

**Agenda for a meeting of the Children's Services
Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on
Wednesday, 1 March 2023 at 4.30 pm in Council
Chamber - City Hall, Bradford**

Members of the Committee – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	BRADFORD INDEPENDENT GROUP
Alipoor Humphreys Berry Shafiq Thirkill	Winnard Pollard	J Sunderland	Sajawal

Alternates:

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	BRADFORD INDEPENDENT GROUP
Mukhtar Walsh Johnson Regan	K Green Felstead	Stubbs	Elahi

VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

Church representative:

Joyce Simpson (CE)

Parent Governor Representatives:

Fauzia Raza & Shifa Simab

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

**Teacher Secondary School
Representative**

Tom Bright

Children's Social Care: Dr Samina Karim

Notes:

- This agenda can be made available in Braille, large print or tape format on request by contacting the Agenda contact shown below.
- The taking of photographs, filming and sound recording of the meeting is allowed except if Councillors vote to exclude the public to discuss confidential matters covered by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Recording activity should be respectful to the conduct of the meeting and behaviour that disrupts the meeting (such as oral commentary) will not be permitted. Anyone attending the meeting who wishes to record or film the meeting's proceedings is advised to liaise with the Agenda Contact who will provide guidance and ensure that any necessary arrangements are in place. Those present who are invited to make spoken contributions to the meeting should be aware that they may be filmed or sound recorded.
- If any further information is required about any item on this agenda, please contact the officer named at the foot of that agenda item.

From:

Asif Ibrahim

Director of Legal and Governance

Agenda Contact: Kanwal Amrez/Farzana Mughal

Phone: 07929 070288/07811504164

E-Mail: kanwal.amrez@bradford.gov.uk/farzana.mughal@bradford.gov.uk

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

The Director of Legal and Governance will report the names of alternate Members who are attending the meeting in place of appointed Members.

2. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

(Members Code of Conduct – Part 4A of the Constitution)

To receive disclosures of interests from members and co-opted members on matters to be considered at the meeting. The disclosure must include the nature of the interest.

An interest must also be disclosed in the meeting when it becomes apparent to the member during the meeting.

Notes:

- (1) *Members must consider their interests, and act according to the following:*

Type of Interest	You must:
<i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; not participate in the discussion or vote; and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i> OR <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Directly Related)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; speak on the item <u>only</u> if the public are also allowed to speak but otherwise not participate in the discussion or vote; and leave the meeting <u>unless</u> you have a dispensation.</i>
<i>Other Registrable Interests (Affects)</i> OR <i>Non-Registrable Interests (Affects)</i>	<i>Disclose the interest; remain in the meeting participate and vote <u>unless</u> the matter affects the financial interest or well-being (a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of a majority of inhabitants of the affected ward, and (b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest; in which case speak on the item <u>only</u> if the public are also allowed to speak but otherwise not do not participate in the discussion or vote; and leave the meeting</i>

unless you have a dispensation.

- (2) *Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to the Member concerned or their spouse/partner.*
- (3) *Members in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months must not vote in decisions on, or which might affect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting that this restriction applies to them. A failure to comply with these requirements is a criminal offence under section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*
- (4) *Officers must disclose interests in accordance with Council Standing Order 44.*

3. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

(Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 3B of the Constitution)

Reports and background papers for agenda items may be inspected by contacting the person shown after each agenda item. Certain reports and background papers may be restricted.

Any request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper should be made to the relevant Strategic Director or Assistant Director whose name is shown on the front page of the report.

If that request is refused, there is a right of appeal to this meeting.

Please contact the officer shown below in advance of the meeting if you wish to appeal.

(Kanwal Amrez/Farzana Mughal – 07929 070228/07811504164)

4. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The following referrals have been made to this Committee up to and including the date of publication of this agenda.

The Committee is asked to note the referrals listed above and decide how it wishes to proceed, for example by incorporating the item into the work programme, requesting that it be subject to more detailed examination, or refer it to an appropriate Working Group/Committee.

B. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTIVITIES

5. FULL OFSTED INSPECTION - INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES (ILACS) 1 - 6

The Strategic Director of Children's Services will present a report (**Document "V"**) following Ofsted's Inspection of Children's Social Care Services from 21st November to 2nd December 2022. Full inspections are part of the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework of inspection activities carried out by Ofsted.

Recommended -

That the Committee note the contents of the report Document "V".

(Picklu Roychoudhury – 01274 431867)

6. BRADFORD CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN 7 - 64

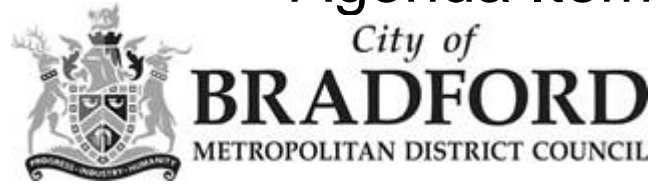
The Strategic Director of Children's Services will present a report (**Document "W"**). The areas for improvement identified in the recent Ofsted inspection (ILACS), resulting in Bradford being judged to be Inadequate overall, inform the Improvement Plan. This report is to present an update on the Improvement Plan and Progress Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Recommended –

That the Committee note the contents of the report (Document "W").

(Picklu Roychoudhury – 01274 431967)

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Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of Children's Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on 21st February 2023

V

**Subject: Full Ofsted Inspection (ILACS)
21st November to 2nd December 2022**

Summary statement:

Bradford have been subject to a number of Monitoring Visits and a Focused Visit since the outcome of the full Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in 2018, where services were judged to be Inadequate overall.

Ofsted notified the Local Authority of a subsequent full ILACS on Monday 14^h November 2022 and the inspection took place between 21st November and 2nd December 2022.

The outcome of the ILACS is the judgement of Inadequate in all areas and overall.

The report was published on the [Ofsted website](#) on 31st January 2023.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

An Equality Impact Assessment is not applicable. However, this report will provide an update on the Monitoring Visit concerned with care leavers who are amongst the most in need young people in the district with regard to consideration of equality and diversity.

Marium Haque
Strategic Director Children's Services

Portfolio:

Children & Families

Report Contact: Picklu Roychoudhury
Phone: (01274) 431867
E-mail: picklu.roychoudhury@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Executive of the details of the Ofsted full inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) which took place in November 2022. The Council has been subject to a number of Monitoring Visits and a Focused Visit since the outcome of the full Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in 2018, where services were judged to be Inadequate. Inspectors have provided feedback at subsequent Visits that whilst there have been improvements within the service, that overall more improvements were necessary.
- 1.2 Ofsted notified the Council of a subsequent full ILACS on Monday 14th November 2022 and the inspection took place between 21st November and 2nd December 2022 and the report was published on the [Ofsted website](#) on 31st January 2023.
- 1.3 The outcome of the ILACS is the judgement of Inadequate in all areas and overall.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Full inspections are part of the [Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services \(ILACS\)](#) framework of inspection activities carried out by Ofsted.
- 2.2 In September 2021, Steve Walker was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education as Children's Services Commissioner for Bradford, and was asked to bring together evidence to assess the Council's capacity and capability to improve itself in a reasonable time frame and recommend whether or not this evidence is sufficiently strong to suggest that long term sustainable improvement to children's social care functions can be achieved, should operational service control remain within the Council. He was also asked to advise on alternative delivery and governance arrangements for children's social care functions. The Commissioner recommended for the creation of an Executive Commissioner role who would oversee the delivery of children's services as he was concerned about the pace of improvement being inhibited during the establishment of the Trust. The Department for Education was not supportive of this recommendation and concluded that Children's Services in Bradford should be provided through a Children's Trust arrangement. The Council voluntarily agreed to enter into the Trust arrangement with the DfE. The planned go live date is in April 2023.
- 2.3 Preparations for the ILACS were robust and organised. Colleagues formed a highly effective virtual inspection team who supported the leadership to make all necessary arrangements for the inspection. Additionally, through support from the Leeds Relational Practice Centre, a highly experienced practice improvement and Ofsted readiness improvement consultant provided leadership and a framework for preparations and also the development of the self-assessment document with the Directorate Management Team and the social care leadership. This document is the one which sets out the evaluation of effectiveness of services and Inspectors seek to understand if their inspection findings are in sync with the self-assessment.
- 2.4 During the three weeks of the ILACS, which took place between 21st November and 2nd December 2022, Inspectors met with the Chief Executive, the Children's Social Care Portfolio Holder, Interim Director of Children's Services, the Bradford Commissioner, children and young people, foster carers, foster carer support,

Social Workers, Personal Advisers, the local judiciary, CAFCASS, One Adoption West Yorkshire, Adoptive parents, schools, Education safeguarding and the Virtual School. They looked in-depth at work carried out with young people in online case files, sought the views of young people, analysed data, reviewed a wide range of documents including the self-assessment (SEF), and considered the outcomes of audits to judge if they felt the overall judgements were in line with the findings.

2.5 Areas for improvement for The Council were identified by Ofsted which should be considered by the Executive and the wider Children's Partnership, and these are:

- Council and corporate senior leaders should ensure that they fully and effectively discharge their role as corporate parents and ensure that children's social care is provided with the resources and support required in a timely way to expedite sustainable improvements.
- The sufficiency and stability of the workforce, including senior leaders and managers.
- The quality and timeliness of assessments of risk and need in all its forms, including the response to domestic violence.
- The timely completion of statutory safeguarding checks and compliance with regulation regarding private fostering and connected carers.
- The timeliness and quality of decisions in respect of section 47 enquiries.
- The currency and accuracy of children's records.
- The effectiveness of all multi-agency meetings and their influence in driving children's plans.
- The timely escalation to public law outline (PLO) and timely progression of permanence in all its forms.
- The effectiveness and impact of independent reviewing officers.
- Foster carer morale, training, recruitment and retention, including the support offered to special guardians.
- The quality and safety of in-house residential provision, including safer recruitment.
- The offer of safe, appropriate and sustainable homes for care leavers and their preparation for leaving care.
- Clarity regarding the process of completing personal education plans so they are consistently completed by all relevant professionals.
- The quality and effectiveness of supervision to staff at all levels by managers and leaders

2.6 **Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan and Next Steps**

- We have already adapted our improvement plan to highlight any areas for improvement stated by Ofsted in the report. The majority of these areas were included in our existing plans.
- A number of programme, project and work stream teams are established to take forward our improvement agenda.
- We continue to report on progress to the Improvement Board on a quarterly basis.
- We will monitor progress on the stated areas for improvement to Ofsted.
- We are preparing for our first Monitoring Visit following the full ILACS. this will include an updated self-assessment.

- We are preparing a monthly and a quarterly monitoring report on key areas of performance from the Children and Families Trust to the Council.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Not applicable.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

4.1 The current 2023-24 budget proposal includes additional funding for Children's Social Care to address demographic growth, demand and improvement activities. These amounts will be part of the financial envelope for the emerging Children and Families Trust.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 Risk regarding the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection (ILACS) relate to the areas for improvement highlighted in the report, set out in section 2:10 of this report. Most of these areas are practice related and were identified already through the self-assessment document (SEF) and the Improvement Plan.

5.2 One of the areas was concerned with the Council and corporate senior leaders fully and effectively discharging their role as corporate parents and ensuring that children's social care is provided with the resources and support required in a timely way to expedite sustainable improvements.

5.3 This constitutes a reputational risk to Bradford, the Council and the ongoing success of the emerging Children and Families Trust.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007 sets out the requirement on the Local Authority following an inspection report. The Local Authority is required to prepare a written statement of the action which they propose to take in the light of the report, and the period within which they propose to take that action. The authority must publish the report, and the statement within such period, and in such manner, as may be prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State, normally 70 days.

The main actions being undertaken in the circumstances of this Ofsted report is the establishment of the Childrens Trust and amendments to the Improvement Plan both of which it is understood are well underway.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Not applicable.

7.5 TRADE UNION

Not applicable.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific ward implications as this report relates to all wards in the District.

7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

All the implications in this report are concerned with children, young people and their families and related to Corporate Parenting. The Local Authority and its officers should make themselves aware of the issues raised in the report.

7.8 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

Not applicable.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 Not applicable. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Full Ofsted Inspection (ILACS) held between 21st November and 2nd December 2022.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Committee are asked to note this report.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 Not applicable. However, the published letter for the full inspection (ILACS) is available on the [Ofsted website](#) from 31st January 2023.



Report of the Strategic Director Children’s Services to the meeting of Children Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on – 1st March 2023

W

Subject: Bradford Children’s Services Improvement Plan

Summary statement:

The Bradford Children’s Services Improvement Plan has strong leadership and assurance mechanisms in place. Support from the Chief Executive, elected members, the emerging Children and Families Trust, partners and senior leaders, ensures focus, drive and pace.

The new plan commenced in April 2022 and was commissioned and is governed by the refreshed Bradford Children’s Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Bradford Commissioner.

The plan has most recently been presented and discussed at the Improvement Board which took place on Thursday 2nd February 2023. The board meets every six weeks.

The areas for improvement identified in the recent Ofsted inspection (ILACS), resulting in Bradford being judged to be Inadequate overall, inform the Improvement Plan.

This report is to present an update on the Improvement Plan and Progress Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

There is not a dedicated strand for equality and diversity consideration, they are considered and addressed throughout the strands, objectives and the success measures in the plan.

Marium Haque
Strategic Director Children’s Services

Portfolio:
Children & Families

Report Contact: Picklu Roychoudhury
Phone: (01274)
E-mail: picklu.roychoudhury@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Children’s Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Children's Services Improvement Plan has strong leadership and assurance mechanisms in place. Support from the Chief Executive, elected members, partners and senior leaders ensures focus, drive and pace. The plan has most recently been presented and discussed at the Improvement Board which took place on Thursday 2nd February 2023.
- 1.2 The new plan commenced in April 2022 and was commissioned and is governed by the refreshed Bradford Children's Improvement Board, which is chaired by the Bradford Commissioner.
- 1.3 The areas for improvement identified in the recent Ofsted inspection (ILACS), resulting in Bradford being judged to be Inadequate overall, inform the Improvement Plan.
- 1.4 This report is to present an update on the Improvement Plan and Progress Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Improvement Plan is in two halves and enables a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and young people and ensuring that those supporting them and their families have the right conditions in place to provide quality services and for success.

A - Improving the lives of children and young people:

1. Who are referred to our Front Door
2. Who need early help
- 3a. Who are in need of help and protection
- 3b. With disabilities (new from January 2023)
4. Who are on the edge of care (to include a Turning the Curve plan to safely reduce the number of children needing to be looked after)
5. Who are in care and who have left care

B - Creating the conditions for success:

6. Ensuring children, young people and families have voice and influence
7. Strategic leadership ensuring the conditions for success are created
8. A sufficient and stable workforce
9. A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model
10. A strong and collaborative partnership
11. Buildings, IT, finance, admin. HR support and equipment that support quality practice
12. Data and Insight (Learning and improving through performance management and quality assurance)

- 2.1 The Improvement Plan has identified measures for success; these success measures (data and milestones) are reported on quarterly and presented to the Improvement Board in the form of the Progress Report.

- 2.2 The Improvement Board have requested that the way data tables represent success are altered, to provide more contextual information about benchmarked or target measures where this is possible. These amendments have been made for the Quarter 3 report.
- 2.2 The draft Improvement Plan and Quarter 3 Progress Report are available in *11 – Appendices* of this report.
- 2.3 The plan is iterative and dynamic and will develop and adapt in line with improvement priorities.
- 2.4 In January 2023, a new strand was introduced, to improve the lives of children with disabilities.
- 2.5 Key successes to date include:
- Introduction and implementation of the conversations approach to contacts at the Integrated Front Door based on Professor David Thorpe research. Early data reports show improvement in re-referrals reducing, and a reduction of contacts that are converted to referral, meaning that more appropriate work goes to social work for assessment.
 - Attracting Start for Life funding from the DfE for Prevention and Early Help.
 - Development of the Prevention and Early Help strategy.
 - Establishment of the Edge of Care Service (Prevention and Residential).
 - New Children in Care and Care Leavers Service established.
 - Joint Housing Protocol agreed and operational – subject to ongoing review.
 - Voice and influence - Tendering process completed for child participation and 'Mind of My Own' have been awarded the contract.
 - New MA social work course developed for existing Bradford Children's Services staff to increase the number of social workers.
 - Attracting DfE funding for additional Practice Educators to support new social work students.
 - Agreement with local universities to increase the numbers of social work students on BA and MA courses – aiming to increase the number of social workers who want to stay in Bradford.
 - Introducing a new approach to recruiting social work qualified staff from overseas.
- 2.6 The previous improvement plan concluded at the end of March 2022 and the new plan was introduced alongside the refreshed Improvement Board chaired by the Bradford Commissioner.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 There is currently a very small improvement team (two substantive PO3 officers and one externally provided Improvement Consultant) in place to provide capacity to deliver the improvement plan. The Improvement Consultant is funded by the DfE via the Leeds Relational Practice Centre as part of the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children programme. Funding has been agreed until 31st March 2023.

The current substantive resource is insufficient to support the whole of the necessary improvements set out in the improvement plan and following the Ofsted ILACS which took place in November and December 2022.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 The budgetary, workforce, internal and media communications are all high priorities with this improvement plan as this links in with children service moving into a Trust as of 1st April 2023 and as such have their own work stream and monitored separately.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 The risks relate to not implementing the improvement plan as the majority of the priorities are those which have been identified as being essential to the ongoing improvement requirements for social care, and areas for improvement identified in the recent ILACS, that will enable a move from an Inadequate Ofsted judgement.
- 5.2 By not making the required improvements, and despite the introduction of the new Children and Families Trust and the anticipated benefits that will bring, the risks are that children, young people and their families are not helped and safeguarded as they should be in the Bradford district, and that future Ofsted inspection activities identify and judge the Local Authority to be Inadequate for a third time.
- 5.3 A key risk relates to capacity. There is a large improvement agenda and a very small substantive team (supported by the addition of the temporary DfE funded Improvement Consultant) available to deliver it, now and following the Children and Families Trust commencing in April 2023. There needs to be sufficient improvement team capacity to deliver the Improvement Plan.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 There are no specific legal issues arising from this report but many of the priorities in the plan relate to the local authority's responsibilities to the Children Act 1989.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

Not applicable.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No specific issues related to the Act.

7.5 TRADE UNION

Trade Unions have been and will be consulted on relevant aspects of the plan, for example, the changes to the Integrated Front Door.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific ward implications.

7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The whole of the Improvement Plan is concerned with improving outcomes for children and young people including through Corporate Parenting.

7.8 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

No issues identified.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9. OPTIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Committee is invited to note this report, the new Improvement Plan and the Quarter 3 Progress Report (see appendices).

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – Improvement Plan.

11.2 Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 Progress Report.

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Not applicable.

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Bradford Children's Services Improvement Plan 2022 – 2024

Improving the lives of children and young people and creating the conditions for success



Introduction and context

In 2018, Bradford's Children's Services were judged to be 'inadequate'. Since then Children's Services, the wider council and partners have been on a journey of improvement. A number of subsequent Ofsted monitoring visits have identified whilst there have been improvements within the service, overall more improvements are necessary. In September 2021, the Secretary of State for Education appointed a Children's Services Commissioner to assess the Council's capacity and capability to improve itself in a reasonable time frame and recommend whether or long term sustainable improvement to children's social care functions could be achieved, whether operational service control should remain within the Council and to advise on alternative delivery and governance arrangements for children's social care functions. The outcome was that Department for Education concluded that Children's Services in Bradford would be provided through a Children's Trust arrangement. The planned go live date is in April 2023.

A refreshed and refocused improvement board has been established and is chaired by the Bradford Commissioner. The board have commissioned a dynamic and iterative improvement plan, the Bradford Children's Services Improvement Plan, to provide a focused approach to making the improvements necessary to improve the lives of children and young people and to establish the conditions for success. There is not a dedicated strand for equality and diversity consideration – this should be considered and addressed throughout the strands, objectives and the success measures.

The inspection of services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) resulted in a number of areas in which we must improve, and partners have resolved to make these improvements and more. The Bradford Children's Services Improvement Plan should be read alongside the Bradford Local Area SEND Action plan where partners across the District will provide the drive and ownership to improve the areas Ofsted have identified as requiring a Written Statement of Action (WSOA) for driving forward the requirements we need to make.

Foreword

On behalf of the Bradford Children's Services Improvement Board we are delighted to present this improvement plan. This is a great opportunity for Bradford and District to make the crucial changes we need to ensure services for children, young people and their families in Bradford are fit for purpose and subject to continuous improvement so that children and young people are safe, healthy, learning and achieving.

As a board we have committed to making sure that improvements are delivered across all agencies across the district that support and deliver services for families to achieve our aim that all children and young people have the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy good outcomes.

Our improvement plan is underpinned by restorative, strength-based and family-led approaches which seek to address the impacts of poverty, and promote equality and diversity, and the voice and influence of children, young people, and their families. We will continue to work in partnership at both strategic and operational levels to realise our aims and objectives.



Eileen Milner
Chair of the Children and Families Trust



Marium Haque
Strategic Director Children's Services

Governance and ensuring success

Governance - 'Working with'

Governance of the improvement plan has strong leadership and assurance mechanisms in place. Support from the chief executive, elected members, partners and senior leaders ensures focus, drive and pace. The programme also has strong cross-party support, with clear commitment from all group leaders to support the improvement process.

Bradford Children's Improvement Board

The Bradford Children's Improvement Board is the key partnership body with ownership of the Improvement Plan and responsibility for its delivery. It is made up of strategic representation from partner agencies, working to agreed terms of reference. The Improvement Board is chaired by the Bradford Commissioner.

Bradford Safeguarding Partnership

The Improvement Board will ensure that decisions and activities dovetail with those of the Bradford Safeguarding Partnership which co-ordinates safeguarding across different agencies and promotes the welfare of children in Bradford

Monitoring Performance and Quality – how much we do and how we do it

Using data and intelligence to monitor and improve performance and quality of practice will be key to the success of our improvement journey, and is a vital part of new ways of working across the council in the future. Progress against the Improvement Plan will be reported to the Children's Improvement Board. Reporting will include but not be limited to:

- A performance report including progress against key indicators linked to the Improvement Plan
- Discrete scorecards linked to the various strands

Making a difference to children, young people and families

Our approach is firmly focused on improving outcomes for children, young people and families. In addition to data and intelligence which shows how we are performing against key indicators, we are using Outcome Based Accountability to demonstrate the difference our improvements make to the lives of children and their families. Our updates to the Improvement Board, will show through case studies and feedback from children, their families and partners the positive impact of changes.

Glossary of terms

Below is a list which provides short explanations of acronyms and professional terms in this plan.

- Integrated Front Door (IFD) is a team of professionals including Children's Services social workers, police, early help, health and education which responds to initial enquiries regarding children and young people in Bradford.
- Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) - a programme that gives newly qualified social workers extra support during their first year of employment. The programme aims to help them develop their skills, knowledge and professional confidence. The ASYE programme for social workers who work with children and families is based on the statement of knowledge and skills for child and family social work.
- Corporate Parenting Panel - co-ordinates and oversees the work undertaken with children in care in Bradford to make sure that they are in appropriate placements and receive the same opportunities as their peers.
- LCS (Liquid Logic Children's Services) Children's Social Care System has been specifically developed by and for practitioners to allow case management and record keeping for children in need, looked after children, adoption and child protection cases, as quickly and simply as possible.

About our Improvement Plan

In two halves, the plan enables a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and young people and ensuring that those supporting them and their families have the right conditions in place to provide quality services.

A - Improving the lives of children and young people

B - Creating the conditions for success

A - Improving the lives of children and young people:

1. Who are referred to our Front Door
2. Who need early help
3. Who are in need of help and protection
4. Who are on the edge of care (to include a Turning the Curve plan to safely reduce the number of children needing to be looked after)
5. Who are in care and who have left care

B – Creating the conditions for success

6. Ensuring children, young people and families have voice and influence
7. Strategic leadership ensuring the conditions for success are created
8. A sufficient and stable workforce
9. A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model
10. A strong and collaborative partnership
11. Buildings, IT, finance, admin. HR support and equipment that support quality practice
12. Data and Insight (Learning and improving through performance management and quality assurance)

1 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who are referred to our Integrated Front Door

The 'Front Door' for social work services plays a crucial role in the safeguarding system in Bradford – as the place where local people and services can access robust and well-informed advice, support and decision-making from social work professionals. Getting this right is vital for ensuring that every child gets the right support and protection at the right time, and getting this wrong can lead to both delayed help for children and unsustainable pressures for local agencies and the social work service, leading to a cycle of growing pressure and weakening practice. An effective Front Door benefits from key partners working closely and collaboratively together to achieve improved outcomes.

In Bradford, too many contacts are being made to the front door that do not require a social work response and the proportion that result in No Further Action (NFA) is too high. This places an unnecessary burden on the front door and means many families are not helped early enough and face avoidable contact, referral, and social work assessment.

What we are aiming for:

- Greater collective ownership, consistency and accountability of the Front Door; strengthening and embedding partnership working, processes and governance.
- An environment that encourages a culture of challenge across the partnership, where appropriate, and healthy dialogue is welcomed.
- Response to risk is appropriate and consistent at all times.
- Partner agencies consistently make appropriate contacts.
- Rebalance of the proportion of referrals and assessments leading to no further action.
- Children and young people safeguarded out of hours by children's specialist emergency duty team (EDT).
- Joint, shared decisions about the right service, right time for children and families.

How we will do this:

- Introducing and embedding an approach based for the IFD based on conversation-based contacts and referrals – based on Professor David Thorpe research.
- As part of new approach, establishing a weekly partnership review of decision-making.
- Establishing a dedicated Emergency Duty Team (EDT) for children and young people.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Families receive the right support and the right time.
- Partners are confident in shared decision-making.
- Children's EDT is operational.
- We will monitor the number and outcomes of contacts and referrals on a quarterly basis.

2 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who need early help

Early Help for children and families is more effective and less expensive than intervening when problems become entrenched. Families should be enabled and supported to have the right conversations, with the right people and at the right time about their needs or concerns, so that statutory interventions can be avoided where this is appropriate. Intervening as early as possible, regardless of the age of the child or young person, can positively improve their outcomes. Being helped earlier is better for children and families and also ensures that the local safeguarding system is sustainable. In Bradford, historic disinvestment in early help and prevention has resulted in children, young people and their families not being helped early enough and as such there is a need for an improved offer across the district.

What we are aiming for:

- Families being helped by those that know them best, as early as possible in the life of the problem, in the communities in which they live, and for access to help made simpler
- A rebalancing and strengthening of the safeguarding system through developing better Early Help and preventative services
- A reduction of the pressures on statutory social work services through improved early help and community support
- An effective partnership approach to early help across the district based on shared: ownership, understanding, principles and values

How we will do this:

- Implementing the Start for Life the programme across the district and enhancing support to children in their first 1,001 days.
- Making early help 'Simpler, Nearer and Earlier' – by further developing our Family Hubs arrangements and ensuring they are well known, welcoming and accessible; and building area based Family Hubs networks involving family members and Third Sector and Education partners.
- Implementing robust arrangements for evaluation and co-production and expanding work with peer supporters and volunteers building on supporting the District to be a safe, green and active place to live, work and play.
- Harnessing opportunities from the City of Culture to create an inclusive, creative environment for babies, children and young people which celebrates the vibrant diversity of our district.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Feedback from families about if they feel they have been helped
- Number of multi-agency early help assessments (tier 2 and tier 3).
- % of repeat referrals to the Front Door
- % of early help audits carried out where the outcome is 'Good or Outstanding Practice'
- Number of multi-agency practitioners trained in early help related workforce opportunities who become lead practitioners
- Proportion of local partners reporting high levels of confidence and satisfaction with locality early help services
- We will monitor data on a quarterly basis

3a - Improving the lives of children and young people - who are in need of help and protection

For those children and young people whose needs cannot be met by universal or early help approaches, they may become subject to child in need or child protection plans depending on the presenting issues and circumstances. Children and young people should be protected through effective multi-agency arrangements with key participants attending multi-agency meetings (for example, child in need meetings, strategy meetings, core groups, initial or review child protection conferences, child exploitation risk management meetings). These meetings need to be effective forums for timely information-sharing, planning, decision-making and monitoring and actions should happen within agreed timescales and the help and protection provided reduce risk and meet need.

Bradford is continuing to improve despite the challenges faced by the national shortage of qualified social workers and an over-reliance on agency workers. This instability of workforce continues to impact on the quality of practice and is highlighted in a number of Ofsted Monitoring visit letters. There is also much work to do to improve multi-agency relationships at all levels to ensure that the needs of vulnerable children and young people are met:

'The need for improved partnership working is recognised by the senior leaders of all agencies and partners are committed to working together to improve relationships, services and outcomes for children and families in Bradford (Commissioners Report 2022).

What we are aiming for:

- Partnership approach to compliance for strategy discussions in line with national good practice guidelines.
- Social work teams focusing on the right children, at the right support at the right time.
- Timeliness and quality of all Child in Need and Child Protection statutory processes.
- Increased attendance for children and young people in their education settings.

How we will do this:

- Partnership commitment to ensure resources are deployed in a timely manner to enable strategy meetings take place in time with full statutory attendance.
- Using a focused improvement approach to improving key areas of safeguarding practice.
- District wide approach to improving educational attendance including those not on a school roll.
- Promoting the identification of Privately Fostered children and notifications made to the Local Authority.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Review and audit show strong and improving decision-making practice.
- Compliance data on strategy discussions – timeliness and attendance.
- Attendance data of key partners at ICPCs and RCPCs.
- Educational attendance data
- Proportion of initial Child Protection Conferences within 15 working days
- All relevant agencies have processes in place to support identification of Privately Fostered children

3b - Improving the lives of children and young people with disabilities

This strand was initiated in January 2023 and is in development. It will pull across the relevant sections as set out in the SEND Written Statement of Action which relate to social care delivery for children & young people with disabilities. This will allow a consistent read across between both the Improvement Plan for Children's Social Care and the wider SEND Improvement journey. The SEND Written Statement of Action has recently been approved by Ofsted.

What we are aiming for:

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How we will do this:

- Streamlined pathway, eligibility criteria in line with good and outstanding authorities, smooth but robust assessment process and multi-disciplinary Team to deliver support to families with children whom have a disability and/or complex needs.
- Improved access and understanding to accurate information and advice for families.
- Increase the sufficiency for children with complex needs.
- Skilled workforce to deliver a good and outstanding service to families and children with a disability and/or complex needs.
- Communications, engagement and co-produced outputs with families and children with a disability and/or complex needs.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Success measure to be identified in February 2023

4 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who are on the edge of care – including a Turning the Curve plan

Many children and young people are considered to be on the 'Edge of Care' in that they are at risk of becoming looked after. There are many reasons for this including parental capacity and parent's needs and / or the child's needs including non-engagement with education or anti-social behaviour, and may include that the child has been subject to a child in need or a child protection plan. Without the right support to the child and the family, the situation may worsen and the outcome may be that the child becomes looked after. Edge of care interventions are essential in supporting children to be able to remain with their families. In addition, in Bradford, there are too many children in care and this can often result in them experiencing poorer outcomes than their peers, and there is considerable expenditure on external placements. A turning the curve plan for the district will aim to: reduce the number of children who need to become looked after; where it is in the best interests of children, carry out targeted work with the family so children can go home; and reduce expenditure on costly external placements.

What we are aiming for:

- Improve long term outcomes for children and young people
- Effective support to families so that children are able to live with their families
- Safe reduction in the numbers of children who need to be looked after
- Reduction in expenditure on external placements

How we will do this:

- Development of an Edge of Care service to safely support children to avoid coming into care and for children to go home where it is safe to do so - – a new model and approach.
- Introduction of evidence based approaches to support children to return home (reunification).
- Identification of actions from a Turning the Curve Event focusing on the factors why large % of children have statutory interventions such as being in care.
- TtC - Collaboration with Born in Bradford to research and analyse key issues why Bradford children need statutory interventions such as being in care
- TtC - Agreeing and trialling / piloting new approaches that bridge Early Help and Social Work
- TtC - Reviewing existing approaches and services to safely reduce the number of children in care that work and expand as per findings
- TtC – Develop and implement evidence based approach to reunification
- Identification of those children whose care orders can be discharged, e.g. those who are placed with parents, those who can live under Special Guardianship with family and friends and whose adoption orders can be more swiftly progressed.
- Enhancement of family decision making approaches (e.g. Family Group Conference) to identify and harness the utility of the child's whole family and network so that care can be avoided.
- Establishment of a Placements Review Panel to ensure placements are meeting the children's needs whilst ensuring best value for money.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Number and RPTT of children in care and number and RPTT new entrants to care.
- Number of those who have left care due to adoption and Special Guardianship Orders.
- Number of children who have benefitted from evidence based approach and have avoided care or have gone home.
- Number of children and young people in external residential placements.
- Outreach edge of care service - % who did not enter care after being supported.
- Residential edge of care service - % who did not enter care after being supported.

5 - Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care

As 'Corporate Parents' we need to make sure that children and young people who are looked after and who have left care benefit from the highest quality support possible to ensure they have healthy, happy, purposeful lives and achieve their full potential. Most young people are supported by their parents well into their twenties, so we need to consider how together as a partnership we can provide the same or better support for Care Leavers who face more challenges than many young people in their transition to adulthood. In addition, we need to make sure there is better help in place for those who need extra support with their mental health, and to support all care leavers into learning and work and housing that meet their needs.

What we are aiming for:

- Corporate Parenting Strategy governed by an effective Corporate Parenting Panel aiming for the highest standards of care, support and outcomes for children in care and care leavers
- The right type of placements and housing, in the right places to meet the needs of children and young people in care and care leavers
- Improved outcomes for children in care and care leavers through a dedicated single service
- Bradford district recognises and celebrates the achievements of children in care and care leavers
- Smooth transition to adult services where they are required
- Wellbeing and mental health needs are recognised and support to access services is improved
- All Care Leavers (except those with exceptional circumstances) are in learning or work, or have a clear, well-resourced plan to help them into learning or employment
- Life stories can 'travel' with children and young people and can be accessed digitally

How we will do this:

- Corporate Parenting Strategy, setting strategic direction for Children in Care and Care Leavers
- Corporate Parenting Panel provides robust governance for the Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Agreement and implementation of Sufficiency Strategy ensuring the right type of placements available locally at the right time for the right children and young people
- Establishing dedicated Children in Care and Care Leaver service
- Ensuring transition work to adult services for those who need them is timely and managed jointly by adults and children's services
- Putting the Joint Housing Protocol for care leavers into operation
- District approach to increasing work related opportunities for Care Leavers to ensure they are engaged in meaningful work in their community and are in education, employment or training
- Improving access to mental health support
- Digital approach to Life Story work is established and operational
- Children in care and care leavers' achievements are celebrated by the district

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Data: on % placement stability, % Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQs) where scores indicate need; % care leavers in suitable accommodation; % care leavers who are in Education, employment and training; and % Children in care and care leavers who have a digital life story.
- Corporate Parenting Panel includes elected members, and key partners.
- Children in Care and Care Leavers service is established.
- % Transition plans at age 17.
- Housing protocol is agreed, approved and operational.
- Number of employment experience opportunities by agency and employer.
- Establishment of celebration events; feedback from children and young people.

6 - Improving the lives of children and young people – by ensuring they have voice and influence

Children and young people have a right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives. Having a voice and influence means they feel that their voices are listened to, valued and can influence decisions and actions. The term 'voice and influence' encompasses consultation, feedback, participation, empowerment; and active engagement. There is strong evidence that working with children and young people wherever possible, instead of doing things to them or for them produces better outcomes and helps to build confidence and resilience. Giving voice and influence to children and young people in decision making demonstrates our commitment to them and acknowledges their right to shape their own future. It increases trust and can enable positive change even in complex situations. Agencies need to feel confident that decisions are informed by what children and young people say they want and need, which should lead to better quality services, saving money and using resources more effectively. In this improvement plan, Bradford Children's Services are focusing primarily on voice and influence for children in care and for care leavers. Future developments would include all children open to social care and working with parents.

What we are aiming for:

- Children in care and care leavers are routinely able to have voice and influence using a variety of approaches
- Care leavers routinely have access to exit interviews to understand their experience
- Learning from voice and influence activity is triangulated, analysed, shared, and changes made are communicated back to children and young people and staff

How we will do this:

- Strengthening and consolidating the three established voice and influence forums – younger children in care, older children in care and care leavers
- Establishing a consistent approach to exit interviews with those who are leaving care
- Introducing a digital mechanism for providing information, seeking feedback and providing a feedback loop to all children in care and care leavers
- Analysing a range of sources of feedback from children in care and care leavers to inform service development and improvement
- Identification of opportunities to collaborate with the work for Bradford to become a Child Friendly City
- Developing quarterly report on triangulated feedback from a range of sources to provide thematic findings and recommendations for improvement and service development

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Number of children and young people participating in each of the three groups (younger children in care (CiC), older children CiC and care leavers)
- Number of children and young people attending Corporate Parenting Panel
- Establishment of digital mechanism and number of children and young people being informed, consulted and providing feedback
- Number and proportion of Exit Interviews carried out with care leavers
- Number of children and young people taking part in Chat Back sessions
- Number of children and young people involved in recruitment interviews
- Quarterly report is implemented

7 – Strategic leadership ensuring the conditions for success are created

Research and inspection in Children’s Services has shown the importance and impact of high quality leadership. Ofsted (2016) highlight the key role of leadership in driving change and improvement ‘Ofsted has seen effective leadership transform the quality of work with children: leaders with a firm grip on practice at every level, who make sure vulnerable children don’t have to wait for help and that frontline professionals have enough time to work with every family on their caseload’.

Strategic partnership leaders across the district need to focus on ‘creating the conditions for success’ – ensuring there is a strong culture of child focus, line of sight on practice, learning and improvement, clear direction and support for staff with strong visibility and access, and the right partnerships and resources in place to support services.

Bradford has had too many changes in leadership and Ofsted continue to focus on this. The approach to leadership used in authorities like Leeds, West Berkshire and Stockport – a focus on relationships and whole system change - has been shown to have a big impact leading to rapid improvement. This approach will be adopted in Bradford leading up to and beyond the introduction of the new children’s trust arrangements.

What we are aiming for:

- Improved outcomes for children, young people and families in line with the Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan priorities
- Working *with* families to enable positive change and approach to co-production
- Workforce who feel supported
- Stability, visibility and accessibility of leadership
- Positive external validation from Ofsted
- Effective line of sight on practice with children, young people and families across agencies
- Delivering financial sustainability

How we will do this:

- Establishing the Children and Families Trust, and senior leadership team
- Training and development programme for Elected Members to bolster strategic support and challenge role incorporating Corporate Parenting (Total Respect)
- Developing an improvement team to ensure inspection readiness and relentless focus on improvement
- Developing a district wide and multi-agency approach to co-production voice and influence for children, young people and parent carers
- Maximising staff engagement through a range of approaches including: continue programme of staff briefings and consultation; Staff Reference Group and Pulse surveys
- Agreeing and implementing a financial sustainability strategy

How we will know we are succeeding:

- External validation from Ofsted (Monitoring Visits, JTAI, Focused Visits, Annual Conversation)
- Feedback from staff e.g. through staff briefings and consultation, Staff Reference group, Pulse Surveys, and Social Work Health Check Survey
- Feedback from children, young people and families
- Vital Signs reports
- Financial Reports
- Improvement plan strands progress and achieve objectives in timescales

8 – A sufficient and stable workforce

When working to improve outcomes for all children and young people, success depends in large part on the capacity and quality of those people who plan, manage and deliver social care services at the front line. We need a skilled and more stable workforce, in sufficient numbers, led and deployed effectively around the needs of children and young people in Bradford. Currently there is an over-reliance on the use of agency workers and a number of vacancies. This leads to instability of service, inconsistency of support to children and their families and an unsustainable budgetary pressure.

What we are aiming for:

- A clear understanding of what a sufficient workforce looks like
- A stable workforce which provides good quality, consistent care to children, young people and their families
- Reduced overspend on agency so that budgets come back in line with plans
- Bradford to become a 'destination employer' for social workers at all levels
- Clear career pathways linked to succession plans that mitigate the risk of under resource and skills gaps

How we will do this:

- Completing a modelling exercise to understand the optimum structure required to meet demand whilst maintaining a healthy case load; and implement optimum service structure and maintain budget stability
- Increasing the proportion of permanent staff by:
 - An ongoing high quality recruitment campaign that builds on the Bring Heart brand
 - Targeting agency staff to move to permanent recruitment
 - Implement overseas recruitment
 - Attract more newly qualified social workers (NQSW) from out of the district to take their Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE) in Bradford
 - Develop proposals to improve staff engagement and retention
 - Partnership with local universities to provide additional social work student places for Bradford

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Increase in number of permanent staff and reduction in turnover
- Decrease in the number of agency staff
- Evidence of strong staff engagement
- Impact on budgetary pressures
- Positive external validation e.g. Ofsted

9 - A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model

The quality of front line practice is key to improving the lives of children and families in Bradford district. It is the way that our staff work with children, young people and families that will, in the end, make the difference and build the relationships, skills and confidence to make change. Effective practice needs shared values, a good theoretical practice model, good skills and knowledge from staff and the right training, support and supervision from managers. We are implementing our Restorative Based Practice Model which focuses on empowering our children, young people and families to find solutions to their problems, and recognises them as experts of their own lives.

What we are aiming for:

- Shared values and restorative based model of practice in place across Bradford Children's Services.
- Shared understanding of good practice across the district.
- Highlighted and shared good or outstanding practice.
- High quality, comprehensive, and responsive Continuous Professional Development offer to social work staff with voice of young people
- Social work students better prepared for post qualification
- Systematic approach to ensuring workforce development opportunities offered and taken up as a learning outcome for audit and external validation

How we will do this:

- Implementing Restorative Practice training and development programme and capacity to embed restorative practices such as maximising family decision making opportunities; restorative approach to complaints; restorative leadership sets. Working with neighbouring local authorities to support implementation.
- Increased multi-agency and multi-disciplinary joint workforce development opportunities
- Carrying out Appreciative Enquiries through the Safeguarding Partnership.
- Developing additional ASYE Academy Faculties for specific social care roles.
- Continued focus on intelligence to design required workforce development programmes
- Increased presence of social work specialists on social work courses and young people in workforce development opportunities
- Implementing an approach to ensuring workforce development opportunities taken up where required and identified

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Proportion of (a) Bradford staff and (b) partner staff trained in Restorative Based Practice Model.
- Proportion of those who have received training who report high quality and impact of training on improved practice.
- Audit shows increasing quality of practice.
- Analysis of workforce development opportunities offered, taken up and followed up when not attended.
- Number of young people involved in workforce development opportunities.
- Number of Appreciative Enquiries carried out.

10. A strong and collaborative partnership

Success and change in Children's Services relies on strong and effective partnership working – children, young people and families need joined up working between all local services and these services need to be shaped and funded collectively if they are to succeed. Many of the issues raised by Ofsted and the problems identified in Bradford have related to the effectiveness of partnership working in recent years. There is a strong commitment by partners and a key aim of the Improvement Plan must be to make best use of this to improve outcomes for children and young people and their families. Quotes from the Bradford Commissioner's Report, 2021

'Whilst there is evidence that the Bradford Safeguarding Partnership is working well, overall partnership working in Bradford is not strong. There is no clear vision for children that is shared and owned by agencies working with children and young people in Bradford.'

'Relationships between the local authority and some partners have been strained. There is a desire and commitment to reset these relationships and this needs to be a priority going forward.'

What we are aiming for:

- Robust Improvement Plan and high functioning Improvement Board with a relentless focus on improving outcomes for children and young people across the Bradford District
- Governance arrangement to lead development and implementation of high quality, refreshed Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and programme ensuring district wide focus and effort on improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Good progress for strengthening the role of Bradford Children's Safeguarding Partnership and district wide response to National Panel Recommendations.
- Collective investment across services in shared priorities, commissioning and plans.
- Collective efforts across Bradford towards realising a Child Friendly City.
- Collective connection to the children and young people's voice and experience

How we will do this:

- Establishing Bradford Children's Improvement Board and develop a quality Improvement Plan.
- Holding a series of Turning the Curve events through the Improvement Board to identify shared actions to make improvements in key areas of work with children and young people.
- Holding conversations to explore the establishment of a Children's Partnership.
- Developing a refreshed Children and Young People's Plan and identify who will implement it.
- Working jointly with the Safeguarding Children's Partnership to review and refresh if appropriate the BDSCP Business Plan, ensuring correlation with the Improvement Plan and the CYPP.
- Addressing the local recommendations from the National Panel review report into the death of Star Hobson and Arthur Labinjo-Hughes.
- Utilising Strategic Joint Commissioning and refreshing approach to funding for high cost placements, children and young people with Continuing Health Care Needs and CAMHs.
- Identify opportunities to Child Friendly City – business and community partnership
- Ensuring that the work of the board is informed by the voice and experience of children and young people in line with the terms of reference agreed by the Improvement Board.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Partners report improved satisfaction and confidence in partnership arrangements and joint working.
- Partners report improved confidence and knowledge of key local safeguarding policies and services including 'thresholds' and local hubs.
- Audit and data show improvements to practice in key areas of joint working including CP processes, and domestic violence.
- Feedback from children, young people and families.

11 – Buildings, IT, HR, Finance, Business Support and equipment that support quality practice

The physical and support function aspects of the conditions for success are critical in ensuring that services working directly with children, young people and their families can focus the majority of their efforts on improving lives and outcomes. These aspects include the places where people work and the IT kit they use that help remove barriers and support high quality practice. Equally, enabling Human Resources (HR), Finance, Information Governance (IG), Commissioning, and Business Support services play an essential role in improving services, lives and outcomes – and improving the daily worked lives of frontline managers and their teams.

What we are aiming for:

- Greater integration of services where possibilities exist
- High quality office accommodation in locations that promote multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working and are family friendly
- Social work teams feel they have the conditions in place to do a good job including HR, IG, Commissioning, Finance and Business Support
- IT and digital solutions that reduce bureaucracy and time spent in front of computers and allow more time spent with families
- Staff wellbeing is promoted

How we will do this:

- Agreeing and implementing refreshed and tailored support arrangements for HR, IT, Finance, Business Support, IG, and Commissioning for Children's Services.
- Implementing a workforce development approach for managers for HR, IT, Finance, Information Governance etc.
- Identifying opportunities for co-location of multi-agency services for families e.g. early help with social work and other partners where possible.
- Ensuring that Children's social care office bases are child and family friendly and in locations that promote multi-disciplinary working; longer term plan for co-location around family hubs and schools.
- Securing suitable Business Support capacity to ensure key processes are met, particularly those that are statutory.
- Engaging staff in reviewing and reducing bureaucratic burdens that get in the way of social work with families.
- Promoting staff wellbeing and emotional support, drawing on the offer available through the council, for example, Mindfulness training, staff networks and using regular bulletins for updated information; and encouraging engagement with regular Pulse Surveys for additional insight.

How we will know we are succeeding:

- Staff satisfaction survey
- Feedback from managers on time spent on HR, IG and finance activities
- Number of co-located services
- Impact on statutory timescales
- Number of staff engaged in wellbeing offers
- Reduction in time spent on recruitment and other HR activities by social work managers

12 – Insight - learning and improving through performance management and quality assurance

When providing services to children, young people and their families, and focusing on how to improve, we need to be able to ask ourselves some key questions:

- What did we do?
- How much did we do and did we do it in the right timeframe?
- How well did we do it?
- Did we do the things we should be doing or set out to do to achieve overall outcomes for children, young people and families?
- Is anyone any better off?

To be able to answer these questions, our performance management (PM) and quality assurance (QA) arrangements need to be robust and allow us to move from data to insight. There are strong arrangements in Bradford but we are continuously improving what we do.

What we are aiming for:

- Using insight from PM and QA for greater focus on essential improvement activities that promote improved outcomes
- Strengthened PM and QA arrangements
- Strengthened leadership role, understanding, engagement and expertise in QA, improvement and learning
- Identification of opportunities for further collaboration and partnerships across the district for insight and learning
- Improved data sharing at the Improvement Board

How we will do this:

- Embedding a dispersed leadership approach to performance management and quality assurance, with local areas collaboratively reviewing performance with staff, and performance management/ quality assurance reflected in individual service plans.
- Ensuring the quality of audits through consistent follow up on recommendations and sharing learning in teams.
- Developing a Performance Framework including review of existing suite of performance reports.
- Developing a Quality Assurance report which analyses all QA activity (audits, external validation, inspection, feedback from children and families etc.) and identifies areas and actions for improvement
- Reviewing and developing the QA role of IRO and CP service
- Reviewing and developing the QA role of the Safeguarding Partnership
- Developing partnerships with Born in Bradford and Data Accelerator – initial projects to support Turning the Curve (see strand 4 - Edge of Care)
- Agreeing development programme for middle managers and Team Managers to strengthen their role, understanding, engagement and expertise in PM, QA, improvement, and learning
- Identifying and sharing partner data sets at the Improvement Board

How we will know we are succeeding:

- New PM and QA framework is implemented
- Quality Assurance report is implemented
- Partners share relevant data reports at the Improvement Board
- % of audits recommendations are followed up

Improvement Plan on a Page – Key Priority Milestones – *subject to further population as work streams progress*

Improving the lives of children and young people

Strand of the plan	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sept 23	Oct 23
1 – Front door	Phase 1 + launch of practitioner line	Weekly referral review meeting	Phase 2 + Launch of public line; DT review		Discrete CYP EDT; DT review			DT review			DT review	
2 – Early Help	Start for Life programme leads in post; Co-production workshop	Simpler, Nearer, Earlier (SNE) & Family Help (FH) Theories of Change;	Early Help Strategy published; SNE Plan; Start for life (SfL) delivery plan; FH impl. plan	New processes for simpler access to early help; Impl. SNE; SfL delivery begins	SfL + FH delivery plans will inform future key milestones							
3 – Help & Protection		Private fostering plan										
4 – Edge of Care & Turning the Curve to safely reduce no.s of children in care	All IT equipment upgraded; DfE Funding decision on new home purchases	Increase in SGO and adoption; Born in Bradford collaboration	Children’s Homes Procedures Manual update; Induction & training programme		Homes Regulatory Compliance review	Statements of Purpose & Function Review; Refurbishment of the Willows and purchase off The Birches	Staffing structure for the Birches and Ofsted registration				Homes Regulatory Compliance review	Statements of Purpose & Function Review
5 – Children in Care & Care Leavers	Joint Housing Protocol	Children in care + Care Leavers service		Corporate Parenting Strategy	Plan for celebration events						Digital life stories implemented	

Creating the conditions for success

Strand of the plan	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Sept 23	Oct 23
6 – Voice & Influence	Corporate Parenting training; Young voice forum is operational	Checkpoint review of Exit Interviews for care leavers	Quarterly report initiated									
7 – Strategic Leadership												
8 – Workforce	Optimum structure & budget agreed; On-boarding starts of international recruits	New DfE funded Practice Educators commence	40 international recruits started; 15 NQSW in ASYE	New Bradford sponsored MA SW course commences	2 nd Staff retention payment							
9 – Practice Improvement & Practice Model												
10 – Partnership												
11 – Buildings, IT, HR, Finance etc.	Business Support capacity review completed	Identifying opportunities for area teams & co-location	Agreeing & implementing refreshed & tailored support arrangements for staff as they move into the Trust		Remaining area teams to move into their perspective localities							
12 – Data & Insight												

Summary of Ofsted areas for improvement – ILACS Report Published 31st January 2023

#	Area for Improvement – to be aligned to existing strand of the plan following consultation	Suggested Strand
1	Council and corporate senior leaders should ensure that they fully and effectively discharge their role as corporate parents, and ensure that children’s social care is provided with the resources and support required in a timely way to expedite sustainable improvements.	7 – Strategic leadership ensuring the conditions for success
2	The sufficiency and stability of the workforce, including senior leaders and managers.	8 – A sufficient and stable workforce
3	The quality and timeliness of assessments of risk and need in all their forms, including the response to domestic violence.	3 – Improving the lives of children and young people who are in need of help and protection
4	The timely completion of statutory safeguarding checks and compliance with regulation regarding private fostering and connected carers.	3 – Improving the lives of children and young people who are in need of help and protection
5	The timeliness and quality of decisions in respect of section 47 enquiries.	3 – Improving the lives of children and young people who are in need of help and protection
6	The currency and accuracy of children’s records.	9 – A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model
7	The effectiveness of all multi-agency meetings and their influence in driving children’s plans.	3 – Improving the lives of children and young people who are in need of help and protection
8	The timely escalation to public law outline (PLO) and timely progression of permanence in all its forms.	4 – Improving the lives of children and young people who are on the edge of care – including a Turning the Curve plan
9	The effectiveness and impact of independent reviewing officers (IROs).	5 – Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care
10	Foster carer morale, training, recruitment and retention, including the support offered to special guardians.	5 – Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care
11	The quality and safety of in-house residential provision, including safer recruitment.	5 – Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care
12	The offer of safe, appropriate and sustainable homes for care leavers and their preparation for leaving care.	5 – Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care
13	Clarity regarding the process of completing personal education plans (PEPs) so that they are consistently completed by all relevant professionals.	5 – Improving the lives of children and young people in care and who have left care
14	The quality and effectiveness of supervision to staff at all levels by managers and leaders.	9 – A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model



Bradford Children's Services Improvement Plan

Progress Report

2022 – 2024

Improving the lives of children and young people and creating the conditions for success

February 2023



1 – Improving the lives of children and young people referred to our Front Door

Achievements and key developments

1.1 Embed a model based for the front door based on conversations and

1.2 Establish a weekly partnership review of decision making

Progress

- Optimal staffing model reviewed post launch, and agreement reached to increase number of Children’s Advisors (non-social work staff who answer calls)
- On-gong successful recruitment campaign for permanent Consultant Social Workers and Children’s Advisors
- Streamlined multi-agency referral form (MARF) developed with operational practitioners with testing with members taking place in Jan 23
- Survey link available at the bottom of all emails that go out from Consultant Social Workers to referrers for feedback
- IFD Weekly Referral Review Meetings diarised, ToR agreed and initial set up meeting has taken place
- Monthly IFD Lessons Learnt and Improvement Reference Group diarised and ToR developed to be agreed by DTIB
- Performance regularly available to track progress post implementation
- Public free phone number in development with IT and Virgin
- Web contents and marketing materials to launch the public free phone number and the Children’s Portal developed and currently with design

Next Steps

- Develop IFD Audit and dip sampling tool
- Hold initial Review Point Meeting with Professor Thorpe and Team 24th January (every 3 months for 12 months)
- Develop Workforce Development Plan
- Develop protocols for handling all enquiries that currently come via the central e-mail box that will begin to come through the portal
- Launch phase two of the project Monday 20th February with marketing campaign:
 - Public free telephone number
 - Children’s Portal for both families and children, practitioners and members of the public

1.3 Establish a dedicated Emergency Duty Team (EDT) for children and young people

Progress

- Recruitment campaign ongoing to recruit to EDT Social Workers to work from Trafalgar House (co-location with the Police)
- Casual bank of EDT Workers in place


Next Steps

- Separate EDT into Children’s and Adults prior to transferring to the Trust

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

- Partners to circulate shared communications to their workforce on changes and future ways of working within the IFD and EDT

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard Integrated Front Door									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Number of contacts received	8,763	7,908	7,496	9,540		↑ 2,044	↑ 777	This measure is for information only	Q3 2021/22 9,224
% of contacts received that result in a new referral to social work	28% (March 2022)	27% (June 2022)	25% (Sept 2022)	20% (Dec 2022)		↓ 5%	↓ 8%	This measure is for information only	
% repeat referrals to Social Care (within 12 months of previous referral opening)	29% (March 2022)	25% (June 2022)	27% (Sept 2022)	18% (Dec 2022)		↓ 9%	↓ 11%	Low is good	SN ave = 21 Eng ave = 22
% contacts with a recorded outcome NFA (information & advice given only)	46% (March 2022)	45% (June 2022)	51% (Sept 2022)	63% (Dec 2022)		↑ 12%	↑ 17%	This measure is for information only	
% of contacts that result in a recorded outcome of EH Episode	18% (March 2022)	22% (June 2022)	22% (Sept 2022)	16% (Dec 2022)		↓ 6%	↑ 2%	This measure is for information only	
% of contacts received with consent	65% (March 2022)	62% (June 2022)	62% (Sept 2022)	66% (Dec 2022)		↑ 4%	↑ 1%	High is good	
% of initial assessments that result in No further Action	49% (March 2022)	44% (June 2022)	42% (Sept 2022)	32% (Dec 2022)		↓ 10%	↓ 17%	Low is good	

Other success measures including date Conversations model at the IFD becomes operational:

- Target is November 2022 (Phase 1) for launch of Professionals Advice and Guidance Hotline - achieved
- Target is January 2023 (Phase 2) for launch of Citizen's free telephone line
- Target is pre Trust transfer for Emergency Duty Team (separation from Adults) becomes operational

2 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who need early help

Achievements and key developments

2.1 Implement the Start for Life programme across the district and enhance support to children in their first 1,001 days

Progress

- Established Sub Group to develop Delivery Plan for Start of Life Programme
- Funded strand individual delivery plans in place and clear lead for each in place - Family Hub and one other with a focus on Reducing Parental Conflict
- Dedicated Commissioning Support in place and drafting appropriate funding agreements to move at pace.
- Joint Programme Team continues to meet. 4 x sub groups meeting. Ongoing reporting to PEH Board.
- Programme management of the Family Hubs Start for Life delivery plan (not operational delivery of services) to remain in LA. Hubs themselves and parenting and family support, RPC and Stronger Families to move to new Trust.
- Final Draft of Early Help Strategy developed ready for submission to Exec in January 2022
- Draft Start for Life Delivery Plan for submission submitted 23 Dec 2023. Awaiting feedback by mid to end January.

Next Steps

- Early Help Strategy following submission to Exec in January 2023; design and publish to follow. Detailed action plan to put strategy into action.
- Initiating recruitment of f/t Development Officer and Analyst both to report to Practice Lead.
- Respond to feedback from DfE re Start for Life delivery

2.2 Making early help 'Simpler, Nearer and Earlier' – by further developing our Family Hubs arrangements and ensuring they are well known, welcoming and accessible; and building area based Family Hubs networks involving family members and Third Sector and Education partners.

Progress

- Simpler, Nearer, Earlier workshop arranged for January 2023
- Health and Care Partnership agreed all ages Area Leadership Teams and panels in each constituency area. Hub Managers agreed as main lead for these in terms of LA prevention and early help services.
- Practice Leads for Family Hubs and Relationships Matter/RPC attending each area's schools' Designated Safeguarding Leads network meet in first quarter of 2023. Also attending regular network meetings linked to wellbeing networks and Neighbourhood and VCS community developments.

Next steps

- Forward plan to report on Family Hubs to each Area Committee by end of March 2023

2.3 Implementing robust arrangements for evaluation and co-production and expanding work with peer supporters and volunteers building on supporting the District to be a safe, green and active place to live, work and play.

Progress

- Co-production Workshop has been held and Action Plan agreed
- Three VCS orgs commissioned to undertake initial co-production activities up to end March 2023 while we spec and commission service for 2023-2025.

- Mobilisation of this first phase on 13th January 2023 and also working with Youth Services, Parent’s Forum for Bradford and Airedale, SEND, Child Friendly Bradford. Funding needs to prioritise pre-birth to 2 and develop a Parents Panel and Youth Service to lead on coproduction with YP.
- All agreed to work to Coproduction Strategy; Nothing About Us without Us.


Next steps

- Deliver on agreed Action Plan

2.4 Harnessing opportunities from the City of Culture to create an inclusive, creative environment for babies, children and young people which celebrates the vibrant diversity of our district.

Still to define and scope how key services linked to collective Prevention and Early Help. Need to identify and understand governance and partnerships around City of Culture yet and how we knit across.

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard									
Early Help									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
% of Repeat Early Help Episodes within 1 year	16%	15%	16%	17%		↑ 1 %	↑ 1 %		
Rate of LA EH Support Cases per 10,000 pop (under 18) (can include rest of tier 3 when hosting is live)	55.9	59.0	42.2	52.8		↑ 10.6	↓ 3.1		
Rate per 10,000 children (under 18) closed with Early Help with an outcome of EH Completed Progress made	21.88	19.00	16.8	15.0		↓ 2	↓ 5		
% of LA Episodes where they are closed without completing	63%	65%	72%	66%		↓ 6%	↑ 3%		
% of LA Early Help Episodes that don't have a subsequent EH Episode or Children's Social Care Assessment within the following year	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC					
Number of Early Help Assessments – Tier 3 Targeted Support/Partnership Plus	670	638	624	572		↓ - 52	↓ - 98		
Number of Early Help Assessments – Tier 2 Universal Plus	475	366	423	609		↑ 186	↑ 134		

3a - Improving the lives of children and young people - who are in need of help and protection

Achievements and key developments

3a.1 Partnership commitment to ensure resources are deployed in a timely manner to enable strategy meetings take place in time with full statutory attendance.

Progress

- Multi-Agency Focus group has been established to review the Strategy Discussion process and performance.
- Review of the current forms have been undertaken and recommendations put forward.
- Performance tracker has been developed to track and address delays / cancellations that impact timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences.

Next Steps

- Finalise and embed new fit for purpose forms.
- Build in weekly monitoring of Strategy Discussions by CSCMT

3a.2 Focused improvement approach to improving key areas of safeguarding practice.

Progress

- Key set of areas of practice have been identified and a high support and high challenge forum established by senior social work leadership

Next Steps

- Continuous review of progress and change key areas as required.
- Away day to refine plan based on areas for improvement identified during the development of the self-assessment document for the ILACS and the outcome letter and the areas for improvement.

3a.3 District wide approach to improving educational attendance including those not on a school roll.

Next steps

- Multi-agency discussion at the December 2022 Improvement Board was not able to take place. This will be deferred until March 2023

3a.4 District wide approach to promoting the identification of Privately Fostered children and notifications made to the Local Authority.


Progress:

- Discrete social work Head of Service identified as strategic lead for Private Fostering (PF).
- Private Fostering has been raised at the Safeguarding and Professional Practice (SAPP) Sub Group Meeting of the Safeguarding Partnership as an area for improvement and focus.
- Previous comprehensive partnership improvement plan from 2021 on PF under review.
- Partner agencies to feed back to the safeguarding partnership around extent of staff awareness, training, and how they capture PF.
- Liaison with education safeguarding and to look at a communication strategy across education providers, particularly with Admissions.
- Principal Social Worker has cascaded practice guidance to social care workforce.

Next steps:

- Social Work HoS to share action plan as basis for discussion, suggestions and comments, around raising awareness about PF across all partner agencies.
- Revised action plan to Children’s Social Care Management Team by end of Jan 2023.
- PF to be highlighted at the next Safeguarding Week.

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard									
Help and Protection									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
% of Initial Child Protection Conferences held in time	45% (March 2022)	44% (June 2022)	53% (Sept 2022)	99% (Dec 2022)		↑ 46%	↑ 54%	High is good	
Number of open cases to social work	6010	5803	5699	5813		↑ 114	↓ 197	This measure is for information only	
Number of children subject to a child protection plan	776	762	754	823		↑ 69	↑ 47	This measure is for information only - use rate per 10,000	
Rate of children who became subject of a CP Plan last 12 months rate per 10,000 population under 18	82 (March 2022)	68 (June 2022)	72 (Sept 2022)	75 (Dec 2022)		↑ 3	↓ 7	+/- 5 of SN average	SN average = 63 Eng average = 53
Rate of Children subject of CP Plans per 10,000 of the CYP population	54 (March 2022)	53 (June 2022)	52.87 (Sept 2022)	58.41 (Dec 2022)		↑ 5	↑ 4	+/- 5 of SN average	SN ave = 47 Eng ave = 42
Number of children with a second or subsequent child protection plan	98	47	51	83		↑ 32	↓ 15		
Number of children and young people with Significant needs for exploitation	42	39	32	37		↑ 5	↓ 5	This measure is for information only	
% of overdue child exploitation risk assessments	17% (March 2022)	34% (June 2022)	31% (Sept 2022)	25.16% (Dec 2022)		↓ 6%	↑ 8%	Low is good	

3b - Improving the lives of children and young people with disabilities

Achievements and key developments

The Children with Disability Project Board was established at the end of December 2022 and Terms of Reference agreed. For each of the sections below, there is a dedicated work stream. Quarterly success measures have yet to be identified.

3b.1 Streamlined pathway, eligibility criteria in line with good and outstanding authorities, smooth but robust assessment process and multi-disciplinary Team to deliver support to families with children whom have a disability and/or complex needs.

Progress

- Work stream Lead and membership agreed and ToR agreed and signed off.

Next Steps

- Collate current Pathways, Eligibility and Assessments and analysis on:
a) What currently works, b) Any gaps and / or what's not working along with ideas on how to overcome these, c) Are they meeting legal obligations? d) Are they on the Local Offer, e) If not, are they accessible to families.
- Map out the child's journey from contact at the Integrated Front Door right through to Social Worker/Practitioner intervention in order to establish the gaps, complexities and areas of work required.

3b.2 Improved access and understanding to accurate information and advice for families.

Progress

- Work stream Lead identified.
- Linked in with Pathways, Eligibility, Assessment and Service Delivery Work stream around collate current Pathways, Eligibility and Assessments and analysis on: Are they on the Local Offer, e) If not, are they accessible to families.

Next Steps

- Work stream membership to be agreed and ToR to be agreed and sign off by the group.
- Research other Children's Services whom are in a Trust to determine whether they still link in with the wider Council's Local Offer or have developed their own.

3b.3 Increase the sufficiency for children with complex needs.

Progress

- Work stream Lead and membership agreed and ToR agreed and signed off.

Next steps

- Group members to bring to next meeting for discussion, number of C&YP in the BMD area that have a SEND need, the needs of C&YP with SEND, where the C&YP live and current provision is there available in the BMD area.

3b.4 Skilled workforce to deliver a good and outstanding service to families and children with a disability and/or complex needs.

Progress

- Work stream Lead and membership agreed and ToR agreed and signed off.
- Agreed final outputs of a Joint Workforce Development Strategy and a Directory of Training relating to working with children with a disability.

Next steps

- Gain an update on the progression of recruiting to a Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO).
- Identify the level of training Integrated Front Door staff require to skill them with knowledge to handle referrals relating to children with a disability.
- Research and contacting other LA's and seeing what their offer is so that we can look at options.
- Establish criteria of disabilities in both Adults and Children's Social Care.
- Explore current skill sets in both Adults and Children's Social Care.
- Collate current training offers in Adults, Children's, NHS, Education and any other training establishments used by the Council.
- Identify current training offer for staff within the residential homes for disabilities.

3b.5 Communications, engagement and co-produced outputs with families and children with a disability and/or complex needs.

Progress

- Work stream Lead identified.

Next steps

- Work stream membership to be agreed.
- Agree and sign off the ToR.
- Identify parents, carers, children and young people to form the co-production workshops for each work stream

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

N/A

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Success measures to be agreed and developments at the next Board Meeting 14th February 2023.

Additional success measures data sets to be considered

Other success measures

- TBC

Details of qualitative success measures e.g. key points of learning from Audit or Review, feedback from children or staff

TBC

4 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who are on the edge of care – including the Turning the Curve plan

Achievements and key developments

4.1 Establish an Edge of Care Service to safely support children to avoid coming into care and for children to go home where safe to do so

Progress - Prevention / avoid care

- Three workshops held with support from experienced colleagues in Leeds, on Operating Model and Outcomes Framework. Edge of Care working group developing the service and the remit of the offer, processes etc. and are consulting with staff
- New Prevention Edge of Care Service live from 1st Jan 2023
- Operation working group and action plan developed to focus on IT, workforce, quality assurance/audit

Next steps

- Review core offer and referral pathways
- Implement operation working group action plan
- Recruit to any vacancies

Progress - Residential / children who can go home

- Residential staff Job Profiles reviewed, updated, finalised and approved and with HR for grading – all graded except Residential Practitioner post, funding yet to be agreed
- Proposed plan for homes refurbishment and staffing structure for current residential homes submitted and awaiting approval;
- Proposed new staffing structure for current and new residential homes submitted and awaiting approval; and presented at PAG for capital and revenue funding
- DfE Bid for funding to purchase additional homes unsuccessful
- Tender process completed for Restraint and De-escalation Contract, in final stages of signing off contract and implementation anticipated March 23.

Next steps

- Review processes and practice within homes to ensure consistent and effective operating model
- Develop a step down and reunification approach to support children to safely return home after a short period of time to provide families with a timely intervention
- Recruitment event to recruit to current vacancies and new homes – Feb 23
- Develop a discrete Academy faculty for residential staff
- Purchasing new potential homes

4.2 **Turning the Curve Event identification of actions to address numbers of children who need statutory interventions including being in care**

Progress

- Work commenced on the identified Turning the Curve areas through a multi-agency group
- Initial meetings held with Born in Bradford. Opportunities for collaboration to be identified.

Next steps

- Develop improvement /action plan through multi-agency Turning the Curve group including:
 - Agree and trial / pilot new approaches that bridge Early Help and Social Work
 - Review existing approaches and services that work and expand as per findings
 - Develop and implement evidence based approach to reunification

4.3 **Enhance the use of Family Decision Making approaches to harness the utility of the family**

Still to be scoped out but will be taken forward as part of roll out of Restorative Based Practice Model

4.4 **Systematically identify those children whose care orders can be discharged and take action to discharge where appropriate**

Progress to discharge Care Orders

The tracking of children in the long term Children in Care service has now been established for:

- those requiring the discharge of their Care Orders but remaining at home
- those progressing to Special Guardianship orders with their Connected Carers or mainstream Foster Carers.

These tracking meetings take place monthly as does the Adoption tracker meeting that was already in place.

In addition, fortnightly meetings with Legal Department with a discrete solicitor to file applications and statements; and keeping CAFCASS informed of likely applications each month.

Placed with parents:

August 2022 there were 93 children in the longer term looked after Children's teams being cared for by their parent/s subject of Care Orders. Most of these children had not returned to their parent's care following the conclusion of proceedings but had never been removed. Several of these children have been in care for many years. Following tracking:

- 4 Children have been removed are now in Foster care.
- 9 Children are back before the court with notice to remove them from their parents owing to abuse and neglect and will, if we are successful require foster care. These children are being closely monitored, with a minimum of fortnightly announced and unannounced visits.
- 4 Children's care orders have now been discharged.
- 24 applications to be filed before the court by the end of February.

Children Living with Foster Carers inclusive of Connected and mainstream Foster carers:

There are a disproportionately high numbers of children subject to Care Orders living with Foster carers under the age of 5 years. Many of these have been with a connected carer for many years and do not require on going state intervention and arguably should not have had proceedings concluded on a Care Order. These children are now being closely tracked and where ever possible carers are being encouraged and supported via the 'no detriment' financial policy to seek Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs). Following tracking:

- 14 SGO's granted.
- 25 Applications filed before the court in January.
- 25 Applications to be filed in February.
- 26 Applications to be filed in March.

Adoption:

Following tracking:

- 31 Adoption orders have been made since July.
- 10 more children are in process.

Summary:

- 154 children have either left our care or are in process to leave our care by the end of April 2023.
- 13 Children have or are in the process of leaving their parents and coming into Foster care as a breakdown of PWP. There have been 3 children whose adoption places have ended due to issues with the prospective adopters.
- There are at least another 30 children who will begin the discharge process either through SGO or Care order discharge in the next few weeks.

Next steps


- Continue to track permanence plans including to review children whose orders can be discharged.
- Complete work to enable remainder of children to safely leave care.

4.5 - Establish a Placements Review Panel

Progress

- Placements Review Panel has been established and is reviewing external residential placements.

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard									
Turning the Curve									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Number of children + young people in care	1446	1488	1527	1576		↑ 49	↑ 130	Between 850 and 950	
Number of children + young people entering care	119	142	135	165		↑ 30	↑ 46	This measure is for information only - use rate per 10,000	
Rate of children who entered care in last 12 months rate per 10,000 population under 18	33 (March 2022)	35 (June 2022)	37 (Sept 2022)	40 (Dec 2022)		↑ 2.5	↑ 3.9	+/- 5 of SN average	SN average = 26 Eng average = 26
Rate of Children in Care per 10,000 of the CYP population	101 (March 2022)	104 (June 2022)	107 (Sept 2022)	112 (Dec 2022)		↑ 4.8	↑ 10.5	+/- 5 of SN average	SN average = 88 Eng average = 70
Number of children and young people in external residential placements	105	120	136	156		↑ 20	↑ 51	Low is good	
Total number of children and young people returning home	8	17	20	18		↓ 2	↑ 10	This measure is for information only	
Number of children ceasing on SGO	10	13	7	24		↑ 17	↓ 14	This measure is for information only	
Numbers of children ceasing on adoption	8	14	18	9		↓ 9	↑ 1	This measure is for information only	

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard Edge of Care - Outreach



Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Number of young people interacting with the Outreach Service	124	113	76	88		↑ 12	↓36	This measure is for information only	
Number of cases closed	37	47	18	20		↑ 2	↓ 17	This measure is for information only	
Percentage of young people who did not enter care	89.18%	91.48%	83.30%	85%		↑1.7%	↓4.2%	This measure is for information only	

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard Edge of Care - Residential



Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	Target	Comparator
Number of young people interacting with the Residential service	36	32	25	23		↓ 2	↓13		
Number of cases closed	3	7	2	2		↔	↓ 1		
Percentage of young people who did not enter care	66.66%	57%	100%	0% *		↓100%	↓ 66.66%		
* one YP entered foster care, one YP Out of Authority Placement									

5 - Improving the lives of children and young people - who in care and who have left care

Achievements and key developments

5.1 Children in care and care leavers Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action plan is developed and implemented; and

5.2 Corporate Parenting Panel provides robust governance for the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Plan

Progress

- Draft Corporate Parenting Strategy co-produced with young people to understand what's important to them. Now format and style is being decided before the strategy is finalised
- Portfolio Holder for Children's Services is finalising governance for the Corporate Parenting Panel
- Young People Led Corporate Parenting Panels have taken place and are identifying key themes for change

Next Steps

- Share finalised Corporate Parenting Strategy with young people to sign off and launch
- Share Corporate Parenting Strategy with Corporate Parenting Panel
- Co-produce Action Plan with timescales and responsibilities with young people

5.3 Sufficiency Strategy is fit for purpose, iterative and responsive to change

Progress

- Sufficiency strategy has been developed and signed off
- Initial scoping meeting held as part of Children with Disabilities Project Board to further strengthen Sufficiency that will feed into the Sufficiency Strategy

Next Steps

- Establish the Children with Disabilities Sufficiency Project Action Group and develop project plan

5.4 Establish dedicated children in care and leaving care service

Progress

- Leaving Care Service have moved across to sit with Children in Care and now sitting together under one Head of Service. *Achieved*

5.5 Transition work to adult services for those who need them is timely and managed jointly by adults and children's services

Progress

- Monthly consultations are proving to be an effective forum for both service areas. This is in addition to the fortnightly High Cost Placement Panel in which Adult Services are represented and provide advice, guidance and direction on planning for young people.

Next Steps

- Plan improvement steps in line with requirements mapped out October

5.6 Joint Housing Protocol for care leavers is agreed, approved and operational

Progress

- Protocol is operational but will continue to be under review to enable continuous focus on improvement
- Consultation undertaken with young people in respect of the proposed changes to the Taster Flat offer to care leavers

Next Steps

- Monitor Joint Housing Protocol quarterly with the action plan
- Complete selection process of Tender to increase the Taster Flats from 1 to 5
- Develop joint training plan with shared training across Leaving care and Housing
- Move towards Restorative Practice and Trauma Informed approaches, which could be shared with the wider workforce, to provide consistent responses.

5.7 Improved access to mental health support

Progress

- Joint case discussions with both community Mental Health Team (quarterly) and the Preparation for Adulthood Team (monthly) are now embedded.
- Feedback from Practitioners and Team Managers collated from initial discussions with a positive outcome that these discussions are productive and solution focused and are addressing delays and ensure that planning is dovetailed to better support transitions for young people.

5.8 District wide approach to increasing work related opportunities for Care Leavers to ensure they are in education, employment or training

Progress

- Personal Advisers are now trained and qualified to deliver Information, Advice and Guidance around education, employment and training to our young people removing what can sometimes be a barrier for young people in accessing this service.
- Prevention work with Care Leavers is embedded at trigger points i.e. 2 placement moves within 12 months who are currently EET but at risk of NEET.
- Successful National Care Leavers week in October with a focus on Education

Next Steps

- Deliver on outcomes identified during Care Leavers Week

5.9 Digital approach to Life Story work (including photography) is established and operational

- Activities are happening within the Service Areas and the Improvement Team are currently scoping this area, update on progress will be provided in the next quarterly report card

5.10 Children in care and care leavers' achievements and celebrated by the district


Progress

- Activities are happening within the Service Areas and the Improvement Team are currently scoping this area, update on progress will be provided in the next quarterly report card

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

N/A

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard Children in Care and Care Leavers									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Short term stability	9.17%	8.86%	8.12%	8.48%		↔	↓ 1%	Low is good	SN average = 9 Eng average = 10
Long term stability	74.42%	73.29%	74.32%	72.25%		↓ 2%	↓ 2%	High is good	SN average = 71 Eng average = 71
% of SDQ scores over 17 (indicating need)	28.26%	28.08%	29.17%	29.56%		↔	↑ 2%	This measure is for information only	
% of care leavers in suitable housing	87.70%	91.73%	93.29%	91.90%		↑ 2 pp	↑ 6 pp	High is good	SN average = 91 Eng average = 88
% Care leavers who are in Education, Employment + Training (EET)	56.41%	60.52%	64.56%	65.93%		↑ 4 pp	↑ 8 pp	High is good	

6 - Improving the lives of children and young people – by ensuring they have voice and influence

Achievements and key developments

6.1 Strengthen and consolidate the three forums for children in care and care leavers including more structured approach to working with the Corporate Parenting Panel

Progress

- Governance for all three forums has been developed and all three forums now established and meeting.
- A fourth child and young people led Corporate Parenting Panel has taken place with a focus on 'Education'
- Corporate Parenting Handbook is in development and a training session delivered for Elected
- Established Young Voice (6-11) forum, initial group being held 26th October with a focus Education and 'what would you like to be when you grow up?'. This session was delivered with three children in attendance. The session coincided with a free fostering trip to Blackpool, so the majority of the predicted audience were otherwise engaged. This highlighted the need to speak to the Fostering Service when events are being booked in.
- Developed Practice Guidance for the forums to ensure consistent practice and for Exit Interviews.
- *Chat back was held 29/11/22. Young people and practitioners gave positive feedback about the session, asking for more sessions, covering different topics and for the sessions to be longer.*

Next Steps

- Deliver the next Young Voice session during half term. Promote within the appropriate residential homes and with the Fostering Service - the session will have a focus on Family.
- Hold the next child and young people led Corporate Parenting Event in March with a theme of Contact / Family Time 29/3/23
- Hold the next Chat Back 28/2/23 with a theme of 'Understanding the Role of the IRO and Pathway Planning.
- Launch Corporate Parenting Handbook and delivering training in March.

6.2 Establish a digital mechanism to routinely communicate with, seek feedback from all children in care and care leavers and provide information on the outcome of voice and influence activities

Progress

- Tendering process completed for child participation and 'Mind of My Own' have been awarded the contract.
- WhatsApp group set up for Youth and Your Voice members.
- The Participation Coordinator has been on the practitioner training and will roll this out to the Participation Service; and has been a part of the weekly mobilisation meetings which has identified and made necessary changes to ensure a successful launch.

Next Steps

- Consult Youth Voice and Your Voice in Jan 23 about Mind of My Own regarding the diversity of the App.
- Explore the development of an App with IT to communicate messages with children in care and care leavers.

6.3 Establish consistent and routine approach to Exit Interviews for Care Leavers

Progress

- Exit interview process has been developed by the Participation Service in consultation with the Care Leavers Service and went live 1st November 2022
- Develop reporting mechanism on exit interviews.

Next Steps

- The participation Service and the Data Team / IT need to meet to discuss how the data collected through the Exit Interviews can be linked to Power BI to support and streamline the reporting mechanism.
- The Participation Service is developing a survey for Care Leavers

6.4 Develop quarterly report on triangulated feedback from a range of sources to provide thematic findings and recommendations for improvement and service development

Progress

- Agreed quarterly qualitative and quantitative data reporting on, demographics, attendance and themes of events.

Next Steps

- Develop and embed mechanism to produce quarterly qualitative and quantitative data reporting.

6.5 Identify opportunities to collaborate with the work for Bradford to become a Child Friendly City

Progress

- The Participation Service made contact with Child Friendly (Richard Cracknel) lead to identify opportunities for collaboration.
- The Participation Service introduce Richard to Your Voice and he will return to speak to Youth Voice in the New Year.
- The Young People were eager to support the Child Friendly City work and to also understand the constitution of the council.
- The Participation Service attended the Child Friendly 'Discovery Day' 23/11/22.


Next Steps

- The Participation Service has booked monthly meetings with the Child Friendly Lead to ensure the experiences of looked after children and young people are linked into the Child Friendly Cities Agenda. Also developing a Participation Workers Group to develop a joined up way of working.

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board – the Participation service:

- Are still waiting to hear back from Ofsted regarding their meeting with children and young people.
- Alongside children and young people are developing training for prospective foster carers, to be rolled out in February
- Is involved in the recruitment of ASYE Social Workers and Student Social Workers for the MA programme.
- Has been included in the recruitment process for the Director and Deputy Director of the Trust and The Director of Children's Services. The Participation Service is keen to embed Young people's interview panels in the recruitment process.
- Supported three Care Leavers through the Leaving Care Employment Programme as Participation Ambassadors. There is another opportunity to recruit to the Participation Ambassador Post and this is being advertised through the Care Leavers Service.

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard									
Voice and Influence									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Attendance at Your Voice (16 - 25 yrs) forum - six sessions / quarter held	23 (Average 4 per session)	14 (Average 2.5 per session)	30 (Average 5 per session)	52 (Average 9 per session)		↑ 22	↑ 29	For info only, it depends on the topic and we can only encourage attendance	
Attendance at Youth Voice (11 - 15 yrs) forum - six sessions / quarter held	n/a	14 (Average 2.5 per session)	17 (Average 3 per session)	30 (Average 5 per session)		↑ 13		For info only, it depends on the topic and we can only encourage attendance	
Attendance at Young Voice (6 - 11 yrs) forum - six sessions / quarter to be held	n/a	n/a	n/a	3 (1 session held)				For info only, it depends on the topic and we can only encourage attendance	
Attendance at child and young person led corporate parenting panels - one session / quarter	16	25	6	16		↑ 10	↔	For info only, it depends on the topic and we can only encourage attendance	
% of care leavers offered exit interviews, where appropriate	N/A	N/A	N/A	100				High is good	
% of care leavers who take up exit interviews	N/A	N/A	N/A	tbc					
Chat Back (information sessions held on a quarterly basis to provide children and young people with information regarding themes or issues that they	N/A	N/A	13	5		↓ 8		For info only, it depends on the topic and we can only encourage attendance	
Child and young person led interviews requested	N/A	2	4	3		↓ 1		High is good	
Child and young person led interviews facilitated	N/A	2	4	3		↓ 1		High is good	

7 – Strategic leadership ensuring the conditions for success are created

Achievements and key developments

- 7.1 Establish the Children and Families Trust, and senior leadership team
- 7.2 Develop and implement Training and development programme for Elected Members to bolster strategic support and challenge role incorporating Corporate Parenting (Total Respect)
- 7.3 Develop an improvement team to ensure inspection readiness and relentless focus on improvement
- 7.4 Develop a district wide and multi-agency approach to co-production, voice and influence for children, young people and parent carers
- 7.5 Maximise staff engagement through a range of approaches including: continue programme of staff briefings and consultation; Staff Reference Group and Pulse surveys
- 7.6 Agree and implement a financial sustainability strategy

Achievements and key developments

- This work stream has been scoped out and has started to meet. Progress updated to be provided in next quarterly report.

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

-

Success measures

- External validation from Ofsted (Monitoring Visits, JTAI, Focused Visits, Annual Conversation)
- Feedback from staff e.g. through staff briefings and consultation, Staff Reference group, Pulse Surveys, and Social Work Health Check Survey
- Feedback from children, young people and families
- Vital Signs reports
- Financial Reports
- Improvement plan strands progress and achieve objectives in timescales

8 – A sufficient and stable workforce

Achievements and key developments

General progress (took place in Q4)

1. Workshop held 16th January led by Ceriph to outline phase 2 of their programme which includes review and update of microsite, Social Media and Ambassador programme.
2. Established 'Always on Recruitment Steering Group' to run fortnightly deliver phase 2 programme and deliver on other identified activities, ToF developed and membership identified and agreed

8.1 Complete a modelling exercise to understand the optimum structure required to meet demand whilst maintaining a healthy case load; and implement optimum service structure and maintain budget stability

Complete and passed over to the Trust

8.2 Increase the proportion of permanent social work staff by:

8.2.1 An ongoing high quality recruitment campaign that builds on the Bring Heart brand and provides an excellent on-boarding experience

Progress

- Phase 2 planning commenced

Next steps

- Develop delivery plan for phase 2 activities

8.2.2 Targeting agency staff to move to permanent recruitment

Progress

- Action plan developed from 1st November 2022 workshop

Next steps

- Hold further event with Agency staff 7th February.
- Engaged with identified agencies to recruit to 40 permanent experienced Social Workers.

8.2.3 Developing and implementing proposals to support staff retention

Progress

- Activities underway for a further retention payments being paid March 2023.

8.2.4 Implementing overseas recruitment

Progress

- Pre-arrival training commenced and introduction to Bradford session held with 15 new starters due to arrive and start with us end of February
- Checks continue with the remaining 11 candidates who have been successful at interview
- Second agency on board identifying potential candidates
- Buddy poster developed and circulated with briefing booked in to for 2nd February

Next steps

- Further nine interviews scheduled to take place end of January and further shortlisting tasks being undertaken with a further 19 candidates, interviews for these will take place at the start of February
- Recruit to Learning and Development Officer to focus on training for overseas recruits.

8.2.5 Implementing high quality sponsorship approaches to attract overseas newly qualified social workers (NQSW) students from Bradford and other regional universities – visas, housing, etc.

Complete with none having been identified.

8.2.6 Attracting more NQSWs (UK nationals) from out of the city to take their Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE) in Bradford

Progress

- Interviews currently taking place to recruit to further ASYE's

8.2.7 Working with local universities to increase number of social work places and develop and implement proposals to attract those students to work in Bradford

Progress


- 18 candidates have been successful and have commenced their courses on 16th January.

Next steps

- NA

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

Quarterly Performance Success Measures

Children's Improvement Plan - Quarterly Scorecard Workforce Sufficiency and Stability									
Position at end of 2022/23 Q3									
	Baseline 2021/22 Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Change since last Quarter	Change since Q4 2021/22	What does good performance look like	Notes
Number of newly recruited social workers - Level 2	2	4	0	0		↔	↓2	High is good	
Number of newly promoted social workers - Level 2	6	2	2	6		↑4	↔	High is good	
Number of newly recruited social workers - Level 3	0	3	0	2		↑2	↑2	High is good	
Number of newly promoted social workers - Level 3	1	3	3	0		↓3	↓1	High is good	
Number of newly recruited NQSW in their ASYE from Bradford University / College (data will be affected by graduation schedule) - includes in-house Apprentices	1	16	11	10		↓ 1	↑9	High is good	
Number of newly recruited NQSW in their ASYE from other Uni(s) (data will be affected by graduation schedule)	4	7	7	5		↓ 2	↑1	High is good	
Number of SW qualified overseas workers recruited for minimum of three years (approach did not start until Q2)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
% of permanent (P) staff v agency (A)	51% - P 49% - A	50.3% - P 49.7% - A	52.8% - P 47.2% - A	56.1% - P 43.9% - A		↑3% - P	↑5% - P	High permanent is good	
Number of Bradford University social work course places - BA	35	35	35	45		↑10	↑10	High is good	
Number of Bradford University social work course places - MA	35	35	35	35		↔	↔	High is good	
Number of Bradford College social work course places - BA	30	30	30	30		↔	↔	High is good	

9 - A constant focus on practice improvement and an agreed practice model

Achievements and key developments

9.1 Implement Restorative Practice training and development programme and capacity to embed restorative practices such as maximising family decision making opportunities; restorative approach to complaints; restorative leadership sets. Working with neighbouring local authorities to support implementation.

Progress:

- Restorative based practice model - developed and signed off

Next steps:

- Hold implementation sessions for all managers - top down.
- The Learning and Development Officers will be taking part in planned sessions as a train the trainer programme to enable sustainability.
- Develop plans to roll our programme for other stakeholders including Trust Board, Elected Members and Partners

9.2 Increase shared multi-agency workforce development opportunities e.g. Trauma Informed Practice, Professional Curiosity etc. with the Safeguarding Partnerships Learning and Development Subgroup.

Progress

- Working with L+D subgroup to review recommendations of National Panel Review Report to clarify requirements of joint workforce development opportunities
- Plan is developed to review existing opportunities and to deliver new additional

Next steps

- Complete plans and deliver opportunities

9.3 Carry out Appreciative Enquiries through the Safeguarding Partnership.

Next steps

- PM Subgroup to lead the development of an approach to carrying out Appreciate Enquiries

9.4 Develop additional Academy Faculties for specific social care roles.

Progress and next steps:

- A number of additional faculties have been and are being developed:
 - Management: developed and due to launch March 23
 - Community Resource Workers: consultation stage
 - Business Support Officers; Early Help, Youth Justice, Fostering, Residential: development stage

9.5 Continued focus on intelligence to design required workforce development programmes

Progress and next steps

- Quarterly quality assurance report in development; Next steps is to analyse and derive learning from the report once developed

9.6 Increase presence of social work specialists on social work courses as part of Teaching Partnership; and young people in workforce development opportunities

Progress and next steps:

- Social work presence on courses: Staff already do attend some sessions but this needs to be embedded further. Requests made to University and College for sight of their teaching schedule so that we can see where we can ask specialists to attend the session.
- Young people - Strong links are already in place and young people are involved in some aspects of training but this needs to be strengthened.

9.7 Implement an approach to ensuring workforce development opportunities taken up where required and identified

Progress and next steps:

- Learning and Development brochure has been produced and circulated to all staff - this is going on to SharePoint and will continue to be advertised through all the usual routes. Tracker forms have been developed and will be circulated to managers to monitor take up of mandatory and other workforce development opportunities are taken up. Workforce Development team have developed a system to follow up on cancellations and 'no shows' and will report back to the relevant HoS.

Success measures and sources of learning to be scoped out but could include:

- Proportion of (a) Bradford staff and (b) partner staff trained in Restorative Based Practice Model.
- Proportion of those who have received training who report high quality and impact of training on improved practice.
- Audit shows increasing quality of practice.
- Number of Appreciative Enquiries carried out.
- Feedback on shared multi-agency workforce development opportunities on content and relationships built
- Learning from Appreciative Enquiry
- Number of social work specialists on social work course and number of young people involved in workforce development opportunities.
- Analysis of workforce development opportunities offered, taken up and followed up when not attended.

10. A strong and collaborative partnership

Achievements and key developments

10.1 Establish Bradford Children's Improvement Board and develop a quality Improvement Plan.

Progress and next steps:

- The Improvement Board is established and operational from April 2022; the Improvement Plan is iterative. A quarterly report card on progress providing narrative and data has been produced. The outcome of the recent ILACS in November 2022 will be reflected in the plan.

10.2 Hold a series of Turning the Curve events through the Improvement Board to identify shared actions to make improvements in key areas of work with children and young people.

Progress and next steps:

- The first Turning the Curve event took place at the September 2022 board on the theme of why high numbers of children and young people become subject to statutory interventions such as being in care. Further discussion on the outcome of the event at the October 2022 board. Further TtC events will take place on agreed themes.

10.3 Hold conversations to explore the establishment of a Children's Partnership.

Still to be discussed

10.4 Develop a refreshed Children and Young People's Plan and identify who will implement it.

Progress:

- Ambition is to create a child-friendly, co-produced, partnership led Children and Young People's Plan for Bradford District. Collective commitment to Child Friendly Bradford will also be a key factor in the successful implementation of the plan. 'Voice and participation' is an enabler for the new plan, alongside partnership working; safeguarding, vulnerabilities and complexities; and research and evidence-informed practice.
- The CYP Strategy needs to be finalised by the end of 2022, following consultation and feedback with partners.
- The CYPF Executive owns the strategy and its implementation, and will take a lead role in developing the action plans and assessing the impact of the plan in the future.

Next steps:

- The partnership will review the outcomes of consultation and feedback on the first draft of the plan and to republish an updated and improved version by the end of the year.
- Consultation through formal and informal channels, including partnership boards, with partners, with professionals and with children and families.
- To ensure co-production with children and families, professionals and partners on the action plan for its implementation.
- To produce an outcomes framework that underpins its implementation and impact.

10.5 Work jointly with the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership to review and refresh if appropriate their Improvement Plan, ensuring correlation with the Improvement Plan and the CYPP.

Still to be scoped out - Conversations on this point are required at the Improvement Board

10.6 Address the local recommendations from the National Panel review report.

Progress and next steps:

- The response to the local recommendations are coordinated by the Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- An update was provided to the Improvement Board in December 2022

10.7 Utilise Strategic Joint Commissioning and refreshing approach to funding for high cost placements, children and young people with Continuing Health Care Needs, and CAMHs.

Conversations on this point are required at the Improvement Board

10.8 Identify opportunities for Child Friendly City – business and community partnership

Progress and next steps:

- Following the delivery of a launch event on 22nd November, the focus of the Child Friendly (CF) initiative has been on the new Children and Young People’s Plan and ensuring that the views of children and young people are represented.
- Once published, children and young people will be invited to a series of action planning events.
- A new steering group for CF will hold its first meeting on 10th February with a membership representing the partnership.
- Working alongside the steering group will be a specific Community of Interest group for youth voice practitioners from across sectors with a view to develop new systems and structures to enable the voice and influence of children and young people. We are keen to ensure that the new Trust is included in this work once it is operational.

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

Success measures

- Success measures in the Improvement Plan show progress.
- Partners report improved satisfaction and confidence in partnership arrangements and joint working
- Progress is made in addressing the local recommendations from the National Panel review report.
- Partners report improved confidence and knowledge of key local safeguarding policies and services including ‘thresholds’ and local hubs
- Audit and data show improvements to practice in key areas of joint working including CP processes, and domestic violence

11 – Buildings, IT, HR, Finance, Admin and equipment that support quality practice

Achievements and key developments

- 11.1 Agreeing and implementing refreshed and tailored support arrangements for HR, IT, Finance, Business Support, IG, and Commissioning for Children's Services.
- 11.2 Implementing a workforce development approach for managers for HR, IT, Finance, Information Governance etc.
- 11.3 Identifying opportunities for co-location of multi-agency services for families e.g. early help with social work and other partners where possible.
- 11.4 Ensuring that Children's social care office bases are child and family friendly and in locations that promote multi-disciplinary working; longer term plan for co-location around family hubs and schools.

Progress

- We have been supporting the service and Estates in making the business case for the acquisition and conversion of Standard House for use by BCFT going forward.
- The building is in South Bradford and as such, the south locality social work teams will be moving in there, contributing to the long-term aspiration of locating social work teams within the communities that they serve.
- We have been helping to model and evaluate several possibilities for which other service function would best be able to share the building. It is likely that some of the children looked after teams would provide the best fit.
- The business case for acquisition can be made with some flexibility and is subject to other dependencies, including the amount of space that is not desk-based that is required for effective practice.
- The acquisition is predicated on a hybrid model of working continuing for the foreseeable future and it is important that this is optimised to best support collaborative practice going forward.

Next steps

- Mobilise over next two quarters into the building

11.5 Securing suitable Business Support capacity to ensure key processes are met, particularly those that are statutory.

Progress:

- Consistent leadership approach to performance management and quality assurance, with collaborative review of administrative processes and performance with staff district wide to improve effectiveness which is reflected in individual service plan.
- Ongoing high quality recruitment campaign for all areas of Business Support
- Developing increased apprenticeship offer via established partnership with Skills for Work to deliver office based apprenticeships in Business Administration service wide enabling us to 'Grow our Own'.
- Comprehensive Individual continuous professional and personal development plan for all staff
- Launch of practitioner line – Phase 1 David Thorpe Research Model within Integrated Front Door.

- Review of current Business Support establishment versus operating requirements has been established and negotiations ongoing to ensure optimum Business Support and model aligns to growth of demand and changes to social care structure.
- Review of budget and scope of works in relation to Information Governance model post transition to trust ongoing.

Next steps:

- Business Support model negotiations complete and optimum levels of staffing for capacity and processes in place
- Information Governance model negotiations complete ensuring optimum levels of resource for scope of works.
- Implementation of 'Grow our Own' increased apprenticeship offer across Business Support

11.6 Engaging staff in reviewing and reducing bureaucratic burdens that get in the way of social work with families.

This area of work is still to be scoped out

11.7 Promoting staff wellbeing and emotional support, drawing on the offer available through the council, for example, Mindfulness training, staff networks and using regular bulletins for updated information; and encouraging engagement with regular Pulse Surveys for additional insight.

Progress:

- Pilot intervention of 3 x 8-week group work Mindfulness for stress course delivered by an internal accredited and supervised teacher who is also employed as a Service Manager within Children's Social Care. The teacher received the required external supervision during the period of delivery.
- The pilot has been a subject of a NICE practice sharing example and is the subject of a workshop as part of Social England's 2021 Social Work Week.
- Phase two courses will run until June 2023

Next steps:

- Interim evaluation report from Breathworks
- Discussions with the Children and Families Trust on the future on the Mindfulness programme

Potential Success measures

- Staff satisfaction survey – especially around bureaucratic burdens
- Feedback from managers on time spent on HR, IG and finance activities
- Increase in number of co-located services
- Impact on statutory timescales following support from Business Support
- Number of staff engaged in wellbeing offers

12 – Insight - learning and improving through performance management and quality assurance

Achievements and key developments

- 12.1 Embed a dispersed leadership approach to performance management and quality assurance, with local areas collaboratively reviewing performance with staff, and performance management / quality assurance reflected in individual service plans.
- 12.2 Ensure the quality of audits through follow up on recommendations and sharing learning in teams
- 12.3 Develop and implement a Performance framework including review of existing suite of performance reports
- 12.4 Develop and implement a Quality Assurance report which analyses all QA activity (audits, external validation, inspection, feedback from children and families etc.) and identifies areas and actions for improvement
- 12.5 Review and develop the QA role of IRO and CP service
- 12.6 Review and develop the QA role of the Safeguarding Partnership
- 12.7 Develop partnerships with Born in Bradford and Data Accelerator – initial projects to support Turning the Curve (see strand 4 - Edge of Care)
- 12.8 Agree development programme for middle managers and Team Managers to strengthen their role, understanding, engagement and expertise in PM, QA, improvement, and learning
- 12.9 Identify and sharing partner data sets at the Improvement Board

Progress

- This strand is still to be scoped out – first meetings arranged

Any other key messages to, or requests of, the Improvement Board

Success measures:

- New Performance framework is implemented
- Quality Assurance report is implemented
- Partners share relevant data reports at the Improvement Board
- % of audits recommendations are followed up
- Evidence of a dispersed leadership approach to performance management and quality assurance, with local areas collaboratively reviewing performance with staff, and performance management / quality assurance reflected in individual service plans.
- Evidence of taking advantage of partnership with Born in Bradford and the Data Accelerator programme

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