Children and Young People Select Committee

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Report Title	Update on savings proposals and the current overspend		
Key Decision	No		Item No. 6
Ward			
Contributors	Executive Director for Children and Young People		
Class	Part 1	1 st November 2017	7

1. Summary of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable consideration of the financial position of the Children and Young Peoples Directorate. It looks at the current overspend and the delivery of the savings and projects in hand to make savings. It then goes on to the action which is in train to address the current overspend.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Children and Young People Select Committee is recommended to note the report

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 Children and Young People's Directorate (CYP) contributes to five of the key priority outcomes of Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020:
 - Ambitious and achieving where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.
 - Safer where people feel safe and live free from crime, antisocial behavior and abuse.
 - Empowered and responsible where people are actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.
 - > Healthy, active and enjoyable where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being.
 - Dynamic and prosperous where people are part of vibrant communities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.
- 3.2 One of the Council's corporate priorities is for young people's achievement and involvement; raising educational attainment and improving facilities for young people through partnership working.

3.3 Reporting financial results in a clear and meaningful format contributes directly to the council's tenth corporate priority: inspiring efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

4 Local Context

- 4.1 The financial forecasts for 2017/18 as at 31 May 2017 across the Council show a forecast overspend of £12.8m against the whole council's net general fund revenue budget. This compares to a final outturn overspend of £7m for 2016/17 which resulted after applying £2.8m of funding for 'risks and other budget pressures' against the total year-end overspend of £9.8m for that year. At the end of August the Council was showing an overspend of £13.5m.
- 4.2 As reported to the Public Accounts Select Committee, over the last eight years, the Council has undertaken a major budget reduction programme to manage the difficult financial challenge it has been faced with. In the period 2010/11 to 2017/18 the Council has implemented savings of £160m, with work is underway to identify and deliver a further £32m by 2019/20. The Children and Young People's (CYP) Directorate represents roughly 25% of the total General Fund spend across the Council.
- 4.3 The year-end outturn for the CYP Directorate 2016/17 was an overspend of £7m. The CYP Directorate as a whole is forecasting an overspend of £7.5m for 2017/18 at the end of August.

The CYP Directorate is made up of three divisions, the budget for each, together with the forecast overspend is shown below

Service Area	Gross budgeted spend	Gross budgeted income – including grants	Net budget	Forecast over/(under) spend August	Forecast over/(under) spend July
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children's Social Care includes No Recourse to Public Funds	38.5	0.9	37.6	5.6	5.6
Education, Standards and Inclusion	2.6	1.5	1.1	0.0	0.0
Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning	25.6	13.6	12.0	1.5	1.5
Schools	0.	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	66.7	18.0	48.7	7.1	7.1

The savings the Directorate were asked to make this year are as follows

Directorate	Savings agreed for 2017/18	Forecast delivery	Variance)
	£m	£m	£m	%
Children's Social Care	3.3	2.4	0.9	27
Education, Standards and Inclusion	0	0	0	0
Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning	0.6	0.6	0	0
TOTAL	3.9	3.0	0.9	23

4.4 In 2010/11 the CYP budget was £76.4m and through the period of the government's austerity programme, it has been reduced to £48.7m, a reduction of £27.7m or 36%.

5. Children Social Care Overspend

The CSC overspend falls into three parts:

5.1 Overspend on placements

The placement budget for *looked after children* is currently forecast to overspend by £2.1m. This is based on an average of 453 looked after children for the year. This budget funds foster and residential placements for Lewisham's looked after children. The Looked after Children numbers are starting to grow and may increase the forecast overspend.

5.2 <u>Overspend on CSC staff</u> The CSC staffing budget, which funds social workers, their managers and business support is forecast to overspend by £1.8m. This includes the investment in MASH team to improve the "front door" following the Ofsted inspection.

5.3 <u>Overspend on Section 17</u> This budget funds families who qualify for financial support under S17 of the Children Act 1989. This budget is expected to overspend by £0.7m.

5.4 <u>Unachieved savings</u> The unachieved savings across in Children's Social Care amount to £0.9 out of a total saving requirement of £3.3m

6 Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning Overspend

6.1 The final outturn on schools' transport at end of 2016/17 was an overspend of £1.2m. In 2017/18, it is expected to be lower but still in the region of £0.7m. Members should note that measures to reduce demand and promote alternatives to bus/taxi transport have resulted in a 10% decrease in numbers

on transport. Alternative travel assistance offers have been put in place such as direct payments and independent travel training, alongside better assessment of need within the existing eligibility criteria. A new DPS for taxi provision has been in place since April 2017 and if forecast to reduce the spend on taxis by £200k this financial year. The spend on taxi's has already reduced by £460k since 2015. There is currently a review of fleet and passenger transport services underway with a view to reducing cost per journey in Door 2 Door.. The revenue budget savings from this review have been built into the forecast in full.

6.2 The net budget which funds education psychologists has seen increased spending pressure due to the increased demand for Education Heath and Care Plans (EHCP), with the numbers issued having doubled over the last year. The staffing budget for the Children with Complex Needs Service is partly funded by a DfE SEND Reform Grant of c£300k which is due to end in March 2018. If this is not replaced by central Government, it will leave a further pressure within the service budget.

In addition, the short breaks budget is expected to overspend by £0.5m, although work is underway to bring this back within budget. This is partly due to an increase in demand and work has been underway to look at alternative ways of meeting this demand within budget; however the overspend is largely due to the costs of Drumbeat Extended Services (after school club and holiday provision) which have created an additional pressure on this budget. Although work is underway with the school and with parents to develop an alternative model of delivery, there will need to be an overall policy decision on what Lewisham's short breaks offer should be.

7. Understanding demand

A main driver of demand for children's social care and SEND services is the increase in population in Lewisham of children and young people aged under 18. The increases since 2013 are as follows

Year	Population	%Growth Cumulative	%Growth Annual
2011	64,234		
2012	65,153	1.43%	1.43%
2013	66,276	3.18%	1.72%
2014	67,366	4.88%	1.64%
2015	68,137	6.08%	1.14%
2016	68,845	7.18%	1.04%
2017	69,330	7.93%	0.70%

7.2 <u>What are the key headline statistics for CSC in Lewisham?</u>

	As at August 2017	Statistical Neighbours	National
Number of children 0 to 18	68,250		
No of contacts and referrals per 10,000 population	403	470	548
S47 child protection enquiries per 10,000 population	184	143	138
Number of children on Child Protection Plans	306	**	**
Number of Looked after Children per 10,000 population (1)	65.1	65.1	60

7.3 What drives demand for CSC?

There are a number of drivers for demand which have resulted in increased spend across London. They can be seen as associated with economic disadvantage, increased child poverty and with intergenerational problems of mental health and deprivation, including:

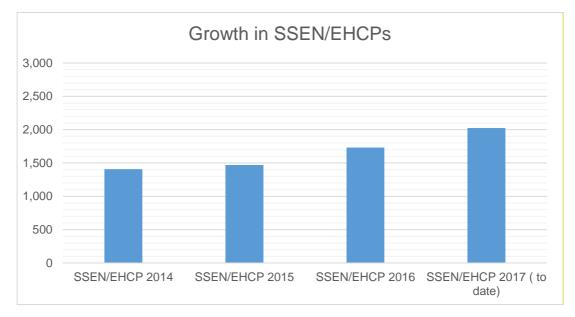
- Increase in incidence of poor parental mental health linked with substance abuse, leading to neglect of children and poor attachment
- Increase in problems of adolescent mental health (e.g. increasing incidence of self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal ideation)
- Increase in gang involvement in drug dealing, leading to exploitation of vulnerable young people, including sexual exploitation and peer on peer abuse
- > Increase in homelessness, mobility and transience
- > Increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

7.4 What drives demand in Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning (TSJC)?

Demand for the services which assess and coordinate support for children and young people with SEND is driven in part by the population growth set out above. It is also driven by the increased rate of survival and lifespan of young people with profound and multiple disabilities (nationally a 50% increase over the last 10 years). Finally it is driven by the implementation of the 2014 SEND reforms, which broadened the responsibility of services from 5-18 years to 0-25 years.

The general pattern of increasing demand appears common across London boroughs – Lambeth and Southwark for example have seen a very similar level of increase as Lewisham. 11 of the 13 Inner London Boroughs have seen an increase in EHCP's issued, and a corresponding drop in the percentage finalised within 20 weeks.

The following chart shows the increase in demand for Education, Care and Health Plans:



This shows an increase in the numbers of children with EHCP's or SSEN's from 1,400 in 2014, at the point the current legislation was introduced, to the current figure of 2024.

Data suggest the demand will continue at the high level observed in 2015/2016. The increase in demand for EHCPs has had a clear impact on the ability of services involved in assessment to meet the 20 week statutory deadlines, and the annual review process. This has particularly been the case for the Educational Psychology Service which has recruited additional staff to meet demand, but resulting in the overspend outlined above.

The increase in demand has an impact on the Children with Disabilities social work team and short breaks provision, which has seen a subsequent increase in the numbers of families eligible for a social work assessment, and for a short breaks provision at either targeted or specialist level.

8. Strategy for reducing cost and bringing the service within budget

8.1 The Ofsted Inspection report in 2016 identified that there needed to be a major improvement programme for CSC, focusing on greater rigor, improved

recording and performance management and much better systems and processes. The work achieved so far has necessitated investment in bringing the service's IT up to date, ensuring that the social workers have phones and ipads to enable mobile and secure working, a huge data cleansing exercise and development of a new performance framework. All this has necessitated investment from the corporate centre beyond that identified in the CSC budget. Alongside this, officers have been working to analyse the budget and develop a 'road map' towards reducing budget overspends. The strategies can be summarised as follows:

- Recruiting additional foster carers to reduce reliance on high cost independent fostering agencies £1.5m.
- Working to reduce relatively high numbers in residential placements through stronger gatekeeping, monitoring and developing home-grown alternatives £0.5m.
- Reducing reliance on agency staff through a strong workforce strategy and encouraging agency staff to become council employees £0.4m.
- More effective front door and early help to reduce escalation to 'high end'
- Intervention at the edge of care to prevent high cost adolescents coming into the care system
- Better procurement to get best possible VFM from suppliers (placements, agency staff, contracts)
- Effective joint working with Housing Needs to reduce costs of intentional homelessness and improve housing options for care leavers £0.5m.
- Better systems and processes to promote improved value for money and eliminate waste.

Each of these strategies is explained in more detail below:

8.2 <u>Recruiting additional foster carers to reduce reliance on high cost independent</u> <u>fostering agencies</u>

Rationale	A comprehensive and effective fostering strategy will increase the number of in-house foster carers to bring us into line and ultimately outperform our statistical neighbours and reduce the overall cost of placements
ACTIONS	

Undertaken The contract for in-house foster care recruitment with a voluntary sector organisation (dates) has been terminated and in-house recruitment of foster carers commenced.	Planned Reinvestment of £96k cost of recruitment contract into a new fostering recruitment service to demonstrate potential return from larger scale investment in recruitment of foster carers
A comprehensive fostering strategy and associated action plan has been developed	Development of in house fostering recruitment team. Monitor recruitment service to track spend, delivery and savings
Investment in service improvement to date £0k	Additional investment required To reinvest £200k of savings following 'proof of concept'
Savings achieved to date: £96k cost of under-performing recruitment contract recycled into in- house approach	Further savings planned: Potential for large scale cost reduction: Increase children with in-house foster carers by 60 and reduce children in IFAs by 60 would generate cost reduction of £1.5m This can be profiled over time as follows: Year 1 £50k Year 2 £600K Year 3 £1,500k

How will we know it's working?

Ratio of in-house foster carers to agency, currently 40:60 and the target is to move it to 60:40

Risks

Recruitment of foster carers is a slow process, with a competitive market across London

Children in existing placements cannot (and should not) be moved if their placement is working well and they are settled and happy, so the change can only affect new placements

8.1. <u>Working to reduce relatively high numbers in residential placements through</u> <u>stronger gatekeeping, monitoring and developing home grown alternatives</u>

Rationale	Rigorous gatekeeping, monitoring and tracking of all residential and semi- independent placements ensures that young people are in the right placement for an appropriate length of time, with an exit strategy if appropriate. In addition tight monitoring of contracts ensures that the agreed contract is being delivered and where appropriate, the cost of the contract is brought in line with the service requirement and needs of the young person.	
Overall savings target	£190k	
ACT	IONS	
<u>Undertaken</u> A Care Scrutiny (Placement Panel) meets weekly to review all new or higher cost placements	Planned Identify whether it is feasible to work with a provider to develop local residential/intensive foster care provision which will reduce the need to place in high cost residential outside Lewisham.	
Our placement procurement team has been strengthened to ensure the best placement at the best cost is identified; within this a Family Finder is in post to facilitate identification and transition to lower cost placements in line with a child's care plan.	This was the substance of an Innovation Fund bid to DfE which was not successful but can be pursued if a case can be made for capital investment.	
Investment in service improvement to date £50k – recouped through savings in placements	Additional investment required Potential Capital Bid.	
Savings achieved to date: Net £140k	Further savings planned: Will be quantified as part of developing options for local provision	
How will we know it's working? Reduction in average unit placement cost Reduction in the use of residential placements Further reduction in placement breakdown due to better matching		

Risks

The market for residential care is subject to high demand and increasing unit costs in line with opportunities for private providers profit margins.

Ofsted inspection standards for residential care make providers less willing to accept children with more complex needs; for those that will this often involves additional resource allocation, for example 2:1 staffing arrangements.

With small numbers of children with complex issues making a big impact on budget, it is challenging to predict demand and need in high cost placements.

Rationale	Given that each agency worker costs an additional £12k per annum when compared to a permanent employed, if we improve our recruitment and retention of social workers, we will save money.
ACT	IONS
<u>Undertaken</u>	<u>Planned</u>
 A workforce strategy is in place, endorsed by CYP Select Committee November 2016 which includes: Retention strategies and developments 	A new Induction policy is due to be launched in September 2017
 Recruitment developments Procedural clarity Consultation and communication arrangements Learning and development All Staff Forums, monthly All Managers meetings staff, Quarterly service days have been introduced across CSC.	A revised supervision framework is due to be launched in September 2017 Leadership development programme agreed with the SELTP and Corporately within the Council.

8.4. Reducing reliance on agency staff through workforce strategy, temp to perm.

How will we know it's working?		
Savings achieved to date: £0k	Further savings planned £400k	
Investment in service improvement to date £0k	Additional investment required £0k	
Partnership. This leads to a range of social work development opportunities. Workshops held with agency staff on IR45 to promote a move into Council employment; 8 agency workers are currently being processed for permanent employment.	Futures transformation programme based on a systemic model of social work intervention is being developed, target roll out winter 2017.	
Revised tracking systems are in place for permanent recruitment, vacancies and agency use to improve accountability and timeliness. Lewisham is one of four partners (Goldsmiths University, Southwark & Greenwich Council) which form the Dfe funded South East London Teaching	A learning and development career framework is due to be launched in October 2017 Social work recruitment via the DfE Step up Social Work recruitment programme is being developed within the SELTP. Championing Children, Transforming	

How will we know it's working?

Reduced level of agency workers – target 10%. Will never be 0% because of maternity and long term sickness cover.

Risks

Social work pay and the housing market may drive social workers to agency work or higher salaried authorities; social workers are nationally in high demand still.

Caseload pressures particularly in the Referral and Assessments services increase the risk of staff turnover.

8.5. More effective front door and early help to reduce escalation to 'high end'

ACTIONS		
<u>Undertaken</u>	Planned	
A new MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) early help team and front door team has been set up to support families to avoid the need for more statutory intervention; better assess levels of need and match to service and meet Ofsted requirements. There are a range of partners sited within the MASH A 'Continuum of Need' has been developed to give clarity on responsibilities for service provision for CSC and partners agencies across the ascribed levels of need. Referrals to partner agencies from the MASH are tracked to ensure engagement and promote outcomes sought. A revised Early Help Assessment has been developed and rolled out across the partnership. Revised Early Help Training is being delivered by the Early Help Team.	The formal launch of our new Early Help arrangements to further promote this across the partnership prior to March 2018. Complete partnership engagement in the MASH with recruitment of Housing and CAMHS links. Address continued high referral rate from the police by achieving a better common understanding of thresholds.	
Investment in service improvement to date £600k	Additional investment required £0k	
Savings achieved to date: £0k	Further savings planned None prior to 2020	
How will we know it's working? Tracking numbers of referrals accepted by CSC Increased engagement of families with early help services Slowing demand on specialist CSC services Service quality audits (and multi-agency audits carried out by LSCB) and Ofsted inspection		

Risks

Impact will take time to deliver, important that service is allowed time to embed. The needs of the partnership for safeguarding support may outstrip supply

Rationale	Lower cost early help key worker support for adolescents in crisis and at risk of coming into care will prevent escalation and future high placement costs		
ACT	IONS		
<u>Undertaken</u>	<u>Planned</u>		
The First Options service is now in place. This consists of redeployed formerly ESF funded key workers as team to support adolescents in crisis, linked with early help service and front door/MASH.	Keep the effectiveness of the team under review and improve links with other relevant early help services (Youth First and YOS) to maximise support for young people and impact on outcomes		
 The First Options Team have been: Provided with a Departmental induction Trained through the SELTP In restorative approaches Trained in trauma informed practice 			
The numbers of young people who have been prevented from becoming LAC in 2017 is 54; the number of delayed/planned admission to care through the work of the team is 1; the number of young people successfully rehabilitated home from care 1; this amounts to cost avoidance of c£600k (based on half the costs of 54 young people not entering care and 1 rehabilitation home, unit costs are based on in house foster care rates.)			
Investment in service improvement to date £300k per annum	Additional investment required Ongoing commitment to fund staff		

8.6. Intervention at the edge of care to prevent high cost adolescents coming into the care system

Savings achieved to date: Cost avoidance of c£600k	Further savings planned Cost avoidance of at least £500k per year	
 How will we know it's working? Number of children where the young person remains with their family post intervention Number of delayed/planned admissions to care 		
Risks None		

8.7. <u>Better procurement to get best possible VFM from suppliers (placements, agency staff, contracts)</u>

Objective/rationale	Improved procurement and contract management across children's social care will improve value for money in a volatile and fragmented market place		
ACTIONS			
<u>Undertaken</u>	<u>Planned</u>		
A contract officer is now in place to ensure monitoring of individual placement agreements, recharges and discounts are applied.	Ongoing participation in South London Consortium and any other partnership arrangements which deliver savings		
We have maintained a private provider framework agreement with Independent Fostering Agencies, to achieve cost volume and placement discounts, avoiding cost increases for the last 8 years.			
A South London consortium Innovation Dfe bid in was successful and is currently being developed to better commission and procure savings on residential care.			
Investment in service improvement to date £40k	Additional investment required £0k		
Savings achieved to date: £160k	Further savings required £0k		

Key performance outcomes

- Reduced unit costs for placement costs
- Individual placement agreements in place

Risks

The market for residential care is subject to high demand and increasing unit costs in line with opportunities for private providers profit margins.

Ofsted inspection standards for residential care make providers less willing to accept children with more complex needs; for those that will this often involves additional resource allocation, for example 2:1 staffing arrangements.

With smaller numbers making a big impact on budget it is challenging to predict demand and need in high cost placements.

8.8. <u>Effective joint working with Housing Needs to reduce costs of intentional</u> homelessness and improve housing options for care leavers

Objective/rationale	To minimise the cost of intentional homeless needs and to ensure that the most cost effective housing is provided for care leavers
ACT	IONS
<u>Undertaken</u>	Planned
The cost of care leavers accommodation has been reduced by commissioning of approved provider supported housing units.	A new contract is being developed for semi-independence providers to ensure quality and improved vfm.
Systems are in place to ensure all housing benefits are claimed for all care leavers in semi-independent accommodation.	Additional 10 housing units from preferred providers are being commissioned for young people under 18 to avoid spot purchase.
Additional Shared Housing Units have been jointly procured with housing for young people outside of Lewisham.	A protocol and panel arrangement is being developed jointly with Housing partners to risk assess and promote joint earlier intervention for families at risk of homelessness.

A joint Housing/CSC Strategy group is in place and meets regularly. Housing partners sit on the weekly Care Scrutiny panel and are soon to join MASH.	
Arrangements for response to young people presenting as homeless has been strengthened and joint training with CSC and Housing undertaken Any external housing funded by CSC due to intentional homelessness is now procured through Housing to ensure vfm.	
Investment in service improvement to date £0k	Additional investment required £0k
Savings achieved to date: £1,600k	Further savings planned £500k
Key performance outcomes	

8.9	The overall summary	of savings	planned	are as follows

Ref	Strategy	Reductions in	Future savings
		expenditure	£000
		£000	(over the next 4
			years)
9.1	Recruiting additional foster carers		1,500
9.2	Reduce residential places	190	500
9.3	Reducing agency staff		400
9.4	More effective front door		
9.5	Intervention at edge of care		
9.6	Better procurement		
9.7	Reduce intentional homelessness and	1,600	500
	improve care leavers		
ТО	TAL	1,790	2,900

* These savings have reduced the expenditure to help bring the overspend down. They have not released budget savings.

8.9. Demand management for children with SEND is being delivered through the Partnership's SEND strategy. This aims to ensure that children and young people's needs are initially met through good quality universal, mainstream provision. The strategy outlines the support that is available to schools and

settings to deliver Quality First Teaching, and the support available to all services to support early identification of need. This aims to ensure the right support is available to children and young people with needs below EHCP level.

- 8.10 The SEND panel is the multi-agency forum for agreeing whether or not to undertake an EHCP assessment, and then whether or not to issue and EHCP after assessment. This is a robust forum and is crucial to ensuring a consistent approach.
- 8.11 The biggest pressure however is in the capacity needed across the system to carry out assessments within the statutory period. This capacity is currently being met through an overspend as described.
- 8.12 Once a plan is issued, the resources needed to support a child or young person are clearly outlined in the plan and must be reviewed annually. Clear, transparent guidance, including the level of resource available, has been issued to schools through our banding review, which sets out what schools are expected to provide and what any 'top-up' funding is for. This is to ensure that as many children as possible can have their needs met in Lewisham schools and not out of borough independent schools, and that the right provision is identified to meet need. Our school place planning strategy is aimed at increasing the number of places for SEND in borough.
- 8.13 Further work is underway to re-design short breaks provision in order to meet demand within the resource available, however this is likely to result in proposals that will need to reduce eligibility or provision in some way.
- 8.14 Work continues on the travel assistance offer to increase the alternatives offered to families and to reduce the dependency on taxi or bus provision. This is likely to result in a small reduction from the current numbers of children receiving transport, but the biggest reduction has already been made. The cost of taxi provision is set to continue to reduce as previously described, and work is underway corporately to reduce the cost of in-house passenger transport.

9. Conclusion

9.1 This report highlights that controlling and reducing the overspend in Children and Young People is vital for the council finances. All the initiatives which are being undertaken and are described in this report involve a degree of systems change. The problems faced by Lewisham are common across London and beyond. London Councils are working with the LGA on lobbying strategies to highlight the scale of the problem.

10. Financial implications

10.1 There are no specific financial implications to this report although it concerns the council's finances.

11. Legal implications

11.1 The legal basis for the provision of CSC services is set out in the report.

12. Crime and disorder implications

12.1 Children's Social Care works very closely with Youth Offending as they work with many of the same young people and their families. The police are key partners is the MASH and LSCB and Children and Young People Directorate is a key part of the Safer Lewisham Partnership.

13. Equalities implications

13.1 CSC is designed to promote equality of opportunity by giving children a better start in life than they would without the service's intervention. The service inevitably deals predominantly with those who are disadvantaged economically, in terms of disability, health and other protected characteristics.

If there are any queries on this report please contact Sara Williams, Executive Director for CYP <u>sara.williams@lewisham.gov.uk</u>, Stephen Kitchman, Director for Children's Social Care <u>Stephen.kitchman@lewisham.gov.uk</u> and Dave Richards Group Finance Manager <u>dave.richards@lewisham.gov.uk</u>