

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Governance

Ofsted

1. Focused visit from Ofsted 26 / 27 May 2021. Report published 15 July 2021. Focused visits set up to assess how 'England's social care system has delivered child centered practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the pandemic'.
2. Carried out by four social care inspectors and one education inspector. Looked across the whole of Children's Services i.e. both the children's social care and education and partnerships areas of practice. Gathered evidence during the previous two weeks.
3. Overall a successful visit. Praise for the way the directorate worked through the pandemic. Managed to improve services in the face of increased demand. A selection of key points includes:
 - Leaders appropriately prioritised recruitment and the development of the workforce strategy.
 - Workers are persistent and build good relationships with children so interventions are more effective.
 - Staff report feeling supported, liked working for Middlesbrough and understood the vision for change.
 - Caseloads are reducing but some too high for some social workers.
 - The quality of practice is variable and does not meet leader's expectations.
 - Some children experience too many changes of social worker. Children want to have social workers who stay with them for a long time.
 - There was a significant focus on Children Missing Education.
 - A minority of Looked after Children are on reduced timetables or have had no education for too long.
4. The inspectors made two recommendations namely:
 - To improve management oversight and actions to ensure that vulnerable children and children in care, including those with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive their full educational entitlement.

- To improve the understanding of identity and the diverse needs of children and their families to inform assessment, planning and support.

Commissioner

5. With Children's Services week of 12 July. He:-

- Looked at a range of key strategic documents,
- Undertook interviews with leaders including political leaders,
- Held focus groups looking at key areas.

6. In summary 'considerable progress has been made and there is evidence of real impact'.

7. Recommended that 'no further direct engagement of an appointed commissioner is required and continued monitoring and support to be from the Improvement Adviser and the core DfE team'.

8. The report and its recommendation will be presented to the Minister on 8 September for a decision to be made by 15 September.

Strategic Plan Priorities, Outcomes and Progress

9. Priorities

- We will show Middlesbrough's children that they matter and work to make our town safe and welcoming and to improve outcomes for all children and young people.
- We will work to address the causes of vulnerability and inequalities in Middlesbrough and safeguard and support those made vulnerable.
- We will ensure the recovery of local communities, businesses and the Council's operations from COVID, taking opportunities to build back better.

All Cross Cutting i.e. across the whole of Children's Services – Children's Social Care and Education and Partnerships so information from both services included.

Priorities	Outcomes	Progress
We will show Middlesbrough's children that they matter and work to make our town safe and welcoming and to improve outcomes for all children and young people	Deliver the Children's Services Improvement Plan to achieve Ofsted rating on Requires improvement	<p>Positive feedback from Ofsted focused visit to Children's Services on May 26 and May 27. Report shared with members</p> <p>Positive report from our Commissioner Peter Dwyer recommending that we are not a service that requires an alternative delivery model.</p> <p>Report presented to the Minister, Vicky Ford on 8 September with a decision by 15 September. If agreed, the Commissioner's involvement will cease and improvement programme supported by our improvement advisor only.</p>

		The entire report will be shared after the Ministerial decision.
	Increase attainment and attendance levels and reduce exclusions for all children across Middlesbrough	<p>New Exclusion model implemented and exclusions reduced last year.</p> <p>Our new initiative VCAP (Vulnerable Children's Attendance Project) is improving attendance of our most vulnerable students (e.g. 87.4 % for Children Looked After).</p> <p>Sept 20 – July 21 - attendance was 91.4% (94.3% Primary, 85.7% Secondary and 92.6% Special schools).</p> <p>Overall attendance was disrupted due to COVID.</p>
	Deliver the Youth Justice plan to reduce reoffending, safe and effective use of custody and reducing the numbers of first time entrants	<p>The Youth Justice Plan is now in delivery and overseen by the Multi-agency Youth Justice Board.</p> <p>Reoffending rates continue to decline in broader population with continued focus on prolific offenders.</p> <p>PACE bed steering group provides effective oversight of use of police custody - 100% compliance with PACE bed protocol. (PACE beds limit the time YP spend in police custody.</p> <p>Work this year includes building/ implementing an effective pathway to support YP to access Education, Training and Employment.</p> <p>Continued focus on supporting Children Looked After within the Criminal Justice system.</p> <p>Youth Offending Service is working with Cleveland Police Early Intervention Coordinators to deliver violence reduction work.</p>
	Ensure high achievement for all from the early years by closing the gaps for the most vulnerable and focussing on Key Stage 4 outcomes	<p>New Achievement Strategy launched at the end of last year which will impact within the new school year.</p> <p>The focus is to deliver:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school to school support • overcome obstacles caused by disadvantage
	Target young people who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	<p>Early Help team continue to support young people who are NEET/ at risk of becoming NEET.</p> <p>Approach is working well and the proportional NEET rate (combined NEET and Not Known) stretch figure for 2020-2021 is provisionally 6.1% (England average 5.5%, North East average 5.7%.</p>

		<p>Middlesbrough's rate of participation in education or training for 2000 was 96.2%. Third best in the NE. (Average NE rate 94.8% and England 95.4%).</p> <p>The Community Learning Service offers apprenticeship training to young people needing support.</p> <p>55% of Care Leavers aged 17-18 years are currently NEET. This increases to 64% for those Care Leavers aged 19-21. This is a national issue and Middlesbrough have developed a NEET Panel to aid a response to this and develop bespoke packages of support for these young people.</p>
	Deliver a universal, town-wide Children and Young People Strategy	<p>The Corporate Reference group was set up to ensure that other directorates were informed about and contributed to the Children's Services improvement plan.</p> <p>There are ambitious plans to spread the Middlesbrough Children Matter (MCM) brand more widely. Next steps:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a report to Executive seeking its endorsement of this approach and of the MCM branding. Oct 2021 • 'Participation People' is being commissioned to lead the consultation with children and young people and to support their involvement in co-producing the strategy.
We will work to address the causes of vulnerability and inequalities in Middlesbrough and safeguard and support those made vulnerable.	Deliver and extend the 50 Futures programme 2020 to 2022 to provide meaningful work experience opportunities for Middlesbrough residents who find it most difficult to gain employment.	<p>50 Futures now embedded in Council practise and working well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged 60 learners during the pandemic in the last year. • Moved 37% long term unemployed into work during the pandemic. • The programme is expanding - six new local employers ready to offer placements.
We will ensure the recovery of local communities, businesses and	Delivery of the Council's COVID recovery plan to enable	<p>Our strategies are aligned to schools plans to focus recovery on all pupils and particularly those classed as vulnerable.</p> <p>Our Achievement Strategy will govern recovery</p>

the Council's operations from COVID, taking opportunities to build back better	individuals, families, communities, and business across Middlesbrough achieve a proper level of functioning, post pandemic	<p>within schools.</p> <p>Work is underway with Community Learning to ensure there is support and training to assist with reskilling and employment.</p> <p>Social Care improvement has continued through COVID.</p>
	Ensure effective Council response to immediate issues, families, communities and business	<p>Ofsted noted in Focused that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) has continued to strengthen and Children's risks and needs are identified through a thorough screening process that is timely and proportionate. • Assessment timescales improved. In July 100%.

Directorate Priorities

Directorate	Priority	Progress
All (Across Children's Social Care and Education and Partnerships).	Deliver the Participation Strategy to support our service users to develop the services they receive in partnership with the Children and Young People's partnership.	<p>'Participation People' commissioned to do this work.</p> <p>Exciting plans such as a takeover week, youth voice champions, co-producing solutions to big business challenges, young reporters.</p>
	Deliver the Quality Assurance and Performance Strategy.	<p>Audit to Excellence programme has been recognised nationally as best practice. Programme recently reviewed and developed to include accreditation to support a sustainable audit programme and an upskilled workforce.</p> <p>Performance framework delivered at every management level of the Directorate. Directors teams to account on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Power Bi dashboard in place for Social Care and being developed for Education and Partnership</p>

		directorate in line with the improvement programme.
	Strengthen the way the Children and Young People partnership work together and challenge the quality of practice through the delivery of the Safeguarding Partnership plan.	Recently appointed an independent chair/scrutineer to the Safeguarding Partnership – Edwina Harrison. Bringing energy and enthusiasm.
Children's Care	Develop and deliver a workforce strategy to support a stable, skilled and focussed leadership at all levels and stable permanent skilled frontline workforce.	<p>Workforce strategy developed.</p> <p>Comprehensive and flexible learning and development offer.</p> <p>Recruitment programme in place.</p> <p>Report to Leadership Management Team (LMT) on 16 September setting out proposals to stabilise the workforce.</p>
	Deliver the Multi-agency Early Help and Prevention Strategy to support a commitment to intervening at the earliest stage possible.	<p>Strategy signed off in May 2021.</p> <p>Sets out the multi-agency early help offer.</p> <p>Focuses on Partnerships, Practice and Communities.</p> <p>Governance through the Partnership and Prevention Board.</p>

Below are listed the Education and Partnerships directorate priorities. Included for completeness.

Directorate	Priority	Progress
Education and Partnerships	Deliver the Inclusion and Specialist Support Strategic Plan to remove barriers to learning and wellbeing for children and young people and reduce exclusions and out-of-area educational placements.	Work progressing well and exclusions reducing. Continued work ongoing to reduce out of area placements.
	Deliver the Access to Education strategy, to ensure sufficient appropriate, high-quality places are available for children and young people now and in the future.	<p>There are enough primary school places.</p> <p>Work ongoing to deliver a new secondary school in Middlehaven for Sept 2023.</p>

		<p>Work completed this year to expand secondary school places to create enough secondary school places</p> <p>There is an increasing demand on special school places. This is being met by the expansion of bases and two new special schools across South Tees.</p>
	Facilitate the delivery of the local area SEND plan for the Partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.	<p>SEND strategy and partnership refreshed.</p> <p>Demand forecasting work ongoing suggesting increasing demand over next few years.</p>
	Deliver the Middlesbrough Community Learning Strategy to deliver more learning opportunities in Middlesbrough.	Ongoing delivery working well with our most vulnerable communities.
	Deliver the Achievement Plan to deliver school improvement and improve educational outcomes in Middlesbrough.	Achievement Strategy now launched and delivery starting within new school term.
	Develop a universal, town-wide Children and Young People's strategy that will aim to improve the lives of all children.	<p>Children and Young Peoples plan being refreshed to support the key objectives of the Children's Trust:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Start in Life, • Locality Working • Mental health and wellbeing of young people. <p>The Corporate Reference Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, is developing a Town wide Children's Strategy. This includes a wide scale ambition to ensure everything we do in the town supports the delivery of the Middlesbrough Children Matter vision. The development of the strategy will include a town wide consultation with children and young people.</p>

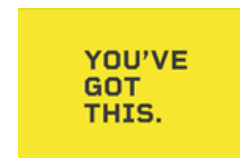
ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Ministry of Housing Funding

1. In partnership with North Star Housing, a successful bid was made to the Ministry of Housing and Homes England to purchase six empty properties in Middlesbrough, renovate and refurbish them and use as move on accommodation. We are now working with Thirteen Group who will be submitting a bid to furnish a further six properties (their own stock) and provide support to individuals who have slept rough or are at risk of rough sleeping.
2. We have been working in partnership with Stockton Borough Council and have secured funding from the Ministry of Housing and MOJ to work with landlords in the private rented sector, provide deposits and furniture/white goods to help prison leavers sustain accommodation.
3. There are 90 single people in temporary accommodation at the moment despite moving over 300 people from temporary to secure accommodation over the last twelve months. All individuals have a move on plan in place and the team continue to work with landlords in the social and private sector to find suitable accommodation.
4. The rough sleeper team continue to carry out 2 or 3 early morning sweeps (5.30 a.m.) in an attempt to find individuals rough sleeping, known 'hot spots' are covered, parks and other areas identified by agencies. Rough sleepers are assessed, offered temporary accommodation if this is suitable and are encouraged to engage with support.

You've Got This – Sport England South Tees Local Delivery Pilot Update – September 2021

5. 'You've Got This' (YGT) is the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot across South Tees, taking a whole system approach to increasing physical activity with the vision of 'Active lives as a way of life'.
6. The pilot is focused on two key themes: Communities of Place and Communities of Interest. Communities of Place covers North Ormesby and Brambles & Thorntree in Middlesbrough. Communities of Interest include groups where increasing physical activity can help improve medical conditions and quality of life. One of these is targeting people living with, or at risk of developing, Type 2 Diabetes (T2D), supporting dietary and physical activity behaviour changes with a view to achieving remission.
7. Initial progress was hampered by the pandemic, but has now been able to restart. There are two aspects to the programme: working with GP practices around a low-calorie diet and exercise for T2D patients; and a community based project delivered by Middlesbrough Environment City (MEC) and community partners that helps reduce the risk of T2D in the ethnic minority communities.



8. YGT is working with GP practices across the South Tees to develop innovative ways of supporting patients to achieve T2D remission through being more active and dietary changes. Developing T2D and beginning treatment is a “teachable moment” – an opportunity for the patient to make behavioural changes to address the condition. The YGT funded activity seeks to add value to an existing programme that addresses T2D through a calorie restricted diet by working with patients to build greater levels of physical activity into daily life. The programme is being led by a dietician funded by YGT. Staff from the practices are shadowing them, so that this new approach can be embedded into the work of the practice once the dietician post ends. Work is also now progressing with linking the service into Middlesbrough Council’s Exercise on Referral offer that is available to patients through primary care.
9. MEC’s work with NUR Fitness and the BME Network, two partners embedded in the local community, inevitably slowed during the pandemic. However, they are now starting to deliver again with a particular focus on outreach to groups at particular risk that are also hard to reach, including taxi drivers, other workers in the night-time economy, people using places of worship and women. This will include through the use of digital communication and networks that bring people together.

Jellystone Project

10. The Staying Put Agencies community inclusion service Staying Included have been working with Middlesbrough Environment City to help kick-start an exciting new gardening initiative. The Jellystone Gardening Project is utilising previously unused community space in Grove Hill Middlesbrough to support residents who are lonely or socially isolated who wish to engage in outdoor community activity.
11. The site offers gardening/allotment plots to various services so that their service users can use the site to grow flowers and vegetables and come together in a safe, supportive environment for social interaction, learning and fun. The Staying Included team are working in partnership with Age UK Teesside to help establish the project and help develop the first plots on the site.
12. In addition to hands-on gardening on the available plots the various services are offering activities at the site such as crafts and plant potting. Residents are able to engage to a level they feel comfortable with, whether it be in gardening, taking part in the craft sessions or sitting in the grounds having a chat with a hot drink and biscuit. The timing of the project is ideal as residents have become more isolated during the pandemic. The project allows for residents to ease back into the community, with services supporting individuals to build confidence, improve health and wellbeing whilst bringing people together.

Local Government Chronicle Awards

13. The LGC Awards is the premier event of the year in the local government calendar. The event exists to identify, celebrate and help spread the finest example of innovation and quality delivered by councils on a daily basis. Due to the high number of entries year on year, winning an LGC Award has become the most sought after accolade in local government. The categories recognise cutting edge ideas from every part of local government and are added, amended and removed year on year to reflect the ever changing priorities and challenges.

The awards' credibility is underpinned by an intensive and robust judging process which again is refreshed and redesigned year on year.

14. Middlesbrough independent Living Services have been shortlisted within the 'Team of the Year' category with their response to Covid. LGC have stated that it has been a record year for entries so to be shortlisted is a truly remarkable achievement. Shortlisted organisations now have to complete presentations and interviews to a specific judging panel made up of senior and influential figures within local government.
15. Winners of the LGC Awards will then be announced at a prestigious ceremony on 4 November 2021 at Grosvenor House, London.

Vaccinations

16. From 25 -28 August the national vaccination surge support team partnered with Middlesbrough Council, Tees Valley CCG, Middlesbrough PCNs and Middlesbrough Football foundation in a push for vaccine uptake. Initiatives involved additional drop in clinic provision at North Ormesby and Brambles and Thortree supported by a 24 strong team of staff on the ground delivering leaflets door to door in these areas, undertaking street based conversations to encourage uptake and address concerns and evaluation feedback on uptake and hesitancy at vaccine clinics. The initiative culminated in the Middlesbrough Football Foundation vaccine bus being stationed at Saturday's home game supported by street and stadium based teams driving footfall toward the bus and community clinics. A full evaluation report will follow and will inform our ongoing approach to vaccination uptake and addressing vaccine inequalities.