

Cabinet

19th November 2014



Children's Services Update

Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Cabinet on the national and local developments in relation to children's services.

Background

2. Children's social care continues to be a high profile area of public service, with local authority decisions under constant scrutiny from regulators and the public. A number of recent child death reviews have highlighted the complex social circumstances in which social workers and partners have to work, and have often been critical of social work practice.
3. The national policy direction has had a consistent focus on a belief that offering effective help as early as possible will prevent the need for intrusive, expensive statutory services at a later point.
4. It is expected that services will be delivered through integrated working between children's and adult's services and partners in health, education, skills and employment services, the police and housing providers.
5. Child Sexual Exploitation has been recognised as an issue facing all local authorities since revelations in authorities such as Rochdale and Rotherham and there has been a drive nationally to tackle this issue.

National Context

6. Numerous national policy documents have been published by successive governments over the last 16 years, all pointing to a consistent strategic direction, towards early intervention and prevention alongside effective and rigorous protection of children and young people.
7. **The Sure Start programme** (1998) set out the theory that universal support services would give children the best start in life, reduce inequality and build strength in families, so that children are emotionally, socially and cognitively ready for school.

8. **The Every Child Matters Programme** (launched in 2003) focused on outcomes rather than process across the 5 themes: Be healthy, Be safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Wellbeing. The approach acknowledged that no single agency can deliver improved outcomes; partnership working is key. This set the context for joint commissioning, integrated services, partnership working and systems thinking about need.
9. **The Healthy Child Programme** (2009) mirrors this view, setting out a programme of prevention for all, and early help through community health services, with targeted support for those who need it, to ensure all children have a strong foundation on which to build their future.
10. **The Think Family Programme** (2009) called for adults and children's services to work more closely together and take a whole family approach to secure better outcomes for children and families with additional needs. In County Durham, this provided the spur to work across the partnership to understand how needs can be met more effectively.
11. **The Marmot Review: "Fair Society, Healthy Lives"** (2010) set as its first ambition that "children are given the best start in life" in the pursuit of health equity for all, again using a whole systems approach. To achieve this, universal support for all needs to be balanced with targeted support for those who need it. The report sets out the challenge to reduce health inequality by reducing social, economic and educational inequality.
12. **Munro Review of Social Work** (2011) Professor Eileen Munro reported that social work needed to refocus back onto the therapeutic relationship needed to achieve sustainable change for families and to reduce the amount of time spent on systems and processes. She recommended leaner processes in order to free up time to spend with children and families and an emphasis on early intervention.
13. **The Troubled Families Programme** (2011) built on Think Family by challenging service providers to work together to achieve demonstrable outcomes, by getting back to basics and providing practical, hands on support to families, whether or not a statutory threshold has been reached. An additional £200m has been made available in 2015/16 -2020 for the Troubled Families programme, to help 'high risk' families address challenges of worklessness, anti-social behaviour and truancy and a broad range of other indicators of need.
14. On 19th August 2014 the government announced a further expansion of the Programme with work to begin in 51 of the best performing areas, including Durham (known in County Durham as Stronger Families), in 2014 ahead of the national 5 year programme due to start in 2015. As well as expanding from working with school-age children to those under 5, the wider programme will also have a particular focus on improving poor health.
15. **The National Review of Children's Centres** (2013) showed that services were often failing to reach those who needed them most and that a re-orientation towards targeting was required. It was clear that just offering services that could improve outcomes was not enough to ensure that those who need them most

will take them up. A greater emphasis on targeting to need was recommended.

16. **Public Law Changes** (2008 and 2014) have been designed to bring about a cultural change in the way children's care and other cases are dealt with through the courts and how social work processes support this. As well as introducing expectations of speed in proceedings where children are to be removed, the outline sets out processes for making very clear to families what they need to do to avoid removal of their children, alongside an expectation that public services will support them to reach these expectations.
17. **Health and Social Care Act** (2012) The 2012 Health and Social Care Act transferred public health responsibilities from the NHS to local government, it presents an opportunity for local authorities to work with the health, voluntary and community sector to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people, adults and older people.
18. **The Jay Report into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham** (2014) An estimated 1400 young people were the victims of CSE over a ten year period, as a result of a number of issues including poor responses from social care services, based on inadequate, under-resourced services, lack of basic procedures, inadequate staffing levels and lack of awareness of the problem. The report states that there was also a poor response from the Police supported by a culture that blamed the victim and denied some young girls protection because they put themselves in harm's way. Rotherham Council was found to have a culture based on bullying, sexism, weak governance and accountability, which was also modelled by politicians. There was a broad failure to recognise and accept that CSE was occurring on this scale and an absence of local awareness and robust challenge of practice and culture by Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
19. **Children who run away or go missing from home or care** (2014) The Department of Education issued revised statutory guidance in January 2014. Children who run away or go missing from home represents a major safeguarding issue. Estimates suggest that 100,000 children go missing nationally each year, and that 25% of these children are at risk of serious harm. There are links between children who go missing and risks of child sexual exploitation.
20. **Children and Families Act** (2014) gives vulnerable children greater protection and supports strong families. It improves services for those children in foster care and those who have been adopted, and introduces changes to support the welfare of children with separated parents and those with special educational needs through integrated Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. The Act lays the legislative foundations for the government to develop new regulations and inspections of children's homes making sure homes are safe and secure, and improving the quality of care vulnerable children receive. The Act places a legal duty on local authorities to provide financial support for every young person who wants to stay with their foster parents until their 21st birthday. The Act, in conjunction with the adults-focused Care Act 2014, seeks to make sure young carers get the support they need.

21. **Care Act** (2014) requires local authorities to continue children's services until an adult needs or carer's assessment has taken place, and a decision has been reached about the young person's care and support. This ensures that there is no gap in provision of care and support when people move from children's to adult social care.

Inspection of Children's Services

22. There are 2 regulatory bodies that inspect local authority services provided to children and young people: Ofsted and HMI Probation. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) evaluates health services and for Children and Young People.
23. Ofsted inspects services for safeguarding, looked after children and care leavers and local authority fostering and adoption services under a new Single Inspection Framework (SIF). A review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) is also undertaken at the same time under the same methodology.
24. The SIF operates on a 3 year rolling programme and Durham is now due an unannounced inspection under this framework.
25. Inspectors will evaluate the experiences of children, young people and families and the services they receive. Judgements will be based on the following performance grades: 'outstanding'; 'good'; 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate'. 'Good' is the benchmark against which to grade performance.
26. To date, 33 SIF inspections have been completed. Further detail is outlined in Appendix 2. No local authority has yet been graded as 'outstanding'. Of those local authorities that have been inspected 45% were judged as 'requires improvement' 18% were judged as 'inadequate'.
27. In 2011, under the previous Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services Inspection Framework Durham was graded as 'outstanding'. Within this Ofsted used the CQC findings on the contribution of health services to safeguarding and the care of looked after children to inform the published joint inspection report.
28. The inspection frameworks changed and CQC now independently evaluate the effectiveness of health services for children looked after and care leavers and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. Health services in Durham will be subject to inspection under these arrangements in February 2015.
29. Thematic inspections on key aspects of service delivery are also undertaken by Ofsted. Durham has been subject to 2 thematic inspections, the Independent Reviewing Officer function and Quality of Assessment. These inspections are not graded and no bespoke written report is provided.
30. In June 2013 Ofsted published their report '*Independent Reviewing Officers: Taking up the Challenge?*' evaluating the effectiveness in the 10 local authority areas visited. Durham was inspected in January 2013.

31. The report highlighted 12 key findings and made the following recommendations:
 - Management oversight of IRO's is sufficiently robust and staff have all the required elements to undertake their role effectively.
 - Regular feedback is sought from children, carers and professionals about the difference the IRO makes.
 - Strategies are prioritised to enable the most vulnerable looked after children to participate in the planning and reviews of their care.
 - Local authorities and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) should ensure that IROs and Children's Guardians develop productive working relationships.
32. The IRO service in Durham has implemented all actions in response to the recommendations.
33. An Ofsted thematic survey inspection has been undertaken in July 2014, which considered the quality of assessment within children's social care.
34. Initial feedback received from the inspectors was very positive. Some key strengths identified were:
 - Clear and committed leadership and validation for the strategic direction, ambition and plans of the service.
 - The voice of the child and the child's journey was clearly evident.
 - Effective application of the single assessment framework.
 - Well-embedded workforce development
 - Learning from audits used to drive practice improvement.
35. Some areas of improvement identified were:
 - Consistency of case recording and chronologies.
 - Improving the process for young people moving into adulthood.
 - Lack of evidence of reflective supervision recorded in supervision notes.
36. In response to the report by Professor Jay commissioned by Rotherham Council in relation to CSE, Ofsted are undertaking a programme of thematic inspections with a focus on local authorities' response, arrangements and practice in relation to CSE. Eight authorities have been inspected. The thematic inspections will provide up to date information and evidence about these issues. The Ofsted single inspection framework will also focus on CSE as a key line of enquiry. Durham has undertaken a gap analysis within the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) on compliance to the guidance issued by Ofsted within the recent thematic inspections on CSE. Work is in place to address areas for improvement and collate evidence that may be required, in readiness for inspection.
37. Ofsted have separate inspection frameworks for the inspection of Children's Homes and Children's Centres.
38. Children's Homes are subject to a minimum of two inspections in a year; one full and one interim inspection. Children's homes are assessed against four areas which contribute towards the overall effectiveness grade; outcomes for

children and young people, quality of care, safeguarding children and young people and leadership and management. Judgements will be based on the following performance grades: 'outstanding'; 'good'; 'adequate' and 'inadequate'. All Durham County Council children's homes are currently judged as good.

39. Children's Centres are subject to inspection every five years subject to performance. Children's centres are assessed against three areas which contribute to the overall effectiveness grade; access to services by young children and families, the quality of practice and services and the effectiveness of leadership, government and management. Judgements will be based on the following performance grades: 'outstanding'; 'good'; 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate'.
40. As at 2nd September 2014, six of the 15 Children's Centre clusters have been inspected. Two were rated as 'good', three rated as 'requires improvement' and one rated as 'inadequate'. Action plan for the Centres are monitored, evaluated and progress reported to the Early Years Strategic Group.
41. A Short Quality Screening (SQS) inspection was conducted of Youth Offending Services in County Durham during the period 7-9 July 2014 by HMI Probation. The SQS focusses on the early weeks of post court cases and the outcomes from the report will inform actions to identify areas that will receive the full joint inspection or other inspections by HMIP.
42. The final report was published on 13 August 2014. There were a number of strengths identified including:
 - Pre-sentence reports were of a good standard.
 - CDYOS was creative in developing interactive tools for work with children and young people
 - Case managers knew children and young people well.
 - Good attention was given to responding to diversity factors and barriers to engagement.
43. The following key areas for improvement were also identified:
 - Assessment of risk of harm to others should reflect all relevant behaviours. This should lead to more robust assessments, and better plans to manage and reduce these risks.
 - Case managers should be more responsive to changing circumstances, so that reviews of assessments and plans are undertaken when required and these remain current.
 - More attention needs to be given to managing the risk of harm to victims, through good assessment of their needs and subsequent planning.
 - Case managers need to be more aware of the possibility of child sexual exploitation, and to ensure that this is adequately considered in assessment and planning.
 - There should be better recognition and assessment of the breadth of vulnerability factors that may apply in individual cases, leading to better planning to address this.

- Line managers should have a consistent understanding, and approach to oversight, of risk of harm work and vulnerability management work, to ensure that this is of good quality.
44. An Inspection Improvement Plan (IIP) based on the findings of the SQS has been developed by CDYOS to ensure learning and service improvement is progressed.

Regional Context

45. In May 2014 the government announced a network of new regional 'adoption leadership boards' to help increase adoption rates. Each Board is made up of children's services directors and members of adoption charities. The Regional Boards extend the work of the national Adoption Leadership Board, Chaired by Sir Martin Narey, which works to monitor progress in the adoption sector and advise ministers.
46. The Regional Fostering Framework is made up of a consortium of the seven local authorities in the North East and is led by Newcastle City Council. The Framework allows the Council to purchase foster placements from the independent market. The Framework provides a formal structure and costs are agreed up front and determined on level of need. There are currently 16 providers within the Framework, however, the tender is due for renewal shortly which will allow other providers to apply for the work. The new contract is due to commence in April 2015.
47. A recent development, in relation to child sexual exploitation, is agreement on the completion of return interviews following missing episodes and the sharing of the interview product to inform future risk assessments. There is now a regional commitment to develop regional protocols for CSE, including inter-agency information sharing.

Changes within Durham County Council

48. Durham has been on a transformation journey over the past number of years. A number of pilot projects have been run in Children's Services since 2009: the Family Pathfinder, the Pre-Birth Assessment pilot, the Children in Need pilot and the Team Around the School pilot. Learning from these has driven broader reform of structures and processes, and will continue to do so as reform progresses.
49. The One Point service was created in 2011. This brought together a range of early help services, including community health services to provide an integrated response to early need with a single point of access.
50. Early Intervention and Involvement services and Children's Social Care services were brought together into a single Children's Services, in October 2013. This created the conditions necessary to move ahead in a coordinated way across the whole continuum of need.
51. In early 2014, Children's Social Care service were restructured to focus

support to lower levels of need and to raise the quality of practice overall. Social care teams have been restructured as follows:

- **First Contact Service** provides a single point of entry for all requests for service, so that a triage can determine the most appropriate response.
- **Assessment and Intervention Teams** provide a focus on prevention to families to resolve difficulties, improve the quality of parenting and reduce risks. All statutory assessments including section 47 child protection investigations are completed by these teams.
- **Child Protection Teams** handle all statutory child protection work including Looked After Children cases from the point of 1st review, all family proceedings court work, and have responsibility for progressing children to adoption where a placement order is made.
- **Looked After Children (LAC) / Permanence Teams** bring together work with looked after children requiring permanence or adoption, but are considered hard to place (often older children, siblings groups and those with complex needs) and are designed to avoid drift.
- **LAC – Case Management** teams focus on those children in the looked after system who are likely to remain in the medium to longer term to promote stability and increase life chances.

52. In addition to the public policy drivers, there have been significant budget pressures as a result of public spending reductions. Durham County Council's budget will have reduced by £224 million by 2016/17 from the 2010 baseline, and the Children and Adult Services budget will need to have delivered £106 million of savings in the same period.
53. In order to contain cost pressures and ensure better outcomes for children it is important to focus on early help and early years as well as supporting families to help themselves.

A Vision for Children's Services in County Durham

54. In County Durham, across statutory partnerships we are committed to working together to empower families and communities using the minimum necessary statutory intervention. Partners are seeking to work collectively to offer effective preventative services, identifying need early and offering practical support. Where a child's wellbeing or safety is compromised, swift action will be taken to ensure safeguards are in place, including use of legal powers where unavoidable.
55. If we succeed in working in this way, we believe the numbers of children who need to be looked after and those with a protection plan will decrease, and we will increase the number of families receiving help at an earlier level.

Strategy

56. In County Durham we have responded to the national policy direction by taking forward a range of strategy developments.
57. The Early Help Strategy has been developed with partners, to set out a

strategic framework to coordinate work that can otherwise appear disjointed. The strategy has three main ambitions:

- To work collaboratively - Early Help will be everyone's business
- To ensure that children, young people and families get the right help at the right time.
- To provide help that we know works.

58. The Looked After Children (LAC) Reduction Strategy has driven actions across the service, all designed to reduce demand and cost for LAC placements. A clear service priority to reduce the number of LAC is established and supported by rigorous placement request management.
59. Durham's Sexual Violence Strategy has been prepared in consultation with a range of partners within the statutory and third sectors to ensure that the response to rape, sexual violence and sexual exploitation is proportionate to the significant and damaging effect it has on the lives of individuals and communities within the county. The Strategy includes a focus on Child Sexual Exploitation.
60. The Early Years Strategy sets out Durham County Council's vision and priorities for all of our children during their early years, and describes how all children and families will be supported to achieve good outcomes during these critical early years, through the provision of high quality universal services.

Durham's 3 ambitions for Early Years:

- **Quality of Care:** All children have access to high quality universal health and learning opportunities that are safe;
- **Equity of Outcomes:** Children who are not making the required progress or whose outcomes are compromised are identified and additional help is provided to them and their families at the earliest possible opportunity;
- **Working Together:** All practitioners involved in the delivery of early years services work together in a coordinated way in the provision of a genuinely joined up, integrated service to children and families.

61. The County Durham Children and Families Partnership brings together partners from key agencies including Health, Police, Probation, Schools and the voluntary and community sector to work together to deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and their families in County Durham. The Children and Families Partnership's overarching strategic plan, the Children, Young People and Families Plan, contains three strategic objectives:
- Children and young people realise and maximise their potential.
 - Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life.
 - A think family approach is embedded in our support for families.

Service Developments

62. A new framework of need has been developed, setting out clearly the support required at each level of need. The initial work has recently been further developed alongside the "Durham Staircase" of need, which is a tool used to

simplify and illustrate the levels of need for all partners.

63. A single assessment procedure has been developed to provide a genuine single assessment across all levels of need. This exceeds the national expectation that the assessment would combine initial and core statutory assessments only and replaces the Pre-Common Assessment Framework, Common Assessment Framework, initial and core assessments with a single process. The assessment has been in use since April 2014.
64. A single front door to all social care services has been created. Called First Contact, the new service is designed to improve decision making on thresholds and improve accessibility to early help services, joining One Point to statutory services. Using the threshold of needs framework, First Contact will assess referrals to ensure the needs are met at the lowest necessary level and that cases are not escalated unnecessarily. This service went “live” in April 2014.
65. Service User feedback is a key mechanism used to engage children, young people and families on service priorities. Parents and children told us what they wanted from services prior to the creation of the One Point service and these “promises” are used to evaluate parent and children’s satisfaction with services.
66. All Children’s Services child protection operational staff are trained in CSE, as is the case for the Constabulary child protection teams. The existence of both the LSCB Missing and Exploited sub group (MEG) and the monthly Missing and Exploited Operational Group demonstrates continuous scrutiny by partner agencies.
67. The LSCB Missing and Exploited sub group (MEG) consisting of multi-agency managers meets quarterly in Durham to develop work around CSE and missing children. The MEG utilises a performance framework for both missing and sexual exploitation and there is a scrutiny of repeat runaways and CSE referrals for individual cases, which may require multi-agency coordination.
68. The MEG monitors progress and reports to the LSCB annually and following audits. The group is chaired by the Durham County Council Strategic manager for Looked After Children, who is also identified as the lead for the Local Authority on sexual exploitation and missing children.
69. The Missing and Exploited Operational group reports to the MEG. The group membership consists of multi-agency managers who focus on operational delivery and compliance with child protection procedures. Through the chair of this meeting, there is daily monitoring of all referrals made for CSE. Every referral about a child made in the preceding month is examined, with discussion on the prevention action taken for named referrals, disruption planning and also an assessment of the outcome of interventions.
70. Specific attention is given to monitoring every missing episode, so that protection can be provided to vulnerable young people, perpetrators can be interrupted and apprehended and a rich intelligence profile can be developed.

71. Durham and Darlington LSCBs and the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) office, have developed an action plan to set out a programme of action to further strengthen CSE arrangements.
72. The action plan includes work to audit multi-agency procedures, provide early help, improve awareness and to engage with local and regional stakeholders.
73. Work has been undertaken to strengthen the links with agencies involved in local community safety forums, Multi Agency Problem Solving groups (MAPs). This presents opportunities for other services to become involved in the prevention and enforcement of CSE as “eyes and ears” in communities.
74. In respect of prevention, work is ongoing to develop a CSE toolkit of approved resources which schools and youth settings can access and deliver through Sex and Relationships Education and Personal, Social and Health Education frameworks. This is part of wider work involving other child risk taking behaviours such as alcohol, drugs, and encouraging healthy relationships.
75. The Council has funded the third sector “Never Do Nothing” programme, to allow voluntary and community sector organisations to be trained in how to report suspected CSE or individuals at risk. Organisations will be encouraged to reach a standard to demonstrate that they operate within agreed procedures and protocols.

Workforce Development and Culture

76. In Durham we employ 240 (Full Time Equivalents) in the social work workforce. There are currently 7 unoccupied posts across children’s social work teams with plans to recruit to all of these posts.
77. Embedding culture change is dependent on all staff working effectively and understanding service aims, supported by managers. We have made a significant investment in a workforce development programme for staff from all agencies and this is helping to challenge thinking and introduce new ways of working into practice.
78. Training offered during 2014/15 has been driven by the transformation of Children’s Services, and has been underpinned by the delivery of three core courses: Single Assessment Process, Engaging with Families and Assessment and Intervention. The transformation has been additionally supported by externally commissioned specialist training in Nurturing Attachments, Communicating with Children, Crisis Intervention and Solution Focused Practice.
79. Practitioners are being encouraged to adopt a practical, hands-on approach to helping families, rather than the traditional process driven, instruction-led model. Assessment and review remain critical functions, but must be seen as means to an end, rather than an end in themselves.
80. The Stronger Families programme is requiring practitioners across the service, including social workers, to think and work differently to maximise the number of families “turned around” for whom reward payment can be claimed.

81. The new approach is aimed at ending “No Further Action”. This is a significant change. LSCB research into referrals showed that over 50% of contacts to the previous Initial Response Team resulted in no further action. Therefore the creation of this new practice framework will further improve safeguarding activities in County Durham.
82. A review of payment for skills for foster carers has been rolled out to improve placement stability for each child or young person by reducing the use of respite care when foster carers go on holiday. Foster carers and adopters receive an annual training programme with a wide range of mandatory and optional courses to choose from.

Improvements and Challenges

83. The creation of Children's Services has facilitated co-creation of a shared vision across the workforce and allowed progress to accelerate.
84. The LAC Reduction Strategy has resulted in a reduction of 47 looked after children between April 2012 (662) and September 2014 (615). Spending on in-house and external placements has reduced by £2.4million in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13. As at 31st March 2013 Durham's rate of LAC was 60.8 per 10,000, which is now on a par with the national average which stands at 60 per 10,000, despite our rate of deprivation, whilst the regional average was 80 per 10,000.
85. Adoptions have increased by 73.8% when comparing 2012/13 to 2013/14 with assistance from the Adoption Reform Grant. Improved marketing and recruitment campaigns have increased the numbers of families seeking to adopt and reduced the time taken to complete adoptions.
86. There has been an increase of 41 foster carers between April 2012 (262) and September 2014 (303).
87. There has been a reduction in the number of Independent Fostering Agencies used from 90 in September 2013 to 81 in September 2014, at a significant saving to the Council.
88. The Pre-Birth pilot and use of the Public Law Outline have reduced the time taken to conclude care proceedings to an average of 26 weeks (down from 56 weeks), with the shortest being 8 weeks, and has succeeded in helping more parents to keep their children safely.
89. Since the creation of the First Contact service in April 2014, there has been a 35% reduction in statutory referrals compared to the same time last year, against an increase of 7% in contacts to the service.
90. The number of families receiving an early help assessment (formerly CAF) has increased by 40% in the last year, with a large increase in those achieving successful outcomes.

91. Children's Centre contact with the most vulnerable families under 5 has increased from 32% - 79% as at the end of September 2014.
92. The lowest ever levels of young people not in education, employment or training have been achieved, with a rate of 7.1% in June 2014.
93. Service user feedback has identified that generally parents are more satisfied with services than children and young people, and has identified higher levels of satisfaction with some teams than others.
94. As at September 2014, the Stronger Families Programme has been successful in 'turning around' the lives of 835 families in County Durham, equating to 63.3% of County Durham's overall 1,320 families to 'turn around' by May 2015. Latest available comparator information up to May 2014 shows that Durham is ranked 46th highest nationally in terms of percentage of families 'turned around' against target and is above the national average (44.8%), region (49.8%) and statistical neighbours (50.4%).
95. We also understand the challenges that face Durham and the areas where we need to improve our performance.
96. The percentage of Children in Need referrals from April to September 2014 which occurred within 12 months of a previous referral is 26.3%, which is achieving target (28%). However, this is higher than the national average of 24.9%.
97. The percentage of Looked After Children who have been in care for more than 2 and a half years and in the same placement for 2 years is lower in Durham than the England average for 2012/13 (67%). However, the number of children looked after who have 3 or more placements in a year has reduced to 5.7% at 30th September 2014 which is significantly below the England average for 2012/13 (11%).
98. The rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan on the 31st March 2014 was 45.3 per 10,000 population which is higher than the latest national average of 37.9 (31st March 2013). As at 30th September 2014 Durham's rate had reduced to 38.5 per 10,000 population.

Next Steps

99. The next steps for transforming Children's Services includes:
 - To continue to develop social work reform and new ways of working.
 - To develop regional CSE protocols and to implement the Durham and Darlington CSE action plan.
 - To identify cases of neglect earlier and to divert more families from statutory social services.
 - To build on opportunities to work with the third sector to support our work

- Seek support from the Department for Education – children’s social care innovation fund (awaiting announcement if we can progress to the 2nd stage of the application process).

Recommendations

100. Cabinet is recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Agree to receive further updates in relation to the transformation of Children’s Services on a six monthly basis.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Substantial efficiencies have already been delivered through this approach as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Further efficiencies are planned.

Staffing – Workforce development will benefit staff and will help to challenge thinking and introduce new ways of working into practice. Roles and responsibilities are being amended in line with revised requirements. Embedding culture change is dependent on staff working effectively and understanding service aims, supported by managers.

Risk – Changes need to be carefully managed to ensure the protection of children remains robust and the system is not de-stabilised during transition

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – The needs of vulnerable children and families will be better met through implementation of these changes

Accommodation – None at this stage, although modern ways of working may impact on accommodation requirements in due course.

Crime and Disorder – Effective partnership working through the Safe Durham Partnership.

Human Rights - None

Consultation – Any changes to workforce will be subject to consultation with affected staff.

Procurement – None at this stage

Disability Issues – None at this stage

Legal Implications – There are a number of key policy developments/initiatives that have led the way and contributed to the Children's Services Transformation agenda in County Durham. All changes must be compliant with legal requirements

Appendix 2: SIF Inspection Judgements as at 30 September 2014

Local Authority	Inspection Start Date	Overall Effectiveness	1. Children who need help & protection	2. Children looked after & achieving permanence	2.1 Adoption performance	2.2 Experiences & progress of care leavers	3. Leadership, management & governance	The Effectiveness of the LSCB	TREND
Derbyshire	19-Nov-13	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	↔
Slough	19-Nov-13	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	↓
Sheffield	19-Nov-13	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	↔
Hartlepool	19-Nov-13	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	↔
Hillingdon	25-Nov-13	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Bolton	14-Jan-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
East Sussex	14-Jan-14	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	↔
Essex	14-Jan-14	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	↑
Hounslow	14-Jan-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Staffordshire	14-Jan-14	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	↑
Coventry	28-Jan-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Inadequate	↓
Hampshire	18-Feb-14	Good	Good	Good	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding	Good	↔
Bradford	18-Feb-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	↓
Bexley	11-Mar-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	↓

Local Authority	Inspection Start Date	Overall Effectiveness	1. Children who need help & protection	2. Children looked after & achieving permanence	2.1 Adoption performance	2.2 Experiences & progress of care leavers	3. Leadership, management & governance	The Effectiveness of the LSCB	TREND
		Improvement	Improvement	Improvement	<i>Improvement</i>	<i>Improvement</i>	Improvement		
Nottingham City	11-Mar-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Swindon	11-Mar-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Good</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Good	↓
Birmingham	18-Mar-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	<i>Inadequate</i>	<i>Inadequate</i>	Inadequate	Inadequate	↔
Barking and Dagenham	29-Apr-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Bournemouth	29-Apr-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Good</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Herefordshire	29-Apr-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Good</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↑
Knowsley	29-Apr-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	<i>Inadequate</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Inadequate	Inadequate	↓
North Yorkshire	29-Apr-14	Good	Good	Good	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	Good	Good	↑
Oxfordshire	29-Apr-14	Good	Good	Good	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	Good	Good	↔
Liverpool	20-May-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Haringey	20-May-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↔
Cambridgeshire	03-Jun-14	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	Good	Good	↑
Newham	03-Jun-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>	Requires Improvement	Good	↔
Buckinghamshire	03-Jun-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>	Inadequate	Inadequate	↓

Local Authority	Inspection Start Date	Overall Effectiveness	1. Children who need help & protection	2. Children looked after & achieving permanence	2.1 Adoption performance	2.2 Experiences & progress of care leavers	3. Leadership, management & governance	The Effectiveness of the LSCB	TREND
Barnsley	03-Jun-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↑
Portsmouth	25-Jun-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	↓
Manchester	25-Jun-14	Inadequate	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Inadequate	↓
Blackpool	02-Jul-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓
Southampton	20-May-14 Re-inspected: 08-Jul-14	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↔