

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

**20 March 2024**

**Children's Social Care  
Demand**



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

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

Countywide

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on demand for Children's Social Care.

**Executive summary**

- 2 Members of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested in their work programme for 2023/24 to receive information on the demand for Children's Social Care.
- 3 Arrangements have been made for the Head of Children's Social Care and the Practice Lead (Safeguarding) to attend the meeting on 20 March to deliver this information to members of the committee.

**Recommendations**

- 4 That Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the report and presentation and comment accordingly.

## **Background**

- 5 At its meeting on 6 July the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and agreed its work programme for 2023/24, which included an item on Children's Social Care Demand.
- 6 Arrangements have been made for the Head of Children's Social Care to attend a Special meeting of the committee to provide members with information on the demand placed on the service.
- 7 Members will find a presentation at appendix 2 this covers the following areas:
  - (a) Social Care Demand including Social Work Caseloads;
  - (b) Social Care Workforce including Recruitment and Retention;
  - (c) Practice Model update including direct impact examples.

## **Conclusion**

- 8 Members of Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be aware of the demand for the service and the challenges this brings.
- 9 Members will be aware there is a national increase in demand in the social care system at a time when the national profile of recruitment and retention is challenging.
- 10 The presentation appended to the report provides an overview of the profile of the demand within Durham, the work ongoing to ensure there is sufficient resilience in the workforce to meet demand and provide an overview of ongoing implementation of the practice model and direct accounts of the impact of this for the children and families of Durham Council.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

None currently

### **Finance**

None currently

### **Consultation**

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable

### **Climate Change**

No additional considerations.

### **Crime and Disorder**

No additional considerations.

### **Staffing**

The report and appendix 1 outline the activity to recruit and retain staff. There are no proposed changes to staffing.

### **Accommodation**

Not applicable

### **Risk**

An inability to recruit and retain social care staff would provide a risk to the delivery of services to vulnerable children and families. This has been identified on the corporate risk register and appropriate mitigations are in place.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable

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## **Appendix 2: Children's Social Care Demand Presentation**

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