

AGENDA

Meeting: Children's Select Committee
Place: Council Chamber - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN
Date: Tuesday 25 October 2022
Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Matt Hitch
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Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Pre-meeting information briefing

There will be a briefing session starting at 9.30am, immediately before the meeting. Its focus will be on the Families and Children's Transformation programme.

Membership:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman) | Cllr Antonio Piazza |
| Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman) | Cllr Mike Sankey |
| Cllr Helen Belcher | Cllr James Sheppard |
| Cllr Mary Champion | Cllr Jo Trigg |
| Cllr Carole King | Cllr Mark Verbinnen |
| Cllr Kathryn MacDermid | Cllr Caroline Corbin |
| Cllr Kelvin Nash | |

Substitutes:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Cllr Trevor Carbin | Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney |
| Cllr Daniel Cave | Cllr Martin Smith |
| Cllr Adrian Foster | Cllr Iain Wallis |
| Cllr Johnny Kidney | Cllr Ricky Rogers |
| Cllr Jack Oatley | |

Non-Elected Voting Members:

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Dr Mike Thompson | Clifton Diocesan RC Representative |
|------------------|------------------------------------|

Non-Elected Non-Voting Members:

Nikki Barnett

John Hawkins

Maisy Humphrey

Declan Kiely

Further Education Representative

School Teacher Representative

Children & Young People's Representative

Children & Young People's Representative -
Substitute

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Public Participation

Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult [Part 4 of the council's constitution](#).

The full constitution can be found at [this link](#).

For assistance on these and other matters please contact the officer named above for details

AGENDA

Pre-meeting information briefing

The meeting will be preceded by a presentation starting at **9.30am**, in the meeting room.

Topic: FACT (Families and Children's Transformation) programme

All members and substitutes of the Children's Select Committee are welcome to attend.

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 9 - 18*)

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2022.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chairman.

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on **Tuesday 18 October 2022** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response questions must be submitted no

later than 5pm on **Thursday 20 October 2022**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **FACT (Families and Children's Transformation) programme** (Pages 19 - 32)

To receive an update on the FACT programme, including how it will be monitoring the implementation of its key objectives over the next 12-18 months.

7 **Children and Young People's Mental Health** (Pages 33 - 74)

To consider a report on child and adolescent mental health services provided through Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, as well as a separate report on the bespoke child and young people's mental health services funded directly by Wiltshire Council.

8 **Capital expenditure on school buildings** (Pages 75 - 82)

To receive an update on the School Capital Programme following an earlier report to Cabinet in February 2022.

9 **Adoption** (Pages 83 - 176)

This is the first opportunity for the committee to consider, at the same meeting, the three reports offering an overall review of performance linked to adoption:

- Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2021-2022 Year End Report
- Adoption West's annual report
- Adoption West Joint Scrutiny panel's annual report

10 **Regular updates**

Updates on information valuable for the committee, but unlikely to require a decision.

Members of the committee are therefore invited to indicate in advance of the meeting if they would like further information or have questions on these regular updates, so that relevant officers can be invited to attend the meeting.

10a **Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative** (Pages 177 - 182)

An update including a summary of recent activities of the Wiltshire Youth Union (WYU) and Children in Care Council (CiCC).

10b **School Ofsted Judgements** (Pages 183 - 188)

An update including information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports, presenting an ongoing view of the effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspection.

10c **DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education** (Pages 189 -

An update on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education.

10d **Working together to improve school attendance** (*Pages 193 - 194*)

The DfE published new non-statutory guidance in May 2022 to help schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. The guidance applies from September 2022.

This regular update is an opportunity for the committee to be aware of the latest requirements for schools, trusts, governing boards and local authorities in maintaining high levels of school attendance, as set out in the guidance.

10e **Schools Forum's update** (*Pages 195 - 196*)

To receive a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of Schools Forum to enable the Children's Select Committee to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Schools Forum through the year.

Full agendas and minutes for the Schools Forum can be accessed here [Schools Forum | Wiltshire Council](#).

10f **Corporate Parenting Panel update** (*Pages 197 - 198*)

To receive a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to enable the Children's Select Committee members, as Corporate Parents, to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Panel through the year.

10g **Directors' update**

To receive a verbal update from Directors highlighting any key issues (current or emerging), successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which may not require a full agenda item and are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

10h **Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update**

To receive a verbal update from the Cabinet Member and / or Portfolio Holders highlighting any news, successes or milestones in their respective areas since the last meeting of the committee, which may not require a full agenda item and are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

10i **Chair's update**

To receive a verbal update from the chair on any work undertaken or news since the last meeting that would not require a full agenda item and would not be suitable under Chairman's Announcements (where no debate is allowed).

11 **Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates** (*Pages 199 - 202*)

The committee will receive updates from active Task Groups, Rapid Scrutiny exercises and the committee's board representatives.

A report by the Senior Scrutiny Officers providing an update on Task Group activity since the last meeting is attached.

12 **Forward Work Programme** (*Pages 203 - 216*)

The Committee is asked to note the attached documents showing the relevant items from the overview and scrutiny forward work programme and the latest version of the strategy list for the Children, Education and Skills directorate.

13 **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting is due to be held on Tuesday **17 January 2023** at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

14 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

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Children's Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Kathryn Macdermid, Cllr Mike Sankey, Cllr Jo Trigg, Cllr Mark Verbinnen, Dr Mike Thompson, John Hawkins and Cllr Adrian Foster (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Tony Jackson and Cllr Peter Hutton

62 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from the following:

- Cllr Helen Belcher (substituted by Cllr Adrian Foster).
- Cllr Kelvin Nash

63 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 6 July 2022, as a true and correct record.

64 **Declarations of Interest**

The chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest that he was a trustee of the 4 Youth charity.

65 **Chairman's Announcements**

The chairman reminded the committee that Kit Malthouse MP had taken over from James Cleverly MP as Secretary of State for Education.

66 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

67 **Children and young people's mental health**

The chairman reminded the committee that they had received a briefing on the subject of young people's mental health prior to the meeting and noted that a

draft mental health strategy was due to be published by early 2023. He stated that the committee would welcome the opportunity to review detailed metrics to gain a better understanding about the impact of mental health services being provided.

The Corporate Director People thanked members for the feedback they had provided at the pre-briefing as it gave a clear indication of the information that was required at the next meeting.

The Director of Procurement and Commissioning noted that a report would be brought to the committee outlining the impact of the contract with Oxford Health across the whole of BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW), in particular the £518,000 annual contribution from Wiltshire Council. She also offered to bring a second report specifically focusing on the additional money spent on bespoke services by the Local Authority.

The committee stated that they would welcome the reports. They would also welcome the attendance of the Director of the Wiltshire Integrated Care Alliance, the Place Based element of the BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care System, at their next meeting.

Resolved

- 1. For the committee to receive a report outlining the impact of the contract with Oxford Health as well as a separate report focussing on the impact of bespoke services commissioned by Wiltshire Council.**
- 2. For the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Task Group to be formed as soon as possible and advertised to members after the next meeting (where further reports mentioned above will be received that may influence the aim and terms of reference for the task group).**
- 3. For the committee to review the Mental Health Strategy either at a committee meeting or through its Standing Task Group (draft expected late 2022/early 2023).**

68 Business plan and action plan update

Members were notified about the progress made towards implementing the Business Plan in areas within the remit of the Children’s Select Committee. The chairman invited the committee to review the report about the activities of relevant services and how they related to the Business Plan. He then reminded members that they had agreed to set up a task group to determine the best approach to oversee and scrutinise these plans.

The Director of Education and Skills and the Director of Families and Children’s Services each provided further information about the activities in their respective service plans and how they linked to the stated missions in Wiltshire Council’s Business Plan.

In addition, the committee were invited to review the Council Performance and Risk 2022/23 – Quarter One Monitoring Report ahead of its consideration by Cabinet on 27 September. The Corporate Director People explained that the data provided in the report related to activities designed to deliver the 10 stated missions within the Business Plan and listed the relevant key performance indicators in Appendix A of the report. She also highlighted the two areas in the Strategic Risk Register relevant to the committee namely, demand for SEND services and safeguarding children.

During the discussion points included:

- Members thanked the directors for introducing the reports, noting that they gave a good overview of the plans. They also stated that they looked forward to receiving further detail about the metrics within in the individual service plans.
- The chairman of Corporate Parenting Panel reassured the committee that the panel scrutinised placement sufficiency for Children Looked After, including a breakdown of children placed within different Local Authorities (LAs). The Corporate Director people assured members that this was an area which they monitored closely.
- Members stated that they would welcome further information about the impact of housing shortages on children’s services.
- In response to a question about the level of educational provision for excluded children the Director of Education and Skills reported that their service length agreement had been reviewed two years ago, in consultation with ISOS and headteachers, to ensure that outcomes were put at the centre. A new governance structure was in place to monitor outcomes, including the director, headteachers and the Head of Alternative Provision.
- A question was asked about whether there were opportunities to improve partnership working with schools to promote the Healthy Schools Programme and mental health provision. The Director of Procurement and Commissioning replied by explaining that they had undertaken a survey of schools to find out about the mental health services that they were commissioning, and they planned to repeat the exercise to get further information.
- When asked about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on early years provision the Director of Education and Skills, highlighted that there were concerns in this area as the providers of early years services were privately run. She reported that two providers had recently closed but measures had been put in place to ensure that the children affected had alternative provision. Wiltshire Council’s Early Years Team had done lots of exciting work to promote careers in the sector. The chairman noted that the Childcare Sufficiency Report was due to come to the committee’s next meeting.
- The Director for Education and Skills offered to clarify the timescale of the maintained schools’ temporary building replacement programme.
- It was noted that the council’s responsibility for post-16 education related primarily to SEND provision and lots of collaborative work was done through the Wiltshire Learning Alliance to develop these services. The Employment, Education and Training Team had responsibility for this area in the Business Plan.
- The Director of Families and Children’s Services provided information about placement sufficiency, reporting that 29 percent of children were placed outside

of the county in Q1, compared to an English average of 42 percent and an outstanding LA percentage of 45 percent.

- Members sought further information about the long-term impact of vacancy rates within children's services. The interim director reported that there was a 29 percent vacancy rate for social workers across Families and Children's Services and agency staff made up between five and eight percent of the staff. The agency worker staff levels were far lower than the regional average and measures were in place to encourage staff to join Wiltshire Council on a permanent basis, such as detailed analysis of why staff were leaving.
- The committee took the opportunity to commend staff for the work they were doing given the high vacancy rate in the service.
- The Corporate Director People noted that they would monitor the impact of cost-of-living pressures on agency staff rates. She noted that LAs in the South West had signed a memorandum of understanding about pay rates for agency staff. The council was also studying pay rates for its staff to benchmark them against regional averages.
- Wiltshire Council had committed funding for the Family Help pilot and was working with partners to establish additional funding.
- It was confirmed that Wiltshire Council had purchased the results of a Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool survey in order to help inform its SEND and Inclusion Strategy.

Resolved

- 1. The committee welcomes the report and the KPIs and outcome measures that will be in future Cabinet reports.**
- 2. To welcome sight of future reports to Cabinet as well as specific reports on those areas specifically relating to areas overseen by Children's Select Committee.**
- 3. For these reports to be received every six months.**

69 Children missing education / children missing out on education

The Head of Targeted Education was pleased to report that permanent exclusion rates in Wiltshire are very low. She then gave further details about the work that the council undertakes to provide oversight of the children missing out on education (CMOE). She explained that she chaired an oversight group every other month to review data and co-ordinate work between different agencies. She also noted that CMOE sub-groups meet on a weekly basis during school term time to identify children at risk of missing education. The head of service also reminded the committee that legislation was coming in which would make it a requirement for creation of LA administered registers for children not in school.

During the discussion the following points were made:

- Members thanked the head of service for the report.
- It was confirmed that the CMOE group also had oversight of children with a reduced educational provision and monitor attendance patterns. The group works closely with schools to ensure that reliable data was available.

- Every school would receive support from Education Welfare Officers.
- Children from Traveller backgrounds received help from the Education Welfare Service and they had a specialist officer within their team working with Traveller families.
- Wiltshire Council was responsible for attendance of all children resident in Wiltshire so worked closely with neighbouring LAs.
- The Head of Education and Skills noted that a three-year service length agreement had been signed in 2021 for the provision of personalised learning to excluded pupils and those at risk of exclusion. She felt that this offered a good opportunity to share best practice and increase school visits by the council.

Resolved

To receive an annual report in a year's time but for it to first be considered by the Standing task group in its draft form to ensure that it provides the information needed by the committee to be reassured about the quality of the council's performance.

70 **Elective Home Education**

An update about how the Education Welfare Service supported children receiving elective home education was provided by the Head of Targeted Education. The head of service highlighted that there had been a slight increase in the number of children receiving home education between the academic year ending September 2021 and 2022. She also stated that there had also been a slight increase in the proportion of children with SEND within the overall number of children being home educated. Although there was no official national data recording the number of elective home educated children, the number of children starting home education was broadly in line with the regional average. Wiltshire Council worked closely with schools and parents to ensure that the education provided was compliant with Department for Education (DfE) guidelines. In addition, an online portal would be developed to make it easier for families to register their children as elective home educated, once legislation had gone through parliament requiring national data to be collected.

During the discussion points included:

- Members thanked the head of service for the update and praised the support provided by Education Welfare Officers.
- It was noted that 31 percent of the elective home educated children had SEND, so it was queried whether this was seen as an indicator that there were an insufficient number of suitable places for children with additional needs in the county. In response, the head of service stressed that elective home education was often seen as a positive choice by parents, and it was important to ask parents the reasons why they wished their child to be home educated.
- The head of service noted that the Education Welfare Service liked to hold discussions with parents before they decided to take their child out of school.
- The Director for Education and Skills reassured members that provision for SEND school places would continue to grow at Sliverwood sites in Trowbridge and Chippenham.

- The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills confirmed that there were no current plans to close sites at the former St Nicholas or Larkrise Schools, now part of Silverwood School.
- The director also offered to get information from schools about how much work was required by them to bring home educated children back to school.
- It was explained that the formation of the Targeted Education Service in November 2021 allowed Education Welfare Officers to get enhanced support from other teams, including the Medical Needs Service, as they were now part of the same service.
- A councillor noted that they had been informed by a parent with a home educated child that they attended a support group. The head of service observed that they were aware of support groups and were always looking to build strong links with these organisations.
- It was confirmed that legislation going through parliament to create a Children Not in School Register would improve the recording of children who had always been home educated. NHS data was currently being used to help identify children who had never attended school.
- When asked about the attainment of home educated children, the head of service explained that they were working closely with their Education Employment and Training team to develop post-16 support for previously home educated children. As part of this work, information was being gathered about the longer-term employment of previously home educated individuals and how they compared to the wider population.

Resolved

To receive an annual report in a year’s time but for it to first be considered by the Standing task group in its draft form to ensure that it provides the information needed by the committee to be reassured about the quality of the council’s performance, especially as the DfE is working to formalise the data collection for elective home education from October 2022 which should enable benchmarking.

71 **Regular updates**

The chairman reminded members that they were able to submit questions in advance of the meeting.

71a Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative

The recent activities of the Wiltshire Youth Union and Children in Care Council were welcomed by members and praise was given to the Youth Voice Team.

71b School Ofsted Judgements

Officers were thanked for providing the report showing the split between results for academy and maintained schools.

71c DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education

The recruitment of another speaker of Ukrainian to the Bilingual Assistant Team was praised by members and they were pleased to see that this support is available to schools at no cost.

It was confirmed that the new admission appeals code, coming in from October 2022, would make permanent changes, bought in during the pandemic, to allow appeals to be held online. Alternative arrangements could be made if a parent/guardian did not have access to an internet capable device.

The inclusion of Wiltshire Council's position to the issues in the report was also commended by the committee.

72 **Working together to improve school attendance**

The Head of Targeted Education reported that all but six schools had signed up to Group Call, a system that provides live attendance data to the LA. She also reminded the committee that Wiltshire was following current guidance around support for school attendance and that this was expected to become statutory from September 2023.

73 **Schools Forum's update**

The chairman explained that the committee had been provided with a brief update about the work of School's Forum. He noted that a more detailed presentation was expected by January 2023 and that funding arrangements for schools were complex.

74 **Corporate Parenting Panel update**

The chairman highlighted that this update was the chance for the committee to look at the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP) in between the formal annual reports. He also noted that the committee would receive presentations from the strategic priorities leads, who are councillors on the CPP.

The CPP's chairman informed the committee that he had attended a bubble football session in Salisbury, as priority leads were keen to be involved in an activity of the Children in Care Council, although did not actively participate in the football match itself. He explained that the CPP actively invited housing officers, leisure officers and Strategic Partnership and Engagement Managers to attend their meetings, so they could hear the views that young people had passed on.

74a Directors' update

The following updates were provided:

The Director of Education and Skills

The Director of Education and Skills reminded the committee that Wiltshire Council had submitted its registration of interest to establish a LA Multi

Academy Trust (MAT) in July 2022. She explained that only a number of applications would be granted nationally, but that Wiltshire's application was still under consideration by the DfE. It was also likely that there would be future opportunities to register interest.

The director reported that Wiltshire Council was looking at the implications of all schools becoming academies by 2030 on how it provided services, with around 120 schools expected to become academies over the next eight years. Particular consideration was being given to how the council would continue its support for vulnerable students. Discussions were also taking place with groups of maintained schools to help the council oversee the transition at a strategic level and to try to ensure that schools did not all transition to become academies simultaneously.

Members thanked the director for the update and raised concerns about whether some smaller schools would be attractive to MATs given that they would be unable to offer the economy of scale that larger schools could.

In addition, the director noted that the new Head of School Effectiveness was in post and looked forward to attending a future meeting.

Corporate Director People

The Corporate Director People noted that Wiltshire Police had been rated inadequate at in a recent PEEL inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). HMICFRS had also undertaken a Child Protection Inspection which had made a number of recommendations to the police, so Wiltshire Council were working closely with the service as it sought to implement the recommended improvements. The corporate director informed the committee that she now chaired the Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership and that they were working closely with the police to look at the recommendations in the HMICFRS reports. A new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Strategic Board had also been set up to review recommendations made at a national level.

The corporate director then informed the committee that three significant instant notifications been submitted to Ofsted by the LA, on behalf of the council and its partners. The instant notifications related to situations where either a fatality had occurred, or significant abuse had taken place. She confirmed that one of the cases was known to social care and two of the cases related to babies. She explained that urgent reviews had taken place so that agencies could quickly take lessons from the incidents that had occurred.

Members stated that they would welcome a briefing about the implications of the recommendations of the two inspections carried about on the police. The committee were deeply saddened to hear about the recent incidents submitted to Ofsted. They noted that there was an established process to go through and that they would be appreciative of future reports.

Director of Families and Children's Services

The Director of Families and Children's Services explained that a national review was being undertaken about children with disabilities or complex needs in residential settings. The panel undertaking the review had asked each LA to identify children in their areas that might fall into this category. The director highlighted that there were up to 30 children that this review could apply to in Wiltshire. Wiltshire would respond to any recommendations from the national panel and would submit further information to the DfE by the end of December.

In addition, the director reported that Wiltshire had been invited to be a consultant by the DfE in reviewing national recommendations of a care review. She also noted that Wiltshire Council have asked the Institute for Public Care at Oxford Brookes University to review its safeguarding arrangements, including a look at waiting times for those children needing assistance. The director was confident that Wiltshire had robust processes in place to help children in need, including early intervention, but welcomed the external scrutiny to provide assurance about the services being provided.

When asked about the progress made at Canon's House, the director confirmed that the improvement plan was progressing well. She noted that Canon's House had now been reinspected and was listed as requiring improvement overall but rated as good for health and protection. Independent Reg 44 monitoring would also take place. In response the committee said that they were very pleased with the progress that had been made in a short period of time and welcomed the continuation of the Reg 44 inspections. The chairman of the CPP stated that he was also holding a meeting with the management of Canon's House and that there would be opportunities for councillors to visit the building.

It was reported that the council had decided to use Aspire House as part of a tender for setting up a children's home in Wiltshire.

74b Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills reported that there were approximately 440 Ukrainian child refugees had now been settled in Wiltshire. 211 primary school places had been offered to these refugees as well as 138 secondary school places. She reassured the committee that Cabinet were continuing to monitor the housing of these children in the medium to longer term and the possible impact on school placements.

The cabinet member also noted that she would be completing a peer review self-assessment with cabinet members from different LAs, including Cornwall.

75 Chair's update

The chairman reported that he had been holding discussions with the Youth Voice team about how young people could play an active role in scrutiny. He

also noted that he was on a national body for employers', and that they were holding discussions about pay for teachers.

76 **Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates**

It was noted by the chairman that the Standing task group had held a productive meeting about the recent adoption report and had made a number of suggestions, as included on the agenda, that he would convey to Cabinet on 27 September. He also reminded the committee that there was still a vacancy on the Standing task group and encouraged members to let the Senior Scrutiny Officer know if they were interested in the role.

77 **Forward Work Programme**

The chairman informed the committee that the vice-chairman and he were due to meet with the relevant cabinet members, portfolio holders and directors on 24 November to consider the priorities for children's services in 2022-23. He then invited members to submit suggestions about what they would like to be considered at the meeting.

78 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 25 October at 10:30am.

79 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.55 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Matt Hitch
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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

WILTSHIRE FAMILIES' AND CHILDREN'S TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

Executive summary

This report provides an update to the Children's Select Committee on the Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme including the current plan and key priorities following the Covid pandemic, the governance and systems in place for monitoring and reporting of projects and their implementation and the key milestones in the programme for the next 12-18 months.

Proposal

That the committee:

1. Notes the updates since the last report to Children's Select Committee in March 2020

Reason for proposal

The Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme is a multi-agency initiative designed around the systemic integrated practice model that is framed around the principles of prevention and early intervention. The approach is underpinned by building resilience in our communities to enable families to care effectively for their children and to achieve the best possible outcomes.

As a transformational partnership programme, the benefits from the work undertaken will be shared across the whole system improving outcomes for the people of Wiltshire.

This is a regular update to the Children's Select Committee on progress and future milestones.

Author: Simon Thomas, FACT Programme Lead

Contact details: simon.thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk

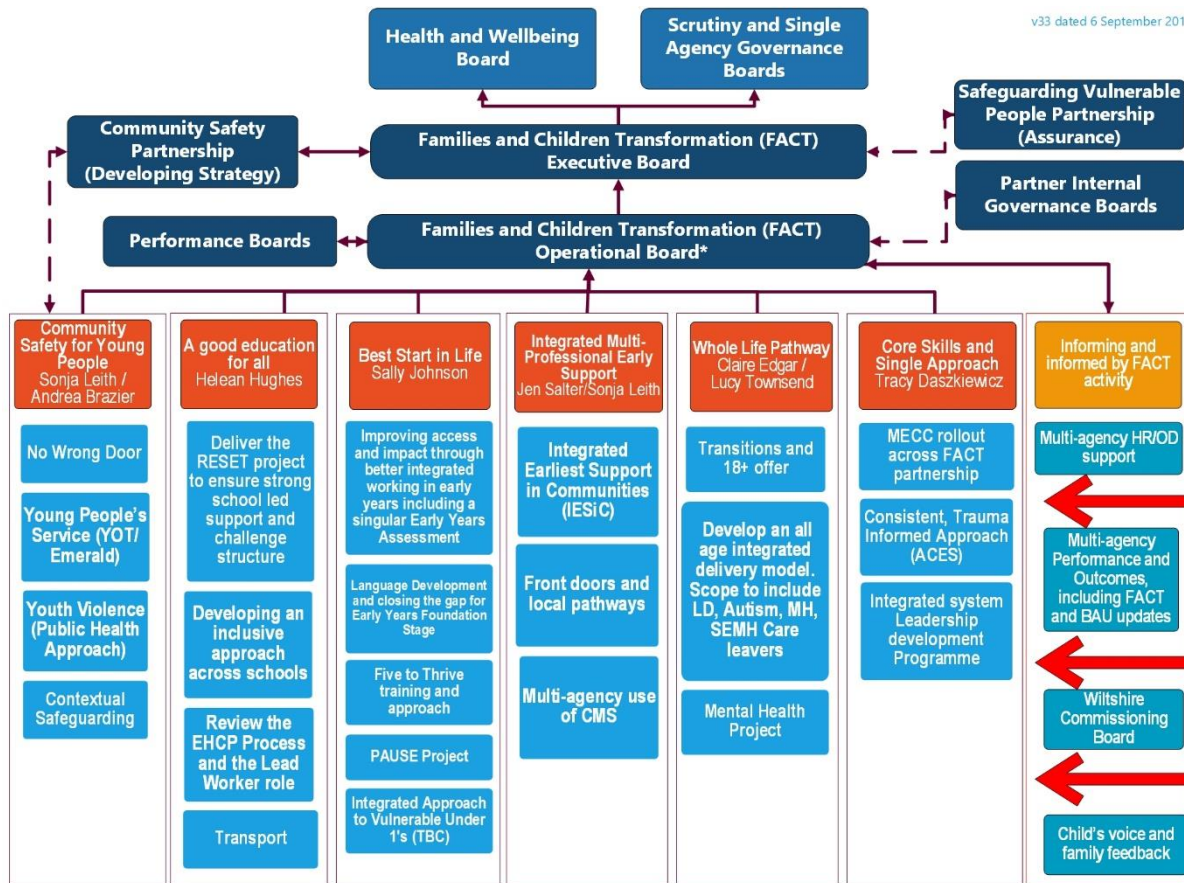
Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) – Programme Update

Purpose of report

1. This is a regular update to the Children's Select Committee on progress and future plans.
2. This report provides an update to Children's Select Committee on the Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme including the current plan and key priorities following the Covid pandemic, the governance and systems in place for monitoring and reporting of project and their implementation and the key milestones in the programme for the next 12-18 months.

Background

3. The Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme was initially set up in early 2018 to deliver whole system change based on a set of five driving principles.
4. The programme was restructured towards the end of 2018/early 2019 following completion of several elements of the programme and a partnership event which identified key shared priorities.
5. In early 2019 the partnership Programme Board was re-organised into an Operational Board and Executive Board to facilitate a greater level of transparency of programme decision making. This structure still represents the current governance model for the programme.
6. The programme submitted a report to the Children's Select Committee in [March 2020](#) which provided background to the programme to that point and set out the priorities for each of the workstreams included in the programme at that time.
7. The workstream structure at that time is set out below:



*To ensure link-up, the FACT Programme Lead sits on both WESB, WETB and ASC Transformation Boards

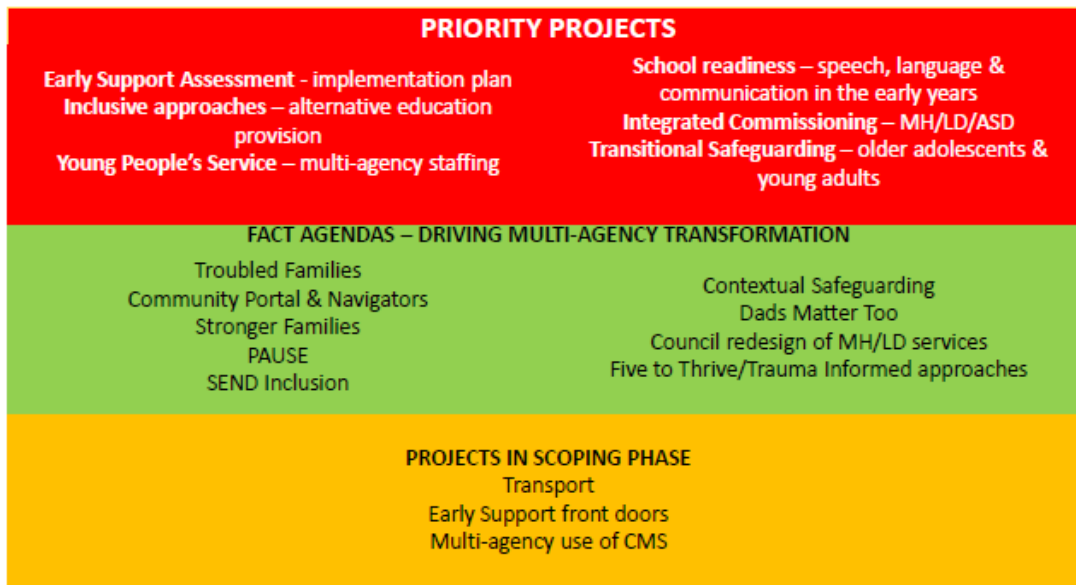


8. The new FACT Programme Lead, Simon Thomas joined the programme in February 2020.
9. When the Covid pandemic began, the FACT Programme was paused from March 2020 until July 2020 and resource diverted to support the immediate response including the setup of the Wellbeing Hub.
10. The programme restarted in August 2020 and a re-prioritisation process was begun with the Operational Board to consider future priorities in the post-pandemic landscape.

Main considerations for the committee

11. From the prioritisation process with the Operational Board during summer and autumn 2020 the projects within the red area in the following diagram were identified as key priority projects for the programme:

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE



12. Updates for each of the priority projects is set out below.

Early Support Assessment

13. An implementation plan was put in place to deliver the Early Support Assessment (ESA) which has replaced the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as the tool to identify a child or family’s need for early help. The ESA went live in October 2021 and a multi-agency group has been monitoring the quality of the ESAs received as well as the number and conversion rates. An audit report is due to be presented to the Operational Board in November 2022 and it is anticipated at this point that the project will be transitioned into business as usual. There will, however, be further monitoring through the Family Help project which will be discussed later on in this paper.
14. The original aim of the project was to implement the new ESA document as a replacement for CAF. This element is due to be considered at the November FACT Operational Board with a view to closing this element down as a distinct project. There will, however, be further monitoring of the impact and quality assurance aspects through the Family Help project which will be discussed later on in this paper.

Inclusive Approaches

15. New service level agreements have been put in place for alternative educational provision for Secondary School age students and groups implemented to review the effectiveness of the agreements. Guidance for schools and providers has been produced and updated onto Right Choice which is the portal for guidance, good practice and policy for schools. Models for supporting inclusion with primary schools are being explored and the Behaviour Support Service model of delivery has been simplified to focus on building school capacity.
16. This project is being driven through and is reporting in the first instance to the Wiltshire Learning Alliance with updates to FACT Operational Board for

information. Where relevant, early intervention aspects of the project will feed into the Family Help developments.

17. This project aims to improve the quality of Alternative Provision and to ensure that pupils that require temporary variation to their educational provision receive effective support that enables them to return to mainstream provision at the earliest possible point. The project is intended to reduce permanent and fixed term school exclusion.
18. Outcomes – Monitoring and reporting is undertaken via the Wiltshire Learning Alliance

| Permanent exclusion | | Fixed term exclusion (suspension) | |
|--|--|---|---|
| Primary Schools | Secondary Schools | Primary Schools | Secondary Schools |
| For 2020/21, Wiltshire was ranked 10 of 156 Local Authorities by the DfE and is in Quartile Banding A with regard to low rates of permanent exclusion. | In 19/20 and 20/21 no secondary aged pupils have been permanently excluded | Wiltshire was ranked 142 of 156 Local Authorities by the DfE and is in Quartile Banding D with regard to low rates of primary school suspensions. While the numbers of primary suspensions has remained higher than those within the comparative groups for the past 5 years, the gap has narrowed each year. | Wiltshire was ranked 71 of 156 Local Authorities by the DfE and is in Quartile Banding B with regard to low rates of secondary school suspensions. While the numbers of secondary suspensions has remained lower than those within the comparative groups for the past 5 years, the gaps narrowed during 2019/20 and 2020/21. |

Young People’s Service

19. The Young People’s Service was developed through the integration of the Youth Offending Team and the Emerald Team during 2019/2020 initially as a FACT project. The final remaining element when the programme was reprioritised were discussions around a particular element of multi-agency resource. Those discussions were concluded and the Operational Board signed off the transition of the project into business as usual in January 2022.
20. The effectiveness of this service is now monitored and measured through the business as usual Performance and Outcome Board within Families and Children.

21. **School Readiness – Speech, Language and Communication in the Early Years**
22. A project group was formed and progressed work to develop an integrated approach to 2-3 year old developmental reviews which was soft launched in October 2021.
23. Cascading of Five to Thrive and Trauma Informed Practice in the early years has continued and will form part of the discussions around the Family Help workforce development framework moving forwards.
24. A campaign was planned to promote take up of the 2 year old funding which involved students from Chippenham College.
25. The project group also developed materials to run a campaign around the Home Learning Environment – developing a system-wide approach that empowers families, and in particular low income families, to promote positive interactions and communication in and around the home from conception through to their children starting school. This included responding to feedback from parents and the development of a 0-5 year pathway.
26. Further development within the project has been paused whilst the development of the Family Help Project scope was undertaken and it is intended that the ongoing work is subsumed and completed as part of that project.
27. The project and associated monitoring is currently being integrated within the wider FACT Family Help project. It is anticipated that the key indicator will be the percentage of children with Good Level of Development at end of Reception year.

Joint Working (formerly Integrated Commissioning)

28. Following review of the scope of this project and other existing multi-agency discussions around mental health, learning disabilities and autism, this project changed to a FACT monitoring agenda item and is being overseen by the Wiltshire Mental Health/Learning Disability/Autism Group meeting and in line with decision making with the newly formed Integrated Care Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. These arrangements encompass the commissioning and delivery of CAMHS and associated provision.

Transitional Safeguarding

29. Transitional Safeguarding is an emerging discipline that seeks to provide an approach to safeguarding practice for adolescents crossing into early adulthood (defined as age 16-24). Approval was received to run a 'proof of concept' where partners committed to developing, trialling and evaluating new ways of working with a defined cohort of young people/adults who are most vulnerable in this context as well as looking at how whole system change might be achieved relating to Transitional Safeguarding.
30. A Transitional Safeguarding Co-Ordinator was appointed to run the proof of concept which formally started with a launch event in January 2022 and a multi-agency Creative Solutions Board was established for case discussion in this space. The proof of concept is due to run until March 2023 and a final report and

recommendations on the future of the Wiltshire approach to Transitional Safeguarding is due in early 2023.

31. An interim report was completed in September 2022 and key points are listed below.

What has worked?

- a. Increased understanding of Transitional Safeguarding as a concept and why it needs a multi-agency system-wide response
- b. Increased awareness of the lived experience of young people in this cohort, including young people's direct participation within the project
- c. Roll out of a focussed multi-agency workforce development offer
- d. Increased collaboration between multi-agency partners at strategic and operational levels
- e. New opportunities to access mentoring provision for this cohort

What challenges remain?

- f. Further developing and offering information and training on Transitional Safeguarding in a range of ways
- g. Increasing take up of the mentoring offer
- h. Further enhancing mechanisms to seek out and act upon the voice of young people
- i. Securing wider partner engagement within the Core Practitioners 'Champions' group and Consultation Forum
- j. Reflecting on our practice and intervention to share and embed good practice
- k. Ensuring mechanisms for understanding impact are robust

32. Outcomes (first report due as part of proof of concept phase at end of March 2023):

- a. To increase stability of housing: ensuring that young people within the transitional safeguarding cohort have consistency of accommodation thereby preventing the risk of frequent placement changes and/or homelessness
- b. To improve accessibility and transitional pathways to Adult and Third Sector Services: enabling young people to access holistic services which consider their needs in context and in line with their individual circumstance. To enable a reduction in dependency on statutory services, identifying areas where support for young people could be provided by third sector services.
- c. To improve the outcomes of young adults transitioning through Motiv8 and Turning Point: to monitor the treatment journeys of young people accessing Motiv8 or Turning Point from within this cohort
- d. To reduce demand and impact on Wiltshire Police: to prevent frequent callouts to young people for anti-social behaviour

33. Alongside the delivery of these priority projects, the Operational Board has also worked on reviewing the post-covid system wide impact to identify further key priorities. The Board identified 3 key areas:
- a. Behaviour that Challenges

- b. SEND waiting lists
- c. Family Help

Behaviour that Challenges

- 34. A multi-agency task and finish was formed to review this issue. There are varying definitions of behaviour that challenges amongst services and the scope of what was included has been discussed by the group. It was agreed at FACT Operational Board that this strand of work should be embedded within the Family Help project.

SEND waiting lists

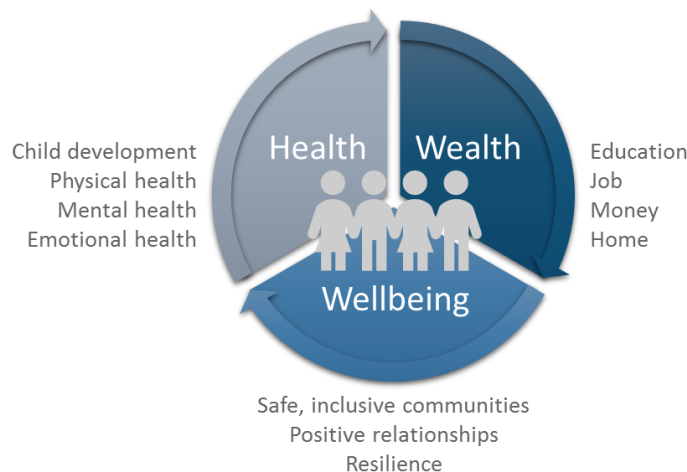
- 35. A multi-agency task and finish group was formed to review this issue. Early in 2022 the group presented back to the Operational Board with a recommendation that the Local Area SEND Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) was being developed with multi-agency partners and this process needed to be completed prior to any further gaps being identified. This process is being overseen by the SEND Strategy Board and as the SEF is now finalised any further actions required by the FACT Programme will be fed in by the appropriate representative.

Family Help

- 36. Whilst there are significant strengths in the partnership delivery of support and services at the Early Help level, conversations within the FACT partnership and feedback from families suggest there are opportunities for development particularly in terms of system-wide collaborative approaches.
- 37. The FACT partnership has agreed to use the term 'Family Help' to stress that the focus is on working with families and to avoid historical confusion associated with the term 'Early Help'.
- 38. The project will draw in the issues identified within the Early Support Assessment described in paragraph 13 of this report as well as responding to partner and family feedback which includes reference to the following opportunities:
 - a. Enhancing capacity in the system for practitioners to take on the role of Lead Professional
 - b. Increasing consistency in the system-wide approaches to holistic whole family practice
 - c. Ensuring cohesion where multiple agencies are involved with the same family
 - d. Clarifying the system-wide Family Help offer
 - e. Increasing the flexibility in terms of how/when/where families are able to access support
 - f. Ensuring coherence between 'youth offer' and Family Help – this strand of work will be informed by the Task Group activity being undertaken in conjunction with Area Boards.
- 39. The ultimate aim of Family Help is to enable children, young people and families to access the right help at the right time through a co-ordinated approach to prevention and early intervention. The strategic response aligns strongly with other strategic initiatives across the BSW footprint particularly the NHS Children,

Young People and Families Transformation programme, SEND Strategy and the Police and Crime Plan.

40. A resourcing paper to deliver the project was signed off by the FACT Executive Board in June 2022 with a rationale for investing during the pilot development phase based on the research of the Early Intervention Foundation that identifies the costs of failing to intervene effectively at an early stage.
41. Council Transformation Fund allocation was agreed for the council contribution through the Transformation Board in July 2022. Positive discussions are ongoing with the Integrated Care Board regarding their contribution. Conversations regarding contribution from other core partners are also taking place.
42. An outcomes framework is currently being developed based on the diagram below and is intended to feature both short term measurable outcomes (eg school attendance) alongside longer term measures of social mobility (eg community level unemployment rates).

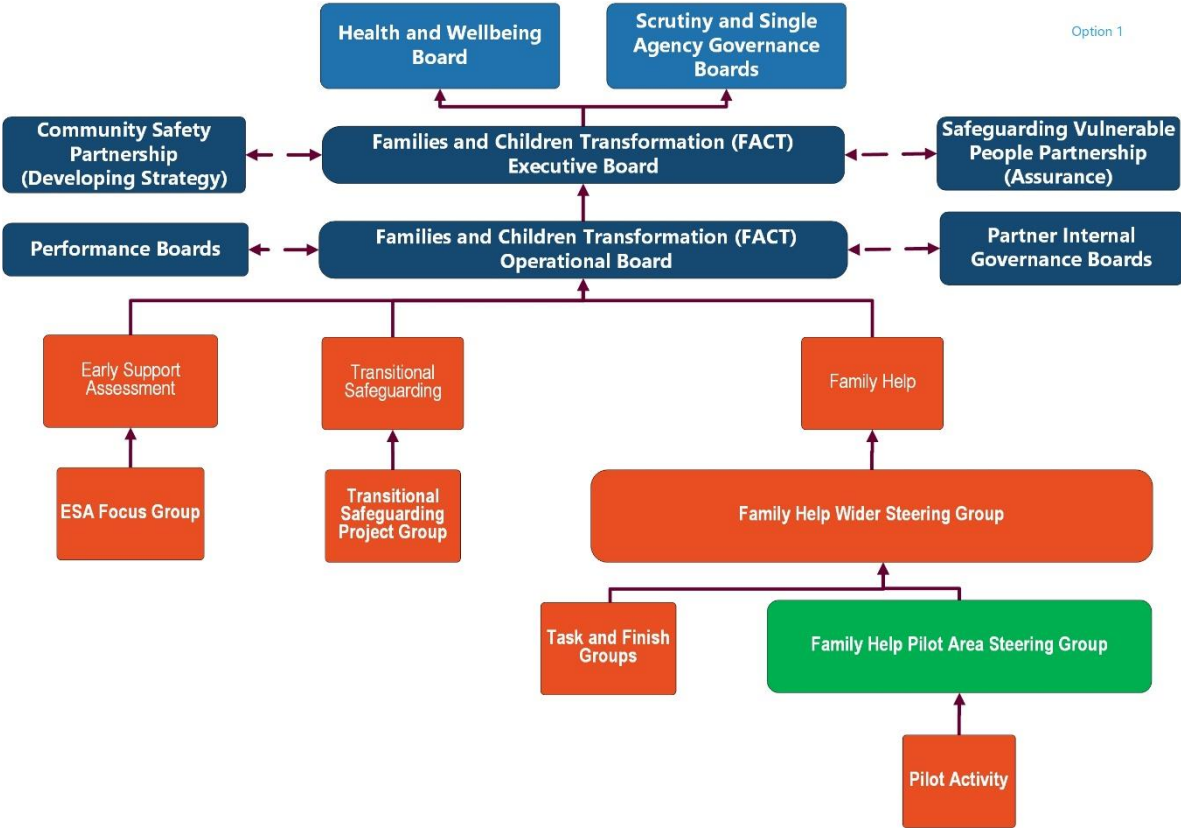


After the initial two year pilot period and the allocated 'pump priming' funding, it is not envisaged that additional funding will be required for this area of work.

43. There are a number of working groups being setup to deliver the main elements of the project which include:
 - A consolidated online Family Help offer
 - A recognisable brand for Family Help
 - Creation and delivery of a Family Help workforce development framework
 - Development of a Family Help Outcomes Framework
 - Delivery of the government's ambition for Family Hubs by April 2024
 - A pilot in a locally defined geography (Westbury/Warminster)
44. An evaluation partner will be appointed to assist in evaluation and monitoring of the Family Help project which is expected to be concluded in Summer 2024 although system changes gained through learning in the pilot will be rolled out during this period as they are identified.

Governance

45. Programme governance remains the same as the previous report. There is a multi-agency Operational Board (chaired until recently by ICB, appointment pending) and a multi-agency Executive Board (currently chaired by the council).



46. Recommendations for decisions are made by the projects to the Operational Board (which includes wider system partners and commissioned services) and from there to the Executive Board which is attended by the Council, the Police, the Integrated Care Board and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

47. Further discussion may be required by partner groups and Boards prior to a final decision being made.

Key milestones

48. The programme has a number of key milestones over the next 12-18 months across the various projects and these are set out below:

| Activity | Milestone Date |
|--|-------------------------|
| Early Support Assessment | |
| Audit Report presented to the FACT Operational Board | 1 November 2022 |
| Decision to formally transition the project to business as usual | 1 November 2022 |
| ESA project evaluated and closed | 31 December 2022 |
| Transitional Safeguarding | |
| Workshops gathering feedback | October – December 2022 |
| Report presented to the Operational Board | January 2023 |
| Report presented to the Executive Board | January/February 2023 |

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Decision on future activity | February 2023 |
| Family Help | |
| FACT/SVPP Workforce Development Lead selected | October 2022 |
| Consultation on Family Hubs model | October 2022 – February 2023 |
| Local stakeholder events begun in Westbury/Warminster | October 2022 |
| Evaluation partner confirmed | October 2022 |
| Migration of existing Family Help information to Wiltshire Together platform | December 2022 |
| Recruitment of additional resources | December 2022 |
| Formal pilot activity begins | January 2023 |
| Continual assessment and learning | January 2023-August 2024 |
| Formal evaluation concluded and decision on future rollout | July 2024-September 2024 |

Safeguarding Considerations

49. The programme will improve joint working with partners improving practice and thus outcomes, protecting children from harm.
50. This includes commissioning services more effectively which would contribute positively in the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults.
51. One of the principles of the programme is focused on providing a more intensive response to families at an earlier point when needs arise in order to prevent them escalating into statutory services. This is reflected in the projects within the programme where an earlier multi-agency response with a consistent lead professional will result in more stable, resilient families.
52. The programme of work will ensure that statutory safeguarding responsibilities remain in place throughout the system change activity.
53. The programme works closely with Public Health colleagues and will lead to improved health outcome in the local child and adult population. Projects support the holistic identification of a child and family's needs and an integrated approach to supporting them to achieve positive change – this leads to improved health and wellbeing.

Environmental impact of the proposal

54. Currently within the programme there is little anticipated impact on carbon emissions. This will be considered separately for each project during the scoping and planning phases.

Equality and diversity impact of the proposal

55. Operational Children's Services work with our most vulnerable children and families including those impacted by poverty and facing inequality.
56. The programme supports and contributes toward the Council's commitment to:

- Tackle inequalities and promote cohesive communities
- Not to discriminate in the way we provide services to the public
- Not to discriminate in our employment related practices
- Promote equality and good relations between different groups.

57. Individual projects within the programme will need to consider whether an equality impact assessment is required following the current advice and guidance.

Risk assessment

58. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Inadequate change leads to significant service cut backs within the council adversely affecting the outcomes for children and families |
| 2 | Insufficient resource availability to prevent families' difficulties escalating and in doing so, improve their outcomes and reduce demand for high tier services |
| 3 | Failure to exploit internal and external opportunities to eradicate duplication, simplify and integrate processes and improve multi-agency integrated working and collaboration |

59. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage those risks

| | Risk | Actions to Mitigate |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Lack of cultural change across the partnership inhibits success of any transformational project | Staff and partners will be fully engaged in decision making, design and implementation processes. FACT Programme Lead post is joint funded by the council, Police and Integrated Care Board. |
| 2 | Insufficient internal and external partner capacity to progress project work due to operational pressures | Emphasise the key areas for partner engagement so co-production is strongest in these areas. Give advance notice of meetings or deadlines. |
| 3 | Lack of co-production with children, young people and families results in limited improvement of their outcomes | Targeted engagement work will be undertaken to agree strategic opportunities to engage children and families in initial consultation work, including community engagement event, social media campaigns, schools and settings engagement and utilising of engagement contracts. |

Financial implications

60. It is anticipated that the programme will ensure that the council can maximise impact within the existing budget provision.

61. Funding has been agreed for the delivery of the Transitional Safeguarding proof of concept (Improved Better Care Fund) and the Family Help Project (Council Transformation budget and ICB funding) for defined periods of time to allow for pilot activity. Thereafter the delivery arrangements are expected to fall within existing budget allocations.
62. The programme will support the financial position of the council and multi-agency partners by co-producing support that meets the needs of the population of Wiltshire to improve outcomes and reduce ongoing demand whilst ensuring effective commissioning for new or renewed services is in place.

Legal implications

63. Each project within the programme will assess the legal implications for its intended outcomes and ensure that appropriate legal advice has been sought prior to the decisions on services being made.

Options considered

64. Projects within the programme that will require a strategic decision from FACT Executive Board will produce a business case detailing the options that have been considered and rejected as well as a preferred recommendation.

Conclusion

65. The conclusions reached have taken into account all the above and the committee is asked to:
 - a. Note the updates since the last report and milestones for the programme over the next 12-18 months

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Date of report: 14 October 2022

Background papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: None

Appendices

Link to the report submitted to the Select Committee in [March 2020](#) as reference earlier in the document

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

Wiltshire Council Funded Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Services for Children and Young People

Background

1. A Whole Life commissioning approach enables the Council to plan support around each person, without creating artificial barriers between childhood, adolescence, adulthood and older age. It also helps services to see people's whole lives – their strengths, talents and aspirations – rather than their needs or disabilities.
2. Wiltshire Council's vision is to create strong communities where people can fulfil their potential; be actively involved and included in their local communities; make informed decisions and have control over their lives, and to be valued and included in society.
3. Children and young people should receive the support they need, at the earliest opportunity, to live independently and safely within their communities. They and their families need the right help, in the right place, at the right time to prevent emotional and mental health difficulties such as anxiety, low mood, depression, conduct and eating disorders reaching crisis point and stopping them from achieving positive life outcomes.
4. Children, young people, and their families tell us they want to remain living with their families, avoiding where possible the need for residential care both now and as they move into adulthood. Children and young people (especially those with special educational needs and disabilities) also tell us they want to live independently, take risks and try new things – but sometimes feel held back by the worries and anxieties of their parents, or because they cannot access the right support.
5. Around a quarter of people will experience a significant mental health problem during their lifetime, disrupting life, work and relationships. Those who experience poor mental health often experience health inequalities as a result of this, and people with severe and long-term mental health conditions die on average 15-25 years earlier than the general population. Early identification and treatment are critical to prevent difficulties escalating.
6. Around 8,855 children and young people (CYP) in Wiltshire (9% of the 0-17 population) have a diagnosable mental health condition.
7. This report outlines the emotional wellbeing and mental health services available to children and young people in Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Council funding

8. Wiltshire Council directly commissions a range of bespoke services to ensure children and young people can access specialist mental health support provision, this includes:

| Provider | Funding per annum | Position Update |
|---|--|--|
| Kidscape Rise Pilot | £13,727 | Ended July 2022 |
| Youth Mental Health First Aid training & resources | £18,000 | Ongoing annual funding |
| Children and Young People Mental Health Network | £1,000 | Re-launch to include review of terms of reference, agenda, attendees, themes, where it sits alongside other forums |
| Relate Time to Talk | £50,000 | Contract end July 2022 – extension to March 2023 |
| Barnado's - Advice & Information £70k - Positive activity £60k - Therapy £220k | £350,000 | 3 year contract 01/04/2020-31/03/2023 |
| Parenting Programmes | £8,000 | Ongoing annual funding |
| Primary Mentoring | £40,000 | Ongoing annual funding via a service level agreement |
| Somehow Project | £30,000 | Ended |
| Sexual Assault Counselling Pilot | £11,000 | Funding until Mar 23 – procurement underway |
| Rethink – Mental Health Inclusion Service | Yr1 £267,792 Yr2 £268,753 Yr3 £274,818 | 3-year contract to end June 2024, currently in year 2 |
| Harbour Project | £160,608 | Funded by Designated Schools Grant |

Kidscape Rise Transition Programme

Description

9. This programme teaches children the practical skills and social competencies they need to help them navigate the challenges they will face throughout their transition through adolescence and into adulthood. The project, previously known as RISE, was developed in 2000, first as a National Lottery funded national programme and, extended from 2021 as a locally funded pilot in Wiltshire.
10. The Wiltshire programme was specifically aimed at supporting primary school children transitioning to secondary school. RISE was delivered as a “Train the

Trainer” model, open to school staff or parents and carers. The programme was fully interactive with a range of content to suit different learning styles and included practical support for developing a positive sense of self, managing change, handling peer pressure, and developing positive relationships, recognising and responding to bullying and knowing who can help.

Aims & Objectives

11. The aim of Kidscape’s peer mentoring programme is to improve the emotional wellbeing of children and young people by “matching” pupils of a similar age or with similar interests/experience with younger pupils in one-to-one non-judgemental relationships, to provide guidance and serve as positive role models.

Outcome

12. 10 virtual sessions, engaging 23 Primary Schools, 8 Secondary Schools and 4 voluntary organisations, were delivered in Wiltshire in 2021/22. 27 primary school staff, 9 secondary school staff and 4 voluntary sector staff attended. The “train the trainer” approach enabled the project to be delivered on an ongoing basis.
13. Following RISE’s initial pilot, of the children who participated, 95% said they felt happier about moving to secondary school, 94% that they felt more confident about making friends, 94% that they felt more able to handle a bullying situation and 90% that they felt more able to ask for help.

Contract Review and Value for Money

14. Funding ended in July 2022 but has been included in this report, as part of the wider budget. We are reviewing whether this is duplication between this service and the Primary Mentoring in-house service.

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training – Wiltshire Healthy Schools

Description

15. Youth Mental Health First Aid is an internationally recognised programme designed to promote awareness of psychological and emotional well-being and mental health and to support professionals to recognise and respond to mental health issues in 8–18-year-olds.
16. Wiltshire Council funds courses and membership for a mix of Wiltshire Council and school staff to be able to run mental health first aid courses to those who would benefit from them. Key areas covered within the course include emotional, mental, social and psychological well-being; eating disorders, self-harm and suicide; child, adolescent and family psychosocial development; depression, anxiety and psychosis; bullying, cyber bullying and promoting protective factors and good parenting.

Aims & Objectives

17. The Youth MHFA course teaches attendees how to recognise the early signs of a mental health problem in young people, feel confident helping a young person experiencing a mental health problem and to be able to guide a young person towards the right support.

Outcome

18. To date two waves of training sessions have been delivered, training leads from 61 Wiltshire schools and colleges. 41 schools are currently booked on cohort 3 which started in September 2022. A fourth cohort will begin in January 2023.
19. The Youth MHFA course complements other training offered by the Council around leadership in a whole school approach to mental health including Senior Mental Health Leads training and Healthy Schools Continued Professional Development.

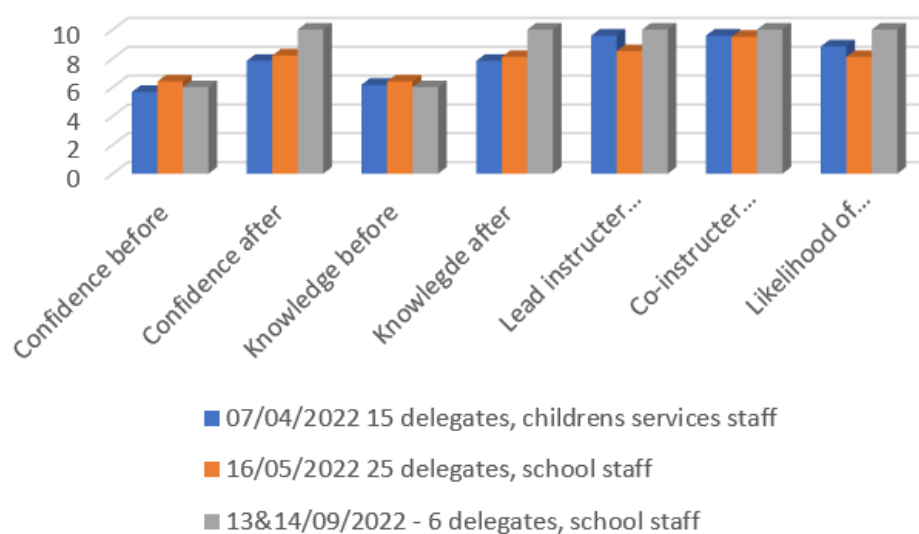
Impact

20. Delegates have become more aware of the signs of mental health issues and are better able to respond to the needs of 8-18 year olds by engaging in supportive conversations and signposting to support.
21. Evaluations are positive showing increases in knowledge and confidence, following the training. This builds the capacity of the children's workforce to effectively address the mental health needs of children and young people, with the aims of preserving good mental health, supporting early intervention, making appropriate and timely referrals and reducing demand on mental health services.
22. The following graph shows the YMHFA evaluation of the courses held this year:

Questions asked were:

- Confidence before
- Confidence after
- Knowledge before
- Knowledge after
- Lead instructor rating
- Co-instructor rating
- Likelihood of recommending the course

2022 YMHFA evaluation outcome



Stakeholder Feedback

- The course is in demand from a range of organisations and is recommended by key national agencies
- It has been accessed by foster carers, Children's Services staff and the Music Service
- It is an internationally recognised programme being used by many Council teams (some still buying from private consultants)
- It has been recommended and previously funded by the DfE. It is the key course in raising awareness around mental health
- In Wiltshire the course is regularly requested by schools, Wiltshire Police, School Nursing and the Voluntary Sector.

Contract Review & Value for Money

- Reduced Council costs of paying for private trainers @£300 per course
- Reduced the costs for schools by 50%, therefore only paying £150 per person
- The YMHFA course has been agreed as the key course to use with the children's workforce in Wiltshire – including with Oxford Health and Educational Psychologists

Children and Young People Mental Health Network

- This network was formed as a result of stakeholder and provider feedback that services should come together as a whole system to plan and deliver appropriate support for children and young people's mental health and well-being in Wiltshire.
- The network provides opportunities to bring children and young people together with stakeholders working to support children and young people's

mental health and to build a robust understanding of service delivery within the Thrive Model.

Aims & Objectives

25. The network aims to support the six key priorities of:

- a. Being led by children and young people
- b. Bringing together stakeholders working to support children and young people's mental health
- c. Understanding demand and capacity within the mental health system
- d. Sharing information, advice and good practice
- e. Taking opportunities to share training, learning and to upskill each other
- f. Encouraging, supporting and innovating

26. The network achieves its aims by:

- a. Facilitating the direct involvement of children and young people
- b. Strengthening the approach to prevention
- c. Promoting awareness of children and young people's mental health
- d. Involving children, young people, parents and carers in the development and improvement of services
- e. Driving collaboration and reducing fragmentation
- f. Ensuring that stakeholders are informed of the service offers available in Wiltshire, and that these are clearly defined and that pathways/referral criteria is easy to understand
- g. Ensuring there is effective partnership working in support of the aims
- h. Supporting the strategic development of the services

Stakeholder feedback

27. Quarterly member led newsletters are produced, sharing information on topics such as training courses available, links to government reports, information on national campaigns such as anti-bullying week.

Review

28. Due to the pandemic the frequency of meeting and sharing of information reduced. Officers are in the process of relaunching the Network.

Relate Time to Talk Counselling

Description

29. The Time to Talk service involves a range of independent counselling services delivered to support children aged 7-11 years. The counselling services will be tailored to the scale, timetables, referral method, cohort, administration and evaluation reporting of each school. There are 15 schools engaged:

- Bowerhill - Melksham
- Forest & Sandridge - Melksham
- Rivermead - Melksham

- Greentrees – Salisbury
- Clarendon Jnr - Tidworth
- Clarendon Inf - Tidworth
- The Mead - Trowbridge
- Castlemead - Trowbridge
- Monkton Park - Chippenham
- St Mary's - Chippenham
- Ivy Lane – Chippenham
- Charter – Chippenham
- Redland – Chippenham
- Kings Lodge – Chippenham
- Aloeric – Chippenham

30. These schools were chosen due to not having access to Mental Health Support Teams. 316 children have had counselling between September 2021 and July 2022.

Aims & Objectives

31. The service provision supports delivery of the following locally defined outcomes:

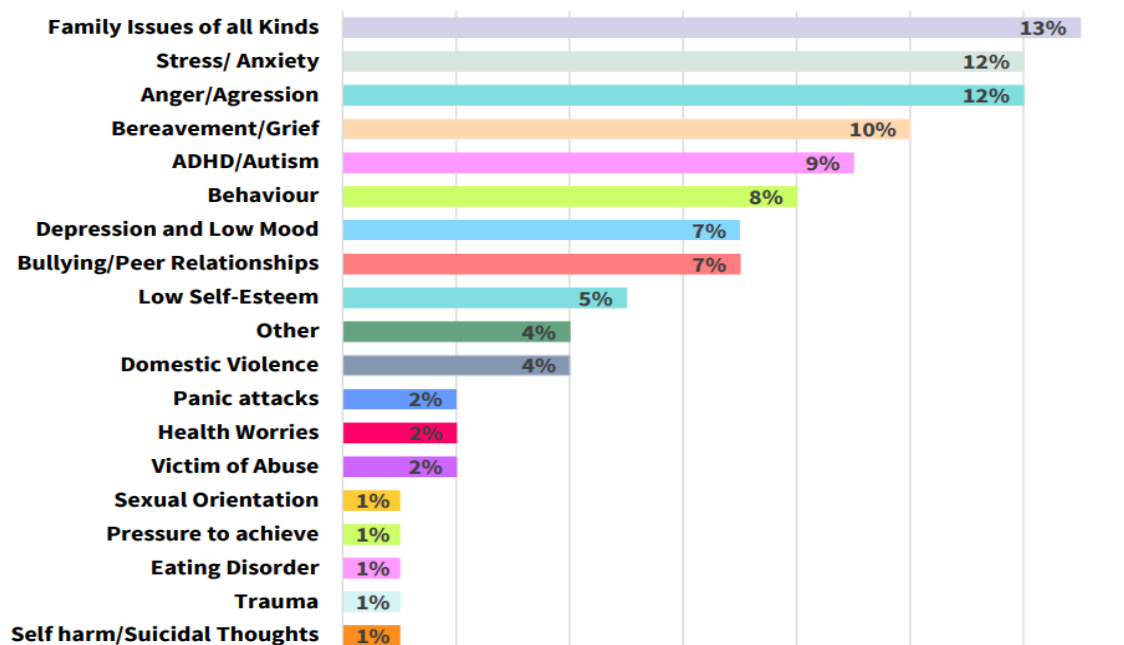
- a. More children and young people will enjoy good mental health, be 'resilient' and feel equipped to manage the usual ups and downs of life
- b. More children and young people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs will be identified early and receive the right help at the right time through services working together across the whole system. They will be supported in community settings including schools, reducing the need for access to more specialised services
- c. Children and young people with more serious or longer-term mental health needs will be able to access support close to home and recover in welcoming, inclusive and supportive communities
- d. Parents/carers and professionals in universal settings and primary care will feel more confident and able to respond to emotional wellbeing and mental health needs and are clear about when and how to access additional support
- e. More children and young people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs (including those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged) will have a positive and seamless experience of care and support (including a smooth transition to adult mental health services where appropriate). They are empowered and help is tailored to their individual needs and effects recovery
- f. Fewer children and young people will be admitted to hospital and those that are will be discharged to community support as soon as possible

32. The service provision also supports improvement in the following Public Health outcomes:

- a. Hospital admissions for mental health conditions (0-17)
- b. Self-harm hospital admissions (10-24)
- c. Locally defined outcomes

Stakeholder feedback

33. Reasons for accessing the service are reported as follows:



34. As a response to the pandemic and the increasing shortage of counsellors, Relate started a Talk Zone 'out of schools' counselling service in September 2021, which is run alongside the Time to Talk service, and is part funded by BBC Children in Need. This service is offering free counselling to children aged 12-18 years of age if they self-refer. From September to December 2021 24 children were seen through talk zone, remotely using Zoom.

Contract Review and Value for Money

35. In the 2020/21 school year, Relate delivered 1714 sessions, with 209 children benefitting from the counselling service.

36. The following is from the 2021/22 data report:

37. Qualitative figures from feedback form based on whether the service helped 'a little' and 'a lot':

- a. 93.75% children reporting an improvement in the problems they brought to counselling
- b. 93.75% children reporting an improvement in relationships at home
- c. 81.25% children reporting an improvement in relationships at school
- d. 100% children engaged in shaping the service (all children are asked to provide a feedback form and comments which are then used to help shape the service)

38. Outcomes around whether the service improved children's outlook:
- a. 87.5% children have good ideas about what to do when things feel bad
 - b. 81.25% children are able to talk to others about how they feel

Barnardo's Early Mental Health Service

Description

39. The service was set up to provide early mental health and counselling support for children and young people (5-18) who are registered with a GP in Wiltshire from April 2020. The activities within the contract include:
- a. Advice and information
 - b. Positive activities
 - c. Therapy (including online)

Aims & Objectives

40. The Early Mental Health Service aims to:
- a. Provide community "connection" for children and young people needing early help and support around their emotional wellbeing and mental health in partnership with the Wiltshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
 - b. Improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people by providing an early response to emotional wellbeing and/or emerging/low level mental health needs
 - c. Improve promotion of and access to the provision of self-care tools and resources that support children, young people and their families to help themselves, take responsibility for their health and wellbeing, and build resilience
 - d. Increase the early detection of mental health problems so that these can be addressed early on, thus preventing problems from getting worse and requiring a more specialist response
 - e. Improve outcomes for children and young people with emotional wellbeing and/or emerging/low level mental health problems through the provision of high quality, accessible, evidence-based interventions that work
 - f. Reduce demand on services delivered by general practitioners and specialist services (primary and secondary care, including CAMHS).
 - g. Improve awareness of local support and services with children, young people, parents/carers and professionals so that they are clear about what is available locally and how to access it
 - h. Improve access to services for children, young people and their families who are vulnerable/disadvantaged and hard to reach, by tailoring services to help remove barriers and meet their needs

- i. Improve transitions between key stages

Outcomes

41. Figures from Q1 22/23:

- a. 12 blog posts published - World Health Day, Stephen Lawrence Day, Exams and assessments – tips to help manage, Stress Awareness month, Ukrainian Support Helpline, World Earth Day, National walking month, Mental Health Awareness Week, Pride month, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Men's Health Awareness Week, social media, mental health, and young people
- b. 142k website hits
- c. 5 Decider Skills groups started in Q1, 6 completed. 1 child/young people 1:1. 32 children and young people completed groups
- d. 35 children and young people commenced therapy – 2.6 new every week. 25 children and young people completed therapy, all with positive ROMS bar one, who stayed the same
- e. 70 children and young people attended the positive activities
- f. 113 children and young people accepted into service.

Stakeholder feedback

42. 94% of children and young people said they would use the service again, 100% would recommend to a friend (with comments that they already had)
- Onyourmind.org.uk has been so helpful - thank you for the resource
Thank you for coming back to me so quickly your website is amazing
 - We thought it was great that it was online so no direct focus on individuals and that you could participate at your own pace
 - Everyone worked as a team, no one was singled out. Everything was also explained very clearly, with a chance to ask questions
 - The understanding of feelings and that you are not the only one that feels that way and that it can feel different to other people.
 - It's good to get things off your back and talk about scenarios. Counselling has really helped me.
 - Very helpful. Nice to have someone safe to talk to.
 - Definitely - Mum and Dad (and now I notice too) said that it has actually helped me loads with my feelings
 - Thank you so much for today. X has been very anxious since he returned from his school residential trip and the session today really lifted up his mood (he was even able to go upstairs on his own to look for a pebble he made before, and he hasn't been able to go upstairs on his own for days because of intrusive thoughts). He was also able to recognise how much the session helped him. Thank you!!

Contract Review and Value for Money

43. Contract monitoring reviews take places quarterly, with the next due in October.
44. Barnardo's provide a commentary alongside their figures.

Key points made Q1:

- a. Staffing shortages are affecting what is able to be delivered, causing longer wait times. These are being addressed and roles are being recruited to, but it has caused a backlog for example:
 - The waiting list number for online /phone counselling is currently 2 so a very short wait.
 - For face to face sessions the number waiting is 41 equating to a 2-3 month wait. Barndao's have taken many steps to drive down waiting lists, i.e. introduce group options, been more flexible on appointment times, and their waiting list has been falling for some months. We remain in regular contact with all those on the waiting list and signposting is offered.
 - The Decider Skills waiting list is 71, they have 42 children/young people starting courses week beginning 10 Oct 2022.
 - They have courses planned up to the Christmas break as part of their drive to reduce the waiting list.
- b. Recruiting counsellors has been difficult, which is not uncommon in the current climate but both full time EMHPs have quit-officers will be reviewing payments if key posts are not recruited to
- c. Schools are making the majority of referrals
- d. Struggle to find a geographic location to meet with children and young people for co-production purposes

Parenting Programme

45. We make a £8,000 contribution per annum to delivery of parenting programmes across Wiltshire, this provides resources, administration support and training. The remaining funding comes from Supporting Families Budget.

Stop Parenting Programme 2016-2021

46. STOP Parenting Programme is a 10-week supportive programme for parents of 11- to 16-year-olds.
47. STOP was an evidence-based programme from the Ministry of Parenting. Delivery was a joint project involving Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire CAMHS and Wiltshire schools, including Thrive Hub Schools. Alongside STOP, PitSTOP training also took place during 2021. PitSTOP was based on the theory and content of the STOP programme but designed to be delivered on a one-to-one basis and is available to STOP trained facilitators.

Triple P – Positive Parenting Programme

48. Triple P is for parents and carers of children aged 5 – 12 years. The programme is designed to give parents and carers the skills they need to raise confident, healthy children and teenagers and to build stronger family relationships. Triple P doesn't tell people how to parent, rather, it gives parents and carers simple and practical strategies they can adapt to suit their

own values, beliefs and needs. The benefits can be dramatic and long-lasting.

49. Triple P groups are 2 hours per week for 7 sessions and are free. Triple P groups are a great opportunity to meet other parents and carers in similar situations.
50. Triple P is offered as an early help option to prevent emerging mental health issues of children through appropriate support at the right time.

Time Out For Parents – Children with Special Needs

51. The seven sessions are written by parents and professionals with input from many different families with experience of children with special needs. They aim to help parents/carers in meeting their child's needs, focusing on children aged between 3 to 11 years with additional or special needs.
52. A medical or formal diagnosis is not required for a parent or carer to attend and the groups are free of charge. These groups are being offered in partnership with the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council.
53. Time Out for Parents: Children with Special Needs is offered online via Microsoft Teams.
54. Wiltshire Council also has an online page on parenting courses. Our courses can help you find new ways and ideas to strengthen relationships with your children and young people, how to problem solve, reduce stress and understand and guide behaviour. You'll be encouraged to build upon your existing skills and learn from other parents and carers, allowing you to see that you're not on your own.
55. Time Out For Parents is offered as an option whilst parents are on the waiting list for SWAPP to try and reduce the demand on SWAPP and to reduce the impact on the mental health of children who are undiagnosed and need additional support which is not available elsewhere.

Primary Mentoring in-house service

Description

56. This service enhances early intervention and prevention through the provision of a mentoring programme for primary school age pupils (8–11-year-olds) who are at risk of developing social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Mentoring builds resilience and seeks to resolve many emerging social, emotional and mental health difficulties, thereby preventing these problems from getting worse.
We currently have 19 trained volunteers working across multiple programmes across the county.

Aims & Objectives

57. More children and young people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs are identified early and supported in community settings, particularly

schools, reducing the need for access to more specialist mental health services

58. Parents/Carers and professionals in universal settings such as schools and primary care are more confident and able to respond to emotional and mental health needs and are clear about when and how to access additional help
59. All children and young people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs (including those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged) have timely access to the right support close to home and recover in welcoming, inclusive and supportive communities
60. More children and young people with emotional wellbeing and mental health needs have a positive experience of care and support which is good quality, empowers them, is tailored to their individual needs and provides access to treatment that works

Outcomes

61. There were 44 Primary Mentoring matches between 1/9/2021 and 31/3/2022. The average number of days from referral to match was 32 days with the minimum being 0 (match done on the same day that written referral was received). The children were matched with a mentor for an average of 16 weeks.
62. Of the 15 children that completed their Primary Mentoring interventions starting and finishing data was collected from 12 children using an outcomes web. 9 of the 12 children (75%) scored higher overall at the end of the primary mentoring compared to the beginning. Generally, the children thought there were people that cared about them, that they could be helpful, and they enjoyed spending time at home.
63. The chart below shows the percentage change, for each of the outcomes' web questions, from the start of the primary mentoring to the finish. The area where the primary mentoring has made the most impact is the children's perception of their ability to deal with problems.

Stakeholder Feedback

64. Some recent feedback from 31 children who completed a primary mentoring intervention includes:
 - a. 100% of the children felt they were listened to by their mentor
 - b. 92% were comfortable or fairly comfortable talking to their mentor
 - c. 100% of children felt safe when talking to their mentor
 - d. 92% felt that the mentor tried to understand them
 - e. 100% would recommend primary mentoring to their friends
 - f. 100% found the primary mentoring to be helpful
65. Qualitative feedback received included:

- a. Of the 31 matches made, feedback was collected in the child's own words on how the programme had helped them. Key areas included managing their emotions, socially interacting with peers, and having time away to come back to class feeling relaxed and ready to learn
- b. Feedback from schools indicated positive changes in behaviour and school. The significant change was in confidence to being able to respond to their peers, build friendships and resilience in managing difficult situations
- c. 1 school fed back on their gratitude of sessions being extended as it helped the children benefit the most out of the service
- d. Feedback was received from one parent where the child is normally socially shy and keeps feelings to herself but had been able to open more to her family for support and showed a significant improvement in confidence
- e. 2 mentors have fed back on their primary mentoring experience and how they supported the children. They indicated the importance of the child having time away from the class to gain independence and self-confidence. Another mentor commented on the importance of the initial meeting and the usefulness of having an independent adult there to explain the ground rules and level of support that can be given to the mentee. The mentors also expressed the skills needed including being able to prepare the child for closure, adaptable to change, interacting quickly to times of distress and building effective rapport with the children to feel trusted.

Contract Review and Value for Money

66. This programme is delivered by the Children in Care and Young People's team. The team shares an annual report with commissioning. The service has been funded since 2016 and funds a 30hr per week support co-ordinator post, who has the responsibility of co-ordinating the project and training the 19 volunteers.

Somehow Project

67. The SOMEHOW project was part of the Swindon, Wiltshire, and Bath and North-East Somerset Sustainability and Transformation Plan. The project related to the Getting Advice group of the THRIVE CAMHS model, bringing together health and education to support emerging difficulties in the area of social emotional and mental health (SEMH). The SOMEHOW model supported 16 cases in five primary schools in Wiltshire during the course of the project (2019-2022). The project delivered against the following key priorities:
 - **Prevention and early intervention:** To identify and address emotional and mental health problems early on and to deliver easy and timely access to the right help first time.
 - **Community resilience:** To empower adults working with children and young people, as well as to promote inclusive practice in mainstream settings.
 - **Digital innovation:** To address barriers to accessing specialist guidance for those working with children and young people in the community by reducing travel burdens and costs and ensuring processes are efficient.
68. The SOMEHOW model was an early intervention digitally-mediated multidisciplinary team (MDT) response. The SOMEHOW team was made up

of professionals from Wiltshire Children's Services: Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Service, Oxford Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Specialist Special Educational Needs Service, and Virgin Care Speech and Language Therapy Service. The MDT met via videoconferencing technology to formulate specialised intervention plans for primary school-aged children (aged 4-10 years) presenting with early signs of SEMH difficulties. Formulation was a process of co-constructing a hypothesis or “best guess” about the origins of a child’s difficulties. This process developed a narrative which provided the basis for an intervention plan tailored to the individual child. Key staff members and parents/carers delivered the intervention plan in primary school settings and at home.

Outcomes of the project include:

69. Empowered key staff members working with children in primary schools and supported their day-to-day interactions, supported a joined-up approach between education staff and parents/carers, developed a better understanding of the child’s needs and provided strategies to use across context
70. A general pattern of progress towards individualised goals from the perspective of the key staff member and parent/carer
71. Change in perceptions of the child by key staff members and parents/carers as well as small improvements in social emotional outcomes for children, with a general pattern of decreasing Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire scores and increasing Thrive® percentage scores
72. An overall positive experience of the SOMEHOW process for key staff members and parents/carers in relation to personnel, information provision, the help received, and the usefulness of the written plan
73. Evidence of systems changes from the project included:
 - a. Positive views of the SOMEHOW project by education staff and the MDT in relation to prevention and early intervention, a collaborative understanding of the child’s needs, and access to support
 - b. Positive views of the SOMEHOW project by education staff and the MDT in relation to use of digital technologies for service efficiencies, change of practice, and meeting the communication needs of staff and parents/carers
74. The pilot project demonstrated success in the following areas:
 - a. Co-production of an efficient, joined-up, child- and family-centred service using innovative, digital approaches
 - b. Collaboration across SEND, CAMHS, and Virgin Care through the entire duration of the project, with interest in the principles of SOMEHOW to align with service goals
 - c. Provision of early support that is valued by education staff and parents/carers
75. The SOMEHOW project had relevance to:

- a. National recommendations (e.g. National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines and Division of Clinical Psychology guidelines for differential diagnosis and formulation-based practice)
- b. Wiltshire strategic priorities (e.g. THRIVE mental health plan, SEND Inclusion Strategy, Autism Strategy)
- c. Existing pathways of support (e.g. Mental Health in Schools Teams (MHSTs) and the Autism Diagnostic Pathway)

76. The recommendation following the pilot was signposting to an MDT by Mental Health in Schools Teams (MHSTs) and the ongoing development of a clear pathway of support for schools that brings together health and education to support difficulties around SEMH.

Sexual Assault Recovery Counselling (SARC)

Description

77. A therapeutic counselling service was commissioned as a pilot in 2021 by the NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) Health and Justice Team (Southwest), in partnership with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police. ISVA services are commissioned by the OPCC. The service provides specialist trauma informed counsellors to engage with children aged 4 and upwards who have experienced sexual violence. 22 children from Wiltshire were referred to this pilot service.

Aims & Objectives

- 78. To reduce psychological distress as well as enhance and promote psychological well-being for Children, Young People and Adults
- 79. To promote and protect the mental health of Children, Young People and Adults who have survived rape and/or sexual abuse at any time in their lives
- 80. Advance the education of the general public and in the workplace in the prevalence and effects of rape or childhood sexual abuse
- 81. The alleviation of the effects of mental distress, depressive illness and post-traumatic stress caused by childhood sexual abuse
- 82. Reduce risk of self harm and suicide by developing personalised coping strategies
- 83. Reduce use of alcohol or illicit drugs

Outcomes

84. Between March 21-March 22, there were 28 Wiltshire referrals out of 51

85. In that year 256 sessions were offered with an average of 14 sessions per completed case and 4% DNA rate

86. 85% of completed cases showed improvement across the 'revised children's anxiety and depression scale' and the 'outcomes written scale'. Of those that did not show improvement the scores remained the same

Contract Review and Value for Money

87. A joint procurement exercise for Wiltshire and Swindon is underway with BSW Integrated Care Board and final decisions for the future service are being made. The service specification is being revised to ensure the new service meets the needs of all the children who would be referred.

88. There is no expectation that the future service will replicate current provision, indeed, there is an expectation that proposal should include innovation and redesign in order to achieve the updated requirements of the specification to make best use of funds to meet the needs of service users. The service will provide a range of evidence based, trauma informed, therapeutic interventions for adults and children and young people who have experienced sexual violence and abuse.

Rethink Mental Health - Social Inclusion Service

Description

89. Wiltshire Council is jointly commissioning and funding this service with Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB. The service is place based in the Wiltshire locality. The purpose is to create an 'inclusion network' in Wiltshire – a universal offer of online (and possible face to face) information, advice and signposting to those recovering from, and living with, mental ill-health.

90. The Rethink Mental Health Social Inclusion Service provides a community mental health service for young people over the age of 16 who suffer with mental ill health. The service has 4 main aspects of delivery which are:

- **Inclusion Support** - offering one-to-one support tailored to individual needs, helping to overcome mental health barriers by being involved and included in the local community. Direct emotional and practical support is provided by an Inclusion Coach. The support will typically be 8-12 sessions over a 3-month period
- **Mental Health Hubs & Drop-Ins** - delivery of community mental health drop-in hubs across the county - in Salisbury, Trowbridge, and Chippenham. The drop-in hubs are free for anyone needing support with their mental health and wellbeing
- **Peer & Volunteer Opportunities** - peer support and volunteer opportunities. Individuals can access guidance from peers who may have had similar experiences. Key opportunities for the service currently are: Community Hub

Volunteers (meeting and greeting others and providing local information); Digital Tech Buddies (helping people get online) and Travel Volunteers (supporting people to access public transport)

- **Online Mental Health Community** - Clic is a free online community to support mental health. Clic Wiltshire provides tailored advice, guidance and support. Developed by its users, the Clic Wiltshire platform has a strong peer support aspect with features such as Clic Chat and Forums where users can chat and share advice. There are also directories for services and support in an Information & Support section.

Aims & Objectives

- Improved health and emotional well being
- Improved quality of life
- Improved levels of confidence and self esteem
- Increased social, health and digital inclusion
- Increased independence

Contract Review and Value for Money

91. The last formal review took place in May 2022. Rethink report on a wide range of KPIs.

92. In 2021-22

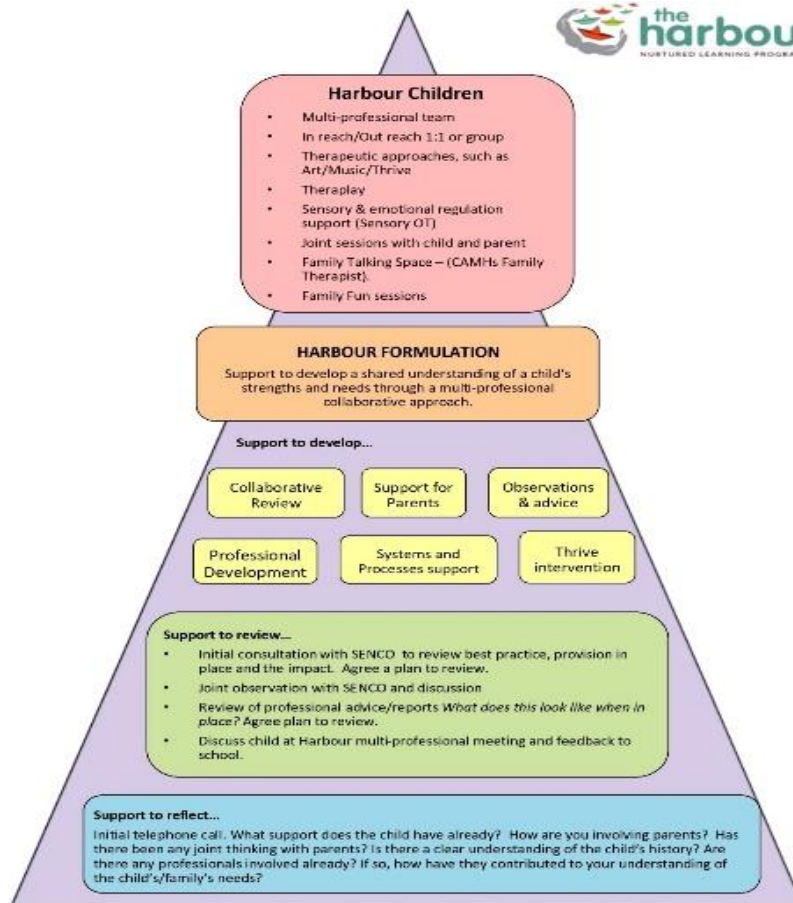
| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of people referred to service | 462 |
| Number of people declined by service | 122 |
| Number of people started using service | 353 |
| Number of people finished using service | 123 |
| No of Volunteers/Peers Recruited | 13 |
| No of members attending forums | 266 |

- Peer Support - 5 digital tech buddies now in post and supporting clients
- 4 Volunteers supporting the local drop in Hubs
- Promotion and Networking, attending 10 groups in quarter 4 and 58 to year end
- 3 hubs continue to be attended well-North Chippenham, West Trowbridge & South Salisbury. Unfortunately, the fourth Hub East Devizes the attendance dropped off to 0 so the decision was made to cancel this hub and look to a different area possibly Durrington, Bulford or Tidworth moving forward
- Campaigns and awareness events promoted on social media, especially when linked with service (e.g. mental health, community, inclusion, social and loneliness), including significant service specific campaigns
- Establishing links with other organisations with a digital directive throughout Wiltshire (via 'Get Connected' group) to network and share resources. Collaborative work with this group including production of user-guides to aid service users with digital tasks and overcoming barriers
- Establishing more comprehensive service page within national Rethink website which included downloadable content and provide additional online

- information portal for service (e.g. integration of Welcome Pack)
- h. Improved digital/online marketing and promotion of service
 - i. Design and creation of marketing and promotion material for service delivery, including posters for: Community Mental Health Hubs; Digital Tech Buddy Scheme; Greener Health Project and Happy Cafés
 - j. Implementation of donated laptops (from Wiltshire Digital Drive) to be used by staff and volunteers at hubs

Harbour Project

93. The Harbour Nurtured Learning Programme (NLP), set up in 2017, is designed to incorporate therapeutic approaches to enable primary aged children with emerging Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs to develop relationships and positively engage with learning in school. Since the pilot phase in 2017, the Harbour Project was developed to support 15 schools.
94. The Harbour Project is grant funded to provide the following services:
 - advice and signposting
 - tuition sessions
 - social activities
 - counselling
95. The aim of this engagement is to support young people to connect to their local communities, connect with each other and support their resilience and understanding. The Harbour Model as The Centre of Excellence is based on the development and delivery of eight core principles:
 - a. Activities that involve schools, families, and the child/young person with equal intent.
 - b. Activities that start at young ages.
 - c. Schemes that focus on sensory and emotional stability and resilience.
 - d. Schemes that equip families, schools and children/young people with practical coping and management skills that start with the child/young person.
 - e. Multi-disciplinary actions, that contain threads of input from a range of professionals and disciplines.
 - f. Clinical/behavioural interventions delivered via engaging and rewarding activities that can be translated into the home situation.
 - g. Opportunities that can be repeated or returned to in order to consolidate learning.
 - h. And all built into the appropriate key stage curriculum.
96. A development from the project was found to be the Pyramid model, which sets out the pathways open to an individual student who comes into Harbour.



97. The Harbour project published an update in December 2021, *Understanding children's strengths and needs in order to help them flourish*.

98. We recognise that the project is grant funded and is managed by the project schools, however it proposed that these arrangements are reviewed and a funding agreement is put in place with clear reporting mechanisms.

Next steps

99. The THRIVE Framework is an integrated, person centred, and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and families which conceptualises need in five categories; Thriving, Getting Advice and Signposting, Getting Help, Getting More Help and Getting Risk Support, we need to ensure we adopt this approach to our work.

100. The CAMHS contract is due to end in March 2025, the Council contributes £518,000 annually to this and we manage a £515,727 annual budget on behalf of the ICB. We have an opportunity to review and shape future early help, emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people in Wiltshire.

101. In order to develop a commissioning plan, it is proposed that a local Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy is developed. We also need to develop a system to identify and support children and young people at risk, enabling us

to work more proactively and effectively to support with the early signs of emotional and mental ill health. The end of the CAMHS contract enables us to look at the total resources for early help and how we commission these services.

Author: Victoria Bayley, Head of Service Whole Life Commissioning

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Update on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

Executive summary

This paper provides an update on the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This element of the paper focuses on the Wiltshire Local Authority commissioning of targeted and specialist CAMHS provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT). It includes context, history, provision and outcomes. It should be noted that Oxford Health remain in a national critical IT incident in relation to access to their electronic patient administration system. This is currently impacting on the availability of information and data.

Proposal

That the committee:

- a) Note the update

Authors:

Contact details:

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Andrea Shand – Associate Director, Thames Valley CAMHS T4 and HOPE Adult Eating Disorder Provider Collaboratives and BSW Community

Dr Viki Laakkonen – Associate Medical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist – Salisbury Community CAMHS

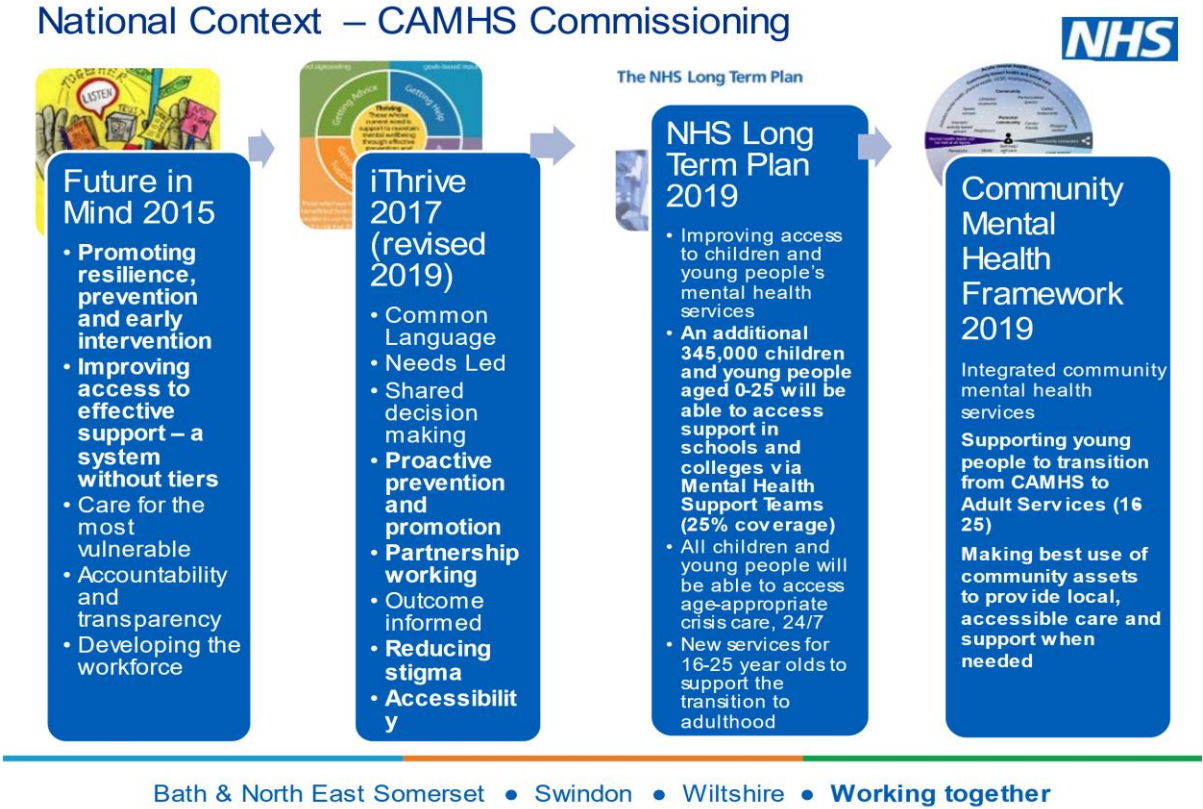
Update on Children and Young People’s Mental Health

Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the provision of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). It focuses on the provision part-funded by Wiltshire Local Authority with Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT) whilst also providing local and national context.

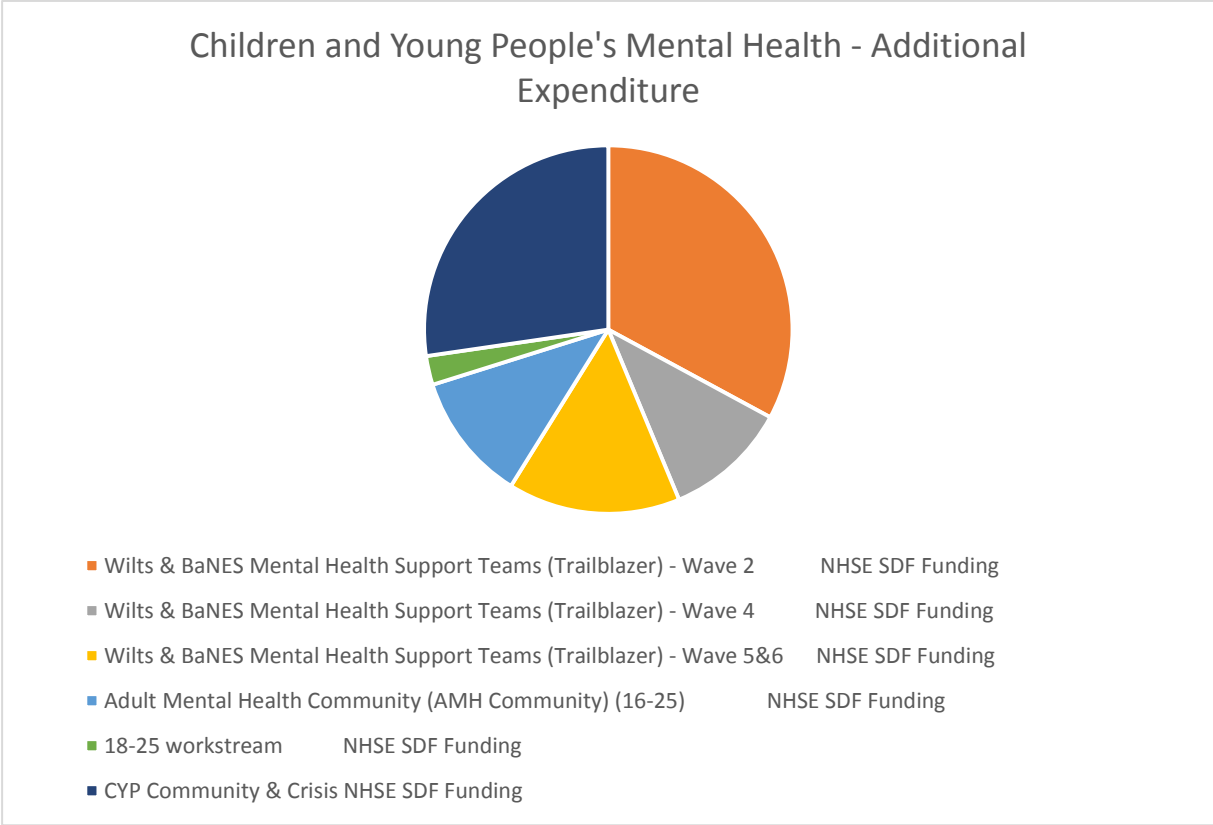
1. Background

The provision of children and young people’s mental health remains a local, regional and national priority. National policy changes in the last 5 years have reinforced the need for systems to provide earlier and increased access to evidence based treatment and interventions, as well as delivering new models of care that avoid fragmentation and ‘cliff edges’ in care pathways. These are summarised in the diagram below:



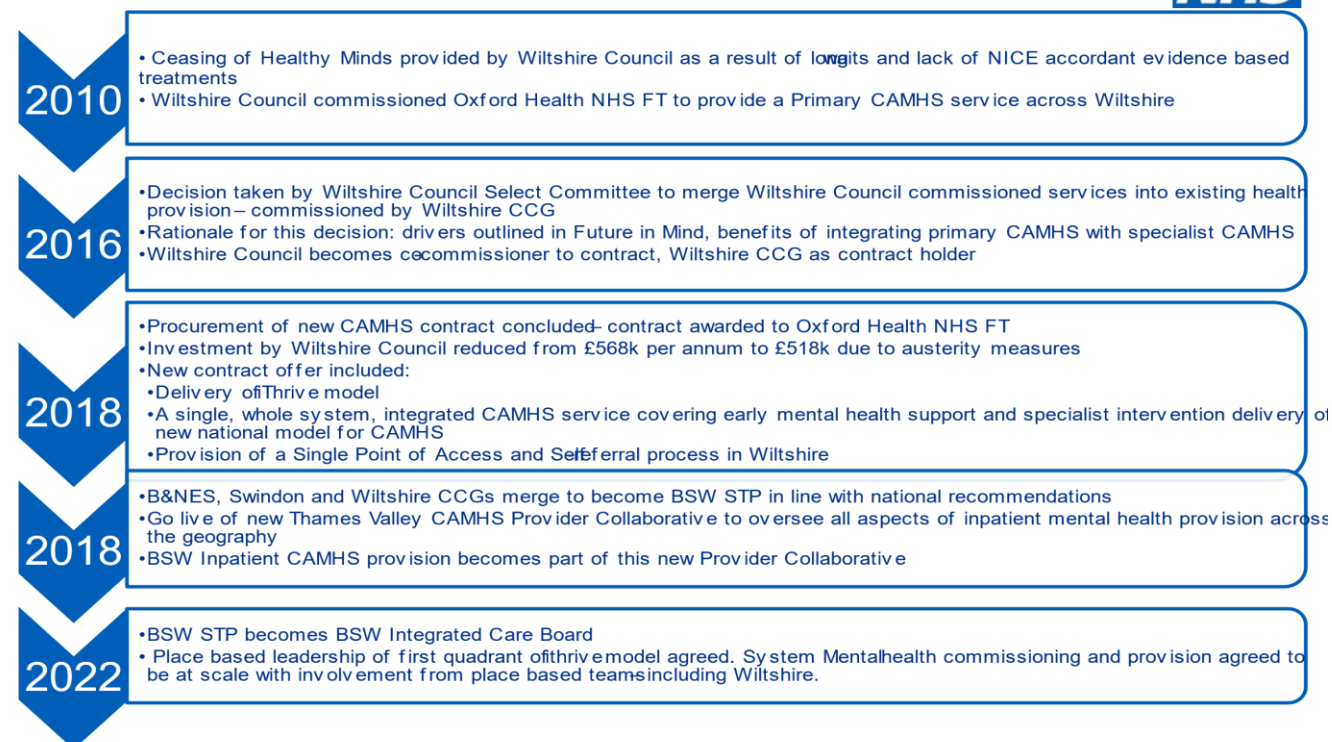
BSW Integrated Care Board (ICB) currently spends £19.24m on CAMHS services including CYP eating disorder services.

Of this £19.24m, £5.5m is allocated to Wiltshire services, with then further investments on top for specific service lines as outlined in the diagram below:



Mental Health Support Teams in Schools are commissioned against a national specification, with limited flexibility for local adjustment. Wiltshire Council provides £518k per annum to support children and young people’s mental health services.

The diagram below details a short history of the commissioning arrangements for Wiltshire in relation to the OHFT contract.



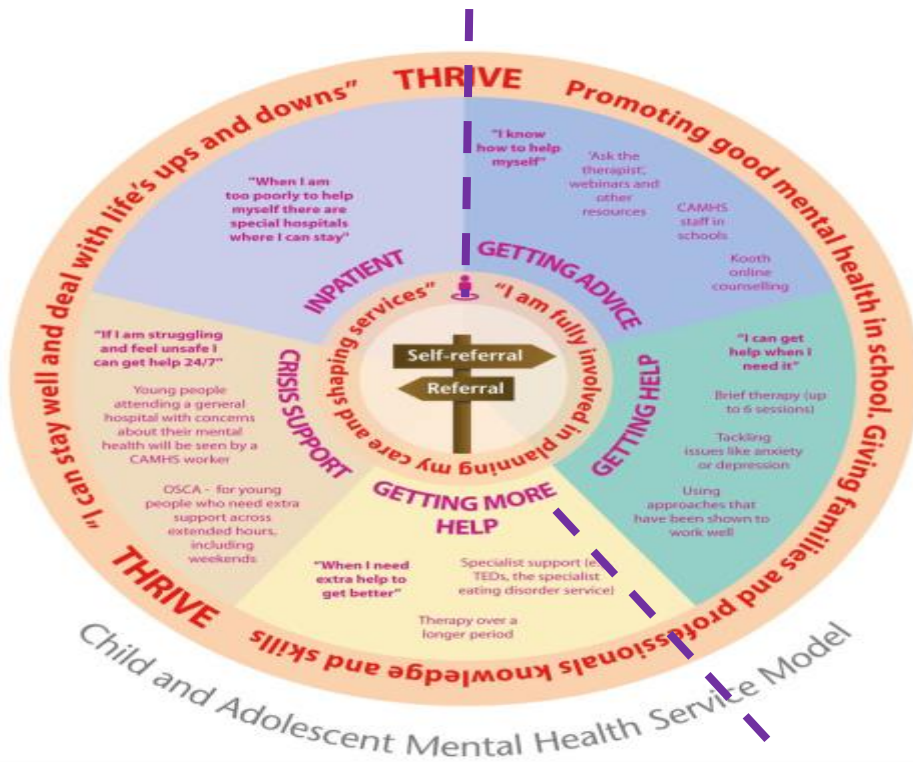
Bath & North East Somerset • Swindon • Wiltshire • Working together

As indicated in the diagram above, Wiltshire Council took a cabinet decision in 2018 to reduce funding for CAMHS by £50k. This was taken as a saving by the Council in light of nationally mandated austerity measures.

A deep dive review of children and young people’s mental health was undertaken in Wiltshire in 2019. The associated scrutiny report recommended the following, which have been updated with the actions undertaken:

- **Partnership with schools** – delivered through expansion of MHSTs
- **Online resources** – re-design of CAMHS website, self-help tools and resources co-produced with children and young people which have been deployed pan-system
- **Looked After Children and 16-25** – Dedicated BSW 16-25 community services framework in place (co-chaired by Wiltshire Council lead). Redesign of Outreach Service for Children and Adolescents (OSCA) and implementation of In-reach Expansion.

Whilst the funding from Wiltshire Local Authority has been merged with the wider health contract, there is specific provision for Wiltshire. The IThrive model is the agreed delivery model both nationally and locally and features below:



The services summarised in the Getting Advice and Getting Help segments are those that were previously regarded as primary CAMHS provision, with a focus on early intervention and support available to all. Our iThrive service model for BSW has been co-produced with children, young people and families.

The diagram below details the offer across BSW ICB:

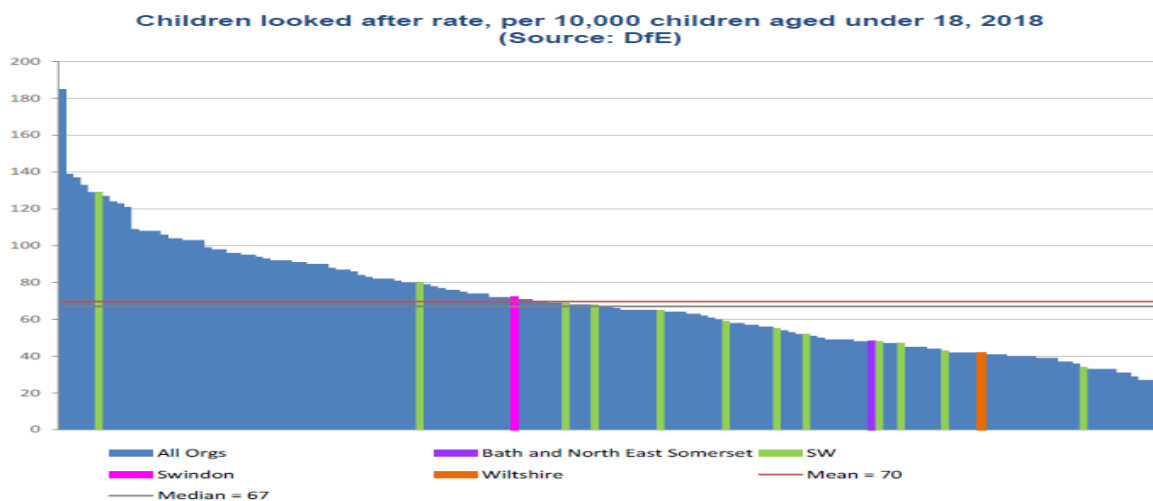


2. Wiltshire Delivery Model

Work has been undertaken since 2018 to review and refine the model in Wiltshire to implement IThrive. The current position is detailed below:

- Getting Advice and Getting Help provision implemented across Wiltshire
- Primary Mental Health offer enhanced through Mental Health Teams in Schools
- Wiltshire is now the best served locality in terms of provision with a dedicated Single Point of Access and in reach service
- The Single Point of Access is part of primary MH offer, with education consultation as well as direct support
- Getting Advice and Getting Help is not only provided by Oxford Health. Other providers also contribute in this space. Detail on these services, which are funded separately are included in a separate report.

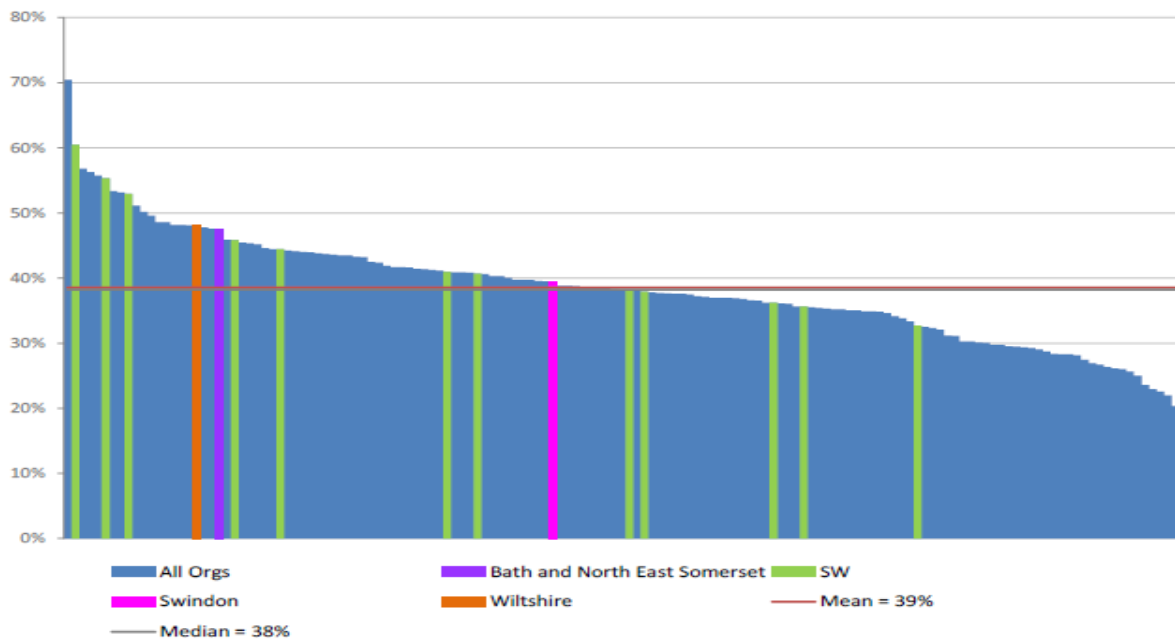
Wiltshire In-reach Team



Although the number of children looked after in Wiltshire is well below the national average per 10,000 (as demonstrated in the graph above), the percentage of those children and young people whose emotional wellbeing is a cause for concern is well above the national average at 48% for Wiltshire young people.

This data is compiled from Wiltshire Council held information by the NHS Benchmarking Network. This could be reviewed in more detail should the Committee want to investigate further.

Percentage of looked after children (5-16 yrs) whose emotional wellbeing is a cause for concern, 2018/19 (Source: PHE)



In order to address this and provide earlier, multi-agency support, Oxford Health have established (with system funding and support) the Wiltshire In-Reach service. This is a community-based offer providing wrap around support for children and young people where there is already a multi-agency network in place, and where the needs of the child/young person and their family/carer would best be met by an integrated approach. Within Wiltshire, links have been established between this service and the Council's in-house Stronger Families team, as well as those children's services provided by HCRG Care Group.

The CAMHS team work in partnership with children's social care to provide a specialist mental health, multi-disciplinary input to vulnerable children and young people (and their families) who present with complex psychosocial and systemic issues, within a consultation framework.

The main benefits achieved as a result are:

- Shared understanding and formulation across agencies to wrap around the young person and their families/carers
- Direct interventions for children, young people and their families presenting with complex trauma and attachment issues, where there is also a mental health or significant wellbeing need and who are open to Children's Services
- Provision of a Risk Support function (in line with i-Thrive model) where children, young people and their families may be unable to benefit from treatment but who remain a significant concern and risk, giving psychological input to the wider professional network

This service has been in place since 2020 and a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are collected and will be reported on a quarterly basis. Reporting on contractual KPIs has been paused through the pandemic. We are now at the point of restarting this and we will be reporting these KPIs as part of our revised Contract

Reporting Meetings. We would be happy to share this information with Council partners.

3. Mental health Support Teams in Schools

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHSTs) were initiated in 2018/19 as part of the Government’s commitment to transform the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. 58 ‘Trailblazer’ teams were established in the first year, from which the final, nationally agreed specification was produced and implemented in 2019/20. A further 125 teams were established in that year (of which the Wiltshire teams were a part) with a further 104 commissioned in 2020/21.

Wiltshire currently has 4 teams (one of which covers some B&NES schools as well due to geography) covering a number of primary and secondary schools. A summary of the current provision in schools features below. Schools were nominated based on demography and need in collaboration with Wiltshire Council.

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools



Meet the Wiltshire Team

The Wiltshire MHST comprises of a Clinical Lead, Clinical Team Manager, Deputy Team Manager, Supervisor Practitioners, Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) and trainee EMHPs. The EMHPs form the core part of the MHST service and are split into four teams to work closely with participating schools in different areas within the Wiltshire:



Participating schools

| North | East | South | West |
|--|--|--|--|
| Wootton Bassett <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bradon Forest School Longlease Primary School Royal Wootton Bassett Academy St Bartholomew's Primary Academy | Melkham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melkham Oak Community School River Mead School Seend CofE Primary School The Manor CofE VC Primary School | Salisbury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harnham CofE Junior School Harnham Infants' School Manor Fields Primary School Pembroke Park Primary School Salisbury Sixth Form College Sarum Academy Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School St Joseph's Catholic School St Mark's CofE Junior School St Mark's CofE VA Primary School St Oswald's Catholic Primary School St Peter's CofE Primary Academy Wiltshire College Salisbury Campus Woodlands Primary School Wyndham Park Infants Learning Campus | Trowbridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bellefield Primary and Nursery School Holbrook Primary School Newtown Community School Oasis Academy Longmeadow St Augustine's Catholic School The Clarendon Academy The Grove Primary School The John of Gaunt School Plecroft Primary School St John's Catholic Primary School Stadley Green Primary School Wiltshire College Trowbridge Campus |
| Chippenham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charter Primary School Proggwell Primary School Hardenhulsh School Ivy Lane Primary School St Mary's Catholic Primary School St Paul's Primary School St Peter's CofE Academy Wiltshire College Chippenham Campus | Devizes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devizes School Five Lanes CofE VC Primary School Lavington School Pewsey Primary School Pewsey Vale School Southdown Infants' School Southdown St James Academy St Joseph's Catholic Primary School The Trinity CofE Primary Academy Wardlake School | Chippenham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbeyfield School Sheldon School St Nicholas CofE VC Primary School Bromham Queen's Crescent School | Westbury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bitham Brook Primary School Dilton Marsh CofE Primary School Mastravers School Westbury CofE Junior School Westbury Infant School Westbury Leigh CofE Primary School |
| Calne <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kingbury Green Academy Marden Vale CofE Academy Priestly Primary School | | | |

- 32% coverage for schools across Wiltshire
- Above Long Term Plan target of 25%

Bath & North East Somerset • Swindon • Wiltshire • Working together

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools



- 1-1 Evidence based treatment provided by Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) using Low Intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (LI -CBT) for children and young people with mild to moderate mental health difficulties
- 1-1 evidence based treatment for parents and carers of primary school children, using LI-CBT to enable them to support their child
- Targeted groups for 6 -8 children including:
 - Anxiety group (4x1 hour sessions)
 - Self-esteem group (4x1 hour sessions)
 - Body image group (4x1 hour sessions)
 - Mind and mood – for low mood, stress and/or anxiety (6x1 hour sessions)
- Universal groups covering exam stress, friendships and relationships, transitions to secondary school
- Audits of Whole School Approaches (WSA) to mental health and wellbeing

The summary above provides an overview of the support delivered by MHSTs. It is important to note that the team provides a blend of 1:1, group and universal offers to reach as many children and young people as possible at the point of presentation. In addition, the MHSTs provide support to the schools themselves – helping them to implement school wide approaches to mental health and wellbeing that support children and young people to thrive.

NHS England gathers performance information regarding MHSTs as part of its national data collection (the Service Delivery Framework return) on a quarterly basis. In Quarter 4 2021/22 referral rates were as set out below:

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools



| QUARTER 4 2021/22 | Wiltshire 1 | Wiltshire 2 | Wiltshire and B&NES | Wiltshire 3 |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| How many education settings have you delivered a MHST service to in this quarter? (per MHST site) <i>Guidance: this includes delivering work across the three core MHST functions, as per the MHST Operating Manual</i> | 18 | 24 | 15 | 20 |
| Out of these settings, how many made a referral this quarter? (per MHST site) <i>Guidance: Please record locally any settings who haven't made a referral for discussion as part of regional/national support calls</i> | 16 | 15 | 10 | 0 |
| Calculated field: Proportion of education settings making a referral this quarter | 16 out of 18 education settings made a referral = 88.9% | 15 out of 24 education settings made a referral = 62.5% | 10 out of 15 education settings made a referral = 66.7% | 0 out of 20 education settings made a referral = 0.0% |
| Number of Children and Young People in the reporting period being supported by each MHST <i>Guidance: Count of CYP with an open referral. To be answered per wave, per site</i> | 116 | 125 | 79 | 1 |

- Increasing skills of practitioners to meet the needs of SEND schools which form part of the wave 2 and wave 4 list.
- Additional staff to support improving access for targeted groups including attending school council sessions, attending focus groups with CYP to understand how to ensure the service is being inclusive, linking with other MHSTs to research best practice
- OHFT running the Education 'engagement meetings'
- Bi-monthly engagement meetings with schools in place. Focus of sessions (adapted from school feedback)
 - How to recognise anxiety
 - Referral form completion
 - Decision making re suitability of referral for CAMHS/MHST
 - Operational delivery of services

Although data has been collected for quarter 1, referral rates are much lower due to the numbers of children and young people who are out of the school setting as a result of exams. Consequently Q4 performance is a better measure of how many schools are referring and the numbers of children and young people using this service.

The diagram above also includes a summary of additional work Oxford Health is undertaking to engage with schools, and in particular how they are acting on feedback from schools themselves about what they would like to know more about to be able to support young people. This work continues.

4. Wiltshire Single Point of Access (SPA)

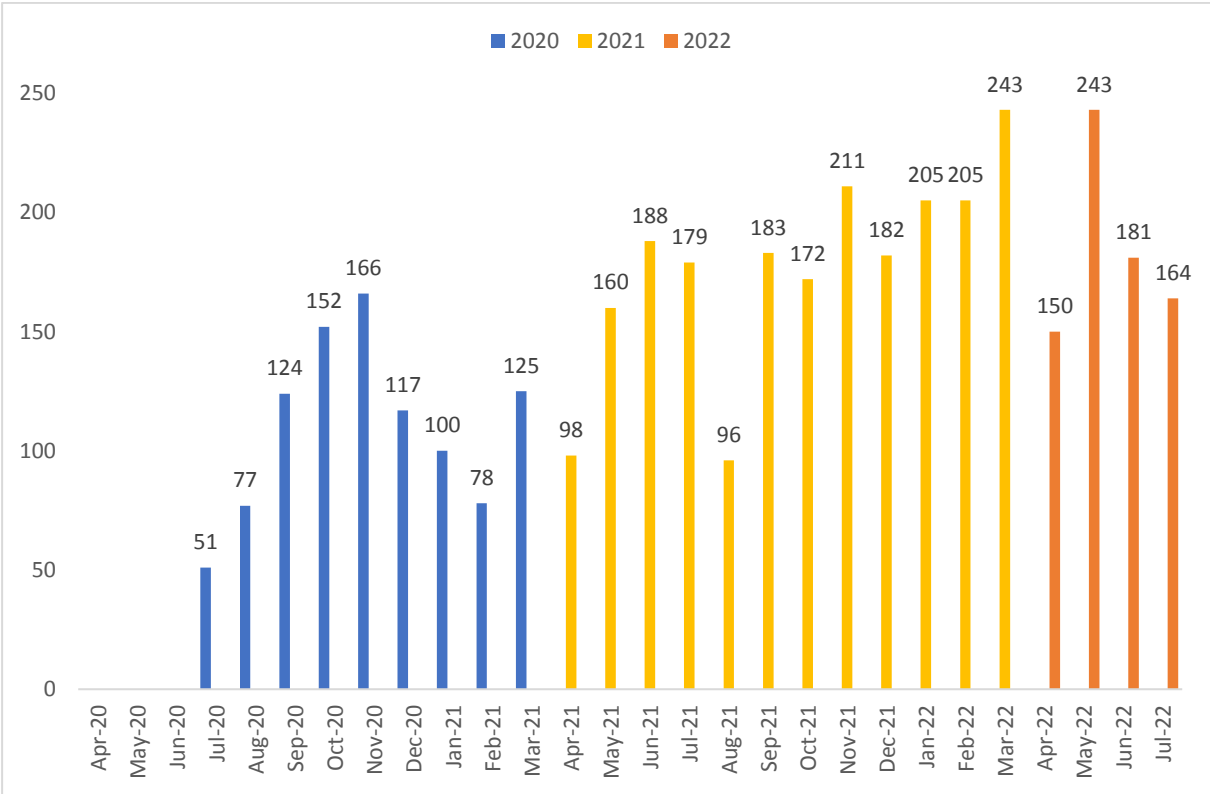
Our Single Point of Access (SPA) for CAMHS is a key point of contact for children, young people, carers, GP's, schools, health and social care professionals who are concerned about the emotional and mental health of those under eighteen years of age. The service can be accessed by telephone or via an electronic referral form. We encourage and accept self referrals from any young person, these self referrals are prioritised to ensure that young people received an immediate response.

Our SPA is delivered by a team of CAMHS professionals working 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. All referrals are screened by a member of the team and a decision is made on how to proceed. Occasionally the information in the referrals provides us with enough information to make a decision straight away an example of this is a referral

for a young person with an eating disorder who needs to be referred to our eating disorders service or a young person who requires an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) assessment will be supported to access HCRG. The majority of referrals require the SPA team to carry out an assessment of the young persons needs, this phone call takes place at a time convenient to the young person and their family or carers. It is also common practice that professionals known to the family also need to be contacted to gain sufficient information to support the family effectively. Once the information is gathered a decision will be made and communicated to the family and network including the GP. The outcome will be either a transfer into our CAMHS service or support for the family to access other services outside of CAMHS such as HCRG, school nurse, Barnardos, school counsellor etc.

If the outcome of the referral is that they need to be signposted to another service the family will receive written information about what service will best meet their needs. We will often support families to access these services if required, for example helping them in completing referral forms, liaising with the appropriate service etc.

The graph below details referral rates for the Wiltshire SPA:



Approximately a third of referrals received in the SPA are what would be termed preventable. The majority of these preventable referrals come from carers who struggle to know where to go to access the support they need for their young person.

Work force nationally is very challenging for the NHS and the SPA has not been immune to this. The vacancy rates for the Wiltshire SPA are as follows:

- October 2021 35.5%
- October 2022 19%

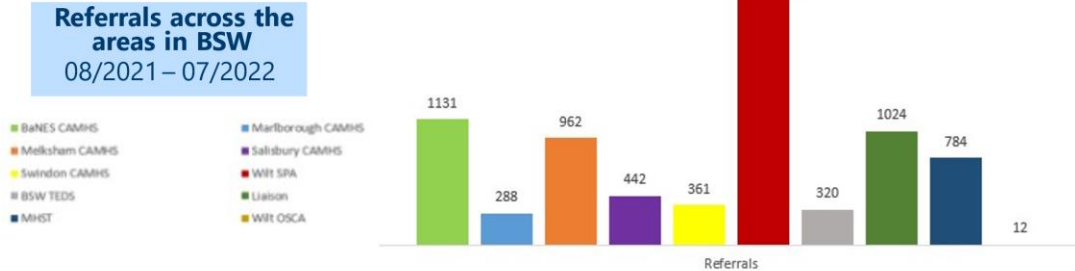
We have made progress in addressing these recruitment challenges, however we know there is more work to be done. ICB leads continue to review our CAMHS workforce and we have recently established a whole system Mental Health Workforce Planning Oversight Group (reporting through our ICB agreed governance structures) to ensure that we are making and taking opportunities to develop new roles, and maximising our offer to staff who may wish to come and work in our area.

Due to vacancies associated with workforce supply issues in healthcare alongside increased demand (and complexity) the Wiltshire SPA has needed to prioritise resources on providing timely screening, triage and signposting of referrals. This has meant changes to the offer provided to schools, with all schools able to access information and advice via the Single Point of Access. Overall support to schools in Wiltshire has been significantly enhanced since 2018 with the roll out of mental health teams in schools.

5. Monitoring Delivery and Outcomes

The table provides an analysis of referral volumes across Oxford Health teams.

Population health needs – CYP Referrals 



As the data demonstrates, referral rates are rising across BSW. More work is required to understand the reasons behind this, however we know that the following are likely to be significant factors (based on national evidence):

- The national children and young people’s prevalence survey reveals that the number of children and young people with a diagnosable mental health need has risen from 1 in 8 to 1 in 6

- The impact of Covid on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, manifesting through sleep difficulties, issues at school and disordered eating (this is not the same as eating disorders)¹ as evidenced through Pulse surveys carried out by Kooth during the pandemic period
- The impact of increasing cost of living, particularly for those children who are at or below the poverty line. Although we know that the number of Wiltshire children and young people living in poverty is significantly lower than the national average, the economic downturn will still have an impact on them.
- The wider international context – the war in Ukraine has affected children and young people either directly through the resettlement scheme or indirectly through news and media
- Due to nationally driven austerity measures, reductions in early help services such as youth service provision, children’s centre provision

Despite this increased demand, waiting times remain better than the national mean, with particularly strong performance in the time between first and second appointments. This is good as it means we are ensuring that children and young people are progressing through their treatment pathway effectively.

Performance Waiting times CYP

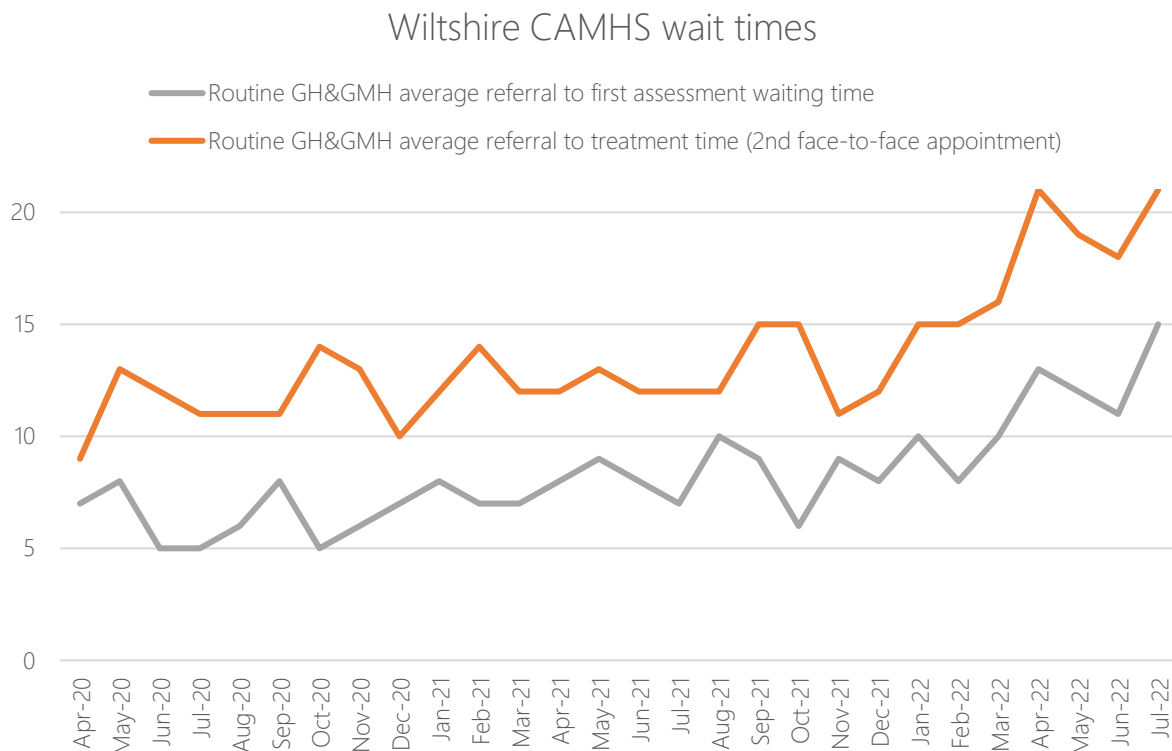


2021/22 Benchmarking results – BSW compared to the national mean

| Wait times | National Mean 20/21 | BSW CAMHS 21/22 |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|
| Mean waiting time to 1st appt (weeks) | 8 | 7.3 |
| Mean waiting time to 2nd appt (weeks) | 14 | 11 |
| Waiting list to 2nd appt at 31st March per 100,000 pop | 462 | 259 |
| % of patient whose RRT was less than 4 weeks | 32%* | 35% |
| % of patient whose RRT was 18+ weeks | 24%* | 15% |

¹ Disordered eating is a term that is used where individuals have an atypical relationship with food intake, often to maintain low weight or as a result of temporary stressors or triggers in their lives. Eating Disorders are psychiatric conditions where individuals present with extreme and continuous levels of body dissatisfaction, alongside long term eating patterns that affect how the body functions – with typical behaviours being extreme reduction or avoidance in food intake; obsessive levels of exercise and vomiting (eg anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating disorder, avoidant restrictive food intake)

6. Wiltshire waiting times



Key: Left axis demonstrates number of weeks

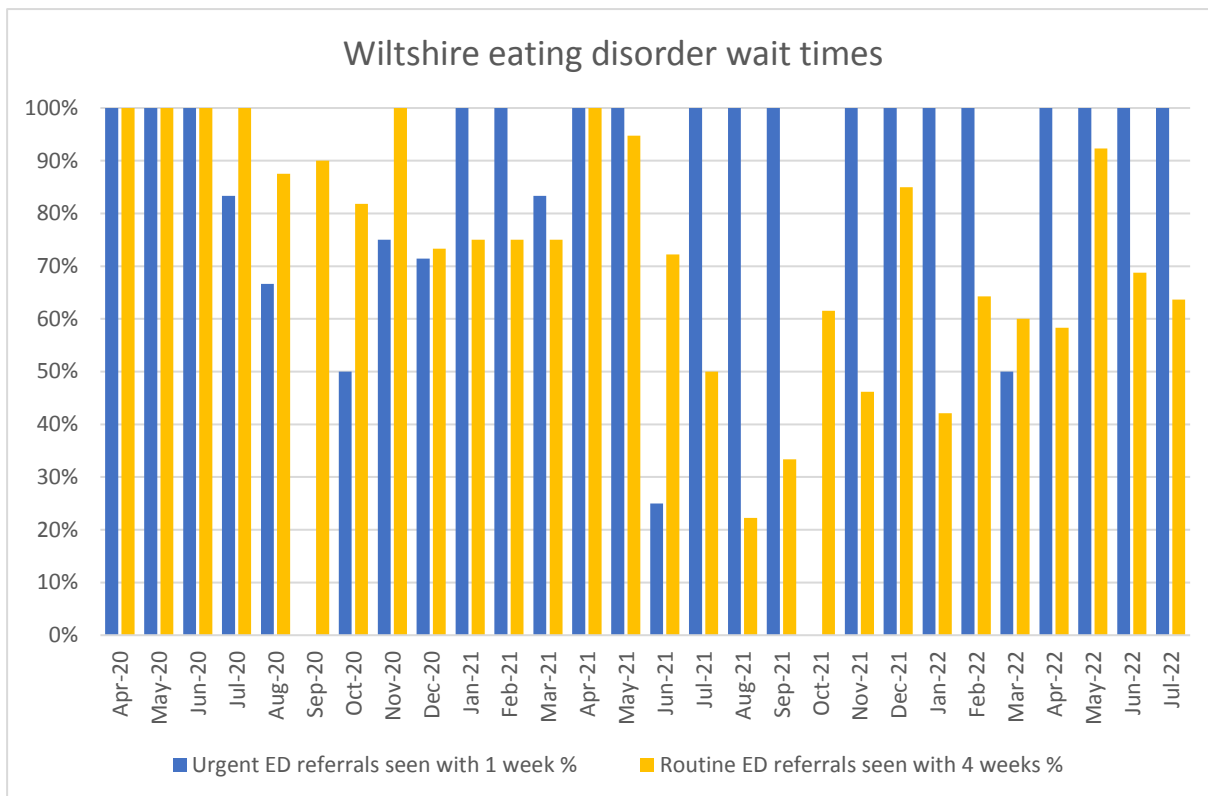
There are no nationally mandated targets for Getting Help and Getting More Help however we do monitor waiting times and activity in each of these areas to ensure that we continue to provide a responsive service for children, young people and their families.

Routine waiting times have been increasing for Getting Help and Getting More Help in line with the national trend, reflecting increasing demand as a result of previously stated reasons. For the period April 21 to July 22, the average waiting time to assessment for children and young people in Wiltshire for routine referrals was 9.5 weeks. The national rate is c. 9 weeks.

The average wait from referral to treatment for Wiltshire children and young people during the same period was 14.9 weeks.

Oxford Health continues to fully achieve national wait time targets in relation to emergency and urgent referrals. Emergency referrals are responded to within 24 hours (as per national standard). The average wait time to assessment for urgent referrals was 1 week (national standard is 1 week) for the time period above and the wait time to treatment 5.7 weeks.

There are nationally set waiting times targets for children and young people's eating disorders. 95% of urgent referrals should be seen within 1 week and routine referrals within 4 weeks. Oxford Health performs well against these targets. Between April 2021 and Jul 2022 the average wait time for urgent referrals was 1 week and the average for routine referrals was 3.2 weeks. Drops in performance are normally attributed to patient choice where parents/carers cancel appointments.



Alongside this, we also gather information on routine outcome measures for children and young people, which demonstrate that we achieve complete recovery for c. 50% of children and young people against a national average of 34-44%. It must be recognised that for a number of children and young people complete recovery will not be achieved and they will continue to have mental health needs into adulthood. For those children and young people, we are developing a new model of provision for 16-25 year olds to support them in transition from CAMHS into adult services more effectively and seamlessly.

Performance - Routine Outcome Measures

Key findings from recent ROMS audit into average pre and post interventions ratings:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Reduction in symptoms on all measures | For 50% of CYP this reduction is large and indicates a complete recovery* | Rates are similar / slightly better than the national average |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|

*National average recovery rate = 34% – 44%

For children and young people with more complex and urgent presentations, we are currently reconfiguring our crisis and home treatment offer. In partnership with the Thames Valley Provider Collaborative (responsible for commissioning all inpatient CAMHS provision across the geography) we have delivered a 10-15% reduction in admissions, as well as provided earlier supported discharge enabling more children

- Rolling out our co-designed survey of children and young people who have used the Single Point of Access – supporting research and further improvement work
- Talking about Suicide event led by members of Oxford Health participation group, helping professionals think differently and providing a training resource for all staff

The following is a feedback quote from a young person in relation to their experience with BSW Oxford Health CAMHS services:

What it means to our children and young people

“As humans it is so easy to focus on the negatives, in this case the young people that have died by suicide. But when was the last time you stopped yourself and thought of all of the people you have helped? The people that are now out there living their lives to the full thanks to the help that you provided. There will be people who - thanks to you - have gone on to now have a career they love, a family of their own or are just generally in a better place. Whilst at the time the young person may have resented being helped, may not have been grateful that they were still alive - years down the line once they’re out of that dark place I can almost certainly guarantee that they will think back and be so thankful. Thankful for you. I know this because it’s how I think. I think back to the help and support that was given to me and there aren’t enough words to convey my gratitude, granted maybe not all the time(!), but I am still so appreciative. From the bigger life saving interventions to the small details, being given a space that felt relatively safe when my world was unbearable is something I will always remember. Next time you either find yourself in the awful situation of losing a young person to suicide, or generally thinking negatively about the things you don’t think you’ve done right - please remember there will always be more positives. The care and support you all provide isn’t really able to be described in words! So thank you. Thank you for all you do. No one is perfect but if there were more kind, compassionate people like you all, the world would be a better place.”

Direct feedback from young people in Wiltshire includes ‘friendly understanding SPA’ and ‘the SPA clinician was helpful with advice they gave’. Overall feedback indicates that YP feel listened to with an overall positive experience of the SPA and the outcome it has had.

The SPA also launched a bespoke feedback tool at the end of August 2022 so that we can better capture the voice of those using the service. This tool was co-produced with young people.

Further quality information is provided in summary below, with further detail set out in the Quarter 1 2022/23 Quality Report, supplied by Oxford Health.

Wiltshire and BaNES CAMHS In Reach ‘I Want Great Care’ findings:

- Overall, how would you rate the service you received? 4.75 Star Average Rating out of 5

- Overall, how was your experience of our service?

89 Responses (64% Wiltshire and 36% BaNES) :

- Very good – 77
- Good – 12
- Neither Good nor Poor – 0
- Poor – 0
- Very Poor – 0
- Don't know – 0

Item 4: Patient experience – Quarterly monitoring

| Patient Experience | |
|--------------------|--|
| Standard | Quarterly 'Patient Experience' reports to include evidence of patient experience activities and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of comments, Concerns (PALS contacts), complaints and compliments (4c's) and Ombudsman cases by month and YTD trend. • themes and learning across the trust, by team level developing from comments, concerns (PALS contacts), complaints, compliments and Ombudsman cases by month and YTD trend • service developments and quality improvement plans resulting from team level comments, concerns (PALS contacts), complaints, compliments and Ombudsman cases by month and YTD trend • triangulation of patient experience monitoring with other data sources, including but not limited to complaints, serious incidents and workforce data. • Compliance with NHS Friends & Family survey and provide associated quarterly quality improvement plan to commissioners. % response rate and recommended rate to be included within bi-annual quarterly patient experience report. • Provider to share with the commissioners at CQRM a minimum of 2 patient stories per year which have resulted in a change to service delivery or quality 1 story per quarter • Outcomes and examples of 'You said, We did' |

The Trust collects patient feedback using the I Want Great Care system. The results of feedback during quarter 1 are presented below.

BSW Community CAMHS – all teams

| | Q4 20/21 | Q1 21/22 | Q2 21/22 | Q3 21/22 | Q4 21/22 | Q1 22/23 |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Parent/Carer responses | 15 | 11 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 15 |
| Young people's responses | 19 | 29 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 5 |

| BSW GH and GMH CAMHS | Q3 20/21 | Q4 20/21 | Q1 21/22 | Q2 21/22 | Q3 21/22 | Q4 21/22 | Q1 22/23 |
|--|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | Out of a possible 5 stars: | | | | | | |
| Parent/Carer questions | | | | | | | |
| Were you (parent/carer) treated with dignity and respect? | 5 | 4.93 | 4.9 | 4.96 | 3.67 | 4.4 | 4.86 |
| Was your child treated with dignity and respect? | 4.9 | 4.87 | 4.27 | 4.98 | 3 | 4.8 | 4.86 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Did you feel involved enough in decisions made about your child's care and treatment? | 4.9 | 4.4 | 4.27 | 4.9 | 3.3 | 4 | 4.6 |
| Did you receive timely information about your child's care and treatment? | 4.7 | 4.47 | 4.36 | 4.86 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 4.8 |
| Was your child treated well by the staff looking after him/her? | 5 | 4.93 | 4.91 | 4.94 | 4 | 4.2 | 5 |
| Was the location suitable for your child's needs? | 4.45 | 4.53 | 4.63 | 4.88 | 4.67 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| Overall, how was your child's experience of this service? | 4.64 | 4.56 | 4.45 | 4.7 | 2.675 | 4.2 | 4.65 |
| Young person questions | | | | | | | |
| Overall, how was your experience of this service? | n/a | 4.54 | 4.65 | 4.7 | 5 | 5 | 4.65 |
| Did people listen to you? | n/a | 4.15 | 4.48 | 4.83 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5 |
| Were the people looking after you kind? | n/a | 4.46 | 4.65 | 4.88 | 5 | 5 | 4.6 |
| Did you feel safe? | n/a | 4.23 | 4.55 | 4.82 | 5 | 5 | 4.2 |
| Did people help you to understand what was happening? | n/a | 3.77 | 4.24 | 4.73 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.2 |

8. Next steps

The key areas of focus for the coming months will be to continue the implementation of NHS Long-Term Plan and Community Mental Health Framework ambitions for children and young people, which includes:

- Improving access
- Enhancing eating disorder services
- Integrating our offer for 16-25 year olds

We will also be working with place based partners to embed fully the national i-Thrive model for CAMHS. This will provide a system-wide and consistent approach to meeting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing needs at place level, alongside more specialist provision delivered consistently at system level (eg crisis service provision, specialist CAMHS provision).

Working with Oxford Health colleagues and partners in Local Authorities, we have established a new Children and Young People's Mental Health Oversight Group. This is aligned with the Children and Young People's Programme Board (Director of Children's Services from Wiltshire Council is a standing member of this Board) and the Thrive Mental Health Programme Board, ensuring that we maintain strong links between both the mental health agenda and also priorities for children and young people's services overall.

We recognise that workforce challenges represent one of the biggest risks to delivery of our existing and future models. We are working pan-system and within mental health to ensure that we are making and taking opportunities to recruit new staff including: development of Clinical Associate Psychologist (CAP) roles; developing

new Multi-Professional Approved Clinician roles; considering the use of family support workers in services. All of these initiatives are held within our Mental Health Workforce Planning Group and contribute to our system wide capability planning in partnership with HR Directors and the BSW Academy.

We know that children and young people's mental health has been affected by the pandemic, and continues to be challenged as they return to school and re-establish their lives. Much work is underway to support this and we look forward to developing and embedding increasingly integrated service provision in partnership with our Councils to support this wide-ranging and critical agenda.

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

Update on School Capital Programme

Purpose of Report

1. To present an update on the School Capital Programme following an earlier report to Cabinet in February 2022.

Background

2. On 1 February 2022, Cabinet approved the School Capital Programme 2022 to 2027. This programme covers investment to improve the condition of maintained schools and projects to provide additional school places. Projects to provide SEND places were not included in the paper or in this update.
3. The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places and to effectively manage and maintain the Councils schools' estate (community, foundation and voluntary controlled schools only). Schools need to be fit for purpose and safe for all site users.

Update on projects

4. In Appendix A, an update has been given for all the projects to provide additional school places. The project status as at February 2022 is shown along with the latest update. It can be seen that five projects have completed since February, with a further 6 projects now in construction. The remaining projects are all on programme to achieve the additional places for when they are required. Projects need to be delivered to meet the demand for places, but not provided too early to avoid having a detrimental impact on other schools.
5. In Appendix B, an update has been provided for all the planned maintenance works approved in February 2022. Of the 36 projects approved, 31 are complete. A further 4 are in progress with 2 of these being completed at October half term. The final project was cancelled as it was deemed not a priority for this year.
6. In addition to these planned maintenance works, a contingency is held to address emergency reactive works required during the year to keep schools safe and open. A further 43 projects costing over £5k each have been completed since 1 April 2022.
7. Feedback from schools on this year's maintenance programme has been very positive. All works scheduled for the summer holidays completed on time for schools re-opening in September. Small scale (revenue) repair works are the responsibility of schools, but they also procure these through the LA. In total, this has amounted to a further 167 individual work orders in this financial year.

8. The list of priority planned maintenance works for 2023/24 is now being prepared. The limited resources available means that only the highest priority maintenance works are included. This does mean that not all priority works can be funded in any year.

Conclusion

9. The delivery of capital projects can be impacted by many factors including difficulties obtaining planning permission, securing tenders or the availability of materials/contractors. Large scale maintenance works often must be completed during school holiday periods and funding is therefore programmed to align with this.
10. For the expansion projects, at the end of each quarter funds are reprogrammed if necessary. The number of projects completed on time and the progress towards those projects required over the next few years illustrates that the School Capital Programme is on track for full completion.

Appendix A

School Capital Programme Progress Report

| School | Project | February 2022 Status | Oct 2022 Status Update |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Primary | | | |
| Lea and Garsdon Primary | Expansion by 0.5FE | In construction | Complete |
| St Bartholomew's Primary, Wootton Bassett | Expansion to 2FE | Complete | Complete |
| Bitham Brook Primary School | Expansion to 2FE | In construction | Complete |
| Mere Primary School | Conversion of former children's centre to school accommodation | Due to commence summer 2022 | Complete |
| Wootton Bassett Noremarsch Junior | Provision of mobile to accommodate large intake in Sept | Complete | Complete |
| Forest and Sandridge Primary | Expansion to 2.5FE | Design underway | Works commenced on site, due to complete by summer 2023 |
| Holt Primary School | Expansion to 1FE | Design underway | Planning application submitted. Works being delayed to fit with pre-school replacement project which has time limited funding. |
| Pathfinder Way, Melksham | New Primary School (approval to commence design only) | Design to be commenced 2022 | Going out to tender for PM and QS by end October. Once appointed they will assist with main contractor appointment. New school required Sept 2025 at the earliest. |
| Secondary | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|------------------|--|
| Royal Wootton Bassett | Expansion by 120 places | Complete | Complete |
| Melksham Oak | Expansion of Secondary School | Complete | Complete |
| Kingdown School | Expansion by 300 places | Design underway | Pre-planning application submitted. Positive response. Internal works to create 4 classrooms to complete for Sept 2024. New block to complete for Sept 2025. |
| Abbeyfield School | First phase of expansion to provide 150 places. | Design underway | Design now completed and planning application to be submitted shortly. Places required for Sept 2025. |
| St Augustine's, John of Gaunt and Clarendon | Creation of additional places funded by Section 106 funding | Designs underway | Offsite fabrication of building underway. Works to commence on site shortly. |
| Alternative Provision - Trowbridge | Creation of AP places at Hope Nature Centre, Trowbridge | In construction | Complete |
| Marlborough St Johns | Expansion by 40 places | In construction | Complete |
| Projects to replace poor quality accommodation | | | |
| Preshute Primary | Replacement of poor quality temporary buildings | Complete | Complete |
| Holbrook Primary School | Replacement of poor quality temporary buildings | Design underway | Construction in progress. To complete for Sept 2023. |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Studley Green | Replacement of poor quality temporary buildings | Not yet started due to insufficient funding, design to commence shortly | Pratten block being demolished in October half term. Internal adaptations being completed on site now. New block to complete for Sept 2023. |
| Bishop Cannings Primary | Replacement of poor quality temporary buildings | Due to commence construction in 2022. Funded by S106 | Construction in progress |
| Stonehenge School | Replacement of Lower School Block | Due to commence construction in 2022/23 | Construction in progress |
| Devizes School | Small expansion using S106 funding | Design underway | Phase 1 completed, phase 2 in progress |
| Springfield South | Provision of mobile classroom to add temporary places until new Free School opens in Salisbury | Design underway | Completed |

Priority School Planned Maintenance Projects

List of projects approved by Cabinet March 2022

| School | Type of Maintenance Works | Oct 2022 Status Update |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Bratton Primary School | Heating controls and fencing | Complete |
| Devizes Downlands | Windows and door framing | Complete |
| Nursted Primary | Window and door glazing, hot water boiler replacement | Complete |
| Holt Primary | Fencing | Complete |
| Silverwood Rowde | Structural works | In progress |
| Silverwood Trowbridge | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Southwick Primary | Boiler and heat distribution, window and door framing | Complete |
| Hilperton Primary | Fencing | Complete |
| Newtown Primary | Roof replacement, window and door replacements | Roof complete Windows and doors completing Oct half term |
| Studley Green Primary | Drainage | Complete |
| Minster Primary | Fire alarm upgrade | Complete |
| Bitham Brook Primary | Roof covering | Complete |
| Westbury Infants | Floor screed, window and door ironmongery | Complete |
| Matravers School | Boiler replacement | Complete |
| Westwood with Iford Primary | Roof replacement, drainage, floor screed, fencing | Complete |
| Box Primary | Window and door framing | Complete |
| Brinkworth Earl Danby's Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Broad Town Primary | Drainage | Complete |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Priestley Primary | Roof covering, heat source equipment | Complete |
| Redland Primary | Roof replacement | Closer inspection of roof revealed works not high priority for this year. Works rescheduled to future year. |
| Crudwell Primary | Heat source and distribution | Complete |
| Hullavington Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Lacock Primary | Fire alarm upgrade | Complete |
| Langley Fitzurse Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Lyneham Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Preshute Primary | Window and door framing | Complete |
| Longleaze Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Amesbury Primary | Fire alarm, paving | Fire alarm complete, paving planned for October half term |
| Amesbury Stonehenge | Lighting, fencing | Awaiting planning permission for fencing. Lighting complete |
| Dinton Primary | Lighting | Complete |
| Ludgershall Primary | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Newton Tony Primary | Water distribution | Complete |
| Harnham Junior | Fire alarm upgrade | Complete |
| Old Sarum Primary | Drainage | Complete |
| Stratford Sub Castle Primary | Heating distribution, drainage and pipework | Complete |
| Winterbourne Earls | Roof replacement | Complete |
| Various schools | Legionella and statutory compliance works | Annual work schedule on programme |
| Emergency reactive works | | 43 additional projects costing over £5k each |

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

27 September 2022

Subject: Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2021-2022 Year End Report

Cabinet Member: Cll Laura Mayes – Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Non-Key

Executive Summary

It is a statutory requirement that the Wiltshire Council Adoption Service provides a year-end report to the Council. It describes the management arrangements, outcomes, priorities, and finances of the Agency for the period 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

This is the Wiltshire Council Adoption Service report, with the Council retaining responsibility for the child’s journey to adoption.

The Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), Adoption West (AW), launched on 01 March 2019. This is the third annual report which relates to three full years of the new organisation being operational. Adoption West is a Local Authority Trading Company that is owned by the six partner Local Authorities and commissioned by them to provide defined adoption services, including responsibility for recruiting, assessing and approving adopters for our children. Adoption West is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency, and it is managed by a Service Director who reports to the Board of Directors.

Wiltshire Council retains overall responsibility for the adoption of our children whilst other functions are undertaken by Adoption West.

There are national scorecard measures that cover a three-year period and thus aspects of this report relate to Wiltshire Council performance, where functions have since moved to Adoption West. The most recent nationally published scorecard available is from 2020 which covers 2017-2020. The scorecard data for 2018-21 will be published by the DfE in the Summer of 2022.

Since the last annual report, Adoption West has been inspected by Ofsted (January 2022), with an overall inspection Judgement of Good with Requires Improvement to be Good for leadership and the inclusion of a requirement in the report related to compliancy with Adoption regulations.

It Stated:

‘Children placed by the agency make progress and achieve positive outcomes. This is because the agency places them with adopters who can meet their

needs and provide them with a stable and loving family, adopters speak of love and pride about the progress their children are making since being in their care'. 'Adopters are comprehensively assessed and prepared to adopt a child' 'It has been a momentous task and much hard work and commitment from leaders and managers to bring six local authority adoption services together, to form one agency and merge different standards of practice and different systems. There is a realistic awareness by leaders and managers of the agency's achievements to date and what needs to be achieved to further develop the agency. This work is effectively supported through comprehensive management scrutiny and oversight from the board.'

In respect of the Requires Improvement to Good in relation to Leadership, the Ofsted inspection took place during a critical time when issues regarding compliancy with Adoption Regulations were emerging nationally, following a High Court ruling relating to medical information required for children being adopted and adopters that is now commonly known as the 'Somerset Ruling' (Somerset County Council v NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group & Anor [2021] EWHC 3004(Fam). Unfortunately, one of the constituent Local Authorities (not Wiltshire) of Adoption West identified non-compliance regarding appointment of the Agency Medical Adviser which had a direct consequence for Adoption West with some of the agency's adopters' medicals not being compliant. Having sought legal advice, Adoption West took immediate action to address and remedy the medical reports that were non-compliant, and all adopters had the issues addressed and amended by April 2022.

In relation to the Somerset Judgment, Wiltshire Council undertook an immediate audit of all children in the adoption journey and sought assurance from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) regarding the appointment of Medical Agency Advisers, which provided assurance that all medicals undertaken previously and in the future are and will remain compliant.

In 2020/21, 23 Adoption Orders were granted, and 33 families living in Wiltshire were approved as suitable to adopt. For the year 2021/22, 19 Adoption Orders have been granted for Wiltshire children, and 18 families living in Wiltshire have been approved as suitable to adopt. Across the Adoption West area there have been 87 adopter approvals; within the target of 85-95 approvals. This is less than last year as the last quarter was impacted by issues relating to medical regulatory compliance as described above. Positively, 32% of adopters approved in 2021/22 are available to adopt siblings, which is well within the target range of 25-35% set in 2021/22, compared to only 15% in the previous year. The target for approvals for adoptive families remains at 85-95 approvals for 2022/2023.

Over the last six years, the number of children entering care where adoption is in their best interest has decreased. This has been more pronounced in the last 2 years, primarily driven by an increase in the number of children where a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) or Child Arrangement Order has been determined to be a more desirable and suitable permanence option for them; adoption being the last resort. Nationally over the last six years there has been a gradual decline in adoption being the outcome: from 17% in 2014/15 to 12% in 2019/20. The % decline for Wiltshire was from 14% in 2014/15 to 12% in

2019/20. In the same period, Special Guardianship Orders have increased from 11% to 13% nationally. For Wiltshire there has been a steady increase in SGO's with 25 in 2019/20, 31 in 2020/21 and 30 in 2021/22, equating to 14%, 18% and 22% respectively in children leaving care as a result of an SGO being made. For Wiltshire this is particularly the case for very young children under the age of 4 years old who are often able to find a loving and supportive home environment with a set of grandparents or connected carers.

Whilst it is anticipated that over future years this trend will continue, there has in this last 6 months been a change in the profile of children with a marked increase of single children under 2 years old with Should Be Placed for Adoption decisions. We have seen spikes previously and thus this does not indicate an overall change in the direction of travel. Four out of seven of these families have a key risk factor related to substance misuse; Wiltshire Council working with the Wiltshire Family Justice Board launched a Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) in June 2022 and it is envisaged that this innovative project will reduce the number of children coming into care where substance misuse is a key factor.

In the Adoption West region, there have been fewer children waiting for adoptive homes than the number of families available to adopt and this has remained the position since mid-2020. Whilst this is positive, Adoption West need to continue to focus recruitment efforts for the children who wait the longest for an adoptive family; older children, those with additional needs, children from black and minority ethnic communities and sibling groups.

The recruitment, assessment and approval of adopters is completed by Adoption West; children from Wiltshire can be placed for adoption with any Adoption West approved adopters, not only those living in Wiltshire. Previously, interagency placements have been made outside Wiltshire, so these now only apply where children move to live outside the Adoption West area, meaning a reduced spend on such placements. In 2021/22 within the Adoption West region as a whole, 26% of children have been placed with adopters outside of Adoption West compared to 34% in 2020/21. For Wiltshire children in 2021/22 10% were placed with adopters outside of Adoption West compared to 17% in 2020/21.

Within Adoption West, as of 31 March 2022 there are currently 32 prospective adopters in Stage 1 and 30 in Stage 2 of the assessment process. As of 31 March 2022, there are 63 approved adopters waiting for a match, excluding those with an Early Permanence (EP) placement. An EP placement refers to the situation where children in care may be placed in a home at the earliest opportunity by being placed with adopters who are also approved as foster carers, who initially foster the child(ren) and may become their adopters once the court proceedings have concluded.

Comparative performance for local authorities is via the Adoption Scorecard which, for Wiltshire, shows that performance remains strong whilst recognising some fluctuations related to factors which may make it more challenging to find a match i.e. older children, and children with complex health needs. The Government has not yet given clarity about how the Scorecard will be used by the Regional Adoption Agencies.

The three key scorecard measures each local authority Adoption Agency currently uses are as follows:

- A10: the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (date of adoptive placement or fostering for adoption placement i.e. Early Permanence approved Adopters that have joint Fostering approval), for children who have been adopted:

The local authority estimated figure for the single year 2021-22 is estimated at 369 days, down from the previous year at 420.

- A2: the average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family:

The locally estimated reported one-year figure for 2021-22 is 145 days, a decrease from 157 days in 2020-2021. 140-160 is our target and through practice auditing we have identified ways to decrease the days, as we aspire to be at the lower end of this target.

- A20: the average time between entering care and placement order:

The locally estimated reported one-year figures for 2021-22 is 282, an increase from 234 days in 2020/21. Our target is 210-230 days, and as above, practice auditing has identified ways in which we can reduce the number of days moving forwards (as outlined in detail below).

A full account of these scorecard measures is detailed below starting on page 6. Each child/sibling group outside of the expected timescales has been reviewed for practice learning. There are no themes indicating timescales could have been reduced based on our practice alone. We have however set up additional internal quality assurance and scrutiny measures to enable any possible positive impact on timeliness there can be, however small.

Proposal(s)

It is requested that this report is for approval. Recommended that the contents of this report are considered against the Corporate Parenting Strategic Priority for children looked after to have a loving home, good relationships, and respect.

Reason for Proposal(s)

Wiltshire Council is an Adoption Agency registered with Ofsted. The 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards (25.6) and 2013 Statutory Guidance (3.93 and 5.39) describe the information that is required to be reported to the executive side of the local authority, on a six-monthly basis, to provide assurance that the adoption agency is complying with the conditions of registration whilst being effective and achieving good outcomes for children.

Adoption West is subject to separate scrutiny arrangements through its own Scrutiny Board.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

27 September 2022

Subject: Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2021-2022 Year End Report

Cabinet Member: Cllr Laura Mayes – Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Non-Key

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides a year-end report to Cabinet regarding the performance of the Wiltshire Council Adoption Service, alongside a consideration of the effectiveness of Adoption West. It is a requirement of the condition of registration, as described in the 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards and 2013 Statutory Guidance, that Cabinet is satisfied the Adoption Agency complies with the conditions of registration, is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children. These Standards and Guidance have not yet been specifically revised to describe the reporting requirements for the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA).
- 1.2 Cabinet received an Annual Report regarding the Adoption Service in October 2021, covering the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This report relates to the full year 2021/22 reporting period.
- 1.3 The Ofsted inspection of Adoption West in January 2022 concluded with a judgement of Good, recognising the momentous task and much hard work and commitment from leaders and managers to bring six local authority services together to form one agency.
- 1.4 This report includes information regarding the management and performance of the Wiltshire Council Adoption Service and the Wiltshire Adoption Scorecard, relating to children who require adoptive families and those who are placed, the disruption of placements and children where the plan for adoption changes. It also includes summary information about the recruitment and approval of adopters by Adoption West and the work of the Adoption West Panel. It should be noted that details of the performance of Adoption West as an organisation can be accessed in that organisation’s annual report.
- 1.5 It is recommended that the contents of this report are for approval.

2. Relevance to the Council’s Business Plan

- 2.1 The Wiltshire Council Adoption Service contributes to a central priority as set out in the Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2022-2032; namely to protect those who are most vulnerable and provide permanent homes for children in care.
- 2.2 The identification of adoptive families for Wiltshire children remains a priority for the Council. Wiltshire Council remains an adoption agency because it retains responsibility for children requiring adoption. Adoption West has responsibility for the recruitment, assessment and approval of adoptive families, family finding and adoption support.

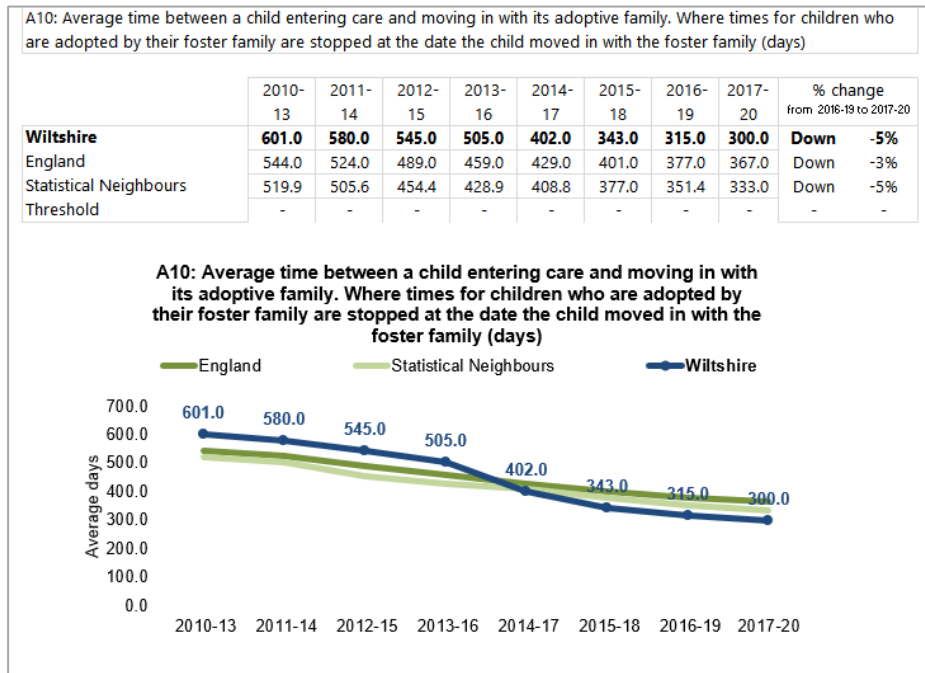
3. Main Considerations for the Council

- 3.1 The main consideration for the Council is to be assured about statutory compliance and the effectiveness of the Adoption Service. In 2019/20, 22 children were adopted and in 2020/21 23 children were adopted. In 2021/22 19 children were adopted, of these 89% were placed within 12 months. In 2019/20, 21 adoptive families living in Wiltshire were approved, in 2020/21, 33 families living in Wiltshire were approved and in 21/22 18 families living in Wiltshire were approved as suitable to adopt. In the Adoption West region (including Wiltshire) 87 families were approved to adopt for 2021/22. Sufficiency of approved families must be maintained through the work of Adoption West.
- 3.2 The next National Adoption Scorecard for 2018-2021 will be published by the DfE in the summer of 2022. We have seen some fluctuation in the past year; this is not significant and given the considerable change brought about through the launch of Adoption West, this is not a cause for concern but will continue to be monitored. Due to the time lag in the nationally published data, no scorecard has been produced for the period that all RAAs have been in operation. At present, each local authority Adoption Agency still has a scorecard and there are three key measures that are included:

A10: the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (date of adoptive placement or fostering for adoption placement i.e. Early Permanence approved Adopters that have joint Fostering approval), for children who have been adopted:

- The latest nationally published adoption scorecard three-year average (2017-20) for Wiltshire is 300 days. This is shorter than the three-year average of 315 days in 2016-19 and shorter than the England three-year average for the same period of 367 days. The statistical neighbour average in 2017-20 was 333 days.
- Locally reported data estimates the figure for 2019-22 to be 381 days, an increase on the 2017-2020 published data and largely reflective of a greater proportion of adoptions in 2020-21 and 2021-22 being from a 'harder to place' demographic which has had an impact.

- The local authority figure for the single year 2021-22 is estimated at 369 days, down from the previous year at 420. Factors contributing to time taken are discussed below.
- The graph below depicts Wiltshire’s published performance since 2010 against England and statistical neighbour comparators. As can be seen, our performance has improved significantly since 2010 and since 2014-17, we have performed better than the England and statistical neighbour average.



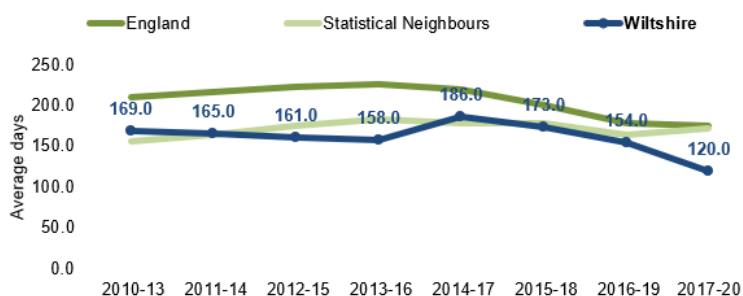
A2: the average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family:

- The latest published local authority three-year average (2017-20) is 120 days for Wiltshire. This is a decrease on the previous year’s data of 154 days (2016-19) and shorter than the national average of 175 days over the same period. The statistical neighbour average in 2017-20 was 172 days.
- Locally reported data estimates the figure for 2019-22 as 143.
- The locally reported one-year figure for 2021-22 is estimated at 145 days, a slight decrease from 157 days in 2020-2021 and 137 days in 2019-20. Performance for this indicator remains lower than the latest published average for England and our statistical neighbours.
- The graph below depicts Wiltshire’s published performance since 2010 against England and statistical neighbour comparators. Performance on this indicator has remained consistently below the England average since 2010, and in 2017-20 improved considerably.

A2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)

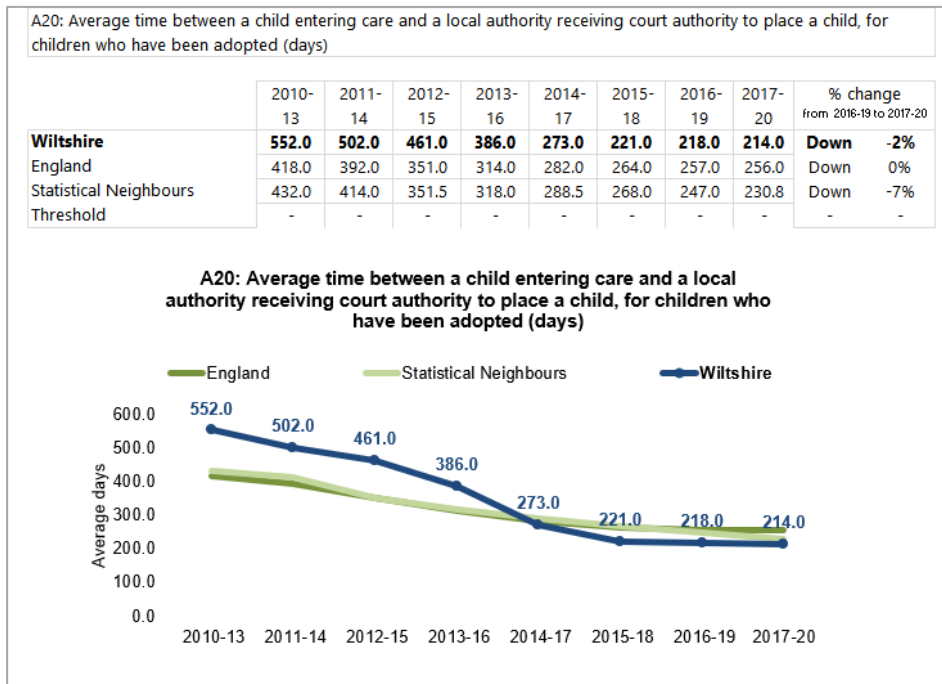
| | 2010-13 | 2011-14 | 2012-15 | 2013-16 | 2014-17 | 2015-18 | 2016-19 | 2017-20 | % change from 2016-19 to 2017-20 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Wiltshire | 169.0 | 165.0 | 161.0 | 158.0 | 186.0 | 173.0 | 154.0 | 120.0 | Down -22% |
| England | 210.0 | 216.0 | 223.0 | 226.0 | 219.0 | 201.0 | 178.0 | 175.0 | Down -2% |
| Statistical Neighbours | 155.8 | 164.6 | 174.6 | 182.8 | 177.6 | 178.3 | 163.9 | 172.1 | Up 5% |
| Threshold | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

A2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)



A20: the average time between entering care and placement order:

- In the latest published data (2017-20), the three-year average was 214 days against a national average of 256 days and a statistical neighbour average of 231 days.
- Locally reported data estimates the figure for 2019-22 as 239 days. The one-year figures for the 2021-22 is 282, slightly above the latest 2020 averages for England and our statistical neighbours.
- The graph below depicts Wiltshire’s published performance since 2010 against England and statistical neighbour comparators. As can be seen, up until 2014, Wiltshire’s performance was significantly worse than the England and statistical neighbour averages however for the last three data periods performance has remained consistently lower than these comparators.



3.3 The most recent scorecard three-year averages relate to 2017-20. The scorecard data for 2018-21 will be published by the DfE in the Summer of 2022. Due to reporting delays with the scorecard, this report includes the indicative locally reported figures described above. This data highlights a slight decrease in performance in 2020-21 and 2021-22 compared with previous years. Indicator A10, for example, shows that it took longer for children to be placed in their adoptive families after being received into care whilst indicator A20 shows that it has taken slightly longer between entering care and a child being subject of a placement order.

These children’s journeys have been reviewed and the reasons for this increase are not practice related or within our control i.e. relate to protracted care proceedings, and the impact of additional assessments being ordered within the court arena and family members coming forward to be assessed at a late stage.

- In one situation where there was delay from being placed into care to moving in with adopters (Indicator A10), siblings of 2 and 8yrs had been made subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) with family carers. The SGO carers made the decision to withdraw in the early stages of the children transitioning to their care. This resulted in the Local Authority having to re-issue care proceedings which became a contested hearing as the parents and Guardian opposed the Local Authority’s Care Plan for adoption in favour of the children remaining with their foster carers long term under a Care Order. Once made subject to placement orders these children’s adoption journey was further delayed due to the covid pandemic impacting on the timeliness for them to transition to their adoptive carers.
- For another child where there was delay from being placed in care to moving in with adopters (Indicator A10) Care Proceedings were

protracted, due to international elements with assessments needing to be considered of grandparents who lived in Poland.

- In one situation where there was delay from coming into care and Placement Order being issued (Indicator A20) siblings of 4 and 5 years had experienced protracted Care Proceedings with addendum assessments completed for mother and then timetabling delays for the final hearing.
- For another 2 siblings aged 4 and 8 years, there were delays in both coming into care and being made subject to placement orders and being placed for adoption (Indicators A10 and A20). The children came into care at the start of pre-proceedings there was an initial delay in completing assessments at this stage in part due to mother having a mental health crisis and when the matter was then in the court arena additional and addendum expert assessments were requested for the mother and the children which protracted the care proceedings creating further delays. For one of these children, her teacher came forward to adopt her at the stage she became aware this was the child's care plan, with the necessary assessments being required for the family to be formally approved.

In relation to A2, there has also been a slight increase in the days taken. The reason for this being that following reforms in Public Law there is a more prominent expectation to secure children within their extended family if they are unable to be cared for by their parents. This has led positively to an increase in the percentage of children being made subject to Special Guardianship Orders. The impact of this however is that children requiring adoptive carers will more often be those with more complex needs or older children; this will make family finding more challenging and can impact on the length of time it takes to achieve this.

- One child whose match took longer had complex health needs, and 2 children were older and had complex needs (aged 4 and 8 years at the time they were matched to adopters).

Adoption West has a recruitment strategy in place to address this. There also remain challenges with care proceedings concluding within the 26-week timescale, due to a number of factors outside of the Local Authority's control. These challenges are subject to debate and scrutiny via the Wiltshire Family Justice Board, and the newly appointed Designated Family Judge (DFJ) for Wiltshire has indicated her views of the need to reduce the number of experts being appointed in Care Proceedings which can lead to delays. There is a view that court decisions are impacting upon delays and that the new DFJ intends to make changes to reduce these moving forwards.

Recognising the numbers are small, these indicators can be influenced and improved upon by the local authority's persistence in delivering permanence for a child where adoption continues to be in their best interest, despite factors which make it more challenging to find a match i.e. older children, sibling groups and children with complex health needs. In the 2021-22, for example, 6% of the children aged 5 and over who left care were adopted compared to 5% in 2020-21, 1% in 2019-20 and 2% in 2018-19.

- 3.4 Overall, this demonstrates continued commitment to secure permanent arrangements for all children where adoption is in their best interests, even though it could take longer to find an adoptive match. To ensure continued progress and improvement, careful attention will be given to all aspects of adoption work that remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council Adoption Service, whilst ensuring, through governance arrangements and challenge, the effectiveness of Adoption West.
- 3.5 Robust processes have remained in place and have continued to be developed within the Council functions and in Adoption West to ensure that family finding starts at the earliest opportunity and that all activities are monitored and completed in a timely way. Adoption West has developed best practice to ensure good outcomes for Wiltshire's children who require adoptive families.
- 3.6 Management arrangements and staffing within the Council are compliant with regulation in terms of qualification and experience. The Director of Children's Services (DCS) has overall responsibility for aspects of adoption retained by the Council. Reporting to the DCS is the Director with responsibility for the Families and Children's Service. The Head of Service for Support and Safeguarding and one of their Service Managers ensure the effectiveness of overall adoption provision and this Service Manager is the designated link with Adoption West. The Service Director for Adoption West came into post in July 2018. This provides strength and clear accountability with an opportunity to develop and enhance the strategy for improvement and ensure best outcomes for children.
- 3.7 Wiltshire Council retains case responsibility for children who require adoptive families. These children are usually allocated to social workers within the Support and Safeguarding part of the organisation (occasionally in Children in Care Teams, when a child is relinquished), where work is carried out, with support from colleagues in Adoption West, to ensure appropriate and timely decision making to achieve adoption. Each of these case holding teams is appropriately managed within the Families and Children's Service.
- 3.8 The core task of adoption work, as carried out by Wiltshire Council and Adoption West, is to provide secure, stable adoptive families for children who require legal permanence and are no longer able to remain living safely with their parents or other family members. The Council retains case holding responsibility and, therefore, responsibility for the outcomes for children, although direct services are provided by Adoption West, as follows:
- The recruitment, assessment and approval of adopters: this provides permanency options for children through the recruitment, assessment and preparation of prospective adopters. Recommended for approval by the Adoption West Adoption Panel, with decisions made by the Service Director of Adoption West, adopters are then matched with children through the family finding

process. Wiltshire social workers work closely with colleagues from Adoption West to do this in a timely way.

- The support of adoptive families and their children to ensure placement stability and that the needs of children are fully met: Services that can be made available including therapeutic support, counselling, training, family days, newsletters and a link to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Staff are also responsible for managing referrals to the Adoption Support Fund which increases adopters' access to specific services for adoption support.
 - The provision of an intermediary service for adopted adults and birth relatives wishing to trace family members, for those wishing to trace adopted children, support for non-agency adoptions (typically step-parents wishing to adopt), support for birth families and those wishing to adopt children from overseas.
4. The Council has policy and guidance regarding permanence for children which ensures that those requiring adoptive families move towards that outcome in a timely way.
- 4.1 The Adoption West Statement of Purpose is available on that organisation's website and states the key objectives of the agency as:
- More children will be identified earlier for an adoption plan.
 - We will recruit a larger pool of adopters with diverse skills and abilities including more adoptive parents able to consider "hard to place" children.
 - Fewer children will wait more than 6 months for an adoptive family.
 - Children will experience fewer moves before being settled into a permanent home.
 - Our adopters will be better prepared with relevant training and support.
 - There will be fewer disrupted adoptions.
 - We will be more efficient with our resources to achieve best value.
 - An increased range of post-adoption services will reach more adoptive families to improve the quality of family relationships.
 - Children and young people will have a strong sense of their identity.
5. The key governance task is to continue to ensure that the work of Adoption West is effective, that management is robust and can deliver sustained improvement which can meet the needs of the region through each of the six local authorities working in partnership with other Voluntary Adoption Agencies. There are benefits to be gained in terms of the recruitment and sharing of a pool of adopters across the area who can best meet the needs

of children requiring adoptive families and therefore increased opportunity for timely matching of children with those families, particularly those who may be considered 'harder to place'.

6. Profile of Wiltshire children in the Adoption Journey as the end of the year 31 March 2022: As of 31 March 2022, thirty-one children were in their adoption journey, this includes all children who have had an Agency Decision Maker decision of Should Be Placed For adoption (SBPFA) to those placed with adopters, and not yet adopted.

Children waiting to be placed for adoption: 17

| Legal status | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Section 20 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Interim Care Order | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Care Order and placement Orders | 5 | 9 | 12* |
| None | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 17 | 13 | 17 |

| Ethnic Origin | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| White British | 16 | 10 | 11 |
| Mixed White Black Caribbean | 0 | 3 | 4* |
| White Irish | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| White Eastern European | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 17 | 13 | 17 |

| Age | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2020/21 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 0-11 months | 3 | 4 | 6* |
| 12-23 months | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| 2-4 years | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| 5-10 years | 6 | 2 | 0 |
| 11 and over | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 17 | 13 | 17 |

* one child placed with early permanence carers not formally matched as of 31 March 2022

To be noted is that some children remained at home with birth family whilst subject to care proceedings with a care plan for adoption. This means that other permanence options (such as Special Guardianship Orders) can be considered by the court for these children.

Timescales for Children waiting to be placed for adoption from date of Placement Orders (PO) relates to 11 children:

| Children with PO (waiting) | 0-3 months | 3-6 months | 6-12 months | 13 months | total |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|----|
| days to match) | | | | | |
| | 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 11 |

Positively of those children waiting to be placed from the date of a Placement Order being made 9 have waited less than 3 months, the one child waiting 13 months is a child who has complex health needs and her present foster carers have now put themselves forward to adopt her.

Children matched as 31 March 2022 not yet placed:

One child, subject to Care and Placement Orders as at the end of March 2022 was matched with adopters and transitions to the adopter's fulltime care were underway.

| | Age | Ethnicity |
|---------|-----------|---------------|
| Child 2 | 11 months | White British |

Children placed for Adoption not yet adopted:

Thirteen children, subject to Care and Placement Orders, as at the end of March 2022 were placed with adopters.

| | Age | Ethnicity | Date placed for adoption | Adoption application made |
|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|--|
| 2 siblings | 2yrs 1yrs | White British | 18/05/2021 | 01.03.2022 |
| 2 siblings | 6yrs 3yrs | White British | 28.05.2021 | 11.01.2022 |
| 1 Child | 4yrs | White British | 31.08.2021 | Not yet made due to therapeutic work to support adopters' confidence in managing child's emotional needs – application due July 2022 |
| 1 Child | 3yrs | White British | 31.08.2021 | Not yet made due to impact of sudden and unexpected family bereavement and Covid illness for adopters. Application confirmed as scheduled to be made later this month (June 2022). |
| 1 Child | 5yrs | White British | 26.07.2021 | 02.02.2022 |
| 1 Child | 4yrs | White British | 06.12.2021 | Not yet made due to the older child requiring time to form |

| | | | | |
|------------|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---|
| | | | | attachments, therapy being provided. |
| 1 Child | 2yrs | Mixed White/Black Caribbean | 25.10.2021 | Not yet made due to younger sibling also due to be matched and joint application will be made for both children together. |
| 2 siblings | 1yrs 5yrs | White British | 24.01.2022 | Pending. |
| 1 Child | 8yrs | White British | 02.03.2022 | Pending. |
| 1 Child | 2yrs | White British | 30.03.2022 | Pending. |

In all situations where there have been delays in making a formal application for Adoption, these have been endorsed through the child's review with oversight of the child's Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

7. Wiltshire Children Adopted in 2021/22

| Age | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| 0-11 months | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 12-23 months | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| 2-4 years | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| 5-10 years | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| 11 and over | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 22 | 23 | 19 |

| Ethnic Origin of children placed for adoption | Number |
|---|--------|
| White British | 17 |
| White Eastern European | 1 |
| White European | 1 |
| Total | 19 |

Wiltshire Children Matched within and externally to Adoption West Region:

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--|--|---|---|
| Wiltshire Children matched within Adoption West | 15 children placed with Adoption West Families | 19 children placed with Adoption West Families | 17 children placed with Adoption West Families |
| Wiltshire Children matched external to Adoption West | 6 children placed with families outside of Adoption West | 4 children placed with families outside Adoption West | 2 children placed with families outside Adoption West |

With the establishment of Adoption West, we are beginning to benefit from the wider cohort of adopters available for our children and year on year fewer placements external to the region which reduces the cost of external placements. Of the two children placed externally in 2021/22 one was for an 8-year-old boy with complex emotional needs and another of a 2-year-old girl with complex health needs.

8. Rescissions of ADM Decisions, and Disruptions:

- 8.1 In 2021/22, 6 rescissions of ADM decisions that children should be placed for adoption were made where the plan for the child moved away from adoption (6 in the previous year).

In one case the Court ordered in favour of an SGO to grandparents who resided in Poland, legal advice was sought and advised that the Judgement was well balanced, the Judge had reflected on the evidence and law in considering his Judgement and there were no grounds for appeal.

For three siblings aged 9, 7 and 6 years, the Court ordered Care Orders with a plan for long term fostering, this was supported by the Court appointed Guardian. The decision of the Court was on the basis that the children had complex needs and, as older children there would be challenges in finding adoptive placements in a suitable timeframe for them together or separately, and to allow the continuation of positive family time between the girls if placed separately, and with their baby sister who had remained in mother's care. Mothers' ability to care for her youngest child also evidenced that she could in future seek to care for all her children and seek revocation of the Care Order. No additional evidence could be provided to the court to achieve Placements Orders for these children.

For one child aged 8 years the court ordered a Care Order, this was supported by the court appointed Guardian. The Judgement concluded that the child's needs would be best met by a Care Order and remaining in long term foster care which would enable him to maintain a relationship with his mother and wider family. The Judge had reflected on the evidence and law in her decision, the decision was finely balanced and there were no grounds for appeal.

For one child aged 4 years with very complex health needs the court endorsed the Local Authority's plan of adoption with a plan for twin tracking searches for the child to be placed either with or separately from her younger sibling. National and local searches for both children together did not identify a placement and a decision was made to place her younger brother for adoption separately given his younger age and need for securing early attachments to adopters. Robust family finding continued for this child; twin tracked with long-term fostering searches recognising the potential limitations on finding adopters who could meet her needs. Eighteen months of robust twin tracked searches identified skilled foster carers with experience of caring for children with disabilities and the decision was made to rescind the decision for adoption and support a long-term match with these foster carers.

Wiltshire Council applies rigorous scrutiny to care planning and it is inevitable that there will be developments in a case or a child's situation that means that adoption is no longer in that child's best interest; for example, a family member or parent can resume the care of a child where it had not previously been envisaged, a court may not grant a Placement Order requested by the Local Authority but may make a Special Guardianship Order instead or a plan will move to long term fostering, particularly for older children and those with complex health needs. In August 2021 we introduced a new protocol whereby the ADM will urgently review any case where a court does not grant a Placement Order. This will include involvement of Legal Services to provide legal advice and will ensure Senior Management has oversight wherever there is a change of Care Plan away from adoption.

- 8.2 During 2021-2022, there has been no adoption placement disruption, relating to a Wiltshire child before an Adoption Order was made and there have been no placement breakdowns that occurred post-order when the child returned to being looked after. This demonstrates strong matching overall.
- 8.3 Full details of the recruitment and assessment activity of Adoption West is available in their Annual Report and so is not included here. However, Cabinet requires assurance of sufficiency for Wiltshire children and so, in summary:

On 31 March 2022, Adoption West had approved 87 families in the year of which 18 live in the Wiltshire area. Positively 32% of adopters approved in 2021/22 are available to adopt siblings, which is well within the target range of 25-35% set in 2021/22, compared to only 15% in the previous year. The target for approvals for adoptive families remains at 85-95 approvals for 2022/2023.

During 2021/22 seventeen families in Wiltshire have had children placed with them for adoption, and as of 31 March 2022 13 families in Wiltshire have children placed for adoption all children have been placed for less than 6 months. In the Adoption West area there are currently 63 families approved who do not yet have a child placed with them of which 13 live in Wiltshire. There are 16 Wiltshire based families in the assessment and Approval process and 78 families in the assessment and approval process across the Adoption West region. This indicates the scope of the pool of adopters that is potentially available for our children and it is anticipated that this will be a sufficient pool of adopters in Adoption West for Wiltshire's children.

One principle of Adoption West is that there will be more people becoming approved as adopters who are more immediately accessible to social workers looking for families for Wiltshire children. It is not necessarily the case that these children will be placed with adopters living in Wiltshire as the match with the family best placed to provide permanence through adoption, and meet the needs of the child, is paramount. The wider access to adopters will support children where there are concerns about the proximity of birth parents and families to adopters' homes. It is nationally

recognised that it is more challenging to find placements for children with complex needs, older children, and sibling groups and so a larger pool of prospective adopters, who Adoption West knows well, is a benefit. This will still mean that 'out of region' placements will be required, but with a decreased reliance on them.

9. Financial summary for Wiltshire

9.1 The tables below indicate the budget, and actual expenditure for the financial year 2021/22 compared to the actual spend for 2020/21. Spend on Special Guardianship allowances continues to increase; however, adoption Allowances spend for 2021/22 has reduced. The increased expenditure of the Special Guardianship allowances reflects children moving up through the age-related bands with more children aged 11 years and over. There has been a steady increase in Special Guardianship Orders being made; in 2019/2020, 25 SGO's were granted, 2020/2021 this increased to 31 and in 2021/2022 this has maintained at 30. Residence Order allowances continue to decrease and given these Orders are no longer made, and children with such orders will reach 16 we will continue to see a decrease in this spend.

| | 21-22 Budget (£) | 21-22 Year End Final Spend (£) | Comparison 2020-21 Year End Final Spend (£) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Adoption Allowances (all types) | 729,410 | 430,627 | 497,103 |
| Special Guardianship Allowances | 2,425,760 | 2,291,931 | 2,014,203 |
| Residence Order allowance | 87,520 | 59,049 | 64,405 |
| Adoption income | 0 | -126,000 | -140,333 |
| Contractual Payment: Adoption WEST | 805,660 | 801,181 | 762,634 |
| Total | 4,048,350 | 3,456,788 | 3,198,021 |

9.2 There have continued to be adoptive families who are financially supported to look after Wiltshire children in addition to those who are supported through Residence Order (RO) and Special Guardianship Order (SGO) allowances. Numbers of families and total costs are indicated below:

| | On 31 March 2020 Children/Carers | On 31 March 2021 Children/Carers | On 31 March 2022 Children/Carers |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| RO Allowance | 8/8 | 7/7 | 6/6 |
| Adoption Allowance | 33/27 | 28/22 | 23/18 |
| SGO Allowance | 243/185 | 195/150 | 305/223 |
| Total | 284/220 | 280/211 | 334/247 |

| | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| | Budget (£) | Actual Expenditure (£) | Budget (£) | Actual Expenditure (£) |
| RO Allowance | 87,520 | 64,405 | 87,520 | 59,049 |
| Adoption Allowance | 368,590 | 309,718 | 399,660 | 261,594 |
| SGO Allowance | 1,833,190 | 2,014,203 | 2,425,760 | 2,291,931 |
| TOTAL | 2,289,300 | 2,388,326 | 2,912,940 | 2,612,574 |

9.3 In this reporting period, and prior to Adoption West becoming operational, the local authority continued to apply for funds from the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) to enable families to access commissioned therapeutic services. At 31 March 2021 there were 132 allocated Wiltshire families who were receiving adoption support (93 in the previous year) and 183 (131) applications had been made to the ASF (this is the number of applications relating to therapy delivered in the reporting period, the actual applications may have been made earlier), with the current budget being administered of approximately £559,087. Adoption West works actively within the £5,000 fair access limit per child and has sought match funding from the local authority for 2 children when there has been significant risk of placement breakdown. As in previous years, the most common types of therapy provided remain DDP, Sensory Integration Therapy and creative therapies such as art or play therapy.

9.4 The outturn budget for Adoption Allowances is broadly in line with the activity. Costs per adoption have increased over time. This reflects more “complex” adoptions being supported (often in adolescence, as the needs of the child change or are better understood, and to prevent placement breakdown as the cohort of children grows older). In addition, the limitations of the Adoption Support Fund only financing therapy for children plus the requirement of the local authority to contribute, means that some adoptive placements require additional financial support to maintain stability.

10. Adoption Panel

| | 2019/20 (Wiltshire Council and Adoption West (AW)) | 2020/21 (Wiltshire Council and Adoption West (AW)) | 2021/22 (Wiltshire Council and Adoption West (AW)) |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Panels held | 56 | 68 | 58 |
| Adoptive families considered | 30 | 101 | 93 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Matches considered | 90 (21 Wiltshire children) | 73 (14 Wiltshire matches) | 97 (16 Wiltshire matches) |
| Relinquished Children | 4(0wiltshire children) | 4 (1Wiltshire Council) | 3 (1 Wiltshire child) |
| Reviews of Adopters notified | 0 | 0 | 0 |

10.1 The Adoption West Adoption Panel complies with Regulation. This is important assurance as children who are the responsibility of Wiltshire Council are matched with adopters at these panels. One Panel is hosted by the Council under the partnership “hub” arrangement although the management and dedicated administration rests with Adoption West. Adoption Panels are not the direct responsibility of the local authority. The panel is chaired by a suitably skilled and experienced Independent Chair who ensures that the functions of panel are delivered effectively. There are Agency Panel Advisers from Adoption West to ensure that the panel is always adequately supported. To ensure that panels are quorate, there is an Adoption West central list of panel members established which includes members with direct experience of adoption, including adopters, and those who have been adopted.

10.2 To comply with regulation, all Panel members, including the Chair, receive annual appraisals which consider their effectiveness as panel members and any areas for development. There is an annual training day; the most recent for Adoption West took place in November 2021 with a focus on lessons learnt from disruption. This ensures that panel members consider their effectiveness and are updated regarding statutory and legislative changes along with Adoption West developments and improvements to practice. The Chairs meet regularly with the Panel Advisors to discuss operational and developmental matters relating to the panels’ work and consistency, making any changes and improvements as required. There are regular liaison meetings between Council managers and Adoption West managers and the Panel Advisor.

10.3 The arrangement for Panel recommendations being considered by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is robust. ADM decisions about Matches are made by the Local Authority responsible for the child with decisions about suitability to Adopt being made by the ADM within Adoption West. This ensures that adopters are informed of decisions promptly following Panel recommendations.

10.4 To ensure capacity and availability within Wiltshire Council, there are currently three senior managers who take the ADM responsibility for children on a rota basis within the organisation, with administrative support and a clear process in place to make sure that ADM decisions are made within timescale.

11. Commentary

11.1 The main externally reported performance information for Wiltshire Council is included in the Adoption Scorecard and is summarised above. Of note are some aspects of performance that have slowed or have decreased due,

in part, to the age and complexities of individual children who need adoptive families, and the complexities within the Court decision making arena. The journeys of children to adoption are tracked and scrutinised to ensure timely progression.

- 11.2 Continued improvement of performance of indicator A10 requires permanence planning to be timely and responsive to a child's needs. The second review (held four months after a child becomes looked after) must identify an appropriate plan where the decision is that permanence is the preferred option. To ensure timely planning and decision making, the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer, working alongside the child's Social Worker, provides challenge and oversight to a case. This is checked through audit and supervision. Permanency Options Meetings are used on all cases to decide which options are right for a child and required actions are identified, supporting the care planning process.
- 11.3 The terms of reference of the monthly Permanence Panel ensures that children have an appropriate plan for permanence, including adoption, at the right time in their care pathway. The average duration of proceedings for 21/22 was 36.9 weeks, whilst this is slightly down from 32.9 weeks in March 2020/21; through robust tracking, we know that the key factors are beyond the control of the Local authority and relate to international elements, late identification of family members, judicial delay, and need for expert witness/assessments. The Care Proceedings Case Manager has recently been given additional responsibility for specific oversight of adoption from pre-proceedings, this has also highlighted some aspects of practice which could positively impact on court outcome timeliness; including greater emphasis on the use of family group conferences at each stage of a child's journey to identify kinship carers, and ensuring assessments in pre-proceedings specifically identify where parents capacity to care will not improve with time, thus reducing the need for addendum assessments in care proceedings, this, supported by the new Wiltshire Family Justice Designated Judge's commitment to reduce the use of expert witnesses; should see a reduction in weeks children stay in the court arena and positively impact on timescales from when children come into care to when they become subject to a placement order (A20) and are placed with adoptive carers (A10).
- 11.4 Whilst there have been some fluctuations in the number of newly approved adopters over recent years, as noted, there needs to be more choice for our 'harder to place' children. Adoption West continue to undertake a targeted campaign to recruit adopters who are interested in adopting sibling groups and older children, which will increase the pool for those children. Specific recruitment for children with complex medical needs is planned for the latter part of this year. Whilst this is positive, perhaps a better indication of overall effectiveness and impact upon outcomes for children is how many children are adopted and in what timescale. The percentage of children leaving care through adoption in 2021/22 in Wiltshire was 14% (12% nationally in 2018-19, the most recent national comparative figure). Currently Adoption West has 78 assessments in progress, of which 16 are "Wiltshire based". As previously indicated, it is this larger pool, which is available for Wiltshire children, but this will only meet our needs if the adopters for older children

and complex needs are approved and if the overall pool is sufficient to meet the needs of the other six Local Authorities in Adoption West.

11.5 As of 31 March 2021, there were 17 children “waiting” for adoption, of these 5 children remain subject to care proceedings and thus formal family finding cannot yet progress. Of those 11 children with Care and Placement Orders only 1 of these children had waited for over 12 months, with a positive plan to be formally adopted by her foster carers, and with the majority having been waiting less than 3 months. Promoting the needs of Wiltshire’s children, Adoption West uses Link Maker for all children, initially using anonymised profiles to identify potential links before Placement Orders are secured. When a Placement Order is made, a fuller profile is added and if children are considered “hard to place”, the circulation of the profile will be broadened, this may include submission to national and regional activity days where potential adopters can “see” the children. Adoption West have a dedicated Family Finding Team from within existing resources to improve this area of work. Link Maker is a national on-line resource that is adopter-led and provides adopters with information about children needing adoptive families. It has produced quicker matching for some children and national searches are made for children considered ‘hard to place’. The use of Link Maker continues to have a vital place in family finding for children since the National Adoption Register was closed on 31 March 2019.

11.5.1 In some situations, and if required, adopters may be recruited either locally or via another adoption agency for specific children waiting. This strategy has not recently been used for Wiltshire children as placements have been identified from Adoption West, from Voluntary Adoption Agencies or other Local Authorities. Adoption West has a positive impact on the timely placement of children with adoptive families as it widens the pool of approved adopters available. Since December 2020 the Service Manager within Wiltshire Council with lead for adoption has established monthly meetings with the Manager of the Adoption West Family Finding team to track and monitor all children on the adoption journey in Wiltshire and ensure any potential blocks are considered and discussed at an early stage, as of June 2022 the decision has been made to change the tracking meeting to a formal adoption permanence panel meeting, which will include attendance of the Wiltshire Operational Service Manager, Care Proceedings Case Manager Wiltshire, Team Manager Family Finding Adoption West and all operational Wiltshire Team Managers who are responsible for case holding children in the adoption journey. This Panel will provide for more robust and dynamic tracking of children, improve joint working with the family finding team, prevent any unnecessary delay, and improve timeliness for children in the adoption journey.

11.6 Early Permanence (EP) practice is established in Wiltshire with all EP carers within Adoption West being potentially available for Wiltshire children. In 2021-22, 4 Wiltshire children were referred for EP and 2 were placed with EP carers. In the preceding year 6 children were referred and 3 placed. The issue of location can be key in placing children in an EP placement due to the need to facilitate regular contact and ensure young children are not travelling long distances on a regular basis. Working

collaboratively with other Regional Adoption Agencies and Voluntary adoption agencies across the Southwest, Adoption West has been successful in a bid for National Adoption Strategy monies. This will enable the appointment of a project worker for 12 months to work across the Southwest to promote Early Permanence champions in each Local Authority and work nationally to develop webinar-based training materials. The aim is to ensure Early Permanence is promoted as an option for children to include older children and groups of brothers and sisters.

- 11.7 The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) process is designed to meet statutory requirements and not bring undue delay into the system. It is under continual review to ensure it is effective, by ensuring that family finding, and matching work can begin at the earliest opportunity so that the time is reduced that children wait to be matched. This activity, linked to good Early Permanence practice and the opportunities provided by the pool of Adoption West adopters, allows placements to be made and matches agreed through Panel quickly and without reducing the rigour applied to ensure that all decisions are in the child's best interest. This will support improvement of A2.
- 11.8 It is anticipated that A20 performance will improve as the scrutiny and challenge provided by the Independent Reviewing Service and the work of Adoption Permanence Panel continue to drive timeliness and permanence planning.
- 11.9 It is important to note that the target has "tightened" in recent years and the measure is now taken over 14 months (previously 16 and 18 months), with progress remaining broadly positive. The emphasis placed on effective planning means that several children, where adoption was identified as being in the child's best interest, have had the ADM decision reversed and the Placement Order rescinded (6 this year), with an alternative permanence plan agreed without further undue delay for the child. Current care planning practice and robust challenge will not allow cases to drift, thus securing permanence for children. The Local Authority updated the Recission Policy in 2021 to ensure more timely decision making where the Court decision does not reflect ADM decision for adoption.
- 11.10 An Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel (JSP) is now in place, bringing the scrutiny function of the six local authorities into one panel. In summary, the purpose of the JSP is to provide scrutiny and assurance to the respective local authorities regarding the effectiveness of Adoption West. Acting as a "critical friend", it will provide independent scrutiny whilst making constructive recommendations for improvement. The JSP will produce its own annual report.
- 11.11 Improving adoption practice within the Council and, in turn, supporting and improving the effectiveness of Adoption West remain priorities for the local authority. In doing so, the Council will ensure best outcomes for Wiltshire's children.

12. Actions

In considering this report, Cabinet is asked to endorse the following actions to continue to improve outcomes for children who need adoptive families. Wiltshire Council will:

- i. Use a range of management and performance information to track the effectiveness of adoption practice in terms of children requiring adoptive families to be confident that the work the Families and Children's Service and the partnership with Adoption West has positive impact on outcomes for Wiltshire's children.
- ii. Through the Board of Directors and the Service Leads Group, maintain a high level of involvement and challenge with Adoption West, meeting the needs of Wiltshire's children through ensuring good matching and support of adopters. The service leads meet bimonthly with Adoption West with their newly developed family finding Team. Wiltshire ADM's meet quarterly with other ADM's in the Adoption West area and Panel Chairs to discuss quality and areas for development.
- iii. Use the scrutiny and challenge of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel to improve outcomes for Wiltshire's children.
- iv. Regularly convene operational and strategic meetings between Council staff and Adoption West staff regarding the decision-making processes for children. Adoption West will also be asked to provide a copy of their quarterly return to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB).
- v. As new leads in the Directorate the Support and Safeguarding Service lead on adoption and are the link to the manager to Adoption West. We will work closely with Adoption West to ensure proactive and effective family finding practice to bring about timely identification of potential adoptive matches for children who require adoption. Quarterly performance data will continue to be scrutinised by the Performance and Outcomes Group chaired by the Head of Support and Safeguarding.
- vi. Through specific discussion and regular liaison meetings with the Wiltshire Family Justice Board we aim to improve the way that all parties involved in the court arena deal with care cases in a timely manner, recognising the potential delays for children where additional family members (sometimes multiple) may be considered as carers late in proceedings or where additional assessments are indicated. The Service Lead is a member of the Wiltshire Family Justice Board and oversees Pre-Proceedings and the Care Proceedings Manager. This gives improved oversight of cases across the service.
- vii. Continue to provide training, led by Adoption West, for children's social workers in writing Child Permanence Reports which are used in court, to match children to adopters and to be the central record of

their life story. Child Permanence Training has taken place this year and further dates will be agreed to ensure that all staff undergo this training. Life Story Training is also be offered as part of our Directorate training plan.

- viii. The Scrutiny Board need to hold Adoption West to account to ensure a sufficiency of adopters who can meet the diverse needs of the population of children requiring adoption in Wiltshire with oversight of what Wiltshire children need and consider targets for the recruitment of adopters for older children, siblings and those with complex needs. This would reduce delay for these children's, improve timeliness of our scorecard but more importantly achieve lasting permanence for these children via adoption.
- ix. In cases where it is recognised that the agency may struggle to match children with in-house prospective adopters, request Court consent to feature the children's profiles beyond Wiltshire's boundaries and, through Adoption West, be pro-active in referring children to regional and national family finding services once a Placement Order has been granted (sooner with the consent of the court).
- v. Ensure that where required and appropriate, match funding is applied to ASF applications to provide high quality support to adoptive families.
- xi. Hold formal Disruption Meetings where adoption placements breakdown before Adoption Orders are made to consider key learning to inform whole service improvement.

13. Background

- 13.1 Adoption is a route to provide permanence for children who are no longer able to live safely with their parents or other family members. This is achieved through the provision of quality adoptive placements for Wiltshire's children where a decision has been made that adoption is in their best interest. This is achieved through effective working between the local authority and Adoption West.
- 13.2 The fundamental requirement is that children are placed with families who have been assessed as being suitable to adopt. A recommendation of suitability is made by the Adoption West Panel, and this is ratified as a decision by that organisation's Agency Decision Maker (ADM). Through this process, there is rigorous assurance that approved adopters can provide safe, secure and enduring family placements for this vulnerable group of children. In turn, this allows them to grow, develop and thrive in a nurturing, supportive and loving family environment, removed from the stigma of being looked after by the local authority. To do this, there must be an appropriate range of enduring adoption placements to meet the assessed needs of children who need permanent adoptive families. These families must

promote stability, safety and positive outcomes for children by working in partnership with all agencies, as required.

- 13.3 The legislative basis of this work is the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the accompanying 2005 Regulations. As indicated, Ofsted inspected the Service as part of the wider Ofsted inspection of the Families and Children's Service in June 2019. Adoption West is the Regional Adoption Agency and Wiltshire no longer carries out the full range of adoption functions as it did. The Council retains some aspects of adoption work and is an Adoption Agency; the requirement to be inspected and for Cabinet to be assured remains.
- 13.4 The local authority, through reporting to Cabinet, must be assured of regulatory compliance and effectiveness through performance monitoring, challenge and improvement planning.
- 13.5 Adoption West has the responsibility to recruit, assess and approve adopters for children. This includes those who can provide permanence for children who may be considered "harder to place". This group includes older children, sibling groups and children with disabilities. Adoption West remains part of the South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC) which works regionally to identify matches for children across the area and it is also developing close working relationships with RAAs across the South West and nationally. Adoption West subscribes to Link Maker, an online adopter-lead resource.
- 13.6 Adoption West is a Voluntary Adoption Agency; a partnership of six local authorities working with a small number of locally operating Voluntary Adoption Agencies. It is the Regional Adoption Agency, providing adoption services in line with government requirement, from the point of expression of interest to adopt, through to assessment and approval at panel and beyond, to Adoption Support. Over time, it is anticipated that Adoption West will have an increasingly significant impact on outcomes for Wiltshire's children as it delivers an effective regional response to adoption and the needs of children. The case responsibility for children remains with Wiltshire Council.

14. Safeguarding Implications

- 14.1 Children who require adoptive families remain the responsibility of Wiltshire Council's Families and Children's Service. This service is delivered in accordance with Wiltshire Children's Services Policy and Procedures, overseen by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Panel. The local authority has clear and effective safeguarding procedures in place for children and vulnerable adults.
- 14.2 The partnership with Adoption West is carefully regulated and Adoption West has the appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- 14.3 This report is for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

15. Public Health Implications

The risk of poor health and wellbeing outcomes is known to be greater for children looked after. We also know from the evidence that safety and mattering are critical to a healthy functioning nervous system and healthy brain development. Safe and caring environments provided by quality adoption placements are, therefore, an opportunity to mitigate these risks and improve long term outcomes for these children and young people.

16. Procurement Implications

Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

17. Equalities Impact of the Proposal

(detailing conclusions identified from Equality Analysis, sections 4 and 5)
Adoption West continue to undertake a targeted campaign to recruit adopters who are interested in adopting sibling groups and older children, which will increase the pool for those children. Specific recruitment for children with complex medical needs is planned for the latter part of this year.

18. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

19. Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

A Standing Task Group will meet on 05 September 2022 to consider this report prior to Cabinet on 06 September 2022

20. Risk Assessment

20.1 Risks that may arise if the performance and management of adoption work, and that of Adoption West with whom the Council is in partnership, is not effective and does not achieve good outcomes for children:

- Safeguarding risk to looked after children if they are placed with adopters who have not been fully assessed, prepared and supported. Safeguarding is considered a high-level risk within the corporate risk register
- An inadequate supply of adopters to meet the needs of children requiring permanence through adoption
- Reputational risk if the Agency or Adoption West is not effective and does not achieve good outcomes for children who require adoption
- Reputational risk if statutory timescales are not met regarding adoption
- Reputational risk if the Agency or Adoption West is rated as Inadequate through inspection
- Financial risk if placements are made, are unstable and subsequently breakdown leading to children returning to local authority care
- Financial risk if Adoption West is not effectively managed
- Risks associated with the safety and effectiveness of overall service delivery provided by Adoption West.

- 20.2 Effective delivery of the provision of adoptive families to children who need them, supported by appropriate improvement and service plans, reporting and challenge will mitigate these risks. The secure operation of Adoption West, with appropriate accountability and reporting to the Board and to Wiltshire Council, as required, will support this.
- 21. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**
See above. Not applicable - for approval by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.
- 22. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks**
See above. Not applicable - for approval by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.
- 23. Financial Implications**
The previous budget for the Adoption Service is indicated, in summary, above. The Service has been managed within budget, supported by external incomes collected. The cost of supporting an adopted child is less than the average cost of looking after a child in the care system and is often time limited as opposed to costs of care which extend to 18 years old and beyond. Cabinet has previously received information relating to the financial implications of Adoption West and the contribution that the Council makes to that organisation. This annual report relates to how well Wiltshire Council carries out responsibilities regarding the adoption of children, it cannot be separated from considerations of the effectiveness of Adoption West and the appropriateness of the level of funding from local authorities compared to the demand for services and therefore adoption activity is dealt with annually as Adoption West (AW) agrees its annual budget.
- 24. Legal Implications**
It is a requirement of registration as an Adoption Agency that the Executive side of the Council receive regular written reports regarding the effectiveness, compliance and management of the Agency. It has been agreed that this will be in the form of an annual report and an interim report, ensuring that legal requirements are met. There are no additional legal implications arising.
- 25. Options Considered**
Not applicable - for approval by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.
- 26. Conclusion**
Recent years have seen considerable change within the world of adoption with the introduction of RAAs and a focus on improving adoption performance. This has led to the need to review and develop services, amend policy and practice and so increase the effectiveness in achieving best outcomes for children to be adopted. At the heart of this is the belief that, for some children, adoption is the best route to legal permanence, security and the opportunity to achieve their potential. Wiltshire Council is committed to improving service delivery and, therefore, outcomes for children, including those for whom adoption is considered to be in their best

interest. Adoption West has brought significant change to this landscape. The Council is an Adoption West partner, working collaboratively and regionally to ensure a whole service approach to prevent delay in securing appropriate adoptive placements for children in a timely and safe way.

Jen Salter (Interim Director - Families and Children)

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June 2022

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None



Annual Report 2021-22

Prepared by Alison Lewis, Service Director



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Appendix 1 – Governance, Commissioning and Scrutiny Arrangements

1.0 Introduction

Adoption West is a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) commissioned by Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Wiltshire Council. The agency is a local authority company wholly owned by the aforementioned local authorities. As a separate legal entity from the local authorities Adoption West is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency.

This report is also produced in accordance with National Minimum Standard 25.6, which details that the Voluntary Adoption Agency Board Members should:

- Receive a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency, every six months
- Monitor the management and outcomes of the services provided, to satisfy themselves that the service is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users
- Satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration

It is also a requirement of the Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF): voluntary adoption agencies, that the six-monthly reports are shared with Ofsted on an annual basis. A six-monthly report will be produced at the end of Q2 and Q4.

This report provides performance data for children's family finding service, adopter recruitment, adoption panels, adoption support, a staffing overview and financial arrangements linking this to the relevant National Minimum Standard (NMS). It also highlights what we have achieved and the key challenges in the last six months.

An appendix is provided which details the governance, commissioning, scrutiny and adopter participation arrangements for the agency.

2.0 Overview:

Adoption West has continued to deliver excellent support to children and families in the last year as we emerged from the Covid 19 pandemic, with increasing contacts with service users being face to face. Alongside this the learning with regards to the use of digital technology for meetings has been embedded, meaning that many staff have been able to have the flexibility and efficiency of hybrid working from home, whilst more recently including some time in office bases.

The period October to March has been particularly dominated by two key issues, a High Court ruling relating to the medical information required for children with plans for adoption that is now referred to as the Somerset Ruling and Adoption West's first Ofsted inspection.

Somerset County Council v NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group & Anor [2021] EWHC 3004(Fam) highlighted issues of non-compliance with Adoption Agencies Regulations 15 and 17. Consequently, the courts requested that adoption agencies to review their processes to confirm that they were compliant with the adoption regulation. Unfortunately, one of the constituent local authorities of Adoption West identified non-compliance regarding the appointment of the Agency Medical Advisors (AMA), specifically the status of the person undertaking that role. When Adoption West was established, the appointment of the AMA was the responsibility of each local authority and Adoption West has accessed this role via the existing arrangements in place with the local authorities. The non-compliance of the specific Agency Medical Advisor therefore, had a direct consequence for Adoption West with some of the agency's adopter's medical reports not being compliant.

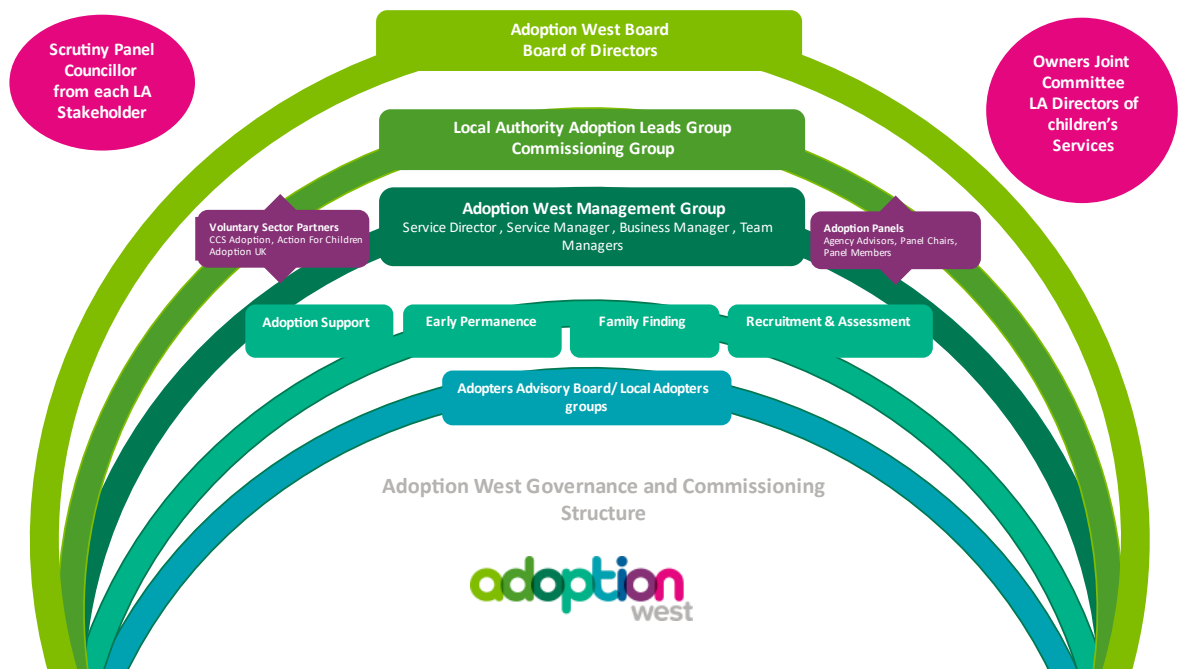
Having sought legal advice Adoption West took immediate action to address and remedy the medical reports that were non-compliant. We worked with the specific local authority to ensure an appropriate medical practitioner was appointed to the AMA role and via the adoption panels to ensure that all prospective adopter reports affected were rigorously reviewed by both the adoption panel and the Agency Decision Maker. All adopters affected had the issue addressed and amended by 14th April 2022.

The Ofsted inspection is discussed in more detail in part 4 of this report.

3.0 Governance and Scrutiny

As a local authority trading company, it has been essential that Adoption West established a rigorous and transparent mechanism of both governance and scrutiny. This is achieved via the Joint Committee of the local authority owners who discharge the strategic management of the agency to the Adoption West Board which meets quarterly. The Board comprises senior managers from the Local authorities along with a representative of the voluntary sector and the Adoption West Advisory Board. The work of Adoption West is presented to Scrutiny Panel which comprises an elected member representative of each local authority also meets quarterly following the Board meetings.

Adoption West operational managers meet bimonthly with the Adoption Lead Managers of the local authorities and focus on practice development for adoption and permanence practice across the region. Over the last year the group has developed a shared approach to managing adoption disruptions, a process for foster carers who wish to adopt a child in their care and has continued to embed the Moving to Adoption framework for enabling children to transition from foster carers to adoption.



4.0 Ofsted

As a registered voluntary adoption agency Adoption West is required to be inspected under the Social Care Common Inspection Framework [Social care common inspection framework \(SCCIF\): voluntary adoption agencies until 31 March 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-care-common-inspection-framework).

The first inspection of Adoption West had been delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic and eventually took place between 24th and 28th January 2022.

| Outcome of the inspection |
|--|
| Overall experiences and progress of service users - Good |
| How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected - Good |
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers - Requires improvement to be Good |
| The voluntary adoption agency (Adoption West) provides effective services that meet the requirements for Good. Good |

The inspection took place during a critical time when issues of compliancy with Adoption Regulations were emerging. As a key factor in this inspection is the focus on the adherence to National Minimum Standards and the Adoption Regulations. The noncompliance relating to Adoption Regulations 26(a)(b) and specifically regarding the appointment of a suitably qualified Agency Medical Advisor in one of the local authorities was a significant factor as evidenced by the inclusion of a Requirement in the report on this matter. This issue has now been resolved with Gloucestershire appointing an appropriately qualified Agency Medical Advisor. All the remedial work to ensure that adopters medical summary reports are compliant with the adoption regulations has been completed.

The inspection report highlights how far Adoption West as an agency has developed in the last three years. The overall Good judgment is welcomed by Adoption West and recognises the passion and commitment of all Adoption West staff to deliver good outcomes for children. In the report there is recognition of the “momentous” task of bringing six separate adoption teams together to form a single Regional Adoption Agency and Voluntary Adoption Agency that is delivering good quality adoption services for children and families across the region.

The agency is considered to be recruiting and supporting adoptive families that provide safe loving permanent homes for children and is focused on the needs of children as reflected in the recruitment strategy and the training and development of its work force. The preparation and training of adopters was highlighted and within verbal feedback, the Lead Inspector commented that it was some of the best training she had observed.

The adoption support provided to children and families by social workers in the agency is a strength, alongside enabling families to access services via the Adoption Support Fund. Even though only operating for a year at the time, the agency has progressed during the pandemic and ensured that its services remained effective. The agency is realistic about its achievements and areas for further development. The five recommendations provided in the report are all issues the agency had previously highlighted and is addressing within its 2022-23 Development Plan.

In the same period Ofsted inspected adoption services as part of their ILAC inspections in:

Gloucestershire County Council

“Planning for children with a plan of adoption is a strength. Working through the regional adoption agency, the numbers of children leaving care to join adoptive families have increased. There is a greater consideration for early permanence placements, as well as targeted recruitment resulting in more brothers and sisters being placed together for adoption.”

Bath and North East Somerset

“When adoption is in children’s best interests, the local authority ensures that the regional adoption agency delivers a good service for children. Children are matched quickly and prepared sensitively, and their adoptive parents are supported well. Adoption breakdown is rare.”

5.0 Children’s Adoption Activity

5.1 Agency decision maker Activity

Adoption West provides advice to all six local authorities on making Should be Placed for Adoption decisions for children. This includes advice and support in relation to the quality assurance of the paperwork for the Agency Decision maker. The Agency Advisors work closely with the social work teams providing guidance and working to the court timetables.

The Agency Advisors have now established training for social workers and managers across the region, who are writing Child permanence reports. This year we have provided 2 days for managers

| Children 2021-2022 | BANES | Bristol | GCC | North Somerset | South Glos | Wiltshire | Total YTD | Total for 2020/21 |
|--|-------|---------|-----|-------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------|
| ADM (Should be Placed for Adoption) decisions | 7↑ | 16↓ | 50↓ | 4↓ | 9↓ | 21= | 107↓ | 132 |
| Matches of children with Families | 2↓ | 25↑ | 29↓ | 14= | 11↑ | 16= | 97↑ | 93 |

The number of children with a plan for adoption has decreased by 19% this year. The most recent data from Coram i indicates a decrease in the number of ‘best interest decisions’ across England and the current ‘year to date’ figure would indicate that this trend is reflected in the Adoption West data.

5.2 Children matched and placed for adoption

| | Children Matched YE 21/22 | Children Matched YE 20/21 | Children Placed YE 21/22 | Children Placed YE 20/21 |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| BANES | 2↓ | 7 | 2↓ | 7 |
| Bristol | 25↑ | 17 | 24↑ | 18 |
| Gloucestershire | 29↓ | 31 | 33↑ | 30 |
| N Somerset | 14= | 14 | 12↓ | 16 |
| S Glos | 11↑ | 7 | 11↑ | 6 |
| Wiltshire | 16= | 16 | 17↑ | 16 |
| | 97↑ | 92 | 96↑ | 93 |

The number of children matched and placed for adoption has increased this year and is reflected in lower numbers of children waiting for an adoptive family.

One of our aims has been to increase the number of children who are placed with Adoption West adopters. During 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 74% of children were placed with Adoption West adopters and increase from 66% the previous year:

| Children placed | YE 21/22 | YE 20/21 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Outside Adoption West | 25 26% | 24 34% |
| Within Adoption West | 72 74% | 46 66% |

Children placed outside Adoption West are with adopters approved by either a Voluntary Adoption Agency or another Regional Adoption Agency. Placing children with Adoption West adopters enables children to remain local which facilitates transitions and support in early placement and longer term

5.3 Timeliness for Children

One of our key performance indicators is the time it takes us to find the right family for a child. The data in the table below sets out the amount of time between the placement order being made and the child being matched with their adoptive family (Coram I data Q3 2021-22). The timeliness is improving with Placement order to Match being shorter than the England average for 4 of the local authorities and the average across Adoption West as a whole is less than the England average for Placement to Adoption Order.

| | Placement Order to Match | Placement to Adoption Order |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Target figure (days) | 121 | 274 |
| England Average | 192 | 283 |
| Adoption West Average | 198 | 277 |
| BANES | 62 | 274 |
| Bristol | 174 | 235 |
| Gloucestershire | 201 | 310 |
| North Somerset | 283 | 231 |
| Sth Gloucestershire | 183 | 286 |
| Wiltshire | 152 | 293 |

There were 44 children with Placement Orders at 31/03/22, whom Adoption West were actively family finding for. This is significantly lower than the 69 children at the same period last year. It is positive to report that there are only 7 children waiting longer than 6 months compared with 23 children at 31/03/21. Of the 44 children with placement orders, yet to be matched at the end of Q4, 23 were linked for adoptive placements.

5.4 Early Permanence

A total of 22 children were placed in EP placements during 2021-22. This is 8 less than the previous year. Recruitment for adopters who will consider providing Early Permanence has remained, however there are some challenges to finding suitable EP placements which include;

- uncertainty about whether a child will need an EP placement, for example if the child is living with a parent in a residential assessment centre.
- there may be limited information about children still living with birth parents or relatives, particularly if this is within their own home, these children tend to be older rather than newborn babies. Whilst some EP carers may consider older children, many EP carers will be motivated by the desire to care for a child as young as possible.

Working collaboratively with other Regional Adoption Agencies and Voluntary Adoption Agencies across the south west of England, Adoption West has been successful in a bid for National Adoption Strategy monies. This will enable the appointment of a project worker for 12 months to work across the South West to promote Early Permanence champions in each local authority and work nationally to develop webinar based training materials. The aim is to ensure that early permanence is promoted as an option for children to include older children and groups of brothers and sisters.

To increase the number of children placed in Early Permanence placements (NMS 13)

6.0 Marketing and Recruitment

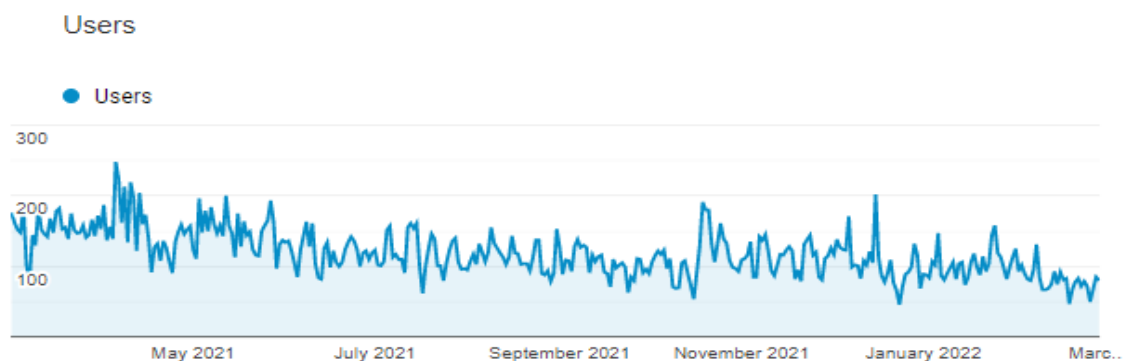
Our main three objectives of the recruitment strategy have been:

1. To recruit enough adopters willing to consider children from the harder to place cohort (specifically groups of brothers and sisters and those children with complex needs)
2. To make potential adopters' early on, of the need for adopters for brothers and sisters and what this might look like.
3. To provide and promote support to enable people to adopt brothers and sisters and children with complex needs

We are continuing to understand and analyse our social media and webpage activity to learn from this information to inform future recruitment plans. The activity focussed on and built upon the efforts made in the earlier part of 2021 (discussed in detail in the previous report)

Acquisition of website visitors

Comparing this period (September 2021 > March 2022) with the previous six months, there has been a decline in the number of visitors to the website, however we have seen a reduction in Bounce Rate and an increase in Session Duration and Pages looked at, this may indicate that the visitors that are coming to the site are seeing the content they are interested in and that is relevant to them.



We can see that the highest number of searches are organic enquiries as opposed to directed from other sites.

1st September 2021 – 28th February 2022

| | Acquisition | | | Behavior | | |
|------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | Users | New Users | Sessions | Bounce Rate | Pages / Session | Avg. Session Duration |
| | 15,602 | 15,386 | 21,641 | 58.74% | 2.15 | 00:01:52 |
| 1 Organic Search | 7,693 | | | 60.37% | | |
| 2 Paid Search | 3,069 | | | 67.17% | | |
| 3 Direct | 3,034 | | | 66.53% | | |
| 4 Referral | 1,925 | | | 29.68% | | |
| 5 Social | 437 | | | 64.18% | | |
| 6 Display | 185 | | | 81.90% | | |

These Organic searches continue to show that awareness of Adoption West is increasing, this is reflected in the number of people reaching Adoption West's website directly and the decline in

number of people reaching us through Referral (i.e. local authority sites). It should be noted the Bounce Rate for Paid Search is significantly higher than that of Referral, attention will be paid over the coming year on the content of referring sites, to ensure this is relevant, current and capitalises on the potential audience interest. While we will continue with GoogleAds, the decision has been taken not to continue with display advertising.

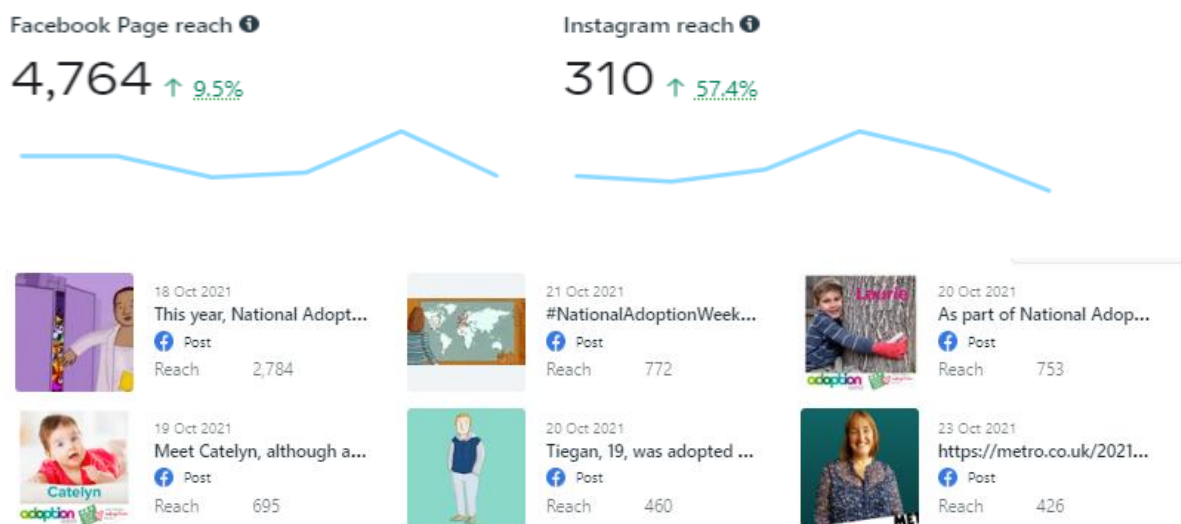
Focus for the coming two quarters will be to have a reviewed focus on web content, bringing some areas up to date and produce more real-life stories, with the aim to increase average session duration, and reduce bounce rate.

Social Media Posts for the last year focussed on the type of children waiting (with a particular focus on brothers and sisters) what we look for in adopters, sharing the real-life stories of adopters and what we offer in terms of support.

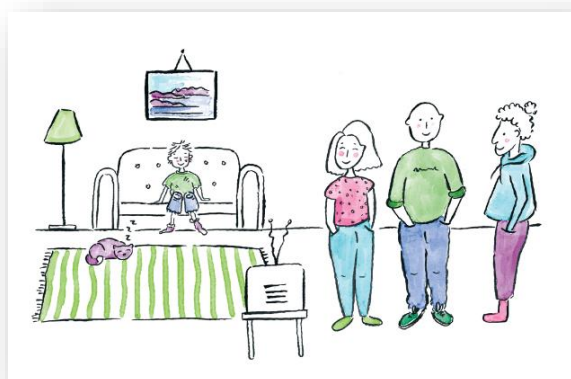
National Adoption Week 18th – 22nd October 2021

The National Adoption Recruitment Campaign focus was given to “The Voices of Adoption”, allowing us to revisit ‘Tia’s Story’ as part of our campaigns for the period.

The reach from two main recruitment social channels for the w/c 18th October 2021



The main areas of focus for the coming year will be looking at our Instagram and LinkedIn presence as these have seen an increase in activity over the previous year and look set to continue.



‘Tia’s Story’ was used extensively across marketing material over the last year, with excellent results (close to 900 YouTube views and a reach of nearly 500 on one post in National Adoption Week). This was also seen in the sharing of stories as part of National Adoption Week (NAW).

There is a growing trend of increased engagement from short form video. When we shared 'The Voices' video as part of NAW we reached 2800 people.

We aim to create further animations over the coming year, to share the voices of adoption.

Social Media plan over the three platforms

Key Messages

- Modern Adoption, this is what adoption looks like in 2022
- Shift from #YouCanAdopt to #CanYouAdopt?
- Who are the children we represent?
- What are the stories of the people in their lives?

Putting the balance back into adoption and shifting the focus to the children

To implement an effective recruitment strategy, meeting the needs of children with a plan for adoption in the AW region (NMS 10.1)

7.0 Adopter Recruitment Activity

7.1 Enquiries

There has been a 26% increase in enquiries against the same period last year. However, there was variation between quarter 1 and 2 with a decrease in enquiries Q2. While the number of ROI's has reduced from the high numbers received in Q1, these were still 42% above the same period the previous year. The conversion rate from 'Enquiries' to 'Registrations of Interest' reduced on the peak of last quarter but was equivalent to the same period last year.

Enquiries have reduced significantly in the second half of 21/22 as was anticipated due to the change in the front door process. The process change requires applicants to attend an information session prior to making an enquiry. Based on this change in process, enquiry rates remain at a reasonable level, especially when the conversion rate to 'Registration of Interest' is considered. Importantly, the number attending information sessions is higher than for the same quarter last year and for the year overall is 31% higher than in 2020/21.

| | 2021-22 | 2020-21 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Enquiries from people considering adoption | 251 | 398 |
| Prospective Adopters attending info sessions | 331 | 253 |
| ROIs received | 82 | 106 |
| Conversion rate: Enquiry to ROI | 33% | 37% |
| Average Time - ROI to Allocation (Days) | 18.5 | 8.9 |
| Average Time - Stage 1 to Approval (Days) | 299 | 318 |
| Started Stage 2 | | |

7.2 Adopter Approvals

Adopters continue to be recruited from across the Adoption West region

| Adopters Approved | 2021/22 | 2020/21 |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| BANES | 2↓ | 5 |
| Bristol | 15↓ | 16 |
| Gloucestershire | 22↓ | 28 |
| North Somerset | 14↑ | 7 |
| South Glos | 10↑ | 8 |
| Wiltshire | 18↓ | 33 |
| Other | 2↓ | 3 |
| Total | 87↓ | 100 |

Adoption West approved 87 adopters in 2021-22, this is a reduction of 13 from the previous year. The number of approvals was slower in the last quarter due to issues relating to the medical regulatory compliance matter. Also there continues to be a high number of approved adopters and consequently we have been prioritising the Registration of Interest for potential adopter for children who wait longest.

Last year only 15 % of adopters approved were for sibling placements, compared with approximately 50% of the children requiring these placements. We set ourselves a target of increasing this figure to between 25-35% target. This has been achieved with 32% of adopters identifying as being available for brothers and sisters.

Feedback about the adoption process:

I thought you may like to know that X had plenty of good things to say about their social workers and the trainers. They referred to them as being exceptional and talked about how all the training and support transformed their views of adoption. They were also very complimentary about the what's app group you helped them to form and the social interactions they have already had with other adopters.

We are so grateful for your support in what we have actually found to be quite a cathartic and enjoyable process.

D has been such a wise, thoroughly supportive influence in our journey and I felt that all through the process she asked the right questions, she was intuitive and encouraging.

7.3 Sufficiency of Adopters to Children in Adoption West

Coram 1 provisional data Q3 2021

| | Approvals 01/01/21 – 31/12/21 | Families available 30/12/22 | Families needed 31/12/21 | Adopter gap |
|----------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Adoption West | 101= | 80↓ | 46 ↓ | 75% = |
| England | 3044↑ | 2474↑ | 1449 ↑ | 71%↑ |

The Adopter Gap tells us the difference between the number of children waiting for an adoptive family and the number of approved adopters in a given area. In the Adoption West region there has been fewer children waiting for adoptive homes than the number of families available. This has remained the position since the mid-2020. Whilst this is a positive situation, we need to continue our recruitment efforts for the children who wait longest for an adoptive family who are older children, those with additional needs, from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, as well as brothers and sisters who need to grow up together.

The adoption agency approves prospective adopters who can meet most of the needs of looked after children who are to be placed for adoption and who can provide them with a home where the child will be able to recover from the impact of their early life experience of loss and trauma, feel loved, safe and secure (NMS 10)

8.0 Adopter Preparation Training

Plans had been in place to go back to face to face training for prospective adopters from January 2022 but had to be put on hold due to the continuing covid restrictions. However, as these were eased in late January, we were able to quickly respond to the request of the adopters who were in the middle of their stage 2 training and wished to have the opportunity to meet one another. Since then, all stage 1, 2 and EP full day training has been in person. EP information and Friends and Family training will remain as virtual courses.

The trainers have been working on several developments and have now provided the first workshop for adopters who are planning to adopt brothers and sisters. The Birth Links support workers are currently liaising with the trainers to produce film and/or audio recordings of birth relatives' and adopted adults' lived experiences, particularly regarding contact and life story. The hope is that these can be used in preparation of prospective adopters and perhaps in student social work training/induction of staff. In addition, Birth Links are also in discussion with the trainers and Recruitment and Assessment teams about developing 'Twilight' sessions which will be sessions outside of the preparation course where adopters can meet birth parents and adopted adults to hear about their lived experience and ask questions directly.

Training courses provided 2021- 2022

| | Stage1 | Stage 2 | EP info session | Early Permanence | Friends and Family |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Number of courses | 12 | 9 | 11 | 6 | 12 |
| Number of participations | 212 | 174 | 189 | 121 | 312 |

The training provided continues to receive very good feedback from adopters many commenting at adoption panel about their learning and the average evaluation being 9/10.

The following comments reflect prospective adopters learning from the training programme:

“I have loved these training sessions, and left the last one wishing we could do more, because I enjoyed them so much. I really appreciate the honesty of the trainers, and how open they were about their own experiences, so thank you. I feel like we learnt so much in a short space of time. It was brilliant.”

“We would like to say thank you to Catherine and Raychel for their knowledge, experiences and willingly for sharing their stories with us to enhance our understanding. This really helped us to gain an insight into what parenting children with past trauma could be like, and the taking time to explain each section of the training in a deep and educated way. we left each session fully informed with no unanswered questions.”

Applicants are given the opportunity to talk to approved adopters, adoptees and birth parents whose children were adopted. (NMS10.7)

Preparation courses are held and made available to all prospective adopters, including foster carers who wish to adopt the child (NMS10.8)

Prospective adopters are prepared to become adoptive parents in a sensitive way, which addresses and gives them skills knowledge and practical techniques to manage the issues they are likely to encounter (NMS10.9)

9.0 Adoption Disruptions

There was one disruption involving an Adoption West child during Q4 who was placed at the age of 6 and left her adoptive placement approximately three months later. The learning will be shared across the Adoption West an Local Authority workforce.

10.0 Adoption Panels

Adoption Panels have continued to be provided via digital platform. In this period there have been no relinquished children considered by the panel. 37 adopter assessments were considered and 32 matches for 43 children. Panel business was covered by the following hub panels during this period:

| Panel | Bristol hub panel | Gloucester hub panel | Trowbridge hub panel |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Relinquished children | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Matches | 14 matches (17 children) | 11 matches (16 children) | 7 matches (10 children) |
| Approvals | 17 approvals | 9 approvals | 11 approvals |
| TOTAL | 31 items | 20 items | 18 items |

During this six month period a total of 29 panels were originally scheduled and 26 panels were held. One panel was cancelled in December (Gloucester) and three panels were cancelled in February (two Trowbridge and one Gloucester). One reserve panel was used in March (Trowbridge) to accommodate the additional medical reviews required to ensure medical reports were compliant.

Panel training was provided on 3rd November and focused on, Learning from Disruptions, Feedback from Panel attendees, Adoption outcomes and Relinquished children

Panel Membership

The most significant change to panel membership in this six-month period was the retirement of Sarah Achieson who had chaired the Trowbridge panel since 2017 and made a significant contribution to the development of panels during the transition to a regional adoption agency.

We are very pleased that Matthew Turner has been appointed as the new chair. Matthew is an experienced social work manager and has been a vice chair of the adoption panel since 2021

The adoption panel and decision-maker make timely, quality and appropriate recommendations/decisions in line with the overriding objective to promote the welfare of children throughout their lives. (NMS 17)

11.0 Non-Agency Partner Adoption (referred to as Step-Parent Adoption)

Assessments for non-agency partner adoptions are undertaken by the recruitment and assessments teams in each hub. This year there has been 104 enquires, with 60 assessments being completed and 34 Adoption Orders granted by the courts.

12.0 Adoption Support

12.1 Provision of Adoption Support Services

The table below provides comparative data for the last three years, showing that the need for adoption support services across the region continues to grow, this is also reported by Regional Adoption Agencies across England and evidenced in the national use of the Adoption Support Fund (ASF). Social workers are managing high caseloads which are rag rated to reflect the level of need with some families needing a review of their therapy, regular keeping in touch calls or visits and others more intensive social work involvement to support with education issues, family relationships, challenging behaviours such as child to parent violence and the impact of early life trauma, identity and life story issues.

| Annual Adoption Support Data | 2021- 2022 | 2020- 2021 | 2019- 2020 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Adoption Support Enquiry | 783↑ | 703 | 694 |
| Appointments for Assessment of need | 132↑ | 126 | 142 |
| Av time from enquiry to Appointment(weeks) | 4.5↓ | 5.4 | 4.6 |
| No Assessments of need completed | 144↑ | 126 | 272 |
| No allocated families | 640↑ | 483 | 377 |
| Average caseload | 56(FTE) ↑ | 46 (FTE) | |
| Waiting allocation | 4.3↓ | 11 | 16 |

Even though there is high demand for service the time from enquiry to appointment of assessment of need has decreased and on average remains below the 6 week target. We do have to acknowledge that there have been periods in the year that the time has exceeded 6 weeks as this has been the experience for a small number of families. Throughout the year only the Gloucester hub have had families waiting for allocation following enquiry or assessment and the average for this is 4.3 families waiting at any time, with a period when no families have been waiting. This demonstrates a service that is responsive and timely to the needs of families whilst supporting high numbers of children and families.

The service capacity is vulnerable to changes in personnel such as vacancies and absence. As previously reported, the opportunities to focus on service development and an offer that provides early intervention support which can divert families need for therapeutic intervention, are limited due to the current level of demand. The need to improve the consistency of the adoption support offer across the region was a recommendation of the Ofsted inspection and we are currently working with the local authorities via the Adoption West Board to develop the adoption support offer.

Groups provided by Adoption West via contract with CCS Adoption Bristol

The contract with CCS Adoption has been reviewed for 2022/23 with the inclusion of

- **The A-Team** – six week focused activity group for adopted teens to be provided in different locations across the region meets regularly to have fun together trying out new skills and initiatives
- **Prime Team Programmes** - two pilot groups for primary aged children based in the Bristol area.
- **Family Fundays**

Services that have been continued

- **The Tots** – three weekly groups for parents and their adopted pre-school children
- **Mums group** – meets monthly facilitated by a member of CCS therapy team
- **Dads Group** – every other month facilitated by a member of CCS therapy team
- **STEP Group** – group for early permanence carers facilitated by an experienced EP carer
- **LGBT Coffee Morning** – meets monthly on a Saturday also opportunity for children to join a planned activity
- **Single Adopters Catch up** – Virtual – every other Thursday
- **Training and Workshops**

TESSA –Adoption UK

Adoption UK TESSA service has been available to families in the Adoption West region since October 2020. This has been a lottery funded service until March 2022. The core elements of the service for families are:

- Consultations with psychologists from their clinical partner organisation, The Family Place
- Peer support through parent partners (employed, trained and supervised by Adoption UK)
- Reflective therapeutic parenting groups facilitated by one of their psychologists and a parent partner

In 2021-22 83 families have been referred to the service with 61 families taking up the offer.

| Hub | Families Referred | Families taken up the service | Families on hold or withdrawn |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bristol | 31 | 22 | 9 |
| Gloucester | 18 | 14 | 4 |
| Trowbridge | 34 | 25 | 9 |
| Total | 83 | 61 | 22 |

Therapeutic Parenting Courses

Adoption West has provided 3 therapeutic parenting courses during the year with 22 adopters attending. These are facilitated by experienced adoption support social workers.

Feedback from participants:

- *It was good timing for me (parent of 3 year old)*
- *Think this training should be offered after the first year of child being placed and a year later as a refresher*
- *Understanding brain development and that our son is not just being naughty and that this happens so young. We got our son very young and expected everything to be plain sailing and it hasn't been*
- *The weekly reset and reminder of what we're doing and why*
- *The community and hearing other's feedback which is exactly the same as our experiences*

The role of adoption support social workers and support workers is central to the support provided to families even when the therapeutic support is commissioned from other services. They are the point of contact in a crisis, assess the level of need and co-ordinate all the services that are necessary to support a family. Here are some comments from families:

I just want to thank you for all your help and support since we approached you in a time of crisis. I would like you to know that you've made a real difference to our lives ..You've allowed us to feel understood, without judgment but with a deep understanding and empathy for us, for our boys and all our needs around coping with the impact of our boys' early life experiences. Even though we know there will be a lifetime of challenges ahead of our family, I feel sure the help we will need along the way will be out there

Gratitude to K in an adoption support review. K was calm, accepting, curious, and really kind and supportive throughout. This made a potentially very difficult situation, so much easier.

10.3 Adoption Support Fund

The table below shows that the number of applications and level of grant funding received from the ASF to support children and families continues to increase each year. Adoption West continues to rely heavily on the ASF to provide adoption support services. Managing the associated tasks and functions when completing applications draws heavily on the capacity of adoption support social workers and business support. There is currently a business case before the board seeking additional resources to increase the support worker capacity and develop the core offer of peer to peer support.

| 2021-22 Total Applications Approved by ASF in the quarter | Count of ASF Application Reference | Sum of Number of Funded Recipients (new) | Sum of Total Service Costs |
|---|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| BANES | 105 | 120 | £334,803.21 |
| BCC | 179 | 199 | £602,253.37 |
| GCC | 333 | 36 | £1,222,458.76 |
| N Somerset | 108 | 125 | £3699,538.53 |
| South Glos | 51 | 61 | £196,543.15 |
| Wiltshire | 183 | 201 | £569,087.39 |
| AW Total | 959↑ | 1082↑ | £3,294,688.41↑ |
| Year total 2020-21 | 891 | 980 | £3,109,024.27 |

Adoption National Minimum Standard 15

Adoption support

Children and adults affected by adoption receive an assessment of their adoption support needs.

Children and adults affected by adoption receive an assessment of their adoption support needs. Service users confirm that the adoption support service provided met or are meeting their assessed needs. (NMS 15)

12.4 Keeping in Touch with Families

Letterbox arrangements

A key aspect of our universal support to families is via the letterbox service. This enables adopted children and young people to keep in contact with birth family via letters exchanged between the adopters and agreed significant members of the birth family. Letterbox plays a significant part in helping children and young people understand their identity and life story. For some, when the time is right it can be a platform for face to face contact. There are now over a thousand letterbox

agreements in place and each will have a minimum of two exchanges of letters a year, many have much more than this.

| As at 31/03/2022 | Total letterbox arrangements |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| BANES | 113 |
| Bristol | 312 |
| Gloucestershire | 272 |
| North Somerset | 93 |
| South Gloucestershire | 88 |
| Wiltshire | 260 |
| AW Total | 1,138↑ |

Thank you for enclosing a letter from my daughter's birth father. I am so pleased that we have heard from him. It is going to be so important for my daughter to have these....I am so pleased to be hearing from the birth families. We are so lucky that they are at least starting to engage with the letterbox process. Thank you for all the thought and effort that has gone into helping us with communication.

Direct contact

The number children with plans for direct contact with members of their birth family has steadily increased each month for the last two years. This reflects the importance that is now being given to providing opportunities to adopted children to keep in touch with significant people in their lives. These arrangements are nearly all supervised initially and may progress to be facilitated in time. This is now becoming an increasingly significant part of the adoption support service.

| As at 31/03/2022 | BANES | Bristol | GCC | N Som | S Glos | Wiltshire | Total | 2020/21 |
|-----------------------|-------|---------|-----|-------|--------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| No. agreements | 5 | 19 | 22 | 3 | 4 | 46 | 99↑ | 86 |

Contact with birth parents, siblings, other members of the birth family and significant others is arranged and maintained when it is beneficial to the child. (NMS 8)

13.0 Birth Links/Adopted Adult/Birth Parent Support



Support to adopted Adults and birth parents is provided by our Birth Links team which now works across the whole region.

The number of birth parents accessing support has significantly increased by 44% however this does still not reflect the level of children who have a plan for adoption. Therefore, continues to be an area of development in 2022/23 and we will be work with the local authorities to promote referrals of birth family to the service at an earlier stage in the process. Adopted Adult work remains consistent with the length of time between enquiry to allocation reducing.

Birth Links has been running a group for birth parents in Bristol once a month since the middle of September 2021. It has been a very successful group with a core membership of 5 birth mothers who have come to every single session. The support workers are in the process of encouraging a further 4 identified birth mothers to attend. Various activities have been provided to enable the group members to talk about their feelings, share common experiences and support each other.

There is a plan to run a similar service in Gloucester as a 'pop up group' that will run for 6 sessions over 6 months which will then be reviewed. Birth mothers have already been identified who are keen to participate.

Birth Links is developing policy, procedure and practice in regard to Post-Commencement accessing of files, which is governed by different law and regulations.

| Total for 2021/22 | Adopted Adult (Schedule 2) | Adopted Adult/Support (Access to Records) | Intermediary Advice | Birth Family | Adopted Adult/Support Post Commencement |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------|--------------|---|
| BANES | 1 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| BCC | 10 | 12 | 12 | 31 | 0 |
| GCC | 17 | 27 | 7 | 21 | 0 |
| N Somerset | 2 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| South Glos | 6 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| Wiltshire | 10 | 17 | 8 | 13 | 0 |
| AW Total | 46 | 75 | 41 | 82 | 1 |
| Total 2020-21 | 44 | 55 | 47 | 89 | 0 |

Birth parents are given access to, and are actively encouraged to use, a support worker from the time adoption is identified as the plan for the child. The support worker is independent of the child's social worker. (NMS12.3)

Birth parents are helped to work through their concerns through the counselling they receive and understand what is proposed for their child and how the child will benefit if they take an active part in their child's adoption.(NMS12.6)

14. Quality Assurance

To support the improvement of our services Adoption West has developed a quality Assurance Framework and which will help us to reflect on our practice. Audits have been completed of the support to Early Permanence carers and of the caseloads that social workers are managing in adoption support.

We have also introduced an evaluation at different stages of the adoption process to provide service users the opportunity to give regular feedback. We intend to introduce a similar process for adoption support. We have worked with the Adopters Advisory Board to seek views of adopters to identify a process that adopters will find meaningful and easy to engage with.

15. Complaints & Data Breaches

As in the previous six month report we have had 2 stage 1 complaints and no stage 2 complaints. One complaint was complex and related to an adopter assessment and transition of a child. It was partially upheld and there is learning for the agency about the quality of records ensuring they provide accounts of contacts with service user and also an acknowledgement that as the agency transitioned to the "Moving to Adoption" model for transitions some adopters, who had already been approved, hadn't covered this as part of their preparation.

The second complaint was in relation to the delay in processing and deciding upon an adoption allowance which is the responsibility of the local authority and was passed to them.

There have been 2 data breaches in this period which is a significant improvement from the previous 6 month period. One related to information shared with an approved adopter as part of an EP referral the information was quickly contained and deleted. The other incident was more significant and was referred to the ICO, it related to confidential information that was shared via a letterbox exchange. The decision of the ICO was there would be no further action. The agency had taken action to prevent a recurrence by reviewing our control measures.

16.0 People

16.1 Senior Management Team

- Alison Lewis, Service Director- Agency Decision Maker (Adopter Approvals)
- Stuart Babbage, Business Manager
- Sue White, Service Manager – Recruitment, Assessment & Adoption Support
- Alison Hall, Service Manager – Family Finding and Panels (30hrs)

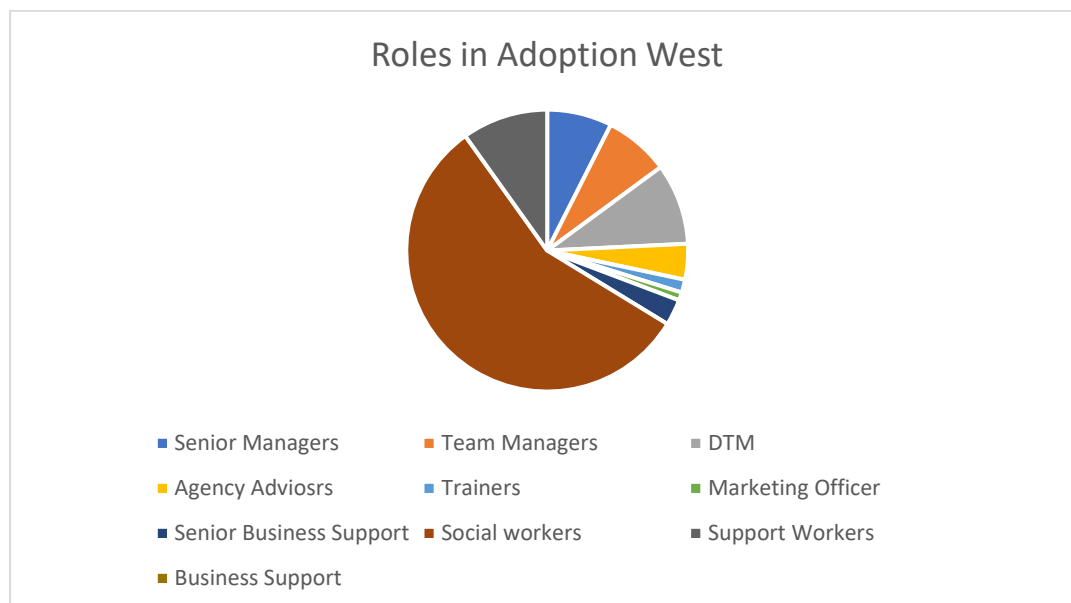
16.2 Establishment at 31st March 2022

The number of staff employed is 84 with 63.23 fte
Permanent staff – 82, Temporary Staff - 2 (1 Team Manager, 1 social worker)

Four members of staff who were on fixed term contracts were confirmed as Permanent following the Adoption West Board meeting in March 2022. This then enabled another two further members of staff to be offered permanent posts. Currently, Adoption West has 1 social worker in adoption support on a temporary contract and a Team Manager working 3 days a week on a temporary basis. Both posts are in the Gloucester hub

8 Independent Workers have been employed over the year to complete Prospective Adopter assessments.

Currently we have vacancies for 4 fte social workers and two part time support worker posts all the post are in the process of being recruited to, with two social work appointments being progressed. We have had a long term vacancy for a team manager in the Gloucester hub. Despite efforts by HR recruitment and offering a significant additional package including welcome offer, retention and relocation there have been no suitable applicants to interview. The decision has now been made to halt recruitment and trial a temporary structure with the Recruitment and Assessments teams in Gloucester and Trowbridge being managed by one Team Manager. This means that the Deputy Team Managers for adoption support in Gloucester and Trowbridge are being supervised by the Service Director and Service Manager respectively, on a temporary basis.



16.3 Workforce Development

It is the aim of Adoption West to provide development opportunities for staff that will enhance the service and meet the needs of adopters, children and birth families. We currently have 20 social workers who are qualified in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy level 1, and 2 social workers qualified at level 2. In February 2022 41 staff attended introduction to the BUSS model (Building Underdeveloped Sensorimotor Systems in children who have experienced developmental trauma). 3

social workers are completing the Level One Training in this model. Plans are in place for 20 staff to complete their level 1 in Theraplay in spring 2022. In addition to these courses;

South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC)

SWAC includes all Regional Adoption Agencies and Voluntary Adoption Agencies in the South West of England. The consortium is funded by contributions from all agencies and has a focus on practice development and training. There are established meetings for Adoption Panel Chairs, Agency Medical Advisors, Service managers and Operational Managers. The training provided by SWAC has included:

- Best Practice - Recruitment, Training and Preparation of adopters
- CoramBAAF – Safeguarding – Learning from Serious Case Reviews
- Education for Adoptees
- Harnessing the energy of sibling bonds – a renewable energy source
- CoramBAAF – Legal Update
- How can NVR be helpful in supporting adoptive families?

16.4 Adoption West staff Values statement

During the year the staff have developed a statement which they feel represents the values they hold and bring to their practice



17.0 Financial Arrangements

Adoption West received commissioned contract income of £3.401m in 2021/22 from its 6 local authority partners to deliver adoption services. The breakdown of budget allocation is shown below:

| Category | Budget (£'000) |
|--|----------------|
| Employee Salary, NI & Pensions | 2,856 |
| Other employee related spend | 117 |
| Commissioned Services, subs & adopter recruitment activity | 144 |
| Post Adoption Support activity | 61 |
| ICT & Office Costs | 142 |
| Other Support Services | 81 |
| Total | 3,401 |

Adoption West has also received £3.218m Adoption Support Fund grant income and manages the related expenditure on behalf of the 6 local authority partners. As a Voluntary Adoption Agency, Adoption West operates on a not-for-profit basis and any surpluses are returned to the local authority partners that control the organisation. Account balances cover in-excess of 3 months operating expenses and there is therefore no perceived risk regarding organisational cashflow.

Adoption West has managed its finances effectively during 2021/22 to deliver services within budget under the added pressures of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and various other organisational challenges. The financial processes and systems in place have proved effective and are being continuously improved to meet requirements, increase efficiency and enable Adoption West to realise new opportunities.

Financial viability and changes affecting business continuity. The Voluntary Adoption Agency/Adoption Support Agency is financially sound. (NMS20)

18. How have we done – Service Priorities for 2021-22

| Adoption West said it would | Adoption West has... |
|---|--|
| To take forward lessons learnt regarding what has worked well in delivering the service during the pandemic and incorporate this into new ways of working. | Continued with Virtual panels Has a hybrid approach with some virtual training and core training face to face Continued a Virtual Information session to ensure accessibility |
| To establish ways of working in accordance with the Adoption West Quality Assurance framework. | Completed a Quality Assurance framework along with Supervision and recording Policies that are bespoke for the agency <small>(To ensure AW is managed ethically, effectively and efficiently and delivering good quality services, which meet the needs of children and service users (NMS 25) Managers to regularly monitor all records kept by the Agency (NMS25.2)</small> |
| To continue to review and develop the adopter recruitment strategy to meet the needs of children waiting for adoption. | Increased the number of adopters for brothers and sisters from 15%-32% <small>To implement an effective recruitment strategy, meeting the needs of children with a plan for adoption in the AW region (NMS 10.1)</small> |
| To improve experiences for adopters by routinely seeking user feedback and reviewing the information sessions. | We have developed a process for user feedback which is now embedded into the process from enquiry to adoption order. We are seeking to develop this for adoption support services and have sought the involvement of the adopter advisory board to seek feedback for the process. <small>To ensure that people who are interested in becoming adopters are treated fairly without prejudice, openly and with respect (NMS 10.2) Service users confirm that the adoption support service provided met or are meeting their assessed needs (NMS 15)</small> |
| To further develop the use of the “Moving to Adoption” model in children’s Transitions. Guidance and training have been completed and shared. | All transitions are planned in accordance with this model. The local authorities are providing training to foster carers to prepare them for transitions <small>The adoption agency has procedures for introducing a child to the prospective adopters and others living in the household that can be adapted to the individual needs of the child and prospective adopters. (NMS13.8)</small> |
| To develop robust tracking and management processes for children pre-adoption order, placed in ‘out of region’ placements. | This has been achieved by the introduction of the central Family Finding who are now monitoring all such placements. <small>To ensure best outcomes for children when moving to adoption placements (NMS 13.8)</small> |
| To complete an audit of Early Permanence placements to ensure that appropriate levels of support are in place that meet fostering standards. To action outcomes from this audit | The audit has been completed which has resulted in guidance for Adoption West social workers when supporting EP placements and has clarified roles and responsibilities between Adoption West and the Local authorities |

| | |
|--|---|
| To work in partnership with the local authorities to deliver Child Permanence Report Writing Training to social workers across the region. | This is now scheduled on a regular basis with social work managers and agency advisors are working with local authorities to deliver training to social workers Birth parents are given the opportunity to comment on what is written about them or their circumstances before the information is passed to the adoption panel or to the child's proposed adoptive parents. (NMS 12.7) |
| A 3yr strategic plan for an adoption support core offer to be developed using outcomes from Adoption Support Audit. | We are continuing to work with the Adoption West Board and local authorities to develop the adoption support offer |
| The transition of the current management of Letterbox system to be undertaken on CHARMS across each three hubs. | This is completed in the Trowbridge hub. It has been delayed in the other hubs and an action plan is in place to address this |
| Establish protocols across AW for management of direct contact post adoption. | The Local Authority Lead Managers have agreed that this is a key action for the group for 2022/23 Promoting children's positive identity, so that they have a positive self-view, emotional resilience and understanding of their background (NMS 2) and contact is arranged and maintained when it is beneficial to the child (NMS 8) |
| Establish clear and efficient protocols with the Local Authorities for accessing records held in adoption archives. | There had been some initial progress ,but this is not consistent across the region. It is now a key priority for the LA lead Managers Adopted adults and birth relatives are assisted to obtain information in relation to adoption (NMS 16) |

19. Adoption West Board Vision Statement

Adoption West believes that every child deserves the right to grow up in a caring and loving family, who will nurture them and prepare them for adult life.

Our vision is for Adoption West to increase the number and diversity of adoptive families available to children in the Adoption West sub region, who are unable to live with their birth families. We also intend to increase the number of early permanence placements available in order to minimise placement moves for children and the number of adoptive families able to consider sibling placements.

We aim to bring a consistent approach towards permanence planning and adoption support across the participating local authorities and, over time, broaden our approach to encompass other forms of permanence, including special guardianship.

20. Service Priorities 2022/23

The priorities for the year are set within the context of our vision statement and each priority is subject to a number of specific actions to ensure the priority is delivered:

- To improve timeliness of Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments

- Ensure that placements are timely either through placing children as soon as they are subject to a Placement Order or through an early placement scheme, in order to promote positive attachment - Improved children's performance data across the region
- To increase the number of children placed in Early Permanence placements
- To obtain the CORAM BAAF EP Quality Mark
- The long term needs of adopted children in the region to be understood and reflected in a regional adoption support offer
- Promoting children's positive identity, so that they have a positive self-view, emotional resilience and understanding of their background
- Adopted adults and birth relatives are assisted to obtain information in relation to adoption
- To improve the consistency of the adoption support offer.

21. Conclusion

This report comes at the end of our third year of operating as a Regional Adoption Agency. Adoption West is now an established agency with a clear identity across the region. Again, this year the service has responded to challenges including the continuing changes and uncertainty of the Covid 19 pandemic and more recently the issues related to the Somerset Judgement.

Throughout we have remained focused on the key priorities of improving the timeliness for children by recruiting sufficient adopters who are prepared and understand the needs of the children. There remain challenges in relation to improving and providing a more consistent adoption support offer. However, the agency is committed to improving the support available to children, adopters and birth families.



Alison Lewis
Service Director

Contributors:

Sue White: Service Manager
 Alison Hall: Service Manager
 Stuart Babbage: Business Manager
 Anjali Gupta: Team Manager Bristol
 Jane Priborsky: Team Manager Trowbridge
 Kate Worthington: Team Manager Family Finding
 Rebecca Myers: Marketing and Communications
 Anita Huggins: DTM Adoption Support Bristol
 Denise O'Connor, DTM Adoption Support Trowbridge
 Rebecca Kay: DTM Adoption Support Gloucester
 Claire Jarvis: DTM Birth Links

Appendix 1

Governance Arrangements:

As a local authority company, Adoption West is owned by the six partner local authorities through the Joint Committee of Directors of Children's Services. The management of Adoption West is delegated to the Adoption West Board of Directors and to the Service Director.

Adoption West Board of Directors:

Voting members:

- Andy Dempsey – Director of Partnerships and Strategy, Gloucestershire County Council (Chair)
- Martin Davis – Assistant Director Children and Families, Wiltshire Council
- Fiona Tudge – Director of Children, Families and Safer Communities, Bristol City Council
- Jo Cross – Head of Integrated Children Services, South Gloucestershire Council
- Becky Hopkins – Assistant Director, North Somerset Council
- Mary Kearney-Knowles – Director Children and Young Peoples Service, Bath and North East Somerset Council

Non-Voting members:

- Mustafa Salih – Head of Financial Management and Business Support, South Gloucestershire Council
- Vicky Reynolds – Chair of Adoption West Adopter Advisory Board, Adoption UK (to join from December 2021)
- Maggie Pitts – CEO, CCS Adoption

Commissioning Arrangements:

Adoption West is commissioned by the six local authorities to provide adoption services. The Lead Managers group is responsible for oversight of the commissioning arrangement and developing shared practice between Adoption West and the Local authority children's social care teams.

Local Authority Adoption Lead Managers Group:

- Rachael Ward – Head of Service: Care Outcomes, Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Tara Parsons – Service Manager, Placements Team, Permanency and Specialist Services, Bristol City Council
- Tammy Wheatley – Head of Service, Permanence, Gloucestershire County Council

- Shelley Caldwell – Service Leader Service Leader Resource Service, North Somerset Council
- Aimee Williams– Service Manager, South Gloucestershire Council
- Pier Pritchard – Service Manager, Children in Care and Placement Service, Wiltshire Council

Scrutiny Arrangements:

As an adoption agency that is funded by public finances to provide statutory adoption services it is crucial that there is effective scrutiny of Adoption West. The Joint Scrutiny Panel has been established to provide this function. The panel meets quarterly and each meeting includes a briefing about adoption issues. In this period adopters have met with councillors and shared their experience of support via the ASF and being an Early Permanence carer.

Joint Scrutiny Panel:

Elected Voting Members:

- Cllr Michelle O’Doherty Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Cllr Christine Townsend Bristol City Council
- Cllr Dr Andrew Miller Gloucestershire County Council
- Cllr Wendy Griggs North Somerset Council
- Cllr Nic Labuschagne South Gloucestershire Council
- Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman) Wiltshire Council
- Cllr Carole King Wiltshire Council

Adopter Participation:

Adoption West has commissioned Adoption UK to provide Adopter Voice services across the region. An Adopter Advisory Board has been created which consists of a Chair and Adopter Champions across the region. The Chair also attends the Adoption West Board to ensure the voice of adopters is included in the governance and scrutiny of the work of Adoption West.

The current Chair of the Advisory Board June 2021 is Vicky Reynolds.

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adoption west

Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel

October 2021 - September 2022
Annual report



*“sometimes superheroes
reside in the hearts of
children fighting huge battles”*



Bath & North East
Somerset Council



Wiltshire Council



Foreword by the chair of Adoption West Board

Although the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel does not fall under the banner of 'Overview and Scrutiny' as defined by the Local Government Act 2000, it is providing a much-needed scrutiny function within the management and framework governance established to oversee the effectiveness of Adoption West. The joint scrutiny arrangements as described in the terms of reference were thoroughly reviewed by each local authority and unanimously agreed by the Adoption West Board.

When the panel was first conceived there was a consensus that more could be achieved through a joint approach to scrutiny as it would draw upon each local authority's councillor representative's skills, knowledge, and input. It would also allow for the efficient use of the finite time available to Adoption West's management to meaningfully engage with independent scrutiny of the Regional Adoption Agency's work.

I believe that aspiration has been realised and that members have engaged with great enthusiasm and commitment in developing their appreciation and understanding of Adoption West and its work. Adoption is a complex area of practice with a profound and enduring impact upon the children and families involved. As such, we must be constantly striving to improve and refine our offer. You have provided a valuable source of challenge and support as we continue that journey, for which I am grateful.

This has been a challenging year. In February, we had our first Ofsted inspection with a very positive outcome, albeit with some areas for development. We have also had to deal with the consequences of the Somerset judgement on the appointment of Agency Medical Advisers which impacted on several local authorities within the partnership, particularly Gloucestershire County Council.

I will be stepping down as chair of the Adoption West Board in November 2022 but can assure the joint scrutiny panel that my successor will continue to work with you in developing the oversight and scrutiny of Adoption West, as will the Director and her team.

Andy Dempsey

Director of Partnerships and Strategy, Gloucestershire County Council

Chair of the Adoption West Board of Directors

Foreword from the chairman of the scrutiny panel

Right from when the plans were first spoken of for the new Regional Adoption Agency, Adoption West, it was my strong personal belief that any new body should include an effective overview and scrutiny involvement provision, and I could not have wished for it to go any better than it has since its first year (2020-21).

I am pleased that Adoption West has remained committed to independent scrutiny by lay members and I hope the board can see its value through the work reflected in this annual report.

As always, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the panel who have been committed to the work we do and for their willingness to engage and learn, because learning we certainly still are at every meeting! I'd also like to thank Alison Lewis, Service Director for Adoption West for her engagement with the panel, enthusiasm and openness.

A key piece of work for 2022-23 will be the review of adoption support, including the views of adopters. I believe this is an area of work where the scrutiny panel could add so much, by reviewing support offers across the country and helping create a clearer picture of the support that would be most beneficial for families supported by Adoption West.

There is incredible value in bringing in the voice of people for whom adoption is a day-to-day reality, not just a data-set. It is still an ambition for the scrutiny panel to develop its membership to include representatives from the "adoption triangle" (e.g. adoptive parent, adopted young person, adopted adults, birth family member, etc.) and I dare say this would bring invaluable strength and depth to the scrutiny panel's work.

My foreword for the first annual report the panel produced concluded with a wish that the work of the panel would carry on improving and that, in time, this scrutiny panel is seen as a natural extension of the overview and scrutiny we all undertake of our Children's Services. I believe I can say that we have taken steps towards these two goals ever since the panel started, and will carry on doing so in 2022-23.

*Cllr Jon Hubbard, Wiltshire Council
Chair of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel*

Purpose of the report

1. This report is written to:
 - a. publicly present the work undertaken by the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel (thereafter referred to as the “scrutiny panel”) from October 2021 to September 2022 to the following committees:
 - Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel, Bath and North East Somerset Council
 - People Scrutiny Commission, Bristol City Council
 - Children and Family Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Gloucestershire County Council
 - Children and young people’s services policy and scrutiny panel, North Somerset Council
 - Scrutiny Commission, South Gloucestershire Council
 - Children’s Select Committee, Wiltshire Council
 - b. enable the Adoption West (AW) Board to monitor the efficiency of the scrutiny panel.
 - c. invite suggestions from the scrutiny committees (as listed in a. above) and the AW board on:
 - areas of focus for the scrutiny panel in 2022-23;
 - the contents that should be included in the scrutiny panel’s annual report in future; and
 - formatting and presentation of the information to ensure ease of reading for future reports.

Background

2. Adoption West (AW) started operating on 1 March 2019, as a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) created by Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, Gloucestershire County Council, North Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Wiltshire Council as a response to the government’s plans, published in June 2015, to regionalise adoption services across England and Wales.
3. Adoption West is a local authority trading company which is owned by the six local authorities and commissioned by them to provide adoption services. Adoption West is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency. Further information can be found on its [website](#).
4. The primary aim of this regionalisation was to deliver an adoption service which offer improved outcomes for both children and those who want to adopt.
5. The scrutiny panel (Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel) has been created to act as a critical friend, providing independent scrutiny of the work of AW and making constructive recommendations to ensure that AW meets its

performance targets and expectations. The terms of reference for the scrutiny panel are included as Appendix 1.

6. The scrutiny panel is an essential element of assuring democratic accountability for the use of public funds; although it does not fall under the banner of 'Overview and Scrutiny' as defined by the Local Government Act 2000 in that it is not a body jointly formed by the six participating councils.
7. The scrutiny panel reports directly to the AW Board. The AW board will monitor the efficiency of the scrutiny panel, including through this annual report.

Membership

Elected Voting Member

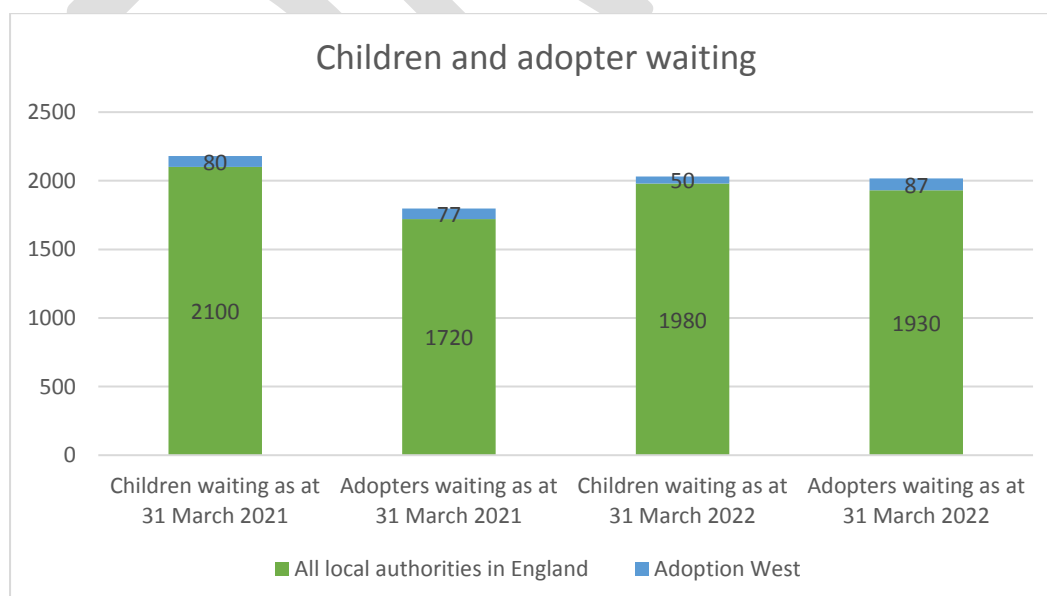
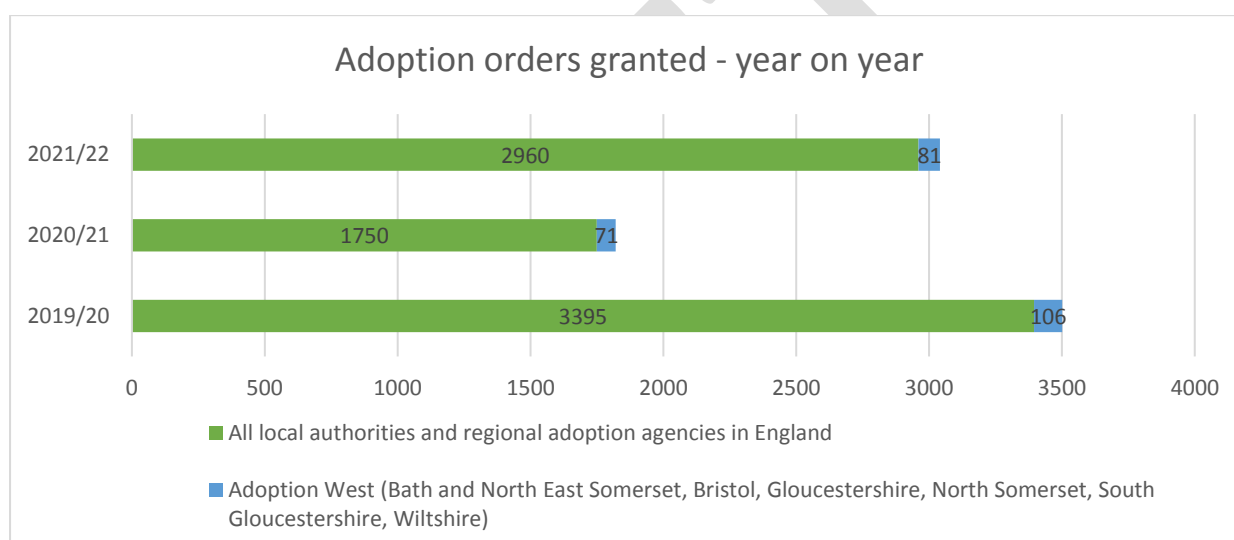
Cllr Michelle O'Doherty, Bath and North East Somerset Council
Cllr Christine Townsend, Bristol City Council
Cllr Dr Andrew Miller (Vice Chairman), Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Wendy Griggs, North Somerset Council
Cllr Nic Labuschagne, South Gloucestershire Council
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Wiltshire Council
Cllr Carole King, Wiltshire Council

Snapshot

[Children looked after in England including adoptions, Reporting Year 2021](#)
(figures for year ending on 31 March 2022 will be released in November 2022)

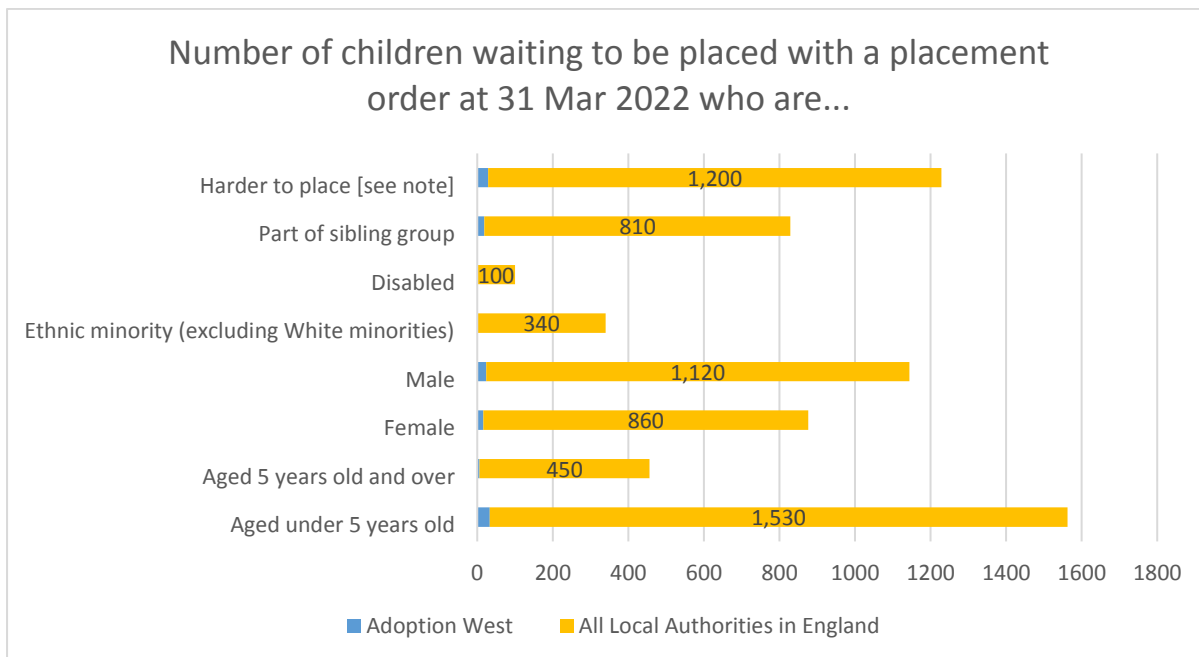
| Children looked after (CLA) | CLA (Children Looked After) per 10,000 children | CLA who were adopted |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| 80,850 | 67 | 2,870 |
| Up 1% on 2020 and at an all time high | The same as 2020 and the highest in the time series | Down 18% on 2020 |

[Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board](#)



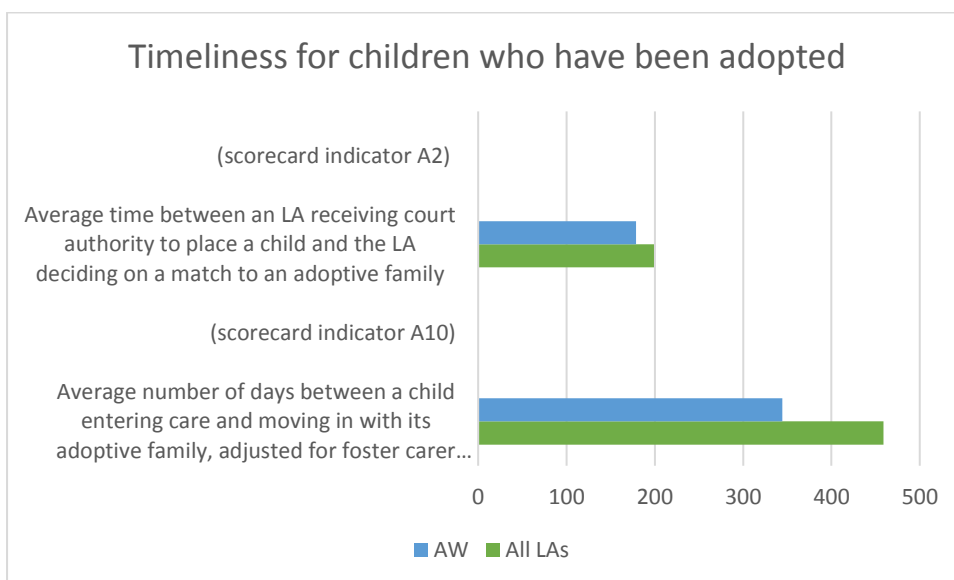
Children with a placement order but not yet placed

Number of approved adoptive families waiting to be matched with children



Note - "Harder to place" is defined as a child who is any of the following: 5 years or over, of an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) background, disabled, or part of a sibling group. Children with more than one harder to place characteristic will be counted in each characteristic.

Note – the figures were often suppressed due to low numbers – where a count is 5 or fewer, or times and percentages are based on a count of 10 or fewer



Note – the figures were suppressed for 3 LAs within AW due to low numbers – where a count is 5 or fewer, or times and percentages are based on a count of 10 or fewer

Work undertaken

8. Between October 2021 and September 2022, the scrutiny panel held four meetings (three virtual meetings due to geographical distances between members and one in person).

October 2021 – the adoption process and the adoption UK adoption barometer 2021

9. The scrutiny panel received a high-level overview of the adoption process for both children and adopters, including the different steps to be taken in accordance with the legislations to be complied with.
10. The scrutiny panel considered its second Adoption UK Adoption Barometer (2021).
11. It was noted that the scrutiny panel had explored issues which had prompted some of the six key recommendations made in the Adoption Barometer:
 - a. Quality standards for prospective adopters
 - b. Changes to the ASF (multi-year rather than single year)
 - c. Making support a priority, including increasing the age at which support stops (26y.o suggested in the Barometer).
12. The panel noted that the Barometer had included, for the first time, a focus on young adults who had been adopted and agreed to direct some of its future work on what appeared to often be a difficult transition to adulthood in terms of accessing the support services needed.

February 2022 - performance

13. The panel considered many reports on performance including the AW 6-months report, performance data for Q2, AW development plan and the outcome of the evaluation of Regional Adoption Agencies.
14. Overall performance appeared to be at expected levels, and where performance was lower the panel was reassured that this had not, of itself, created delays for children waiting for adoption.

April 2022 – outcome of the Ofsted inspection

15. Adoption West had its first Ofsted inspection in January 2022 and was rated good for “Overall experiences and progress of service users” and “How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected”, and rated as requires improvement to be good for “the effectiveness of leaders and managers”.
16. Five recommendations in the Ofsted report were linked to leadership and management and the panel focused on the proposed actions to address these, as summarised below.

- i. Supervision records and caseload management – the panel recommended default reporting of unsigned supervision and will consider the outcome of the supervision audit once available.
- ii. Prospective adopters understanding and support following panel – the panel will conduct a rapid scrutiny on this issue using the outcome of two Adopters Voice Forum that focused on this, as well as consult witnesses and review how other RAAs (Regional Adoption Agencies) are managing this.
- iii. Consistent level of support across the region - the panel will carry on monitoring this through the year in the data presented in the 6-monthly report from AW and the quarterly performance reports. Depending on information presented this may lead to a more in-depth scrutiny activity (such as deep dive or rapid scrutiny) to develop a clear picture of the levels of support accessible across the region.
- iv. Data breaches – the panel will monitor this through the 6-monthly report from AW.
- v. Views and opinions – the panel will dedicate one of its meetings to a deep dive on a formal system to capture the views of adopters, children and staff (a “you said, we listened, we did” approach).

July 2022 – Adoption UK 2022 Barometer

17. The panel considered the Adoption UK 2022 Barometer, which, this year, had a focus on direct contact with birth families, including the perspectives of adopted adults. This really highlighted for the panel the profound changes in adoption, from the almost “secretive” and often closed adoptions of the 60s to the ever-evolving openness of current adoptions (including the exploration of technology to facilitate direct contact with birth family members) and the fine balance this demanded to ensure that the needs of each child is best met.
18. The Barometer also offered a glimpse into the differences of approaches to adoption across the different nations in the UK. *“Two hundred and eighty respondents had a child or children move into their family during 2021. Of these, 80% were standard adoptions, and the remaining 20% were early permanence arrangements. In Northern Ireland, 78% of newly placed respondents were welcoming children on early permanence arrangements, whereas in Wales this was just 3%”.*
19. The panel noted the six recommendations in the Adoption UK Barometer and that these reflected the feedback they had previously received from adopters:
 - quality standards for the journey of prospective adopters,
 - ringfenced multi-year funding,
 - support plans for every child to be placed for adoption,
 - adoption agencies duty to provide the adoption support set out in a child’s assessment of support need,
 - to train education and health professionals in early childhood trauma and associated conditions,

- Provide free, expert, lifelong support for establishing and maintaining birth family relationships.
20. The panel resolved to explore further which recommendations from the Adoption UK Barometer AW would implement and how (as the responsibility for some of these may fall on each of the local authority, others on AW).
21. This also was the “once a year in person” meeting for the panel at which they met one of Adoption West’s in-house trainers and got to experience a step on the emotional journey adopters are taken on when they receive their training. This reinforced the panel’s ambition to widen its own membership to bring these experiences, and voices, into its work.

Ambitions for 2022-2023

22. The scrutiny panel remains committed to developing its membership to include up to five stakeholders within the “adoption triangle”, such as (but not limited to) adoptive parent, adopted young person, adopted adult, birth family member. This would have the dual benefit of deepening the scrutiny panel’s understanding of adoption and, hopefully, enable continuity of work through continuity of membership.
23. A key area of work for the panel in 2022-23 remains to work with all six local authorities to develop a process to ensure that reporting on adoption is co-ordinated as best as possible to enable robust scrutiny, including:
- a. Developing a common “core” report template;
 - b. “synchronising” consideration of different reports linked to adoption:
 - i. Local authority’s performance report with regards to adoption;
 - ii. AW’s annual report;
 - iii. This scrutiny panel’s annual report.
24. The panel will also endeavour to work more closely with the Adoption West board to ensure that scrutiny happens at the right time and at the right level to provide the most added value.
25. The scrutiny panel has set its work for 2022-2023 (Appendix 3 – forward work programme), with “deeper” scrutiny exercises planned (paragraphs 18, 19 and 21 above refer) and welcomes input on this.

Conclusion

26. The scrutiny panel has been consistently deepening its understanding of adoption, in terms of process, data (including targets to be met) and the reality of it for those “living it”, as well as challenging AW’s reporting and will carry on doing so in 2022-23.

Proposal

For the scrutiny committees (as listed in paragraph 1.a. above) and the AW board to:

27. Note the annual report October 2021 to September 2022 of the scrutiny panel and make suggestion on contents to be included for future annual reports, and formatting and presentation of the annual report to ensure ease of reading;
28. Note the forward work programme for the scrutiny panel for 2022-23 (Appendix 3) and suggest any amendments or additional areas of focus for the scrutiny panel;

For the scrutiny committees (as listed in paragraph 1.a. above) to note that:

29. The scrutiny panel would like to invite all councillors to read the Adoption Barometer 2022, with its focus on direct contact with birth families, to gain some understanding of the difficulties and issues faced by adoptive families, as this is likely to inform the support offered, and financed, by adoption agencies (including AW). The Adoption Barometer 2022 can be accessed here, alongside information on the 2019, 2020 and 2021 surveys: [Adoption Barometer](#).

Cllr Jon Hubbard, Wiltshire Council, Chairman of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Committee

Date of report: 12 October 2022

Report author: Marie Gondlach, Senior Scrutiny Officer, Wiltshire Council

Appendices

Appendix 1 – terms of reference of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel

Appendix 2 – Split of responsibilities between Regional Adoption Agency and Local Authority

Appendix 3 – forward work programme

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Adoption West – Joint Scrutiny Panel

Terms of Reference

General

1. These terms of reference set out the membership, remit, responsibilities and reporting arrangements of the Adoption West (AW) Joint Scrutiny Panel (also referred to as the panel in this document).

Background

2. Following the general election in May 2015 and the publication of 'Regionalising Adoption' (July 2015), in which the government set out their proposals to move to Regional Adoption Agencies (RAA) by the end of the Parliament in 2020, AW was formed and started operating on 1 March 2019.
3. AW is a RAA commissioned to deliver adoption services by six local authorities:
 - a. Bath and North East Somerset Council
 - b. Bristol City Council
 - c. Gloucestershire County Council
 - d. North Somerset Council
 - e. South Gloucestershire Council
 - f. Wiltshire Council
4. AW is a company limited by guarantee and is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA).
5. The respective Directors of Children Services for the six local authorities are the registered owners of the company with ultimate responsibility for organisational performance and appointment / dismissal of directors, which they discharge to the AW Board (see Appendix 1 - AW governance structure).
6. There are a number of documents underpinning the operating of AW, including:
 - a. A Members' Agreement, which clearly sets out the purpose of the collaboration, assigns roles and responsibilities to each of the participating authorities and deals with governance and issues such as dispute resolution;
 - b. Commissioning agreement.
7. Service delivery is defined by a contract that sets out specific performance measures and the reporting requirements of the RAA.
8. The service operates from three hub premises, each comprising a multidisciplinary team of recruitment, assessment, matching and support staff. There is one Adoption / Permanence Panel (see Appendix 2 - AW structure chart).

Effective scrutiny

9. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has previously identified four Effective Scrutiny Principles, in that it:
 - a. Provides critical friend challenge to decision-makers;
 - b. Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities;
 - c. Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process; and
 - d. Drives improvement in public services.

10. Some key concepts for the panel to consider are that scrutiny should:
 - a. Be independent of the AW Board;
 - b. Be inclusive, structured, non-adversarial and cross-party;
 - c. Offer constructive challenge to prompt AW Board reflection;
 - d. Make recommendations which are evidence based;
 - e. Be part of a wider web of accountability, which may include partners and the public;
 - f. Not unnecessarily duplicate other assurance activity;
 - g. Be appropriately challenging and use effective questioning techniques;
 - h. Ensure value for money; and
 - i. Provide high levels of assurance.

Purpose of the AW Joint Scrutiny Panel

11. It should be noted that the AW Joint Scrutiny Panel does not fall under the banner of 'Overview and Scrutiny' as defined by the Local Government Act 2000 in that it will not be a body jointly formed by the six participating councils. Although it will not have the power to call in a decision or summon officers to attend, the panel will still provide a scrutiny function led predominantly by democratically elected councillors.

12. It should also be noted that as part of the division of roles between AW and the local authorities, each local authority has retained case management responsibility for the child until the making of the Adoption Order. The local authorities remain responsible for all statutory functions including but not limited to: Statutory Visits, Management and supervision of contact between child and family members, Supervision, administration and finance of foster placements and communication with foster carers (including Fostering for Adoption placements).
 These responsibilities will be monitored by each local authority through its chosen scrutiny mechanism, although the panel will make every effort to notify a local authority if issues within the local authority's responsibility are identified by the panel.

13. The panel will act as a critical friend, providing independent scrutiny of the work of AW. It is an essential element of assuring democratic accountability for the use of public funds.

14. The objective of the panel is to make constructive recommendations to ensure that AW meets its performance targets and expectations. The focus of the panel will be on the Region (not each individual local authority – *paragraph 11 refers*) and members of the panel will work in partnership to focus on performance for the Region overall.
15. The role of the panel is to enhance good decision-making process and it will be able to make recommendations for improvement and make its conclusions public but will not have the power to delay decision-making by AW.
16. Through the panel, and its annual report, each local authority will have an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to democratically-led scrutiny of AW, without duplicating the workload for either officers or elected members for the six local authorities. It is therefore expected that each local authority would commit to engaging with the work of the panel, either as elected councillor(s) on the panel or as witnesses attending meeting of the panel to provide requested information and answer questions.

Responsibilities

17. The panel will foster and encourage an inclusive, structured, non-partisan and non-adversarial approach which is reliant on evidence rather than anecdote, to perform all scrutiny function on behalf of the Region in respect of AW.
18. The panel will produce an annual report for the AW Board, which will also be presented to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or any other Committee the local authority has chosen to review the work of the panel, for each of the authorities by its councillor representative on the panel and, if required, its officer representative on the AW Board.

AW Joint Scrutiny Panel membership

19. Membership: The panel will have a membership of a maximum of 14, made up of:
 - a. 7 non-executive councillors: 1 from each local authority + 1 chair;
 - b. Up to 6 stakeholders within the “adoption triangle”, such as (but not limited to) adoptive parent, adopted young person, adopted adults, birth family member, etc.
Consideration will have to be given to a balance between the different roles, as well as geographical representation of the Region;
 - c. The chair of the Adoption Advisory Board (AAB) will be invited to engage with the work of the panel and may be appointed as advisor to the panel, to regularly inform the committee of the work undertaken by the AAB, as well as share relevant feedback from adopters collected through AAB’s engagement activities.

No substitutions are permitted for the panel. Members of the panel will gain an in-depth understanding over a series of meetings before reaching conclusions and it would therefore be difficult (and potentially disruptive) for a new member to enter the arena partway through the process.

20. Appointment: the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or any other committee the local authority has chosen to review the work of the panel) for each authority will appoint its respective non-executive councillor(s).
The panel will invite applications from stakeholders and appointments will be made by the Chair of the Panel in consultation with the AW Service Director.
21. Term of office: each non-executive councillor will be appointed for a minimum of 2 years, and consideration should be given to local election patterns where appropriate. Stakeholders will also be appointed for an initial period of 2 years from the date of joining the panel. These appointments can be repeated and there is no limit on the number of years anyone can serve on the panel.
22. Chair: the chair will be a non-executive councillor elected by the panel on a 2-year rotating basis, at the panel's discretion.
Once a chair has been elected by the panel, the local authority the chair of the panel belongs to will be invited to appoint a further non-executive councillor to the panel. The Chair of the panel will act solely in the interest of the Region and focus on the role of chair, whereas the second non-executive councillor will represent his or her local authority and undertake associated reporting duties.
- The panel will appoint a chair from its first meeting until May 2021. After May 2021 the chair will be appointed for a 2-year period. This is designed to avoid conflicts with local election patterns and to allow some continuity for membership of the panel.
23. The Chair has the following duties:
- a) To have a holistic view of performance for the whole Region and to act on behalf of the Region;
 - b) To work with the AW Service Director to develop an Annual Work Programme for the panel, having regard to the advice of support officers
 - c) To set the Agendas for meetings, having regard to the advice of the AW Service Director and of support officers;
 - d) To ensure that the panel's annual report is presented to each relevant committee for each local authority, or delegate representation to another member of the panel where required;
 - e) To facilitate the smooth running of each meeting;
 - f) To ensure that Members of the Panel have an equal voice and an opportunity to discuss and debate items of interest;
 - g) To ascertain the sense of the meeting and ensure realistic recommendations are developed;
 - h) To resolve any dispute in meetings through the exercise of his/her powers;
 - i) To lead the panel in its role as critical friend; and
 - j) To be a champion for the scrutiny role.
24. Quorum: the meeting will require three members, at least two being non-executive councillors, to be attending the meeting, either physically or remotely (online or by phone), to be quorate.

25. Attendance: non-executive councillors are expected to attend, either physically or remotely, all meetings of the panel. Issues with attendance will be reported to the AW Board and the relevant Committee.
26. Voting rights: only non-executive councillors will have voting rights; however, it will be at the chairman's discretion to invite all members of the panel to express their views and opinions on a decision or recommendation being put to a vote.

Meetings of the AW Joint Scrutiny Panel

27. The Joint Scrutiny Panel will meet no less than four times a year and no more than six times a year, unless an additional meeting is either requested by the AW Board to undertake a specific scrutiny exercise or under exceptional circumstances as requested by at least three members (two of which must be elected councillors) of the Joint Scrutiny Panel.
28. Meetings will be set on a pattern taking into accounts the meetings of AW Board and at a day and time to suit members of the panel and will be reviewed on a yearly basis; or following significant membership changes.
29. Meetings format: Members of the panel would be expected to attend pre-meeting briefings (usually 30minutes to 1 hour – just before the meeting), meetings (usually 1.5 to 2 hours) then “wash-up” sessions (usually 30 minutes – straight after the meeting).
30. Meetings can be attended either in person or remotely (online / telephone) to take into account the geographical distances between members of the panel. However, one meeting a year will be set to be attended in person by all members of the panel.

Witnesses

31. The panel will identify the areas it wishes to scrutinise and will request the Service Director (or any officer the Service Director delegates this role to) to identify relevant witnesses and arrange their attendance.
32. The panel can operate flexibly, taking any approach it considers necessary to inform its deliberations, including:
- a. Meeting with members and officers
 - b. Meeting with external agencies, interest groups and service users
 - c. Considering existing evidence e.g. performance reports
 - d. Gathering new evidence e.g. through surveys, site visits or research ***
 - e. Undertaking or commissioning analysis ***
 - f. Visiting relevant sites or organisations ***
 - g. Learning from other local authorities and areas

*** It should be noted that financial agreement may have to be sought from the local authorities prior to undertaking d, e or f listed above.

Agendas and minutes for the AW Joint Scrutiny Panel

33. Agendas and minutes for the AW Joint Scrutiny Panel will be supported by Wiltshire Council's Overview and Scrutiny team and accessible to all members of the Joint Scrutiny Panel.
34. Agendas and minutes will also be circulated directly to the members of the panel and any witness presenting evidence at the meeting.

Closed meeting and confidentiality

35. To ensure a full and frank discussion of the issues and evidence, the meetings of the panel will not be public meetings. On occasion, the panel may have a specific reason for holding an open meeting, for example to enable wider consultation with interested members of the public. This would have to be a decision made by the panel.
36. Members of the Panel are required to respect confidentiality of specific topics discussed at the meeting as well as the confidentiality of the agendas and minutes for the meetings of the panel.
37. However, the Annual report from the panel will be a public document and considered in public forums.

Reporting and Monitoring

38. The Joint Scrutiny Panel reports directly to the AW Board. The AW board will monitor the efficiency of the Joint Scrutiny Panel, including through its annual report.
39. The panel's annual report will also be presented to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or any other Committee the local authority has chosen to review the work of the panel) for the six local authorities by its elected councillor representative on the Joint Scrutiny Panel and, if required, its officer representative on the AW Board.

Review of the Joint Scrutiny Panel

40. At a minimum the terms of reference will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain aligned with government policy around accountability and transparency and OFSTED guidance.
41. These may be reviewed sooner, either at the AW Board or Panel's request, should there be significant changes to government policy, recommendations from an OFSTED inspection or if the Terms of References set are preventing the Joint Scrutiny Panel from fulfilling its purpose.
42. Any proposed changes to the Terms of Reference will also be presented to the six local authorities' relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or any

other Committee the local authority has chosen to review the work of the panel, for consideration.

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Glossary – Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel

Coram – adoption terms explained

[Adoption terms explained | Coram Adoption](#)

| | |
|-----|---|
| ADM | <p>Agency Decision Maker</p> <p>The decision-maker makes a considered decision that takes account of all the information available to them, including the recommendation of the adoption panel and, where applicable, the independent review panel, within seven working days of receipt of the recommendation and final set of panel minutes.</p> <p>ADOPTION STANDARD 17 - Adoption panels and agency's decision-maker (minimumstandards.org)</p> |
| AO | <p>Adoption Order</p> <p>This is an order giving full parental responsibility for a child to the approved adopters, made on their application to the court. An adoption order severs the legal ties between a birth parent and the child, so that the adoptive parent(s) become the child's legal parent(s) throughout life. An adoption order does not end when a child turns 18 – the child/adult remains a legal member of his/her new family permanently.</p> <p>Child adoption: Applying for an adoption court order - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> |
| ASF | <p>Adoption Support Fund</p> <p>The adoption support fund (ASF) provides funds to local authorities and regional adoption agencies (RAAs) to pay for essential therapeutic services for eligible adoptive and special guardianship order (SGO) families.</p> <p>As at October 2022, the ASF will continue to offer support to adoptive and eligible special guardianship families up to March 2025.</p> <p>The ASF model is based on the existing statutory framework for the assessment of adoption support or SGO support needs and the provision of support services.</p> <p>Adoption support fund (ASF) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> |
| AW | <p>Adoption West</p> <p>Adoption West is a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) commissioned to deliver adoption services, by 6 local</p> |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| | <p>authorities – Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES), Bristol, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.</p> <p>It is a company limited by guarantee and is registered with Ofsted as a Voluntary Adoption Agency. Service delivery is defined by a contract that sets out specific performance measures and the reporting requirements of the RAA. The local authorities make up the controlling committee of company members with ultimate responsibility for organisational performance and appointment / dismissal of directors.</p> <p>Policies and Procedures - Adoption West</p> |
| CPR | <p>Child Permanency (or Permanence) Report</p> <p>This is the report which the child's social worker has to present to the Adoption Panel where the Panel's recommendation is sought that the child should be placed for adoption.</p> <p>The author of the report must be suitably qualified and experienced and/or supervised by a suitably qualified and experienced social worker.</p> |
| DDP | <p>Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy</p> <p>Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy has been developed by Dan Hughes over the past twenty years. It is based on a theoretical understanding of attachment and intersubjective relationships; and the impact of developmental trauma.</p> <p>Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy - DDP Network</p> |
| EP | <p>early permanence - an umbrella term including both Fostering for Adoption (FfA) and Concurrent Planning placements (CPP).</p> <p>Both approaches aim to place children where the courts are considering whether they can safely return to the care of their family or whether they might need to be adopted. The children will need to be fostered while the court decides on the future plan. Most will go on to be adopted but a small proportion will return to the care of their birth family.</p> <p>Read more on: FAQs earlypermanence.org.uk</p> |
| LA or LAS | Local Authority / Local Authorities |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Letterbox contact / arrangements | <p>Letterbox contact is a formal arrangement for birth parents, relatives and the adoptive parents to share information about the child(ren) when and if appropriate. This is a confidential and agreed process made through the court process and manage through Adoption Services.</p> <p>What is Letterbox Contact? Letterbox Contact Information Birmingham Children's Trust birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk (really detailed information, including benefits of letterbox contact)</p> <p>Contact in adoption: making sense of the past - First4Adoption</p> |
| PO | <p>Placement Order</p> <p>This is the legal ruling made by the courts which authorises a Local Authority to place a child with approved prospective adoptive parents. At this stage in the adoption process, the LA and the prospective adoptive parents share parental responsibility for the child.</p> <p>Adoption and Children Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> |
| RAA | <p>Regional Adoption Agency</p> <p>In 2015, the Government set out its commitment to markedly improve outcomes for children through the delivery of a regional adoption system via Regional Adoption Agencies.</p> <p>The functional scope of each Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) varies.</p> <p>RAAs are formed from several LAs from a region who have joined forces in a government-led initiative to pool resources and increase efficiency in the adoption process.</p> |
| SGO | <p>Special Guardianship Orders</p> <p>Special Guardianship is a formal court order which places a child or young person with someone permanently and gives this person parental responsibility for the child. This could be a grandparent, close relative or a family friend.</p> <p>Special Guardianship means that the child lives with carers who have parental responsibility for them until they are grown up. If the child was looked after before the Special Guardianship Order was granted, they will no longer be the responsibility of the local authority.</p> <p>The order usually lasts until the child is 18 years old.</p> |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| | <p>Become a special guardian: What is a special guardian - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> |
| TESSA | <p>Therapeutic, Education and Support Services in Adoption</p> <p>TESSA is an Adoption UK project to create the conditions for healthy development and family wellbeing in adoptive families. It is based on the understanding that a child's relationship with his or her parents or carers is one of the main keys to their development, and is founded on the principle of helping families, not fixing children.</p> <p>Therapeutic Education Support Services in Adoption</p> |
| TUPE regulations | <p>Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations</p> |
| Virtual schools | <p>The Virtual School is a core statutory function of every local authority. The Virtual School does not exist in real terms as a building, and children and young people do not attend. However, all children in care, and previously looked after children, from nursery up to the end of Post 16 or full-time education, are tracked as though they were in a single school (although they remain the responsibility of the school at which they are enrolled).</p> <p>The Virtual School works in partnership with the child or young person's school/educational setting to ensure that they are supported to fulfil their potential at all stages of their education, and to give them the best opportunity to be successful in their adult lives. The Virtual School monitors their attendance, attainment and achievement, and makes sure that their educational success is a top priority in their care planning.</p> |
| VCS | <p>Voluntary and Community Sector organisations</p> <p>The voluntary sector is independent from local and national government, and distinct from the private sector. Charities are the largest single category within the voluntary sector. Others include community benefit societies and co-operatives, not-for-profit community businesses or community interest companies (CICs), credit unions and small informal community groups.</p> |

The table below sets out the roles and responsibilities of Adoption West and which remain in the local authorities. It is important to note that all Adoption West staff are directly employed by Adoption West as a separate employer from the local authorities and as such the staff aren't officers of the LA.

| Function | Regional Adoption Agency | Local Authority |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|
| RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT | | |
| Marketing and Recruitment Strategy | ✓ | |
| Adopter Recruitment and Enquiries | ✓ | |
| Assessment of Prospective Adopters – all Stage One and Stage Two functions | ✓ | |
| Completion of Prospective Adopter Report | ✓ | |
| Agency Decision Maker for approval of adopters | | ✓ |
| Post approval training | ✓ | |
| Matching | ✓ | |
| Post Placement training for Prospective Adopters | ✓ | |
| PERMANANCE PLANNING | | |
| Early identification of a child possibly requiring adoption | | ✓ |
| Tracking and monitoring the child possibly requiring adoption | ✓ | ✓ |
| Support and advice to childcare social worker on the adoption process | ✓ | ✓ |
| Sibling or other specialist assessments | | ✓ |
| Direct work to prepare child prior to placement | ✓ | |
| Preparation of the Child Permanence Report | | ✓ |
| Agency Decision Maker for “Should be placed for Adoption” decisions | | ✓ |
| Case management for the child | | ✓ |
| MATCHING AND PLACEMENT | | |
| Family finding | ✓ | |
| Looked After Child reviews | ✓ | ✓ |
| Shortlist and visit potential families | ✓ | |
| Organising child information meeting | ✓ | |
| Ongoing direct work to prepare child prior to placement | | ✓ |
| Adoption Panel administration and management | ✓ | |
| Agency adviser role | ✓ | |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Agency Decision Maker for Matching prospective adopters and child | | ✓ |
| Placement Planning meeting administration and management of introductions | ✓ | |
| Support to family post placement and planning and delivery of adoption support | ✓ | |
| Ongoing life story work and preparation of Life story book | | ✓ |
| Statutory visits pre adoption order and Early Permanence | | ✓ |
| Independent Review Officer monitoring of quality of child's care and care plan | | ✓ |
| Support prospective adopters in preparation and submission of application for Adoption Order – including attending at court | ✓ | |
| Preparation of later life letter | | ✓ |
| NON-AGENCY ADOPTIONS | | |
| Partner adoption (Step Parent) assessments | ✓ | |
| Intercountry adoption assessments and post approval and post order support | ✓ | |
| ADOPTION SUPPORT SERVICES | | |
| Assessment for adoption or special support | ✓ | |
| Developing and delivering adoption and support plans | ✓ | |
| Management and administration of all aspects of the Adoption Support Fund | ✓ | |
| Adoption support delivery including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support groups • Social events • Post adoption training • Independent Birth Relative services • Management and support of ongoing birth relative contact (letterbox and direct) • Specialist Life Story practitioners • Adoption counselling and training | ✓ | |

**Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel
Forward Work Programme 2022-2023**

Proposal for future timings of online meetings:

9.30am-9.50am – Pre-meeting, only for members of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel.

10.00am-12.00noon – Meeting of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel meeting, including witnesses and presenting officers.

12.00pm-12.15pm – wash up if required, only for members of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel.

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| Page 171 | Wednesday 6 April 2022 (was 13 April) | Briefing – no officers attending. Opportunity for the panel to review “ways of working”. | |
| | | Focus item: Ofsted Inspection | |
| | | High Court Judgement: Somerset County Council v NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group & Anor [2021] EWHC 3004(Fam) Update on implications for adoption practice in Adoption West Region + work undertaken by the board to date. | |
| | | Quarterly performance report Q3 (October-December) | |
| | | Membership of panel | |
| | | | |
| Wednesday 13 July 2022 (NB in person) | Interactive session – a “taster” of the journey Adoption West takes adopters on. | AW trainers | |
| | Adoption UK 2022 Barometer report (usually published between June and September) Adoption Barometer Adoption UK Charity | | |
| | Adoption West – 6 months report (October to March), produced in May | | |
| | Quarterly performance report Q4 (January-March) | | |
| | | | |

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Wednesday 19 October 2022 | <p>Presentation: Advertising – understanding the use of social media and other advertising and measuring impact and effectiveness. NB – National Adoption Week</p> | Becky Myers |
| | Quarterly performance report Q1 (April-June) | |
| | Joint Scrutiny Panel – annual report – approval (following email circulation of DRAFT) Each member of the panel to then circulate to the relevant overview and scrutiny committee in their respective LA. | |
| | 6-month report on the evaluation of the “front door” pilot (02.02.2022 meeting refers) | |
| Page 172 | <p>Annual review - Recruitment of adopters / adopter sufficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - current number of adopters for AW and “anticipated demand” - Quarter x Data - AW performance in recruitment of adopters compared to national (CoramI stats) - how the “supply” matches “demand” (e.g. sibling adopters, older child adopter, BME adopter, etc.) - how AW currently advertises / recruits adopters (key “selling points” for adopters to sign up with AW rather than other RAA or VAA) - AW compliance with national requirement / targets for processing of adopters’ applications + matching + etc. (all scorecard data linked to adopters) - feedback and “lessons learnt” from any national campaign / drive to recruit adopters <p>Where possible (see notes for March 2021 meeting):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. for a cover report to highlight key figures for the scrutiny panel; b. for “per 10,000” to be used to enable comparison between the areas of AW (for example for ADM decisions). <p>As per 14 July 2021 meeting: to consider the AW recruitment strategy and delivery (to date) against the plan.</p> <p>Adoptions continue to decline with children waiting longer to be placed, latest figures show - Community Care</p> | |
| Date tbc November / December | <p>Extraordinary meeting (or single focus meeting) - Adoption UK barometer – implementation of actions by AW</p> | |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|
| | | To receive a list of priorities / recommendations from the Barometer that AW is planning on implementing locally (some may be through the 6 LAs others directly through AW) and grading each accordingly (implemented by AW / LAs). | |
| | Date tbc | DEEP DIVE formal system to capture the views of adopters, children and staff (“you said, we listened, we did”) (see 06 April 2022 meeting – Ofsted inspection). | |
| | Date tbc | RAPID SCRUTINY (see 06 April 2022 meeting – Ofsted inspection). Panel to receive the reports from the two Adopters Voice Forum who had considered prospective adopters understanding and support following panel, then conduct a Rapid Scrutiny meeting with witnesses and reviewing what other RAAs are doing | |
| | Date tbc | Consistent level of support across the region – to be monitored through the year in the data presented in the 6-monthly report from AW and the quarterly performance reports. Depending on information presented this may lead to a more in-depth scrutiny activity (such as deep dive or rapid scrutiny) to develop a clear picture of the levels of support accessible across the region. | |
| | Date tbc | Agenda item - Outcome of the supervision audit (see 06 April 2022 meeting – Ofsted inspection). The panel recommended default reporting of unsigned supervision, at least by the supervisor to their own line manager, to enable AW to have a clearer picture of a possible issue (supervisee not agreeing their supervision). | |
| | Wednesday 11 January 2023 | Information / presentation: AW working relationships with schools / education, SEND and Health (from 02 February 2022 meeting) | |
| | | Quarterly performance report Q2 (July-September) | |
| | | Adoption West – 6 months report (April to September), produced in November For the panel to annually consider the Adoption Panel Six Monthly report (if possible 2 reports): a. review progress from AW in ensuring consistency across the 6 areas in terms of quality of reports to adoption panels: CPRs (child Permanence Report), PARs | |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>(Prospective Adopter's Report) and APRs (Adoption Placement Report) using feedback from adoption panels' chairs;</p> <p>b. monitor the provision and attendance rate of training for panel members as well as social workers writing and presenting reports for adoption panel;</p> <p>c. monitor the sufficiency of membership of the panel, in terms of numbers overall for each "category", number for specific roles (chair and vice-chair) and the level of diversity aimed for by Adoption West [and linked to that any recruitment exercise – if required]</p> <p>Timing of this should match the Adoption Panel Six Monthly Report (April-September and October-March)</p> | |
| | Adoption West Adoption panel – 6 months report (last one considered on 02 February 2022) | |
| Page 174 | Annual review of the Adoption West Development Plan (last considered on 02 February 2022 – commissioning issue highlighted) | |
| | Review of the Birth Link pilot (02 February 2022 meeting refers) | |
| | Annual review of the joint scrutiny panel's terms of reference | |
| | | |
| | Evaluation of RAA Evaluation of regional adoption agencies: final report, March 2022 | |
| Wednesday 19 April 2023 | Information / presentation: "moving to adoption model" (from 02 February 2022 meeting) | |
| Consider changing date as COSC for Gloucestershire. | quarterly performance report Q3 (October-December) | |
| | | |

Date to be set

Information: language that care leavers have selected as being more child friendly

Information / presentation: Matching process / criteria – Family Finding, Link Maker (from 02 February 2022 meeting)

Outcome of the supervision audit to be presented to the panel (as per 06 April 2022 meeting – Ofsted inspection)

Rapid scrutiny on prospective adopters understanding and support following panel (as per 06 April 2022 meeting – Ofsted inspection)

Repeat items:

December / January: Adoption West – 6 months report (April to September), produced in November

January / February: annual review of terms of reference

January: quarterly performance report Q3 (October-December)

April: quarterly performance report Q4 (January-March)

June / July: Adoption West – 6 months report (October to March), produced in May

July: quarterly performance report Q1 (April-June)

July / August / September: Review the scrutiny panel's annual report (DRAFT)

For each member of the panel to consult with his / her overview and scrutiny committee on the draft report

September / October / November: finalise the panel's annual report (to be presented by each panel member to their respective council in conjunction with AW's annual report and LAs performance reports)

October: quarterly performance report Q2 (July-September)

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Wiltshire Council
Children's Select Committee
25 October 2022



Child and Youth Voice

Children Select Committee Update

Mental Health First Aid

1. A subgroup of the Wiltshire Youth Council has been working with the Healthy Schools Lead Nick Bolton to become trained as Mental Health First Aiders. The training is due to take place in October, after this has been completed the Youth Councillors will be able to use the skills they have learned to set up peer support networks and groups in their schools. The trained Youth Councillors will be able to offer advice to their peers and find out what the main issues affecting children in their schools are, these can then be fed back to the wider Wiltshire Youth Council group.

Healthy Schools Awards Auditors

2. Some of the Wiltshire Youth Councillors have been selected to audit schools that are taking part in the Healthy School's Awards. They will hold focus groups with students around health and wellbeing and ensure that pupil voice is heard throughout this process.

Shadow Youth Cabinet Members

3. The Shadow Youth Cabinet Members have now all met with their Cabinet Member counterparts and have started to form a work plan. The Shadow Youth Cabinet Members will meet in October Half Term to see how they can work together to fulfil their commitments and ensure that young people have their views heard in all areas of the council. Cabinet Members have been invited to part of this session and work with the Shadow Youth Cabinet.
4. The Head Secretary delivered a fantastic speech at the Keeping Salisbury Safe Event on 1st October about safety for young people.

Member of Youth Parliament

5. The Members of Youth Parliament will attend a debate in the Houses of Commons on 4th November to agree the final 3 issues that the Youth Parliament will focus on over the next year.

Wiltshire Youth Council Eco Day 2023

6. The Wiltshire Youth Council will be hosting an Eco Day Competition within schools, with the title being 'The most creative way to raise awareness about environmental issues'. Ideas that have been suggested include; art made out of recycled materials, hosting an eco-themed event and plastic reduction initiatives. Schools will promote what they have done on Eco Day via social media and the Wiltshire Youth Council will decide on the winners and present them with an award.

Youth Voice Residential to PGL

7. The Child and Youth Voice Team took 25 young people on a residential experience to PGL Liddington. The young people were from all the groups that we work with, including the Children in Care Council, Wiltshire Youth Council and young people that are on Child in Need/ Child Protection Plans. The young people enjoyed activities such as climbing, giant swing, archery, and water sports.

Children in Care Council

8. We are currently working with 64 children in Care and Care Leavers. We will soon be creating the Annual Survey of Children in Care and will be reviewing the Corporate Parenting Panel Priorities, to ensure that these are reflective of what is important to the children and young people that we care for.
9. We will continue to run fun activities to draw new members to the group and ensure that they have a chance to meet other children in care and share experiences.
10. We have consulted with Care Leavers about the Wiltshire Local Offer and will be presenting findings to the National Care Leavers Lead Mark Riddell in October.

Staying Close

11. We are supporting children in care and care leavers to shape the Staying Close Project, ensuring that children who leave residential children's homes receive excellent support to help them thrive when moving onto adulthood.



20220518_SC_EOI_a
pplication_form_April.

FACT Transitional Safeguarding Project

12. The Child and Youth Voice Team's Youth Consultants have been heavily involved in giving their views about Transitional Safeguarding. Fran, a Youth Consultant gave a speech at the recent Transitional Safeguarding Conference and raised important issues around mental health, cultural identity and moving onto adulthood.

Care Experienced Parent and Baby Group

13. We are launching a new social group for care experienced parents and their children aged 0-5 years old. The sessions run every 2 weeks in Salisbury.
14. This group is inspired by Youth consultant and care experienced adult Emma Richards. Please see following paragraph from Emma.

Hello, I'm Emma & I am 24 years old. I had my first child when I was 15 and I was in care. Because I was in care my child was automatically in care with me. I found becoming a mum extremely scary, frightening and I had no one around me that had children who had been in care. This is why I'd like to make this group, as a chance for all of us to get together in a nice calm happy environment, for your children to socialise and you to socialise. I'm really passionate about making this group happen, I know how incredibly difficult and stressful parenting can be. I'd like this group to be a breath of fresh air for all of us. I know have a daughter she is two and keeps me on my toes I think it's so important for you to know you're not alone and I have been exactly where you are; I hope to see you at the group."

15. This is a pilot project and if successful we will look to replicate the group in other parts of the county.

Young Persons Fostering Panel

16. The Child and Youth Voice Team have now hosted 7 Young People's Fostering Panel Meetings. These meetings provide children in care and care leavers a chance to ask prospective foster carers questions during their assessment process. They also give the applicants a chance to meet young people who have lived in care and ask them questions. The participants provide feedback which is then shared with the main fostering panel and gives them a say in whether they get approved. These groups have proved to be immensely valuable for all involved and help to support fostering sufficiency.

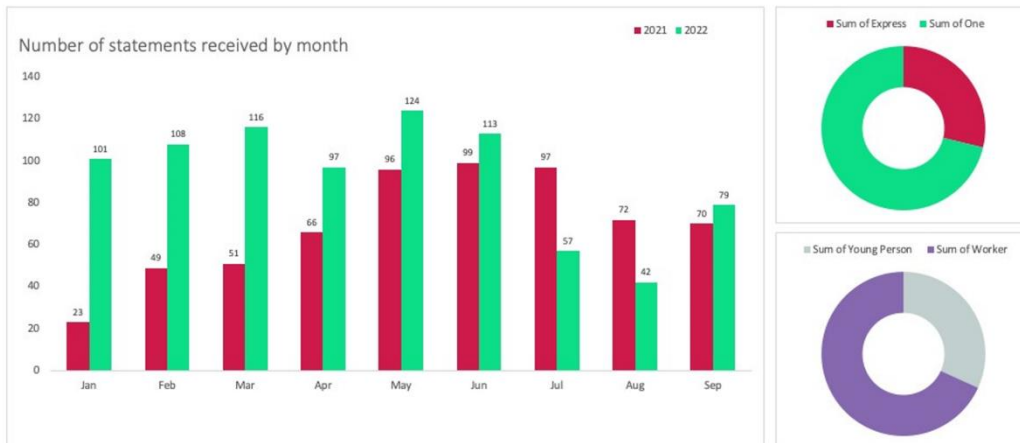
The National Review of Children's Social Care

17. The Child and Youth Voice Team has been collecting feedback from young people supported by social care in Wiltshire regarding their views about the Care Review. This information is being shared with officers who are formulating Wiltshire Council's position on the review recommendations.

Mind of My Own App

18. In September there have been 29 Young Peoples Accounts created and 4 Worker Accounts created.

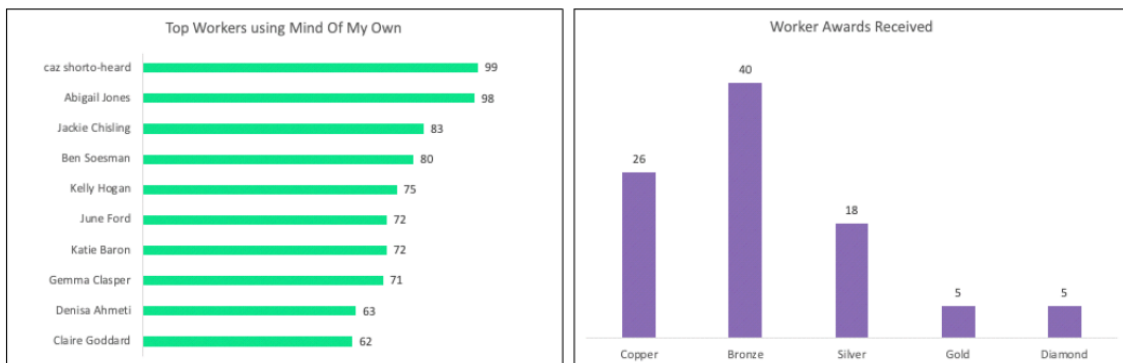
TOTAL USAGE



So far in 2022 only July and August have been worse performing months than the same period last year. Though August saw the lowest number of statements received, Wiltshire bounced back in September with almost double the number of statements

19. The Child and Youth Voice Team had noticed the dip in usage and arranged to visit social care team meetings to remind people of this fantastic resource. This has worked as the usage has exceeded last year.

PRACTITIONER USAGE



This data includes both worker account usage **and** when a child sends a statement to these workers. Caz and Abigail are the current top users of Mind Of My Own in Wiltshire.

Most current users are at a 'Copper' or 'Bronze' level

| One app Usage | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| STATEMENT TYPE | SENT BY YOUNG PEOPLE | SENT BY WORKERS | TOTAL |
| Totals | 35 | 15 | 50 |
| Conference | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Foster Care Review | 12 | 0 | 12 |
| My Life | 7 | 5 | 12 |
| My Wellbeing | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Pathway | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Post Meeting | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Preparation | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Problem | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Share Good News | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| This is Me | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| Worker Visit | 3 | 4 | 7 |

20. Foster Care Reviews in September came out as the most used statement type, this is a great example of how the app has been wholeheartedly adopted within service delivery. We are now advocating that workers use the 'This is Me Statement' this will create a pen picture of the young person in their own words!! Foster Carers have said they would love to receive this rather than the information shared from someone's else's perception.

21. It's great to see that the teams we have visited to talk about the app this month have been proactively using Mind of My Own and introducing it to young people they are working with.

| Team | No of Users | One Usage | Express Usage | Total |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| CIC North | 4 | 12 | 8 | 20 |
| CYPDT | 5 | 8 | 8 | 16 |
| SASS West 2 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 16 |
| SASS North | 5 | 15 | 0 | 15 |

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

October 2022 (data correct at 13/10/2022)

School Ofsted Judgements

Executive summary

1. This report is a regular update for the committee focused upon Ofsted inspections in Wiltshire schools. The report shows schools inspected since **April 2022 (Summer Term) - October 2022** and provides updates on inspection judgements based on the inspection framework introduced in **September 2019** using the categories below:

- Overall effectiveness
- Quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development
- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Early years provision
- Sixth form provision

Update

2. The data correct as of **13th October 2022** showing the number of inspections per phase for the Summer Term 2022 and the first part of the Autumn Term 2022

| Phase of Education | April-August 2022 | September-October 2022 |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Primary | 10 | 5 |
| Secondary | 0 | 4 |
| Special | 0 | 0 |

Inspections explained

3. There has been a change since September 2022 from what had been defined previously as Section 8 and Section 5 inspections. The Ofsted handbook provides information about what are now graded, ungraded and urgent inspections of maintained schools and academies under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005.
4. Graded, ungraded and urgent inspections are all based on this handbook. Monitoring visits have a separate handbook. Please note that all inspection reports prior to September 2022 will have been classified as either a Section 8 or Section 5 but any post September 2022 should be seen in the context of graded and ungraded.
5. Graded inspections use the full Ofsted framework and will grade the school for its Overall Effectiveness and against the key judgements grade descriptors as described in the Executive Summary above.
6. Ungraded inspections focus on determining if the school remains at the same grade as previous inspection. This does not result in a graded judgement. The key areas of focus in these inspections will be:
 - The Quality of Education and Safeguarding (as in a graded inspection)
 - Behaviour
 - Gaming and off-rolling
 - Pupils' wider development: breadth of curriculum (beyond academic, vocational or technical) / SMSC / careers provision (secondary schools)
 - Workload
7. Published inspection outcomes of all schools (April 2022-October 2022)
Previous OFSTED grades are in brackets

| School name (Web address to access Ofsted report below) | Status | Date of inspection | OE (previous) | Quality of education | Behaviour & attitudes | Personal development | Leadership & management | Early years provision | Sixth form provision |
|---|------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Hilperton Primary Ofsted Hilperton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School | Maintained | 05/04/22 SECTION 8 | G (G) | | | | | | |
| Aloeric Ofsted Aloeric Primary School | Academy | 26/04/2022 SECTION 5 | G (G) | G | G | G | G | G | |
| Kingsbury Green Ofsted Kingsbury Green Academy | Academy | 27/04/2022 SECTION 5 | G (RI) | G | G | G | G | G | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------|------------|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| Coombe Bissett Ofsted Coombe Bissett Church of England Primary School | Maintained | 05/05/2022 SECTION 8 | G (G) | | | | | | |
| Great Wishford Ofsted Great Wishford CofE (VA) Primary School | Academy | 10/05/2022 SECTION 5 | RI (G) | RI | G | G | G | RI | |
| St Mary's Catholic Primary Ofsted St Mary's Catholic Primary School | Maintained | 11/05/2022 SECTION 5 | RI (I) | RI | G | G | RI | RI | |
| Larkhill Primary Ofsted Larkhill Primary School | Academy | 07/06/2022 SECTION 5 | G (G) | G | G | G | G | G | |
| Staverton Primary Ofsted Staverton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School | Maintained | 05/06/2022 SECTION 5 | RI (G) | RI | RI | RI | RI | G | |
| Hindon CofE VA St Mary's and St John's Ofsted Hindon Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, St Mary's and St John's | Maintained | 28/06/2022 SECTION 5 | G (G) | G | G | G | G | G | |
| Saint Edmund's Catholic Primary School Ofsted Saint Edmund's Roman Catholic Primary School | Academy | 13/09/2022 SECTION 2 | RI (RI) | RI | G | G | RI | G | |

| Schools inspected and awaiting published reports | Type |
|--|------------------------|
| Avon Valley Academy | Academy (Secondary) |
| Westbury Leigh Primary | Maintained (Primary) |
| Matravers | Maintained (Secondary) |
| Melksham Oak Community | Academy (Secondary) |
| The Manor Primary | Academy (Primary) |
| The Stonehenge | Maintained (Secondary) |
| Crudwell Primary | Maintained (Primary) |
| Churchfields, The Village | Maintained (Primary) |
| Pembroke Park | Academy (Primary) |

Table 1: Ofsted Inspection Outcomes October 2019 to Current – National, Southwest Region and Wiltshire. Schools graded Good or Outstanding
External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

| | England | SW | Wiltshire |
|--------------|---------|------|-----------|
| October 2022 | 87.7 | 84.3 | 81.5 |

| | | | |
|---------------|------|------|------|
| June 2022 | 87.3 | 83.6 | 82 |
| February 2022 | 87.1 | 83.4 | 81.6 |
| October 2021 | 86 | 82 | 81 |
| July 2021 | 86 | 82 | 81 |
| January 2020 | 86 | 83 | 80 |

Table 2: Ofsted Inspection Outcomes October 2019 to Current – National, Southwest Region and Wiltshire. Pupils attending Good or Outstanding schools

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

| | | | |
|--------------|---------|------|-----------|
| | England | SW | Wiltshire |
| October 2022 | 87.1 | 84.7 | 85.5 |

Table 3: Ofsted Inspection Outcomes. Profile of small schools based on Oct 21 census with less than 150 on roll v Wiltshire overall profile

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|------|----------------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
| Less than 150 NOR | 2 | 78 | 16 | 4 |
| All schools | 7 | 75 | 15 | 3 |

Table 4: Comparison table: OFSTED grades-maintained schools and academies in Wiltshire. (October 2022)

External data: NCER Primary and secondary schools.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|------|----------------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
| All schools | 7 | 75 | 15 | 3 |
| Academy | 9 | 68 | 18 | 5 |
| Maintained | 5 | 81 | 13 | 1 |

Table 5: Schools maintaining, improving and/or declining in Ofsted performance April 2022 - October 2022 (Published Reports)

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| | Improving | Maintaining/No change | Declining |
| All schools | 2 | 6 (Including 1 second RI) | 2 |

Table 6: Inspection outcome analysis – key common strengths and areas of development from the April-October 2022 Inspection Reports

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | Strengths | Areas of development |
| April – October 2022 Ofsted Report Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad curriculum intent Phonics and early reading Safeguarding Pastoral provision Extended learning opportunities Teacher workload | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation subject planning and sequencing Inconsistency in teaching Assessment to check understanding Monitoring of the curriculum Adapting learning to meet need |

8. The tables above provide a range of information and pose a number of questions for School Effectiveness. The overall profile of Wiltshire is one whereby there is a gap between our performance and that of both the South-West and National. What is interesting is that when we consider the number of pupils attending Good or Outstanding Schools the weighting shifts and we are in a stronger position regionally but yet are still behind National.
9. There are also differences between maintained schools and academies in terms of performance but there are some caveats with this. Academies in areas like Wiltshire that are at this stage less academised are more likely to take on more vulnerable schools which can then potentially skew data, so the data needs to be considered with some caution.
10. What we are not yet seeing is the number of improving schools within a term outweigh the numbers that are then declining, and this is an area that needs to be discussed and monitored in terms of securing rapid improvement.
11. To improve the Ofsted outcomes overtime it is important to look at the trends coming through the reports and in particular the strands around curriculum, sequencing, monitoring and assessment. With our maintained schools we are already targeting specific training and development based on our report finding analysis.
12. The trends highlighted above will be discussed at a system level and through the Wiltshire Learning Alliance to then look at strategic actions.

Conclusion

13. The percentage of Wiltshire schools with Good or Outstanding grades has declined slightly from the previous report. There are some key trends that as a system we need to focus on in the next twelve months to secure higher levels of performance. There is a priority in working as a system to ensure schools judged 'Requires Improvement' secure a 'Good' judgement at their next inspection; some of this will come down to the development of leadership capacity and support. The work that has already been undertaken around curriculum development needs to continue and respond to the feedback that we are seeing as evidenced through the inspection reports.

Author:

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Wiltshire Council

Children Select Committee

25 October 2022

DfE Changes - October 2022

What maintained schools must publish online

1. Page updated to show what maintained schools must or should publish in the 2022 to 2023 academic year. Includes new sections on 'School uniforms' and 'School opening hours', and changes elsewhere [Link](#) (updated 05/09/22)

2. Wiltshire's position:

School leaders will need to reflect the changes in their websites noting the expectation that all mainstream state-funded schools should provide a school week of at least 32.5 hours by September 2023. This will be communicated to schools.

Check early years qualifications

3. Find out if a person's qualifications allow them to work in an early years setting, and if you can include them in staff: child ratios [Link](#) (updated 05/09/22)

4. Wiltshire's position:

The guidance on staff qualifications has had some minor name/title changes:

Titles 'Qualifications achieved in England' has been updated to 'Qualifications achieved in the United Kingdom' and 'Qualifications achieved outside England' has been changed to 'Qualifications achieved outside the United Kingdom'

This will add clarity to the providers and enable them to check qualifications from other parts of the United Kingdom simply. There will be no other impact on provision and delivery of service.

Access support from school hubs

5. How school leaders can get support from other schools in their area to improve a specific area of teaching or leadership [Link](#) (published 20/09/22)

6. Wiltshire's position:

In Wiltshire we have the Swindon and Wiltshire Teaching School Hub: [Swindon and Wiltshire Teaching School Hub > About Us \(swindonwiltshiretsh.org.uk\)](https://swindonwiltshiretsh.org.uk). They offer a range of training opportunities including the ECF and NPQs.

For Mathematics we have the Mobius [Mobius Maths Hub - Home](#) and for English [Our English Hub – Ramsbury English Hub \(ramsburyschool.org\)](https://ramsburyschool.org). The nearest Behaviour Hub is located through the Cabot Learning Federation that operate in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset: [Current Lead schools and MATs - Behaviour Hubs](#). This information is regularly shared with schools.

Period products in schools and colleges

7. Guidance for schools and post-16 education organisations in England on providing free period products for all learners [Link](#) (updated 08/09/22)

8. Wiltshire's position: This information is shared with all schools.

Invitation for councils, schools and social care settings to register an interest for a new alternative provision (AP) for a new special free school

9. The Department for Education launched the 2022 application wave for alternative provision (AP) and special free schools in June [Link](#) (updated 20/09/22)

10. Wiltshire's position: The Council is exploring this option and will consider how this will support the implementation of the SEND Green Paper.

Vaping guidance for councils and schools

11. With a sharp rise in the number of children vaping, the Department for Health and Social Care has requested that schools review their vaping policies, paying particular attention to the new guidance from Action on Smoking and Health [Link](#)

12. Wiltshire's position:
This information has been shared with schools through the Newsletter.

Schools to share daily attendance data take part in research

13. Over 65% of schools in England are now sharing their daily attendance data with the Department of Education (DfE). Sharing data means councils and schools get access to daily attendance reports. DfE would like to hear from anyone who would be willing to talk about the experience of using the daily attendance reports. Please complete the form below if you wish to take part. [Link](#) (updated 01/09/22)

14. Wiltshire's position: This platform is promoted across all the schools. Wiltshire operates Groupcall across all schools; this provides live attendance data.

Exams head back to normality in 2023

15. Government and Ofqual confirm exam arrangements for students in 2023 [Link](#) (published 29/9/22)

16. Wiltshire's position:
GCSE, AS, and A level exams in England will largely return to pre-pandemic arrangements next summer as young people continue to recover from the pandemic. In line with the plans set out last September, Ofqual has confirmed a return to pre-pandemic grading in 2023 and the Council has highlighted this through its regular communications.

School admission appeals code

17. We have published 'School admission appeals code 2022', which applies to appeals from 1 October 2022. This replaces 'Draft school admission appeals code 2022 (correction)' and 'Explanatory memorandum to the school admission appeals code 2022' [Link](#) updated 30/09/22)

18. Wiltshire's position: The purpose of updating the Appeals Code is to allow appeal hearings to be held remotely by video conference and in limited circumstances by telephone conference, as well as in person (face to face). These changes have been made in response to positive feedback from stakeholders about the impact of the temporary flexibilities to hold appeals in this way during the COVID-19 pandemic and following a statutory consultation. Wiltshire will therefore continue to offer appeals remotely by telephone conference which has been well received by parents.

Emergency Planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings

19. How educational and childcare settings should plan for and deal with emergencies, including significant public health incidents and severe weather. The guidance has been updated to include 'extreme heat' as an example of severe weather on pages 4 and 7 [Link](#) (updated 03/10/22)

20. Wiltshire's position: The Council publishes an Emergency Conditions Guide for Schools which is being updated to include the latest new guidance on planning for extreme heat.

Prisoners start as apprentices at big name employers

21. Prisoners at open prisons in England are to start high-quality apprenticeships at big name employers thanks to change in law and the Government's skills agenda [Link](#) (published 4/10/22)

22. Wiltshire's position: Apprenticeships are promoted as an excellent way to address skills gaps and develop a talent pipeline. This new legislation refers to Category D prisons, Wiltshire's prison is Category C, not an open prison.

Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessment: England 2022

23. Provisional information on the 2022 phonics screening check and assessments at key stage 1, including breakdowns by pupil characteristics [Link](#) (published 06/10/22)

24. Wiltshire's position: Information on Phonics and Key Stage 1 performance data is shared with Heads through briefings and strategic boards such as the Wiltshire Learning Alliance. Wiltshire performance in Year 1 phonics is in line with the rounded Phonics screening results nationally, with both at 75%; however, it is 1%

below the South-West regional average at 76%. In terms of Key Stage 1 outcomes when looking at the rounded percentages, Wiltshire is 1% above the national in reading at 68% compared to a national average of 67% which mirrors the South-West, writing is 1% below the national average with results in Wiltshire at 57% compared to 58% nationally and regionally, the Local Authority is in line with national for mathematics at 68% which is also the South-West average. It should be noted that attainment is down nationally from the last published outcomes of 2019 in all areas of phonics and Key Stage 1 performance.

Wiltshire Council

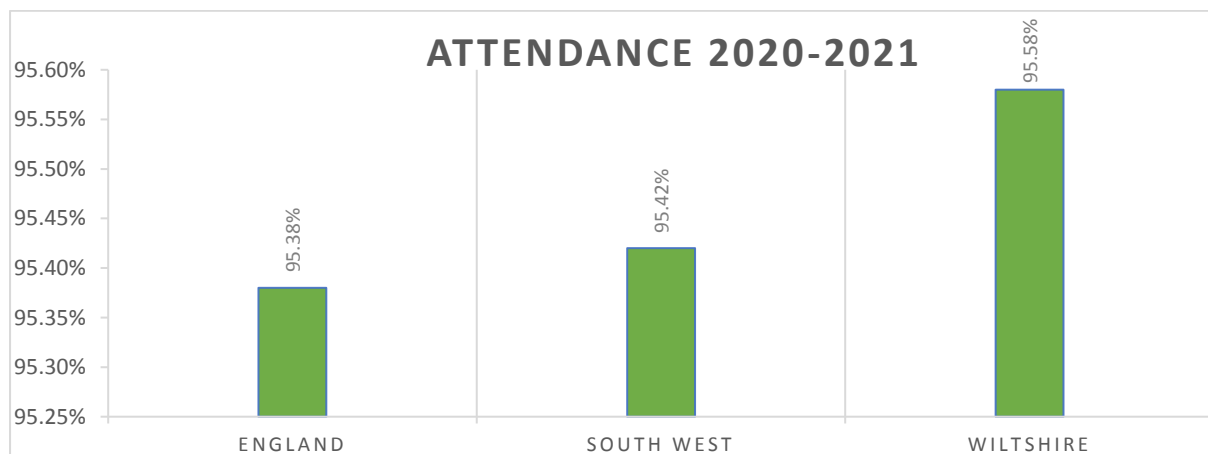
Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

Regular Update to Children's Select Committee: Working Together to Support School Attendance

DfE Published Attendance Data

1. The impact of robust attendance practice can be seen in Wiltshire's published attendance data for 2020-2021.



2. Wiltshire had better attendance than 128 other local authorities in England, placing Wiltshire in the top 15% of local authorities for attendance performance in 2020-2021
3. Wiltshire ranks as 14th nationally for attendance performance.

Attendance in 2022-2023

4. As previously reported to the Children's Select Committee, we are re-modelling the attendance offer in Wiltshire in line with new DfE guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (effective September 2022). Current practice includes:
 - a. Maintained schools receive an allocation of Education Welfare Service (EWS) time which can be used for consultation, support and guidance, strategic development and case management processes. Academies who subscribe to EWS will receive the same offer of service dependent on the hours they choose to purchase.

- b. All schools (maintained and academies) will have a Targeting Support Meeting in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. We will prioritise schools where we have identified higher rates of persistent and severe absence from our analysis of attendance data.
- c. All Education Welfare Officers will offer a fortnightly attendance focus/surgery for their designated schools. This will be an online group drop-in session where schools can discuss concerns, seek advice, guidance and solutions, and share good practice.

Karen Green – Assistant Manager, Education Welfare Service

On behalf of Kathryn Davis – Head of Targeted Education

11th October 2022

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

Schools Forum update

Key discussion points/issues from meeting of Schools Forum – 6 October 2022.

- Updates from the Early Years Reference Group and the joint meetings of the School Funding Working Group and SEN Working Group
- Update on the Proportionality, Membership and Terms of Reference of Schools Forum
- Dedicated Schools Budget – Budget Monitoring 2022-23 as at 31 August 2022
- School Revenue Surplus and Deficit Balances 2021-22
- Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) Project Update
- Update on Consultation – National Funding Formulae for Schools 2023-24
- National Funding Formula for School and High Needs 2023-24
- Update from the High Needs Block Working Group

The next meeting of Schools Forum will be held on 8 December 2022 and Children's Select will receive an update at their meeting on 17 January 2023.

Agendas and minutes for Schools Forum can be accessed on: [Browse meetings - Schools Forum | Wiltshire Council](#)

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

25 October 2022

Corporate Parenting Panel update

Key discussion points/issues from meeting of Corporate Parenting Panel – 27 September 2022.

- Child and Youth Voice Team update
- Corporate Parenting Data Scorecard 2022
- Update on Children's Placement Budget
- Updates on Councillors Corporate Parenting Strategic Priorities
- Update on Children Looked After placed more than 20 miles from home
- Update on Canons House and Aspire House
- Overview of the new BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Examination Results Update from the Virtual School
- Data Spotlight on Push and Pull factors collated from Return Interviews following Missing Episodes in 2021-22

The meeting focus/strategic priority highlight was "To be heard – my voice is not the only way I am heard – it may come out as my behaviour". Due the Panel member being unable to attend the meeting the update was not presented.

The next meeting of the Panel will be on 15 November 2022 and Children's Select will receive an update at their meeting on 17 January 2023.

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Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

20 September 2022

Task Group and Rapid Scrutiny Update

Purpose

To provide an update on any recent work from task groups and rapid scrutiny exercises linked to the Children's Select Committee (CSC), as well as information on any upcoming overview and scrutiny (OS) activities for the committee.

Updates from active Task Groups

1. Children's Select Committee – Standing Task Group

Supporting officer: Marie Gondlach

Membership

Cllr Helen Belcher
John Hawkins
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chair)
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Caroline Thomas
Cllr Jo Trigg

Terms of Reference

At its 6 July 2021 meeting, the Children's Select Committee resolved to establish this Standing Task Group:

1. To undertake detailed reviews of the regular reports that come within the Children's Select Committee's remit and to bring updates to the Committee on its work;
2. To present any key issues, findings and recommendations to the Children's Select Committee, and / or other relevant committees, for discussion, endorsement or further scrutiny where appropriate;
3. To invite all members and substitutes of Children's Select Committee to its meetings, should they wish to attend and participate.

Recent activity

No meeting.

2. Fostering Excellence Task Group

Supporting officer: Marie Gondlach

Membership

Cllr Liz Alstrom
Cllr Chuck Berry (Chair)
Cllr Ruth Hopkinson
Cllr Sam Pearce-Kearney
Cllr Mark Verbinnen

It should be noted that Cllr Jack Oatley was appointed to the task group but had to resign at the second meeting as he was no longer able to attend the scheduled meetings of the task group.

Terms of Reference

For the Fostering Excellence task group to:

1. review how the Fostering Excellence project has been / is / will be addressing the issues identified in the report presented to CSC on 10 March 2020:
 - a. Increase initial enquiries and therefore assessments and approvals of Wiltshire Council foster carers;
 - b. Improve the retention of Wiltshire approved foster carers;
 - c. Increase the percentage of Wiltshire children in foster care cared for by Wiltshire Council foster carers (at the time 46%);
 - d. Maintain high occupancy rates of Wiltshire approved foster carers (at the time 80%+).
2. identify how the effectiveness of the Fostering Excellence project will be measured and reported, and be satisfied that this is robust and delivering improvements whilst achieving the savings identified in the budget 2022-23;
3. identify how the benefits of being placed with Wiltshire Council foster carers (who are receiving enhanced training / support as part of Fostering Excellence) for children in care will be measured and reported, and be satisfied that this is robust;
4. identify best practice across the country for recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers.

Recent activity

The task group is scheduled to meet on

Upcoming activities

The following rapid scrutiny exercises (RS) and task groups (TG) will have been advertised and all members of the committee are welcome to express an interest:

- High Needs Block Funding RS
- Road map to excellence RS
- The council's options in terms of setting its own MAT (multi academy trust) RS
- Children and young people's mental health TG
- Youth provision and youth service funding TG
- Provision for post-16 TG

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on task group and rapid scrutiny activities provided.**
-

Report authors:

Marie Gondlach, Senior Scrutiny Officer, 01225 713 597, E:
marie.gondlach@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Children's Select Committee - FWP - September 2022

Last Updated 9 SEPTEMBER 2022

| Children's Select Committee – Current / Active Task Groups | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| Task Group | Start Date | Final Report Expected |
| <p>Fostering Excellence To identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. how the effectiveness of the Fostering Excellence project will be measured and reported; b. how the benefits to children in care being placed with in-house carers (receiving enhanced training / support as part of Fostering Excellence) will be measured and reported; c. best practice across the country for recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers, as well for anticipating demand (needs / demand modelling) | 18 January 2022 | November |
| <p>Business Plan Metrics Task Group As agreed at the Children's Select Committee on 19 January 2022 – to review the metrics to be included in the Business Plan for measures linked to the remit of the committee</p> | | |
| <p>Business Plan – service plans As agreed at the Children's Select Committee on 19 January 2022 – to review the service plans supporting the Business Plan linked to the remit of the committee</p> | After the Business Plan metrics tg | |
| <p>Children and Young People's Mental Health This will follow on from the work of the CAMHS task group but the terms of reference will be reviewed to ensure a more holistic approach.</p> | tbc | |
| <p>Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) To scrutinise the impact and effectiveness of the FACT programme, whilst ensuring that the voice of the child is embedded in the FACT programme.</p> <p>Areas to focus on (based on the debate and areas for continuing improvement that were highlighted in the</p> | After briefing to CSC | |

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| report) are detailed in the minutes of the CSC meeting on 19 January 2021. | | |
| May link to the Getting to Outstanding items to committee and briefing. | | |
| <p>Youth provision and youth service funding</p> <p>Area Board youth service funding</p> <p>To understand what the differences are (and why) in allocating youth funding and to determine whether the eligibility criteria and assessment / approval process are still relevant (where possible compare with other local authorities) and ensure clear “best practice” / guidelines.</p> <p>Youth Provision – gap analysis</p> <p>To consider the outcome of the Youth provision gap analysis undertaken (referred to in the Covid-19 update to Cabinet, 1 December 2020) and establish whether further scrutiny (e.g. task group) would be beneficial to ensure that demand / needs are met where possible and also that people are aware of the provision (effective promotion).</p> <p>NB link with Youth Voice team’s work</p> <p>To develop consistency across the 18 area boards in terms of allocating youth funding and eligibility criteria.</p> | tbc | |
| <p>Access to Post-16 education</p> <p>To establish a clear picture of post-16 education provision available to young people in Wiltshire and availability of / options for transport to access that provision.</p> <p>NB – may link to follow up work from the Youth Transport Task Group’s final report.</p> | (tie in with academic year) | |

| Children’s Select Committee - Rapid Scrutiny | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| Topic | Details | Date |
| SEND provision – data set | tbc | |
| High needs block funding | To review the current processes and explore whether there would be value added in establishing a task group to consider options to manage pressures on high needs block budget whilst | |

| | | |
|--|--|----------|
| | providing the most appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. | |
| Health Outcomes and meeting health needs | To explore how the council can best scrutinise what partners (and providers) are doing to provide health outcomes for Wiltshire children, this would include establishing what the current scrutiny by the council is (including information on the current and planned work on this topic of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership). | Date tbc |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / Purpose of Report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| For consideration by the Standing Task Group. | | | | | |
| | Corporate Parenting bi-annual report | March (brief update) October / November (annual report) | | | |
| | Adoption | Annual item. To receive information on adoption from the following sources: Local authority's performance report with regards to adoption (statutory requirement that regular assurance reports are provided regarding the Council's responsibility for the adoption of children); Adoption West joint scrutiny panel's annual report. | | | |
| | Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership | To receive annual report from the partnership presenting work in the past year and priorities / objectives for the year ahead. | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Performance monitoring reports | To receive performance monitoring reports on the overall service, likely to be June (to consider the year-end data from the previous year) then January meetings. | | | |
| | Traded Services - annual report (November 2022) | To receive the second traded services annual report - this should be linked with the Standing Task Group meeting on 4 January 2022 | Helean Hughes (Director - Education and Skills) | Cllr Laura Mayes | Paul Redford |
| Information briefings | | | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Information briefing - employment and apprenticeship | <p>To receive information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEET (not in education, employment or training) numbers in Wiltshire – including national figures for comparison (ons) • Take up / outcome of the NEET government scheme in Wiltshire and nationally • Current number of apprentices in Wiltshire and schemes in place, including Wiltshire Council • Services in place / support available in Wiltshire to help young people move towards work, education or training e.g. Wiltshire Council's Employment and Skills (Work Wiltshire), programmes such as Building Bridges, etc. | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|--|--|---|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Information briefing - Alternative Educational Provision | To receive information on processes followed and options available in Wiltshire, including information on the Service Level Agreement for funding delegated to secondary schools to support learners at risk of exclusion. Anticipated to be a shorter briefing (30 minutes). | | | |
| | Information briefing - Demand modelling for children services | To develop some awareness of the work undertaken, common factors that drive demand, how to anticipate impact and volume – informing members of the complexities of managing and anticipating demand. Once this briefing has been delivered there may be further updates on specific demand analysis. | | | Tamsin Stone |
| | Information briefing - FACT (Families and Children Transformation Programme): the journey so far | There is also a proposed task group and agenda item Timeline – late September, October for the briefing and November for agenda item. | Martin Davis (Director - Families and Children) | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|---|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Information briefing - Family Learning Service | To raise awareness of the service and the support it offers to families. Anticipated to be a shorter 30 minutes briefing. | | | |
| | Information briefing - learning from Covid-19 | To inform members on the lessons learnt from Covid on how some of the mitigations or new ways of working implemented to manage the pandemic could be adapted for ongoing use to improve the efficiency/productivity of the service (This potentially could be an agenda item at some point as well). NB the briefing should be linked to a presentation from Wiltshire CIL to Health Select Committee and work undertaken by Wiltshire Parent Carer Council. | | | |
| | Information briefing - MASH and early support | September / October 2021 | | | |
| | Information briefing - School Funding | Yearly briefing ahead of consideration of the budget. | | | |
| | Information briefing - school improvement programme | Linked to agenda item - briefing in November | Helean Hughes (Director - Education and Skills) | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|---|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Information briefing - SEND provision: See the person not the disability | To understand SEND and provision by the council (including awareness of funding). This briefing would underpin future scrutiny work (proposed rapid scrutiny) on SEND provision and High Needs block funding. | | | |
| | Information briefing - Young Carers in Wiltshire | This briefing could inform the scope of a potential task group or rapid scrutiny – to consider how to best promote the service and ensure that Young Carers and their families are aware of and access the support on offer. | Helen Jones (Director - Joint Commissioning) | | |
| Standing items (at all meetings) | | | | | |
| | DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education | A report presenting an update on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education. | Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director - People) | Cllr Laura Mayes | Nicola McCann |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|---|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | School Ofsted Judgements | A report which includes information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports. It will provide an ongoing view of the effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspection. | Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director - People) | Cllr Laura Mayes | Louise Lewis |
| | Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative | An update including a summary of recent activities of the Wiltshire Youth Union (WYU), the Youth Safeguarding Board (YSB) and the Children in Care Council (CiCC). | Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director - People) | Cllr Laura Mayes | Gary Binstead |
| Agenda item – date to be set | | | | | |
| | Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations | Provides an annual overview of pupil performance at the end of each key stage and compares Wiltshire's attainment with national, south west and statistical neighbours. | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Child Poverty | To receive a report presenting figures / data for child poverty in Wiltshire (compared to national figures) and the services / provision in place to address this in Wiltshire, either delivered / supported by the council or third sector (that the council is aware of). | | | |
| | School Improvement Programme | As agreed at the 10 March 2020 meeting (schools Ofsted judgments) to receive a report on implementation / progress of the school improvement programme. (NB with pre-meeting briefing as well) | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | Youth Transport (including SEND) | <p>Update following task group's work and executive response - National Bus Strategy and any decision or progress regarding a single "Wiltshire Youth Card"</p> <p>.</p> <p>To include input from the council's review of transport services for children and young people with SEND (commissioning team).</p> <p>NB – may link to the proposed Access to Post-16 education task group</p> | | | |
| | Outdoor education | Update following task group's work and executive response (CSC 10 March 2021) | | | |

| Children's Select Committee - FWP - March 2022 | | | Last updated 7 MARCH 2022 | | |
|--|---|---|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Meeting Date | Item | Details / purpose of report | Associate Director | Responsible Cabinet Member | Report Author / Lead Officer |
| | FACT update | <p>Following consideration of update on 10 March 2020:</p> <p>Request an update for March 2021. The Chair and Vice-chair will identify specific areas for update from the report considered today and inform officers accordingly. The update should include more figures for improved outcome for young people and also figures on savings / costs avoided to demonstrate the impact of the FACT programme.</p> <p>For example number of Five to Thrive champions trained, outcome / learning from the Multi-Agency Use of CMS, outcome of performance reviews, etc.</p> | Lucy Townsend (Corporate Director - People) | Cllr Laura Mayes | |
| | Early Years and Childcare Standards Annual Report | To receive a report detailing local authority standards for early years and pre-school provision including sufficiency (which is a statutory duty), pupil outcomes and Ofsted grades. | | | |

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