

Swindon Borough Council

Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 27 November 2019

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

Barbara Parry (Chair)
Matthew Courtliff (Vice-Chair)
Alan Bishop
Oladapo Ibitoye
Nick Martin

Labour Councillors

Fay Howard
Carol Shelley
Bazil Solomon
Nadine Watts

Co-opted Representatives

Spencer Allen, Swindon Association of Primary School Headteachers
Steve Colledge, Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers
Steve Henderson, Equalities Advisory Forum
Alison Paul, Swindon Association of Special School Headteachers
Elaine Poulter, Parent Governor
Liz Townend, Church of England Diocese
Jacquie Watt, Swindon SEND Families Voice
Carol Willis, Healthwatch
TBC, Catholic Church Diocese
TBC, Children's Representatives

Committee Officer: Shaun Banks, 07980 752051
email: sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

Access Arrangements - The venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you have any special requirements to enable you to attend the meeting or would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size, please contact the Committee Officer as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

3. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

4. Minutes (Pages 5 - 18)

To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 25th September and 17th October 2019.

5. School Exclusion and Attendance

(Report to follow)

6. Elective Home Education, Children Missing Education, School Leavers process update, and School Attendance reporting update

(Report to follow)

7. Children's Summary of Performance 2019/20 (Pages 19 - 32)

8. Work Programme (Pages 33 - 44)

Date of Despatch: 25 November 2019

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Chief Legal Officer, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council

Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website.

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

Terms of Reference:

- To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to –
- the review, scrutiny and development of policy recommendations,
 - the management of performance,
 - the monitoring of progress towards delivering relevant strategies and corporate priorities, and
 - the formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders.
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- To have specific responsibility for (but not limited to) the scrutiny of:–
 - the performance of services for children towards agreed local and national Performance Indicators,
 - the quality of provision and effectiveness of Local Authority strategies to raise standards of education within Swindon,
 - specialist social services and integrated social services for children and young people in Swindon,
 - the delivery of services to children and young people in Swindon generally.

In addition, as these relate to Children and Young People:

- the performance of services seeking to deliver healthy communities towards agreed local and national performance indicators,
- Health, health commissioning and service delivery,
- Public Health, Health promotion and the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and
- Health Integration and collaborative working and commissioning with Health agencies and providers and General Practitioners.
- Reducing Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Strategic issues around Licensing

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**CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

WEDNESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Alan Bishop, Matthew Courtliff (Vice-Chair), Fay Howard, Oladapo Ibitoye, Nick Martin, Barbara Parry (Chair), Alison Paul, Carol Shelley, Bazil Solomon and Nadine Watts and Alison Paul (Association of Swindon Special Schools Headteachers).

Apologies for absence were received from Spencer Allen (Swindon Association of Primary Head teachers), Gill May (Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group), Jacqui Watt (Swindon SEND Families Voice).

12. Brief overview on the outcome of the OFSTED Inspection

At the Chair's invitation, the Corporate Director for Children's Services provided the Committee a brief overview on the outcome of the OFSTED Inspection.

The Corporate Director drew Members' attention to the Cabinet Report attached as an appendix to Agenda Item 7: Children's Summary of Performance 19/20 Quarter 1 outturn data position, which contained more detail. He was pleased that OFSTED judged the Council's services for children relating to early intervention and prevention along with protection to be good. The inspection did report that the services to support children in care and care leavers require improvement. Overall, the positive news is that OFSTED saw good quality work, which means that children and families in Swindon can have confidence in the support and services the Borough provides.

In response to OFSTED's recommendations, Officers have nearly completed updating and revising the improvement plan so that it can be implemented. While the plan will address the whole service, it will focus more intently on addressing the needs of children in care and care leavers.

The Council is still working closely with colleagues at Essex County Council to strengthen its SMART plans and targets that will have to be implemented across the whole safeguarding partnership to be effective. On the advice of inspectors, Officers have commenced working with the London Borough of Bromley to support improvements in the Care Leavers Team. OFSTED recommended this Council as an example of best practice for supporting care leavers from which we will learn from to improve our support to care leavers in Swindon.

The Chair congratulated the Corporate Director Children's Services and his Department for progress made and the positive OFSTED findings.

13. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest

in respect of agenda items 5 (Committee Sub-Groups), 6 (Schools Performance Update) and 7 (Children's Summary of Performance 19/20 Quarter) as she worked for Ridgeway School.

Councillor Basil Solomon made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of agenda items 5 (Committee Sub-Groups), 6 (Schools Performance Update) and 7 (Children's Summary of Performance 19/20 Quarter) in his capacity as a part time teacher.

14. Public Question Time

No public questions were received before or during the meeting.

15. Minutes

Resolved: – That the minutes of the meeting held 3rd July 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

16. Committee Sub-Groups

The Head of Skills, Employment & Lifelong Learning and the Service Manager - quality assurance and review, participation Officer submitted a joint reporting setting out proposals to address the Committee's previous recommendations. 1) To establish a cross-party Overview and Scrutiny working group to help more young people access education, employment and training and 2) to enhance the Overview Scrutiny committee's engagement with children and young people.

The Head of Skills, Employment & Lifelong Learning invited Members to review Terms of Reference for the proposed post 16 Education, Employment and Training outcomes sub-group, attached as an appendix to the main report, to consider the suggested time over which the sub-group will function, and to agree its membership. The officer set how Swindon Borough Council was focused on improving all education and training outcomes, an ambition that is set out in its supported employment strategy. The purpose of the sub-group would be to enlist the key stakeholders to provide specific support. Once established, the sub-group would define the desired outcomes, develop plans and bring forward new recommendations. The sub-group would meet every two months until March 2020.

It was made clear at the meeting that in order for the Council to achieve its targets Members would have key roles in both offering robust challenge as well as support. As a consequence of this scrutiny, Members would have greater confidence in the work being undertaken. With regard to possible membership, the Chair of the Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee has informed officers that Councillor Jim Robbins had volunteered to represent that Committee on this sub-group.

Councillors Bishop, Courtliff, Ibitoye, Martin, Shelley and Solomon asked a range of questions to which the Head of Skills, Employment & Lifelong Learning and the Corporate Director, Children's Services responded:

- 1) Was this subgroup also covering those who fell out of mainstream education?

Response: This element focuses on those young people either who are 16 to 18

and have a statutory requirement to engage with learning, or who are care leavers or SEND up to the age of 25, for whom the Council has a specific duty. The purpose of the subgroup is to generate more capacity to assist young people through building more relationships with the business and community sectors. It is anticipated that the members of the sub-group can help with access to work experience and opportunities for young people.

2) Is this about guiding people to apprenticeships?

Response: While that is suitable for some young people, others need different coaching and support to determine what possibilities exist or to overcome barriers that are preventing them from entering employment.

3) What number of young people is involved and why may school governors be unaware of the problems?

Response: Of the care leavers aged 19-21, 57% are in education, employment or training and the target is to raise that to 75% by 2022. This is an ambitious target and was recognised by OFSTED as such. Officers agreed to review the training offered to governors to recommend that they ask for information from Head teachers on this cohort of pupils at least annually. Schools are obliged to collate data for former students for three years.

The Corporate Director, Children's Services, agreed to take the following actions following this meeting

1) Swindon Borough Council will be explicit about the data and the cohorts to be measured in school performance review meetings with providers.

2) Through training, make it an expectation for governors to ask heads to report annually on the cohort, not accessing, or at risk of not accessing employment and training.

4) Do the young people already have ideas about what they wish to do or is the Council starting with a blank page?

Response: The aim would be to provide more focus on those who were not clear about the options or pathways open to them, or any barriers that might need to be overcome. The proposals also aimed to have the wider communality involved in both identifying and providing solutions.

5) Is it too late to be looking to the needs of young people at 16? Should the process of help begin at 12? Is there sufficient resource for those with SEND needs, especially given the current time it can take before young people have access to mental health care?

Response: This sub-group will focus on any young person at risk of not being in education, employment, or training, including care leavers and young people with SEND?

6) What will the success measures be for the sub-group? Will there be some tangible outcomes by March 2020?

Response: The sub-group will be a "task and finish" group rather than a standing sub-committee. The outcome will be to determine whether the Council has sufficient momentum to achieve its targets for which there will be specific metrics with clear action plans. If Members felt it was beneficial, there would be an option to extend the sub-group's duration.

7) Would there be opportunities to work with existing social enterprises and voluntary groups?

Response: The Council is seeking to engage with such groups and to make sure that more businesses realise the benefit of providing support to young people who might not otherwise be considered as employees by Swindon employers

The Service manager, Quality Assurance and Review and the Corporate Director, Children's Services, set out the aim of having a task and finish group for engagement with children and young people as it would help those young people to plan the challenge and scrutiny that they would find most helpful. It would also help set the scope of what the Committee want to hear from them, whether they would be asked questions, from a young person's Shadow Board, or if they would be Members of the Committee itself. Officers recommended options 1 as STEP was already commissioned by the Council and was prepared to undertake work that would cover the other two options as well, within existing contracted arrangements

Councillors Howard, Martin, and Shelley asked a range of questions to which the Service Manager - quality assurance and review officer and the Corporate Director, Children's Services responded.

- 1) How would young people know the correct quality of services they might expect on which they be invited to comment?

Response: One of the first task, if option 1 was chosen would be to help young people develop an understanding, for example within the young inspectors programme.

- 2) Given that the three options indicate three different choices rather than alternatives to reach one end, what outcomes are desired?

Response: The main outcome from the task and finish group would be to agree terms of reference that would enable all three options in the report to be covered. As part of this, Officers would meet again with members of the Overview and Scrutiny to hear councillors' views of what would best serve the committee.

- 3) Under option 1, how flexible is the contract with STEP?

Response: Officers confirmed that the contact would permit the work. The Corporate Director, Children's Services also set out how this task group would hear from and report to the mainstream of children and young people to complement existing channels for those with specific needs.

Resolved: –

- 1) That contents of the Draft Terms of Reference of the proposed Education, Training and Employment sub group and recommend required changes be approved.
- 2) That the following members of the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee be appointed part of the sub group: Councillors. Courtliff, Solomon, Ibitoye and Parry plus Cllr Robbins from the Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3) That for Engagement with Children and Young People, option 1 be approved, that STEP be commissioned to engage with young people.
- 4) That the budgetary requirements of the project for engagement with children and young people; staffing, recruitment of young people, training, resources, travel and project costs be covered within the existing contract with STEP.
- 5) That a 'Task and Finish Group' be established to set the scope for the engagement project, to look at the process required to set up this project; creative thinking is required. In addition, that this group be authorised to confirm the terms of reference for the engagement of children and young people.
- 6) That a small and dedicated team of Youth Workers be authorised to identify a group of young people, train them and link them with voluntary agencies to undertake the project.

- 7) That Members and Officers consider how to work with Parish Councils to identify young people in their areas with whom they are already engaged and that Councillors coordinate the plan and rotate the use of Parish Councils to 'bring young people into their world'.

17. Schools Performance Update

The Chair informed the meeting that a full report would be brought to the Committee when the validated data are available as some schools are still in the process of challenges and validating data. The Chair requested that officers add an item to the Committee's work programme so that the Committee Officer can include it on a future agenda.

18. Children's Summary of Performance 2019/20 - Quarter 1 Outturn Data Position

The Director of Children's Social work introduced the report, which contained information used by Ofsted in the recent inspection. The Director drew Members' attention to a number of key points including:

- That the government has extended finance for the Troubled Families project by a year to March 2021,
- The Family Intervention Service, which was launched in September, is functioning well with none of the cases that were transferred from social care having to be referred back. This indicates that the Council has the correct selection criteria, it was noted that this will be checked and tested through monthly audit.
- More work needs to be done to train and support partner organisations as Swindon is still an outlier for the high number of contacts through the Front Door. There is a better balance so that children are protected without issues always being framed as safeguarding.
- As a consequence of Officers' work, the number of Child Protection Plans was falling and this trajectory was expected to continue. However, Members were advised that this figure was susceptible to change because of demand.
- It was noted that the Council is working closely with Essex in order to learn and implement best practice, within the Youth Offending Team.

Councillor Howard reflected on the outcome of the Serious Case Review and noted that officers and partners were learning the lessons from it. Councillors Howard and Shelley, asked a series of questions to challenge officers, to which the Director of Children's Social Work and the Corporate Director, Children's Services responded.

- 1) Could officers state the causes behind the reduction in the number of first time entrants? Is this pattern different to other councils? Could officers provide details of how many of those who went through the Youth Restorative Justice Intervention Board's processes subsequently became offenders?

Response: Officers elaborated on the Early Help work the Council undertakes, the work with families, and the multi-agency working. However, officers cautioned Members by clarifying and explaining that this downward trend may not be sustained. Officers undertook to submit a report to the Committee on the impact of the Youth Restorative Justice Intervention Board, including the details requested to permit scrutiny, and the Committee Officer

was asked to add this to the work programme.

- 2) Could officers provide details on how many young people being selectively home educated have SEND? Was there a correlation between the number and parents believing that schools were not adequately addressing their children's needs?

Response: information will be circulated for Members to read and challenge after the meeting.

- 3) Given the acknowledgement of the problems moving foster placements can cause, could officers consider the number of changes in each child or young person's social workers?

Response: Officers agreed that a change of social worker can have a detrimental impact on a child and accepted the challenge of noting this impact for future reports.

- 4) Would there be a report to this Committee on the Early Help Strategy?

Response: Officers confirmed that there would be a report.

Resolved: -

1) That the key performance messages in relation to 19/20 quarter 1 for Children's Early Help and Social Care services be noted.

2) That it be recognised and acknowledged where and how improvements are being made and successes achieved, the detail of which is also reflected in the OFSTED Inspection report (Appendix 1).

3) That officers would respond to the areas of concern identified by Members that require further scrutiny and investigation. The Committee noted that these actions will be owned by the Corporate Director of Children Services and the Director of Children's Social Work, with the support of appropriate Heads of Service and Corporate Senior Managers depending on the areas of performance that to which they relate.

19. Children's Services - Quality of Practice

With the consent of the meeting along with officers' assurances that there were minimal changes from the report initially circulated, the Director of Children's Social Work presented the report, informing the Committee that it had largely been superseded by the OFSTED inspection.

The Director of Children's Social Work drew Members attention to the actions undertaken to improve social work practice, which OFSTED had found to be good. The report also set out how OFSTED was complimentary about the operation of the MASH and the strength of practice to help and protect children, which was a consequence of the work with partner agencies to improve compliance and on-going action to improve staffing. The report set out the Council's ambition to progress from a rating of "good" to "outstanding" and Members' were invited to review and challenge the actions that would be necessary to achieve this.

Councillors Shelley welcomed the progress to achieve good but expressed a reservation that the Committee's task group on this area had ceased. Councillor Shelly challenged officers on what steps were being taken to improve children's experiences in care and as care leavers. In particular, what was being done to ensure there were adequate local placements, especially for older children? The Director of Children's Social Work acknowledged this challenge and assured the committee that the two service commissioners were relentless is seeking to find

placements as close to Swindon as possible, providing it was in the child's best interest. Officers were requested by Councillor Shelley to provide regular reports to this Committee so that work in this area could be scrutinised and challenged.

Resolved: -

- 1) That the improvements are being made and successes achieved be recognised along with the methods being used to achieve them.
- 2) That the areas of concern identified in the meeting that require further scrutiny and investigation be brought back to the Committee as soon as practicable.

20. Work Programme

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer on the results of the work programme consultation and the suggested priorities for the work for the Municipal Year, 2019/20.

Resolved –

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the work programme be updated to include items recommended by the Committee.
- 3) That Councillors Courtliff, Cllr Solomon, Cllr Ibitoye and Cllr Parry from this Committee along with Cllr Robbins from the Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee be appointed to the Improving post 16 Education, Employment and Training outcomes sub-group.
- 4) That Councillors Parry and Shelly be appointed to the “task and finish” Engagement with Children and Young People sub-group.

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Barbara Parry (Chair), Alan Bishop, Nick Martin and Abdul Amin

Also in attendance: Councillor Mary Martin (Cabinet Member for Children's Services), Anne Gray (Clinical Commissioning Group), David Haley (Corporate Director Children's Services), Sonja Leith (Wiltshire Police) Detective Superintendent Debra Smith (Wiltshire Police) and Bernice Weiss (Lead Safeguarding Advisor – Swindon Borough Council).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Courtliff (Vice-Chair), Fay Howard, Oladapo Ibitoye, Carol Shelley, Bazil Solomon and Nadine Watts, and Gill May (Clinical Commissioning Group) and Alison Paul (Swindon Association of Special School Headteachers).

21. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as she worked for Ridgeway School.

22. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

23. Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children

The Committee considered a report by Jeanette Chipping, Child Exploitation and Missing Manager, providing an overview of multi-agency work currently being undertaken in Swindon to address the issues of Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Missing Children. A presentation of the report by David Haley, Jeanette Chipping, Anne Gray (Designated Nurse) Sonja Joseph (Virtual School Head) highlighted the following issues:

- The importance of work in relation to Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children and a presentation to all Councillors in December 2018 in respect of the issue and work being undertaken by partner organisations at that time.
- The way in which the Council, Police, Health organisations and other agencies were working effectively together to strengthen the protection offered to children and young people against Child Exploitation.

Health

- The newly created Information Sharing System operated by the National

Health Service which allowed authorised healthcare professionals and administrative staff to share information in relation to Female Genital Mutilation and ensuring concerns raised would be captured.

- That there was a Mandatory Reporting Duty in healthcare introduced in the Serious Crime Act (2015) legislation and that Section 73 of that Act requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report to the police cases of FGM in girls under 18.
- That there was a FGM Enhanced Dataset which was the information standard for all NHS organisations and detailed which information should be recorded within healthcare records about FGM (the Great Western Hospital was part of this system that went live in September 2018).
- On-going NHS training for staff, in particular midwives with 25 staff currently having received this FGM training.
- That all acute Trusts report to Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) their activity regarding FGM through safeguarding schedules which was then reported quarterly to NHS England.
- The challenges of training and operating a new reporting system.
- The low number of FGM cases identified locally and work to confirm this was representative.
- That a Multi-agency Risk Panel (MARP) is attended by the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children to ensure that the CCG is aware of individual children at risk. Concerns raised around Looked After Children are shared with the Named Nurse for Looked After Children.
- The role of the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children in attending a Priority Focus Child Exploitation Group for the CCG so that the CCG has strategic oversight of CSE, CE and Missing Children.
- The role of the CCG in leading on one action from the CE delivery plan in relation to awareness and prevention and ensuring that agencies are raising awareness of CE and identifying resources to raise awareness of CSE and CE.
- That a member of the Children Looked After Health Team attended all Missing and Looked After Children strategy meetings, sharing information with other health agencies including GPs as required.

Council

- The commissioning of an independent review of Child Exploitation and Missing Children in May 2018, and the implementation by the Council of key findings and recommendations including:
 - A reduction in the number of Multi-agency group meetings across the partnerships in relation to Child Exploitation and Missing Children to avoid duplication.
 - The development of a multi-agency strategy (into focused work on Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children) and a plan on a page to focus work and understanding on key areas under the moniker of GUARD (Governance, understanding of the situation in Swindon, Awareness and Prevention, Response and Disruption Response).
 - Work under GUARD relating to Child Exploitation (including County Lines and drug exploitation), CFE, Missing Children, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery, Cyber Exploitation and Radicalisation which lead to the

creation of a Child Exploitation Delivery Plan.

- The development of a new approach to safeguarding adolescences, when it is recognised that the main risk is coming from outside of the family (Contextual Safeguarding) and work undertaken with Wiltshire Council.

Multi-Agency

- Swindon's response to Missing Children, which in the recent OFSTED positive feedback. There had been a significant reduction in the number of children going missing in Swindon.
- The multi-agency mapping of vulnerable children which resulted in exploitation being identified and disruption taking place.
- Intervention by the Youth Offending Team exploring exploitation both to individual young persons and the widening of risk to other children, connections being young people and adults trying to exploit them and in trying to prevent children becoming criminalised.
- The creation of a Digital Investigation and Intelligence Unit by Wiltshire Police.
- Early intervention work being undertaken by the Family Service, Youth Engagement Workers and the Police.
- The work of the Pan Swindon and Wiltshire Violent Crime Executive in relation to serious violence, including information sharing and the development of a joint approach to education relating to exploitation and knife crime.
- Police activity during County Lines operation which resulted in 63 people being arrested across Swindon and Wiltshire; drug gang leaders were targeted in the operation and the level of County Lines activity taking place in Wiltshire to close the lines down.
- A forthcoming multi-agency debrief arising from the County Lines operation.
- Increased understanding of the risks to children outside of the family and adopting the Contextual Safeguarding approach.
- The work of further education and alternative providers to deliver a two week 'Save a Friend' event which focussed on criminal exploitation and knife crime, (a leaflet was produced for the families of home educated children).
- Positive feedback from OFSTED in relation to work by the Council to reduce the risk of child exploitation.
- The success of the recent County Lines operation across Wiltshire.
- The identification by the multi-agency risk panel (MARF) of adults potentially exploiting children, themes used to exploit children and hotspots used by children at risk.
- Disruption tools used by multi-agency partners both locally and nationally.
- Joint partnership working to tackle Domestic Abuse.
- The work of the Fair Access Panel in co-operation with schools within the Borough.

Challenges

- The low number of FGM cases being identified and how partners were engaging with local communities to identify and deal with this issue.
- The reduction in number of children being identified as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and work by officers to reassure authorities that they could

be confident that children are not being missed.

- The challenge of children on part-time timetables or who regularly move schools because potentially these children were at greater risk of being exploited if they aren't at school.
- Ways to tackle persistent absence from school.
- Increasing knowledge of ideas that work locally and nationally in preventing child criminal exploitation and identifying what additional resources might be needed to further this work.

Future Actions

- A review of the FGM Protocol and the low numbers of children identified to increase joined up working and to agree future actions. This would be led by the Community Safety Partnership.
- Child Sexual Exploitation national day on the 1st in March with Swindon wide events to highlight CSE. This would be led by the Child Exploitation and Missing Focus Group.
- The reduction in the number of children on part-time timetables and school moves with a roll out of an electronic monitoring system to be tested in 2020.
- Implementing the contextual safeguarding approach across Swindon.
- A Police review of its policing footprint within the partnership model.

Following the presentation Members of the Committee challenged Council officers and representatives of partner organisations in respect of:

- When profiling of FGM cases identifying ethnic and cultural backgrounds whether community leaders were approached to offer leadership in work to influence change.
- The work of the Police in liaising with community leaders and the sharing of work and best practice across the region in this and other areas.
- Examples of education provided by multi-cultural community groups to effectively deter illegal actions within sections of those communities.
- The involvement of Oxford Health Mental Health teams within the partnership work relating to Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children and the resourcing of this work to permit a timely response.
- The differences between family and gang related child exploitation.
- The role of schools in identifying and reducing incidents of missing children.
- Work with young people to help them recognise the need for change to avoid their exploitation and trauma related training for staff dealing with young people.
- Examples of joint work involving Ward Councillors, the Police and local people to identify and tackle local criminal activity. There was a recognition that a relationship with local communities needed to be built to make this type of interaction effective.
- The need for agencies to report outcomes back to local communities in order to encourage their interaction.
- The reasons for children changing schools at the behest of their parents and a recognition that usually part-time educational timetables were used for children with medical needs.
- The monitoring and outcomes of the pilot "Call In" Intervention on knife crime in Swindon.

- Schools that participated in FAKE (Fire Arms and Knife Education) educational sessions.
- Whether budgets could be utilised more effectively to undertake more outreach work with young people in the community and work to provide school, community and school based working.
- The future roll-out of compulsory Child Exploitation training for all Council staff.

Resolved - (1) That officers be requested to arrange a presentation for all Councillors in early 2020 regarding Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children.

(2) That officers be requested to investigate and report back to this Committee how greater engagement of community leaders, and wider multi-cultural communities, can be facilitated in the work of partner organisations in order to prevent Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation.

(3) That this Committee supports work by the Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner to recruit additional police officers for Swindon and Wiltshire.

(4) That partner organisations be requested to report back to this Committee any assistance this Committee might offer to support their work in relation to Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children.

(5) That this Committee endorses the impact of work being undertaken in respect of early intervention and prevention and supports the continuation of this work by the Council and partner organisations.

(6) That, where community based intervention and prevention work is undertaken by this Council in relation to child protection, officers be requested to work with Parish Councils where possible in the provision of services.

(7) That officers investigate how the positive work undertaken by Wiltshire Police in respect of youth working can be more widely used across the Borough.

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Children's Summary of Performance 19/20 Quarter 2 Mid-Year Data Position

Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny

Date: 27.11.19

Author:	Dr.Lee- Anne Farach – Director of Children's Social Work
Wards:	ALL
Locality Affected:	ALL
Parishes Affected:	ALL

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This performance summary provides an overview of performance in children's services based on the April-September 19 data position. The report captures key performance information and provides additional service context which should be considered when reviewing the overall direction of travel during the first quarter of 19/20.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee need oversight of Children's Services' performance in order to scrutinise, challenge and hold the service to account. The report highlights areas of performance which are positive as well as areas where there are challenges and improvement required. The report enables the Committee to have an understanding of the areas of performance where Swindon is compared with other Local Authorities and how that information is used by the Council and external bodies such as the Department for Education and OFSTED. The latest national benchmarking data is referenced to give comparator context. The 18/19 dataset for Children In Need and Child Protection has just been published and so is referenced as appropriate in this report. Children Looked After comparator for 18/19 data is due for national publication imminently and will be included in future reports.
- 1.3 Children's Services social care performance contributes to the Council's Corporate Priority in terms of safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children and young people. Partnership working is key to improving outcomes for children and this report helps to indicate where stronger partnership working is required.
- 1.4 Children's Services social care helps deliver the Council's priority to protect vulnerable children and achieve the Council pledges 20, 21 and 22 which focus on increasing the capacity of local foster provision, safeguarding children and the provision of effective early help interventions through working within the Troubled Families Programme.
- 1.5 Early help services are key to providing effective early support and intervention that can prevent children from needing help from more specialist and statutory services, including social care. Early Help services cover a broad range of single and multi- agency services which contribute to improved outcomes for children

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and young people. They aim to prevent the escalation to children's statutory services.

- 1.6 Where appropriate the performance and activity outlined in this report is linked to key success measures for the delivery of the Children's Service Improvement Plan, particularly in relation to the delivery of Pillar 4 (Quality of Practice), Pillar 5 (Early Help), and Pillar 6 (Children Looked After and Permanency Planning). Progress against the plan is monitored internally by the Children's Leadership Team, Corporate Management Team; The Leadership Advisory Group and externally through an Improvement Board which is chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by members of the Department of Education, Local Government Association and Safeguarding Partners in Swindon.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the key performance messages in relation to 19/20 mid-year data position (April- September 19) for Children's Early Help and Social Care services
- 2.2 Identify, challenge and scrutinise areas of concern that require further scrutiny and investigation. These will be owned by the Corporate Director of Children Services and the Director of Children's Social Work, with the support of appropriate Heads of Service and Corporate Senior Managers depending on the areas of performance that they relate to.

3. Detail

- 3.1 Key Performance Headlines: Mid-Year (April – September 19) data position
- 3.2 Early Help: There are a range of multi-agency services within Early Help in Swindon. These include the Early Help Hub, The Family Service and Butterflies Family Centre. In addition, Swindon has integrated Locality Teams providing the following services; Education Welfare, Health Visiting, School Nursing, Family Nurse Partnership, New Beginnings, Baby Steps, Youth Engagement, TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health Services) and Family Group Conferencing. Early Help in Swindon is a collaborative approach, not a provision. All children and young people will receive universal services, however some children and young people because of their needs or circumstances will require extra support to achieve their potential.
- 3.3 Early Help enables children, young people and their families that have become overwhelmed by difficulties to receive support to make informed choices, learn new skills and improve aspirations to turn their lives around.
- 3.4 Between April and September 19, there were 969 referrals to the Early Help Hub. Of these, 913 (94.2%) were opened within 2 working days of MASH triage. 973

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has an outcome/review within 5 working days (98.9%) were completed within 5 working days. Exception reporting and management oversight is in place for referrals not meeting timescales and these are risk assessed with management oversight. The positive performance demonstrates that pathways between MASH and the Early Help Hub are well embedded and ensuring a timely response for families. The source of referrals mirrors that of social care with the police being the highest referrers followed by schools. Social Care are also stepping across a proportion of cases where the impact of statutory work has been successful and which no longer meet the threshold for statutory intervention. The impact of this in the longer term should be a reduced social care referral rate as the Early Help Offer continues to strengthen.

- 3.5 The Troubled Families Programme in Swindon continues to be a key approach to working with families to provide effective early interventions. The 19/20 Swindon Troubled Families Programme performance until the end of September 2019 reports that Swindon has claimed for 1029 (79%) out of the 1,310 19/20 target. This is good progress and the local authority is on track to claim all of the funding by the end of the programme in March 2020.
- 3.6 The Family Intervention & Support Service (FISS) including the new Edge of Care and adolescent at risk services officially launched in September 2019. This new Service provides appropriate challenge to families to improve their outcomes and deliver support to enable long term sustainable changes. Multi skilled key workers and family support workers will have support from qualified social workers where families are near to the Social Care threshold and this will facilitate the delivery of a more flexible service that meets the needs of families when they need it, including outside of regular service hours. The social care threshold document is determined and agreed by Swindon's Safeguarding Partnership and has recently been refreshed.
- 3.7 The current Early Help Services provide appropriate support and encouragement to families to improve their outcomes and deliver support through 1-1's and Family Group Conference as well as using evidenced based parenting programmes. This enables long term sustainable changes within families. The number of families currently in the process of family group conferencing was 60 at the end of September 19 up from 46 in the previous year. Outcomes for families worked with in this way include improved school attendance, reduced exclusions and anti-social behaviour as well as improvement in emotional health and wellbeing.
- 3.8 Healthy Child Programme: Swindon Health Visitors deliver the 0-5 years Healthy Child Programme as agreed with the Public Health commissioners. There are national challenges being experienced in the recruitment of Health Visitors, which Swindon is also experiencing. This has resulted in a detailed risk assessment that targets resources according to vulnerability and prioritises new birth, 6-8

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week and 2-2.5 year visits. The Institute of Health Visiting has just published a new strategy highlighting the importance of not "hitting the target, but missing the point" encouraging local health visiting services to focus on quality evidenced based support for families, not just making contact. There is a proactive recruitment programme and the service has secured 5 training places to train up new Health Visitors starting in January 2020.

- 3.9 Performance against prioritised contacts between July and September 2019 - new birth visits reached 94.6% (668/706) compared to the England average of 98.3%. The 6-8 week contact rate reached 90.9% (608/669) which is higher than the England average of 85.4%. The performance in relation to completion of 2-2.5year visits reached 68.6% (469/684) and is below the England average of 78%. Of the 2-2.5 year visits completed 97.8% were done using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire which is considered best practice and this compares to 89.8% for England. The service has been proactively working with Early Help Family Practitioners to maximise resources and these staff have been trained and are assisting in the completion of 2-2.5 year contacts. The impact of this on performance will be positive and is expected in quarter 3 reports. The essential prioritisation of resources inevitably impacts on performance for other aspects of the programme and this means that antenatal contacts by Health Visitors have significantly decreased. Midwifery services are providing universal contacts during this period and health visitor contacts are targeted for vulnerable children and families. A report detailing the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme in Swindon will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny in early 2020.
- 3.10 There has been a positive performance improvement in relation to Infants breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks. This has increased from 49.3% in Quarter 2 of 2018/19 to 52.1% in Quarter 2 of 2019/20 and is now above the national average of 47.3%. Breastfeeding is a strong protective factor for infants, promoting good health and attachment.
- 3.11 The service continues to try to attract new Health Visitors, alongside increasing the use of skills mix in the staffing structure in order to increase capacity. This skills mix includes the use of Early Years Family Practitioners who are a valuable asset to the service. The service is working on retaining the existing staff through offering opportunities to develop and progress whilst strengthening the quality of our delivery. Senior Practitioner posts have been created for both Health Visitor and Early Years Family Practitioners. A review of recruitment and retention is underway with support from HR specialists with a view to increasing the number of Health visitors in Swindon and ensuring retention of staff in the longer term.
- 3.12 Contacts to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): MASH standards and processes have been revised and further improved and multi-agency audits now take place fortnightly to ensure any challenges to decision making can be addressed swiftly to meet children's needs. The MASH team are working well

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with partners and the Early Help Hub and are hosting a number of MASH team visits for partners to come and see MASH and gain a better understanding of the team activity and build strong working relationships.

- 3.13 Social Care Referrals: 7032 contacts were received into MASH between April and September 19. This is an average of 1172 per month. Of those referrals that were screened by MASH at contact stage, 1794 cases progressed to a social care referral. This is slightly less than 1882 referrals received between April and September 18. Swindon's referral rate continues to be higher than national average but the gap is showing some potential signs of reduction during 19/20 compared with the previous year. The police continue to have the highest proportion of referrals with nearly 37.7% of referrals to social care coming from the police between April and September 19. The national average for 18/19 was 29.2%. Swindon has historically had a higher referral rate from police compared with others. In response to this a new Domestic Abuse Pathway was implemented in March 19 to ensure families have access to the right support at an earlier stage as well as improving multi agency information sharing and understanding of risks, themes and patterns of domestic abuse. This pathway has been developed and agreed between MASH and the police and is enabling improved multi agency working in response to domestic violence. In addition, Multi Agency training on the Domestic Abuse Pathway was delivered to staff in May and June 2019.
- 3.14 The Early Help Strategy was refreshed in April 2019 and is key to reduce the number of social care referrals through effective early interventions which result in fewer referrals meeting social care threshold. The increase in Early Help Hub referrals provides early indication of the new process embedding. An evaluation of the hub will be undertaken towards the end of 2019 to gain a detailed understanding of the extent of the impact the Early Help Offer is having on reducing the social care referral rate.
- 3.15 Social Care Re-referrals: 25.6% (460 out of 1794) of referrals between April and September 19 were re-referred within 12 months. This compares with 22.6% nationally. This measure is a good indicator of whether first time interventions are effective. There will always be instances where families are re-referred for different reasons to those presenting at original referral. Where the re-referral is for the same reason as the previous referral it is important to understand if there are any practice changes required. Swindon routinely audits cases to determine learning and disseminates this through the service.

Statutory Assessments: The number of statutory assessments numbers remained at a high level with 2,675 completed between April and September 19 compared with 2245 between April and September 18. The rate of assessment completion is being inflated by the good practice of social workers creating an updated assessment every 12 months. This will be part of the reason for

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Swindon looking high comparatively. The average duration of assessment was 20 days and is below the national average of 31 days. The statutory requirement is for all aspects of the assessment (which includes multi agency contribution) to be completed within 45 days. The completion rate in Swindon provides time for managers to quality assure assessments and enhance the quality is required. The number of overdue assessments has decreased substantially from 124 in September 18 to 22 in September 19. The Director of Children Services requests an update of the status of all outstanding cases with a trajectory for completion to each Quality Assurance and Improvement board. This ensures all managers have reviewed overdue cases and any delays are addressed as well undertaking any data cleansing activity where assessments had been duplicated in error.

- 3.16 Children In Need: The number of children in need, (those requiring a Social Worker but not the subject of a Child Protection Plan or Looked After), has reduced to 939 at the end of September 19 compared with 1,267 at the end of September 18. There has been a month on month decrease during quarter 2 of this financial year and an overall decreasing trend for the last 12 months. Children in Need numbers have been higher than comparator averages in the last 4 years, but the gap is narrowing with 187.1 per 10,000 population aged under 18 in September 19 which is only marginally above the national average of 185.7 per 10,000 population. There are fluctuations in the numbers of children in need because it includes those that are in the assessment process and this varies depending on the monthly referral demand. As well as a decreasing trend in terms of the number of children in need the investment to increase the number of social workers has resulted in a reduction of average caseloads for social workers from 22 in February 19 to 17 by September 19. There is some variation across the service which means there are still some Social Workers with caseloads higher than 17.
- 3.17 A series of local priority measures were introduced during 18/19 and progress against local targets for Children In Need has been notable. This includes an improvement from 66% in April 19 to 80.5% (548 out of 681) of children received timely 4 weekly visits in September 19. 81% (521 out of 646) of children in need received a review within 3 months which is an improvement from 61.8% in April 19. Progress against these measures is monitored at monthly performance clinics and exception reporting is in place. There is no comparator data for these measures but the definitions deliberately set a high standard of practice expectations and have enabled strong management oversight and identified where performance management is required.
- 3.18 Recruitment and retention of Social Workers remains a significant challenge and this, in some instances leads to instability of caseloads for the workforce as a whole, as caseloads for vacant posts have to be managed whilst recruitment takes place. This impacts on children having a change of social worker and it is recognised that some children have had too many changes of social workers.

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The services works to minimise changes for children wherever possible. A "Temp to Perm" roadshow held in May 2019 had positive engagement and the outcome has included 16 enquiries from agency staff wishing to join permanently with 10 already confirmed. Thirteen student placements have gone live during October and November 19 and seven frontline placements were made during September 19. A further 8 students are planned to be in placement by February 2020. In October 19 the service attended a Community Live event. The event enabled the promotion of Swindon offer to social workers at all level of experience from students to experienced social workers and managers. It was also an arena to raise awareness of Swindon's rating as a good authority and to inform of the developments underway to support social work including the Social Work and Leadership Academy launching in November 19. As a result of the event, 151 initial enquiries have been made in relation to social work posts in Children Services.

- 3.19 Human Resources have negotiated an overseas recruitment package for 6 staff who will be in post in late Spring 2020. This training involves a work based programme (Social Work Apprenticeship) with the Open University commencing February 2020.
- 3.20 Practice management within locality teams continues to be strengthened with a more focused use of exception reporting for the purpose of ensuring strong management oversight and practice grip. The Team Managers report to their Service Manager on a weekly basis the details of any children and young people that have not received a visit within timescales or who have an overdue or out of date assessment. The exception report gives a strong focus on practice at child level and provides the operational managers with the tools to challenge and support Social Workers to undertake timely visits and assessments. The Service Manager has visibility of any children who have not been visited or who are experiencing drift or delay in having their needs met. Actions to address any late visits or out of date assessments are agreed with the Social Worker and tracked through the weekly worker level performance reports. Exception reporting takes place at monthly performance clinics for each service and is escalated by exception to the monthly Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Board (QAPIB) chaired by the Director of Children Services.
- 3.21 Child Protection: There were 234 children at risk of significant harm and therefore the subject of a Child Protection Plan at the end of September 19. This is a reduction from 331 reported at the end of March 19 and significantly lower than 444 in September 18. The decreasing trend has been most evident between September 18 and March 19 and continues into 19/20 to date. Swindon has significantly closed the gap with its comparators with 46.2 per 10,000 population aged under 18 on a child protection plan compared with 43.7 nationally. The national data published in October 19 for 18/19 reports a 4% decrease nationally. The percentage of Child Protection Conferences which result in a Child

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Protection Plan has also reduced to 78.5% from an average of 95% during 17/18. This is the result of more robust challenge by Independent Reviewing Officers in relation to multi agency decision making. The Independent Reviewing Service has created more capacity for the allocation of Child Protection Conferences. The requests are now routinely quality assured in relation to thresholds alongside more in depth exploration of what work has been completed with the family prior to the conference being requested. The responsiveness for child protection cases to progress to conference at pace is good with 93.3% (126 out of 135) having a conference within 15 working days of the decision to go to conference. This is higher than 78.7% nationally. Once on a plan the timeliness of Child Protection visits has been a key focus for the service and performance is very good with 91.1% (184/202) of children on a plan during September 19 receiving visits within timescale of one visit every 2 weeks as a minimum. Management information is provided weekly to operational managers to monitor visit completion. If a visit is unsuccessful in terms of the family not being available there is a prompt follow up visit. Audits of unsuccessful visits are undertaken by Team Manager and these demonstrate the service is taking appropriate action to ensure children are seen.

- 3.22 In terms of the overall child protection service in Swindon, audits and softer operational intelligence indicates that agencies and partners are showing a stronger understanding of social care thresholds following the training that has taken place with LSCB and partners. This is starting to be reflected more consistently in the application of thresholds and improved multi agency working with children in need, in order to prevent escalation to child protection where appropriate. Children who are on Child Protection Plans received timely reviews with 97.16 (207 out of 212) of children being reviewed with statutory timescales, (3 months from the initial date of a plan and 6 monthly thereafter). This is strong performance in the comparator context (90.5% nationally). Exception reporting shows that if there are delays in review this is predominantly due to it being in the best interests of the child. All late conferences are reported as exceptions to senior management with reasons for delay.
- 3.23 11.3% (12 out of 106 children) starting a child protection plan between April and September 19 had been on a previous plan. This will not necessarily be for the same reason acknowledging that some children will be the subject of a subsequent child protection plan due to family circumstances that are not linked to the original concerns. The national and statistical neighbour average is 21%. Auditing is undertaken for children who are the subject of a second or subsequent plan to ensure any practice learning is shared with staff as appropriate.
- 3.24 Serious Case Reviews (SCR): A Serious Case Review is undertaken when a child has died or received a life-threatening injury due to abuse or neglect. Swindon Safeguarding Partnership conducts formal reviews of these and other serious child abuse cases in accordance with Central Government guidance

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contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children. There are 2 SCRs commissioned by the Swindon Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) which are pending publication. The learning from SCR Q has been shared with staff and a learning event is planned. A comprehensive action plan has been implemented and progress monitored via the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board and the Safeguarding Partnership Practice Review Group. The second SCR G will be published alongside SCR Q on the Safeguarding Partnership website. Its action plan for learning has been agreed. They will both be published in late November 2019. A third SCR M, commissioned by Oxfordshire LSCB includes some learning for Swindon, which is being implemented, and Oxfordshire has published this SCR report on their website. Learning events have taken place with regard to SCR M. The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Practice Review group in November noted that all the action plans for Children Families and Community Health have been almost totally implemented. Learning leaflets have been shared with all partners and are available on the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership website. Commissioned training in response to SCRs has been delivered specifically to share the learning, particularly in relation to risk and neglect. Within Children, Families and Community Health Service learning has been reflected in policy and procedure changes and these have been launched across the service. The performance management system and audit work is assessing the outcomes for children and the quality of intervention they and their families receive. All service improvement actions resulting from SCRs are incorporated into the service improvement plan within Pillar 4 in relation to Quality of Practice. This ensures that the learning from Serious Case Reviews is implemented and improves practice.

- 3.25 Children Looked After: Three hundred and thirty five (335) children were Looked After at the end of September 19, or 66.7 per 10,000 population aged under 18. Swindon is still slightly above national and statistical neighbour averages (63 per 10,000), but the gap has narrowed since March 19 when 71 per 10,000 was reported. There were 24 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children at the end of September 19, which is the same as reported to the Committee for March 19. The number of children becoming looked after continues to show a downwards trend with an average of 8 per month between April and September 19 compared with 12 in 18/19. This gives confidence that sustainability of a reduction in the number of children needing to become looked after is embedding.
- 3.26 Seven children looked after at the end of September 19 have experienced 3 placements during between April and September 19. This is an improvement from 22 for April- June 18. This measure does increase through the year as it counts the number of placements from 1st April 19. The service does also measure the number of placement moves in the previous 12 months (September 18- September 19 placement moves) and performance was not as strong with 17% (57 out of 335) of children experiencing 3 placements within 12 months. Long term stability of care placement continues to be lower than the national

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average, which is of concern and long term stability is less robust for children placed further from home. This is directly linked to recruitment and retention in the care workforce, the lack of in-house foster care provision and lack of locally commissioned external placements. There has however been an improvement from 41.1% (49 out of 119) children aged under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more have been in the same placement for at least 2 years at the end of June 19 to 45.5% (56 out of 123) at the end of September 19. The national average is 68%. Swindon has needed to 'spot purchase' independent sector specialist placements, which can cause instability for children as well as significant budgetary pressures. Focused activity on strengthening both commissioning in relation to provider management and the In House foster carer provision has meant that only 4 of 40 placements in the last 6 months were placed out of Borough. Work to strengthen the In House Foster Carer service continues and a dedicated Service Manager has been appointed to drive improvements at a faster pace. There has been a reduction in the number of children looked after placed more than 20 miles from home from 33% (112 out of 339), at the end of June 19 to 31.2% (106 out of 335) at the end of September 19. Progress to reduce this number is positive but it is recognised that decreases are not anticipated in the short term given the complexity of the placement provision arrangements and the long term shift in provision mix required to place more children looked after locally. The placements for all these children are being consistently reviewed to understand if their needs can be met in a more local placement. The challenges linked to local service provision mean that longer term initiatives to create more provision locally are being progressed to make a shift from the use of Out of Borough placements to local placements. There will of course be some instances where it is in the best interests of the child to live at a distance from the Borough and some types of specialist placements are the best option for children. Any potential placement change involves careful consideration to make sure any changes are in the best interests of the child.

- 3.27 Permanency for Children Looked After: A concentrated focus on achieving permanency for some of the legacy Looked After Children cases is evident in the mid- year data with 12 children adopted between April and September 19. This represents 17.65% of Children ceasing care and is above the national average of 12.8%. Permanency planning is a key priority for Swindon. The work with Adoption Thames Valley to match adopters to children in Swindon on placement orders where a court has determined the child should be placed for adoption is getting stronger. The number of Children on a placement order has reduced from a high level of 49 June 19 to 40 at the end of September 19 and the latest data reports a further decrease to 34. In some cases the length of time the children have been subject to a Placement Order is too long and this is being addressed through strengthened management oversight and the introduction of a fortnightly permanency tracker for all children on placement orders. Work is being undertaken to ensure that all children with plans for adoption still require this

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permanency route; there are some cases where other options for example long term fostering, should be considered to best meet the child's needs.

- 3.28 Collaborative work with the Care Leavers Team has resulted in the co-production of a Care leavers Offer and Health Passport that promotes and facilitates young people's access health services. The challenge of children placed outside of Swindon not receiving timely health assessments is being addressed by Nurses travelling to complete these, when appropriate, to ensure that unmet health needs are addressed. There is also evidence that direct links with the Designated Nurse in requesting and escalating delays is having a positive impact.
- 3.29 Care Leavers: 64.3% of Care Leavers were in Education, Employment, or Training (EET) at the end of September 19 (63 out of 98) young people. This compares with 50% nationally and is positive performance. Eighty three percent, (81 out of 98), of Swindon's Care Leavers are in suitable accommodation although still in line with national comparators (Nationally 84% and statistical neighbours 82%), is lower than previous report when 88% was reported. Although the service consistently tracks and works with the young people who need suitable accommodation, improvements are required in relation to consistent processes and assessments in relation to determining the suitability and safety of accommodation. OFSTED (March 19) recommended that Swindon Care Leavers would benefit from a greater range of bespoke housing options and this is being addressed. The Housing and Children Social care and Accommodation Panel now meets fortnightly. The aims of this panel include providing clear pathways for young people and to make decisions related to accommodation following case referrals from Children Social Care and Housing team.
- 3.30 Youth Offending: The number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) into the national youth justice system has reported a sustained decrease over time, which is welcome. Police National Computer (PNC) and Youth Justice Board (YJB) figures from 2016 showed that 82% of First Time Entrants to the Wiltshire youth criminal justice system were dealt with by the police under their pre court processes with no Youth Offending Team (YOT) involvement. This high figure resulted in Wiltshire (including Swindon) being identified as an outlier and resulted in a joint initiative with the Police and wider partners to create and launch the Youth Restorative Intervention Board (YRIB) across both Wiltshire and Swindon. This innovation started in February and a Board is held weekly in each location; with Swindon YOT working with partners (Wiltshire Police, Restorative Together, Early Help Hub and others) to triage all Swindon young people coming to the notice of the police and signposting to more suitable forms of disposal; thereby reducing unnecessary entrance into the formal criminal justice system and attracting a life-long criminal record. This will, over time, reduce the FTE figures whilst maintaining and delivering suitable, credible and appropriate alternatives and disposals. The First Time Entrants count has fallen

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by over 52% from its peak of 160 in 2015 (810 FTEs/100,000) with the latest annual Youth Justice Board FTE figures for Apr to Mar 2019 showing a reduction in the number of FTEs in Swindon down to 77 (373 FTE's/ 100,000). Latest local figures show 15 FTEs for the period Jul-Sep 2019 (compared to 11 in the same quarter in 2018) and compared to 11 in the previous quarter (Apr-Jun 19).

- 3.31 SEND: In September 2019, 2093 children and young people aged 0-25 in Swindon had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There has been a relatively steady increase over the last two years with 3.9% of the school age population currently having EHCPs and 13.2% identified as SEN Support compared to 3.1% and 11.9% nationally. Between 2012 and 2018, Swindon EHCP figures grew by 60% compared to 39% nationally. The number of EHCPs is forecast to increase as the population grows significantly by 2028. A number of activities governed through the Written Statement of Action are seeking to stabilise the percentage for SEND whilst ensuring that outcomes are good for children and young people. The increase in the number of assessments requested has inevitably impacted on performance with completion of new assessments within 20 weeks decreasing to 52.3% over the last 12 month period. Cumulatively there has been 378 requests for statutory needs assessments in the last 12 months and of these, 58 have been refused. These challenges are being addressed through the implementation of Core Standards whereby educational settings came together and developed a Swindon wide set of guidance of what is normally available for children and young people for universal and graduated response needs, improvements made to the collection and use of performance data which in turn will strengthen quality and performance monitoring processes. These activities will drive up the quality of EHCPs and we expect to see the completion within 20 weeks increase over the next 18-24 months to national levels. The New Local Offer platform <https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/home> was launched in October. The SEND management system has been digitalised rather than heavily paper based system and a SEND IT portal in the coming quarter will provide more immediate and responsive individual case management and data.
- 3.32 Elective Home Education: The number of children registered as electively home educated (EHE) within Swindon at the end of September is 220. This is a reduction of 54 from Feb 2019 when the numbers of EHE were at a peak. Swindon is currently below the national average for EHE pupil's per school population. EHE continues to be a priority area for the EWS who are currently reviewing the new guidance published by the DfE in regards to the use of School attendance orders (SAO) for those families who do not engage with the LA. The EHE strategy and multi-agency implementation plan is continues to be delivered to improve the identification and support to Electively Home Educated Children. Appropriate information sharing with our partners in MASH, Social care, Education, Health and Early Help ensures that any safeguarding concerns are responded to in a manner.

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- 3.33 Children Missing from Education: The number of children being tracked as children missing education (CME) within Swindon at the end of Sept 2019 is 79. This higher than usual number is reflective of the time of year and is comparable to the figure in 2018 when there were 81 pupils being monitored as CME. This is partly due to pupils not returning to school from the summer holidays with no notification of having moved home, and pupils not getting a school place of their choice where they have not informed the LA. In addition to this Swindon has a policy of keeping pupils identified as CME whereabouts unknown, on a monitoring document far beyond the time when all reasonable checks have been made to find the child. This is a practice that will be reviewed as many LA's remove the child from their monitoring once all reasonable enquiries have been made, Swindon will look to ensure that best practice is maintained in any decision on changes to this process.

Alternative Options

- 3.34 There are no alternative options for consideration within the context of this report.

4. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications.

- 4.1 For 2019/20, the budget for Children, Families and Community Health is £38.616m. The forecast outturn position as at the end of September 2019 was a £0.913m over-spend. There continues to be pressures relating to agency staff and the need for additional resource to support the service during their improvement journey. There are also pressures emerging which relate to children with high and complex needs being managed at home and this area of spend is currently being reviewed by the service. The service has undertaken a review of their budgets and have identified savings which have reduced the pressure down from the £2.1m reported at the end of June.
- 4.2 The 2019/20 Skills and Attainment Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs budget is £31.084m. The forecast outturn position as at the end of September 2019 was a pressure of £1.620m. The main pressures relate to an increase in demand for high needs top ups, Post 16 placements for High Needs pupils and alternative provision required for an increased number of Primary age pupils, these pressures are partially offset by the High Needs Contingency.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.3 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) requires every Local Authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor and improve performance report.

Children's Summary of Performance 19/20 Quarter 2 Mid-Year Data Position

Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny

Date: 27.11.19

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 4.4 There are no other direct implications arising as a result of this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and in any recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 4.5 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is required at this stage as this report proposes no changes to services. Any DIA that is required during a review of topics included within the work programme, will be identified at the appropriate stage.

Risk Management

- 4.6 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

5. Consultees

- 5.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 There are no background papers associated with this report.

7. Appendices

Work Programme 2019/20

Children's' Health, Social Care and Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27th November 2019

Author: Chief Legal Officer
Wards: All
Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to have a work programme that details the activities that it will be undertaking during the Municipal year.
- 1.2 The work programme details the various topics and issues that each Committee intends to look into during the coming year with the aim of producing evidence based recommendations intended to provide service improvements for Cabinet and external agencies/bodies to consider.
- 1.3 Under the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Committees are required to agree a work programme at the start of the municipal year outlining their priorities and likely outcomes of considering these issues.

The work programme is developed taking into account:

- Corporate priorities and objectives, including the Cabinet Forward Plan.
 - Partnership strategic priorities and objectives.
 - The interests and concerns of Members, Council officers, members of the public and other stakeholders such as community and voluntary groups and local businesses.
- 1.4 Committees are encouraged to review the work programme on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and to prioritise the workload of the Committee.
 - 1.5 Members are reminded that the work programme must also take into account:
 - The workload of the Committee and of individual members.
 - The capacity of the Scrutiny Unit and other officers to support a review.
 - The resource implications of carrying out a review.
 - The timescales for a review.
 - The most appropriate method of carrying out a review e.g. Committee meeting, Task Group, Member Champion review.
 - 1.6 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 have presented the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a role, remit and powers regarding local health matters.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Contact Shaun Banks, 0789752047, sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

Work Programme 2019/20

Children's' Health, Social Care and Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27th November 2019

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- 1.7 The Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee is encouraged to be mindful of its role and remit when considering a work programme for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- Consider and discuss the Chair's proposal for the 2019/20 work programme.
- Approve the proposed Work Programme for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal year.

3. Detail

- 3.1 It is important that Overview and Scrutiny adds value to the work of the Council and the Borough and produces tangible outcomes for local people that result in real service improvements. Selecting the right topics is crucial to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny will be effective.

The work programme will be reviewed at every Committee meeting or as the Committee sees fit to ensure that it remains relevant and that Members and Officers have sufficient capacity to effectively achieve its objectives.

- 3.2 The Work Programme attached at Appendix 1 includes these suggestions and the Committee is asked to approve the work programme for the 2019/20 Municipal year.
- 3.3 Attention is drawn to the Scrutiny Process Flowchart, attached at Appendix 2, which is aimed at assisting the Committee in identifying how they could influence policy development.

Task Group Reviews

- 3.4 The Committee is required to undertake individual reviews throughout the municipal year and proposals for reviews should be proposed and discussed at the Committee meeting.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Committee can choose not to have a detailed work programme although it is recommended that it is best practice to do so.

Work Programme 2019/20

Children's' Health, Social Care and Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27th November 2019

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising as a result of this report. Any expenditure arising as a result of an item on the Committee's work programme will be met by the Overview and Scrutiny Support budget, subject to the approval of the Committee.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Section 21 of the Local Government Act requires every local authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor and improve performance.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no other direct implications arising as a result of this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee and in any recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment is required at this stage, any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the work programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

Risk Management

- 5.5 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The author has consulted, where appropriate, with Corporate Directors, Heads of Service, other officers and relevant partners on the purpose, content and recommendations of the report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Work Programme for 2019/20.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Contact Shaun Banks, 0789752047, sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

Work Programme 2019/20

**Children's' Health, Social Care and Education
Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Date: 27th November 2019

8.2 Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Process Flowchart.

Children's Health, Social Care and Education
Work Programme 2019-20

Terms of Reference of the Committee

To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to: –

- The review, scrutiny, and development of policy recommendations.
- The management of and monitoring performance.
- The monitoring of progress towards delivering relevant strategies, corporate priorities, and the Councils pledges and priorities.
- The formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders.

To have specific responsibility for (but not limited to) the scrutiny of:–

- The performance of services for children towards agreed local and national Performance Indicators.
- The quality of provision and effectiveness of Local Authority strategies to raise standards of education within Swindon.
- Specialist social services and integrated social services for children and young people in Swindon.
- The delivery of services for vulnerable groups, particularly those vulnerable to criminal exploitation, poor school attendance and attending alternative education provision.

In addition, as these relate to Children and Young People:

- The performance of services seeking to deliver healthy communities towards agreed local and national performance indicators.
- Health, health commissioning and service delivery.
- Public Health, Health promotion and the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Health Integration and collaborative working and commissioning with Health agencies and providers and General Practitioners.

In accordance with Section 7 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (as amended), the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee will undertake scrutiny of local health service providers jointly with the Adult's Health, Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Review of the Work Programme

The work programme will be reviewed at every meeting of the Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee to ensure that it remains relevant, to ensure that Members and Officers have sufficient capacity to deliver the work programme and to include any additional items on the work programme, if appropriate.

Contact details

Committee Officer: Shaun Banks
Email: sbanks@swindon.gov.uk
Tel: 07980 752 047

Pillars of Improvement:

- Workforce
- ICT
- Quality of Social Work Practice
- Placement stability and sufficiency
- Early Help Hub, Troubled Families and Early Help Offer (combine with partners pillar)

3rd July 2019		
Early Help Hub, Troubled Families and Early Help Offer		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
Co-optees Appointment	a) To confirm the appointment of Co-optees to the Committee. b) Ask the Committee if they wish to co-opt four young people to the Committee.(2 plus 2 deputies)	Chair
Performance Report-Full Year Report March-April 2019.	To provide a detailed report on the Children's Services performance. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An analysis of re-referrals to determine if support and interventions were appropriate and sustainable b) The work being undertaken on the serious case reviews to prevent escalation 	Jo Ash and Lee-Anne Farach
Healthy Child Programme 0-5s	To provide a report on the Healthy Child Programme delivered by Childrens Services an Partners in Swindon	Katie Currie
Pillars of Improvement 1		
Implementation of Early Help Strategy, delivery of Early Help Hub and Family Intervention and Support Service Restructure.	To provide information on implementation of the Early Help Strategy and the new service structure, and the impact and quality of working in the Early Help Hub	Jane Griffiths
SEND - Progress on Written Statement of Actions Following Local Area SEND Inspection November 2018	To challenge and scrutinise the Written Statement of Action and the progress made in delivering improvements. To update the Committee on the preparatory work being undertaken.	Peter Nathan
Work Programme discussion	To set the work programme for the forthcoming municipal year.	All

25th September 2019		
Theme/Scope: Educational		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
Performance Report- Q1- 2019/2020	To provide a detailed report on the Children's Services performance.	Jo Ash and Lee-Anne Farach
Progress report on the monitoring made by the sub-group on the improvement plan		
Education Standards and Improvement – Provisional Education outcomes 2019 and schools performance.	To challenge and scrutinise	Peter Nathan
OFSTED Inspection Update	To review the OFSTED Inspection Report and Actions Arising	Peter Nathan
Pillars of Improvement 4		
Improving the quality of Social Work practice to include scrutiny of MASH improvement post April 2018 inspection	To challenge and scrutinise	Lee-Anne Farach
Work Programme discussion	To review the work programme.	All

OCTOBER 2019 – Date to be confirmed		
Theme/Scope:		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
Multi-agency scrutiny on Swindon's response to Child Exploitation, Missing, Vulnerable Children and on-line internet safety	To challenge and scrutinise	Jeanette Chipping

27th November 2019		
Theme/Scope:– Quality of Social Work Practice		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
Performance Report Q2 2019/2020	To provide a detailed report on the Children's Services performance.	Jo Ash and Lee-Anne Farach

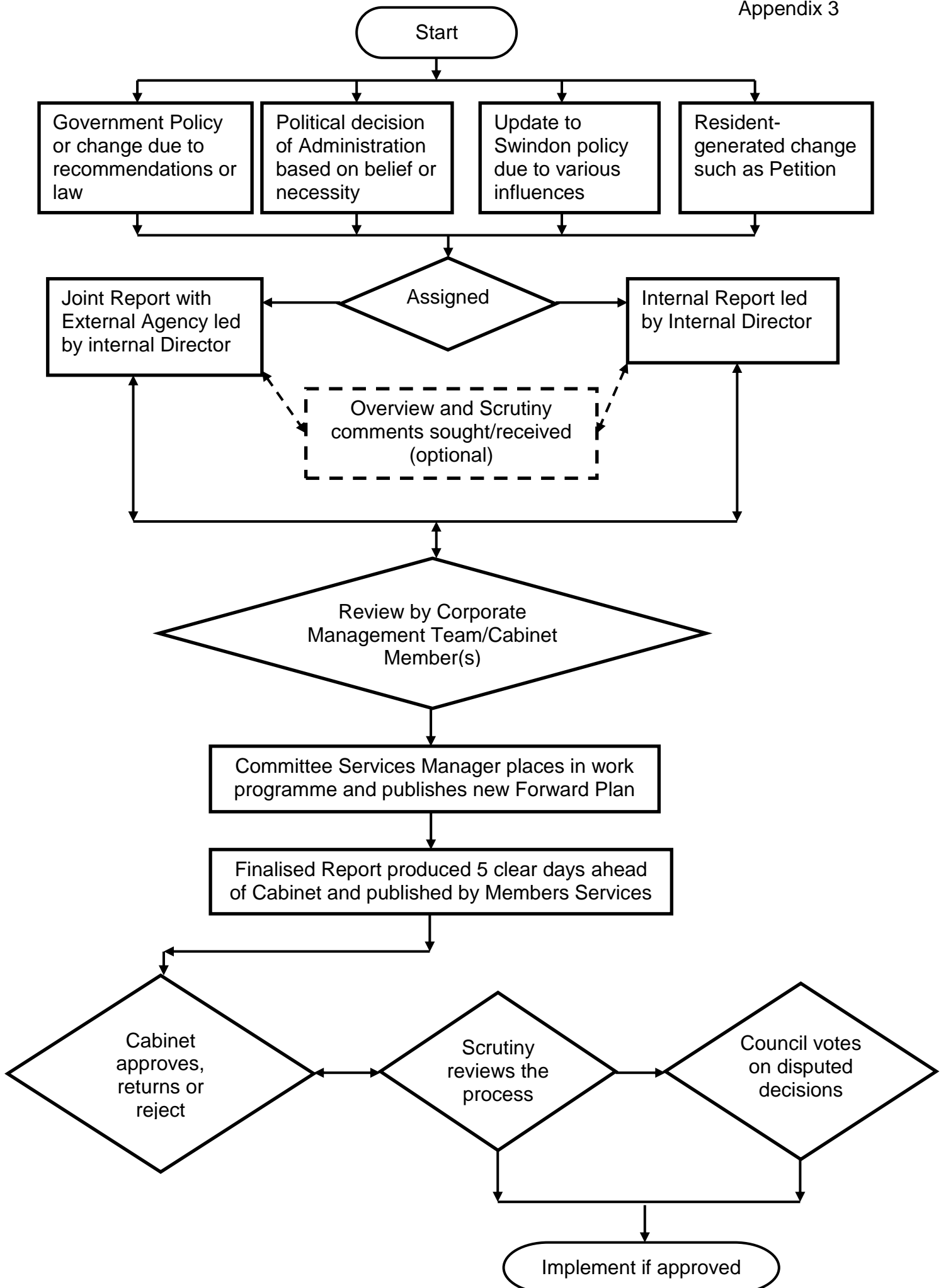
27th November 2019		
Progress report on the monitoring made by the sub-group on the improvement plan		
Alternative provision for children not attending school	To update the Committee on the provision and outcomes of young people	Peter Nathan/Nigel Pickering
Exclusions, attendance (register marking and attendance network), Children Missing Education, Children Elected Home Education. To also include off-rolling and part time timetables	To challenge and scrutinise	Peter Nathan, Wendy Lunt and Caroline Starling
Work Programme discussion	To review the work programme.	All

22nd January 2020		
Theme/Scope: Placement Stability and Sufficiency		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
SEND - Progress on Written Statement of Actions Following Local Area SEND Inspection November 2018	a) To update the Committee on the progress and improvement against the Written Statement of Action.	Peter Nathan
Education Standards and Improvement. To cover validated data.	The published Educational outcomes for 2019 at all key stages, post 16 and HE To receive and challenge a report from Swindon Challenge Board in quality of educated provision.	Peter Nathan
Youth Participation – How we engage with children and young people.	To receive details of the Youth Council's and participation group' work for the 2018/19 period and to give the Committee an opportunity to identify any issues raised that Overview and Scrutiny can assist with.	Paul Dobson/ Claire Smith/Jane Alexander
Children's commissioned services for physical and mental health.	To report to the Committee on Children's commissioned services including CAMHS, TAMHS and internal paediatric services.	Katie Currie
Health Visitors Update	To update Members on information requested at its September meeting	Louise Campion
Work Programme discussion	To review the work programme.	All

18th March 2020		
Theme/Scope: Workforce		
Item	Objectives	Witnesses
Performance Report Q3 2019/2020	To provide a detailed report on the Children's Services performance.	Jo Ash and Lee-Anne Farach
Progress report on the monitoring made by the sub-group on the improvement plan		
Youth Offending Team, Report of the YOT Board	To receive, challenge and scrutinise an Annual Report from the YOT Board.	Matt Bywater
Work Programme discussion	To review the work programme and make suggestions for the next Municipal year.	All

Task Group
Task Group with members of the Growing the Economy O&S to be set up to review how NEET and children in care were engaged with to get into work. Report to be submitted to Cabinet.

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