

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION -
VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS
POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 21st October, 2010

10.00 am

Darent Room, Sessions House,
County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21 October 2010 at 10.00 am
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Christine Singh**
Telephone: **01622 694334**

Tea/coffee will be available before the meeting

Membership

- Conservative (11): Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles, Mrs P T Cole,
Mr H J Craske, Mr R Frayne, Mr D A Hirst,
Mr G A Horne MBE, Mr S Manion, Mr M J Northey,
Mr C T Wells and Mr K Smith
- Labour (1): Mrs E Green
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M J Vye
- Church Representatives (3): The Reverend N Genders, The Reverend Canon J L Smith
and Dr D Wadman
- Parent Governor (2): Mr P Myers and Mr B Critchley
- Teacher Advisers (6): Mr T Desmoyers-Davies, Mrs J Huckstep, Miss S Kemsley,
Mr R Straker, Mr S Thompson and Mr J Walder

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UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

Item
No

Timings*

A COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A1 Substitutes

A2 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting

A3 Dates for Future Meetings 2011

The Committee is asked to note the following meeting dates:

Wednesday, 30 March 2011

Tuesday, 21 June 2011

Thursday, 13 October 2011

(All meetings will commence at 10.00 am)

(After each meeting of this POSC the Children's Champions Board will meet, which is a public meeting)

A4 Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2010 (Pages 1 - 14)

B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

B1 Deputy Cabinet Member, Director of Children's Specialist Services and Director of Joint Commissioning and Partnerships Update (Pages 15 - 18)

B2 Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children (Pages 19 - 32)

B3 Costs of Residential, Foster Care and Placements. Challenges and Issues (Pages 33 - 38)

B4 Joint Commissioning in Children's Services - Outcomes & Priorities (Pages 39 - 44)

C SELECT COMMITTEE WORK

C1 Select Committee - update (Pages 45 - 46)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

**All timings are approximate*

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Wednesday, 13 October 2010

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN
AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children, Families & Education - Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 29th June, 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole, Mr H J Craske, Mr S Manion, Mr K Smith, Mr M Robertson (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M J Vye), Mr D L Brazier (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr A H T Bowles) and Mr R Brookbank (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M J Northey)

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES: Dr D Wadman

PARENT GOVERNORS: Mr P Myers

TEACHER ADVISERS: Mrs J Huckstep

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms H Davies (Director For Specialist Children's Services Group), Mrs J Wainwright (Director Commissioning (Specialist Services)), Ms J Hook (Policy Officer), Ms A Hornsby (Policy Officer), Mrs P Huntingford (Director Policy, Performance & Quality Assurance), Mrs J Wiles (Policy Officer, Kent Children's Trust & Health) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

29. Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2010
(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

30. Deputy Cabinet Member (Vulnerable) and Director of Specialist Children's Services Verbal Update
(Item B1)

(Verbal update by Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member for Vulnerable children and Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist children's Services and Mrs J Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships)

(1) The Chairman asked Ms Davies to begin with her verbal report. Ms Davies gave a brief update on the position of the CFE Restructuring advising that she and colleagues were currently interviewing for the posts 12 of Preventative Services Manager. This post would drive the development of the early intervention through bringing together all relevant agencies.

(2) The Committee noted that the Special Educational Needs Review had started and would include all provision. The Review would be completed in the Autumn and the initial findings reported to Cabinet in September.

(3) Ms Davies advised of the ongoing increase in Looked After children (LAC) which had increased by 30 in the last quarter and the struggle to keep those within in-house placements and having to place some of those children in the independent sector.

(4) In response to the former Chief Executive's Safeguarding Review, Ms Davies explained that work was underway to address the recommendations and would be reported to the October County Council meeting.

(5) Ms Davies was pleased to inform the Committee that 60 newly qualified Social Workers had been appointed and would be in post by September. She gave assurances that they would receive an induction and support from senior staff.

(6) Ms Davies explained that the coalition Government review on child protection by Eileen Munro would be looking at reducing the bureaucracy of Social Workers' role. Kent would be looking at the Review's Terms of Reference with staff to look at ways we deliver Social Work in Kent.

(7) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(8) Mr Robinson said on behalf of Mr Vye, who sent his apologies for this meeting, that he would prefer summaries of the items in the verbal update rather than bullet points in future and sought a response on Minute 26 (5). Ms Davies noted the first comment and advised that the Chairman and Leaders of the Opposition would be advised of serious case reports unless there were legal implications that prevented this.

(9) In response to a follow up question, Ms Davies advised that part of the CFE Directorate restructuring that was taking place the Children's Centres would be line managed, from the Autumn of this year, by the Preventative Services Managers. The Specialist Services Group were also reviewing the specifications for the Children's Centres being mindful of the budgetary constraints that were likely to take place in April 2011 and the coalition government's message that they anticipate that Children's Centres will become a more targeted service. The review would conclude in the Autumn.

(10) In reply to questions by Mr Smith, Ms Davies explained that there were 27 Social workers recruited from the United States of America and 25 from Europe. Of the 60 newly qualified social Workers the vast majority came from the University of Kent and Christchurch, Canterbury. For the future, there were 2 schemes being restarted enabling 10 or 12 Social Workers Assistants to qualify through the Open University route per annum and the setting up of a trainee social work scheme with the aim to recruit 10 or 12 trainee social workers for a year, followed by a 2 year course. If those two schemes were successful she anticipated that they would continue and even expand them as growing our own social workers had to be the way for the future.

(11) In reply to the second question Ms Davies said that the uncertainty for staff across the County Council had been difficult. There were challenges in how the policies of the coalition government developed. The challenge in her group was to develop a vision of how they wanted children's services to be delivered, and in the coming years, as there were budget reductions, tailor that accordingly.

(12) In response to a follow up question, Ms Davis assured Mr Smith that she did have enough political direction from KCC. There was important work that would be covered over the Summer and Autumn of this year through working closely with Mrs Hohler Cabinet Member and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member, with an emphasis on early intervention services to minimise children that need social work services. Work was also being carried out on rethinking how social work services were delivered to reduce the bureaucracy for social workers enabling them to do social work and feel better supported.

(13) In response to a follow up question by the Chairman, Ms Davies advised that the recommendations in Mr Gilroy's report, former Chief Executive of KCC, would be dovetailed with the reviews being undertaken.

(14) In response to a question by Mr Craske, Ms Davies advised that when the 60 social workers came on stream there would be approximately 60 vacancies, which needed to be put in the context that the social work establishment had been increased significantly during the latter part of 2009. The challenge would be; do we recruit more social workers or do we recruit staff with other qualifications to work in social work teams? Ms Davies felt that there was creative potential through not considering that all posts had to be filled with qualified social workers; there were different ways to deliver our services.

(15) In response to a question by Mr Robinson, Ms Davies said that she had heard about the television programme and stated she was satisfied that there were clear supervisory policies in place in Kent for social worker assistant posts, and an audit process where the District Managers audit that staff were being supervised appropriately and given a workload that was appropriate to their level of experience.

(16) In reply to a question by Dr Wadman, Ms Davies said that there had been significant referrals to Children's Social Services every week and a number of those referrals were not at the threshold of Children's Social Services. The vast majority of those children would have a level of need, as they had been referred. Ms Davies felt that the challenge that needed to be grasped was what were the whole range of services available in every in the district for children. The new post of Preventative Services Manager would be there to ensure that those services in a district were well coordinated to help vulnerable children. This would ensure that a rational decision would be made about those children that would require social services. Ms Davies said that work was being carried out to refine the process for a single point of access, which existed in some districts now, so that it was clear which service a child with a level of need accessed, to stop the cycle of referrals being made that do not meet the threshold.

(17) The Chairman then asked Mr Ridings to give his verbal update. Mr Ridings commended the efforts made in recruiting the 60 social workers. He concurred with Ms Davies statement about ensuring that the supervisory programme and support were adequate to meet the needs of the social work career with proper progression

that so that they stay rather than leaving going elsewhere. He advised that there were different issues in recruitment in each district. He stated that there would be no compromise in the quality of social work that was presented in this authority. He did not feel that this would be done in the same way as in the past 20 years; there would be different and improved ways of handling the service and hopefully at a lesser cost. He then went on to mention the ICS data inputting system where he felt there were too many people from Children's Social Services spending a disproportionate amount of time keying in data for governments returns, although this had been getting better with the number of mistakes fallings from 60k in April 2009 to a significant lower number in 2010. Other systems and providers had been looked at but there was an enormous cost from changing from one system to another.

(18) Mr Ridings had tabled the following information to the Committee. 'Current monitoring of Children Social Services' actual expenditure indicates there will be an overspend of £2million for the financial year 10/11. The major constituent parts of this overspend have been generated by the fostering and 16 plus service. The volume of children and young people needing to access foster placements and the 16 plus service has been far above our original predictions. Also, the adverse mix between in-house fostering and Independent Fostering Agencies has added to the fostering overspend'.

(19) Mrs Wainwright was then invited to give her verbal update. Mrs Wainwright, focused on the restructure and re-organisation within Children, Families and Education and progress with developing the new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). This included an update on the current position with recruitment into the new CFE structures, and the need for induction, staff development, and team building/re-building. She advised that within these processes there would need to be a change from a culture where services were reliant on grant funding to one of securing the best outcomes through integrated working and a greater focus on drawing the Kent Children's Trust partners into joint commissioning arrangements.

(20) Mrs Wainwright then gave an overview of the timelines involved in developing the new CYPP from 2011 - 2014 and a summary of progress to date, copies of a timeline chart were tabled.

(21) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(22) In response to a question by Mr Smith, Mrs Wainwright advised that there had been Member input during the Senior Management Team meetings held within CFE through looking at the Directors written rationale, which included what they wished to change, whether it stacked up, were we doing the right thing, was it conservative or radical, so that the structure met the needs of the young people, bearing in mind the reductions in the budget and grants. She said that there had been changes of minds when looking at the options in detail. The Directors had to look at the range of posts within their Groups and across CFE to determine the best use of staff. All agreed that the Preventative Services Manager posts would be critical to success. There were also risk analyses made. Ms Wainwright stated that monitoring of the new structure would be through managerial processes. Each manager would have to monitor that there were no gaps working through the structure looking at what was wrong and putting that right, making adjustments to

ensure that the Business Plans were met or there would be an impact on the performance indicators. Staff needed to be clear of their responsibilities. She concluded that this could not be definitive as the full impact of the coalition governments changes was not known. She felt that this was likely to be a continuing process of change.

(23) The Chairman asked that the CFE restructure be kept on this Committee's agenda for progress reports.

(24) RESOLVED that the responses to Members questions and the verbal updates be noted.

31. Draft Minutes of the Children's Champions Board - 19 May 2010

(Item B2)

(1) In response to a question by Mr Robinson, Ms Davis said that she would be interviewing for the Virtual Head Teacher post for Looked After children (LAC).

(2) The Chairman requested a presentation on the role of the Virtual Head role when they had been appointed.

(3) The Chairman said that she was pleased that the Board were joined by Scott King a former Looked After Child who took an active part at the meeting.

(4) The Chairman wished to formally thank Kay Weiss for being an outstanding officer and a true champion of young people and best wishes in her future post.

(5) RESOLVED that the responses to questions and comments made by Members and the Minutes be noted.

32. Kent Contact and Assessment Centre - Abandonment Rate

(Item B3)

(Report by – Mr G Gibbens, Cabinet Member, Adult Social Services and Mr O Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)

(Mrs P Huntingford, Transforming Social Care Lead Officer was present for this item)

(1) The Committee considered a report on the level of abandoned calls experienced at Kent Contact & Assessment Service (KCAS) and the measures that were in place to mitigate this.

(2) Mrs Huntingford introduced the report highlighting the key issues.

(3) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(4) In reply to a question by Mr Craske, Mrs Huntingford explained what an abandoned call was saying; the panel in front of the telephonist tells them how many calls were waiting and how many callers put their phone down. The system records the speed at which that abandoned call took place. So as well as having

the weekly data of the number of calls at which the percentage is arrived of the total. The pace at which people choose to abandon a call, over time as this was a new system it would be possible to track whether there were certain points in the day where the calls were abandoned quicker and where the peaks and troughs in those calls coming in were. She added that 15% of calls were abandoned in 45-50 seconds. The system was not sophisticated enough to identify whether they were repeat callers. Intuitively when there were calls from Kent operational teams, colleagues from the Primary Care Trusts and General Practitioners it was likely that they would not hang on the phone if they did not get an immediate response to move on to do something else and try later.

(5) In response to a follow up question, Mrs Huntingford said that there was a wish from Members for there to be a single point of access for as many of the County Councils callers as possible and the Children, Families and Education Directorate feel that this was right where it was appropriate for them to take on certain responsibilities. As part of the review there would be some close debate and scrutiny on which circumstance it would be appropriate for the Contact Kent to deal with and which may be left to more highly trained specialist in service Directorates to deal with. There was a programme of training to up skill staff in Contact Kent so that they were better able to respond to the lower level of enquiry about information and advise about a services activity, there were calls that were passed to KCAS that had nothing to do with Social Services either Children and Families or Adults.

(6) In response to a comment by Mr Robinson, Mrs Huntingford confirmed that the Social Care Reform Grant of £144k would not be available from April 2011 and there was no expectation that the Department of Health would make any more funding available even though most adult services across the country had not achieved the changes that were required under the new 'Putting People First Agenda'. Kent had been at the forefront of those changes and was confident that it would meet all the milestones but there were concerns as to how the services that had enabled it to do that that were being currently funded from within the Reform Grant were going to be sustained beyond April 2011. For this to be sustainable the funding would have to be taken from the base budgets in the longer term unless a more efficient way can be found to continue the service especially in the current economic climate. Mr Robinson requested that the CFE Budget IMG be kept appraised on this matter.

(7) In response to a comment by Mr Brookbank, Mrs Huntingford said that the demand increased year on year so even if you removed the call from the CFE Directorate the external demand increases you would not necessarily be making a saving because there was a need to resource meeting that increasing demand. She mentioned the growing impact of the closure of the reception points which meant that those calls went elsewhere either to Contact Kent or KCAS. The primary objective was to lower the abandoned call rate.

(8) The Chairman requested an aid Memoire for Members to indicate where they should direct enquiries for their local community.

(9) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the CFE Budget IMG be kept appraised on the impact of losing the Social Care Reform Grant;

- (b) an aid Memoire for Members indicating Key contact points be set up;
- (c) the comments and the responses to questions by Members be noted.

33. Kent Young Carers' Strategy Annual Update *(Item B4)*

(Report by Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Directorate)

(Ms A Hornsby, Policy Officer and Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group were present for this Item)

(1) The Committee viewed a short video in which young carers voiced their feelings about being a carer for a loved one. This was closed to the public to preserve the identity of the young people.

(2) The Committee considered a report that highlighted national development activities during 2009-10 and the recent consultation with young carers and the next steps in that process.

(3) Ms Hornsby felt that from a national perspective this was a good time for carers as the issues that surround them had been picked by a number of national streams of work. This included; 'Think Family' which was the overarching approach towards the integration of Children and Families within the support of services from Adult and Children's Services and within that work Central Government and the Association of Directors of Children Social Services and Adult Social Services had issued the Memorandum of Good Practice for Young Carers. The Memorandum mirrored the work that Kent 2009.

(4) Ms Hornsby mentioned the comments from the young carers on their position in school being torn between their desire to tell about their position as a carer and the fear that if they release the information what would happen in their lives that they could not control. Working closely with schools had helped young carers to seek support. The National Healthy Schools Enhanced Model now included the requirement to consider young carers as part of the social and emotional wellbeing aspect of 'Healthy Schools. This would provide a clear pathway into schools. There was a range of support for young carers provided through the partnership with voluntary organisations. This included support ranging from respite care, residential activities, weekly meetings and weekly tailored support for those young carers most in need.

(5) Consultation with young carers had been commissioned to look at what work still needed to be carried out to deliver the strategy. There had also been work carried out with professionals to increase their understanding of the issues faced by young carers but this needed to continue. Mrs Hornsby said that this dialogue needs to continue with young carers to monitor the impact of the strategy.

(6) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(7) In response to a question by Mr Craske, Ms Hornsby advised that all the young people should be in school and that was why there was a need to work closely with schools to help young people feel confident about talking about their caring status and coming forward and sharing that information. Very good partnerships had been forged with the Voluntary Sector Organisations and local schools that was enabling the identification of more young carers. This work needed to progress at a pace that the schools and young carers were comfortable with. Young carers were clear that they did not want to feel pressurised in talking about their caring status.

(8) In reply to a question regarding paragraph 2.4, page 22, of the report by Mr Robinson, Mrs Wainwright advised that there were around 600-700 children home educated in Kent. For some parents and children home education was a very successful choice. For young carers home education may be a pragmatic choice to enable them to exercise their carer's responsibilities but may not be in their best interests.

(9) In reply to a follow up question, Mrs Wainwright explained that it was difficult to give a figure of how many young carers there were being home educated as the local authority's right to examine the quality of the education they were receiving was very limited and therefore the local authority may not know if the young person was a carer or not. Mr Robinson said that this was an area of concern and the local authority should do all it could to ensure that young people were receiving the best education at home as possible.

(10) In reply to a question by Mr Smith, Ms Hornsby advised that the guidance was not yet available regarding the National Healthy Schools Framework and the expectations of Academies and Free Schools. It was accepted that young carers will do better in school if they are well supported and all good schools would endorse this.

(11) In a follow up question, Ms Hornsby said that there would be opportunities to share good practice with the Academies and the Free Schools and there were a range of materials that could be offered to schools to support them.

(12) In response to a question by the Chairman, Ms Hornsby advised that most young carers were in school so the local voluntary sector organisations would hold assemblies to raise awareness with primary and secondary schools. Through the curriculum there were other opportunities to discuss issues caring activities through Person, Social, and Health Education (PSHE). There were leaflets that were available to young people. Young people could self refer to Young Carers organisations and there was a connection through the Youth and Community website for young people to young carers' organisations.

(13) In reply to a question by Mr Myers who referred to paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 on page 23, Ms Hornsby stated that there was a lack of clarity on funding streams and this would become clearer after the Comprehensive Spending Review in September. Ms Davies added that there would be increased clarity on funding by the Autumn on the Central Government Funding and the Directorates base budget to determine the effect on services.

(14) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to questions by Members and their comments be noted;
- (b) the Minutes on this report from this meeting be used as part of the presentation to the Kent Children's Trust Board to express the committees concerns; and
- (c) the report be noted with thanks.

34. Update on work of Parenting Team and Issues Arising *(Item B5)*

(Report by Mrs J Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships Group and Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services Group)

(Ms J Hook, Lead Manager for Supporting Parents was present for this Item)

(1) The Committee considered a progress report on the work of the Parenting Team and some of the issues facing the agenda. It also illustrated the nature and funding of the Team and risks associated with a focus on the "parenting programmes and practitioner development" work strand of the Team. The report had also been considered by Children, Families and Education SMT and the Commissioning and Partnerships DMT.

(2) The Chairman asked Ms Hook to introduce the report. Ms Hook highlighted key issues within the report which included the following; the delivery of parenting sat in the Priority 3 of the Kent Children 2008-11 and Young People's Plan to ensure that good quality parenting programmes were available to help parents in their role. This laid out a vision with 3 key components:

- **Availability** of programmes for families, when they needed them and where they could access them;
- **Quality**, a key issue to ensure that that families in Kent get good intervention in what really helps them support their children and move their family to a place of harmony and most critically where we are reducing safeguarding concerns; and
- **Need**, ensuring that the programmes were in place with the right levels of need, including behaviour, attachment, mental health, domestic violence or postnatal depression ensuring that the right configuration of programmes available with the best quality of staff delivering them.

(3) Ms Hook said that her Team had been; facilitating the access of free places for up to 90 Practitioners, which had given them the capacity to reach an additional 1350 parents, troubleshooting delivery issues as they had been uncoordinated in the past by working out new and innovative ways to pull the structure together; setting up Parenting Practitioner Fora across the Districts so that local Practitioners could plan who they needed and work on who they needed to train, pooling together their resources and deliver the programmes, and responding to the national agenda ensuring that they had trained facilitators and were piloting 'Working with Parents' level 3 qualification, there were currently 30 people studying for this qualification through Adult Education funded by the KCC. The Children's

Workforce Development Council had approached the Team to offer places for Children Centres outreach Workers to train for the qualification.

(4) The Team also offered parenting programmes for parents with children aged 8 to 13 years at risk of antisocial behaviour, a government funded initiative which would end in April 2011.

(5) Ms Hook explained that she had commissioned a cost benefit analysis on Parenting Programmes. A similar piece of work has been carried out by the London School of Economics nationally. This had given a clearer idea of the balance of effectiveness against the cost waiting in Kent and that challenges and appropriate support were being made especially where programmes were being funded but were not as effective as they were costly.

(6) Ms Hook advised that in terms of base budget funding, there was Ms Hook and her team consisted of a Supporting Parents Officer and 6 other members of staff, 4 of whom were funded directly by the 'Think Family' grant. One of them played the role of a Senior Parenting Coordinator [DCSF called a Parenting Expert]. This role was used as a coordinator building up knowledge of programmes and supporting the local structures. There were also 3 Parenting Early Intervention Coordinators in place, who had been solely delivering role on role off programmes in their areas since April 2009 working with 95 parents between them and 124 children. There was also a Respect Senior Parenting Practitioner funding through the Respect agenda generally with the same role working directly through Thanet District Council.

(7) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(8) In response to questions by Mr Smith, Ms Hook advised that there had been research undertaken on the programmes that were used by being put through a series of random controlled trials and at the same time the National Institute for Clinical Excellence had conducted a study and found that 11 out of 15 case studies of parents who had been on Parenting Course had made successful long term changes. Because in the past there had been a less coordinated approach the next task was to agree a common set of evaluation in that way the agreed data set was collected and would be able to link back parents back to children for a much clearer family focused assessment to ensure that those were the right programmes for those families. She gave examples of programmes; 'Incredible Years' for conduct disorder and attachment issues and 'Mellow Parenting' used by Social Workers and CAHMS, that had been highly tested and were proven programmes that worked. In terms of sustainability there had been discussions on commissioning arrangements about parenting. She would like to see an agreement on a virtual service coordinated which meant that there would need to be clarity on job descriptions and clear agreements from managers and expectations set out and agreed about staff roles/tasks and how that would be carried out.

(9) In response to a question by Mr Manion, Ms Hook explained that needs analysis had been undertaken on development and where the services needed to be enhanced locally. The Department of Education had released the grant conditions around the existing early intervention and parenting services, which meant that the service could be widened and there was more flexibility on how the service could be delivered. Needs analysis would be undertaken in the near future to look at how

best to use the resource we had now in the interim period. If resource continues there would be thought given to whether the focus was on delivery or focus on coordination across areas. Ms Davies added that the new post of Preventative Services Managers would be involved in ensuring that every district had a range of Parenting Programmes and ensure that there were sufficient staff and parent helpers as appropriate trained in each district of the County.

(10) Mr Ridings stated some concerns that he had with the programmes saying that he felt that 8-13years old was very late in terms of age in intervening with parents as parents would have had 8 years to cause trouble and suggested that the children's Centres be used more and the unpaid parents within those Centre's too with training. He advised that he had visited 2 Children's Centres where he observed young parents who were very keen to learn what parenting was about to look after their children's needs and a group of parents who were having left their work in their early thirties to have a family were equally ignorant in their parenting skills as the young parents and he was impressed how they were learning from the 17-18 year old parents. He felt that there was an untapped resource which needed to be looked into with the aid of the Preventative Services Managers.

(11) Mr Smith stated that there was an impending collection of grants that may stop in April 2011 and requested that officer bring a report back to this committee at an appropriate meeting. The Chairman agreed and said that she had noted this as a concern to be considered by the CFE IMG Budget.

(12) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to Members questions and comments be noted;
- (b) a report be submitted to this Committee at a future meeting on the effect of the grant funding reductions and any subsequent review of existing services be noted; and
- (c) the good progress that has been made by the parenting team be noted.

35. New Statutory Guidance for Kent Children's Trust and Children and Young People's Plan

(Item B6)

(Report by Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group, Mrs R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)

(Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group and Mrs J Wiles, Policy Officer, Kent Children's Trust & Health were present for this Item)

(1) The Committee Considered a report on the new statutory guidance for Children's Trusts and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and Kent's response.

(2) Mrs Wainwright introduced the report explaining that there had been changes since the Statutory Guidance was published March 2010. The current political stance of the Coalition government was permissive of Children's Trusts and CYPP and had less desire than the previous government to make the Trust and the Plan

compulsory. Within the County Council there was continued enthusiasm and commitment from the County Council's Partners, Cabinet, Kent Partnership, for the direction of travel that the Kent Children's Trust was now going through and in particular for the change to twelve district teams and the Local Children's Trust Boards and the review of the CYPP and the key linkages to the new Vision for Kent. She then drew Members attention to paragraph 4.2 page 33 of the report in 'Stage 1 Needs Assessment' a preliminary list of 7 areas of greatest need; Emotional and Mental Health, Healthy start in life, Safeguarding, Primary aged children's learning, Adolescent engagement, Housing/accommodation and Family Poverty, which were likely to be the priorities in the new CYPP to be produced by April 2011 and different from the current arrangements the fact that this plan had to be costed across multi agency partners.

(3) In reply to a comment by the Chairman, Mrs Wainwright advised that the CYPP would also be produced as a version for children which was carried out for the existing Plan.

(4) Mr Smith stressed his concerns regarding the workability of the structure and the amount of meetings that multi agency partners had to attend and suggested that with the new CYPP this was an opportunity to stand back and simplify the structure to allow the various partners to do their jobs rather than attend meetings. He then requested a chart detailing of all the organisations involved in Children's Services. The Chairman added that there had been a request from the young people that attended the Children's Champions Board for the structures to be as simple as possible.

(5) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to Members questions and comments be noted;
- (b) the request for a chart detailing all the organisations involved Children's Services be noted and sent to all Members of this POSC outside the meeting; and
- (c) agreement be given to further reports being submitted to this POSC on the development of Kent Children's Trust and the new Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014.

36. Select Committee - Update (Item C1)

(Report by Mr P Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)

(1) Members considered a report on the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services and the request for suggestion of future topics for the Select Committee Review Programme.

(2) Mr Smith spoke as a Member of the Select Committee for Extended Services expressing his view of the timing of the Select Committee Review coinciding with the Children, Families and Education Directorate restructure. He advised that the message that was coming from the evidence gathering the Committee carried out

included that External Services added real value, that there were likely to be budgetary cuts to the service, it was more likely to be sustainable if 4-5 schools grouped together.

(3) Members raised their concerns regarding the impact that any cuts to the Extended Services would have for vulnerable children and were anxious to raise their concerns as a matter of urgency. The Chairman said that she would refer the matter to Mr Burgess, Chairman of the Select Committee and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the comments and questions raised by Members, be noted

(b) the progress of the Select Committee for External Services be noted and the concerns of the Committee regarding the impact of any cuts to External Services would have on vulnerable children be referred to Mr Burgess, Chairman of the Select Committee and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member by the Chairman; and

(c) Members of the Committee agreed to advise the Democratic Services Officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme outside the meeting be noted.

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By: Leyland Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member for Children,
Families and Education
Helen Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families
& Education Policy & Scrutiny Overview Committee

Date: 21 October 2010

Classification: Unrestricted

Subject: Summary of Verbal Update

- Following the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment services in August, an improvement plan is being implemented, and an improvement and development steering group, chaired by Mrs Hohler, is in place to monitor progress
- Additional administrative and social work assistant capacity has been made available to all 12 duty and initial assessment teams
- The number of trainee social workers being recruited in autumn 2010 has been increased from 10 to 22. The number of social work assistants being sponsored on the Open University training course has been increased from 10 to 20.
- 58 newly qualified social workers joined the service between July-September. 23 more social workers have been recruited from Europe; they will take up their posts in January. The number of social worker vacancies dropped to 15% at end of August
- 12 preventative services managers (one per district) came into post on 1 September and are developing strategies to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals to Children's Social Services
- The number of children with child protection plans and the number of looked after children continues to rise, causing capacity issues for the social work teams, along with financial pressures
- An announced (i.e. 2 weeks notice) inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services will take place 11-22 October.

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By: Leyland Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member for Children,
Families and Education
Joanna Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and
Partnerships

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families &
Education Policy & Scrutiny Overview Committee

Date: 21 October 2010

Classification: Unrestricted

Subject: Summary of Verbal Update

- The renegotiation of the last two years of the Connexions contract has commenced with the Connexions Kent and Medway Board.
- Work has been undertaken to determine outcomes for children whose parent(s) are in the armed forces in Kent.
- Work has begun to assess ways to reduce the high cost of placements of some vulnerable children in Kent through appropriate commissioning and decommissioning as may be necessary.
- Support has been provided for initial meetings of Local Children's Trust and Head Teacher meetings.
- Following an administrative error, the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) has now confirmed that Kent is still within the pilot for complaints against (all) schools, if satisfaction is not achieved through Governing Body consideration. I.e. the Local Authority will no longer discharge this role.

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By: Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate
Sarah Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Directorate

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families & Education Policy & Scrutiny Overview Committee

Date: 21 October 2010

Subject: Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report will identify the key roles around the Virtual School, evidence the current educational context of Kent LAC, highlight issues within the current service (ILSS) and provide an outline programme of work to develop the service into the Virtual School."

Virtual School

1. (1) Role of the Virtual School Headteacher

There are three key areas of responsibility of a virtual school head should be accountable for:

- (i) To make sure that there systems to track and monitor the attainment and progress of looked after children:
 - rigorously track and monitor data on where looked after children are at school and their progress, in a similar way to a head teacher of any school.
 - ensure that schools know which children are looked after and make sure that there is a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for all looked after children and one-to-one support where appropriate.
 - maintain an accurate record of the location and educational progress of looked after children within Kent, including those whom we after but are placed in other and those who are looked after by another authority but educated in this one.
 - act where necessary and work towards improving overall attainment at the virtual school, by maximising achievement and progress of both individual and cohorts of looked after children.

- ensure that the Headteacher and the designated teacher in each school know which of the children on their roll are in care, and what can be done to support them.
- (ii) To ensure that all looked after children have a robust and effective personal education plan and access one-to-one support, including personal tuition where appropriate by:
- working with relevant professionals to ensure PEPs are of a high quality, subject to a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process, with impacts and outcomes that are followed up. In conjunction with School Improvement Partners they should challenge schools and others when appropriate to improve the quality of the PEP and promote faster progress.
 - They should also ensure that looked after children are able to access one-to-one tuition and Personal Education Allowances (PEAs) wherever appropriate. They should also explore other sources of additional funding/support e.g. disadvantaged subsidy/home access project.
- (iii) To champion the educational needs of our looked after children across the authority and those placed out-of-authority by:
- championing the needs of looked after children across the authority and spread effective practice, particularly in relation to improving behaviour and attendance, promoting stability of placement and school stability through admissions policies and use of school transport.
 - working with others in local authorities and schools to ensure that measures are taken across the authority to promote positive behaviour, good attendance, and reduce exclusions, which should in turn lead to good progress and improved attainment.
 - ensuring social workers adequately consider the educational needs of looked after children when a child/young person comes into care or when taking decisions about moving placements. Where moving placements is absolutely essential, wherever possible a new placement should be found which enables continuity of schooling but at KS4 ensures there is no change of educational placement. The virtual school head should take responsibility for making sure that admissions powers to admit looked after children to the most appropriate school are used wherever necessary, and they should ensure that school transport is provided as required to help children stay in the same school.

Data

2. (1) Number of Looked after Children (LAC) – KCC & Area

Table 1

Number of LAC - KCC and Area

		Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10	Mar 10	Apr 10	May 10	Jun 10	Jul 10	Aug 10
KCC exc Asylum	In Care	750	747	751	744	751	742	742	751	750	764	782	806	813
	Accom.	412	427	442	455	455	454	463	482	486	487	521	508	507
	Total	1,162	1,174	1,193	1,199	1,206	1,196	1,205	1,233	1,236	1,251	1,303	1,314	1,320
KCC inc Asylum	In Care	750	747	751	744	751	742	742	751	750	764	782	806	813
	Accom.	737	744	704	720	703	707	711	718	722	714	759	760	755
	Total	1,487	1,491	1,455	1,464	1,454	1,449	1,453	1,469	1,472	1,478	1,541	1,566	1,568
East Kent	In Care	262	254	257	245	245	245	244	245	247	255	259	262	268
	Accom.	151	153	144	162	165	159	165	165	164	165	169	168	167
	Total	413	407	401	407	410	404	409	410	411	420	428	430	435
Mid Kent	In Care	204	200	199	197	201	194	192	195	199	197	202	224	224
	Accom.	97	101	111	114	110	108	112	118	113	117	130	126	130
	Total	301	301	310	311	311	302	304	313	312	314	332	350	354
West Kent	In Care	158	164	161	160	164	163	163	170	166	176	189	185	186
	Accom.	65	72	78	82	81	87	82	89	87	86	96	91	90
	Total	223	236	239	242	245	250	245	259	253	262	285	276	276
Disability	In Care	21	19	21	25	24	24	24	24	24	25	24	22	24
	Accom.	37	37	44	38	38	38	37	37	38	41	42	42	43
	Total	58	56	65	63	62	62	61	61	62	66	66	64	67
16+	In Care	105	110	113	117	117	116	119	117	114	111	108	113	111
	Accom.	62	64	65	59	61	62	67	73	84	78	84	81	77
	Total	167	174	178	176	178	178	186	190	198	189	192	194	188
Asylum	In Care	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Accom.	325	317	262	265	248	253	248	236	236	227	238	252	248
	Total	325	317	262	265	248	253	248	236	236	227	238	252	248

Management Information Unit, CFE Commissioning and Partnerships Group, 15 September 2010

(2) Number of LAC – District

Table 2

Number of LAC - District

		Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10	Mar 10	Apr 10	May 10	Jun 10	Jul 10	Aug 10
Ashford	In Care	48	43	44	42	43	42	42	43	49	49	50	51	50
	Accom.	26	26	28	26	26	26	26	29	30	29	30	29	27
	Total	74	69	72	68	69	68	68	72	79	78	80	80	77
Canterbury	In Care	56	55	58	57	57	60	61	59	59	62	62	63	64
	Accom.	29	29	29	30	30	28	31	30	28	28	31	35	38
	Total	85	84	87	87	87	88	92	89	87	90	93	98	102
Dartford & Sevenoaks	In Care	53	53	55	58	58	57	56	60	55	65	69	71	68
	Accom.	29	29	27	23	22	26	24	28	28	26	30	32	33
	Total	82	82	82	81	80	83	80	88	83	91	99	103	101
Dover	In Care	47	48	49	49	49	48	50	50	52	51	53	54	57
	Accom.	31	31	30	34	33	31	32	36	33	31	33	31	34
	Total	78	79	79	83	82	79	82	86	85	82	86	85	91
Gravesham	In Care	46	48	46	44	44	43	45	43	42	42	45	44	46
	Accom.	21	23	28	28	27	27	22	24	23	22	27	26	23
	Total	67	71	74	72	71	70	67	67	65	64	72	70	69
Maidstone	In Care	44	45	46	51	54	50	49	51	49	50	50	60	58
	Accom.	15	15	20	16	13	13	17	16	17	19	21	21	24
	Total	59	60	66	67	67	63	66	67	66	69	71	81	82
Shepway	In Care	65	64	60	55	55	54	51	51	49	47	49	59	59
	Accom.	25	29	33	38	38	38	37	37	33	38	46	45	45
	Total	90	93	93	93	93	92	88	88	82	85	95	104	104
Swale	In Care	66	68	73	62	65	64	65	64	65	68	68	65	66
	Accom.	45	42	39	54	52	51	53	49	49	50	50	48	47
	Total	111	110	112	116	117	115	118	113	114	118	118	113	113
Thanet	In Care	140	131	126	126	123	121	118	122	123	125	129	134	138
	Accom.	77	82	76	78	83	80	81	86	87	87	88	85	82
	Total	217	213	202	204	206	201	199	208	210	212	217	219	220
Tonbridge & Malling	In Care	29	28	26	27	31	31	31	31	32	34	41	41	41
	Accom.	6	9	11	14	15	16	15	15	15	14	14	11	13
	Total	35	37	37	41	46	47	46	46	47	48	55	52	54
Tunbridge Wells	In Care	30	35	34	31	31	32	31	36	37	35	34	29	31
	Accom.	9	11	12	17	17	18	21	22	21	24	25	22	21
	Total	39	46	46	48	48	50	52	58	58	59	59	51	52
Disability EK	In Care	15	14	16	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	17	17
	Accom.	28	28	32	27	27	27	26	26	28	28	29	29	30
	Total	43	42	48	45	45	45	44	44	46	46	47	46	47
Disability WK	In Care	6	5	5	7	6	6	6	6	6	7	6	5	7
	Accom.	9	9	12	11	11	11	11	11	10	13	13	13	13
	Total	15	14	17	18	17	17	17	17	16	20	19	18	20

Management Information Unit, CFE Commissioning and Partnerships Group, 15 September 2010

(3) Attainment Summary

Table 3

Indicator <i>local/national indicators as appropriate e.g. LAA2, 2010, NIs</i>	Actual performance 2007/2008	Actual performance 2008/09	Target 2009/10	Estimated 2009/10	Actual performance 2009/10	Trend ▲ improving ▶ not improving ▼ deteriorating	Target 20010/11
NI 99 Children in care reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	32.6 % OC2 submission document	31.6 % OC2 submission document	43%	34% (18/52) Red=19 Amber=15 Green=18	42% (-1%)	↑ 33%	47%
NI 100 Children in care reaching level 4 in Maths at Key Stage 2	28.3 % OC2 submission document	31.6 % OC2 submission document	53%	33% (17/52) Red=20 Amber=15 Green=17	46% (-7%)	↑ 65%	54%
NI 101 Children in care achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and Maths)	5.4 % OC2 submission Document	6.3 % OC2 submission document	19%	7% (12/168) Red=118 Amber=25 Green=12 Blank=13	9% (-10%)	↑ 44%	19.5%

Management Information Unit, CFE Commissioning and Partnerships Group, 1 October 2010

Full attainment report can be seen in appendix 1.

(4) Persistent Absence

Table 4

Kent LAC Persistent Absence Analysis 2009-2010		
	KCC All Pupils	Kent LAC Pupils
All Schools Primary, Secondary and Special	3.5%	14%

(5) Other Local Authority (OLA) LAC

On commencement of the Headteacher post, an immediately request to ABS was made to complete a comparative analysis on Kent Vs OLA LAC attendance.

The report identifies that, when comparing like-for-like (LAC in Kent mainstream schools), Kent LAC appear to perform worse than OLA LAC in terms of attendance. Kent LAC have higher rates of absence in almost all categories, poorer rates of excellent (100%) attendance and higher levels of persistent absence.

The full report can be seen in Appendix 2.

(6) Exclusions

Table 5

Kent LAC Exclusion Analysis 2009-2010	
No. excl	170
No LAC school age	896
% Excluded	19
% of Boys Excluded	73

% of Girls Excluded	27
2+ Exclusions	88
% of 2+ Exclusions	56
Total No of Sessions Lost from education	2340
Av. No. of sessions lost per LAC (who experienced exclusion)	14 (7 days)
Pex	9
Pex trend(09/10 vs 08/09)	↑29%

Welfare Call Exclusion Report 29 September 2010

Currently unable to gain any OLA comparative data

Areas for development

3. (1)

- Multi professional team that have been on a journey towards cohesion as a team. A unified team with a shared vision has not yet been achieved
- Communication between services especially Health complicated by different information sharing protocols
- Visibility and profile of the service is a real issue. Not a single Headteacher within the last 8 District Headteacher Meetings had heard of the ILSS
- Data tracking and monitoring systems are not fit for purpose
- Analysis of key data sets are not currently established, therefore do not inform intervention and strategic deployment of resources to maximise impact for LAC.

(2) Progress in all area identified above has been made since the 1st of September 2010. Extremely positive partnerships have been fostered between ABS and MIU.

Proposed Programme of Work to develop The Virtual School Kent

4. Ambitious programme to develop three foundation stone on which to build the Virtual School:

- Develop the Virtual School Governing Body – This will need clear scoping in terms of its remit. It may potentially raise the question of the remit that KCPB has and whether there needs to be a review to avoid potential overlaps with the governing body. Key responsibilities of the governing body is to support, challenge and hold the Headteacher to account, as well as being in a position to make decisions quickly to unblock systemic barriers for LAC.
- Development of the Virtual School's Management Information System. An integrated data set which is responsive to needs, accessible, functional, fit for purpose and informs strategic planning and deployment. A data set that can be used far beyond the Virtual School.
- Development of the Virtual School Identity/Brand. Key to the development of the united community of professionals around the looked after children. Fundamental in developing the community of looked after children. Intrinsic in the services capacity to grow and develop and potentially develop income generating streams.

Outline programme can be seen in Appendix 3.

Recommendations

5. Members of the Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the in Kent variation of Kent LAC and OLA LAC and to consider and support the proposed programme of work in response to this issue

Appendix 1

2010 Kent LA FSP, KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 Attainment for pupils recorded as Looked After Children in January 2010 School Census

FSP

	Number of LAC Pupils	Number of Pupils Achieving 6+ in PSE	% Pupils Achieving 6+ in PSE	Number of Pupils Achieving 6+ in CLL	% Pupils Achieving 6+ in CLL	Number of Pupils Achieving 6+ in PSE and CLL	% Pupils Achieving 6+ in PSE and CLL	Number of Pupils Achieving 78+ Points Including+ in PSE and CLL	% Pupils Achieving 78+ Points Including+ in PSE and CLL
Kent LAC	36	21	58.3	13	36.1	11	30.6	11	30.6
OLA LAC	15	11	73.3	5	33.3	5	33.3	5	33.3
Total LAC	51	32	62.7	18	35.3	16	31.4	16	31.4

KS1

	LAC Yes	Number Achieving Below L2 in Reading	% Achieving Below L2 in Reading	Number Achieving L2+ in Reading	% Achieving L2+ in Reading	Number Achieving Below L2 in Writing	% Achieving Below L2 in Writing	Number Achieving L2+ in Writing	% Achieving L2+ in Writing	Number Achieving Below L2 in Maths	% Achieving Below L2 in Maths	Number Achieving L2+ in Maths	% Achieving L2+ in Maths	Number Achieving Below L2 in Science	% Achieving Below L2 in Science	Number Achieving L2+ in Science	% Achieving L2+ in Science
Kent LAC	32	15	46.9	17	53.1	20	62.5	12	37.5	14	43.8	18	56.3	11	34.4	21	65.6
OLA LAC	8	1	12.5	7	87.5	3	37.5	5	62.5	1	12.5	7	87.5	1	12.5	7	87.5
Total LAC	40	16	40.0	24	60.0	23	57.5	17	42.5	15	37.5	25	62.5	12	30.0	28	70.0

KS2

	Number of LAC Pupils	Number Achieving Below L4 in English	% Achieving Below L4 in English	Number Achieving L4+ in English	% Achieving L4+ in English	Number Achieving Below L4 in Maths	% Achieving Below L4 in Maths	Number Achieving L4+ in Maths	% Achieving L4+ in Maths	Number Achieving Below L4 in Science	% Achieving Below L4 in Science	Number Achieving L4+ in Science	% Achieving L4+ in Science	Number Achieving Below L4 in English and Maths	% Achieving Below L4 in English and Maths	Number Achieving L4+ in English and Maths	% Achieving L4+ in English and Maths
Kent LAC	55	32	58.2	23	41.8	30	54.5	25	45.5	26	47.3	29	52.7	37	67.3	18	32.7
OLA LAC	35	17	48.6	17	48.6	20	57.1	15	42.9	15	42.9	20	57.1	22	62.9	13	37.1
All LAC	90	49	54.4	40	44.4	50	55.6	40	44.4	41	45.6	49	54.4	59	65.6	31	34.4

KS3

	Total Pupils	% English 5+	% Maths 5+	% Science 5+
Kent	71	19.7	18.3	22.5
OLA	47	40.4	48.9	46.8

KS4

	Total Pupils	% 5+A*-C	% 5+ A*-C ESM	% 5+ A*-G	No Passes
Kent	110	29.1	9.1	60.0	16.4
OLA	60	45.0	23.3	80.0	11.7

Kent and Other Local Authority (OLA) LAC Attendance Analysis

Context

The attendance of Looked After Children (LAC) nationally has historically been poorer than the general school population, and for children who are not looked after. In Kent, there are high levels of both Kent and OLA LAC and there has been recent debate around the impact of OLA LAC – and possible poor attendance / attainment – on Kent resources and schools. This piece of research, undertaken by the Attendance and Behaviour Service, aims to compare the attendance rates of Kent and OLA LAC in Kent maintained schools to provide accurate, up-to-date information around attendance and absence rates, and to support decision making around LAC in Kent schools.

Research

Sources and Rationale

The LAC EWO team analysed and compared attendance rates in Kent Maintained schools for the 2009-2010 academic year¹ for Kent and OLA LAC, across six Kent partnerships; two in East, Mid and West Kent. These partnerships were selected as they had the highest numbers of OLA LAC in each area and would therefore yield the most comparative data (see data below). By choosing two partnerships in East, Mid and West Kent, comparisons could also be made between county areas to identify any area-specific attendance trends or issues.

Partnership	Area	OLA LAC in Kent Schools	Kent LAC in Kent Schools
Thanet 2	East Kent	57	117
Canterbury Coast.	East Kent	46	48
Ashford 1	Mid Kent	38	45
Shepway Rural	Mid Kent	21	19
Gravesham	West Kent	39	38
Malling	West Kent	18	18
TOTAL	Data available	205	284
TOTAL	Data unavailable	14	1
TOTAL	ALL AREAS	219	285

Table 1. Number of LAC in Areas and Partnerships used for Attendance Analysis

¹ LAC entering care after end April 2010 (out of data analysis window) were not included in our data analysis.

Initial Results and Analysis

Attendance	Kent LAC	Kent LAC %	OLA LAC	OLA LAC %
100%	13	4.6%	14	6.8%
>95%	172	60.6%	124	60.5%
>90%	205	72.2%	166	81%
>85%	224	78.9%	182	88.8%
<85%	60	21.1%	23	11.2%
<50%	24	8.4%	5	3.9%

Table 2. Absence Rates of Kent and OLA LAC – Total by Attendance Range

On initial analysis, when comparing like-for-like (LAC in Kent mainstream schools), Kent LAC appear to perform worse than OLA LAC in terms of attendance. Kent LAC have higher rates of absence in almost all categories, poorer rates of excellent (100%) attendance and higher levels of persistent absence. It is worth noting that OLA LAC placed in Kent may have a different profile to Kent LAC i.e. more OLA LAC with behavioural issues may be placed in independent provision as opposed to Kent-maintained mainstream schools. Further analysis around teen pregnancy, disability, offending status and SSEN status may help further disaggregate the data. However, on this profile, OLA LAC would appear to present less of an attendance challenge to Kent schools than Kent LAC.

Absence rate	Kent LAC	Kent LAC %	OLA LAC	OLA LAC %
Any UA absence	99	34.9%	50	24.4%
>5% UA absence	34	12%	8	3.9%
Total number of LAC	284	100%	205	100%

Table 3. Absence Rates of Kent and OLA LAC – Total by Unauthorised Absence

The data collected around unauthorised absence shows that Kent LAC have considerably higher levels of unauthorised absence than OLA LAC, both for overall levels of unauthorised absence, and for pupils with high (5%+) levels of unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence consists of sessions where the school deem absence to be without good reason (i.e. through truanting, absconding, internal truanting or being allowed to miss school for birthdays, shopping trips or non-essential appointments) and with both Kent and OLA LAC, the majority of this unauthorised absence was due to refusing to attend, truancy or the child having absconded from placement and being missing.

Key Stage	Attendance	Kent LAC		OLA LAC	
		Number	%	Number	%
4	Total	96	100%	66	100%
	100%	3	3.5%	2	3%
	>95%	34	35.4%	28	42.4%
	>90%	47	49%	46	69.7%
	>85%	54	56.3%	53	80.3%
	<85%	42	43.7%	13	19.7%
	<50%	19	29.8%	4	6.1%
3	Total	88	100%	83	100%
	100%	4	4.5%	6	7.2%
	>95%	61	69.3%	51	61.4%
	>90%	70	79.5%	69	83.1%
	>85%	76	86.4%	78	94%
	<85%	12	13.6%	5	6%
	<50%	3	3.4%	1	1.2%
2	Total	61	100%	47	100%
	100%	5	8.2%	4	8.5%
	>95%	50	82%	38	80.9%
	>90%	55	90.2%	43	91.5%
	>85%	57	93.4%	43	91.5%
	<85%	4	6.6%	4	8.5%
	<50%	1	1.6%	0	0%
1	Total	39	100%	9	100%
	100%	1	2.6%	2	22.2%
	>95%	27	69.2%	7	77.8%
	>90%	33	84.6%	8	88.9%
	>85%	37	94.9%	9	100%
	<85%	2	5.1%	0	0%
	<50%	2	5.1%	0	0%

Table 4. Absence rates of Kent and OLA LAC – Attendance by Key Stage and Attendance Range

The analysis of Kent and OLA LAC attendance data by Key Stage shows that for both Kent and OLA LAC, attendance rates are best in Key Stages 1 and 2 (primary-age children) and worsen as children progress through Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. For Key Stage 1, 69.2% of Kent LAC and 77.8% of OLA LAC have attendance of 95% or above, and for Key Stage 2 the rates were even higher, at 82% for Kent LAC and 80.9% for OLA LAC. However, when children moved to secondary school these rates began to fall considerably to 69.3% for Kent LAC and 61.3% for OLA LAC in Key Stage 3, and to 35.4% for Kent LAC and 42.4% for OLA LAC in Key Stage 4. Given that children take important examinations and qualifications in Key Stage 4, this drop-off in attendance is concerning and may have a considerable impact on potential engagement and achievement. Further analysis in Key Stages 3 and 4, to look at unauthorised absence and possible links between poor absence and placement moves / moving children to 16+ Teams would be very helpful.

Action				
Action Point	Activity	Resp.	Deadline	Exp. Outcome
Identify current systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify LAC data sources Audit data sources in terms of delivery profile (what/when/ how often) 	HT / VSLT	Sept'10	Fully operational IDS by the beginning of Term 3. This is dependent on the reliability of current systems being improved
Audit functionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWW EBI Identify gaps 	VS LT		
Meet operational data officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Functionality Audit identify what is needed 	HT 14.09		
Develop Draft IDS feasibility Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research effective practice Utilise evidence from operational team and functionality audit 	HT 14.09	Sept '10	
Meet with MIU Strategic Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss Draft proposal Investigate all implications for VS 	HT	Sept '10	
Produce IDS specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce detailed specification document outlining:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Data sources Gate-keeping Functionality for different users Development potential 	HT	Oct '10	
Key Issue For Action		Development of the VS Identity / Brand		

Action Point	Activity	Resp.	Deadline	Exp. Outcome
Clarity of Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop VS Vision / Mission Statement • Develop and build Leadership Team • Develop VS Service Specification • Develop VS Policies and operating procedures 	HT / VSLT	Oct'10	The Brand will impact on all VS Stakeholders. Professionals from all connected services/agencies will have clarity of our role and expectations. LAC, carers and schools will have a hub for quick IAG designed in consultation with them
Team Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and celebrate the ILSS Journey • Share VS Vision and empower whole team through ownership of the vision and direction • Bespoke CPD whilst fostering and celebrating their own professional backgrounds (ongoing) 	VS LT	29 th Sept & 19 th Oct '10	
Communications Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Plan (EH) • Development of VS Website • Newsletters • CPD Events • Network Meetings • Conferences • Word of mouth via <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directors 2. Principle Advisers / HOCS 3. District Heads / Managers / PSM's 4. SIP's • Team visibility modelled HT down 	HT / VSLT	Dec '10	

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By: Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate

Sarah Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Directorate

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families & Education Policy & Scrutiny Overview Committee

Date: 21 October 2010

Subject: Cost of residential, foster care and placements. Challenges and issues

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This paper outlines the management actions and measures that are in place to reduce the number and cost of Private and Voluntary (P&V) and Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements across the County.

Background

1. (1) The increase in referrals following the tragic death of Baby Peter, the changes to the legal system brought about by the Public Law Outline (PLO) and the recent Southwark judgement ruling, are among a number of factors that have had a significant impact on the number of Looked After Children (LAC). In August 2010 Kent had 1320 looked after children, this is an increase of 13.6% compared to August 2009.

(2) Kent County Council's in-house fostering service has been successful in its campaign to recruit and retain foster carers and as a result the service has been able to absorb most of this increase in demand. As the table below demonstrates, the fostering service had 14% more foster placements in August 2010 than in August 2009, this equates to 118 more placements. During this same period the number of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements increased by 23 and Private and Voluntary (P&V) sector placements by 9.

	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10
Total LAC	1162	1174	1193	1199	1206	1196	1205	1233	1236	1251	1303	1314	1320
P&V	38	41	39	49	45	43	45	44	42	44	48	49	47
Percent age	3.27	3.49	3.27	4.09	3.73	3.60	3.73	3.57	3.40	3.52	3.68	3.73	3.56
IFA	69	73	72	74	80	77	85	86	88	88	96	94	92
Percent age	5.9	6.2	6.0	6.2	6.6	6.4	7.1	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.4	7.2	7.0

Total P&V and IFA	107	114	111	123	125	120	130	130	130	132	144	143	139
Percent age	9.21	9.71	9.30	10.26	10.36	10.03	10.79	10.54	10.52	10.55	11.05	10.88	10.53
Total LAC	1162	1174	1193	1199	1206	1196	1205	1233	1236	1251	1303	1314	1320
KCC fostering	841	856	869	900	890	876	858	878	887	909	942	950	959
Percent age	72.38	72.91	72.84	75.06	73.80	73.24	71.20	71.21	71.76	72.66	72.29	72.30	72.65

(3) To gain a better understanding of why children and young people were being placed in the private sector an analysis of this cohort of children and young people was undertaken in 2009. The aim of this exercise was to inform the development of a strategy that would prevent further placements. 83% of children and young people had significant challenging behaviours including drug use, alcohol misuse, and violence to others, stealing and sexualised behaviour. Their ages ranged between 11 -15 years and many of the placements were made following family crisis or fostering breakdown.

(4) The remaining cases were parent and child placements. This type of placement is favoured by courts but unfortunately there is a tendency for placements to drift because of the reluctance of the Judiciary, to move the parent and child into the community until the care proceedings are concluded, because of the risks to the child,

National Context

2. (1). The 2010 National statistics have show an increase of 6 per cent nationally of the number of Looked After Children and an increase of 8 % becoming looked after in the year ending 31st March 2010.

(2) According to DfE statistics 2009, even including asylum seeking children, KCC has the third lowest figure [7%] of children and young people in children's homes [3.2% in the private sector] in comparison with KCC's statistical neighbours which range from 3 to 18 percent. However, all private sector children's homes are high cost and many are not good value for money. In 2009-10 the average gross weekly expenditure per looked after child for a private sector children's home was £2,895. Despite the small increase in placements this has created a budget pressure of £1,065.5 for 2010/11.

(3) Currently there are no statistical data to compare the percentage of children placed in IFAs by other local authorities. However, in Kent the demand for placements has placed the Fostering Service under considerable pressure which has resulted in an increase in the number of IFAs. In 2009-10 the average gross weekly expenditure per looked after child for an IFA placement was £1,086. The relatively high cost of IFA placements has created a budget pressure of £1.145.9 for 2010/11.

(4) In total the overall budget pressure for private sector placements is £2,211.4 for 2010/11.

(5) KCC has always invested in the Fostering Service and it was only in exceptional circumstances that an IFA placement was approved. KCC has maintained an exceptionally low weekly unit cost for LAC which in 2008/9 was £583*. [Highest unit cost was £1,236 Bracknell Forest and lowest £453 Rutland] Due to the increase in the

number of LAC, the gate keeping has become more challenging and the procurement process requires strengthening.

(6) Although the number of IFA placements has reached a plateau, it is imperative that action is taken to reduce the need to use private sector placements and this report sets out a robust strategy to reduce the financial pressure that has been identified.

* [NB This information is no longer recorded by DfE]

Strategy for Reducing Private Sector Costs

3. (1) There are a number of actions that have already been taken to produce some quick wins and although it is early days the increase in IFA placements has slowed down. This is due to a stringent gate keeping process and proactive care planning to bring children and young people back into KCC Fostering placements.

(2) However, this must be underpinned by a longer term strategy to ensure a tight grip is maintained on the number of private sector placements. Below is a list of actions that have been put in place.

(3) In order to ensure we achieve best value for money the procurement arrangements will be more robust. With immediate affect all new contracts with IFAs will finish on the young persons 16th birthday to allow the 16 plus service to renegotiate the cost and care plan. The aim is to enable 16 plus, where appropriate, to place young people back with their families or in a community placement.

(4) Heads of Service and Catch 22 are monitoring private sector placements on a monthly basis to identify those young people who can be placed in house or in supported living arrangements and to ensure these plans are implemented.

(5) In order to ensure rigorous gate keeping is in place, Heads of Service approve all new private sector placements. As at 28th July 2010, 13% of private sector placements were parent and child placements. With immediate effect only in exceptional circumstances will parent and child placements be made unless the case is in care proceedings. This ensures that placements are time limited, avoiding unnecessary drift in both private and in house placements, which will in turn release more placement capacity in house reducing the need to use private sector placements.

(6) In order to ensure a sustainable reduction in the overall number of looked after children, District managers are ensuring that all care plans are expedited to avoid drift and that looked after children are:

- Returned home where possible
- Placed within the family network
- Placed for adoption or under special guardianship arrangements
- Placed in long term foster care

Medium term action

4. (1) KCC Fostering Service

KCC fostering service is competing with 33 IFAs to recruit carers at a time when there is a national shortage of suitably skilled and available carers. A robust recruitment strategy

has led to the service being on schedule to meet its ambitious target to recruit 120 new foster carers in 2010 /11.

(2) To achieve this KCC recognised the need to increase the number of fostering social workers and for their role to focus on assessments.

(3) Since the review of the Fostering service in 2003 and the introduction of the initial enquiry and recruitment team, it has been highly successful in attracting new applicants. However, until recently the service had to maintain a waiting list of applicants but with the increase in social workers the waiting list has reduced considerably. This is vitally important because if applicants do not want to wait they can easily apply to an IFA and KCC will lose their interest. IFA carers wanting to transfer to KCC are fast tracked.

(4) It remains difficult to recruit foster carers who are prepared to foster challenging adolescents and the competition for this type of carer is fierce as the IFAs are fishing in the same pond. Therefore as previously identified in this report there are not sufficient KCC foster carers for adolescents with challenging behaviour. However, the Fostering Service through the provision of expert support and training has been successful in encouraging and enabling existing carers to care for adolescents, where previously they were not confident to do so. Consequently although the number of foster carers has not increased significantly the number of placements available for adolescents has increased. To enable this process of 'growing our own adolescent carers' to continue it is imperative that KCC continues to provide good training and support.

Adolescent Fast Response Service for young people on the brink of care

5. (1) Each district is establishing dedicated resource to ensure that when teenagers are on the brink of care the duty teams respond within 24 hours. This is the most effective way to maintain young people in their family by providing social work support and intervention immediately. If a young person does become looked after, a rehabilitation plan must be identified at the time of being brought into the care system with the aim of returning the young person back to the families within two weeks.

(2) Some families may need a more intense intervention over a period of time and voluntary agencies have a key role to play in providing mediation services that work closely with the C&Fs duty teams. This type of service will prevent young people bouncing back at a later stage and will offer families an alternative support service. The scoping and commissioning of such service falls into the longer term strategy as set out below.

Parent and Child Placements

6. The parent and child placement procedures have been updated, and the intention is that the number of parent and child placements will reduce by adopting the measures outlined below;

- The eligibility criteria will be tighter. Parent and child placements should only be used if care proceedings have already begun
- Where possible, placements should last no longer than 3 months
- Teams will use more rigorous pre birth assessments. If assessment indicates that the parents are not able to protect their child then proceedings should be issued at birth or a recommendation made to begin the PLO process.

Long Term Plan

7. Adolescent Strategy

(1) The outcomes for young people becoming looked after in adolescence are amongst the poorest, and therefore admission to the care system should be considered as an extreme intervention. The aim is to prevent these young people becoming looked after and instead offer support in the community. In order to achieve this, safely, there are strategic and local actions in place.

(2) At a strategic level work is underway to review and update the adolescent strategy and the integrated youth support strategy. CFE and other external and internal partners will be working jointly to improve support and services to adolescents.

(3) At a local level, management actions are in place to support effective intervention with adolescents, these include:

- Reviewing adolescent mediation service commissions (eg Breakthrough) with a view to these being county wide
- Recognising the significance of poor school attendance or school exclusion for this age group, to move to more integrated working between Attendance and Behaviour Service and Social Services.

Preventative Services

8. (1) As part of the reorganisation of CFE, 12 district based preventative services managers have been appointed. These Preventative Services Managers will lead on implementing the preventative strategy, ensuring that children with additional needs are identified early and that services from relevant agencies are deployed effectively and speedily to meet their needs.

(2) The PSMs are to manage CFE preventative services directly and will champion integration of preventative services and processes and ensure county wide consistency and equity. Children referred to social services, but who do not meet the eligibility criteria, will be supported through these preventative services and processes.

(3) It is expected that overtime, through successful management there will be a gradual reduction in the number of children with child protection plans and the number of children and young people who become looked after.

Procurement Strategy

9. (1) The sufficiency duty requires local authorities to have sufficient local placements available for their Looked After Children. To achieve this a commissioning process must be in place which is reviewed regularly. The main component of the commissioning process is the procurement and management of private sector placements and for reasons previously identified in the report, the procurement arrangements must be more robust to ensure 'value for money' and a reduction in placement costs. The following will be in place by the end of October 10.

- The Commissioning Team will negotiate cost and volume placement arrangements with existing service providers for all new IFA placements for LAC including asylum seekers. This will bring down the cost of all new placements.

- Specialist Services will pilot the care funding calculator for children's homes/residential placements. The calculator will provide a basis for negotiating cost on the basis of need through a framework similar to the one used in KASS.
- Analysis of existing IFA/residential high cost placements will be undertaken. The care funding calculator will be applied to residential placements and individual negotiations entered into with existing providers for IFA placements.

(2) The new National Framework set of procurement and contract documents produced by the DFE will be adopted which will significantly reduce administration time.

Summary

10. This paper has outlined some of the strategic and local changes that should impact on the number of IFA and P&V placements required in the future and the cost of these placements. These changes will take time to embed therefore reduction will be a gradual process. The actions outlined in the report will be part of an overall Looked After Children strategy which will include desired outcomes and robust performance monitoring procurement processes.

Recommendations:

Members of the Vulnerable Children and Partnerships POSC are asked to note this report for information.

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Background documents

None

By: Joanna Wainwright, Director, Commissioning & Partnerships
 Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate
 Sarah Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Directorate

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families & Education Policy & Scrutiny Overview Committee

Date: 21 October 2010

Subject: Joint Commissioning in Children's Services – Outcomes & Priorities

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper identifies the national and local context for commissioning; examples of jointly commissioned services in Kent which have improved outcomes for children and young people; and the commissioning priorities for the Commissioning Unit.

'Commissioning is the process for deciding how to use the total resource available for children, young people, parents and carers in order to improve outcomes in the most efficient, effective, equitable and sustainable way' (Commissioning Support Programme).

Joint commissioning in Kent is a tool to ensure that children's services are spending public money efficiently and effectively to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. Joint commissioning is not just about individual service contracts or agreements with a particular provider; it is concerned with the strategic development of services to meet the needs of all children, young people and their families. The joint commissioning process allows partners who have responsibility for planning, securing, monitoring and evaluating services to work together to make joint decisions about the needs of their population and how they should be met.

Introduction

1. (1) The Coalition Government's vision to change the relationship between the state and society and the cuts anticipated through the Comprehensive Spending Review, will result in fundamental changes to the way Kent County Council and its partners do business. The role of joint planning and commissioning will become more significant than ever before, with the need to ensure local services are efficiently planned, delivered and performance managed and that they offer real value for money.

(2) Emerging policy statements from the Coalition Government underline the need for efficient and innovative approaches to local commissioning:

- The DfE announcement on the reform of Children’s Trusts in July 2010 expresses continued support for “effective local partnerships” where these are found to be the most appropriate means of achieving improved outcomes for local children and young people. The statement includes an ambition to see these partnerships “address local issues with innovative solutions.”
- The recent White Paper on the NHS, (‘Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS’) outlines a clear role for local authorities in helping to join up the planning and commissioning of local services including the NHS, children’s services and safeguarding. The paper also outlines a commitment to “simplify and extend the use of powers that enable joint working between the NHS and local authorities”.
- The Government’s response to the Health Select Committee Report on Social Care (July 2010) outlines an ambition to see increased use of personalised budgets within social care, giving families much greater control over decision-making about the support they receive.
- The Government’s ambitions to increase educational choice through the introduction of new academies and free schools will significantly change the relationship between the LA and schools. Although schools opting to become academies will have freedom to commission their own services, this will need to be balanced against the economies of scale that can be gained from commissioning services over a broader number of schools. The Government has indicated that all learning environments will have greater freedoms and flexibilities which is likely to impact significantly on commissioning.

The Local Context:

2. (1) KCC has stated its intention to respond to the new political and economic context as an “opportunity to fundamentally reshape ourselves to deliver a new council with a new focus and new ways of working that will cost much less than it does now.” (*The First Bold Step*, KCC September 2010). A key aspect is to reduce duplication across the business and establish a unified and streamlined approach.

(2) Key priorities within this document and the Medium Term Plan include:

- Putting the citizen in control (including a need to simplify customer access to services and design services that put the customer first).
- Tackling disadvantage
- Growing the economy

(3) Delivering these priorities will require efficient and accurate targeting of resources through rigorous processes of commissioning, de-commissioning, and performance management, both within KCC and with service providers. It will also require a new degree of partnership between KCC, district councils and local

partners to find new ways of responding to local issues with reduced resources and to provide the enhanced local accountability and transparency that is an ambition of both national and local policy. Place-based budgeting will be a key concept within this since it will enable devolving certain commissioning responsibilities for decision-making to local level.

(4) Although there will no longer be a statutory duty for partners to develop a Children & Young People's Plan, it is recognised that there are benefits and efficiencies through shared planning, commissioning and delivery of children and young people's services. A countywide needs assessment has identified the following priorities:

- Emotional and Mental Health
- Healthy start in life
- Safeguarding
- Primary aged children's learning
- Adolescent engagement
- Housing /accommodation
- Family Poverty

(5) Commissioning (which will include de-commissioning, re-negotiation and remodelling of contracts) will be based upon the agreed priorities and will occur at various levels across the Kent Children's Trust:

- Strategic commissioning of countywide services
- Specific joint commissioning plans developed beneath key CYPP priorities e.g. Teenage Pregnancy
- Commissioning plans developed by Local Children's Trust Boards as an expression of how the overarching priorities will be implemented at district level (in line with place based budgeting)

Existing Joint Commissioning Processes to Improve Outcomes

3. (1) There is a significant amount of evidence in Kent of joint planning and commissioning improving outcomes for children and young people and increasing efficiency. The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes has validated or identified as promising practice the case studies in the Appendices attached. ¹

(2) Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) in Dartford

A need was identified to improve access to SALT in Dartford due to the long waiting times (approximately six months for an assessment and a further nine months for the commencement of therapy) and a lack of home-based support for families. A not-for-profit organisation, Symbol, was commissioned to provide a team of speech and language therapists to work from the local Children's Centres. The improved outcomes include:

- decrease in inappropriate referrals reported by the PCT Speech and Language Service

¹ (see www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/general/localpracticeexamples)

- contribution of SALT interventions to improved foundation stage profiles. The figures below compare the data for 2008-9 with 2007-8:
 - Brent – 27% improvement
 - Darenth – 37% improvement
 - Knockhall – 4.8% improvement
 - Maypole – 24% improvement
 - Oakfield – 30% improvement
 - Swanscombe – 21% improvement
 - Temple Hill – nearly 100% improvement
- significant reduction in waiting time for SALT
- an external evaluation by Semper Visio Ltd reported substantial cost efficiencies in this model.

(3) Multi-Agency Early Intervention to improve Speech, Language and Communication in Ashford

A needs analysis identified that between 10-12 children per annum living in the Ashford district had severe speech, language and communication needs that would benefit from an intensive specialist approach to enable them to access the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Following the engagement of parents, schools and professionals, a model of early intervention to offer targeted, multi-agency support to young children with severe speech, language and communication needs (Ashford Better Communications Service) was jointly planned and commissioned. The improved outcomes include:

- reported increase in the children's speech, language and communication skills (70% demonstrated a marked increase in understanding of language and 80% in their use of language)
- 92% of the children supported were able to attend their local primary school and make good progress
- increased confidence in participating children to make new friends
- an improved joint approach to assessment and interventions
- only 1 child out of 12 required a statement of SEN
- very high parental satisfaction rate

(4) The Children & Families Enterprise (CAFÉ) Project

A need was identified to provide a holistic support service for offenders serving community sentences in Kent in order to help reduce re-offending, prevent intergenerational crime and improve outcomes for the children of offenders. The rationale for developing CAFÉ was the Reducing Re-Offending Pathway which highlights the positive role of maintaining a stable family life when seeking to reduce offending. KCC and Kent Probation commissioned the St Giles Trust to develop a service to engage offenders, who have traditionally been reluctant to engage with services, and provide intensive support using a Think Family Approach. The improved outcomes achieved include:

- 2009/10 – there were 137 referrals (involving 181 children) and a 96% rate of engagement
- improved the ability of families to maintain or obtain stable accommodation

- Accommodation found – 19%
- Accommodation saves – 54%
- 40% of families referred accessed employment, education or training
- 90% of clients remained free of offending behaviour
- external evaluation by the University of Kent stated that the service should be mainstreamed as it clearly reduces the risk and cost of future demands on public services
- positive feedback from clients
- cost benefits of reduction in direct costs to probation, the prison service, unemployment benefits and housing costs (due to cost of eviction or homelessness)

Next Steps

4. (1) The Commissioning and Partnership Group within CFE Unit has identified the following key priorities for the next six months:

Ensure that commissioning standards are used at a local and county level for children's services:

- develop and implement clear governance for commissioning through a joint commissioning framework with standards and processes
- develop operational guidance to support excellence in commissioning
- build expertise of commissioning across children's services through training and support to ensure compliance with commissioning standards
- support the development of Bold Steps through developing new ways to plan services to maximise impact through place-based budgeting, budget pooling etc.
- link closely with County Procurement

(2) Review contracts and resources across KCC commissioned services for children and young people initially focusing on:

- identify and implement early cash savings for quick wins (3-6 months)
- medium and long term sustainable efficiency savings planned (e.g. Connexions, large contracts, removing duplication at local level) including decommissioning high cost and low impact services

(3) Improve commissioning and procurement mechanisms across children's services to make longer term efficiencies, reduce duplication and improve outcomes e.g. reducing costs through stopping spot-purchasing of foster care placements in the independent sector (research has shown that other LAs have made 10-20% savings)

Recommendations

5. Members of the Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to

- (i) note the examples of jointly commissioned services in Kent
- (ii) agree the next steps for the commissioning unit for the next six months

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By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 21 October 2010

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update the Committee on the current topic review programme and to invite suggestions for future Select Committee topic reviews.

Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme

1. (1) There are currently no Select Committee topic reviews in the work programme which fall under the remit of this Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(2) The current work programme consists of the following:-

- Renewable Energy – which is due to submit its final report to the Cabinet in November 2010 and County Council in December 2010
- Extended Services (previously called Extended Schools) – which is due to submit its final report to the Cabinet in November 2010 and County Council in December 2010
- Educational Attainment of Pupils and Schools in Areas of High Deprivation – which is due to start its work in the Autumn of 2010
- Dementia which is due to start work in the Autumn of 2010 and report to County Council in April 2011.

Suggestions for Select Committee Topic Reviews

2. At the Scrutiny Board it was agreed that Members would be asked to consider whether there are any topics that they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review programme. If Members do have any suggestions could they contact the Democratic Services Officer for this POSC.

3. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the current Select Committee topic review programme and to advise the Democratic Services officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme.

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Background Information: *Nil*

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