

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 17 February 2016

Performance Information

1. As of January 2016:

Current Children Looked After figures are: 374 = 117.61 per 10,000

Current Child Protection figures are: 233 = 73.67 per 10,000

Current Children in Need figures are: 1385 = 435.52 per 10,000

North East Tackling CSE Board

2. The Chief Executive is leading a regional board to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation. The Board had its first meeting in November at which the terms of reference and a 'promise' were agreed.
3. It was agreed that there would be a strengthened collaborative approach to:
 - Intelligence
 - Voice of the Council
 - Disruption/Preventative Work
 - Communications
4. It was also agreed that there would be an immediate initiative regarding intelligence sharing for 'Out of Area' placements.

Children's Homes

5. There is a major programme of refurbishment of three children's homes in Middlesbrough. Recent Ofsted inspections have highlighted the need for a programme of works which addresses the quality of the buildings.
6. In December 2015, Rosecroft was inspected by Ofsted and judged 'In Adequate' in part. This was due to the physical condition of the building. A series of measures have been put in place to address the concerns raised by Ofsted including the refurbishment of the building. There has been a subsequent inspection and Rosecroft has been moved from 'In Adequate' to 'Requires Improvement'.
7. The Council is using Gleneagles as a benchmark. The estimated costs to refurbish the three homes is estimated at £500,000. Immediate work has already taken place in response to the recent inspections.

Management Review

8. Safeguarding and Children's Care will be implementing a management restructure on 16 February 2016. The service has been reviewed in response to demand, capacity and observations from the recent Ofsted Inspection. The review will provide 8 Assessment and Care Planning Teams rather than the current 6, this will ensure caseloads are manageable and there is sufficient supervision and managerial oversight.

First Contact

9. The Council's front door to Children's Services continues to develop, it was initially designed to respond to contacts for safeguarding services. Its remit has been expanded and over the last two years Domestic Violence workers and CAMHS staff have joined First Contact to provide a more extensive service. As the role of First Contact has expanded its focus has also been extended, it will now offer a response to early help requests as staff from Supporting Communities join the team.
10. Agreement has also recently been reached for Safe Families for Children to locate one of their staff in the First Contact Team.

Frontline

11. Frontline is a Government initiative to improve the quality of Social Workers by recruiting high performing graduates to the Social Work profession.
12. Nationally the government is investing £100 million into the programme, Middlesbrough is a participating Council. Four aspiring Social Workers have joined the Council as part of the programme, they will be nurtured and developed through a programme of practice placements and academic work.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board

13. The Government has announced a plan to review the role of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Middlesbrough's Safeguarding Children's Board will be subject to the review. As yet it is too early to predict what the implications of the review will mean for services and families in Middlesbrough.

Regional Adoption Agency

14. Middlesbrough Council is involved in a bid to develop a Teeswide Adoption Service. The bid is well developed, funding has been approved to begin the start up work that will be required. It is anticipated that the new service will provide a wider range of choice for children who will need adoptive placements and it will increase the post of potential adopters.

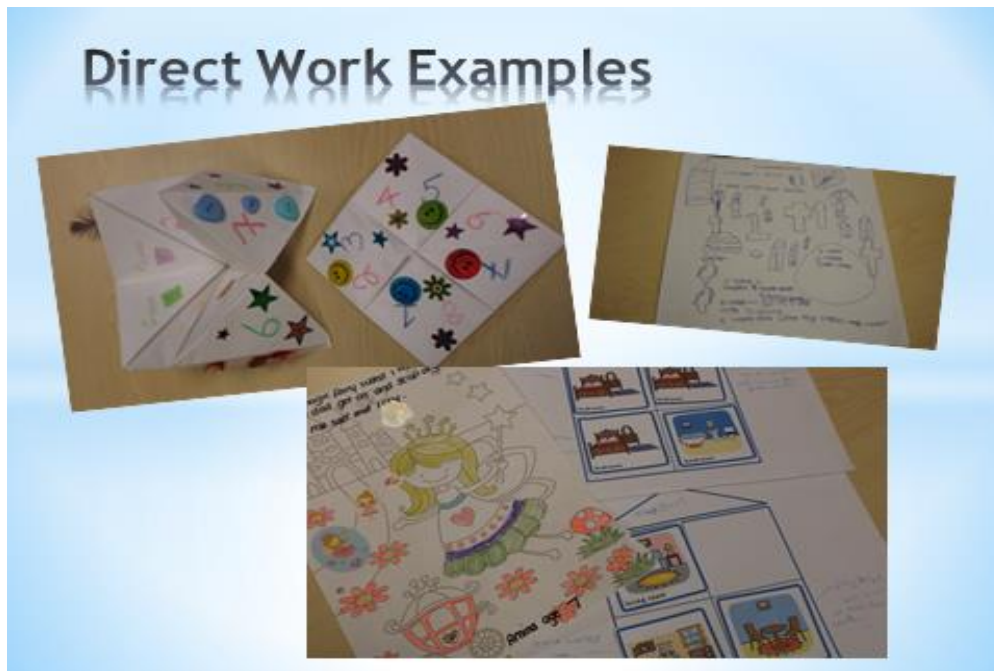
Alcohol Survey

15. The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC), is currently running a National consultation regarding the What About Youth survey - which provides information on the drinking habits of 15 year olds at the LA level.
16. Some of the North LAs rank fairly highly when compared nationally on the alcohol indicators within the survey.
17. The picture in Middlesbrough is better than the regional average on all indicators for alcohol consumption by young people aged 15 years and better than the national average on the first two indicators.
18. The improving picture of alcohol use amongst school aged children in Middlesbrough is also supported by a 34% fall in wholly attributable alcohol admissions to hospital in the under 18 age group since 2008. This also shows Middlesbrough as better than the Northeast average
19. (HSCIC survey results), RANKING 1 = Highest: 150 = Lowest

Local Authority	Ever had an alcoholic drink (overall)		Drink at least once a week (overall)		Been drunk in past 4 weeks (overall)		Been drunk in past 4 weeks (those that drank)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
County Durham	74	10	9	16	20	14	27	24
Darlington	72	25	12	1	23	4	32	5
Gateshead	72	28	11	7	19	17	27	23
Hartlepool	73	20	11	5	23	5	32	6
Middlesbrough	60	100	5	98	16	71	26	34
Newcastle upon Tyne	59	102	8	41	16	73	27	26
North Tyneside	74	16	10	12	25	2	34	3
Northumberland	76	4	11	6	20	12	27	27
Redcar and Cleveland	75	7	10	13	22	6	30	10
South Tyneside	66	77	7	48	17	49	25	46
Stockton-on-Tees	68	58	6	81	18	29	26	32
Sunderland	69	52	11	8	19	22	27	22
North East	70	-	9	-	20	-	28	-
England	62	-	6	-	15	-	23	-

Principal Social Worker

20. The Principal Social Worker meeting held in December and attended by representatives from all the children's social work teams focused on ascertaining children's views and exploring ways in which we gain those views and record them. Social Workers from across the department shared their innovative methods of engaging children and young people of all ages in talking about their needs and wishes. From self-penned pictorial care plans, thoughts and feelings post boxes, crafts and art to the use of buttons to support younger children to talk about how they feel the session showed the variety of skills and methods in communicating throughout the department.



Councillor Michael Carr
Executive Member, Children's Social Care