

Public Accounts Select Committee		
Report Title	Update on Children's Social Care Budget	
Key decision	No	
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director of Children and Young People	
Class	Part 1	10 th July 2019

1. Summary of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides an update, briefing and information on the financial position of Children's Social Care (CSC). It describes how the budget is made up and explains the demands and cost drivers. It then goes on to describe the action which is in train to address the current overspend. It also describes the trends in these together with the impact to date of the CSC Improvement Programme

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note and comment on the report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 One of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Strategy is "Giving children and young people the best start in life - every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential."
- 3.2 Children Social Care contributes to the Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2022 and its priorities.
- 3.3 Reporting financial results in a clear and meaningful format contributes directly to the council's aims to ensure transparency, efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

4. Budget headlines

- 4.1 In 2018/19, the CSC budget had an outturn of £50.3m on a budget of £43.4m showing an overspend of £6.9m. This was as projected throughout the financial year and reflected a programme of works to stabilise the budget and to recalibrate it to be closer to reflecting the required activity in the Directorate. The reduction in budget 'overspend' from 2017/18 (outturn was £50.5m on a budget of £37.9m i.e £12.6m) reflects the application of additional funding to establish the CSC budget at a realistic level with an additional £6m to support Placement costs. In 2019/20, the budget is £46.8m including additional funding (Placements additional £3m and Staff salaries £4m). The 2019/20 budget also reflects savings agreed on the placements budget of £1.5m, with a similar level of savings planned

for 2020/21. As at May 2019, the CSC budget is projected to be on track to meet its targets, including the savings of £1.5m on placements. It should be noted that the projection in May 2019 is achievable only if a forecast underspend in the No Recourse To Public Funds continues to net off the overspend in the following service areas: Section 17, Legal Fees and LAC Additional Costs (the cost of Family Support assessments and Supervision of contacts).

- 4.2 Over the last nine years, the Council has undertaken a major budget reduction programme to manage the difficult financial challenge it has faced. In the period 2010/11 to 2019/20, the Council has implemented cuts of £174m, with work is underway to identify and deliver a further £12m by 2021. The Children and Young People’s (CYP) Directorate represents approximately 22% of the total General Fund budget across the Council. For its part, Children Social Care (CSC) makes up 79% of the CYP budget and 19% of the total General Fund spend across the Council.
- 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 £53.5m, a reduction of £22.9m or 30%. The cuts attributable to CSC since 2010 are shown below;

	£m
2010/11	0.2
2011/12	3.6
2012/13	0.3
2013/14	0.5
2014/15	0.3
2015/16	4.2
2016/17	1.4
2017/18	3.3
2018/19	0.7
	14.5

In 2018/19 and 2019/20, the CSC budget has been increased to rectify the historic structural overspend.

- 4.5 Table below shows the Outturn against budget for Lewisham over the last 5 years.

CSC(including NRTPF)			
Year	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
2014/15	57.6	46.8	10.8
2015/16	50.3	43.9	6.4
2016/17	48.2	41.9	6.3
2017/18	50.4	37.9	12.5
2018/19	50.3	43.4	6.9

5. The areas of pressure for CSC spend

5.1 Placements of looked after children

The placement budget for *looked after children* had an outturn of £31.2m on a budget of £28.7m in 2018/19, in line with forecasts. In 2019/20 the budget is £30m (incorporating a budget cut of £1.5m as well as the additional funding allocated) and is currently forecast to spend in line with budget. In 2018/19 there was an average of 488 looked after children for the year. In 2019/20, the numbers have reduced slightly, projecting an average of 470 for the year. This budget funds foster and residential placements for Lewisham's looked after children.

5.2 CSC staffing budget

The CSC staffing budget, which funds social workers, their managers and business support had an outturn of £16.7m on a budget of £12.6m in 2018/19 in line with forecasts. In 2019/20 the staffing budget is £16.6m and spending is projected to be in line with budget.

6. National and London context

6.1 National underfunding of Children Social Care

In January 2019, the National Audit Office reported that nationally there was a £872m shortfall in CSC budgets (£108m for London). They also reported that 91% of councils were overspending on CSC in 2017/18. The report also noted that nationally the looked after children population had gone up by 15%, compared with general population growth of 5%. In London, CSC spend has increased by £50m between 2014/15 and 2017/18 – a 5% increase. During this period, the average overspend in London increased from 6% to 9%. This situation has not received the popular attention which spending on adult social care has but it has been the subject of representations to central government from the LGA and the Association of Directors of Children's Services. With Ofsted's demanding regulatory regime, expectations of children's services have never been higher, yet many of the non-statutory preventative services have been eroded since the beginning of the austerity programme. DfE figures show that in the 10 years from 2006 to 2016, the number of child protection enquiries nationally increased from 72,000 to 172,000.

A recent report commissioned by London Councils says that their research indicated that "children's social care budgets were often set historically and may not have responded to changes in the population or need over time". ... Analysis of the data suggests that councils with both high and low per capita budgets are equally likely to be overspent and that there is no discernible correlation with the degree of overspend and whether per capita expenditure is below or above average or has increased or decreased over the period."

7.0 Is Lewisham a high spender on CSC?

7.1 The only available comparative information is from the Section 251 return. The analysis below shows comparison with Lewisham's statistical neighbours. The spend is per head of population 0 to 17 so is adjusted for population. The table below shows that Lewisham

is not a high spender – slightly above average for spend on children looked after but low on spend on children’s social care staffing and associated costs.

S251 comparison of CSC spend 2018/19

Area of spend	£ spend per child in population	Rank out of 11	Average	Lambeth	Croydon	Haringey	Hackney	Waltham Forest	Southwark	Enfield	Brent	Greenwich	Islington
	Lewisham												
Children looked after	368	6	346	440	253	479	315	330	580	203	203	440	586
Safeguarding children (incl social workers)	152	8	193	340	326	134	301	177	205	103	152	235	454

The functions and activities of Children Social Care

7.2 Statutory basis

7.2.1 Children’s Social Care operates under a set of legislation and statutory guidance, the main pillars of which are:

- The Children Act 1989 which imposes a statutory duty on local authorities to safeguard children in their area
- The London Child Protection Procedures 2016 which have been adopted by all London councils and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. This provides a national framework and core requirements which agencies and professionals must satisfy in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

7.3 Key functions of CSC

7.3.1 Early help

Early help means taking action to support a child, young person or their family early in the life of a problem, as soon as it emerges. It can be required at any stage in a child’s life from pre-birth to adulthood and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with or meet on their own. It is to meet this wide definition that the council commissions family support and children’s centres in particular but a wide range of other services provided by the council and its partners also count as early help although (as in councils across the country) the range and quantum of this has been eroded during the austerity period. The council and its partners must ensure that children and families who do not meet the threshold for social care intervention are offered and indeed take up and benefit from early help. CSC is also expected to ‘step down’ cases which no longer need a social

worker but where some vulnerabilities remain to early help services. Early Help is part of the Ofsted's focus in its current inspection arrangements for CSC.

Early help provision is currently being reviewed in Lewisham. This is the subject of regular reports to CYP Select Committee and is linked with the budget making process as it relates to the few parts of General Fund spend in the CYP budget which are non-statutory.

7.3.2 Child protection

7.3.2.1 A local authority's powers and duties to safeguard children are defined in the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004. Two core elements of the 1989 Act are Section 17 and 47. Section 17 imposes a general duty on every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need of local authority services within their area.

7.3.2.2 Section 47 defines the authority's duty, in partnership with other agencies, to initiate enquiries if they become aware that a child in their locality is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. If, following or during the course of assessment, concerns about a child's safety are identified, local authority social workers should convene a strategy discussion/meeting with the police and others to decide whether to undertake an enquiry under Section 47 and any associated action to protect the child.

7.3.2.3 Within the 2004 Act, Section 11 requires local authorities and partner organisations with responsibility for the care and well-being of children to co-operate. This includes health, police, probation and youth offending teams. Schools and the voluntary sector are encouraged to work in partnership with local authorities to plan and deliver services tailored to the needs of the child.

7.3.2.4 In addition, the 2004 Act requires all children's services' authorities to appoint a Director for Children's Services (DCS) and a Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS). Legislation last year changed the requirement to have an Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the council (with local partners) is implementing the new model within the same budget envelope as it certainly will not cost less than current arrangements.

7.4 Looked after children

7.4.1 There are several ways that a child or young person can become looked after by the local authority

- A parent can request that their child is looked after or "accommodated" by the local authority under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989
- The police can take a child under Police Protection for 72 hours
- The local authority can be so concerned about a child that they decide to apply for an Emergency Protection Order which also lasts for 72 hours
- The local authority can decide to implement care proceedings if the threshold for this has been met.
- The court may decide to award an Interim Care Order whilst further investigations are continued which may lead to the granting of a Care order.
- The Courts can remand a child into the care of the local authority in criminal matters

- In exceptional cases, the local authority can apply for a Secure order under Section 25 of the Children Act 1989

7.4.2 When a care order is made, the local authority acquires parental responsibility and becomes a legal parent with associated duties alongside the parent/ guardian. Looked after children are placed at the expense of the local authority in foster placements or in exceptional circumstances, residential placements. Other types of care include adoption, kinship care with extended family and special guardianship arrangements. Looked after children become Care Leavers at age 18 and following recent legislation, the council has responsibility for them up to age 25.

7.4.3 Foster placements are either with in-house foster parents who are recruited by the Council or by placing a child with an external agency who employs foster parents and then sells out the placements to local authorities. These are known as Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).

7.5 Adoption/Special Guardianship Order

7.5.1 A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's 'special guardian'. It is intended for those children who cannot live with their birth parents and who would benefit from a legally secure placement. Usually SGOs place children with grandparents, other close family or family friends. They are increasingly used by the courts, sometimes even if the local authority considers that the child should be placed for adoption. The local authority is expected to provide financial support for the placement under a local policy which meets legislative requirements.

7.6 Section 17

7.6.1 A 'Child in Need' is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled.

7.6.2 For children who are disabled, assessments are carried out by the Children with Complex Needs Team and packages of care may be given, where appropriate linking up as part of a holistic package of support with education and health.

7.6.3 For children whose parents present as destitute and/or intentionally homeless it may also be necessary for a social work assessment and may require support to be given in kind, by providing accommodation or cash.

7.7 Ofsted inspection regime

7.7.1 Ofsted inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages.

7.7.2 Ofsted inspects Local Authority Children Services and the Local Safeguarding Children Board under its powers in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

7.7.3 Lewisham was last subject to a full inspection of our CSC Department in November 2015, with the report published in February 2016. We received a Focussed Visit under the new Inspection Framework in September 2018. This is a form of 'mini inspection' reported via a letter rather than a graded report. It focused on our front door and MASH arrangements, given that this was the main area for action following our 2015 inspection and recommended improvements to systems, processes, quality assurance and performance management (all of which had been identified in our self-assessment). Based on current arrangements Lewisham would expect to receive a further inspection under the new ILACS regime before the end of 2019.

7.7.4 All aspects of Children's Social Care fall under the Ofsted regulatory regime and in effect this regime sets standards which the council is required to adhere to. The local authority is not free (as with some council services) simply to 'cut its coat according to its cloth' but rather is expected to provide a service that meets requirements, not just keeping children safe but ensuring good outcomes in a holistic way across children's services. If an Ofsted inspection finds (as in a number of London boroughs) that standards are not met and the services are graded 'Inadequate', the Council is required to rectify this, with a high degree of scrutiny from the DfE, or risks CSC being removed from Council control.

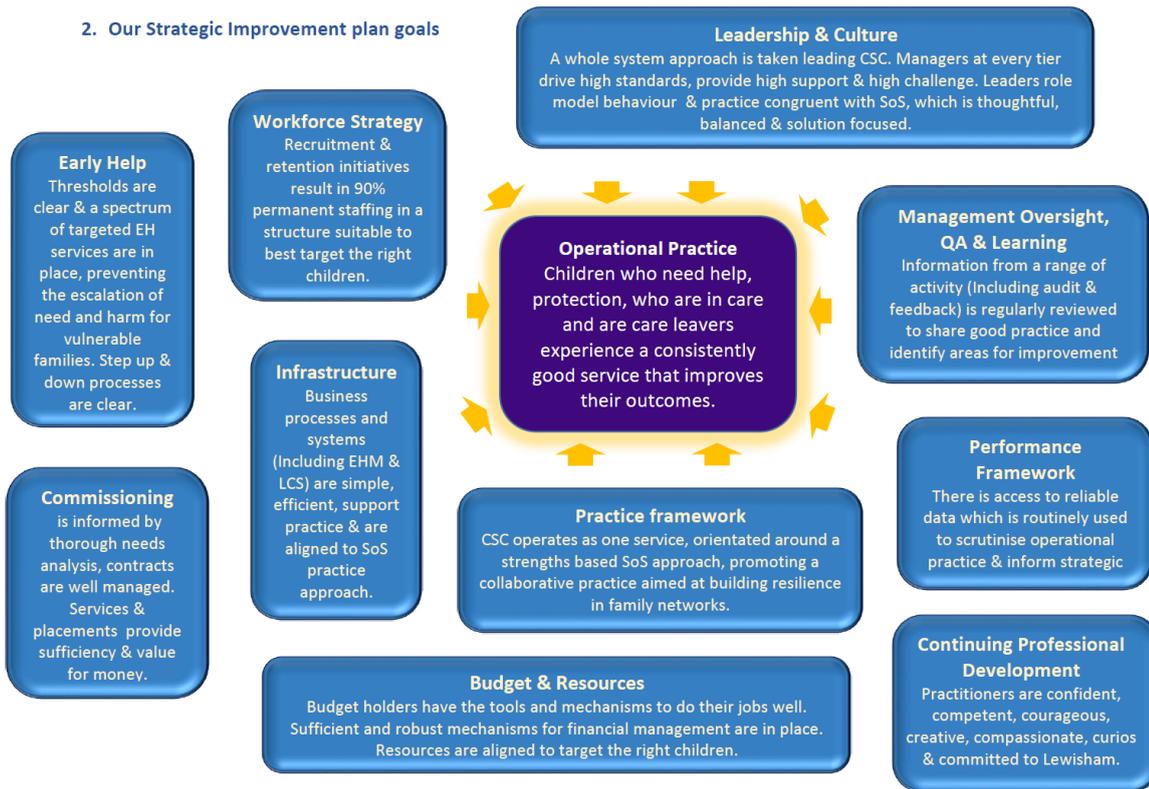
8. The Children's Social Care Improvement Programme

8.1 The CSC Improvement Programme began in its current form in September 2018, following a series of reviews in spring and summer 2018 which identified that the pace of change in the improvement of CSC needed to be quicker. Ofsted agreed with our self-assessment during their focused visit in September 2018.

8.2 Since the Improvement Plan was revised and the Improvement Board was introduced, the pace of change has significantly increased. Real progress has been made to rebuild the infrastructure and create the right conditions for good social work to thrive. Key improvements made between July and December 2018 were referenced in an in-depth annual self-assessment conducted in January 2019. This was then updated in June 2019 ahead of the Executive Director's Annual Engagement with our linked Ofsted HMI.

8.3 The strategic goals of the Improvement Plan are set out below. In their different ways, all improvement strands contribute to stabilising and controlling the budget, but those around workforce, commissioning and resources are especially relevant

2. Our Strategic Improvement plan goals



9. What has the CSC Improvement Programme Achieved?

Since September 2018, the CSC Improvement Programme has achieved major service changes, the financial impact being the stabilisation of the budget. The table below summarises the areas of action. There is still a large programme of work progressing as this is a two year programme running to September 2020.

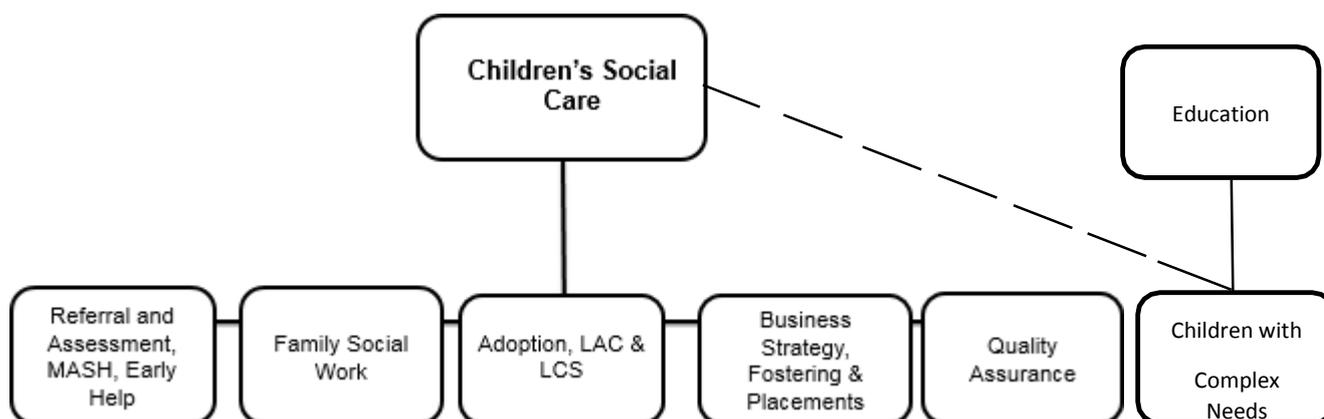
What we have done	Why we have done it	When
A review of the placements and commissioning function. Sufficiency Strategy drafted.	Increased range and number of in-house foster care placements, more options to place Children Looked After locally in family based setting. Manage the market of independent providers and commissioned placements for reduced placement costs. Reduce reliance on residential placements	Started Jul 2018 Q1 2019
Senior Management Alerts introduced	Senior Management Team better sighted on high risk cases	Aug 2018
The revised supervision framework, recording template and accompanying caseload management guidance was revised and re-issued	Promote reflective supervision, aligned to Signs of Safety practice framework. Manage caseloads to promote relationship based social work.	Q3 2018
Business Support arrangements across the service were reviewed.	Plan to increase business support (within budget envelope) to better help enable social workers to spend more time with	Q3 & Q4 2018/19

	children and families.	
Performance data scrutiny clinics and SMT scrutiny cycle introduced. Performance data strategy created.	Increase the breadth, depth and accuracy of performance information and how it is used to drive practice and service planning	Q3 & 4 2018/19
An additional layer of management i.e. Group Managers, were recruited	To strengthen management oversight and increase strategic capacity.	Started Nov 2018
Monthly CSC newsletters introduced Manager Breakfast Briefings, all staff conference held	Improve communication and increase staff engagement in service developments	Nov 2018 Jun 2019
Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) revised and re-launched. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-annual 'Listening & Learning' events • quarterly learning reports • revised audit formats (Signs of Safety) • Open days for members and partners 	Strengthen scrutiny and accountability to better understand the quality and impact of services and plan strategic improvements and workforce development	Dec 2018
Re-design programme to improve the Liquidlogic Children's Recording System (LCS & EHM)	Reduce bureaucracy, simplify convoluted systems, to increase capacity for more direct work with children and families	Started Dec 2018
SMT introduced a routine cycle of management meetings for business, workforce, finance and scrutiny of PQA	Increase management oversight and strengthen strategic leadership	Started Dec 2018
New business process for the MASH introduced.	Address issues identified in self-assessment & Ofsted focused visit	Go live Jan 2019
LSCB redrafted the threshold continuum of need	Consistency with the rest of London and clarification thresholds for partners	Jan 2019
The terms of reference for four key decision making and case monitoring panels were refreshed and re-launched.	Provide better scrutiny, oversight of practice and consistency of decision making.	Jan 2019
Signs of Safety (SoS) practice framework implementation started	Establish shared practice approach aligned with vision and values	Started Jan 2019
A dedicated senior Principal Social Worker started in post. Transition of Advanced Practitioners to create Workforce Development Team	Lead on developing stronger workforce development offer linked to professional standards & lead on SoS implementation	Started Jan 2019 May 2019
Partners in Practice arrangement agreed with Islington – professional training and development focus	Assist delivery of improvement programme and strengthen training and development offer, with focus on Team Managers	Feb 2019
Delegated decision making matrix drafted and introduced.	Clarity of management responsibilities and delegated authority.	Q1 2019/20

Adjustments made to the 19/20 CSC budget agreed by Mayor & Cabinet (Feb19)	Enable the development of: (a) dedicated Leaving Care Service, (b) adolescent safeguarding team (Safe Space Team) (c) permanent Group Manager layer (d) enhanced business support (e) academy for CPD and NQSWs. (f) creation of stronger family support, edge of care offer & specialist posts/teams e.g. DV, FGC, PAUSE	Mar 2019 July 2019 July 2019 Q2 2019 May 2019 Q3 & 4 2019/20
In light of this, the staffing structure was reviewed to realign resources to target the right children, young people and families and develop specialist practice across the service.		
Budget coding review and restructure	Provide managers with the tools to enable oversight and grip of finances.	Q4 & Q1
Corporate Parenting Group self-assessment, review of effectiveness and new forward plan developed	Strengthen and promote Corporate Parenting responsibilities, across the council and voice of CLA in service design	Q4 & Q1
Transition from LSCB to new partnership arrangements developed	As required by changes in legislation	Q4 & Q1
Transition of Adoption to RAA planned	As required by changes in legislation	Q4 & Q1
Tracking systems put in place for complaints and FOIs. Learning from complaints now fed into QA reports	Improve responsiveness to families, strengthen management oversight. Enhanced use of service user feedback for learning and practice improvement.	Q4 2019
Refurbished office and improvements in hardware for agile working – laptops	Improve staff morale, positive contribution to retention and greater working agility and efficiency.	Feb 2019
Transfer process revised x2 (Plan to introduce new transfer panel in July 19)	Minimise delays and ensure good quality transitions between workers and teams.	Q1 & Q4
Service wide appraisal targets linked to the KSS set for 2019/20	To encourage management discussions about performance, identify areas for practice improvement. Set practice expectations, embed Vision, Values & KSS	Jun 2019
Recruitment campaign for Senior Managers (Group Managers & HOS)	Stabilise leadership team to take forward improvement programme.	Jun 2019

10. The CSC Workforce

- 10.1 A large piece of work was completed in 2018/19 to rebase the CSC staffing and to have a clear establishment. This is now being maintained on an ongoing basis to enable managers to adjust this to ensure that the right staffing resources are in the right place and to monitor spend. The staffing structure is as follows:



Across the whole service, we have the following staffing:

WORKFORCE - 24 May 2019 (FTE)	MASH & Assessment	Children with Complex Needs	Family Social Work	LAC Adoption Leaving Care	Fostering & Placements	Quality Assurance	SMT	LSCB	TOTAL excludes BSO
Total no. of posts	93	24	81	69	34	35	3	3	342
No. perm staff	63	15	55	59	23	24	2	3	244
% perm staff	67.7%	62.5%	67.9%	85.5%	67.6%	68.6%	66.7%	100.0%	71.3%
Vacancies	30	9	26	10	11	11	1	0	98
Agency staff	26	8	27	14	6	9	1	0	91
Unfilled vacancies	4	1	-1	-4	5	2	0	0	7
Turnover (April 19)	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

- 10.2 As at May 2019 71% of our workforce is permanent, a 4% improvement from January 2019. The majority of vacancies are filled by agency staff which enables us to manage reasonable caseloads. Our rate of agency social workers is 12th out of the London boroughs – so 'mid-table' and we aim to be top quartile.
- 10.3 Our workload management guide specifies how many children should be allocated to Officers. Since October we have consistently managed caseloads at the agreed levels for Children with Complex Needs, Family Social Work and Children Looked After services. Caseloads for Personal Advisors were too high in January, introduction of the dedicated Care Leaver Service in March has enabled us to bring down caseloads down to manageable levels. The impact of threshold decision making changes in the MASH since May has had an impact on the Assessment service caseloads,

which we are now reviewing for the best way to manage.

Average caseloads	Assessment	Children with Complex Needs	Family Social Work	Looked After	Adoption/ Permanence	Care Leavers
Q1 2019	20	11	15	14	7	21

Source : Caseload performance data from end of each month. (Excludes part time & early NQSW's with reduced caseloads)

- 10.4 In order achieve a standard of social work practice which would be judged good by Ofsted, the expectation is that social worker caseloads are management and there is sufficient management oversight. The research and surveys on the key factors that attract and retain social workers highlight: comparable pay, workforce development opportunities, stable management and reasonable caseloads. If these issues are not given due attention, there will be increased staff turnover and vacancies which have to be filled with higher cost agency staff. The impact on children is that they experience more changes of social worker and a poorer service. The weaker the practice system, the more likely it is that children looked after numbers will rise. We are therefore committed to keeping social worker caseloads at around 15 and the manager to social worker supervisory ratio as a maximum of 1:6. These figures are commonly agreed as reasonable across the profession. Our staffing structure has been comprehensively reviewed to ensure that these ratios are in place.
- 10.5 All our teams and practitioners are being reviewed and realigned where necessary to ensure our resources are targeting the areas where we can make the best impact. This includes the development of more family support services for families where children who are on the edge of coming into care. We are however seeking central government innovation grant money to do this, as additional funding is required. E.g. PAUSE and Family Group Conferences.
- 10.6 We have also undertaken a comprehensive review of the finance coding structure to simplify it for budget holders. This aims to create more transparency and improve the tools to aid financial management. This includes requesting an upgrade of the COntrocc ICT system that support payments linked to individual casework.
- 10.7 Social work regulatory frameworks demand a high degree of record keeping and data inputting, for statutory performance data returns to central government. We are streamlining our internal systems and business processes to try to maximise efficiency. We are re-designing outdated case recording ICT systems (LCS & EHM). These changes are all aimed at increasing the time that social workers spend with families to deliver good practice and reduce time they spend undertaking bureaucratic tasks which can be more efficiently managed by business support officers.
- 10.8 When more time can be given to families directly and better quality practice can being delivered, more children can stay safely with their families and do not need to come into care.

11. Placements of children looked after

Previous reports to PAC identified that while our unit costs of placements was not high in comparison with other boroughs, our numbers of placements were high overall and our use of residential placements and independent fostering agencies (IFAs) was high. This position in part reflected a national context, with the ADCS and others describing the market for children's social care placements as 'broken', with escalating costs and competition for placements between local authorities. Our analysis showed however that we are not sufficiently active in developing and supporting the local market for placements and securing best value from the placements we buy.

- 11.1 In response to this we have changed our placements processes, introducing more rigorous panel processes, moved the Placements Team into Commissioning and changed our approach to procurement and service monitoring. We have also adopted a new Fostering Statement of Purpose, a new approach to supporting our foster carers and we have launched our Foster Carer Recruitment Strategy. This together with the introduction of Signs of Safety and a changed approach to social work has led to a reduction in the numbers of CLA in residential placements and an increased number in in-house foster care. This is part of a longer term strategy.
- 11.2 The table below shows that overall the number of placements and the unit costs were reduced during 2018/19. So far, this trend is continuing in 2019/20. Particularly encouraging is the increase in numbers of children placed with in-house foster carers.

See next page

Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16	Mar-17	Mar-18
£	£	£	£	£
£357	£385	£418	£440	£445
£879	£902	£908	£925	£910
£2,901	£3,163	£3,468	£3,782	£3,841
£900	£1,086	£1,047	£1,222	£1,357
N/A	N/A		£155	£160
N/A	N/A		£790	£799
£5,037	£5,536	£5,841	£7,314	£7,512

Placement Data Weekly costs

	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Variance March to 2017	Variance to March 2018
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Local Authority Fostering	£440	£440	£440	£440	£440	£445	£444	£444	£4	-£1
Agency Fostering	£910	£910	£912	£912	£907	£908	£911	£911	-£14	£1
Residential Placement	£3,712	£3,712	£3,636	£3,700	£3,581	£3,936	£3,940	£3,942	£158	£99
Semi-Independent	£1,436	£1,436	£1,568	£1,568	£1,644	£1,436	£1,375	£1,346	£153	£18
SGO	£160	£160	£160	£160	£160	£160	£160	£160	£5	£0
Leaving Care 18+	£802	£802	£793	£800	£791	£793	£794	£784	£4	-£5
Total	£7,460	£7,460	£7,509	£7,580	£7,523	£7,678	£7,624	£7,587	£310	£112

Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16	Mar-17	Mar-18
201	208	198	186	176
194	183	166	171	185
51	47	59	61	46
38	25	28	30	41
N/A	N/A		185	186
N/A	N/A		42	45
484	463	451	675	679

Placement Data Numbers of children placed

	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Variance March to 2017	Variance to March 2018
Local Authority Fostering	193	202	199	200	196	199	199	197	13	23
Agency Fostering	192	186	188	188	188	193	197	196	26	12
Residential Placement	47	48	50	50	50	50	48	45	-13	2
Semi-Independent	46	46	46	44	40	39	38	36	8	-3
SGO	211	211	211	210	210	210	209	209	24	23
Leaving Care 18+	43	44	45	45	45	46	46	46	4	1
Total Placements	732	737	739	737	729	737	737	729	62	58

Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16	Mar-17	Mar-18
				£
£71,757	£80,080	£82,764	£81,840	£78,320
£170,526	£165,066	£150,728	£158,175	£168,350
£147,951	£148,661	£204,612	£230,702	£176,686
£34,200	£27,150	£29,316	£36,660	£55,637
N/A	N/A		£28,675	£29,760
N/A	N/A		£33,180	£35,955
£424,434	£420,957	£467,420	£569,232	£544,708

Placement Data Total Spend (average weekly)

	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Variance March to 2017	Variance to March 2018
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£		£
Local Authority Fostering	£84,920	£88,880	£87,560	£88,000	£86,240	£88,555	£88,356	£87,468	£6,516	£10,036
Agency Fostering	£174,720	£169,260	£171,456	£171,456	£170,516	£175,244	£179,467	£178,556	£21,292	£11,117
Residential Placement	£174,464	£178,176	£181,800	£185,000	£179,050	£196,800	£189,120	£177,390	-£41,582	£12,434
Semi-Independent	£66,056	£66,056	£72,128	£68,992	£65,760	£56,004	£52,250	£48,456	£15,590	-£3,387
SGO	£33,760	£33,760	£33,760	£33,600	£33,600	£33,600	£33,440	£33,440	£4,765	£3,680
Leaving Care 18+	£34,486	£35,288	£35,685	£36,000	£35,595	£36,478	£36,524	£36,064	£3,344	£569
Total cost	£568,406	£571,420	£582,389	£583,048	£570,761	£586,681	£579,157	£561,374	£9,925	£34,449

	Annualised Variance assuming March as base between 2017 and 2019	Annualised Variance assuming March as base between 2018 and 2019
Local Authority Fostering	£338,832	£521,872
Agency Fostering	£1,107,184	£578,084
Residential Placement	-£2,162,264	£646,568
Semi-Independent	£810,680	-£176,124
SGO	£247,780	£191,360
Leaving Care 18+	£173,888	£29,588
Total movement in cost pressure	£516,100	£1,791,348

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 This report highlights that controlling and reducing the overspend in CSC 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.

13. Financial implications

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

14. Legal implications

- 14.1 The legal basis for the provision of children's social care services is set out in the report.

15. Crime and disorder implications

- 15.1 The children's social care service works closely with youth offending service as they work with many of the same young people and their families. The police are key partners as is the MASH and LSCB and Children and Young People Directorate is a key part of the Safer Lewisham Partnership.

16. Equalities implications

- 16.1 The children's social care service is designed to promote equality of opportunity by giving children a better start in life than they would otherwise have 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:

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