



North Tyneside Council

Children, Education and Skills Sub Committee

8 March 2019

To be held on **18 March 2019 in room 0.01**, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY **commencing at 6.00pm.**

Agenda Item

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1. Apologies for absence

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

2. Appointment of substitutes

To be informed of the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3. To receive any declarations of interest

You are invited to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests in matters appearing on the agenda, and the nature of that interest.

You are also requested to complete the Declarations of Interests card available at the meeting and return it to the Democratic Services Officer before leaving the meeting.

You are also invited to disclose any dispensation from the requirement to declare any registerable and/or non-registerable interests that have been granted to you in respect of any matters appearing on the agenda.

4. Minutes

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To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2019.

Continued overleaf

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Elizabeth Kerr, Democratic Services Officer on tel: (0191) 643 5322.

5.	Employment and Skills Strategy	10
	To receive an update on the work undertaken on the Employment and Skills Strategy	
6.	Prevention and Early Help	34
	An update of the Early Help Offer and the Troubled Families Programme 2015-2020	
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	To receive information on the role of Foster Carer in North Tyneside.	
8.	Collaborative Working Sub Group Report	44
	To receive the report of the sub group for approval to submit to Cabinet.	

To all Members of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Councillor Linda Bell
Councillor Sean Brockbank
Councillor Pamela Brooks
Councillor Joanne Cassidy
Councillor Karen Clark
Councillor Cath Davis

Councillor Joe Kirwin
Councillor Maureen Madden
Councillor Andy Newman
Councillor Pat Oliver (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Steven Phillips
Councillor Matthew Thirlaway (Chair)

Parent Governor Representatives

Mrs Michelle Ord

Churches Representatives

Rev. Michael Vine, Church of England

Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

21 January 2019

Present: Councillor M Thirlaway (Chair)
Councillors S Brockbank, J Cassidy, C Davis,
J Kirwin, P Oliver and S Phillips.

Rev. M Vine Church Representative
Mrs M Ord, Parent Governor Representative.

CES27/01/19 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Bell, P Brooks, K Clark and M Madden.

CES28/01/19 Substitute Members

There were no substitute members reported.

CES29/01/19 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest or dispensations were reported.

CES30/01/19 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 November 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CES31/01/19 Education in North Tyneside

The sub-committee received a report which provided information on a number of matters relating to the provision of Education in North Tyneside. The Senior School Improvement Officer attended the meeting to present the report and answer any questions.

Members were provided an update on education funding; academy conversions; the impact of the closure of the Discovery school in Newcastle on North Tyneside children; the School Improvement Service; exclusions; and home educated children.

The sub-committee was informed that the overall level of School Balances at the end of March 2018 was £3.356m compared to £5.470m as at March 2017, a reduction of £2.114m and significantly better than forecast at the start of the 2017/18 financial year. Deficit meetings with schools took place in April and June and involved officers from School Improvement, Human Resources and Finance so that a holistic conclusion could be reached with schools needing to demonstrate their medium term plan to address the pressures. Nine schools projected a deficit budget in 2018/19. The deficit position was significantly driven by

surplus capacity and a programme of work with schools had begun to consider further actions required to address the longer term approach to financial planning for schools in North Tyneside.

The Early Years and School Improvement Service was providing intensive support to 11 schools. The North Tyneside protocol for supporting schools causing concern was founded on a clear, specified, formal statement of interventions that were differentiated according to the degree of concern that the Authority had for a school. Further information was provided in the Early Years and School Improvement Service Strategy for Support and Challenge to Schools which was included as an appendix to the report. Education attainment was also a separate item on the agenda of the meeting.

The rate of fixed term exclusions in North Tyneside was far lower than the national rate in general and these figures included children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The rate of fixed term exclusions in the secondary phase had consistently remained in the top 20% (lowest rate) in the country and the rate of fixed term exclusions in the primary phase remained steady and much lower than the national and regional rates, which had been increasing since 2012-13.

North Tyneside's rate of permanent exclusion was generally increasing at a similar rate to the national increase, however rates of primary phase permanent exclusions were so low that any exclusion had the potential to drastically alter apparent performance position; each of the peaks in North Tyneside's performance represented 2 or 3 exclusions in that academic year. North Tyneside's rate of primary permanent exclusions was less than national and regional benchmarks.

In North Tyneside there were 67 children being home educated which was relatively low compared to other parts of the country; at the last comparison it was the fifth lowest in the country. The main reasons reported by parents for choosing home education were that they always planned to home educate; they could not get the school of their choice; or the child had experienced problems at school. Members were assured that there were very clear processes in place to assure the Authority that these children were receiving the correct standard of education and were safeguarded. Members were also reminded of their in-depth investigation into the issue in 2016/17.

Members sought clarification on what measures were taken by schools to reduce deficits and the impact these had on the children at the school. In responses to a question regarding the value of the reserves for each school in deficit the officer agreed to enquire as to whether that information could be shared and to provide it to the Members if it was.

Members also sought further information on the reason for the exclusions, how many of the permanently excluded children had already received a fixed term exclusion, which schools these children were attending and whether any of the excluded children (either fixed term or permanently) were looked after children. The officer did not have the details to hand and undertook to provide an answer in writing.

Members then suggested that a flowchart for exclusions, like the one included in the report for home educated children, would be useful for parents and schools. Members expressed concern regarding the impact on the child and the family if any child, but particularly one with an Education, Care and Health Plan, was excluded and considered that a flowchart would help the family understand the steps taken before and after exclusion to get the child back into education. The officer shared the sub-committee's concerns and agreed to take the

suggestion back to the appropriate department.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the information regarding the provision of Education in North Tyneside; and
(2) that the additional information requested above be obtained and sent to the Democratic Support Team and circulated to all Members of the sub-committee.

CES32/01/19 Education Attainment and Progress Report

The Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had requested at its 30 March 2015 meeting that the sub-committee monitor the effectiveness of the support and challenge programme undertaken by the School Improvement Service (SIS) to ensure pupils classified as disadvantaged made comparable progress to those not classified as disadvantaged (minute OV43/03/15). Disadvantaged pupils were defined as those who had been eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in the last six years, or had been adopted or were looked after; they also formed the majority of those eligible for pupil premium funding.

The sub-committee received a report from the Assistant Director of Education, Learning and Skills on the educational attainment of all pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, in North Tyneside. A Senior School Improvement Officer attended the meeting to answer any questions.

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside schools had once again performed well compared to national measures and there was an upward trend across the borough. However, it should be noted that the data was provisional as test remarking and checking exercise outcomes had not been completed.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage performance had continued to improve for the fifth year in a row; 72.8% reached a good level of development in North Tyneside against a national average of 71.5%. However, the performance of non-FSM pupils had improved more than that of FSM pupils resulting in a slightly increased gap, within borough, of 15%. This remained smaller than the gap nationally. The gap between all children and the bottom 20% had increased to 34.2% which was higher than the equivalent gap nationally.

At Key Stage One, 84% reached the phonics threshold, compared to 82% nationally and 73% of FSM pupils reached the threshold and 85% of other pupils, leaving an in-borough gap of 12%, against a national gap of 14%. 100% of the looked after children who had been in care for over 12 months reached the expected phonics threshold. In reading, writing and mathematics the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was higher in North Tyneside than national: Reading 78% against 75%; writing 73% against 70%; Maths 79% against 76%; and Science 85% over 83%. There were eight pupils who had been looked after for at least 12 months and were eligible for KS1 assessments in 2018. Pupils achieved in line with looked after children nationally, with reading and writing slightly below and maths and science slightly above. This cohort was small and 40% were educated out of borough.

At Key Stage Two, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected level in writing (82% compared to 79%) and maths (78% compared to 76%) was higher than the national figure; 11% reached the higher level in the combined reading, writing and maths measure. This was in line with national at 10%. In reading, writing and maths combined, 55% of disadvantaged pupils and 75% of non-disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside reached the expected level. The local authority gap had reduced from 27% to 20%. Comparing the performance of

disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, the gap had reduced from 19% to 16% between 2017 and 2018. Positive progress was made by disadvantaged pupils in writing and maths, significantly better than their peers nationally, in reading progress was in line nationally.

There were 17 pupils who had been looked after for at least 12 months and were eligible for Key Stage Two assessments in 2018: 59% reached the expected level in reading; 59% reached the expected level in writing; 65% reached the expected level in maths; 47% reached the expected level in grammar, punctuation and spelling; and 53% reached the expected standard in the combined reading, writing and maths measure. Although the average progress scores were less than zero these figures were not significantly different from all pupils nationally.

At Key Stage Four (G.C.S.E) North Tyneside's performance for the percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths in 2018 was 65%, this was in line with 2017 and the current national rate. This placed the Authority third in the region. Progress 8 in 2018 was -0.21 which, although significantly lower than the national average and last year, was in line with the regional average.

44% of disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths in 2018. This was in line with the current national average (also 44%) and a significant improvement from last year. 72% of non-disadvantaged pupils in North Tyneside achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths, in line with the current national average (71%) and a slight decrease from 2017. As a result of this improvement in disadvantaged pupils' attainment the attainment gap (for 9-4 English and maths) was now in line with national at -27% and improved from last year's gap of -34%. However the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the wider curriculum remained a concern and was significantly lower than the national disadvantaged Progress 8.

This year was the strongest performance for the looked after cohort at GCSE, which after the assessment changes was pleasing. 22% achieved Grade 5 in both English and maths against 10% national; 17% entered the EBacc against 12% nationally; and the Progress 8 attainment was -1.09 against -0.94 nationally.

The early years and school improvement service was working intensively with leaders in a number of schools where the progress data was a significant concern. This included leadership development, support for English, maths and science departments and support to improve the attendance of pupils.

Raising standards for pupils eligible for pupil premium was a key priority for all staff. Professional development, network meetings and intervention strategies contributed to ensuring schools were focussed on narrowing gaps in educational achievement for pupil premium pupils. Through the work of the seconded head teacher the profile of these students had increased and the impact of the work was becoming evident within outcomes data. Pupil premium drop in sessions had been established to support school leaders in reviewing their strategies and developing new initiatives; training had been provided to secondary head teachers and pupil premium leads; and all middle and high schools were committed to a pupil premium peer review.

In response to a question it was explained that the definition of a disadvantaged child was a national measure and they were unable to record and report the attainment data for Children In Need or those on a Child Protection Plan. Members queried what was meant by a

“coasting” school and the implications for the school if it was classified as such. The officer informed the sub-committee that a “coasting” school was one where attainment and progress over a rolling three year period had fallen below a certain threshold. Based on current data it was anticipated that one secondary school would be considered coasting with three schools to be considered below the floor target. The Regional Schools Commissioner had the power to issue a letter of concern to these schools; this was a change to its power which previously had been to intervene and potentially convert the school to an Academy.

Members sought information on how many children in each education stage had Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), what those cohorts’ attainment statistics were and whether the looked after children data could be disaggregated to included SEND children. The officer did not have the details to hand and undertook to provide an answer in writing.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the information provided on the attainment and progress of all pupils, particularly the results of the looked after children cohort; and (2) that the additional information requested above be obtained and sent to the Democratic Support team and circulated to all Members of the sub-committee.

CES33/01/19 Youth Offending

The sub-committee received a report on the work of the North Tyneside Youth Offending Team (YOT).

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside Youth Offending Team (YOT) worked with all young people aged 10-17 involved in the Youth Justice System. The principal aim of the YOT was to “prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people”.

The report provided information on the management board; the inspection regime; funding; performance management; the services delivered by the YOT; the work undertaken to reduce re-offending; types of crimes committed; partnership working; and the challenges faced by the service. A case study and full details of the services delivered by the YOT were included as appendices to the report.

The sub-committee was informed that North Tyneside’s First Time Entrant performance was better than the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner area average but worse than the North East average and the national average; North Tyneside’s Re-offending performance average was better than all three; as was North Tyneside’s Use of Custody performance.

Details were given on how the team worked to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending. The case officer assessed the young person using the required Youth Justice Board assessment tool known as “AssetPlus” which identified key areas for intervention and the level of risk the young person posed in respect of re-offending; harm to others; and self-harm. The assessment informed the frequency of contact with the young person and the actions undertaken to reduce the identified risks. An offer was made to all young people to be health screened and have a brief assessment undertaken to identify unmet or previously unidentified needs.

The changing shape of how young people used technology had impacted on the increasing number of young people arrested for ‘cyber-enabled’ sexually harmful behaviour. This in the main was the taking of/sharing and distribution of indecent images. The possession of

bladed articles and knives in the Borough had not, to date, increased which was positive against the national picture of significant increases. In North Tyneside there was 135 young people in the cohort of re-offenders, of which there were 13 prolific offenders (committed 5 or more re-offences). These 13 had committed 72% of the total number of re-offences, 132 between them, and were the most risky and difficult to effect sustained change for.

The sub-committee was reminded that there was no typical young person that the YOT worked with but it was well documented that young people that had contact with the youth justice system were more likely to have experienced early childhood trauma which then impacted upon their health, education and subsequent behaviours including offending and anti-social behaviour. The team had adopted the “Trauma based model” to working with the most complex young people; this was a pyramid model that focused on meeting the needs within each tier before progressing to the next and required workers to understand and address early childhood trauma and loss.

The impact having a criminal record as a young person on that individual’s future was never underestimated and all partners, where it was judged safe to do so, endeavoured to keep a young person away from formal court proceedings. Steps to achieve this were making suggestions in pre-sentencing reports on alternative measures to reduce and mitigate further behaviours occurring; for example exclusion zones and electronically monitored tags.

In response to questions, reassurance was provided that work was being undertaken to understand County Lines and ensure that in any meeting the appropriate information was shared. The Police and the YOT were sighted on vulnerable young people and adults with regard to County Lines.

Members expressed concern that the case study referred to the young person having been “considerably bullied” at school and enquired as to what challenge had been made to the schools involved regarding their response to the bullying. Members also sought clarification on the support available for young people with mental health issues; and the transition process for young people to the probation or other services at aged 18.

It was **agreed** to note the information provided and to thank the Youth Offending Team for all they did to support the young people of North Tyneside.

CES34/01/19 Transition Sub Group Recommendations Update

The sub-committee received a report which updated it on the progress made against the recommendations from the *Transition Process for Young People with SEND from Children to Adult Services in North Tyneside* report accepted by Cabinet on 25 June 2018.

The sub-committee was presented with a table setting out the actions Cabinet had agreed to take in response to the recommendations and details of the progress that had been made on their implementation.

Of the eleven recommendations only one had yet to be implemented which was recommendation 4:

Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding produces different assessment forms for young people transitioning to adult services to those used for adults entering adult services at an older age and creates different forms for different

additional needs; for example one form for young people with SEN, another for young people with disabilities and another for those with SEND and Disabilities.

The Action Plan agreed by Cabinet had anticipated a September 2018 date for completion of recommendation 4 however, the implementation had been delayed due to the introduction of the LAS/LCS electronic recording system in 2017 / 2018. This change had presented the team with a number of challenges related to electronic recording across the 0-25 year agenda and had required further work to agree and test out documentation and recording across the SEND service, a pilot was currently being undertaken and, if successful, a full roll-out would follow.

The sub-committee was informed that the SEND Strategic Board had undertaken the responsibility to monitor and sign off subsequent decisions associated with the action plan. Improving the transition from children's to adult services for young people and their parents and carers was a key focus of the SEND Improvement Plan and a Transitions Manager, working across children and adult services, had been appointed to assist in this goal.

The sub-committee was informed that strategic co-production had been a strength in delivering the action plan and Parent/Carer forums and their time and commitment could not be overstated. A 'contract of expectations' had been produced which illustrated what parents could expect from the service and what the service would need from the parents. Relationships with Housing had been strengthened and the service had a much better understanding of and being able to predict what facilities would be required when. Officers in Housing could now identify when a young person might be at risk of losing their tenancy and what changes could be introduced to prevent that from happening. The Assistant Director for Mental Health and Disability had also made a personal commitment to meet with parents/carers if they considered that something had fundamentally gone wrong with the transition for their young person to understand why and to consider whether the process could be adapted or changed to prevent it happening to another young person.

In response to questions it was confirmed that if it was perceived that things had not gone well, the approach was to encourage a listening culture and not to focus on fault finding so as to ensure that all concerns were reported back. In addition a senior officer always attended parent and carer forums and made themselves available afterwards to speak to parents/carers. It was acknowledged that officers may be hearing a minority voice as engaging all parents/carers was a significant challenge due to their caring and/or work commitments or situation. All parents/carers had been approached to participate in the forums.

The sub-committee was pleased to note the work undertaken on the recommendations and the wider work on learning from previous inspections and from the SEND Peer Review undertaken in January 2018.

It was **agreed** (1) to note the updated action plan and welcome the implementation of all but one of the sub-committee's *Transition Process for Young People with SEND from Children to Adult Services in North Tyneside* report's recommendations; and (2) to endorse the oversight and responsibility for the Transition Process for Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disability being undertaken by the SEND Strategic Board, including the delivery of the outstanding action on the action plan.

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Committee

Date: 18 March 2019

Title: An update on delivering the North Tyneside Employment and Skills Strategy

Author: Mark Barrett Tel: 0191 643 6061
Senior Manager –
Employment and Skills

Service: Health, Education, Care
and Safeguarding

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on delivery of the North Tyneside Employment and Skills Strategy in 2017 and 2018.

2. Recommendations

The committee members are requested to:

- note and comment on the content of the report;
- consider if any further information is required; and
- make recommendations to Employment and Skills Managers for their consideration.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 North Tyneside Council's Cabinet received a report and presentation titled 'Employment and Skills: Ready for Work and Life' on 16 January 2017. The report set out that the prosperity of North Tyneside flows from its economy supported by the employment and skills of residents and those who work here. Cabinet had previously considered the Authority's approach to employment and skills in 2013.
- 3.2 Since 2013, the Mayor and Cabinet had refreshed the Our North Tyneside Plan and introduced a focus on people being ready for work and life. There had been a General Election and the EU Referendum, and the Government had also published its Post-16 Skills Plan.
- 3.3 While skills shortages and unemployment continued to be challenges for some of our businesses and parts of the Borough, particularly as they related

to deprivation, much progress had been made particularly with our young people who leave school with very clear ideas of their next steps and how they fit with the labour market. Working in partnership with schools, our Connexions service continued to deliver high performance in ensuring each young person had a destination and that only the absolute minimum of our young people spent any time not in education, employment or training.

- 3.4 However, it was highlighted that for some people, more still needed to be done to ensure they could access the right jobs and that our businesses were clear that we can all work together to make sure people enter the world of work with the right skills.
- 3.5 The report therefore asked Cabinet to agree the strategic approach and actions to be taken to make sure the people of North Tyneside were ready for work and life. It explained the context in which we were working and suggested where energy should be directed.
- 3.6 After setting out the strategic context in early 2017, the current situation in the Borough and the needs that the approach should meet, the report then went on to consider the action being taken and action being planned to meet those needs.
- 3.7 The proposed approach was relatively straight forward and set out under some key priorities:

- **Delivery of a universal offer for young people;** this means making sure North Tyneside's young people are ready for work and life with a particular focus upon those young people with lifelong learning difficulties and disabilities to progress into full employment
- **Delivery of a targeted offer for young people and adults;** this means making sure young people at risk of not being ready for work and life, in particular those with lifelong learning difficulties and disabilities, are the focus of our work with schools and targeted and personalised work with adults of working age who cannot access work and need to learn new skills
- **Delivery of a universal offer for employers;** this means making sure North Tyneside is a great place to live, work and visit and runs across the full gamut of health, education, homes, transport and culture
- **Delivery of a targeted offer for employers;** this means working with specific companies to support inward investment and growth but also specific work with businesses who want to be engaged in working with those furthest away from work
- **Trying to be an exemplar employer;** this means North Tyneside Council and its main commercial partners targeting their employment policies and

practice at those areas of greatest priorities. For example the Authority's Apprenticeship Scheme, the partnership with Kier and Justice Prince delivering Working Roots, Capita's target to recruit from areas of concentrated worklessness and ENGIE's contractual commitment to guarantee a job interview for eligible North Tyneside applicants who have been unemployed for over 6 months; and

- **Influencing the local, regional and national picture;** this means using our local intelligence and priorities to influence and connect work within and beyond North Tyneside.

- 3.8 The report included a description of the main assets within North Tyneside that would enable delivery of these priorities and some evident risks that needed to be managed.
- 3.9 The report closed with the priorities for action. Based on the policy context and the evidence these suggested set of priorities for action were designed to support delivery of the Our North Tyneside Plan and the Ready for Work and Life element of the Creating a Brighter Future Programme.
- 3.10 Since January 2017, the Authority has continued to undergo a considerable period of change, but during this period a great deal of work has been undertaken both by internal Council services and by wider partners to deliver on the key priorities set out as part of the Employment and Skills Strategy. The Strategy has underpinned everything we do and considerable progress has been made.
- 3.11 This report therefore provides an update on the changing strategic context for employment and skills, the current position in the Borough of North Tyneside before going on to outline in more detail the work undertaken and progress made on the priorities for action as set out in January 2017.

4. The Strategic Context

- 4.1 The Cabinet report considered the Global context using two key comparators. A most useful reference is the [Hays Global Skills Index](#) which considers seven key indicators from education flexibility to labour market participation and flexibility, talent mismatches and wage pressures overall and in particular high-skilled industries and occupations.
- 4.2 The index provides a global position and comparisons with other countries. Overall for 2018, the index shows that the global labour market conditions have become more pressured over the last year. Global economic growth is predicted to gather momentum over the next 12 months, but productivity and wage growth is not matching this.
- 4.3 This Global Productivity Puzzle occurs because labour productivity across the globe, particularly in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas has flat lined

since the Global financial crisis. There is also a growing talent mismatch between the skills workers possess and those required by employers. Almost half of the countries assessed have seen a rise in the rate of unfilled employment vacancies in 2018. Overall across all countries talent mismatch is now at its highest point since the index began in 2012.

5. The European Economy

- 5.1 The European Commission's European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) produces a Skills Panorama, which turns labour market data into accurate and timely intelligence to offer new insights into skill needs in the European Union. The latest [2018 Skills Forecast](#) sets out four key challenges ahead of Europe.

5.2 Challenge 1: How can we reverse falling participation rates?

Future labour market participation rates across all demographic groups are expected to fall for most countries in the period up to 2030. This is mainly the outcome of a workforce that is ageing as the size of the older workers' group is increasing while that of prime-aged workers decreasing. Over the forecast period, this tendency is not expected to cause a decline in the workforce as population is increasing but it may be a matter of time that Europe's labour force will start declining. This brings about a number of interesting questions. For example; are measures, such as the extension of working life, flexible forms of work, and support to female participation, which focus on specific groups of workers, enough to resolve the overall problem? Moreover, if this is the situation we are faced with, will Europe be able to support high-value-added, knowledge-intensive growth? Will its workforce be adaptable to the changing world of work?

5.3 Challenge 2: Can we sustain a trend towards high value added industries?

According to the Skills Forecast, even though basic manufacturing is expected to decline in employment, some high value added sectors will experience an increase as for example *optical and electronic equipment*, and *motor vehicles*. A question, therefore, one may want to ask is what will it take for the EU to be ready to sustain the shift towards high value added sectors? Will, for example, employers manage to fill these vacancies? Evidence suggests that 4 out of 10 employers are already having problems to fill their vacancies. This bottleneck could be intensified in high value-added sectors. This problem becomes even more apparent if we take into consideration the constant ageing of population. As far as policies are concerned, the challenge refers to how will adult learning remain sufficient to sustain upskilling and reskilling of the labour force in an age of accelerated technological change?

5.4 Challenge 3: How can we secure decent work for everyone?

In the period up to 2030 job polarisation is expected to grow further. Jobs in the higher and lower skills spectrum are expected to grow in size, while mid-level jobs are expected to be hollowed out. Overall, 4 out of 5 new jobs will be in high-skilled occupations. The phenomenon of job polarisation is not new. However, we are at a stage where the technological advances seem to be affecting routinised occupations the most. So a question we want to ask is whether we are heading towards a fully polarised labour market and what are the implications of this? This trend is driven mostly by sectoral changes (for instance service workers) but also technological change that makes some occupations more relevant than others. For instance many clerks, such as *general and keyboard clerks* or *numerical and material recording clerks*, will lose a significant share in employment because they now become less relevant. We need to ask how workers in middle level occupations are protected and how decent work for everyone is secured.

Moreover, the Skills Forecast suggests a continuing orientation of Europe's economy towards services. This sector includes industries where non-standard work, as well as new forms of employment, is growing rapidly. Platform work has an upward trend and free-lancing is becoming more common than ever. The challenge, therefore, is to ensure that the trend towards the service sector is not coupled with an intensification of precarious employment.

5.5 Challenge 4: How can we achieve a balance between over-education and under skilling?

The Skills Forecast estimates that by 2030, the needs of the economy for a workforce with high level of qualifications will account for about 36.5% of total employment. However, due to the fact that supply of a highly qualified workforce is outpacing the demand, it is more likely that the share of total employment with high level of qualifications will account to 41%. The key point here is that we are heading towards a highly skilled workforce, a significant part of which, however, may not have the opportunity to use the skills accumulated. At the same time, this situation might lead to intensification of work at lower levels, rising skill needs and making mid-level occupations even more demanding. In fact, evidence from Cedefop Skills and Jobs Survey suggest that a significant part of the European workforce found their skills, at the time of hiring, inferior to those required to perform the job sufficiently. Last, but not least, a question remains how the low-skilled that may be pushed to accept lower wages, can escape the vicious circle of low productivity and low wages.

6. The National Economy

- 6.1 In the United Kingdom, against a backdrop of ongoing economic uncertainty around the outcome of the Brexit negotiations, the [Hays Global Skills Index](#) identifies that the UK labour market remains healthy with record levels of employment. Regardless of the outcome of the EU negotiations, the availability of skilled labour is, and will remain, a critical issue for employers.
- 6.2 Shortages are particularly acute in the construction industry and in technology, particularly for specialists in areas such as data and cyber security. Most sectors remain candidate-led, with candidates receiving multiple offers and putting pressure on employers to make quick recruitment decisions. Wage pressure has cooled but candidates in skill shortage areas are still receiving significant salary and day rate increases.
- 6.3 Business surveys point to the availability of skilled staff being a constraint on growth. In 2017, the CBI's Service Sector survey found that an average of 38% of business and professional firms, and 22% of consumer services firms, thought the availability of professional staff would limit their ability to increase the size of their business over the next year. The CBI's Industrial Trends Survey also found a net balance of +23% of firms thought the lack of availability of skilled labour would limit output over the next three months, in Q3 of 2018.
- 6.4 The key skills found to be in most demand in the UK in 2017 and 2018 were:
- Data Scientists
 - Front-end Developers
 - Cyber Security Analysts
 - Part Qualified Accountants
 - Building Surveyors
- 6.5 In forecasting future trends the Hays Index identifies that a fall in the UK's long-term unemployment rate suggests that skills mismatches are becoming less of a problem in the country. Real wage growth has recovered in 2018, following a year of decline, although it remains below normal levels by historical standards. The UK's participation rate is expected to continue to decline, but at a slower rate, with participation amongst those aged between 55 and 64 increasing.

7. The Regional Economy

- 7.1 In terms of the National and wider Regional Policy context, not a great deal has changed since the Cabinet report of January 2017. Skills powers continue to be devolved to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and post-16 skills responsibilities are featuring in regional devolution deals.

- 7.2 There is a continued focus on Apprenticeships, as reforms introduced in 2017 bed down with both employers and training providers slowly finding their feet to increase the number of Apprenticeship starts; a significant decline was experienced following the implementation of reforms in May 2017.
- 7.3 An intention to shift the balance of power to employers from provider-led systems continues and a significant move to simplify and increase rigour in technical education with the introduction of T-Levels, as a vocational equivalent to A Levels, is in the early stages of planning, alongside plans for a National Retraining Scheme.
- 7.4 The North East Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) “More and Better Jobs”, which was published in March 2014, has been refreshed for a second time, and this is in anticipation of providing an evidence base for the development of a Local Industrial Strategy for the North East. The Government has set out its policy prospectus for Local Industrial Strategies being long-term, based on clear evidence and aligned to the national Industrial Strategy.
- 7.5 The latest update to the North East SEP provided in February 2019 reaffirms that the North East has a diverse economy and that our region is recognised as a high quality location for business and leisure. The SEP sets out an ambition to grow the economy and create 100,000 more and better jobs by 2024 and in terms of progress significant progress has been made with 64,600 new jobs created since 2014 and improvements to our employment rates, economic activity rates and productivity.
- 7.6 The SEP also focuses on four areas of strategic importance – Digital, Advanced Manufacturing, Health and Life Sciences and Energy aiming to build a stronger North East economy; one that puts us at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse and reinforces our position as one of the UK’s most important economic hubs. The SEP sets out how to achieve this through five programmes of delivery, including skills, employment and inclusion, and four service sectors.
- 7.7 The major development since January 2017 has been the agreement of the North of Tyne Devolution Deal, and the establishment of a North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA). The NTCA will see an Elected Mayor in place following elections in May 2019 and an Investment Fund of £20million per annum being utilised as a catalyst to long term investment in the area.
- 7.8 Inclusive Economy is a predominant theme across the entirety of the Deal; influencing and driving investment priorities in all areas from transport to housing through the NTCA Assurance Framework and an Inclusive Economy Innovation Fund and Assessment Tool. This Innovation Fund would, through the adoption of “proof of concept” model, help illustrate where and how we can make a difference to people’s lives and thereby contribute to fulfilling our ambition to become the national exemplar for showcasing the delivery of an

inclusive economy. The fund alongside further deliverables will be managed by an Inclusive Economy Board currently being established.

- 7.9 In relation to employment and skills there are some clear deliverables in terms of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB), the development of an Employability Framework working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and influencing and incentivising employers to create better quality employment through a 'Good Work' Business Pledge. In addition, there are two funded projects that are at design and implementation stages.
- 7.10 The North of Tyne Working Homes Project has developed as a partnership of local authorities and social housing providers in response to a European Social Fund (ESF) Active Inclusion call. The total project cost is £4.3m with the 50% match funding being sourced from partner organisations, utilising Housing Revenue Account and other income. It will support at least 1,650 residents over three years and represents the first major project to deliver the vision of an inclusive economy on behalf of the NTCA.
- 7.11 The partnership is made up Bernicia Homes, Karbon Homes, Newcastle Futures Ltd., North Tyneside Housing and Employment and Skills Service, Northern Learning Trust, Northumberland County Council Housing Services, and Your Homes Newcastle. It will actively engage with tenants of the partner organisations to deliver a programme of flexible, tailored and intensive support to help them connect with the labour market. The project will commence on 1st April 2019.
- 7.12 The devolution deal also included a commitment that:
- (49) Government and the NTCA will explore ways to support those returning to the labour market after time out of paid employment to care for children or other family members*
- 7.13 The proposed Returnships programme will support residents across the North of Tyne area to return to work after a period out of the labour market to help deliver the *Inclusive Economy* agenda. The programme will work with employers to develop pathways to returning to work, including internships and work experience placements with additional training and support as needed. It will provide routes to genuine vacancies and help meet recruitment needs while supporting some of our hard-to-reach residents to become economically active.

8. The North Tyneside Economy

- 8.1 The North of Tyne Devolution Deal will inevitably be a major area of policy development for North Tyneside bringing significant investment and affecting how economic development is managed across the area for some considerable time. However, the unique strengths and challenges faced in the Borough will remain and will still require our own response.

- 8.2 In terms of working with business, the Authority's Business and Economic Development activity continues to deliver an account management approach prioritising the businesses that make the biggest contribution to the North Tyneside Economy. This is supplemented by the commissioning framework for the Business Factory, providing successful support to start ups, specifically small businesses and the self-employed.
- 8.3 The North Tyneside Business Forum is the lead support organisation for the business community in North Tyneside; encouraging economic growth, employment, sustainability and corporate responsibility. The forum has been established for over 8 years and is here to create a supportive network for businesses in North Tyneside and ensure local business is well connected and represented. Membership is free for those businesses with a trading address in North Tyneside.
- 8.4 In addition, our Employment and Skills Service works closely with business representative groups and directly with businesses to promote and secure a range of employment and training opportunities for residents across the Borough. As well as recruitment activities and a programme of major recruitment events, including the Cobalt, Quorum and Silverlink Jobs Fairs, targeted activity takes place to secure opportunities for vulnerable residents including the long term unemployed, care leavers and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 8.5 In terms of skills gaps, the availability of reliable data continues to be difficult at a Local Authority level and the main indicator continues to be the UK Employer Skills Survey with the latest data for 2017 published in July 2018. The survey measures two things, skills gaps caused by difficulties in recruiting employees with the necessary skills (Skills Shortage Vacancies (SSV)) and existing employees lacking skills to perform effectively in their jobs (the Skills Gap.)
- 8.6 In 2015, the Employer Skills Survey estimated there were 536 skills shortage vacancies in North Tyneside, this was 26% of the total number of vacancies. By 2017 this had increased to 1,277 or 52% of all vacancies. In 2015, the occupations with the highest number of skills shortage vacancies were skilled trades, machine operatives and caring, leisure and other services. By 2017, the majority (84%) of skills shortage vacancies were for Non-Market Services* (only 17% in 2015) and, considering all sectors, at associate professional level (83%).
- (* Non-Market Services are those services provided to the community as a whole free of charge or essentially free. For instance: public administration and defence, education, and health and social work.)*
- 8.7 For the Skills Gap, in 2015 the survey estimated 2,825 (4%) of staff in North Tyneside were not fully proficient. By 2017 this had risen to 3,763 (5%) of

staff.

8.8 Recent vacancy data is also available to us via a Burning Glass Labour Insights Tool. The data highlights current demand for health and social care employment (care workers and nurses) with customer service and care giving being the most sought skills.

8.9 In addition, the Learning and Work Institute has developed a useful interactive tool, the Youth Opportunity Index Map, which gives a relative measure of education and employment opportunities for young people across England's 150 local education authorities. The score for each area reflects how its performance compares with the best-performing area in the country; with a ranking available. The measures and ranking out of 150 for North Tyneside are:

- **Apprenticeships.** Apprenticeship starts as a proportion of 16-24s in a local area. (ranked 70th out of 150)
- **Employment.** Employment rates for 23-28 year olds. (95th)
- **Net underemployment.** This measure is the balance between the numbers of young people wanting to work more hours and the numbers wanting to work fewer hours. (37th)
- **NEET.** The proportion of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training. (61st)
- **Attainment 8.** Attainment of GCSE-level qualifications by young people resident in a local area. (52nd)
- **Level 3.** The proportion of young people resident in a local area qualified to Level 3 by age 19. (78th)
- **Higher education.** The proportion of 15 year olds in a local area entering higher education by age 19. (63rd)
- **Overall Index.** The average score across all indices. It gives an overall comparative measure of the education and employment opportunities for young people living in each local area. (67th).

8.10 Finally, while unemployment in North Tyneside continues to fall our work to understand and tackle deprivation has demonstrated that there remains concentrated pockets of worklessness. When Cabinet agreed its approach to tackling deprivation in 2015, starting in Chirton and Riverside Wards, one quarter of all Jobseekers in North Tyneside lived in those two wards. The proportion was similarly high for those of working age in receipt of working age benefits.

8.11 As the efforts to address deprivation in these two wards had some success, this approach has now been expanded to include Howdon and Wallsend wards with policy priorities for the next phase of work focusing on education; children and young people; housing and environment; health; and employment.

- 8.12 Specifically for employment, national research on monitoring poverty and social inclusion has confirmed that 55% of people who are in poverty are in work. Examination of local data demonstrates those individuals and families are particularly concentrated in poor quality housing in the centre of Wallsend and North Shields. As well as our work to tackle unemployment the Authority will focus its efforts in this work on those households in poverty and in work considering progression routes to better work.
- 8.13 The rollout of Universal Credit (UC) full service from May 2018 and its impact on claimants and the labour market are still being assessed. The Council and its partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions and Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) are working closely to ensure a smooth rollout and that any negative impacts are minimised for new claimants.
- 8.14 Specific services include the provision of personal budgeting support provided by CAB and assisted digital support provided by the NTC Employment and Skills Service. In total, over 500 (out of just over 5,000 UC claimants) had accessed these services between May 2018 and January 2019. North Tyneside Housing are also working closely to ensure that housing issues are addressed quickly including any claimants falling into rent arrears. Reports on all areas of support are being provided regularly to the Mayor's Welfare Reform Group.
- 8.15 Our policy context is shaped by the Our North Tyneside Plan, which sets out our bold ambitions for making North Tyneside an even greater place to live, work and visit by 2021. It focuses on our three key themes – people, place and economy – and has 16 priorities for delivering positive opportunities for everyone in the borough over the next three years.
- 8.16 The plan is also focused on ensuring the council works better for residents by improving how we do things and offering residents opportunities to volunteer, be more independent and do more for their local communities.
- 8.17 In terms of our priorities for the economy, by 2021 we will:
- Grow by supporting new businesses and building on our strengths
 - Continue to support investment in our business parks, units and town centres
 - Be business friendly, ensuring the right skills and conditions are in place to support investment
- 8.18 Our Employment and Skills Service has also recently set out its 2018-2021 Strategy 'Raising Aspiration, Realising Ambition'. The service consists of a number of key services including:
- Connexions North Tyneside providing Careers Education and Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to young people and services linking schools with business through effective employer engagement

- Employability projects supporting unemployed residents to overcome barriers to employment and move into the labour market
 - Adult Learning Service, which holds contracts with the Education and Skills Funding Agency to deliver study programmes, traineeships, apprenticeships and adult learning courses for residents.
- 8.19 The service contributes to delivery of the Council's 'Our North Tyneside Plan 2018-2021' and in particular the aim by 2021 that:
- 'Our people will get the best start in life and have the right skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, find employment and live independently. They will be healthy and well, and be cared for and protected if they become vulnerable. Residents will be able to volunteer and do more for themselves and their local communities. They will have a council that works better for them.'*
- 8.20 The service has an annual Service Improvement Plan that details its contribution to achieving the North Tyneside Plan setting out specific actions that it will take to move the service from a good to outstanding provider of services in North Tyneside.
- 8.21 It is also informed by Government priorities for education and training, including increasing rigour and expectations of education delivery; protect vulnerable children and adults; and preparing well-rounded young people and adults ready for further learning, work and life. Achievement of these priorities is regulated by Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Priorities of the service are also informed by external funding providers.
- 8.22 The Service has a Vision:
- To support Inclusive growth by ensuring that all of our residents have the skills and abilities to realise their ambitions and succeed in work and life; ensuring that nobody is left behind.*
- 8.23 The Employment and Skills Service is proud to serve the people of North Tyneside providing a personalised service to the most vulnerable residents in the Borough. Values include:
- Raising aspirations for all
 - Doing the right thing with honesty and integrity
 - Being passionate and creative
 - Never giving up on people whatever the challenges they face
 - Making a difference
 - Providing value for money

8.24 The service has also identified a number of priorities for the period from 2018-2021:

- Deliver the North Tyneside Employment and Skills Strategy, working in partnership with employers and both internal and external partners
- Continue to focus on vulnerable and priority groups ensuring high outcomes across all employment and skills services and maximising external funding sources
- To ensure delivery is local, community focused and responsive to resident and business needs including a presence in Community Hubs
- Increase the take-up of Apprenticeships and become a 'Centre of Excellence' for Apprenticeship training
- Deliver quality; moving the service towards securing an 'Outstanding' outcome in our next Ofsted Adult Learning inspection
- Secure pathways Post-16 into employment and training for SEND through a Preparation for Adulthood Progression Model
- Utilise technology in the delivery of services
- Work in partnership to deliver collaboration and integration of services, including the delivery of careers education and information services through a 'Careers Hub' model
- To review the skills and abilities of our staff to develop a plan for the progression and career development of staff and secure succession planning for the service.

9 Priorities for Action – an update on progress

9.1 The Cabinet Report of January 2017 included six key priorities and within them a number of sub priorities for action. This section of the report provides a more detailed update on the progress made on these actions during 2017 and 2018.

Priority 1 - Delivery of a universal offer for young people

No:	Action Required	Progress
1.1	Continue to encourage high aspirations for all of our young people; especially helping them match their aspirations with their likes and abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NEET rates continue to be low (2.9% in 2018 NEET Scorecard)• North Tyneside is held up as an exemplar in providing Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CE-IAG) with our retained Connexions Service providing both a universal offer to schools, but also targeted support to address issues for Looked after Children, Care Leavers and those with Special Educational Needs

No:	Action Required	Progress
		<p>and Disabilities (SEND)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Tyneside Council and the North Tyneside Learning Trust provide additional programmes to engage businesses in schools to raise awareness of the World or Work; the offer is supplemented by close working with the North East LEP to maximise the benefits of North East Ambition and Opportunity North East within the Borough.
1.2	<p>Continue our focus on attainment and progression; delivering above national average, improving results in GCSE English and Maths and ensuring our young people maximise their potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Nov 2018 89.9% of schools were rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted 86.9% of pupils were in Good or Outstanding Schools For Secondary schools: 68.8% were rated Good or Outstanding compared to 75.5% nationally North Tyneside's performance for the percentage of pupils who achieved a 9-4 pass in English and maths in 2018 is in-line with last year and in line with the current national rate at 65%. This places us 3rd in the region behind Stockton and Darlington. 91% of North Tyneside's KS5 cohort progressed to sustained positive destinations in 2016-17. This compares favourably to the national rate of 89% and the regional rate of 88%. Overall progression to Higher Education Institutions was in line with national at 50% of the cohort as was progression to the Top Third of HEIs at 17% of the cohort. However, progression to Russell Group HEIs was achieved by 15% of the North Tyneside cohort compared to 12% of the national cohort. The major difference in post KS5 destinations for students from North Tyneside was in progression to Apprenticeships. 16% of our students went on to study Advanced Apprenticeships, the joint highest rate in the country (with Hartlepool), and compares to a national average of 6% and a regional average of 10%.

No:	Action Required	Progress
1.3	Secure the statutory careers advice and guidance duty and judge the appropriate investment; continue to ensure the discharge of the statutory duty and invest, in line with policy choices, in Ready for Work and Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation rates amongst young people are high (93.2% compared to 92% across England) • The percentage of 16-17 year olds made an offer of an education place under the September Guarantee was 96.8% in 2018 compared to 94.7% across England
1.4	Shape a Connexions service to meet school need that they pay for; once agreed this work will be used to re-shape the current service to match the needs of secondary schools and come up with a costed offer that schools will fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of Secondary Schools have signed up to a three year funding model for Connexions Services between 2016-17 and 2019-20 • The North Tyneside Learning Trust are providing support for Trust schools as part of this model • Further work on a sustainable funding model is underway.
1.5	Work in partnership with our secondary schools to apply the Gatsby principles to increase capacity; where work between Connexions, North Tyneside Learning Trust, Churchill Community College, Seaton Burn College and the NELEP is developing named careers champions with the right skills set and bringing labour market intelligence into the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council, North Tyneside Learning Trust (NTLT), the North East LEP, the North Tyneside Business Forum and schools are all working in partnership to promote and embed the eight Gatsby Career Benchmarks • The careers champions programme has developed into a support programme for Careers Leaders and schools to develop their provision and meet the benchmarks. • The Council and NTLT operate a very active NT Careers Leaders Network • Connexions and NTLT are supporting a number of schools to work towards the Quality in Careers Standard.
1.6	Deploy self-service technology; alongside the existing ideas-generator, KUDOS, the Learning Trust is working with Connexions to deploy unifrog, a destinations platform which allows young people to bring together their achievements and attainments and chart their way into the best route to further education and employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of schools are using Unifrog, and some Grofar (both supported by NTLT) to meet their own needs. • Our Connexions Service also use these programmes to record their activity with young people.

Priority 2 - Delivery of a targeted offer for young people and adults

No:	Action Required	Progress
2.1	<p>In shaping the Connexions service focus on our priority groups; those Not in Education, Employment or Training (or at risk of becoming so), those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and lifelong learning difficulties and disabilities, our Looked After Children, those on the edge of care, low achievers and low attendees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The targeted support provided by our Connexions Service for Looked after Children, Care Leavers and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) continues to achieve success: • Participation rates for 16-17 year olds with SEND at 90.8% are the highest in the North East and above the national average of 88.5% • From the latest data for Dec 2018, out of 117 16-18 year olds who were NEET, 19 were Looked After (15) or Care Leavers (4) • The number of LAC and Care Leavers who were NEET fell from 26 in Jan 2018 to 19 in Dec 2018 • The service provides dedicated Adviser support to work with relevant Teams (SARs and Leaving Care) and wider partners (Tyne Met College, Barnardos etc.) to ensure support and progression pathways are in place.
2.2	<p>Support people of all ages to become active; making sure they engage with lifelong learning and training and that they make the right progress. Particularly making sure services are accessible and support the likely demand for life long re-skilling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A restructure of the Employment and Skills Team has created an all age service in both the delivery of provision and working strategically with business and partners across the Borough • A focus on Apprenticeships locally is helping to address a national trend of a decrease in starts as a result of Apprenticeship Reforms • Our own delivery of Apprenticeship training has seen apprentices on programme increasing from 38 in 2017-18 to 77 in 2018-19 with plans to increase further. • Our joint Adult Learning offer with Tyne Met College provides progression routes in learning for residents wanting to develop their skills.
2.3	<p>Develop our targeted work with particular priority groups; where we are using some of our partnerships to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of 2700 Adult Learning enrolments in 2017-18: • 57% were female; 43% male • 72% of apprentices were female; 28%

No:	Action Required	Progress
	provide work experience for adults in “Troubled Families”, the work done in partnership with Jobcentre Plus by the Working Homes Outreach Team	<p>male</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29% of adult learners were ALDD, compared to 26.7% in 2016-17 • 28% of apprentices were ALDD, compared to 20% in 2017-18 • The North Tyneside Employability Partnership, chaired by the Council, involves all deliverers of employability support in the Borough to ensure coordination and maximising the outcomes of our projects and available funding (including European Social Fund (ESF)). • Jobcentre Plus has a key role in the partnership to ensure referrals and support are maximised for unemployed and inactive residents.
2.4	<p>Conduct a course by course review of Adult Learning; where, following the approach to tackling deprivation agreed with Cabinet and the work done to understand the Ready for Work and Life Entitlement, each course is being evaluated on whether it contributes directly to the Authority’s priorities: Including understanding any barriers to access; for example branding and location.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Adult Learning courses delivered by the NTC Adult Learning Service continue to be reviewed on an annual basis, following an extensive review and restructure of the curriculum in 2016. Courses are reviewed considering cost effectiveness, performance and strategic fit (including: targeting of priority groups; and progress to work focus) • Curriculum planning takes place alongside Tyne Met College each year to ensure a progression strategy is in place for Adult learners and to help inform our joint prospectus • The service also works closely with other key partners including Employment Training Skills North (ETSN) (formerly Barnardos Palmersville Training).
2.5	<p>A fundamental change in our approach to income generation; where we are moving from chasing funding streams and delivering activity to seeking funding that will resource the Authority’s priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding is being secured by the Council’s Employment and Skills Service and its key partners (through our Employability Partnership) to address key priorities. For example: • ESF Building Better Opportunities – delivering support for the unemployed with long term health and mental health conditions by NTC, Justice Prince, Meadowell Connected and VODA • Generation NE – addressing youth

No:	Action Required	Progress
		<p>unemployment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North of Tyne Working Homes – working with housing providers to support unemployed housing tenants to access and sustain employment • Brighter Futures programmes with a wide range of VCS partners • CLLD North of Tyne – delivering community designed and based interventions in Wallsend.

Priority 3 - Delivery of a universal offer for employers

No:	Action Required	Progress
3.1	Help our employers engage successfully with our schools; finding the right ways to allow both sectors to understand each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NTC Employment and Skills Service, North Tyneside Learning Trust (NTLT), the North Tyneside Business Forum and the North East LEP are working together closely to coordinate and deliver an extensive programme of support to engage employers with schools. This includes delivery of: • Schools into Work and World of Work programmes – specific initiatives and activities to support schools • Business Ambassador training for employers delivering activities in schools • Enterprise Advisers attached to schools to support business engagement • Support for schools to achieve the eight Gatsby Career Benchmarks and Quality in Careers Standards • Exploration of a North Tyneside Careers Hub model to bring all activities together and build on the National and Regional Careers Hub approach.
3.2	Continue to engage with employers; to ensure we understand their needs and plans, that we can support growth and associated recruitment and that we can match people to posts but also work to ensure we try to bring a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Employment and Skills Service working with its key partners continues to engage with employers on a daily basis to understand and address their needs including: • Working with Cobalt, Quorum and Silverlink Parks to deliver a programme of Recruitment and Jobs Fairs that supported over 4,000 people in 2018

No:	Action Required	Progress
	closer match with the rhythm of the school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing bespoke 'Get into' courses to support the matching of jobseekers to the skills and opportunities available such as Get into Cobalt with the MORE Team and Get into Digital with Accenture • Sector Based Work Academies that deliver courses co-designed with employers for jobseekers who receive guaranteed interviews.

Priority 4 - Delivery of a targeted offer for employers

No:	Action Required	Progress
4.1	Continue our partnership work to increase the number of STEM candidates while getting a better fix on actual local need using labour market intelligence; While there are widespread, continued concerns about the availability of STEM qualified candidates this fluctuates and we will continue to identify the actual need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with STEM businesses to identify and address demand is ongoing • The Moving on Tyne and Wear STEM Innovation Project delivered by VODA and NTC Employment and Skills Service delivers STEMtastic courses and volunteering opportunities to support residents to learn more about and access the opportunities available within these areas.
4.2	Match the right young people with the right skills to the North Tyneside economy; ensuring young people are encouraged toward those priority jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Learning (RPA) rate for 16-18 year olds is one of the best in the North East region; our NEET rate is one of the lowest • Working Roots, our study programme for 16-19 year olds, continues to be hugely successful in supporting the most vulnerable young people in the Borough with 24 young people currently on programme and 100 supported since 2014 • Using Traineeships to ensure young people are ready to take up Apprenticeship opportunities • The delivery of a Supported Internship in partnership with NHS England in 2018 for 13 young people resulted in all of them (100%) securing successful

No:	Action Required	Progress
		<p>progression opportunities into employment, apprenticeships and further education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Apprenticeship Week - a programme of activities across the week culminating in our successful “Get up and Go” annual apprenticeship fair attended by over 200 young people and over 40 employers/providers.
4.3	<p>Bespoke work with employers; who wish to locate in North Tyneside or grow in North Tyneside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Training Kitchen and Café established with YMCA North Tyneside in 2017 supports learners to gain employment in the growing hospitality and catering industry. • The Employment and Skills Team have partnered with Crown Estates, owners of the Silverlink Shopping Park and Silverlink Point, on a new project called Recruit Silverlink to support the retailers on these sites with recruitment. • The Council’s Business Factory project supports over 200 new businesses to start-up in North Tyneside per annum. • The Business and Enterprise Team supports existing businesses to expand in North Tyneside. This could be advice, specialist consultancy, identifying commercial property options, mentoring support from larger companies, accessing funding to support the growth or signposting to regional / national support programmes. • Inward investment activities are delivered by the Business and Enterprise Team to attract employers into North Tyneside. The team work with the Department for International Trade and Invest North East England to promote the borough’s employment sites and in the last five years there are on average 1,000 new jobs per annum being created through inward investment growth.

Priority 5 - Trying to be an exemplar employer

No:	Action Required	Progress
5.1	<p>Using our supply chain leverage; where we are using our procurement and partnerships to create apprenticeship and employment opportunities. Examples include the Working Roots Programme with Kier North Tyneside, the targets for recruitment from Chirton and Riverside in the Capita Annual Service Plan, the employment targets in the ENGIE partnership and the wider application of Social Value in our procurement work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the opening of the Spanish City in Whitley Bay as a visitor destination the Employment and Skills Service worked with the managing agents to promote employment vacancies including a two day recruitment fair and helping the company to fill over 50 roles including Chefs at all levels, Bar and waiting staff, Cleaning and maintenance staff, administrators, assistant managers and supervisors • S106 Planning Agreements include, where relevant, the creation of employment and apprenticeship opportunities with developers and end users • Engie as a strategic partner has an ongoing priority to create Apprenticeship opportunities which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11 Apprenticeships created in 2017 in areas such as customer service, ICT and contract management - 9 Apprenticeships created in 2018 in areas such as HR, Finance, Customer Service, ICT and Reprographics - Upskilling existing employees to Levels 3, 4 and 5 in Team Leading and Project Management - Providing Intern opportunities each summer for young people - Engie apprentices secure sustainable employment, make up 4.5% of the workforce and three apprentices won national ENGIE Apprenticeship awards in 2018 • As well as participating in the Working Roots Programme, Kier North Tyneside currently have 16 apprentices on programme, at varying levels and stages in their apprenticeship. 15 males and 1 female are currently completing the various craft and trade apprenticeships with training provided by Tyne Met College • All contracts procured by the Authority include a requirement that bidders

No:	Action Required	Progress
		<p>identify the additional social value they will bring to North Tyneside. Some bidders include commitments on how, if they are awarded the contract, they will increase employment opportunities for local people. Social Value commitments are monitored as part of the contract monitoring process.</p>
5.2	<p>Prepare for the Apprenticeship Levy; prepare our own organisation and work with others to deliver the planned increase in Apprenticeships. In addition to creation of new apprenticeships, we will consider opportunities for up-skilling parts of our existing workforce using an apprenticeship route through effective workforce planning. Working with our partners, agencies and schools over the coming months we will identify opportunities and begin promotion of those to our young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 is the fifth year of external apprentice recruitment for North Tyneside Council • 133 apprentices have been recruited overall with 43 currently on the apprenticeship programme • 81% complete their apprenticeship and 84% move into employment following this completion • 81% of apprentices are residents of North Tyneside and 58% are from targeted groups • This year, we developed 2 traineeship programmes, one each in Parks and Gardens and Sport and Leisure. These unpaid pre apprenticeship programmes ran for 6 weeks offering 3-4 day's work placement in the service area plus 1 day spent on basic skills learning with the Adult Learning Service. • In 2017, the Employment and Skills service responded to reforms in Apprenticeships by recruiting a dedicated Apprenticeships Manager and developing an Apprenticeships Strategy. This has resulted in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achievement rates increasing from 60% to 83% ○ Positive Progression rates of 91.3% ○ Number of apprentices has increased by 100% on both 15/16 and 16/17 numbers • Development of new areas that include Hospitality and Catering, Project Management, Residential Childcare

Priority 6 - Influencing the local, regional and national picture

No:	Action Required	Progress
6.1	Being an active and engaged player; making sure our team are working with colleagues in the Combined Authority, Government, employers, providers and other partners to describe our approach and influence activity to support our priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council, via Employment and Skills and other routes, is active in the development of key policy initiatives. This includes the delivery of the North of Tyne Combined Authority objectives to support Inclusive Growth through leading on an education challenge and a 'Good Work' Business Pledge and influencing the wider priorities for a devolved investment fund • The Council has an active role on a range of policy forums including the North East LEPs Employment and Skills Board, Employability, Inclusion and Skills Group and ESF and ERDF Thematic Groups
6.2	Improve our local knowledge; switching away from activity and contract driven data toward sharper intelligence and share that picture with our partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the active involvement, North Tyneside is coordinating the intelligence for the North of Tyne. This is supporting the development of the intelligence base • In addition, information is being shared with partners, both at a North of Tyne level and locally, for example through the North Tyneside Employability Partnership
6.3	Understand the labour market in our travel to work area; keeping a close eye on opportunities to match young people and adults to higher skill roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Employment and Skills Service uses a wide range of intelligence and information to inform its provision and that of its partners including use of national and local data sets provided by the ONS and DfE, intelligence gained directly from employers and business representative groups, school engagement and through the North Tyneside Employability Partnership whose members engage extensively with residents and business to gain a comprehensive understanding of the labour market. • Additional questions were added to the annual Residents' Survey to gain a greater understanding of where our residents worked.
6.4	Listen to business; shaping our approach accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The North Tyneside Business Forum is supported by North Tyneside Council and managed by a private sector management group with regular liaison

No:	Action Required	Progress
		<p>with the Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and chambers of trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Business Forum conduct surveys on specific business related topics, co-ordinates business responses to a range of consultation exercises, provides feedback on events and actively communicates with businesses through emails, website, helpline and social media • The Town Centres Task Group is chaired by the Deputy Mayor to support economic prosperity within our town centres. The group includes representation from the three town centre chambers of trade, the shopping centres and other key stakeholders.
6.5	<p>Listen to our residents; understanding their needs and aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional questions were added to the annual Residents' Survey to develop a greater understanding of local needs and aspirations for their employment. This is currently being analysed and will inform the 2019/20 work plan of the Council.

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Date: 18 March 2019

Title: An update of the Early Help Offer and the Troubled Families Programme 2015-2020

Authors: Lesley Davies Tel. 643 6462

Service: Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose:

To update the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee on Prevention and Early Help; including the Troubled Families Programme and the objectives for the final 12 months of the programme.

2. Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Sub-committee:

- a) Note the progress of work to date undertaken to deliver Prevention and Early Help and to achieve the Troubled Families programme outcomes;
- b) Assess the effectiveness of the approach and ability to demonstrate improved outcomes for families.

3. Prevention and Early Help Update

- 3.1 Prevention and Early Help are vital for improving children's life chances and delivering better outcomes for them and their families. The sooner we can help families, the less likely it is that their situations will worsen.
- 3.2 Children and families need to be equipped to adapt positively to challenging life experiences at a time when there is intense pressure on public finances. Resilient children, families and communities can bounce back and thrive despite the challenges they face.
- 3.3 Whilst our aim is for children, young people and parents to be confident and independent through their own personal resilience and the support of social networks, this isn't always possible without support provided by a range of services including excellent universal services, delivered by a variety of partners which are available to all (early years, health services, schools, play and youth provision), and effective accessible targeted or specialist services, when needed.
- 3.4 Clearly this fits perfectly within the signs of safety (SofS) approach in terms of focussing on the families' strengths and networks to find resolution in the difficulties they face. The approach has been embraced by the Locality Teams and is already

receiving really positive from families who are engaging with the process as well as being able to evidence outcomes. Part of this development has been working with a range of partners to update the Early Help Assessment (EHA) to ensure it has a SofS focus, which has been in place since September 2018 and is being used by all partners across North Tyneside.

3.5 In addition other developments have included

- a) Work with school improvement within the 'Keeping Children in School' Agenda. This has included some bespoke work and support with specific schools. We now also sit on the school panel suggesting alternative support that could be put in place to prevent managed moves/exclusions. Schools are also expected to have engaged in the EHA process before coming to the panel to demonstrate all avenues have been tried.
- b) Supporting Paediatric clinics, to ensure families' where children have additional needs are offered holistic support at the earliest opportunity through the EHA. By supporting these clinics it means the process is inclusive from the beginning and an additional meeting is not required.
- c) Ensuring the Early Help Pathway is fit for purpose in-line with SEND and Whole Life Disability pathway.
- d) Working with housing partners to identify and support families' at risk of eviction at the earliest opportunity so that a more proactive support approach offered.
- e) Developing and rolling out the Young Carers Needs assessment to all partners, in conjunction with the Young Carers Project, to ensure all Young Carers are offered a needs assessment with a plan to support any identified need.
- f) Jointly running targeted groups with the Young Carers Project to meet additional need.
- g) Review and update of the Drug and Alcohol Pathway.

4. Troubled Families Programme

4.1 As Members will remember from the last update in September, we began the second phase of the Troubled Families programme, in 2016. The focus of the programme remained the same – using sustained outcomes to show that interventions with families had made a difference, (Payment by Results - PBR) with additional elements of:

- Service transformation – (what impact the programme will have after 2020)
- Data – (how we will use this for future development)

4.2 Payment by Results

In order to maximise the income from this programme we are expected to work with and 'turn around' a minimum of 1480 families. With income being available at the identification

and attachment phase; as well as when sustained changed by the families can be evidenced.

4.3 As of 26/02/19 we have identified and attached over our expected number of families; with 1,969 families attached to the programme. 'Additional' families will be continued to be supported in the same way, as this is the service transformation work, showing how we have mainstreamed the approach and how using the Early Help Assessment (EHA) in Early Help, will continue to evidence positive outcomes for families.

4.4 The next claims deadline had a cut-off date of 28/02/19, to enable cases to be audited. At this point we have currently claimed for 750 (51%) with a trajectory of claiming a 100% of the 1480 by March 2020, which is the end of the programme. In order to do this we will be over identifying families, but this also reflects the level of need as obviously continuing to support the most vulnerable families is the most important outcome; regardless of the target, attachment figures.

4.5 **Service Transformation/ Data Analysis**

You will be aware the service transformation in NTC began at the beginning of the Troubled Families programme in 2013, and this has continued, including some of the developments mentioned above. With the programme ending in 2020 the on-going focus will be how we continue to intervene and evidence the impact of our work with families beyond 2020. In North Tyneside, this will be evidenced through the continued use of EHA's and the impact this has with the interface with Children's Social Care and statutory assessments.

4.6 We have a scheduled visit from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on March 26th 2019, where the focus will be on the service transformation we have achieved, future sustainability and our use of data analysis. Already we have sent in requested examples of good practice to be shared across all authorities.

5. **Conclusion**

To date the Troubled Families Programme has not only been part of the way in which we have shaped the identification of and intervention with the most vulnerable families; but also enabled us to look at how we work with partners in a different way to ensure support offered to these families is done so at the earliest opportunity. It has been used to inform and improve our approach as well as our use of data. We will continue this service transformation in line with the Councils priorities to ensure families' in the borough receive the most appropriate support possible at the earliest opportunity.

6. **Appendices**

None provided.

7. **Background Information**

The North Tyneside Outcome Plan (NTOP) is available upon request to the author of this Report.

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Date: 18 March 2019

Title: Support to Foster Carers

Author: Carly Brownlee, Team Manager

Tel: 0191 643 8198

Service: Fostering Service

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform the Children, Education and Skills sub-committee on the recruitment levels of foster carers and the support provided to them.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Sub-committee:

- a) Note the information provided;
- b) Request further information if appropriate;
- c) Make such recommendations as the Sub-committee consider appropriate.

3. Information

- 3.1 A key priority of our Reducing Children in Care strategy is to support children that need our care, internally within the Local Authority, keeping children close to their family, friends and community networks rather than externally outside of the Local Authority boundary. We know our in-house offer is more efficient and effective than other forms of care; however, we currently experience some challenges in both recruiting and retaining foster carers.
- 3.2 North Tyneside fostering service is unfortunately, losing experienced carers to other agencies; with the foster carer fee rate being highlighted as being a significant factor by carers. It is acknowledged that fees in North Tyneside have not been increased for a number of years. This presents ongoing difficulties with foster carers leaving North Tyneside to go to other local authorities or to work for Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs); with the latter resulting in significantly increased costs to the authority, as we cannot disrupt placements when children are settled and achieving positive outcomes.
- 3.3 There is currently insufficient internal foster carer capacity to meet demand; which results in additional challenges and costs. It is envisaged a renewed approach could make North Tyneside's offer more attractive to both current and potential foster carers, making us more competitive regionally and supporting our recruitment aspirations.

4. Recruitment and Retention Challenges

- 4.1 Ofsted National Statistics for Fostering in England 2017-18, reported that the recruitment of fostering households hasn't kept pace with the increase in children in care and that the number of fostering households in England had continued to decline; reporting a decrease of 1% from 43,935 (March 17) to 43,475 (March 18).
- 4.2 Recruitment in North Tyneside remains an ongoing issue; with foster carers being swayed by the enhanced terms and conditions being offered by neighbouring Local Authorities and Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).
- 4.3 Since April 2018 North Tyneside Fostering Service have approved five mainstream foster carer households with a further five carers being successfully re-assessed following being on hold, changes in circumstances or having allegations made against them. This is alongside 20 Family, Friend or Other Connected Person carers. Within the same period 30 carers resigned, of these 17 carers were awarded legal orders such as Special Guardianship Orders, 2 Mainstream carers went to Independent Fostering Agencies, 4 mainstream carers retired, 1 carer adopted a child under fostering to adopt regulations, 1 carer was de-registered with another resigning following allegations being made against them.
- 4.4 North Tyneside Fostering Service are supported in their recruitment strategy by the Council's Communications and Marketing Team, and since April 2018 the Fostering Managers and the named Communications and Marketing Officer have worked on a marketing strategy to increase foster carer recruitment. A recent development is 'Fostering Road shows' which are pop up recruitment events. These are being piloted within the Local Authorities leisure centres, alongside the more formal evening events.
- 4.5 The Fostering Service has also launched a Facebook page. This is to ensure that the Service can reach a wider market with free advertising of the benefits of fostering with North Tyneside Council. More targeted advertising can also be achieved with this page. We are averaging around 2500 people reached on social media posts.
- 4.6 The Fostering Service two stage recruitment process for potential foster carers remains in place. This strategy sustains a consistent approach for all applicants throughout the recruitment process, from the point of initial interest, through the assessment and to the point of recommendation at the Fostering Panel to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for approval. The Fostering Service continues to meet the expected timescale of stage 2 of the assessment process within 4 months at 100%.

5. Proposed Fostering Framework

- 5.1 We are currently exploring the possibility of implementing a new financial model to encourage and support growth in internal foster care. The proposed fostering framework will include a new payment for skills fees structure, alongside an enhanced offer of support to carers which if agreed, will be launched through a refreshed marketing campaign.
- 5.2 The key aims and objectives of the new fostering framework are:
 - To improve local placement choice for children and young people in North Tyneside
 - To improve placement stability for our children and young people

- To provide sufficient sibling group placements which will enable siblings to stay together
- To improve placement choice for teenagers; which maintains wherever possible their education , support networks and friendships
- To increase the number of internal placements and reduce the usage of IFAs
- To support in reducing the spend on external residential placements

5.3 This will be achieved if we can recruit more internal foster carers to our network who can help meet the needs of looked after children in North Tyneside

6. Foster Care Placements

6.1 As of February 2019 North Tyneside Council have corporate parenting responsibly for 288 children; of these 228 (79%) are placed by the fostering service; we have an aspiration to raise this figure to 90%.

6.2 The year on year demand for foster care placements showed a marginal decrease from 2016 to 2018; however, there has been a rise over the last 11 months (Feb 19) with an increase of 5%.

Placement Type	31-Mar-14	31-Mar-15	31-Mar-16	31-Mar-17	31-Mar-18	14-Feb-19
Foster Care provided by Connected Person	60	49	50	84	63	68
Foster Care provided by LA	167	159	144	103	133	138
Foster Care provided by Agency	21	20	26	32	20	22
Totals	248	228	220	219	216	228

6.3 Number of children looked after by Age (Feb 2019)

Placement Age Range	0 – 4	5 - 10	11 - 15	16	17	Total
Foster Care With Agency Carer	1	4	11	4	2	22
Foster Care With Connected Person	16	21	14	9	7	67
Foster Care With In House Carer	34	26	60	8	11	139
Totals	51	51	85	21	20	228

6.4 The highest proportion of children in a foster care placements are aged 11 – 15 years; with 85 (37%) falling in that age band. Of those 11 (13%) are currently placed with external agencies.

7. Placement Stability

- 7.1 Stability means ensuring that every child in care is found the right placement as soon as possible and that the placing authority supports the placement to ensure that it lasts for as long as the child needs it.
- 7.2 In North Tyneside, placement stability for children who have had 3 or more placements in a 12 month period is marginally decreasing from 12.9 in February 2018 to 12.2 in February 2019; however as the table below shows North Tyneside continues to have a higher percentage year on year against regional comparators and the national average.

Percentage children at 31 March with three or more placements during year			
	2016	2017	2018
North Tyneside	14.00	10.00	12.00
North East	9.00	8.00	9.00
Statistical Neighbours	9.10	9.10	9.60
England	10.00	10.00	10.00

- 7.3 Our aim is to increase our mainstream internal foster carer capacity, by recruiting new foster carer households; however, to support us in doing so we need to ensure we address the wider support needs expressed by our current internal foster carers.
- 7.4 Currently our foster payments are made using series of rates, which are aligned to need, age or related circumstance. We are proposing to streamline the current foster carer payment structure, address historic anomalies and where appropriate provide an enhanced offer: We will achieve this by introducing a payment for Skills structure linked to competency, skills and training; with Pre-Accredited, Accredited, Advanced and Specialist bands.

8. Wider Offer

- 8.1 Alongside reviewing the financial payments to carers we have also considered the wider offer to our carers to ensure that North Tyneside Fostering Service is a competitive service in the current market.
- 8.2 We have been working on the wider offer over the last year and have already achieved North Tyneside foster carers being eligible for priority Ease cards by working with Leisure services.
- 8.3 As part of the fostering framework we are looking at providing enhanced training opportunities for foster carers managing complex placements alongside increasing the number of foster care support groups. We have therefore been working with our partner agencies to see what support and training opportunities they can offer Foster Carers. Examples of this have been working with the Youth Offending Team, RHELAC and Health partners who have all provided specialist training to our carers.
- 8.4 REHLAC service are also offering emotional support including counselling, drawing and talking and theraplay. This is alongside support including analysis and advice around strategies to manage more challenging and complex behaviours.

- 8.5 Additional to this training, many carers have asked about more formal learning. Some Carers are completing diplomas in both level 3 and 5 in Children and Young People Workforce and some have already successfully completed this. We will continue to explore these options with carers moving forward.
- 8.6 Another area we are working on is to explore whether foster carers can be exempt from paying 'bedroom tax' for having spare rooms available in their home that they are using for Fostering. We are hopeful that we will have a positive outcome to this request in the near future.
- 8.7 We are confident that with this increased offer in training and support, that we have carers that can manage the complex needs and behaviours that some of the children and young people display and therefore support us in achieving positive outcomes.

9. Training

- 9.1 The Fostering Service continues to utilise the skills and experience of a dedicated trainer to meet the stringent training requirements for foster carers both pre and post approval. Fostering Managers continue to work with partner agencies to enhance the training offer. This ensures that applicants can benefit from a range of experiences, professional knowledge and up to date strategies/ legislation.
- 9.2 When potential carers are being assessed they are required to undertake the Skills to foster training within both stage 1 and 2 of the recruitment process. Relative, Friend or Other Connected Person foster carers are also offered the equivalent Skills to Foster training within their assessment period however, this can also be accessed after their assessment has been ratified by the Agency Decision Maker. This is to allow these carers the chance to complete this training when they have moved out of the crisis situations that they often find themselves in, during the assessment process.
- 9.3 The core courses that all carers are required to undertake within a three yearly cycle, are: -

Course	Course
Protecting Children Safeguarding Foster Carers course One	Paediatric First Aid
Protecting Children Safeguarding Foster Carers course Two	Health and Equality Refresher
Recording	Child protection
Attachment	Health and Wellbeing
Equality & Diversity	Health & Safety
Solihull	Court Skills

- 9.4 In addition to traditional training the Service has continued to support Foster Carers development post full approval (at the end of their first year). This is achieved through the use of workbooks, which are completed by the carer in his/her own time and

returned to the trainer for monitoring. However, it is acknowledged that the benefits of face to face training remain the optimal way of learning for foster carers, so with this in mind workbooks can only be used in every other cycle of training.

- 9.5 Alongside the Core Skills Training, bespoke training opportunities are now being afforded to carers as and when needed, rather than waiting for scheduled training. Examples of this have been sessions in the carers home on specific contact issues, behaviour management and attachment issues. The experienced Social Care assistant working within the Fostering Service continues to support carers with this offer. Carers feedback positively on this support, due to the reactivity of this offer.

10. Marketing and Communication

- 10.1 As there is currently no marketing budget for the Fostering Service, there will be a requirement for investment in marketing activity to meet communications and marketing objectives: This will allow the Fostering Service to raise the profile of North Tyneside Council's Fostering Service, raise awareness of the continued and growing need for foster carers and to continue to generate a sufficient number of new enquiries to meet the current and predicted demands of the looked after population.
- 10.2 A marketing campaign will also support the service in recruiting an additional 30 foster carers which have been identified as needed to support the service in meeting the target of having 90% of all placements in-house and in improving the stability of placements in line with the national and regional averages.
- 10.3 We propose a tactical approach to our advertising campaign; with a range of different advertising activities being undertaken strategically throughout the year which include;
- Outdoor advertising- Bus rears / side panels on local buses (6 monthly)
 - Radio advertising – 3 day airtime campaign (6 monthly)
 - Social media advertising – Facebook posts to targeted audiences
 - Bannerstand - targeting public areas i.e. library's; health centers, hospitals etc
 - Posters - targeting public waiting areas
 - Post cards

11. Priorities for the next three months.

- 11.1 The fostering service are working towards going out to consultation with foster carers with the new framework in April 2019. Subject to the outcome of consultation, the plan is to implement the agreed changes in June 2019.
- 11.2 Due to the fact there are now two Team Managers within the Fostering Service, moving forward the Team Managers will develop clear lines of accountability with Carly Brownlee remaining the registered manager with responsibility for Mainstream Fostering alongside Panel Advisor for the Fostering Panel and Jill Dixon being responsible for family placements, and Special Guardians. The two Team Managers will continue to work closely together to ensure areas such as duty, training, support and the allocation of assessments continue to meet the needs of all carers.
- 11.3 It is recognised that the transferring of Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Assessments and post SGO support has significantly impacted on service delivery. This impact has increased not only the full assessments but also the initial interviews undertaken,

alongside post order support and assessment of support needs. All of these tasks had previously sat with the Adoption Service and from January 2018, transferred to the Fostering Service. Work has been undertaken in terms of completing both viability, full assessments and post SGO assessments in a timely manner. The service has commenced some engagement activities with kinship carer groups to explore development of the offer to Special Guardian's. This work will be a priority for the service over the next 6 months.

12. Background documents

- <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/policy-practice/research/state-nations-foster-care-2019>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fostering-in-england-1-april-2017-to-31-march-2018>

Meeting: Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee

Date: 18 March 2019

Title: Report from the Collaborative Working Sub Group

Author: Elizabeth Kerr, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 643 5322

Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the report produced by a sub group reviewing the collaborative working practices of the Authority to ensure they were fit for purpose and improving outcomes for children and their families.

2. Recommendation(s)

The Sub-committee is recommended to endorse the report and its recommendations and agree to approve the report for submission direct to Cabinet.

3. Collaborative Working Sub Group

3.1 On 9 July 2018 the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee agreed to establish a Sub Group to review the collaborative working practices of the Authority to ensure they were improving outcomes for children and their families with a focus on the most vulnerable and in need.

3.2 The remit of the Sub Group was to examine the existing collaborative working practices of the Authority, including the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub), the Tyneside Alliance, the North of Tyne Collaboration and proposals relating to the local safeguarding children board.

Key questions to be answered included:

- a) Who is doing what?
- b) Who should be doing what?
- c) What could be done better?

3.3 The Sub Group met on a number of occasions to receive information and discuss their findings. Evidence gathering sessions were held with the Independent Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board; representatives of the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); social workers and front line staff in Children's Services; Northumbria Police; and senior managers within the Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Service.

3.4 The findings and recommendations of the Sub Group can be read in the full report attached at Appendix 1.

4. Submission to Cabinet

- 4.1 The next scheduled meeting of Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development (OS&PD) Committee is not until 17 June 2019. The Chair and Deputy Chair of Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee have proposed that this report be submitted straight to Cabinet without first being endorsed by the OS&PD Committee.
- 4.2 The OS&PD Committee's Terms of Reference allow this. Paragraph 13 states that the Committee has the responsibility to:
- “Consider and either approve or reject any reports and recommendations made by a sub-committee for submission to Cabinet, Council, an individual or outside organisation unless:
- a) in exceptional circumstances, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee agree otherwise...”
- 4.3 By agreeing to submit the report to Cabinet directly the Sub-committee can expect Cabinet's response to the first scheduled meeting of the 2019/20 municipal year on 11 July 2019. If the sub-committee follows the usual procedure, the report would not be considered by Cabinet until 24 June 2019 and the response from Cabinet would not be reported back to the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee until its meeting on 12 September 2019. The Chair and Deputy Chair of Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee consider this to be an unnecessary delay and have sought OS&PD Committee's view on the matter.
- 4.4 At the meeting of OS&PD Committee held on 4 March 2019 it was agreed that the Chair of the Committee could agree that any completed studies be forwarded directly to Cabinet once agreed by the necessary sub-committee.
- 4.5 The Chair of OS&PD Committee has read the report and has requested that it is submitted to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.6 With the Sub-committee's agreement the report will be submitted to the Cabinet meeting to be held on 1 April 2019.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of the Collaborative Working Sub Group: *The Effectiveness of Collaborative Working in North Tyneside*.

6. Background documents

- See appendix 2 of *The Effectiveness of Collaborative Working in North Tyneside* report attached as appendix 1.
- North Tyneside Council Constitution.
- Minutes of Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee meeting held 4 March 2019.

The Effectiveness of Collaborative Working in North Tyneside



March 2019



North Tyneside Council

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1. Background to the study

- 1.1. On 9 July 2018 the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee agreed to establish a Sub Group to review the collaborative working practices of the Authority to ensure they were improving outcomes for children and their families with a focus on the most vulnerable and in need.
- 1.2. Councillors Joanne Cassidy, Cath Davis, Joe Kirwin, Maureen Madden, Pat Oliver and John O'Shea volunteered to be members of the Sub Group. Unfortunately Cllr Kirwin had to withdraw from the group part way through the study.
- 1.3. In determining that it was an appropriate topic for an in-depth investigation the sub-committee considered recent developments in the sector.
- 1.4. In March 2018 it was announced that the Department of Education had awarded £15m of funding to eight "partners in practice", a peer support programme that sees leading children's services departments work with other local authorities to improve standards. North Tyneside Council and South Tyneside Council working in partnership was one of the eight and was known as the Tyneside Alliance. The Tyneside Alliance was committed to working with up to 10 other Authorities during the two years of the programme to develop and share strong practice and deliver hands-on peer support to help and improve outcomes for more children and their families.
- 1.5. The Children's and Social Work Act 2017 had made changes to safeguarding requirements by replacing the local safeguarding children's board with Safeguarding Partners (the local authority, the clinical commissioning group (CCG) and the police) and they will be responsible for exercising the functions for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area.
- 1.6. The multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) had been established in North Tyneside to coordinate support and protection services for children and vulnerable adults and was well established; now was a good time to review the implementation and its working practices to see if they could be replicated elsewhere.
- 1.7. In light of the above it was agreed that a review of the collaborative working arrangements to ensure that each organisation understood what their and the other agencies responsibilities were, that they shared information efficiently and that the Authority meets its obligations was appropriate at this time. The topic would also allow Members to contribute to new policies and strategies in the area and provide the opportunity to improve the service available to the borough's children and their families.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. The remit of the Sub Group was to examine the collaborative working practices of the Authority, to include existing arrangements, the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub), the Tyneside Alliance, the North of Tyne Collaboration and proposals relating to the local safeguarding children board.

2.2. Key questions to be considered included:

- a) Who is doing what?
- b) Who should be doing what?
- c) What could be done better?

2.3. The Sub Group met on a number of occasions to receive information from Officers and discuss their findings and also met:

- the Independent Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board;
- representatives of the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG);
- with social workers and front line staff in Children's Services;
- with a representative of Northumbria Police; and
- with senior managers within the Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Service.

3. Findings

The report will look at the key areas in turn and will make recommendations relating to each at the end of the respective section. The recommendations also form appendix 3 of the report.

4. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- 4.1. One of the first sessions of the Sub Group was to meet with representatives from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), namely the Senior Manager for Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Lead Nurse 0-19 Children's Public Health Service.
- 4.2. The MASH coordinates support and protection services for children and vulnerable adults in North Tyneside. It brings together professionals from across the Authority, Northumbria Police, health agencies and Harbour (a domestic abuse charity) in one team to improve information sharing, identify safeguarding concerns quicker and manage cases more efficiently.
- 4.3. The MASH was highlighted as a highly effective multi-agency partnership with seamless links to and from the social work assessment team and early help services during the Ofsted Inspection of May 2018. The work of all partners was acknowledged and described as a real strength with Inspectors describing the Authority's staff and partners as highly motivated, conscientious and committed to safeguarding children and young people in North Tyneside.
- 4.4. The Sub Group was informed that that MASH could receive over 50 reports a week but the average was more like 30.
- 4.5. The Sub Group was given examples of how the MASH had improved practice by having all the information available about a child. All members of the MASH team were experienced practitioners and provided soft intelligence, which in turn enabled earlier conversations with the relevant information. For example, Council Tax records are available from the officer from Housing; health visitors will have

information on whether there is a baby or young children in the household.

- 4.6. At the beginning of the operation of the MASH one of the gaps in information was from the education side. Now a position had been seconded after a pilot (split across three teachers all with a safeguarding in education background) and there was an education representative as part of the MASH. The MASH had helped smooth things over with schools with regards to changes relating to the completions of the Early Help Assessment forms.
- 4.7. The Sub Group was also informed that the Probation Service had been a missing factor in the MASH. The information was provided but it took time and as an officer was not physically present the soft intelligence or the advice and support, which was invaluable, was not available.
- 4.8. As part of its work the Sub Group also met with a group of front line social workers and managers. Overall the response to the MASH and how it was working was very positive as the ability to be able to walk across an office and have a conversation with all the key partners and get an overview of a family really quickly was really useful; for those not in the MASH appointments had to be made. When asked if any agency was missing it was commented by the frontline staff that it would be useful to have a link with CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services); the managers stated that a representative from CAMHS was there once a week and had a good presence in the locality teams.
- 4.9. The Sub Group also met with an Inspector from Northumbria Police to talk about their involvement with the MASH both in North Tyneside and in the other local authorities in the region.
- 4.10. The Inspector informed the Sub Group that the MASHs' around the region had different organisation and focus but Northumbria Police's establishment was the same across all six. It would have been helpful for all six to use the same IT system, Liquid Logic, so they were able to access all information but accepted that different authorities had different needs. The Dynamic MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conferences) would be a useful addition to the MASH process but overall North Tyneside's MASH was in a very good position and it was going well. The Police invested a lot of resources in the MASHs but did so because of the identifiable benefits.
- 4.11. The Inspector detailed the resources and processes they gave to the MASH. Whilst it was acknowledged that it would be great to have everyone involved in safeguarding on the one site it was not practicable and core partners were good at drawing information from other services, for example mental health. There had been no resistance to engagement or the new way of working in the MASH; partnerships had been long established between individual services.
- 4.12. Representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) also attended a meeting of the Sub Group and gave their perspective on the MASH and recent changes to collaborative working. Attending were the Designated Nurse Looked After Children and Safeguarding Children and Adults Officer and the GP Lead for Safeguarding Adults and Children.

- 4.13. The MASH was now one year old and had been very successful. The next step was to embed the processes and ensure interventions were made as early as possible, that there was appropriate support for all partners and also appropriate challenge. It was reported that the responses felt more co-ordinated and that being able to understand other colleagues' roles helped too.
- 4.14. The Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board called the MASH "tremendously exciting" but believed there were challenges about next steps and the long term commitment of the partners to the model.
- 4.15. The Sub Group were very impressed with the enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of the representatives from the MASH and considered that its creation and progress was something the Authority and the team were rightly proud of. This example of collaborative working was working well and it appeared that, subject to all partners retaining their current commitment, the appropriate steps were in place to ensure it continued to thrive and make a positive impact on children's lives.
- 4.16. Taking all of the above into account, the Sub Group makes the following recommendations in relation to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub:

Recommendation 1 - Cabinet notes that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee considers the education role in the MASH vital and recommends continued funding for the seconded post for education in the MASH for future years.

Recommendation 2 - Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding considers increasing the membership of the MASH to include on a more formal basis:

- a) a mental health and drug and alcohol and /or CAMHS professional/advocate;
- b) a Learning disabled advocate; and
- c) the Dynamic MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conferences)

5. North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board

- 5.1. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) were established by the Children Act 2004. The Board was the means by which organisations came together to agree on how they would cooperate with one another to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Board's role was to scrutinise and monitor this process, and to ensure that local agencies cooperate and worked well to achieve this.
- 5.2. The LSCB's core objectives are set out in the Children Act 2004 and the functions are set out in the 2015 statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. They include communication, quality assurance, learning from serious case reviews, reviewing child deaths and ensuring sound safeguarding policies and procedures are in place.
- 5.3. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (the Act) replaces LSCBs with new local safeguarding arrangements, led by three safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups). These arrangements need to be in place by September 2019. It also places a duty on child death review partners (local authorities and clinical commissioning groups) to review the deaths of

children normally resident in the local area.

- 5.4. LSCBs must continue to carry out all of their statutory functions, until the point at which safeguarding partner arrangements begin to operate in a local area. They must also continue to ensure that the review of each death of a child normally resident in the LSCB area is undertaken by the established child death overview panel (CDOP), until the point at which new child death review partner arrangements are in place.
- 5.5. Mr Richard Burrows, the Independent Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (the Board), provided the Sub Group with his opinion on how collaborative working was functioning between the many organisations and partners involved in the Board.
- 5.6. Mr Burrows stated that he believed the Board was working well and cited the work with the schools as a good example. North Tyneside Council had an effective relationship with all schools in the borough with no distinction between community and non-community schools; this was not something which was replicated across the country. There was representation from primary schools and secondary schools and this provided a positive environment for collaboration.
- 5.7. The Board had an active model whereby if an organisation had a seat on the Board they were expected to *do* something. All Members of the Board were reminded that the role of the Board was to hold each other to account and to do so they must collaborate and participate; each organisation was there to help the others understand where they were and how they got there, rather than want went wrong and whose fault it was.
- 5.8. Each organisation had different cultures, agenda and performance management targets however each one was expected to account for their areas of expertise. The Board provided a common set of guideline and procedures and at most meetings people were honest and open but this attitude did change when the Board undertook a Serious Case Review.
- 5.9. The Council's *Our North Tyneside Plan* provided a coherent framework around which all partners could align their work. The work undertaken in light of the Rotherham abuse scandal and the Serious Case Review after the 'Primark case'¹ showed how important a linkage between all authorities was; that being punitive was counterproductive; and gave an appreciation of softer connections between what people did.
- 5.10. The Authority were going to run a 'Practice week' and this was welcomed by Mr Burrows (please see section 10, *North Tyneside Council* for more information about Practice Week).
- 5.11. It was acknowledged that the role of the Board in Community Safety should have more focus; more could be done collectively to raise the awareness of the public to understand what to look for and how to report matters of concern and to increase the value of the information obtained from these contacts.
- 5.12. When discussing this aspect of Mr Burrow's evidence, Members shared his concern

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idx-5667c315-a69c-4e5d-a683-e4e7771eb04d>

and considered whether in addition to community centres, council buildings, surgeries and police stations other organisations and businesses, like supermarkets and soft play centres, could display posters with key contact details for the Front Door service. This would help increase the general public's awareness of what to do and who to contact if abuse or suspected abuse was witnessed.

- 5.13. Members also wondered whether council officers who worked outside of Children's Services, for example refuse collectors, and Members themselves, knew about how to report safeguarding concerns about any resident and what to look out for. Examples of what might be a sign that something was wrong were bins not being put out as regularly as usual or the build-up of post just inside a front door.
- 5.14. Concerns raised by Members about Electively Home Educated children were shared by Mr Burrows and he made reference to a strategy employed by Darlington Borough Council and Durham County Council regarding assurance on the welfare of children being educated at home.
- 5.15. Further enquiries were made by the Sub Group with the Authority's Fair Access Team in Education. The Sub Group was informed that there had been a meeting with colleagues at Darlington Council and discussions with the MASH team which had led to a review of the Authority's procedure and the establishment of a clear escalation process if no response from the parent/carer was received or if no evidence was received of satisfactory education. A copy of the guidance and a flowchart showing the processes around elective home education was provided to Members.
- 5.16. The Sub Group was pleased to note that the revised procedure was a result of effective collaborative working.
- 5.17. With regards to the implications for the future of the Board as set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017, Mr Burrows stated that nationally other safeguarding children boards also had difficulty understanding the logic behind the changes and uncertainty as to how they would make things better. Six local authorities (North Tyneside, Newcastle, South Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland and Northumberland) had formed a North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum to examine what model their new arrangements might take and work was on-going.
- 5.18. The importance of ensuring there was a local mechanism for delivering whatever model was one of the main questions to be answered as the local structure was often undervalued in safeguarding. Mr Burrows also expressed concern that the level of engagement may drop when attendance and participation was no longer statutory for many organisations.
- 5.19. Representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) also attended a meeting of the Sub Group and spoke about their involvement with the Board. It was considered that the Board worked very well in most ways and had a good participation at Board level however this was not always repeated at sub groups (the Quality, Improvement, Learning and Performance sub group and the Training sub group) often due to other work commitments. The example cited was education representatives as an individual teacher from a school was not sufficient, it needed to be a senior leader to disseminate the information and learning from these meetings

to all schools in the borough. See paragraph 9.6 for the Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Skills' response to this comment.

- 5.20. With regard to the forthcoming changes to the Board it was acknowledged by the representatives from the CCG that it was a significant change with the Police, the CCG and the Local Authority having an equal shared responsibility as 'safeguarding partners'. Whilst there was always room for improvement the current arrangement had created a cohesive group that had good working relationships. Work on establishing the new arrangement had begun with consideration as to which organisations would be formally named as 'relevant partners' and the role of lay members.
- 5.21. The Sub Group considered that the existing arrangements and the Board was very effective and was ensuring that children and young people in North Tyneside were protected and kept as safe as possible; that all organisations, their leaders and their practitioners were working effectively together to safeguard children and young people; and that people were open to learning, transparent about what they did and were focused on improving outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.22. As the current arrangements were working so well the Sub Group was concerned that the changes to the arrangements for local safeguarding children boards would struggle to replicate this and the impact the disruption would have on what was an effective partnership between all key organisations for child protection. The Sub Group welcomed the creation of the North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum and looked forward to hearing the proposals at a meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee in due course.
- 5.23. Taking all of the above into account, the Sub Group makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 3 - Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to consider producing a universal 'brand' for use by all partners, including the community safety partnership and businesses in the area, to inform the general public in North Tyneside about what to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult so that the issue, how to identify it and what to do about it becomes familiar to the general public.

Recommendation 4 - Cabinet informs the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee advocates the appointment of an Independent Chairperson for the new local safeguarding arrangements and the inclusion of schools, lay people and the ambulance service in the new arrangements and puts this forward to the North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum.

6. The Tyneside Alliance (Partners in Practice)

- 6.1. The Partners in Practice (PiP) programme was a national initiative developed and funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The programme aimed to increase joint working between central and local government by working with the best performing local authorities in relation to children's social care to improve the overall system.

- 6.2. North Tyneside Council, in partnership with South Tyneside Council, had successfully secured PiP status and funding in March 2018. Acting as the Tyneside Alliance, the two Authorities would jointly deliver sector-led improvement activity to local authorities across the country that had been identified as, or had identified themselves as, requiring improvement to their children's services. Both authorities had received funding for two years from the DfE in order to deliver this work.
- 6.3. The Sector Led Improvement support was committed to delivering improvement activity with up to ten local authorities over a period of two years. The improvement work would be a mixture of onsite and offsite activity, including review and analysis, collaborative improvement work, monitoring and evaluation. Funding across both authorities for the Sector Led Improvement work was £1,600,000 over two years: £860,000 in 2018/19 and £740,000 in 2019/20.

Expenditure of the grant would cover:

- i. Funding to enable the Authority and South Tyneside Council respectively to resource sufficient capacity within their own organisation, enabling senior managers and practitioners to work with host authorities to help them improve.
 - ii. Funding for 'Improvement Associates' – a pool of highly skilled and experienced sector experts that would work with the Tyneside Alliance to deliver improvement work.
 - iii. Funding for a core team that would support the mobilisation and delivery of the programme through all phases.
 - iv. Funding for travel, accommodation, supplies and services associated with delivery of work with individual authorities as well as hosting regional and national events to share best practice.
- 6.4. The Sub Group was informed that the Tyneside Alliance was working well and discussions were taking place about what would happen after the end of the funding with an option of a traded service offer.
- 6.5. The Senior Manager: Transformation informed the Sub Group of the process undertaken with each client authority and that it was at least a three to four month exercise.
- 6.6. It was acknowledged that the Tyneside Alliance work did take North Tyneside's workforce away but the funding had provided for posts to be backfilled or to increase capacity; any new staff employed had been appointed on a two year contract, for the length of the programme. Officers were also mindful of the risk to the performance of North Tyneside and their priority was to ensure the Authority's performance was not impaired.
- 6.7. The social worker managers commented that they were concerned that the programme might take away resources from the North Tyneside team and that it was another thing to contend with amongst the other changes within the last two years to the service.

- 6.8. The Sub Group, whilst acknowledging the prestige that the award of the Partners in Practice status had given the Authority and that the work was going well, was concerned about the impact on existing frontline officers whose knowledge of the programme appeared to be minimal. This lack of knowledge had led to uncertainty and anxiety due to the appearance of resources being taken away from the day job. Members were also concerned about the impact of having temporary, possibly new and inexperienced officers working for the Authority whilst the experience was helping other local authorities elsewhere.

Recommendation 5 - Cabinet reassures itself that the steps taken to “resource sufficient capacity within their own organisation, enabling senior managers and practitioners to work with host authorities to help them improve” for the Tyneside Alliance had left the Authority with sufficient experience and capacity to retain its own high level of performance.

7. Adopt North East

- 7.1. The development of Regional Adoption Agencies was part of the national adoption agenda set out in the Department for Education (DfE) paper ‘Regionalising Adoption’ in June 2015 which was further developed by Government in ‘Adoption: A Vision for Change’ in March 2016 which signalled a clear intention that by 2020 all local authorities would be part of regional agencies.
- 7.2. Newcastle City Council had received funding from the DfE to develop a regional Adoption Agency on behalf of Northumberland County Council, North Tyneside Council, Gateshead MBC, South Tyneside Council and Newcastle City Council and four voluntary adoption agencies: After Adoption; Barnardos; ARC NE; and Durham Family Welfare. It was acknowledged that all the Councils provided high performing adoption services however Government anticipated that Regional Adoption Agencies would be better able to target the recruitment of prospective adopters, speed up the matching and placement of children, improve adoption support services and potentially create efficiency savings.
- 7.3. Adopt North East would be formed from the staff groups currently working across the local authority adoption services. Staff would transfer into North Tyneside and work to develop the service to meet the needs of the children across the area who required permanence by adoption. It was anticipated that Adopt North East would be formed from a staff group of approximately 50 people including: social workers who worked directly with prospective adopters; staff who engaged in recruitment of people interested in adoption and social work; and other staff who provided post adoption support to children and families.
- 7.4. Adopt North East became a service on the 1 December 2018.
- 7.5. The Sub Group was assured that there was nothing about the individual adoption services which had required the creation of a regional adoption agency; it was based on a very clear direction of travel from Government. That North Tyneside Council had been chosen as the host authority illustrated how well regarded the service was in the region. The social workers managers were pleased that the new service would be based in North Tyneside and believed that all members of the team being in the same place would be a help; the challenge was still finding the correct match for

each child, not finding adoptive parents.

- 7.6. It was reported by the Senior Manager for Looked After Children that the shared pool of experience with all officers being based on one site was an immediate benefit and all officers involved were highly motivated and focused on improving practice and being innovative. The new agency was being seen as an opportunity to establish and share best practice and as South Tyneside's adoption service was an 'Outstanding service', North Tyneside and others were happy to learn from them, particularly in the life story work and with harder to place children.
- 7.7. The management team for Adopt North East was mindful that this was a significant change for staff and was being as supportive as possible with a clear workforce development plan. There was some anxiety in the team about some changes, for example that some locally accepted 'work arounds' would no longer be acceptable and people might have to work in a different way to their habit to ensure all officers worked in the same way.
- 7.8. Whilst it is still early days for Adopt North East the Sub Group was very impressed with how quickly the service had been developed once it had been agreed North Tyneside would be the host and the impact the positive approach and attitude towards this change had made to such a significant piece of work. The successful transfer of staff, agreement on funding and governance arrangements, the creation of a brand and refurbished office space being achieved in the time it had was impressive and to be commended. The Sub Group hoped it would be a model for future collaborative projects in the future; Adopt North East showed it could be done.

8. North of Tyne Collaboration Programme

- 8.1. The Department for Education's Children's Social Care Innovation programme seeks to develop, test and share effective ways of supporting children who need help from social care services. Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland Councils submitted a successful bid to the Innovation Programme in 2016 and established the North of Tyne Collaboration Programme. This was outwith the North of Tyne devolution agenda.
- 8.2. The programme began by developing a plan to work more closely on practical proposals to make a difference, with initial opportunities relating to the Authorities' response to domestic abuse; workforce planning and quality; elements of their services for looked after children; and what could be done to improve outcomes for each areas' residents.
- 8.3. There was also an examination of common problems, one of which was placement capacity; others included looking at specialist provision and collective responsibility to the NHS. Operational relationships were effective, the difficulties came when agreement had to be made on funding; however a real strength was the collective voice to the NHS and on a national level.
- 8.4. The funding from the Innovation Programme was then used to create capacity to allow the team to work together. Whilst there was some synergy each local authority kept its own identity as each local authority had its own culture, political landscape and geography. The services were still regulated and inspected in the way they

always had been but the collaboration ensured that if something was not working somewhere it was picked up quickly and changed; as the teams knew each other there was a willingness to learn and build. The three local authorities had shared policies, for example on kinship, but not every policy was shared. The Programme also assisted the relationship between the Directors of Children's Services in each Authority to become trusted, healthy and constructive.

- 8.5. The Sub Group was reminded that it was important to remember that integrated services did not always save money but the three authorities were choosing to continue to work collaboratively because of the known benefits to each Authority for what they chose to do collaboratively. For example, combining fostering was counterproductive because of the distances involved across the three local authorities; young people have a significant local area identity and placing a child from North Shields in Wallsend could be too far away. Alternatively combining staff training did have benefits. It was anticipated that increased collaborative working would grow naturally, bringing the officers with them to ensure its success.
- 8.6. The Sub Group were not very familiar with the North of Tyne Collaboration before they began their work and were pleased to see the commitment and enthusiasm of the officers involved to making it work. It was clear to the Members that the key message of the project to improve outcomes for residents was embedded in the project. There was also an appreciation that at some point collaboration can become unhelpful and/or inefficient and the bigger picture needs to be kept in mind at all times.

9. Schools and the School Improvement Service

- 9.1. The Sub Group also met with the training and development officer for the School Improvement Service (SIS) who delivered the safeguarding training to schools. Her role was to deliver child protection training to every member of staff who required it (3,500 people), the designated safeguarding leads in schools in the borough and people new to a child protection role. Many schools had a training pathway for child protection issues which included a brief introduction on the first day; a more in-depth presentation with the safeguarding lead in the first week and the in-depth training provided by the SIS in the first term.
- 9.2. Each designated safeguarding lead (each school had at least two) received a quarterly update which they then disseminated to staff; it was expected regularly but required annually although the quality control of that dissemination was inconsistent. Over a course of three years everyone in a school should have received the in-depth training provided by the SIS. This training covered the signs and indicators and the different categories of abuse and neglect; other ways a child might be vulnerable; and how to flag concerns. The training also provided information on the Local Authority's systems; how the different mechanisms worked; the work of the locality teams; and what the requirements of Ofsted were.
- 9.3. A challenge was keeping schools up to date with new issues and different schools has different vulnerabilities; some schools had pastoral leads that "do it all day" whereas others did not have the resources for that and so there was less opportunity for expertise to develop.

- 9.4. Each child at school had to be measured as part of the national child measuring programme in Reception and Year 6 and all school nurses were highly trained in safeguarding matters and knew their responsibilities and reporting pathways.
- 9.5. The SIS became involved in anything new to try and engage schools and was currently working with the Police on Operation Encompass; this was a process where if a family was involved in a reported domestic abuse incident the school of any children of the family were notified by 10.00am the next day.
- 9.6. The Assistant Director for Education, Learning and Skills responded to the comments made by the representatives of the CCG regarding the dissemination of information from the Board and its sub groups to the individual schools. She informed the Sub Group that the two school representatives on the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board were both senior leaders at their own school and were also members of regular forums and meetings for head teachers; the PLP for primary heads and the EIP for secondary heads. There was also a forum for heads of special schools to meet known as SHOG. Feedback from school representatives on the Board was to be a standing agenda item at each of these meetings. In addition a Higher Education representative and the Training and Development Officer for the School Improvement Service attended the training strategy sub group of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board.
- 9.7. The social workers reported a good relationship with schools, each had their own reporting processes either including a pastoral team or not although the quality of that was patchy with some being better than others. It was suggested that this was because some schools were more confident than others but it was important to remember that social care was the social workers business and education was the schools business.
- 9.8. The role of schools in safeguarding was vital and the programme of support available to all schools through the SIS was an important element of collaborative working and would be integral to the new local safeguarding arrangements (see recommendation 4). The Sub Group considered the pilot of Operation Encompass to be an important addition to ensuring schools and practitioners had a view of the whole family when making decisions about an individual child; another example of good collaborative working.

10. North Tyneside Council

During the Sub Group's meetings with witnesses other elements of the Authority's recent changes and projects were mentioned; those which demonstrated collaborative working are included below.

10.1. Signs of Safety

- 10.1.1 Signs of Safety was a practice model for children in need of a statutory assessment which had been implemented within the Authority and partner agencies since 2017.
- 10.1.2 School nurses had reported positively on the Signs of Safety model forms as freeing up time to do more. Two days of training had been required but it was now used in their practice. Forms and paperwork had been adapted to reflect the Signs of Safety

Principles as it clearly captured the child's views and wishes. It also helped the family to see the same information and format of forms from their health visitor and social worker.

- 10.1.3 The social workers considered that Signs of Safety and the MASH made them feel like the service was a step ahead of other Authorities; it was commented that the focus on risk and the honesty in using the practice was to be welcomed; although it was acknowledged that the transition into using the practice in looked after children had been difficult because it came halfway through some young people's assessments.
- 10.1.4 The Inspector from Northumbria Police stated that they had attended training on the Signs of Safety Practice Model and it was now used across most of the six Local Authority areas and was working well. She considered that it was the right way to go as it supported the whole family and concentrated on cases and areas of improvement.
- 10.1.5 The principles of Signs of Safety had been built in to the safeguarding training and the practice model was supported by the training and development officer, she considered that it was really good as it made people be reflective.

10.2 Looked after Children and Care Leavers

- 10.2.1 It was reported that the multi-agency approach for looked after children and care leavers was strong with all agencies working well together; it was acknowledged that the mental health element could be strengthened and a pilot had begun to include a mental health assessment as soon as a child became looked after by the Authority.
- 10.2.2 The representatives from the CCG mentioned that late notification or imprecise details on notifications from the Local Authority to the designated doctor for Children in Care could cause unnecessary delay as the doctor had to unpick what was meant in the referral with the family instead of being fully prepared before meeting the family and the child involved. It would be helpful for the notification to have some narrative and background to the case as doctors were not involved at the initial discussions and meeting in the MASH. There was no suggestion that a GP should be on the MASH as improved communication of the background situation should resolve the issue. If MASH needed the information for the initial discussion they would approach the GP and it would be provided for them.
- 10.2.3 Over recent years a huge amount of work between all partners had been undertaken to improve the service and information sharing. A frustration now was not receiving information from the Local Authority. For example, the return figures on the statutory Section 47 response rates² for the CCG were recorded as 'poor' but GPs stated that they were completing the report on time. There was a set process which used a report template and a secure email but some GPs were receiving phone calls and not emails. The Local Authority had not provided the CCG with enough information to allow them to audit the responses to see where the problem may lay.

² 'Section 47' refers to section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and refers to a multi-agency assessment which is undertaken when there are concerns of significant harm to a child or children.

- 10.2.4 In addition, there was a problem in that the Local Authority (LA) were not always notifying GPs when a child ceased to be Looked After and currently did not have a robust system in place for doing this. This was important information to have recorded on a child's medical file, not least to be able to support them later on in adult life.
- 10.2.5 When the Authority's Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Children's Services was asked about the CCG's concerns he acknowledged that there was an issue in that the data was indicating non-compliance with the statutory framework but that it was difficult to discover where the non-compliance lay and that a practical solution to the problem was still to be found. The Authority shared the CCG's desire to improve the process but evidence was required to see where the weakness lay.

10.3 Keeping Families Connected

- 10.3.1 The Keeping Families Connected project was an edge of care initiative to create a new, integrated service with education and health to support children to live safely at home. The primary objective was to maximise the number of children and young people supported to remain at home by having effective edge of care provision that reduced the number of looked after children and effectively enabled those children that were looked after to return home safely.
- 10.3.2 The Authority had been awarded £1,086,760 over a period of two years; £538,380 in 2018/19 and £548,380 in 2019/20. The service model incorporated:
- A multi-professional, co-located team (including clinical psychology, youth offending, education, nursing, fostering, and outreach staff)
 - Additional therapeutic restorative services
 - Additional programmes of education support to keep children in school
 - New short stay provision via foster care
 - Shared staff training and development, including foster carers
 - A single key worker model with safeguarding oversight and risk management from Social Workers
- 10.3.3 The police had also dedicated resources to the project as part of reducing crime and the NHS had also allocated resources for it. The staff in the project would be handpicked as the culture and attitude towards the service would be a vital part of its success.

10.4 Practice Week

- 10.4.1 The Sub Group was provided more information about Practice Week from the Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Children's Services. It took place in the first week of December 2018 and Members of the Senior Management Team undertook observations of front-line practice across services from an agreed schedule of planned safeguarding activities.

Activity observed included:

- A Multi-Agency Core Group
- MASH Triage of a Safeguarding Case
- MASH and Police Pre-Triage of potential Contacts

- Multi-Agency Review Child Protection Conference and 20 Day Looked After Review
- Multi-Agency Team Around the Family Meeting
- Multi-Agency Locality Meeting

10.4.2 The process was one of appreciative inquiry, gathering information and stories about what was working well from the practice observed. It was important that staff did not perceive the week as an exercise in fault-finding and enabled the development of a sense of the practice wanted by the Authority.

10.4.3 Key findings included:

1. Senior Managers noted positively the use of the Signs of Safety approach in practice, evidencing its effective implementation across the safeguarding continuum and its use in a wide variety of different safeguarding activities.
2. Senior Managers all commented upon the care, warmth, sensitivity, compassion and emotional skill of the practitioners that they observed when working with vulnerable children, young people, parents and carers.
3. Senior Managers were consistently struck by the child-centred focus of practitioners.
4. Senior Managers commented that practitioners were intentional in identifying 'strengths' – this suggests that the implementation of Signs of Safety was positively shifting understanding about risk.
5. Senior Managers noted strong systems and processes underpinning practice across services.
6. When asked, service users were positive about the support that they received.

10.4.4 The Sub Group welcomed this initiative and was pleased to note that it was something which would be repeated on a regular basis. The Sub Group considered that it was important for senior managers to be seen by frontline staff as well as for frontline staff to be seen by senior managers and the suggestion that it could be widened out to include other partners, like the police or members of the NTSCB was encouraged.

10.5 Others

10.5.1 The Sub Group was informed that the recent transition of the 0-19 health service into the Council had involved a lot of discussion and challenge but had worked very well.

10.5.2 The RHELAC (Raising Health and Education for Looked after Children) Team was a multi-agency team whose purpose was to raise the health and educational outcomes for Looked after Children. The CCG part funded a counsellor and the team as a whole were doing really good work.

10.5.3 For children with additional needs on an Education, Health and Care Plan a joint visit with a children's services social worker and a social worker from the child disability team was undertaken as they both had different assessments to undertake. A joint

visit also helped manage a family's expectations. There was a representative for children with a learning disability on the MASH although concern was raised that children with ADHD or Autism might slip through the net as they didn't meet the threshold for CAMHS as they were not mental health matters.

- 10.5.4 A positive relationship with Northumbria Police was also reported especially by the Youth Offending team (YOT). The Police were forthcoming with information and would attend reviews if asked and were available at the end of a telephone if a direct conversation was needed. It had been different with the probation team but a secondment by a probation officer into the YOT had been successful.
- 10.5.5 The importance of keeping officers in the same post over a number of years and reducing the amount of agency staff was also emphasised as long term relationships were invaluable; the senior management structure in the service at the Local Authority was now robust and permanent. The lack of experienced social workers and retaining staff who might be tempted to work for other local authorities who paid more was an issue but the case load had reduced. In response it was reported that significant work had been undertaken by Safeguarding and Children's Services to stabilise the workforce and the benefits of that were already being seen.
- 10.5.6 The dissemination of information regarding major changes within the Council, for example the Regional Adoption Agency and the North of Tyne Collaboration, were not really well known to the front line social workers. The Independent Chair of the NTSCB also believed a challenge was keeping the front line up-to-date with information about what they needed to know due to the high turnover in staff. He noted that the Authority was aware of the issue and suggested that they could look and see how other organisations ensure information is disseminated to all staff in a timely manner.
- 10.5.7 Liquid Logic was still bedding in and areas of improvement had been identified, for example the information recorded on a "child's story" and "outcomes" needed to be improved. It had been recognised by the Local Authority that this was the case.

10.6 Overall

- 10.6.1 As can be seen by the many different aspects of the service referred to above there had been a lot of change within children's services which had led to concern and uncertainty. However, no witnesses had given any indication that the Head of Service and the Senior Management Team as a whole had not acknowledged this or that support had been lacking. It was considered by the Sub Group that the service as a whole had coped with this prolonged period of change well and collaborative working across the service was working well, albeit if communication of changes could be improved.
- 10.6.2 Taking all of the above into account, the Sub Group makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 6 - Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to ensure that Corporate Parenting Committee receives information on a quarterly basis on the percentage of the initial healthcare assessment which are being completed within the statutory period of 20 working days.

Recommendation 7 - Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to:

- a) ensure that when social workers are referring children for Initial Assessments, they always give the detail (in the referral form) of why the child has become looked after and do not leave it vague e.g. 'family breakdown'. This will assist the doctor who undertakes the Initial Health Assessment, to have a full picture of the circumstances and improve planning for the child;
- b) develop a robust process that ensures the health staff based in the RHELAC team receive a request for an Initial Health Assessment for a child who has become Looked After including the consent form, within the set time-scales so that the child can receive the assessment within the statutory time-scale of 20 working days; and
- c) develop a robust system to ensure that GPs are always notified in a timely manner of when a child ceases to be 'Looked After'.

Recommendation 8 - Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to review the process of dissemination of information to front line staff regarding changes at the strategic level to ensure it is efficient and effective.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 Whilst there will always be competing priorities and the inevitable debates over budgets and funding the Sub Group was very pleased to note that overall the Authority had very good collaborative working relationships with its statutory partners, its neighbouring local authorities and internally. The trusting relationships developed between organisations, services and officers allowed for criticisms to facilitate improved services and actions and also to provide assurance to the Sub Group that it was unlikely that an issue would be allowed to fall between any gaps. That there was some scope for improvement was reflected in the recommendations but in a challenging environment with competing demands the Sub Group felt satisfied that collaborative working was providing benefit to the Authority. Overall the balance between collaborative working and ensuring the service for North Tyneside residents was the best it could be was right and the effort taken to achieve this balance was not to be underestimated.
- 11.2 The enthusiasm and commitment shown by everyone who gave up their time to attend a meeting with the Sub Group was felt and appreciated by all members of the Sub Group. That this commitment was evident when everyone faced challenges and was busy was to be commended and it gave the Sub Group confidence that collaborative working was being managed effectively and would continue to be so.

12 Acknowledgements

The Sub Group would like to place on record its thanks and appreciation to those officers and representatives of external organisations for their assistance in providing the evidence on which this report is based. A full list of all those individuals who helped the Sub Group with its work is set out in appendix 1.

13 Background Information

The background papers and research reports listed in appendix 2 have been used in the compilation of this report and copies of these documents are available from the Democratic Services Officer.

Acknowledgements

The working group would like to place on record its thanks and appreciation to the following individuals for their assistance to the Sub Group:

North Tyneside Council:

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 Nik Flavell, Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Children's Services
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 Inspector Lisa Musgrove, Northumbria Police

List of Background Papers

The following background papers have been used in the compilation of this report and copies of these documents are available from Elizabeth Kerr, Democratic Services, e-mail: elizabeth.kerr@northtyneside.gov.uk Tel: 0191 643 5322

- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- Elective Home Education - Guidance for Parents and Carers, North Tyneside Council
- Elective Home Education Process Flowchart
- [Get in on the Act: Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), Local Government Association
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018](#)
- *Newcastle Primark kidnap teenagers sentenced*, BBC News Website, published 18 July 2016 accessed 18 December 2018 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-5667c315-a69c-4e5d-a683-e4e7771eb04d>
- [North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18](#)
- Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in North Tyneside 2017
- Our North Tyneside Plan
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)

Recommendations

1. Cabinet notes that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee considers the education role in the MASH vital and recommends continued funding for the seconded post for education in the MASH for future years.
2. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding considers increasing the membership of the MASH to include on a more formal basis:
 - a) a mental health and drug and alcohol and /or CAMHS professional/advocate;
 - b) a Learning disabled advocate; and
 - c) the Dynamic MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conferences)
3. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to consider producing a universal 'brand' for use by all partners, including the community safety partnership and businesses in the area, to inform the general public in North Tyneside about what to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult so that the issue, how to identify it and what to do about it becomes familiar to the general public.
4. Cabinet informs the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee advocates the appointment of an Independent Chairperson for the new local safeguarding arrangements and the inclusion of schools, lay people and the ambulance service in the new arrangements and puts this forward to the North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum.
5. Cabinet reassures itself that the steps taken to "resource sufficient capacity within their own organisation, enabling senior managers and practitioners to work with host authorities to help them improve" for the Tyneside Alliance have left the Authority with sufficient experience and capacity to retain its own high level of performance.
6. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to ensure that Corporate Parenting Committee receives information on a quarterly basis on the percentage of the initial healthcare assessment which are being completed within the statutory period of 20 working days.
7. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to:
 - a) ensure that when social workers are referring children for Initial Assessments, they always give the detail (in the referral form) of why the child has become looked after and do not leave it vague e.g. 'family breakdown'. This will assist the doctor who undertakes the Initial Health Assessment, to have a full picture of the circumstances and improve planning for the child;
 - b) develop a robust process that ensures the health staff based in the RHELAC team receive a request for an Initial Health Assessment for a child who has

become Looked After including the consent form, within the set time-scales so that the child can receive the assessment within the statutory time-scale of 20 working days; and

c) develop a robust system to ensure that GPs are always notified in a timely manner of when a child ceases to be 'Looked After'.

8. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to review the process of dissemination of information to front line staff regarding changes at the Strategic Level to ensure it is efficient and effective.