



County Offices  
Newland  
Lincoln  
LN1 1YL

13 April 2023

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Friday, 21 April 2023 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL** for the transaction of the business set out on the attached Agenda.

Yours sincerely



Debbie Barnes OBE  
Chief Executive

**Membership of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**  
**(11 Members of the Council and 3 Added Members)**

Councillors R J Kendrick (Chairman), W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), S A J Blackburn, R J Cleaver, Mrs J E Killey, C Matthews, N Sear, T J N Smith, J Tyrrell, M A Whittington and R A Wright

**Added Members**

Church Representative: Mr M Kyle

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs M R Machin and 1 Parent Governor Vacancy



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA  
FRIDAY, 21 APRIL 2023**

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Pages</b> |
|-------------|---|--------------|
| <b>1</b>    | <b>Apologies for Absence / Replacement Members</b>  |              |
| <b>2</b>    | <b>Declaration of Members' Interest</b>   |              |
| <b>3</b>    | <b>Minutes from the last meeting on 3 March 2023</b>  | 5 - 14       |
| <b>4</b>    | <b>Announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement and Chief Officers</b>   |              |
| <b>5</b>    | <b>Update on Community Response to High Level Mental Health Needs</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Strategic Commissioning, which provides an update on community responses to high level mental health needs of children and young people (CYP) across Lincolnshire).</i>   | 15 - 24      |
| <b>6</b>    | <b>Care Review</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Carolyn Knight, Head of Service – Quality and Standards and Principal Social Worker, providing an overview of the Government’s response to the care review and to highlight the three associated consultations that are currently live, as well as providing some commentary on Lincolnshire’s current position in relation to the proposals).</i> | 25 - 36      |
| <b>7</b>    | <b>HMIP Inspection Report and Outcome - Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Andy Cook, Head of Service – Future4Me/Youth Offending, on the outcome and findings from the recent youth inspection of youth justice services in Lincolnshire undertaken by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in January 2023).</i>                                    | 37 - 66      |
| <b>8</b>    | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme</b><br><i>(To receive a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which enables the Committee to consider and comment on the contents of its work programme to ensure that its scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit)</i>   | 67 - 74      |
| <b>9</b>    | <b>CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION</b><br>In accordance with Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the following agenda item has not been circulated to the press and public on the grounds that it is considered to contain exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the  |              |

Local Government Act 1972, as amended. The press and public may be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of this item of business.

**10 Expansion of Sutterton Fourfields Primary School**

75 - 88

*(To receive an exempt report from David Pennington, Head of Property Development, and Alison Toyne, Project Manager, Corporate Property, which invites the Committee to consider a report prior to a decision taken by the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council between 2-5 May 2023).*

Democratic Services Officer Contact Details

Name: **Jess Wosser-Yates**

Direct Dial **07387 133753**

E Mail Address [jess.wosser-yates@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:jess.wosser-yates@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

**Please note:** for more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements

Contact details set out above.

Please note: This meeting will be broadcast live on the internet and access can be sought by accessing [Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Friday, 21st April, 2023, 10.00 am \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
3 MARCH 2023**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R J KENDRICK (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), R J Cleaver, C Matthews, N Sear, T J N Smith, M A Whittington, and R A Wright.

**Added Members**

Church Representative: Martin Kyle

Councillors: Mrs P A Bradwell OBE and S P Roe were also in attendance.

Councillors Daniel Westcott, Marian Boyd and Paul Silvester, and Janice Spencer OBE (Interim Director of Children's Services) from North East Lincolnshire Council attended the meeting as invited guests.

Chris Cook OBE (Independent Chairman of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership), Jonathan Grant (Headteacher of Fulstow Community Primary School) and Paul Thompson (Director of Education, Diocese of Lincoln) also attended the meeting as guests.

Officers in attendance:-

Matthew Clayton (Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency), Deborah Crawford (Head of Service, Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care), Linda Dennett (Assistant Director for Children's Health and Commissioning), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Jo Kavanagh (Assistant Director of Early Help), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Martin Smith (Assistant Director for Children's Education) and Stacey Waller (LSCP Business Manager), Matt Spoor (Head of Service – School Standards), Sarah Nardone (Assistant Director for Sector Led Improvement), Jess Wosser-Yates (Democratic Services Officer).

**32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillors S A J Blackburn and J Tyrell. Tara Jones, Interim Assistant Director of Children's Safeguarding also gave apologies.

**33 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST**

There were no interests declared at this point in proceedings.

**34 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2023**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 January 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

35 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROCUREMENT AND CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chairman encouraged members to attend the Lincolnshire Music Service on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April. The event featured young performers from across the county.

The Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration reported that the results of the Youth Offending Inspection had concluded that Lincolnshire services were 'outstanding'. The Chairman agreed to write on behalf of the Committee, in conjunction with the Executive Councillor, to congratulate the Youth Offending Service. Strut House had been rated 'outstanding' for the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

36 LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (LSCP) ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report from Chis Cook, Independent Chair of Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and Stacey Waller, LSCP Business Manager, which enabled the Committee to review and comment on the work and function of the Partnership. It was reported that:

- The strategic priorities for 2022-2025 were tackling child exploitation, enhancing the emotional wellbeing of children and young people, promoting healthy relationships, and identifying and reducing the impact of neglect, sexual and physical harm.
- Voluntary compliance with safeguarding assurance from schools had increased from 66% to 80%.
- In 2022, the LSCP had engaged with analysis and audits, and had worked with the National Panel, the National Audit Office (NAO) and the Department for Education (DfE).

In the Committee's discussion of the report, the following points were noted:

- Members questioned how children were recognised as victims of domestic violence in instances where they were exposed to violence either by or between parents and guardians. The Chair of the LSCP highlighted that the partnership was developing an understanding of how to support children exposed to domestic violence; a domestic abuse group was established under the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership, and the LSCP was involved with the nation-wide Operation Encompass which facilitated communication between police and schools in cases of domestic abuse to deliver support to young people.
- Further detail was requested on the benefits of safeguarding courses and the LSCP Business Manager assured that the mandatory six-year pathway was quality assured,

although assessing the impact of courses was challenging for the training team given the high volume of engagement. It was noted by the Executive Director of Children's Services that some training programmes were national and evidence-based, and some specifically responded to Lincolnshire audits which had identified a training need. It was assured that the benefits of training were observed and would be detailed further in the next LSCP annual report.

- In regard to babies and toddlers reported with serious injuries, the children's services directorate had invested heavily in early help, and the Chair of the LSCP gave assurance that there was a robust multi-agency response which involved strong intervention by health officials and police. The Executive Director of Children's Services highlighted that decisions around injury were made by a health professional before a determination was made by children's services, and health visiting was compulsory in Lincolnshire which allowed for early intervention where necessary.
- Detail was requested on the systems used to identify cases of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Lincolnshire. The Executive Director of Children's Services and the LSCP Chair noted that there was information identified by these systems that pertained to active police investigations and therefore agreed to discuss this outside of the meeting.
- 42% of independent schools had completed safeguarding assurance in total, whereas 80% of schools returned assurance overall, and Members consequently questioned whether the private sector engaged less with the LSCP. Overall, the LSCP Chair assured he was satisfied with the way the education sector engaged with the partnership. Low nursery returns were also reported because only five nurseries in Lincolnshire could respond as it was a school-led process; he highlighted Lincolnshire was unique in attempting to strengthen its assurance without statutory regulatory power, although he accepted Members' general concern around low percentages of returns.
- Members commended junior online safety officers and suggested a target of engagement and participation could be established with them; the LSCP Chair agreed this was possible, but reminded the Committee that participation was voluntary.
- The Committee questioned the legitimacy of safeguarding concerns raised by young people within the context of social media. The Executive Director – Children's Services was aware of cases where children had taken action in school to raise their concerns; some grievances were legitimate but caused disruption for other pupils. Ofsted assessed whether children knew the avenues to sufficiently raise their concerns and complaints, and assurance was provided that there was a strong wellbeing offer for school children in Lincolnshire.
- The Church Representative commended the work of the Stay Safe Partnership, and questioned when the safeguarding audit programme would be back online. The Executive Director – Children's Services gave assurance that there was progress on the online safeguarding form, and a new provider was being identified to ensure this provision would return.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee is assured on the work and function of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership in promoting the welfare of children in Lincolnshire.
2. That an annual update is received by the Committee in April 2024.

37 PROPOSAL FOR FULSTOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL TO BECOME A VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED CHURCH SCHOOL (FINAL DECISION)

The Committee received a report from Matthew Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency, which invited the Committee to consider a Proposal for Fulstow Primary School to become a voluntary controlled church school (Final Decision) which is being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration for a decision on 10 March 2023.

During its discussion, the Committee explored the following topics with the Headteacher of Fulstow Community Primary School, the Director of Education at the Lincoln Diocese and officers:

- By converting to a church school, it was confirmed that the school would have access to a range of support and expertise from the Diocese and the Education team, and also the network of 141 Church of England schools across the Diocese and the National Church of England Education Office. The support provided by the Diocese would not duplicate the support provided by the Local Authority or teaching schools, but instead would complement it.
- The Diocese would be able to support the school to develop its vision further, its values, the quality of religious education and the wider curriculum, and its collective worship, and provide leadership support for governors, senior leaders and subject leaders. The Diocese would be able to provide small grants to help the school develop its ethos and character and provide access to courses and conferences as well as specialist reviews and audits. The Diocese would also be able to help the school prepare for church school inspections and Ofsted inspections.
- Assurance was provided that the same level of support would also be offered to North Cotes Church of England Primary School to help foster the federation between the two schools. The Committee requested more information on the role of the Diocese in church schools and the support it provided.

**Parental Concerns**

- In relation to the parental concerns raised during the consultation, it was confirmed that there would be very few changes to the school. Assurance was provided that there would be no narrowing of the curriculum and no changes in any of the policies. The curriculum would remain the same and would still go through the usual monitoring and evaluation process to ensure it was tailored towards the children in the school. The school would continue to follow the locally agreed syllabus for religious education which was inclusive of all faiths. Assurance was being provided to



the parents through consistent communication that if the school converted, it would not become a faith school and would remain open to all faiths.

#### **Church Land**

- As the school was situated on church land, it was confirmed that the school could not formalise relationships with other schools or join a multi-academy trust. The school was split between two different processes due to being on church land but not a church school. If the school was on local authority land and wanted to join a trust, the Local Authority would sign over the land on a 125 year lease. However, church schools had a different arrangement and followed a different pathway because it was church land. By becoming a church school, the school would return to its original intention, and would have a pathway around choice for governance and leadership in the future.

#### **Closure of Church Schools**

- In relation to any potential request to close a church school by the Diocese, it was confirmed that it would still need a formal decision by the Local Authority to close the school after following an extensive consultation process, as the Local Authority remained the decision maker whilst it was still a Local Authority maintained school.

#### RESOLVED

1. That Committee supports the recommendation to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration for Fulstow Community Primary School, Fulstow to become a church school with effect from 1 September 2023.
2. That the comments from the discussion on this item have been recorded to be passed on to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration.

#### 38 COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR FOSTER CARERS

The Committee received a report from Deborah Crawford, Head of Service - Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care, on the Cost of living increase for carers which was being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration for a decision between 20 and 31 March 2023.

The Committee recognised the importance of the Council's foster carers and how valued they were by the Council. It was acknowledged that foster carers played a vital role and having so many meant that the Council did not need to rely on independent fostering agencies as much as some other local authorities might have to. During its discussion, the Committee explored the following topics:

#### **Shortage of Foster Carers**

- With regards to the estimated national shortage of approximately 9000 fostering households across the country, it was confirmed that in Lincolnshire there had been some loss of foster carers due to age and change in personal circumstances. There were

no particular areas in Lincolnshire where the Council struggled to recruit, and it was highlighted that foster carers were also recruited from outside of Lincolnshire's boundaries. The Council's media and marketing campaigns were focussed on recruiting from across Lincolnshire and ensuring there was inclusivity from a range of people.

#### **Fostering Allowances**

- In relation to the 12.4% uplift to fostering allowances, it was confirmed that it was a national recommendation to provide this uplift to foster carers. If the additional funding provided through the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 was not spent on the uplift, there would be a risk to the Council of losing foster carers to independent fostering agencies. The Council would then be exposed to a position where it would have to commission the independent fostering agencies with the 12.4% uplift included plus an additional agency fee.
- For 2022/23, it was confirmed that foster carers had received a 2% uplift. Foster carers also receive financial incentives such as retention fees and enhancements if they help recruit someone that they know to become a foster carer.

#### **Support to Foster Carers**

- Foster carers were supported throughout the process from expressing an interest through to approval and beyond. It was highlighted that new foster carers were buddied with an established foster carer to teach them about what to do and support them through difficult times. There was a strong social media and face to face offer of support, both within the home or in the community. In addition, there were online groups and a training and development plan, and engagement with other services, such as the Virtual School, Health and Education, were promoted. Therapeutic support was also offered to foster carers to help them understand the trauma and experience of the child/children they were caring for.
- While the majority of people did not become a foster carer for the money, it was confirmed that the proposed 12.4% uplift would help to support foster carers with the cost of living increases so that they could continue to foster. In addition, foster carers had access to the same staff benefits as employees of the Council and had been subscribed to the blue light offer which enabled foster carers and foster families to have their own blue light cards to access savings at high street stores and supermarkets, and various activities for children.
- By matching children and foster carers through a strength based approach, this helped to ensure that the right children were put with the right people at the right time. It was confirmed that there were a number of considerations and assessments used, such as the Valuing Care toolkit, to make sure the right children were put in the best place. There were regulations in place regarding what social workers had to do and when with a fostering household, including with any birth children as well, to provide support and supervision to the family.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supports the recommendation to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration to approve the increase of all Lincolnshire's foster carer rates by 12.4% from April 2023 in line with the Government's increase to the National Minimum Allowances.
2. That the comments made in relation to this item be passed on to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration.

39      LINCOLNSHIRE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 2021 - 22

The Committee received a report from Martin Smith, Assistant Director - Education, and Matt Spors, Head of Service - School Standards, which provided an update regarding standards within the sector led system.

The Head of Service - School Standards guided the Committee through the report, and the following was noted:

- Key Stage 1 (KS1) performance was steady but below the national average.
- KS2 performance in Lincolnshire's schools benchmarked above the national average.
  - KS2 pupils with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) performed better than national averages in regard to attainment and progress.
- Lincolnshire was below the selective area school average for KS4, although school performance had improved.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) in Lincolnshire was better than the national average, but there was still a difference compared to children not eligible for FSM.
- Children with special educational needs (SEN) in Lincolnshire performed better than the national average.
- Ofsted outcomes in Lincolnshire was similar to national performance in regard to 'good' and 'outstanding' schools, although varied between districts.

During consideration of the report, the following points were highlighted:

- Members questioned why the data for selective school performance in Lincolnshire was lower than other types of school. The Executive Director – Children's Services stated that selective school statistics regularly fluctuated thus seemingly low performance data could be attributed to national cohort variation, and she gave assurance that Lincolnshire performed well compared to statistical neighbours.
- Additional detail was requested on unvalidated performance data, and it was noted that the first statistical release occurred in September-October from the DfE; therefore, data was unvalidated as the school still maintained the opportunity to appeal at this time. The Head of Service - School Standards assured he was confident the data in the report was now validated.
- The Head of Service – School Standards advised the Committee that 96% of secondary schools were academies and therefore were not under LCCs remit,

although he assured that the Lincolnshire Partnership Board facilitated a good working relationship.

- LCC could not formally or directly influence academies, however the Assistant Director – Education assured informal signposting of support and opportunities occurred and was beneficial; LCC worked with Regional DFE Directors (formally Regional Commissioners) on instances where academies were underperforming.
- Performance data for early years was collated at the end of reception but included the performance of nursery provision which indicated the first five years of a child’s life. The current cohort of children had experienced lockdown which impacted their development; however it was assured that the Education Team were involved in various local and national programmes which were established to address the legacy of lockdowns on young people.
- Attendance at schools in Lincolnshire was above the national average during the pandemic.
- Members noted that it was staggering to observe the decline in national school performance.
- The report highlighted a clear correlation between deprivation in the surrounding area of a school, and the percentage of disadvantaged children enrolled - as the level of disadvantaged children increased, school outcomes decreased. This indicated that schools had a significant challenge to ensure vulnerable children succeeded, although it was assured that the district with the highest concentration of these pupils saw better outcomes in closing the gap in performance between them and their peers.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the Committee reviews the report and is assured on the outcomes for Lincolnshire schools for the academic year 2021-2022.

#### 40 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2022-23 - QUARTER 3

The Committee received a report from Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help, which provided a summary of the Service Level Performance against the Success Framework 2022-23 for Quarter 3. The following points were reported:

- The ‘*average time taken to match a child to an adoptive family*’ measure exceeded its target.
- Four measures were reported as having achieved their target:
  1. ‘*Juvenile first time offenders*’; this was partly attributed to the work of the joint diversionary panel and was reflected in the youth offending inspection.
  2. ‘*Children in Care (CiC)*’; there was a strong foster offer in Lincolnshire despite the impact of the pandemic.
  3. ‘*Children who were subject to a child protection plan*’; this measure often fluctuated because if there was a significant risk of harm for a child, they would rightly be put on a plan.

4. *'Care leavers in suitable accommodation'*; this measure benchmarked well nationally.
- Three measures did not achieve their target:
    1. *'The average time taken to move from care to an adoptive target'*; this was partly attributed to court delays from the pandemic. There was a three-year rolling target for this measure and some improvements had been observed.
    2. *'Juvenile re-offending'*; the cohort had reduced around 50% from last year, and Lincolnshire avoided criminalising children therefore those who reoffended had a large impact on the statistics.
    3. *'16-17 CiC participating in learning'*; this measure fluctuated, but it was assured there was an initiative for Year 10 and 11 students in care with dedicated job coaches specifically to support CiC and help young people in care identify opportunities for education and work-based learning.

During consideration of the report, the following points were highlighted:

- Members welcomed that the *'time taken for an adoptive family to be identified for a child'* target was exceeded, and it was noted that one child could significantly impact performance which was necessary; if a match had broken down it was identified immediately, and the team committed itself to finding a suitable match.
- Assurance was provided that the court backlog resultant of the pandemic was slowly clearing.
- Members were informed that the *'16-17-year-olds participating in learning'* data fluctuated because the lives of these young people were subject to dramatic change. It was suggested by Members that this caveat be noted in future reports.
- It was highlighted that being incarcerated constituted as being in suitable education, employment, or training, however this was a national classification.
- The *'juvenile re-offending'* measure would no longer be a key performance indicator (KPI) moving forward because acquiring and tracking this data was challenging, and it was nationally accepted that poor performance in this measure did not reflect the performance of the team.
- Questions were raised around the difference in service level performance data reported in this Committee and that of which is reported at the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP). The Executive Director – Children's Services informed members that the data reported in this Committee had been published and verified, whereas the data shared in CPP was more recent and unverified. Members suggested that service performance reports could be considered by both Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and CPP to harmonise data in the future.
- Members observed that the *'Juvenile first-time offenders'* data was not available prior to 2019 however had noted a slight increase since then. The Assistant Director – Early Help expressed that the establishment of the Joint Diversionary Panel in 2017 saw a significant decrease but it was never anticipated to result in a long-term reduction of first-time offenders. It was highlighted in the recent Youth Offending Inspection that involvement in the panel was correct, and the police were keen to make referrals. She added there were virtually no cautions issued to young people however if they were, there was a focus on restorative intervention.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee reviews the report and is satisfied with the performance of the measures that are either above or below the target range.

41 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which invited members to consider and comment on the content of its work programme, to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit.

There were no amendments made to the published work programme, although it was highlighted that several reports had been added to the 21 April agenda since the last meeting of the committee:

- The report on Social Care Reform Consultation would be set out the Government's consultation on the 'Children's Social Care: Stable Homes, Built on Love' Implementation Strategy which was launched on 2 February.
- A report on the Outcomes from the Inspection of the Youth Offending Service by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation would set out the findings from the inspection which took place in January.
- An exempt pre-decision scrutiny report on Sutterton Fourfields Primary School for a two-class extension and existing site drainage works was added prior to a decision by the Leader of the Council between 2 and 5 May. A decision report on Sutterton Fourfields Primary School was considered by the Committee in April last year which was to expand the school's capacity from 1 September 2023 to cope with increasing demand for places in the area. This decision would be for some building works to enable the school to cope with the increased capacity.
- An exempt pre-decision scrutiny report on Lincoln St Francis School - Refurbishment and External Works was also added prior to a decision by the Leader of the Council between the 2 and 5 May. This report was originally listed for the June meeting but needed an earlier decision so was brought forward.
- The pre-decision scrutiny report listed for the 21 July meeting on Holbeach William Stukeley Primary School was confirmed. The report would be exempt and was in relation to a single class extension, hall, and staffroom extension. A decision would then be taken by the Leader of the Council between 26 and 31 July 2023.

It was suggested that the item in relation to Community Responses to High Level Mental Health Needs was presented alongside input from the Director of Public Health and linked into the impact of deprivation highlighted in discussions in relation to Item 8 of this meeting.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee's Work Programme be reviewed and agreed upon.

The meeting closed at 1.03 pm



**Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director - Children's Services**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Report to: | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>                       |
| Date:      | <b>21 April 2023</b>  |
| Subject:   | <b>Update on the Community Response to High Level Mental Health Needs</b> |

**Summary:**

This report provides an overview of mental health services for children and young people, with a particular focus on the community crisis response to high level mental health needs. Children and young people (CYP) in Lincolnshire can access a variety of services that support their mental health needs, from early intervention to more specialist services for those experiencing more serious mental illness. Evidence<sup>1</sup> pre-pandemic showed:

- CYP's mental health needs were assessed quickly.
- Early intervention services were helping to reduce referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) whilst nationally referrals were increasing.
- CYP recovered well and maintained their emotional wellbeing after discharge.
- Lincolnshire had fewer CYP needing inpatient care.

In 2019, Lincolnshire's CYP inpatient unit, Ash Villa, closed and in 2020 a new CAMHS Crisis and Enhanced Treatment Team (CCETT) launched to provide a community crisis response to help prevent inpatient admission and support CYP transitioning out from inpatient services. Evidence shows the CCETT has helped reduce hospital attendances for CYP in crisis, because their needs can be met in the community and supported the number of Lincolnshire CYP needing inpatient care to remain below the national average.

Since the pandemic, the CCETT and other mental health services have faced significant challenges with increased demand and reduced workforce capacity. This is a national problem and not one just being faced in Lincolnshire. Additional investment in services from NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) is helping to increase the workforce and reduce waiting times. Beyond this, there is still a need to develop services further particularly as we know growing numbers of CYP need to access services and as such a CYP Mental Health Transformation Programme has commenced.

### **Actions Required:**

The Committee is invited to review and seek assurance on the community crisis response for children and young people experiencing high level mental health needs.

## **1. Background**

### **Commissioning Arrangements**

The Council is the delegated lead commissioner for CYP mental health services in Lincolnshire, on behalf of the ICB. Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) is commissioned to provide the services listed below which are rated outstanding by the Care Quality Commission. The annual cost of the services is c.£15m and they are funded through an ICB and Council pooled budget.

- **Healthy Minds Lincolnshire** works in schools and the community to provide early intervention support and prevent emotional wellbeing concerns escalating to mental health issues.
- **Mental Health Support Teams** are a new nationally prescribed model of emotional wellbeing support in schools and colleges which are part of the national drive to improve access to mental health care for CYP. Lincolnshire has four fully operational teams (Lincoln, Gainsborough, Boston, Skegness) and four more planned/in progress (Spalding, Grantham, Sleaford, North Kesteven (including South of Lincoln)).
- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)** includes:
  - **Core CAMHS** offering therapeutic interventions by a range of professionals such as mental health nurses, psychiatrists, and psychologists for CYP with moderate to severe concerns including but not limited to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, trauma and self-harm.
  - **Community Eating Disorder Service** offering interventions for CYP with Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia, binge eating and atypical eating disorders.
  - **CAMHS Learning Disabilities Team** offering interventions for CYP suffering with mental health problems who have a diagnosed learning disability.
- **Complex Needs Team** (formerly the Future4Me Health Team) supporting CYP with complex needs and trauma, including children in care, adopted children, those with complex health needs and children living in vulnerable households e.g. socio-economic disadvantage, parents with mental health problems etc.
- **CAMHS Crisis and Enhanced Treatment Team (CCETT)** offering 24/7 crisis response and intensive home treatment to prevent inpatient admissions or support CYP transitioning out of inpatient services. This is part funded by the East Midlands Providers Collaborative (see below).

Since 2013, NHS England (NHSE) has been the responsible commissioner for all **CYP inpatient services** (previously referred to as Tier 4). CYP inpatient services are for those who can no longer be supported at home and need to be admitted to a specialist unit due to severe mental health problems. In 2015, concerns were raised that inpatient services were not being properly commissioned to meet the needs of the most vulnerable CYP (Department of Health) and so NHSE developed the 'provider collaborative' model.

In 2019, the responsibility for commissioning CYP inpatient services was transferred to local provider collaboratives under the national New Care Models programme, and regional



partnership working was established across England to deliver specialised mental health care for CYP. This approach aims to streamline referrals, reduce avoidable admissions, reduce delays accessing inpatient services, ensure clinically appropriate lengths of stay, ensure effective admission and discharge processes and avoid care that is far from the patient's home.

The East Midlands Provider Collaborative was established in April 2021. This created a single point of access to inpatient services for the whole region. If a Lincolnshire CYP requires an inpatient admission, LPFT refers to the Provider Collaborative who identify a place in one of the regional partner's inpatient services. LPFT remains in regular contact with the CYP and family throughout their inpatient stay.

### **Lincolnshire's CYP Crisis and Inpatient Model**

Until September 2019, LPFT operated Ash Villa in Sleaford; a 10 bed General Adolescent Inpatient Unit (GAU). Any CYP that required a Specialist Eating Disorder Unit (SEDU) or Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) was placed in the closest available bed to Lincolnshire, but this could be anywhere in the country depending on bed availability and individual needs.

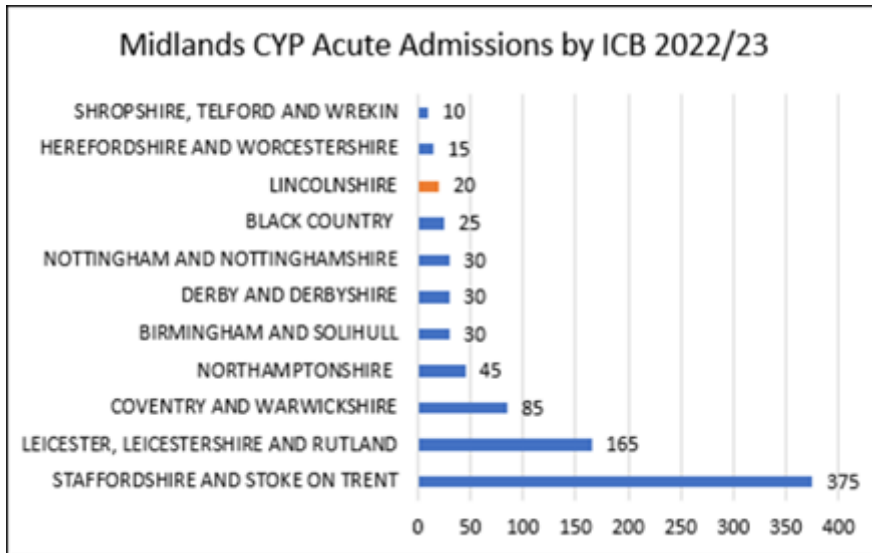
Ash Villa was closed due to a combination of staffing, estates and strategic factors. The unit did not meet new NHSE specification requirements and so the building could not continue to be used as a CYP inpatient setting. This closure led to a rapid mobilisation of an interim intensive home treatment team and then in April 2020, permanently became the CCETT.

The CCETT is jointly funded by the ICB and East Midlands Provider Collaborative. The objective of the CCETT is to prevent unnecessary admission to inpatient services and ensure that CYP are repatriated back into the community in a timely manner where admission occurs. The main focus of the service is supporting CYP at risk of/needing GAU, as non-GAU beds (SEDU, PICU, low secure and learning disability beds) were out of scope. The CCETT ensures Lincolnshire's CYP receive enhanced support in the absence of a local inpatient facility.

The CCETT offers 24 hour support; this is in person until 19:00, and then an on-call emergency crisis response is available until 08:45. The on-call response requires the team to undertake an urgent mental health assessment of CYP within an identified safe setting (e.g. A&E, acute paediatric ward etc.). Telephone contact must take place within four hours of referral and a face-to-face assessment within 24 hours. Telephone consultation and advice is also provided to relevant professionals outside of normal working hours. Since February 2023, a CAMHS Mental Health Liaison offer is being piloted at Lincoln County Hospital and so a CAMHS practitioner is on-site at the hospital out of hours. Recent CYP feedback said this practitioner meant their attendance at hospital was much better than previous times, they felt listened to and left feeling they could keep themselves safe.

LPFT work closely with United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT); joint working practices and protocols have been developed and are currently being formalised into a joint Standard Operating Procedure for CYP admitted to Paediatric wards in ULHT. This partnership approach has been recognised as good practice by providers within the East Midlands Provider Collaborative.

Since the new model launched there has been some positive impact. The CCETT team successfully kept 97.7% of accepted referrals out of hospital during 2020/21. Lincolnshire's CYP inpatient admissions reduced from 68.9 (per 100k population) in 2017 to 58.4 in 2019. In comparison, nationally admissions rose to 88.3 in 2019. Around four Lincolnshire CYP are now cared for in GAU's at any one time, which is lower than the regional and national averages. The chart below shows inpatient admissions by ICB area in 2022/23.



### **Pandemic Impact**

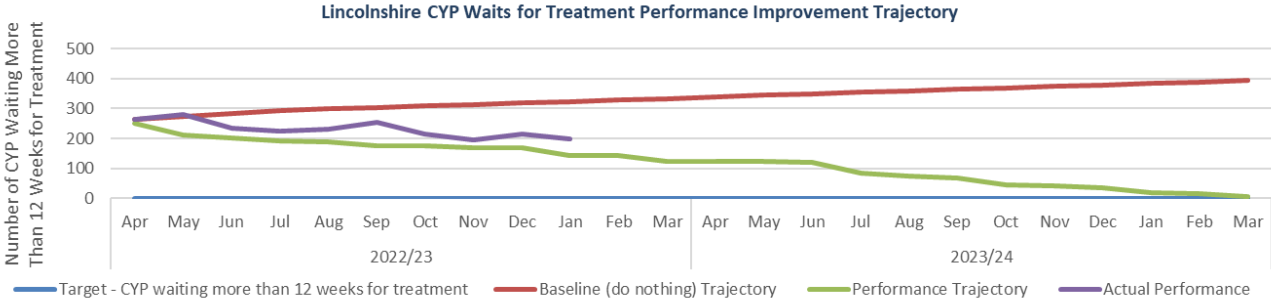
Before the pandemic, the prevalence of mental disorders in CYP had increased from one in nine (2017) to one in six (2020). The NHS Confederation Report [Reaching the Tipping Point](#) considered the further impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on CYP's mental health. Nationally, frontline mental health services reported a large increase in CYP needing help but not meeting referral criteria for CAMHS leading CYP to potentially store up problems for the future. Demand modelling suggested that 1.5 million CYP may need new or additional mental health support as a result of the pandemic.

The Healthy Minds Lincolnshire service enabled local CYP to receive early intervention support and so Lincolnshire did not experience some of the same issues as other areas. During the pandemic (up to July 2021):

- Nationally referrals to CAMHS increased by 35% (Children's Commissioner Report, January 2021). In Lincolnshire there was a 15.7% increase. Eating Disorder Service referrals increased by 250+%.
- Lincolnshire services had 15% more clinical contacts than the national average.
- 42% of clinical contacts were face-to-face, higher than the national average.
- 22% of clinical contacts were digital, 5% higher than the national average.
- 92% of children had an emergency telephone response within 4 hours, the national average was 83%. The average emergency wait was 1.4 hours, the national average was 11 hours.
- Nationally inpatient numbers increased to 89.5 per 100k population, Lincolnshire rates increased to 75.1 but remained below regional/national averages.

Since the pandemic, Lincolnshire’s CYP mental health services, like other areas, have experienced challenges. When the CCETT was established, Covid-19 and the associated impact on mental health was unknown. Since then, there has been a 24% increase in the numbers of referrals received by the CCETT. Workforce challenges have also impacted on the capacity of the CCETT. The latest data in March 2023 shows there was a 40% vacancy rate within the CCETT (South) and this is creating high caseload numbers. To support business continuity, some enhanced care packages are being delivered by the Core CAMHS teams, some CCETT (North) staff have been working in the South team and team boundaries have been temporarily adjusted.

There are implications for Core CAMHS team capacity, which has also been impacted by increased referrals and waiting times. Cases are generally open for longer, discharges rates have reduced and there are workforce challenges, especially for highly skilled roles. This is also a national issue. In 2022/23, the ICB increased its investment in CYP mental health services by £1.2m recurrently to address these pressures and positive progress is being made to increase staffing and reduce waiting times for CYP.



In 2021/2022, Lincolnshire saw increased demand for inpatient services (76.3 per 100k population, but still below national 99.8), especially SEDU beds. This resulted in some CYP waiting longer for appropriate placements. In Lincolnshire, increasing numbers of CYP remained in acute hospital beds (Lincoln County and Boston Pilgrim Hospitals) when they were physically well enough for discharge. Admission to an acute hospital bed is appropriate if a CYP requires medical treatment (e.g. a CYP that is dangerously underweight due to restricting food intake), but delayed discharge creates a pressure across the health and social care system. Most importantly acute hospitals are not therapeutic environments for the CYP, which often adds to their distress.

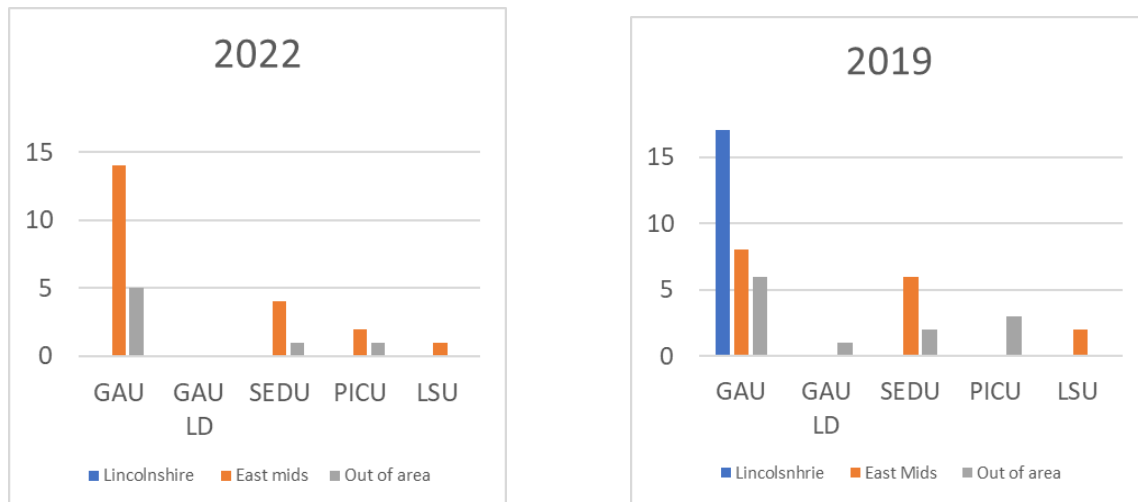
The East Midlands Provider Collaborative reviewed bed usage since 1 April 2021 to explore whether there were sufficient CYP inpatient beds in the region and whether the correct pathways were in place and being followed. Following the outcome of the review SEDU beds were increased in the East Midlands.

**Future Inpatient Needs**

The need for an in-county inpatient unit is often discussed, given increased demand and because Lincolnshire CYP needing inpatient care must access treatment outside of the county which is incredibly difficult for them and their families. It is worth noting that for some areas of Lincolnshire, out of area units are closer than Lincolnshire’s previous unit. In

2019, 17 children were placed in GAU beds in Ash Villa, before it closed, this included CYP from other areas. 16 Lincolnshire CYP were placed outside of Lincolnshire but within the East Midlands, and 12 children were placed outside of the East Midlands.

In 2022, 21 CYP were placed outside of Lincolnshire but within the East Midlands and the number of children placed in inpatient beds outside of the East Midlands reduced to seven (-42%). It is anticipated that, with the increase in SEDU beds in the East Midlands, this number will reduce further in 2023.



Even if an inpatient unit was opened in Lincolnshire (commissioned by NHSE), it would be used by CYP from across the East Midlands and could not meet all Lincolnshire CYP's needs in one type of unit. Lincolnshire demand for inpatient beds continues to be below many areas, despite the challenges set out above.

Commissioners and LPFT are considering further development of Lincolnshire's' CYP crisis offer to reduce the use of inpatient services further and help CYP to get the specialist help they need in their homes and communities. Current developments being explored include:

- Increasing **mental health support in acute hospitals** for CYP with complex mental health needs that are also physically unwell.
- Expanding the **Mental Health Urgent Assessment Centre (MHUAC)** and **Psychiatric Clinical Decisions Unit (PCDU)** currently available to adults in Lincolnshire and based on the Lincoln County Hospital site. CYP and their parents/carers would be able to attend the site 24/7 and stay whilst their mental health needs are assessed for up to 72 hours. This will require some capital work to segregate the building and make the environment clinically suitable for CYP and also an increased workforce model. Investment bids have been submitted.
- Piloting the **Night Light Café** model for CYP; this is a non-clinical, out of hours support service for people experiencing mental health crisis in an evening. If successful, an expansion of the offer will be considered.
- A **day hospital/hospital at home** model for CYP in crisis to reduce CYP being admitted into paediatric beds.
- A multi-agency **respite/crisis house** provision for short term stays.

## **Wider Service Developments**

A CYP Mental Health Transformation Programme launched in 2022 which is considering a wide range of cross-cutting factors, including:

- Understanding needs across Lincolnshire, health inequalities and population health management.
- Ensuring there is the right capacity and skills of community support and mental health trained professionals to meet the needs of Lincolnshire CYP.
- Engaging CYP and families and ensuring their views are used to help shape and co-produce services.
- Ensuring professionals work together, supported by integrated pathways, to provide the right support to CYP at the right time and remove barriers to co-delivery of support.
- Making the best use of the funding, workforce and other resources available to us so that services are sustainable and represent best value.

There are five workstreams:

1. **CYP Mentally Healthy Communities and Community Assets** (Prevention) – to ensure CYP stay healthy through public mental health promotion and prevention by building resilience, creating mentally healthy communities and maximising community assets and support/advice, including online and digital.
2. **CYP Early Intervention** – problems must be identified early and all CYP who need help, including those with complex needs, need to be able to access timely and effective support or advice at the right level, in school or in their communities.
3. **Mental Health Support for Learning Disabled and Autistic CYP** (LDA) – CYP with Learning Disabilities or Autistic CYP who are also suffering from mental illnesses must be able to receive specialist care that is tailored and able to meet their specific needs in the community and wrap around their lives, care and education as they transition into adulthood.
4. **CYP Community Specialist Mental Health** – all CYP who are suffering from mental illnesses must be able to receive timely assessment and evidence-based treatment to improve their mental health that wraps around their lives, care and education including as they transition into adulthood, within their communities.
5. **CYP Urgent and Emergency Mental Health** – responsive assessment and support for CYP in mental health crisis must be available 24/7 in Lincolnshire’s acute hospitals, the community or at home, with appropriate treatment to avoid admission to specialist mental health units, facilitate prompt discharge or support transition.

The Programme has clear governance arrangements in place that include representatives from CYP and parents with a lived experience, NHS England, the ICB, Primary Care, local health service providers, Children’s Services, Public Health, Schools, VCSE organisations and relevant commissioned service providers.

Given the wide scope of the Programme and the services involved, it is essential that we have a proactive and preventative approach to improve physical and mental health outcomes, promote wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for CYP. We must also have a clear understanding of the different needs of our local communities e.g. urban centres, urban industrial centres, coastal communities, rural and market towns etc. and particular

groups of CYP who we know are more likely to experience poor mental health. This understanding supports service planning and will help target support to improve mental health outcomes. Coordinated work is taking place with Public Health and the ICB to inform the Programme.

The services already in place provide a good example of how population health management and the targeting of those experiencing health inequalities are already used:

- All CYP mental health services include a training offer to professionals working with CYP to help upskill them to support CYP with mental health concerns and prevent their needs escalating.
- There is a focus on promoting self-care and CYP and parents/carers can access training and support online and in-person. Self-referral is available for Healthy Minds Lincolnshire, MHSTs and CAMHS via a single point of access.
- There is a digital offer (Kooth) that supports people to access online counselling that helps overcome some challenges with rurality. Face-to-face services are delivered in local communities, although this is an identified area for expansion.
- MHST's are targeted in our most deprived areas.
- The Complex Needs Team provides support to CYP that we know are disproportionately more likely to have mental health concerns than their peers e.g. children in care, adopted children, those with complex health needs and children living in vulnerable households e.g. socio-economic disadvantage, parents with mental health problems etc. LPFT Children in Care Link Workers have been recruited to support CYP living in the Council's in-house residential care homes.
- An LPFT mental health worker is co-located in the Barnardo's Leaving Care Service.

## **2. Conclusion**

CYP in Lincolnshire can access a variety of services that support their mental health needs, from early intervention to more specialist services for those experiencing more serious mental illness. Following the closure of Lincolnshire's CYP inpatient unit and the introduction of the new CCETT, CYP are supported in their community to prevent inpatient admission. Evidence shows, despite increased demand and workforce challenges since the pandemic, that services are helping to ensure the number of Lincolnshire CYP needing inpatient care is below the national average. There are further developments being explored that will strengthen the community offer for CYP experiencing high level mental health needs.

## **3. Consultation**

### **a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

n/a

## **4. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Charlotte Gray, Head of Service - Children's Commissioning, who can be contacted on [charlotte.gray@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.gray@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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<sup>i</sup> Between April 2018-March 2020, 96% waited <4 weeks to access HML. 68% Waited <2 weeks. The average CAMHS wait to assessment was 4.4 weeks (Jan 2020).

Between April 2019-March 2021, 87% of discharges from HML needed no further support or universal support e.g. school. Only 2% escalated to CAMHS. The average re-referral rate was 7%. There were no re-referrals to CAMHS Eating Disorder Service.

Referrals to CAMHS dropped by 5% in 2019/20. Urgent referrals to CAMHS reduced by 6%. Nationally referrals were increasing.

In-patient admissions reduced from 68.9 (per 100k population) in 2017 to 58.4 in 2019. Nationally admissions rose to 88.3 in 2019.

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**Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director – Children’s Services**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Report to: | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b> |
| Date:      | <b>21 April 2023</b>                                |
| Subject:   | <b>Care Review</b>                                  |

**Summary:**

This report is intended to provide an overview of the Government’s response to the care review and to highlight the three associated consultations that are currently live. In addition, there is some commentary on Lincolnshire's current position in relation to the proposals.

**Actions Required:**

The Committee is invited to review and comment on the overview of the Government’s proposed response to the care review and the opportunity to feed into the three consultations by 11 May 2023.

## 1. Background

The Care Review was commissioned by the Government as a “once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform systems and services” for children and families. After 15 months of work, the Care Review (led by Josh MacAlister) was published in May 2022 and offered an ambitious plan to revise children’s social care, including a set of over 80 recommendations across seven areas. The report suggests that these are to be implemented by 2027.

The Government’s response to this was published on 2 February 2023 and consists of three documents: Children’s Social Care Reform Implementation Plan, National Framework, and Social Work Agency Social Care. The strategy sets out a vision to rebalance children’s social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective early support.

It sets out actions that seek to:

- Address urgent issues facing children and families now.
- Lay the foundations for whole system reform.
- Set national direction for change.

The plan is to reform in phases, investing £200m over the next two years. After two years the Department for Education (DfE) will refresh this strategy, scaling up new approaches

they have tested through pathfinder local authorities and pilots and bringing forward legislation (subject to parliamentary time).

### **Children's Social Care Reform Implementation Plan: Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation, Strategy and Consultation**

This plan has six pillars as detailed below. Under each pillar there is a summary of where Lincolnshire is currently at in relation to what is proposed.

#### **Pillar 1: Family Help provides the right support at the right time so that children can thrive with their families.**

- £45m for up to 12 'Families First for Children' family help pathfinders (three in 2023 and up to nine in 2024), co-designing and delivering end to end service reform, with three elements: local, multi-disciplinary family help services, child protection lead practitioners, and a focus on family networks and kinship care.
- Development of knowledge and skills statements for family help workers.
- Consult on enabling a broader range of practitioners to 'case hold' children in need cases.
- Work to join up family help funding and strategy across government.
- Law Commission to review children's social care legislation for disabled children with a view to simplifying and streamlining.
- Reference to building culturally competent practice and better responding to the needs of families facing material deprivation.

#### **Lincolnshire's current position**

Lincolnshire already has a strong Early Help service which is co-located alongside social care, Future4Me (F4Me) and the 0-19 Health Service in localities. They are skilled and knowledgeable workers who are able to access the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and Children's Services learning and development offer. A knowledge and skill statement would be useful to bring consistency to the role across the country. Consideration has been given to Early Help holding children in need cases as they are already lead practitioners for children and families who's needs could be defined as child in need. Our Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Children with Disability Teams are well regarded, and we would welcome any measures that would simplify and streamline legislation in this area. There has been a recent focus on anti-racist practice with January practice lead sessions focussing on this. Training has been rolled out over this year. Cultural competence training would be the next step on this journey, so Lincolnshire is well placed to embrace this.

#### **Pillar 2: A decisive multi-agency child protection system.**

- 'Families First for Children' pathfinders will test a new child protection lead practitioner role which will co-work with Family Help teams when safeguarding issues are identified.
- Consult on new National Multi-Agency Child Protection Standards in 2023 as part of the planned update to Working Together 2018.
- Report to go to Parliament setting out ways to improve information sharing between safeguarding partners, including exploration of the use of a single consistent child identifier.
- Strengthen leadership across multi-agency partnerships via amends to Working Together 2018 guidance, improved accountability, and an increased role for education

in local safeguarding arrangements and, consult on education's role as a safeguarding partner. Following a consultation, areas will be funded to implement the agreed reforms, with Pathfinder areas being early adopters.

- Act on delays and improve parental engagement in the family courts.

### **Lincolnshire's current position**

Good partnership working across all agencies, supported by Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) is in place. Education providers within Lincolnshire already play a significant role in meeting the needs of Lincolnshire children so we would welcome any formal recognition of this role. We have well developed Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements which co-ordinate the response to children who are being exploited both in supporting and safeguarding the children and young people and endeavouring to identify and disrupt adults and locations who are responsible.

Partners have limited, read only, access to our data base Mosaic, but the use of a single identifier across all partner agencies will only serve to strengthen information sharing. There is a proactive and well embedded Lincolnshire Family Justice Board which champions legal proceedings and challenges barriers, such as delay and practice issues.

### **Pillar 3: Unlocking the potential of family networks.**

This pillar aims to create a culture of family first by:

- Using the 'Families First for Children' pathfinders, test how to implement family group decision making and Family Network Support Packages. Seven family help pilot areas will be identified to test Family Network Support Packages.
- Publish a national kinship care strategy by the end of 2023. This will include issues such as educational entitlements, training, and local authority practice plus related reforms e.g., financial allowances.
- Invest £9m in a training and support offer for all kinship carers (those with a legal order and informal arrangements) by the end of this Parliament.
- Explore the case for mandating a financial allowance for all Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) and Child Arrangement Orders (CAOs).

### **Lincolnshire's current position**

Lincolnshire has embedded "family seeing" as a cornerstone of practice and we are proud of the work we have done in working with families and their family networks. We have high numbers placed with kinship carers compared to both regionally and nationally, and kinship carers in Lincolnshire receive the same support as local authority foster carers. In 2020/21 Lincolnshire was granted 63 SGOs. Over 8% of Lincolnshire's children in care were made subject to an SGO at the conclusion of care proceedings. Lincolnshire's kinship carers can access the same training and support as mainstream foster carers, although additional support is always welcome. Lincolnshire offers financial allowances to SGO carers and would welcome more financial support in this area.

### **Pillar 4: Putting love, relationships, and a stable home at the heart of being a child in care.**

- £27m over two years for a fostering recruitment and retention programme to be initially trialled in the North East region.
- National minimum allowance for fostering to increase by 12.43%.

- Continuing reforms to supported accommodation; registration in 2023, inspection in 2024.
- Two Regional Care Cooperatives (RCC) pathfinders to plan, commission and deliver care places.
- DfE to commission an external organisation to support local authorities with forecasting, procurement and market shaping efforts.
- Support improvements in the quality of leadership and management in the children's homes sector leadership programme, KSS, focus on Continuing Professional Development (CPD), considering professional registration of the residential childcare workforce.
- Implement an opt out independent advocacy; this will not replace Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) or Regulation 44 visitors.
- Introduce financial oversight regime for the largest providers, thereby increasing transparency and reducing risks of sudden exit.
- Expert group to review standards of care, regulation and guidance and consult on legislative changes.
- £30m over two years to fund well evidenced interventions in family finding, befriending and mentoring programmes.
- Consult on strengthening and extending corporate parenting principles to a wider set of relevant bodies in Autumn 2023.
- Create opportunities for children in care and care leavers to achieve their potential with a focus on education, training and employment via Virtual School heads, Pupil Premium Plus, an uplift to the apprenticeship bursary and a refresh of the care leaver covenant.
- Universal offer of wrap around support and accommodation for all care leavers via an uplift in the leaving care allowance and strengthening Staying Put / Staying Close, with entitlements up to age 23.
- Focus on the mental and physical health of care leavers and addressing health disparities to increase life expectancy by building understanding and skills of social workers plus other professionals.
- Update existing guidance on promoting the health and wellbeing of children in care and extend it to cover care leavers up to age 25.
- Consult on extending the mandatory reporting of deaths or serious incidents involving children to include the deaths of care leavers.

### **Lincolnshire's current position**

Lincolnshire has a well-established fostering service that recruits and supports foster carers in Lincolnshire, although would welcome any additional funding and national publicity to raise the profile of foster carers. Our two in-house supported accommodation homes have from the outset had Regulation 44 visits as required in mainstream homes. The visit to the supported accommodation is currently undertaken quarterly as good practice, so we are well placed to increase this to a more frequent schedule if this is what the new regulations require. Lincolnshire has always had a number of residential homes and is in the process of increasing capacity with Robin House opening in 2023 and Riverhead in 2024. There is an offer in place to the staff in residential homes, which is flexible and comprehensive to meet the needs of the children and staff. We would welcome any recognition, extension of the training offer and standardisation through KSS for the residential workforce. Lincolnshire already commissions Voiceability to provide an opt-out advocacy service and this would continue under the proposed changes. Lincolnshire has a corporate parenting framework

with strong links in place but welcomes any additional extension to this across partner agencies. Our virtual school is well placed to support any additional opportunities that may be created through this implementation plan and welcomes any increased provision of universal services to care leavers.

**Pillar 5: A valued, supported and highly skilled social worker for every child who needs one.**

- Social Work England (SWE) to inspect all initial education routes by July 2025, commission research on the role of practice educators and take a greater role in overseeing them.
- Development of a five-year Early Career Framework (ECF) for social workers, starting with early adopters in Spring 2023 to design, develop and test ECF delivery mechanisms.
- Boosting social worker recruitment and retention, including an additional 500 child and family social work apprentices, reviewing student social work bursaries and education support grants, and exploring international recruitment.
- National Workload Action Group to identify unnecessary workload drivers.
- Reduce the cost and reliance on agency social workers (separate consultation).

**Lincolnshire's current position**

Lincolnshire has a robust and proactive Learning and Development offer alongside the LSCP training offer. There is a rolling programme to recruit to 15 supernumerary social work apprentice roles every year, one for every frontline team. Apprentices and newly qualified staff are well supported through provision of practice educators, group supervision, ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) programme and a comprehensive wellbeing offer. We welcome any action to reduce workloads and address the disparity between agency workers and local authority social workers in relation to salary.

**Pillar 6: A system that continuously learns and improves and makes better use of evidence and data.**

- Introduce a Children's Social Care National Framework, supported by a data dashboard by the end of 2023 with implementation by the end of 2024 (separate consultation).
- Publish a data strategy by the end of 2023 setting out plans for transforming data in children's social care and establish a Data and Digital Expert Forum.
- Align inspection with the National Framework. Ofsted to rebalance how it looks at practice, so it acts as a lever for improvement.
- Development of a suite of practice guides; this work will be overseen by the National Practice Group.
- Enhancing the DfE's intervention role and offer via a clearer interventions policy and escalation pathway, new focus on 'getting to good' in Requires Improvement (RI) rated Local Authorities (LAs).
- Before the next Spending Review, DfE, in consultation with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), will aim to update, publish, and consult on a new formula for children's services funding.

**Lincolnshire's current position**

Lincolnshire Children's Services has a comprehensive performance framework and prides itself of being a learning authority.

### **Pathfinders and Pilots**

The DFE has yet to announce which local authorities will be involved in the pathfinder and pilot projects. Lincolnshire Children's Services has expressed an interest in the Early Career Framework and is awaiting further communication from the DFE about this.

In addition, we have expressed an interest in bidding for the social work apprentice additional funding. Official detailed bids for this are scheduled for March.

### **Children's Social Care National Framework Consultation**

The consultation on the national framework was issued at the same time as the Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation Strategy and Consultation. The national framework endeavours to bring together, in one place, the purpose of children's social care, principles for practice, and the outcomes that should be achieved. This is so that there is a shared understanding of the expectations for all those who are working to ensure that children, young people, and families, whatever their circumstances, can thrive. The national framework also includes dashboard indicators.

#### **The framework includes:**

- The purpose of Children's Social Care (CSC).
- Principles underpinning leadership.
- Outcomes to be achieved plus enablers and how leaders and practitioners should hear the voices of children, young people and the families they support.
- The indicators that will form the CSC dashboard.

The purpose of CSC is defined as follows:

"Children's social care exists to support children, young people and families, to protect children and young people by intervening decisively when they are at risk of harm and to provide care for those who need it so that they grow up and thrive with safety, stability and love."

#### **Principles underpinning the framework**

A series of principles underpin the framework drawn from legislation, guidance and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Children's welfare is paramount, and their wishes and feelings are sought, heard and responded to.
- CSC works in partnership with families.
- Children are raised by their families, in family networks, or in family environments wherever possible.
- Practice engages with partner agencies at every stage of support to identify and meet the needs of children, young people and families.
- Practice and services are poverty aware and anti-discriminatory.

#### **Outcomes and enablers**

There are four outcomes which lay the foundations that enable children to thrive:

1. Children, young people, and families stay together and get the help they need.
2. Children and young people are supported by their family network.
3. Children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes.
4. Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes.

There are two system level enablers that help CSC to achieve these outcomes:

1. The workforce is equipped and effective.
2. Leaders drive conditions for effective practice.

Plus, there are wider outcomes that public services should aspire to e.g., good education and good mental and physical health.

### **The CSC data dashboard**

The dashboard brings together a set of LA level indicators via a publicly accessible, interactive form with the aim of increasing transparency and supporting learning. It is not intended to measure the performance of LAs and does not set performance targets. The main aim in publishing this new guidance, the National Framework, along with the Dashboard indicators, is to set national direction for practice that affects children, young people, and families. The National Framework clarifies existing duties; no new duties are added. Each chapter of the National Framework explains what leaders and practitioners should do to support the children's social care outcomes and enablers, and how they should listen to the voices of children, young people, and families, ensuring they shape services and decisions that affect their lives. These expectations are a summary of the practice that is expected to support the outcomes, rather than a definitive list of everything that should happen in children's social care.

See Appendix A for a visual summary of the dashboard.

### **Child and Family Social Worker Workforce Consultation**

Following recommendations made in the independent review of children's social care's final report, DfE is consulting on proposals to improve quality and reduce costs associated with the use of agency social workers. The consultation builds upon existing regional Memoranda of Understanding / Cooperation to create a set of national rules. Subject to consultation responses, DfE intends to set out the national rules in September 2023. By spring 2024, LAs and all procurement routes used by LAs to engage agency social workers should comply with the national rules.

DfE expects that social workers who are currently working for a local authority via an agency should be offered the opportunity to transition to permanent or fixed term employment. They will work with the sector to ensure "simple and effective means to complete transition" subject to the outcome of the consultation. The proposal is as follows:

#### **National rules**

1. Engage agency workers only via commercial compliant procurement routes.
2. Only engage agency workers within national price caps.
3. Minimum of five years post qualified experience in LA children's social care and completion of ASYE to qualify for agency role.
4. Not engage project teams for social work.
5. Standard references for all candidates that relates to standard of practice for any agency worker.
6. Three months wait for workers leaving substantive roles before taking agency role in same region.
7. Minimum six week notice period for agency social workers.
8. Quarterly data return.

### **Procurement of social workers**

- By spring 2024, all procurement routes used by LAs to engage agency workers should comply with the national rules.
- Compliance will be monitored via regular data collection and local and regional spot checks.
- Agencies that circumvent national rules would be restricted by LAs from accessing new vacancies.

### **Price caps**

- Cap on the rate LAs can pay for an agency social worker.
- Bring agency worker pay in line with substantive worker pay. This will take into account contract differences e.g., holiday pay.
- Create greater national consistency around pay for social workers (substantive and agency) who are carrying out the same role in different LAs or regions.
- Ban on bonuses which take amount of pay a worker earns over the cap.

### **Post-qualified experience**

- Social workers who graduated in or after April 2024 must have a minimum of five years post qualified experience working within LA children's social care and have completed their ASYE before being employed as an agency social worker.
- DfE funding cannot be used to support agency social workers in the attainment of their ASYE.
- International social workers - should this also apply to them?

### **Project teams**

- Project teams no longer engaged for child and family social work.
- Multiple agency workers can be employed but each one contracted individually.

### **Data and monitoring**

The following data to be collected and shared quarterly:

- Agency worker job type and pay rate.
- Substantive worker job type and pay rate.
- Vacancies by job type.
- Use of market and other supplements.
- Substantive worker full time equivalent (FTE).
- Leavers FTE.
- Agency worker FTE.
- Data sharing agreement for data to be shared with DfE and between LAs and regions.

## **2. Conclusion**

All three consultations have a closing date of 11 May 2023. A range of responses are invited, from individuals, local authorities, regional and national groups such as the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), British Association of Social Workers (BASW), Principal Social Work network. The DfE has offered a few online events in March and April in relation to the national framework and the agency workforce consultations.



Lincolnshire Children’s Services plan to submit a collective response, to which all staff are invited to contribute. There is a communication plan in place and the consultation documents and questions are available on SharePoint so staff can submit their views this way. Several virtual sessions are planned throughout April to go through the three consultations and offer staff the opportunity to contribute to each consultation question. All information will be collated at the end of April and the draft responses shared with Children’s Services Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) on 3 May before being submitted by 11 May.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

N/A

**4. Appendices**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report |  |
| Appendix A  | Children’s Social Care National Framework – One Page Summary |

**5. Background Papers**

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

| Document title   | Where the document can be viewed  |
|--|---|
| Social Care Reform Implementation Plan: Stable Homes, Built on Love: Implementation, Strategy and Consultation | <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Children's social care: Stable Homes, Built on Love - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>     |
| Children's social care national framework and dashboard  | <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Children's social care national framework and dashboard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> |
| Child and family social worker workforce   | <a href="http://www.gov.uk">Child and family social worker workforce - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>                |

This report was written by Carolyn Knight, who can be contacted on 01522 553732 or [carolyn.knight@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:carolyn.knight@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

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**Children's Social Care National Framework - one page summary**

|   |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| <p><i>Why does the CSC system exist?</i></p>  | <p><b>Purpose</b></p>   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p>To help children and families, to protect children by intervening decisively when they are at risk of harm and to provide care for those who need it so that children, young people and care leavers grow up and thrive with safety, stability and love.</p> |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p><i>How should CSC practice?</i></p>  | <p><b>Principles of practice</b></p>  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p>Children's welfare is paramount and their feelings are sought, heard and responded to</p>  |   | <p>Children's social care work in partnership with families</p>        |  | <p>Children are raised by their families, in family networks or in family environments wherever possible</p> |   | <p>Practice engages partner agencies at every stage of support to identify and meet the needs of children, young people and families</p>   |  |  |
| <p>Practice and services are demonstrably poverty-aware and anti-discriminatory</p>   |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p><i>What should CSC achieve?</i></p>  | <p><b>Outcomes for children and families</b></p>  |  |  |  | <p><b>System enablers</b></p>   |  |  |  |
| <p>Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need</p>   |   | <p>Children and young people are supported by their family network</p> |  | <p>Children and young people are safe in and outside their homes</p>   |   | <p>Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes</p>   |  |  |
| <p>The workforce is equipped and effective</p>  |   |  |  |  | <p>Leaders drive conditions for effective practice</p>  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Practice guides</b></p>   |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p><b>Proposed dashboard indicators</b></p>   |   |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p><i>How will CSC understand progress?</i></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ % of referrals which are repeat referrals</li> <li>▪ School attendance of children in need</li> <li>▪ Rate of new entrants to care</li> <li>▪ Rate of assessments completed</li> <li>▪ Rate of children in care</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ % of section 31 proceedings that end with the child living with parents, and the age of the children in the proceedings</li> <li>▪ % of children in care living with their family networks</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rate and number of section 47 investigations</li> <li>▪ Rate of section 47 investigations which result in an initial child protection conference</li> <li>▪ Rate of new child protection plans</li> <li>▪ % of children whose plan was de-escalated and did not present again with unmet needs in 2 years</li> </ul> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ % of children in care living in foster care</li> <li>▪ % of children in care living in residential care</li> <li>▪ Distance of placements from home</li> <li>▪ Stability of placements of children in care</li> <li>▪ Strengths and difficulties questionnaire scores for children in care</li> <li>▪ Progress and attainment in Key Stage results of children in care</li> <li>▪ % of care leavers in education, employment or training</li> <li>▪ % of care leavers in higher education</li> <li>▪ % of care leavers in apprenticeships</li> <li>▪ % of care leavers in unsuitable accommodation</li> </ul> |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social worker turnover</li> <li>▪ Agency social worker rates</li> <li>▪ Social worker caseloads</li> </ul>   |   |  |  |  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share of children's social care spend on children in care</li> <li>▪ Turnover of Directors of Children's Services and practice leaders</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <p><i>Outcomes that help children, young people and families to thrive</i></p>  | <p><b>Long-term outcomes, achieved with partner agencies</b></p>  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |
| <p>Good child development</p>   |   | <p>Good education attendance, attainment, training, and progress</p>   |  | <p>Good physical and mental health</p>   |   | <p>Family stability, including housing and financial stability</p>   |  |  |
| <p>Family functioning, including strong family relationships and support networks</p>   |   |  |  |  | <p>Preventing and tackling crime</p>  |  |  |  |

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**Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Executive Director - Children Services**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Report to: | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>                              |
| Date:      | <b>21 April 2023</b>   |
| Subject:   | <b>HMIP Inspection Report and Outcome - Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service</b> |

**Summary:**

This report provides the Committee with the outcome and findings from the recent youth inspection of youth justice services in Lincolnshire undertaken by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in January 2023.

**Actions Required:**

The Committee is invited to review the findings and the judgements from the inspection report and agree the next steps in respect of the recommendations contained within the inspection report.

## 1. Background

Oversight and the effectiveness of youth justice services across England and Wales is currently measured and inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). This takes place through a cycle of inspection based on a random and risk led criteria with the previous inspection in Lincolnshire having taken place in December 2015. The inspection programme has been significantly interrupted and delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic with inspections initially paused and then moved on to a virtual basis. At the current time, inspections have now returned to the pre-pandemic methodology which consist of visits by the inspectorate team to the local authority.

On 18 November 2022, Lincolnshire was given notice by HMIP of the intention to inspect the Youth Offending Service. As planned, the fieldwork element of the inspection commenced on 9 January 2023 and inspectors were on site for this week undertaking a wide range of activity to validate and evidence their judgements.

The national approach to inspecting youth offending services by HMIP through the current inspection consists of three domains which are set out within the inspection report and are as follows:

- **Organisational delivery (Domain one)**  
This examines how the service is run and led, strategically. It looks at workloads and staffing levels and whether there are arrangements for learning and development. Inspectors will look at any partnerships and services there may be and whether the right information/data and analysis is available, and facilities are in place to support staff.
- **Court disposals (Domain two)**  
Inspectors look at the assessment, planning, implementation and delivery and the reviewing processes being delivered to children and young people sentenced by the courts in Lincolnshire.
- **Out-of-court disposals (Domain three)**  
Inspectors look at the assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery being delivered to children and young people, and also at the overarching policy and provision for out-of-court work.
- **Resettlement**  
Inspectors look at the policy and provision for resettlement work (those children returning home following periods in youth custody), which is illustrated by inspecting a small number of custodial cases.

The inspection consisted of the submission of significant evidence in advance against the national inspection framework criteria and also a number of focus groups with key partners, staff, managers, young people and parents. More than 50 cases of children were inspected and assessed against a robust criteria and this also involved case interviews with more than 30 practitioners. In total eight inspectors conducted the field work during the week which demonstrated a robust and intensive examination of all aspects of both strategic governance and operational practice.

The initial feedback on the inspection was provided to the Executive Director of Children Services on 25 January 2023 and a draft report was provided for factual accuracy purposes on 13 February 2023. The final inspection report was published on the HMIP website along with a press release on 4 April 2023 and is provided as an appendix to this report.

The legislative basis for the delivery of youth justice work is set out through the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) which also lays out the minimum statutory requirements for Youth Offending teams in England and Wales. The Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service (YOS) Strategic Management Board provides the overarching governance arrangements and strategic direction for the service upon which the respective partners agree to abide. Therefore, the inspection also examines the strength of partnership work and how this contributes to support children and maintaining public protection and community safety.

The YOS management board is responsible for ensuring that the principle aim of preventing offending by children and young people in Lincolnshire is promoted and that the work of the service is focused on achieving local targets and those set nationally by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The board seeks to ensure that the service works to recognised standards and that all work is underpinned by the desire to achieve the very best outcomes for children and young people who come to the attention of the youth justice system in Lincolnshire.

The management board is a significant area of focus for the inspectorate, and it seeks assurance that the representatives from partner agencies should be strategic decision makers to ensure that board business is progressed and contributes to the development of the annual Youth Justice Plan. The management board is expected to provide the overall strategic direction for youth justice services in Lincolnshire, and monitor objectives linked to key performance indicators, within the national framework established by the Youth Justice Board and other locally agreed measures.

## 2. Conclusion

The attached report and findings by HMIP have concluded that Lincolnshire YOS has achieved an overall rating of 'Outstanding' by HMIP. The inspectorate also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Good'. The achievement of receiving an overall outstanding judgement is evidenced by the fact that to date only approximately 12 of the 130 areas in England and Wales inspected have received a rating of outstanding.

The following sections below highlight just some of the many significant strengths that inspectors observed on their visit to Lincolnshire:

HMIP Report 2023-

*'Our inspection of the YOS identified a cohesive and integrated approach to working positively with children. Strong strategic and operational partnerships support staff in the delivery of work with children, and we found this reflected in high-quality practice, particularly across all elements of assessment, planning, delivery, and review within court disposals.'*

*'Lincolnshire's leadership and governance arrangements are a strength. The YOS management board sets a well communicated clear vision and strategy, and strategic partnership arrangements are mature and collaborative. Board members have sufficient seniority to make decisions and commit resources from their own agencies. They model positive behaviours of partnership working, and this is reflected in their operational staff's work with children.'*

*'Lincolnshire YOS is a well-led and well-managed service. There is an open and receptive learning culture, which enables motivated staff to achieve positive outcomes for children within the YOS cohort. Their overall rating of 'Outstanding' is reflective of the sustained efforts and commitment of senior leaders and operational staff across the partnership over a number of years.'*

The work of the Joint Diversionary Panel has featured within this Committee on many occasions, and we are proud that this area of practice was graded as outstanding in its own right. Our collaboration with Lincolnshire Police was highly commended and inspectors were able to see a very strong commitment to multi-agency working through work with the Courts, Probation, Health and many other partners who contribute to service delivery.

The report sets out four recommendations to further improve practice which are as follows:

- Ensure consistency of safety and wellbeing casework in out-of-court disposals, across all the YOS locality teams
- Ensure effective management oversight of all out-of-court disposals
- Improve arrangements and provision to increase the number of children in education, employment or training (NEET) within the YOS cohort
- Work to ensure that the staff and volunteer ethnicity profile properly reflects the cohort of YOS children.

For assurance purposes, the recommendations detailed above are already aligned to the strategic priorities set out by the board and were already recognised and being responded to prior to the inspection. Nonetheless they will form an integral part of the service action plan and this year’s youth justice plan to ensure continued oversight and progress. These areas will also be monitored by the Strategic Management Board as part of a drive toward on-going improvement.

It is clear from the report that HMIP observed a highly motivated and skilled workforce in Lincolnshire who work in close collaboration with their colleagues in seeking the very best outcomes for children. The report also reflects our commitment to working in a child first and trauma informed way by acting proportionately, restoratively whilst also delivering high quality interventions. The entire staff group are rightly proud of this outcome, and it represents a deserved recognition for their practice over a sustained period.

Finally, the inspection report is seen as a clear endorsement of our work within Future4Me as all of the elements within the service were scrutinised and deemed to provide a strong offer to children and families. The inspection outcome is a hugely positive reflection of our partnership approach in Lincolnshire to working with children and young people and offering effective support and intervention.

### **3. Consultation**

#### **a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

Not applicable

### **4. Appendices**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report |  |
| Appendix A  | An inspection of youth offending services in Lincolnshire – April 2023 |

### **5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Andy Cook, who can be contacted on 07787 887175 or [andy.cook@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:andy.cook@lincolnshire.gov.uk).





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HM Inspectorate  
of Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in  
**Lincolnshire**

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HM Inspectorate of Probation, April 2023

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## Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Mike Lane, supported by a team of inspectors and colleagues from across the inspectorate. We would like to thank all those who helped plan and took part in the inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

## The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

HM Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

Please note that throughout the report the names in the practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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## Foreword

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This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Lincolnshire YOS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work.

Overall, Lincolnshire YOS was rated as 'Outstanding'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Good'.

Our inspection of the YOS identified a cohesive and integrated approach to working positively with children. Strong strategic and operational partnerships support staff in the delivery of work with children, and we found this reflected in high-quality practice, particularly across all elements of assessment, planning, delivery, and review within court disposals.

Lincolnshire's leadership and governance arrangements are a strength. The YOS management board sets a well communicated clear vision and strategy, and strategic partnership arrangements are mature and collaborative. Board members have sufficient seniority to make decisions and commit resources from their own agencies. They model positive behaviours of partnership working, and this is reflected in their operational staff's work with children.

YOS staff and senior leaders have a shared commitment to ensuring that children receive the most appropriate services and interventions. We were particularly impressed by in-depth understanding of the issues and challenges facing YOS children, predicated on the strong use of data and evaluation from internal and external sources and reports. The breadth of targeted, specialist, and mainstream services ensures that partners collaborate closely and share responsibility for addressing children's complex needs.

Although underpinned by clear evidence-based policy and provision arrangements, improvements were required in some of the specific areas of out-of-court disposal work inspected, particularly in ensuring consistency of case management in relation to the safety and wellbeing of a small number of YOS children. Management oversight and quality assurance of this element of out-of-court disposal work also needs to be more consistent.

Lincolnshire YOS is a well-led and well-managed service. There is an open and receptive learning culture, which enables motivated staff to achieve positive outcomes for children within the YOS cohort. Their overall rating of 'Outstanding' is reflective of the sustained efforts and commitment of senior leaders and operational staff across the partnership over a number of years.



**Justin Russell**  
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

## Ratings

**Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service**  
Fieldwork started January 2023

**Score 31/36**

### Overall rating

**Outstanding**



### 1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

**Outstanding**



1.2 Staff

**Good**



1.3 Partnerships and services

**Good**



1.4 Information and facilities

**Outstanding**



### 2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

**Outstanding**



2.2 Planning

**Outstanding**



2.3 Implementation and delivery

**Outstanding**



2.4 Reviewing

**Outstanding**



### 3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1 Assessment

**Good**



3.2 Planning

**Good**



3.3 Implementation and delivery

**Good**



3.4 Out-of-court disposal policy and provision

**Outstanding**



### 4. Resettlement<sup>1</sup>

4.1 Resettlement policy and provision

**Good**



<sup>1</sup> The rating for resettlement does not influence the overall YOS rating.

## Recommendations

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As a result of our inspection findings, we have made four recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Lincolnshire. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

### **Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service should:**

1. ensure consistency of safety and wellbeing casework in out-of-court disposals, across all the YOS locality teams
2. ensure effective management oversight of all out-of-court disposal practice
3. improve arrangements and provision to increase the number of children in education, employment or training (NEET) within the YOS cohort
4. work to ensure that the staff and volunteer ethnicity profile properly reflects the cohort of YOS children.

## Background

---

We conducted fieldwork in Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service (YOS) over a period of a week, beginning 09 January 2023. We inspected cases where the sentence or licence began between 10 January 2022 and 04 November 2022; out-of-court disposals that were delivered between 10 January 2022 and 04 November 2022; and resettlement cases that were sentenced or released between 10 January 2022 and 04 November 2022. We also conducted 42 interviews with case managers.

In 2016 Lincolnshire YOS moved from the finance and public protection directorate of the county council into the children's services directorate. In 2019, Lincolnshire children services radically redesigned its approach to working with adolescents. The creation of Future4Me (F4Me) was founded upon research, previous learning, and feedback from children, parents and carers, as well as practitioners' experiences. It established a practice framework that fits the profile of need for children presenting with complex behaviours and risk factors. F4Me is an umbrella service, under which key aspects of service delivery are brought together, including Lincolnshire YOS and a range of other statutory and third sector partners and organisations.

The partnership faces service delivery challenges because of the rural nature of Lincolnshire and has undertaken work to understand and map the different demographics of each of its four localities. The profile of work within the YOS has changed since 2017, with out-of-court disposals providing the bulk of the work undertaken (a ratio of approximately 30 per cent court disposals to 70 per cent out-of-court disposals). The prevalent offence types for the YOS cohort were for violence or aggression.

There was a clear consistency between what senior leaders, operational managers, and YOS frontline practitioners identified as the challenges and issues for the cohort. These included: emotional wellbeing and childhood trauma; substance misuse; special educational need; criminal exploitation; and employment, training, and education issues.

YOS organisational data indicates an over-representation of females (23 per cent) within the overall caseload. The partnership has identified that black and minority ethnic children are not over-represented in the YOS cohort – 9.7 per cent are from an ethnic minority compared to 15.6 per cent in the wider children's population. Cared-for children comprise 13.2 per cent of the YOS cohort and are over-represented, being higher than the national average of two per cent.

The latest Youth Justice Board (YJB) data reveals an overall reduction of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system in Lincolnshire from 2017 to a current figure of 111 (July 2021 to June 2022). This is well below the regional East Midlands rate of 169 and the current England and Wales rate of 144. Historically, reoffending rates have been high in Lincolnshire, which the partnership has identified as attributable to a small but complex cohort of children. As such, the data shows an overall increase in these rates since 2018. However, the YOS management board has analysed this data and produced a coordinated strategic and operational plan in response.



## Domain one: Organisational delivery

---

To inspect organisational delivery, we reviewed written evidence submitted in advance by the YOS and conducted 13 meetings, including with staff, volunteers, managers, board members, and partnership staff and their managers.

Key findings about organisational delivery were as follows.

---

### 1.1. Governance and leadership



The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Outstanding

#### Strengths:

- There is a clear vision and strategy, which is well communicated across the partnership. The YOS vision sits within a wider vulnerable adolescent strategy and is evidence-based.
- The positioning of the YOS with other teams in the wider 'Future4Me' adolescent service structure provides enhanced service delivery opportunities and supports organisational resilience.
- The board chair is very knowledgeable and holds board members to account for their individual and collective actions.
- Board members regularly attend and actively participate in board meetings. They advocate for YOS children and have sufficient seniority to make decisions and commit resources from their own agencies.
- The board is part of a network of partnership arrangements that work across Lincolnshire. YOS board members provide strategic links to other partnership forums, such as the safeguarding children's partnership, community safety partnership, local criminal justice board, and violence reduction partnership.
- Partnership arrangements are mature and collaborative, with excellent use of data to inform strategic decisions and demonstrate impact on YOS children. Board members model positive behaviours of partnership working which is reflected in the work of the staff with children.
- There is a culture of support and challenge within the board, with shared responsibility across strategic partners for addressing the complex needs of YOS children and vulnerable adolescents.
- All board members have received an appropriate induction and clear terms of reference are in place. Board members have participated in additional training and development days where required.
- The YOS head of service is well respected across the partnership and has links with a range of local and regional strategic groups and forums.
- There are strong links and mutual trust between the head of service, operational managers, and the board. The board is sighted on the quality of practice.

- The YOS has been successful in obtaining funding from various sources to develop innovative and creative approaches and projects.
- The management board and the YOS service manager have a good understanding of the service's business risks and have appropriate mitigations in place.
- Senior leaders and managers have established a strong learning culture. They have an open and reflective style, empowering staff to make decisions and providing them with good support and training.
- Staff report that links with the YOS management board are good. Board members are visible and have utilised opportunities to engage with frontline staff through a range of activities. There are high levels of connectedness, strategically and operationally.
- Team managers have designated lead responsibilities and sit on relevant multi-agency operational groups. Partnership managers describe mature and collaborative relationships with their YOS counterparts.

## 1.2. Staff



Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Good

### Strengths:

- The YOS actively manages workloads. Two new case managers have been recruited in response to increases in caseload for out-of-court disposals. The staff survey indicated that a large majority of practitioners felt their workload was manageable.
- Allocation of cases prioritises a consistency of case manager and recognises the individual diverse needs of children.
- Staffing and workforce development are high priorities for YOS managers, with a good focus on staff's wellbeing. There is a positive learning culture and evident reward and recognition arrangements.
- The operational management team is stable, experienced, and from a range of safeguarding or criminal justice/YOS backgrounds. Spans of control and the number of direct staff reports are felt to be manageable.
- Practitioners and managers benefit from a comprehensive workforce development strategy. The staff survey indicated that 100 per cent of the 28 respondents felt their training and development needs were met.
- The YOS actively encourages opportunities for staff to complete external qualifications as a route to becoming a YOS officer, such as Social work apprenticeships and the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate. Various leadership courses are available for staff becoming YOS practice supervisors or managers.
- Staff reported that they had received a full induction, with opportunities for shadowing, training, peer support, and learning across the YOS and the wider adolescent service. This enabled them to understand how teams and services worked together.
- The workforce has the full range of skills, knowledge, and experience to develop trusting and supportive relationships with children and families. Staff are very motivated and spoke of their pride in working for the YOS.
- Staff reported that supervision is regular, purposeful, and beneficial. Group and joint supervision are used effectively, enabling a reflective and considered approach to the management of complex cases. Management oversight of court disposal casework was sufficient in 16 out of 18 cases.
- Within the staff survey, 17 out of 21 relevant staff felt their most recent appraisal was valuable
- Succession planning has been evident throughout the YOS. Several staff had progressed from early help to YOS roles and from practitioner to management roles.

### Areas for improvement:

- There is inconsistency of safety and wellbeing casework in out-of-court disposals across the YOS locality teams. Management oversight of such work varies between localities. The YOS leaders need to understand if this is attributable to variations in approaches to practice.
- The ethnicity of staff and volunteers is not representative of the YOS cohort.

### 1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Good

#### Strengths:

- There is an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of the children in the YOS cohort.
- Children can swiftly access a range of services and support, with specific pathways for universal, targeted, and specialist provision.
- Workers across all roles collaborate well, facilitate children's engagement effectively, and foster positive relationships with children.
- The YOS has a full-time police officer, full-time probation officer, and a range of seconded and commissioned staffing arrangements – including education, training and employment (ETE) mentors, youth workers, and supported accommodation staff.
- Health provision for YOS children is strong. The complex needs team (shared across the F4Me service) has a range of staff, consisting of three psychologists (including clinical and forensic) and two Speech and Language Therapists, alongside access to substance misuse services through a commissioned arrangement.
- Children benefit from a case formulation approach to support their identified needs and risks.
- The partnership has a broad range of one-to-one and group interventions. The 'Status' and 'Filter' groupwork programmes afford a gendered approach to delivery of interventions.
- Partnership work for school-age YOS children has had an impact in reducing the number of school exclusions.
- There are clear arrangements for joint working between the YOS and children's services.
- The YOS contributes to a variety of internal and external multi-agency operational groups and panels for children deemed to present a high risk of harm to others or a high level of safety and wellbeing concerns.
- Partnership managers have a good understanding of the specialist work their staff undertake with YOS children and there is regular supervision, joint oversight, and communication with relevant YOS team managers.
- Arrangements to support victims and delivery of restorative justice work have resulted in positive outcomes.
- Sentencers expressed confidence in the quality of YOS court work, and the relationships between YOS court staff and children.

#### Areas for improvement:

- Staffing and delivery of reparation is recognised as an ongoing area of development by YOS leaders.
- 40 per cent of relevant children in the YOS cohort are not in appropriate education, training or employment and this needs to be improved.

## 1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Outstanding

### Strengths:

- The YOS has a suite of policies and procedures, which are regularly reviewed and updated when necessary, with consideration of diversity evident throughout.
- Referral pathways are clear and there are service level agreements and joint working protocols between the YOS and key partners, such as health, education, and other third-sector projects and services.
- The YOS is co-located with other teams (across a range of venues and localities) as part of the wider adolescent service, which enables effective joint working and communication.
- Inspectors visited a local children's centre and youth centre as part of the fieldwork. We found that these buildings allow strong joint working, which helps staff to build professional relationships and a better understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities. The premises are accessible to children and families, child-friendly, and provide a safe space for staff from all the different agencies. Work also takes place across Lincolnshire in community hubs and venues, alongside home visits to children.
- All 29 respondents to the staff survey (100 per cent) felt that the delivery environments were safe for both staff and YOS children.
- The workforce described ICT systems as reliable and facilitate high-quality work and exchange of information with partners where required.
- The production of management information is strong, and it is used operationally and strategically to shape the delivery of work across the YOS partnership.
- Processes for learning lessons are well developed across the partnership. Critical learning reviews are shared at board level and disseminated to staff through various arrangements and meetings.
- The YOS uses data to help it secure funding for additional bespoke projects.
- A range of internal audits are undertaken to inform practice development.
- External arrangements are evident between key stakeholders such as the YJB, Department for Education (DfE), and University of Lincoln to enable innovation and evaluation of YOS services.

### Areas for improvement:

- The YOS has a quality assurance framework and policy in place. However, it needs to ensure that these are applied more consistently across out-of-court disposal cases.
- The YOS captures feedback from children and families in various ways, but this could be further developed and coordinated.

## **Involvement of children and their parents or carers**

The YOS management board incorporates the view of children into the local strategy. In the current YOS strategic plan, children's participation is a key objective and priority. The views of more than 50 children were sought as part of the evaluation of Future4Me, and this demonstrated that 93 per cent of the children surveyed believed that they had been supported throughout their interventions and that their futures were more positive as a result. Additionally, 90 per cent of those children would recommend the service to their peers.

Future4Me continues to work closely with the Lincolnshire Youth Commission, which was established on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner to capture the voice of children on police, crime, and community safety in Lincolnshire. Future4Me has been able to ensure that a broad section of children have the opportunity to input, but also that children with lived experience of the youth justice system are able to feed in their views.

The YOS has reviewed a range of documents and procedures to share and communicate them with children and families. The YOS is one of a small number currently part of a DfE pilot and has been given YJB dispensation to depart from the use of AssetPlus as the main assessment tool in favour of 'Aspire'. This assessment tool is designed to enable the practitioner to share the content of the assessment with the child and family more effectively, and is worded in language that aims to be child-first and understandable to children and families.

The YOS contacted, on our behalf, children who had open cases at the time of the inspection to gain their consent for a text survey. We delivered the survey independently to 31 children and 19 children replied, 18 completed the survey fully.

When asked how they rated the service they had received from the YOS, five responded with a score of 10 out of 10, four with nine out of 10, four with eight out of 10 and four with seven out of 10. One child scored six out of 10 and one scored five out of 10. Positive responses included:

*"I really felt like I had someone to talk to and they really listen to what I had to say."*

*"Because the members are really friendly and very understanding they listen and don't judge."*

Eighteen people responded to the question on how much the YOS had helped either themselves or (if they were a parent) their child to stay out of trouble. One child said:

*"Keeps me thinking about my actions and what could happen, and keeps me away from trouble – as I don't want to be in trouble."*

Two children responded to our telephone contact and were complimentary about the service received. They felt that their YOS workers had the right skills to do the work and said that they have been able to access the right services and support to help them stay out of trouble.

## Diversity

The YOS management board has demonstrated evidence of work to address diversity and disproportionality. Overall, this has been consistent and is explicitly highlighted as a strategic priority in the current YOS strategic plan and the operational action plan it covers.

In the inspected court disposal and out-of-court disposal cases, we judged that YOS practitioners were effective in taking account of the children's diversity needs in their assessments, planning, delivery, and review within their casework.

Although the rate of girls cautioned or sentenced is identical to the national figure of 13 per cent of the total YOS cohort, YOS organisational data indicates that 23 per cent of the overall caseload, including prevention and out-of-court disposals, are female. The partnership has identified that black and minority ethnic children are not over-represented in the YOS cohort. Organisational data indicates that 9.7 per cent of the YOT cohort are from an ethnic minority, compared to 15.6 per cent in the wider children's population.

Cared-for children comprise 13.2 per cent of the YOS cohort and are over-represented, being higher than the national average of two per cent. In response to this disproportionality, the head of corporate parenting was brought on to the board in October 2022. Organisational data indicates that 46.5 per cent of the YOS cohort have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or an education, health and care plan (EHCP). This is identified as an over-representation compared to the general children's population. Embedding knowledge of SEND and linking it to the understanding and interventions regarding offending behaviour have resulted in Future4Me being awarded the SEND Quality Mark in 2022.

There is a good understanding of the make-up of the community by region and the different ethnic profiles of children by area, which helps to identify disproportionality and over-representation. Following learning from a previous rapid review, it has been made easier for frontline staff to access interpreter services.

The YOS links operationally into various support groups and organisations within the community and third sector – including LGBTQ+, faith groups, and a young farmers' group (established across the partnership following data indicating high rates of suicide within this group). The YOS also accesses a youth centre in Boston, where there is a multi-national eastern European community, and there has been outreach work with children from Afghanistan who have resettled in the Lincolnshire area.

Through the Lincolnshire children's services current corporate people's strategy, staff highlighted they can access various support/focus groups across the local authority in relation to protected characteristics. Diversity training is evident through mandatory training and additional specialist training on SEND, LGBTQ+, and inclusion. Although strong, this could be further enhanced through cultural competence training.

Ethnic minority groups are minimally represented among the service staff and this is an area where recruitment could be improved. Organisational data indicates that 2.9 per cent of staff are from an ethnic minority group, and that 75 per cent of staff are female. In the staff survey, 21 of the 23 staff with a diversity need felt their need was met very well.

Given that Lincolnshire is a rural county with limited public transport, the YOS has challenges with service delivery and access to intervention and positive activities. However, it has utilised a pool of volunteer drivers to help children access services and is currently recruiting to cover vacancies for these.

## Domain two: Court disposals

We took a detailed look at 16 community sentences and two custodial sentences managed by the YOS.

### 2.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>2</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

|   | % 'Yes'    |
|---|------------|
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance? | 94%        |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?            | <b>83%</b> |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?         | 94%        |

Assessment of desistance factors was strong. Staff gained a thorough understanding of children and their wider familial and social contexts. Practitioners spoke of how case formulation helps with the consideration of diversity and the individual needs of children. In all but one case, they achieved this by liaising effectively with partner agencies to access information and by ensuring that children, and their parents or carers, were central to the assessment process. Assessment of victims' needs and wishes was sufficient in every relevant case, which supported and enhanced opportunities for restorative justice. In all the inspected cases, we saw a strengths-based approach and high levels of attention given to understanding the child's maturity, ability and motivation to change, and the likelihood of engaging with the court disposal.

Assessment of a child's safety and wellbeing included information from other agencies in a large majority of cases. The YOS had access to the children's social care case management system and could complete checks on past and present contact.

Assessment work should provide an analysis of how other people will be kept safe when there are signs that the child could present a risk of harm to others. We saw consistent evidence of this in court disposal cases. Case managers drew together current and historical issues or behaviours, which in turn resulted in balanced and well-reasoned assessments. In every case, inspectors saw evidence that case managers had used information from other agencies and sources, all of which informed active and effective risk management.

<sup>2</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)



## 2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>3</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

|  | % 'Yes'    |
|--|------------|
| Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance? | <b>94%</b> |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?            | <b>94%</b> |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?         | <b>94%</b> |

Planning to support the child's desistance was a strength in a large majority of the inspected cases and was strengths-based in all but one case, enabling children and their parents or carers to be fully involved. Inspectors were pleased to see strong joint planning between YOS case managers and a range of other agencies and professionals. This enabled case managers to identify and sequence interventions. In all cases, planning was proportionate to the court disposal and took sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability, and motivation to change. Planning activity considered the needs and wishes of victims in all but one relevant case, which maximised opportunities for restorative justice work. We saw instances where children continued to be supported by the wider Future4Me adolescent service and other mainstream, targeted, and specialist services after their court disposal had ended.

Planning to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child was strong and clearly informed by other agencies, such as social care. This led to the necessary controls and interventions being put in place to address the issues in all but one case. Inspectors found some variability in the quality of contingency plans for safety and wellbeing in half of the cases. This is important, as there should be a clear plan of action if the risk to a child were to either increase or decrease. Contingency plans did not always clearly set out adequate actions or responses to be taken if, or when, circumstances changed. However, overall, we judged that planning focused sufficiently on keeping the child safe in all but one case.

In all but one case, planning focused sufficiently on keeping people safe, and practitioners involved other agencies in their planning processes in every relevant case. In a large majority of cases, planning addressed specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims. Contingency planning was inconsistent and deemed sufficient in less than two-thirds of cases. Within the complex YOS cohort, circumstances in a child's life can change quickly. Case managers need to consider the potential for change in each case, so that, should concerns escalate, they are prepared and more likely to respond effectively.

<sup>3</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

## 2.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>4</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

|  | % 'Yes'    |
|--|------------|
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?     | 100%       |
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?    | <b>89%</b> |
| Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people? | 94%        |

Within the delivery of court disposal casework, it was clear that case managers took a strengths-based approach to their work. As part of the wider Future4Me adolescent service, the YOS had access to a wide range of specialist staff and other resources to deliver well-coordinated and innovative interventions to children. The YOS speech language therapist provided examples of where various legal documents (such as licences or court orders) had been translated to easy-read versions to aid their understanding of conditions and expectations. There was a high level of engagement and compliance with interventions, and case managers were tenacious in gaining the trust of children and their parents or carers. We saw consistent evidence of work by a broad range of staff from mainstream, targeted, and specialist services that had led to positive outcomes for many YOS children. Practitioners matched interventions to children's needs and learning styles and took account of their diversity in every inspected case.

Where there were issues concerning safety and wellbeing, we found clear multi-agency arrangements to support children who were looked after, open to social care, or criminally exploited, or who had emotional wellbeing or substance misuse issues. The YOS consistently worked with a range of agencies and organisations to deliver well-coordinated packages of support. Case managers advocated on behalf of children and made timely referrals to specialist and mainstream services, such as social care, substance misuse, and the complex needs health team.

In keeping other people safe, case managers had considered the protection of actual and potential victims in their delivery of all relevant inspected court disposal cases. Managing risk of harm often involved developing a better understanding of the victim's perspective, as well as intelligence from police and other professionals. In all but one of those relevant cases, inspectors judged that the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm was sufficiently well coordinated. Internal risk management meeting arrangements were used well when required.

<sup>4</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

## 2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>5</sup> for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

|   | % 'Yes'    |
|---|------------|
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance? | 100%       |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?            | <b>89%</b> |
| Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?         | 94%        |

Reviewing of progress to support the child's desistance was strong. In every relevant case, a written review of desistance was completed, leading to necessary adjustments in the plan of work in all of them. This responsiveness to changing circumstances helped to maintain children's engagement and ensured that the work delivered was effective and meaningful. Reviewing continued to focus sufficiently on building on the child's strengths, enhancing protective factors, and assessing motivation and engagement levels in every relevant case. Importantly, we found that children and their parents or carers were meaningfully involved in their assessment in all relevant cases.

Reviewing identified and responded to changes in factors relating to safety and wellbeing, and we saw examples where YOS risk management meetings ensured a coordinated partnership approach to addressing the issues to keep the child safe. Many of the children supervised by the YOS had complex lives, and their circumstances could change rapidly. Inspectors found that reviews led to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work in a large majority of relevant cases. There were evident links to multi-agency safeguarding arenas, alongside the use of joint review between the child, parent or carer. Joint supervision between YOS practitioners and relevant professionals was evident in many of the inspected cases, with a written review of safety and wellbeing completed in every relevant case.

Reviewing was informed by the necessary input from other agencies to manage the risk of harm posed to others. Inspectors found that case managers consistently completed written reviews, which were supported through the activity of the YOS risk management panel. We saw reciprocal sharing of intelligence with the police, and strong relationships between a range of partnership services. As a result, public protection issues were well managed through activity that included changes to reporting, increased structure and allocation of resource, and use of positive activities.

<sup>5</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

## Domain three: Out-of-court disposals

We inspected 26 cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of four youth conditional cautions and 22 community resolutions. Lincolnshire YOS refer to these community resolutions as 'youth restorative interventions'. We interviewed the case managers in 22 cases.

### 3.1. Assessment



Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>6</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

|   | % 'Yes'    |
|---|------------|
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance? | 88%        |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?            | <b>73%</b> |
| Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?         | <b>73%</b> |

Assessment of desistance factors was strong in the inspected cases. Staff focused on understanding the offending behaviour from the child's perspective, in order to analyse their motivation, attitude, and sense of responsibility. This led to a sufficient analysis of offending behaviour in a significant majority of the inspected cases. Assessments routinely drew on information from multiple sources to gain the best understanding of a child's circumstances, familial and social context, and history. Particular attention was provided to the diversity needs of the child – often informed by a case formulation approach. We were pleased to see a strengths-based approach to assessment, alongside the involvement of the child and their parents or carers in the assessment in all but one case. The needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice, were considered in a large majority of cases.

Assessment of a child's safety and wellbeing consistently included information from other agencies. In many cases, we agreed with the safety and wellbeing classification. However, we judged that assessment of a child's safety and wellbeing could be further improved by more clearly identifying and analysing the full range of factors which impact on the safety and wellbeing of the child.

Assessments included information from key agencies in a large majority of cases. However, they did not consistently identify and analyse all relevant factors when considering who was likely to be at risk from the child's behaviour, internal and external controls, and the nature and imminence of any risk occurring.

<sup>6</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

## 3.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>7</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

|  | % 'Yes'    |
|--|------------|
| Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?      | 96%        |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?    | <b>77%</b> |
| Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? | 92%        |

Planning for desistance was strengths-based, well sequenced, and involved other agencies. Case managers considered victims' wishes and were responsive to the child's diversity needs, and social and familial context, and they took an inclusive approach. Their involvement of children and their parent or carers in plans was excellent. They took full account of the family's needs as well as the child's aspirations and interests. The work planned was proportionate in a significant majority of the cases inspected and could be achieved within the timescale of the out-of-court disposal. In a large majority of cases, planning for the child's levels of maturity, ability, and motivation to change was evident. Similarly, planning consistently focused on supporting access to universal services to promote community integration following the completion of the out-of-court-disposal.

In a majority of cases, there was sufficient planning to keep children safe. When this was done well, there was strong multi-agency working, aligning the YOS plan with other plans. Overall, planning focused sufficiently on keeping the child safe in just over three-quarters of the inspected cases. Circumstances in a child's life can change quickly. Case managers need to consider the potential for change in each case so that, should concerns escalate, they are prepared and more likely to respond effectively. We recognise the need for proportionate planning in out-of-court disposals, where interventions may be brief, but would have expected to see more detailed contingency planning in some of the cases we inspected.

In a large majority of relevant cases, planning focused sufficiently on keeping people safe, and case managers involved other agencies in their planning processes in many of those cases. Similarly, in all of these cases, planning addressed specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims. As with safety and wellbeing, contingency planning to manage public protection is important, and there should be a clear plan of action in the event of the child's risk of harm to others either increasing or decreasing. Inspectors found some inconsistency in contingency planning for risk of harm to others.

<sup>7</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

### 3.3. Implementation and delivery



High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.

Good

Our rating<sup>8</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

|   | % 'Yes'    |
|---|------------|
| Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?     | 88%        |
| Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?    | <b>69%</b> |
| Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people? | 88%        |

The involvement of other agencies across the wider Future4Me adolescent service was evident and well-coordinated. Delivery of services to support children's desistance was strong and built on the assessments and plans made. There was a high level of engagement and compliance with interventions, which were mainly voluntary. Case managers worked hard to gain the trust of children and their parents or carers. We saw consistent evidence of work by a broad range of staff from mainstream, targeted, and specialist services that had led to positive outcomes for many YOS children. Practitioners matched interventions to children's needs and learning styles, while their diversity needs and other commitments were addressed in all but one of the inspected cases.

Where there were issues concerning safety and wellbeing, we found clear multi-agency arrangements to support children who were looked after, open to social care, or criminally exploited, or who had emotional wellbeing or substance misuse issues. The access to specialist therapeutic input from a range of staff in the complex needs health team (including a clinical psychologist and a speech language therapist) supported interventions and case formulation work for the more complex children within the cohort. Although we saw some good work by the case managers and other specialist workers in the YOS, there was some inconsistency in involvement and coordination of other agencies in keeping the child safe. Overall, however, inspectors judged that service delivery supported the safety of the child effectively in a majority of cases.

Services were sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm in a large majority of cases. Managing risk of harm often involved developing a better understanding of the victim's perspective, using a number of restorative justice techniques, as well as intelligence from police and other community projects and professionals. There were also good examples of interventions to improve understanding of the dangers and consequences of knife crime, alongside programmes addressing healthy relationships and aggressive behaviour through a gendered approach. Inspectors judged that the case manager paid attention to the protection of actual and potential victims in a large majority of the relevant cases.

<sup>8</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. [A more detailed explanation is available in the data annexe.](#)

### 3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based out-of-court disposal service in place that promotes diversion and supports sustainable desistance.

Outstanding

We also inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings, and interviews. Our key findings were as follows:

#### Strengths:

- There is a clear out-of-court disposal policy, which sets out regional and local arrangements for decision-making, provision, and delivery. The policy details how diversity and disproportionality are to be addressed.
- The out-of-court disposal policy is supplemented by process and guidance notes and links to complementary policies. These set the distinction between prevention work, community resolutions, and formal out-of-court disposals.
- Referrals to the joint decision-making panel are timely. The panel includes representatives from children's social care and early help services; this ensures that all options for addressing the children's safety and wellbeing are considered. The joint decision-making panel also considers harmful sexual behaviour cases which may not be charged to court.
- There are clear arrangements for escalating and resolving differences when these occurred. There is also a Lincolnshire out-of-court disposal scrutiny panel that the YOS manager attends.
- There is a strong and varied prevention offer. The YOS is proactive in engaging children and families before they receive an out-of-court disposal.
- All interventions and services for children on statutory orders are also available to those receiving an out-of-court disposal.
- Out-of-court disposal cases that are assessed as either high risk of harm or safety and wellbeing receive the same risk management meeting process as post-court cases.
- Children and families continued to receive support from the wider Future4Me adolescent service after their out-of-court disposal ended. Arrangements are in place to capture and collate the views of children completing an out-of-court disposal.
- The YOS partnership uses internal and external evaluation to demonstrate the impact of the out-of-court disposal joint decision-making panel and revises its approach where necessary. Board members and other stakeholders have utilised opportunities to observe the out-of-court disposal joint decision-making panel to understand how it works.

#### Areas for improvement:

- The granularity of data on out-of-court disposals and reoffending could be refined to provide further evidence of ongoing impact.
- The YOS partnership should continue with ongoing work to implement 'Outcome 22' in Lincolnshire.

## 4.1. Resettlement

### 4.1. Resettlement policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody.

Good

We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for resettlement work, using evidence from documents, meetings, and interviews. To illustrate that work, we inspected four cases managed by the YOS that had received a custodial sentence. Our key findings were as follows.

#### Strengths:

- There is a clear resettlement policy, based on principles of constructive resettlement and identity shift. It explicitly references diversity, equality, and inclusion.
- The resettlement policy is also accompanied by practice guidance and clear direction to complementary policies and guidance (including safety and wellbeing and risk of harm policies). This ensures staff and partners have a thorough understanding of their role in resettlement work with YOS children.
- There is a clear remand strategy, which sets out partnership expectations, roles, and responsibilities. YOS board minutes evidence a reduction in remands over the last 12 months.
- Information-sharing and communication between the YOS and the secure estate is strong, reciprocal, and swift.
- YOS partner staff (such as the education mentors, substance misuse workers, youth workers, and complex needs health team practitioners) work well with their counterparts in the secure estate, which leads to continuity of relationships and interventions for children.
- There are clear and accessible referral and intervention pathways in key areas such as accommodation, ETE, and health.
- We saw case examples of effective work with secure estate mentors from different establishments who continued to work with some children in the community following their release from custody.
- YOS resettlement practice promoted strong contact between case managers, the child and their parents/carers in all cases inspected.
- The YOS had commenced work with the local secure children's home (Lincoln) to enhance working relationships and improve awareness of roles and responsibilities. This led to the development of an underpinning joint working protocol between the organisations.
- Staff had received resettlement training within the YOS workforce development plan as a rolling schedule of inputs for new and existing staff.
- There was good management of public protection through casework activity and via additional internal and multi-agency risk management meetings.
- The YOS speech language therapist provided examples of where children's licences had been translated into easy-read versions to aid their understanding of conditions and expectations.



- The YOS had conducted an independent audit of a small number of resettlement cases, which highlighted good practice and areas for further development.
- We saw some individual feedback from children about resettlement provision.

**Areas for improvement:**

- Attention to safety and well-being needs to be more consistent in a small number of resettlement cases, including use of escalation to managers where required.
- The use of release on temporary licence (ROTL) and mobility needs to be developed and used more in resettlement cases.

## Further information

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The following can be found on our website:

- [inspection data, including methodology and contextual facts about the YJS](#)
- [a glossary of terms used in this report.](#)

**Open Report on behalf of Andrew Crookham, Executive Director - Resources**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Report to: | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>                |
| Date:      | <b>21 April 2023</b>   |
| Subject:   | <b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme</b> |

**Summary:**

This item enables the Committee to consider and comment on the content of its work programme to ensure that its scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit. The Committee is encouraged to highlight items that could be included for consideration in the work programme.

**Actions Required:**

- (1) To review and agree the Committee's work programme as set out in this report.
- (2) To highlight for discussion any additional scrutiny activity which could be considered for inclusion in the work programme.

## 1. Background

### Current Items

For reference, the Committee's items for this meeting are set out below: -

| 21 April 2023 |  |   |               |
|---------------|--|---|---------------|
| Item          |  | Contributor   | Purpose       |
| 1.            | Update on Community Response to High Level Mental Health Needs | Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Strategic Commissioning                           | Policy Review |
| 2.            | Care Review  | Carolyn Knight, Head of Service - Quality and Standards and Principal Social Worker | Consultation  |

| <b>21 April 2023</b> |   |  |   |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Item</b>          |   | <b>Contributor</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>  |
| <b>3.</b>            | HMIP Inspection Report and Outcome - Lincolnshire Youth Offending Service | Andy Cook, Head of Service - Future4Me/Youth Offending   | Inspection Outcome  |
| <b>4.</b>            | Expansion of Sutterton Fourfields Primary School (EXEMPT)                 | Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development<br>Alison Toyne, Project Manager, Corporate Property | Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader Decision between 2- 5 May 2023) |

### Planned Items

The Committee's planned items are listed below:

| <b>16 June 2023</b> |   |  |   |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Item</b>         |   | <b>Contributor</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>  |
| <b>1.</b>           | Team Around the Child Annual Report 2022/23   | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help<br>Paula Whitehead, Team Manager - Team Around the Child (TAC)    | Policy Review   |
| <b>2.</b>           | Young Carers Annual Report 2022/23  | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help<br>Paula Whitehead, Team Manager - Team Around the Child (TAC)    | Policy Review   |
| <b>3.</b>           | Gosberton House Academy - New Block Extension and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy (EXEMPT) | Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager SEND Strategy<br>Teri Marshall, Senior Project Manager – Corporate Property | Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader Decision between 26 and 30 June 2023) |

| <b>16 June 2023</b>   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Item</b>   | <b>Contributor</b>  | <b>Purpose</b>   |
| <b>4.</b> Lincoln St Francis School - Refurbishment and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy (EXEMPT) | Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager<br>SEND Strategy<br>Teri Marshall, Senior Project Manager – Corporate Property | Pre-Decision Scrutiny<br>(Leader Decision between 19 and 23 June 2023) |

| <b>21 July 2023</b>  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Contributor</b>   | <b>Purpose</b>   |
| <b>1.</b> Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2022-23 – Quarter 4                    | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help   | Performance Scrutiny   |
| <b>2.</b> Review of Regulated Services (TBC)   | Tara Jones, Interim Assistant Director – Children’s Safeguarding   | (TBC)  |
| <b>3.</b> Lincolnshire Secure Children’s Home (LSCH) (EXEMPT)  | Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development<br>Matt Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency<br>Dave Clarke, Service Lead - Secure Estate<br>Rachel Freeman, Head of Service Children in Care and Residential Estates | Pre-Decision Scrutiny<br>(Executive decision on 5 September 2023)    |
| <b>4.</b> Holbeach William Stukeley Primary School – Single class extension, hall and staffroom extension (EXEMPT) | Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development<br>Alison Toyne, Project Manager, Corporate Property   | Pre-Decision Scrutiny<br>(Leader decision between 26 – 31 July 2023) |

| <b>08 September 2023</b> |   |  |                      |
|--------------------------|---|--|----------------------|
| <b>Item</b>              |   | <b>Contributor</b>                           | <b>Purpose</b>       |
| <b>1.</b>                | Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 – Quarter 1 | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help | Performance Scrutiny |

| <b>20 October 2023</b> |   |   |                               |
|------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Item</b>            |   | <b>Contributor</b>  | <b>Purpose</b>                |
| <b>1.</b>              | Update on the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy | Sheridan Dodsworth, Head of Special Educational Needs and Disability<br>Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager, Special Schools Strategy<br>Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development | Policy Review (Yearly Update) |
| <b>2.</b>              | Children's Services Annual Statutory Complaints Report 2022-23      | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director - Early Help  | Performance Scrutiny          |

| <b>01 December 2023</b> |   |  |                      |
|-------------------------|---|--|----------------------|
| <b>Item</b>             |   | <b>Contributor</b>                           | <b>Purpose</b>       |
| <b>1.</b>               | Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 – Quarter 2 | Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help | Performance Scrutiny |

| 01 December 2023 |   |  |   |
|------------------|---|--|---|
| Item             | Contributor   | Purpose  |   |
| 2.               | Lincolnshire Secure Children's Home (LSCH) (EXEMPT) | Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development<br>Matt Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency<br>Dave Clarke, Service Lead - Secure Estate<br>Rachel Freeman, Head of Service Children in Care and Residential Estates | Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Executive decision on 5 December 2023) |

### **Items to be scheduled**

- Review of Children and Young People Mental Health Services
- Children in Care Transformation Programme Update

## **2. Conclusion**

The Committee is invited to review, consider and comment on the work programme as set out above and highlight for discussion any additional scrutiny activity which could be included for consideration in the work programme. A list of all upcoming Forward Plan decisions relating to the Committee is also attached at Appendix A.

## **3. Appendices**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report |  |
| Appendix A  | Forward Plan of Decisions relating to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee |

## **4. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, who can be contacted on 07552 253814 or by e-mail at [tracy.johnson@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.johnson@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

**FORWARD PLAN OF DECISIONS RELATING TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM 02 MAY 2023**

| DEC REF | MATTERS FOR DECISION   | REPORT STATUS | DECISION MAKER AND DATE OF DECISION   | PEOPLE/GROUPS CONSULTED PRIOR TO DECISION    | DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED | OFFICER(S) FROM WHOM FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED AND REPRESENTATIONS MADE<br>(All officers are based at County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL unless otherwise stated) | DIVISIONS AFFECTED |
|---------|--|---------------|---|--|----------------------------|---|--------------------|
| I029213 | Sutterton Fourfields Primary School - Two Class Extension and Existing Site Drainage Works   | Exempt        | Leader of the Council<br>(Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)<br><br>Between 2 May 2023 and 5 May 2023   | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee | Reports                    | Head of Property Development<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>  | Boston Rural       |
| I028647 | Lincoln St Francis School - Refurbishment and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy     | Exempt        | Leader of the Council<br>(Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)<br><br>Between 19 and 23 Jun 2023          | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee | Reports                    | Head of Property Development<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshie.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshie.gov.uk</a>  |                    |
| I028654 | Gosberton House Academy - New Block Extension and External Works as part of the SEND Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy | Exempt        | Leader of the Council<br>(Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)<br><br>Between 26 Jun 2023 and 30 Jun 2023 | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee | Reports                    | Head of Property Development<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>  |                    |



|         |   |        |  |   |         |  |          |
|---------|---|--------|--|---|---------|--|----------|
| I029262 | Holbeach William Stukeley Primary School - Single Class Extension, Hall and Staffroom Extension | Exempt | Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)<br><br>Between 26 Jul 2023 and 31 Jul 2023 | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (21 July 2023) | Reports | Head of Property Development<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a> | Holbeach |
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# Agenda Item 10

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