



Community & Children's Services Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2016
Time: 11.30 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOMS, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dhruv Patel (Chairman) | Deputy Alastair Moss |
| Gareth Moore (Deputy Chairman) | Barbara Newman |
| Randall Anderson | Deputy Joyce Nash |
| Deputy John Barker | Emma Price |
| Revd Dr William Campbell-Taylor | Adam Richardson |
| Deputy Billy Dove | Delis Regis |
| Emma Edhem | Deputy Elizabeth Rogula |
| John Fletcher | Virginia Rounding |
| Deputy Bill Fraser | Mark Wheatley |
| Marianne Fredericks | Philip Woodhouse |
| Alderman David Graves | James de Sausmarez |
| Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines | Keith Bottomley |
| Ann Holmes | Alderman Robert Howard |
| Deputy Henry Jones | Deputy Robert Merrett |
| Alderman Sir Paul Judge | Angela Starling |
| Professor John Lumley | Alex Bain-Stewart |
| Deputy Catherine McGuinness | Chris Punter |
| Brian Mooney | |

Co-opted Members: Laura Jørgensen

Enquiries: Natasha Dogra tel. no.: 020 7332 1434
Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lunch will be served in Guildhall Club at the rising of the Committee.

N.B. Part of this meeting may be the subject of audio visual recording.

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Reports

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**
To agree the minutes of the previous Committee meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **APPOINTMENT OF ONE COMMITTEE MEMBER TO SERVE ON THE HOMERTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST.**
The Committee are invited to appoint 1Member on Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, for a three year term expiring in October 2019 in the room of Emma Price, who is standing down from the organisation.

For Decision
5. **PRESENTATION FROM LEE HUTCHINGS, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR, PARKGUARD LTD.**

For Information
6. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) INSPECTION FRAMEWORK AND COL DRAFT SEND STRATEGY**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 7 - 24)
7. **CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY UPDATE 2016**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 25 - 36)
8. **DCCS DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW: RESPONSES/ACTIONS**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 37 - 54)
9. **OFSTED REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOARD**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 55 - 110)

10. **SOCIAL ISOLATION PANEL**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 111 - 116)
11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Part 2 - Non-Public Reports

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the non-public minutes of the previous Committee meeting.
For Decision
(Pages 117 - 122)
15. **WAIVER OF RULE 15 OF THE CITY'S PROCUREMENT CODE TO PURCHASE AN ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION SYSTEM FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
For Decision
(Pages 123 - 130)
16. **TEMPORARY LOCATION FOR ALDGATE SQUARE CAFÉ – MIDDLESEX STREET RETAIL UNIT**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
For Decision
(Pages 131 - 142)
17. **DELIVERY OF 700+ NEW HOMES ON HRA LAND - PROGRESS REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
For Information
(Pages 143 - 146)
18. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 9 September 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Children's Services Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 9 September 2016 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Dhruv Patel (Chairman) | Barbara Newman |
| Randall Anderson | Deputy Joyce Nash |
| Deputy John Barker | Emma Price |
| Revd Dr William Campbell-Taylor | Delis Regis |
| Deputy Billy Dove | Virginia Rounding |
| John Fletcher | Philip Woodhouse |
| Deputy Bill Fraser | James de Sausmarez |
| Marianne Fredericks | Alderman Robert Howard |
| Alderman David Graves | Deputy Robert Merrett |
| Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines | Angela Starling |
| Ann Holmes | Alex Bain-Stewart |
| Deputy Henry Jones | Chris Punter |
| Alderman Sir Paul Judge | Keith Bottomley |
| Professor John Lumley | |
| Deputy Catherine McGuinness | |

Officers:

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Natasha Dogra | - | Town Clerk's Department |
| Neal Hounsell | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Simon Cribbens | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Chris Pelham | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Jacquie Campbell | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Sarah Greenwood | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Mike Kettle | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Mark Jarvis | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Adam Johnstone | - | Community & Children's Services Department |
| Monica Patel | - | Community & Children's Services Department |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Gareth Moore, William Campbell Taylor, Mark Wheatley, Deputy Elizabeth Rogula and Laura Jorgensen.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Deputy Henry Jones declared an interest in item 17 – the conversion of up to nine podium level shop unites for residential use on the Middlesex Street estate – as he was a leaseholder.

3. **MINUTES**

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

In response to a query regarding the use of suicide prevention signs along bridges, Members were informed that planning agreement was being sought from the local authorities to allow the City to erect the signs along other London bridges.

4. **APPOINTMENT OF FOUR MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE EDUCATION CHARITY SUB COMMITTEE**

The Committee were invited to appoint four Members to serve on the Education Charity Sub Committee.

Resolved – that the following Members be appointed:

- Ann Holmes
- Philip Woodhouse
- John Fletcher
- Bill Fraser

5. **PRESENTATION: CITY OF LONDON REGISTRATION SERVICE, ISLINGTON**

The Committee received a presentation regarding the City of London Registration Service. Members were informed that during 2015/16 421 death registrations, 171 marriages & civil partnerships were registered with the Islington service. 96% of deaths were registered within 5 days. Next day appointments were available for deaths and statutory notices of marriage & civil partnership. 75% of customers booked appointments online and Members noted that ceremonies were marketed through the 'Say I Do' website.

In response to a query, Members noted that an on-call service was provided on weekends to ensure that deaths which took place over the weekend could be registered to allow religious customs to be carried out in line with the religious beliefs of the family.

Resolved – that the presentation be received.

6. **COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN: QUARTER 1 UPDATE**

Members noted the progress made during Quarter 1 (Q1 – April to June 2016) against the refreshed 2015–17 Community and Children's Services Business Plan. Members noted that the five departmental strategic aims were:

- Safeguarding and early help
- Health and wellbeing
- Education and employability
- Homes and communities
- Efficiency and effectiveness.

At the end of the reporting period, 14 performance indicators were achieved or exceeded and two were within the tolerance of -10% of the set target. Three

indicators were below the tolerance of -10% of the set target. Five indicators will not be available until Quarter 2 as they are linked to education performance and an annual housing satisfaction survey.

In response to a query regarding Mais House, Officers agreed to send the Member update reports which had been considered by the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee.

Members considered the City's contract with Fusion and noted that although their income at the Golden Lane Estate had not been as expected, the City held a fixed payment with the company which was not dependent on their income. The City was however party to a shared profit agreement which would be affected if the company did not perform very well. Members agreed that Fusion was a nationwide chain who would not be severely impacted by a fall in profits at a relatively small facility.

Resolved – that the update be received.

7. HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES

Members noted that this item was withdrawn from the agenda, as the Committee had considered it at their meeting in July 2016.

8. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ALLOCATION POLICY

The City of London Corporation had a duty to secure temporary accommodation for people who apply to it as homeless. Due to increasing numbers of applicants and greater difficulties in securing accommodation within Greater London, most London local authorities have sought accommodation outside their boundaries and many have accommodated applicants some distance outside the capital.

The Supreme Court had urged each local authority to adopt a policy, approved by Members, for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation and for allocating them to homeless applicants.

Resolved – that Members approved the Temporary Accommodation Allocation Policy.

9. COMMISSIONING PROSPECTUS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Commissioning Team had produced a prospectus which set out the City of London Corporation's vision and commitment for commissioning services for children and young people. Through this document, the Department of Community and Children's Services would strengthen the commissioning arrangements for children and young people.

The Department of Community and Children's Services had a combination of inhouse, spot-purchased and commissioned services. The prospectus set out to the market the pragmatic approach to commissioning that was taken to ensure that the processes best fit the scale of service required and do not discourage potential providers from wanting to work in partnership with the City.

The commissioning prospectus aimed to inform residents, colleagues, Members and our current and potential service providers of the City of London Corporation's commissioning approach and position, and the opportunities that this provides.

It was proposed that versions of the prospectus were also produced for Adults Social Care and Housing and Neighbourhoods.

Resolved – that the update be received.

10. HEATING AND HOT WATER EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT - GOLDEN LANE ESTATE

The Gateway 3/4 report concerning the replacement of the heating and hot water equipment at Golden Lane Estate was approved by the Community and Children's Services Committee on 10 July 2015 and by the Projects Sub Committee on 21 July 2015. Due to the listed status of Crescent House and Cullum Welch House, and the complexities around the planning arrangements, Officers sought approval to separate these two buildings into a separate project, so that we can progress the work to the remaining properties on the estate.

The current situation, with the requirement for more detailed flue design proposals at Crescent House and Cullum Welch House, was delaying the specification and tendering processes for the remaining properties on the Golden Lane Estate, and poses a further risk of additional costs associated with reactive replacements of any boilers that fail in the interim. If viable options were not agreed for Crescent House and Cullum Welch House, it may result in having to submit a formal planning application, which could further impact project timescales.

To proceed with the specification and tendering process for all of the remaining properties on the estate, and to treat Crescent House and Cullum Welch House as a separate project while we explore solutions around the flue designs that will comply with planning and legislative requirements.

Resolved – That following decisions were taken by Committee Members:

1. That approval is given to separate Crescent House and Cullum Welch House into a separate project, for which a separate Gateway 5 report will be submitted at a future date.
2. To note that the tendering and specification process for the remaining properties will proceed as planned and that a separate Gateway 5 report will be submitted accordingly.
3. That approval is given to split the approved Resources Required to Reach Next Gateway accordingly, as per the apportioned costs above (namely that £15,448 will be apportioned to Crescent House and Cullum Welch House and that £21,552 will be apportioned to the remaining blocks).

11. SOCIAL WELLBEING COMMISSION

The City of London Corporation had identified the reduction of social isolation and

loneliness as a strategic priority. Research from Goldsmiths University has provided valuable insights into social isolation within the City of London and has also suggested areas where extra investigation could prove beneficial.

It was proposed that a Social Wellbeing Commission should be established to investigate these areas further, hearing evidence from a range of expert witnesses including residents, academics, other local authorities and the voluntary sector. The evidence heard will be used to refine the City Corporation's Social Wellbeing Strategy and to produce guidance which can be shared with other commissioning authorities as well as informing the national policy debate.

Discussions ensued regarding the usefulness of the exercise, with Members agreeing that although they knew a large number of their residents it was not always possible to speak to all of their residents about any issues they were facing. Members agreed that in principle the consultation would be useful however the Committee felt that there was a need to clearly identify the scope, cost and methodology of the consultation. Officers agreed to submit a paper reviewing the scope and title of the group to the October Committee meeting.

Resolved – that Members approved the establishment of a Social Wellbeing Commission.

12. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

In response to a query, Members were informed that two Syrian refugee families had been accommodated in the City. Specialist organisations were working to provide the necessary guidance to both families.

A Member queried whether additional locations in the City could be made available as wedding venues. The Director informed Members that this was currently being investigated.

The Committee were informed about a number of community events that had recently been held in the Portsoken ward. Members noted that the events had been very well attended and enjoyed by the community.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

15. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

16. **WAIVER OF PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS TO ENABLE A CONTINUATION OF CONTRACT**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
17. **GATEWAY 1 PROJECT PROPOSAL: PHASE I, CONVERSION OF UP TO NINE PODIUM-LEVEL SHOP UNITS FOR RESIDENTIAL USE ON THE MIDDLESEX STREET ESTATE**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
18. **PRESSURES ON THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
19. **UPDATE ON ROUGH SLEEPERS**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
20. **CITY OF LONDON REGISTRATION SERVICE CONTRACT**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
21. **SPITALFIELDS FLATS**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
22. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
23. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at time not specified

Chairman

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Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

Agenda Item 6

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Community and Children's Services | 14/10/2016 |
| Subject: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Inspection Framework and CoL Draft SEND Strategy | Public |
| Report of: Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
| Report author: Pip Hesketh, Service Manager Education and Early Years | |

Summary

The purpose of this Committee Report is to update Members regarding the publication of a new Ofsted/CQC Inspection Framework for the provision of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) which was published in May 2016. This inspection framework has prompted an internal review of the current SEND Strategy and Policy (2013–17) which was ratified at Community and Children's Services Committee in July 2013.

The new inspection framework is an 'area' inspection with the local authority as the hub of each area. The Draft SEND Strategy, which is appended to this report, is aligned to the themes for inspection articulated within the newly published framework.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.
-

Main Report

Background

1. The 2014 Children and Families Act introduced a number of reforms to the way children and young people and their families receive services to support them. The reforms brought about a cultural shift in which children and their families became the architects of the design and delivery of services available to them rather than recipients of them. It required the local authority and health services to place children and their families at the heart of planning and provision for themselves and others, and introduced the Education Health and Care Plan, a multi-agency planning system for children and young people to replace the existing Statement of Special Educational Needs.
2. It also required:
 - the increased engagement and participation of young people and families so that they have greater choice and control, are listened to and their concerns are resolved swiftly;
 - a published Local Offer of support, services and provision, how to access it and how to raise concerns or seek redress;
 - the use of effective practice, data and wider intelligence and independent assessment to drive improvement;
 - clearly defined and understood roles and responsibilities;
 - increased integration of services and joint commissioning across the local authority and Health.
3. There are currently 19 children and young people who have a statutory plan for support with their SEND needs in the City of London. They range from 5–24 years old. All of the children and young people are in receipt of full-time education or training and each of the schools/colleges is rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' where they are subject to Ofsted inspection. Satisfaction rates are consistently high across children and family stakeholders. There are an estimated 250+ children receiving lower levels of support within City of London schools. The Strategy must address their needs too.

Current Position

4. The new inspection framework differs from others in that:
 - it is an area-wide and joint inspection with the local authority considered to be the area 'hub' in each inspection;
 - the partnership between relevant Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and local authority Children's Services is an important area of scrutiny;

- there are no judgements within the SEND Inspection Framework. Instead, inspections so far have recognised the journey of each local area and recommended next steps/areas for improvement;
 - each local area is given five working days of notice for an imminent inspection.
5. The recently published SEND inspection framework has three main themes for inspection:
- early identification of need;
 - assessing and meeting needs;
 - impact of services on life outcomes.
6. The 2014 reforms call for co-creation of a strategy between partners and the inclusion of families at the heart of the team. The City of London Draft SEND Strategy is a preliminary draft which captures some of the needs and aspirations for the service based on a self-evaluation of services currently provided. Areas of strength and themes for improvement are identified within the Draft Strategy. The Draft Strategy is currently in circulation with key officers and partners for comment and contributions. The City of London is also participating in Tower Hamlets' and Hackney's work on SEND as many City children are educated in neighbouring boroughs.

Proposals

7. A series of workshops and meetings with key partners are being programmed for the coming months to secure equal ownership of all parties. These include:
- joint meetings with Tower Hamlets and City and Hackney CCGs;
 - multi-agency away-day (with parents and young people in attendance) to work through the Strategy and develop a new draft which comprehensively reflects current needs;
 - awareness-raising session at multi-agency forum;
 - a SEND Implementation Board which includes membership of young people with additional needs and parents;
 - communications work to raise the profile of work on SEND;
 - external audit of case files of children and young people with SEND;
 - mock SEND inspection through an external consultant.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. The work on SEND is high priority, high profile and subject to external scrutiny in the same way as safeguarding work is, although the inspection regime is less onerous and there is no judgement awarded to local authorities. The City of London will receive an area inspection at some stage over the next three years but the work towards excellence in outcomes remains core business within the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan. The forthcoming inspection is a lever towards improving standards and achieving excellence.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft SEND Strategy.

Background Papers

None.

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Service Manager Education and Early Years

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City of London

Draft Special Educational Needs and Disability Joint Strategy

SEND in the City of London – the local context

Around 300 children and young people receive some additional services through SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Support because they go to school in the City (281 children in January 2016) or because they live in the City. A small number of these children and young people (19) have a statutory plan to support their needs. This is about 9% of the total number of children aged 0–19 years who either live in the City or go to school in the City.

The families of the children and young people who have statutory plans (including an Education Health and Care Plan, Statement of Special Educational Needs or Learning Disability Assessment) each receive tailored packages of support from a wide range of agencies. The children and young people themselves all attend school or college, most in a mainstream setting and all but two live at home.

All but one of the City of London's schools and early years settings are within the independent sector and there are no special schools in the City. This makes our children and young people and their progress less naturally visible to us than they might be, and makes direct conversations with them, the most important stakeholders, about how we should shape our services more challenging than it might be in other authorities.

The City's families live in two main locations, one towards the east in Portsoken and the other in the Barbican/Golden Lane area. Children and their families are supported with health services provided by either by the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) or by Tower Hamlets CCG. Families have very positive feedback about both services and there is no noticeable difference in health or other outcomes based on the CCG that serves them.

The number of City children subject to a statutory plan has increased by 35% within the last year whereas the percentage of pupils with SEND has remained stable across the rest of the country. There are two main contributory factors: schools and settings are developing skill and understanding in identifying needs; a number of children have recently moved into the City with SEND.

Small increases in the number of children have a disproportionate impact on the size of overall cohort in the City of London. Nonetheless, the increase is significant for the City of London and the volatility creates challenges in making sure services are well resourced.

How to use this strategy

The SEND Strategy sets out the City of London’s ambitious vision for children and young people with SEND and describes the journey we need to make to achieve this. It follows the previous plan which is the SEND Strategy Action Plan (2013–2017). The strategy should be read alongside the 2016 SEND Self-Assessment and 2016 SEND Action Plan.

- The 2016 SEND Self-Assessment is a tool for us to know where we are on the road map, how far along the road we have travelled and how far we have to go.
- The 2016 SEND Action Plan sets out the things we need to do to if we are to achieve our vision.

How does this strategy fit with the work of the Corporation and its priorities?

The City’s vision for children and young people is to ensure that:

“Every child and young person enjoys a safe and healthy lifestyle. They will be able to access a high-quality education provision to achieve their maximum potential in order to thrive in their community. They will be supported by a skilled and confident workforce.”

The health, wellbeing and achievement of children and young people with special educational needs is a very high priority within the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) and within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The CYPP priorities are as follows:

Priority 1 – SAFEGUARDING AND EARLY HELP

Children and young people in the City are seen, heard and helped, they are effectively safeguarded, properly supported and their lives improved by everyone working together.

Priority 2 – CLOSE THE GAP FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

Every child and young person in the City has the right to educational attainment, participation, confidence, health and wellbeing. We identify and provide early support and help for particularly vulnerable groups in the City to ensure they are able to have every opportunity to succeed, regardless of their background.

Our vision

Our vision describes the way we want to be, now and in the future.

The City of London is a place where children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities, mental health conditions or other long-term medical conditions can **thrive**.

We identify developing conditions, difficulties and needs at the earliest stage and make it straightforward for children and young people's families to assess what help may be required.

We work seamlessly with our partners to provide high-quality, easily accessed services and opportunities that promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and development and break down the barriers that make achieving their hopes and ambitions hard.

Our children and young people are confident that they are highly valued, equal to all of their peers, and have high expectations for their futures.

Our children and their families know where to turn, what is available and how to get services for themselves or their children; they feel understood, involved and supported at all times.

Our children and young people with SEND have excellent long-term life outcomes. Each fulfils their potential and achieves their goals.

Where are we now?

The City of London is the smallest local authority area in London. Its population of children with SEND is also small and, partly because of this, our families have enjoyed well-resourced, tailored services and a stable team of professionals, some of whom have worked with the children and young people for many years. We are deeply committed to maintaining the quality of services and the strength of our relationships as we move forward and make improvements.

Across the country, SEND reforms which came into force in 2014 changed the expectations of children, young people, families and professionals about the way in which they should work together. The City was well placed to introduce these reforms as its small numbers lend themselves to close and harmonious working relationships between professionals and with families.

Since the introduction of the SEND reforms, the City of London has introduced a number of changes. All former Statements of Special Educational Needs have been transferred to Education Health and Care Plans with the full engagement of the children, young people and their families. All statutory assessments are completed within 20 weeks of commencement (the legal timeframe) compared with 59% nationally and 70% in London as a whole, and the City has completed the transfer of all Statements (of Special Educational Needs) to Education Health and Care Plans, well in advance of the national deadline of 1 April 2018. An Education Health and Care Plan has also been issued for a young person who previously had a Learning Difficulty Assessment. This was well in advance of the legal deadline.

Many of our schools and settings have been providing excellent services and support to children and young people with SEND and their families. City-wide SEND audits during the early part of 2016 confirmed this. We are not yet at a point where we can provide a City-wide picture of how all our children and young people with SEND are progressing or confirmation of the outcomes they are securing.

We need to understand much more about all of these children and young people to make sure they have the high-quality services they need and that they themselves are satisfied and know how to seek support and advice as needed. With no legal authority over most of our schools and settings, achieving this goal is highly dependent on the quality and effectiveness of partnership working in the City.

There is a very high satisfaction rate among our families, and most children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan enjoy a comprehensive suite of services and feel they have their needs well met. Parents meet together with City of London officers regularly and children often come too. However, within parents' feedback there is a sense within a small number of families of reliance on the City, of 'not knowing what it is they don't know' and wanting to be able to find out more for themselves. We need to do more to make information accessible, to highlight opportunities and to facilitate participation to enable this.

The City of London's published **Local Offer** (everything that is offered to children and young people with SEND and their families at a local level) is factually accurate and has a comprehensive level of content but can be difficult to navigate and needs children, young people and their families to critique it and make it more attractive to use. More importantly we need our Local Offer to be designed by our children, young people and their families. To this end, we have begun work with our young people, put our services under their close scrutiny and asked for their help in redesigning the website.

The Local Offer can be found here:

<http://www.fyi.cityoflondon.gov.uk/kb5/cityoflondon/fyi/localoffer.page?familychannel=7>

Families tell us that they experience good multi-agency working. Often this means they have a close relationship with one agency or individual within an agency who then acts as a gateway for other agencies. However, working in partnership across agencies can have its challenges in the City. The City's children receive their healthcare services through either the Tower Hamlets CCG or the City and Hackney CCG, so the City of London's partnership with both CCGs is equally important. We need to do more to strengthen integration of services.

Because of the size of the City's resident population, joint commissioning activity needs to be reframed to specifically meet the needs of the City's children, particularly where there is a joint commission of services targeting large numbers of children across two boroughs. New governance arrangements and multi-agency participation at SEND Implementation Boards will create a new paradigm in which the voice of the *City* child is the first voice in all that we do.

We have recently established a multi-agency Transitions Forum within the City to make sure that young people who have received services as a child have their future needs as an adult assessed long before they become one. This enables a fresh assessment to be made in which the young person's needs are central, the securement of resources, continuity of service where required, and an early introduction to any new professionals and services before the current ones stop supporting the young person and their family.

The legal framework

The Children and Families Act, 2014 has established a clear programme of SEND reforms which have made best practice in services a set of robust requirements:

- a person-centred, joined-up approach to identifying and meeting the needs of children, young people and their families;
- increased engagement and participation of young people and families so that they have greater choice and control, are listened to and their concerns are resolved swiftly;
- a published Local Offer of support, services and provision, how to access it and how to raise concerns or seek redress;
- the use of effective practice, data and wider intelligence and independent assessment to drive improvement;
- clearly defined and understood roles and responsibilities;
- increased integration of services and joint commissioning across the LA and Health.

This legislation sits in the context of the **Equality Act 2010**

Public bodies must adhere to the General Duty and the Specific Duties of the Equality Act 2010.

General Duty

In the exercise of functions, due regard must be given to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims/arms of the general equality duty.

Due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Specific Duty

- Information about how disabled people have been involved in its development.
- The authority's methods for undertaking impact assessments.
- An action plan setting out the steps it will take to meet the general duty.
- Arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the authority's policies and practices on disabled people.
- Arrangements for using this information, including reviewing the effectiveness of the action plan and preparing subsequent disability equality schemes.

Information about how disabled people have been involved in its development:

- The authority's methods for undertaking impact assessments.
- An action plan setting out the steps it will take to meet the general duty.
- Arrangements for gathering information on the effect of the authority's policies and practices on disabled people.
- Arrangements for using this information, including reviewing the effectiveness of the action plan and preparing subsequent disability equality schemes.

Our priorities

The priorities for this strategy are:

Early identification of need

- Equipping professionals with the skills and knowledge to recognise needs early, know what resources are available, what process to follow and provide support and advice to families from the outset.
- Helping our families to know how to access services independently, make a contribution and challenge our thinking.

Assessing and meeting needs

- Timely, skilful and multi-disciplinary assessments of need leading to ambitious and meaningful plans.
- Gathering benchmarking data across all schools and settings to compare the educational and other outcomes for children and young people with SEND and developing action plans as required.

Improving long-term outcomes and creating an area-wide impact

- Securing excellent long-term life outcomes through challenge, support and opportunity.

Communication and engagement

- Communication and engagement with children, young people and their families; making sure their voices are the first voices in everything we do.
- Getting to know the children who don't have a plan – listening to their expert views, giving them a leading role in the way we do things.
- Providing a rich information and guidance resource for children, young people, their families and professionals.

Working in seamless partnership

- Working in seamless partnership across agencies to create a suite of joined-up services that can be easily understood and navigated.
- Introducing mechanisms to better co-design our services with our children and young people and empowering them to shape their own futures and the future of our services.

Removal of barriers to participation

- Working with all major stakeholders within the City of London to actively remove barriers to participation, including physical barriers, informational, communicational or attitudinal.
- Supporting families creatively with short breaks that increase children and young people's opportunities.
- Mystery shopping venues and building a reliable information bank of accessible venues and activities.

Quality assurance

- Developing new governance arrangements to evaluate the quality of services.
- Inviting our families to hold us to review their services, set the agenda and hold us to account.
- Regularly seeking third party review.

Each of these priorities is the subject of a separate workstream which reports into a main SEND Delivery Board. Parents and children are participants in each workstream and are also represented on the Board.

Priority 1 – Early identification of need

At the start of 2016, we conducted SEND audits to find out more about the quality of services across the City's educational and early years settings. Most audit reports show positive work and good levels of skill and understanding. In March we commissioned an Area SENCo to work in all early years and educational phases and regardless of legal status. Since that time, specialist advice through the Area SENCo has been provided at all schools and settings and sponsorship to enable school/setting-based SENCo staff to qualify has been provided. Targeted training in identifying SEND has been provided for all schools and settings.

City of London Early Help Services bring professionals from all agencies together regularly to discuss early identification of need and strategies to support families and children. This is known as the MARF (Multi-Agency Referral Forum). With such a small cohort of children this allows partners to work seamlessly together and agree the right package of support.

A new year-long programme for the under-fives – 'Little Movers in the Big City' – is being delivered across early years settings which develops gross and fine motor skills towards accelerated and improved cognitive development. One of the aims of this programme is to identify the signs of need through the course of the year.

Web pages for professionals that provide specialist advice and training, access to policies and strategies, changes in legislation and updates on performance will be rolled out during 2016/17. Online SEND training resources including videos are currently being developed for City early years and education professionals.

Priority 2 – Assessing and meeting needs

Most children and young people with additional needs (93%) in the City are supported through SEN Support which is provided directly by their school or early years setting. When a child or young person is identified as having an additional need that requires specialist input, resources or support, and following an assessment, they are often entitled to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) which sets out the services that have to be provided for them. At the heart of this Plan are the child's or young person's own wishes. The Plan is reviewed every year to make sure that, as things change, the Plan reflects this. The law sets out some timeframes for assessing children and young people's needs and then reviewing them. The City of London exceeds these legal requirements as is shown in the Self-Assessment. But there are bigger challenges which go beyond statutory duties and take us on a path to outstanding services.

We want to be fully confident that all children and young people who might need a statutory EHC assessment are receiving one. To gain this confidence, we need to work closely with the independent schools and settings as well as our one maintained school to build skill expertise and understanding in SEND and how to commission an assessment.

We also need to up-skill parents to learn more about the assessment process, who to contact and how to get support. We want all EHC Plans to genuinely reflect children and young people's wishes and aspirations and to hear first-hand if things are not working for them or they want things done differently. A new programme of work to speak directly with children and young people began in August 2016 which includes one-to-one engagements with children and young people with EHC Plans.

We know a lot about the progress and achievements of the children with SEN Support at Sir John Cass Primary School but very little about those at the independent schools. We want to know how they fare when compared with their peers and whether there are services we could provide to support them.

Periods of transition can be bumpy, whether that's transition to school or through different phases through a school career. We want to plan well for changes so that the transition times are smooth.

If and when a child or young person's needs change, we need to be able to step up or step down services, provide additional support or resources

Priority 3 – Improving long-term life outcomes

Planning early for and with our children and young people is critical to securing high-quality life outcomes. We need to encourage our children and their families to be ambitious, set challenging goals and aspire to great futures. As professionals, we need to wrap around the goals and put things in place that make those aspirations a reality for every child.

Every young person is entitled to have their transition to adulthood supported through an assessment of their needs in which their voice is clearly heard and their wishes are paramount. The package we will consider includes:

- advocacy
- independent travel training
- work experience
- training/FE/HE education options
- career coaching
- independence skills training
- personal budget
- longer-term need for adult services.

If we want our children and young people to have high aspirations, we must be ambitious for them; we need to broker opportunities that change their horizons, and build their confidence to fully participate in the activities that they find fulfilling. And we must never lose sight of the fact that there are many aspects other than disability status that make up social identity – we need to enable our children to celebrate all of them.

Priority 4 – Communication and engagement

Our work on communication and engagement is far reaching. It encompasses:

- providing accessible information for our children, young people and families;
- providing a forum for families to come together with each other and the professionals working on their behalf – to have an active and productive dialogue in the interests of improving the quality of services;
- enabling children and young people to have a voice through advocacy, through membership of the SEND Implementation Board, through video diaries and mystery shopping;
- enabling parents and families to use alternative services to communicate with the City of London or their CCG through KIDS Mediation Service.

Families

Families of children and young people with SEND tell us they are generally very satisfied with the services they receive. Most of those we've spoken to tell us they have everything they need and some say that they haven't had to think about what they needed, it was just all arranged for them, with agencies working well together. However, a small number of families say that they have found it difficult to know what else is available (other than the services that they are offered). Others commented that they wanted their child to be able to participate more in social activities and that the City play facilities are not all accessible.

Children and young people

Across the partnership, we meet with our children and young people regularly. We understand their views about their own needs and the way they are met. But so far our conversations with children, young people and their families have been focused on those children who have had a statutory Plan. We know much less about the views of those children and young people who have additional needs but who do not meet the thresholds to have a Statutory Plan.

During 2016/17, we want an active dialogue to build with these young people. Engagement through video booths (similar to those used in the popular TV show *The X Factor*) which will be located at four City schools in September starts off this programme. Young people with SEND will be asked questions about their priorities, their views about services they already receive and those that they would like to have when using the video booth.

Children and young people will be central to strategic planning, prioritising through advising each working group of the SEND Implementation Board, and the Board itself. Mystery shopping of City of London services, facilities and opportunities, which has begun already, will become a key element of the way we quality assure our work. Advocacy services will be offered to all children and young people with SEND as a matter of course.

Local Offer

The City of London has a published comprehensive 'Local Offer' which comprises all the services, facilities and opportunities available to children and young people with SEND and their families. We want the next development of the Local Offer to be an offer shaped by our children and their families, in which their voice is loud and strong. Work during 2016/17 will see a complete overhaul of the SEND Local Offer web pages as a consequence.

Priority 5 – Working in seamless partnership

Our children with EHC Plans and their families tell us that on a personal level they do not experience any gaps or barriers between services provided by different agencies. On a practical level, City children and families do receive the full complement of the services they require and express a high level of satisfaction with them.

One of the challenges the City faces is that its families receive services from the City of London for early years, education and children's social care but health services come from either Tower Hamlets CCG or City and Hackney CCG. This means our shared strategies need to align with two CCGs and in both, the City has far fewer children than the other authority with which it shares services.

Going forward, the City and its CCG partners will work on new strategies together from the outset and devise strategies and services that are targeted specifically for City children and their needs.

Health Service information will play a more prominent role on the City's Local Offer web pages as well as signposting assistance about which CCG to contact.

The SEND Implementation Board is designed to be jointly owned with partners and in particular the CCGs and this strategy is a joint strategy, owned by all.

Priority 6 – Removal of barriers to participation

A child with SEND is a child first with many aspects to their identity, their own hopes and dreams and a need to develop as an individual. We are committed to making sure that our children and young people are able to access all the opportunities that are available to their peers, and to participate in society on their own terms. This means we must reduce and remove barriers to their participation where they exist. These barriers may be:

- physical – services/facilities are not made sufficiently accessible to be able to be used;
- communication/informational – methods of communication are not accessible, including accessing enough information about accessible services;
- attitudinal – other people’s attitudes, their limited understanding of people’s needs and/or poor training make participation difficult or impossible.

Over recent years, because of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and then the Equality Act 2010, awareness of what barriers are has increased a great deal. Many barriers have already been removed and accessibility has improved because of this understanding. The confidence of disabled people to participate has perhaps not increased at the same rate and there is a gap between the steps already taken and genuinely equal participation. We need to close that gap.

Our families and the young people themselves tell us they find it difficult to socialise in the City. They feel there are too few children with SEND for them to have a sense of belonging and that there isn’t enough for children and young people to do, particularly older children. We must change this.

Steps to take are:

- identifying what steps remain to remove barriers created by organisations or individuals;
- working with our families with children with SEND and in particular the children and young people themselves to mystery shop City of London facilities to understand their real experiences and what can be improved;
- working with partners and providers to understand the user experience and increase opportunity to participate;
- focusing our attention on the ‘whole child’, exploring the things they want to do and see, and how they wish to develop so that we can find activities, groups and opportunities that match;
- building confidence in participation by phased introduction to new activities and opportunities.

Priority 7 – Governance

The small number of children with SEND in the City of London means that the teams of professionals who support them and their families know them very well indeed and some have worked with them for much of their lives. The partnerships between multi-agency professionals are also very close and positive. This makes good governance very important.

The progress of all children and young people with SEND is reported to the Children's Executive Board which meets on a six-weekly cycle. As we learn more about the children receiving SEN Support in City Schools, their data will be included in this reporting.

There are forums which meet regularly where children and young people are the main focus of discussion.

Targeted Education Resources Panel (TERP)

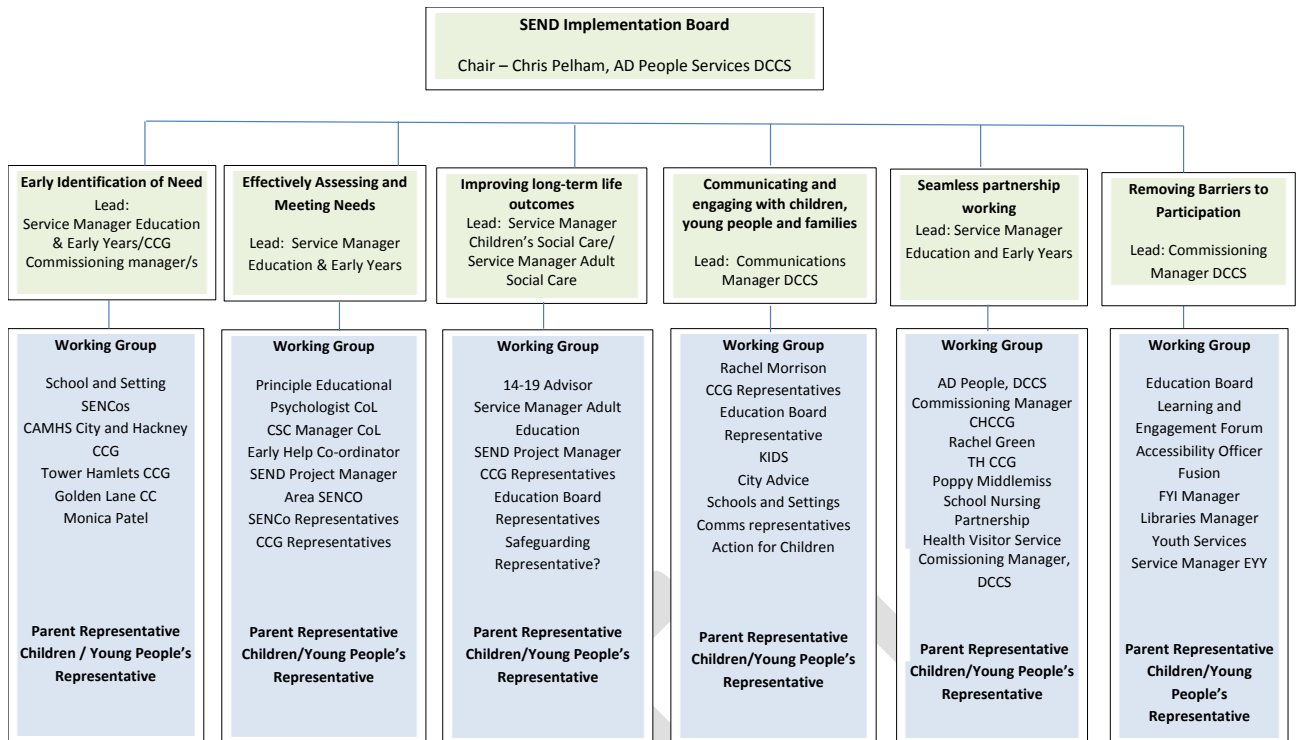
This is a panel of multi-agency professionals who consider cases for allocating financial and other resources to support individual children and young people. This panel considers requests for assessment for an Education Health and Care plan. All applications for places at an independent special school are also discussed here as well as applications for short breaks or requests for additional specialist educational support. Not all requests made to the panel are for resources for children with SEND but most are. The Panel is chaired by the Service Manager Education and Early Years. The Panel makes recommendations to a Resourcing Board chaired by the Assistant Director People from the Department of Community and Children's Services and is attended by the Lead Member for Community and Children's Services periodically.

Transitions Forum

This Forum looks closely at the transition of vulnerable children to adulthood. On a case-by-case basis, the Forum discusses the needs of those young people becoming young adults and evaluates their need to continue to receive services in adulthood. At the heart of this assessment are the wishes of the young person themselves. The Forum is chaired by the Service Manager for Education and Early Years.

Work with children and young people with SEND is also reported on regularly at the Early Help Sub Group, the City and Hackney Children's Programme Board (CCG) and the Mental Health Programme Board (CCG) and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The new SEND Implementation Board, which is shown in the structure below, is designed to manage the workstreams in this strategy. Each workstream is led by a senior manager from one or more agencies, and the Board itself which oversees the workstreams is chaired by the AD People Services. Crucially, parents and young people are part of each workstream and the main board. The structure is shown below.



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| Community and Children’s services – For Information | 14 October 2016 |
| Subject: Childcare Sufficiency Update 2016 | Public |
| Report of: Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children’s Services | For Information |
| Report author: Will Cooper, Family and Young People’s Information Service Manager | |

Summary

This report fulfils the statutory duty of officers to provide an annual report to Members on the sufficiency of childcare in the City of London.

Under section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006, all English local authorities are required to ensure (as far as is ‘reasonably practicable’) that working parents in their area are able to access the childcare they need. In order to inform this, local authorities must conduct regular assessments of the childcare provision in their area and the extent to which it meets local demand.

In the City of London, this duty sits with the Education and Early Years Service. An in-depth Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was commissioned by the service in 2014, and a smaller update of this report was conducted in the winter of 2015/16 – referred to in this report as the 2016 update. As with the 2014 CSA, the findings of the update will be addressed through actions in the Early Years Strategy.

The 2016 update found that there is currently sufficient provision of early years childcare, although the tendency of parents to move in and out of the City’s borders to access childcare makes it difficult to pin down a true figure for local demand. The supply of childcare for over-fives during the school holidays is an area where there would seem to be an under-supply, and more research is required into how this sector could be developed.

There is healthy uptake of the various types of financial support offered to parents towards the cost of childcare. The two-year-old offer of 15 hours is currently being accessed by 100% of eligible families, and the City’s own Childcare Affordability Scheme is now offered at five nurseries in and around the City.

Some private childcare providers predict that the forthcoming entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare for eligible families could present them with a financial shortfall. The City must aim to ensure that there is sufficient availability of the free 30 hours if some of these providers choose to not offer it.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities in England and Wales to secure sufficient childcare, as far as is 'reasonably practicable', for the needs of working parents and to report annually to elected Members and the public.
2. The Childcare Act 2016 received Royal Assent in March. This builds on the 2006 Act and comprises only two duties:
 - to make available 30 hours of free childcare a week to working parents
 - to publish information about childcare.

Current Position

3. The 2016 update found that there are sufficient early years childcare places in the City of London for the number of children who might potentially need them. However, the tendency of parents to move in and out of the City's borders to access childcare makes it difficult to pin down a true figure for local demand.
4. There is a strong indication that holiday childcare for school-age children is not sufficient in the City, with one provider stating that demand consistently outstrips supply. This is an area that the Education and Early Years Service should look at, to investigate potential venues and providers that could help to expand this sector.
5. There are currently no registered childminders in the City; however, there are three Ofsted registered 'home childcarers' (nannies). The use of nannies in the City is significant but largely unregulated. The service has therefore established a professional network for nannies in order to raise the safety and quality of the childcare offered in parents' homes.
6. The entitlement to 15 hours of free childcare for three- and four-year-olds is currently being taken up by 82% of eligible families, while the two-year-old offer of 15 hours is currently being accessed by 100% of families who meet the various economic criteria. The City's own Childcare Affordability Scheme is now available at five private sector nurseries in and around the City.

7. The forthcoming entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare could bring challenges, and some private providers have expressed concerns about providing it. This is due to a shortfall between the funding provided for these hours and the rate they would normally get from a fee-paying parent. The 2017 Childcare Sufficiency Update will need to look further at this and aim to anticipate the likely availability of the 30 hours offer before it rolls out in September that year.

Proposals

8. The next annual Childcare Sufficiency Update will be carried out in early 2017 and will focus on the 30 hours offer. This will involve an assessment of the likely demand among City residents, and an audit of the capacity within City settings that intend to provide the offer. This will give us enough time to plan for any anticipated shortfall.
9. If a shortage of places seems likely, the proposed solution will be to work with nurseries in neighbouring boroughs. We already do this with the two-year-old offer and the Childcare Affordability Scheme.
10. The findings of the Childcare Sufficiency Update 2016 will be addressed through actions in the Early Years Strategy.
11. The Executive Summary (Appendix 1) will be published on the City of London Corporation's website.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and Early Years Strategy support priorities 1 and 2 of the Children and Young People's Plan: Closing the gap in outcomes for children, young people and families based on vulnerability and location.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual Update: 2016 (Executive Summary)

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Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Annual update: 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

April 2016

Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Legislative context | 3 |
| 2.1 The Childcare Act 2016 | 3 |
| 2.2 Other legislative changes | 4 |
| 3. Local context | 4 |
| 4. Research methods | 4 |
| 5. Childcare supply in the City of London | 5 |
| 5.1 Registered early years childcare | 5 |
| 5.2 Registered out of school childcare | 5 |
| 6. Key findings | 6 |
| 6.1 Sufficiency of early years childcare | 6 |
| 6.2 Sufficiency of free childcare places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds | 6 |
| 6.3 Sufficiency of affordable childcare | 7 |
| 6.4 Sufficiency of out of school childcare | 7 |
| 6.5 Sustainability of childcare provision | 8 |

1. Introduction

Section 6 of the Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities in England and Wales to secure as far as is 'reasonably practical' sufficient childcare for the needs of all parents in their local area who are working or in work-related training. Local authorities are also required to make sure there are enough free early education places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

As part of this duty, local authorities must conduct regular assessments of childcare sufficiency and analyse the various factors that can affect it. They should then publish these findings in an annual report that sets out any sufficiency gaps that have been identified. These annual childcare sufficiency update reports should then be made available to elected members and the public.

This document is the executive summary of an annual childcare sufficiency update conducted in the early months of 2016 and published in April.

2. Legislative context

2.1 The Childcare Act 2016

Receiving Royal Assent on 16 March 2016, this new act builds on the previous Childcare Act (2006). It comprises only two duties:

- **To make available 30 hours of free childcare a week to working parents**

From September 2017, working parents of 3 and 4 year olds will be entitled to a total of 30 hours of free childcare per week. To be eligible a family must earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national minimum wage. Families where at least one parent earns £100,000 per year or more will not be eligible.

Local authorities must ensure that there are sufficient places available locally for eligible parents to access their 30-hour entitlement. Just as they currently do for the 15 hours available to all 3 and 4 year olds and some 2 year olds. There are already some pilot 'early implementer' authorities who will begin to roll out the new entitlement from September 2016.

- **To publish information about childcare**

Section 12 of the Childcare Act (2006) already requires local authorities to provide parents with information, advice and assistance about childcare and other services that they require. This updated duty provides more structure to the frequency of publishing and updating this information.

2.2 Other legislative changes

Other recent developments from Government that could have an impact on childcare sufficiency are:

- **Early Years Funding Formula:** Government has committed to investing just under £300 million per year from 2017-18 to increase the rate paid for the 2, 3 and 4 year old entitlements by at least 30p per hour, and introduce a new national funding formula for early years.
- **Children's Centres:** A review of the future of children's centres was announced in summer 2015 and is now expected to report in September 2016. This will include a new Ofsted inspection framework.
- **National Living Wage:** The introduction of the living wage, and the automatic enrolment of workers into a workplace pension scheme are both likely to impact on the costs of running a childcare business.

3. Local context

An in-depth Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) was carried out in 2014. It found that the City did have sufficient early years childcare, but that most provision was running more or less at capacity. It also identified a possible insufficiency of holiday childcare for school-age children.

A total of 104 parents were surveyed for the CSA, including 45 parents from the Bangladeshi community. Their testimony confirmed the anecdotal view that Bangladeshi families generally do not use formal childcare for under fives.

Since the 2104 CSA a new nursery has opened in the north of the City. The number of nurseries offering the City's Childcare Affordability Scheme subsidy has grown by two and a review of Children's centre services in the City has been undertaken.

4. Research methods

Childcare sufficiency data for the 2016 update was collected through:

- Desk analysis of childcare data held by the FYi service and Ofsted.
- A telephone survey of childcare providers, using a standardised questionnaire, to gather their views on planned changes to childcare, trends in demand, levels of demand, occupancy levels and sustainability.
- Informal discussions with mothers, fathers and other carers and nannies as part of a wider review of City of London children's centre services.
- Telephone discussions with parents who have benefited from the City's Childcare Affordability Scheme.
- Analysis of all data to identify gaps and key issues for both providers and parents/carers.

It was agreed that, as the 2014 CSA had involved a significant consultation with parents this would not be required for the 2016 update.

5. Childcare supply in the City of London

5.1 Registered early years childcare

| Setting name | Ofsted | Postcode | Type | Sector | Places |
|--|---------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Barbican Playgroup | Good | EC2Y 8AX | Sessional pre-school | Private | 28 |
| Cass Child & Family Centre | Good | EC3A 3DE | Day nursery | Maintained | 30 |
| City Child Bright Horizons Nursery | Good | EC2Y 8AH | Day nursery | Private | 54 |
| Charterhouse Square School nursery class | Outstanding | EC1M 6EA | Nursery class (8.30 – 3.30) | Independent school | 52 |
| Eden Mobile Crèche | No inspection | EC1A 9ET | Mobile crèche | Private | - |
| Hatching Dragons Nursery | No inspection | EC1Y 0AA | Day nursery | Private | 34 |
| Newpark Childcare Centre | Outstanding | EC2Y 8DU | Day nursery | Private | 26 |
| Smithfield House Nursery | Good | EC1Y 9HA | Day nursery | Private | 100 |
| St Pauls Cathedral School pre-prep class | Good | EC1 8JN | Nursery class (7am to 7pm) | Independent school | One class |
| The Children's Centre Nursery at Goldman Sachs | Outstanding | EC4A 2BE | Workplace nursery | Private | 36 |
| Total | | | | | 360 |

5.2 Registered out of school childcare

| Setting name | Ofsted | Postcode | Type | Sector | Places |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|---------|--------|
| Fit For Sport At City Of London | No inspection | EC1Y 0SH | Holiday activity club | Private | Varies |
| London Fablab | No inspection | EC2R 8AE | Holiday activity club | Private | Varies |

In addition to the provision shown above there is also out of school childcare provided by Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School.

- After school
- Holiday playscheme

Currently the City of London has no registered childminders. There are however three home childcarers who have joined the Voluntary Ofsted Register. Two of these are nannies, whose registration is an outcome of their membership of the City's Nanny Network – a professional network set up to encourage nannies to develop their childcare practice and become registered home childcarers. It is believed that use of nannies is significant in the City, and the network is an attempt to bring as many as possible into contact with the Education and Early Years service to help ensure the safety and quality of their childcare practice.

6. Key findings

6.1 Sufficiency of early years childcare

The table in 5.1 shows a maximum potential number of 360 early years places in the City. Even taking out the 36 places that are only available to Goldman Sachs employees this still leaves 308. In addition there are 12 places available to City families at the Golden Lane Children's Centre nursery in Islington. Estimates of the population of under-fives in the City differ but are usually in the region of 300 children. Mathematically therefore, it can be said that there are sufficient places to accommodate all of the children in the City who might need one.

A truer picture of sufficiency is more complicated. We know from previous CSAs that some City families access childcare outside of the City due to factors such as proximity and cost. There are also parents using childcare in the City who travel here to work. Most providers estimate a 50:50 split of City and non-City families using their settings.

Most early years providers report that they are usually full. Some have waiting lists – particularly for two year olds, and those who do have vacancies fill them quickly. Since 2014 the FYi service has noted a general increase in providers reporting vacancies, and rarely has any difficulty finding places in nurseries for parents who request them.

6.2 Sufficiency of free childcare places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds

6.2.2 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds

DfE data¹ for the year 2014-15, states that 82% of 3 and 4 year olds resident in the City of London benefited from free nursery education. This compares with 87% across inner London.

The entitlement is not provided uniformly across the City however. Many of the private sector providers in the City state that they limit the numbers of places they provide free, due to what was described as the 'funding gap' between their fees and the rate of funding they receive from the Government (via the City Corporation).

"We have some funded 3 and 4 year olds. We could take more but would be concerned about funding shortfall."

Childcare provider

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provision-for-children-under-5-years-of-age-january-2015>

Offering the free places is optional for private and independent childcare providers, and it is not clear that this kind of approach is resulting in parents being unable to take up their entitlement. No parent has ever reported this to the City. It does however suggest that when the extended entitlement to 30 hours begins in September 2017, it is unlikely that these providers will be willing to offer it. Some actually stated this when consulted for the update.

Potentially therefore there could be a future sufficiency gap for 3 and 4 year olds places, but this will depend on demand. The Education and Early Years Service will therefore be conducting further research into the likely demand for 30 hours, in order to ensure that the City is ready for the extended entitlement.

6.23 15 hours entitlement for eligible 2 year olds

Since the launch of the 15 hours free childcare offer for 2 year olds, the City of London has managed to find a place for every eligible family that has wanted one. This has consistently placed the City of London at the top of the table of London local authorities for take up of the offer.

Since 2014 the number of private nurseries in the City willing to offer free places to 2 year olds has increased. Parents no longer have to access the offer in the local authority area where they live, and so some City families have placed their two year olds in nurseries outside of our border.

6.3 Sufficiency of affordable childcare

Childcare in London is the most expensive in England, and childcare in the City is some of the most expensive in London. Nurseries in the Square Mile charge an average £470 per week for a full time place, making it unaffordable for low-income families.

A number of means-tested affordable places are available at the nurseries in Cass Child and Family Centre and Golden Lane Children's Centre. The City's Childcare Affordability Scheme also makes places in participating private sector nurseries more affordable to low and middle income families by subsidising part of the cost. Since 2014 two additional nurseries have joined the scheme, but take up has remained fairly low. A renewed marketing campaign by FYI is currently underway in order to boost take up

6.4 Sufficiency of out of school childcare

Both the 2014 CSA and 2106 update found an apparent insufficiency of out of school childcare for 5-14s in the City. This is largely based on feedback from providers, one of whom reported that demand for their provision far outstrips supply:

"More parents are looking for holiday activities but (this) setting can't take more than 40 children. It could probably double its numbers if it had more space."

Childcare provider

The biggest barrier to any new provider offering out of school childcare is a lack of suitable premises in the City. Nonetheless it remains an action for the Education and Early Years service to investigate ways of expanding the availability of this kind of childcare.

6.5 Sustainability of childcare provision

Provider consulted for the 2016 update reported some concerns about the rising costs of running their business. In particular:

- Recruitment: providers in the City reported that they have difficulty recruiting high quality staff and that this was largely due to the cost of travelling into the City.
- High business rates.
- Increased staffing costs following the introduction of the National Living Wage.

Despite this, no provider stated that they had either plans or expectations to change their provision in the near future.

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| Committee | Dated: 14 October 2016 |
| Community and Children's Services | |
| Subject: DCCS Departmental Review | Public |
| Report of: Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children's Services Report author: Lorraine Burke, Interim Head of Policy, Projects and Programmes | For Information |

Summary

This report provides the Community and Children's Services Committee with an update on an audit of the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) departmental processes for:

- business planning
- monitoring of the business plan activities, risks and budgets
- identification and challenge of risk.

As part of the Internal Audit team's ongoing cycle of independent reviews of departmental processes and procedures, a review of the DCCS business planning process commenced in February 2016. The final report of this review, with recommendations, was issued by Internal Audit in July 2016.

The overall aim of the audit was to 'provide assurance that corporate plans are linked to budgets, risks and KPIs [key performance indicators], to provide assurance to Chief Officers that the plan is being delivered within budget and what is being reported is consistent with other reporting mechanisms.'

The findings of the audit showed that there was substantial assurance around the DCCS processes and procedures in the areas examined. Internal Audit concluded: 'There is a sound control environment with risks to system objectives being reasonably managed. Any deficiencies identified are not major causes for concern.'

DCCS has had the opportunity to develop a management response to Internal Audit's findings and has put in place an action plan to address the issues identified.

Internal Audit will be providing a briefing on the outcome of this review for Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the findings of the audit report and the assurance provided around the existing DCCS processes and procedures.
- Note the actions in place to address the risks/issues identified.

Main Report

1. The objectives of the audit/departmental review were to ensure that:
 - The business planning process is robust, that is, clearly linked with financial, risk and performance management.
 - Monitoring of the delivery of the business plan is undertaken alongside consideration of budget reports, risk register and key performance measures at appropriate levels.
 - Any significant variances (budget, risk or performance) are challenged and either explained or further action is taken.
 - Budget and monitoring information is presented consistently.
2. The full Internal Audit report, detailing the conclusions of the review and seven recommendations, is set out in Appendix A. Six of the recommendations fall into the green category and one within amber. There are no recommendations rated red.
3. The DCCS management responses to the recommendations are also set out in Appendix A under the individual recommendations.
4. The DCCS action plan to address the issues identified is summarised below:
 - September 2016 – ensure that all departmental leadership team, senior management team and budget monitoring meetings include a standard agenda item for 'finance/budget risks' and 'departmental risks' (risks in meeting business plan objectives).
 - September 2016 – ensure that any risks/variances identified are captured and recorded in the minutes of senior management team meetings.
 - November 2016 – ensure that risks around budgets, KPIs and activities are captured, recorded and reported quarterly.
 - April 2017 – develop the new DCCS business plan to show explicit links between activities and KPIs and include clearer outcomes/success measures.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Final Report DCCS Departmental Review July 2016

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CITY OF LONDON
CHAMBERLAIN'S DEPARTMENT
INTERNAL AUDIT SECTION



COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW (2015-16)
FINAL REPORT

Date Issued: 21st July 2016

Issued to: Neal Hounsell – Assistant Director, Head of Strategy and Performance
Lorraine Burke – Interim Head of Programmes and Projects
Mark Jarvis – Head of Finance (Citizen Services)



CONTENTS (INDEX)

| <u>SECTION</u> | <u>PAGE</u> |
|--|--------------------|
| SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 3 |
| SECTION B: AUDIT FINDINGS | 5 |
| APPENDIX 1: AUDIT DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES | 11 |



SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) has a wide remit to provide care and support to the residential population of the City of London. They also provide social housing and housing management services to residents in six other London boroughs.
2. In April 2013, responsibilities for public health were devolved to local authorities from the NHS; as a result, DCCS gained additional responsibilities for preventing disease and promoting good health and wellbeing amongst the entire population of the City, which includes the 7,600 residential population along with the 360,000 City worker population.
3. The DCCS remit includes the provision of:
 - People's Services
 - Housing Services and Management of the Barbican Estates
 - Commissioning and Partnerships
 - Public Health Services.
4. The Departmental Business Plan sets out the main activities that will achieve the priorities of the Department and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to measure progress. Sitting under the Departmental Business Plan are service plans for each directorate which set out in more detail how they will deliver the departmental priorities, as well as the business as usual activities.
5. The focus of this audit was to provide assurance that corporate plans are linked to budgets, risks and KPIs, to provide assurance to Chief Officers that the plan is being delivered within budget and what is being reported is consistent with other reporting mechanisms.
6. The objectives were to ensure that:
 - the business planning process is robust, that is, clearly linked with financial, risk and performance management;
 - monitoring of the delivery of the business plan is undertaken alongside consideration of budget reports, risk register and key performance measures at appropriate levels;
 - any significant variances (budget, risk or performance) are challenged and either explained or further actions are taken, and
 - Budget and monitoring information is presented consistently.



Assurance Statement

| Assurance Level | Description |
|--|---|
| Substantial Assurance 'Green' | There is a sound control environment with risks to system objectives being reasonably managed. Any deficiencies identified are not cause for major concern. |

Recommendations Summary

| Recommendations | Red | Amber | Green | Total |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Number Made: | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Number Accepted: | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 |

Key Conclusion

- Audit testing and discussions with the Interim Head of Programmes and Projects, Finance representatives and the DCCS Inspection and Improvement Team demonstrated linkage between corporate plans, budgets and risks though there is scope for this to be more explicit in relation to priorities set.**
- Audit testing identified that targets set within the departmental business plan are generally SMART with clear success criteria. For the 2016-17 financial year links have been drawn between KPIs and strategic priorities and it is understood that monitoring will focus on their contribution to the achievement of business plan targets; this represents an improvement upon previous years. Review of evidence confirmed that performance monitoring occurs regularly at both SMT and Committee level.**
- Internal Audit confirmed that departmental budget and risk register information is considered in conjunction with business plan monitoring and is presented to Committee. There is scope, however, to better demonstrate discussion of risks at SMT level and for risk reporting to be fully aligned with corporate guidance.**
- Evidence was obtained of financial monitoring within the department although the frequency and level of detail was found to vary between SMTs. Audit examination of financial monitoring returns and minutes of relevant meetings indicates that services are, in general, being delivered within budget. Limited audit testing was possible in relation to local challenge of budget variances as, for the sample selected, SMT minutes did not refer specifically to budget areas.**
- Internal Audit evaluation of the consistency of reporting between SMT, DLT and Committee proved problematic as there were variations in the level of information presented. It is anticipated that revised business plan reporting arrangements in 2016-17 should address this through consistent linkage of KPI information to strategic priorities, where appropriate.**



SECTION B: AUDIT FINDINGS

Key Findings

Robustness of the business planning process and business plan links

12. Audit testing confirmed that there are specific service improvement activities which are linked to the department's five strategic priorities and feature clear high level success measures. Committee ratification of the business plan is on the basis that the actions are relevant and attainable. Each of the actions is dated to within the period the business plan covers (i.e. 2015 - 17) and in some cases these are specific to a month.
13. The 'Master Update' provides a quarterly report in relation to the Strategic Priorities set out in the business plan. Whilst these are broken down into activities, the target dates, groups and outcomes are not always specific to ensure a clear measure of success. A recommendation has been made to further strengthen control in this area through the use of consistently detailed objectives to drive performance improvement.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|----------|--|---|
| Green | In the summary activity Business Plan, some target dates are set as 2015–17 to achieve an unquantified improvement in service (Action to meet priority 4.2 - Health Commissioning: number of rough sleepers accessing mental health services). | Performance monitoring and improvement may be hampered by targets or actions which are not sufficiently detailed / challenging. |

Recommendation 1:

Business Plan success measures should incorporate specific outcomes and timeframes.

Management Response and Action Plan:

Although in the revised Business Plan for 2016/17 there has been mapping of the PIs/ KPIs to the activities this is not reflected on the activity summary used for reporting and monitoring purposes. Using the above issue as an example - this improvement activity does directly link to a number of existing PIs that are captured around social care and homelessness. The intention going forward will be to make the links more explicit in the plan and in reporting.

We recognise that links between activities, PIs and identifying clearer outcomes / success measures and timescales is an area for improvement. For the development of the new 2018/22 DCCS Business Plan, that will commence in November 2016, we will be looking to ensure that these are SMARTer – with clear links between the improvement activities in the plan that will enable outcomes to be measured / evidenced with identified dates for achievement. Additionally, we plan to review the



PIs being captured / monitored to ensure these provide a meaningful overview to DLT of the performance of the services being delivered.

Responsibility: DCCS DLT

Target Implementation Date: April 2017 (commencing November 2016 as part of the business planning cycle)

* Where recommendation not accepted indicate alternative action that will be taken to mitigate risk or reasoning for accepting risk exposure to be provided

- 14. Audit testing confirmed the use of 17 Key Performance indicators within the department. Examination of documentation related to 2015-16 identified that these were not aligned to specific strategic priorities when reported to Committee. It was noted, however, that this is being addressed for business plan reporting in 2016-17 to facilitate monitoring of delivery against strategic aims.
- 15. No process was identified to align performance indicators with budgets and risk. The business plan contains high level financial information but none specific to strategic aims or performance indicators which refer specifically to cost. Budget monitoring information is presented to Committee alongside business plan updates but no clear links are drawn between the two.
- 16. Risk implications of strategic aims are not detailed in the Business Plan and review of SMT and DLT minutes indicated that there had been limited discussion of risk in relation to service delivery. A recommendation has been made on the basis that evidence was not readily available to demonstrate that risk represented an integral part of the business planning process.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|----------|--|---|
| Green | The business plan does not demonstrate clear links between key performance indicators, risk and budgets. | Without demonstrating knowledge of how risk and budgets affect objective delivery, there is a risk that these have not been considered and strategic priorities may not be met. |

Recommendation 2:

Planning in respect of strategic priorities and associated performance measures should demonstrate consideration of risks and budget implications.

Management Response and Action Plan

In relation to point 14 above - the quarterly reporting of PIs to DCCS DLT and Committee does show the PIs grouped and linked to the relevant DCCS strategic priority.



To address this item – at the quarterly performance reporting update to DLT (also attended by Finance) we will request an updated from all divisions and Finance on any budget risks that will impact on the delivery of activities in the Business Plan or the achievement of PIs. This will allow any items identified to be included in meeting minutes with the planned mitigation recorded. This will subsequently be recorded in the quarterly report to Committee.

Responsibility: DCCS DLT

Target Implementation Date: Q2 review of Business Plan activities that will be reported to DLT 2 November 2016.

Performance Monitoring

17. Active monitoring of business plan delivery and financial performance was confirmed by reference to Committee update reports. 'Master updates' collated by the Inspection and Improvement Manager were found to provide clear information regarding strategic priority actions.

18. DLT and SMT records provided evidence of local performance monitoring arrangements and confirmed regular discussions regarding service delivery, although inconsistencies were noted across service areas in terms of the level of detail. An example of this applies to financial monitoring whereby minutes did not make reference to budget positions or expected outturn. Discussion with Finance Officers indicated that separate meetings are held with budget holders but sample testing identified that this had not happened consistently during the year and in some cases discussions had not been minuted.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|----------|---|---|
| Green | Limited evidence was available in relation to budget monitoring at SMT and DLT. | Budget implications for service delivery may not be considered and discussed within teams and at Management level. Staff may not be aware of the position with regards to service delivery. |

Recommendation 3:

An overview of financial standing in relation to service delivery should be captured at SMT / DLT, as evidence of the consideration of budget monitoring.

Management Response and Action Plan

All DCCS SMTs to introduce a standard agenda item of 'Finance/budget risks' to capture and record any issues that may impact on service delivery and the actions being taken to address. This will be cascaded down to teams to raise awareness of the identified risks and mitigating action being taken.

Responsibility: DCCS DLT and SMTs



Target Implementation Date: 1 September 2016 (to be discussed / agreed at DCCS DLT on 17 August)

19. Internal Audit were advised that in one service area budget monitoring meetings were not held due to staff changes within DCCS but the forecast outturn was reported to the Assistant Director as a compensatory measure. An audit recommendation has been raised to strengthen control in those areas where budget monitoring is understood to be relatively informal.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|---|--|---|
| Green | Evidence of budget monitoring meetings was not available for some service areas. | Decision-making may be hampered by the absence of formal budget monitoring / records of key discussion. Action points may not be followed up appropriately if not documented, resulting in poor financial management. |
| <p>Recommendation 4: Monthly budget monitoring meetings should be held and documented to provide evidence and an audit trail of the review and decision making process.</p> <p>Management Response and Action Plan Budget meetings have been scheduled for the year. Minutes are taken for all meetings with budget managers and we will make sure that action points are followed up and documented.</p> <p>Responsibility: Finance / budget managers Target Implementation Date: 1 September 2016 (to be discussed / agreed at DCCS DLT on 17 August)</p> | | |

20. Corporate risk management guidance provides for the quarterly presentation of risk reports to Committee. Internal Audit examination of a sample of such reports in 2015-16 identified that information did not coincide with Committee reporting dates and this was attributed to difficulties experienced with Covalent. It is understood that system issues have since been addressed and an audit recommendation has been made to promote ongoing adherence to corporate risk reporting arrangements.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|----------|--|--|
| Amber | Only two risk reports (dated September 2015 and February 2016) were identified in respect of the 2015-16 financial year. | Non-compliance with Corporate guidelines. There is a risk that issues affecting service delivery and meeting objectives are not being actively considered as part of the whole DCCS operation. |



Recommendation 5:

Risk reports should be produced in compliance with corporate guidelines, which is quarterly.

Management Response and Action Plan

The reporting of risk to Committee on a quarterly basis did resume in Q3 and Q4 of 2015/16. This quarterly reporting will be on-going in accordance with Corporate requirements.

Responsibility: DCCS DLT

Target Implementation Date: Already being done

21. Sample testing of four DCCS risks confirmed that these had been reviewed at least monthly and, in some cases, more frequently. Examination of SMT and DLT minutes identified little indication of discussion related to departmental risk. The only evidence within the sample related to Commissioning and Partnerships SLT meetings in June and December 2015. Based on testing performed assurance cannot be provided in respect of the arrangements for ensuring the flow of risk information between SLT to DLT and vice versa.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|----------|---|--|
| Green | Audit sample testing identified little evidence of the consideration of current and new departmental (i.e. non-Health and Safety) risks at SLT. | The Department at Service level does not actively look at and consider, on a regular basis, what would prevent the service meeting their objectives. |

Recommendation 6:

Each Service should include risk as a standard agenda item for SLT meetings. In the discussion of this, Service departments should identify any additional risks that should be added to the risk register, in relation to progress against Business Plan objectives. Progress against mitigating other risks should be considered.

Management Response and Action Plan

'Departmental risks' will be added to DCCS SMT meeting agendas as a standard item – any risks or issues identified recorded and fed back to the DCCS Business Manager for recording on the risk register.

Responsibility: DCCS DLT

Target Implementation Date: 1 September 2016 (to be discussed / agreed at DCCS DLT on 17 August)

Challenge of significant variances

22. Audit testing was focused on a sample of four service departments to determine the extent of scrutiny and challenge in respect of budgetary performance. Testing identified that budget monitoring discussions are not minuted consistently and in one of the areas sampled only significant exceptions would be documented, of which there were none within the period.
23. Examination of Committee reporting across 2015-16 identified mention of an overspend within People's Services as part of the second quarter outturn. No related discussion was identified within the notes of DLT meetings. In the absence of regular minutes reflecting the detail of budget monitoring actions, assurance cannot be provided that departmental monitoring arrangements would highlight variances for reporting to Committee.

| Priority | Issue | Risk |
|---|---|---|
| Green | Documentation related to budget monitoring was insufficient to demonstrate that variances are flagged and tracked appropriately to ensure resolution. | Without evidence of discussion of variances and tracking of agreed rectifications, there is a risk that actions are not put in place to deal with overspends and the implications for service delivery properly assessed. |
| <p>Recommendation 7: Significant budgetary variances should be highlighted in monitoring meetings and clearly tracked to facilitate resolution.</p> | | |
| <p>Management Response and Action Plan All significant variances are highlighted at meetings with budget managers and recorded in these minutes. These are then looked at again in the following month. DCCS Budget Managers to raise any issues following budget monitoring meetings with Finance at their relevant SMTs for recording in minutes and the identification of actions being taken to address. Responsibility: Finance / DCCS Target Implementation Date: 1 September 2016 (to be discussed / agreed at DCCS DLT on 17 August)</p> | | |

Consistent presentation of budget and performance monitoring information

24. Audit testing confirmed that budget and performance monitoring information is presented at Committee quarterly in a format that facilitates comparison over a period, through the use of a standard agenda and commentary on:
- The current position against indicators
 - Progress against improvements actions under strategic aims
 - Significant achievements



- Complaints
- Financial and risk implications

25. Comparison of SMT / DLT information to that reported to Committee identified an inconsistency under 'progress against improvements'; no reference had been made to progress against two 'red' rated activities. This was queried with the Interim Head of Programmes and Projects who was aware of the inconsistency. It was further explained that the categorisation of the 'red' rated activities had been queried locally (it was considered that these should potentially be 'amber') and in any event mitigating actions had been put in place to deal with the issues raised. Internal Audit were advised that revision of the format of business plan monitoring arrangements in 2016-17 is focused on demonstrating, consistently, how actions are contributing to the achievement of strategic aims.
26. Proposed audit testing of the consistency and flow of performance information between SMT and DLT was hampered by a lack of detail in meeting minutes. It was confirmed that the minutes follow a standard agenda at each management level which encourages consistency of the broad areas discussed. It is acknowledged that the focus of these meetings is to provide an update to staff on activities within the department rather than formal performance monitoring, however, and on this basis no recommendation is made. Notwithstanding, consideration should be given to the consistent capture of detail from SMT / DLT meetings to facilitate tracking and performance monitoring, enabling comparisons to be made between meetings.

APPENDIX 1: AUDIT DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Assurance levels

| Category | Definition |
|--|---|
| Nil Assurance 'Dark Red' | There are fundamental weaknesses in the control environment which jeopardise the achievement of system objectives and could lead to significant risk of error, fraud, loss or reputational damage being suffered. |
| Limited Assurance 'Red' | There are a number of significant control weaknesses and/or a lack of compliance which could put the achievement of system objectives at risk and result in error, fraud, loss or reputational damage. |
| Moderate Assurance 'Amber' | An adequate control framework is in place but there are weaknesses and/or a lack of compliance which may put some system objectives at risk. |
| Substantial Assurance 'Green' | There is a sound control environment with risks to system objectives being reasonably managed. Any deficiencies identified are not cause for major concern. |

Recommendation Categorisations

| Priority | Definition | Timescale for taking action |
|------------------|--|---|
| Red - 1 | A serious issue for the attention of senior management and reporting to the appropriate Committee Chairman. Action should be initiated immediately to manage risk to an acceptable level | Less than 1 month or more urgently as appropriate |
| Amber - 2 | A key issue where management action is required to manage exposure to significant risks, action should be initiated quickly to mitigate the risk. | Less than 3 months |
| Green - 3 | An issue where action is desirable and should help to strengthen the overall control environment and mitigate risk. | Less than 6 months |

Note:- These 'overall assurance level' and 'recommendation risk ratings' will be based upon auditor judgement at the conclusion of auditor fieldwork. They can be adjusted downwards where clear additional audit evidence is provided by management of controls operating up until the point of issuing the draft report.



What Happens Now?

The final report is distributed to the relevant Head of Department, relevant Heads of Service, and those involved with discharging the recommended action.

A synopsis of the audit report is provided to the Chamberlain, relevant Members, and the Audit & Risk Management Committee. Internal audit will carry out a follow-up exercise approximately six months after the issue of the final audit report. The ongoing progress in implementing each recommendation is reported by Internal Audit to each meeting of the Audit & Risk Management Committee.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions about the audit report or any aspect of the audit process please contact Cirla Peall, Audit Manager (ext. 1266) or Pat Stothard, Head of Audit & Risk Management via email to pat.stothard@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

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Agenda Item 9

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Community and Children's Services – For Information | 14 October 2016 |
| Audit and Risks – For Information | 08 November 2016 |
| Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information | 17 November 2016 |
| Policy and Resources – For Information | 17 November 2016 |
| Subject: Ofsted inspection of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers | Public |
| Report of: Ade Adetosoye, Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
| Report author: Chris Pelham, Assistant Director, People's Services | |

Summary

This report provides Members with a summary of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in July 2016, carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The effectiveness of children's services in the City of London was judged overall to be 'Good' with a number of 'Outstanding' features. The individual judgements were as follows:

- The experience and progress of children who need help and protection is 'Good'.
- The experience and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence is 'Good'.
- The experience and progress of care leavers is 'Good'.
- Leadership, management and governance in the City of London is 'Outstanding'.

The City of London is the sixth local authority in London to receive an overall 'Good' judgement for its children's services, out of 22 London local authorities inspected so far. The City of London is also one of six local authorities in England to receive a judgement of 'Outstanding' for its leadership, management and governance.

A separate but concurrent review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) also took place in July 2016, carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.
- Note the Department of Community and Children's Services' (DCCS') plans to address the recommendations outlined in the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Ofsted single inspection framework (SIF) is a statutory inspection framework, introduced in November 2013, to evaluate the experience and progress of children and young people in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in all local authorities across England. A separate but concurrent review of all LSCBs in England usually takes place at the same time as the local authority inspection. All local authorities are due to be inspected under this framework by December 2017 and 110 local authority inspections have taken place so far.
2. The inspection framework tests the decision-making at all stages of a child's journey within the local authority, from accessing Early Help services through to leaving care. The inspection takes into account the full breadth of work to support children, young people and families in a local area and the difference that this makes to their lives.
3. An overall judgement of the effectiveness of children's services is given in addition to the following individual and graded judgements:
 - the experience and progress of children who need help and protection
 - the experience and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence:
 - a graded judgement in adoption performance
 - a graded judgement in the experience and progress of care leavers
 - leadership, management and governance.
4. Judgements are given on a four-point scale:
 - Outstanding
 - Good
 - Requires Improvement
 - Inadequate.
5. Of 110 inspection reports published so far, local authorities have received the following overall judgements for the effectiveness of children's services:

- 2% of local authorities have been judged to be 'Outstanding'
 - 25% of local authorities have been judged to be 'Good'
 - 49% of local authorities have been judged as 'Requires Improvement'
 - 24% of local authorities have been judged to be 'Inadequate'.
6. The last inspection of the City of London's safeguarding arrangements and its services for looked after children took place in March 2012, at which time the local authority was judged to be 'Good'.
 7. The DCCS senior leadership team has led an ambitious programme of child-focused service improvement to take forward the recommendations from this report and ensure improved outcomes for children and young people in the City.
 8. Two independent children's safeguarding reviews were carried out in May 2015 and May 2016 using the SIF methodology to identify the necessary single and multi-agency improvements, including those for the City LSCB and for City health and police partners, to ensure effective safeguarding services for children and young people in the City of London.
 9. An independently chaired Service Improvement Board has been established to provide appropriate scrutiny of and challenge to improvement planning for children's services. It meets on a quarterly basis and the membership includes the Director for Children's Services and the Assistant Director for People's Services, as well as senior managers from Early Help and Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Strategy and Performance, and Commissioning.

City of London SIF inspection

10. Ofsted completed an unannounced SIF inspection of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers from 4 to 28 July 2016.
11. The inspection team was composed of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted, led by HMI Stephanie Murray. HMI Alison Smale carried out the separate review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board's (CHSCB's) work in the City of London. HMI Sean Tarpey provided the quality assurance function for the inspection.
12. Due to the geography and demography of the City of London, the main inspection activity for the local authority was carried out in the first three weeks of the inspection period and the LSCB review was completed in the fourth week. The main inspection evidence was collected through:
 - reading Early Help and Children's Social Care case files
 - direct observation of practice, including home visits and children's reviews
 - talking to children, young people, carers and families
 - observation of meetings
 - auditing, tracking and sampling cases
 - shadowing staff

- focus groups and interviews with staff, multi-agency partners, elected Members and service users
 - talking with providers of commissioned services
 - reviewing documentation requested over the course of the inspection, including strategic documents, minutes of meetings, improvement plans and performance reports.
13. On 20 September, Ofsted published the City of London's report, which identified children's services in the City of London to be of an overall 'Good' standard with a number of 'Outstanding' features.
14. The overall 'Good' judgement for the City of London's children's services was composed of the following individual judgements:
- The experience and progress of children who need help and protection is 'Good'.
 - The experience and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence is 'Good'.
 - The graded judgement for the experience and progress of care leavers is 'Good'.
 - Leadership, management and governance in the City of London is 'Outstanding'.
15. Although arrangements to provide adoption services were considered, there was no graded judgement for adoption performance as, at the time of the inspection or within the timescales for judging adoption performance, the City of London had neither commenced adoption proceedings nor placed any child for adoption.
16. The City of London is the sixth local authority in London to receive an overall 'Good' judgement for the effectiveness of its children's services. The City of London is also one of six local authorities in England to receive a judgement of 'Outstanding' for its leadership, management and governance.
17. In terms of the City of London leadership, management and governance, the report noted that "Determined and inspiring leaders within the City of London take a detailed and ambitious approach to continuous improvement. For this reason, services provided for vulnerable children are consistently good and, in some instances, very good. As a result of outstanding leadership, management and governance, the trajectory is positive, with all the key components in place to enable the City to achieve exceptional outcomes for children."

Inspection findings

Children needing help and protection

18. The inspectors found the experience and progress of children who need help and protection to be 'Good'.
19. Children in the City of London who need help are identified early. All new parents in the City receive an early help visit, which is usually a joint visit by a family

intervention worker and a health visitor. Such early identification has led to a complete take-up of two-year-old children's free childcare places. Families have access to a wide range of helpful services that make a tangible difference to their lives.

20. Early help assessments are generally of a good standard, and lead to helpful and valued support. Increasing the number of children and their families taking up early help services is a priority in the City of London. Although numbers remain low, determined work across the partnership at a strategic and operational level has led to a doubling of the number of new early help assessments completed over the last year.
21. A consultation conducted on behalf of the City indicates that parents are very positive about the help they receive. For example, parents have increased confidence, manage their children's behaviour better, strengthen their children's routines and improve their children's speech. Parents who spoke to inspectors said that staff are 'fantastic', services are provided quickly and the help that they received 'sorted things out'.
22. Inspectors found that social workers in the City of London listen to the children with whom they work and develop good relationships with them. The Children and Families team is settled and stable and all social workers have manageable caseloads. Managers at all levels provide practitioners with good formal and informal oversight and guidance.
23. When children are, or may be, at risk of significant harm, information is shared appropriately. Decisions are sound and are made promptly, and assessments are consistently good. They take into account risk, family history, children's diverse needs and relevant research. Children's views and experiences are well reflected.
24. Multi-agency work is well co-ordinated and has a positive impact on outcomes for children, including those living with parental mental ill health or learning difficulties, or domestic abuse. Child protection conferences and plans are effective in understanding, addressing and reducing risk within families.
25. Very few children are known to be at risk of sexual exploitation, go missing, live in private fostering arrangements or become homeless. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to identify and support any children who present to social care in these circumstances. Practitioners are well trained and well informed to ensure that they can deal with new situations and presenting problems as they may arise.

Children looked after and achieving permanence

26. The inspectors found the experience and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence to be 'Good'.
27. All of the children looked after spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the services and help that they have received. Children are provided with highly individualised care and support, leading to them settling well and achieving

consistently good outcomes. Social workers and managers care about the children and know them very well.

28. All children are placed within 20 miles of the City in fostering placements judged to be 'Good' or better by Ofsted. Children live in families and communities that meet their diverse needs well, with interpreter services and helpful English language and educational support.
29. The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) provides a strong, creative and sensitive service. All reviews of children looked after are held within national timescales. The IRO visits children between reviews and closely monitors the progress of care plans. The IRO also regularly meets with the Virtual Head Teacher, health commissioners and providers to ensure that high-quality support is provided to children looked after.
30. Potential risks for children are considered well. On the rare occasion that children go missing, follow-up is swift and effective. Good information briefings are used well to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, among foster carers, children looked after and care leavers.
31. Children use a number of routes to express their views. The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is well attended and has effective links to the Corporate Parenting Board.

Adoption performance

32. As no City of London child has had a plan for adoption since 2012, the City did not receive a graded judgement for adoption performance. However, secure and comprehensive commissioning arrangements are in place to ensure that any child or adult who requires an adoption service can access it.

Care leavers

33. Inspectors found the experience and progress of care leavers to be 'Good'.
34. Care leavers who spoke to inspectors were very positive about the assistance that they receive. All are allocated to a social worker who sees them, in most cases, regularly and flexibly, depending on the young person's wishes and needs. Social workers support children and young people through their time in care and throughout their transition to adulthood. This supports enduring and trusting relationships.
35. The quality of support provided to care leavers is consistently good. No young people leave care before the age of 18. Specific care leaver support starts at age 18 and continues at least until the age of 25, whether or not they are in full-time education. Those care leavers who are at university are supported beyond the age of 25. The City is in touch with all of its care leavers.
36. Accommodation for care leavers is good, and young people are supported well to remain with their carers into adulthood. High-quality independent accommodation is provided in the City or where care leavers choose to stay. The virtual school

provides valuable support to children, including to care leavers at university. Employment and training opportunities are also good.

37. Most Personal Education Plans and pathway plans are comprehensive, but a few could be improved by more focused targets and better recording of young people's views. Health support is timely and meets the needs of children. However, not all young people have received a summary of their health histories upon leaving care. Senior managers are working with health managers to progress this.

Leadership, management and governance

38. Inspectors found leadership, management and governance in the City of London to be 'Outstanding'.

39. All aspects of strategic, political and operational leadership are keenly focused on achieving the best outcomes, not just for children who live in the City but also for children or parents who spend time there.

40. The City of London is a caring and aspirational corporate parent. Children looked after and care leavers consistently do well, and sometimes exceptionally well. Most children looked after are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. They are provided with good education and healthcare, many leisure opportunities, high-quality independent fostering placements and effective social work support.

41. The strong and stable senior management team has ensured a clear understanding of the quality of frontline practice. Analysis and evaluation of performance are meticulous. Quality assurance, including case auditing, is robust and leads to sustained improvements, although the voices of children and partners are not always evident. Leaders and managers are responsive to challenge and make focused improvements at a timely pace. The City Service Improvement Board has been effective in addressing areas for development.

42. The Safeguarding Sub-Committee, in its capacity as a Corporate Parenting Board, receives good-quality data and information about children's experiences, and this enables members to challenge practice effectively. The chair has a 'no nonsense' approach to getting to the heart of critical issues.

43. Leaders listen to what children think about their lives and go to great lengths to provide them with very good care.

Recommendations for improvement

44. The City of London received the following recommendations for improvement in the report:

- Further improve the quality and consistency of written plans for children, including early help plans, child in need plans, Personal Education Plans and pathway plans. These should be clear and simple, fully integrate the views of children and young people and clearly state what is to be achieved by when.

- When families disengage from services and the threshold is not met to escalate the case further, ensure that any ongoing work is purposeful and that case records clearly evidence managers' rationale for ceasing or continuing support.
- Ensure that permanency planning records include a record of decisions about legal permanence for children, along with the rationale for these decisions.
- Expedite the provision of health histories for all care leavers.
- Increase opportunities for direct contact between children looked after, care leavers and councillors, and between these children and the chief executive, in order to establish even more meaningful personal relationships.
- Strengthen the inclusion of the perspective of children, families and partners in case auditing, in order to improve services.

Current Position

45. Following the publication of the report, the City of London is required to submit a post-inspection action plan to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007 by 30 December 2016. This action plan will outline how the City of London intends to address the recommendations made in the report.
46. The recommendations from the Ofsted report have already been incorporated into the Service Improvement Plan and are currently being progressed. An action planning session to consult with the cross-cutting services in the City of London that support the Early Help and Children's Social Care team will take place on 18 October. A multi-agency partnership event will also take place on 22 November to ensure that key partners receive an update on the outcomes of the inspection and can contribute to the action planning process.
47. Once the action plan is finalised, its progress will be monitored by the Children's Service Improvement Board and updates will be provided to the Safeguarding Sub-Committee to ensure timeliness in addressing the recommendations, as well as providing appropriate scrutiny and challenge.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

48. The City of London's commitment to provide effective Early Help and Children's Social Care services aligns with the Corporation's strategic aims of:
- providing modern, efficient and high-quality local services, including policing, within the City for workers, residents and visitors
 - providing valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure, to London and the nation.
49. The ongoing improvement work for the City of London's children's services underpins the first priority of the DCCS business plan: 'Priority one – Safeguarding and early help: Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for

responding to safeguarding risks, promoting early identification and support to prevent escalation of issues and keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.'

50. Safeguarding and early help are also key priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and the City of London Corporation Safeguarding Policy.

Conclusion

51. The DCCS senior leadership team is committed to taking forward the recommendations outlined in the Ofsted report to ensure that we have the key components in place to consistently achieve exceptional outcomes for children. This work will be done in conjunction with our multi-agency partners and the CHSCB to ensure effective services for children across the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Ofsted single inspection framework report of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

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|---|------------------------|
| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Community and Children's Services – For Information | 14/10/2016 |
| Audit and Risks – For Information | 08/11/2016 |
| Safeguarding Sub-Committee – For Information | 17/11/2016 |
| Policy and Resources – For Information | 17/11/2016 |
| Subject: Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board | Public |
| Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
| Report author: Chris Pelham, Assistant Director, People's Services | |

Summary

This report provides Members with a summary of the outcome of the recent Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB), carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013. The CHSCB review was separate but concurrent to the Ofsted inspection of the effectiveness of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

The CHSCB is a dual-borough Board, covering both the City of London and Hackney due to the range of organisations covering both areas. The CHSCB received two separate judgements of 'Outstanding' for the effectiveness of its work in the City of London and in Hackney respectively. The CHSCB is the first Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in England to have received an 'Outstanding' judgement out of 110 LSCB reviews completed so far.

This report summarises the key findings of the review, as well as the recommendations for the CHSCB to take forward following the review.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

Under the requirements of the Children Act 2004, a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must be established for every local authority area.

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how statutory partners co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their local area.

The City of London Corporation and Hackney Council agreed to the operation of a dual-borough Board given the range of organisations covering both areas.

Current Position

1. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) was reviewed separately but concurrent to the Ofsted inspection of the City of London's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers from 4–28 July 2016. This review was carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.
2. The CHSCB received two separate judgements of 'Outstanding' for the effectiveness of its work in the City of London and in Hackney respectively. It is the first LSCB in England to have received an 'Outstanding' judgement.
3. Ofsted combined the reports for the City of London and the review of the CHSCB in accordance with s.152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Inspection findings for the CHSCB's work in the City of London

4. The CHSCB is a highly accomplished safeguarding Board, supported by solid governance arrangements. The separate City and Hackney Executive Boards ensure that rigorous oversight of safeguarding practice in each local authority area is achieved, while also benefiting from economies of scale created through their shared sub-groups.
5. The Independent Chair provides strong, credible and influential leadership, facilitating a culture of openness and challenge that has positively influenced wider partnership working. Safeguarding is a firm priority for all Board members, demonstrated by consistently good levels of attendance, effective engagement in sub-groups, and a strong culture of constructive challenge and debate.
6. The Board's relationship with City of London leaders is highly effective. Governance arrangements are robust, with clear lines of communication between the Independent Chair of the LSCB, the Director for Children's Services, the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Town Clerk.
7. The productive Safeguarding Inter-Board Chairmen's Meeting links the chairs of the LSCB, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Safer City Partnership. It shares annual reports and business plans, which feed into strategic documents. As a result, the Board effectively influences partner agencies and provides persistent challenge, to ensure that safeguarding is a golden thread running through all strategic documents.
8. The CHSCB has influenced and supported the City to maintain a strong focus on the safety and wellbeing of children. The Board and City leaders have

worked together to engage more closely with private schools, in order to ensure that safeguarding is their first priority. The addition of lay people to the Board has strengthened links to schools and other settings.

9. The Board has made substantial progress in raising awareness of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and child abuse through faith, belief or culture. The Board has worked closely with public health services to influence and monitor the multi-agency response to female genital mutilation.
10. The Board closely monitors the City's 'Prevent' duty and holds agencies to account for driving their response, including awareness-raising and recognition. The City 'Prevent' co-ordinator post is well established. Designated 'Prevent' leads are in place in each Corporation department. Awareness-raising sessions have been held across agencies, foster carers and community groups, and the co-ordinator links with other boroughs to share information and good practice. Risk assessments include awareness of risks within affluent communities.
11. The LSCB supported the City in its highly effective and innovative 'notice the signs' campaign, utilising a range of communication media to raise staff understanding of the signs of child and adult abuse, including child sexual exploitation. This included blogs, a website and a film. Senior leaders, including the Town Clerk, distributed leaflets. This stimulated many conversations with members of the residential and business communities, schools and other agencies involved with children who live or spend time in the City.
12. Early help remains a firm priority for the Board, with the effectiveness of early help services evaluated through the learning and improvement framework and City sub-group. The City early help sub-group has led to improvements in practice and services. Forty partners attended a multi-agency partnership event in February 2016, which included a presentation covering the strategic objectives and operational priorities for early help.
13. The Board maintains a very strong focus on hearing the views of children and using their experiences to influence developments to improve local safeguarding arrangements. In partnership with the City, consultations with children led to the commissioning of a new children's rights service and training sessions for independent reviewing officers on immigration rights.
14. The Board has created and fostered an effective learning culture that extends to frontline practitioners and embraces the community. Professional relationships across the City are based on a team approach, ensuring excellent communication and an atmosphere of continuous improvement.

Recommendations

15. Ofsted identified one recommendation for improvement:

- Take steps to engage with children and families in all diverse communities within the City, for example through the role of lay members.

16. This recommendation will be taken forward through the workplan of the City Executive and reviewed by the work of the City of London's Service Improvement Board.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The outcome of the CHSCB review supports the Corporation's strategic aims:

- Provide modern, efficient and high-quality local services, including policing, within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors.
- Provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure to London and the nation.

18. It also supports the first priority of the Department of Community and Children's Services (DCCS) Business Plan:

- Priority one – Safeguarding and early help: Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for responding to safeguarding risks, promoting early identification and support to prevent escalation of issues and keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

Conclusion

19. The DCCS senior leadership team welcomes the recognition of the outstanding work of the CHSCB in the City of London. We are committed to working with the CHSCB to take forward this recommendation and working towards consistently exceptional outcomes for children and young people across the City of London.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Ofsted review of the effectiveness of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (pp. 33–42).

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City of London

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board¹

Inspection date: 28 July 2016

Report published: 20 September 2016

| Children's services in the City of London are good | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| 1. Children who need help and protection | | Good |
| 2. Children looked after and achieving permanence | | Good |
| | 2.1 Adoption performance | Not judged |
| | 2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers | Good |
| 3. Leadership, management and governance | | Outstanding |

¹ Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

Executive summary

Determined and inspiring leaders within the City of London take a detailed and ambitious approach to continuous improvement. For this reason, services provided for vulnerable children are consistently good and, in some instances, very good. As a result of outstanding leadership, management and governance, the trajectory is positive, with all the key components in place to enable the City to achieve exceptional outcomes for children.

The senior leadership team is stable and entirely child focused. Governance arrangements facilitate a culture of firm challenge and generous support, which extends beyond the City limits. Partners agree on their priorities and work together with real energy to achieve them. Leaders and partners have ensured that they know their community extremely well. This has resulted in a highly individualised approach, which takes full account of the unique, diverse and sometimes challenging City context. Services, including those that are commissioned, consistently meet the needs of local families. They are also well targeted to safeguard children who do not live in the City yet are supported by its services, or whose parents work there.

Early help services are effective, and some are particularly strong. A comprehensive early help strategy underpins the partnership approach to providing support to families before their problems worsen. Parents told inspectors that they are very happy with the help that they receive. Although positive impact can be evidenced for individual children, the City is yet to introduce a multi-agency evaluation tool to help them to judge how effective their early help services are, overall.

Partners have a clear understanding of local thresholds of need and support, and children consistently receive help at the right level for them. Targeted work with partners has led to an increase in referrals and early help assessments, which is a positive development. The social work response to risk and need within families is swift and reliably good, with analytical assessments leading to helpful support that demonstrably improves children's lives and makes them safer. Although working plans are effective, written plans are not always clear enough to make sense to all families. In a small number of cases, the work with parents who disengage from support lacks purpose and clarity. It is positive that the City has commissioned innovative research into neglect within affluent families.

The City of London is a caring and aspirational corporate parent. Most children looked after are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. They are provided with good education and healthcare, many leisure opportunities, high-quality independent fostering placements and very effective social work support. This enables them to do well in their lives. Social workers and children enjoy enduring relationships beyond childhood, built on meaningful time spent together. All children looked after experience good outcomes, and some are doing exceptionally well in the context of their life experiences. Senior and commissioning managers have taken steps to further improve placement choice in order to enable social workers to consistently achieve the ideal match for children.

The City is very committed to its care leavers and continues support until, and sometimes beyond, the age of 25, whether or not they are in full-time education. All care leavers live in safe and suitable accommodation, guided by their own choices and needs. Social workers consistently stay in touch with young people and work closely with other services to ensure that the young people reach their full potential. Healthcare for care leavers is very good, but not all care leavers have been provided with information about their health histories. Planning for these young people is effective, and their diverse needs are particularly well addressed. Written plans should include more focused personal targets and better attention to young people's views.

Children looked after and care leavers are actively encouraged to share their views. Direct contact with senior managers, the highly effective independent reviewing officer service, independent advocates and visitors, and an annual consultation event ensure that their voices are heard. The Children in Care Council (CiCC) enables young people to use their direct link to leaders to effect positive change. Children looked after and care leavers meet with the corporate parenting board. However, council members and the town clerk (chief executive) could further strengthen these relationships by spending more informal time hearing about young people's lives.

No children have had a plan for adoption for some time, but commissioned and shared services are in place to provide a full range of adoption and post-adoption services. Social workers and managers ensure that children experience a strong sense of belonging to their carers. Care plans address children's need for permanence well and in good time.

The City of London's approach to increasing the skills and abilities of childcare professionals to provide outstanding services is exemplary. The knowledge transfer programme, an innovative partnership with a local university, provides practitioners with valuable opportunities to improve their practice. Training, supervision and support of social workers are comprehensive and contribute to good and improving outcomes for children. The workforce is stable, and this is linked to the vibrant learning environment. Caseloads are manageable and allow social workers to spend the time that they need with children and their families.

Supported by thorough quality assurance processes and excellent performance information, leaders and managers routinely identify where services for children need to be improved in order to be consistently good or better than good. This is reflected in strategic service plans and translated into specific actions that are assertively progressed. Case auditing is well established and ensures that leaders and managers are confident that they know what is happening on the ground. However, audits do not routinely include the perspectives of children, families and partners.

At the time of the last inspection in 2012, services for children were judged to be good. A number of areas for development were identified, including improving and integrating performance and quality assurance systems. Supported by the children's improvement board, all these areas have been rigorously addressed.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Executive summary | 2 |
| The local authority | 5 |
| Information about this local authority area | 5 |
| Recommendations | 8 |
| Summary for children and young people | 9 |
| The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection | 10 |
| The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence | 16 |
| Leadership, management and governance | 25 |
| The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) | 33 |
| Executive summary | 33 |
| Recommendations | 34 |
| Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board | 34 |
| Information about this inspection | 41 |

The local authority

Information about this local authority area²

Previous Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates no children's homes.
- The last inspection of the local authority's safeguarding arrangements was in March 2012. The local authority was judged to be good.
- The last inspection of the local authority's services for children looked after was in March 2012. The local authority was judged to be good.

Local leadership

- The director of children's services (DCS) has been in post since April 2013.
- The DCS is also responsible for adult services and housing services.
- The chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has been in post since April 2013.
- The LSCB is shared with the London Borough of Hackney.
- The local authority has commissioned out the following services:
 - information, advice and guidance for children looked after and care leavers (Prospects)
 - advocacy services (Action for Children)
 - adoption services (Coram)
 - youth offending services (London Borough of Tower Hamlets)
 - emergency duty team (Hackney).

Children living in this area

- Approximately 1090 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in the City of London. This is 12.4% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 14.3% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 20.8% (the national average is 15.6%)
 - there are no state secondary schools in the City of London.

² The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data, where this was available.

- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 42.6% of all children living in the area, compared with 21.5% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian, Asian British and Mixed.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 64.6% (the national average is 19.4%)
 - secondary schools data is suppressed (the national average is 15%).
- The City of London is just over one square mile in size. It contains 15,105 enterprises and is a key transport hub within London. The residential population is approximately 8,000. Only 10% of households have children, compared with 30% in Greater London and nationally. The City's daytime population is over 50 times greater than the resident population.

Child protection in this area

- At 1 July 2016, 37 children had been identified in need of a specialist children's service, including child and family assessment. This is an increase of one from 36 at 31 March 2015.
- At 1 July 2016, two children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. Data at 31 March 2015 was suppressed.
- At 1 July 2016, no children were living in a privately arranged fostering placement. This was also the case at 31 March 2015.
- Since the last inspection, no serious incident notifications have been submitted to Ofsted and no serious case review (SCR)s had been completed or were ongoing at the time of the inspection.

Children looked after in this area

- At 1 July 2016, 10 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 91.7 per 10,000 children). The number was in line with that at 31 March 2015, although the rate had increased (84.0 per 10,000 children at 31 March 2015). Of this number:
 - 10 (all) children live outside the local authority area
 - no children live in residential children's homes
 - no children live in residential special schools
 - 10 children live with foster families, all of whom live out of the authority area
 - nine children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
 - there have been no adoptions

- two children became the subject of special guardianship orders
- six children ceased to be looked after, none of whom subsequently returned to be looked after
- three children and young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
- no children and young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses in multiple occupation.

Recommendations

1. Further improve the quality and consistency of written plans for children, including early help plans, child in need plans, personal education plan (PEP)s and pathway plans. These should be clear and simple, fully integrate the views of children and young people and clearly state what is to be achieved by when.
2. When families disengage from services and the threshold is not met to escalate the case further, ensure that any ongoing work is purposeful and that case records clearly evidence managers' rationale for ceasing or continuing support.
3. Ensure that permanency planning records include a record of decisions about legal permanence for children, along with the rationale for these decisions.
4. Expedite the provision of health histories for all care leavers.
5. Increase opportunities for direct contact between children looked after, care leavers and councillors, and between these children and the chief executive, in order to establish even more meaningful personal relationships.
6. Strengthen the inclusion of the perspective of children, families and partners in case auditing, in order to improve services.

Summary for children and young people

- The City of London is a small area where many more people come to work than to live. Just over 1,000 children live within the City of London, and many older children travel outside of the City to go to school.
- Services for children in the City of London are good. Some children have difficulties within their families. When this happens, a social worker steps in early, to see whether they would like some support. This help is very good and families are very happy with it. It improves children's lives and, for most families, it stops their worries increasing.
- Social workers spend a lot of time with children and families who have bigger problems, making sure that they understand what has gone wrong. This means that the help that they offer is what families need. When there is a risk that children may be unsafe, social workers talk to other adults like the police and teachers. Together, they make good decisions about what to do next to keep children safe.
- Some parents do not want a social worker to help them, even though they have problems that are making their children unhappy. Social workers need to be clearer about why they are involved with these families and what they are doing to help them.
- When children need to be looked after, they are found caring foster homes. Almost all children who are looked after have moved here from another country, often because they were scared or unhappy where they were living before. They are given good help to speak English, to talk about their experiences, and to settle into their new homes and schools. As a result, they make friends and quickly become more confident. They are helped to be healthy and to do many enjoyable things like playing sports and going to the theatre.
- Social workers and managers are proud of the children whom they look after and they care about them, as a loving parent would. They make sure that children go to good schools and that they get a lot of help so they achieve well. Social workers encourage young people to stay living with their foster carers for as long as possible, and this means that they only leave home when they are ready.
- When children leave care, they receive good help and support. They live in safe homes that they are proud of, and most find a job or carry on with their education. Senior managers and local politicians are very interested in the children whom they look after and those who have left care. They listen carefully to the CiCC and have meetings to find out what young people think. Relationships between young people and local politicians would be even better if they spent more informal time together.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection

Good

Summary

Social workers in the City of London listen to the children whom they work with and develop good relationships with them. The children and families team is settled and stable, and all social workers have manageable caseloads, allowing social workers to spend the time that they need with families. This supports good direct work with children. Managers at all levels provide practitioners with good formal and informal oversight and guidance.

Children in the City of London who need help are identified early. They are supported by a range of services that make a tangible difference to their lives. Increasing the number of children who benefit from early help has been a priority for the City and partners. This has successfully led to a doubling in the number of children being helped in the last year.

In a few cases, families do not believe that they need help and disengage from services. As a result, support plans are difficult to achieve. Plans are regularly reviewed, and efforts to re-engage with families are tenacious, but the rationale to continue or cease involvement is not always recorded well.

When children are, or may be, at risk of significant harm, information is shared appropriately. Decisions are sound and are made promptly, and assessments are consistently good. They take into account risk, family history, children’s diverse needs and relevant research. Children’s views and experiences are well reflected. Children’s case files are generally clear and up to date, although a very small number of children in need cases do not include an up-to-date chronology.

Multi-agency work is well coordinated and has a positive impact on outcomes for children, including those living with parental mental ill health or learning difficulties, or domestic abuse. Child protection conferences and plans are very effective in understanding, addressing and reducing risk within families.

Very few children are known to be at risk of sexual exploitation, go missing, live in private fostering arrangements or become homeless. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to identify and support any children who present to social care in these circumstances. Practitioners are well trained and well informed to ensure that they can deal with new situations and presenting problems as they may arise.

Inspection findings

7. Strong arrangements are in place to identify children in need of early help. All new parents receive an early help visit. This is often a joint visit by a family intervention worker and a health visitor. Such early identification has led to a complete take-up of two-year-old children's free childcare places. Families have access to a wide range of helpful services. The 'friendly dentist' scheme provides dental checks for all under-fives and parenting support is available from a child psychologist through a commissioned service, while weekly speech and language sessions, 'stay and play' and other activities are available through the City's children's centre. Parents are well supported with benefits advice and debt counselling by a commissioned service. The 'nanny network', launched in 2015 to establish links between the City's early help services and this large group of private childcare providers, runs weekly 'stay and play' sessions for approximately 10 nannies and the children for whom they care.
8. Increasing the number of children and their families taking up early help services is a priority in the City of London. Although numbers remain low, determined work across the partnership at a strategic and operational level has led to a doubling of the number of new early help assessments completed over the last year.
9. Early help assessments are generally of a good standard, and lead to helpful and valued support. Team around the child meetings are held when they are needed, and there is good engagement in these by a range of professionals. Although there are individual agency tools to measure progress, there is not yet a single agreed system to measure family improvements so that they can be aggregated and reported on. Work with partners to agree a suitable tool is already underway.
10. A consultation conducted on behalf of the City indicates that parents are very positive about the help that they receive. For example, parents increase in confidence, manage their children's behaviour better, strengthen children's routines and improve their children's speech. Parents spoken to by inspectors said that staff are 'fantastic', services are provided quickly and the help that they received 'sorted things out'.
11. The children and families team includes social workers and early help practitioners, and is fully staffed and stable. An experienced manager has been in post for over a year, and oversees both the practice of social workers and early help staff. Practitioners who spoke to inspectors during the inspection were positive about working in the City of London. Senior managers are described as visible, approachable and knowledgeable about children's circumstances. Staff feel well supported and have access to a wide range of training and development opportunities. They were able to describe how they apply learning from training to their work with individual children.

12. Secure arrangements are in place in relation to contacts and referrals that are made to children and family services. All calls are taken by a qualified social worker, and recommendations made by them are signed off by a manager. Appropriate and detailed instructions about next steps are included in the management decision record. Decisions are made promptly, and all records seen during the inspection were signed off within 24 hours.
13. The thresholds of need document is clear and up to date. When making decisions about how to respond to referrals, social workers consistently apply the guidance appropriately. Consent is sought explicitly, with careful consideration to overriding it given when it is necessary. Partners report a clear understanding of thresholds, and this is supported by close partnership working. Police forward all notifications to the children and families team when there are potential child welfare concerns. These often relate to children who have been stopped in the key transport hubs of the City. Many of these children do not live in the City, and some are flagged for child sexual exploitation concerns. When this is the case, the duty social worker proactively ensures that the referral is made to, and received by, their home local authority area.
14. When children are identified as being at risk of significant harm, prompt action is taken to understand their circumstances and to protect them. Strategy discussions include relevant professionals, and appropriate decisions are made. In one case, details of significant relevant information were not shared by the police. This was appropriately escalated and resolved by senior managers.
15. Children are seen, and seen alone, as part of their assessment. When case auditing, senior managers specifically look for evidence of regular and meaningful visits to children. Inspectors saw case examples, where senior managers had appropriately raised questions about visits to children, leading to actions to strengthen practice further. Social workers know the children whom they work with well. They use a range of tools to work with them to ensure that their views are understood and reflected in assessments and plans. Some very good examples of bespoke direct work were seen by inspectors. Social workers include detailed observations of the demeanour and developmental progress of younger children in case records and assessments.
16. Assessments are comprehensive. They consider family history and reference the appropriate research. Strong examples were seen of social workers identifying presenting and emerging risks, including those arising from domestic abuse, sexual exploitation, honour-based violence and parental mental ill health. In almost all cases, children's diverse needs resulting from disability, ethnicity and religion were well considered. Good use is made of advocacy services when parents with learning difficulties need support to engage with and understand the assessment and planning process.

17. Assessments lead to appropriate plans that make a difference to children. A parent of a disabled child described the support that his child receives from the City of London as 'amazing'. Child protection conferences are well attended, and enable professionals and families to reach a clear understanding of risk and need. Children make use of advocacy services to share their views, and professionals take careful account of these views when agreeing the plan. Subsequent work is consistently effective, and risks for children reduce as a result of good multi-agency intervention. Inspectors saw cases where children were being supported to develop an understanding of the risk of child sexual exploitation, with effective strategies leading to a marked reduction of risk.
18. Although the support provided to children and families is effective, not all written plans are in simple language that clearly describes the desired outcomes. Some actions do not specifically include the date by which they should be completed. (Recommendation)
19. Practitioners demonstrate tenacity in working with the small number of children whose parents do not wish to accept support, yet the threshold is not met, in order to escalate to child protection procedures. However, in a few cases, child in need plans remain in place but are not purposeful, due to the disengagement of the family. Managers need to ensure that their rationale for continuing involvement or ceasing support is clearly recorded. A research project considering neglect within affluent families is nearly complete. It has been commissioned with a view to assisting practitioners in working successfully with such families. (Recommendation)
20. Multi-agency working to meet children's needs and keep them safe is effective. Early help, child in need and child protection plans are regularly reviewed. Inspectors saw examples of effective joint work with an independent school, a homelessness officer, a housing support worker and a debt advice service, as well as a specialist parenting support agency and adult services. Bringing together agencies and working in a coordinated manner consistently leads to improved outcomes for children and their families, such as moving to suitable housing, managing debt, improving school attendance and the provision of intensive support for a mother to continue to care for her child.
21. Case records seen were generally up to date and comprehensive, and showed evidence of clear and regular management oversight and direction. Although family history is considered well in assessments, in a very small number of children in need cases chronologies are not kept up to date on children's files. This is a lost opportunity to maintain a clear record of significant incidents, themes and patterns in children's lives.

22. No child has been reported missing from home in the City of London in the last 12 months, and very few children have been identified as at risk of sexual exploitation. Clear and well-publicised processes are in place to monitor and coordinate services, through the multi-agency sexual exploitation group, for those children who may be at risk. This group has an intentionally low threshold, to identify children who may be at risk at the earliest opportunity. Awareness raising about child sexual exploitation across the City is comprehensive and is targeted at residents, businesses and those who work in the City. Positive links have been made with the two independent secondary schools in the City to raise awareness of a range of safeguarding issues, including sexual exploitation. A drama production with a sexual exploitation theme was commissioned for the girls' school during this school year, and will be delivered at the boys' school in the new school year.
23. Although no children were known to be living in private fostering arrangements at the time of the inspection, a small number of arrangements have been identified in the past year. Thorough assessments, in line with requirements, are completed with appropriate and timely ongoing support.
24. Effective work has been completed in relation to raising agencies' awareness of their responsibilities in relation to allegations against adults who work with children. This has led to an increase in the number of referrals received. Processes to manage allegations, once they are made, are comprehensive. In one case, the City took responsibility for coordinating the multi-agency response to concerns in order to avoid further delay, even though the professional no longer worked in the City and the child lived in another area. This demonstrates a commitment to good practice.
25. Multi-agency risk assessment arrangements to support vulnerable victims and children affected by domestic abuse are effective. Meetings are convened when required, are well attended and lead to appropriate support plans. Support to victims of domestic abuse is available from the advocate for vulnerable victims. Specialist programmes and services for individuals, including perpetrators, are provided on a case-by-case basis when needed.
26. At the time of this inspection, no children were missing from education. Managers frequently and assiduously monitor children's school attendance both within and outside the City. Very good processes are in place through productive partnerships with schools, to respond when safeguarding concerns are identified. An effective risk RAG-rating (red, amber, green) system and procedure is in place for those children at risk of missing education.
27. Very few children are electively home educated in the City of London. For those children who are, good arrangements are in place to monitor their progress, in cooperation with their parents.

28. Out-of-hours services are commissioned from a neighbouring authority. The commissioning arrangement is sufficient to meet current need and any unexpected peaks in activity outside of office hours. Inspectors saw an example of effective joint working between the out-of-hours team, City police and children's social care when there was concern about possible child trafficking.

29. No 16- to 17-year-old young person has presented as homeless in the last 12 months. Close working relationships are in place between the housing department and the children and families team. These support clear arrangements that would be put in place if a young person presented to either department. This includes an assessment and consideration of whether the young person should be looked after by the City of London.

The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence

Good

Summary

All of the children looked after and care leavers spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the services and help that they have received. Inspectors found that the support provided is reliably good. Many children looked after are unaccompanied asylum seekers with no previous links to the City. Children are provided with highly individualised care and support, leading to them settling well and achieving consistently good outcomes.

By design, there are no care placements in the City of London. All children are placed within 20 miles of the City in fostering placements judged to be good or better by Ofsted. Children live in families and communities that meet their diverse needs well, with interpreter services and helpful English and educational support. Social workers and managers care about children and know them very well. The small number of placement breakdowns are due, in the main, to a lack of in-depth knowledge of children who have recently arrived in the United Kingdom (UK). The range of placements is being improved. A permanence panel monitors children's care plans well, although some decisions could be recorded more clearly. No City of London child has had a plan for adoption since 2012. However, a secure and comprehensive commissioning arrangement is in place to ensure that any child or adult who requires an adoption service can access this.

The independent reviewing officer has established strong relationships with children. Children looked after reviews are purposeful, and plans are rigorously progressed. Potential risks for children are considered well. On the rare occasion that children go missing, follow-up is swift and effective. Good information briefings are used well to raise awareness, of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, among foster carers, children looked after and care leavers.

Accommodation for care leavers is good, and young people are supported well to remain with their carers into adulthood. High-quality independent accommodation is provided in the City or where care leavers choose to stay. The virtual school provides valuable support to children, including to care leavers at university. Employment and training opportunities are also good. Most PEPs and pathway plans are comprehensive, but a few could be improved by more focused targets and better recording of young people's views. Health support is timely and meets the needs of children. Mental health assessments are particularly good. Not all care leavers have been provided with information about their health histories. Children use a number of routes to express their views. The CiCC is well attended and has effective links to the corporate parenting board. The group makes good use of its direct link to senior and political leaders.

Inspection findings

30. Services for children looked after in the City of London are somewhat unique. Although the proportion of children who are looked after is similar to that in other local authorities, the number is small in comparison. All children looked after are between the ages of 14 and 17, and only one was resident in the City prior to being received into care. The other children are unaccompanied asylum seekers who are the responsibility of the City through a London-wide dispersal scheme for sharing refugees across the capital. Most of these young people have arrived in the country and become looked after in the past year. Inspectors looked at the support provided to all of these children and found social work to be, in the main, of a high standard and, in some cases, of an exceedingly high standard. Many children looked after achieve very good outcomes. However, support is not yet consistently demonstrating an exceptional and sustained difference to all children's lives.
31. All children receive at least a good service. They are supported and helped by social workers and managers who have found creative ways to ensure that they know them well. Visits are regular. Children are seen alone. The children spoken to by inspectors were very positive about the support that they have received. Their views are considered very well in visits, meetings and plans, and are recorded, in the vast majority of cases, to a high standard.
32. There is a strong focus, led by the DCS, on building high-quality relationships between social workers and children. Social workers and children spend time together doing fun activities on both a one-to-one basis and as a group, and this strengthens their relationships. An annual holiday for social workers, children looked after and care leavers is valued by children and social workers as an opportunity to get to know each other much better. This complements the time spent during other visits. All children's cases are known, in depth, by the DCS and the assistant director, who, commendably, visits all children looked after on a bi-annual basis.
33. Due to the unique nature of the City, and in order to maintain sufficient matching choice, the City of London has chosen not to provide any in-house foster placements for its children looked after. No children are placed within the City, and all children are placed in foster placements within 20 miles. The quality assurance of these placements is rigorous. The City has decided that children will only be placed in placements that Ofsted has judged to be good or better. The City complements the training offered by foster carers' own agencies with additional targeted learning, for example through the provision of workshops on countering radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Overall placement stability is good. There have been a small number of placement breakdowns, due in part to the lack of knowledge about children who have recently arrived in the country. Work is ongoing to improve further the choice of carers available. Related children are placed together, when

appropriate. Effective support is provided to children to have continued contact with their families, including for unaccompanied asylum seekers.

34. All children looked after attend school regularly. During 2014–15, the attendance rate was 96%. No children have been excluded from school permanently in the past three years, and only two have been excluded for a day or so, and the isolated incidents were resolved. No children looked after are in alternative provision. Children participate and make the expected progress in their learning. Staff at the virtual school, in good partnership with teachers, work relentlessly to make sure that children with vastly different starting points, most with skills levels below level 1 in key stage 3, receive bespoke individual support. This ensures that they develop the skills that they need for life in the UK.
35. All but one child looked after came into care as an unaccompanied asylum seeker at secondary school age. Just over half of these have achieved entry-level qualifications in English and have progressed to the next level. Some children looked after have made particularly good progress, and others have made sufficient progress in their studies towards achieving GCSE qualifications. Good advice and guidance from experienced advisers ensures that all children looked after are prepared well to make the next steps in their education or training. For instance, a wide range of progression opportunities is provided to learners who are about to progress to key stage 5.
36. Most PEPs are purposeful, and staff are particularly effective in monitoring each child's progress. Targets for children looked after to improve their academic skills and knowledge, particularly English and mathematics, are clear. A few identified gaps in personal skills, which are recorded well in the plans, do not translate sufficiently well to targets. (Recommendation)
37. The City virtual school team implements effective measures to make sure that children looked after get the support that they need through, for example, pupil premium funding. This includes funding for targeted support to help those who are falling behind with their GCSE studies or to improve the English skills of unaccompanied asylum seekers who have recently come into care. The City ensures that foster carers are well equipped to care for children for whom English is not the main language. For example, a toolbox including a whiteboard, word box, world map and role-play pictures is provided to foster carers, along with helpful guidance. This enables them to help children to improve their English at a faster pace than through formal education alone.
38. Good enrichment opportunities have had a visibly positive impact on the confidence and attitude to learning of children looked after. Children looked after participate in a good range of activities, including sailing, football, cricket and art classes. They enjoy trips that staff facilitate. One such trip to a local maritime museum, where there is a large map of the world, provided a safe

catalyst for a group of unaccompanied asylum seekers to show each other where they had come from and to get to know each other better.

39. Health outcomes are improving. Most children looked after have needs arising from poorer health provision, or from the ways in which they were treated in their home countries or on their journeys to the UK. Most initial health assessments are done promptly and all are undertaken by a paediatrician. Children also receive timely dental support, immunisations and further health support, when needed. All children receive a baseline extended mental health assessment by City of London child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), wherever they are placed. This has been specifically negotiated by senior managers with the local CAMHS. Children are referred promptly and receive ongoing support when further emotional or mental health needs are identified. No children are known to be misusing substances.
40. A small number of children looked after have gone missing over the past year. This has mainly been for a matter of hours. The response by children's services and police has been swift and robust. All of these children were offered a timely return home interview, and strategy discussions were initiated to consider any wider safeguarding issues. One child was subject to a more in-depth assessment, which was of a high quality, to look at risks of child sexual exploitation. Careful consideration is given to potential ongoing risks to those children who had been trafficked by organised criminal networks into the UK. No children looked after have been involved in offending during the time covered by this inspection.
41. All children looked after reviews are held within national timescales. Reviews seen and attended by inspectors were of a high standard, with children fully engaged. The independent reviewing officer provides a strong, creative and sensitive service. She visits children between reviews and closely monitors the progress of care plans. Her interaction with children was observed by inspectors to be warm and engaging. She also regularly meets with the head of the virtual school, health commissioners and providers to ensure that high-quality support is provided to children looked after. Plans are well focused and child centred, and actions decided at reviews are, in the main, actioned promptly.
42. All children looked after have clear and appropriate plans for permanency before or by the time of their second looked after review. The permanence panel ensures good oversight of all children in care, and includes the assistant director, legal services and the independent reviewing officer. Consideration is given to whether care proceedings should be initiated to provide security for children, although decisions with accompanying rationale are not always explicitly recorded in permanency panel minutes. In addition to ensuring that social workers and managers have access to these decisions in the future, better recording would ensure that, in later life, children can fully understand why these judgements were made. (Recommendation)

43. There are no current or recent care proceedings, although the City of London maintains good relationships with the family courts and the Family Court Advisory and Support Service. No children have had a plan for adoption in the past three years. Secure and appropriate commissioning arrangements are in place to ensure that the full range of adoption and post-adoption services is available for adults and children, if these are required. A small number of children looked after have recently left care and are subject to special guardianship orders. The full range of permanence options was considered for these children, and the resulting care arrangements meet children's needs well. Court work in relation to these children was of good quality, and the ongoing support provided is appropriate.
44. Direct work is a strong feature of social work with children looked after in the City. Some of this is of an exceptional standard. For the unaccompanied asylum seekers, there is sensitive and sustained support to help them with their claims for refugee status. Local children are also well supported through family- and community-focused activities. Careful and sensitive life-story work is provided for all children looked after, to help them to gain a better understanding of their backgrounds and of what has happened to them. Work is underway to extend the skills of staff in culturally specific life-story work, in particular for children who have experienced disrupted childhoods before arriving in the UK. Support to children and children from different ethnicities, faiths and beliefs is very good.
45. Independent visitors are provided to over half of children looked after, and they are matched well to children's interests and hobbies. Some of these relationships have been sustained over many years through shared interests, such as going to the theatre and sports. Two further children were being matched at the time of the inspection.
46. Formal advocacy support is available and well publicised, but it is not taken up by many children, who rely more on their social workers, their independent visitors, the support of the independent reviewing officer and visits from the assistant director. When children raise concerns, they are responded to swiftly and appropriately, including when it is felt that a change of social worker would genuinely make a difference to them. In one instance, a young person asked the independent person who visited him after he had gone missing from his placement to sort out a worry about his placement. This was quickly resolved, leading to the 'missing' episodes ceasing. There have been no formal complaints from children and young people in the past year, although concerns or worries expressed by children, for instance through the independent reviewing officer, have been responded to promptly and to the satisfaction of the children.
47. Thresholds for whether children and young people should become looked after are clear. Agencies understand these well, and social work support to

children and families at home is good. A small number of cases have met the threshold to be dealt with through the Public Law Outline. In these cases, high-quality social work resulted in there being no need for legal proceedings to protect children further. Managers appropriately involved the commissioned adoption service at an early stage, ensuring that all permanence options were considered to avoid potential delay for children. Care proceedings involving the High Court were also initiated last year, as the case involved the citizens of another European Union country. This was resolved promptly with the family returning home, supported by their local social services department.

48. The CiCC is well attended and meets quarterly. Members receive child-friendly versions of key policies and strategies. There have been a number of improvements facilitated by this group, including improvement of the pledge for children looked after and care leavers. This, along with a welcome pack, is provided to all children looked after, in both English and the child's first language. CiCC members have been involved in interviewing new staff and producing reports for the safeguarding sub-committee on the services available for care leavers. It is good that members of the CiCC have also been involved in mentoring children who have become looked after more recently.

The graded judgement for adoption performance

At the time of the inspection, and within the timescales for judging adoption performance, the City of London has neither commenced adoption proceedings nor placed any child for adoption. Therefore, arrangements to provide adoption services were considered, but adoption performance was not judged.

The graded judgement about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it is good

49. Care leavers who spoke to inspectors were very positive about the assistance that they receive. All are allocated to a social worker who sees them, in most cases, regularly and flexibly, depending on the young person's wishes and needs. Social workers support children and young people through their time in care and throughout their transition to adulthood. This supports enduring and trusting relationships.

50. The quality of support provided to care leavers is consistently good. No young people leave care before the age of 18. Specific care-leaver support starts at age 18 years and continues at least until the age of 25, whether or not they are in full-time education. The care leavers who are at university are being supported beyond the age of 25. The City is in touch with all of its care leavers.

51. All but one care leaver is an unaccompanied asylum seeker. All care leavers live in suitable accommodation. This is either in 'staying put' arrangements, whereby they remain with their former foster carers, or in independent accommodation provided in the City of London or an area where the young person wishes to live. Social workers undertake checks to ensure that proposed independent accommodation is not in an area known by police to cause concern, due to anti-social behaviour, gangs or drugs-related activity. There has been a good range of awareness-raising courses for care leavers, for instance on the dangers of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. No care leavers are known to be involved in criminal activity.

52. The large majority of planning for care leavers is effective. Education and employment outcomes for most of those leaving care are good. Of the current care leavers, 80% are following courses in further or higher education, are in training or are in employment (EET). A few care leavers achieved particularly good results, following completion of their degree courses at university. For those care leavers who are currently not in employment or training, there have been concerted efforts by the virtual school to enable them to participate in a range of work experience opportunities. The City commissions a targeted service to help young people to access and sustain EET opportunities. The support includes attending college open days, accompanying young people to maths and English tests, completing enrolment forms and helping with bursary paperwork. Advisors are steadfast in the help that they provide and, in most cases, this increases young people's ability to succeed with their choices.

53. The City provides care leavers with work experience opportunities within its own services. At times, this is used as a creative way to encourage young people to re-engage with a meaningful daily activity or for staff to re-establish

contact with older young people who are resisting support. Senior leaders such as the DCS and the chief executive promote and support these opportunities.

54. The advice and guidance for young people leaving care are supportive and skilled. Good links to the City of London adult learning service mean that care leavers have the option to start apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships in subjects such as butchery and accountancy. Two care leavers will soon be commencing a traineeship programme to help them to progress onto an apprenticeship. Support to prepare young people for independence is good. Examples were seen by inspectors of focused programmes that had assisted children looked after in developing their practical skills in preparation for future career opportunities.
55. The large majority of needs assessments and pathway plans are good. The diverse needs of young people are particularly well considered in these records, with sensitive consideration of young people's asylum-seeker status and preparation for the possibility that they will not be allowed to remain in the UK. Access to good legal advice is prioritised for young people who are making asylum-related claims. The best pathway plans have clear, aspirational targets and desired outcomes. A few pathway plans have actions that do not move the young people forward quickly enough. In a small number of cases, pathway plans had not been shared with care leavers, and the voice of the young people was not consistently recorded. (Recommendation)
56. The availability of health support is good. The provision of care leavers' support to one young person was extended beyond his 25th birthday to allow time for the social worker to ensure that his emotional well-being was stable. However, not all young people have received a summary of their health histories upon leaving care. Senior managers are working with health managers to progress this. As most of the care leavers are unaccompanied asylum seekers, these health records would assist in providing an overview of their emotional, mental and physical health needs, wherever they choose to live in the UK. This is currently being taken forward by the CiCC. (Recommendation)
57. The CiCC includes care leavers. It has developed the Pledge, which also incorporates the City's promises to its care leavers. It is provided to all young people in their first language. This ensures that care leavers have a good understanding of their entitlements. Activity-based schemes are run, through the CiCC, to provide learning experiences and to maintain contact with care leavers. For instance, a popular annual activity holiday strengthens social work relationships with care leavers and facilitates mentoring relationships between young people.
58. Over the past year, the corporate parenting board has met with the CiCC for lunch and young people attended a board meeting. The board has considered

messages from the annual consultation with young people. However, regular informal contact is not yet a strong enough feature. Members have a good awareness of their responsibilities, but have underestimated how powerful regular, direct contact with children looked after, in particular care leavers, is likely to be. (Recommendation)

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| Leadership, management and governance | Outstanding |
| <p>Summary</p> <p>Leadership, management and governance in the City of London are outstanding. All aspects of strategic, political and operational leadership are keenly focused on achieving the best outcomes, not just for children who live in the City but for children or parents who spend time there. Senior and political leaders know their local community very well indeed. Scrutiny arrangements are challenging and support improvement. Leaders and managers work proactively with key partners and forums to ensure that services meet the needs of the diverse and unique population. The response to the potential risks of female genital mutilation and radicalisation is robust. Commissioning arrangements, including those to meet the needs of any child or adult who may require adoption services, are evidence based and sensible, and demonstrate the City’s exacting standards for its children.</p> <p>Leaders are attentive and proud corporate parents. Children looked after and care leavers do consistently well and, sometimes, exceptionally well. Leaders listen to what children think about their lives and go to great lengths to provide them with very good care. However, council members have not used all available opportunities to further strengthen their informal relationships with children looked after and care leavers.</p> <p>The strong and stable senior management team has ensured a very clear understanding of the quality of frontline practice. Analysis and evaluation of performance are meticulous. Quality assurance, including case auditing, is robust and leads to sustained improvements, although the voices of children and partners are not always evident. Leaders and managers are responsive to challenge and make focused improvements at a timely pace. The City improvement board has been very effective in addressing areas for development.</p> <p>Leaders and managers have created a safe and vibrant environment in which social workers and their practice can continually improve. Learning opportunities are rich and wide ranging. They include the knowledge transfer programme, through which a local university and the City work together to strengthen practice through research. Caseloads are manageable, supporting social workers to establish meaningful relationships with children. Social work practice is consistently strong, and consideration of children’s diverse needs at all levels is extensive. The children’s workforce is stable. Good management oversight of practice is evident, and social workers appreciate opportunities for reflection, although records do not always evidence this well. Leaders commit their time to supporting local authorities that are not performing well. This illustrates the City’s approach to improvement, and has not detracted from the quality or effectiveness of leadership in the City.</p> | |

Inspection findings

59. The DCS has been in post since April 2013 and the chief executive since September 2012. The DCS is responsible for community and children's services, which include education, community housing, and adults' and children's services. Together with the assistant director for children's services, they provide strong and inspiring leadership, with a steady determination to use all the skills and resources available to them to benefit children in the City and in Greater London. The DCS's capacity to undertake his roles and responsibilities has been thoroughly explored by a test of assurance undertaken by an independent person. He states that he is 'a social worker first and a senior leader second', demonstrating this through a highly detailed and enthusiastic approach to all areas of social work practice and a keen interest in individual children. Senior leaders have an outward-looking and philanthropic approach to improvement, for example in their willingness to invest their time in mentoring and supporting senior leaders from other London boroughs.
60. Governance arrangements are highly effective in prioritising and improving the well-being, safety and outcomes of children who live or spend time in the City. Safeguarding is a clear theme through all City strategic documents. The DCS, chief executive and the lead member for the City are active and committed partners of the City LSCB. The priorities within the children and young people's plan are clearly linked to measurable objectives, with a strong emphasis on early help, and on preventing domestic abuse, radicalisation, neglect and child sexual exploitation. They are congruent with the priorities and plans of the LSCB, the children's services improvement plan, the health and well-being strategy and the City's education strategy.
61. The City executive links proactively with a range of partnerships, including Transport for London's safeguarding board and the Safer City Partnership, through formal membership, informal meetings and an inter-board chairs' meeting. Importantly, all strategies, priorities and plans relating to City children are rooted in a highly detailed understanding of the local community. The joint strategic needs assessment has been supplemented by the resident insight database, the 'troubled families' analysis and a detailed review of a particular neighbourhood in the City to enable partners to gain a clearer understanding of the local resident and non-resident population. Assertive steps have been taken to understand this diverse City, for example through the public health analysis of more than 300 local private health providers. This has been scrutinised by the City executive and is being taken forward in partnership to ensure that these providers fully understand their safeguarding duties towards children.
62. Partners share a firm commitment to innovate and to tailor safeguarding activity to the unique way in which children live in and connect with the City. For example, strong performance management information and tracking systems identify, monitor and respond to children who live locally yet may go

missing from education outside of the City, and children at risk who pass through the area or use its public transport.

63. Children's casework at all levels of need, including for those children who are in need of protection, is overseen by experienced managers who have a sound understanding of the legal and statutory framework in which they work. In almost all cases, decision-making at key points in children's lives is considered and unambiguous, leading to plans that meet children's needs and reduce risk. Managers demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of establishing permanent care arrangements for children. Case supervision is regular, and social workers have many opportunities to discuss children with managers at all levels. Social workers are clear about plans for children and can articulate these well. However, not all staff supervision records are up to date and, in a few instances, they do not reflect the key discussions about professional challenges and dilemmas that social workers describe.
64. Leaders and managers are nurturing, determined and aspiring corporate parents. Care and ambition are backed up by personal and financial investment. The assistant director visits all children looked after, personally addressing the issues that they raise with him. The City supports care leavers to the age of 25 years and sometimes beyond, whether or not they are in full-time education. Senior leaders, in partnership with the head of the virtual school, make effective use of their chain of academies to ensure that children are matched with good schools that meet their needs. They welcome care leavers into the City for work experience and apprenticeships, as they would a family member. Senior and political leaders use these arrangements creatively to establish and maintain helpful contact with young people.
65. All care leavers are in suitable accommodation and almost all are in employment, education and training. The City sets very high standards for the provision of support to its children looked after and they are adhered to. For example, through a commissioning arrangement, CAMHS assessment and, if needed, ongoing therapeutic support are provided to all children looked after, wherever they are placed. Bed and breakfast accommodation is never used.
66. The corporate parenting board receives good-quality data and information about children's experiences, and this enables members to challenge practice effectively. Questions asked by members demonstrate genuine scrutiny and insight. The scrutiny function of the safeguarding sub-committee is effective. The provision of good-quality performance information and reports enables the committee to decide what it wishes to analyse. The chair has a 'no nonsense' approach to getting to the heart of critical issues. The dual adults' and children's focus of this sub-committee enables helpful crossover and resolution of shared issues, such as young people's transition to adult services.
67. The views of children and young people are sought and acted upon. Annual consultation, undertaken by the commissioned children's rights service, results

in an action plan that is closely monitored by the improvement board and safeguarding sub-committee. Senior managers are held firmly to account for their actions, in response to the issues raised by children. For example, they have raised the profile of the virtual school and have taken appropriate steps to increase the knowledge of practitioners about immigration issues. With a direct link to senior managers, the independent reviewing officer acts as a strong and influential voice for children subject to child protection plans, children looked after and care leavers. Children are confident to raise their concerns or worries, and these are swiftly addressed. Formal complaints are rare, but when they are received they are dealt with quickly and fairly. Members of the corporate parenting board have met with children looked after and care leavers through joint meetings and a lunchtime event. Council members and the chief executive could establish even more meaningful personal relationships with children and young people by seeking out informal opportunities to get to know them well. (Recommendation)

68. Senior leaders ensure that they have an exceptionally clear line of sight on frontline practice. They have achieved this through the combination of a comprehensive quality assurance framework, a very detailed and analytical approach to performance information, and a personal interest in children's experiences. The quality assurance framework provides a clear structure, which ensures that practice is thoroughly explored and analysed through the routine oversight of case work, a robust cycle of independent and in-house case auditing, learning from complaints and consultation, and detailed scrutiny by the independent reviewing officer. Learning is translated into whole-service change through the service improvement plan. For example, quality assurance activity highlighted some areas for improvement in the independent reviewing officer service, leading to the service being brought back in house. This is now a highly effective and child-centred service.
69. The lead member for children's services takes a direct interest in practice. Over the past year, he has attended a step-down meeting, a child protection conference and a multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE) meeting. He assertively exerts his influence on behalf of individual children. The DCS regularly reviews and audits cases, inviting social workers to reflect with him on his findings. The audits carried out by managers for this inspection were reflective, clearly focused on children's experiences and, on the whole, accurate in their appraisal of the quality of practice. Early help audits consistently include the views of families and partners, but other audits do not do this routinely. (Recommendation)
70. The quality assurance of independent fostering arrangements is detailed and effective. The voice of children is a key part of twice-yearly monitoring reviews. This leads to improvements in the quality of placements. For instance, as a result of a quality assurance visit, additional training was provided for an independent foster carer, to enable her to respond more effectively to a young person's alcohol use.

71. Live and retrospective performance information is very comprehensive and is shared with the right people and forums. Performance reports are detailed, and commentary is particularly helpful where numbers are low, enabling managers at all levels to maintain a sharp oversight of services and to identify patterns and trends to scrutinise further. Low numbers do not lead to data being dismissed as insignificant. For each area of data, analysts, leaders and managers ask, 'Does this mean anything?' and, 'If so, what?' As a result, no assumptions are made about how relevant or otherwise the data is. Where numbers are low, additional child-level detail is provided. Rigorous analysis of performance information has led to targeted work and practice improvements, such as raising overall referral rates to children's services and increasing referrals to the designated officer about adults who work with children. Proactive steps are taken to improve the use of performance information continually, for example through collaboration with another London borough to improve the City's child sexual exploitation dataset.
72. Senior managers recognise that local professionals who work with children will not necessarily have the same breadth of opportunity to develop their practice skills as those who work in other areas. This potentially reduces their ability to make an exceptional difference consistently to children's lives. There are relatively low numbers of staff in the City and, as a result, they are required to deal with a wide range of tasks that would be undertaken by more specialist teams in most other areas. In response to this, and to ensure that services for children are as good as they can be, leaders have taken determined steps to provide many innovative and creative learning opportunities for staff.
73. The knowledge transfer programme, a three-year partnership between the City of London and Goldsmith's University of London, was established in 2014, to increase the ability of staff to provide outstanding services through ready access to high-quality research and knowledge. A launch event and four seminars have been attended by over 90 professionals, combining policy, practice and research, to explore subjects such as mental health and risk, and domestic abuse. The programme has completed research projects on the longitudinal impact of early help and the impact of social isolation on City families. Structured reflective practice sessions help staff to think more creatively about their work with local families. The learning in relation to domestic abuse has led directly to the development of a revised City domestic abuse policy and to the creation of a new coordinator post to counter domestic abuse.
74. In response to the recognition that abuse and neglect within affluent families can be harder to recognise and address, the DCS, the chair of the LSCB and the chief executive have worked together to commission a research project in partnership with Goldsmith's University of London. The findings of this project are due to be shared with stakeholders in autumn 2016. The City will draw on the findings to promote a greater understanding of the issues, with a view to enabling practitioners to respond better to the needs of children who may experience harm within affluent families.

75. Social workers and practitioners are very positive about the environment in which they work. It affords them the right learning opportunities to strengthen their practice and to prepare them to respond effectively to a wide range of complex case situations. For example, social workers attend the adoption and fostering boards in Hackney, and any referrals and assessments relating to the children of staff who are employed by a neighbouring borough are dealt with by the City to enhance the range of work in which social workers are involved. Moreover, staff are supported to attend higher-level courses in order to benefit individuals and all staff. In one instance, a manager undertaking a Master's level degree in strategic management was able to use her learning to strengthen further the impact of case audits on staff and on practice.
76. The children's services training programme is closely linked to City priorities and complements the LSCB training provision very well. All of the 15 training priorities for 2015–16 were achieved, including the legal context for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, the use of research in assessments and life-story work. During the inspection, the positive impact of this training was seen by inspectors in casework, such as the helpful use of research to inform assessments and plans for children, and the quality of life-story work.
77. The City's approach to staff retention is well considered and effective. It is realised on a number of levels, including providing social workers with the right technology to do their jobs, good-quality supervision and support, the care and interest of senior managers, appropriate financial reward, generous investment in training and a firm commitment to using research to improve practice. Social workers are afforded rich opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with children, through low caseloads, direct work and activity breaks. Staff reported to inspectors that the approach to improvement and the City's outward-facing culture attracted them and retains them. The children's workforce is stable at all levels and turnover is very low indeed.
78. The strong commitment to promoting learning and development extends to the independent foster carers who care for City children. Free training has been provided to carers to counter radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and children going missing. The City provides all foster carers with an innovative toolbox to enable them to help children to improve their English at a faster pace.
79. The City works resolutely with the LSCB to reach out to professionals who work in the City of London, in order to ensure that they take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. There is a particular focus on those who might not usually engage closely with children's services, such as private healthcare professionals and public schools. The 'nanny network' identifies and reaches out to carers, many of whom look after children who do not live within the City, and provides them with safeguarding advice alongside 'stay and play' sessions. The network is also used as an opportunity to raise their awareness of private fostering.

80. Commissioning arrangements are based on a clear understanding of the local population and the needs of children. Where services have not been deemed to be consistently good enough, senior and commissioning managers have rigorously reviewed arrangements. This has resulted in the decommissioning and recommissioning of services, such as the independent reviewing officer and children's rights services, leading to better quality provision and improved outcomes for children. Arrangements to meet the needs of any child who may have a plan for adoption in the future are robust. A comprehensive commissioning partnership, established in June 2015, is in place. This includes the provision of a good range of services, including post-adoption support and services for individuals who wish to seek information or help in later life. When specific commissioning needs are identified, new arrangements are made, for example through the provision of a targeted service to support young people who need intensive help to engage with work or learning. This is particularly helpful to young people whose first language is not English.
81. City leaders and partners have worked together in a focused and determined way to develop clear and practical procedures and guidance for agencies to identify and tackle child sexual exploitation. The City has its own well-structured operating protocol to counter child sexual exploitation. Wide-ranging education and awareness raising have been undertaken in the City in partnership with the LSCB. Senior leaders, including the chief executive, were closely involved in the highly successful 'notice the signs' campaign. Multi-agency training is comprehensive and targeted awareness raising includes local hoteliers. Although numbers of children at risk of child sexual exploitation in the City are low, MASE meetings ensure that children, adults and places of concern are identified and that targeted support is provided. The City has established helpful intelligence-sharing links with neighbouring authorities. All child sexual exploitation concerns are referred to and followed up by the child and family team, whether or not the children are resident in the City.
82. Partners are highly proactive in their approach to issues such as female genital mutilation and radicalisation, which have not, to date, been a problem in the City. Few cases of concern have been raised in relation to radicalisation. However, the response by partners to potential risks is very robust, demonstrating a sound knowledge of the community, effective partnerships, the interconnectedness of strategic priorities and a determined approach to identifying the individuals of concern.
83. Leaders have ensured that they are fully engaged with the 'Prevent' duty, with regular updates to the City executive and the identification of 'Prevent' leads in all 19 of the City's departments. They have worked with police to provide free 'Prevent' workshops to all foster carers caring for City children, all children looked after and care leavers, police cadets, young apprentices and those undertaking adult skills courses. The City supported the police to run a 'fun day' to engage with the local Bangladeshi community. Partners are aware of the possible links between radicalisation and child sexual exploitation, prompting 'Prevent' leads to deliver a presentation to the City MASE group.

Police and City leaders have forged links with neighbouring boroughs to share intelligence and good practice.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is outstanding

Executive summary

This is an outstanding Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). It is a dual board, covering both the City of London and Hackney. The board demonstrates an unwavering determination to safeguard children who live in or visit the City, or whose parents work there, with a firm commitment to sustaining and improving partnerships. The board has an ambitious resolve to be the best that it can be, to contribute the best possible outcomes for children, and to learn from itself, external sources and, most importantly, from children and their communities. Strong governance arrangements are evident across partnerships, developed to ensure that the City of London is not overshadowed by its dual partner authority on the board. As a result, it is making a real difference to children's lives. An example is the chair's persistent escalation of a recommendation from a SCR to the Home Office, Department of Education and the national police chief's council.

The board has inspirational leadership, which is open and reflective, with a relentless focus on quality and a passion for improvement. Outstanding partnership working has enabled the board to respond to emerging safeguarding issues through highly effective strategic approaches that positively influence children's lives. The board robustly reviews progress and takes decisive and prompt action when necessary in order to meet its objectives. The board's business plan is pivotal in improving safeguarding practice.

The board is unrelenting in its challenge to partners to improve services to safeguard children. It scrutinises agencies' compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures through effective bi-annual section 11 audits and evaluation. The board is forward thinking, demonstrates an impressive ability to reflect on a range of critical issues and robustly considers creative solutions to address individual and collective partnership concerns. Learning from SCRs, as well as from other LSCBs and relevant research, is well embedded across the partnership. The LSCB annual report provides a rigorous assessment and overview of key strengths and weaknesses across safeguarding services in the City of London and Hackney.

Learning and practice improvement is systematically cascaded to frontline staff through a wide range of creative and highly effective opportunities. The board's analysis and evaluation of performance are effective, and help partners to understand the impact of services and the quality of practice, and to identify areas for improvement. However, it would benefit from stronger links to the diverse communities within the City.

Recommendations

84. Take steps to engage with children and families in all diverse communities within the City, for example through the role of lay members.

Inspection findings – the Local Safeguarding Children Board

Inspection findings

85. The LSCB is a highly accomplished safeguarding board, supported by solid governance arrangements. It demonstrates exemplary effectiveness in holding partners to account to ensure that they safeguard children. The separate City and Hackney executive boards ensure that rigorous oversight of safeguarding practice in each local authority area is achieved, while also benefiting from economies of scale created through their shared sub-groups. The board's relationship with City of London leaders is highly effective.
86. The independent chair provides strong, credible and influential leadership. He has successfully facilitated a culture of openness and challenge that has positively influenced wider partnership working. LSCB members express a high level of confidence in the chair, who is extremely knowledgeable across all areas of the board's business. As a result, board members are motivated and engage fully with the work of the board. Safeguarding is a firm priority for all board members, demonstrated by consistently good levels of attendance, effective engagement in sub-groups, and a strong culture of constructive challenge and debate.
87. Governance arrangements are robust, with clear lines of communication between the chair, DCS, lead member and chief executive. A productive inter-board chairs' meeting, alongside clear protocols, links the chairs of the LSCB, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Safer City Partnership. It shares annual reports and business plans, which feed into strategic documents. As a result, the board effectively influences partner agencies and provides persistent challenge, to ensure that safeguarding is a golden thread running through all strategic documents.
88. The senior professional advisor, board manager and community partnership advisor provide highly effective support to the board. The senior professional advisor has been pivotal in strengthening the board's scrutiny function, as well as providing a valued resource to partners.
89. The board is forward thinking, demonstrating an impressive ability to reflect on a range of critical issues. It robustly considers creative solutions to safeguarding or partnership challenges. For example, female genital mutilation is now flagged on the City's electronic recording systems, and a private fostering mobile phone application (app) is disseminated by the board and the City to provide information for residents, practitioners, children and parents. It

is of note that the City has recently received two private fostering notifications.

90. Board members describe the chair as seeking opportunities through 'horizon scanning', to ensure that the board is proactive in anticipating new issues. This enables the board systematically to investigate emerging evidence, which might pose new and future safeguarding threats to children. For example, in response to challenges identified by City of London leaders, the board has worked with the City to commission independent research on effective intervention with affluent families in need. The board has also introduced a comprehensive and up-to-date strategy to tackle online safeguarding challenges. This sets out guiding principles for professionals about how to keep children safe in the context of social media and technology.
91. Serious incident notifications are thoroughly scrutinised by board partners through the joint SCR sub-group. This leads to appropriate and timely recommendations that are reviewed and endorsed by the chair. The national panel of independent experts has validated these decisions, commending the clear and analytical correspondence and the inclusion of children's voices in the process. Opportunities for learning from national SCRs and multi-agency case reviews are comprehensive. Lessons concerning neglect, sexual abuse and domestic abuse are widely disseminated in the City through well-attended learning events, lunchtime seminars and 'things you should know' (TUSK) briefings. Discernible differences have been made, including the implementation of an escalation policy for practitioners and managers. The majority of practitioners spoken to by inspectors had attended briefings, and almost all articulated the lessons learned.
92. The board demonstrates respectful, rigorous and tenacious challenge of partners and agencies. One member who sits on other boards said that this board is 'the most challenging, rigorous and child focused' of those he attends. It has an impressive and up-to-date log that identifies challenges, alongside persistent tracking of recommendations until sustained evidence of improved practice occurs. For example, the LSCB continues to challenge the Home Office with regard to its position on a recommendation arising from an SCR. The board is requesting a review of Home Office guidance for police on how to disclose 'soft intelligence'. This is not yet fully resolved, but the determination of the board in pursuing the issue is testament to the culture of resolute challenge.
93. The City of London has a small residential population characterised by extremes of wealth and poverty and a broad range of ethnic groups. The board has a clear commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to build partnerships based on mutual respect and trust. An example of this is the work of the board's community partnership advisor, who provides extensive support to community and voluntary organisations on a range of issues, such as economic and cultural diversity, female genital

mutilation, forced marriage, radicalisation, child trafficking and honour-based violence.

94. There are numerous examples of where the board has influenced and supported the City to maintain a strong focus on the safety and well-being of children. The board and City leaders have worked together to engage more closely with private schools, in order to ensure that safeguarding is their first priority. The addition of lay people to the board has strengthened links to schools and other settings.
95. The board maintains a very strong focus on hearing the views of children and using their experiences to influence developments to improve local safeguarding arrangements. Board members make extensive efforts to engage with children who have experienced services and, from a wider group, to use their feedback to inform practice developments. In partnership with the City, consultations with children led to the commissioning of a new children's rights service and training sessions for independent reviewing officers on immigration rights. The 'say something if you see something' campaign was launched at Hackney's youth conference, following consultation with children who challenged professionals about the original ideas for communication. The focus of the campaign changed from one of raising awareness in the local community, in order to spot signs of child sexual exploitation, to encouraging children to identify friends who may be at risk of, or experiencing, exploitation. The introduction of lay people who engage directly with children in settings such as schools and other services for children is already having an impact, but it requires further development to ensure that the authentic voices of harder-to-reach children and communities are heard. (Recommendation)
96. The board's business plan is comprehensive. It has three key strategic priorities that are underpinned by strategies to tackle safeguarding, relating to neglect, domestic violence and child sexual exploitation and preventing radicalisation and female genital mutilation. Sub-group work plans provide a robust framework detailing how the board works to safeguard children. These plans are well coordinated, effectively monitored, challenged and used to drive priorities for children robustly. Specific City sub-groups have been established to ensure that the needs of local children are prioritised.
97. The board has made substantial progress in raising awareness of female genital mutilation, forced marriage and child abuse through faith, belief or culture. The board has worked closely with public health services to influence and monitor the multi-agency response to female genital mutilation. The chair has hosted meetings with the voluntary sector and survivors of these abusive practices, enabling the board to take account of these voices in the development of the strategy to counter female genital mutilation.
98. The board closely monitors the City's 'Prevent' duty and holds agencies to account for driving their response, including awareness raising and recognition. The City 'Prevent' coordinator post is well established. The post

holder is also the community safety manager. Designated 'Prevent' leads are in place in each corporation department. Awareness-raising sessions have been held across agencies, foster carers and community groups, and the coordinator links with other boroughs to share information and good practice. Risk assessments include awareness of risks within affluent communities.

99. The 'Prevent' lead is approved to deliver workshops to raise awareness of the 'Prevent' duty. The widely disseminated Safer City 'Prevent' roadmap is informative, comprehensive and well presented. A designated email address is available for people to seek advice, alongside clear referral processes. Innovation is evident, with discussions and challenge regarding the links between radicalisation and mental health, and the connection between radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Extensive awareness raising, using a variety of media, has been effective. For example, a foster carer reported a concern about radicalisation. Work is underway to develop the use of social media to increase the community's understanding of risks further.
100. The board continues to drive the strategy and action plan to counter child sexual exploitation effectively and coordinates the partnership response through a highly effective child sexual exploitation and 'missing' working group. The board's data analyst has ensured that comprehensive information about children informs the local child sexual exploitation profile. The City's operating protocol sets out comprehensive, well-structured and practical guidance. Extensive work has been undertaken through a City-specific children sexual exploitation working group. The group coordinated a targeted City campaign with hoteliers, alongside multi-agency training and support for children, together with research and intelligence. The police refer all children at risk of sexual exploitation to City child and family services, regardless of where children reside. Effective intelligence-sharing links with neighbouring authorities are in place.
101. In May 2016, the LSCB supported the City in its highly effective and innovative 'notice the signs' campaign, utilising a range of communication media to raise staff understanding of the signs of child and adult abuse, including child sexual exploitation. This included blogs, a website and a film. Senior leaders, including the chief executive, distributed leaflets. This stimulated many conversations with members of the residential and business communities, schools and other agencies involved with children who live or spend time in the City.
102. The LSCB led the 'say something if you see something' campaign to raise public awareness of child sexual exploitation. This included a film made by young people for young people, leaflets on countering sexual exploitation for parents and young people, and free sessions of the 'Chelsea's choice' play, attended by more than 1,300 students across the City of London and Hackney. During 2015–16, the LSCB delivered seven separate training sessions on child sexual exploitation to 113 staff from the City and Hackney. A further 199 staff from the two local authorities attended the board's

conference on the theme of child sexual exploitation. 'Operation Makesafe' continues to raise awareness in the business community, including hotels, taxi companies and licensed premises.

103. The board utilises a comprehensive range of multi-agency performance information, which includes children with disabilities, unregistered schools and, more recently, attendance and reports received by agencies at child protection conferences. The dataset is clear. It represents all agencies' contributions to safeguarding and fully supports an understanding of effective practice across the whole partnership. Data and commentary are thoroughly scrutinised by the quality assurance sub-group, executive group and the main board, with appropriate focus on the board's priorities. The board receives regular reports regarding the few children who go missing in the City and the actions taken when they return, including return home interviews. However, the board has not sufficiently scrutinised the timeliness of these interviews.
104. The board comprehensively monitors multi-agency frontline practice. An extensive programme of themed audit activity is determined by the board's priorities, and local and national concerns. These include early help and intervention, child sexual exploitation, children who go missing, the journey of the child and the experiences of children with disabilities. The board considers findings from its own audits, alongside those from City single-agency audits and from staff surveys. Learning is carefully fed back to staff and findings inform training.
105. The board has ensured that safeguarding is a priority for all partner agencies through rigorous scrutiny of agencies' compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures. A comprehensive section 11 audit process engages all partners. Returns are rigorously analysed by the quality assurance sub-group. Bespoke training to support agency participation and peer reviews provides the board with assurance that agencies are meeting their safeguarding responsibilities. Training extends to diverse sections of the community. Audits have led to changes, which have improved the safety of children in the City, for example joint actions with British Transport Police regarding children using public transport. Low referral rates led to the scrutiny of two hospitals outside the City, where City children are born, to assure the board that safeguarding practice was robust. Further work is progressing to map the private health providers in the City, in order to engage them in the safeguarding agenda.
106. Early help remains a firm priority for the board, with the effectiveness of early help services evaluated through the learning and improvement framework and City sub-group. The board rigorously monitors the numbers of children who receive early help assessments, through its multi-agency dataset. The annual report provides a comprehensive overview of early help services. A multi-agency audit of the effectiveness of early help identified strengths and learning, which are widely disseminated through TUSK briefings. The City early help sub-group has led to improvements in practice and services. For example, good performance data increased the focus on concerns about

adults who work with children, and this led to an increase in referrals. Awareness raising and protocols to counter child sexual exploitation led to the identification of a small number of children with vulnerabilities. 40 partners attended a multi-agency partnership event in February 2016, which included a presentation covering the strategic objectives and operational priorities for early help.

107. The board has adopted pan-London LSCB policies and procedures, which are adapted to the City and reviewed regularly. The City has refreshed and relaunched a revised threshold document, which is comprehensive and practical. Descriptors provide clear examples for each level of need, including child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and disability, as well as a link to the joint City and Hackney escalation policy, which staff reported as extremely useful in achieving resolution when agencies disagree. Thresholds are now understood well and used by staff across the City.
108. Arrangements for the review of child deaths are highly effective. The child death overview panel (CDOP) is well attended by the right professionals and has clear terms of reference. The CDOP annual report provides a comprehensive analysis of local issues and appropriately sites this in a national and regional context. It identifies issues of concern and themes, for example the risks associated with baby slings and co-sleeping with infants. Both have resulted in well-targeted public awareness raising across the City. The panel identified the need to discuss a range of issues with the senior coroner. As a result, all coroner reports concerning the prevention of future deaths are now sent to the panel to ensure that learning is widely circulated.
109. The board has created and fostered an effective learning culture that extends to frontline practitioners and embraces the community. Professional relationships across the City are based on a team approach, ensuring excellent communication and an atmosphere of continuous improvement. The board delivers a comprehensive range of training for managers and practitioners relating directly to multi-agency improvement priorities. Technology is used creatively and well, for example the online booking system and the provision of a range of online training modules through its website. The training and development sub-group ensures highly effective planning, monitoring and oversight of all training activity. Regular reflection by the board on the learning arising from SCRs, reviews and case audits further enhances the training programme, with relevant themes shared effectively with trainers. Contemporary messages to improve safeguarding of children are comprehensively included in the rolling programme of training. The board regularly monitors the effectiveness of its training courses. This includes observation of trainers, post-course evaluation, staff surveys and random telephone calls to participants and their managers, to assess how learning has influenced practice. Following safeguarding awareness training, a City apartment receptionist raised concerns about a child to the police.

110. The annual report for 2014–15 is well written, comprehensive and evaluative, providing rigorous and detailed overview of the board’s work. The report clearly identifies learning and provides documented examples of effective and constructive challenge to partner agencies and other boards. The board’s website is accessible, mobile telephone friendly, easy to navigate and well used. It includes a comprehensive and up-to-date set of procedures with links to research information, legislation and practice guidance. The latest news from the board is highlighted on the home page and is disseminated through monthly TUSK briefings. There are regular tweets from the Twitter account to update staff.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the local authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the local authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of local authority functions and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted.

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| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Community and Children's Services | 14 October 2016 |
| Subject: Social Wellbeing Panel | Public |
| Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services | For Information |
| Report author: Adam Johnstone, Strategy Officer | |

Summary

The City of London Corporation has identified the reduction of social isolation and loneliness as a strategic priority. Research from Goldsmiths, University of London, has provided valuable insights into social isolation within the City of London and has also suggested areas where extra investigation could prove beneficial.

In September, this Committee approved the formation of a group tasked with investigating some of these areas further. Clarification was requested around the group's scope, methodology and costs.

A Social Wellbeing Panel will now be brought together to investigate specific issues relevant to social isolation in the City of London. The Panel will hear evidence from a range of contributors, and evidence heard will be used to refine the City Corporation's Social Wellbeing Strategy and its actions.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the clarifications made to the work of the Social Wellbeing Panel.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation and Healthwatch hosted a series of 'Ageing Well in the City' workshops in 2014. A common theme raised during the events was the need to do more to tackle social isolation and loneliness.
2. Tackling social isolation has subsequently been identified as a priority in the DCCS Business Plan, in the City Corporation's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, in the Mental Health Strategy and by the Adult Advisory Group.
3. The City Corporation commissioned Dr Roger Green of Goldsmiths, University of London, to carry out community ethnographic research into social isolation in the City. In July 2016, this Committee received a presentation on his research. This

research provided valuable insights into the nature of social isolation in the City of London and also suggested specific challenges where extra investigation could prove beneficial.

Current Position

4. Officers have been developing a Social Wellbeing Strategy to take forward this work and to start to address the social isolation issues faced by some residents. A public consultation was held on the draft proposals throughout September.
5. In September, this Committee approved the formation of a Social Wellbeing Panel to examine social isolation in the City in more detail. Officers were asked to report back, clarifying the scope, methodology and cost of the work.

Scope

6. Only issues identified as having a high degree of relevance for City residents will be considered by the Panel. The scope of the Panel will be to make specific recommendations for reducing social isolation in the City of London.

Methodology

7. The Social Wellbeing Panel will examine specific issues drawn from the City of London based research, engagement and consultation undertaken to date. These may be:
 - issues that emerged from Roger Green's research (e.g. highlighting the isolation faced by some older LGBT people in the City);
 - issues that have arisen from the public consultation (e.g. early responses from BAME residents suggest they are unsure the draft strategy does enough to meet their needs);
 - issues raised by Members (e.g. the problems faced by City residents who live away from the main residential estates);
 - particular approaches that have led to reductions in social isolation elsewhere (e.g. innovative uses of new technology).
8. Officers will propose a long list of topics to the Chairman of the Panel who would agree the final programme.
9. A summary report, drawing together the Panel's conclusions and recommendations will be produced.
10. The Panel may identify additional outputs or events during the course of its work. These would be proposed to the Chairman for approval.

Panel

11. Following the last Committee, three members expressed an interest and have agreed to serve on the Panel alongside the Chairman of Community and

Children's Services and the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board. These are Sir Paul Judge, Ms Emma Price and Professor John Lumley.

12. The Panel will hold four evidence sessions, hearing from contributors from other local authorities, innovative projects working in the field, national charities and community representatives.
13. In addition to the Panel sessions, a public workshop with City residents will also be held, to explore their views, experiences and suggestions. A member of the Panel will attend the public workshop and a report capturing the output of the workshop will be presented to the Panel as part of the evidence sessions.
14. The evidence sessions and public workshop would be held between November 2016 and February 2017. The Panel's final report will be published in spring 2017.

Costs

15. The direct costs of the Social Wellbeing Panel are estimated to be £2,500 for the design and print of a summary report and £1,000 for meeting expenses.
16. The project is estimated to require 43 hours of Strategy Officer time. This is within the scope of the core duties outlined in the job description for the post. If this time were not spent facilitating the Panel, an equivalent length of time would need to be spent carrying out alternative work to refine the Social Wellbeing Strategy.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. The second priority in the CCS Business Plan 2015–17 is to promote health and wellbeing so that people in the City feel safe, are socially connected and supported, and feel a sense of pride and satisfaction in where they live and in their community. Reducing social isolation and loneliness supports this objective.
18. The sixth priority in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-16 is to enable more people in the City to become socially connected and know where to go for help. Reducing social isolation and loneliness supports this objective.

Conclusion

19. Reducing social isolation and loneliness has been identified as an important way to improve the health and wellbeing of City residents. A Social Wellbeing Panel, tasked with investigating issues of particular relevance to reducing social isolation in the City of London, will make an important contribution towards this.
20. Social isolation is an important public health concern and developing a policy response tailored to the City of London's communities may present an opportunity to contribute to the regional conversation on this issue. This also fits with Policy Objective KPP3 in the City of London Corporate Plan: to engage with

London and national government on key issues of concern to our communities such as transport, housing and public health.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Social Wellbeing Panel Diagram

Adam Johnstone

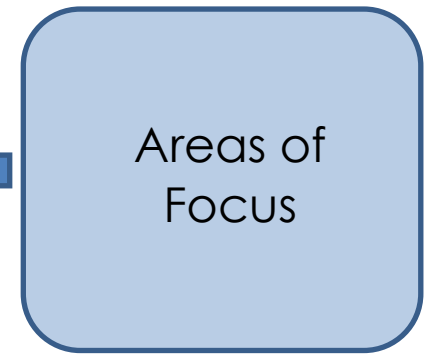
Strategy Officer, Housing and Adult Social Care

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- Commission Chairman
- 1 x CCS Chairman (or his/her representative)
- 3 x Elected Members – One Alderman and two Common Councilmen
- 1 x DCCS Director
- 1 x HWBB Chairman (or his/her representative)
- 1 x Director of Public Health
- 1 x CHSAB representative



- Health Issues
- LGBT older people
- BAME older people
- Parents' Issues
- City residents not living on the main estates
- Faith Groups
- New Technology
- Asset Based Community Development



Output

- A summary report with a section on each area of focus
- Input into the City Corporation's Social Wellbeing Strategy

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