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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.