members will receive information on programmes that address areas such as breastfeeding; smoking in pregnancy.	Members will continue to monitor and scrutinise the Best Start in Life Programmes.
0-25 Family Health Services	13 November  Members of AWHOSC invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	Julia Bates/ Michelle Baldwin/ Amanda Smith	Members will receive information from HDNHSFT in relation to the contracts they provide to DCC such as health visiting and school nurse.	Members will scrutinise the projects within the programme and gain an understanding of their performance.

Family Hubs	13 November	Report to CYPOSC	Karen Davison	Members will be aware of the support available at Family Hubs	Following their visit members will receive information relating to the work carried out in the Family Hubs, the challenges faced in their first year and how they have addressed them
Preparation for Adulthood	Joint Special Meeting CYP & AWH OSC TBC (Dec)	To Joint Special CYP & AWH OSC	Jennifer Illingworth	Members will have an opportunity to hear about the work and provide comment on this work.	Members will receive information on the partnership work looking at health and social care transitions between the ages of 16 to 25 years
Support of children and families on the edge of care	8 January 2024	Report to CYPOSC	Bernie Toomey/Paul Rudd	Members will be aware of support available for those on the edge of care	Members will receive information on the support available to those on the edge of care
Pre Birth Programme	8 January 2024	Report to CYPOSC	Jac Tyler	Members will have an understanding of the pre birth programme	The committee will receive information on the pre-birth programme, including

					challenges and successes.
CAMHS Waiting times Data	TBC	Report for information to CYPOSC		Report for Information	Report for Information
Elective Home Education Update	6 March 2024	Report to CYPOSC	Clare Nicholl	Members will be aware of the challenges and how the service is engaging with families and getting children back into schools.	The committee will receive an update on the work to engage with families who choose to educate their children at home and to ensure these children are safeguarded.
School Attendance and Inclusion	6 March 2024	Report to CYPOSC	David Wall/ Clare Nicholl	Members will be aware of attendance levels in county Durham schools.	The Committee will receive data on the levels of school attendance in County Durham and how the service is working with schools to provide support.
Educational Attainment and School Ofsted Update	6 March 2024	Report to CYPOSC	Jim Murray	Members will receive information relating to educational attainment across	Members will be aware of the educational attainment of children and

				all key stages of a child/young person's development.	young people in County Durham.
CYP Mental Health, emotional wellbeing and resilience	25 April 2024  Members of AWHOSC invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	Julia Bates	Members will receive information on the various programmes to support children and young people with mental health and emotional wellbeing issues.	Members will Continue to monitor and scrutinise the number of programmes on offer to CYP both in school and in Members will Continue to monitor and scrutinise the number of programmes on offer to CYP both in school and in them.
Evaluation of Multi Agency Pilot	25 April 2024  Members of AWHOSC invited to attend	Report to CYPOSC	James Graham	Members will be aware of the early findings of the pilot.	Members will receive information regarding the early findings of the Multi Agency Pilot that took place in Consett to improve access to services

CAMHS Waiting times Data	TBC	Report for information to CYPOSC		Report for Information	Report for Information
DfE Safeguarding Guidance update on Working Together	TBD (Dependant on publication by government)	Report to CYPOSC	Rachel Farnham/ Martyn Stenton	Members will be aware of the government's plans for the update of the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance.	Members will receive information on how the government plan to update safeguarding guidance
<b>Briefing Reports</b>					
Support for Young Carers	TBC	Report circulated electronically	Karen Davison	Members will receive information on the work being done to support young carers in County Durham	Members will continue to monitor the help and support available to young carers and their families.
Stronger Families Programme	TBC	Report circulated electronically	Karen Davison	Members will receive information on how many families lives have been turned around by the focussed help and support of the programme.	Members will continue to monitor the programme, the targets and performance to date.



Autism Strategy Information	TBC	Report circulated electronically  AWHOSC members included in circulation	Peter Mulholland	Members will have an understanding of the support available for children and families awaiting an autism diagnosis.	Members will receive information on the support available to families who are awaiting an autism diagnosis
Relationship Based Social Work	TBC	Report circulated electronically	Chris Ring	Members will understand the capacity within the service and the level and complexity of caseloads.	Members will receive information updating them on social worker recruitment and retention and caseloads
Risks Outside the Home	TBC	Report circulated electronically  S&SCOSC members included in the circulation	Bernie Toomey	Members will receive information on work to protect vulnerable children from being exploited.	Members will be aware of the partnership working taking place to help and support vulnerable children.
Work of the Healthy Weight Alliance	TBC	Report circulated electronically  AWHOSC members included in circulation		Members will be aware of projects and support available to children and families reach and maintain a healthy weight.	Members will receive information on the various projects to help people reach a healthy weight including children and families.
Support for Young People who are Not in Education, Employment or Training	TBC	Report circulated electronically	Helen Radcliffe	Members will be aware to the support provided to help young people	Members will receive and update on the projects and

		EEOSC members included in circulation.		into education, employment and training.	programmes supporting young people into education, employment and training.
Joint local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028	Following the strategy being considered at Cabinet	Circulated electronically	Jayne Watson	Members will be aware of the final adopted strategy	Members will receive the adopted strategy which they had commented upon.
Director of Public Health Annual Report	TBC	Circulated Electronically	Director of Public Health	Members will receive the annual report	Report for information
HWB Annual Report	TBC	Circulated Electronically	Julie Bradbrook	Members will receive the annual report	Report for Information

Durham Safeguarding Children Annual Report	TBC	Report circulated electronically	Chair of DSCP/ Jacqui Doherty	Members will receive the annual report	Report for information
<b>Informal Briefing Sessions</b>					
Third Party Payments	TBC	Informal Information via Teams	Jodie Henderson	Members will be aware of how the service is addressing third party payments.	The Committee will receive information relating to the use of third party agencies and the costs to the Council
<b>Visits</b>					
Family Hubs	TBC (Oct/early Nov)	Visit	Karen Davison	Members will have an opportunity to visit the family hubs and receive information in relation to the approach taken in developing them.	Members will be able to see how the family hubs are being developed.
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	TBD	Visit	Hilary Bagley	Members will have an understanding of the work of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	Members will have an opportunity to observe multi agency working

<b>Performance/Budget</b>					
<b>Performance</b> Quarterly reporting	6 July 2023 22 Sept 2023 8 Jan 2024 26 April 2024	Report to CYPOSC	Stephen Tracey  (Resources)	To provide Members with progress towards achieving the key outcomes of the council's corporate performance framework.	Summary information to Members
<b>Budget Outturn Report</b> Quarterly reporting -	22 Sept 2023 (Q4 & Q1) 8 Jan 2024 26 April 2024	Report to CYPOSC	David Watchman  (Resources)	Detail of budget	Summary information to Members