

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL** held at Room 15, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford on Monday, 8 May 2017

### PRESENT

#### Elected Members (voting)

Cllrs Cllr Mrs C Hegley (Chairman)  
R D Berry (substituting for Mrs A Barker)  
D Bowater (substituting for Mrs A L Dodwell)  
N B Costin  
Mrs S A Goodchild  
Mrs T Stock  
M A G Versallion  
B Wells

#### Officers (voting)

Mr T Keaveney, Assistant Director Housing Services

#### Carers (non-voting)

Mrs T Rowlands  
Mrs A Wallace

Apologies for Absence: Mr P Albon, Carer  
Cllr Mrs A Barker  
Cllr Mrs A L Dodwell, Vice-Chairman  
Mrs S Harrison, Director of Children's Services  
Mrs J Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing

Officers in Attendance:	Mr R Bharkhada Ms R Coals Ms A Craig Mr G Jones Mr L Manning Miss N Phillips Ms M Short	– Interim Head of Corporate Parenting Service – Principal Social Worker and Head of Professional Standards – Practice Manager Fostering – Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help – Committee Services Officer – Practice Manager Adoption – Participation Officer Professional Standards
Others in Attendance:	Ambassadors	– for Children in Care Council

#### CPP/17/39. Election of Chairman

In the absence of the Chairman, and having received apologies for absence from the Vice-Chairman, it was

**RESOLVED**

**that Councillor Mrs T Stock be elected Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Panel until such time as Councillor Mrs Hegley arrives at the meeting.**

**Councillor Mrs T Stock in the Chair**

**CPP/17/40. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:

**Minute CPP/11/32 (LAC Health Report – Six Month Update)**

In the penultimate sentence of paragraph 7 delete ‘.re’ found between the words ‘case loads’ and ‘as the safeguarding’.

**Note: At the conclusion of the above item at 10.14 a.m. Councillor Mrs C Hegley arrived at the meeting and took the Chair.**

**Councillor Mrs C Hegley in the Chair**

**CPP/17/41. Members' Interests**

None notified.

**CPP/17/42. Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The following announcements and communications were made:

- The Children in Care Council (CiCC) Ambassadors had visited the Priory View development where they had been able to examine this example of housing provision for older people and meet with the sheltered tenants’ action group.
- The CiCC Ambassadors had also attended a presentation for Councillor Chatterley. This had been held in recognition of Councillor Chatterley’s work under the Looked After Children Champion initiative in arranging a visit for Looked After Children to Luton Town Football Club.
- The Chairman referred to the Panel’s next meeting and to the scheduled report on Leaving Care Housing. She also stated that she would welcome an update on how the Aspirations Wish List was progressing. She was aware some offers had been made.

CPP/17/43. **Peer Review and Action Plan**

The Panel considered a presentation entitled 'Peer Review and Action Plan' which informed Members of the process and outcome of the Peer Review undertaken by the Eastern Region Partnership between 20-22 February. The presentation was introduced by the Interim Head of the Corporate Parenting Service.

The Panel noted that on the slide headed 'Action Plan – Work Streams' work stream number 6 should read 'Policy on missing UASC needs to be clearer'.

A copy of the presentation pack is attached at Appendix A to the minutes.

Points and comments included:

1. An expression of gratitude by the Interim Head of the Corporate Parenting Service to the Children in Care Council for its contribution to the Peer Review. He also thanked Members for the leadership role they had carried out.
2. Arising from the findings of the Review the Interim Head of the Corporate Parenting Service stressed that reflective supervision was taking place but that the extent to which it was held had not been accurately recorded.
3. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help stated that the Peer Review had been treated by the Council as if it were a full Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspection.
4. The inspection team had stated that the quality of the Council's service was far better than the impression given by the Council itself. The Panel noted that Ofsted had previously made a similar comment.
5. The Peer Review was a planned (pre-notified) in-depth inspection which used Ofsted descriptors. The work undertaken by the Council in preparation for the Review would be of use when the expected future Ofsted inspection took place.
6. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help referred to those areas where the Review had felt the Council could improve and he set out the action which had been taken in response. Although there was no final score awarded by the Review the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help stated that, given there was no evidence of inadequacy, he believed the score would have been 'good'.
7. The Interim Head of Corporate Parenting responded to Members' queries regarding support for 'Out of County' care leavers. The meeting noted the background to this issue and the action which had already been taken. The Panel also noted the planned purchase of an app which would allow young people to access the full range of information that they required.

8. With regard to the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help advised that although the score had improved he acknowledged that issues remained in Central Bedfordshire regarding young peoples' mental health and general wellbeing.
9. Full debate took place on the issue of housing provision for care leavers and young people and the quantity, quality and appropriateness of that available. A Children in Care Ambassador briefed the Panel of her own experiences in this area. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help, the Interim Head of Corporate Parenting and Assistant Director Housing Services responded to the points raised by Members.
10. In response to comments raised by the Chairman the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help stated that Action Plan arising from the Review would be issued shortly. He added that much was already complete. With regard to employment and care leavers he suggested that a deep dive report and presentation be made to the Panel accompanied by care leavers and including the aspirations list. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help stressed that accommodation for care leavers had been a matter of consideration for some time though he acknowledged that progress had been slow. Following further debate he stated that the report on housing scheduled for the Panel's July meeting would include an outline plan with actions and options.

**NOTED**

**the presentation entitled 'Peer Review and Action Plan'.**

**RESOLVED**

**that a 'deep dive' item on care leaver employment to include a presentation, the Aspirations Wish List and the attendance of care leavers be made to a future meeting of the Panel.**

**CPP/17/44. Update on the Transformation Plan**

The Panel considered a presentation entitled 'Transforming Children's Services' which updated Members on the progress made in implementing the Transformation Programme against the adopted timetable. The presentation was introduced by the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help.

A copy of the presentation pack is attached at Appendix B to the minutes.

Points and comments included:

1. The numbers of Looked After Children, Child Protection Plans and Child in Need Plans had dropped following a significant increase in early help. This approach had reduced the number of children experiencing avoidable harm and family breakdowns. It was noted that there had

actually been a 9% reduction in the number of Looked After Children over a three year period rather than, as stated in the presentation, a 6% reduction over four years.

2. The Panel noted the major achievement the above figures represented and that they placed Central Bedfordshire within the top tier of local authorities in England. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help stated that he believed the figures could be further improved and undertook to circulate an Executive report, which provided a useful background narrative on this topic, to Members.
3. The meeting noted the number, age and background of those children who had become Looked After between June 2015 and May 2016. The Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help advised that four children had left care and one had entered the care system in April 2017. As a result of the dispersal of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) when entering the country there were now fewer becoming Looked After in Central Bedfordshire.
4. Members raised a number of queries on aspects of the Transformation Programme including the need for its introduction, the likely outcome and impact on the quality of service provision and the recent decrease in the opportunity for Members to participate and comment on such proposals following the reorganisation of representative bodies. In response the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help explained that the Transformation Programme was necessary because only limited change was possible under the current business delivery model. A more integrated service approach was required to meet the increasing challenges being faced both in local communities and in schools as these could not be managed under the current arrangements. Instead, teams of professionals with a range of skills were required and by December 2018, the target date at the end of the planned Transformation timetable, such teams would be in place in each locality able to undertake early intervention work.
5. Following Members' comments the Assistant Director Safeguarding and Early Help undertook to raise the progress of the establishment of a Members' Reference Group with the Director of Children's Services, provide the Panel with story board illustrating the Transformation journey, ensure that Members were fully briefed on the work that was being undertaken and bring the Transformation team to a future meeting of the Panel.

#### **NOTED**

**the presentation entitled 'Transforming Children's Services'.**

**THE COMMITTEE ADJOURNED AT 12.05 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 12.10 P.M.**

**CPP/17/45. Adoption Service Statement of Purpose 2017/18**

The Panel considered a report on the draft Adoption Service Statement of Purpose for 2017/18.

Points and comments included:

- The draft Statement, a copy of which was attached at Appendix A to the report, had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authority Adoption Service (England) Regulations 2003 and Standard 18 of the National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2011.
- The Practice Manager Adoption introduced the report and highlighted the changes which had been incorporated into the draft Statement including a revamped layout and greater detail.
- In response to a Member's queries the Practice Manager Adoption stated that, locally, the timescale for the adoption process had been reduced by 38 days and that, as a result, the Council lay within the top 25% of local authorities. She added that there had been no disrupted adoptions within the last twelve months, a situation which she attributed to the improved training of prospective adopters.

**RESOLVED**

**that the draft Adoption Service Statement of Purpose 2017/18 be approved and adopted.**

**CPP/17/46. Fostering Service Statement of Purpose 2017/18**

The Panel considered a report on the draft Fostering Service Statement of Purpose for 2017/18.

Points and comments included:

- The draft Statement, a copy of which was attached at Appendix A to the report, had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of fostering services, the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for the provision of fostering services and the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 which governed the work of fostering services throughout England.
- The Practice Manager, Fostering introduced the report and drew the Panel's attention to the revamped format adopted for the draft Statement and the inclusion of greater detail than in its previous versions.
- A Member commented on how easy it was to read and understand the draft Statement. She also suggested a minor amendment to the document.

**RESOLVED**

**that, subject to amending the word ‘quarter’ to ‘quarterly’ in paragraph 14.3 of the draft Fostering Service draft Statement of Purpose 2017/18, the draft Statement be approved and adopted.**

**CPP/17/47. Work Programme**

Members considered the report of the Committee services Officer which set out the Panel’s proposed work programme for the municipal year 2017/18. The Panel was aware that it had already approved the addition of a ‘deep dive’ item on care leaver employment at a future meeting of the Panel (minute CPP/17/43 above refers).

The Assistant Director Housing Services referred to the scheduled report in July on Leaving Care Housing and, in view of the workload involved, requested that this item be deferred for consideration to the September meeting. The Interim Head of Corporate Parenting indicated his support for this action.

**RESOLVED**

**that the Corporate Parenting Panel work programme, as attached at Appendix A of the report of the Committee Services Officer, be approved subject to:**

- **deferring the scheduled ‘spotlight’ report on Leaving Care Housing to the September meeting of the Panel**
- **including a ‘deep dive’ item with a presentation and the attendance of care leavers on care leaver employment together with an update on the Aspirations Wish List at a future meeting of the Panel.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.08 a.m. and concluded at 12.24 p.m.)

Chairman.....

Dated.....

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Appendix A

# Peer Review and Action Plan

**Gerard Jones** - Assistant Director Children Services Safeguarding & Early Help

**Raj Bharkhada** - Interim Head of Corporate Parenting Service

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## Peer Review

- A Peer Review was undertaken by the Eastern Region Partnership between 20 and 22 February 2017
- Conducted by colleagues from other local authorities in our region
- The Peer Inspectors involved were experienced social work managers
- They spent time looking at the quality of the services we provide to looked after children, with a particular focus (but not only) on care leavers and asylum seeking children
- A formal Letter was sent to the Director with their findings

# Peer Review

- They focused on:
  - ❖ Quality of Care
  - ❖ Accommodation for young people aged 16 plus
  - ❖ Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
  - ❖ Housing and employment for Care Leavers

## Peer Review

As part of this process the Peer Inspectors

- ❖ Were based on site at Stephenson Court
- ❖ Read all the pre-supplied documents before they arrived on site and gave brief feedback on them
- ❖ Met with the Chief Executive, Councillors, the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, the DCS and senior managers, other managers and practitioners and 'our very charming Children in Care Council'
- ❖ Looked at all the case audits (12) supplied and met with staff involved in these cases

# Peer Review

- ❖ Met with Focus Groups on a variety of topics
- ❖ Dip-sampled a number of cases
- ❖ Looked at further written material supplied
- ❖ Presented their findings to DCS, Senior and Middle Managers

## Peer Review

The Peer Reviewers stated that overall our service was safe, children and young people were well cared for and supported. The findings also included:

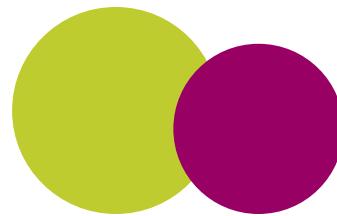
- ❖ Workers clearly know and care about their children and come across very well
- ❖ Workers are very positive about CBC and particularly about Professional Development Opportunities
- ❖ Caseloads are reasonable and workers report good supervision and supportive management
- ❖ Political and strategic leadership is effective and can demonstrate commitment to children including investment in the service

# Peer Review

- ❖ Political and Strategic Leadership is joined up – this means that the whole Council has children in view, not just the CYP Department
- ❖ Management “grip” is strong, KPIs are generally in right place, many are in top quartile and strategic plans are kept under review and progressed
- ❖ The Children in Care Council (CiCC) are very impressive and gave good evidence of their impact – particularly welcomed personal support of senior managers including the DCS and AD

# Peer Review

- ❖ Examples of very good life story work reflecting strong engagement with young people
- ❖ Pathway plans have a good format and demonstrate good involvement of young people
- ❖ Workers know how they will manage risks and have contingencies in place
- ❖ SDQs and other Health LAC indicators are very good



# Peer Review

- Areas where we could do better included:
  - ❖ Recording reflective supervision more accurately as it is happening but not recorded as such often enough
  - ❖ A summary of case history on chronology would be helpful
  - ❖ Out of County 16+ are not supported by Youth Support Service
  - ❖ Missing policy for UASC should be clarified
  - ❖ Written Leaving Care entitlement and clarity about our complaints process

# Action Plan - Work streams

The areas of development were considered and grouped into 7 work streams:

1. Clearer recording of case histories/chronologies on MOSAIC and the suggestion that it would be useful to have a summary of the case history within our chronologies
2. Better evidence of reflective discussions in supervision
3. Clearer case decision making to avoid ‘drift’, Are there too many meetings that do not involve the child/young person?
4. Ensuring out of authority care leavers get good 16+ educational opportunities
5. Develop Life Story work further
6. Missing policy on UASC needs to be clearer
7. Risk Assessment including CSE

# Examples of actions and progress

Clearer recording of case histories/chronologies on MOSAIC

- **Actions completed**

- ❖ Single signposting statement drafted to direct the reader to where earlier chronologies are located
- ❖ All records have an up to date chronology with clear signposting statement to other chronologies of earlier periods in the child/young persons life

- **Longer term action to progress**

Development of a single freestanding chronology on Mosaic fed by:

- ❖ Key events automatically
- ❖ Other events by a simple manual process
- ❖ This work will require consultation with Mosaic system and performance team colleagues

# Examples of actions and progress

Ensuring out of authority care leavers get good 16+ educational opportunities

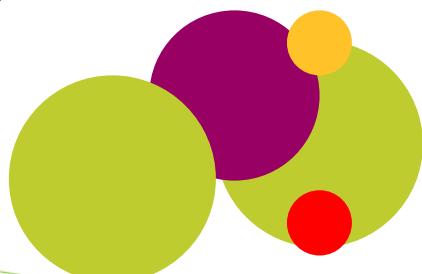
- ❖ Joint work has commenced with colleagues in the Youth Support Service
- ❖ RAG rating of 16+ LAC/Care Leavers for education, employment and training (EET) and personal circumstances for those living outside CBC, Luton and Bedford has begun
- ❖ Following audit individual young people identified as living outside the local authority will be provided with relevant contacts in the authority they live to access support
- ❖ Where support is required Youth Support and key worker to produce an action plan, recorded on Mosaic and monitored by key worker and manager

# Peer Review

- We want to thank the Children in Care Council (CiCC) for their support and contribution
- We thank our Members for their support and strong leadership throughout this process

# Peer Review

- We are pleased with the outcome of the review
- The outcome demonstrates good quality of practice and commitment of our staff to the young people in our service
- An action plan has been developed. The plan is primarily focused on the areas of development
- An overall timescale has been set for the majority of the plan to be completed by the end of May 2017



# Central Bedfordshire Council

## TRANSFORMING CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Briefing for Corporate Parenting Panel  
8<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

Gerard Jones



# Our ambition

To have the happiest, safest, healthiest & highest achieving children in the country



# Building on our strengths in preventing family breakdown

Looked After Children Numbers  
DOWN  
Feb 2014 275  
Feb 2017 249  
excl UASCs  
6% reduction in 4 years despite 5% increased population and 12% increase in national LAC

Child Protection Plans Numbers  
DOWN  
Feb 2014 222  
Feb 2017 164  
44% reduction over 4 years despite 3% population increase

Child in Need Plans  
DOWN  
12% in 4 years despite a 3% population increase

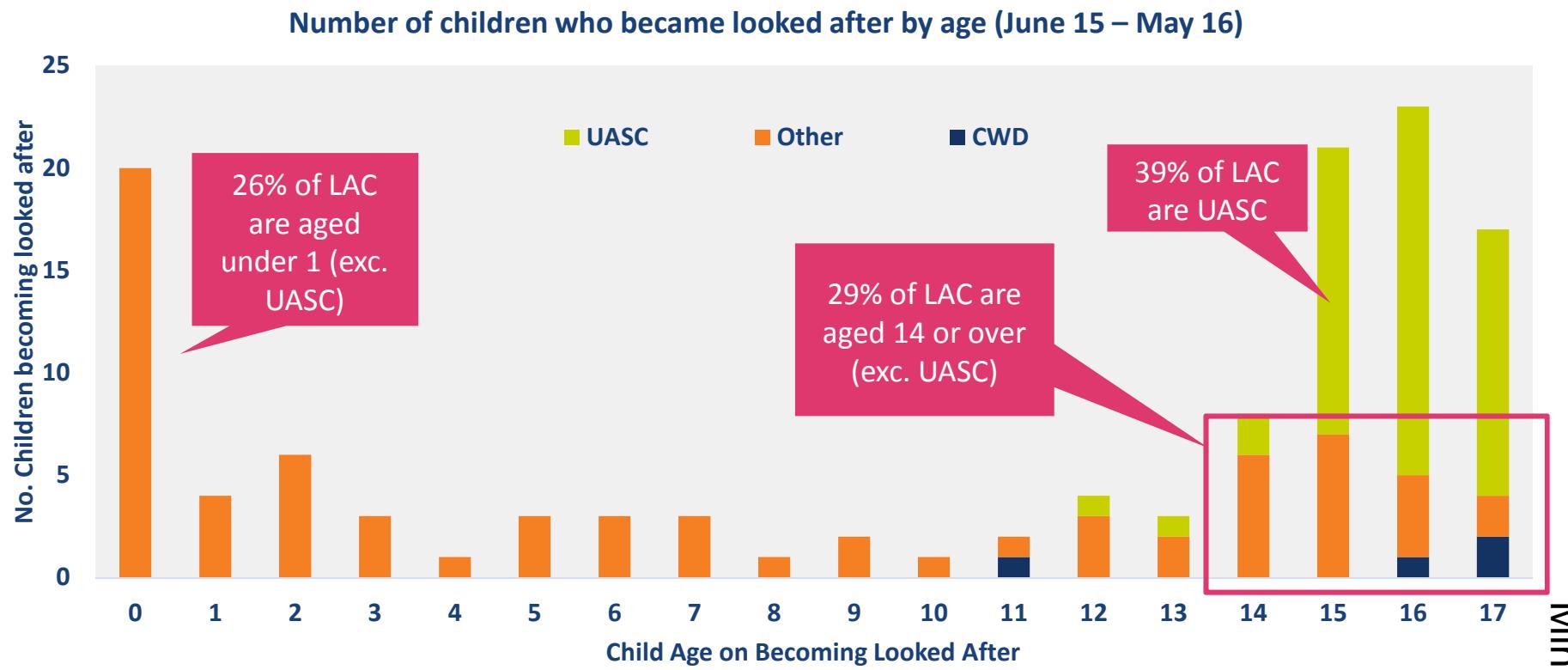
# Good Outcomes for Children in Care

- Social Workers visits to Children in Care – 97.7%
- Average SDQ Score (Mental & Emotional Wellbeing) for Children in Care – Down from 14.7 to 13.4
- Placement Stability – Children in Care with 3+ Care Placements – Down from 12.2% to 9.2%
- Placement Stability – children in the same placement for 2+ yrs – Up from 63.0% to 78.4%
- Care Leavers in Suitable Accm: Up from 88.3% to 90.9%
- Care Leavers in EET: Up from 68.0% to 70.2%

# Realising our ambition – the Transformation Programme Work Streams

Integrated Working Project			
Project leads: Gerard Jones and Celia Shohet			
Service Development	Workforce Development	Commissioning and Performance	Infrastructure and Systems
<b>Lead: Alex Coman</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop and test new operating model for locality working, including structure, pathways in and out of system, roles and supporting processes</li><li>Establish a plan for implementation, including realistic phasing to introduce the new model</li></ul>	<b>Lead: Debbie Crawford</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Skills audit focusing on demand drivers &amp; develop plan to address gap</li><li>Review external best practice</li><li>Develop a workforce development strategy and plan</li><li>Identify suitable training and roll out development plan</li></ul>	<b>Lead: Ben Pearson</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Design commissioning/ decommissioning strategy</li><li>Review effectiveness of services that were not in scope of original PIR</li><li>Develop, test and implement service performance framework</li><li>Resource Allocation System design and implementation</li></ul>	<b>Lead: Alex Coman</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Understand the enabling functions to support the new model (IT, equipment and accommodation)</li><li>Develop and agree information sharing protocol across partnership to optimise systems use and access</li></ul>

# Insight from the Transformation Programme – care entry is driven by children under 1 year and by adolescents



Identifying the two key cohorts allows us to focus on shaping the system to support and offer early intervention to the most at risk children and families

# Key messages from our development work – to get even better

Our services need to be more integrated

our model of delivery needs to change

We need to work with families for longer

We need to focus on direct intervention and delivery

All staff will need to have core skills

We need to use data differently

We will need to consider how we commission different specialist support

Two key pathways:  
Pre-birth to 1 year  
•14 + (particularly adolescent girls)

We need to invest in partnerships and work more closely with our localities

We will be introducing five integrated locality teams in June 2017

# It is clear that we need to integrate our services to address the problems families face more effectively



## Named lead from core team linked to a school, GP etc.

Creating improved dialogue, advice and relationships between our locality teams and universal services with a key role of the locality team being developing community capacity

## Partners beginning to be based with core teams

Our ambition over time is that more partners are physically based in these locality teams some or all of the time. This includes connecting our adult-based services

## Social Care wrapped around core teams in localities

Supporting risk oversight to core early help; connections with universal services to build their confidence in pathways & support; providing consistent local SW interface

## Integrated core team in localities – potentially in schools

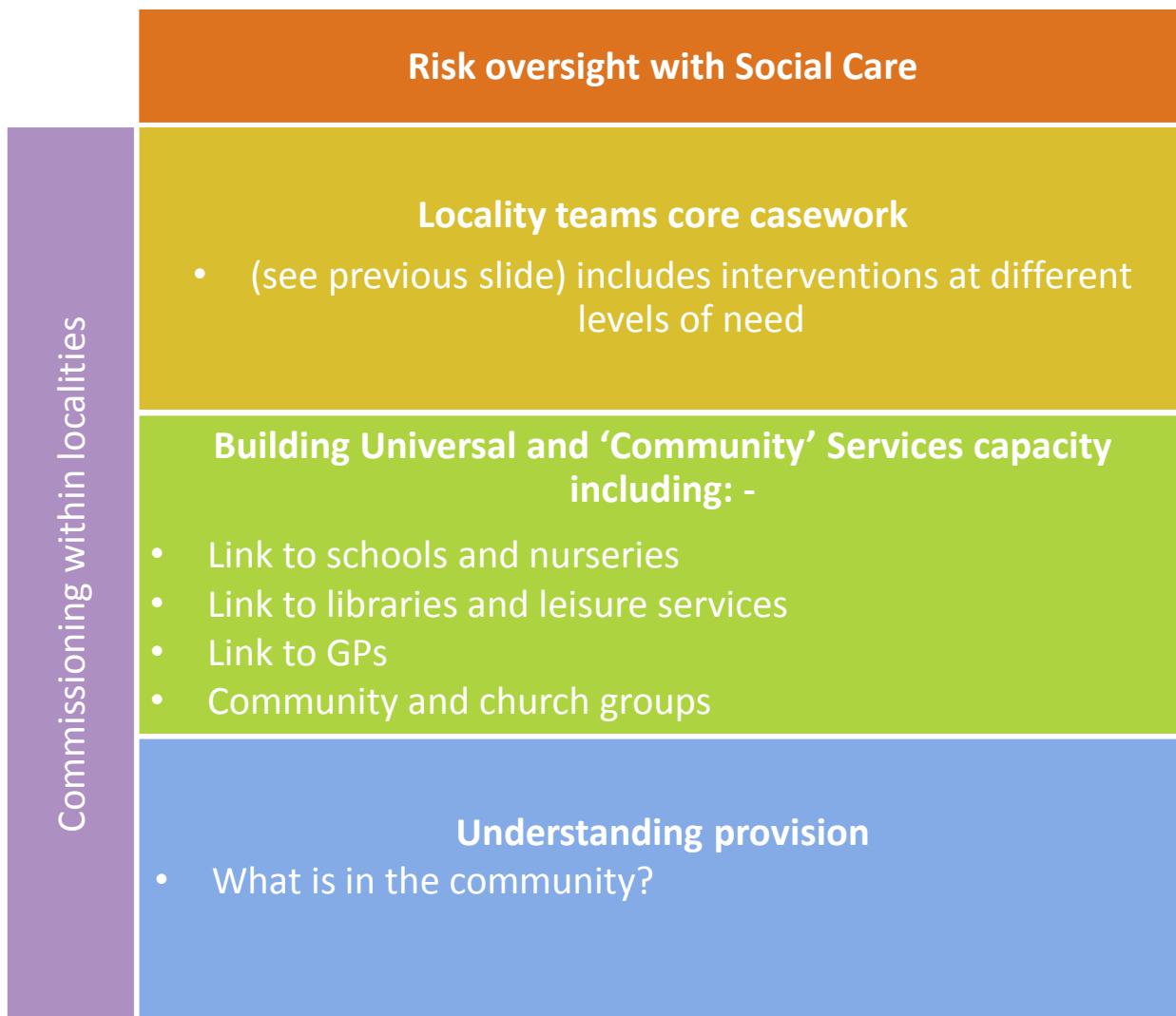
Bringing together a range of current services including: supporting families, parenting, early help, family intervention service, youth support services, health visiting & school nursing

# Each team will have a number of Early Help 'key workers' within it

The role of workers in the locality teams is multi-faceted and includes: -

- Providing direct case work support to families
- Ensuring a clear understanding of locality provision
- Working with universal services to develop their capacity
- Potentially commissioning on an individual or local scale

These workers will have a number of key roles over time



# The ‘Transformation’ Journey - The Planned Timetable

Integrate CBC Childrens Services early help & social care in locality teams

Supporting Families

Early Help Team

Social Care

FIS

Adolescent Hub

Parenting

Youth Support Service

CLEAR LINKS WITH

Schools & their Family Support Workers, GP surgeries

**Phase 1**

Integrate other council services into integrated locality teams

**Phase 2**

- Housing
- Health Visitors
- School Nurses
- Path to Recovery
- Community Safety
- YOS
- SEND Services
- Leaving Care Team
- Domestic Abuse Team

Other partners fully join integrated locality teams

**Phase 3**

- Police (PCSO's)
- Adult Mental Health
- CAMHS
- SEND Services (including commissioned)
- Town Councils
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector

- End June all 5 CBC locality teams go-live
- **One locality multi-agency prototype including a mix of phase 2 + 3 agencies in Dunstable**

- Evaluation following phase 1
- Other council services located in locality teams
- Full multi-agency team in Dunstable evaluated

- All five localities are multi-agency with key partners & CBC staff co-located in each locality
- Consider phase 4 – universal services join, colocation / campus arrangement with schools where appropriate

June 2017

Target by June 2018

Target by December 2018

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# SUMMARY

- We are a well performing Council and good Corporate Parents to our Children in Care and Care Leavers.
- It is clear that by working more closely with key partners we can do even better and use our resources more efficiently.
- The Transformation Programme is key to the Medium Term Financial Plan over the next 4 years.
- New leadership arrangements are in place in Children's Services including a new multi –agency Children's Leadership Board.

# SUMMARY

- The first stage of implementing the programme commences in June 2017 with Locality Early Help Teams and a multi agency Domestic Violence pilot in Dunstable.
- We will develop an ‘Adolescents Hub’ to target support on young people most at risk of care, custody and School exclusion.
- We will target better support and interventions to very young children whose parents are affected by Domestic Abuse, Mental Health, Substance Misuse, Learning Disability and Criminality.
- New services will be closely linked to School Clusters and based in the communities they support.