

# Children, Young People, and Families Service Service Plan 2018/19

## 1. Service Scope

### What does each service unit do?

Our Children Young People and Families Service works closely with both internal and external partners to:

1. Have the highest aspirations for all of Bournemouth's children and young people, and ensure they all have the opportunities and support needed to make a positive journey through their early and adolescent years and a seamless transition into a fulfilling and productive adulthood.
2. Provide a clear 'front door' to Children's Social Care, as the assessment and entry point in to the Service, by responding to referrals regarding children at risk of harm and responding with partners to ensure safety and protection through our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
3. Conduct enquiries and triage to alternative teams/services or for multi-agency strategy meetings.
4. Respond to referrals regarding Children in Need (CIN) leading multi-agency assessments and plans to support and deliver more positive outcomes, including Children with Disabilities.
5. Support and protect children and families at risk of, or affected by, child sexual
6. Work with families in pre-proceedings under the Public Law Outline (PLO) for issuing Care Proceedings on behalf of the Local Authority and for care and permanence planning for children who require alternative care arrangements.
7. Respond to private fostering referrals and ensuring the public and other agencies are aware of private fostering requirements. This includes young people staying with host families who are attending language schools.
8. Provide the lead professional role for children who are subject to child protection plans co-ordinating social work and multi-agency intervention and support.
9. Look after children and young people including separated and trafficked children seeking asylum who cannot live within their own family or friend network by providing and commissioning foster care and residential placements.
10. Jointly assess young people and families with children at risk who have housing needs.
11. Support appropriate placements for looked after children.
12. Support care leavers to live independently and fulfil their potential.
13. Match children needing adoption with suitable adopters through the work of Aspire Adoption.
14. Provide an Independent Reviewing Service to review children's plans, chair the Child Protection Conferences and assess the effectiveness of local authority planning and support for children.
15. Provide a statutory Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) service to manage, oversee and monitor the progress of allegations made against adults who work with children.
16. Lead on the recruitment, retention and development of the workforce; and to develop partnership working with the Pan Dorset Health and Social Care Academy. Lead on the coordination of BA, MA and Step up Social Work Students. Develop and support newly qualified social workers in their assisted and supported first year of employment (ASYE). Deliver a comprehensive training programme for the children's workforce.

The following summary of the main work areas of each of the teams in the service:

### **Early help**

The Early Help services work in effective partnerships across the Early Help Partnership, so that positive interventions to support vulnerable children, young people and children occur as soon as additional needs emerge. This will involve empowering and enabling families to identify their own needs and to be partners in selecting and engaging in interventions that they believe will help them most. Early Help in Bournemouth puts the responsibility on everyone who engages with children, young people and their families to identify emerging problems and potential unmet needs. Often, due to their positive relationships with and knowledge of children, young people and families, it is those providing Universal Services such as: General Practitioners, Health Visitors, Schools, Early Years Providers, Youth Services, Schools, School Nurses and Children's Centres, that are best placed to assess and identify children, young people and families who may be vulnerable and therefore at greatest risk of poor outcomes. Universal services are also the place in which children, young people and families are often most comfortable and confident to ask for help and support. Universal providers also play a crucial role supporting individuals and families to build resilience and self-awareness, so that they are able to recognise and respond to their own emerging needs at the very earliest opportunity. Bournemouth Early Help Partnership has adopted the "C Model" to describe a continuum of need and support; and process for stepping up a response to access more intensive and specialist interventions and packages of support.

**Universal Services - Children, young people and families have no identified additional need in this offer. (Level1)** This level focuses on the provision of universal services for families such as schools, GPs, Health Visitors, Children's Centres, Housing, Police, School Nurses, subsidised childcare and Early Education provision for example. These are services that are available to all and will support and enable our children and families to be healthy, safe, achieve and make a positive contribution to society. Services will work closely with each other, have a good understanding of each other's 'offer' in order to support children and families in the community by providing access to the information, advice, guidance and services appropriate to their need.

**Universal Plus - Children, young people and families have a low risk to vulnerable level of need in this offer. (Level2)** This level focuses on services delivering a timely response, when children or young people need identified additional help that can be delivered by an additional single agency. Completion of an early help assessment is recommended to help inform a targeted response. Responsive services are universal or targeted e.g. School Action, SALT, local community projects, parenting programmes, School Nurses, Health Visitors etc. These are services that are available for targeted support to children, young people or families that will enable them to help themselves to address the difficulties they may be experiencing in order that they receive the appropriate help at this earliest point preventing their needs escalating into further crisis. Services will work closely with each other, have a good understanding of each other's 'offer' in order to support children and families in the community by providing access to the additional support services as well as information, advice and guidance appropriate to their need.

**Plus Partnership - Children, young people and families will have identified needs that are increasingly complex or unmet and at risk of escalation. More than two agencies are involved with the child, young person or family and a coordinated /targeted integrated response is required to support these families. (Level3)**

This level of support focuses on a multi-agency, co-ordinated support for children, young people and families where needs are complex. An Early Help Assessment to look at the holistic needs of the family will be completed by an appropriate lead professional in order to coordinate and deliver the support required. Responsive services are targeted support services e.g., CAMHS, specialist substance misuse services, Integrated Youth Services, Family Solutions Team, Turnaround Families etc. These are specialised services that are available for complex needs and targeted at specific needs of children, young people or families. They will intensively support and enable them to address the difficulties they are experiencing in order to prevent them escalating. Services will bring together their Early Help resource and offer together to work collaboratively in the FAMILY SUPPORT HUB.

**Statutory Services - Children, young people and families have identified needs that are increasingly complex or unmet. (Level4)** Children and young people who require statutory intervention or support from Children's Social Care require this level of support because they are at serious risk of harm. Children's Social Care (CSC) works closely with partners to ensure that children identified as being at risk of harm and those with the highest needs in Bournemouth are protected and supported They have specialist teams who work with children, young people and families offering focused social work support where needed with key universal partners such as schools, youth services, health visitors and children's centres. There will be a strong interface between the Family Support Hub and Statutory Services.

### **Referral & Assessment**

The Service provides a 'One front door' approach to Children's Social care. Contacts and referrals are managed within our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), who prioritise all safeguarding. These cases move through the service quickly to enable a rapid response from the Assessment Team. The MASH also triage child care welfare concerns to either Universal, Partnership or Partnership Plus services. All Children in Need which meet threshold for Children's Social Care intervention under Section 17 (Children Act 1989) are processed in the MASH and then transferred to the Assessment Team.

The Assessment Team undertake assessments under either Section 47 or Section 17. They undertake the single assessment within a timescale that is proportionate and timely to the needs of the children and family and within a maximum of 45 working days from the point of the referral. They will also undertake initiating Child Protection Conferences' or initial care proceedings or emergency placements. Work from this team will either close, step down or transfer to another team at an agreed time.

### **Children in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Court Services**

When a case has transferred from the Assessment Team it will be allocated to the PLO & Court Team or CIN & CP Team. These teams will initiate and review all planning and work with the child or young person and family. These teams will support, educate and promote children and young people staying in their birth families. When plans are complete the child/young person/family will 'step down' to lower level support in the Universal, Partnership or Partnership Plus Services. If, however the safeguarding concerns escalate, in the period, then the team will present the case to the Legal Gateway Panel for direction. If the case is

transferred from the Assessment Team where significant harm has been demonstrated, and the Legal Gateway Panel view has been either Public Law Outline or to issue care proceedings immediately, the case will transfer directly in to the PLO & Court Team. The PLO & Court Team will undertake all court work.

### **The Looked After Children's Team (LAC)**

The Looked after Children's Team works with children and young people who are looked after between the ages of 0 – 16. They conduct assessments, develop care plans and permanence plans and facilitate reviews of the plans for children and young people. Children's Plans change with a young person's growing needs; thus a full assessment of need is undertaken on a yearly basis. The LAC Team engages with the child, their carers, their health providers and their schools to ensure all their needs are met. However, most importantly the LAC team continue to work with the child's birth family to maintain contact. Where appropriate the team will consider re-unification for the child/young person if this is in their best interests.

### **The 16+ and Care Leavers Team**

When a child reaches 15 years and 9 months they are allocated a Personal Advisor (PA). The Personal Advisor will work with the young person until they reach 25. The PA sits within the 16+ and Care Leavers Team. This team ensures that future planning is in line with the young person's wishes and feelings and that the young person is the lead on all planning. Social Workers within this team also work with the young people up to the age of 18. The Care Leavers team have high aspirations for our Care Leavers, to promote the young person's identity, independence, and ambition.

### **The Adoption Service**

The Adoption Service is provided through Aspire Adoption. They will work closely with social workers who have cases within the Court Team to ensure that both matching the child with adopters is successful and that the placement is planned and executed in a timely manner.

### **The Fostering Team**

The Fostering Team recruit, assess and support foster carers for Bournemouth's children and young people.

### **The Private Fostering Team**

This team works with children and young people under the age of 16 who cannot be cared for by their parents or a near relative; and with parental agreement are being looked after by others. Once a child has been cared for by any other person for a consecutive period of 28 nights, the local authority has a statutory duty to assess the safety of that child in that placement. In Bournemouth, language schools and colleges welcome international students and provide carers for their stay. If the child or young person is placed for a period of over 28 nights, the local authority has a duty to assess these carers. The team monitor and review all placements.

### **Separated and Trafficked Children Seeking Asylum and Supported Lodgings service**

The service works with these young people from the time that they first arrive in Bournemouth, undertaking age, needs and risk assessments (when appropriate), providing support, suitable accommodation, advice and guidance. The service also recruits, assesses and supports Supported Lodging carers and is developing an enhanced supported lodgings

scheme to meet the needs of separated children seeking asylum and those older LAC and Care leavers with complex needs.

### **Standards Unit**

The Unit provides an Independent Reviewing Officers Service (IRO) and case auditing for looked after children, and independent chairing of Child Protection Conferences. The Unit includes the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) support, who respond to allegations made against professionals working with children. The service ensures that there is an independent overview of child protection plans and the care plans of looked after children. This provides rigorous challenge to social workers to ensure they work in the best interest of children and young people. All allegations against professionals will be investigated by the LADO.

### **Principal Social Worker (PSW)**

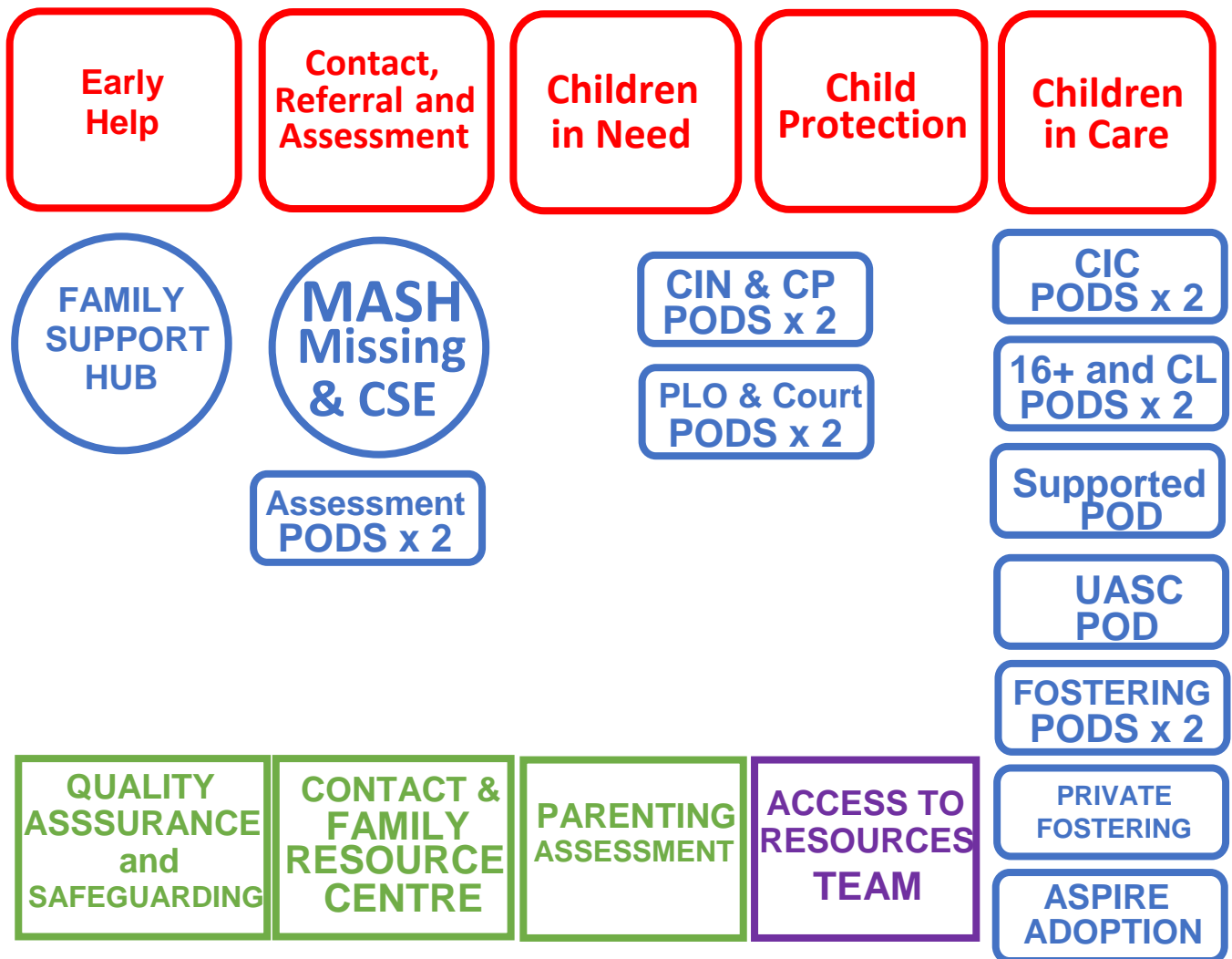
The Principal Social Worker supported by the Professional Development Manager ensures that the social work workforce has the knowledge, tools and techniques to identify and meet the needs of children and families in Bournemouth. Working with the Pan Dorset Health and Social Care Academy for the coordination of BA, MA and Step up Social Work Students programmes. The PSW develops and supports ASYEs within the workforce, and oversees the delivery of training programme for the CSC workforce.

How are we organised? From Aril 2017

SERVICE

TEAMS AND

RESOURCE



**What are our key risks and assumptions?**

**Risks:**

1. Destabilising effects of local government changes and other national and regional changes which cause significant instability in the workforce. Could undermine retention and recruitment achievements.
2. Increase in demand for statutory Children’s Social Care services causes budgetary pressures within the Service. Failure to provide an effective service would increase the risks to children in Bournemouth.
3. Sharp increase in the number of Separated Children Seeking Asylum and young people particularly in relation to the availability of placements.
4. Further challenges in managing demands in relation to housing issues and increased poverty for families and young people creating additional pressures.

5. Recruitment, development and retention of professional and managerial social care staff. The recruitment and retention of staff in the CSC workforce is a continuous challenge because of acute national and regional pressures in the workforce market.

**Assumptions:**

1. A net increase in in-house foster carers through investment and focussed recruitment will result in more LAC being placed in best value placements closer to home.

2. Aspire Adoption will enable greater choice for the recruitment of prospective adopters and speed up the matching and placement of children, and the support they need.

3. The Best Care Panel will ensure that every child and their family get all the help they need and the decisions represent best value for the Council.

4. The on-going focussed recruitment campaign will ensure that there are sufficient children's services staff to meet the needs of the service.

5. The work undertaken under the leadership of the Principal Social Worker will strengthen the 'offer' of continuous professional development for experienced staff to ensure staff have long fulfilling careers with us and we retain the best.

**What were our key achievements**

1. As a result of work undertaken on the Ofsted Action Plan and the work following the 2015 Peer Review of the Children's Social Care Service, culminating in the Ambitions Plan, we have been able to write a robust Self Evaluation report in preparation for the next Ofsted inspection that is anticipated in 2018/19.

2. Continued to promote recruitment and retention which have resulted in relatively low turnover rates, lower than those of our regional neighbours.

3. Strengthening of the services to support vulnerable children who are at risk of child sexual exploitation and children and young people reported missing.

4. Ensuring that costs and budget implications form part of every decision made regarding the care of children and young people.

5. Work of the Best Care Panel has improved care planning for children on the edge of care, and safely reduced numbers in contrast to regional and national comparators.

6. Numbers of children achieving permanence through Adoption remains in line with national trends and statistical neighbours.

7. Tighter budget management across the whole service resulted in the Service being in a positive financial position.

8. A full training programme has now been developed for the whole front line workforce, including a focus on specialist areas of work.

9. The new organisation structure to deliver children's social care has been implemented, aimed at reducing unnecessary hand-offs in cases, improving the working lives of social workers, and enabling greater performance management of the work.

10. There has been a full ASYE training programme for Bournemouth, including developing a cohort of mentor assessors from within the workforce.

11. There is successful delivery and support of the Step Up to Social Work programme, including ongoing development of the next cohort for 2017/18 and beyond.

12. The establishment of a Separated and Trafficked Children Seeking Asylum team successfully undertaken.

### **Customer and stakeholder analysis**

Children's Social Care engages in regular stakeholder meetings through the Children's Trust and LSCB's frameworks to ensure:

- Actions on the findings of external audits and internal/multi agency audits and self-assessment of all services for children and young people, including peer review, unannounced and announced Ofsted inspections.
- All partners within the trust and LSCB are updated on statutory and national issues affecting the delivery services protecting children from harm.
- Alignment of planning across all organisations with priority action areas identified in the Plan for Children, Young People and Families to ensure the effective delivery of services.
- Involvement of LAC and Care Leavers on the Corporate Parenting Panel and on the recruitment of all permanent social workers and managers.
- Access to Resources Team (ART) engages stakeholders to ensure services are monitored and meet the needs of the users.
- Work with neighbouring Councils and the NHS, to improve contract management arrangements.
- Qualitative and quantitative work in relation to development of contracts for Carers takes place – including Leisure Links and Respite Care and the Carers Survey.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The Council is committed to meet the challenges of equality and diversity. Each service unit is obliged to produce an Equality Action Plan. ED Adults Childrens Gap Analysis March 2016 v02.docx 7

### **Employee Engagement**

The service consulted with staff before preparing the Self-Evaluation and the subsequent Improvement Plan. This took into account concerns regarding strengthening management visibility within the Service and regular staff forums will continue to engage employees.

### **Appraisal Conversations**

The Appraisal Conversation Policy sets out that Annual Appraisal Conversations will take place within a two month window defined by Service Directors. Interim reviews take place six months later. Our Appraisal Conversations will be completed in July and August of each year.

### **Information Governance / Management of Personal Data**

The control of access to information, and the use of personal data, is an ongoing challenge as the level of cross departmental and organisational working increases. Significant work



has been undertaken to ensure that appropriate policies, guidance and training are in place. This will continue to develop and evolve to meet new ways of working.

## **2. What are our key activities in 2018/19?**

Our Self Evaluation is that Bournemouth continues to be ambitious to develop excellence. We are confident that we have the vision, leadership, determination, and the talent in our workforce, whilst working with new and existing partners, to achieve our ambition to deliver consistently good outcomes for vulnerable children in Bournemouth.

Our Children's Trust Plan has been refreshed for 2018 to ensure that it meets the needs of children and young people. The Trust aims brings together all partners with a role in improving outcomes for children to agree common strategies on how they will cooperate to improve children's wellbeing and to help embed partnership in partners delivery of their own functions.

Bournemouth is looking to develop opportunities for shared services with Poole for synergies where possible. There are currently a number of successful partnerships with Poole (such as the LSCB and Safeguarding Adults Board) and other partnerships which are pan Dorset.

We are looking to underpin our commitment to relationship and strengths based practice by investing in a joint implementation of a Signs of Safety model.

In Bournemouth, we know that we still have work to do to ensure that the quality of practice is at least 'good' consistently across the service. We have strengthened quality assurance and performance management activities, and we are committed to sustaining a performance culture that has achieving best outcomes for individual children as its main driver.

We are proud of our achievements in recent years but recognise there remain a number of key challenges and areas for further improvement. These include:

## **1. Assessment**

- 1.1. Ensuring that thresholds for statutory services are comprehensively understood and consistently applied by ourselves and our partners so that children get the right service at the right time in their lives
- 1.2. Strengthening ease of timely access to early help services from the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and from early help into statutory services where necessary
- 1.3. Improving the quality and timeliness of assessments

## **2. Permanence**

- 2.1. Revising and reviewing our use of the Public Law Outline (PLO) to ensure that we only engage in legal proceedings to remove children from their families when all safe alternatives have been thoroughly explored in a timely manner and ruled out
- 2.2. Improving the offer of help we make to adolescents particularly those at risk or on the edge of care
- 2.3. Providing better support for children and young people with disabilities and their families, and for young people approaching transition to adulthood
- 2.4. Making sure that children and young people in care are provided with family based placements first and foremost
- 2.5. Improving the services and support we provide for our care leavers;
- 2.6. Achieving placement stability and permanent alternatives to care wherever possible including reunification with family where safe and appropriate

## **3. Performance monitoring and case auditing**

- 3.1. Continuously and effectively using performance information and case audits to celebrate and encourage good practice, understand problematic performance, and to respond swiftly to address any issues across all our children's services
- 3.2. Understand and respond effectively to the high rate of re-referrals which are a feature of our performance and reduce the re-referral rate
- 3.3. Narrow the gap in educational attainment for disadvantaged children, especially our children in care and care leavers

## **4. Leadership and management**

- 4.1. Ensuring there are clear lines of sight between senior managers and leaders and front line operational practice and performance
- 4.2. Responding quickly and effectively to emerging areas of need particularly in relation to abuse and exploitation, domestic violence, 'County Lines' etc.
- 4.3. Acting on the learning from case audits and Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and ensuring their lessons are embedded in practice improvement

These challenges are translated into progress and actions as our Improvement Plan for the next 12 months.

### 3. Financial Resources – Children, Young People and Families

Expenditure description	2017/18 Revised £'000	2018/19 Original £'000	2019/20 Original £'000	2020/21 Original £'000
Direct salary and other employee costs	13,800	13,491	13,572	13,653
Premises costs	547	560	560	560
Transportation costs	298	300	300	300
Supplies and services	2,535	1,936	1,786	1,786
Other direct costs	16,067	15,708	15,708	15,708
<b>Service expenditure</b>	<b>33,247</b>	<b>31,995</b>	<b>31,926</b>	<b>32,007</b>
Fees, charges and rents	(1,019)	(613)	(613)	(613)
Grants and contributions	(4,369)	(3,713)	(3,713)	(3,713)
Service income	(2,232)	(1,932)	(1,932)	(1,932)
<b>Total net budget excluding recharges</b>	<b>25,627</b>	<b>25,737</b>	<b>25,668</b>	<b>25,749</b>
Appropriation to/(from) Reserves	(425)	(367)	(367)	(367)
<b>Total Cost of Service</b>	<b>25,202</b>	<b>25,370</b>	<b>25,301</b>	<b>25,382</b>

### Staffing Resources – Children, Young People and Families

Grade description	1st April 2018	
	FTEs (including vacancies)	No. of employees (headcount)
Service Directors	1	1
Heads of Service / Service Managers	5	5
Teachers (Leadership scale)	1	1
Managers (grades 11 – 13)	30.92	30
Soulbury: Educational Improvement Professional	2.8	3
Teachers (Upper pay scale)	1	1
Youth workers	18.3	35
Operational (grades 8 – 10)	104.95	117
Admin/Service (grades 5 – 7)	129.2	142
Admin/Service (below grade 5)	11.55	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>305.72</b>	<b>350</b>
Recorded sickness rate days per employee (latest rolling 12 months based on the 17/18 FTE rate)	9.17 days reported in January 2018	

<b>Savings and Efficiencies – Children, Young People and Families 18/19 onwards</b>				
	<b>2017/18 £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 £'000</b>	<b>2020/21 £'000</b>
LAC Commissioning care costs (Residential and Independent Fostering Agency)	(1,150)	(450)		
Adoption	(50)			
Early Help review / Children's Centres Re-provisioning		(350)	(150)	
<i>In Year Total</i>	<i>(1,200)</i>	<i>(800)</i>	<i>(150)</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>(1,200)</i>	<i>(2,000)</i>	<i>(2,150)</i>	<i>(2,150)</i>

<b>Budget Pressures – Children, Young People and Families 18/19 onwards</b>				
	<b>2017/18 £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 £'000</b>	<b>2020/21 £'000</b>
Salary Growth pay award 2017/18 onwards	79	81	81	81
LAC Commissioning care costs (Residential and Independent Fostering Agency)	350			
Statutory Responsibilities Adults & Children		25		
Young Carers		90		
<i>In Year Total</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>Cumulative Total</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>625</i>	<i>706</i>	<i>787</i>

#### **4. Service plan sign off**

This service plan has been agreed for operation from 1 April 2018 by:

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nicola Greene

Date: 16 April 2018

Director Adults and Children: Sue Ross

Date: 13 April 2018