

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 2017

Performance Information

As of September 2017:-

Current Children Looked After (LAC) figures are: 459 (142.6 per 10,000)

Current Child Protection (CP) figures are: 249 (77.4 per 10,000)

Current Children in Need (CIN) figures are: 1217 (378.2 per 10,000)

The rate per 10,000 is now being calculated using the mid 2016 population estimate of 32,180.

Assessment and Care Planning

Recent social work interviews were successful in recruiting to all vacancies remaining across the Assessment & Care Planning Teams.

Resource Team

The Resource Team currently consists of a Contact Service, Home Support Service (parenting support 0-11 and 11-18), Returning to Middlesbrough Project (edge of care support) and Home Support for Children. An interim review has been undertaken regarding service delivery and proposals are drafted regarding the potential reconfiguration of the service in line with the vision 'Believe in Families'. The redesign is underway; this will ensure that the needs of children with disabilities continue to be met to the high standard already set; however there will be a significant shift to an edge of care service, to support more children to either stay at home or return home, and other lower level support more appropriate aligned to non-statutory services. Feedback regarding the early stages of the 'Edge of Care Support

Service' (currently the Returning to Middlesbrough Project) is very positive, including feedback from Judiciary.

Children's Homes

The three children's homes continue to be fully utilised, however there are children being supported to independence and supported to return home regularly. Work is ongoing to strengthen the skills and resilience of staff teams, to provide care to our most complex young people; with the view that their needs are best met in Middlesbrough, where a joined up approach to their care can be offered by professionals they know and professionals who can remain involved should they return home. In addition, with very close links with The Edge of Care Support Team (Returning to Middlesbrough Project), there is a greater chance of successfully returning young people home.

First Contact

We are pleased to welcome a new post of Safeguarding Information and Compliance Officer (Education). The Purpose of the Post is to:

- To provide coordinated support, guidance and challenge to schools and partners to ensure that children and young people are effectively supported to remain safe.
- To support schools in ensuring compliance with National requirements in safeguarding of children and young people.
- To develop safeguarding knowledge, understanding and procedures to ensure that effective multi-agency working supports the sharing of best practice to keep children and young people safe.
- To provide safeguarding knowledge and guidance to schools on the multi-agency decision making in the Council's front door arrangements, playing a leading role in that decision making procedure.

Newly Qualified Social Workers

As part of the North East Teaching Partnerships a regional website has been developed on behalf of the North East Social Work Alliance (NESWA). The website showcases the good partnership working in the North East Region. As part of this Middlesbrough have conducted

video interviews discussing the support, guidance and reflective supervision as part of the ASYE programme. All candidates were professional and enthusiastic during their video interviews. This was an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of the Council and hard work and professionalism of our social workers and how we support them into practice. Middlesbrough has a positive reputation for supporting its social workers on their Assessed and Supported Year in Practice which all social workers must complete successfully to be a practicing social worker.

Review and Development Team (RAD)

The Review and Development unit is now fully staffed after efforts over the past 18 months and is able to meet the recommendation from Ofsted in 2016. We have successfully secured a full-time IRO in September 2017.

The Team have also secured a Public Service Apprentice, whose primary role is to improve child participation. The post holder has experience of chairing CICC and is care-leaver. The post holder's work will commence by approaching a group of young people who are subject to a Protection Plan and want to participate in improving the service that is currently on offer. Regular group sessions will be held, with agenda items such as; making the conference room accessible, updating consultation documents, providing key messages from young people to professionals in conference which will be displayed as art on the walls. They will engage on a one to one basis with those young people who are hard to engage, to ensure that their voice is heard in the process. They will offer training to teams about child participation and seeing Social Work intervention from a child's perspective. They will be involved in C/YP consultation, an example of this is the Neglect Strategy which is currently being reviewed.

Partnerships

YOS

Reforms to youth justice announced by the government last year are starting to take effect. From 1 September the Youth Custody Service, a distinct arm of HMPPS, will be responsible for the placement of young people into custody and the delivery of secure services, and the Ministry of Justice will be responsible for the commissioning of these services.

The YJB will retain oversight of the whole system and provide independent advice to ministers on its functioning, a duty enshrined in legislation. They will also continue to work with youth offending teams and share best practice across the system.

South Tees Youth Offending Service has recently finalised the strategic plan for 2017/18, which outlines the service priorities for the forthcoming year;

- Improve the outcomes for young people with Special Education Needs, including engaging as a partner in phase 2 of the YJB SEND Project
- Reduce the numbers of Looked After Children within the criminal justice system
- Further develop our engagement processes with young people to ensure that the voice of the child informs and influences the work we do
- Further develop our interventions with young people who re-offend, using intelligence and information to review the impact of our work on individuals
- Build on current partnership working to ensure the Safety and Wellbeing of all young people identified as at risk to being vulnerable, exploited, missing or trafficked
- Continue to embed restorative approaches in all YOS activity, including working towards the Restorative Services Quality Mark for our Restorative Justice processes
- Further develop and build partnership working with Troubled Families and Early Help provision to promote effective intervention and positive outcomes for young people

Councillor Michael Carr

Executive Member, Children's Care