



County Offices  
Newland  
Lincoln  
LN1 1YL

30 November 2023

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee will be held on **Friday, 8 December 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), A J Baxter, A W Briggs, Mrs J E Killey, C Matthews, Mrs S A J Nutman, N Sear, T J N Smith, M A Whittington and R A Wright

**Added Members**

Church Representative: M Kyle

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs M R Machin and Dr E van der Zee



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA  
FRIDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2023**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Pages</b>
1	<b>Apologies for Absence / Replacement Members</b>	
2	<b>Declaration of Members' Interests</b>	
3	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 October 2023</b>	5 - 14
4	<b>Announcements by the Chairman, Executive Councillors and Lead Officers</b>	
5	<b>Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit</b> <i>(To consider a report from Mark Rainey, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Children’s Services, which invites the Committee to consider the Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit ahead of a decision by the Executive Councillor for Children’s Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration between 8 and 22 December 2023. The views of the Committee will be passed on to the Executive Councillor as part of their consideration of this report)</i>	15 - 38
6	<b>Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 - Quarter 2</b> <i>(To receive a report from Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help, which provides a summary of the Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Corporate Framework 2023-2024 for Quarter 2)</i>	39 - 48
7	<b>Childcare Sufficiency in Lincolnshire</b> <i>(To receive a report from Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service – Early Years and Childcare Support, and Geraldine O’Neill, Sustainability and Development Manager which invites the Committee to consider the current childcare sufficiency position within Lincolnshire and to provide recommendations to support the development of early years and childcare places in Lincolnshire to meet the statutory childcare sufficiency duty)</i>	49 - 84
8	<b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme</b> <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>	85 - 92

**9 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public are excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that if they were present there could be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

**10 Myle Cross & Cherry Willingham Childrens Centre Refurbishment – Alternative Provision**

93 - 112

*(To receive an exempt report from Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development and Mark Rainey, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Children’s Services on the Myle Cross & Cherry Willingham Childrens Centre Refurbishment – Alternative Provision, which is due for a decision by the Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning) between 8 and 22 December 2023. The views of this Committee will be passed on to the Executive Councillors as part of their consideration of this report)*

<u>Democratic Services Officer Contact Details</u>	
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<p><b>Please note:</b> for more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business of the meeting</li><li>• Any special arrangements</li></ul> <p>Contact details set out above.</p> <p>Please note: This meeting will be broadcast live on the internet and access can be sought by accessing <a href="#">Agenda for Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on Friday, 8th December, 2023, 10.00 am (moderngov.co.uk)</a></p> <p>All papers for council meetings are available on: <a href="https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/search-committee-records">https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/search-committee-records</a></p>	



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE  
20 OCTOBER 2023**

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

Councillors W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), A J Baxter, A W Briggs, Mrs J E Killey, C Matthews, N Sear, T J N Smith and M A Whittington

**Added Members**

Parent Governor Representatives: Dr E van der Zee

Councillors Mrs Bradwell OBE, R Butroid and S Roe were also in attendance.

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Matthew Clayton (Interim Head of Capital Reform & Education Sufficiency), Thomas Crofts (Democratic Services Officer) Linda Dennett (Assistant Director - Children's Health and Commissioning), Sheridan Dodsworth (Head of Service - SEND), Charlotte Gray (Head of Service – Children's Strategic Commissioning), Emily Humphries (Commissioning Officer - Children's Commissioning) Kevin Johnson (Commissioning Manager - Children's Mental Health, LD and Autism), Jo Kavanagh (Assistant Director of Early Help), Eileen McMorrow (Programme Manager, Special Schools Strategy), Sarah Nardone (Assistant Director for Sector Led Improvement - Children's), Dave Pennington (Head of Property Development), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Martin Smith (Assistant Director for Children's Education) and Ethan Thorpe (Strategic Communications Lead), Alison Toyne (Project Manager – Corporate Property) and Jess Wosser-Yates (remote – Democratic Services Officer)

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R A Wright and S A J Nutman.

Martin Kyle, the Church Representative, also gave apologies.

28 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

No declarations were made at this point in proceedings.

29 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

## RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 September 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

The Chairman had actioned a letter on behalf of the Committee congratulating all Children's Services Staff on the 'Outstanding' outcome of the Ofsted inspection which was considered by the Committee in July 2023.

Councillor Mrs. P A Bradwell OBE, Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration informed Members that Family Hubs were due to receive additional provision and encouraged Members to visit their local Hub. She further noted that she was anticipating the opening of multiple Special Schools and Children's Centres across Lincolnshire.

31 RECOMMISSIONING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report from Kevin Johnson, Commissioning Manager – Children's Mental Health, Learning Difficulties and Autism, Emily Humphries, Commissioning Officer and Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Children's Strategic Commissioning which invited the Committee to consider the Recommissioning the Children and Young People's Online Mental Health Support Service, which was presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration for a decision between 27 October and 3 November 2023.

Support was given to the recommissioning of the online support service, and it was acknowledged that the digital offer was a key part of meeting the demand in Lincolnshire and remaining aligned to the Children and Young People's (CYP) Mental Health (MH) Transformation Programme.

During its discussion, the Committee explored the following topics:

**Self-referral rates of Black or Minority Ethnic populations in Lincolnshire**

- It was explained that past research findings revealed a preference for digital access to Mental Health services among the black and minority ethnic community, possibly linked to language barriers and the ease of translating written content, with national

findings documented in research documents that can be shared with interested members for a more in-depth understanding.

### **Access to Mental Health services**

- In the context of access to Mental Health services for Children and Young people, including the black and minority ethnic community, historical figures were measured against NHS England's Long-Term Plan access targets, although there were concerns about the utility of this approach. The measurement focused on the number of CYP with at least one clinical contact, potentially favouring a reactive model over prevention. Lincolnshire invested significantly in preventive services, such as Healthy Minds Lincolnshire, which reduced referrals, though data recording issues affected the accuracy of this data in comparison to other areas due to not counting all contacts included by other areas, for example, for diagnosis of autistic children. Nevertheless, with the introduction of mental health support teams Lincolnshire had the highest access rates in the Midlands for these teams, with the expectation of further improvement with the introduction of more mental health support teams. Despite these efforts, there remained complexities and nuances within the access target framework.

### **Alignment with the CYP MH Transformation Programme**

- Members questioned the timing of the CYP MH Transformation Programme, whether it ought to have commenced earlier to align with contract timeframes and prevent potential misalignment with the programme's outcomes. Officers explained that in the backdrop of the CYP MH Transformation Programme, the initial scope was smaller, primarily focusing on specialist Mental Health services. However, the scale of the programme expanded significantly due to the heightened demand for services during the pandemic and changes in budget allocation. Digital delivery became a more prominent feature as a result of the pandemic, but the exact extent and methods remained under consideration. The programme prioritised taking the necessary time for careful review and design in collaboration with children, families, and various partners. The initial scale of the CYP MH Transformation Programme was underestimated and was also unknown during the commissioning process for the online mental health support service.

### **Service Assessment/Feedback**

- It was explained that young persons over 11yoa accessed the service anonymously, allowing them to connect with the same counsellor or different ones, engage in messaging, access peer support and information, and have the flexibility to choose a different approach as suggested by the counsellors, followed by self-rating of their emotional state, booking future sessions, and their progress was tracked, while feedback and signposting to local services were integrated into the platform.

**Partnership Working**

- Members queried whether working in partnership with Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) had been explored as an option. Officers explained that as part of the CYP MH Transformation Programme, they were actively examining the establishment of a strong evidence base around digital mental health services for young people and families, with a focus on determining the most cost-effective and locally suitable delivery method, considering both procurement from the market and potential development of the CYP Mental Health service offered by LPFT. The decision regarding LPFT's involvement in overseeing a digital offering depended on their capabilities and interest in this area. The current phase involved an initial review, with recommendations for the future model yet to be made, acknowledging that digital was a critical aspect of the transformation programme. LPFT already had an existing digital offer through Healthy Minds Lincolnshire, primarily featuring online group sessions, which was popular, even though emerging evidence suggested that children and young people generally responded better to face-to-face interventions. The exploration of LPFT's role in this regard was part of a joint program within the transformation initiative.

**Funding & Costs**

- In relation to funding and current exposure Officers confirmed that from a Council perspective, £200,000 in funding was allocated, with the remainder being provided by NHS Health Partners. In the context of the previous contract, there was no mechanism to adjust funding per unit effectively, as inflation had remained low for several years, and costs had not risen significantly. However, market indicators suggested rising costs, resulting in an increase in the cost per unit over time, aligning with inflationary pressures on staffing, electricity, and other operational expenses. Despite these cost increases, demand for the service did not decrease, and the Council aimed to ensure an adequate supply for the volume of young people in need, despite a plateau in demand observed after the pandemic.
- It was explained that the volume of hours commissioned for the programme in 2022-2023 proved insufficient to meet the demand, prompting an increase in the allocated volume. However, there was a subsequent slowdown in the increase of referrals and people seeking services, which was not reflected in the table provided. In the current year, the hours of volume purchased align with demand. The service has been in place since 2011, was well-recognised and known among children, young people, schools, and professionals who could easily access it if desired. The flexibility to adjust volume if demand escalates again has been incorporated into the tender, offering contractual adaptability.
- In terms of cost/hr rates, the platform employed qualified counsellors as part of the service, serving as an essential component of the offering. The hours purchased were dedicated to face-to-face counselling, and other aspects of the service cost covered



various content elements such as message boards, moderated chat, and information resources, which were accessible to anyone. Staffing constituted the major proportion of the hourly rate, with central overheads also factored in. This digital model was cost-effective compared to traditional face-to-face approaches, as staff primarily worked remotely. Schools occasionally employed their own counsellors or procured counselling services, and the CYP Mental Health service offer also included Healthy Minds Lincolnshire, and a bereavement counselling service commissioned by the provider as part of Lincolnshire's Children's Mental Health Services. The transformation initiative was exploring whether a counselling offer was needed in addition to the more formalised therapies already in place.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration as set out in the report.
2. That any additional comments be passed on to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration in relation to this item.

#### 32 THE MAPLES SHORT BREAKS PROVISION - RE-COMMISSIONING

Consideration was given to a report from Eileen McMorrow, Programme Manager SEND Strategy, which invited the Committee to consider the Re-commissioning of Maples Short Breaks Provision ahead of a decision by the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration between 30 October and 3 November 2023.

Support was given to the recommissioning of an overnight short breaks provision at The Maples residential unit; Members acknowledged that this ensured that the Council would be futureproofing sufficiency and improving accessibility.

During its discussion, the Committee explored the following topics:

##### **Funding, Costs & Demand for Places**

- Officers explained that the current contribution for the Maples provision was £534,000, including a proportional contribution to additional educational provision. However, the new proposal seeks to secure a lower contribution rather than an increase but providing only social care provision in place of existing expenditures. If the Maples were not included in the council's short breaks plan, there would be a significant shortfall in the coming years, with projections of 590 places short by 2024-25, 1,010 places short by 2025-26, and 1,014 places short by 2026-27, necessitating external spot purchasing from independent providers in a volatile short breaks provision market. The Maples, as a children's home within a school, is currently funded from the high needs block rather than the Council budget, which was noted in

the financial comments, indicating a lower cost allocation from a different budget source to address areas of high demand and need.

- Assurance was provided that the high needs block, as previously reported to the committee, was under significant pressure, both nationally and locally, making it unlikely that it could accommodate additional innovative expenditures from any savings related to this proposal.
- In terms of bed night costs, the existing in-house provision had a cost per unit of £599 and £576, while the Maples proposal suggested a lower cost of £437 per unit for 3-bedded facilities. If the unit size were increased to a 5-bedded, the cost per unit would decrease further due to economies of scale, although the specific figures were not available at the moment but were estimated to be in the high £300 per year per unit.
- In terms of demand, it was explained that purchasing more capacity than needed, even at a lower per-unit cost, could result in significantly higher overall expenses, which was a concern. The nature of these provisions, designed for extremely disabled children to provide respite for their families, made occupancy rates fluctuate, subject to last-minute disruptions like illness or families deciding to keep their child for the weekend. Maintaining optimal occupancy was essential, as having excess capacity would mean empty beds that incurred unnecessary costs. The projected capacity aligned with current needs, and the confidence in filling gaps in the coming years justified the chosen approach. There was potential for expansion, but the current plan was considered the most cost-effective option.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration as set out in the report.
2. That the Committee's comments be passed onto the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration in relation to this item.

**33      POTENTIAL TOPICS FOR SCRUTINY REVIEW BY SCRUTINY PANEL A**

Consideration was given to a report from Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, which invited the Committee to suggest topics for an in-depth scrutiny review by Scrutiny Panel A, for consideration and decision by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) at its meeting on 21 December 2023.

Members were advised that any proposed topic should not duplicate work being carried out elsewhere by Lincolnshire County Council or any of its partners, nor be overly broad to ensure a timely completion of an in-depth review.

'Young Carers' and 'Workforce Recruitment and Retention' were proposed as potential topics for exploration by the Executive Director of Children's Services. The Committee was subsequently encouraged to suggest any other topics and were advised to agree on one recommendation to be included in the final report to OSMB for their consideration.

Members noted the report, and during the discussion the following matters were highlighted:

- Physical exercise in communities and schools, along with the declining opportunities for children and young people to engage in physical activity, were proposed for allocation to Scrutiny Panel A. The discussion highlighted challenges related to safeguarding concerns, limited school timetables and facilities for physical exercise, and the need for a broader range of sports and activities in schools. It was noted that children, especially girls, experience a decline in physical activity as they reach adolescence, which has implications for physical and mental health. The focus was not solely on sports but also on fostering relationships, confidence, teamwork, resilience, and the ability to cope with both success and failure, with the aim of addressing health and well-being issues through increased physical activity and recreation.
- The Executive Director of Children's Services agreed this held merit in regard to skills development, although the Council's influence on schools' curricula was limited and leisure centre activities fell under the remit of District Councils.
- Assurance was provided that the Council worked closely with the One Sports Network and sat on the Health and Wellbeing Committee meaning this topic may duplicate pre-existing work streams. The Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration subsequently highlighted that she was satisfied with the PE and sports offer available in schools.
- Members shared their experiences of school sports activities and the varying levels of interest among young people in sports, particularly around the ages of 12 or 13. They highlighted the positive efforts of primary schools in engaging children in physical activities to expend energy and aid learning. The rural nature of the county was mentioned as a factor influencing access to sports, with the responsibility often falling on parents. In conclusion, it was noted that while there is already considerable activity in promoting physical exercise, there is potential for further encouragement and engagement in schools.
- It was suggested by that the topic of PE engagement could form part of the remit of an independent working group within the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee in the future.
- Scrutiny plans regarding mental health provision for children and young people and transitions were also suggested. The interest primarily focused on the relationship between the Council's formal mental health services for children and the external support provided by agencies like LPFT and others, with an emphasis on ensuring seamless coordination to track mental health issues and the offer available to young

people. Additionally, there was a specific concern related to the transition process for young people, especially those in care and corporate parenting. Education challenges were noted, with concerns about late entrants into care receiving what was considered inappropriate mental health provision, leading to a complex and messy transition phase. The issue was recognised as an ongoing problem that needed exploration and resolution, even though it might not be immediately addressed, and was relevant to the work of Corporate Parenting Panel. Subsequently, members were informed that this duplicate work involved in the Mental Health Transformation Project in the form of an ongoing comprehensive review of children's mental health in Lincolnshire. The review involved the participation of Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust and the Integrated Care Board, with senior officers contributing to it. Furthermore, a previous scrutiny panel and a working group under the Health Scrutiny Committee had explored the transitions from child to adult mental health support. This previous scrutiny panel focused on children's issues covered various transition aspects, including mental health, social care, and education transitions. It was confirmed that the ongoing review also included a focus on transitions, and the results of this review were expected to be reported in April.

- The topic of Young Carers was proposed for allocation to Scrutiny Panel A, with the aim of raising awareness of a hidden cohort of children and young people who often do not identify themselves as carers due to caring for family members with complex needs. The concern is that many young carers go unnoticed because they do not self-identify, making it challenging to provide them with the necessary support. While the exact number of young carers in Lincolnshire was not clear (HS was able to provide further information on those who previously had stepped forward or were identified by professionals such as schoolteachers), Members felt it was essential to conduct a fact-finding mission to determine how many have identified themselves or been identified by professionals. Members argued that it would be beneficial to investigate the issues surrounding young carers, with a focus on understanding why many of them choose to remain unseen. Members agreed that scrutiny would provide valuable insights into a contemporary societal issue and help inform better approaches to support young carers, not just in Lincolnshire but also at a national level.
- Lastly, the topic of Workforce Recruitment and Retention was proposed for allocation to Scrutiny Panel A with the aim of reviewing the support provided to the workforce delivering essential community services. This scrutiny topic intends to tackle the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff. While Members acknowledged that a problem exists in terms of both recruiting and retaining and developing staff, Members were unsure what the expectation would be from a scrutiny review in terms of providing solutions, however it was argued that such an exercise could gather feedback and information that can be used to address this issue effectively in the future.

Following the discussion, the Scrutiny Officer recommended that 'Young Carers', 'Workforce Recruitment and Retention' and 'Physical Education Engagement' be submitted to OSMB for their consideration; these subjects would be assessed by the prioritisation toolkit to identify any pre-existent work streams and establish the most optimal topic for scrutiny.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the request for a suggestion for an in-depth Scrutiny review by Scrutiny Panel A be considered by the Committee
2. That the Committee proposes 'Young Carers', 'Workforce Recruitment and Retention', and 'Physical Education Engagement' as suggestions for a scrutiny review for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 21 December 2023

**34 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a report from Kiara Chatziioannou, Scrutiny Officer, which enabled the Committee to comment on the content of its work programme.

Members were informed that there had been no amendments to the published work programme.

**RESOLVED**

That the work programme be agreed.

**35 UPDATE ON THE BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF SPECIALIST PROVISION STRATEGY**

It was noted that this item was for information only.

**36 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION****RESOLVED**

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following two items of business on the grounds that they are considered to contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

**37 EDUCATION PROVISION PLANNING**

Consideration was given to the exempt report, and the Committee raised a number of questions which were answered by the Officers present.

**10**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 OCTOBER 2023**

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration as set out in the report.
2. That the Committee's comments be passed onto the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration in relation to this item.

**38      EXPANSION OF SAXILBY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Consideration was given to the exempt report, and the Committee raised a number of questions which were answered by the Officers present.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supports the recommendations to the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council as set out in the report
2. That the Committee's comments be passed onto the Lincolnshire County Council in relation to this item

The meeting closed at 12.35 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>8 December 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit</b>

**Summary:**

This report invites the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider a report on the Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit, which is being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration for a decision between 8 and 22 December 2023.

The views of the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor as part of their consideration of this item.

**Actions Required:**

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to: -

1. Consider the attached report and to determine whether the Committee supports the recommendation(s) to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration as set out in the report.
2. Agree any additional comments to be passed on to the Executive Councillor in relation to this item.

**1. Background**

The Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration is due to consider a report on the Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit between 8 and 22 December 2023. The full report to the Executive Councillor is attached at Appendix A to this report.

**2. Conclusion**

Following consideration of the attached report, the Committee is requested to consider whether it supports the recommendation(s) in the report and whether it wishes to make any additional comments to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community

Safety, Procurement and Migration. Comments from the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor.

**3. Consultation**

The Committee is being consulted on the proposed decision of the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration between 8 and 22 December 2023.

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit to be presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration between 8 and 22 December 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 Rachel Gilliatt, who can be contacted on 07721726462 or [rachel.gilliatt@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.gilliatt@lincolnshire.gov.uk).





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

Report to:	<b>Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell OBE, Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration</b>
Date:	<b>8 – 22 December 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit</b>
Decision Reference:	<b>I030084</b>
Key decision?	<b>Yes</b>

### Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council currently commissions a catering service for the supply of daily meals to the Lincolnshire Secure Unit ('Secure Unit') from Elior (Taylor Shaw). The current contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and will end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, with no option for further extension.

The annual contract value in 2021/22 was £135,180 per annum. The cost of delivering the service has risen and it is anticipated the cost of delivering the service in 2023/24 will be £182,308. The current supplier has experienced recruitment and retention issues with staff which is an issue across the catering industry.

Future commissioning options have been considered. The cost of insourcing the service is expected to be higher than 2023/24 prices, but a fee increase will be requested through the Council's contract with the Ministry of Justice, who commission Secure Unit beds. This should mitigate the risk to the Council's budget.

The market of suppliers is considered limited (all bar one of the other Secure Units in the country insource their catering provision), and any re-procurement will be complicated by the service requirement changing in April 2026 with the planned new build Secure Unit. Insourcing the service is considered the preferred option. It will offer greater flexibility for the Secure Unit to meet the needs of young people, including delivery of NVQ/BTEC catering qualifications, and ensure the Council continues to meet its contractual obligations to the Ministry of Justice.

**Recommendation(s):**

That the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration:

1. approves the insourcing of the catering service for the Lincolnshire Secure Unit from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 when the current contract expires.
2. delegates to the Executive Director – Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration, authority to take all decisions necessary to progress the insourcing of the service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

**Alternatives Considered:**

- **Do nothing**

The current contractual arrangement ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. To do nothing would mean the contract would end and no catering service would be provided for young people at the Secure Unit. The Council would be in breach of its contractual obligations with the Ministry of Justice and fail to safeguard young people accommodated at the Secure Unit and to deliver related statutory duties.

- **Re-Procurement**

Re-procuring the catering service would ensure a service is available at the Secure Unit in line with the Council's contractual offer to the Ministry of Justice. It would also ensure the Secure Unit meets its statutory duties in relation to the young people in its care. However, the market is limited in the number of suppliers who can meet the full requirements of the service (all bar one of the other Secure Units in the country insource their catering provision). The previous two procurements of this service only received one response each. Procuring the service from a third party is likely to cost more than the current cost of the service; costs have risen by 35% in the lifetime of this contract. There is also the complication of the timeline for the new build Secure Unit (2026). This would either restrict the contract length required for the catering service or require significant flexibility within the contract to support the transition to the new build. Both are likely to reduce interest from the market. Engagement with School Meals Suppliers indicated the requirements of the service, such as the training aspect and multiple serving times, were too far removed from the standard ways of working within the sector. Based on the high risks and negative cost implications involved with re-procurement, it was not deemed a viable option.

**Reasons for Recommendation:**

The benefits of insourcing the catering service are:

- The young people at the Secure Unit would see little or no disruption to the Secure Unit catering service (subject to TUPE) as the experienced catering team who have established relationships with the young people would remain in post.

- The Council would remain compliant with its contractual offer to the Ministry of Justice.
- The Secure Unit will have the overall control and responsibility for the catering staff, and be better able to manage staffing shortfalls; there are existing staff already trained in food hygiene who have experience in providing backfill as required.
- The Secure Unit will be able to monitor the staffing structure over time and be able to deliver any efficiencies, where identified. This may offer up savings in the longer-term within the staffing element of the budget.
- The Secure Unit will be able to better monitor expenditure on catering services in readiness for the new build and expansion in 2026. The Secure Unit will be able to be flexible in ensuring a smooth transition.
- There will be more opportunity to control expenditure on food produce, making it easier to adapt to short notice demands, dietary requirements and the preferences of the young people, making it feel like more of a home. This will reduce wastage. The Secure Unit can react in a more *ad hoc* manner whereas an outsourced supplier is required to stock produce in advance.
- There would be more flexibility to make best use of local produce and businesses that an external supplier is largely unable to achieve due to their own contractual requirements on sourcing food. This will enhance social value locally.
- It will align the Secure Unit with other in-house Residential Children's Homes. Children's Services can look to identify where there is scope to purchase food more strategically (e.g. buying items in bulk for all Children's homes) with an aim to ensure best value for money from cumulative budgets.
- The Council's Food Education Team can support the mobilisation period of the catering service, to ensure the food being provided is in line with the mandatory school food standards.

## 1. Background:

The Council is commissioned by the Ministry of Justice to provide a Secure Unit for up to 12 young people until November 2025. Eleven beds are Justice beds (linked to criminal sentencing) and one is a Welfare bed (linked to maintaining the welfare and safety of young people and/or others in the community).

The Council currently commissions a catering service from the supplier, Elior. Elior were the only bidder for the current contract. The previous procurement process also had only one bidder. The service assists the Council to support the delivery of their contract with the Ministry of Justice. It also ensures the Secure Unit can meet its statutory duties in relation to the young people in its care.

Elior is a national company with over 10,000 staff. It provides catering, hospitality, and wider facilities services in different settings, including education and health care, across the country. The current contract with Elior will cease on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. There is no further option to extend.

The original annual contract value from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 was £135,180 per annum. Due to increased costs for food produce and staffing, it is anticipated the contract spend in 2023/24 will be £182,308. This includes a contribution of £9,600 by Elixor.

The service requires healthy and nutritious meals to be prepared and cooked on-site at the Secure Unit. These meals are expected at three sittings per day with the addition of snacks. The catering service operates seven days per week.

The catering service needs to cope with the dietary requirements of the cohort and any fluctuation in the number of young people residing at the Secure Unit. Short-notice admissions are a regular occurrence.

The Council also offers, as part of the contract with the Ministry of Justice, an NVQ/BTEC qualification to young people, where requested, to enable them to enhance their vocational and independent living skills. This service is delivered as part of the catering service contract.

The Secure Unit is re-locating to a new build within Sleaford and expanding its capacity to support up to 28 young people. The provisional opening date for the new build is April 2026. This will have implications for the future nature of any catering service. The new build programme has been approved via the democratic process and is being funded by the DfE.

### **Current Service Performance**

Elixor currently employ four staff to deliver the service. Food is sourced via contractual arrangements between Elixor and their preferred food suppliers. This limits the produce available to purchase and diminishes the opportunity to secure more competitive food prices by working with more local and/or independent food suppliers.

Over the past 18 months the service has experienced poor performance due to the inability of the supplier to recruit and retain staff (a sector-wide issue in the catering industry). Elixor have struggled to maintain the required level of service. Secure Unit staff with appropriate qualifications have had to supplement the service where staffing availability has been compromised. The Council was forced to temporarily suspend the NVQ/BTEC training whilst sufficient staff were recruited.

Increased costs for food produce have also made it difficult for Elixor to maintain the expected standards of service within the contract budget. There have been additional budget pressures in terms of the increased cost of food supplies. As a result of the increased costs for food produce and staffing, spend on the contract is anticipated to be £182,308 in 2023/24, more than one-third higher than the original contract value of £135,180 per annum. It is therefore anticipated that any new tender would require a higher budget than the current cost.

### **Benefits of recommended model**

Bringing the service in-house will allow the Secure Unit to better manage the service, and any issues around recruitment and retention, sickness/ absence etc., through the ability to

deploy a larger number of staff – from the wider staff team - to assist and support the catering element, including delivery of the NVQ/BTEC training. Currently, the service is reliant solely on the continued presence of 3-4 people whereas the Secure Unit can call upon a wider number of employees, where they have the right qualifications (e.g. Basic Food Hygiene certification), to support.

Over time, the Secure Unit can look to establish if a more hybrid form of working, where staff may work more generically across the Unit, would benefit the service both from an economic and practical viewpoint. It will also allow the Secure Unit to look ahead to the new build and gauge catering service requirements within an expanded staffing structure.

In-house delivery of the catering service will have the benefit of allowing the Secure Unit to respond to short-notice admissions and ad hoc requirements more quickly. The outsourced service must prepare, in terms of stocking produce, to cater for all eventualities; whereas bringing the service in-house will enable a response to be tailored to the specific requirements of the individual young person. This will reduce wastage and costs over time.

The Secure Unit will be able to look at the purchasing of food and produce more strategically by looking to bulk purchase alongside the other homes in the Children's Services Residential estate. It will also enable the service to look at sourcing food more locally, taking advantage of fresher produce where appropriate, and enhancing social value within the County.

### **Financial Recommendations**

The recommended model to in-source the Secure Unit catering service will cost £203,592. This total includes current costs of food (£55,332) and proposed staffing costs of £148,260 (excluding holiday/sickness).

It is anticipated that 3.0FTE chefs will TUPE across to the Council at G5 on a salary scale point commensurate with their existing rate of pay. The Catering Manager would move across at G8 – slightly higher (c. £1k) than is comparable to their existing rate of pay – to align with other staff within the Secure Unit with similar responsibilities.

However, the most significant additional cost will be linked to the LGPS contributions; this will add c. £23k more to the overall staffing costs. Although the Secure Unit will be able to offset some other costs associated with the Elior contract, the net result is a c. £22,000 increase over what is currently spent with the supplier.

If the Elior contribution of £9,600 is considered, the real increase is less than £12,000 based on current expenditure. However, pressures on staffing and food costs being experienced by the industry mean there is no guarantee any tendered service could continue to be delivered at the existing prices.

The Council will seek to recoup the increase in costs through the annual fee increase request process with the Ministry of Justice, highlighting the actual costs of delivery of

catering. The fee per bed per night can be requested to be increased to include the cost of delivery.

The new 28-bed secure unit will impact upon the overall expenditure. If the recommendation to in-source the catering service is approved, consideration would need to be given to a revised staffing structure and associated costs within the Secure Unit's financial model.

## **2. Legal Issues:**

### Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material

with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision-making process.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been initiated during the early development of this work and, whilst this is a working document, the current version of the EIA is included as Appendix 1. With the recommendation to in-source the catering service, it is not anticipated that there will be persons with protected characteristics negatively impacted.

The EIA will be further developed should this be required following decision making.

### Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision.

The JSNA and JHWS make reference to the health and well-being of children and young people and how tackling childhood obesity is a primary function of the strategy.

Secure Unit staff will have control over the quality of ingredients being used to ensure meals are nutritious, healthy and in-line with School Food Standards. The staff will also be well placed to monitor and control the food portions supplied to the young people which will further support the aim of reducing obesity in children.

### Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area.

The proposal to bring the catering service in-house will ensure that the young people will be able to have access consistently to the NVQ/BTEC Qualification which will support long term opportunities for employment into adulthood.

### **3. Conclusion**

With the market being extremely limited in this sector, the cost of food produce increasing, and the impending transition to the new build Secure Unit, it would not be advisable to continue to outsource the catering service.

In-sourcing the catering service will offer the Secure Unit greater flexibility to source produce locally and deliver a more economic and efficient service. Aligning with Children's Residential Homes offers the opportunity for economies of scale across the estate in purchasing produce.

Bringing the service in-house has the additional benefit of being able to better monitor expenditure on catering services in readiness for the new build and expansion in 2026.

It is therefore recommended that the catering service is brought in-house with a planned implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

#### **4. Legal Comments:**

The Council has the power to directly deliver the services proposed.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive Councillor.

#### **5. Resource Comments:**

The recommendation to approve the insourcing of the catering service for the Lincolnshire Secure Unit from 1 April 2024, when the current contract expires, offers best value, helps to provide resilience and will ensure that the Council is not in breach of its contractual obligations with the Ministry of Justice. The slight increase in cost in providing an in-house service compared to the cost of the current contract is noted but this will be managed within the overall income received by the Lincolnshire Secure Unit.

#### **6. Consultation**

##### **a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?**

No

##### **b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?**

Yes

##### **c) Scrutiny Comments**

The decision will be considered by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2023 and the comments of the Committee will be reported to the Executive Councillor.

##### **d) Risks and Impact Analysis**

Risks should the recommendation to bring the catering service in-house not be supported:

- A full re-procurement will be needed. The timescales to commission a service of this nature in readiness for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 would be significantly constrained. The previous two procurement exercises have elicited only one bid each.



- Any procurement exercise will be complicated by the impending Secure Unit new build, due to come on stream in April 2026. Any tender offer would need to be restricted to two years. This may not entice the market to bid and/or result in higher short-term costs from any successful bidder.
- Staffing and food costs within the catering industry remain extremely volatile (as shown by in-contract price increases of nearly 35%). The budget will therefore need to be increased to encourage suppliers to bid. It is possible that the cost will be higher than that envisaged cost in bringing the service in-house; certainly in the longer-term if not the short-term.
- The NVQ/ BTEC qualification training programme had to be suspended due to issues with recruitment and retention for the existing supplier. There is a risk this would be a regular reoccurrence in the future. This would impact negatively on young people at the Secure Unit. This may lead to reputational damage to the Council given it is a fundamental part of the offer to the Ministry of Justice.

## 7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Equality Impact Assessment

## 8. 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 Rachel Gilliatt, who can be contacted on 07721726462 or [rachel.gilliatt@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.gilliatt@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

# Equality Impact Analysis

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- (i) help decision makers fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and
- (ii) for you to evidence the positive and adverse impacts of the proposed change on people with protected characteristics and ways to mitigate or eliminate any adverse impacts.

## Using this form

This form must be updated and reviewed as your evidence evolves on proposals for a:

- project
- service change
- policy
- commissioning of a service
- decommissioning of a service

You must take into account any:

- consultation feedback
- significant changes to the proposals
- data to support impacts of the proposed changes

The key findings of the most up to date version of the Equality Impact Analysis must be explained in the report to the decision maker. The Equality Impact Analysis must be attached to the decision-making report.

**\*\*Please make sure you read the information below so that you understand what is required under the Equality Act 2010\*\***

## Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 applies to both our workforce and our customers. Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers are under a duty, to have due (that is proportionate) regard to the need to protect and promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics. The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker.

## Protected characteristics

The protected characteristics under the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex

- sexual orientation

## **Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010**

Section 149 requires a public authority to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share those characteristics
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The purpose of Section 149 is to get decision makers to consider the impact their decisions may or will have on those with protected characteristics. By evidencing the impacts on people with protected characteristics decision makers should be able to demonstrate 'due regard'.

## **Decision makers duty under the Act**

Having had careful regard to the Equality Impact Analysis, and also the consultation responses, decision makers are under a personal duty to have due regard to the need to protect and promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics (see above) and to:

- (i) consider and analyse how the decision is likely to affect those with protected characteristics, in practical terms.
- (ii) remove any unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other prohibited conduct.
- (iii) consider whether practical steps should be taken to mitigate or avoid any adverse consequences that the decision is likely to have, for persons with protected characteristics and, indeed, to consider whether the decision should not be taken at all, in the interests of persons with protected characteristics.
- (iv) consider whether steps should be taken to advance equality, foster good relations and generally promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics, either by varying the recommended decision or by taking some other decision.

## **Conducting an impact analysis**

The Equality Impact Analysis is a process to identify the impact or likely impact a project, proposed service change, commissioning, decommissioning or policy will have on people with protected characteristics listed above. It should be considered at the beginning of the decision-making process.

### **The Lead Officer responsibility**

This is the person writing the report for the decision maker. It is the responsibility of the Lead Officer to make sure that the Equality Impact Analysis is robust and proportionate to the decision being taken.

### **Summary of findings**

You must provide a clear and concise summary of the key findings of this Equality Impact Analysis in the decision-making report and attach this Equality Impact Analysis to the report.

# Impact

**An impact is an intentional or unintentional lasting consequence or significant change to people's lives brought about by an action or series of actions.**

## **How much detail to include?**

The Equality Impact Analysis should be proportionate to the impact of proposed change. In deciding this ask simple questions:

- who might be affected by this decision?
- which protected characteristics might be affected?
- how might they be affected?

These questions will help you consider the extent to which you already have evidence, information and data. It will show where there are gaps that you will need to explore. Ensure the source and date of any existing data is referenced.

You must consider both obvious and any less obvious impacts. Engaging with people with the protected characteristics will help you to identify less obvious impacts as these groups share their perspectives with you.

A given proposal may have a positive impact on one or more protected characteristics and have an adverse impact on others. You must capture these differences in this form to help decision makers to decide where the balance of advantage or disadvantage lies. If an adverse impact is unavoidable, then it must be clearly justified and recorded as such. An explanation must be stated as to why no steps can be taken to avoid the impact. Consequences must be included.

## **Proposals for more than one option**

If more than one option is being proposed, you must ensure that the Equality Impact Analysis covers all options. Depending on the circumstances, it may be more appropriate to complete an Equality Impact Analysis for each option.

**The information you provide in this form must be sufficient to allow the decision maker to fulfil their role as above. You must include the latest version of the Equality Impact Analysis with the report to the decision maker. Please be aware that the information in this form must be able to stand up to legal challenge.**

## Background information

Details	Response
<b>Title of the policy, project or service being considered</b>	Lincolnshire Secure Unit (LSU) Catering Service
<b>Service area</b>	Children's Services - Safeguarding
<b>Person or people completing the analysis</b>	Rachel Gilliatt, Commissioning Officer, Strategic Commissioning
<b>Lead officer</b>	Dave Clarke, Service Lead Secure Estate, Children's Safeguarding
<b>Who is the decision maker?</b>	Tara Jones, Assistant Director, Children's Safeguarding
<b>How was the Equality Impact Analysis undertaken?</b>	Through a desktop review and through discussions with the LSU Catering Team and LSU Management regarding the LSU catering service.
<b>Date of meeting when decision will be made</b>	15/12/23 - Executive Councillor Report
<b>Is this a proposed change to an existing policy, service, project or is it new?</b>	The proposal is a change to an existing service.
<b>Version control</b>	V1.3
<b>Is it LCC directly delivered, commissioned, recommissioned, or decommissioned?</b>	Currently commissioned with an external Supplier with a view to insourcing the service.
<b>Describe the proposed change</b>	<p>The proposal is to insource the LSU Catering Service, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, once the existing commissioned service expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.</p> <p>LSU Managers will then have the overall responsibility for the catering budget, catering staff and service delivery. LSU will seek to TUPE the existing Elior Catering Staff across to ensure there is continuity of the service for the young people (YP) residing at the LSU.</p>

## Evidencing the impacts

In this section you will explain the difference that proposed changes are likely to make on people with protected characteristics.

To help you do this, consider the impacts the proposed changes may have on people:

- without protected characteristics
- and with protected characteristics

You must evidence here who will benefit and how they will benefit. If there are no benefits that you can identify, please state 'No perceived benefit' under the relevant protected characteristic.

You can add sub-categories under the protected characteristics to make clear the impacts, for example:

- under Age you may have considered the impact on 0-5 year olds or people aged 65 and over
- under Race you may have considered Eastern European migrants
- under Sex you may have considered specific impacts on men

## Data to support impacts of proposed changes

When considering the equality impact of a decision it is important to know who the people are that will be affected by any change.

### Population data and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) holds a range of population data by the protected characteristics. This can help put a decision into context. [Visit the LRO website and its population theme page.](#)

If you cannot find what you are looking for, or need more information, please contact the LRO team. You will also find information about the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on the LRO website.

### Workforce profiles

You can obtain [information on the protected characteristics for our workforce](#) on our website. Managers can obtain workforce profile data by the protected characteristics for their specific areas using Business World.

## Positive impacts

The proposed change may have the following positive impacts on persons with protected characteristics. If there is no positive impact, please state 'no positive impact'.

Protected characteristic	Response
<b>Age</b>	<p><b><u>Young People (YP) – Aged 10 – 18</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality ingredients will be provided to the YP residing at the LSU as part of this proposal as the LSU will have more control over where the food is purchased, with the ability to source fresher produce locally.</li> <li>• The current size of food portions has been highlighted as a concern by the YP. The LSU will be able to closely monitor portion control and increase/decrease portion sizes as necessary for the YP.</li> <li>• Having a full staffing structure will mean the NVQ/BTEC Qualifications in Food Preparation will once again be made available to the YP; in recent months this service has had to cease due to the current supplier's inability to consistently retain a full complement of staff. This will help prepare young people for adulthood and independence.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LSU will have greater control over the purchasing of food and meal planning/preparation with the proposal. This will enable dietary requirements to be better supported at short notice for individuals who may have specific needs linked to a disability.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	[No positive impact]
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	[No positive impact]
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LSU will have greater control over the purchasing of food and meal planning/preparation with the proposal. This will enable dietary requirements to be better supported at short notice for individuals who may have specific requirements as part of a pregnancy.</li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	[No positive impact]
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LSU will be able to purchase food items at short-notice, resulting in fresher ingredients and more local produce, to meet the demands of any young person admitted to the LSU at short notice who has a specific dietary requirement which may be based around their religious beliefs e.g. Halal Meat.</li> </ul>

Protected characteristic	Response
Sex	[No positive impact]
Sexual orientation	[No positive impact]

**If you have identified positive impacts for other groups not specifically covered by the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 you can include them here if it will help the decision maker to make an informed decision.**

Positive impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is anticipated that the proposal to in-source the Catering Service will increase Social Value with the ability to more readily utilise local food suppliers and farmers. The LSU can work with these businesses to purchase seasonal food items and at the same time achieve good value for money.</li> </ul>



# Adverse or negative impacts

You must evidence how people with protected characteristics will be adversely impacted and any proposed mitigation to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts. An adverse impact causes disadvantage or exclusion. If such an impact is identified please state how, as far as possible, it is:

- justified
- eliminated
- minimised or
- counter-balanced by other measures

If there are no adverse impacts that you can identify, please state 'No perceived adverse impact' under the relevant protected characteristic.

**Negative impacts of the proposed change and practical steps to mitigate or avoid any adverse consequences on people with protected characteristics are detailed below. If you have not identified any mitigating action to reduce an adverse impact, please state 'No mitigating action identified'.**

Protected characteristic	Response
Age	[No perceived adverse impact]
Disability	[No perceived adverse impact]
Gender reassignment	[No perceived adverse impact]
Marriage and civil partnership	[No perceived adverse impact]
Pregnancy and maternity	[No perceived adverse impact]
Race	[No perceived adverse impact]

Protected characteristic	Response
Religion or belief	[No perceived adverse impact]
Sex	[No perceived adverse impact]
Sexual orientation	[No perceived adverse impact]

If you have identified negative impacts for other groups not specifically covered by the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 you can include them here if it will help the decision maker to make an informed decision.

Negative impacts
N/A

# Stakeholders

Stake holders are people or groups who may be directly affected (primary stakeholders) and indirectly affected (secondary stakeholders).

You must evidence here who you involved in gathering your evidence about :

- benefits
- adverse impacts
- practical steps to mitigate or avoid any adverse consequences.

You must be confident that any engagement was meaningful. The community engagement team can help you to do this. You can contact them at [engagement@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

State clearly what (if any) consultation or engagement activity took place. Include:

- who you involved when compiling this EIA under the protected characteristics
- any organisations you invited and organisations who attended
- the date(s) any organisation was involved and method of involvement such as:
  - EIA workshop
  - email
  - telephone conversation
  - meeting
  - consultation

State clearly the objectives of the EIA consultation and findings from the EIA consultation under each of the protected characteristics. If you have not covered any of the protected characteristics, please state the reasons why they were not consulted or engaged with.

Objective(s) of the EIA consultation or engagement activity
The LSU staff regularly obtain feedback by speaking to the YP residing at the LSU to discuss their views and opinions on the current catering service. Feedback from LSU staff has formed part of the review of the service and helped to form the recommendations of the review.

## Who was involved in the EIA consultation or engagement activity?

Detail any findings identified by the protected characteristic.


Protected characteristic	Response
Age	<p><b><u>Young People (YP) – Aged 10 – 18</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current service identified concerns for the YP specifically in relation to the quality of food and small portions at mealtimes. The new model to in-source the service will alleviate these concerns as the LSU will be able to carefully monitor the portion sizes and be able to source higher quality ingredients at less cost, ensuring food portions meet the needs of YP.</li> </ul>
Disability	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A
Race	N/A
Religion or belief	N/A
Sex	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A

Protected characteristic	Response
<p><b>Are you confident that everyone who should have been involved in producing this version of the Equality Impact Analysis has been involved in a meaningful way?</b></p> <p>The purpose is to make sure you have got the perspective of all the protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Yes. All protected characteristics have been considered and reported upon where applicable.</p>
<p><b>Once the changes have been implemented how will you undertake evaluation of the benefits and how effective the actions to reduce adverse impacts have been?</b></p>	<p>With the service being brought in-house, it will be easier for the LSU Managers to assess how the recommended model has impacted on the YP at the LSU. Regular monitoring will take place on-site and the YP will be able to provide feedback and views to the Catering Team and LSU Managers on any changes experienced with the service and future improvements.</p>

## Further details

Personal data	Response
Are you handling personal data?	No
If yes, please give details	N/A

Actions required	Action	Lead officer	Timescale
Include any actions identified in this analysis for on-going monitoring of impacts.	LSU to monitor the new model of in-sourcing the service and seek views and opinions of the YP and the Catering Team.	Dave Clarke – Service Lead Secure Estate, Children’s Safeguarding	Ongoing

Version	Description	Created or amended by	Date created or amended	Approved by	Date approved
V1- V1.3	Version created and refined as part of Service Review to support democratic pathway for decision making.	Rachel Gilliatt	18.10.23	Tara Jones 	30/10/23



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

Report to:	<b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>8 December 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 - Quarter 2</b>

**Summary:**

This report summarises the Service Level Performance against the Success Framework 2023-24 for Quarter 2. All performance that can be reported in Quarter 2 is included in this report.




Full service level reporting to all scrutiny committees can be found here: [Corporate plan – Performance data - Lincolnshire County Council](#)

**Actions Required:**

The Committee is invited to review and comment on the Children and Young People Service Level Performance for 2023- 24 Quarter 2.

## 1. Background

This report details the Service Level Performance measures for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee that can be reported at Quarter 2.

- 1 measure exceeded their target 
- 4 measures achieved their target 
- 1 measure did not meet their target 
- 1 measure did not have data available to report

## 1.1 Children are Healthy and Safe

### 1.1.1 Measures that exceeded their target

None in Quarter 2.

### 1.1.2 Measures that Achieved their target

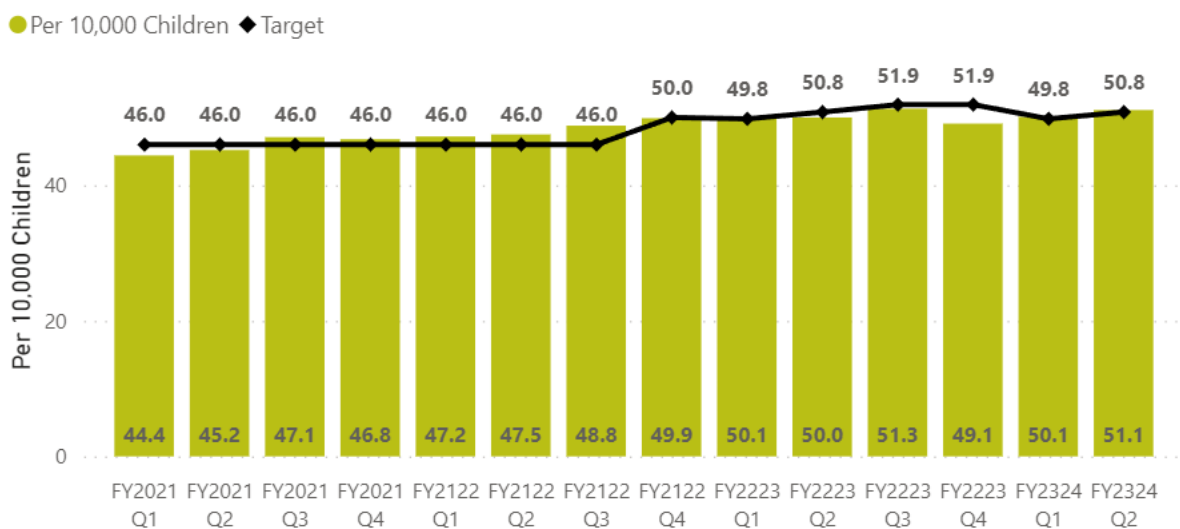
#### PI 23 Children in Care ✓

**Actual: 51.1**

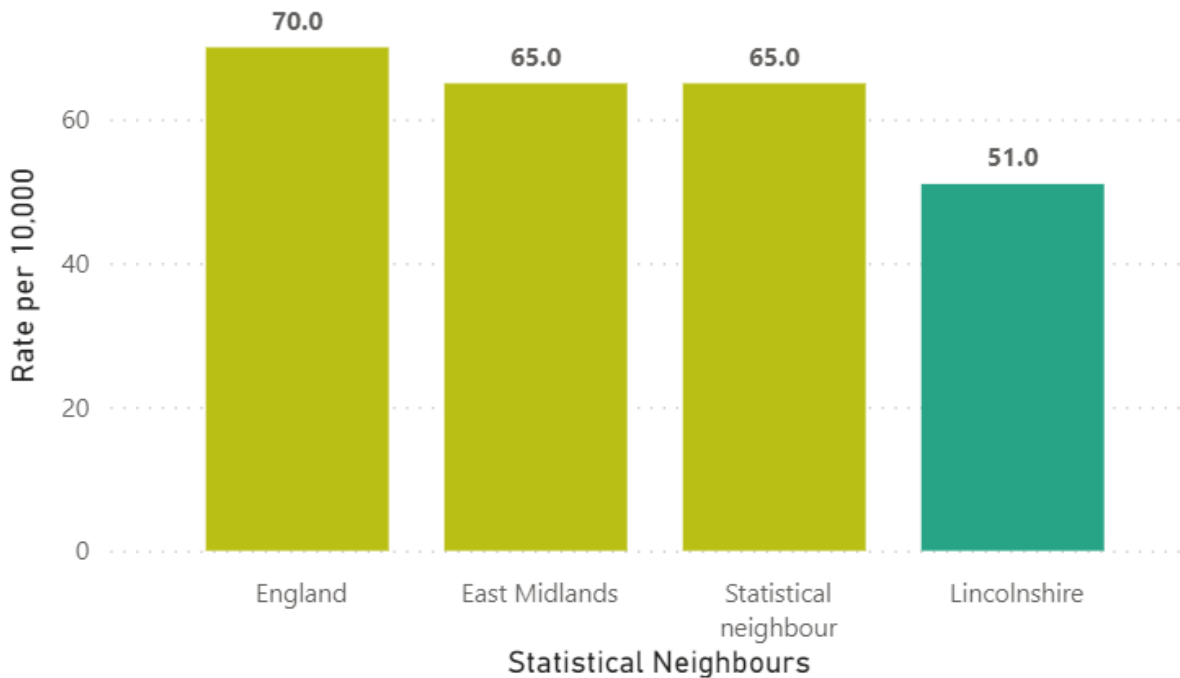
**Target: 50.8**

At 51.1 per 10,000 children in care, this measure is slightly above target (50.8) but is within tolerance, so has therefore achieved this quarter. This target has been revised upward in comparison to recent years to take into account the effects of the National Transfer Scheme and the number of children in care per 10,000 remains at a relatively high level compared to recent years. The recent growth in numbers is attributable to the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and is partly attributable to the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children that have arrived as part of the new temporary mandated National Transfer Scheme. The expectation is that Lincolnshire will take a maximum of 144 children which equates to 0.1% of the general child population and therefore there continues to be a likely impact of growth going forward.

Despite the recent growth and the potential for future increase, there continues to be an emphasis on prevention from children coming into care and exit planning from the care system where it can be achieved. However, even with the increase, the Lincolnshire number of Children in Care (CiC) per 10,000 remains significantly below the most recent published figures both nationally and by our statistical neighbours (70 per 10,000 and 65 per 10,000 respectively as of 31 March 2022).







Benchmarking as at March 2022

**PI 25 Average time taken to move a child from care to an adoptive family ✓**

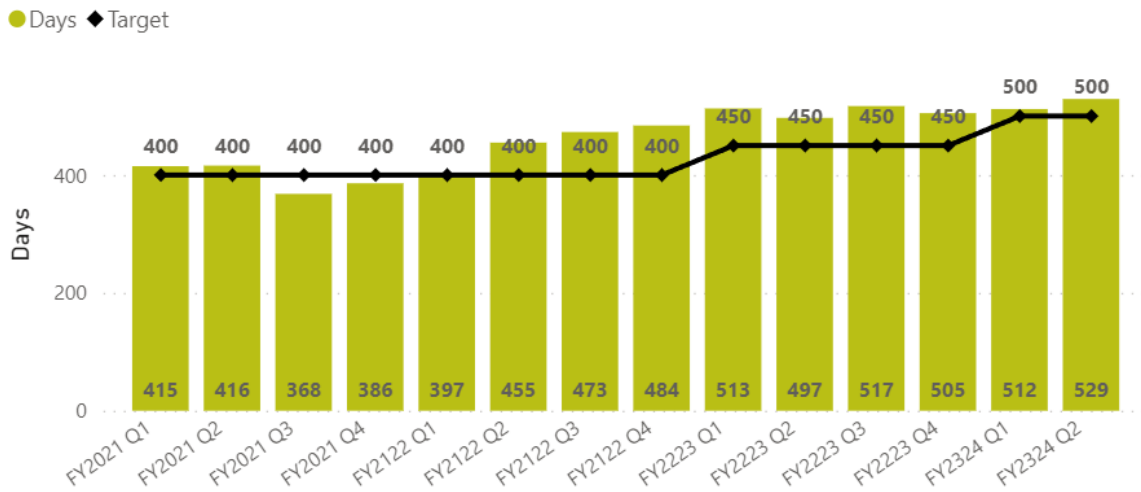
**Actual: 529**

**Target: 500**

This measure is a 'rolling' three yearly average. As we have moved forward, the calculation has considered more of the period covered by the pandemic, which has in turn increased the rolling average figure. There were children who experienced significant delay within the care proceedings that impacts on this figure.

It is important to note that the figure presented also includes some rare anomalies which have also adversely affected the overall timescales, such as one case which lasted for over 2,000 days due to an unusual amount of disruption as well as an increase in the number of children deemed harder to place in general.

In addition to this, there are also some children later adopted by their foster carers, but this measure does not properly take in to account the time they began living with those families, producing a longer timescale than there was in reality. These children have experienced a longer period of stability that does not really show within the figures.



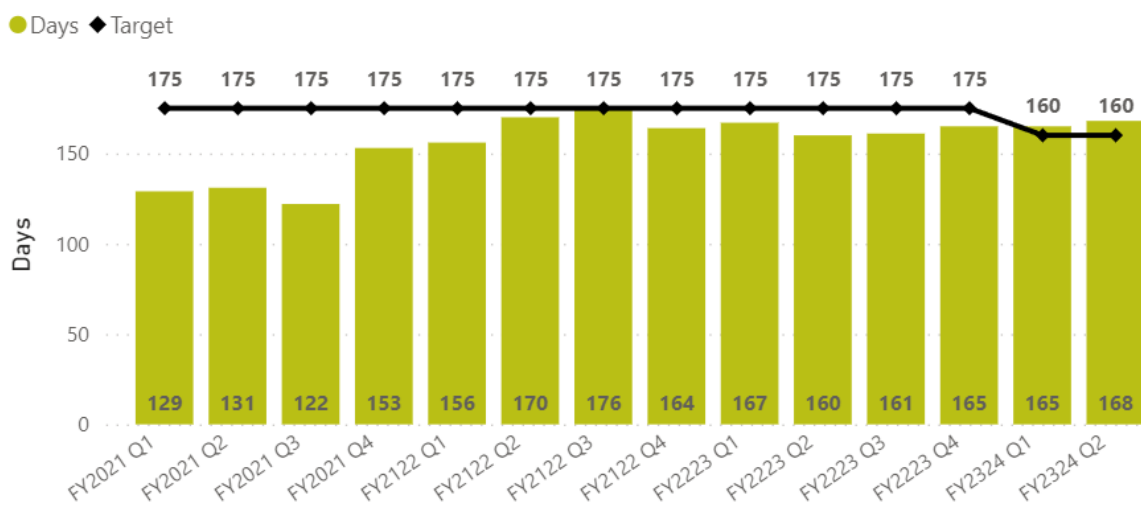
**PI 26 Average time taken to match a child to an adoptive family ✓**

**Actual: 168**

**Target: 160**

There are signs that the timescale is continuing to decline. This has, however, been impacted by an increase in the number of birth parents who are appealing the decision to make a placement order which impacts on the timescales for matching which has been seen in this quarter. This impacts on the timescales for this measure as we cannot family find whilst an appeal is ongoing.

Despite these challenges this figure is under the national average of 175 days, meaning that once we have authority to place for adoption, Lincolnshire is able to move children onto their adoptive families in a timely manner.





Benchmarking period April 2017 – March 2020

### 1.1.3 Measures that did not meet their target

#### PI 24 Children who are subject to a children protection plan ❌

**Actual: 425**

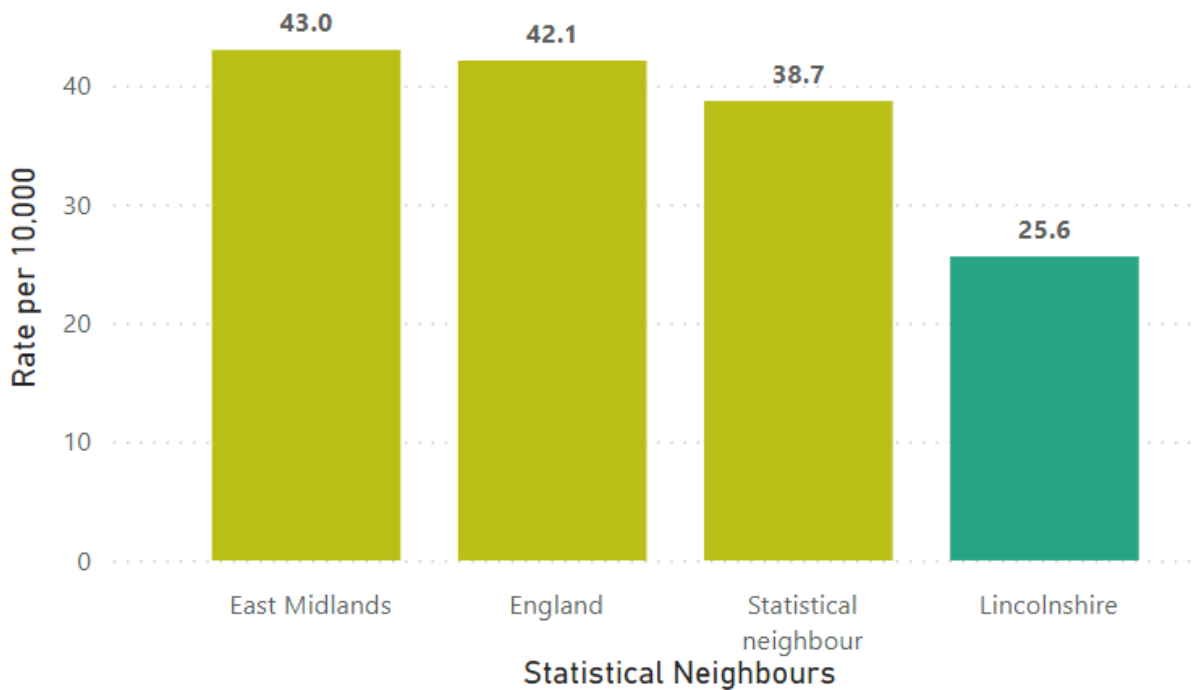
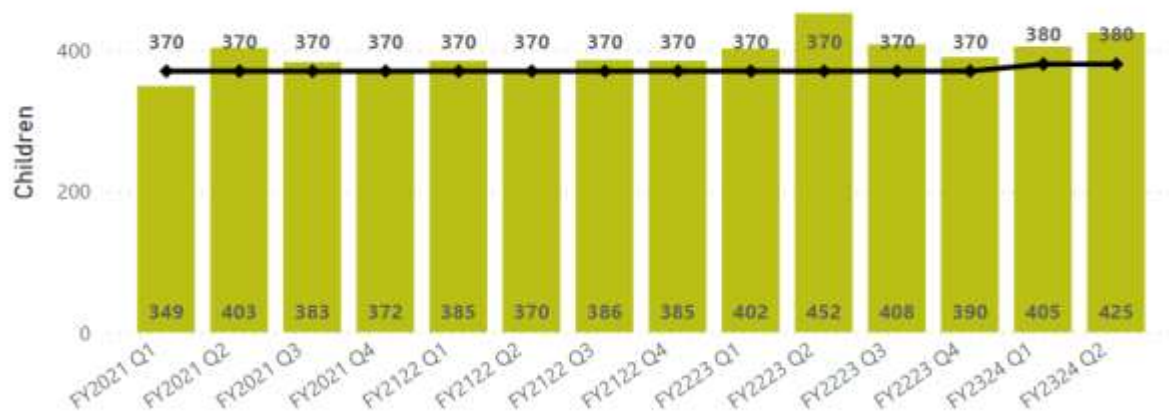
**Target: 380**

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at the end of Quarter 2 is 425. It is recognised that this is a dip in performance and takes the number of children on a child protection plan just outside of the tolerance range.

The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan does fluctuate as the decision for a child to be made subject to, or remain on, a child protection plan is based on the risk factors present for the individual child. Additionally, this measure is heavily influenced by families where parents have multiple children. We expect to shift back into tolerance range as the year progresses due to the progress that families currently supported by child protection plans are making. However, we continue to see increased pressures and financial hardship upon families because of the cost-of-living crisis. This is particularly evident in those families where there are a number of children.

Child protection plans create safety, and it is important that risk is recognised and managed through plans where appropriate. Early intervention with families and effective risk management continues to take place to ensure that only the right children are subject to a child protection plan.

● Children ◆ Target



Benchmarking period April 2021 – March 2022

**1.1.4 Measures that did not have data available to report**

**PI 15 Juvenile first time offenders**

Unfortunately, there is no available data for this quarter (April 2022 - March 2023). This is due to the Youth Justice Board changing the way in which this indicator is calculated.

Data will be available for the July 2022 – June 2023 period, which will be reported in Quarter 3. Due to the new calculation method significantly impacting the figures for this measure, a revised target (to be agreed) will also be set against this measure from Quarter 3 onwards.

## 1.2 Learn and Achieve

Not reported in Quarter 2.

## 1.3 Readiness for Adult Life

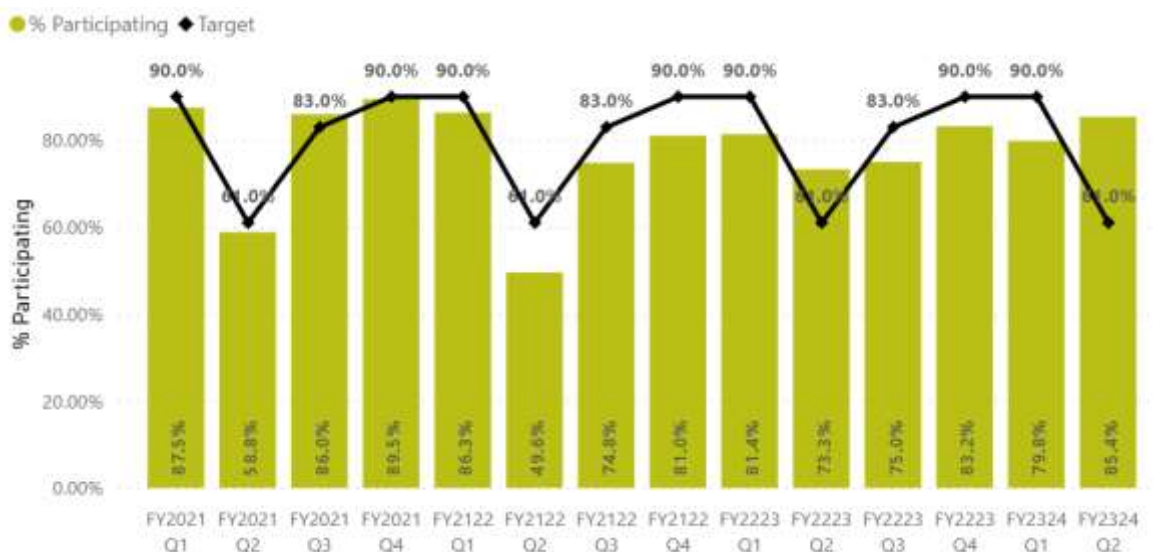
### 1.3.1 Measures that exceeded their target

PI 45 16 -17 year old Children in Care participating in learning 

**Actual: 85.4**

**Target: 61**

Performance this quarter exceeds the target and is an improvement on last year's Quarter 2 performance of 73.3%. At the end of the reporting period, there were 192 young people in care aged 16 and 17. 164 young people met the criteria for engaging in learning and were on roll at local colleges, post 16 providers and school sixth forms. Of the remaining 28 young people, two young people were in full time employment (without training), 10 young people were accessing interim/online English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision whilst awaiting a college place, and three young people were awaiting confirmation of a college place. Personal Education Plans for the 13 young people not actively engaged in learning aim to identify any potential barriers to progressing into employment, education or training and explore opportunities and appropriate support on a termly basis. Working in partnership with the Lincolnshire Leaving Care service, work experience placements are sought for those young people wanting to seek employment and short training course opportunities are revisited every term.



### 1.3.2 Measures that Achieved their target

#### PI 46 Care leavers in suitable accommodation ✓

**Actual: 92.6**

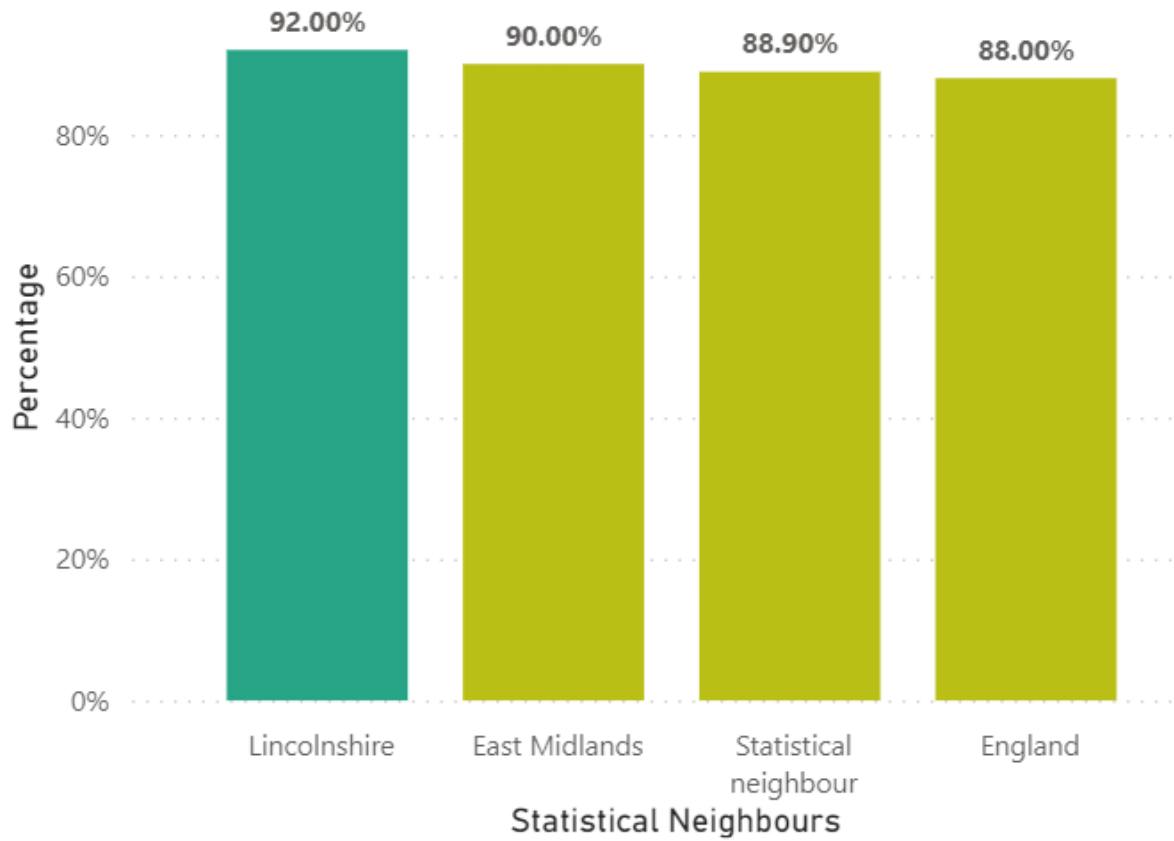
**Target: 95**

The most recent child level data analysis reported a percentage of 92.6% of young people in suitable accommodation for 19-, 20- and 21-year-olds. The definition of the suitability of accommodation is very strict, and whilst the definition would deem some of the accommodation options unsuitable, the young person might be making an informed choice (as an adult) about where they live and how they live. For example, the monthly tracker continues to identify a small number of young people who are choosing to live with friends and sleep on their sofa. This is deemed unsuitable, but the decision to live on a friend's sofa is the informed choice of the young person. We also know of one young person who still chooses to live in a caravan on their ex foster carers driveway and another young person who has turned down accommodation to live on their mother's driveway in a car. Both these young people have had multiple offers of supported living but choose to live where they are. This is still deemed as unsuitable by the criteria. There is also a small number of young people in temporary accommodation, provided by the District Council, whilst the housing authority is addressing homelessness and finding a long-term solution with the leaving care service.

In addition to the above, custody is also always deemed unsuitable. There has, however, been a small increase in the numbers of young people in custody. Ironically, being in custody qualifies as being in education, employment and training but is deemed as unsuitable accommodation.

The Head of Service continues to monitor unsuitable accommodation on a case-by-case basis every month.





Benchmarking as at March 2022

### 1.3.3 Measures that did not meet their target

None in Quarter 2.

## 2. Conclusion

The Committee is invited to review and comment on the Children and Young People Service Level Performance for 2023- 24 Quarter 2.

## 3. Consultation

### a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not applicable.

## 4. Appendices

None used.

## **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 Jo Kavanagh, who can be contacted on [jo.kavanagh@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:jo.kavanagh@lincolnshire.gov.uk)





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

Report to:	<b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>8 December 2023</b>
Subject:	<b>Childcare Sufficiency in Lincolnshire</b>

**Summary:**

This report is intended to confirm the current childcare sufficiency position within Lincolnshire, clarify the findings of the online sufficiency surveys with Ofsted registered childcare providers and parents, and provide recommendations to support the development of early years and childcare places in Lincolnshire to meet the statutory childcare sufficiency duty.

**Actions Required:**

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. Support the actions within the report.
2. Agree with the publication of the Childcare Sufficiency Report for 2023.

## **1. Background**

The local authority must report annually to elected members on how we are meeting our statutory childcare sufficiency duty to secure sufficient childcare and make this report available and accessible to parents.

Early Years and Childcare Support offers childcare providers access to effective support to deliver the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and ensure there is sufficient provision available for families in Lincolnshire. This support enables providers to effectively meet the needs of children and has a particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged and vulnerable families, to reduce inequalities in child development and promote the school readiness agenda.

Evidence shows that attending high quality early education has a lasting impact on social and behavioural outcomes of young children. The entitlements make childcare more accessible and affordable for families and enables them to access training, work or increase their working hours if they wish to do so.

The local authority is responsible for determining the appropriate level of detail in the annual childcare sufficiency report, geographical division, and date of publication.

The local authority completed a sufficiency survey to review the availability of childcare in Lincolnshire in May 2023. The survey was designed to assess the sufficiency and sustainability of early years and childcare provision being offered in Lincolnshire.

One survey was designed to assess the sufficiency and sustainability of early years and childcare provision being offered in Lincolnshire. Providers were asked to confirm the services that they offer, to which age groups, opening hours, hourly cost, number of places they offered, and current take up.

The survey was widely promoted via social media and email communication directly with schools and childcare providers.

The survey had a high response rate with 96% of providers completing.

Please see Appendix A 'Lincolnshire County Council Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023' for the full report details and links to the data and findings.

In addition, a parent survey was hosted on the Let's Talk Lincolnshire online platform. A record 1,893 responses were received through this platform.

Please see Appendix B 'Engagement Report – Parental Childcare Sufficiency Project' for the full findings from the parent survey.

Following the actions in the annual sufficiency report from last year, the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCC) has secured capital funding to support the development of childcare places identified within the childcare delivery plan.

The existing childcare delivery plan has been updated to ensure this is responsive to the needs within the report from 2022 and to include capital investment in areas from the current assessment for childcare developments. The service is working with existing providers and schools wherever possible to develop places with match funding investment from the sector wherever possible.

At the beginning of the year, Ofsted gradings for early years settings were becoming a growing concern with higher numbers of settings being graded as inadequate than previously seen. EYCC undertook a review of how the safeguarding and welfare requirements are supported in settings and implemented a relational based offer of visits to all settings who were due an inspection in the current cycle.

So far, those providers that have since been inspected who have taken up the offer of a visit have achieved a Good rating from Ofsted. The approach has been shared with key colleagues who support the Early Years sector to ensure there is consistency.

Over 100 providers attended sessions to help shape a CPD (Continuing Professional Development) opportunity in Lincolnshire. In June, countywide face to face Ofsted

Inspection seminars were held based on needs identified by the sector. Approximately 80 practitioners attended from a range of provider types. There was positive feedback with the majority of providers telling us they felt more confident following the seminar.

Lincolnshire was successful in securing a place on a National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) / Department for Education (DfE) funded project for four Local Authorities. The project focussed on a whole setting approach to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and 15 SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) took part and conducted SEND reviews in their setting. We also trialled partnering with five Outstanding Providers to work alongside aspiring settings to achieve at least a good outcome at their next inspection.

Early Years hold termly SENCO networks. To make these more interactive and to capture the knowledge and experience of the sector, solution circles have been introduced with the support of the Local Authority (LA) Practice Advisers from the Quality and Standards team. These are now embedded in the termly sessions so that SENCOs can offer advice and guidance to their peers.

In February 2023, EYCC was also successful in securing an opportunity to work with the National Children's Bureau on a small DfE funded project to improve the provision and support for the Home Learning Environment for young children with SEND in the area. This comprised training sessions for both practitioners and parents and we were delighted to be able to involve the Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum in this opportunity.

## **2. Conclusion**

The outcome of the annual childcare sufficiency survey demonstrated that Lincolnshire has a good level of sufficiency of early years places across the county. However, South Holland district goes against that trend and remains an area of concern with regards to sufficiency of childcare places for all age groups. The data from the provider and parental survey is showing that Out of School places across the county are low and are not meeting parental needs.

Staff recruitment concerns within the sector are being felt locally and nationally with a shortage of qualified and experienced staff within the childcare sector. The shortage of staff is instrumental to the effective delivery and development of adequate places to meet parental need. The Government has announced that it will be running a national campaign in early 2024 to encourage people to consider a career in the childcare sector, and the early years and childcare support team is continuing to work with partners to promote careers in childcare locally.

There have been significant announcements from the Government in the Spring Budget, which has seen an expansion of the funded education places. From April 2024 the funded offer will include 15 hour funded places for 2-year-olds of eligible working parents. The offer will further expand to 15 hours for eligible working parents of 9-month-olds by September 2024. By September 2025, the offer will be 30 hours of funded education to children of eligible working parents from 9-months-old to school age. This will impact on the sufficiency of places needed. To what extent is unknown at present, but the initial

assessment is that the preliminary take-up of places will be by children who are already accessing childcare on a fee-paying basis.

In addition, the Government announced in the Spring Budget 2023 further investment to 2-, 3-, and 4-year-old funding rates on top of the increase pledged in the 2021 spending review. £204m has been invested nationally to create an unprecedented mid-year uplift in the funded rate from September 2023. The money will be paid as a grant with 100% passed through to providers.

In April 2024, the Government will invest a further £288m to increase the funding rate further. This will be paid to providers through the EYSFF (Early Years Single Funding Formula). The funded rate for 2-year-olds now exceeds the average rate for paid for fees in Lincolnshire and the funded rate for 3- and 4-year-olds is expected to reach the average rate of paid for fees in Lincolnshire by April 2024.

The service is monitoring the market closely, particularly for the changing demands of working parents and the employment market in response to the budget announcements. There is a particular focus on the out of school provision for 4–11-year-olds and a recruitment campaign to encourage more childminders into the sector. However, there is still a limited interest in this area, and we need to develop additional places where areas have limited or no availability of childcare places.

It is expected that additional places are required in several areas in Lincolnshire and the cost has been estimated cautiously due to the growing cost of new builds and the ability to develop provision in existing properties. Other cost efficiencies have been explored and where possible, the early years team is working with schools and existing providers to expand or develop places at minimal cost. Where this is not an option, further investment is required.

Lincolnshire now has 97% of settings rated good or outstanding, demonstrating an increase in quality across the county.

### **3. Consultation**

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

The local authority has converted £0.780m of funding to develop new childcare places in the immediate areas identified within the sufficiency report and childcare delivery plan from the childcare sufficiency assessment (CSA) data in 2022.

The capacity within the early years team to deliver the childcare reforms will need to be reviewed. The Government's additional childcare rollout from April 2024, and full rollout of funded early years childcare from nine months in September 2025, poses the greatest childcare sufficiency risk for Lincolnshire. This, however, is a matter for all LAs to contend with, and the support from Government will be important.

There will be further funding increases in the amounts paid to local authorities to pass to providers for delivering the Government’s free childcare places moving forward, with an additional investment of £288 million already announced at the Spring Budget for 2024-25.

The Department has completed a consultation on how the funding for the new entitlements in 2024-25 will be distributed, to make sure it remains fair in light of the radically expanded free childcare offers.

A further £12 million is also being given to local authorities this financial year to support them to effectively roll out the new offers. In October 2023, LA Delivery Support Funding was announced to support Local Authorities to deliver on the expanded childcare reforms.

A report will be written and presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in January 2024 to clarify the additional childcare reforms and Lincolnshire’s position.

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire County Council Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023
Appendix B	Engagement Report – Parental Childcare Sufficiency Project

**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
Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities	<a href="https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/early-education-and-childcare-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities">Early education and childcare - Statutory guidance for local authorities (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a>

This report was written by Geraldine O’Neill, who can be contacted on 01522 552752 or [geraldine.o’neill@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:geraldine.o’neill@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

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Appendix A  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023

A report on the Early Years and Childcare sector in  
Lincolnshire



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## 1 Introduction

Securing sufficient childcare allows parents to work when childcare places are available, accessible and affordable and are delivered flexibly in a range of high quality settings. Following the childcare sufficiency assessment in 2022, the local authority has successfully converted funding into capital to support the development of places within the childcare delivery plan.

To secure sufficient childcare places, local authorities are required by legislation to:

- Secure sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

To carry out this duty in Lincolnshire, the following is considered:

- The local childcare market, including the demand and supply that currently exists
- The local labour market, including the sufficiency of the local childcare workforce
- The quality and capacity of childcare providers and childminders registered with a childminder agency, including their funding, staff, premises, etc
- Schools offering wraparound childcare (from 8.00am until 6.00pm and in school holidays)
- Where existing providers might expand their provision and new providers entering the local childcare market
- Supporting providers with business plans & financial forecasting to support their sustainability
- Ensure parents understand the childcare available to them and encourage them to access the Government funding available to support the cost of childcare.

In this report, we will:

- Reference how we are securing sufficient childcare to meet the needs of children and families in Lincolnshire, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and access to government funding, including the 2, 3 & 4 year old entitlements
- Provide information about the current and projected supply and demand of childcare for particular age ranges of children, and the affordability, accessibility and quality of provision
- Details of how any gaps in childcare provision will be addressed.

### 1.1 Lincolnshire's Sufficiency Surveys

We completed a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) in May 2023. The key aim is to inform strategic planning to ensure we meet our statutory childcare sufficiency duty.

The CSA draws on the data received from a survey of registered childcare providers and schools offering childcare provision and a survey of parents accessing childcare in Lincolnshire. Data was collected between 24<sup>th</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and childcare providers were requested to report their information based on a specified week. The week specified was w/c 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 for term time childcare and 3<sup>rd</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April for holiday provision.

In total 999 childcare providers and schools were surveyed with a 96% return rate. Table 1. shows the type and number of providers surveyed.

Provision Type	Number surveyed
Childminders	322
Independent schools	14
Full Day Care Settings	185
Preschool provision	48
Schools, including academies	357
Standalone out of school provision	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>999</b>

Table 1.

Both primary and secondary schools were surveyed to ensure that all wraparound services were captured within the survey. This method identified 21 schools providing either a breakfast club or afterschool club that were not on the early years and childcare database.

In addition, the CSA draws on the data received from a survey of Lincolnshire parents which was collected between 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023. The parental survey was widely promoted via social media, childcare providers, children’s centres, websites and posters. The survey was completed by 1,893 respondents, 26% more than previous years.

The parental survey engagement report can be found on [Lincolnshire County Council’s website](#)

The data collected within the surveys is used alongside population, housing and birth-rate data in order to assess the need for childcare by districts, children’s centre reach areas and electoral wards.

## 1.2 Key Findings

- Across Lincolnshire, the sufficiency of childcare is generally good based on current demand.
- South Holland remains an area where we continue to grow the market due to sufficiency needs.

- The introduction of the childcare reforms will place additional demand on places for under 2's in some areas of the county.
- There is a need to focus on developing places for out of school provision in some areas. This will be considered in the Government ambitions for schools to have 8am-6pm wraparound provision by September 2026.
- Birth rates have declined across the country. We will need to monitor this to ensure the development of places is responsive to demand.

## 2 Lincolnshire Demographics and Childcare Market

Lincolnshire is located in the East Midlands and is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest county in England. The county has seven districts – Boston; East Lindsey; Lincoln City; North Kesteven; South Holland; South Kesteven and West Lindsey. It has a diverse geography comprising large rural and agricultural areas, urban areas and market towns, and a large eastern coastline which hosts a thriving tourism industry.



### 2.1 Population

According to mid-2021 census figures published by the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#), the population of Lincolnshire was 769,474. Based on recent growth rates it is estimated that the **current 2023 population of Lincolnshire to be 778,000**. In the ten years prior to 2021 census, the population grew by 50,290 (6.5%), inline with the national population increase of 6.3%. The ONS forecast the population of Lincolnshire to be 791,978 by 2025 and 812,161 by 2030, representing a further 4.4% increase, but slowing compared to 2021 census data.

Children aged 0-4 years represent 4.7% of the 2021 census population (36,566) which was 0.7% below national average. In contrast to the population growth within Lincolnshire, there has been a decline in birth rates since the last census from 7,938 births in 2011, to 6,559 births in 2021. This is forecasted to continue to decline which will in turn reduce the percentage of the population who are under 4 years of age in the next 2 years. From known GP registered data in May 2023 there were a total of 36,100 children from 0-4 years residing in Lincolnshire, 4.6% percent of estimate population.

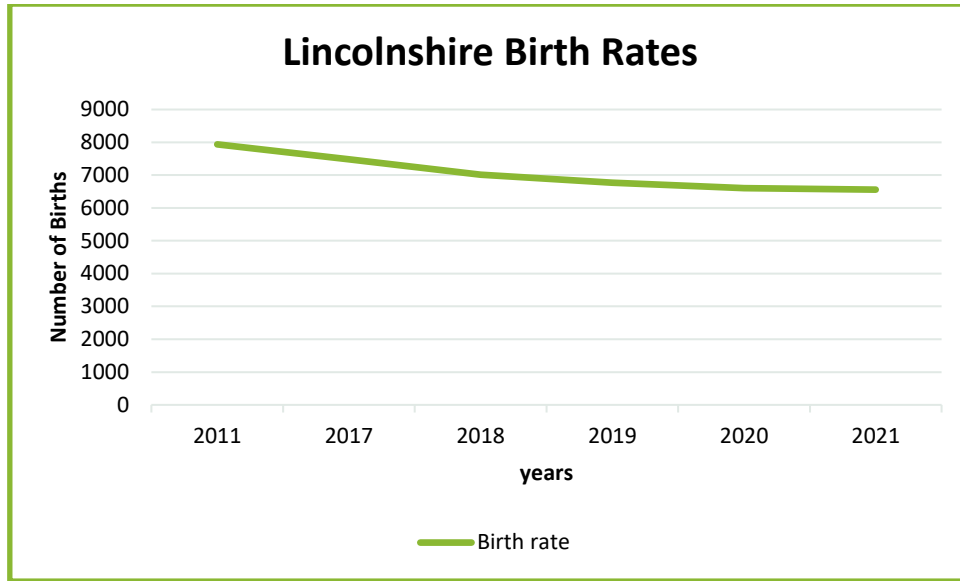


Table 2. Taken from ONS live births data

Population data to support our sufficiency assessment is extracted from NHS data (System1) which includes children registered with doctors in Lincolnshire. Whilst there may be some variation to doctor registrations, this data is reliable for sufficiency assessing.

## 2.2 Housing

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to identify a rolling 5-year supply of deliverable housing across the period.

In Lincolnshire, there are ambitious plans to deliver new houses across the county by 2031. Planned housing growth does not necessarily equate to increased demand for childcare. Average household size and population demographics will impact on the size and nature of new housing developments, and potential demand for childcare depending on the mix of population, and is considered alongside Lincolnshire’s birth rates, which are falling.

Table 3. shows the current planned housing developments for Lincolnshire and the progress made so far.

District	Developments	Number Of Houses	Number Already Built
Boston	52	3,369	628
East Lindsey	94	6,439	1,254
Lincoln	24	3,580	56
North Kesteven	73	8,309	697
South Holland	61	4,118	1,476
South Kesteven	41	5,643	1,110
West Lindsey	66	10,824	1,645
<b>Total</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>42,282</b>	<b>6,866</b>

Table 3

DfE guidance '[Securing developer contributions for education August 2023](#)' now references early years as follows:

### **2.3 Pupil yield evidence by education type and phase**

While many early years settings fall within the private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector, local authorities have a duty to ensure early years childcare provision within the terms set out in the Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016. DfE has scaled up state-funded early years places since 2010, including the introduction of funding for eligible 2-year-olds and the 30 hours funded childcare offer for 3-4 year olds. Expanded early years entitlements for children aged nine months to three years old will be available from 2024.

The take-up of funded childcare entitlements is high, increasing the demand for early years provision. All new primary schools are now expected to include a nursery. Developer contributions have a role to play in helping to fund additional early years places for children aged 0-4 where these are required due to housing growth, whether these are attached to schools or delivered as separate settings.

The positive news is that early years is cited in the above guidance. The guidance gives reference to the new reforms, including the provision for 0-4 years in any new development, this will enable us to adapt plans and requests funding in future.

## **3 Childcare Supply and Demand**

Lincolnshire has a broad range of childcare services that offer parents a choice of provision. At the time of the survey there were 818 Ofsted registered childcare providers across Lincolnshire.

**Across Lincolnshire, the sufficiency of childcare is good based on current demand.**

Table 4. details the amount of childcare providers by type. Although childminders represent the largest group of providers (326), due to the number of children they can care for within the [EYFS statutory framework](#), they only deliver a small proportion of places compared to our Full Day Care (FDC) and school provision.

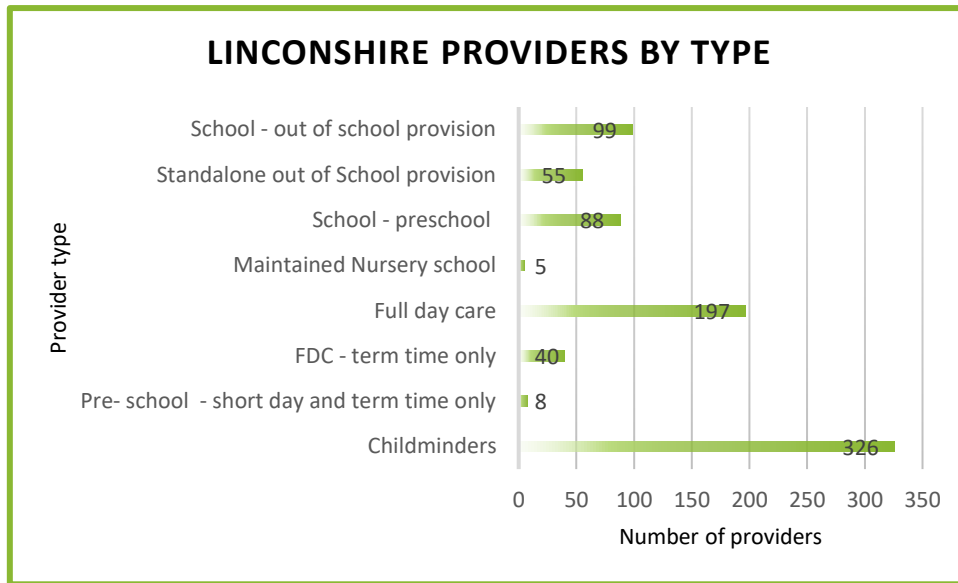


Table 4

In addition to the type of childcare provision there are varying governance models. Table 5. shows the distribution of settings according to the governance types.

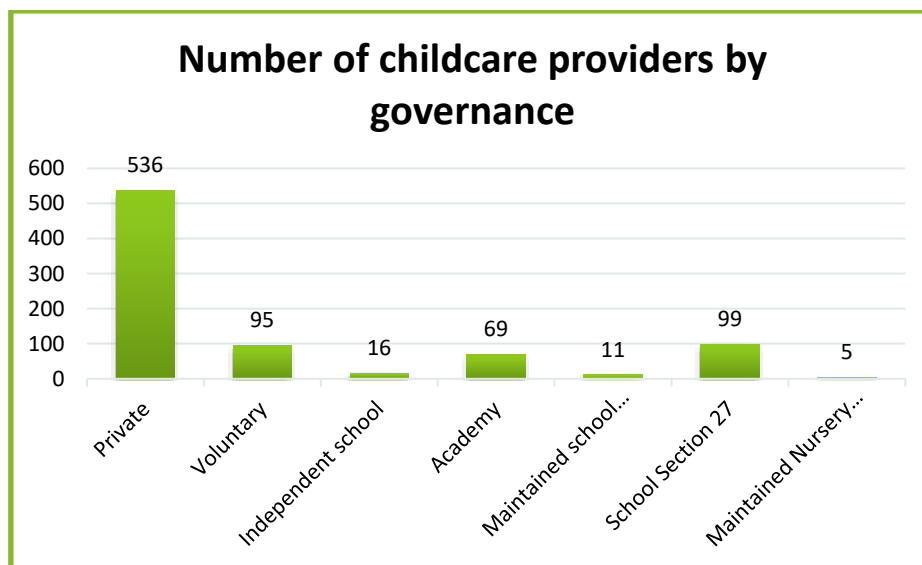


Table 5.

The largest proportion of providers are privately governed, which includes childminders, full day care and some standalone out of school provision. Our ability to foresee changes within the private sector can be more challenging due to the volatility of the market. It is therefore essential that we maintain a strong relationship with the sector. This ensures consistent communication and localised intelligence in order to gather updates on the sustainability of the provision being delivered.

Across the last decade, there has been a significant shift from sessional delivery models to full days and all-year-round places being offered that meet working parents needs. This was

developed further when the government introduced 30 hours funded childcare for working parents which required many settings to extend the hours they offer. Lincolnshire has more sessional pre-schools extending their hours to meet working parents needs.

Provision for children aged 11-14 years is more likely to be delivered in the form of clubs, activities and groups delivered by schools for their own pupils. This provision is not classed as formal childcare and is not in demand by families for this age group.

### 3.1 Parental Survey

We undertook a parental survey as part of the statutory annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023. The parent survey was published on Let’s talk Lincolnshire for parents or carers with children under 19 years of age, to provide their views and experience of childcare in Lincolnshire. The aim was to find out if childcare is meeting the needs of parents across Lincolnshire.

To understand the childcare requirements across the county, parents were asked to clarify the reason for accessing childcare when completing the survey. Table 6. shows most respondents (84%) access childcare in order to work.

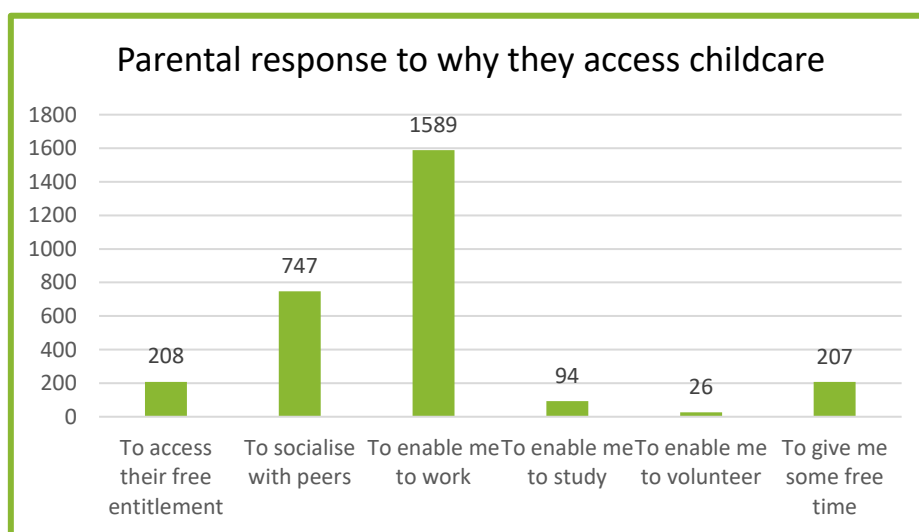


Table 6.

For further details of the findings of the parent survey, please access the full report here: [Your survey feedback | Parental childcare survey | Let's Talk Lincolnshire](#)

### 3.2 Childcare Sufficiency

The data from the provider and parent surveys is analysed against the housing, birthrate and population data to assess the need for places. A formula is applied to the data which calculates how many places would be needed to accommodate the population in each age group.



The data provided below is on a district level and gives an overview of the current childcare sufficiency across the county. We hold sufficiency data at a children’s centre reach and ward level. When assessing the need for more places, the team use the data at ward and children’s centre reach to identify the most appropriate place to develop childcare places. This is done in collaboration with localised intelligence, for example discussion with providers about take-up of places, a review of their occupancy levels within the survey and knowledge of the parental demographics of the area.

### 3.3 Sufficiency – Early Years

**Lincolnshire largely has a sufficient number of places for 2-, 3- & 4-year-olds, based on the current demand.**

There are some isolated insufficiencies at ward level, however these are off-set by surplus places in neighbouring wards. South Holland is an area in an exceptional position with a deficit of places across all age ranges for under 5 years. The data from both the provider and parental survey, in collaboration with localised intelligence also tells us that some parents are not able to access the childcare they need in this area.

Data indicates that in South Holland, Boston, East Lindsey, West Lindsey and Lincoln there are insufficient places for under 2 year olds. This shortfall is not corroborated by current localised intelligence or the parental survey. The childcare reforms and the expansion of the funded offer to 9-month-olds by September 2024 will place additional demands on existing places. We will consider if places need to be developed in preparation for the commencement of the new offer.

#### Lincolnshire early years places sufficiency by district

District Name	Places for Under 2's	Shortfall/ Surplus for Under 2's	Places for 2 Year olds	Shortfall / Surplus for 2 Year olds	Places for 3&4 Year Olds	Shortfall/ Surplus for 3&4 Year Olds
Boston	197	-95	478	156	1014	62
East Lindsey	381	-47	702	212	1717	397
Lincoln	324	-65	594	121	1416	194
North Kesteven	501	111	821	346	1699	452
South Holland	211	-137	384	-31	982	-145
South Kesteven	633	152	958	355	2088	516
West Lindsey	289	-21	590	216	1359	392
<b>Total</b>	<b>2536</b>	<b>-101</b>	<b>4526</b>	<b>1375</b>	<b>10275</b>	<b>1869</b>

Table 7.

Following a successful disapplication request to the secretary of state, we have secured £0.780m for a capital grant programme. The funding programme was launched in May 2023 and will support the development of places in line with the CSA 2022 and 2023.

The grant programme focuses on the development of funded education places for 2, 3- & 4-year-olds in areas of identified sufficiency need. We have welcomed funding applications to develop childcare places in areas of need from existing providers and other individuals or organisations who are interested in developing places in Lincolnshire. There is an expectation that all projects are match funded by the provider, the individual or organisation.

The government have pledged £12m nationally to support the development of places to accommodate the expansion of the funded offers. We expect to receive information on how that will be distributed by October 2023.

Where a public request for more in-depth data and analysis is requested, this is supplied by the Early Years and Childcare Support team.

### 3.4 Sufficiency – Out of School childcare

Out of school childcare refers to the childcare needed for school-aged children and includes before school, after school and holiday clubs. These are paid for and relied upon by parents to meet their childcare needs. It does not include extra-curricular activity clubs that are run by schools which include sports and art clubs. Some clubs are standalone, Ofsted registered and privately governed. Many clubs are run under school governance in primary and secondary.

**It will be necessary to develop wraparound and holiday places in some areas across the county to meet parents' needs.**

#### Lincolnshire Out of School places sufficiency by district

District	Places for Before School	Shortfall for Before School	Places for After School	Shortfall for After School	Places for Holiday Care	Shortfall for Holiday Care
Boston	696	-41	540	-197	374	-178
East Lindsey	1,238	-75	1,062	-252	682	-303
Lincoln	859	-84	781	-163	487	-220
North Kesteven	1,946	728	2,028	811	1,161	248
South Holland	859	-52	701	-210	456	-228
South Kesteven	1,728	307	1,761	340	1,124	58
West Lindsey	1,313	359	1,263	309	536	-180
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,640</b>	<b>1142</b>	<b>8,136</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>4,820</b>	<b>-804</b>

Table 8.

The data shows that Lincolnshire has a shortfall in out of school places in 4 districts, this is supported by the data received in the parental survey where 20% of parents reported they were unable to find out of school childcare. The 2023 budget announced that the government will be investing £289m over 2 academic years to support the development of wraparound care (before and after school) with the ambition of all schools being able to access 8am-6pm wraparound provision by September 2026.

The successful delivery of the HAF Programme in Lincolnshire has strengthened holiday provision across the county. The running of HAF alongside holiday clubs for working parents has ensured sustainability for many clubs.

For Summer 2023 we had 132 HAF clubs across Lincolnshire, 17 of which are SEND specific. All providers delivering HAF in Lincolnshire should provide an inclusive offer and are supported with advice and guidance where required, to help them to meet the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Since 2022, HAF has seen a rapid growth in clubs, in particular those being provided for children with additional needs.

The Lincolnshire programme has been recognised by the DfE for its partnership work and presented to other local authorities on ‘value for money’ showcasing how donations have enhanced our clubs. There will be a focus on working with the HAF team to ensure this and holiday provision for working parents is assessed in collaboration.

The development of additional places must be sustainable, therefore prior to any further development of out of school places, local consultation will be completed with parents and we will work closely in the coming months to ensure developments are carefully considered.

We are awaiting findings from a national pathfinder programme, currently being delivered in 16 local authorities across the country and we are actively engaging in discussions with the DfE and regional colleagues on solutions to wrap around provision.

### 3.5 Quality

**96% of Lincolnshire’s childcare is Good or Outstanding (Ofsted March 2023)**

This means that the majority of children in Lincolnshire have access to high quality settings. More recent local figures (June 23) show that Lincolnshire now has 97% settings good or outstanding, demonstrating a increase in quality across the county. Table 9. shows the comparison between Lincolnshire’s Ofsted ratings and the regional and national figures.

	Outstanding %	Good %	Requires Improvement %	Inadequate %
<b>National</b>	14	82	2	1
<b>East Midlands</b>	7	89	2	2
<b>Lincolnshire</b>	4	92	1	3

Table 9. Ofsted March 2023

[Lincolnshire’s Early Childhood Strategy](#) sets out the approach for Lincolnshire to achieve our ambitions to improve educational outcomes for our youngest children. Within the strategy it outlines our commitment to ensuring the availability of high-quality childcare provision enabling all children to access their entitlement. Supporting the development of quality provision remains one of our primary focuses. This strategy will be reviewed in 2024 and be included within Lincolnshire’s start for life strategy.

### 3.6 Staff Recruitment and Retention

There have been some concerns nationally around the ability to recruit people into the sector and retain them in favour of better paid roles with less responsibility. Supporting recruitment and retention of the childcare workforce is at the heart of the work within the early years team. We are working in partnership with external agencies such as schools, the DWP and careers advisors to [promote a career in the childcare](#).

**Childcare workforce recruitment and retention remains an area of focus to support the sufficiency duty.**

The government has also announced they will be running a national campaign in early 2024 to encourage people to consider a career in the childcare sector.

### 3.7 SEND Provision and Accessibility

Schools, early years & childcare settings and other organisations that provide services for children must make reasonable adjustments and deliver high quality and inclusive provision to ensure that all children have the same play and learning opportunities. The Equality Act 2010, the Children and Families Act 2014, SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (covering children’s early education from 0–5) are in place to ensure that all children get the support they need, when they need it, and that all children have every opportunity to reach their potential. Under the legislative frameworks, all children and families must have access to an inclusive childcare place.

SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF) is available for children with emerging, or mild Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Disability Access Funding (DAF) is payable to settings for children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Additional deprivation funding and Early Years Pupil Premium payments are made to supplement the hourly funding rate for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Number of children in receipt of the Early Years Pupil Premium

Summer 2023
2,504

Table 10.

Providers request parent details so these can be checked for eligibility. The current number of children funded exceeds the expected levels and this funding is supporting providers with additional costs associated with children’s needs.

Number of children in receipt of DAF

Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
55	58	77

Table 11.

Initial indications from HMRC showed that Lincolnshire had approximately 200 children eligible for DAF. The funding awarded is allocated based on a child for the full year. Therefore, combined figures for this academic year show 190 children eligible and providers receiving this additional funding to support those children to access the provision.

The local authority has seen an increase in provider applications to support children with SEN. We have responded by increasing the amount of funding available to providers through the Dedicated Schools Grant specifically for SENIF. Of those SENIF children accessing provision, attendance shows that the majority are accessing their universal and extended hours.

The Early Years team is currently working with performance colleagues to identify all those children in Lincolnshire not currently accessing provision. This includes reviewing GP data against EYE take-up data. A detailed outreach activity is planned to determine any barriers to accessing provision, and how many of those children not accessing provision have SEND.

**Based on feedback from the childcare sector, inclusive provision is being widely offered for children with SEND in Lincolnshire.**

15% of parents who responded to the parent survey had children with SEN. Parents identified that one of the barriers to them accessing childcare provision in Lincolnshire is the availability of suitable provision with adequately trained staff to support the needs of their child.

When supporting the development of a new setting, we ensure that advice and guidance is given around inclusive environments and practice. Childcare staff are able to access training to support their practice and locality early years teams aide them in developing more inclusive practice to meet the needs of children.

Both nationally and locally there is ongoing concern about childcare availability for a small number of children with SEND. We are offering all early years family facing professionals, including local authority staff, the opportunity to upskill their knowledge and skills through a free online inclusion training project led by [Dingley's Promise](#).

### 3.8 Affordability

The cost of childcare continues to rise. The National Living Wage, utility bills, and the impact of inflation all contribute to the increase in childcare fees. [Coram Family and Childcare](#) finds that childcare costs continue to rise with a 5.6% increase for those aged under two.

**Lincolnshire's EYE funded rate has increased by 33.4% to support provider costs and reduce the fees to parents.**

Costs and fees vary between the districts, Table 12. shows the average fees charged within each district.

District	Under 2's	2 year olds	3 and 4 year olds	Before School	After School	Holiday Care
Boston	£5.86	£5.72	£5.46	£3.73	£4.96	£4.52
East Lindsey	£5.31	£5.19	£4.91	£3.87	£4.38	£4.38
Lincoln	£4.78	£4.85	£4.70	£4.01	£4.20	£4.11
North Kesteven	£4.90	£5.05	£4.82	£4.37	£4.31	£3.94
South Holland	£5.22	£5.14	£4.93	£3.63	£4.03	£4.50
West Lindsey	£4.93	£5.01	£4.82	£4.08	£4.29	£4.22
South Kesteven	£5.24	£5.23	£5.18	£4.39	£4.51	£4.66
<b>Lincolnshire Average</b>	<b>£5.10</b>	<b>£5.12</b>	<b>£4.94</b>	<b>£4.11</b>	<b>£4.36</b>	<b>£4.30</b>

Table 12.

In Lincolnshire, the average hourly costs have increased significantly across all types of provision but more noticeably with Out of School Care (Table 12).

Lincolnshire remains lower than the average national fees. National data shows the average hourly rate for 3&4-year-olds as £5.48, whereas in Lincolnshire it is £4.94.

Age Range	2022	2023	Difference	Increase
<b>0-2 years</b>	£4.85	£5.10	+£0.25	5.2%
<b>2-3 years</b>	£4.81	£5.12	+£0.31	6.4%
<b>3&amp;4 years</b>	£4.74	£4.94	+£0.20	4.2%
<b>Before school provision</b>	£3.24	£4.11	+£0.87	26.9%
<b>After school Provision</b>	£3.41	£4.36	+£0.95	27.9%
<b>Holiday provision</b>	£3.15	£4.30	+£1.15	36.5%

Table 13. Comparison of average fees from 2022 to 2023

We have a responsibility to ensure there is sufficient, affordable childcare available to meet the needs of families. Within the parental survey 15% of parents said that affordability was a barrier to accessing suitable childcare. The childcare reforms announced within the spring 2023 budget, will support parents to access suitable and affordable childcare and ensure that delivery of childcare is financially viable for providers.

The majority of parents are able to access government support with paying for childcare costs for children aged 0-14 years. Government offers are widely promoted to parents and providers in Lincolnshire using the [Childcare Choices website](#). All providers are encouraged to promote this with their parents to ensure their fees remain affordable. Within the provider survey, 92.5% of providers reported that they promote Tax-Free childcare to their parents.

The spring budget 2023 also included reforms to universal credit. Payments for support with childcare will be paid upfront when parents move into work or increase their hours. This will support parents returning to work or considering working. There has also been an increase in the maximum amount of support parents can receive to £951 for those with one child and £1,630 for those with two children.

Childcare providers can utilise the [Childcare Choices communications toolkit](#) to promote the Tax-Free Childcare and other offers, which is also promoted with the role of the outreach worker.

## 4 Delivering the Early Years Entitlements in Lincolnshire

All 3 and 4 year-olds and the most vulnerable two-year-olds are entitled to 570 hours funded early years education a year, delivered as 15 hours a week over 38 weeks (school term time)

but can be taken as a stretched offer with fewer hours a week over more weeks year. In addition, eligible 3 and 4 year olds of working parents are entitled to a further 15 hours a week to give them a 30hr a week entitlement, or 1,140 hours a year.

#### 4.1 EYE Take up Rates

As of June 2023, 600 providers were registered to offer the Early Years Entitlements (EYE) 15 hours or 30 hours for eligible 2-, 3- & 4-year-olds.

According to the [Statistical First Release 2023](#) (SFR), Lincolnshire currently has a higher take-up of 2-year-old funded places compared to regional and national statistics. Data from the statistical first release 2023:

##### 2-Year-Old Take-up

National	Regional	Lincolnshire
73.9%	69.7%	76.3%

Table 14.

Total 2 year old take up at end of the summer term 2023 was 84% based on 1,908 children eligible according to DWP list supplied in July 23. This does not include July adjustments or August claims.

##### 3- & 4-Year-Old Take-up

National	Regional	Lincolnshire
93.7%	93.2%	90.8%

Table 15.

The take-up rate for 3&4 year olds has decreased in Lincolnshire. Our participation in Dingley's Promise will support joint working and sharing best practice through a regular peer network for participating LAs. This peer group and the collective experience so far, has supported them to develop tools and resources to help LAs to measure the sufficiency of places for children with SEND. This has been a critical piece of work in ensuring legal compliance locally, as well as preparing for the extension of the early years entitlements and influencing change at a national level. Lincolnshire will be involved in more detailed analysis work with Dingley's Promise to consider the take-up further.

The outreach work for 2-year-old funding will continue, however, it is planned that there is renewed focus on promoting the universal 3- & 4-year-old offer across the county to ensure that the take up rate remains high.

Number of children in receipt of the 3& 4 year old entitlement

Entitlement	Autumn 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023
Universal	7,108	9,189	10,655
Extended	3,623	4,801	5,664

Table 16.



Number of children in receipt of the 2 year old entitlement across district areas in Lincolnshire:

District	Summer 23 Numbers of children in places	Summer 23 Percentage taken based on those eligible
Boston	163	64%
East Lindsey	293	78%
Lincoln	280	91%
North Kesteven	171	106%
South Holland	142	63%
South Kesteven	273	104%
West Lindsey	171	81%
Lincolnshire	<b>1,600</b>	<b>84%</b>

Table 17.

#### 4.2 Early Years Funding

There are still inequalities across the country in terms of the amount of funding local authorities receive. Lincolnshire is 1 of 47 local authorities receiving the lowest level of funding in the country.

#### Funding rates increase from September 2023

Funding	March 2023	September 2023	% increase
2 year old funding	£5.29	£7.06	33.46%
3 & 4 year old funding	£4.42	£4.75	7.47%

Table 18.

With the government's commitment for an additional £288m investment in funding rates from April 2024 in addition to the funding settlement, it is anticipated that rates for the next financial year will be further improved to support the future sustainability of the childcare market.

#### 4.3 Childcare Reforms

In the Spring Budget 2023, the government pledged £204m of additional funding to the early years sector in 2023, increasing to £288m by 2024-25 to support the funding levels paid to providers delivering the entitlements.

The measures outlined in the budget will be rolled out in stages, allowing the childcare market to adjust to the growing demand. Below is the timeline for the childcare reforms.



Work has begun within the early years team to review and analyse the potential need for additional childcare places to meet the expansion of places.

## 5 Summary

The development of childcare places has remained steady since the last reporting period. This academic year (2022/2023) has seen a number of closures, in particular childminders. Table 19 shows the net opening and closures for Childminders and Full Day Care (Ofsted registered provision) across the whole county.

Open / Closed	Number of providers
Childminders open	17
Childminders closed	47
Difference	-30
Full Day Care open	25
Full Day Care closed	34
Difference	-9

Table 19.

There continues to be a drive within the support service to recruit childminders into the market and encouraging a career in childcare more broadly. LCC web pages have been specifically designed to deliver key messages across professionals and partners regarding [Working in Childcare](#)

The Government has re-introduced childminder start-up grants and will be launching a national campaign in early 2024 to support a career in childcare. This includes potential apprenticeship schemes that will encourage more people into the childcare market. This should all contribute to sector workforce growth.

Where provision has closed this has been monitored at a local level for potential sufficiency impact with local solutions having been implemented. This has included where necessary supporting the retention of places with a tender framework. Since the last report, EYCC have conducted 6 Tenders, successfully appointing providers to operate from LCC properties where needed.

The outcome of the sufficiency assessment has demonstrated that Lincolnshire is in a reasonable position in most areas of the county with some unmet needs in others.

There are the following factors to consider:

- The current workforce crisis is placing additional pressure on the availability of places within the market which are not necessarily demonstrated within the survey data
- It is evident that increased costs have had an impact on childcare sectors ability to maintain places across one or more of the age ranges

This has resulted in increased sustainability concerns across the childcare market in Lincolnshire. The risk is that if staff recruitment and retention does not improve, we may see further closures across all sectors of the childcare market and the recruitment of suitable staff become a barrier to the development of new places to meet demand.

Through national research it is well accepted that staffing and low levels of funding are intrinsically linked. The uplifts to the funded rate due September 2023 and April 2024, are hoped to support the recruitment and retention of qualified staff into the sector.

We currently have 22 active developments across Lincolnshire of which 6 are in the areas of the county where the need for places is highest. We will continue to monitor and be responsive to the needs of the childcare market.

## **6 Areas for Action**

- Continuously monitor and update Lincolnshire's childcare delivery plan based on the sufficiency needs.
- Continue to utilise the capital grant funding programme to develop places in those areas with an identified sufficiency gap.
- Develop places in South Holland in line with the current findings in the sufficiency assessment.
- Promote the Family Services Directory and the childcare sufficiency gap form for families in Lincolnshire, to ensure access to information and alerting us to pressures is maintained.
- Develop a strategic plan to support the delivery of the childcare reforms, based on the phased roll-out of the new childcare offers.
- Work with schools to assess the need for wraparound childcare and develop provision where required.
- Deliver a strategic marketing campaign to raise awareness of the extended entitlements announced within the childcare reforms and continue to encourage access to places.
- Complete additional analysis and outreach activities with a focus on the universal 3- & 4-year-old offer to increase the universal take-up rate.
- Implement Dingley's Promise to support the sufficiency of places for all children with SEND.

# Engagement Report – Parental Childcare Sufficiency Project



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## 1 Executive summary

- This is a statutory, annual survey of current and potential childcare users. This year it was open for four weeks.
- It was very widely promoted to news outlets and partners, social media, staff, the public and councillors (who were also invited to share the information locally).
- The last survey in 2022 received approximately 1,500 responses. This year it has received 1893 responses, almost 26% more.
- There were 1,893 respondents, of which 228 had children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND).
- Most respondents, 68%, felt they had sufficient childcare to meet their current needs.
- The vast majority of those who felt they needed more childcare required afterschool club places or holiday clubs.
- The cost of childcare was the most prohibitive factor.
- Over a thousand respondents, 1,380 (78%), did not know about the Family Services Directory as an online source of childcare.
- The majority, 1,680 (96%) were also unaware of the childcare gap form to inform Lincolnshire County Council of gaps in childcare provision.
- The most frequently made comment related to a lack of availability of childcare followed by the cost.

## 2 Introduction

The local authority has a duty to secure sufficient childcare to meet the demands of parents who work or wish to study or train. (Childcare act 2006).

The Early years and childcare team has undertaken a parental survey as part of the statutory annual Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2023

The parent survey was published on Let's talk Lincolnshire for parents/carers of children under 19 years of age to provide their views and experience of childcare in Lincolnshire.

The aim was to find out if the needs for childcare are being met across Lincolnshire. The service wanted to know if parents can access the childcare provision they need and when and where they need it. The information will help the team to plan new services that will benefit parents and children.

The page included useful links for help with:

- Childcare costs
- Information on Lincolnshire's local offer for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.

Additionally, there was an audit survey on SNAP (information gathering survey) to childcare providers to provide information about their services.

The results from both surveys will formulate a report which will be shared with Lincolnshire County Council's Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) in July 2023. Additionally, the results will feed into the Childcare delivery plan 2023-2025, which will be shared with DLT for approval in July.

### 3 Stakeholders

Public – Anyone who uses or is planning to use childcare services in Lincolnshire.

### 4 Methodology

A survey was open to the public on the homepage of Let's talk Lincolnshire for four weeks from 24 April to 21 May 2023. The dates of this survey ran parallel to an audit that was being completed by childcare service providers.

Promotion was carried out via various methods:

- News releases were sent out to local media outlets
- Social media messages were sent out on the following pages: Lincolnshire County Council, Children's Centres, Maternity Hub, 0-18 Children Health
- An article was put in the Town and Parish Council newsletter
- Email newsletters sent to childcare settings, children's clubs, childcare groups, DWP contact, Let's talk Lincolnshire registered participants, Lincolnshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services, Children's Links, the LCC Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education team, YMCA Lincolnshire, LCVS/VCS, Shine network, Lincolnshire Military Veterans and Families Wellbeing Network
- Messages were sent through the internal communications newsletter to all staff
- Email message to all councillors, asking them to help raise awareness of the survey and circulate the page link to their networks

### 5 Findings

- The project page had 6,002-page visitors. Of that number, 2,737 people clicked for further information and 1,881 of them completed 1,893 surveys. This is a 31% visitor to respondent conversion rate which is positive. Most respondents used an email link they had received directly (1,462) or came from social media (330). This reflects the way the survey was promoted.
- Of the 1,893 respondents, 1,752 (92.6%) did use childcare services and 141 (7.4%) did not use or intend to use any childcare services in Lincolnshire.
- The highest number of responses (264) came from parents/carers living in South Kesteven. 226 from those in North Kesteven, 204 in West Lindsey, 160 in East Lindsey, 152 responses from South Holland, 151 from the City of Lincoln. The lowest (56) number of responses came from parents/carers in Boston.
- Most of the parents/carers responding (963) had children aged 4-11 primary school age and the parents of children aged 16-18 years old (17) were the least represented
- When asked if their child had special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) - 228 (15%) parents/carers said yes
- Of these 228 parents/carers, 94 felt that the needs of their child/children with additional needs were not fully met and this was a barrier to accessing childcare provision

- In response to the question ‘Have you been able to access all the childcare that you need?’ 1191 respondents (68%) felt they had didn’t need any extra childcare and 561 (32%) wanted extra childcare
- Those 561 respondents were then asked what extra childcare they would like. The highest requests were for afterschool clubs and holiday clubs. With 238 and 235 requests, respectively. Day nursery was next with 155 requests followed by breakfast clubs (151), access to a childminder (134), preschool/playgroup (68), school nursery place (65) and home childcare/nanny (31). (Respondents could tick more than one option)
- When asked about how they find information about childcare in their area, the majority (1,154) said that they use the internet, followed by almost 1,100 use word of mouth. Only 92 responses stated that they use noticeboards.
- Availability was the main barrier highlighted by respondents to accessing the current childcare provision. Followed by cost and lack of wraparound care.
- When analysing SEND comments, almost all (93.8%, 76) provided a negative response, three (3.7%) provided a mixed response and 2 (2.5%) provided a neutral response
- The most frequently made comment related to a lack of any services for children with SEND (55, almost two in three), followed by a lack of funding (17)
- A lack of local or any provision, funding for very minimal hours, mental health services or buildings and services that are equipped to accept children with specific needs were all highlighted. Alongside more training for staff, prohibitive costs, and the impact on parental and children’s wellbeing
- When asked if they were accessing tax-free childcare, 906 said they were. 834 replied that they weren’t.
- Of the 834 that replied, 452 (54%) said they were not eligible, 201 (24%) were not aware of the benefits and 181 (22%) had other reasons for not claiming this benefit. Most people not accessing tax free childcare said this was due to claiming Universal Credit.
- Over a thousand respondents, 1,380 (78%), did not know about the Family Services Directory as an online source of childcare.
- The majority, 1,680 (96%) were also unaware of the childcare gap form to inform Lincolnshire County Council of gaps in childcare provision.

## 6 Conclusions and next steps

- This survey was published at the same time as a childcare sufficiency survey, gathering data from all current childcare providers in Lincolnshire
- Analysis is now underway to interpret all feedback received from both the parent and the provider surveys.
- An internal report will be written and presented to Lincolnshire County Council’s Directorate Leadership Team and Councilors, with recommendations. Following approval it will be available [here](#).
- The childcare delivery strategy will be updated. The strategy outlines the next steps that ensure the local authority meets their statutory duties to secure sufficient childcare to meet the demands of parents that work, study or train.



## 7 Appendices

### Appendix 1 Survey

#### Parental childcare survey 2023

Please only complete this survey if you use, want to use or intend to use childcare.

The findings will be published in autumn 2023 and can be found on

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/early-years-education/support-childcare-providers>.

We only use the information you provide for the purposes of analysing the childcare sufficiency need in Lincolnshire. We will only ask you to provide the minimum amount of information we need in order to do this. Your information is only shared where necessary and where the law allows it.

We will only keep your information for as long as is necessary, and in line with our retention schedules <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/directory-record/65606/community-engagement>.

For further information on how we process your information, see our Privacy Notice on <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/privacy>.

1. Do you currently use, want to use or intend to use childcare in Lincolnshire? Tick only one option. Mandatory question.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No – please skip to end of survey

2. Please provide your full postcode. We need your full postcode so that we can identify the areas that have insufficient childcare. Mandatory question.

3. What age ranges are the children that access, want or need to access childcare? Please tick all that apply. Mandatory question.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	3- 4 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	4-11 years – Primary school age
<input type="checkbox"/>	11-16 years – Secondary school age
<input type="checkbox"/>	16-18 years – Sixth form or college

4. Have you been able to access all the childcare that you need? Tick only one option. Mandatory question.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No – please answer 4.1 and 4.2 below

- 4.1 What childcare do you need that you are unable to access? Please tick all that apply. Mandatory question.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Childminder
<input type="checkbox"/>	Day nursery

	Pre-school/playgroup
	School nursery/preschool
	After school club - Primary or Secondary school aged children
	Breakfast club - Primary or Secondary school aged children
	Holiday club - Primary or Secondary school aged children
	Home child carer/ Nanny
	Other

Other, please specify below.

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4.2 Are any of the following preventing you from accessing childcare? Please tick all that apply.  
Mandatory question.

	None
	There are no places locally
	I don't have transport
	I cannot afford the cost
	My preferred provider(s) are full
	Places are not available at the times or the days that we need them
	Other

Other, please specify below.

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5. Is one or more of your children considered to have a Special Educational Need or Disability? Mandatory question. Tick only one option

	Yes – answer Q5.1
	No

5.1 Do you feel the childcare that your child/ children access meets their SEND needs? Tick only one option

	Yes
	No – answer Q5.1.1

5.1.1 Can you briefly tell us why.

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6. Why do you need to access childcare? Tick all that apply. Mandatory question.

<input type="checkbox"/>	To be able to work
<input type="checkbox"/>	To be able to study
<input type="checkbox"/>	To be able to volunteer
<input type="checkbox"/>	So my child can access their free entitlement
<input type="checkbox"/>	To give me some free time
<input type="checkbox"/>	To give my child opportunities to socialise with peers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Other, please specify below.

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Tax free childcare can help you with your childcare costs. You can find out what help you are eligible for on the childcare choices website.

7. Are you using tax free childcare? Tick only one option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No – answer Q 7.1

8. What is the reason you are not using tax free childcare? Tick only one option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Not eligible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not aware of the benefits
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Other, please specify below.

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9. How do you find information about childcare in your area? Please tick all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet searches
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noticeboards
<input type="checkbox"/>	Word of mouth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Leaflets and advertisements

	Social media
	Other

Other, please specify below.

The Family Services Directory is a website that allows you to find suitable childcare in Lincolnshire.

10. Are you aware of the Family Services Directory? Tick only one option.

	Yes
	No

The Childcare Gap Form informs Lincolnshire County Council of the need for childcare in your area

11. Are you aware of the childcare gap form? Please tick only one option.

	Yes
	No

12. If you would like to make any further comments on childcare in Lincolnshire, please use the box below.

**Thank you very much for completing this survey.**

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

Report to:	<b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>8 December 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: -

<b>08 December 2023</b>			
<b>Item</b>		<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>1.</b>	Insourcing of the catering service at Lincolnshire Secure Unit	Mark Rainey, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Children's Services	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Executive Councillor decision between 8 – 22 December 2023)

<b>08 December 2023</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	
<b>2.</b>	Service Level Performance Reporting against the Success Framework 2023-24 – Quarter 2	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny
<b>3.</b>	Childcare Sufficiency in Lincolnshire	Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service Early Years and Childcare Support Geraldine O'Neill, Sustainability and Development Manager	Policy Review
<b>4.</b>	Myle Cross & Cherry Willingham Childrens Centres Refurbishment – Alternative Provision (EXEMPT)	Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development Mark Rainey, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Children's Services	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader decision between 8 - 22 December 2023)

#### Planned Items

The Committee's planned items are listed below:

<b>12 January 2024</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	
<b>1.</b>	Children's Services Budget Proposals 2024/25	Heather Sandy, Executive Director – Children's Services Mark Popplewell, Strategic Finance Lead – Children's Services	Budget Scrutiny / Pre-Decision Scrutiny
<b>2.</b>	Early Years Funding Formula - Childcare Reforms	Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service Early Years and Childcare Support Geraldine O'Neill, Sustainability and Development Manager	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Executive Councillor decision between 15 – 17 January 2024)

<b>12 January 2024</b>			
<b>Item</b>		<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>3.</b>	Attendance in Schools, Elective Home Education and Children Missing Education Annual Report 2022/23	Jill Chandar-Nair, Inclusion and Attendance Manager	Annual Report
<b>INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS</b>			
<b>4.</b>	Youth Offending Service – Progress against HMIP Inspection Recommendations	Tracey Evans, Head of Service – Future4Me and Youth Offending	Inspection Outcome
<b>EXEMPT ITEMS</b>			
<b>5.</b>	Welton William Farr – New Sixth Form Block and Dining Remodelling (EXEMPT)	Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader decision between 22 – 26 January 2024)

<b>08 March 2024</b>			
<b>Item</b>		<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>1.</b>	Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services - Improvement Plan	Andrew Morris, Head of Service - Leaving Care, Semi-Independent Living and Unaccompanied Children	Inspection Outcome
<b>2.</b>	Lincolnshire School Performance 2022 - 23	Martin Smith, Assistant Director – Education Matt Spoons, Head of Service - School Standards Nicky Myers, Interim Head of Service Early Years and Childcare Support	Performance Scrutiny
<b>3.</b>	Children's Services Annual Statutory Complaints Report 2022-23	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director - Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

08 March 2024			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
4.	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Success Framework 2023-24 Quarter 3	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny
5.	Lincolnshire Secure Children’s Home (LSCH) (EXEMPT)	Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development Matt Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency Dave Clarke, Service Lead - Secure Estate Rachel Freeman, Head of Service Children in Care and Residential Estates	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (TBC)
6.	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 Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader Decision between 18 – 22 March 2024)
7.	Primary School Mobile Replacement Scheme (EXEMPT)	Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development	Pre-Decision Scrutiny (Leader decision between 18 – 22 March 2024)

19 April 2024			
Item		Contributor	Purpose
1.	Children and Young People Mental Health Transformation Programme	Charlotte Gray, Head of Service – Children’s Strategic Commissioning	Policy Review



19 April 2024			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
2.	Children in Care Transformation Programme Update	Matt Clayton, Interim Head of Capital Reform and Education Sufficiency Tracey Robinson, Programme Manager – Sector Led Improvement & Children in Care Transformation Tara Jones, Assistant Director – Children’s Safeguarding	Policy Review

14 June 2024		
Item	Contributor	Purpose
1.		

19 July 2024			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
1.	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Success Framework 2023-24 Quarter 4	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

6 September 2024			
Item	Contributor	Purpose	
1.	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Annual Report 2023	Chris Cook, Chair of LSCP Stacey Waller, LSCP Manager	Yearly Update
2.	Service Level Performance Reporting Against the Success Framework 2024-25 Quarter 1	Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help	Performance Scrutiny

## 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 01 DECEMBER 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 (All officers are based at County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL unless otherwise stated)	DIVISIONS AFFECTED
I030186	Myle Cross & Cherry Willingham Refurbishment – Alternate Provision	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)  Between 8 Dec 2023 and 22 Dec 2023	Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration, Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, Children's Services, Legal Services, Property Services	Exempt Reports	Children's Service Strategic Commissioning Manager Tel: 01522 554053 Email: <a href="mailto:mark.rainey@lincolnshire.gov.uk">mark.rainey@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>	All Divisions; Birchwood
I030084	Lincolnshire Secure Unit (LSU) Catering Service	Open	Executive Councillor: Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration  Between 8 Dec 2023 and 22 Dec 2023	Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety, Procurement and Migration Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee LSU Staff Legal Services	Reports	Children's Services Strategic Commissioning Manager E-mail: <a href="mailto:mark.rainey@lincolnshire.gov.uk">mark.rainey@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>	All Divisions
I030410	Welton William Farr - New Sixth Form Block and Dining Remodelling	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)  Between 22 Jan 2024 and 26 Jan 2024	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Exempt Reports	Head of Property Development E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>	Welton Rural

I030411	Primary School Mobile Replacement Scheme	Exempt	Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)  Between 18 Mar 2024 and 22 Mar 2024	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Exempt Reports	Head of Property Development E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>	All Divisions
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 (Executive Councillor: Resources, Communications and Commissioning)  Between 18 Mar 2024 and 22 Mar 2024	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Exempt Reports	Head of Property Development E-mail: <a href="mailto:dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk">dave.pennington@lincolnshire.gov.uk</a>	

# Agenda Item 10

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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