

Children in Care Transformation Programme

Appendix B

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

27 October 2022

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Children's Services Context

- Children's Services in Lincolnshire is an **Ofsted rated Outstanding** local authority which deliver **good outcomes** and **benchmarks well** financially against the national average.
- However, there is more we can do to **deliver excellent outcomes** for children and families, particularly taking into account the impact of Covid-19 and the national lockdowns. This has been seen in the **pressure** upon the market place and **availability and cost of external placements** and the **reduction** in the availability of in house foster placements
- The Children in Care Transformation programme will **respond to these challenges** and help realise our ambition **of improving outcomes** for Children and **achieving financial sustainability**.

Children in Care (CIC) Transformation Programme Key Strategic Aims

Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3
<p>To reduce the need for statutory intervention in families lives, by providing the right help to the right children at the right time and for the right duration.</p>	<p>To support families to come to their own solutions by focusing upon building networks which they have in place.</p>	<p>To improve outcomes for our Children and Young People, by providing care locally within Lincolnshire rather than care at a distance to keep children and Young People within their own communities where they can be close to their networks.</p>

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Our Challenges

Increased CIC numbers during the pandemic, but whilst continuing to rise, Lincs per 10k is still lower than national average.

The external market is volatile resulting in significant rise in cost of externally commissioned placements. Average weekly cost of placement is £4,663. Our in house residential is £2,038.

Budget scaffolded by Covid funding and cost pressures will take time to reduce.

LCC's internal residential capacity is limited.

Foster Carer age profile means reducing capacity.

'Do Nothing' Trajectory indicates continued significant cost pressures.

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Initial diagnostic work identified the key areas to concentrate on

- Four diagnostic workshops were held, involving key experts from the services to identify strengths, barriers, opportunities and threats for the journey of the child from Team around the Child (TAC) to Leaving care.
- A SWOT analysis was used to draw out the discussions as this approach helps to build on what the organisation does well, to address what the service is lacking, to minimise risks, and to take the greatest possible advantage of chances for success.
- The analysis from these workshops determined the programme structure below:

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Programme Impact so far

Launched our new Early Help Strategy that is fully reflective of our strengths and priorities and owned by LCC and our partners.

The strategic management of placements and the VC tool is resulting in better planning and outcomes.

The development of a Strategic Placement Panel and Placement Tracker keeps the focus on progressing opportunities and tracking potential savings.

The launch of a 'one placement referral' form through Mosaic, is saving social worker time and resulting in better quality referrals.

We are changing culture, social workers are thinking of trajectories and using the VC tool to support planning.

Exit planning upon a child's entry into an external placement provision.

The revision of all children's profiles, focusing upon strengths and needs and the support carers will receive from the partnership has ensured that Placements have been secured via IFA and in house fostering matching events.

Financial Impact of the Programme

Since June 2021 **45** children and young people have transitioned to an in-house placement or returned home, as at 31 August 2022 this is an actual cost avoidance of **£5.193m***

These savings are being used to off set the following:
£791k Covid Grant
£4.4m Out of County Budget Overspend

Two new children's homes to be fully operational in January 2023 and October 2023

Two new children's homes forecast to secure savings of **£0.563m**. Planned savings have been built into the Council's financial plan

*Figures quoted do not include the cost of children moving into other placements within LCC

Lincolnshire's approach to supporting better outcomes

Vision & Ambition

