

# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE



**Tuesday, 26 November 2024**

**Democratic and Members' Services**  
Emma Duncan  
Service Director: Legal and Governance

**14:00**

New Shire Hall  
Alconbury Weald  
Huntingdon  
PE28 4YE

**Red Kite Room**  
**[Venue Address]**

## **AGENDA**

**Open to Public and Press**

### **CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

1. **Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**  
*Guidance on declaring interests is available in [Chapter 6 of the Council's Constitution \(Members' Code of Conduct\)](#)*
2. **Children and Young People Committee Minutes - 8 October 2024** **5 - 18**
3. **Petitions and Public Questions**

### **KEY DECISIONS**

4. **Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028** **19 - 66**
5. **Alconbury Weald Secondary School** **67 - 72**

## DECISIONS

6.	<b>Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2024-2029</b>	<b>73 - 100</b>
7.	<b>Safety Valve Programme Update</b>	<b>101 - 114</b>
8.	<b>Finance Monitoring Report – October 2024</b>	<b>115 - 144</b>
9.	<b>CYP Agenda Plan, Training Plan and Appointments</b>	<b>145 - 164</b>

### Date of Next Meeting

14 January 2025

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The Children and Young People Committee comprises the following members:

Councillor Bryony Goodliffe (Chair) Councillor Firouz Thompson (Vice-Chair) Councillor David Ambrose Smith Councillor Michael Atkins Councillor Anna Bradnam Councillor Alex Bulat Councillor Claire Daunton Councillor Mark Goldsack Councillor John Gowing Councillor Anne Hay Councillor Samantha Hoy Councillor Maria King Councillor Alan Sharp Councillor Philippa Slatter and Councillor Simone Taylor Dr Andy Stone (Appointee) Jon Young (Appointee)

Clerk Name:	Tamar Oviatt-Ham
Clerk Telephone:	01223 715668
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## Children and Young People Committee: Minutes

Date: 8 October 2024

Time: 2.00 pm - 4.35 pm

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald

Present: Councillors Ambrose-Smith, Bradnam, Count, Coutts, Daunton, Goodliffe (Chair), Gowing, Hay, Hoy, Meschini, Sharp, Slatter, Thompson and Taylor.

Co-opted Members:  
Jon Young, Church of England Diocese of Ely

### 228. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Atkins, Councillor Alex Bulat (substituted by Councillor Elisa Meschini), Councillor Maria King (substituted by Councillor Piers Coutts), Councillor Mark Goldsack (substituted by Councillor Steve Count) and Dr Andy Stone.

Members noted that Councillor Maria King had replaced Councillor Piers Coutts on the Committee, with Councillor Coutts remaining as a substitute.

There were no declarations of interest.

### 229. Minutes - 10 September 2024 and minutes action log

The minutes of the meeting on 10 September 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

Members commented on the following actions:

- Action 203: Education Contracts - Undertook to provide a briefing note on progress around the education transport transformation programme and improved practices Response: CEF DMT met on 12 September and agreed to defer the report until February 2025 and an provide an update report will be provided to CYP Spokes in November 24. Briefing also required for all Committee members. **Action Required**
- Action 225: Education Capital Projects - Clarified that a note updating on Waterbeach Primary School would be provided to Members outside of the meeting (linked to action 206) **Action Required**

- Action 226: Children, Education and Families Risk Report - Stated that the authority was working with the Combined Authority on a number of transport pilots. The Chair clarified that a note on the pilots would be circulated to the Committee. **Action Required**

The minutes action log was noted.

## 230. Petitions and public questions

There were no public questions or petitions.

## 231. Healthy Child Programme Commissioning Approach

The committee received a report that followed an initial report to committee on 12 March 2024 where approval had been granted to commission an integrated Healthy Child Programme (HCP) across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough local authority areas. This was to maintain the stability of this service, to allow for improvements in delivery to be consolidated and to avoid a dip in performance.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- expressed concern in relation to performance against two key performance indicators that were being presented to the Adults and Health Committee later in the week, that related to the programme around the health visiting mandated checks for the percentage of children receiving their 6-8 week review by 8 weeks and children receiving their 2-2.5 year review. Members were informed that the indicators would be reviewed as part of the commissioning process and would be aligned to the national benchmarks.
- asked that the information on the school nursing offer was made clear on the Cambridgeshire Community Services Website for parents and carers. Members noted that the website included information on the nursing offer and mental health support. Information on childhood immunisations could be found on the Cambridgeshire Integrated Care System website and links to both websites would be circulated to members for reference. **Action Required.**
- queried the percentage link to performance of 3% outlined at 4.8 of the report and how this would be implemented and sought assurances that this would be linked to better outcomes and service improvement. Members learnt that performance would be reviewed at quarterly contractual performance meetings and agreed as part of an annual development plan.
- sought assurance that Members in Peterborough had seen and agreed to the report recommendations. Members heard that the original report was approved in March at Peterborough Cabinet, and that a similar report had been taken to Peterborough Cabinet two weeks ago which had been approved. Currently Cambridgeshire was the lead commissioner, but from April 2025 each authority would have their own section 75 agreement.

- noted that the CCS emotional wellbeing service worked closely with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT) who were the lead provider of the YOUnited service. This service offered help to children and young people with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. It was available to those up to the age of 25 and offered a range of support including therapies, counselling and guided self-help.

The chair proposed the following minor amendments to the report recommendations which were agreed unanimously by members:

- b) add the words 'NHS Trust' after Cambridgeshire Community Services
- c) add the words 'Cambridgeshire Community Services' before NHS Trust
- d) add the words 'a committee report on progress to committee before' after the words 'in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Children & Young People's Committee with'

It was resolved unanimously:

- a) To commission a Universal 0-19 HCP including Health Visiting and School Nursing that follows national commissioning guidance, has a focus on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities and allows flexibility to adapt to local needs by working in place-based integrated teams with other local authority (Education, Social Care and Community), Public Health and NHS services.
- b) For Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to enter into a Section 75 Partnering Arrangement with Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust (CCS) for delivery of this service starting on 1st April 2025 for a duration of 2 years with the option to extend for 2+2 years (Total 6 years).
- c) To agree the annual budget of £9,126,108 for 25-26 of which 3% shall only be paid to the Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS) NHS Trust subject to the achievement of performance/outcome targets agreed as part of the Section 75 Partnering Agreement's Annual Development Plan. The Annual budget may be subject to inflationary changes in subsequent years.
- d) To delegate responsibility for awarding and executing the Section 75 Partnering Arrangement for the provision of the Healthy Child Programme starting 1st April 2025 to the Executive Director Adults, Health and Commissioning in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Children & Young People's Committee with a committee report on progress to committee before the option to extend the arrangement after each 2-year period for a total of 6 years to 31st March 2031.

## 232. Music Education Hub Funding Consortium Agreement

The committee received a report that outlined the new national Music Education Hub Funding Process set out by the Department for Education that covered both the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Authority areas as a single Hub.

An application to lead the new Hub was made, by agreement between the local authorities, through a consortium bid in the Autumn of 2023. The successful award made in April 2024 could only be drawn down with a formal Consortium agreement in place between the two authorities. This has been drafted and agreed with the involvement of legal teams. The report outlined the nature of the work the investment supported and the impact on existing provision were this not to be continued. The Consortium agreement would enable the lead teams for music education to support existing provision and providers without disruption for children and young people and identify and facilitate new opportunities and development across the County. It would enable the further development of the infrastructure that supported access to musical instrument learning, ensemble participation, experiential projects and support for school music provision development.

Individual members raised the following points in relation to the report:

- welcomed the successful application and extended gratitude to officers for their work in pulling the bid together.
- noted that as part of the new governance arrangements for the consortium Councillor Thompson would sit on the Programme Board and Councillor Atkins on the Strategic Hub Board.
- sought clarity on the outreach work that had taken place in Fenland and learnt that the 'First Access Programme', group instrument learning, was delivered in 2023-24 at Thomas Clarkson Academy to 400 students with a performance at the end and included instrument loans, provision has grown by 38% in 2024-25 in Fenland. Also, that 34% of Fenland Schools had engaged in the CPD workshop programme in 2023-24 and the Rap and Literacy School had a project planned in Fenland in 2025. Officers agreed to produce a briefing on the range of projects that had taken place and were planned across the county, by district, for members. **Action Required.** A member stated that she did not feel that music provision in Fenland was sufficient and did not reflect the Arts Councils prioritisation of Fenland and stated that she was keen on promoting arts projects in Fenland and was not aware of the music provision. She asked for local members to be kept up to speed with projects and officers offered further dialogue individually with local members, were required. Another member stated that more work should be done with the corporate leadership team to look at achieving better educational outcomes and targeting areas of high deprivation through music outreach in the longer term.
- highlighted the benefits of digital music in terms of better value for money.
- questioned how the music education hub worked with libraries and district council youth community development officers. A communications programme had been developed and officers explained they would circulate further details on this following the meeting. **Action Required.**

- queried whether there were any synergies between the Library Presents Programme and the Music Education Hub programme as they were both Arts Council funded.
- questioned whether the new hub would enhance workforce development and CPD and new careers in music education and heard that this was a key focus through the programme and when the board was fully established a further briefing on progress would be brought to committee. **Action Required**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the Consortium Agreement between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Authorities to enable Cambridgeshire County Council to access and distribute the funding awarded by the Department of Education via the Arts Council of England.

### 233. Ofsted Action plan and update on Sector Led Improvement Programme

The committee considered a report that provided an overview of the sector led improvement work across Children Services and outlined an action plan following the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS) in March 2024.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- highlighted that the actions in relation to placement sufficiency for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and homelessness 16-17 ensuring access to advocacy did not have any progress against timescales but were highlighted to be completed by December 2024. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families explained that the action plan was a dynamic document and that a larger action tracker sat behind this document and that progress against both actions was ongoing. In particular, there was a lot of work taking place with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as this was the largest area for newly looked after children in Cambridgeshire. A special team has been developed to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, looking at their needs and working with the national transfer scheme. He explained that in relation to 16-17 homelessness and access to advocacy, the authority was working with the districts to ensure that the information and advice that they were giving was recorded and work was ongoing to increase the advocacy offer. The Chair commented that both herself and the member champion for asylum seekers had recently visited the unaccompanied asylum seekers team and welcomed the work they were doing.
- sought clarity on what the authority was putting in place in terms of enhanced support preparation for young care leavers from the age of 14. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families stated that officers had asked care leavers what support they would have welcomed at 14 to help them prepare to leave care. The service was also working with foster carers to support them to share the information and had also increased the number of personal advisors in

the care leavers team. Members noted that the care leavers local offer page on the website had recently been updated to include updated information.

- commented that all of the success criteria should be populated with a measurable target so that the committee could track the progress. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families explained that the report was a summary for OFSTED who had come back to say that they were satisfied with the report and that as stated previously there was a more detailed underlying action tracker that sat below this document which contained this information.
- requested further detail on Section 3 assessments and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), new MASH screening template in place from the end of August. Was this in place and was it working. Members learnt that there had been a lot of work happening in the MASH in terms of reviewing processes and focusing on early help and prevention which had included making changes to decision makers so that referrals could be made quickly into the early help hub, and this has included a lot of work with partners to enhance the quality of triaging and information sharing processes.
- queried how the training on the key six areas identified in the action plan had been progressing. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families explained that a range of training had been carried out and Essex had led on some of this training. The training was varied and included whole team training days as well as bitesize training and this was all built into the audit processes and had a full quality assurance programme for the year.
- expressed concern in relation to out of hours support for foster carers not being sufficient and whether there was work underway to improve this. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families explained that there was an out of hours advice line for foster carers and when further support was required the county wide Emergency Duty team which included support for children and adults could be contacted and social work staff could deal with child protection issues. He explained that there would be some instances when the police would need to be called.
- the Executive Director of Children, Education and Families highlighted that the service had previously been shared with Peterborough and that their inspection outcome was inadequate, and Cambridgeshire's was required improvement. He explained that the staff in Cambridgeshire had a good level of practice and that he was confident in the trajectory and working towards a good rating for the next graded inspection. He thanked Dee Revens for her work on the plan.

It was resolved to note the report.

## 234. Finance Monitoring Report – August 2024

The committee received the finance monitoring report up to the end of August 2024.

Officers raised the following points in relation to the report:

- the Directorate was currently forecasting a 5% overspend which equated to £7.3 million, driven by increasing placement costs for children with complex needs and increased demand for home to school transport due to the rise in children with complex needs and a limited supply market. There was a programme in place to review home to school transport to help drive down costs over the medium term.
- Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets continued to forecast an overspend of £12 million, with the cumulative deficit being over £52 million. Work was ongoing to address this issue with the Department of Education through the Safety Valve Programme, with a reset of this work due in the Autumn.
- maintained school deficits were outlined in in appendix 6 of the report and officers were working with 30 schools on deficit programmes.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- discussed the spend on unregulated placements being unsustainable. The Executive Director for Children Education and Families explained that there was a significant supply issue of regulated placements and between 4-6 children a month were placed in unregulated placements. He stated that over the total estate there were 220 regulate placements with 50-60 children waiting on these placements on any given day. The authority was constantly looking for regulated placements and the development of the authority's residential strategy looked to bring some of these placements in house for those children with particularly complex needs. A member questioned who was overseeing the Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs) and unregulated placements process. The Executive Director for Children, Education and Families explained that the authority oversaw this process and there was an unregulated care panel that reviewed the placements on a weekly basis and worked with providers who wished to apply to be regulated placements. Children were moved from DoLs settings were the authority felt they were not getting the correct care and the placements were reviewed on a weekly basis by the panel and the oversight of an independent reviewing officer. A member highlighted that at the last committee meeting members were asked to approve plans to use unused homes to provide additional suitable settings for children with complex needs within the county as part of the residential strategy.
- sought details of the amount of one of grant carried forward for the targeted support for children in social care budget. Officers to come back to members outside of the meeting with the figures. **Action Required.**
- queried how the mainstream home to school transport budget was being affected by school placements for children across county borders and placements outside catchment areas, due to lack of secondary school places. Officers acknowledged that the problem was multi-facetted with the need to focus on the

capital programme to build on school places where there was capacity constraints and constrained local supply for transport services and a bulge in numbers of children in specific age groups in parts of the county.

- questioned how home to school transport contracts were negotiated due to the variations in the market and queried whether there were any plans in place to tackle the overspend on home to school transport. The Executive Director for Children, Education and Families commented that an independent review of home to school transport was due to take place and was currently out to procurement. Officers would come back to committee with the results of this review. Most of the demand increases were in relation to SEND transport and an insufficiency of special school places, with two new special schools due to be built by the Department of Education still in train. The number of EHCPs were increasing year on year with 113 local authorities overspent on the high needs block and this was not a new problem, and it was extremely difficult to predict demand.
- queried if there was a general issue with the design of schools as a number of the capital projects were delayed due to issues with design. The Executive Director for Children, Education and Families explained that for a number of the projects the original costs had been hit with inflationary changes which then impacted on the design.

It was resolved to note the report.

## 235. Children and Young People's Corporate Performance Report

The committee considered an update on the performance monitoring information for the 2024/25 quarter 1 period, covering April 1st to June 30th.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- expressed concern in relation to a number of indicators that were showing as red in particular indicator 1: percentage of children whose referral to social care occurred within 12 months of a previous referral which was showing a decline in performance; Indicator 2: Number of children with a Child Protection Plan every 10,000 population under 18; Indicator 10: Ofsted- pupils attending schools that are judged as Good or Outstanding (Special Schools) and Indicator 128: Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plan assessments (EHCPs) completed within timescale as this was a statutory duty but performance was in decline. A member stated that the authority needed to be concerned about these indicators now as it was his view that if this continued it would lead to government intervention in the future. The Executive Director for Children Education and Families explained that the authority was currently assessing too many children too frequently and 64% of the assessments carried out were resulting in no further action or referral to targeted support. The changes that had been made to the MASH would mean that children would get their needs met through targeted support and members should see an improvement in performance against this indicator. He explained that the target for indicator 2 was incredibly high with the England average being 42.1 and the council target of 21.1, and in the eastern region the council was third out of 11 authorities in terms of

performance against this indicator. He stated that there were far fewer children in care in Cambridgeshire (47.8) than the England average (67) every 10,000 population under 18. Officers explained that Indicator 10 in relation to special schools, 92.5% of the schools were rated good or better. There were 14 special schools, 4 being rated less than good (2 academies and 2 maintained schools). Officers highlighted that in relation to indicator 128, the report showed 5% of EHCPs completed in the timescales when the report was, this now currently stood at 19.5% which was still not good enough. Officers explained that the system for recording the EHCPs was not fit for purpose and the authority was currently implementing a new system and training staff. There was also the fundamental reason in relation to the lack of capacity around Educational Psychologists which was a national issue. The authority had just secured some locum Educational Psychologists and there would be a SEND end to end review and introducing an Inclusion for All Framework. This will be a needs lead approach supporting all Cambridgeshire Schools to be inclusive so that needs are identified and met earlier and not necessarily reliant on the EHCP process. Cultural change takes time, and an Inclusion summit was due to take place on 18 November to define what was meant by inclusive practice in Cambridgeshire and look at how this could be embedded.

- highlighted that indicator 130: Keys stage 2 reading, writing and maths combined to the expected standard (all children) was below target last time committee received a report and this was now further below target and asked officers to explain what was being done to improve performance in this area. Officers stated that this was below the national average and that writing was the biggest problem and a lot of children post covid were starting school with greater needs and not taking advantage of the childcare offer so not arriving school ready. The service was looking at the most impacted groups and targeting resources starting earlier on through trauma informed practice. A bid had also been submitted with the Education Endowment Fund and officers were waiting to see if this is successful.

It was resolved to note the report.

236. Children and Young People Committee agenda plan, training plan, committee appointments and Local Authority school governor appointments

It was resolved to note the Agenda Plan and Training plan.

Chair



## Children and Young People Committee - Minutes Action Log

### Purpose:

To capture the actions recorded in the minutes of Children and Young People Committee meetings and report responses.

### Minutes – 12 March 2024

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
203.	Education Contracts	Sarah Callaghan	Undertook to provide a briefing note on progress around the education transport transformation programme and improved practices.	<p>This report has been rescheduled as we have gone out to procure an independent review of Home to School Transport and it would be sensible to include an update from the review alongside an update on the current transport transformation projects as part of the Transport Strategy update.</p> <p>CEF DMT met on 12 September and agreed to defer the report until February 2025.</p> <p>A briefing will be shared with CYP Committee members in November 2024.</p>	Ongoing
206.	Finance Monitoring Report January 2024	Sarah Callaghan	Officers undertook to confirm when a report on the preferred delivery option for Alconbury Weald Secondary and Special School would be brought to the Committee.	This report will now be tabled at the November 2024 Committee meeting to recommend that Members approve entering into contract with the contractor for the construction of Alconbury Weald Secondary School. (Please note on this action it also says Alconbury Weald Special School – this has already been built and opened this September. Previous	On-going

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
				reports have been to Committee explaining that this campus would be split into two separate projects and it was agreed the Special School would be delivered first).	
206.	Finance Monitoring Report January 2024	Sarah Callaghan	Officers undertook to confirm when a planning decision was expected on Waterbeach New Town Primary.	A briefing will be circulated to all Committee members in November 2024	On-going

## Minutes – 25 June 2024

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
216.	Finance Monitoring Report - Outturn	Sarah Callaghan	A detailed analysis of school balances including the multiple factors affecting them would be presented to committee in the autumn or early 2025.	A report will be provided at February's Committee	Ongoing

## Minutes – 10 September 2024

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
225.	Education Capital Projects	Sarah Callaghan	Clarified that a note updating on Waterbeach Primary School would be provided to Members outside of the meeting.	Relates to action 206 above.	See action 206
226.	Children, Education and Families Risk Report	Sarah Callaghan	Stated that the authority was working with the Combined Authority on a number of transport pilots. The Chair clarified that a note on the pilots would be circulated to the Committee.	Please refer to action 203. A response to the CA transport pilots will be covered in the same briefing to committee members in November	Ongoing

## Minutes – 8 October 2024

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
231.	Healthy Child Programme Commissioning Approach	Raj Lakshman	Members noted that the website included information on the nursing offer and mental health support. Information on childhood immunisations could be found on the Cambridgeshire Integrated Care System website and links to both websites would be circulated to members for reference.	Information circulated to members on 23 October 2024.	Complete

Minute	Report title	Officer responsible	Action	Response	Status
232.	Music Education Hub Funding Consortium Agreement	Helen Gregg	Officers agreed to produce a briefing on the range of projects that had taken place and were planned across the county, by district, for members.	A briefing will be prepared for committee members and circulated in December 2024.	Ongoing
232.	Music Education Hub Funding Consortium Agreement	Helen Gregg	A communications programme had been developed and officers explained they would circulate further details on this following the meeting.	Further information will be included in the briefing mentioned in the above action.	Ongoing
232.	Music Education Hub Funding Consortium Agreement	Helen Gregg	Members questioned whether the new hub would enhance workforce development and CPD and new careers in music education and heard that this was a key focus through the programme and when the board was fully established a further briefing on progress would be brought to committee	Further information will be included in the briefing mentioned in the above action.	Ongoing
234.	Finance Monitoring Report – August 2024	Stephen Howarth	Members sought details of the amount of one of grant carried forward for the targeted support for children in social care budget. Officers to come back to members outside of the meeting with the figures..	Information circulated to members on 23 October 2024.	Complete

## Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028

To:	Children and Young People Committee
Meeting Date:	26 November 2024
From:	Executive Director: Children, Education & Families
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	Yes
Forward Plan ref:	2024/039
Executive Summary:	The report sets out the revised Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023- 2028 (Appendix 1). The revised strategy provides an update on the five key priorities and how they will be delivered over the next five years.
Recommendation:	The Children and Young People Committee is asked to agree the updated corporate parenting strategy 2023-2028 as set out in Appendix 1.
Voting arrangements:	Co-opted members are eligible to vote on this report.

Officer contact:

Name: Ranjit Chambers

Post: Service Director for Fostering, Adoption and Corporate Parenting.

Email: [Ranjit.Chambers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ranjit.Chambers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 The Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy aligns towards:
- Ambition 7, Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.
  - Ambition 4: People enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs
- 1.2 The strategy seeks to provide a plan of how the The Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy outlines the council's vision for delivering on five key priorities, which have been co-produced in collaboration with children and young people, elected members, and key stakeholders.

# 2. Background

- 2.1 The Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy was last updated in 2023 and it has been recognised as needing substantial revisions to ensure it fully captures the promises made to our children along with the newly created pledges for Care Leavers and clearly outlines the key priorities for improving their outcomes. It is important that the strategy also reflects the Care Leaver protected characteristic adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council, ensuring it is inclusive and forward-looking.
- 2.2 Since December 2023, significant progress has been made to engage children and young people in care, along with care leavers, ensuring their voices were central to the strategy's development. The Young People's Corporate Parenting Meeting, a pre-meeting to the corporate parenting sub-committee, has been revamped to encourage greater participation, which has positively impacted the strategy's progress.
- 2.3 Additionally, considerable collaboration has taken place with key stakeholders to ensure the strategy reflects their perspectives to aid the delivery of the objectives outlined in the strategy. To support the strategy's implementation, the service proposes the creation of a Corporate Parenting Steering Group. This group will regularly meet to drive the agreed priorities and actions, focusing on five key objectives that aim to enhance the care and support for the children and young people under Cambridgeshire County Council's care, aligned with their voices and needs.

# 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028 outlines five key priorities to support children in care and care leavers. These priorities are:
- Children in our care who have experienced our services that we provide have an active role in care planning and contribute to the development of shaping future services.
  - Children and young people are placed in stable homes built with love where they feel a sense of safety and belonging.
  - We will ensure all aspects of health and wellbeing of children in our care are prioritised. We will help our children and young people maintain positive mental health and ensure

they receive timely support when needed.

- Children and young people are supported to succeed in education, employment and training in line with their aspirations.
- Children and young people who have experienced our care are supported to get ready for the world of work and become active members of society. We will ensure that young people are ready to be independent.

3.2 These priorities are designed to create a comprehensive support system for children in care and care leavers, ensuring their well-being and success in life.

## 4. Alternative Options Considered

Not Applicable.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 The Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028 (Appendix 1) outlines the council's vision for delivering on five key priorities, which have been co-produced in collaboration with children and young people, elected members, and key stakeholders.

5.2 CYP Committee is asked to agree the updated Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028 (Appendix 1).

## 6. Significant Implications

### 6.1 Finance Implications

There are no significant financial implications.

### 6.2 Legal Implications

Local authorities have a unique responsibility to the children they look after and their care leavers (relevant and former relevant children). In this context local authorities are often referred to as being the 'corporate parent' of these children and young people.

### 6.3 Risk Implications

There are no significant implications.

### 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications.

### 6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key decisions only)

There are no significant financial implications.

## 7. Source Documents

It is a legal requirement for the following to be completed by the report author.

- 7.1 The Corporate Parenting Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.

# Corporate Parenting Strategy

2023 - 2028



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# Foreword

## A message from our children and young people to their Corporate Parents

### Dear Corporate Parents

We're all born as children, so we believe we should be treated as equal to others who aren't in care. We're all just children with the simple ambition to live a normal life. We deserve the opportunities to reach our potential and become the independent and successful young adults we know we can be.

The future will look different for all of us, and we'll need support tailored to our individual needs. We want you to be ambitious with us and not limit our potential. Even when we're doing well, you should be aiming for the absolute best for us, not just in education, but in anything that we enjoy, whether that's sports, social activities, other hobbies and in all areas of our lives.

### Children in Care

### Dear Corporate Parents

We'll need extra support to develop the required skills to live independently and have long term financial stability, but we know that with a clear plan for the future, the right guidance and a shared ambition, this is more than achievable.

### Care Leavers

# Foreword

## **A message from Councillor Bryony Goodliffe, Chair of Children and Young People Committee**

We commit as corporate parents to support our children in care to ensure that they can have experiences and opportunities while living in caring, safe homes just as other young people do.

We take our responsibility as corporate parents seriously and this does not stop for us once adulthood is reached. We commit to support all those in Cambridgeshire who had experience in care.

To assist them to reach their potential in employment, relationships, leisure. We are ambitious for all our young people and care leavers and want to support them to reach their ambitions and celebrate their accomplishments.

## **A message from Councillor Anna Bradnam, Chair of Corporate Parenting Sub Committee.**

Here in Cambridgeshire our children, young people and families are at the heart of everything we do. We want you to feel safe and secure, to thrive and aim high. We will encourage you to learn the skills you need to move into employment and live a happy and independent life. We will provide the stability, love and care you need to achieve your ambitions. We are proud of you and will celebrate your achievements. We promise to listen to you, to acknowledge how you feel and support you.

This Corporate Parenting Strategy explains our commitments to you, your family and to those who work with you while you develop into independence.

This Strategy is for you, and we will always welcome and listen to any feedback you have about this document or our services. We commit to improving the service so that you and your family and those who care for you have all the support they need. We want our children and young people to feel safe and cared-for, from childhood to adulthood.



# Foreword

A message from our Executive Director, Martin Purbrick



One of Cambridgeshire County Councils ambitions is for “children and young people to have opportunities to thrive”.

An important measure of this ambition will be in how well the County Council can support the children, young people and families facing greatest challenges in their childhood, and how well we care for the children and young people we look after and those who have left that care to start their adult lives.

Cambridgeshire is a widely diverse County with beautiful countryside and large towns and cities. It has huge resources through the businesses, services, communities and voluntary organisations across the area. We should be able to provide the very best care and opportunities to the children who have been disadvantaged or experienced trauma early in their lives.

We want to ensure that outcomes for children in our care whether that is in education, in health, in work and in their wellbeing are just as good as their peers. Working to reduce these inequalities is a priority and providing good quality care that is designed to meet the individual needs of each of the children we care for will provide them with a solid platform to learn, grow and be independent.

This strategy will support the children in our care or are care experienced and ensure that as corporate parents, we support them all to achieve the best possible outcomes in life.

# Introduction – Our strategy

## A warm welcome to the Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028

Corporate parenting is about everyone – elected members, council colleagues, and partner agencies – working together to provide the best support and protection for children in care. In Cambridgeshire County Council, the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee brings everyone with Corporate Parenting responsibilities together, creating a welcoming space for our children, foster carers, and care leavers. Here, they can openly discuss and influence the entire range of services available to children and young people.

This strategy outlines our priorities for supporting our children in care and care leavers and establishes a framework that holds the council and their partners accountable for their promises and pledges. The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee will diligently monitor our commitment delivery. Members will actively listen to young people, ensuring their happiness, health, access to quality education, and opportunities for training and employment. Additionally, it ensures they have a home to go to when the time comes to live independently.

Our relational approach involves direct and routine engagement with children, their carers, and social workers, encouraging them to share experiences. This enables us to better understand the challenges they face and adapt services to meet their needs. Young people regularly provide feedback through statutory reviews, the Young Inspectors report, and the Children in Care Council/Voice.

Children's experiences always form the core of our approach in Cambridgeshire County Council, with the strategy's foundations set in consultation with our children and young people. Our priorities directly respond to The Cambridgeshire Promise, a list of commitments co-developed and endorsed by young people and endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee. We have further improved this by introducing our Pledges to care leavers.

In Cambridgeshire we have a diverse group of children who we are responsible to ensure that they reach their full potential in line with their aspirations and goals. We are proud to have such a diverse group of children in our care and actively encourage everyone to feel confident and proud of who they are. Regardless of circumstances or characteristics, all our children and young people will receive complete support to make every success of their lives.

At Cambridgeshire County Council, we understand that each child and young person has a unique history and vision for the future. This strategy seeks to ensure that their vision becomes a reality. Every child must be supported to reach their full potential, with no one left behind.

# The Cambridgeshire County Council Vision

Our Councillors and colleagues across Cambridgeshire are committed to

**“Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire”**



We will deliver this vision by being closer to our communities, partners and residents, so that Cambridgeshire can become greener, fairer and more caring in the ways that are most suitable to the variety of people and communities we serve.

To do this we have SEVEN ambitions:

## Ambition 1

Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

## Ambition 2

Travel across the county is safer and more sustainable

## Ambition 3

Health inequalities are reduced

## Ambition 4

People enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

## Ambition 5

People are helped out of poverty and income inequality

## Ambition 6

Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

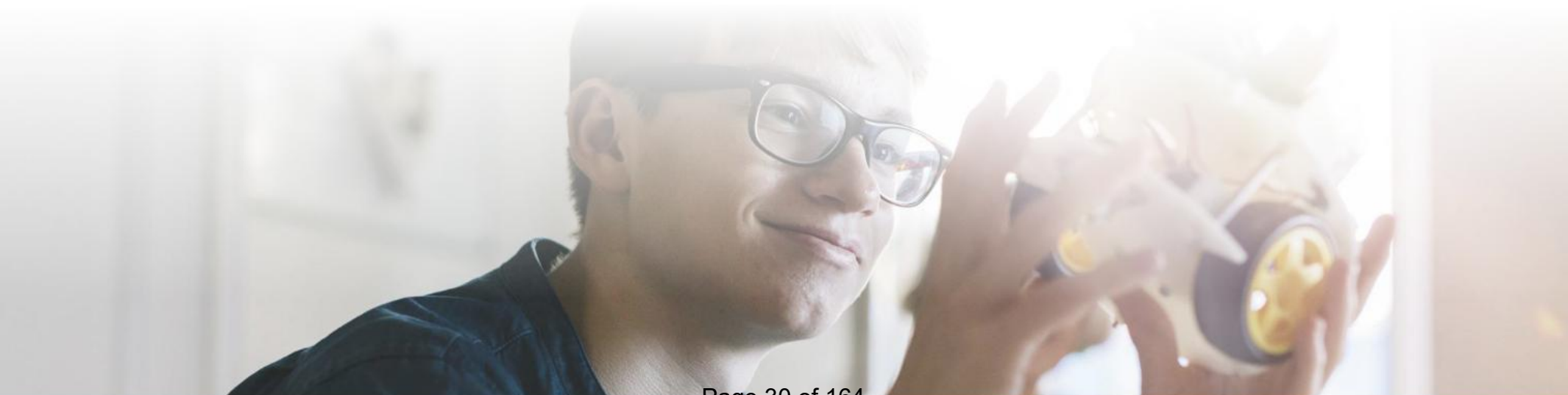
## Ambition 7

Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

# Conditions for success in achieving ambitions for our children

We will achieve our ambitions by:

- Demonstrating strong leadership and implementing rigorous performance management.
- Continuing to involve and engage children and young people, in shaping and executing our strategy.
- Frequently asking our children and young people for their opinion to ensure we are staying true to our commitment.
- Fostering inclusive and efficient collaboration within Cambridgeshire County Council, supported by designated elected member, partners and front-line colleagues to be champions for each priority theme.



# Priorities

Cambridgeshire has worked closely with our children and young people to establish priorities that reflect their voices and perspectives.

To achieve our vision of being strong corporate parents, we have co-developed the following five refreshed priorities in partnership with the children, young people, and the trusted adults in their lives.

## Priority one

Children in our care who have experienced our services that we provide have an active role in care planning and contribute to the development of our services.

## Priority two

Children and young people are placed in stable homes built with love where they feel a sense of safety and belonging.

## Priority three

We will ensure all aspects of health and wellbeing of children in our care are prioritised. We will help our children and young people maintain positive mental health and ensure they receive timely support when needed.

## Priority four

Children and young people are supported to succeed in education, employment and training in line with their aspirations.

## Priority five

Children and young people who have experienced our care are supported to get ready for the world of work and become active members of society. We will ensure that young people are ready to be independent.



# Priority One

## Voice of our children and young people

Children in our care who have experienced our services that we provide have an active role in care planning and contribute to the development of shaping future services.

You said...

We want the feedback that we provide to make a difference

We want to know how this will happen

We want to know how our voice can be used to influence change

We will...

- Make sure that children feel involved in decision making about their lives through the child's journey.
- Increase the number of children who participate and attend the Children in Care Council.
- Increase young people's knowledge and understanding of why care planning is so important and how they can influence decisions that affect their lives.
- Facilitate opportunities for young people to chair the Young People's Corporate Parenting Meeting and influence how we deliver services to children.
- Support members of the Children in Care Council to deliver training to our Foster Carers.
- Support our children and young people to participate in the recruitment and selection of senior managers.

# Priority One

## Voice of our children and young people

Children in our care who have experienced our services that we provide have an active role in care planning and contribute to the development of shaping future services.

You said...

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We want to know how this will happen

We want to know how our voice can be used to influence change

We will...

- Support our young people who are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to share their voice and work with both local and external services to better meet their needs.
- Develop the use of social media platforms to consult children and young people, capture their voice, and produce a report of their feedback to influence change.
- Support and encourage the voice of young people to influence on how we commission services for them.
- Work collaboratively with young people to ensure they influence the creation of important documents that will support preparation for independence.
- Provide activities through our Virtual School to share support services available to children and young people and hear their views around education support.

# Priority One

## Voice of our children and young people

Children in our care who have experienced our services that we provide have an active role in care planning and contribute to the development of our future services.

### What will success look like?

- Implement the Care Leavers Pledge which has been co-produced with young people.
- Audit activity to ensure the voice of the child has been recorded and acted upon where possible.
- The Bright Spots Survey will provide an overview of our children's voice to aid planning.
- Utilising the Young People's Corporate Parenting Meeting to influence change.
- All children are provided with a copy of the promise and understand our commitment.
- All care leavers understand and encouraged to provide feedback on the delivery of our pledge.
- Review the % of children providing feedback.

### Who will this be delivered by?

The Participation team, the Virtual School, the Children in Care team, the Care Leavers team, the Independent Reviewing Officer Service, the Youth Offending Service, the Family Support and Safeguarding team and the Fostering Service.

# Priority Two

## Achieving permanent homes for our children with good quality care

Children and young people are placed in stable homes built with love where they feel a sense of safety and belonging.

### You said...

We want to know when we are moving, and where we are moving to as soon as this information is available

We would like to know why we must move

We want the homes to be referred to when discussing where we live and see the wording when recording information about us

We would like to have as much information as possible about the home that we will be moving to

We want to know why we cannot live with our family and siblings

### We will...

- Increase the number of in house foster carers so children can live locally in Cambridgeshire.
- Hold family group conferences/network meetings to support children to have family time and consider reunification plans timely.
- Ensure that we secure permanent homes for children at the earliest opportunity.
- Work towards stepping children out of residential care to a family setting at the right time.
- Open two children's homes in Cambridgeshire by 2026 to enable children to remain local to family.
- Provide care leavers with good quality care and support to promote the development of independence skills for the future.
- Have two lifelong people supporting young people when they leave our care.

# Priority Two

## Achieving permanent homes for our children with good quality care

Children and young people are placed in stable homes built with love where they feel a sense of safety and belonging.

### What will success look like?

- Children are placed in stable placements at the earliest opportunity. The statutory performance measures will evidence this through our placement stability performance.
- We will place children locally in Cambridgeshire where it is suitable and in their best interest.
- We will hold stability meetings to prevent home environments from breaking down.
- We will improve our fostering recruitment campaign by strengthening local connections to increase the number of local carers joining our Cambridge Fostering Service.
- We will capture the feedback of children's experiences of moving homes through reviews and pathway planning.

### Who will this be delivered by?

The Fostering Service, the Commissioning and Placements team, the Children in Care team, the Care Leavers Service, the Housing team, and the Family Support and Safeguarding team.



# Priority Three

## Physical and mental health and wellbeing

We will ensure all aspects of health and wellbeing of children in our care are prioritised. We will help our children and young people maintain positive mental health and ensure they receive timely support when needed.

### You said...

We would like to know what support is available to us to support our health needs

We would like you to explain why we need health checks and other appointments

We want to understand what support is available to us to support our mental health

We want to be supported and encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle and emotional wellbeing

### We will...

- Ensure an Initial Health Assessment is undertaken within four weeks of entering care.
- Ensure that Annual Health Review Assessments are completed on time and annually.
- Ensure that health assessments are discussed and explained to children by their carers/support worker.
- To understand the effects of traumatic lived experiences, race and identity on mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that advice, guidance and support is provided to young people where there is a health need identified and access services and support.
- Ensure that the right support and services are accessed timely where there is a disability identified.
- Ensure that Child And Adolescent Mental Health Services and therapeutic support are provided to meet needs.

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### We will...

- Ensure that young people have access to information about age-appropriate drugs and sexual health to them keep safe.
- Ensure that any information needed to keep children healthy will be recorded in their care plan and pathway plan (reviewed every six months).
- Ensure that information on important health matters will be shared with children.
- Support children and young people to access better health support in line with the recommendations from your Review Health Assessment post 18.
- Identify children and young people aged 14-25 who are not already known to mental health professional and disability services to ensure they access the support they need.

# Priority Three

## Physical and mental health and wellbeing

We will ensure all aspects of health and wellbeing of children in our care are prioritised. We will help our children and young people maintain positive mental health and ensure they receive timely support when needed.

### What will success look like?

- We will use the outcomes from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to inform us on how we can better support children and young people with their mental health in collaboration with education and health.
- Improvement in the key performance data in health assessments.
- The number of children that are provided support for their emotional wellbeing timely either directly or through the carers.

### Who will this be delivered by?

Public Health colleagues, the Clinical team, the Children in Care team, the Care Leavers Service, the Youth Offending Service, the Virtual School, the Family Support and Safeguarding team, and the Fostering Service.



# Priority Four

## Education, training and employment (EET)

Children and young people are supported to succeed in education, employment and training in line with their aspirations.

### You said...

We want you to support us to access opportunities that interest us

We want you to celebrate with us when we do well

We want you to be aspirational Corporate Parents and encourage us to achieve beyond our potential

We want you to support us to be ready for the world of employment and our future

We want you to ensure that we are supporting to prepare for the planning of the Personal Education Plan meeting

### We will...

- Aim to ensure that children are placed in a good or outstanding rated school.
- Ensure that know who their designated teacher is to support them at school.
- Ensure that children are provided with the right support to enable them to thrive in education.
- Ensure that regular Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings are held and that the wishes and views of children are listened to, and their achievements celebrated.
- Ensure that future educational planning is in line with your aspirations.
- Support children to access mental health support where a high Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire score is identified.
- Make an application for an Education Health Care Plan to be completed and access the necessary support timely where special educational needs or a disability is identified.
- Aim to develop a work experience opportunity in line with aspirations and goals.

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We want you to ensure that we are supporting to prepare for the planning of the Personal Education Plan meeting

### We will...

- Increase the apprentice offer for care leavers reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment, or training.
- Support young people to present at the Education Employment and Training Empowerment Forum to access opportunities in line with their aspirations.
- Support young people should they want to go to university.
- Support our unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people to access good quality education opportunities to enhance their language skills.
- Support children to have minimal changes in their education where possible.
- Work with the Virtual School to ensure that there is a good understanding of trauma and attachment so that children's social and mental health needs can be understood in education settings to provide stability and support.

# Priority Four

## Education, training and employment (EET)

Children and young people are supported to succeed in education, employment and training in line with their aspirations.

### What will success look like?

- Hearing more about children and young people's experience in education through surveys and direct communication.
- More young people given the opportunity to access apprenticeships within the council.
- Children's feedback from their experience at school via their Personal Education Plans (PEP).
- Review of the number of children who have access services via the Education, Employment and Training (EET) Empowerment Forum.
- Increase the number of young people accessing education, training and employment.
- Review the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) completion for children with additional needs and require support.
- Drive the agenda of care leavers as a protective characteristic in line with the council's commitment.

### Who will this be delivered by?

The Virtual School, Public Health colleagues, the Family Support and Safeguarding team, the Children in Care team, the Youth Offending Service, the Leaving Care Service, the Fostering Service, EET coordinators, and HR colleagues.

# Priority Five

## Preparation for independence

Children and young people who have experienced our care are supported to get ready for the world of work and become active members of society. We will ensure that young people are ready to be independent.

### You said...

We would like to know more from care leavers about their experiences

We would like to be supported to prepare for independence when we feel ready

We want to learn about becoming financially independent and understand the importance of wants and needs

We would like you to support is to access work experience opportunities to prepare for the world of work

### We will...

- Ensure young people are supported by their Personal Advisor from aged 17 and a half to help them plan for the future.
- Prepare 'preparation for independence' booklets with young people to ensure we are supporting their development from the age of 14.
- Support young people to access preparation for independence training via the library services.
- Create forums for care leavers to share their experiences of living independently and the transition post 18 years.
- Support young people to access work experience.
- Support young people with writing their CV.
- Support young people to access hobbies and interests in line with their care and pathway plan.

# Priority Five

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### You said...

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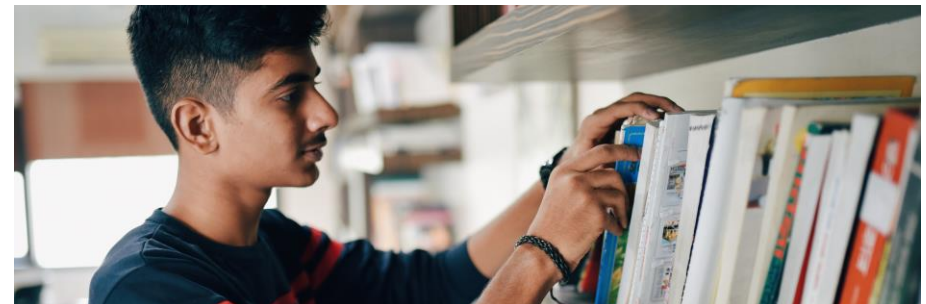
We would like to be supported to prepare for independence when we feel ready

We want to learn about becoming financially independent and understand the importance of wants and needs

We would like you to support us to access work experience opportunities to prepare for the world of work

### We will...

- Support young people to access support in managing their money and becoming financially independent.
- Ensure young people understand the Local Offer and how to access support.
- Ensure that young people understand all the options available to them for post 18 (e.g., staying put, university, supported accommodation, and private rental/tenancy via local housing providers).



# Priority Five

## Preparation for independence

Children and young people who have experienced our care are supported to get ready for the world of work and become active members of society. We will ensure that young people are ready to be independent.

### What will success look like?

- Our young people feel better supported in understanding their future options about homes.
- Our young people feel better prepared for the transition post-18.
- More children placed under staying put arrangements post-18.
- Our placements stability data will evidence improvements.
- More young people living locally in Cambridgeshire in their own tenancies.
- Children and young people can identify two important people to be lifelong connections.
- Drive the agenda for Care leavers being a protected characteristic and provide opportunities across the partnership.

### Who will this be delivered by?

The Leaving Care Service, the Virtual School, the Children in Care team, the Fostering Service, Public Health colleagues, the Housing team, the Placements team, and the Participation team.

# Our Vision

Cambridgeshire County Council is dedicated to being an effective, caring, and ambitious corporate parent, demonstrated through our passion to strive for the best outcomes for children through our actions. Our commitment is to ensure that our care-experienced children are well-prepared for life.

We are loving parents who care deeply about our children and young people. We will provide the same standard of care as any good parent, maintaining high aspirations and being strong advocates for our children. We will equip our carers with the skills needed to support our children to live fulfilling, successful, and rewarding lives, filled with love.

We will take bold and innovative steps to ensure that carers who are privileged to parent our children have the right training, support, knowledge, and skills that our children need and deserve to reach their full potential and beyond.



# The Corporate Parenting Principles

In 2017 the Children and Social Work Act introduced a set of Corporate Parenting Principles for our children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25 that underpin everything we do and are referenced below.

Act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of our children and young people.

Encourage our children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.

Consider the views, wishes and feelings of our children and young people.

Help our children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.

Promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for our children and young people.

Be safe, have stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.

Prepare our children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

# Our approach

Cambridgeshire County Council's overarching approach will include:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention** – we prioritise prevention and early intervention to support children and families, giving them every opportunity to stay together. If care becomes necessary, we will explore options for children to live with wider family and friends' networks whenever possible.
- **Children and young people's voices** – the voices of children and young people will support to shape our service design, delivery, and evaluation, including democratic decision-making processes.
- **Family first** – wherever safe and possible, children and young people should live with their families. We will ensure that only those who genuinely need to be in care are placed in our care.
- **Corporate Parenting shared responsibility** – ensuring good outcomes for children in care and care leavers is a responsibility shared by the entire Cambridgeshire County Council and its partners.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – we will always strive to promote the physical and mental wellbeing of our children and young people.
- **Good quality homes** – we will strive to ensure each child has access to the best quality homes that meet each child's needs and offer stability.
- **Education access** – children in care have the right to access the best education possible and the support they need to reach their full potential and beyond.
- **Permanence and belonging** – we will secure permanence and a sense of belonging for children, supporting, and strengthening the relationships that matter to them and helping them stay connected to those they love throughout their childhood and into adulthood.
- **Support for independence** – we will ensure that children from the age of 14 years are supported to develop their independence skills to prepare for adulthood.

This strategy is part of a comprehensive effort to enhance provision for children in care and care leavers, encompassing:

- **Our co-produced Promise** – a commitment to children in care.
- **Our co-produced Pledge** - commitment to care leavers, along with a local offer for care leavers.
- **Our Framework 2023-2028** - outlining the Council's long-term vision for Cambridgeshire, with a real focus on reducing health inequalities, ensuring safety, and providing opportunities for children and young people to thrive in every aspect of their care.
- **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee** – a meeting chaired by Members to review the progress of how services are delivered to children and young people.
- **Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum** - ensuring that the voices of young people remain central to our work.
- **Corporate Parenting Annual Report** - owned by the Corporate Parenting Services and presented to committee meetings.
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2027** creating a more inclusive, caring, and greener supportive environment for all residents of Cambridgeshire.
- **The Virtual School** - collaborating with schools, colleges, training providers, education settings, and children's social care to improve educational outcomes.
- **Joint Housing Protocol for Young People 2023 - 2024** - includes the pathway dedicated to preventing homelessness for our young people.
- **Corporate Parenting Responsibilities** –ensure these are embedded in our induction for all colleagues and applicable policies, strategies, and commissioning arrangements.
- **Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Integrated Care Strategy** – a whole community approach to improving mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people.
- **Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2024** - outlining how we will deliver the range and number of high-quality placements needed by children in care and care leavers.



# Context in Cambridgeshire

From December 2023

As of December 2023, Cambridgeshire had:



**661**  
Children  
in Care

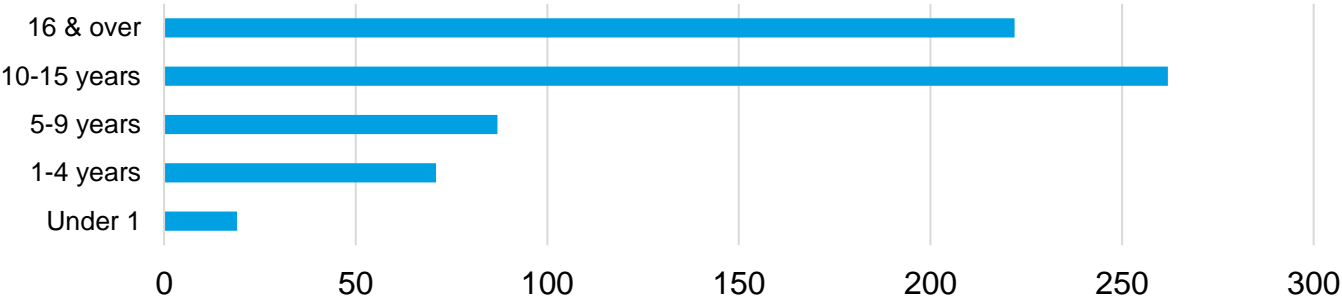


**403**  
were  
male

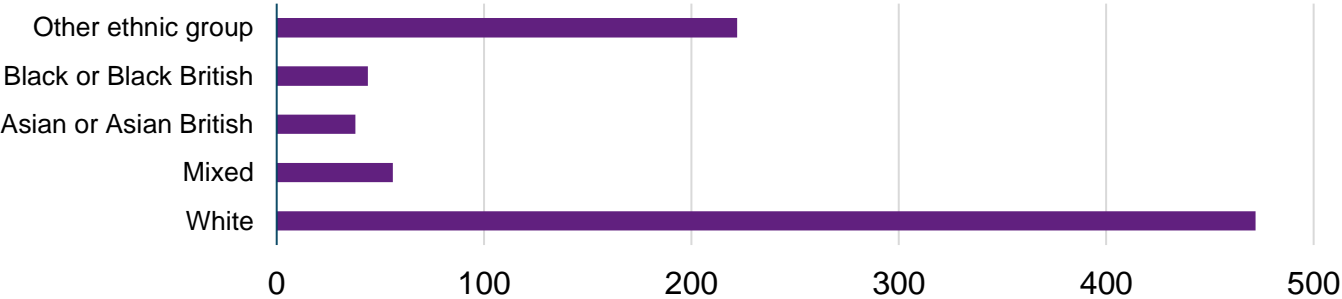


**258**  
were  
female

Children in Care – breakdown by age



Children in Care – breakdown by ethnicity

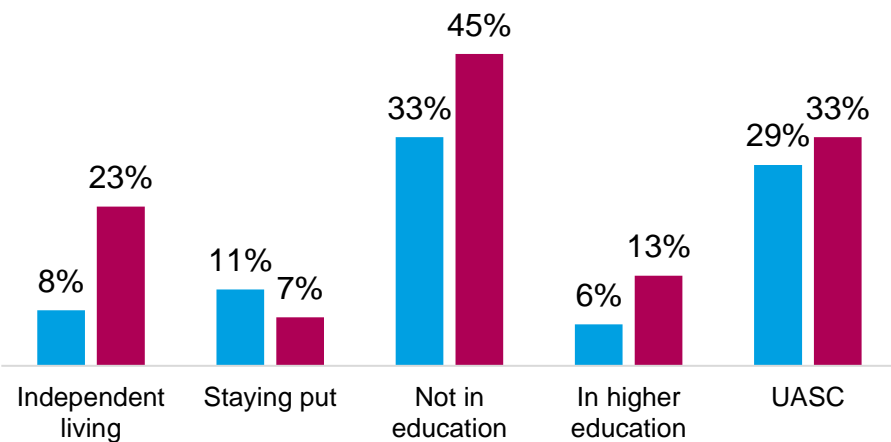


# Context for care leavers

From December 2023 for Cambridgeshire County Council care leavers (aged 18 to 21)

Care leavers (aged 18 to 21)

■ 18 ■ 21



Ethnic background

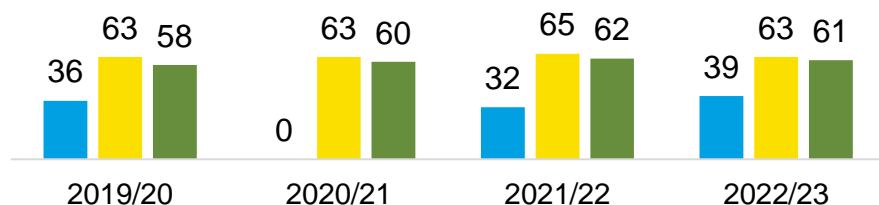
White	49%
Mixed	6%
Asian or Asian British	8%
Black or black British	18%
Other ethnic group	18%

57 (8%) care leavers have a disability

Remain with former foster carer

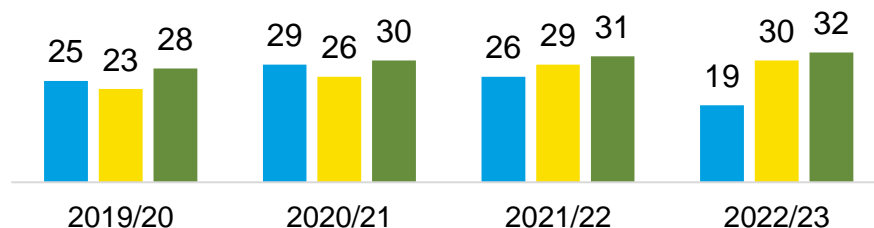
Aged 18

■ LA ■ SNs ■ Eng



Aged 19 to 20

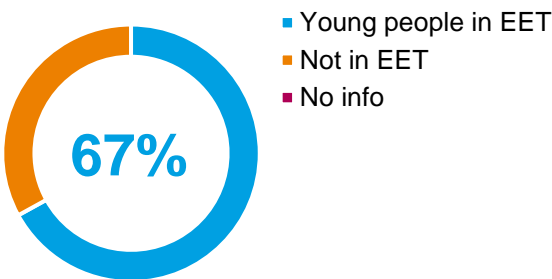
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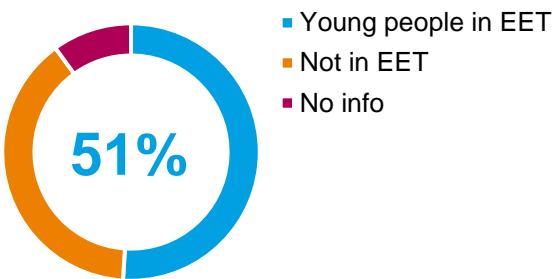
# Care Leavers activity

## Education, Employment or Training (EET)

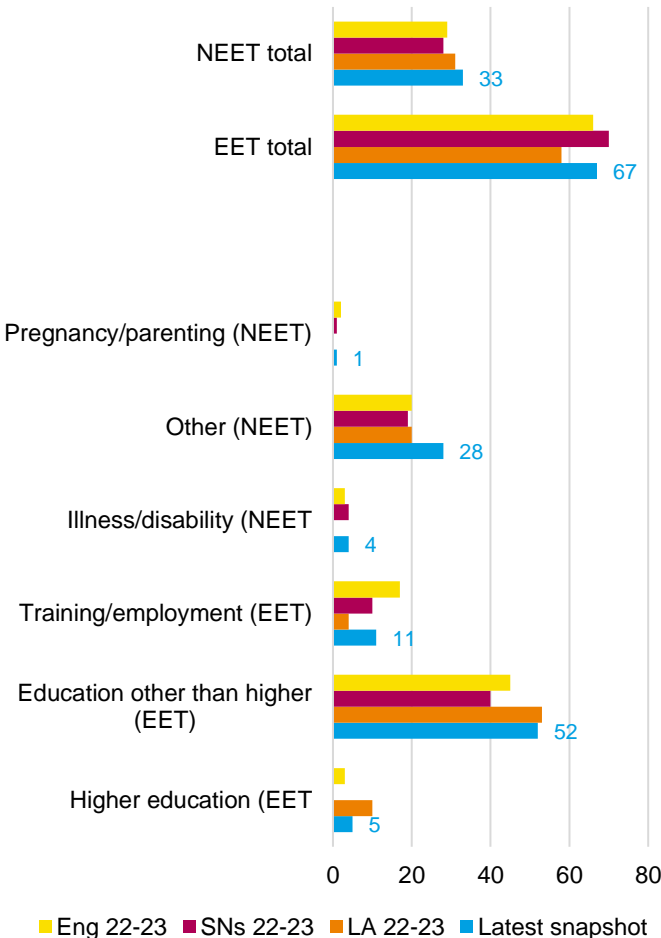
Education, Employment or Training (EET) of 17 to 18 year olds



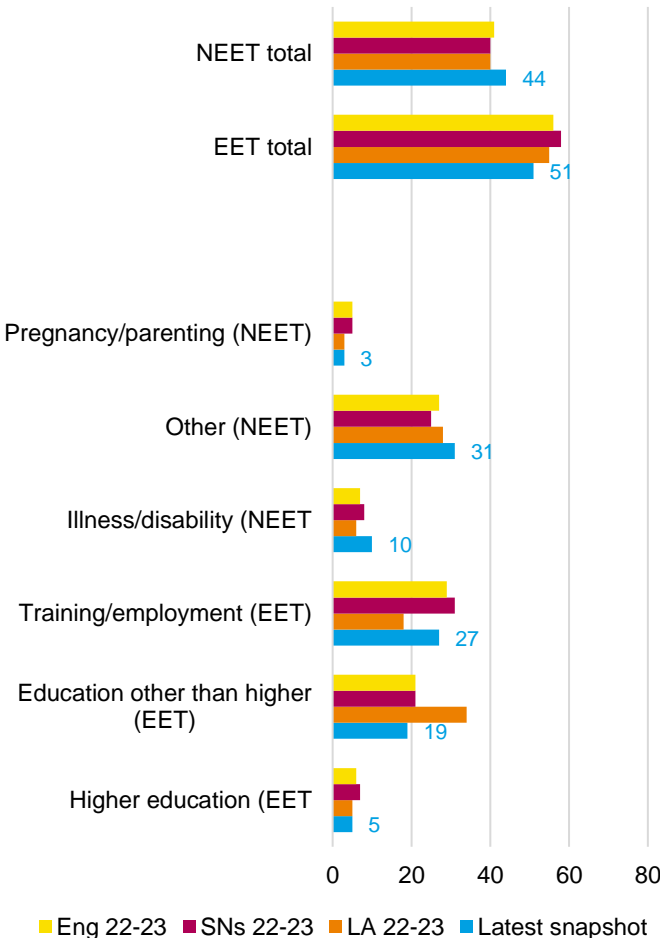
Education, Employment or Training (EET) of 19 to 21 year olds



Activity types of 17 to 18 year olds



Activity types of 19 to 21 year olds





# Cambridgeshire homes

Where our children and young people live – from December 2023



**454**

children were  
living with foster  
carers

**68%** of children in  
care aged under 16 (who  
have been looked after for  
two years or more), in the  
same placement for at  
least two years



**61** children were living in  
residential care homes



**14** children were  
placed for adoption

**459**

children have  
had the same  
placement for  
12 months





# Children and young people's health

From December 2023



**43%** of children in care had an Initial Health Assessment within 20 working days of coming into care



**46%**

of children in care had an up-to-date dental check

**67%** of children in care have an up-to-date SDQ



**75%** of children in care have had an Annual Health Assessment



# Children and young people's education

From December 2023



Personal Education Plan compliance was **98.2%** for September 2023 to December 2023

We have **80%** of children of statutory school age attending good or outstanding schools



We had **11** students achieve five GCSEs at grade 4+ representing **20.7%** of our overall cohort



# The Cambridgeshire Promise and Pledge

This strategy sits alongside our promise to children and young people in our care along with the newly co-produced pledge for our care leavers.

The Cambridgeshire Promise and Pledge is a set of commitments created by young people and decision-makers in children's services to guarantee that all our children in care and care leavers receive the appropriate services and support.

As corporate parents, we aim to help our young people achieve their best and succeed in life. We promise to review each commitment annually through the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, providing opportunities for children, young people, and corporate parents to evaluate our performance in line with our agreed priorities.



# Promises

## to our Children in Care

1) We will work to keep you safe and help you to keep yourself safe

2) We will do everything we can to make you feel cared about, valued, and respected as an individual



7) We will help you to see your family, friends and other people who are important to you. If there are people can't support you to see, we will explain why

3) We will be honest with you and explain if we are unable to do something we said we would do. We will not make unrealistic promises to you

4) We will involve you in decision making so your views are listened to, and will explain when we make a decision you may not like or agree with

8) We will support you to achieve your goals and reach your potential in your education, hobbies and interests

9) We will work with you to give you all the help and support you need to make a success of moving on from care to adult life



5) We will work to keep you in a supportive and caring environment where you can feel safe and happy

6) We will support you to maintain a healthy lifestyle and help look after your physical and mental health

10) We will make sure you have the up-to-date information you need, including who is working with you and how to give us your views or ask us for help



# Care Leavers Pledge

We are ambitious and optimistic about what you can achieve. We will nurture your aspirations and dreams by providing an easily accessible, up to date and inspiring Care Leaver Local Offer to enable you to reach your potential.

Our Care Experience Network have told us the following are the most important issues for our young people:



## Education and employment

We will work with local colleges, universities and employers to make sure you have access to courses and opportunities so that you can achieve your potential in education and work.



## Finances

We will support you to develop the skills you will need to be financially stable.



## Health

We will ensure that you understand the physical and mental health services available to you and how to access them. We will work with health professionals to help them understand the needs of care experienced young people and to offer services to meet those needs.



## Housing

When the time is right, we will work closely with housing providers to make sure you receive the support you need to find a suitable property that you can truly call home.



To help with this we will provide you with a dedicated Personal Adviser, who will build a trusted relationship with you, keeping in touch regularly and being your champion when you need one. We will support you to make informed choices about your present and future, as you get ready for independence.

# Governance structure and accountability

The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee provides strategic oversight and direction to enhance the wellbeing and outcomes of children under the care of Cambridgeshire County Council, as well as those who were formerly in care. The committee comprises elected members, key service leaders, and representatives from various service providers, including council officers and stakeholders from broader public services.

The primary role of the Governance Structure is to exercise leadership in advocating for the unique needs of children and young people who are currently or were previously looked after by the local authority. This involves collaboration with elected members, council officers, representatives from partner agencies, and direct engagement with children and young people.

The Governance Structure is committed to overseeing the activities of specific services, ensuring a unified, corporate approach across various council departments and agencies. The aim is to optimise resources and support for looked-after children, facilitating their access to a broad spectrum of services and maximising their potential for successful outcomes.



## To achieve this, all our work must be...

- **Trauma informed and relationship based**  
We are committed to understanding the impact of trauma and building consistent and trusted relationships with children, young people, and families.
- **Strengths orientated**  
We identify the strengths of children, young people and families and build on them to create positive change.
- **Outcome focused**  
We do whatever it takes to achieve the best outcome for children, young people, and families.
- **Whole family**  
We think about family in the widest sense in all the work we do.
- **Systemic approach**  
We work in partnership with both internal and external partners to get the right support for children, young people, and families at the right time.



**Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**  
Provides vision, strategy and performance accountability

**Children in Care Council**  
Vehicle for C&YP to have their say in planning, development and assurance of services they receive



**Children in Care Promise**  
Commitment to children in care and care leavers, reflected in strategic planning and commissioning by the council and partner agencies

**Care Leavers Network Voices**  
An opportunities for care leavers to access wider support, advice and have their say about services delivered to them



# What is good Corporate Parenting?

Has high aspirations for children and young people's achievements

A Committee that clearly understands its role and the responsibilities of the local authority towards looked after children and care leavers

Plans for and prioritising CIC needs, resulting in a greater focus on improving outcomes

Actively engages with their young people – through children in care council and effective and regular links with senior management and elected members

Good partnership, commitment and collaboration by partner agencies to 'make things happen'

A good understanding and knowledge of the lived experience of children and young people and their carers

Demonstrates a strong dedication and commitment to children in care and care leavers

Robustly monitors children's progress and challenges outcomes



# Care leavers – Protected Characteristics

The Protected Characteristics motion, which was passed in Cambridgeshire in May 2023, ensures that people who are care experienced are protected and considered, across all services provided by that local authority.

This is already required by law for other groups who face potential discrimination because of their age, ethnicity, disability, or gender.

We appreciate the importance of this motion and will exercise our duties to ensure that our care leavers are treated with fairness. Our Corporate Parenting Steering Group will help drive this agenda as a whole council approach.



# Taking the strategy forward

The relationship between our priorities, the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, partners and local businesses, and the voices of our young people will support successful outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

Each year, the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee will review various reports and updates to gain insight into the support given to our looked after children and young people.

They will analyse the reports based on the stated priorities, ensuring that Cambridgeshire's services are offering the best possible support for children and young people. Any specific areas requiring additional attention will be highlighted, always keeping the experiences of children and young people at the forefront of this process.



## Corporate Parenting Annual Report

Annually, the Corporate Parenting Board will generate a report offering a comprehensive overview of the accomplishments, advancements, and challenges encountered in addressing the needs of Cambridgeshire's looked after children and care leavers, whether placed within or outside the borough. This report will also outline the priorities for the upcoming year.

## Participation Annual Report

Annually, the Participation team will complete a report outlining the work that has been undertaken to hear the voice of our children and young people - to influence the service changes required to deliver a better care and support.

## Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report

This report complements the Corporate Parenting Annual report by offering an overview of the looked after population. It highlights key successes and challenges while outlining plans for the upcoming years.

## Annual Health Report for Children in Care

This report details the provision of health services to children in care in Cambridgeshire. It assesses performance indicators, clinical activities conducted by the LAC Health team, service enhancements, and future development plans. The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee will have an opportunity to identify any emerging challenges on service delivery for children and young people and where necessary request further updates.

## The Virtual Head School Report for Children in Care

The Virtual School Annual Report offers the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee insights into the educational achievements, challenges, and overall wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers under the care of the Virtual School.

## Children Missing from Care Report

The report provides information on instances where children in care have gone missing. This report outlines details such as the number of occurrences, the duration of each incident, and any associated challenges. It provides an overview to understand and address issues related to children in care who are reported as missing, and the steps taken to safeguard them.

## Therapeutic Support Report from the Clinical team

Outlines the range of therapeutic services and support that is aimed at addressing the emotional, psychological, and behavioural needs of children and young people. This support is tailored to promote mental wellbeing, emotional resilience, and positive development.

## Foster Carers Charter

Evaluate the Foster Carer Charter, acknowledging the invaluable role played by foster carers in delivering exceptional care and support to our looked-after children in Cambridgeshire and ensure that carers feel listened to.

## Foster Carers Annual Report

The Foster Carers Annual Report provides an overview of the performance, achievements, and challenges within the fostering service over a specific period. It typically includes information about the number of foster carers, placements, training initiatives, support services, and any notable accomplishments or improvements made within the foster care system

## Sufficiency Strategy

This report outlines how the council will meet the sufficiency needs of homes for children within Cambridgeshire County Council.

## Foster Carers Statement of Purpose

Statement of Purpose is a document that outlines the aims, objectives, and functioning of a foster care service or an individual foster carer. It serves as a guide for prospective foster carers, social workers, and other key partners involved in the foster care process.

## Placement Stability Report

Provides analysis of the reasons behind placement changes (e.g., reunification, adoption, disruptions along with trends and patterns.

## Adoption Statement of Purpose

A report that provides comprehensive information about the adoption agency's goals, principles, and the services it offers in the context of adoption.

## Adoption Annual Report

The report provides a detailed overview of an adoption agency's activities, accomplishments, challenges, and statistics over the course of a year.



## Alconbury Weald Secondary School

To: Children and Young Peoples Services

Meeting Date: 26 November 2024

From: Service Director Education

Electoral division(s): Alconbury and Kimbolton

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2024/060

**Executive Summary:** This report brings to the attention of Committee the contract required between Cambridgeshire County Council (the Council) and Morgan Sindall (the contractor) to deliver Alconbury Weald Secondary School.

**Recommendation:** The Children and Young People Committee is recommended:

- a. To approve the Council entering an Engineering and Construction Contract with the contractor for the construction of Alconbury Weald Secondary School in April 2024 on the condition that the contract value continues to stay within the project budget.
- b. To approve that following the completion of a Department for Education's (DfE) risk assessment for sprinklers in schools that sprinklers should not be installed.
- c. To note the cost of, and approve, the installation of a three-ply roofing system rather than the single-ply roofing system which is included in the DfE's standard specification.
- d. To note the risks associated with the successful delivery of this project.

**Voting arrangements:** Co-opted members are eligible to vote on this report.

**Officer contact:**

Name: Rachael Pinion

Post: Strategic Education Capital and Place Planning Manager

Email: rachael.pinion@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

# 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 This report relates to three of the Council's ambitions, with Ambition 7 being the most significant.

Ambition 7: Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.

Ambition 6: Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

Ambition 5: People are helped out of poverty and income inequality.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Following pausing the Alconbury Weald Secondary School project at Milestone 4, as the Engineering and Construction contract sum exceeded the project budget significantly, officers have worked with the Contractor to redesign the scheme within the agreed budget set in the Council's Business Plan.

Following the completion of Milestone 2 the Contractor carried out a full costing exercise and provided a price proposal and associated preconstruction and construction programme to the Council at the end of September 2024.

## 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The current future key delivery dates in the project programme are shown below:

Task	Timings
Milestone 3/4 design period	October 2024 - March 2025
Contractor's proposals/contract sum issued	March 2025
Council to approve Milestone 4 report and contract sum	April 2025
Council and Contractor to sign Engineering and Construction contract	April 2025
Construction to start on site	May 2025
Target handover date	February 2027

- 3.2 The Engineering and Construction Contract amount has been estimated at Milestone 2. The Council and the Contractor are due to sign the Engineering and Construction contract in April 2025 (until this point the contract sum is only proposed). Currently, the contract sum is within the overall budget as shown in Appendix 1.

- 3.4 Fire Sprinklers

The Fire Safety Adviser's view is that BS9999 is suitable for adoption on this school, and it will therefore not require the incorporation of a sprinkler system based on risk assessment approach applied under BB100 to satisfy Building Regulations Part B. The Adviser has noted that the Academy Trust will be able to effectively manage the site and building security and their maintenance and fire safety procedures in accordance with the

recommendations of an 'Average Risk' building as detailed within the DfE Risk Assessment tool.

In addition, included in the design are fire protection features such as a roller shutter fire door, built between the kitchen and the dining hall that closes automatically when triggered by the fire alarm sounding. For localised fire protection the kitchen will also have installed a pre-engineered, automatic fire suppression system that can tackle large, hazardous fires without human intervention. This is specifically designed to protect areas associated which contain ventilation, grease extraction and/or cooking equipment; in essence, like a sprinkler system but for commercial cooking appliances and suited to these environments because it utilises a specialised liquid extinguishing agent that attacks burning fat.

The nearest fire station is Huntingdon Fire Station which is approximately 4 miles away by road.

The proposed cost for the addition of sprinklers is £850,000.00 to £900,000.00. In addition, this would add two weeks to the construction programme.

It is recommended that Members endorse the approach to continue the design and construction of this school without sprinklers based on the above risk assessment, the current DfE design guidance and current building regulations.

### 3.5 Roofing

The Council have previously specified a 'three-ply' system in school construction projects. This was as a result of fabric failures found in the 'single-ply' system and the occurrence of leaks in new and relatively new buildings. It is recommended that the Council continues to use a 'three-ply' roofing system particularly as there is a requirement for more mechanical plant to be sited on the roof space (for example photo voltaic panels and air handling units).

The proposed cost for the use of a three-ply decking system would be a £235,000 addition to the project construction costs. This is included in the Council's policy requirements budget line in the table in paragraph 3.3

### 3.6 Risks to this project

#### 3.6.1 *Construction/design risks including ground conditions.*

Several risks have been identified on the risk register (and allocated within the risk contingency fund). The main items include for potential issues under the ground, including ground conditions/bearing capacities, contamination and unforeseen obstacles. These items account for between £400,000.00 - £500,000.00 of the total risk allowance within the agreed project budget.

#### 3.6.2 *Gap between project completion and school occupation*

To hold the projected proposed Engineering and Construction Contract sum the Contractor has issued a contract programme that completes in January 2027 ahead of the school occupation date of September 2027. In discussion with the academy trust (DEMAT) the Contractor has priced to extend the school maintenance period by six months from January 2027 to September 2027 at a cost of £152,285.00.

This would offer the Council better value for money than slipping the programme to

September 2027. This option is forecast to cost approximately £760,000.00 (based on the indexation for the mid-point of construction moving back by two financial quarters from 2Q26 to 4Q26).

### 3.6.3 *Construction and Project Programme Timescale*

Minimal risk to construction and programme timescale due to the lead in timing of the project.

### 3.6.4 *Cost*

Should the project be delayed than budget inflationary pressures may be sought by the Contractor.

### 3.6.5 *Design Quality and Planning*

The design of the proposed school meets the aspirations of the overall site master plan and design codes and aligns with Urban& Civic's overall quality aspirations for the Alconbury Weald development in terms of size and massing and meets the requirement for a large boundary edge completing the development's Runway Park.

It has been agreed with planning colleagues that the revised scheme could be considered as a S73 application, that seeks to amend an existing planning consent, rather than a new full Regulation 3 planning application. The project was scrutinised at Cambridgeshire Design Quality Panel on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

### 3.6.6 *Pupil Demand*

The catchment forecast suggests that there will be 53 Year 7 aged children living with Alconbury Weald in September 2027. The number of places has been forecast based on the most recent forecast tables produced by the Council's Business Intelligence Service.

Catchment forecast for Alconbury Weald Secondary School						
<b>Academic year</b>	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2024/2025</b>	39	29	25	22	23	138
<b>2025/2026</b>	31	43	32	27	24	157
<b>2026/2027</b>	47	35	46	34	29	191
<b>2027/2028</b>	53	51	38	48	36	226
<b>2028/2029</b>	54	57	54	40	50	255
<b>2029/2030</b>	70	58	60	56	42	286
<b>2030/2031</b>	88	74	61	62	58	343
<b>2031/2032</b>	74	92	77	63	64	370
High catchment forecasts (2023)						

The DfE expects secondary schools to open with a minimum viable number of 120 or 4 forms of entry (4FE). The data suggests that the minimum viable number will not be reached within this forecast period, and so the school's opening will be reliant upon the Trust reaching an agreement with the DfE as an exception to this. This is a significant risk to the successful opening of this school.

The S106 agreement for Alconbury Weald was signed in 2012. Under this agreement the Council is obligated to open the secondary school before 1350 homes were completed. As of April 2024, 1038 homes have been completed on the development.

## 4. Alternative Options Considered

### 4.1 Procurement Approach

- 4.1.1 The Council has procured its own two-stage Design & Build (D&B) Contractor Framework model of procurement to deliver its large-scale education capital projects. The D&B framework is divided into various 'lots' depending on the value of the contract. For the larger value schemes, each project detailed above has been advertised within the appropriate 'lot', allowing for framework partners to bid for the delivery of the project. These are in line with the local government procurement rules.
- 4.1.2 All returns through the D&B tender process were evaluated on cost and quality by officers, this process was overseen by the Council's procurement team and Atkins Realis who are providing professional consultancy services on this project. This framework approach provides an alternative to the lengthier individual tender process, on a site-by-site basis, whilst ensuring best value is reached for the Council.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The Council has statutory duties with regard to the sufficiency, diversity and planning of places for statutory school age children. The Council is also legally obligated under the S106 agreement to provide a secondary school on Alconbury Weald by the trigger of 1350 homes.

To ensure that it can meet these obligations, the Council must procure services from external providers for the delivery of these places. The award of this construction contract to Morgan Sindall is a key step in this process.

## 6. Significant Implications

### 6.1 Finance Implications

The anticipated contract sum sits within the budget line, AC.02.009 and has already been included within the Council's Capital Business Plan. The report brought to Committee in January 24 details the breakdown of the budget for each project including sources of funding (section 106, grant etc). These are in accordance with the framework tendered rates and represent good value for money

### 6.2 Legal Implications

This contract will be awarded as a call off from the Design and Build Framework. The framework is included on the Council's Contract Register. Pathfinder Legal Services Ltd will be instructed to support and advise the Council in drafting and awarding the call off contract from the Design and Build Framework.

## 6.3 Risk Implications

There are multiple risks associated with the delivery of any capital scheme. The risks associated with this project are detailed in paragraph 3.6 above.

## 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the project listed in this report. Mitigations have been identified to address any concerns and overall, the project delivery is expected to have a positive impact ensuring fairness and consistency to all children and young people impacted by the additional school places.

## 6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key Decisions only)

All projects included within the Capital Programme are subject to a Carbon Calculation assessment. These calculations are detailed within each business case and provide information on the carbon impact of the capital scheme (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), the ongoing operational energy use (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and the net revenue cost/(saving) over the lifetime of the building (2081-82). In addition, as part of the council's monitoring process all contractors are asked to provide annual updates to the carbon footprint data.

All projects have been targeted to achieve an 80% reduction in their carbon footprint, and to achieve BREEAM Very Good with ENE01 - 6 Carbon Credits.

All newly commissioned projects have been designed to remove the county council's reliance on fossil fuel using renewable technology in the form of solar panels and either air source or ground source heating.

In addition, the CCC Framework Contractors are providing evidence of the social value and carbon reduction being delivered through the projects we commission. For example, ensuring that all employees are deployed by locality based on miles travelled to the workplace, vehicles including company cars and construction plant that are not reliant on fossil fuels and other such measures. The construction industry acknowledges its overall impact on the generation of carbon and are continuing to work on reducing their carbon footprint on a National and International level.

# 7. Source Documents

## 7.1 [Jan 24 committee report](#)

## Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2024-2029

To:	Children and Young People Committee
Meeting Date:	26 November 2024
From:	Executive Director: Children, Education and Families
Electoral division(s):	All
Key decision:	NO
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Executive Summary:	The report sets out the development of the Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2024-2029 specifically for children Social Care and the appendix outlines the plan in full.
Recommendation:	The Children and Young People Committee is asked to agree the proposed Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan, 2024-2029.
Voting arrangements:	Co-opted members are eligible to vote on this report.

**Officer contact:**

Name: Tapiwa Julius  
Post: Principal Social Worker  
Email: [tapiwa.julius@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:tapiwa.julius@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 This report contributes to the following ambitions of the Cambridgeshire County Council Strategic Framework.
- 1.2 Ambition 5 – People are helped out of poverty and income inequality:
  - This Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan aligns with this ambition, ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible to our children, young people, their families, carers and our community.
- 1.3 Ambition 6 - Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised:
  - This Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan aligns with this ambition, ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible to our children, young people, their families, carers and community.
- 1.4 Ambition 7 - Children and young people have opportunities to thrive:
  - This Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan aligns with this ambition, ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible to our children, young people, their families, carers and community.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan has been developed to consider the Ofsted recommendations, following the recent Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS). Additionally, it aligns with the Local Government Association Standard for Employers of Social Workers (Standard 2) regarding effective workforce planning.
- 2.2 The plan sets out the key areas for development to ensure our Children's Social Care colleagues are well supported, fully trained and have opportunities to continue to grow throughout their careers at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 2.3 The previous 'Children's Services Workforce Development Framework 2022-2025' was a joint shared framework between Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Peterborough City Council (PCC) document. Following the decoupling, an interim Workforce Development Framework was developed in November 2023 for the short term, whilst a workforce plan was being worked through.

## 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan describes Children's Social Care ambitions and nine drivers for 2024 – 2029.

Nine Drivers are:

- Living Our CARE Values
- Leading with purpose and inspiring our workforce
- Empower and involving our workforce
- Building capacity with our children and young people at the heart of everything we do

- Driving digitalisation
- Accountability and managing outcomes
- Valuing, appreciating and recognising high performance and good practice
- Delivering continuous improvement
- Creating sustainable success

3.2 The Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan is provisionally focused on our Children Social Care Workforce and will be updated to integrate Education at a later stage.

It aligns with our ambitions in our Strategic Framework 2023-2028, alongside Our People Strategy 2023-2028 and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2023-2027, as well their respective Action Plans.

3.3 Drawing from various engagement methods and children's social care workforce analysis. In addition, a separate Action Plan has been developed and this will be refreshed periodically and monitored through our Children's Workforce Board and Children's Workforce Operational Delivery Group.

## 4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 N/A

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 Endorsement of the Draft Children's Services Strategic Workforce Plan

## 6. Significant Implications

### 6.1 Finance Implications

The aspiration is to execute the plan within the current financial envelope however the national workforce trends and social care reforms may result in the need for additional investment to ensure that children and families thrive. Any investment will need to be considered as part of the annual business planning process.

### 6.2 Legal Implications

There are no significant implications

### 6.3 Risk Implications

Workforce stability has been identified as one of the Ofsted recommendations and these feature in the Children, Education and Families risk register in ensuring risks pertaining to the workforce has been considered and appropriately mitigated where possible. The Draft Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan addresses the improvements required to place assurances for workforce stability and therefore services provided to children and families.

## 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality, Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed - CCC641660412

## 6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key decisions only)

There are no significant implications

## 7. Source Documents

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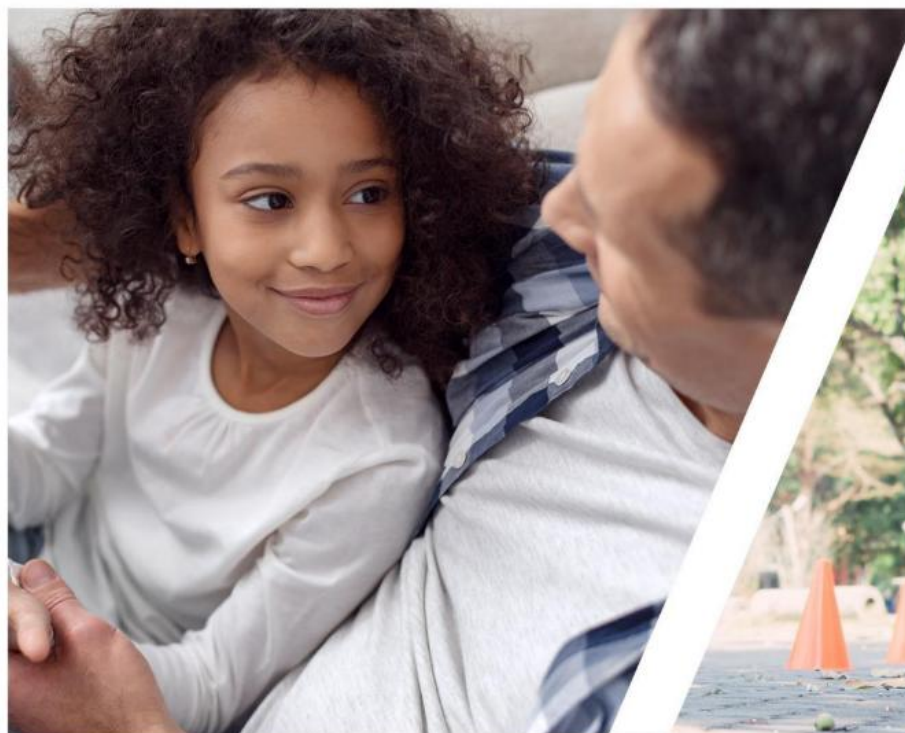
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# Children, Education and Families



Draft Strategic Workforce Development Plan  
2024 - 2029





## Introduction

This document describes our priorities and drivers for the Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2024-2029 aligned to our ambitions in our Strategic Framework 2023-2028.

- Accompanied by a Strategic Workforce Action Plan that is refreshed periodically and monitored through our Children's Workforce Board and Children's Workforce Operational Delivery Group.
- Provisionally focused on our Children Social Care Workforce and will be updated to integrate Education at a later stage.
- Aligned to our People Strategy 2023-2028 and its Action Plan and the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2023-2027 and its Action Plan.
- Drawing insights from various engagement methods and children's social care workforce analysis. We can only achieve our goals through a skilled, engaged and flexible workforce who can respond quickly and positively to changing demands.
- Supporting a workplace culture that is compassionate, respectful and positive for everyone.

Our workforce outcomes and commitments outline how we will collaborate to meet our council's seven ambitions. By delivering our ambitions together, we can ensure that our children and young people, their families and carers receive

the best possible services from us and that we are recognised as a great employer and a successful organisation.

### Our People Strategy Themes and Outcomes:

**Attracting you:** Your experience starts from the moment you are first interested in joining us, and from that point onwards, your employment journey is welcoming and engaging. Our inclusive, supportive and safe working environment attracts and retains diverse people who want to come to work as part of our team.

**Appreciating you:** Our culture of compassion and appreciation means that we really do all feel that we belong. We feel valued for the work that we do, the contribution that we make and the differences that we bring. People talk positively about working for Cambridgeshire and we are known to be a kind and compassionate employer.

**Developing you:** We work with you to enable you to manage your own development and careers, and our commitment to learning extends beyond skills and knowledge for your current role.

**Supporting you:** Our commitment to considering wellbeing in all aspects of employment ensures that you feel supported at every stage of your life and time with Cambridgeshire. You have adequate resources and safe spaces to support you to do your job well, and you feel that you belong in your team and in the wider organisation.



## Our Ambition



## Our Priorities

Our priority is to offer the guiding principle to frame the actions of the Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Plan:

- Building better relations with children, young people and families to ensure their voice is heard and we are a trusted partner within their network.
- Developing, supporting and strengthening our workforce to build capacity and skills for the future.
- Building better partnerships and working collaboratively to ensure services can be delivered as effectively as possible.
- Improving quality and consistency of practice, processes and pathways.
- Redesigning services to align with place-based working wherever possible.

- Utilising and enhancing the use of digital technology to be as efficient and effective as possible.

## Our Nine Drivers

In addition to our priorities, our nine drivers will help to direct and shape our priorities and the actions of our workforce in line with our People Strategy outcomes to be consistently good over the next 5 years.

1. **Living Our CARE Values**
2. **Leading with purpose and inspiring our workforce**
3. **Empower and involving our workforce**
4. **Building capacity with our children and young people at the heart of everything we do**
5. **Driving digitalisation**
6. **Accountability and managing outcomes**
7. **Valuing, appreciating and recognising high performance and good practice**
8. **Delivering continuous improvement**
9. **Creating sustainable success**



## Driver 1: Living Our CARE Values

Our workforce always works and acts in line with Our CARE Values, they have the courage and support to challenge inconsistent behaviour.



We are **Collaborative** with our partners, our communities and each other.



We are **Accountable** to our residents and each other for delivery of outcomes.



We are **Respectful** of each other, the environment, our communities.



We are focused on **Excellence**, delivering the best we can, and always improving.

## Our commitment to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

As part of our EDI strategy and EDI Action Plan we are committed to foster an inclusive, supportive and safe working environment that attracts and retains a diverse workforce who feel valued, respected and empowered.

### Our commitment is to:

- Champion our council's vision and promote engagement with the EDI Team, EDI conversations, Wellbeing Hub, and IDEAL Network to promote inclusion, diversity and equality within our workforce.
- Attract, retain and develop a diverse workforce with different experiences, skills and backgrounds that can meet the needs of the community.
- Enhance the way we recruit, develop and promote people, creating equitable processes by identifying and overcoming structural barriers to people from marginalised and under-represented groups.
- Build an inclusive workforce which fosters a culture of respect and ensure our workforce feel safe and that they belong.
- Develop and empower our workforce to design and deliver inclusive and accessible services, removing internal and external institutional barriers.



- Empower all our people and services to use their influence to advance and promote equality, equity, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of our organisation and wider community.

### **Anti-Racism Charter**

In May 2022 the council signed the UNISON Anti-Racism Charter which sets out our commitment to become an anti-racist organisation. Also aligned to our practice methodologies – cultural awareness and anti-racist practice.

#### **Our commitment is to:**

- Support the councils' vision by participating in the Anti-Racism Steering group to develop an Anti-Racism Action plan, drawing on what our workforce told us and the findings and recommendations of the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (SC-WRES).

#### **Our culture commitments:**

- Our workforce talks positively about working for Cambridgeshire County Council and we are known to be a kind and compassionate employer.
- Our culture of compassion and appreciation means that everyone feels they belong.

- Our workforce feels valued for their efforts, contributions they make, and the unique perspectives that they bring to our organisation.

### **Driver 2: Leading with purpose and inspiring our workforce**

We will make our outcomes clear to inspire and motivate our workforce to deliver against these outcomes.

#### **Our commitment is to:**

- Setting a clear direction of travel to achieve our ambition for all children and young people in Cambridgeshire to have opportunities to thrive.
- Ensuring our leaders have service plans that will be shared through regular service forums and team meetings.
- We will invest in our leaders to ensure that they have the time, knowledge and skills to lead the workforce.
- Ensuring our leaders use the 'our conversation toolkit' to have regular meaningful and structured conversation with our workforce (including agency workers).
- Empowering and supporting our managers and leaders to role model Our CARE Values and commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and being an anti-racist organisation.



- Setting out our benchmark to achieve and maintain manageable workloads across all roles so that our workforce has time to develop meaningful relationships that improve outcomes for our children, young people, their families and carers.
- Ensuring each team has a team charter to set out clearly how they work together and what they can expect in terms of roles, responsibilities, communication and support.
- Ensuring our managers and leaders are provided with the tools, resources and learning through the Managers Hub needed to develop the skills and knowledge to effectively support health and safety and wellbeing in their service areas and teams.
- Ensuring our workforce have the time for reflection as well as learning and development opportunities, via Our Development, to develop their knowledge and skills to do their job well.
- Ensuring that our workforce feel supported to engage and manage their wellbeing at work, including having the time to do so.
- Ensuring our leaders role model ways of working that promote wellbeing.

This means our managers and leaders will take responsibility for developing a learning environment, showcasing

(#WeAreCambs) our work and embracing our culture of compassion and appreciation, working as one team where mistakes are used to learn from, complaints and representation are handled timely and professionally, and successes are celebrated.

### **Driver 3: Empower and involving our workforce**

There is a culture of trust and ownership where our workforce feels empowered to make decisions and act on them.

#### **Our commitment is to:**

- Ensuring that our workforce have a voice, and all voices are heard, and feedback is actively actioned.
- Ensuring we have an internal and external communication plan.
- Ensuring we have service meetings and regular Council wide and CEF briefings, where we will discuss how the service is running, recognise, reward and celebrate achievements, and agree what actions to take to help us continuously improve.

### **Driver 4: Building capacity with our children and young people at the centre of everything we do**

Our workforce capabilities are actively managed and developed. This allows our workforce to realise their full potential and ensure that we have the right people with the



right skills in the right roles/place at the right time within budget to support manageable workloads and consistency for our children.

**Our commitment is to:**

- Ensuring we have a clear recruitment and retention plan.
- Ensuring our academy will strengthen our approach to recruitment and retention of social workers and our commitment to establishing excellent practice in our current and future workforce.
- Ensuring we analyse exit and retention interviews to understand changes required and acted upon them.
- Ensuring we reduce our reliance on agency workers.
- Ensuring that our workforce is supported to attend CEF forum and Council wide briefings, Cambridgeshire conversations and other regular drop-in sessions to be kept up to date on the latest information within the service and council.
- Ensure that our workforce is supported to access the excellent learning and development opportunities to help them develop their skills to deliver our priorities.
- Ensuring we develop career pathways across all roles that are based around accountability, knowledge, skills and behaviours.

## **Driver 5: Driving digitalisation**

Ensuring our workforce maximise the opportunities of digital solutions. It is a continuous journey of adaptation as digital technologies evolve.

**Our commitment is to:**

- Ensuring our workforce are making full use of the available technology and seek support where they need to build their skills and confidence to do this well.

## **Driver 6: Accountability and managing outcomes**

Our outcomes are fully aligned, performance is measured, and feedback is used.

### **Our Practice Methodologies**

To achieve good outcomes for our children and families, we have adopted a comprehensive practice approach to strengthen our practice.

- A common language will deliver a clear and consistent practice approach.
- Embedded through all our learning activities, supervision and management oversight, putting children at the heart of everything we do.



- It will further build a quality learning culture, ensuring the systems are in place to evaluate our commitment and impact.

### **Spotlight Bix Six**

Our 'Big Six' will improve the quality and consistency of our work with families and the records we keep. It is the basis of our eight practice standards and quality assurance framework.

#### **Our commitment is to:**

- Ensuring all new colleagues to our organisation, and those new in their role gets a good Council wide and service induction 'lift off' to understand the way we work, our practice methodologies and our processes.
- Ensuring that our workforce has outcomes, jointly set by them and their line managers. Some will be service objectives and others will relate to personal goals.
- Be clear about our practice methodologies, eight practice standards and quality assurance framework - "what does 'good' look like?".
- Ensuring our workforce have monthly 'our conversations' or supervision and that line managers support our workforce in the work they are doing.
- Ensuring that 'our conversations' includes wellbeing, career development and succession planning conversations.

- Ensuring our workforce have manageable workloads and time for:
  - Reflection
  - Continuous professional developing
  - Coaching
  - Career development
  - Apprenticeships

### **Driver 7: Valuing, appreciating and recognising high performance and good practice**

Recognise and create a culture of appreciation where our workforce is supported and motivated to perform at their best.

#### **Our commitment is to:**

- Ensuring that our workforce efforts are recognised through our digital thank you cards - # WeAreCambs, showcase their work and provide them with the opportunity to celebrate their achievements.
- Ensuring that we utilise the employee recognition scheme to recognise when our workforce is going the extra mile.
- Ensure that we nominate our workforce for the Spotlight Awards and any other national awards.



## Driver 8: Delivering continuous improvement

There will be a focus on redesigning services to align with place-based working wherever possible. We will structure our work to deliver our ambitions to ensure roles are designed to deliver our objectives and create interesting work for people, encouraging collaborative ways of working.

There is a focus on continuous improvement and a need to review our practice, processes and procedures where they are not working. Our workforce is encouraged to use internal and external sources to come up with new ideas and approaches, supported by a culture that encourages innovation.

## Deliver 9: Sustainable success

We have a focus on the future and are responsive to change, particularly national guidance and legislation. Our leaders have a clear understanding of the internal and external environment and the impact this has on our organisation.



A commitment to the investment in our current and future Children's workforce and supporting them to be the best that they can be.



Our ambition is to reach excellence in everything we do with excellent practitioners, delivering excellent outcomes for children across Cambridgeshire.



Creating the conditions for success – stable management, good tools and understanding to do their job well, super skilled and confident with supportive reflective spaces.



Putting Cambridgeshire on the map, for recruitment and development opportunities in Children's social care.



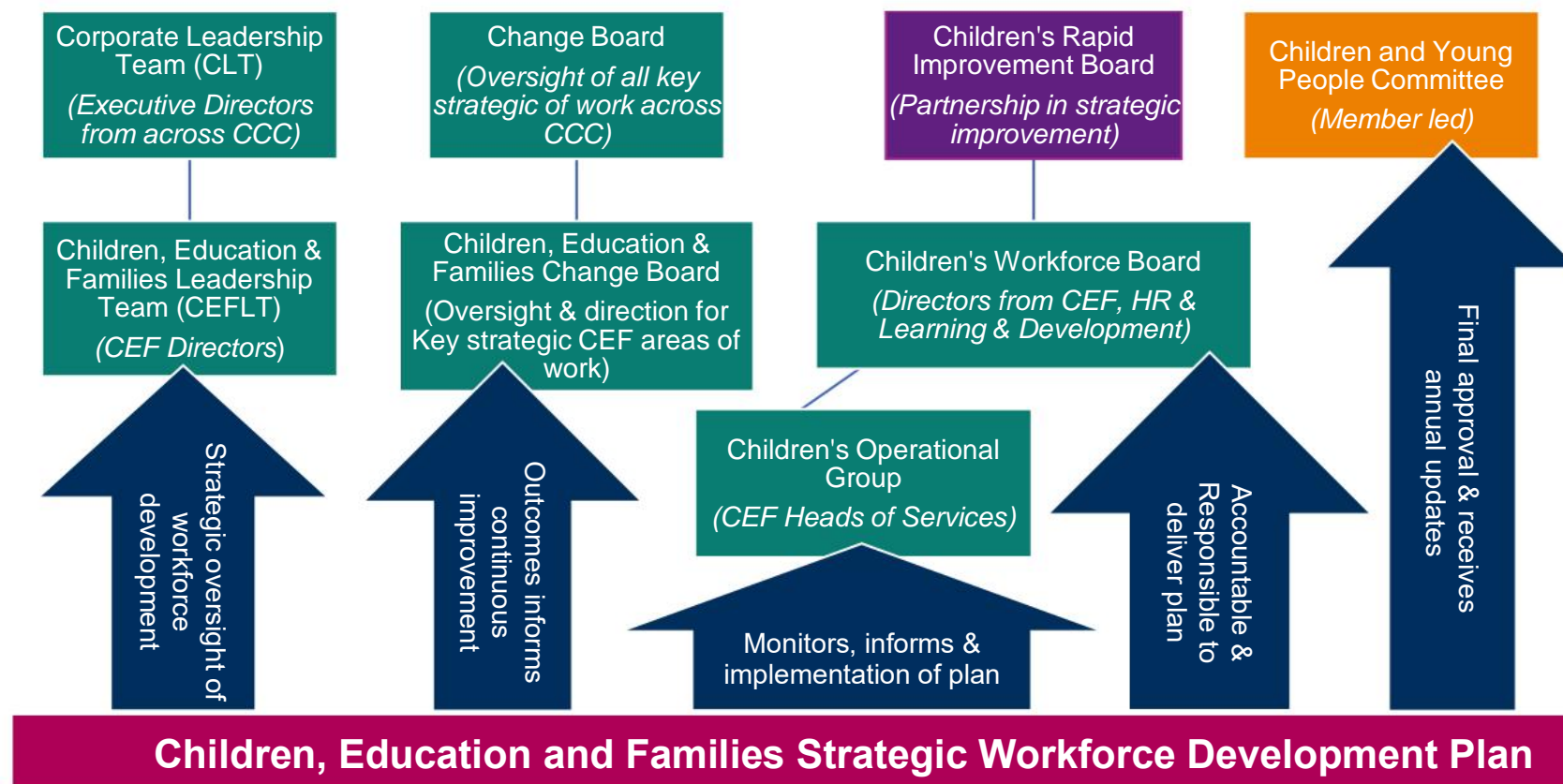
We're in a great place to unlock your potential: learn with us, work with us, grow with us.

## Implementing the Strategic Workforce Plan

Children's Workforce Board and Operational Delivery Group will oversee the implementation of the Strategic Workforce Plan and Action Plan. It is a live document managed by responsible service directors, aligned with service priorities, and will be adapted to address emerging challenges as needed.



## Governance for the Children, Education and Families Strategic Workforce Plan





## Action Plan

This action plan outlines key focus areas for workforce planning in Children Social Care. It is a live document, managed by responsible service directors. Actions are divided into nine drivers and aligned with the People Strategy and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy and respective action plans. These actions should be overseen and collaborated on with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Governance. A success criteria/matrix is being developed to capture a baseline and measuring progress for key actions identified below.

No	Action required to achieve outcome	End	Success Criteria / KPI contribution
1.	<b>Driver 1: Living Our CARE Values – Martin Purbrick (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Our CARE (Collaborative, Accountable, Respectful and Excellent) Values are embedded and at the heart of the way we work, colleagues always work and act in line with our values, they have the courage and support to challenge inconsistent behaviour.		
1.1	We will use Our CARE Values to support culture change and showcase how we work with our children, young people, their families and carers, what is important to us and what people can expect of our culture and what it is like to work here. #WeAreCambs campaign.	March 2025 Checkpoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2028</li> <li>March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feel proud to work for the council 65% positive</li> <li>recommend the council as a great place to work 54% positive</li> <li>feel a strong sense of belonging 51% positive</li> <li>the council provides opportunities for people from diverse background to succeed 62% positive</li> </ul> Increase in disclosure rates recorded  Improve diversity of applications and success rates for roles.  See EDI Action Plan



			Our Conversations, EDI Conversations and Wellbeing hour are protected  Collaborative audits and Bright spots feedback
<b>2.</b>	<b>Driver 2: Leading with purpose and inspiring our workforce – Raul Butron (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Make our objectives clear. Inspire and motivate our colleagues to deliver against these objectives.		
2.1	We will clearly and effectively communicate the council's strategic framework to ensure that it understood by our workforce, and they feel confident and motivated about the future direction of the council.	Checkpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2025</li> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic framework 48% positive</li> <li>• confident about the future direction 35% positive</li> <li>• communicated a future vision that motivates 34% positive</li> <li>• motivated to do the best job 52% positive</li> <li>• my job makes good use of my skills and abilities 85% positive</li> <li>• it is clear how my role contributes to the delivery of the council's framework 74% positive</li> <li>• the council provides the appropriate tools, equipment and information needed to do the job well 63% positive</li> <li>• Improve barriers 17% cited issues with management</li> <li>• Improve barriers 17% cited poor communication</li> </ul>
2.2	We will ensure all our line managers are having regular and meaningful 'Our Conversations' and 'Wellbeing Conversations' with their direct reports.	January 2025  Checkpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• January 2026</li> <li>• January 2027</li> </ul>	Number of our workforces having outcome.  Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• genuinely cares about my health and wellbeing 56% positive</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 2028</li> <li>January 2029</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide coaching that will support my development 32% should do this more</li> <li>provide regular feedback on how I am performing 30% should do this more.</li> </ul> <p>Take up of wellbeing interventions</p> <p>All line managers taking ownership for development in teams and of self.</p> <p>Uptake of wellbeing related training.</p>
2.3	Ensuring our workforce is supported by linking to our 'People Strategy action plan'.	<p>May 2025</p> <p>Checkpoints:</p> <p>May 2026</p> <p>May 2027</p> <p>May 2028</p>	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> <li>sufficient opportunities to grow and develop 48% positive</li> <li>the council provides opportunities for people from diverse background to succeed 62% positive</li> <li>genuinely cares about my health and wellbeing 56% positive</li> <li>believe appropriate action will be taken 66% positive</li> </ul> <p>Increase in different working patterns and using it to focus on themselves and their wellbeing.</p> <p>Audits and health checks demonstrates an increase in the above.</p> <p>Reduction on number of appeals against flexible working and feedback from new starters and exit interviews.</p> <p>Increase in the take up and recording of learning undertaken on 'our development'</p>



			<p>Increase attendance of CEF colleagues at wellbeing session</p> <p>Levels of internal progression, analysed by demographic factors.</p> <p>Increase in the number of colleagues and managers reporting health and safety incidents – monitoring through DMT.</p> <p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>supported to balance my work and my personal life in a way that works for me</li> <li>in my immediate team, when people say they will do something they can be relied on to get it done 78% positive</li> </ul>
2.4	Ensure 'New Managers' and those new in a management role received a good induction.	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>Checkpoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2025</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2028</li> <li>March 2029</li> </ul>	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>share important information in a timely manner 26% should do this more.</li> <li>Improve barriers 17% cited issues with management</li> </ul>



3.	<b>Driver 3: Empower and involving our workforce – Tapiwa Julius (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	There is a culture of trust and ownership where colleagues feel empowered to make decisions and act on them.		
3.1	We will respond effectively to what we have heard from the IPSOS Employee Survey, Social Work and Social Care Health Check and subsequent listening activities with a 'You said, we did' back to our workforce.	<b>Ongoing</b>  Checkpoints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leaders do what they say they will 25% positive</li> <li>• believe appropriate action will be taken 66% positive</li> <li>• share important information in a timely manner 26% should do this more.</li> <li>• in my immediate team, people's opinions are genuinely listened to when they are shared 80% positive</li> <li>• listen carefully to issues/concerns and offer support 21% should do this more</li> </ul> Increase the number of colleagues completing surveys and engaging in listening sessions
4.	<b>Driver 4: Building capacity with our children and young people at the heart of everything we do – Raul Butron (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Our workforce's capabilities are actively managed and developed. This allows colleagues to realise their full potential and ensure that we have colleagues with the right skills in the right roles/place at the right time at the right cost within budget to support manageable workloads and consistency for children.		
4.1	Ensure establishment controls are used to effectively reflect our organisational design principles and manage resources and workforce budgets within our business systems.	March 2025	Business Planning processes completed and reflect workforce budget within CEF.  All colleagues (both agency workers, fixed and permanent) show on the ERP system meaning reports are accurate and



			reliable Managers are competent at updating ERP and do so in a timely manner
4.2	Develop a workforce matrix outlining knowledge, skills and behaviours for roles within our Children Social Care workforce. Communicate a clear pathway outlining expectations and support.	<p>March 2025</p> <p>Reflect, review &amp; update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	<p>A clear and transparent outline of expected knowledge, experience and skills of our colleagues within their role.</p> <p>An understanding of confidence levels within CEF</p> <p>A forward-facing learning and development plan which includes providing the training required to fulfil gaps identified in the matrix</p>
4.3	Development of the retention plan, ( <i>which will form part of the recruitment plan</i> ) to be specific to Children Social Care workforce.	<p>March 25</p> <p>Checkpoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> </ul>	<p>Caseloads have reduced to 20 per Social Worker (25 in Assessment)</p> <p>Our workforce feel valued and receive regular feedback and meaningful supervision</p> <p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have sufficient control over my day-to-day work, including deadlines and workloads 79% positive</li> <li>• Improve barriers 34% cited workload and overwork</li> <li>• Improve barriers 10% cited workforce capacity</li> </ul>
4.4	Development of a recruitment plan which outlines the specifics to children social care requirements.	<p>March 25</p> <p>Checkpoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> </ul>	<p>Links to existing People Strategy &amp; EDI Strategy action plans</p> <p>Recruitment Team and recruiting managers work in partnership to ensure an excellent candidate experience</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2028</li> </ul>	<p>Reduction in turnover</p> <p>Existing managers and colleagues feel adequately enabled to support this cohort confidently</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Driver 5: Driving digitalisation - Ranjit Chambers (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Our workforce maximises the opportunities of digital solutions. It is a continuous journey of adaptation as digital technologies evolve.		
5.1	To support our workforce through innovational changes across our organisation.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Checkpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2025</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2028</li> </ul>	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is easy to get things done around here</li> </ul>
5.2	Further development of this work is needed to leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and automation to aid efficiency and alleviate unnecessary workload, thereby freeing more time for direct work with children and young people and optimising information use.	<p>March 2025</p> <p>Checkpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2028</li> </ul>	Council digitalisation strategy development updated



6.	<b>Driver 6: Accountability and managing outcomes - Ranjit Chambers (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Our objectives are fully aligned, performance is measured, and feedback is used.		
6.1	Heads of Services and Service Managers will work with their respective Service managers to support teams to develop their team charters around the working arrangements within their job roles and service areas and they must be reviewed regularly to remain relevant and effective.	January 2025	<p>Team Charters and Wellbeing passports are routinely used, and for Team Charters to be reviewed and signed off by Heads of Services and Senior Managers.</p> <p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate care for my health and wellbeing 18% should improve</li> <li>• listen carefully to issues/concerns and offer support 21% should do this more</li> <li>• share important information in a timely manner 26% should do this more</li> </ul>
6.2	Embed the induction programme across the whole Children Social Care to induct new colleagues to ensure consistency.	<p>March 2025</p> <p>Checkpoints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> <li>• I have sufficient opportunities to grow and develop in my role</li> </ul> <p>Probation reviews completed on time</p>



7.	<b>Driver 7: Valuing, appreciating and recognising high performance and good practice - Liz Clarke (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	Recognition and create a culture of appreciation where our workforce is supported and motivated to perform at their best		
7.1	Use every opportunity to recognise and appreciate our workforce, fostering an inclusive culture of appreciation.	Ongoing - Quarterly checkpoints	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am often recognised when I do a good job 67% positive</li> <li>• I feel I am fairly rewarded considering my duties and responsibilities at the council 44% positive</li> <li>• I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> </ul> <p>collaborative audits</p>
8.	<b>Driver 8: Delivering continuous improvement - Liz Clarke (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	There is a focus on continuous improvement. Our workforce uses internal and external sources to come up with new ideas and approaches, supported by a culture that encourages innovation. We are structured to deliver our ambitions. Roles are designed to deliver our objectives and creating interesting work for people, encouraging collaborative ways of working.		
8.1	Welcoming feedback as an opportunity to be curious to learn from including the following: Responding to our inspections; Ofsted, Peer Reviews, Quality Assurance Reviews, Essex diagnostics, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Responding and initiating change through these reviews.	Quarterly reviews through existing governance	<p>Improved employee engagement metrics (in 2023):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> </ul>



8.2	Redesigning services takes consideration of Children Social Care workforce requirements (i.e. skills) into account of Social Care and SEND Reforms and national frameworks.	Ongoing  Checkpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2025</li> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> <li>• sufficient opportunities to grow and develop 48% positive</li> <li>• the council provides opportunities for people from diverse background to succeed 62% positive</li> </ul>
8.3	Ensuring processes are clear, updated and communicated effectively and regularly to our workforce.	Ongoing  Checkpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2025</li> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is easy to get things done around here</li> <li>• Improve barriers 27% cited technology and IT systems</li> <li>• Improve barriers 10% cited our processes and procedures</li> <li>• Improve barriers 17% cited poor communication</li> </ul>
8.4	Developing a learning and development offer which can be flexible to consider the changing needs of teams and individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2025</li> </ul> Checkpoints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> <li>• sufficient opportunities to grow and develop 48% positive</li> <li>• the council provides opportunities for people from diverse background to succeed 62% positive</li> </ul>
8.5	Development of an annual learning and development plan which will enable regular	February 2025	Improved employee engagement metrics (Tier 1 report in 2023):



	feedback from our workforce to help continuous improvement in line with business planning cycle.	Updated by: January 2026 January 2027 January 2028 January 2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I often receive constructive feedback that helps me to improve my performance 62% positive</li> <li>sufficient opportunities to grow and develop 48% positive</li> <li>the council provides opportunities for people from diverse background to succeed 62% positive</li> </ul> <p>Collaborative audits</p>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Driver 9: Creating sustainable success - Liz Clarke (Senior Responsible Officer)</b>		
	We have a focus on the future and are responsive to change. Our leaders have a clear understanding of the external environment and the impact this has on our organisation.		
9.1	To have open communication across the partnerships aligned to Working Together 2023 (Section 11 of Children Act 2004 and Sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002) at strategic and operational level.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Checkpoints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2025</li> <li>March 2026</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2028</li> <li>March 2029</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence of strong partnership working relationships and cooperation</p> <p>All agencies working together to achieve the same goals.</p>
9.2	To participate in the bi-annual Section 11 audits and implementation of audit findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 2025</li> <li>March 2027</li> <li>March 2029</li> </ul>	Number of colleagues taking part increase



9.3	Ensure the LSCB training plan is disseminated to support professional development of workforces across the partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2025</li> </ul> <p>Updated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2026</li> <li>• March 2027</li> <li>• March 2028</li> <li>• March 2029</li> </ul>	Increase in the take up on LSCB training
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## Safety Valve Programme Update

To: Children and Young People

Meeting Date: 26 November 2024

From: Martin Purbrick, Executive Director, Children Education and Families

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: N/A

Executive Summary: This paper provides an update on key activity and progress with the Safety Valve programme.

Recommendation: The Children and Young People Committee is recommended to note the updates provided on the Safety Valve Programme.

The Committee is asked to note that the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and High Needs Block funding issues facing the Council are a national issue affecting the majority of Local Authorities. The council's position is that Special Educational Needs (SEND) remains an area of Education policy in urgent need of reform.

The Committee is asked to note the scope of work underway to meet the terms of the Safety Valve agreement by reshaping our offer of support to children and young people with additional needs by identifying and meeting need earlier so that more children and young people can thrive in mainstream schools, where appropriate.

Officer contact:

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Post: Service Director Education

Email: [sarah.callaghan@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.callaghan@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

# 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 The report proposal has been evaluated in regards to alignment with the following seven ambitions [Strategic Framework 2023-2028 \(refreshed\) \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- 1.2 This report relates to Ambition 7 – Children and Young People have opportunities to thrive.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an overview of the current position with the Safety Valve Programme and Agreement Conditions, which was entered into with the Department for Education (DfE) in 2023.
- 2.2 This report sets out what the terms of the Safety Valve agreement were, what we have done since this agreement to drive down spend in the High Needs Block in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and also includes some illustrative examples of practice that has changed and is improving the experience for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Cambridgeshire.

### Context

- 2.3 In Cambridgeshire, we are committed to ensuring all children and young people are enabled to thrive, whatever their starting point and this is set out within our corporate plan and SEND Strategy.
- 2.4 The Local Government Association and the County Council Network commissioned an independent review of the SEND system 'Towards an effective and sustainable approach to SEND' [LINK](#) published in July 2024. This independent report states educational outcomes for SEND pupils have failed to improve over the last decade. The report identified the need for a fundamental reform of the SEND system in England.
- 2.5 Cambridgeshire is one of 113 Local Authorities nationally who are either identified as 'Safety Valve' or 'Delivering Best Value'. This illustrates that the financial pressures we are experiencing driven by growing demand is not unique.
- 2.6 The Safety Valve agreement needs to be achieved through a change in practice that drives down spend by supporting inclusive practice across all our schools and settings so that children with SEND are supported to remain in mainstream provision, where appropriate, and receive the right support at the right time from the right service.
- 2.7 Implementing cultural change through the Inclusion for All Framework is the way we will meet the terms of the Safety Valve whilst also improving the experiences of children and young people with SEND. The 'Inclusion for All' framework is expanded upon in section 3.10 of this report.
- 2.8 Cambridgeshire have made some changes to improve practice, but demand is outstripping the impact of those changes. This means that the number of requests for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) is rising significantly, over 46% in the last 5 years, and so the focus of work is on meeting that demand, rather than making the cultural changes we need

to make so that need is identified and supported earlier.

- 2.9 The approach adopted in Cambridgeshire is one that is driving inclusion for all and as such, is a cultural shift in practice that requires time to embed. It is important that we address the urgent practice issues that are impacting on children and young people alongside implementing our 'Inclusion for All' framework and this takes time. It is recognised that delivering cultural change cannot happen overnight and we are not operating in a static environment. The approach we are adopting is not a 'sticking plaster', this is about a shift in culture in an environment where we do not control all variables that contribute to success.
- 2.10 Our 'Inclusion for All' framework will deliver change through a countywide commitment to a needs-led approach with a trauma informed workforce that puts children and young people first.

### 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The Safety Valve Programme provides additional resources to Local Authorities to deliver a sustainable position for our children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), without impairing their education. These agreements, hold the local authorities to account for delivery of reforms to their high needs systems, so that they can function sustainably and therefore in the best interests of the children and young people they serve. These local authorities will be expected to reach an in-year balance on their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as quickly as possible, and over time eliminate their deficits.
- 3.2 The Cambridgeshire Safety Valve agreement conditions are:
- Improve decision making on awarding Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) through developing a more consistent and transparent multi-agency decision making process;
  - Develop a special schools outreach model to facilitate supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in mainstream provision;
  - Review current tuition packages to ensure appropriate and successful reintegration to mainstream school settings;
  - Develop a model of investment in ordinarily available provision to support schools in meeting need without an EHCP. This will include developing a system for funding which will provide consistent resources and support across a graduated approach to need including those pupils without an EHCP;
  - Review the Needs Assessment and Post-Assessment process to ensure appropriate and consistent provision is put into place;
  - Strengthen processes around mediation and dispute resolution in order to reduce the requirement for tribunals;
  - Increase independence of children and young people by targeting reviews to ensure provision is appropriate, meets needs and promotes independence;
  - Continue offering free access to the SEND District Team support to identify training needs, emerging themes and focus less on individualised support and more on upskilling staff knowledge and skills in all areas of SEND.
- 3.3 The Cambridgeshire Safety Valve agreement is based on the following funding arrangements:

- Revenue contribution of £49m from the DfE to support the repayment of the deficit, supported by a contribution of £9m from the Council's reserves.
- A further £11.3m for capital funding to support new SEND provision on mainstream school sites.
- Two new special free schools for Cambridgeshire to be established in March (opening September 2026) and Gamlingay (opening September 2025) being delivered directly by the Department of Education.

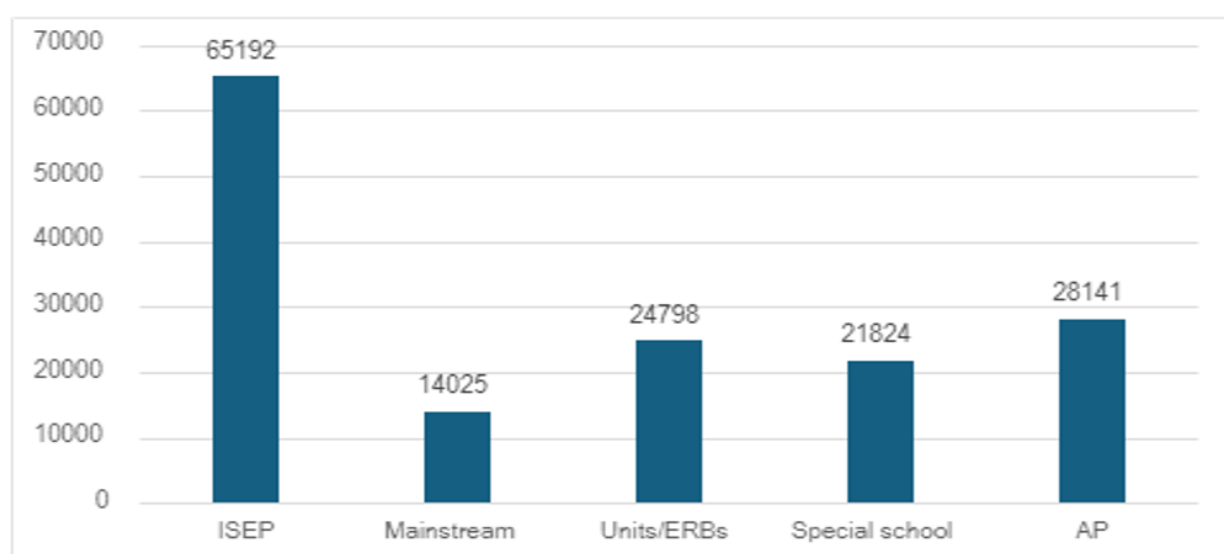
## Funding Position

- 3.4 The Safety Valve Programme is a Department for Education intervention for Local Authorities with significant Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits because of pressures on the High Needs Block budget. The Local Authorities participating in the programme receives additional funding as part of their agreed plan, provided in increments and is subject to the authority making satisfactory progress towards achieving targets set out in their original plan. The funding received as part of this programme is to support the reduction in the overall DSG deficit held by local authorities and does therefore not increase the funding available to passport onto individual schools.
- 3.5 The plan, or conditions set within the programme are related to use of appropriate and cost-effective provision. This includes ensuring mainstream schools are equipped and encouraged to meet needs where appropriate. It also focusses on appropriate management of the assessment process. By participating in Safety Valve, local authorities have agreed to undertake transformation activity to ensure their high needs budget is sustainable.
- 3.6 In Cambridgeshire, the levels of children and young people requiring an EHCP has become greater than was initially forecast. This has meant that the terms of plan, as agreed, with the DfE have not been met as intended. Therefore, the programme has been paused whilst the new data informs a refreshed forecast modelling of demand for SEND provision to ensure the plan is achievable. There are many Safety Valve Local Authorities undertaking this renegotiation activity given the national rise in numbers of children and young people with SEND.
- 3.7 Officers have been working with the DfE financial and SEN advisors to develop the renegotiated agreement with the intention of submitting an updated plan by the end of October 2024. Once the new plan is agreed, the DfE should continue to make the payments originally agreed, as set out in section 3.3 of this report.
- 3.8 To date Cambridgeshire have received Safety Valve payments of circa £21.5m from the DfE, with the remaining £27.5m to be released in instalments subject to the approval and delivery of a renegotiated agreement.
- 3.9 The funding to support children and young people with special educational needs comes from the High Needs Block in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The Local Authority is the commissioner of high needs places. The cost of places varies dependent on the complexity of need. With higher cost placements typically supporting greater complexity of need. Illustrative cost of placements can be seen at Table 1.
- 3.10 All local authorities have a statutory duty to meet the needs set out within an EHC Plan and these needs cannot be compromised. On that basis, our objective to drive down demand

and reduce spend must be driven by the needs of children and young people. This is the objective of the Inclusion For all Framework where one of the key objectives is to create inclusive settings where all children and young people can thrive.

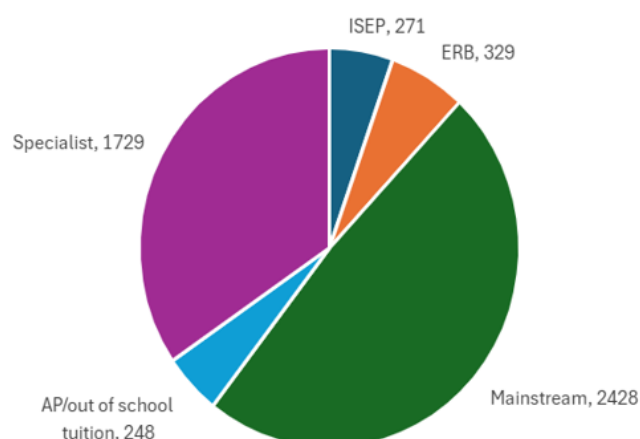
- 3.11 To support the objectives of our commitment to 'inclusion for all' the aim is to identify and meet need early so that children and young people can thrive in mainstream settings. In this way, children and young people can develop their life skills to support independence whilst also driving costs down.

Table 1- Average costs of placements

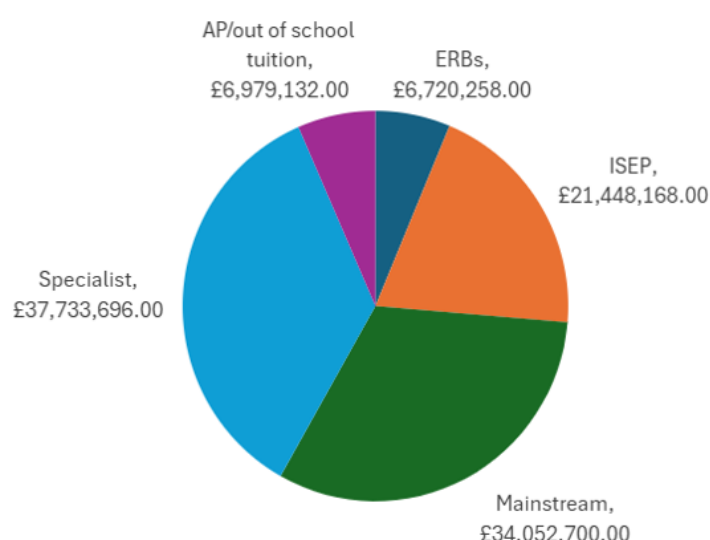


- 3.12 The numbers of children and young people by placement and illustrative costs are set out below.

Number of children in each type of settings



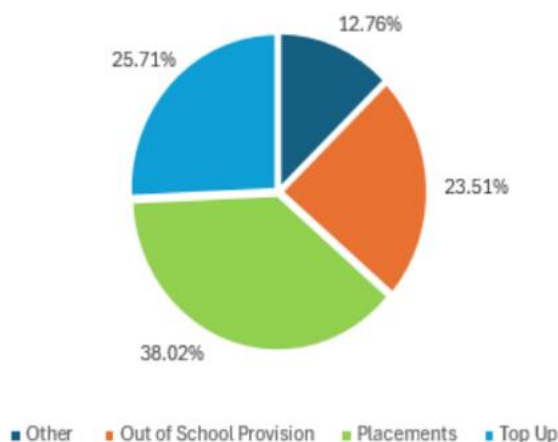
Spend per type of placement



- 3.13 The pie chart below illustrates where the financial pressures in the High Needs Block (HNB) are most impacted. The highest percentage of overspend is within the budget to support placements and out of school provision. Recognising these financial pressures there is a

need to support children and young people with additional needs to remain in mainstream provision, where appropriate, whilst also ensuring access to specialist support when needed.

HNB Overspend 23/24 - % Breakdown



Disapplication requests for local authorities in Safety Valve Programmes

- 3.14 The DfE wrote to those local authorities in Safety Valve programmes in early October 2024 with information on how to submit any disapplication requests, which will need support of the schools forum before submission. These include:
- Any schools block transfers above 0.5%, or any amount without schools forum approval. The Secretary of State will however expect that any schools block transfers required for Safety Valve will have the support of your schools forum.
  - Any disapplication's to the special schools Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG), or to the schools MFG where these are required for implementing Safety Valve agreement.
  - Any disapplications to minimum per pupil levels (MPPLs) for schools which are required for implementing your Safety Valve agreement.
- 3.15 The only disapplication request linked to Cambridgeshire's Safety Valve is in respect of the block transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block. As detailed above, anything over 0.5% requires the Secretary of State's approval. Part of Cambridgeshire's original Safety Valve agreement was contingent on a 1% transfer which requires annual approval and support from Schools Forum. This is in the process of being populated in preparation for review by Schools Forum.
- 3.16 The 1% block transfers in 23/24 (£4.5m) and 24/25 (£4.8m) have just effectively reduced the in-year and cumulative deficits which means Cambridgeshire would be £9.3m worse off at the bottom line if the transfers hadn't been agreed. In respect of impact, some of the funding has been used to fund new Enhanced Resource Bases (ERBs) and Special School places which have resulted in cost avoidance of higher cost out of county provision.
- 3.17 Since last reported to Committee in 2023, the programme's core workstreams have

progressed as follows:

- SEND Support & Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP): The development and launch of the OAP toolkit have been key milestones of the programme. This toolkit, which has seen a threefold increase in uptake, offering guidance to schools to support children and young people without the need for EHCPs.

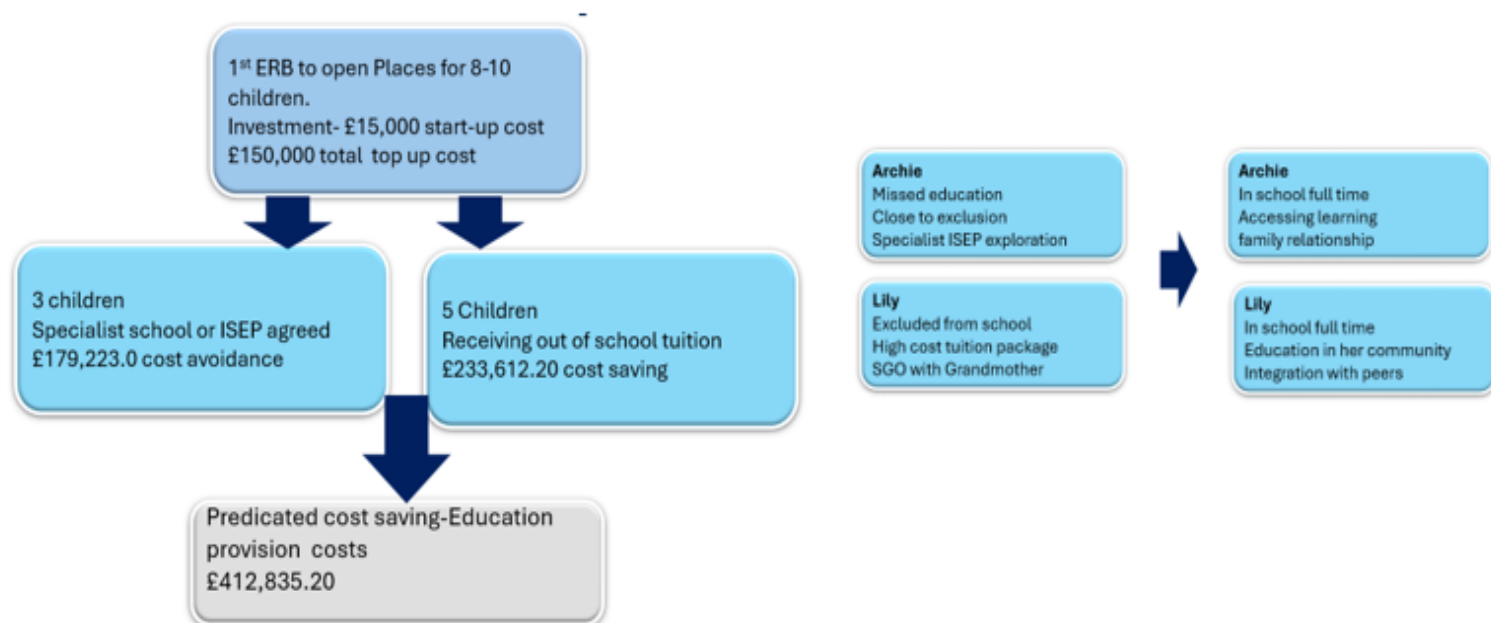
Since 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 there's been:

- 25,423 visitors to the online toolkit
  - 223,915 page views
  - 31,846 visits to the page
- EHCP Improvement: Despite challenges, progress has been made in improving EHCP processes. A new post-assessment panel and placement decision mechanisms were introduced but continuing increases in demand and staffing shortages have limited overall progress.
  - Preparing for Adulthood (PfA): The PfA programme is well underway, focusing on post-16 transitions to education, employment, and independent living. The programme has been successful in reducing costs and has developed a strong support structure through the 14-25 Additional Needs Team.
  - Developing Capacity - new school places already delivered:
    - Special School = 120
    - Enhanced Resource Base (ERB) = 8

New school places planned by 2027/28:

- Special School = 530
- ERB = 198

Evidence of impact of ERBs:



- 3.18 Despite the nationally recognised challenges in SEND, we know we are getting it right in Cambridgeshire due to:
- **The needs of children and young people are identified early** - 66% of children and young people referred were discussed at a multi-agency Early Support meeting within 4 weeks. 60% of children and young people received a multi-agency response.
  - **Schools and settings understand SEND Needs** - schools have access to advice and training, a SEND Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) toolkit. An Increasing number of schools following Trauma informed and Therapeutic Thinking approaches.
  - **Schools and settings Work in Partnership with Health Education and Early Help** - for example Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Virtual School Education Advisors, Specialist Teachers, Education Inclusion Officers and Education Psychologists.
  - **Improved Information for families** - through the 'SEND Information Hub', a new Local Offer designed and populated across the partnership.
  - **Prioritised Preparing for adulthood (PFA)** - by appointing a PFA lead to steer the strategic response, listening to the voices of children and young people.
  - **Listening to children, young people and their families** - embedded parent and carer voice via Pinpoint Parent Carer Forum, who are an equal partner on key strategic and operational boards. Collaborations with diverse Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations - Fullscope, Eddies, VoiceAbility and Speak Out Council.

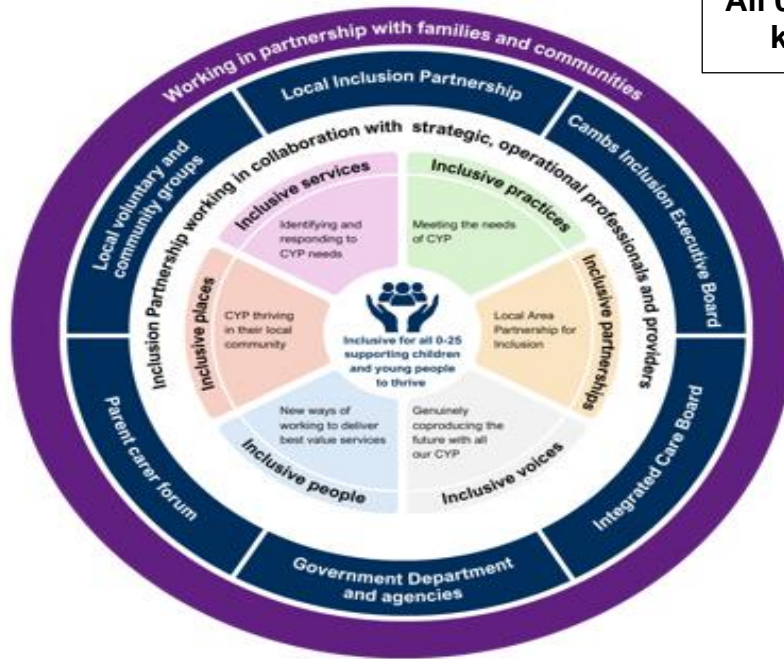
#### Strategic Ambition and Priorities

- 3.19 The council's strategic ambition 7 is to support all children and young people thrive - to deliver this we need to identify those children and young people we are not supporting and target our resources more effectively and ensure our schools are fully inclusive, including academies, using a status neutral approach.

#### 'Inclusion for All' Framework

- 3.20 Over the last five years children and young people identified with special educational needs has grown by 46% and they require additional resources which is creating a financial pressure on the Local Authority and on schools. Our ambition is to identify need early on so that the right support can be provided at the right time by the right service. Doing this will help us to support better outcomes for children and young people whilst also driving down spend. To enable needs to be responded to at the earliest point, one of the aspirations of framework is ensuring that all of our schools and settings have a sense of belonging where children and young people with additional needs feel celebrated and supported to learn.

**Circular diagram depicting Inclusive for All 0-25 framework and key stakeholders**



3.21 There are the six areas of focus within our 'Inclusion for All' framework:



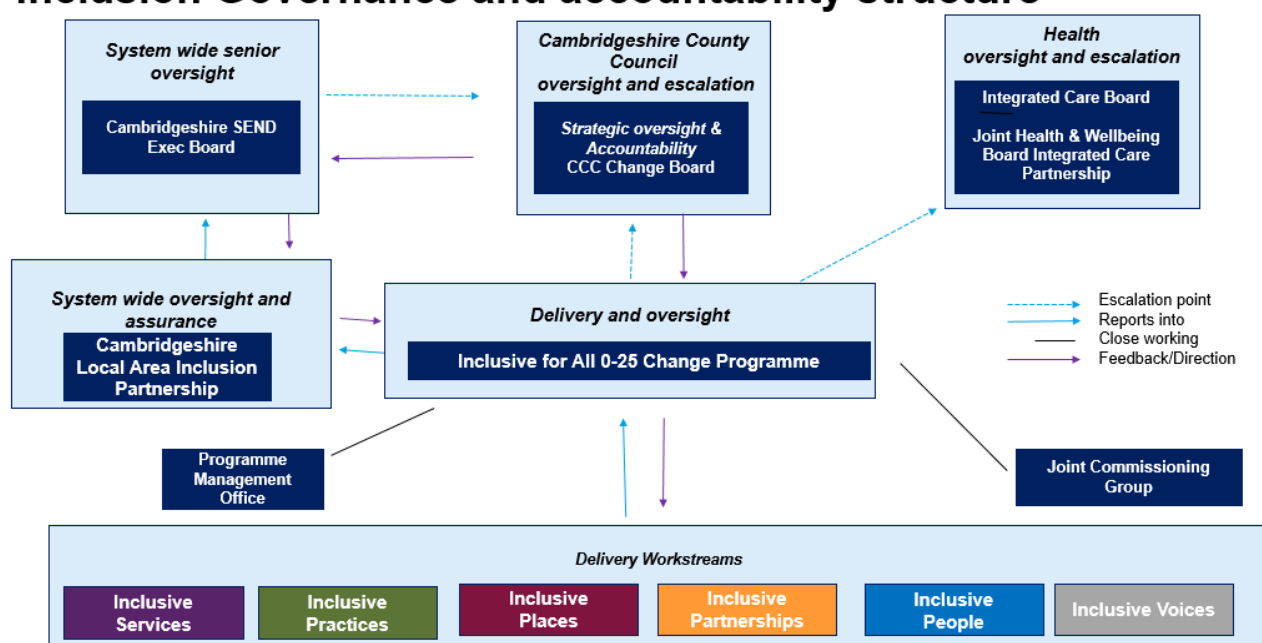
3.22 To drive improvement making a shift towards an inclusive programme is required. It is essential that a financial narrative underpins each inclusion workstream, driving down demand, meeting the terms of the Safety Valve programme and making Cambridgeshire financially stable. In the following table, financial impact is detailed for each of the inclusion workstreams:

Workstream	Cultural/Systemic Impact	Financial impact
<b>Inclusive Services</b> Identifying and responding to CYP needs	Delivering better services, improving experiences of CYP and their families for SEND and AP.	Improving statutory timescales across the system Increased number of providers who are assessed as delivering a high-quality service. Reduction in complaints

Workstream	Cultural/Systemic Impact	Financial impact
		Increase in reintegration into mainstream for those in alternative provision (AP) Efficient use of resources, fewer mediation/ tribunal requests
<b>Inclusive Practices</b> Meeting the needs of CYP	Universal / ordinarily available inclusive practices and provisions. Inclusive schools and settings with graduated responses and increased capacity. Smooth transitions and inclusive journey.	Confidence in SEND support and OAP leads to more children being supported at SEND support/fewer requests for EHCP Confidence in Inclusive schools allows children with EHCPs having their needs met in mainstream Proportion of children needing AP reduces Proportion of children reintegrating back into mainstream from AP increases
<b>Inclusive Places</b> CYP thriving in their local community.	Sufficiency of inclusive, specialist, ERB and other appropriate education provision. Smooth transitions and inclusive journey	Reduction in escalation to high cost/ independent/out of county specialist placement Return from children on AP to appropriate mainstream or specialist provision
<b>Inclusive Partnerships</b> Local Area Partnership for Inclusion.	Leadership and governance of Inclusion Eco-system. Smooth transitions and inclusive journey Shared data sets cross service impacts and measures	Less reliance on EHCP to support transition. Fewer EHCNA requests in Y5/Y6 Appropriate distribution of EHCP funding to services
<b>Inclusive People</b> New ways of working to deliver best value services.	putting the decisions and information in the hands of the service user Stronger relationship with partners. Changing culture and practices Consistent, inclusive messaging from partners. Smooth transitions- inclusive journey	Professionals' competence and confidence as a result of CPD undertaken. Positive outcomes and improved experience for CYP and their families. Improved system wide confidence at SEND support and supporting EHCP in mainstream Reduction in EHCNA requests/ tribunal
<b>Inclusive Voices</b> coproducing the future with all our CYP	Positive outcomes and improved experience for CYP and their families Understanding and improving Children and young people's journeys, inclusion and achievements.	Hearing young people's voices from AP and Mainstream school. Ensuring CYP views are consistently clear in their SEND support and EHCPs  Supporting independence, less reliance on expensive private EHCP resources packages and shift towards locally available resource.

- 3.23 The 'Inclusion for All' framework will be supported by a robust governance structure, as detailed in the diagram below. For each of the delivery workstreams, there will be a designated responsible service lead and project officer with a responsibility to report progress into the 'Inclusion for All' Change Programme Board. This Programme Board will be chaired by the Executive Director of Children, Education and Families (CEF) and membership will include representation from Customer and Digital Services, Finance, Change and Performance. The Board will be the driving force before the programme to ensure we deliver the Safety Valve Agreement moving forwards.

## Inclusion Governance and accountability structure



- 3.24 For the first phase of this programme, we will be focussing on Inclusive Practices. This strand of work will align with the Safety Valve Programme by delivering the following key pieces of work:
- Growing the Enhanced Resource Base (ERB) model from 1 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Base to 3 SEMH and 1 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
  - Redistribution of alternative and independent specialist educational provision.
  - Support mainstream schools to reduce the need for special school places, including further work to embed our trauma informed training and practices throughout the network of Cambridgeshire schools and settings.

### Risks and challenges

- 3.25 High level programme risks are reported to the CYP Committee via the corporate risk

register and the Corporate Change Board on a frequent basis to keep leaders and members informed.

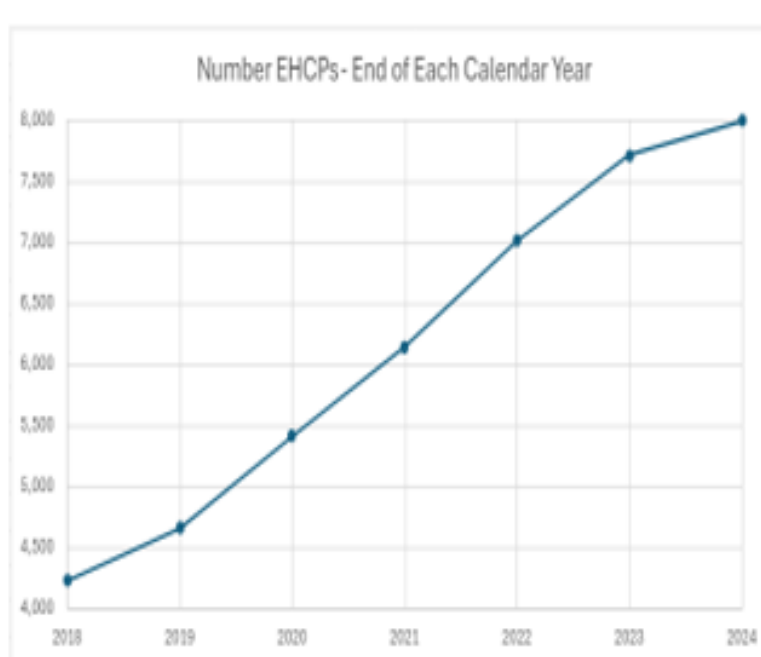
3.26 The Department for Education (DfE) closely monitors the council's compliance with the Safety Valve agreement and should the Enhanced Monitoring Support (EMS) be stepped down, it is expected the local authority will return to quarterly finance and performance monitoring submissions.

3.27 Current high-level risks:

- Continued increase in demand. The key risk to the programme is the growth of SEND cohorts within the county grow outside the trajectories set against the renegotiated agreement.

The following chart highlights the following:

- Between 2018 and 2023 number of EHCP's increased from 4222 to 7707, a 45% increase in 5 years
- On average, number of EHCP's have been growing 12.8% a year within that time frame
- By contrast, the High Needs Block has grown on average by 7.12% in the last two years, with growth expected to slow (only 3.4% growth this year)



- Workforce Capacity: High sickness rates and turnover of staff in the SEND team including educational psychologists have impacted progress. Projects like the Increasing Independence initiative have been re-scoped multiple times due to staffing shortages.
- Data Quality Issues: Problems with data accuracy, particularly following the transition to the CACI Impulse Nexus case management system from Capita ONE, continue to affect reporting. The Service Director for Education has holds weekly oversight meetings which are attended by the Assistant Director for Inclusion and colleagues from the corporate ICT project team and the Policy, Information and Change team to monitor progress of responding to and resolving data quality issues.

## Programme next steps

- 3.28 As mentioned above, senior leaders presented a revised financial and delivery model to the DfE at the end of October 2024 centred around the objectives, supported by a number of key projects.
- 3.29 If the DfE feel reassured by the revised model, we will come out of the Enhanced Monitoring and Support (EMS) programme and Safety Valve payments will be re-established.
- 3.30 Prioritisation and Focus: The programme will concentrate on improving EHCP processing times and expanding local provision. As part of the Inclusive Practices work strand, a full SEND end to end review will be undertaken that will look at the whole SEND system and service improvements, as well as how best to use the resources available.
- 3.31 Stakeholder Engagement: A priority will be to enhance communication with parents, schools, and other stakeholders to ensure transparency, build trust and get the buy in from stakeholders to any proposed changes.
- 3.32 How will we measure success?



**Address data quality**



**Build data reports using Metabase /CACI**



**Develop Inclusion Dashboard for Local Area Partnership**



**Agree KPIs and metrics for each delivery workstream**



**Financial tracking**



**Trajectory monitoring and management**

## 4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Not continuing with the Safety Valve Programme would place the Local Authority in an even more challenging financial position.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The main risk against this budget remains the rising number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). There also remains the risk of rising inflation prices for SEND provision and settings where provisions are also seeking over inflationary prices to deal with pressures. However, this can be partly mitigated by strengthening effective commissioning arrangements.

- 5.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes the current position of the delivery of the Safety Valve Programme including key risks and financial position and feel reassured the 'Inclusion for All' framework and reset governance arrangements will ensure robust financial and performance monitoring against the Safety Valve agreement conditions moving forwards, once renegotiated.

## 6. Significant Implications

### 6.1 Finance Implications

A cumulative DSG deficit of £40.015m has been brought forward into 2024-25. To the end of September, the reported net DSG forecast is £11.730m. Work is underway to remodel demand and develop new approaches to manage costs whilst meeting the increase level of need. Escalating Deficit: If the council does not adhere to the commitments outlined in the Safety Valve agreement, the SEND budget deficit may continue to grow. This could result in the withdrawal of future financial support from the DfE, leaving the council to cover the deficit from its own budget, which could strain other essential services.

### 6.2 Legal Implications

If is unable to meet its statutory requirements for supporting children and young people with SEND, the council could face legal challenges from parents and carers.

### 6.3 Risk Implications

Community and Stakeholder Trust: The council's reputation may suffer if the Safety Valve agreement is not successful.

Operational Risk - Service Delivery: Inability to manage the agreement could lead to unmet needs and poorer outcomes for these children and young people. Delays in interventions or reduced access to specialist provisions could further exacerbate these risks.

### 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The Safety Valve Programme is intended to improve early support, more timely assessments and increase access to specialist local education placements wherever possible, and as such should improve equality for all children and young people with SEND.

### 6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key decisions only)

## 7. Source Documents

It is a legal requirement for the following to be completed by the report author.

### 7.1 None

## Finance Monitoring Report – October 2024

To: Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Date: 26 November 2024

From: Executive Director of Children, Education and Families  
Executive Director of Finance and Resources  
Director of Public Health

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not Applicable

Executive Summary: This report provides Committee with the October 2024 Finance Monitoring Report for Children, Education and Families.

Recommendation: The Children and Young People Committee are asked to note the report.

Officer contact:

Name: Martin Wade  
Post: Strategic Finance Manager  
Email: [martin.wade@cambridgehire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.wade@cambridgehire.gov.uk)

## 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1 This regular financial monitoring report provides the financial position for Children, Education and Families, enabling members to be aware of, and to scrutinise, the delivery of the business plan for 2024-25.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Finance Monitoring Reports (FMR) are produced monthly, except for April, by all services. They report on a range of financial information to enable a view of each service's financial position to be taken.
- 2.2 Budgets for services are agreed by Full Council in the business plan in February of each year and can be amended by budget virements. In particular, the FMR provides a revenue budget forecast showing the current projection of whether services will be over or underspent for the year against those budgets.
- 2.3 The detailed FMR for Children, Education and Families (CEF) is attached at Appendix A. As noted previously the budgets within Appendix 1 are now being shown gross and net, to provide details of any income or grant funding associated with each policy line, and to align with the presentation within in the business plan.
- 2.4 The table below provides a summary of the budget within CEF, with further detail being available in Appendix A:

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous) £000	Service Area	Net Budget 2024/25 £000	Actual to end of October £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %
6,926	Children, Education and Families - Non-DSG	148,967	69,922	7,431	5%
11,730	Children, Education and Families - DSG	0	2,696	18,427	0%

- 2.5 The table below provides a summary of the budgets within the Adults and Public Health FMR which come under the responsibility of the CYP:

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous) £000	Service Area	Net Budget 2024/25 £000	Actual to end of October £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %
0	Children's Commissioning - Staffing	1,348	862	0	0.0%
0	<b>Adults, Health and Commissioning Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous) £000	Service Area	Net Budget 2024/25 £000	Actual to end of October £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %
0	Children Health - Main	9,564	4,795	0	0%
0	Children Health - Other	957	422	0	0%
<b>0</b>	<b>Children Health Total</b>	<b>10,521</b>	<b>5,216</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

### 3. Main Issues

- 3.1 Further details of the CEF position, including explanatory narrative and relevant technical appendices can be seen in Appendix A.

### 4. Significant Implications

#### 4.1 Finance Implications

This report provides the latest financial information for CEF and so has a direct impact on scrutiny and wider decision making.

#### 4.2 Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.3 Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications (Key decisions only)

There are no significant implications within this category.

## 5. Source Documents

### 5.1 Source documents

As well as presentation of the FMR to the Committee the report will be made available online.

### 5.2 Location: [Finance monitoring reports - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Directorate: Children, Education and Families  
Subject: Finance Monitoring Report – October (period 7)

## Contents

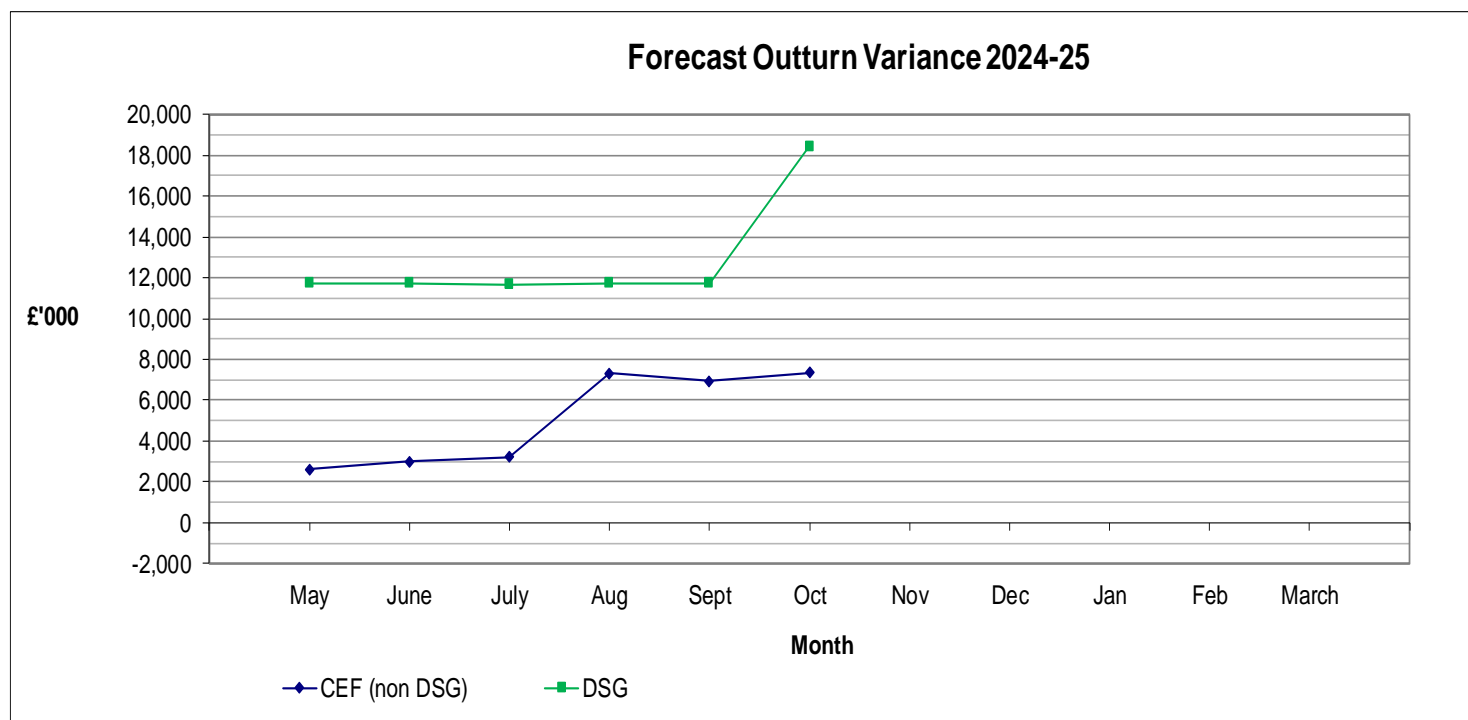
Section	Item	Description
1	Revenue Executive Summary	High level summary of information and narrative on key issues in revenue financial position
2	Capital Executive Summary	Summary of the position of the Capital programme within Children, Education and Families
3	Savings Tracker Summary	Summary of the latest position on delivery of savings
4	Technical Note	Explanation of technical items that are included in some reports
5	Key Activity Data	Performance information linking to financial position of main demand-led services
Appx 1a	Service Level Financial Information	Detailed financial tables for Children, Education and Families main budget headings
Appx 1b	Service Level Financial Information	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) financial tables for Children, Education and Families main budget headings
Appx 2	Service Commentaries	Detailed notes on revenue financial position of services that have a significant variance against budget
Appx 3	Capital Appendix	This contains more detailed information about the capital programme, including funding sources and variances from planned spend.
<i>The following appendices are included quarterly as the information does not change as regularly:</i>		
Appx 4	Savings Tracker	Each quarter, the Council's savings tracker is produced to give an update of the position of savings agreed in the Business Plan.
Appx 5	Technical Appendix	Each quarter, this will contain technical financial information showing: Grant income received Budget virements Earmarked & Capital reserves
Appx 6	Maintained Schools	Each quarter, this will contain summary financial information showing: Numbers of maintained school with deficit budgets Revised maintained school balance forecasts

# 1. Revenue Executive Summary

## 1.1 Overall Position

At the end of October 2024, Children, Education and Families is projected to be £7,431k overspent on core funded activities and £18,427k overspent on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) activities.

## 1.2 Summary of Revenue position by Directorate



### 1.2.1 Childrens, Education and Families – Non DSG

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous) £000	Service Area	Gross Budget £000	Income Budget £000	Net Budget £000	Actual to date £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %
-750	Executive Director	3,532	-99	3,433	567	-1,360	-39.6%
0	Quality Assurance & Practice Improvement	2,919	-312	2,607	1,295	0	0.0%
-400	Fostering, Adoption & Corporate Parenting	29,512	-9,256	20,255	15,046	-650	-3.2%
782	Targeted Support & Childrens Social Care	28,771	-4,212	24,559	13,599	682	2.8%
2,863	Education	71,094	-15,325	55,769	16,028	1,329	2.4%
4,000	Commissioning	33,986	-715	33,271	19,538	7,000	21.0%
430	LDP and Prevention	9,864	-791	9,073	6,751	430	4.7%
<b>6,926</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>179,677</b>	<b>-30,710</b>	<b>148,967</b>	<b>72,824</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
0	Schools	0	0	0	-2,902	0	0.0%
<b>6,926</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>179,677</b>	<b>-30,710</b>	<b>148,967</b>	<b>69,922</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>5.0%</b>

### 1.2.2 Children, Education and Families – DSG

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Service Area	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual to date  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
14,000	Education (DSG)	117,721	-805	116,916	68,708	20,697	17.7%
0	Commissioning (DSG)	245	0	245	123	0	0.0%
<b>14,000</b>	<b>Total Expenditure (DSG)</b>	<b>117,966</b>	<b>-805</b>	<b>117,161</b>	<b>68,830</b>	<b>20,697</b>	<b>17.7%</b>
-2,270	Schools (DSG)	537,613	0	537,613	112,736	-2,270	-0.4%
0	Financing (DSG)	304,558	-959,333	-654,774	-178,871	0	0.0%
<b>11,730</b>	<b>Total (DSG)</b>	<b>960,138</b>	<b>-960,138</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,696</b>	<b>18,427</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

## 1.3 Significant Issues

The overall position for Children, Education and Families non-DSG budgets to the end of October 2024 is a forecast overspend of £7.431m.

**Executive Director** – The revised forecast against the Executive Director budget is a £1.36m underspend. The vacancy factor for Children Education Families (CEF) is currently forecast to overachieve by £750k. Following the confirmation of the national pay award, and the decision by Staffing and Appeals Committee for locally determined pay scales, there is an underspend of £610k against the allowance made in the budget for pay inflation.

**Children in Care Placements** –The forecast for children's external placements has increased to £7m. This is primarily driven by an increase in the number of young people requiring care, rising placement costs and limited provider availability of suitable providers. To manage this, we are monitoring costs through weekly package reviews and implementing strategic initiatives such as the Sufficiency Strategy. We are engaging with providers to secure more sustainable and economical placements for children. There continues to be increasing demand of statutory care placements for children that are unable to remain in the family care setting affected by extra familial harm (risks outside the home); acute mental health needs and those are acutely affected by their neuro developmental needs resulting in family breakdowns.

**Fostering, Adoption and Corporate Parenting** – The net underspend for Fostering, Adoption and Corporate Parenting has increased to £650k. This is due to receiving an increase in the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children grant funding than anticipated and a decrease in the spend for Special Guardianship Order allowances.

**Targeted Support and Childrens Social Care** – The net forecast overspend for Targeted Support and Childrens Social Care has reduced to £682k. Continuing reliance on agency staff within the Integrated Front Door (IFD), Assessment and Family Support & Safeguarding teams. This has been offset in part by the application of one-off grant carry forward and the cessation of previous Family Safeguarding contracts. As part of the business planning process for 2025-26 options to support the workforce in these areas have been developed based on demand analysis and forecasted improvement activity. In addition, the IFD/Assessment service will be receiving 6 newly qualified social workers (SWs) and 3 International SWs in September / October as part of its effort to recruit more permanent social workers. We are continuing to engage with our internal recruitment team to bolster our permanent

recruitment drive and campaigns. We are also ensuring that any requests for agency staff are being rigorously reviewed at the Children's Expenditure Panel.

**Strategic Management - Education** – A revised underspend of £1.5m is being reported to reflect the continuation of the Household Support Fund which has released core funding previously identified to provide Free School Meal vouchers during school holidays, which will instead be funded from the Household Support Fund grant.

**Education** – A revised net forecast pressure of £68k is being reported for Education services (excluding Home to School Transport). A reduction in the number of recipients has resulted in a forecast underspend on historic teachers' pensions of £450k. This is being offset by pressures within the ICT service (£172K) and SEND Specialist Services (£350k) as well as other small variances.

The SEND Specialist Services pressure is due to the continued pressures within the Educational Psychology service. The service continues to experience increasing demand which cannot be met from within the substantive team and is therefore being met through use of locum Education Psychologists. This is as a direct result of the increase in requests for Education Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) that is impacting on all SEND services. This is a national trend and is not isolated to Cambridgeshire. The service is continuing to consider the best value approach to meeting the increasing demand. The current forecasting suggests this position will worsen by year end due to the demand outweighing capacity.

To drive down demand for EHCPs and reduce spend, a SEND recovery plan has been agreed within an Inclusion for All 0-25 programme that will strengthen the focus on Inclusive Practice through an end-to-end review of SEND. This will enable a review of resources against the pressure points in practice to reconfigure spend so that there is funding in the right places. In scope of this work, all non-statutory provision across the wider Education department will be reviewed to ensure the gaps in capacity that is driving the reliance on high-cost locums is reduced. The strengthened governance within the Inclusion for All programme will accelerate the pace and tighten the grip and focus of this work. However, the scale of the issues is large, and the changes implemented are in a dynamic environment where demand is outstripping the cultural shift in practice to generate change.

The ICT Service is forecasting an overspend of £172k as a result of the continued reduction in spend by schools on ICT hardware due to increasing financial challenges. The service is looking at ways to mitigate this overspend and amend the delivery model for future years.

**Home to School Transport** – The Home to School Transport Service continues to forecast a £2.7m overspend for the 24-25 Financial Year. This is because of unforeseen growth in demand, for example an additional 2,000 routes being implemented for the 24-25 Academic Year across just mainstream services.

The demand underpinning escalated transport costs is driven by a combination of a surge in demand for children and young people meeting the criteria for transport (largely through the growth in children with SEND) and the costs associated with meeting this demand where the transport itself is costing more to deliver. To drive down these costs, a transformation programme is in place that is aiming to reduce demand by a consistent application of The Home to School Transport Policy, alongside a review of contractual arrangements and routes.

A lack of local special school places has contributed to the increase in transport demand as children are more often requiring transport to a specialist private school that can meet their needs.

Despite changes in the transport team structure and processes, there is a strong focus on service review to mitigate continued overspends. This is to include processes for earlier forecasting, transport procurement plans and utilising the opportunity of the pending consultancy review.

**Children's Disability Service** - The 0-25 Disability Service continues to forecast an overspend of £430k due to the increase in demand and need across the direct payment budget, community support and Camplay holiday clubs, as well as a budget pressure created by the intensive therapeutic support hub (ITSH).

**Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)** – Appendix 1b provides a detailed breakdown of all DSG spend within Children, Education & Families Services. The budget figures are gross of recoupment for academies and High Needs place funding.

A cumulative DSG deficit of £40.015m has been brought forward into 2024-25. To the end of October, the revised reported net DSG forecast is £18.427m. Work is ongoing to remodel demand and develop new approaches to manage costs whilst meeting the increase level of need.

**Maintained Schools** – An increasing number of schools have submitted deficit budgets for the 2024-25 financial year. Work is currently underway to review revised deficit recovery plans and work with schools to develop further options for sustainable budgets in future years. Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee have now approved delegated responsibility to the Executive Director: Finance and Resources to be able to approve license deficit applications for schools with deficits in excess of 5% of their annual school budget.

## 2. Capital Executive Summary

At the end of October 2024, the capital programme forecast underspend is zero. The level of slippage and underspend in 2024-25 is currently anticipated to be £6,048k and as such has not yet exceeded the Capital Variation Budget. A forecast outturn will not be reported unless this happens.

## 3. Savings Tracker Summary

The savings trackers are produced quarterly to monitor delivery of savings against agreed plans.

## 4. Technical note

On a quarterly basis, a technical financial appendix will be included as Appendix 5. This appendix covers:

- Grants that have been received by the service, and where these have been more or less than expected.
- Budget movements (virements) into or out of the directorate from other directorates, to show why the budget might be different from that agreed by the Full Council.
- Service earmarked reserves – funds held for specific purposes that may be drawn down in-year or carried-forward – including use of funds and forecast draw-down.

## 5. Key Activity Data

5.1 Key activity data to the end of October 2024 for **Children in Care Placements** is shown below:

	BUDGET				ACTUAL (October 2024)				OUTTURN		
Service Type	No of placements Budgeted	Annual Budget	No. of weeks funded	Average weekly cost per head	Snapshot of No. of placements Oct 2024	Yearly Average	Forecast Outturn	Average weekly cost per head	Yearly Average budgeted placements	Net Variance to Budget	Average weekly cost diff +/-
Residential - disability	4	£1,462k	52	£7,028	6	5.75	£2,184k	£8,338	1.75	£722k	£1,310
Residential - secure accommodation	1	£1,396k	52	£26,852	0	0.00	£k	£0	-1.00	-£1,396k	-£26,852
Residential schools	6	£662k	52	£2,122	6	5.26	£876k	£3,143	-0.74	£214k	£1,021
Residential homes	51	£15,421k	52	£5,815	56	53.89	£16,577k	£6,894	2.89	£1,156k	£1,080
Independent Fostering	151	£7,346k	52	£936	190	181.10	£9,596k	£1,079	30.10	£2,250k	£144
Tier 4 Step down	1	£348k	52	£6,695	0	0.00	£k	£0	-1.00	-£348k	-£6,695
Supported Living	2	£776k	52	£7,460	1	0.91	£554k	£7,075	-1.09	-£222k	-£384
Supported Accommodation 16+	33	£3,286k	52	£1,915	30	12.26	£3,274k	£2,407	-20.74	-£12k	£493
Unregulated	5	£101k	52	£387	0	1.84	£50k	£374	-3.16	-£51k	-£13
Growth/Replacement	2	£1,664k	52	£16,002	8	4.60	£6,556k	£21,695	2.60	£4,892k	£5,693
Additional one off budget/actuals	0	£k	0	£0	0	0.00	£k	£0	-	£k	£0
Mitigations required	0	£k	0	£0	0	0.00	-£1,205k	£0	-	-£1,205k	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>£32,462k</b>			<b>297</b>	<b>265.61</b>	<b>£38,462k</b>		<b>9.61</b>	<b>£6,000k</b>	
In-house Fostering	170	£4,224k	56	£444	165	151.22	£4,016k	£473	-18.78	-£208k	£29
In-house fostering - Reg 24	35	£400k	56	£204	23	33.25	£336k	£212	-1.75	-£64k	£8
Family & Friends Foster Carers	20	£400k	52	£385	34	30.05	£696k	£412	10.05	£296k	£28
Supported Lodgings	0	£k	0	£0	2	1.22	£18k	£0	0.00	-£5k	£0
Mitigations / growth							-£19k			-£19k	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>£5,062k</b>			<b>224</b>	<b>215.74</b>	<b>£5,047k</b>		<b>-15.16</b>	<b>£k</b>	
Adoption Allowances	80	£991k	52	£238	76	77.11	£809k	£201	-2.89	-£181k	-£37
Special Guardianship Orders	292	£2,482k	52	£163	270	277.79	£2,090k	£144	-14.21	-£392k	-£19
Child Arrangement Orders	41	£350k	52	£164	18	37.55	£263k	£134	-3.45	-£87k	-£30
Mitigations / growth							£260k			£260k	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>£3,822k</b>			<b>364</b>	<b>392.45</b>	<b>£3,422k</b>		<b>-20.55</b>	<b>-£400k</b>	
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>£41,346k</b>			<b>885</b>	<b>873.80</b>	<b>£46,931k</b>		<b>-26.10</b>	<b>£5,600k</b>	

NOTES: In house fostering payments fund 56 weeks as carers receive two additional weeks payment during the summer holidays and one additional week each for Christmas and birthday.

## Appendix 1a – Children, Education and Families Detailed Financial Information (non DSG)

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Committee	Note	Budget Line	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual to date  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
<b>Executive Director</b>									
-750	CYP	1	Executive Director	3,532	-99	3,433	567	-1,360	-40%
0	CYP		Central Financing	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>-750</b>			<b>Executive Director Total</b>	<b>3,532</b>	<b>-99</b>	<b>3,433</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>-1,360</b>	<b>-40%</b>
<b>Service Director – Quality Assurance &amp; Practice Improvement</b>									
0	CYP		Quality Assurance & Practice Improvement	2,919	-312	2,607	1,295	0	0%
<b>0</b>			<b>Service Director – Quality Assurance &amp; Practice Improvement Total</b>	<b>2,919</b>	<b>-312</b>	<b>2,607</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Service Director – Fostering, Adoption &amp; Corporate Parenting</b>									
0			Fostering and Supervised Contact Services	10,689	-396	10,293	6,079	0	0%
0		2	Corporate Parenting	12,566	-8,168	4,398	6,013	-250	-6%
-400	CYP	3	Adoption	6,257	-693	5,564	2,954	-400	-7%
<b>-400</b>			<b>Service Director – Fostering, Adoption &amp; Corporate Parenting Total</b>	<b>29,512</b>	<b>-9,256</b>	<b>20,255</b>	<b>15,046</b>	<b>-650</b>	<b>-3%</b>
<b>Service Director – Targeted Support &amp; Childrens Social Care</b>									
-375		4	Strategic Management - Children's Social Care	3,632	0	3,632	1,807	-375	-10%
1,600		5	Integrated Front Door	4,398	-208	4,190	3,634	1,500	36%
-329		6	Family Support & Safeguarding	4,641	-175	4,466	2,186	-329	-7%
0			Youth Offending Service	4,099	-1,331	2,768	1,965	-0	0%
-114		7	Targeted Support Service	9,675	-376	9,299	5,403	-114	-1%
0	CYP		Support to Parents	2,326	-2,122	204	-1,396	0	0%
<b>782</b>			<b>Service Director – Targeted Support &amp; Childrens Social Care Total</b>	<b>28,771</b>	<b>-4,212</b>	<b>24,559</b>	<b>13,599</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>3%</b>

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Committee	Note	Budget Line	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual to date  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
<b>Service Director Education</b>									
0		8	Strategic Management – Education	3,176	-61	3,115	2,988	-1,500	-48%
31			Early Years Service	4,670	-4,057	612	-1,548	33	5%
-0			School Improvement Service	1,457	-607	850	432	0	0%
-66			Virtual School	1,976	-1,501	475	712	-66	-14%
36			Outdoor Education (includes Grafham Water)	2,304	-2,381	-77	-374	0	0%
-25			Cambridgeshire Music	2,826	-2,851	-25	465	-25	-100%
172		9	ICT Service (Education)	1,632	-1,832	-200	-423	172	86%
-350		10	Redundancy & Teachers Pensions	4,750	-579	4,171	3,092	-450	-11%
<u>SEND Specialist Services (0 - 25 years)</u>									
250	CYP	11	SEND Specialist Services	4,962	-79	4,883	3,270	350	7%
0	CYP		High Needs Top Up Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0%
0	CYP		Alternative Provision and Inclusion	621	0	621	182	0	0%
<b>250</b>			<b>SEND Specialist Services (0 - 25 years) Total</b>	<b>5,583</b>	<b>-79</b>	<b>5,504</b>	<b>3,453</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>6%</b>
<u>0-19 Place Planning &amp; Organisation Service</u>									
55	CYP		0-19 Organisation & Planning	1,505	-980	525	262	55	10%
-0	CYP		Education Capital	199	0	199	-9,753	-0	0%
2,090	CYP	12	Home to School Transport – Special	25,260	-180	25,080	9,964	2,090	8%
-0	CYP		Children in Care Transport	2,165	0	2,165	807	-0	0%
671	CYP	13	Home to School Transport – Mainstream	13,591	-216	13,374	5,953	671	5%
<b>2,816</b>			<b>0-19 Place Planning &amp; Organisation Service Total</b>	<b>42,720</b>	<b>-1,376</b>	<b>41,343</b>	<b>7,232</b>	<b>2,816</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>2,863</b>			<b>Service Director Education Total</b>	<b>71,094</b>	<b>-15,325</b>	<b>55,769</b>	<b>16,028</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Service Director Commissioning</b>									
4,000	CYP	14	Children in Care Placements	33,157	-695	32,462	19,317	7,000	22%
0	CYP		Commissioning Services	829	-20	809	221	0	0%
<b>4,000</b>			<b>Service Director Commissioning Total</b>	<b>33,986</b>	<b>-715</b>	<b>33,271</b>	<b>19,538</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>21%</b>

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Committee	Note	Budget Line	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual to date  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
<b>Service Director LDP and Prevention</b>									
430	CYP	15	Children's Disability Service	9,864	-791	9,073	6,751	430	5%
<b>430</b>			<b>Service Director LDP and Prevention Total</b>	<b>9,864</b>	<b>-791</b>	<b>9,073</b>	<b>6,751</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>6,926</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>179,677</b>	<b>-30,710</b>	<b>148,967</b>	<b>72,824</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Schools</b>									
0	CYP		Primary and Secondary Schools	0	0	0	1	0	0%
0	CYP		Schools Financing	0	0	0	-2,546	0	0%
0	CYP		Pools and Contingencies	0	0	0	-357	0	0%
<b>0</b>			<b>Schools Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2,902</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>6,926</b>			<b>Overall Children, Education and Families Total</b>	<b>179,677</b>	<b>-30,710</b>	<b>148,967</b>	<b>69,922</b>	<b>7,431</b>	<b>5%</b>

## Appendix 1b – Children, Education and Families Detailed Financial Information (DSG)

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Committee	Note	Budget Line	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual to date  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
<b>Service Director Education</b>									
0	CYP	16	Early Years Service	2,626	0	2,626	1,448	150	6%
0	CYP		Virtual School	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<u>SEND Specialist Services (0 - 25 years)</u>									
-0	CYP		SEND Specialist Services	7,250	-10	7,240	4,554	-0	0%
0	CYP		Funding to Special Schools and Units	47,798	0	47,798	19,684	0	0%
0	CYP		High Needs Top Up Funding	37,817	0	37,817	18,543	0	0%
-0	CYP		SEN Placements	20,290	-588	19,702	14,008	-0	0%
-0	CYP		Out of School Tuition	7,035	0	7,035	3,875	-0	0%
0	CYP		Alternative Provision and Inclusion	7,085	-101	6,984	4,312	-0	0%
14,000	CYP	17	SEND Financing – DSG	-14,686	0	-14,686	549	20,570	140%
<b>14,000</b>			<b>SEND Specialist Services (0 - 25 years) Total</b>	<b>112,590</b>	<b>-699</b>	<b>111,891</b>	<b>65,524</b>	<b>20,570</b>	<b>18%</b>
<u>0-19 Place Planning &amp; Organisation Service</u>									
0	CYP		0-19 Organisation & Planning	2,442	-106	2,336	1,698	-23	-1%
0	CYP		Home to School Transport – Special	63	0	63	37	0	0%
<b>0</b>			<b>0-19 Place Planning &amp; Organisation Service Total</b>	<b>2,505</b>	<b>-106</b>	<b>2,399</b>	<b>1,735</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>14,000</b>			<b>Service Director Education Total</b>	<b>117,721</b>	<b>-805</b>	<b>116,916</b>	<b>68,708</b>	<b>20,697</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Service Director Commissioning</b>									
0	CYP		Commissioning Services	245	0	245	123	0	0%
<b>0</b>			<b>Service Director Commissioning Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>14,000</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>117,966</b>	<b>-805</b>	<b>117,161</b>	<b>68,830</b>	<b>20,697</b>	<b>18%</b>

Forecast Outturn Variance (Previous)  £000	Committee	Note	Budget Line	Gross Budget  £000	Income Budget  £000	Net Budget  £000	Actual  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %
<b>Schools</b>									
0	CYP		Primary and Secondary Schools	473,785	0	473,785	76,660	0	0%
0	CYP		Nursery Schools and PVI	60,921	0	60,921	35,609	0	0%
-2,270	CYP	18	Schools Financing	2,907	0	2,907	467	-2,270	-78%
0	CYP		Pools and Contingencies	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>-2,270</b>			<b>Schools Total</b>	<b>537,613</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>537,613</b>	<b>112,736</b>	<b>-2,270</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Financing</b>									
0	CYP		Financing DSG	304,558	-959,333	-654,774	-178,871	0	0%
<b>0</b>			<b>Financing Total</b>	<b>304,558</b>	<b>-959,333</b>	<b>-654,774</b>	<b>-178,871</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>11,730</b>			<b>Overall Children, Education and Families DSG Total</b>	<b>960,138</b>	<b>-960,138</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,696</b>	<b>18,427</b>	<b>0%</b>

## Appendix 2 – Service Commentaries on Forecast Outturn Position

Narrative is given below where there is an adverse/positive variance greater than 2% of annual budget or £100,000 whichever is greater for a service area.

Note	Commentary vs previous month	Service Area / Budget Line	Net Budget £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %	Commentary
1	Previous	Executive Director CEF	3,433	-1,360	-40%	The Vacancy Factor for Children Education Families (CEF) is currently forecast to overachieve by £750k. Following the confirmation of the national pay award, and the decision by Staffing and Appeals Committee for locally determined pay scales, there is an underspend of £610k against the allowance made in the budget for pay inflation
2	Previous	Corporate Parenting	4,398	-250	-6%	Corporate Parenting is forecasted to overspend by £100k due to agency staff usage. This is offset by £350k underspend from the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) grant. Primarily due to receiving more grant funding than anticipated for FY 23-24, as well as additional income due for National Transfer Scheme Transfers.
3	Previous	Adoption	5,564	-400	-7%	The Adoption Service forecast is showing a £400k underspend. This is due to an underspend in Special Guardianship Order allowances.
4	Previous	Strategic Management - Children's Social Care	3,632	-375	-10%	One off underspend within the Strategic Management budget. Committed to be used in FY 2025-26.
5	Previous	Integrated Front Door	4,190	1,500	36%	The Integrated Front Door and Assessment service is forecasted to overspend by £1.5m in FY 2024-25. Additional agency staff have been recruited in MASH and Assessment's whilst the current structures are being reviewed. There are high levels of agency staff both within and over budgeted establishment, which is more expensive than employing permanent staff.
6	Previous	Family Safeguarding	4,466	-329	-7%	The Family Safeguarding budget is forecasted to underspend by £329k due to grant carry forward, coupled with 2 of the Family Safeguarding model contracts not being renewed in FY 24-25.
7	Previous	Targeted Support Service	9,299	-114	-1%	Targeted Support Service is forecasting an underspend of £114k due to the ending of a contract and non-salary underspend
8	New	Strategic Management - Education	3,115	-1,500	-48%	Underspend of £1.5m to reflect the continuation of the Household Support Fund which has released core funding previously identified to

Note	Commentary vs previous month	Service Area / Budget Line	Net Budget £000	Forecast Outturn Variance £000	Forecast Outturn Variance %	Commentary
						provide Free School Meal vouchers during school holidays which will instead be funded from the Household Support Fund grant.
9	Previous	ICT Service (Education)	-200	172	86%	The £172k forecast position is a result in the continued reduction in spend by schools on ICT hardware due to increasing financial challenges. The service is looking at ways to mitigate this overspend and amend the delivery model for future years.
10	Previous	Redundancy & Teachers Pensions	4,171	-450	-11%	Based on the reduction in the number of eligible recipients an opening forecast underspend of £450k is being reported for teachers pensions.
11	Previous	SEND Specialist Services	4,883	350	7%	The Education Psychology service is currently forecasting an overspend of £350k. The service continues to experience increasing demand which cannot be met from within the substantive team and is therefore being met through use of locum Education Psychologists. This is as a direct result of the increase in requests for Education Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) that is impacting on all SEND services.
12	Previous	Home to School Transport – Special	25,080	2,090	8%	The £2.7m forecast overspend across mainstream and SEND transport is a result of a continuing increase in demand and complexity of need.
13	Previous	Home to School Transport – Mainstream	13,374	671	5%	
14	Updated	Children in Care Placements	32,462	7,000	22%	The increased £7m forecast overspend is primarily due to a small number of young people in very high-cost placements. If forecast to year-end, these placements would result in a more significant overspend position, however, the service is working hard with relevant agencies to secure placements at more manageable costs and therefore we do not expect these to continue for the full year.
15	Previous	Disability Service	9,073	430	5%	The 0-25 Disability Service continues to forecast an overspend of £430k which predominantly reflects the increase in demand and need across the direct payment budget, community support and Camplay holiday clubs. In addition to this there has been pressure created by the intensive therapeutic support hub (ITSH) which is no longer being implemented.
16	New	Early Years Service – DSG	2,626	150	6%	Estimation of overspend on Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF), which is based on actuals and existing commitment records

Note	Commentary vs previous month	Service Area / Budget Line	Net Budget  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  £000	Forecast Outturn Variance  %	Commentary
						for the Summer 2024 and Autumn 2024 terms respectively. Estimations of expenditure in the Spring term have been created using last year's take-up. Growing complexity of need is seeing high levels of demand for SENIF and delays in finalising EHCPs is meaning this is having to be funded for longer.
17	Previous	SEND Financing – DSG	-14,686	20,570	140%	The revised forecast DSG deficit is reflective of continuing pressures and increasing demand within the High Needs Block (HNB).
18	Previous	Schools Financing - DSG	2,907	-2,270	-78%	Budgeted underspend on the DSG Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) to mitigate HNB pressures.

## Appendix 3 – Capital Position

### 3.1 Capital Expenditure

Original 2024-25 Budget as per Business Plan £000	Committee	Scheme Category	Total Scheme Revised Budget £000	Total Scheme Forecast Variance £000	Budget Carried-forward 2024-25 £000	Budget Re-phasing 2024-25 £000	Additional/Reduction in Funding 2024-25 £000	Revised Budget for 2024-25 £000	Actual Spend (Oct) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance (Oct) £000
17,767	CYP	Basic Need - Primary	119,409	0	1,018	-995	0	17,790	10,021	-2,753
43,433	CYP	Basic Need - Secondary	173,348	-416	8,102	-17,566	0	33,969	21,275	-616
1,040	CYP	Basic Need - Early Years	8,531	0	588	0	0	1,628	318	-978
2,435	CYP	Adaptations	11,473	0	1,228	-890	0	2,773	1,180	-1,245
3,250	CYP	Conditions Maintenance	25,225	0	507	0	1,225	4,982	3,321	0
780	CYP	Devolved Formula Capital	6,999	0	2,079	0	-21	2,838	-5	0
20,951	CYP	Specialist Provision	89,120	0	597	-5,221	416	16,743	10,265	-456
150	CYP	Site Acquisition and Development	750	0	0	0	0	150	0	0
550	CYP	Temporary Accommodation	6,300	0	0	0	0	550	118	0
1,749	CYP	Children Support Services	9,521	0	0	0	0	1,749	2	0
-16,707	CYP	Capital Variation	-46,817	0	0	4,359	0	-12,348	0	6,048
1,213	CYP	Capitalised Interest	2,844	0	0	0	0	1,213	0	0
0	CYP	Environmental fund Transfer	-3,499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>76,611</b>		<b>Total CEF Capital Spending</b>	<b>403,204</b>	<b>-416</b>	<b>14,119</b>	<b>-20,313</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>72,037</b>	<b>46,496</b>	<b>0</b>

There are six schemes with significant variances (>£250k) either due to changes in phasing or changes in overall scheme costs to be reported this month.

Ref	Directorate/ Committee	Commentary vs previous month	Scheme	Scheme Budget £m	Budget for 2024-25 £m	Forecast Outturn Variance £m	Cause	Commentary
1			Basic Need - Primary					
1a	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Littleport	6.0	4.2	-2.7	Phasing	Planning delays and authorisation for the project has caused delays. Start on site now expected early January 2025 with expected completion late October 25. Kitchen works carried out in holidays in 2025.
2			Basic Need - Secondary					
2a	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Darwin Green (North West Fringe) secondary	34.66	1.0	-0.750	Phasing	Slippage due to lack of progress in design. Anticipated that only 75% of MS2 would be completed by 31 <sup>st</sup> March. No tender issued for contractor appointment as yet, Scheme will be delivered for 2027 completion.
2b	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Witchford Village College	1.380	1.316	-0.416	Underspend	Underspend due to tender price lower than planned.
2c	CEF CYP	New	Alconbury secondary	37,027	1,500	0.350	Phasing	Increase is due to MS2 report cost plan received at the end of September 2024 including costs of £350K for UXO survey and other fees.
3			Basic Need - Early Years					
3a	CEF CYP	Previous Month	LA Early Years Provision	8.531	1.628	-0.978	Phasing	Teversham scheme delayed due to planning and conditions. Start date tentatively agreed January 2025. Tender costs of construction works are lower than estimated.
4			Adaptations					
4a	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Townley Primary	1.60	1.396	-0.746	Phasing	Delays due to highways work required and the timing of this. Further slippage due to delay in authorising the project spend. Completion now slipped to July 2025
4b	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Willingham Primary	.892	.40	-0.35	Phasing	Design work has not yet completed and has been slower than originally anticipated, start on site delayed until next financial year.
8			Specialist Provision					

Ref	Directorate/ Committee	Commentary vs previous month	Scheme	Scheme Budget  £m	Budget for 2024-25  £m	Forecast Outturn Variance  £m	Cause	Commentary
8a	CEF CYP	Previous Month	Highfield Littleport	8.0	2.8	-0.6	Phasing	Slippage due to revised start on site from November 2024 to January 2025 due to redesign, omission of alterations and for increased externals due to requirement for turning circle.

### 3.2 Capital Variations Budget

Variation budgets are set annually and reflect an estimate of the average variation experienced across all capital schemes, and reduce the overall borrowing required to finance our capital programme. There are typically delays in some form across the capital programme due to unforeseen events, but we cannot project this for each individual scheme. We therefore budget centrally for some level of delay. Any known delays are budgeted for and reported at scheme level. If forecast underspends are reported, these are offset with a forecast outturn for the variation budget, leading to a balanced outturn overall up to the point when rephasing exceeds this budget.

### 3.3 Capital Funding

Original 2024-25 Funding Allocation as per Business Plan  £000	Source of Funding	Budget Carried- forward 2024-25  £000	Budget Revisions 2024-25  £000	Revised Budget for 2024-25  £000	Forecast Spend - Outturn (Oct)  £000	Forecast Variance - Outturn (Oct)  £000
12,479	Basic Need	0	0	12,479	12,479	0
3,450	Capital maintenance	2,052	375	5,877	4,982	-895
780	Devolved Formula Capital	2,079	-21	2,838	2,838	0
0	Schools Capital	0	0	0	0	0
20,354	S106 contributions	21,619	-14,095	27,878	27,878	0
9,312	Other Specific Grants	797	-5,155	4,954	3,975	-979
0	Other Contributions	0	0	0	0	0
0	Other Revenue Contributions	0	0	0	0	0
30,236	Prudential Borrowing	1,518	-2,884	28,870	30,744	1,874
0	Prudential Borrowing (Repayable)	-13,946	3,087	-10,859	-10,859	0
<b>76,611</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>14,119</b>	<b>-18,693</b>	<b>72,037</b>	<b>72,037</b>	<b>0</b>

## Appendix 4 – SAVINGS TRACKER – CEF Quarter 2

Directorate	Committee	Type	Business Plan Reference	Title	Planned Savings 2024-25 £000	Forecast Savings £000	Variance from Plan £000	% Variance	RAG	Forecast Commentary
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.001	Children's Disability operational savings	-96	-96	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.003	Targeted Support operational savings	-65	-65	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.004	Family Safeguarding Service	-200	-200	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.005	Social Care and Education Transport	-582	0	582	100%	Black	Continuing increases in demand and complexity of need have result in additional cost pressures across transport budgets.
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.007	Children in Care Placements High-Cost Placements Review	-1,000	0	1,000	100%	Black	Despite efforts to drive down costs of high cost placements the budget is still showing a pressure relating to a small cohort of Young People who are unable to step down provision.
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.008	Children in Care Placements Unregulated Placements reduction in costs	-250	0	250	100%	Black	Despite efforts to drive down costs from unregistered placements the budget is still showing a pressure relating to a small cohort of Young People who are unable to step down from the current provision. These packages are reviewed weekly.
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.009	Early Years Service contract savings	-19	-19	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.010	Home to School Transport	-87	-87	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.011	Residential Strategy - Children in Care placements Saving	-435	0	435	100%	Black	Budget adjustments made based on investment and savings assuming a January 2025 start however project rescope and revised start date Jan 2026 which

										will need to be reflected in 25/26 Business Plan.
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.012	School Improvement Service operational savings	-49	-49	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 saving	A/R.6.013	Corporate Parenting	-200	-200	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2023-24 cfwd	A/R.6.255 (2023-24)	Children in Care Placements	-1,000	0	1,000	100%	Black	Despite efforts to drive down costs from unregistered placements the budget is still showing a pressure relating to a small cohort of Young People who present with complex needs and requires a high level of support.
CEF	CYP	2023-24 cfwd	A/R.6.255 (2023-24)	Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance	-45	-45	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 income	A/R.7.101	Early Years additional income	-4	-4	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 income	A/R.7.102	School Improvement Service	-47	0	47	100%	Black	Work is ongoing to consider further opportunities within the service to deliver.
CEF	CYP	2024-25 income	A/R.7.103	Children's Targeted Support	-15	-15	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 income	A/R.7.104	Children's Disability - increase in external income	-10	-10	0	0%	Green	On Track
CEF	CYP	2024-25 income	A/R.7.105	Educational Safeguarding additional income	-7	-7	0	0%	Green	On Track

## APPENDIX 5 – Technical Note

**5.1** The table below outlines the additional Children, Education and Families grant income, which is not built into base budgets.

Grant	Awarding Body	Amount £000
<b>Grants as per Business Plan</b>		
Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers	Home Office	7,040
Core Schools Budget	DfE	4,272
Supporting Families	Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC)	1,977
Early years Wraparound	DfE	1,944
Holiday Activity Fund (HAF)	DfE	1,928
Cambridgeshire Music Hub	Arts Council	1,049
Supported Accommodation Reforms Grant	DfE	809
Youth Offending Good Practice Grant	Youth Justice Board	709
Adoption Support Fund	DfE	625
Public Health	Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)	616
Staying Put	DfE	285
Virtual School	DfE	227
Personal Advisor Support to Care Leavers & Homelessness	DfE	176
Social Worker Apprenticeship	DfE	154
Turnaround Programme 2022-2025	Secretary of State for Justice	150
Leaving Care allowance - uplift	DfE	134
Crime and Disorder Reduction Grant	Police & Crime Commissioner	127
Non-material grants (+/- £160k)	Various	237
<b>Total Non-Baselined Grants 24-25</b>		<b>22,460</b>
Financing DSG	DfE	117,161
<b>Total Grant Funding 24-25</b>		<b>139,621</b>

The non-baselined grants are allocated across the Children, Education and Families directorates as follows:

Directorate	Grant Total £000
Children & Safeguarding	14,226
Education	7,618
Various (Public Health)	616
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,460</b>

## 5.2 Virements and Budget Reconciliation (Children, Education and Families)

(Virements between Children, Education and Families and other service blocks)

	Period	£000	Notes
<b>Budget as per Business Plan</b>		<b>148,900</b>	
Multiple Directorates (all)	Apr	14	Post BP, pre initial budget load adjustments
Multiple Directorates (all)	Apr	-200	Public Health Strategic Management in budget reduction 2023-24
Commissioning Services	May	194	Children's Advocacy new contract
Executive Director - CEF	May	73	Salary budget transferred from Adults Exec to Children Exec
Children's Centres Strategy	July	-200	Transfer contribution from PH reserves via Corporate to CEF
Children's Centres Strategy	Oct	200	Reversal of Transfer contribution from PH reserves via Corporate to CEF
Executive Director - CEF	Oct	-14	Adjust/Correct Public Health MoU funding
<b>Budget 24-25</b>		<b>148,967</b>	

### 5.3 Children, Education and Families Earmarked Reserve Schedule

Budget Heading	Opening Balance 2024-25 £000	Movements 2024-25 £000	Balance at Quarter 2 £000	Year End Forecasted Balance £000	Reserve Description
<b>Strategic Framework Priorities Reserves:</b>					
Transport invest to save	292	-16	277	129	To support programme of work to deliver savings in Social and Education Transport.
SAFE Project	96	0	96	-0	Partnership Development Approach to Data Analyst in respect of Extra Familial Harm & Exploitation
Cambs Art Reserve	65	0	65	55	Art Collection Restoration Fund. Providing cultural experiences for children and young people in Cambridgeshire.
Other investment reserves	241	0	241	158	Small grant balances
<b>Corporate risk reserves relating to services in this directorate:</b>					
Children's risk reserves	163	3,084	3,247	3,200	Reserve created in business planning for 2024-25 for children's placements cost risk; reserve is planned in to be used in 2025-26
Other risk reserves	1	0	1	0	Union reps funding for 2024-25
<b>Ringfenced Reserves:</b>					
Regional Adoption Agency Reserve	793	0	793	469	Funding to cover CCC legacy adoption costs following transition to a Regional Adoption Agency.
Local Safeguarding	354	0	354	354	Local Safeguarding carry forward amount. Annual contributions from internal and external bodies.
Trading unit account	146	0	146	0	Cambs Music building fund and commissioned work reserve
Improvement programme	154	0	154	0	Children's improvement programme reserve
UASC Grant Reserve	170	0	170	0	Risk reserve to mitigate Home Office grant funding decisions
PFI School Sinking Fund	2,188	0	2,188	2,038	Thomas Clarkson PFI reserve to cover inflation increases.
Other ringfenced contributions	294	-170	124	63	Grant funding to support education settings and Residual school facing grants.
<b>Earmarked Reserved Relating to CEF</b>	<b>4,959</b>	<b>2,898</b>	<b>7,858</b>	<b>6,467</b>	

(+) positive figures represent surplus funds.

(-) negative figures represent deficit funds.

## 5.4 Children, Education and Families Capital Reserve Schedule

Budget Heading	Opening Balance 2024-25 £000	Movements 2024-25 £000	Year End Forecasted Balance £000	Reserve Description
Education Capital	2,079	0	279	Devolved Formula Capital
Education Capital	11,145	0	6,146	Capital Other Grants
Education Capital	0	0	0	Capital Basic Need
Education Capital	2,252	0	0	Capital Schools Condition
Primary Schools	36	0	36	Insurance – Primary
Central Financing	314	0	314	Schools General
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVES</b>	<b>15,827</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,775</b>	

(+) positive figures represent surplus funds.

(-) negative figures represent deficit funds.

## APPENDIX 6 – Maintained Schools

The table below provides a summary of the value of balances held by maintained schools as at 31st March 2024 (excluding academy convertors):

2022-23	(Deficit) / Surplus	Nursery	Primary	Special	Total	Change from 2022-23
4	(£100k+)	2	3	1	6	2
3	(£60k) – (£100k)	0	3	0	3	0
3	(£20k) – (£60k)	1	11	0	12	9
3	(£10k) – (£20k)	0	3	0	3	0
1	(£1k - £10k)	0	7	0	7	6
7	£0k - £10k	0	5	0	5	-2
6	£10k - £20k	0	5	0	5	-1
28	£20k - £60k	0	19	0	19	-9
17	£60k - £100k	0	17	0	17	0
19	£100k - £150k	2	16	0	18	-1
11	£150k - £200k	1	8	1	10	-1
13	£200k - £300k	0	10	0	10	-3
2	£300k - £400k	0	3	1	4	2
8	£400k+	1	4	0	5	-3
<b>125</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>-1</b>

School level balances can be viewed in Appendix A of [Schools Balances and DSG Financial Health - July 2024](#) presented to Cambridgeshire Schools Forum in July 2024.

The following maintained schools have all submitted deficit budgets for the 2024-25 financial year:

School	Status
Brunswick Nursery School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Colleges Nursery School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Huntingdon Nursery School	Formal Warning Notice issued – Structural solutions being explored.
The Fields Early Years Centre	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Ashbeach Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Castle Camps Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Eastfield Infant School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Fen Drayton Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required (extension granted due to fire).
Grove Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Revised budget balances in-year.
Gt & Lt Shelford Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Hardwick and Cambourne Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Hauxton Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Hemingford Grey Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Linton Infant School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit License approved.
Lionel Walden Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Mayfield Primary School	Notice of Concern to be issued – Deficit License approved.
Meridian Primary School	Notice of Concern to be issued - Budget resubmission required.
Orchard Park Comm. Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Queens Federation	Notice of Concern issued and RIG in place. Deficit to be addressed across the Federation.
Shirley Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Spinney Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Spring Meadow Infant School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
St Anne's Primary School	Notice of Concern issues – Budget resubmission required. Structural solutions being explored.
St Helen's Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
St Matthew's Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Steeple Morden Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Trumpington Meadows P	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required recognising use of balances across the Federation.
Westfield Junior School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission required.
Wheatfields Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Budget resubmission received.
Wyton Primary School	Notice of Concern issued – Deficit Licence approved.
Castle Special School	Sector review to be undertaken.
Granta Special School	Sector review to be undertaken.
Samuel Pepys Special School	Sector review to be undertaken.

# Children and Young People Committee Agenda Plan

Published on 1 November 2024

## Notes

The definition of a key decision is set out in the Council's Constitution in Part 2, Article 12.

\* indicates items expected to be recommended for determination by full Council.

+ indicates items expected to be confidential, which would exclude the press and public.

The following are standing agenda items which are considered at every Committee meeting:

- Minutes of previous meeting and Action Log
- Agenda Plan, Training Plan and Appointments to Outside Bodies and Internal Advisory Groups and Panels

Committee date	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
26/11/24	Children's Workforce Strategic Plan	M Purbrick	Not applicable	14/11/24	18/11/24
	Finance Monitoring Report - October	M Wade	Not applicable		
	Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024 [via CPSC]	R Chambers	2024/039		
	SEND Safety Valve Update	S Callaghan	Not applicable		
	Alconbury Weald Secondary School Construction Contract	A Revell	2024/019		
14/01/25	Schools and Early Years Revenue Funding Arrangements 2025/26	M Purbrick	2025/004	02/01/25	06/01/25
	Determined admission arrangements	S Callaghan	Not applicable		

Committee date	Agenda item	Lead officer	Reference if key decision	Deadline for draft reports	Agenda despatch date
	Sufficiency Strategy	L Munt	2025/013		
	Re-Commissioning of Young People's Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services	V Thomas	Not applicable		
	Quarterly Performance Report (Q2)	R Springbett	Not applicable		
	Children's Occupational Therapy provision 2025/26	L Roberston	2025/011		
	Scrutiny of Draft Business Plan and Budget	M Purbrick	Not applicable		
	Deed of Variation to enable the building of the permanent accommodation of Wisbech Free School	R Pinion	2025/012		
	Education Performance	S Callaghan	Not applicable		
	Early Years and Childcare Contracts 2025-2026	E Dean	2025/015		
25/02/25	Quarterly Performance Report (Q3)	R Springbett	Not applicable	13/02/25	17/02/25
	Finance Monitoring Report – January	M Wade	Not applicable		
	The Award of Design and Construction Contracts for Education Projects Included in the Council's Approved Business Plan	R Pinion	2025/010		
	Transport Strategy	S Callaghan	2025/014		
	Child yield multipliers for new development in relation to seeking contributions for early years and children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)	J Jordan-Hills	Not applicable		
03/06/25	Finance Monitoring Report - May	M Wade	Not applicable	22/05/25	26/05/25
	Outturn 2024/25 Finance Monitoring Report	M Wade	Not applicable		

Please contact Democratic Services [democraticservices@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) if you require this information in a more accessible format



## Children and Young People (CYP) Committee Training Plan

The training plan provides details of training sessions which have taken place during the current Council and topics for potential future training sessions and visits.

### PREVIOUS TRAINING 2021-2023

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
1.	Children & Young People Committee induction	To brief Members of the role and responsibilities of the Children and Young People Committee	High	15.06.21 12.00-2.00pm	Executive Director: People and Communities	Teams	All CYP Members	Cllrs Ambrose Smith Atkins Bywater Bradnam Bird Bulat Coutts Daunton Goodliffe Gowing Hay Hoy Prentice Kindersley M King J King Sharp Slatter Thompson Taylor van de Ven
2.	Member Induction Programme: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	To brief new and returning Members and Substitute Members on the responsibilities of the	High	12.07.21	Nicola Curley/ Myra O'Farrell	Teams	Members and Substitute Members	Cllrs Ambrose Smith Bird Bradnam

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee					of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee	Bulat Goodliffe M King Slatter van de Ven
3.	Safeguarding	To brief Members on safeguarding issues and responsibilities	High	08.10.21	Director of Children's Services	Teams	All Members	Cllrs Bulat Goodliffe Taylor Thompson Bird Bradnam Coutts Cox Condrion Gowing Nethsingha van de Ven Meschini
4.	Corporate Parenting and the Fostering Service		High	22.10.21 10.00am - 12.30pm	Assistant Director: Regional Adoption and Fostering	Virtual	All Members	Cllrs Atkins Bulat Goodliffe Hay Slatter Taylor Kindersley Nethsingha van de Ven
5.	Ofsted – Inspection Framework – Key areas of focus in assessing quality	Cambridgeshire children's services will have a focussed visit from Ofsted at some time in 2022, and a graded inspection in 2023. The aim:	Director of Children's Services	02.12.21 12pm – 1pm	Director of Children's Services	Virtual		

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		<p>Introduce to the framework for inspection used by Ofsted</p> <p>How we ensure that we are prepared for inspections.</p>						
6.	Education Finance	Members gain a clear understanding of education funding and council decision making.		10 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 12.30 – 2pm	Service Director: Education & Strategic Finance Business Partner	Teams	All CYP Members	Atkins, Bulat, Goodliffe, Daunton, Coutts, Meschini, Bywater, Slatter, Taylor, M King, Bradnam
7.	Education - Attainment	Members gain a clear understanding of the assessment system used in schools.		23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2022 12 – 1.30 pm	Service Director: Education	Teams	All CYP Members	Cllrs Atkins, Daunton, Bulat, Coutts, Hay, Kindersley, M King, Taylor
8.	Supporting the mental and emotional health needs of children in care/on the edge of care	To introduce CYP Members and the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee to the clinical framework and how it		7 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 1.30 – 2.30	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Virtual	CYP Members and Corporate Parenting	Cllrs Atkins, Bradnam, Goodliffe, M King, Hay,

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		supports our foster carers and contributes to the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.					Sub Committee	Hoy and Slatter
9.	The Role of the Foster Carer	To introduce CYP Members and the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee to the role of the Foster Carer, and the part they play in impacting positively on the lives of children in care		21 October 2022 – confirmed & booked 12pm-1pm	Ricky Cooper Fiona Van Den Hout	Virtual	All Members	Cllrs: G Wilson, C Daunton, A Whelan, H Cox Condron, S King, A Bradnam, A Bulat, S Taylor, B Goodliffe
10.	Estimating Demand for Education Provision Arising from New Housing Developments	To brief Members on the process of estimating demand for education provision for new housing developments.		28.09.23	Alan Fitz	Teams	CYP members and substitutes	Cllrs Ambrose Smith, Atkins, Bulat, Count, Coutts, Daunton, Goldsack, Goodliffe, Hay, Read, Slatter, Stone, Thompson

**CURRENT TRAINING JANUARY 2024 – DECEMBER 2024 – the majority of training sessions will be recorded and can be accessed via the members training area link - [Our Development for Members](#).**

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
11.	Children & Young People and Corporate Parenting Committee overview	To brief Members of the role and responsibilities of the Children and Young People Committee and corporate parenting sub committee	Utilising reserve CYP committee  TBC	Executive Director Children Education and Families:  Martin Purbrick	Microsoft Teams/Member seminar	All Members		
12	Corporate Parenting Roles and Responsibility LGA Training	To brief Members and Substitute Members with responsibilities to represent Corporate Parenting	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Service Director Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement:  Liz Clarke  and  Service Director Fostering and Adoption:  Ranjit Chambers.	Bespoke Training delivered in person at New Shire Hall.	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting Sub-committee	Attendees: Officers: Caroline Tote – LGA Trainer Ranjit Chambers Dee Revens Sophine Rankine Members: Cllr Bradham Cllr Alex Bulat Cllr Andrew Wood	Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members.</a>

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
							Cllr Anne Hay Cllr Brian Milnes Cllr John Gowing Cllr Philippa Slatter Cllr Piers Coutts Cllr Ros Hathorn Cllr Adela Costello	
13.	Safeguarding refresher course	To brief Members on safeguarding issues and responsibilities	23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024 12-1	Acting Service Director Targeted Support and Children Social Care:  Raul Burton	Microsoft Teams/Member seminar	All Members		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members.</a>
14	Childs Journey (Broken down into 4 parts – see 4 a-d)	Members to obtain a briefing on the teams/ service objectives, by meeting managers and hearing about the day in	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 12 - 2	Representatives in Children Family and Education.	Virtual meeting	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our</a>

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		the life of a Social Worker/Front line worker.		Led by Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius		Sub-committee		<a href="#">Development for Members.</a>
14a	Start of the Childrens Journey	Members to understand the Integrated front door, including, MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub), MET (Missing and Exploited and Trafficked Team), Early Help Hub, Assessment Team and EDT (Emergency Duty Team).	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 12 - 2	Representatives in Children Family and Education.  Led by Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius	Virtual meeting	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting Sub-committee		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members.</a>
14b	Early intervention and social care involvement for families subject to a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection or PLO.	Members to understand the Targeted Support, Family Safeguarding, Adolescent and Child Protection Conference.	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 12 - 2	Representatives in Children Family and Education.  Led by Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius	Virtual meeting	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting Sub-committee		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members.</a>

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
14c	Corporate Parenting Service including Children in Care teams and Care leavers teams	Members to understand the Children in Care teams and Care Leavers	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 12 - 2	Representatives in Children Family and Education.  Led by Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius	Virtual meeting	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting Sub-committee		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members</a> .
14d	Fostering and Adoption	Members to understand with Fostering, Adoption and Supervised Contact services.	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2024 12 - 2	Representatives in Children Family and Education.  Led by Principal Social Worker Tapiwa Julius	Virtual meeting	All CYP members and Corporate Parenting Sub-committee		Completed & recorded – recording accessed via <a href="#">Our Development for Members</a> .
15	Ofsted – Inspection Framework – Key areas of focus in assessing quality	Understanding of Cambridgeshire children's services focus and graded inspections. The aim: Introduce to the framework for inspection used by Ofsted How we ensure that we are prepared for inspections.	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Executive Director Children Education and Families:  Martin Purbrick	Microsoft Teams	CYP Members and Corporate Parenting sub committee		Completed – recording unavailable

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
16	Meeting with Young People's Council)	Members to meet the young people's council and understand how the service engages with children in care to help improve delivery of service.	Autumn 2024	Head of Service Corporate Parenting:  Catherine Issacs	Microsoft Teams	CYP Members and Corporate Parenting sub committee		
17	Education - Finance	Members gain a clear understanding of education funding and council decision making.	January 2025  (January 2024 completed)	Service Director  Education:  and  Strategic Finance Business Partner	Microsoft Teams	All CYP Members		
18	Education - SEND	Members to gain a clear understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is SEND?</li> <li>• SEND Support in schools and settings</li> <li>• Exclusions</li> </ul>	Autumn 2024	Assistant Director: SEND & Inclusion	Microsoft Teams/Member seminar	All CYP Members		

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)</li> <li>• High Needs Block and EHCP Demand in Cambridgeshire</li> <li>• Cambridgeshire's SEND Transformation Programme</li> </ul>						
19.	Performance Management Framework	An introduction to the Performance Management Framework and review of the Children and Young People's Committee's key performance indicators.	Autumn 2024	Executive Director Children Education and Families: Martin Purbrick and Service Director Education: and Business Intelligence	Microsoft Teams	All CYP Members and corporate parenting sub committee		
20	Place Planning 0-19; Admissions, Attendance, Elective	To brief Members about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council's statutory</li> </ul>	Autumn 2024	Assistant Director Education	Microsoft Teams	All Members		

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
	Home Education (EHE), Children in Education/ Employment/Training	<p>responsibilities with regard to commissioning educational provision and DfE guidance which informs decisions on design and build projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the roles and responsibilities of internal and external partner organisations, including the DfE, Multi-Academy Trusts and the Diocesan Boards for Education</li> <li>the business planning processes involved in commissioning educational provision</li> </ul>		Capital & Place Planning:				
21	Education Transport	Members gain further understanding of education transport processes	November 2024	Assistant Director Education	Microsoft Teams	All CYP Members & appeal		

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
				Capital & Place Planning:		committee members		
22	Education - Attainment	Members gain a clear understanding of the assessment system used in schools.	May 2025	Service Director Education:	Microsoft Teams	All CYP Members		
23	Supporting the mental and emotional health needs of children in care/on the edge of care	To introduce CYP Members and the Corporate Parenting Sub Committee to the clinical framework and how it supports our foster carers and contributes to the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.	Autumn 2024	Service Director Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement: Liz Clarke, joint with the CPFT.	Teams	CYP Members and Corporate Parenting Sub Committee		
24	Commissioning Services – what services are commissioned and how our services are	How: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cambridgeshire's needs are <b>Analysed</b> to inform</li> </ul>	28 November 2024	Service Director: Commissioning & Head of Service	Microsoft Teams	All members		

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
	commissioned across Children Services	<p>recommendations made to internal governance boards, and ultimately Committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How we work with internal and external partners and stakeholders to <b>Plan</b> and develop services responding to gaps in need and themes in demand.</li> <li>• What we <b>Do</b> to deliver this need, via open and transparent procurement activity</li> <li>• How we <b>Review</b> both internal and externally commissioned services to evidence value for money, positive outcomes and to</li> </ul>		Children's Commissioning				

	Subject	Desired Learning Outcome/ Success Measures	Date	Responsibility	Format of Training	Audience	List of attendees	% of elected members of the Committee attending
		continually shape service delivery.						
25	The role of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE),		Autumn 2024	Service Director Education:				
26	Safeguarding & the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	To brief Members on Safeguarding issues and responsibilities		Service Director QAPI/ Janet Farr	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		
27	Meeting the Needs of Children in Care	To include briefings from Education, SEND, Clinical Team		Service Director/HOS CP	Virtual	All CPSC Members invited		
28	Secondary and Primary School Allocation of Places	About secondary and primary school allocation of places with particular focus around issues in Wisbech and Chesterton area	Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 12.30 - 1.30pm	Assistant Director Education Capital & Place Planning		All Members		Completed
29	Trauma informed training	Training specifically on trauma for Councillors to feel well informed on trauma	Dates offered in Sept (17 <sup>th</sup> or 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 4:15-6:15pm)	Virtual Schools	In person	All Elected Members		Completed

For more information contact [Emma Nederpel](#)

