

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Council Chamber) on Thursday
4th November 2021 at 5.30 p.m.**

Membership

Cllrs Crosby, Dodds, Dunn, P.W.L. Gibson, S. Johnston, Mason-Gage, McKeith (Vice-Chairman), Noble, Samuels, Scanlan, P. Smith (Chairman) and Tye

Co-opted Members – Mrs. A. Blakey and Ms. J. Graham

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E. WAUGH,
Assistant Director of Law and Governance,
Civic Centre,
SUNDERLAND.

27th October, 2021

At a meeting of the CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY 7th OCTOBER, 2021 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Smith in the Chair

Councillors Crosby, Dodds, Dunn, S. Johnston, Mason-Gage, McKeith, Samuels and Scanlan.

Also in attendance:-

Wendy Coghlan, Family Group Conference Co-ordinator, Together for Children

Ms Jill Colbert, Chief Executive, Together for Children

Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer, Law and Governance, Corporate Services Directorate

Mr Simon Marshall, Director of Education, Together for Children

Mr David Noon, Principal Governance Services Officer, Law and Governance, Corporate Services Directorate

Ms Gillian Robinson, Scrutiny and Members Support Coordinator, Law and Governance, Corporate Services Directorate

Ms Jane Wheeler, Service Manager Early Help, Prevention and Innovation Together for Children

Andy – Youth Council

Ellie – Change Council

Ian – Stars

Kayla – Youth Council

Polly – Youth Council

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Paul Gibson, Noble and Tye and also on behalf of Ms Jackie Graham.

Minutes of the last meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 9th September, 2021

Councillor Samuels having referred to the item in respect of Elective Home Education and requested that if there was any information to show that the de-registrations were linked to issues of equality, that it was shared with the Committee, it was :-

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 9th September, 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

There were no declarations of interest made.

Engagement and Participation with Young People

Ms Jane Wheeler, Service Manager Early Help, Prevention and Innovation Together for Children, welcomed and introduced representatives from the Sunderland Youth Council who were attending the meeting to provide Members with a presentation to highlight the voice of young people in Sunderland.

(for copy presentation – see original minutes)

The young people in turn gave a brief description of their groups and their role within the wider young people's network, before going on to described the positive aspects of living in Sunderland for a young person together with those areas where improvements could be made.

Examples of the positive aspects of Sunderland for young people included:-

- Regeneration of the city
- Parks are well maintained (special mention was made of Thompson Park)
- The beaches are nice
- Seafront developments (especially the Stack and the Illuminations)
- The people of Sunderland are caring
- Hospital facilities are good
- Sunderland Empire
- Culture Hub and the regeneration of workplaces
- The new wild flowers in the City
- City centre art
- Sunderland has a great history which is remembered through the glass centre and museum
- Accessible buses, metro and taxis
- There are good places to eat out
- Good shopping in city centre
- Winter Gardens/Library is nice
- The establishment of the Engagement LGBTQ+ Group
- More awareness around identity

Negative issues and areas where improvements could be made included:-

- The loss of lives and jobs through Covid
- Transport links (the wish to see a Metro Extension to Washington was cited together with better bus services)
- Youth Space in the city (a venue that was safe, warm and accessible that young people could drop in and out off eg the temporary ping pong space created in an empty unit in the Bridges)
- A replacement for the Seaburn Centre
- Traffic jams and road works seemed to be widespread and continuous

- Not enough accessible social, seasonal and cultural events nor specific festivals for young people
- Public toilets (not enough and they are poorly maintained, not enough accessible ones)
- The desire for an ice rink, more soft plays and trampoline parks
- Make the coastline more accessible through the provision of beach wheelchairs similar to those offered at South Shields
- There is a lot of litter and a lack of greenery
- Homelessness is a growing issue
- Drug and alcohol use is a problem
- Desire for a greater variety of shops
- Access to clubs is limited due to expense
- Public hygiene - Smoking in public spaces causing passive smoking. Dog dirt on the paths and grass. Not enough bins and not emptied often enough
- Mental health problems – long waiting times to receive support.
- Anti-social behaviour by a minority of young people impacts on older people's negative perceptions of all young people
- Greater use of pronouns required
- Greater support for parents of LGBTQ+ young people required
- More work experiences for young people required
- Need to increase the awareness of young people of where to go to get help

The Chair thanked the young people for their presentation, and their suggestions for improvements. She believed that some were deliverable whereas others were probably more aspirational. She asked the representatives of the Youth Parliament what would be the best way for the Council to continue the conversation? In response the Committee was advised that the best route would be for Members to attend the meetings of the Young People's groups.

Councillor Samuels welcomed a fantastic and very comprehensive presentation which incorporated a massive number of viewpoints, many of which she shared. She referred to the request for a Youth Centre within the City Centre and asked the young people what would this look like in an ideal world?

In response the Committee was informed that ideally it would have good public transport links with all areas of the city. It would be warm, safe, affordable and be somewhere that young people could use on a come and go basis, being able to drop in and out (this was contrasted with most youth clubs which preferred that young people signed in and stayed the whole evening). In an ideal world the centre would be multi-purpose with perhaps a café and would provide somewhere for young people to relax and hang out with friends.

Councillor Crosby referred to the comments made in respect of mental health and asked what help was required. In reply the Committee was informed that young people wished to see a more rapid response to requests for help and cited the issue of waiting times with regard to CAMHS and CYPS.

Councillor Dodds commended the presentation stating it was very refreshing to hear the positivity of the young people which was a pleasant contrast to the negativity often displayed by older generations.

Councillor McKeith welcomed the engagement with the Youth Council and suggested that it was something the Committee should do on a regular basis as it had been very useful. He recommended that a Working Group comprised of members of the Committee was established to attend meetings of the young people's groups. The Chairman also recommended that a copy of the presentation was sent to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council for their information and to the Council's five Area Committees for their consideration.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Ms Wheeler and the Youth Council for their presentation, and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that

- i) the presentation be received and noted;
- ii) a Working Group comprised of members of the Committee be established to attend meetings of the young people's groups; and
- iii) a copy of the presentation be sent to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council for their information and referred to the Council's five Area Committees for consideration.

Joint Area Send Inspection in Sunderland – Feedback

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) on the outcome of Ofsted's and the Care Quality Commission's Joint Area Send Inspection in Sunderland undertaken between 21 and 25 June 2021 and which presented the letter summarising the findings of the Inspection published on 28 September, a copy of which was appended to the report for information.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr Simon Marshall, Director of Education, presented the report highlighting the main findings of the Inspection including the strengths identified and also those areas where improvement was required. With regard to the areas highlighted for improvement, Sunderland would be required to submit a written statement of action to outline how these areas were to be addressed. Mr Marshall advised that a first meeting had been arranged for next Thursday (14th October) with partners to consider a response and plan the improvements. Mr Marshall felt it would be an exciting process which would enable Sunderland to challenge its ways of working. It would require a degree of cultural change, but he believed Sunderland had the leadership required to drive things forward.

Ms Colbert advised that these next steps were important, and the plan would help Ofsted understand how Sunderland were going to address the issues raised. It was anticipated that the plan would be brought back to the Committee in the new year.

The Chairman thanked Mr Marshall and Ms Colbert for their report and invited questions from Members.

Councillor Crosby welcomed the news provided by Mr Marshall that additional DFE funding had been secured to establish a model that would allow a better use of data across the city and also his acknowledgement that communications needed to improve. She highlighted the following points made in the inspection letter and asked how they would be addressed?

“Some children, young people and families do not have good enough access to the equipment and personal care products they need, such as pads from the incontinence service and suitable wheelchairs.”

“..parents feel that there is a ‘cliff edge’ when their children reach the age of 18.”

Ms Colbert replied that these were relevant questions. She emphasised however that it was important to recognise that the Inspection was a citywide one. With regard to the first point, the City Council was not responsible for the delivery of every aspect of SEND services, some would be the responsibility of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) or Sunderland Care and Support (SCAS). It was not within her gift to describe how the issues regarding the wheelchairs and the incontinence service would be addressed however she assured Councillor Crosby that they would be addressed as a priority. With regard to the transition from Children’s to Adult services it was not unusual for parents to be nervous in trying to cope with the move from one regime governed by the Children and Families Act to another governed by the Care Act. The Local Authority did its best to ensure there were no gaps in services while the transition between children’s and adults’ services took place. With regard to the move into post 16 education, Mr Marshall advised that this had always been a difficult issue. There was perhaps a need to look at provision on the basis of need rather than on the basis of age. He added that planning in advance was also the key to reduce the possibility of a “cliff-edge” scenario. It certainly shouldn’t be put off until the final summer term.

In response to a further enquiry from Councillor Crosby, regarding whether the budget in respect of Adult services was smaller, Ms Colbert advised that it was more an issue in respect of eligibility criteria rather than budget size. There were significant differences in the criteria contained within the Children and Families Act and the Care Act with each providing completely different statutory frameworks.

Councillor Dunn referred to page 15, bullet point 5 of the agenda papers and welcomed the positive comments made in respect of the completion of the Education Health Care Plans which had previously been an area of concern. In addition, he asked if there was anything in the letter which had come as a surprise and also, was there a confidence that the partnership could deliver the response required by Ofsted and the CQC. Mr Marshall replied that there had been no surprises as the self-evaluation had been very thorough. Mr Marshall confirmed that any scrutiny needed to be of the wider partnership however he was confident that it would be able to deliver. The main challenge was being able to get all members of the partnership together at one time. A key positive was the brilliant work of Sunderland’s Parent Carers Forum.

Councillor S. Johnston referred to the Inspection Letter and a theme that seemed to revolve around data use. He asked if anything could be done to improve the partnership’s use of data. Ms Colbert replied that it was a very good question. It was

the holy grail that you would only need to tell your story once before any problem was addressed. The issue was the multitude of platforms available and in use and their lack of compatibility. You only needed to look at the number of I.T. devices within an average home and their lack of ability to 'talk' to each other. The additional funding to allow the development of a data integration project was exciting news however it was something that couldn't be delivered overnight. Mr Marshall added that one of the best levers to make change was a report like this as it set a base line together with a deadline for improvement in the form of the re-inspection. He intended to contact those areas that were not required to submit a Written Statement of Action to see what they were doing so well with regard to the use of data.

Councillor McKeith welcomed the positive comments in the letter with regard to the operation of the Virtual School. He suggested that it would help Members if representatives of the Council's SEND partners attended a future meeting of the Committee. In addition, Councillor McKeith asked when was the re-inspection likely to take place and who would lead in respect of the Action Plan?

Ms Colbert replied that Ofsted were currently introducing a revised inspection framework and that the re-inspection would be undertaken within these new parameters. It was anticipated that the re-inspection would take place within the next 3 years. With regard to who would lead on the Action Plan, Ms Colbert advised that the letter detailing the findings of the Joint area SEND inspection in Sunderland was addressed to both herself as Director of Children's Services and Dave Chandler, Chief Executive of NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group. They would jointly own the Action Plan and be responsible for the submission of the Written Statement of Action to Ofsted.

Councillor Samuels stated that she was shocked to hear that the requirement to submit a Written Statement of Action to Ofsted was not an unusual event with 59 per cent of Local Authorities nationally asked to submit one and 72 per cent across the North East / Yorkshire and Humber region. She asked what statutory powers were open to Ofsted if they were not happy with the responses provided in the Written Statement of Action? In addition she welcomed the improvements required in respect of commissioning new services and asked if services that had already been commissioned would also be looked at?

With regard to the number of Written Statements of Action issued, Ms Colbert advised that the general view was the structure of the current inspection framework, with its 6 year timescale, inevitably led to a high number of Written Statements being required. If the DFE or Ofsted were not happy with the response, they could ultimately serve a 'notice to improve'. She added that this would not be the case in Sunderland. With regard to Commissioning, Mr Marshall advised that the Council did not commission all SEND related services. If there was an issue with a particular school TfC would visit the school and undertake a review. The information gained would be fed into the Schools Forum which monitored how money had been spent. Sunderland had worked very hard around the governance of the Forum to ensure it focused on outcomes. There was a twin pronged strategy which looked to reduce the number of young people requiring support from outside of the city and also to maximise best value in respect of services within the city. A £21m capital spend had been secured in respect of new provision and the Forum would be very strong in holding the Council to account for this spending.

Ms Blakey stated that it was really healthy that joint commissioning had been identified as an area of weakness by Ofsted and the CQC, as it would force all members of the partnership to work together to drive the improvements needed. She echoed Councillor McKeith's comments regarding the usefulness of the Committee hearing from representatives of the Council's partners and suggested it would be helpful if Mr Chandler was invited to a future meeting. She championed the work of the School's Forum stating it was a voice that needed to be heard.

Councillor Mason-Gage highlighted a theme arising from the findings that access to information for parents about services available appeared to be poor. People did not receive enough information or when they did it was not explained clearly. She believed that a lot of the problems identified in the report could be overcome by establishing clearer conversations with parents. She referred to the reference in the report that "Transitions across all services and age ranges are too variable. Much of the support for families at times of transition is driven by individual schools. This is variable across Sunderland." Councillor Mason-Gage asked if there was best practice in this regard that could be shared amongst schools.

Mr Marshall replied that there were inconsistencies across schools and that TfC employed School Improvement Offices who were well versed in current areas of best practice. TfC would quickly become aware if a school was falling short and an Improvement Officer would be sent to work with the school. There was also a strong SENCO network which met regularly to share best practice. He acknowledged that the information platform was not easy to access largely because it contained too much information. It was difficult to design a platform which catered for everyone's needs and keep it simple. TfC were trying to break down any barriers to communication and any suggestions would be welcome. It was recognised that the more informal things TfC did were the things that people responded to the best.

In response to a further query from Councillor Mason-Gage, Ms Colbert advised that short break provision was being reviewed in conjunction with the Parent Carers Forum. It had not been initially recognised how Covid had changed requirements around the Service. Councillor Mason-Gage added that the Service was well received however parents would appreciate shorter more frequent local breaks.

Councillor Dodd expressed concern that it appeared that some parents had to fight to have the needs of their children addressed and also that a number of children were entering school with unmet needs.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Mr Marshall for his attendance, and it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Annual Work Programme 2021/22

The Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) which briefed members on the developed of the Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2021/22 and appended a draft copy of the programme for Members' consideration.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

In response to an enquiry from the Chair regarding whether any Members had additional items for the Work Programme, Councillor Samuels suggested that the results of the Holiday Fund Evaluation should be reported back to the Committee for its consideration.

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted and that an item on the Holiday Fund Evaluation be scheduled into the Work Programme.

Notice of Key Decisions

The Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from the 13th September, 2021.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

The Committee was advised that if Members had any issues to raise or required further detail on any of the items included in the notice that were within the purview of the Committee, they should contact Mr Diamond, Scrutiny Officer for initial assistance.

5. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

There being no further items of business, the Chair closed the meeting having thanked members and officers for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) P. SMITH,
Chairman.

CHILDREN EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 NOVEMBER 2021

DRAFT SUNDERLAND DOMESTIC ABUSE SAFE ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES STRATEGY

Report of Executive Director of Public Health and Integrated Commissioning

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set the context for the statutory duty on local authorities to assess the need for accommodation-based support for adult and child survivors of domestic abuse and to put in place a strategy to meet the needs identified.
- 1.2 To provide an opportunity to seek views on the appended draft Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy ('the Strategy') and the four priorities in particular.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 This report seeks to inform the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee of a new duty placed on Sunderland City Council to develop, publish and put in place a strategy to provide accommodation-based support to meet the needs of adult and child survivors of domestic abuse, as set out in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 2.2 Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) have been key priorities for the city for many years. Domestic abuse in Sunderland has historically been led by the Safer Sunderland Partnership. It has also been a priority for other key strategic partnerships in the city including the Health and Wellbeing Board and Safeguarding Boards.
- 2.3 Domestic abuse in Sunderland
 - Residents of Sunderland experience high levels of domestic abuse incidents and crimes compared to other nearby areas, and other areas of the country. During 2020/21, there were a total of 4,841 victims of domestic abuse, representing a rate of 23.7 victims per 1,000 residents. This was the highest rate across the Northumbria Police force area and represented an increase compared to 2019/20.
 - Most commonly victims were female and between the ages of 18 and 55. Comparatively high rates of cases were referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) due to the level of risks to safety identified.
 - In line with nationally observed trends, the period of the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have seen increased demand for support services for survivors,

particularly in the period immediately following the initial wave (Office for National Statistics, 2020).

2.4 Provision of Accommodation-Based Support for Survivors of Domestic Abuse in Sunderland

- Sunderland has a range of safe accommodation-based support available for survivors of domestic abuse. This consists of a blend of 'traditional' refuge, a recovery unit for women with additional needs, dispersed accommodation, support for survivors to remain safely in their own homes and a range of therapeutic interventions. Survivors who access these services are primarily resident in Sunderland.
- Wearside Women in Need (WWIN) is currently the primary provider of safe accommodation and support in Sunderland which is commissioned by the Council.
- Alongside this, there is other provision using dispersed accommodation and behaviour change support for perpetrators of domestic abuse. As such, the range of services in Sunderland are broadly in line with models prevailing in the UK and elsewhere.
- Users of local services recognise them as delivering good quality support and emphasise the need for holistic support, provided in a flexible range of safe environments that are tailored to their individual circumstances.
- In common with similar services in other parts of the country, accommodation-based support services in Sunderland experience significant levels of demand. This has been particularly marked since the initial phases of the ongoing pandemic. As such, there is pressure on capacity across the services offered.

3.0 **The Domestic Abuse Act**

3.1 Introduction

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act') received Royal assent in April 2021. It provides improved protection for the many victims of domestic abuse (DA) as well as strengthened measures to tackle perpetrators. An overview of the 2021 Act is provided in the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021: overarching factsheet](#).

3.2 New Duty on Tier One Local Authorities

Part 4 of the 2021 Act aims to ensure all survivors of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation. The 2021 Act places a duty on Sunderland City Council, as a Tier One local authority in England, to appoint a multi-agency Local Partnership Board which it must consult as it carries out specified functions (below, i - v):

- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support** for all survivors, and their children, including those who come from outside of their area.

- ii. **Prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of support** to cover the locality having regard to the needs assessment.
- iii. **Give effect to the strategy** by making commissioning / decommissioning decisions to meet the support needs of adult and child survivors.
- iv. **Monitor and evaluate local delivery** of the strategy.
- v. **Report back** annually to **Central Government**.

3.3 Progress to date

- Domestic abuse local partnership board - Cabinet approved the appointment of a Sunderland Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Executive Board in line with the 2021 Act (section 3.2 above) on 14 September 2021. In accordance with the 2021 Act, the Council has consulted with the Board on the appended draft Strategy at the Board's meeting on 24 September 2021.
- Needs assessment for accommodation-based domestic abuse support – this has been developed in-house working with partner organisations including the Northumbria Police force, functions within the Council (Housing, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care), health and local specialist domestic abuse service providers. A brief desktop review of local and national literature was also undertaken to contextualise the work to support identification of key areas which should inform the Strategy.

As part of the needs assessment, and to inform the Strategy, the Council undertook an engagement exercise during July and August 2021 with survivors with lived experience of accessing local safe accommodation and support services. Key messages, based on the feedback from survivors, are summarised in the appended Strategy.

The Council also engaged with a range of stakeholders, including staff members from local providers, from statutory and non-statutory agencies including commissioners, and members of the recently appointed Sunderland Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Executive Board ('the Board') as part of this engagement work to inform the strategy development.

In total, 17 survivors were consulted, 20 staff members from local providers and 32 staff from partner agencies including commissioners. Thematic analysis of all interviews was conducted to identify key messages. The needs assessment and engagement highlight the following areas to address through the Strategy:

- a. Evidence that the level of demand for safe accommodation exceeds the bed/units available in Sunderland with a lack of capacity in sustainable forms of accommodation.
- b. Need for evidence-based clinical support for survivors-victims, particularly relating to mental health and substance misuse.

- c. Appropriate and culturally competent services for survivors-victims with protected characteristics, notably black and minoritised women and LGBT+ survivors.
- d. Provision of specialist support able to accommodate survivors with complex needs, otherwise prevented from accessing services because of the complexity of presenting needs.
- e. Learning from pilot projects in London and North Yorkshire, to understand how accommodation pathways for perpetrators could support survivors to engage with specialist support services and contribute to their recovery.

The recommendations from the needs assessment and the engagement inform the Strategy's approach to seek to address the gaps identified and to deliver a more robust offer to support victims-survivors in safe accommodation in Sunderland.

3.4 A draft Sunderland Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy- Sunderland City Council has a legal duty to publish its strategy before 5 January 2022 and to publish a draft of the strategy ten weeks prior (by 26 October 2021).

- The draft Strategy has been considered by and received support from:
 - Sunderland's Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Executive Board on 24 September 2021.
 - Council Cabinet on 12 October 2021.
- The draft Strategy has been shared with the Sunderland's Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Sunderland Partnership to seek views on the strategic priorities.
- Having engaged with survivors, staff and other stakeholders (section 3.3) on 'what good looks like' in respect of support in safe accommodation, we are now seeking their views on the four strategic priorities to refine and finalise the Strategy.

The final Strategy will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in December 2021, ahead of submission to the DLUHC before 05 January 2022.

3.5 Safe Accommodation Funding

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (previously the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) issued a section 31 grant to Sunderland City Council which provides additional funding to support the Council to meet its statutory duty to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children residing in safe accommodation. The funding allocation of £666,874 is confirmed for 2020/2021 only by the DLUHC. Future funding allocations would form part of the local government finance settlement and at this stage there is no indication as to the funding levels for 2022/23.

4.0 **Sunderland's Draft Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy**

4.1 The appended draft Strategy sets out four strategic priorities for 2021 to 2024:

1. Ensure that what we do is underpinned by a robust needs assessment: to improve our knowledge of demand and capacity and to better understand and evidence the levels of unmet need (including needs of male victims-survivors) and the barriers that prevent victims-survivors with diverse and additional needs from accessing support.
2. Deliver quality service interventions which contribute to improving outcomes for survivors and children: to commission outcome-based services to meet needs identified giving priority to support services which address mental health and substance misuse and services which work directly with children.
3. Increase safe accommodation provision: to ensure victims and survivors achieve stable and secure accommodation with a minimum of moves which contributes to their recovery and ability to engage with specialist support services, including how pathways into accommodation for perpetrators could be developed.
4. Strengthen our approach in hearing the voice of survivors, and children and young people, including those with protected characteristics, to ensure their views are heard and influence what we do: to involve survivors-victims in commissioning processes to ensure support services are accessible, equitable and inclusive and outcomes for victims-survivors are understood.

4.2 The draft Strategy also sets out a high-level action plan for the delivery of the priorities, including measures to use to monitor and evaluate success. The financial implications for the provision of support in line with the draft Strategy, and having regard to the need assessment, will be considered at the appropriate time prior to commissioning the relevant activity or service.

4.3 The Strategy does not cover the wider issues and responses to domestic abuse (for example, prevention, holistic response across statutory agencies in the life journey of survivors and their children) as this would be addressed in a violence against women and girls' strategy of which this Strategy would be an integral part contributing to the Council and partners' response to violence against women and girls.

4.4 Health and equality have been considered in the development of the Strategy. In line with public sector equality duties an equality analysis has been completed has been undertaken.

5.0 **Recommendation**

5.1 That Members of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee provide comment on the strategic priorities of the draft Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy

DRAFT

Sunderland's Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support Services Strategy

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Foreword

DRAFT

Part one

1. Introduction

Purpose and scope

- 1.1. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 aims to respond to domestic abuse in England by,
 - Strengthening the support available to victims through statutory agencies,
 - Improving the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in protecting victims and bringing perpetrators to justice
 - Raising awareness of the impacts of domestic abuse.
 - Addressing the inconsistent approach to the commissioning and delivery of support within safe accommodation.
 - Reducing fragmentation of services and a postcode lottery which may determine whether survivors and their children receive help
 - The introduction of a statutory duty on local authorities to provide support that meets the diverse needs of victims of domestic abuse and their children, ensuring they have access to provision that is right for them.
- 1.2. The Act places a statutory duty on Tier One¹ local authorities in England to assess the need for accommodation-based support for victims of domestic abuse in their areas, to put in place a strategy to meet the needs identified and to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
- 1.3. Accommodation-based support is defined as "...support, in relation to domestic abuse, provided to victims of domestic abuse, or their children, who reside in relevant accommodation"²
- 1.4. There is a requirement that domestic abuse support will include:³
 - Advocacy support – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services (for example, GPs and social workers, welfare benefit providers);
 - Domestic abuse-prevention advice – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online) and to prevent re-victimisation;
 - Specialist support for victims with relevant protected characteristics and / or complex needs, for example, interpreters, faith services, mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, and immigration advice;

¹ Tier one authorities are county and unitary councils (other than London Boroughs), the Greater London Authority and the Isles of Scilly Council)

² Relevant accommodation is defined as, refuge accommodation, dispersed accommodation; second stage accommodation, or other accommodation designated by the local housing authority, registered social landlord or registered charity as domestic abuse emergency accommodation. All accommodation must provide specialist domestic abuse support.

³ HM Government advice 2021

- Children's support – including play therapy and child advocacy;
 - Housing-related support – providing housing-related advice and support, for example, securing a permanent home and advice on how to live safely and independently; and
 - Counselling and therapy for both adults and children.
- 1.5. The requirement of the Act makes it clear that the act of decommissioning and commissioning of services will be a key component in the delivery of the strategy to ensure needs are met and positive outcomes achieved. Current guidance dictates that the strategy should influence the commissioning and decommissioning of services in relation to safe accommodation.
 - 1.6. This document sets out Sunderland City Council and its partners, response to the statutory requirements under Part IV of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as it relates to safe accommodation and specialist support services.
 - 1.7. The strategy does not cover the wider issues and responses to domestic abuse (e.g. prevention, Holistic response across key statutory and non-statutory agencies e.g. police, education, and health etc.in the life journey of survivors and their children) this is will be addressed in the VAWG strategy.
 - 1.8. The Safe Accommodation and Specialist Support Services Strategy will be an integral part of the VAWG strategy and contributes to the Sunderland City Council and Partner response to VAWG
 - 1.9. This strategy will form the basis by which Sunderland City Council and partner agencies will meet demand, based on the current needs analysis, survivor voice and specialist expert domestic abuse insight from research and specialist providers.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. For the purpose of this document, the following government definitions will be adopted:
- 2.2. It defines domestic abuse as any pattern of abusive behaviour by a person toward another where both are over the age of 16 and are personally connected⁴. Abuse can be perpetrated through the following types of behaviours:
 - Physical or sexual;
 - Violent or threatening;
 - Controlling or coercive;
 - Economic;
 - Psychological or emotional.

⁴ 'Personally connected' is defined as intimate partners, ex-partners, family members or individuals who share parental responsibility for a child. There is no requirement for the victim and perpetrator to live in the same household.

2.3. The definitions below define abuse behaviours

- **Domestic Abuse** - “any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse”.
- **Controlling Behaviour** - “a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and / or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour”.
- **Coercive Behaviour** “an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim”.
- **Economic abuse** “Economic abuse involves behaviours that interfere with an individual’s ability to acquire, use and maintain economic resources such as money, transportation and utilities. It can be controlling or coercive. It can make the individual economically dependent on the abuser, thereby limiting their ability to escape and access safety.
Examples of economic abuse include:
 - having sole control of the family income;
 - preventing a victim from claiming welfare benefits;
 - interfering with a victim’s education, training, or employment;
 - not allowing or controlling a victim’s access to mobile phone/transport/utilities/food;
 - damage to a victim’s property

2.4. These definitions equally apply to those married, cohabiting and partners not living together.

2.5. The definition is broad in scope and includes issues such as Female Genital Mutilation, honour based violence, child on parent or sibling violence and elder abuse.

2.6. Part 1 of the Act provides that a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, domestic abuse and is related to the person being abused or the perpetrator is also to be regarded as a victim of domestic abuse. This will help to ensure that locally commissioned services consider and address the needs of children affected by domestic abuse.

2.7. One of the key functions of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner will be to encourage good practice in the identification of children affected by domestic abuse and the provision of protection and support for these children.

3. National context

3.1. Between April 2019 and the end of March 2020 it is estimated that 2.3 million adults (aged 16 to 74) in England and Wales had recently experienced domestic abuse. This is the equivalent of over 5% of the adult population.

Records of domestic-abuse related crimes increased by 9% in this period compared to the previous year. Additionally, data from the early months of the coronavirus pandemic indicate that this increase continued, resulting in greater demand for domestic abuse support services⁵.

- 3.2. Domestic abuse affects women significantly more than men. 7.3% of women are estimated to have been recent victims, compared to 3.6% of men. Younger women (aged 16 to 19) are at greater risk than those in older age groups, as well as those that are separated or divorced, those that have a disability and those that are unemployed or on long term/temporary sick leave⁶
- 3.3. We know that certain groups are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse and crimes of violence against women and girls. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that amongst adults aged 16 to 74 in the year ending March 2020; disabled people were more than twice more likely to have been victims of domestic abuse, stalking or rape than people without a disability.⁷
- 3.4. In addition, when considering sexual orientation, gay, lesbian or bisexual people were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than heterosexual people. This was also the case for stalking, sexual violence and rape.⁸
- 3.5. There is also concern that migrant women with no recourse to public funds are particularly vulnerable and high risk.⁹

4. Local context

Sunderland prevalence and Impact

- 4.1. Sunderland currently has an estimated population of 277,846¹⁰. Prevalence of domestic abuse is comparatively high in the city, with a number of key contributory characteristics. For example, residents experience significant levels of deprivation. Around 27% of the population live in areas that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England.
- 4.2. Local analysis of domestic abuse crimes¹¹ which took place between January 2017 and August 2021 show high levels of domestic abuse crimes in areas of high deprivation in Sunderland. Hendon ward is ranked within the most deprived quintile according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation and has the highest recorded rate of domestic abuse - 169.2 per 1,000 of population. Hendon is followed closely by a further 11 wards that are within quintile 1 with rates between 81.4 and 139.4. Together this group of wards accounted for around 65% of domestic abuse crimes, whilst the 8 least deprived wards in Sunderland, only accounted for just under 20% (shown in Appendix 1)

⁵ Office for National Statistics 2020

⁶ Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2021

⁷ Tackling violence against women and girls. HM Government July 2021

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ ONS 2021

¹¹ Crime data from the Sunderland Safe accommodation and specialist support needs assessment

- 4.3. There is a strong correlation between poverty and those who experience domestic abuse.¹² In addition alcohol consumption and the incidence of abuse. Alcohol is estimated to be a factor in a third of all incidents of domestic violence, with many perpetrators consuming alcohol prior to the assault¹³. Victims of domestic violence may also use alcohol as a coping mechanism and, in some cases; this may be used by perpetrators as an excuse for continued abuse.
- 4.4. Harmful and precarious alcohol consumption is common in Sunderland, with a number of indicators showing that alcohol-related hospital admissions are amongst the highest in the North East and significantly higher than England as a whole¹⁴

Incidence of Domestic Abuse in Sunderland

- 4.5. We know that nationally and locally domestic abuse is a significantly underreported crime, with shame, stigma and fear often preventing reporting.
- 4.6. During 2019/20, Northumbria Police¹⁵ recorded a combined rate of 34.9 domestic-abuse related incidents and crimes per 1,000 members of the population. This compares to a rate of 28.0 for England as a whole and places the force area amongst those most significantly affected in England and Wales.
- 4.7. In Sunderland, a total of 7970 reported domestic abuse related incidents were recorded in this period. (2019/20) This is equivalent to a rate of 38.9 incidents per 1,000 people. The number of incidents increased by around 6% to 8434 in 2020/21; a rate of 41.2 incidents per 1,000 people. Sunderland has the highest rate of incidents in the Northumbria police force area. Neighbouring South Tyneside and Gateshead are both similar with respective rates of 40.9 and 39.3 incidents per 1,000 people in 2020/21
- 4.8. Demand for local domestic abuse support services in Sunderland increased quickly as initial lockdown arrangements eased in the summer of 2020 with over 1,500 referrals received during the 5 months from June to October in that year.
- 4.9. Domestic abuse incidents taking place in Sunderland in 2020/21 concerned a total of 4,841 victims. This is the highest recorded number of incidents in the force area and represents a rate of 23.7 victims per 1,000 people. Of these victims, 43% (2,057) had been subject to previous incidents; a rate of 10.1 per 1,000 people. This placed Sunderland at a comparatively high rate of repeat incidence within the Northumbria Police area.

¹² Evidence and policy review :Domestic Violence and Poverty :A Research Report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation By Eldin Fahmy, Emma Williamson and Christina Pantazis, University of Bristol School for Policy Studies 2018

¹³ Walby S and Allen J. 2004. Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office Research Study 276. London: Home Office / World Health Organisation 2020

¹⁴ Public Health England 2021

¹⁵Northumbria Police Force Area. - Sunderland, South Tyneside, Gateshead, North Tyneside, Newcastle, Northumberland

	Repeat Victims			
	2019/20		2020/21	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Sunderland	1931	9.4	2057	10.1
South Tyneside	1179	10.7	1121	10.2
Gateshead	1318	8.9	1379	9.3
North Tyneside	1288	8.5	1266	8.3
Newcastle	1860	6.6	1885	6.6
Northumberland	1481	6.3	1575	6.7

- 4.10. Of the total number of victims in Sunderland, 73% were female; 86% of victims were between the ages of 18 and 55, 12% were over 55 and just over 1% were aged 16 or 17. Rates per 1,000 in each age group were generally comparable with other parts of the Northumbria Police area.
- 4.11. The proportion of victims that were identified as being from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups was relatively low in Sunderland at around 3%. This is consistent with the population as a whole in Sunderland which has around 4% of the population estimated to be from BAME groups (Office for National Statistics, 2021). It was also similar to the proportion seen in most of the rest of the Northumbria Police area, with the exception of Newcastle upon Tyne, where 12% of victims were from BAME groups.
- 4.12. Perpetrators are also known to commonly commit multiple offences. Thirty known perpetrators were linked to over 20 domestic abuse crimes each. Within this cohort 39% of perpetrators were identified as having alcohol misuse behaviours.¹⁶
- 4.13. Since the introduction of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR), in April 2011, Sunderland has convened 8 reviews, in the period 2013-2020. While each of the reviews have been different, they have highlighted specific complexities and issues, which included, greater awareness of elder abuse, suicide, victim response to abuse and triggers which suggest potential significant harm to the abuser and the impact of abuse on children.¹⁷
- 4.14. **MARAC.** Local rates of active MARACs are 6th highest in England and Wales at 60 cases per 10,000 adult females
- 4.15. In Sunderland during 2020/21, 686 MARACs took place; this represents a reduction of 13% compared to 2019/20 when there were 789 MARACs. 96% of victims were female; this is equivalent to a rate of 63 conferences per 10,000 adult females, and is similar to the rate for the wider Northumbria Police area. Additionally, on average, these cases involved 1-2 children in the associated households, which is similar to the previous year.
- 4.16. 30 (4%) of the MARACs in the period concerned male victims. The proportion of MARAC victims that are male was significantly lower than the

¹⁶ Northumbria Police 2021

¹⁷ Domestic homicide accounts for around a fifth of all homicides Home Office, Homicide Index. Homicide in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

overall proportion of victims reported by Northumbria Police as male (27%); this would suggest that although a substantial proportion of incidents involve a male victim, the likelihood of males being identified as at high risk is significantly lower than females.

- 4.17. MARAC cases during 2020/21 involved only a small number of people from BAME backgrounds (around 1%). When compared to the number of BAME victims in the period, the group that became MARAC cases represents around 6% of all victims from these ethnic groups. This is lower than the proportion becoming MARAC cases for the overall population which is estimated at around 14%. This may suggest that BAME victims are less likely to be identified as high risk.
- 4.18. A consultation piece (commissioned by Sunderland City council and Sunderland CCG) undertaken by Imkaan (November 2018 – March 2019) with survivors of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and key stakeholders in Sunderland noted that Black and minoritised women were likely to be identified as being at lower risk.¹⁸.
- 4.19. Agencies referring cases to the MARAC in 2021 were identified as the police (78%), Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (7%), Children's Social Care (4%), Health Services (4%) and Housing Services (4%). Other sources collectively referred 3% of cases. Overall, this means that around 20% of cases are identified through routes other than incidents dealt with by the police and demonstrates the need for frontline staff ¹⁹who come into contact with victims of abuse to be able to identify signs of domestic abuse and respond appropriately.
- 4.20. **Housing services**, in Sunderland have seen a general increase in demand from those affected by domestic abuse in recent years with around 45% more people accessing the services in 2020/21 totalling 557 compared to 2018/19.
- 4.21. The following data refers to those accessing the services in 2020/21. During this period, 82% of clients were aged between 19 and 44 with the highest levels of demand from resident aged 25-34.
- 4.22. 70% of cases were female; this is similar to the gender profile of victims identified above via incident data. Sexual identity is recorded for most clients of housing services in the period and where present it indicates that 93% were heterosexual/straight, around 2% were gay/lesbian and around 3% identified as another sexual identity.
- 4.23. Where data was present, the proportion of clients from BAME backgrounds was around 5%, with the remainder identified as from white backgrounds. This is a slightly higher representation from BAME communities than in the wider population.
- 4.24. Information about the marital status of the clients was present in around 70% of cases. Where it was recorded, 82% were identified as single with around 10% identified as either separated or divorced. Alongside this, 60% of clients who approached housing services were recorded as living in a one-person

¹⁸ "Everybody has the right to be safe" Consultation with stakeholders and survivors of violence against women and girls in Sunderland Imkaan May 2019.

¹⁹ This should include voluntary sector agencies, who are more likely to be in contact with those with protected characteristics, who are particularly vulnerable.

household. Lone female parents living with dependent children also made up a further 30% of clients.

- 4.25. 70% of those who approached housing services were recorded as either unemployed or unable to work due to long term sickness or disability. Additionally, around 8% were working less than 30 hours per week.
- 4.26. Survivors exhibited a wide range of co-existing risks and complex additional needs in addition to domestic abuse. Almost 92% were recorded as having a history of mental ill health problems, 82% were recorded as experiencing physical ill health and/or disability, 76% were affected by alcohol dependency and 76% by drug dependency.
- 4.27. Housing placements associated with survivors accessing the services in 2020/21 were most commonly within privately managed Bed and Breakfast hotels (66%) or Hostels (20%). Notably, only around 3% of placements were identified as specifically within facilities providing safe accommodation in relation to domestic abuse²⁰.
- 4.28. **Adult Social Care** (ASC) has seen increasing levels of activity relating to domestic abuse in recent years, with 43% more contacts recorded in 2020/21 compared to 2018/19. Additionally, 81% of these contacts went on to lead to new safeguarding adult's cases or to be linked to existing cases. For the period 2020/21 ASC saw a wide distribution of cases across all age ranges covered by the service, however a significant proportion (over 30%) were above the age of 64.
- 4.29. 73% of clients affected by DA were female. Marital status was not available in a large number of cases (44%), where it was present it showed 31% were married and this was notably higher than any other cohort (i.e. those presenting at housing, reporting abuse to the police etc.)
- 4.30. Fewer than 3% of contacts were identified as coming from BAME backgrounds, similarly to the wider population in Sunderland.
- 4.31. The most common presenting needs associated with clients included personal care (28%), support relating to mental health (15%) and support relating to learning disabilities (8%).
- 4.32. **Children's Social Care** (CSC) in Sunderland is provided by Together for Children. Between 2018/19 and 2019/20, the proportion of children's social care assessments in which a concern regarding domestic abuse against a parent was present has risen from 35.5% to 38.1%, indicating a similar trend to other data sources concerned with adults; whilst this is slightly lower than the wider North East (39.1%), it is significantly higher than England (32.5%).
- 4.33. Assessments identifying where a concern relating to a child being the victim of domestic abuse represented 12.5% during 2019/20, which was a decrease compared to the previous year. However, it remained higher than both the North East (11.5%) and England (12.3%) in the same period.
- 4.34. Concerns identified about other household member reduced from 5.4% in 2018/19 to 4.3% in 2019/20; this was lower than the North East (5.4%) and England (6.0%).

²⁰ Sunderland city council

- 4.35. Domestic abuse is a significant safeguarding issue within Sunderland and we recognise the impact domestic abuse has for children. Children exposed to domestic abuse can experience trauma which can have a long lasting negative effect, developmentally, emotionally and in their ability to achieve.
- 4.36. In addition this has to take into account that we know an overwhelming number of children subject to a child protection plan and those who may become subject to care plans, have lived with domestic abuse accompanied by substance abuse and parental mental ill health, which has impacted adversely on their lives and their ability to develop healthy relationships, positive self-esteem and resilience.

5 Safe accommodation and specialist domestic abuse provision in Sunderland

- 5.1 Sunderland has a range of safe accommodation-based support available for survivors of domestic abuse. This consists of a blend of 'traditional' refuge, a recovery unit for women with additional needs, dispersed accommodation and sanctuary scheme. Survivors who access these services are primarily resident in Sunderland
- 5.2 Wearside Women in Need is currently the primary provider of safe accommodation and support in Sunderland which is commissioned by the LA.
- 5.3 Appendix 2 illustrates safe accommodation and specialist support in Sunderland.

6 Summary of usage and demand

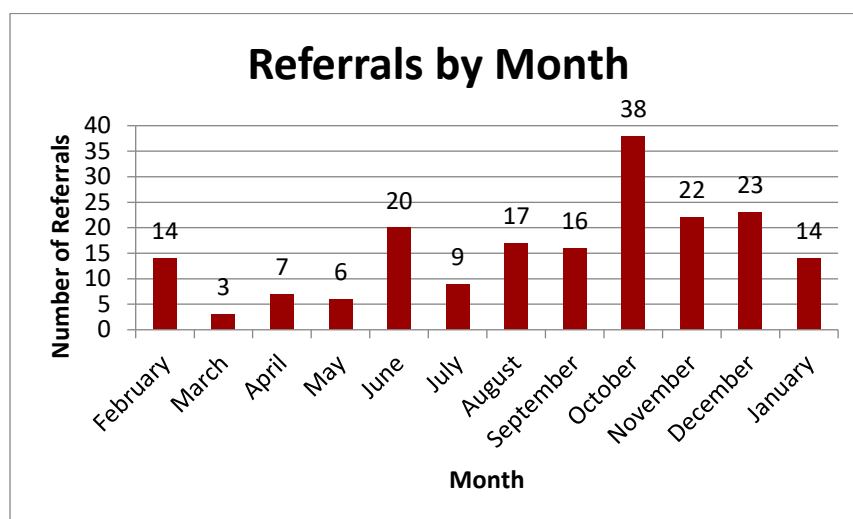
- 6.1 It has not been possible to provide detailed information on usage and demand for all services providing safe accommodation and support in Sunderland, particularly where services have not been directly commissioned Sunderland city council or CCG.
- 6.2 Relevant information available is set out below.

Wearside Women in Need – Refuge

- 6.3 WWiN provide refuge accommodation in Sunderland. In total, 28 units are available. These are supported by specialist workers that provide one-to-one casework and therapeutic group work.
- 6.4 During the period February 2020 – February 2021. A total of 189 referrals were received for 'traditional' refuge services provided by WWiN. Housing services were the most common referral source (25%), followed by self-referrals (19%), other domestic abuse services (15%), children's social care (14%) and the police (11%). Others came from sources including substance misuse services, adult social care and health providers. It is estimated that on average, residents stay for between 6

and 7 months in refuge spaces in Sunderland, which is broadly comparable to England as a whole²¹

6.5 On average, around 16 referrals were received per month. It is noted that there was a drop in referrals during the first wave of the pandemic and, as with other areas of provision, activity increased as restrictions were eased in the summer months, with an average of 20 referrals per month between June and October 2020.



Source WWiN (period February 2020- January 2021)

6.6 26% of referrals received were accepted. The majority of referrals which were not accepted 48% related to a lack of capacity, and 11% to needs relating to substance misuse and mental ill health.

6.7 Of those referrals that were accepted, the majority were aged between 21 and 40 (80%). Around 10% of those accessing the services were pregnant at the time.

6.8 The table below shows breakdown of ethnicity of residents during the period February 20/January 21. 20% of residents in the refuge reported non-English language as their spoken language

Refuge Ethnicity of Accepted referrals	
White	%
British	71.43
Eastern European	6.12
Any other White background, please describe	2.04
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background	%
White and Asian	4.08
Asian / Asian British	%
Pakistani	4.08
Chinese	2.04
Any other Asian background, please describe	2.04
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	%
African	4.08
Other Ethnic Group	%

²¹ Sunderland: profile of domestic abuse provision Women's Aid, 2021

Arab	2.04
Not Asked	2.04

Source WWiN

6.9 Safe Lives reports²² that “BAME women are less likely than white women to access a community based service and are represented at much higher rates in refuge.” This would be the case when looking at representation of BAME survivors across provision with the exception of services offered by the Angelou Centre.

6.10 Almost 37% of residents were non – Sunderland residents. These were almost exclusively from the North East region with a very small number from elsewhere in England.

Local Authority of Residence	%
County Durham	12.24
Hackney	2.04
Hartlepool	2.04
Mansfield	2.04
Newcastle upon Tyne	4.08
North Tyneside	6.12
Northumberland	2.04
South Tyneside	6.12
Sunderland	63.27

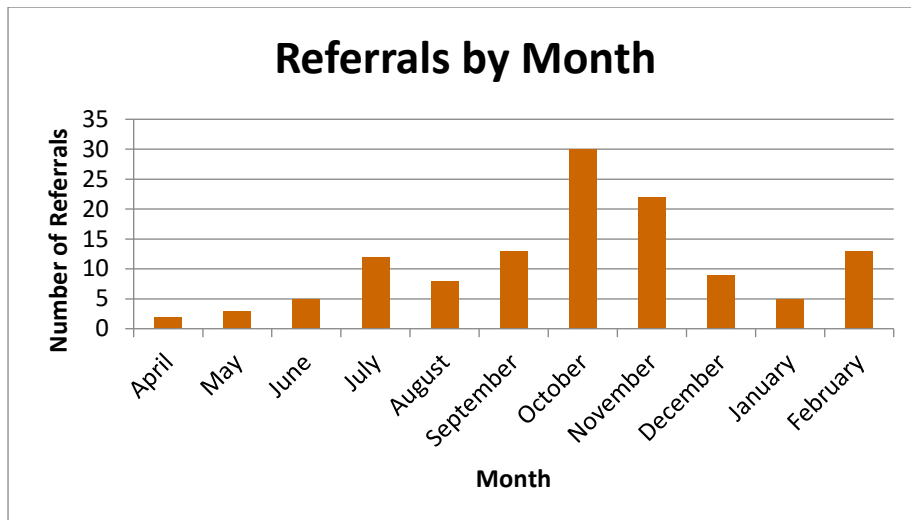
Source WWiN

Wearside Women in Need - Recovery Unit

6.11 The Recovery Unit which aims to address the needs of women who are unsuitable for traditional refuge accommodation and may have difficulties engaging with other services. It provides support to those with complex needs such as mental health and/or substance misuse issues and those engaged in high-risk behaviours such as sex work. The project consists of 8 unit

6.12 For the period April 2020 to February 2021, a total of 122 referrals were received. Referrals received came from housing services (23%), domestic abuse services from other areas (20%) and self-referrals (14%). Other referrers included mental health services, adult social care, substance misuse services and the probation service.

²² Safe lives reference



Source WWiN (period April 2020- February 2021)

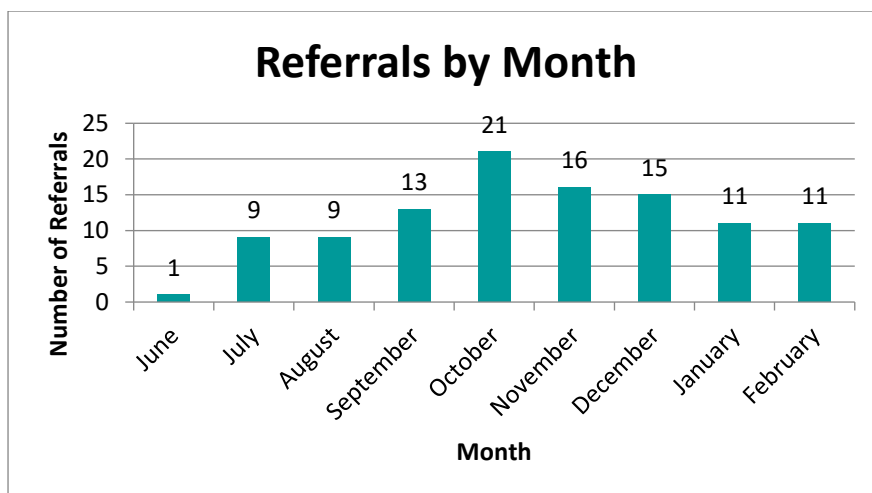
6.13 Just over a quarter of referrals to the Recovery Unit were accepted. Around 18% could not be accommodated due to capacity issues. Additionally, smaller proportions of referrals were rejected due the service being unable to meet needs relating to substance misuse and some women were “not ready” to engage with services and declined any offer of support.

6.14 Survivors who accessed the Recovery Unit were almost exclusively aged between 21 and 40 (93%). Around 7% of those accessing the services were pregnant at the time of admission. The vast majority of service users identified themselves as heterosexual, with only around 4% identifying as pansexual. Those accessing the service were almost exclusively identified as White British, with only 4% from other backgrounds. The majority of those accessing the service were from Sunderland (82%), with the remainder from elsewhere in the North East region.

Wearside Women in Need - Sanctuary provision

6.15 The Sanctuary provision provides a multi-agency victim centred service which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures and specialist support. A risk assessment will determine whether it is safe for the victim to remain in their own home and a safety plan is developed.

6.16 For the period from June 2020 to February 2021, 106 referrals were received, these were primarily made by Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA's) and other parts of WWiN provision (82%). Other referrers include housing services, the police and children's social care. Referrals were relatively stable over time, though as with other services October 2020 saw the highest levels, with a total of 21 received



Source WWiN (period June 2020 – February 2021)

Wearside Women in Need - Group work and counselling provision.

6.17 WWiN offer a range of group work opportunities for survivors. These include the following programmes:

6.18 Power to Change

6.19 You and Me, Mum

6.20 Domestic Abuse Recovering Together

6.21 Additional group work is carried out in the Recovery Unit, covering domestic abuse, recovery, life skills and arts and crafts.

6.22 All survivors accessing safe accommodation are offered counselling and therapeutic programmes.

6.23 42 % of referrals made during the period February 2020- February 2021 were placed on a waiting list due to lack of capacity.

Changing lives sanctum project

6.24 Provides safe accommodation for survivors with additional needs who do not wish to live in shared temporary accommodation. Properties are available to both male and female survivors.

Angelou centre

6.25 The Angelou Centre provides specialist advocacy, outreach, therapeutic support and recovery programmes for women from black and minoritised ethnic backgrounds.

6.26 It is led by women from BAME communities and supports women from across the North East as well as outside the region. Typically, it supports around 700 BAME survivors of domestic abuse per year through its range of interventions, with capacity to accommodate 29 residents in its refuge provision.

6.27 Between March 2020 and April 2021, 32 referrals from Sunderland were made into the Angelou Centre VAWG Advocacy Service.

- Ethnicity Breakdown: 65.6% Bangladeshi Women, 21.9% African Women and 12.5% Pakistani women.
- Immigration Breakdown: 28% are Asylum Seekers, 9% with indefinite leave to remain (ILR), 44% on Spouse Visas and 19% with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

7 Women with lived experience

7.1 During July and August 2021 Sunderland City Council undertook an independent engagement exercise with women with lived experience of domestic abuse and accessing local support services.²³ This included representation from women who were receiving services from WWIN and The Angelou Centre. Interventions received included outreach support, refuge accommodation, and residential recovery support.

7.2 Women were asked to give their views on what they felt good safe accommodation and support services would look like. In general, the women used the services they received from WWIN and The Angelou centre as a benchmark and reported that they experienced them as setting good standards. Some of the repeated comments made include:

- “I get the support and therapy I need ... I have experienced a lot of trauma, I am still scared to travel outside alone staff recognise this, and have helped me”
- “The rooms are nice I have my own bathroom ... we have communal rooms and communal kitchen, there are rooms where I can sit and be myself and have quiet time”
- “Sometimes it feels like hard work ... we have to do various sessions and I feel like there is nothing for me ... It would be nice to do fun activities go to the beach, kayak”
- “More specialist support should be available if you have substance misuse and mental health related problems, staff do what they can, but they are not specialists”
- “I came here frightened and terrified with nothing ... I feel safe here”
- “I now understand that I was in an abusive relationship ... I am getting the support I need to know what a healthy relationship is”
- “Children need support and therapy ... my little girl is scared and anxious around men”

7.3 Key messages arising from women’s expressions regarding “what good looks like” include:

- Alternative accommodation should be made available for the perpetrator. Women and their children should not have to leave their home. Women perceived this as disruptive for them and their children and unnecessary if safety plans can be put in place to protect themselves and their children. Women identified a key factor for their recovery would be provision of alternative accommodation for the perpetrator. All too often their experience was that the perpetrator would return to the family home and put pressure on the women to “take him back”.
- Women and their children should not have to leave their home. This is disruptive if you have children and unnecessary if safety plans can be put in place to protect the victim. They identified a key factor for their recovery would be provision of alternative

²³ Stakeholder and engagement report attached as an appendix

accommodation for the perpetrator. All too often their experience was that the perpetrator would return to the family home and put pressure on the women to “take him back”.

- Trauma informed therapy and support with substance misuse and mental health issues are key requirements of specialist support.
- BAME women specifically valued support on immigration issues and benefit entitlement. Fundamental to their abuse was coercive control, the threat of deportation and an inability to provide for basic needs such as food and shelter. In addition, they expressed a need to be somewhere safe where staff understand and are able to act on the linguistic, cultural and generational complexities rooted in their abuse. This would help remove barriers in seeking help
- Support needs to be holistic and not just about trauma. It also needs to provide women with life skills and build confidence.
- Self-contained units with wrap around support are preferred. However, there is recognition that this may not be suitable for all.

8 Gaps in provision and or lack of capacity

8.1 Key areas identified where there are potential gaps in provision and or a lack of capacity include

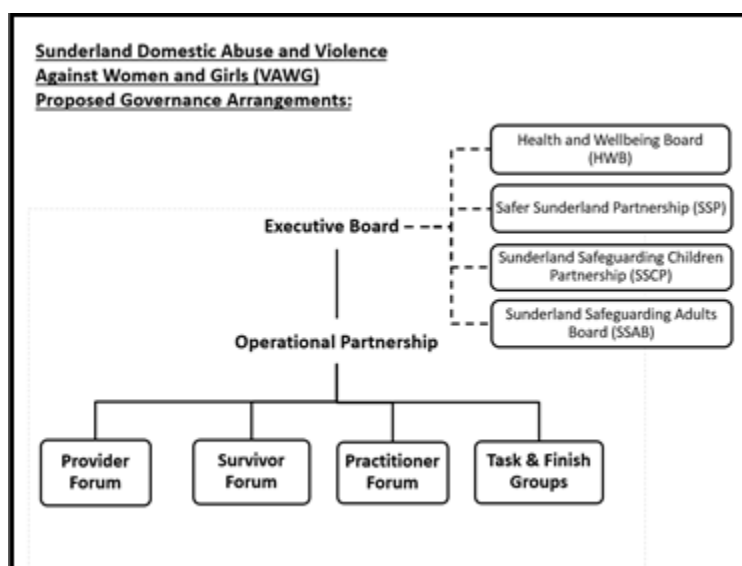
- Direct therapeutic work with children
- Capacity issues are evident re counselling and group work programmes given the need for waiting lists.
- The level of demand re safe accommodation exceeds the available bed space/units available within Sunderland
- If there is an increase in the number of units / properties made available to offer safe accommodation this may require an increase in resources providing specialist outreach support.
- Specialist clinical support for survivors with mental ill health and or active substance abuse behaviours
- Appropriate and culturally informed services for survivors with protected characteristics notably black and minoritised women, LGBT+ survivors.
- Limited safe accommodation with wheelchair access and adaptations for survivors and or children with limited mobility
- Provision able to accommodate survivors who are actively engaged in risky behaviour which puts them at immediate risk and those around them e.g. significant substance abuse and continued relationships with perpetrators to support their risky behaviour
- Pathways of accommodation for the removal of perpetrators from households which would enable survivors to secure sanctuary services, and engage with specialist support services which aid recovery for survivors and their children

Part Two

9 Aims and Principles

9.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, a Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Executive Board was established in

June 2021. The governance structure is illustrated below.(further details can be found in Appendix 3)



9.2 The Sunderland Domestic abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Executive Board has agreed the following key principles which will underpin multi agency approach on domestic violence ;

- Address prevention, early intervention, crisis, and long-term recovery and safety working with a wide range of services, pathways and systems to improve outcomes for children, adults and their families affected by domestic abuse and wider forms of VAWG in Sunderland.
- Build on best practice taking a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) and in doing so ensure domestic abuse and VAWG is everyone's business.
- Deliver locally developed, locally owned; solutions which engenders a shared responsibility across agencies, with effective coordination and good governance.
- Delivering more than a crisis response, by focusing equally on prevention and early intervention; and trauma informed responses
- Take an inclusive approach, ensuring the needs of the survivors (including multiple forms of difference and intersectional needs) are central to service criteria and recognise the diversity of survivor experience, including the voices of children.
- Take a whole system response to a whole person, shifting responsibility for safety away from individual survivors to the community and services existing to support them.

9.3 Sunderland City Council and partners seek to ensure that commissioned services for safe accommodation and specialist support;

- Demonstrate and deliver a joined up approach of commissioned specialist services, where the pathways are clear and survivors and their children are referred into and between services based on their level of need.
- Deliver improved safety leading to a reduction in repeat victimisation,
- Help survivors to recognise and avoid future abusers (stopping the cycle of abuse), empowering them to build safe, happy, productive lives for themselves and their children, and increase levels of independence
- The ability to secure a reduction in child protection concerns

- Contribute to Sunderland's ability to secure longer-term reduction in health inequalities and improvements in the wider determinants of health.

9.4 The result being Sunderland City Council and partners are better able to direct resources where a) need and unmet need is evident, and b) service intervention improves the quality of life for survivors and their children. In addition in the long term reduce the amount of public money spent addressing the harmful and debilitating consequences of abuse.²⁴

10 Our strategic priorities

10.1 Our strategic priorities are based on what the needs assessment and stakeholder engagement has told us, in particular the voice of women with lived experience.

10.2 Our strategic priorities for 2021- 2024

1. Ensure that what we do is underpinned by a robust needs assessment.
2. Deliver quality services which contribute to improving outcomes for survivors and children.
3. Increase our safe accommodation provision
4. Strengthen our approach in hearing the voice of survivors, and children and young people, including those with protected characteristics, to ensure their views are heard and influence what we do

10.3 The table below sets our actions for the delivery of our priorities and measures used to monitor and evaluate success.

²⁴ Due to its high prevalence and prolonged period of abuse, the total socio-economic costs of domestic abuse were estimated at £66 billion for the 1,946,000 estimated number of victims identified in England and Wales within 2016/17 (about £74 billion in today's prices)

11 Our actions to support delivery and measures used to monitor and evaluate success

Strategic priority	What we will do	Key Out Puts	Key Outcomes
Ensure that what we do is underpinned by a robust needs assessment	<p>We will improve our knowledge of need within Sunderland, regionally and nationally to better understand</p> <p>a)The levels of need and demand, through the acquisition of robust data from local and regional partners, national specialist organisations and nationally held data sets</p> <p>b)Barriers that prevent victims and survivors with diverse needs from accessing support within safe accommodation</p> <p>c)The increase in unregulated accommodation and usage</p> <p>Engage with regional and national networks to facilitate the sharing of information. (To include networks initiated by local authorities and networks led by specialist DV organisations)</p> <p>Work with providers to better understand capacity, levels of demand and agree core data requirements which provide insight</p>	<p>Core data requirements agreed with relevant partner agencies to inform annual review of needs assessment</p> <p>Consistent collection of data across all commissioned service areas.</p> <p>Able to identify gaps in provision and put in place plans/strategies to meet those gaps.</p>	<p>Local commissioning and decommissioning is informed by intelligent commissioning.</p> <p>There is clear evidence of actual and unmet need locally and regionally, to inform and deliver on local and joint regional commissioning opportunities</p>
Deliver quality service interventions which contribute to improving outcomes for survivors and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission services which are evidence based, and can demonstrate impact through an evidence based outcome / progression tool e.g. outcome star, strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) or other recognised tools methodologies, to capture related data on outcomes for survivors and children, Commission services which meet needs identified by women with lived experience, giving priority to support services which address mental ill health, substance abuse and direct work with children Through our contract monitoring process put in place clearly defined outcomes to be achieved by services, and KPI's which support the measurement of impact against outcomes 	<p>Service providers are able to evidence improved circumstance of survivors and their children</p>	<p>Children and adults experience improved physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Increased resilience of survivors to prevent further experiences of DA. Improved ability to cope and recover.</p> <p>Increased financial stability and independence</p> <p>Survivors experience strong and resilient support networks</p> <p>Survivors/children have hope and goals for the future</p> <p>Improved attachment / relationships with children and young people</p>

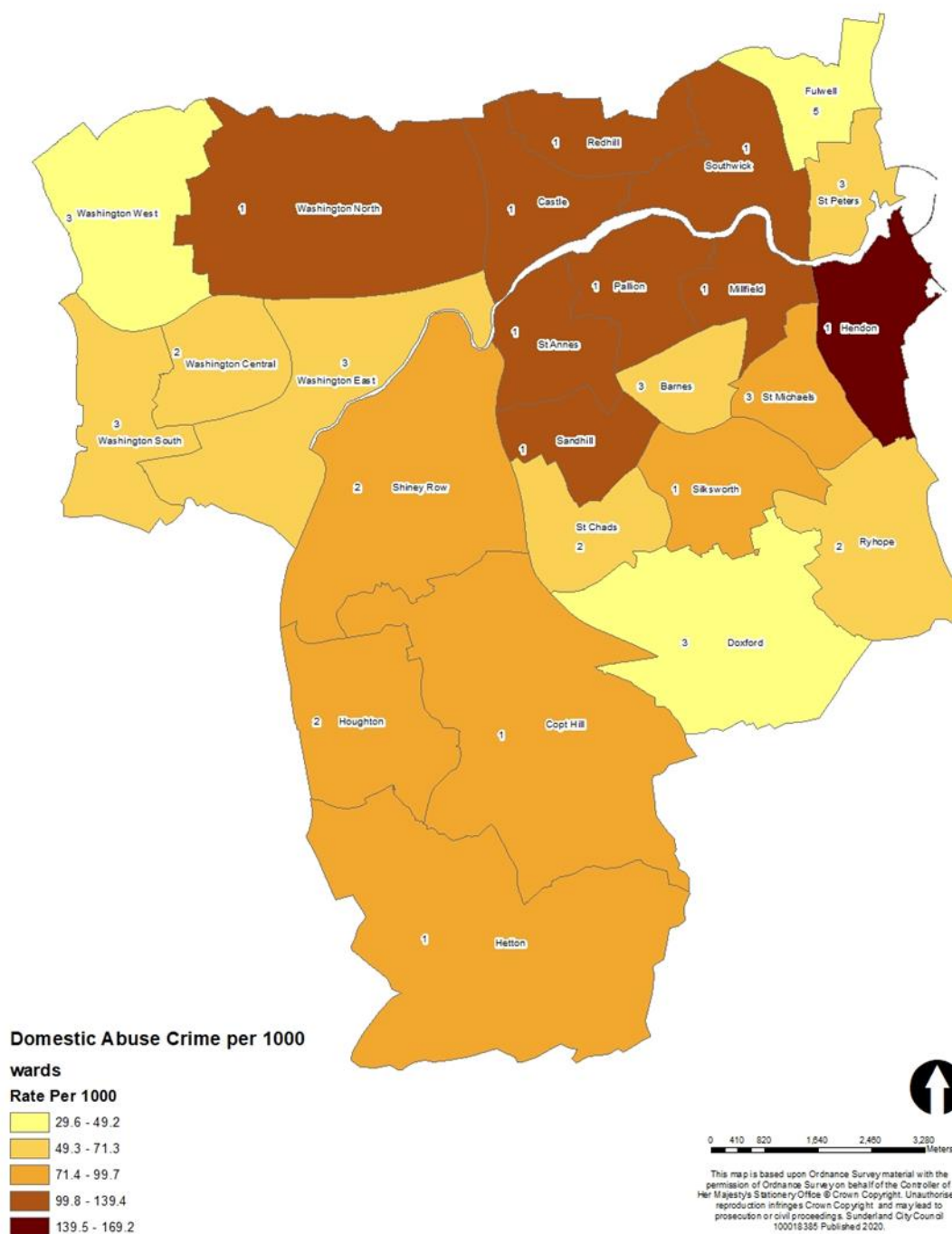
Strategic priority	What we will do	Key Out Put	Key Outcomes
Increase our safe accommodation provision	<p>Through our operational group develop and implement an action plan which will increase the availability of dispersed safe accommodation based on our needs assessment, regional and national intelligence</p> <p>Increase provision for protected characteristic groups including male victims and perpetrators²⁵</p> <p>We will work with Safe Lives and partners to understand how accommodation pathways for perpetrators can be developed in Sunderland and learn from the current pilot project implemented through MOPAC²⁶ across 5 London boroughs and the Making Safe Scheme in North Yorkshire ²⁷</p>	<p>Survivors and their children experience limited accommodation moves</p> <p>A percentage reduction in the numbers of victims and survivors who are accessing unregistered accommodation which does not provide safe, secure, accommodation with specialist support.</p> <p>Proposal for pathways into accommodation for perpetrators developed and opportunity to engage in pilot project sought</p>	<p>There is evidence of increased capacity in meeting the demand of all survivors, in particular those who have protected characteristics, are male victims and perpetrators. Survivors who have teenage sons and survivors with additional needs</p> <p>Survivors achieve stable and secure accommodation with a minimum of moves, which contributes towards their recovery and ability to engage with specialist support services</p>
Strengthen our approach in hearing the voice of survivors, children and young people, including those with protected characteristics, to ensure their views are heard and influence what we do	<p>We will work with survivors, experts in the field of DA and service user participation and engagement, and co-production to develop and implement a range of methodologies of engagement and participation, which work</p> <p>Establish a survivors forum , and a forum for children and young people</p> <p>Establish survivor representation in commissioning processes</p> <p>Identify and implement ways by which survivors can be engaged in the contract monitoring of services</p>	<p>We are able to evidence engagement with survivors and children</p> <p>We are able to evidence how those engagement activities have influenced what we do. (e.g. you said , we did)</p>	<p>Our offer of safe accommodation and specialist support services are equitable, accessible, and non-discriminatory.</p> <p>Survivors who access services report that their voices have been heard and barriers to accessing services addressed.</p>

²⁵ Nationally, there is a shift to enable victim/survivors to stay in their own home , with perpetrators moving into alternative provision

²⁶ Mayor's Office for Policing and crime

²⁷ This project supports pathways into accommodation for perpetrators enabling women and children to remain in their homes.

Domestic Abuse Crimes by Ward and IMD Quintile 01 January 2017 - 16 August 2021

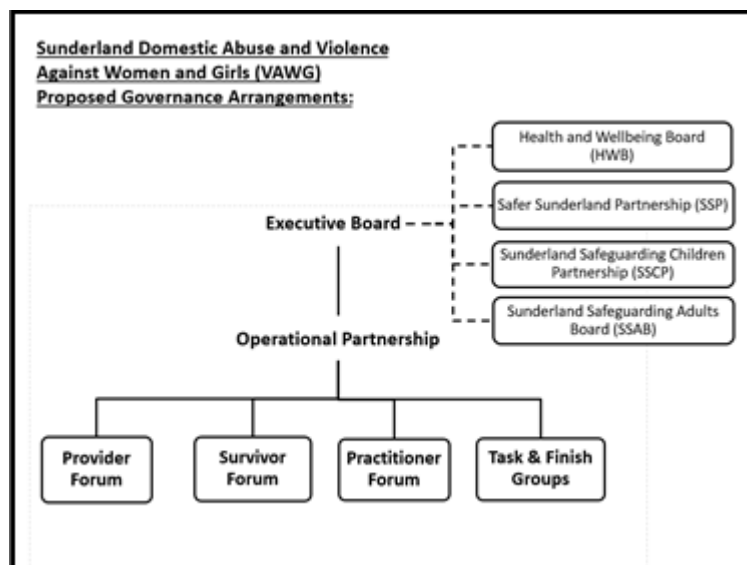


Appendix 2 Safe accommodation and support services in Sunderland.

Provision	Current provider	Capacity	
Crisis Refuge Accommodation, Specialist Domestic Abuse Outreach Support	WWIN	28 units spread across 3 buildings 4FTE IDVA's 9 outreach workers 2 group workers	Provides safe accommodation for women fleeing domestic violence Offers Support groups and group work programmes and individual casework. Outreach resettlement support
Crash Pad and Complex Needs Outreach.	WWIN		Offering one to one support to victims of domestic abuse, and safe accommodation for women in crisis (short term)
Trauma informed Recovery Unit	WWIN	8 Units	A residential project which provides safe accommodation and trauma informed counselling for women who are unable to access traditional refuge accommodation, due to additional mental health and substance abuse needs
Dispersed accommodation Complex Needs Provision Sanctum project	Changing Lives -	8 self-contained properties	Provides safe accommodation for survivors with additional needs who do not wish to live in shared temporary accommodation. Properties are available to both male and female survivors. The service is responsive to supporting survivors who are ineligible for housing benefit, have teenage sons or pets or people in gender transition or who define themselves as non-binary. The scheme aims to offer access for individuals for 6-9 months and delivers intensive supported via a dedicated team with a view to enabling residents to take a holistic approach to their own recovery. 8 properties are available in Sunderland.

Sanctuary Scheme	WWiN	Covers 70 properties	Provides a multi-agency victim centred service which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures (target hardening) and specialist support. A risk assessment will determine whether it is safe for the victim to remain in their own home and a safety plan is developed.
Accredited Group Work	WWiN		Freedom Programme 26 week programme for female survivors of domestic abuse
Perpetrator Programme (Impact Family Services)	Impact family services		A voluntary behaviour change programme consisting of 26 weekly group work sessions aiming to help perpetrators to recognise where they have been abusive and develop ways to ensure they are not abusive in the future.
Refuge and advocacy service	The Angelou Centre	29 units	Provides refuge accommodation, specialist advocacy, outreach, therapeutic support and recovery programmes for women from black and minoritised ethnic backgrounds. Not commissioned by Sunderland City council or partners .charity based in Newcastle Upon Tyne

Appendix 3 Governance Arrangements



The Operational Partnership will advise and support the work of the Board by driving forward business and operational matters requiring focus, attention and development.

A Provider Forum – this will provide a regular formal forum for commissioned and non-commissioned providers working in and around this field of work to consult and be consulted on local, regional and national initiatives and developments. There would be representatives from the Provider Forum on the Operational Partnership.

A Survivors' Forum – this will provide a forum for survivors of domestic abuse and wider forms of VAWG over the age of 18 years to have a space for safe discussions and dialogue, where they can:

- Share their thoughts, feelings and experiences, feel connected, empowered, uplifted and decrease isolation;
- Give opinions about services based on experience;
- Help identify any gaps or barriers to accessing support services;

- Ensure the services are coordinated;
- Influence service development and practice; and
- Highlight, promote and celebrate good practice in the city.

The forum will acknowledge that domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, disability or socio-economic background, therefore the membership of the forum should reflect that. However, there will be topics that may require targeted invitations to a specific meeting. The prerequisite for membership is that individuals have been (or are currently) affected by domestic abuse or wider forms of VAWG. Members do not have to have had experience of being a service user.

A Practitioner Forum - open to all professionals who have a relevant interest. The Forum will encourage links between people working in education, early years, youth offending, youth work, social services, police, probation, health, housing, policy and commissioning, CAMHS, CAFCASS, and people working as refuge staff, family nurses, health visitors, school nurses, teenage pregnancy coordinators, IDVAs and more.

Task and Finish Groups. Established to support the delivery of the Board's priorities.

The Board may wish to consider holding an annual Joint Development Session involving representation from the Operational Partnership, the Provider Forum, the Survivor Forum, the Practitioner Forum, the four strategic partnerships and any Task and Finish Groups under the umbrella of the Boards wider governance arrangements. The annual event would provide a forum to hear the voices of victims and come together to tackle the complex issues of domestic abuse and VAWG in partnership.

Item 5

CHILDREN EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 November 2021

REPORT BY SERVICE MANAGER EARLY HELP AND EARLY HELP ASSISTANT TEAM MANAGER WITH DVA LEAD FOR TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN.

OPERATIONAL DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACTED BY RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULTIES, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide a report on the current operational delivery of services and future aspirations for supporting families and children experiencing relationship difficulties, domestic abuse and domestic violence.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 To present to Committee an update on current operational delivery of domestic abuse services to children and families to complement the presentation delivered to Committee by Helen Steadman and Gerry Taylor of the draft Domestic Violence strategy
- 2.2 Susan Toulson and Joanne Brown will provide a presentation on the current approach to supporting families and children experiencing relationship difficulties, domestic abuse and domestic violence. The presentation will also include discussion and description of future aspirations for service delivery and improved outcomes for children and families
- 2.3 The presentation will be accompanied by a case study provided by members of one of Together for Children's Early Help Teams covering the South and North of Sunderland.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Scrutiny Committee considers the report and notes the information contained therein.

4 Background Papers

None

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 November 2021

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN PERFORMANCE UPDATE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide performance information in relation to Together for Children and the commissioning arrangements in the Council, offer assurance over progress and any issues that arise, in the context of the scope of service and performance indicators set out in the service contract.

2. Background

- 2.1 The contractual and performance of Together for Children is monitored regularly through the Operational Commissioning Group and the Chief Officers Group.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 Information contained within this report will include the agreed Key Performance Indicators for Together for Children. The tolerance levels for each of the measures will be included within the report.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the performance to date.

5. Background Papers

Guide to Governance and Contractual Arrangements

TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN	
DATE:	27 October 2021
REPORT of	Richard Burns, Performance Manager
SUBJECT:	Together for Children Performance Report
PURPOSE:	To provide TfC Board with an overview of performance against the contractual indicators with Sunderland Council and the Sunderland City Plan measures. Comments and analysis are based upon September 2021 performance information.

INTRODUCTION

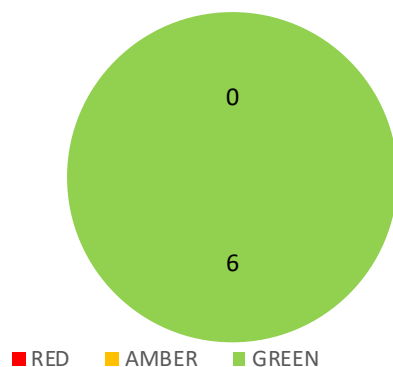
This performance report for 2021/22 is in a new format in line with our refreshed performance framework launched in April 2021.

The measures within the report include:

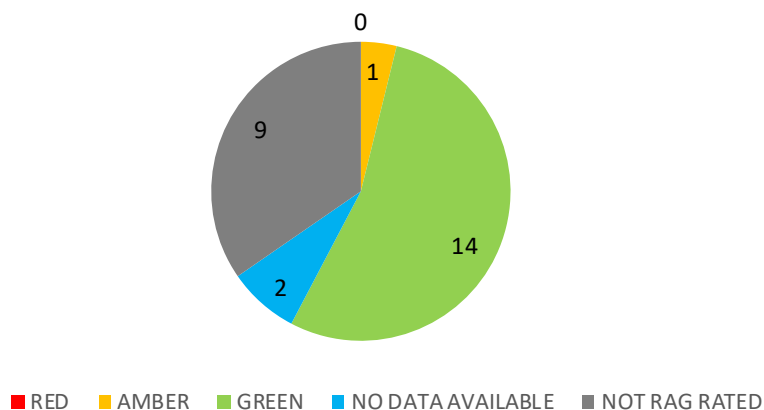
- TfC Contractual Key performance indicators (KPI) reported to the Council;
- TfC Supporting measures (SM) reported to the Council, and
- TfC Measures included within Sunderland Council's City Plan.

The report includes a high-level summary of performance for each measure together with service commentary for any rated amber or red.

TFC KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (CONTRACTUAL AND CITY PLAN)



TFC SUPPORTING MEASURES (CONTRACTUAL AND CITY PLAN)



Indicators Rated Amber:

Proportion of Educational Health Care Plans issued in 20 weeks (Excluding Exception cases) – rated Amber

Target: 65%

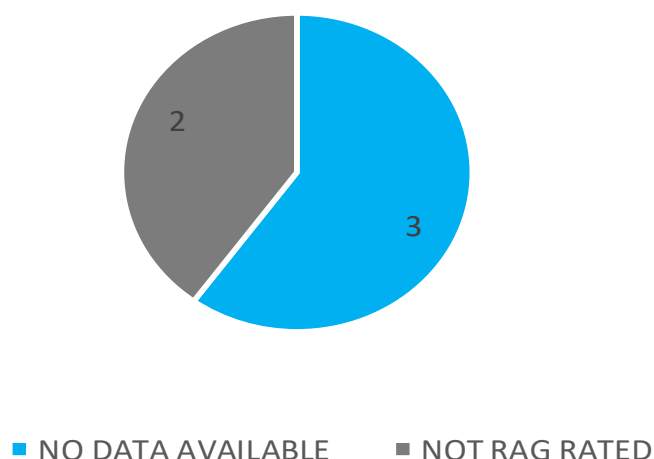
Actual: 59.4%

The decrease in timeliness is a result of a bottleneck in the SEND business support team. These chiefly impacts sending out consultations and draft plans and the issuing of final EHCPs. Both blockages in the process have resulted in missing the statutory timescales. The timescales for completing the Needs Assessment with children have been achieved.

The team were also impacted by a staff member becoming seriously ill with Covid19, and requiring hospital treatment. Attempts were made over the summer to use agency staff to cover this absence and increase the staff resource in the team, but this was unsuccessful owing to the candidates not being suitable for the role.

Senior managers in the education directorate have worked together to create three fixed term posts in the business support team, using covid recovery funding. In addition, additional management oversight has been introduced to identify problems at an early stage and address these by re-prioritising tasks.

ADDITIONAL TFC CITY PLAN MEASURES (NON CONTRACTUAL)



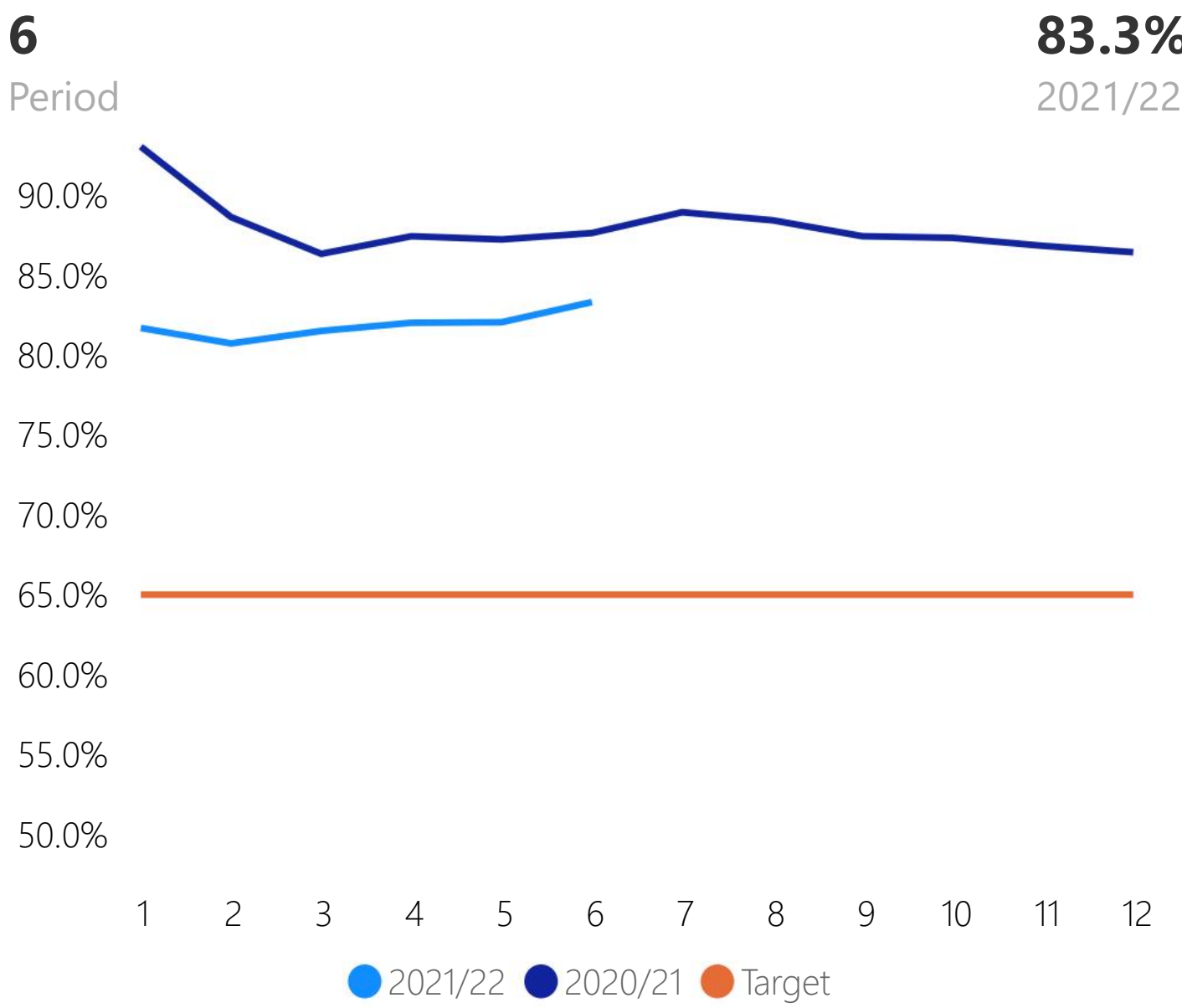
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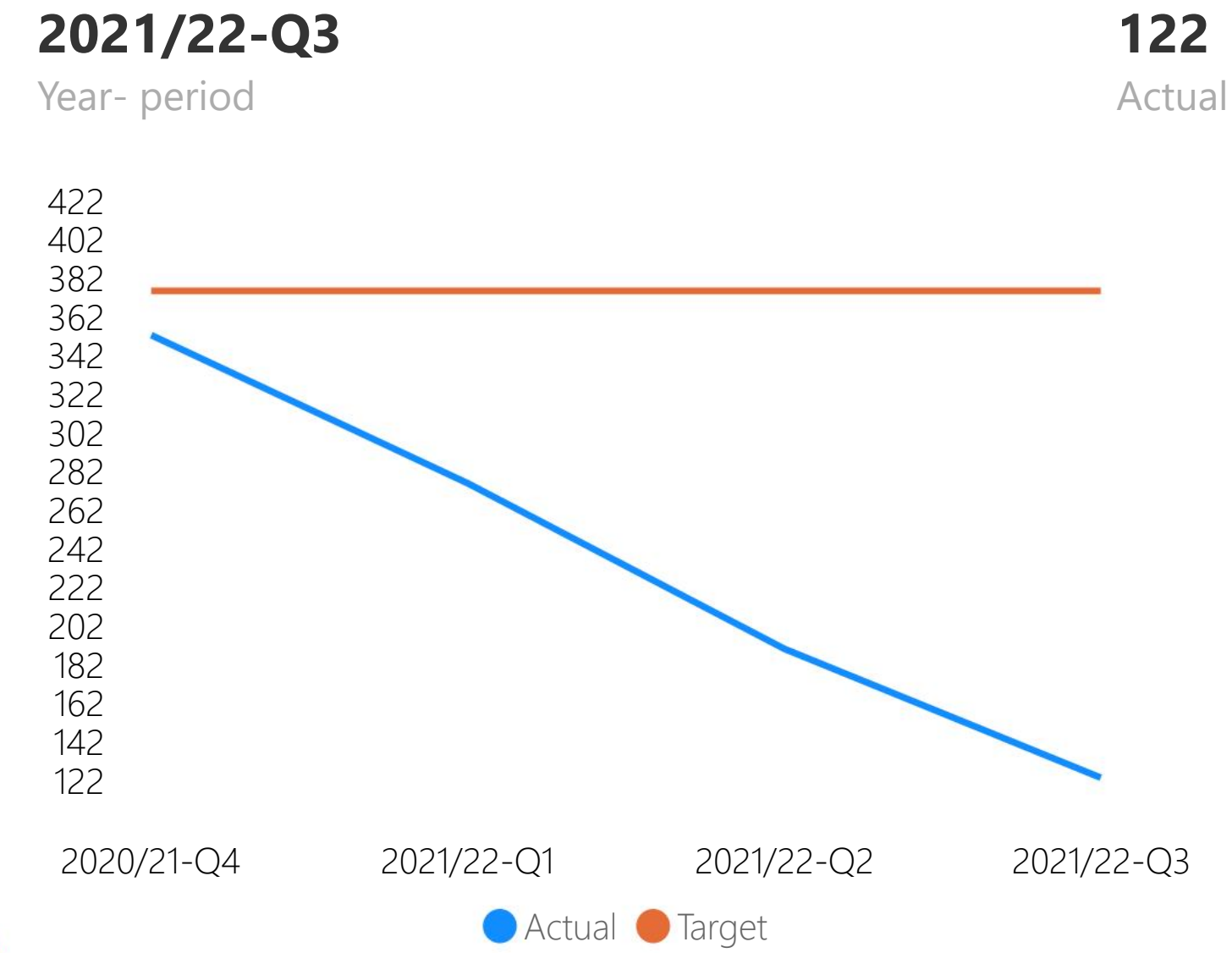


TfC Key Performance Indicators (Contractual and City Plan)

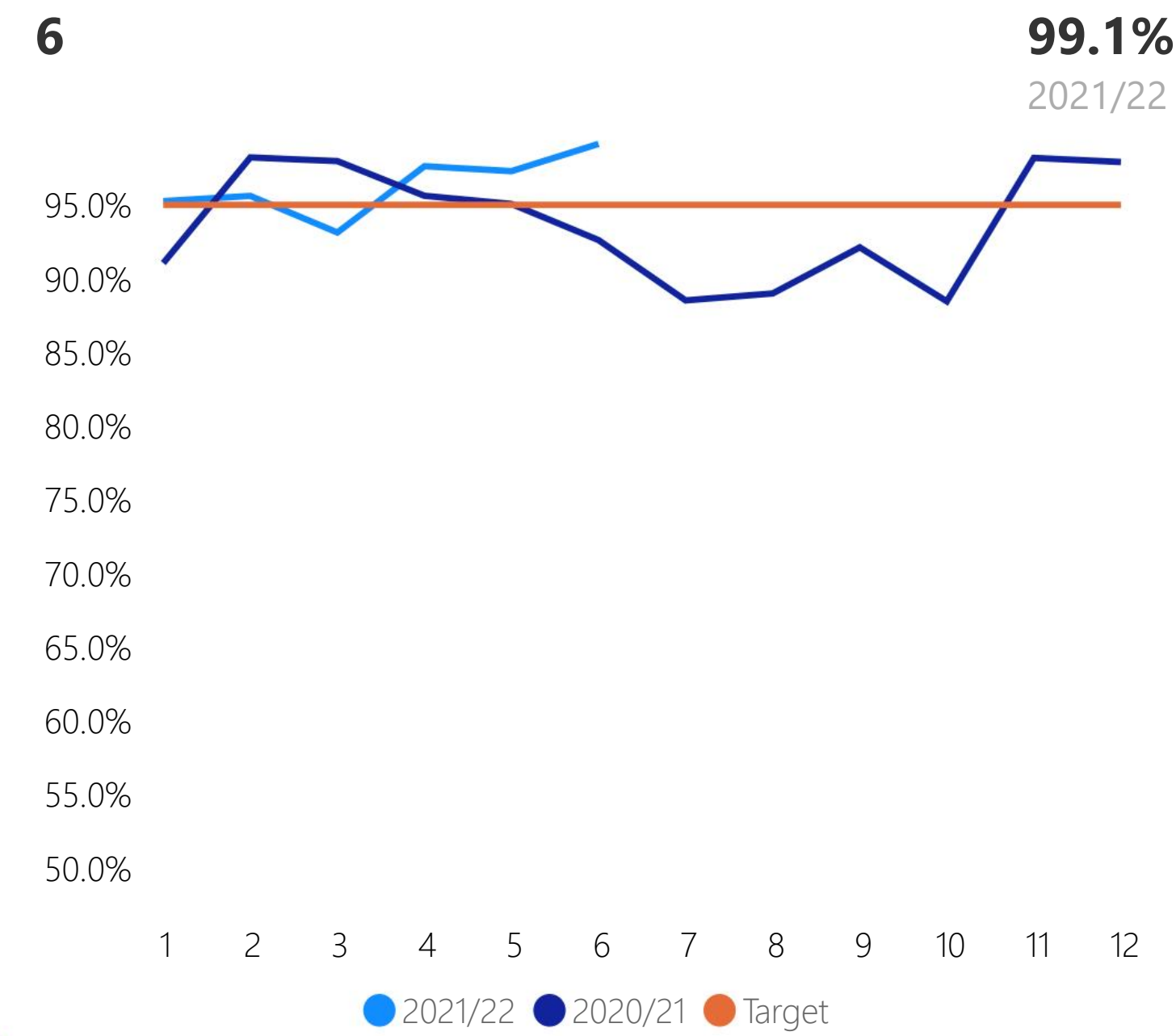
% of Early Help Cases closed with two or more successful outcomes



Rate of First-time entrants into the Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17 (per 100,000 young people)



% of all referrals with a decision within 24 hrs

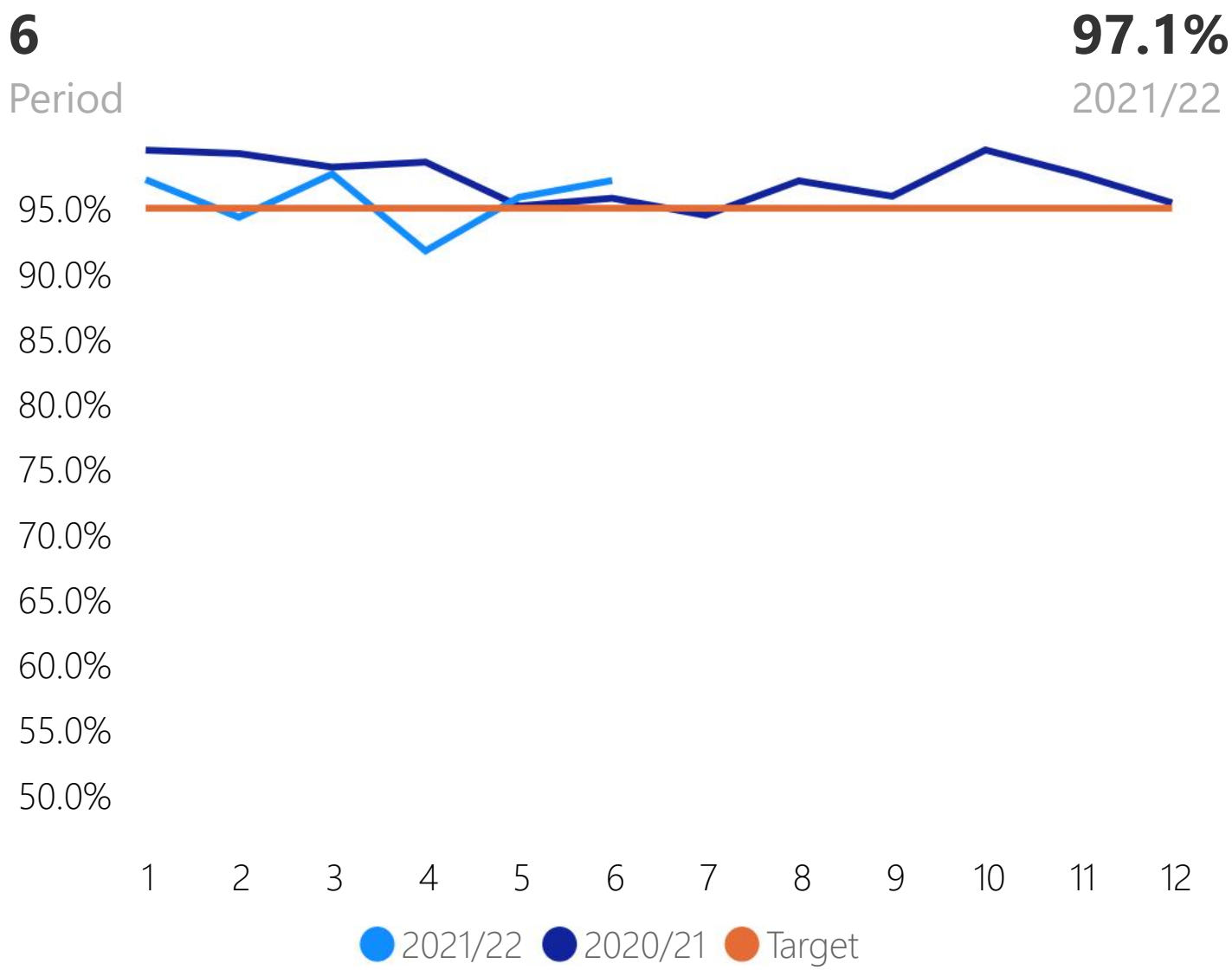


Performance has improved during September, with 299 cases closed with 2 or more successful outcomes.

Performance remains unchanged

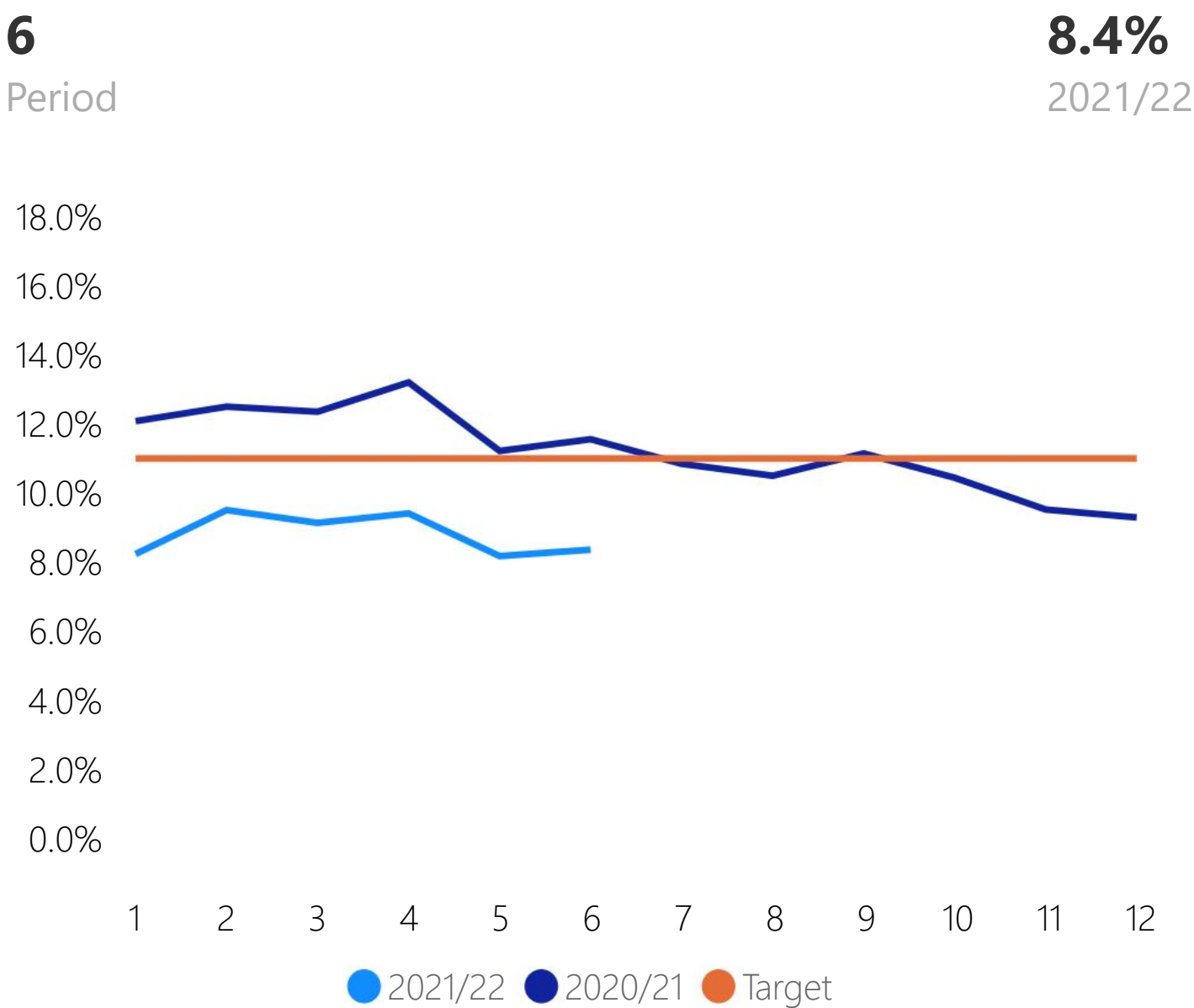
Performance further improved during September, meaning only 2 referrals were not decided on within 24 hours.

% of children subject to a child protection plan who have received a statutory visit within timescale



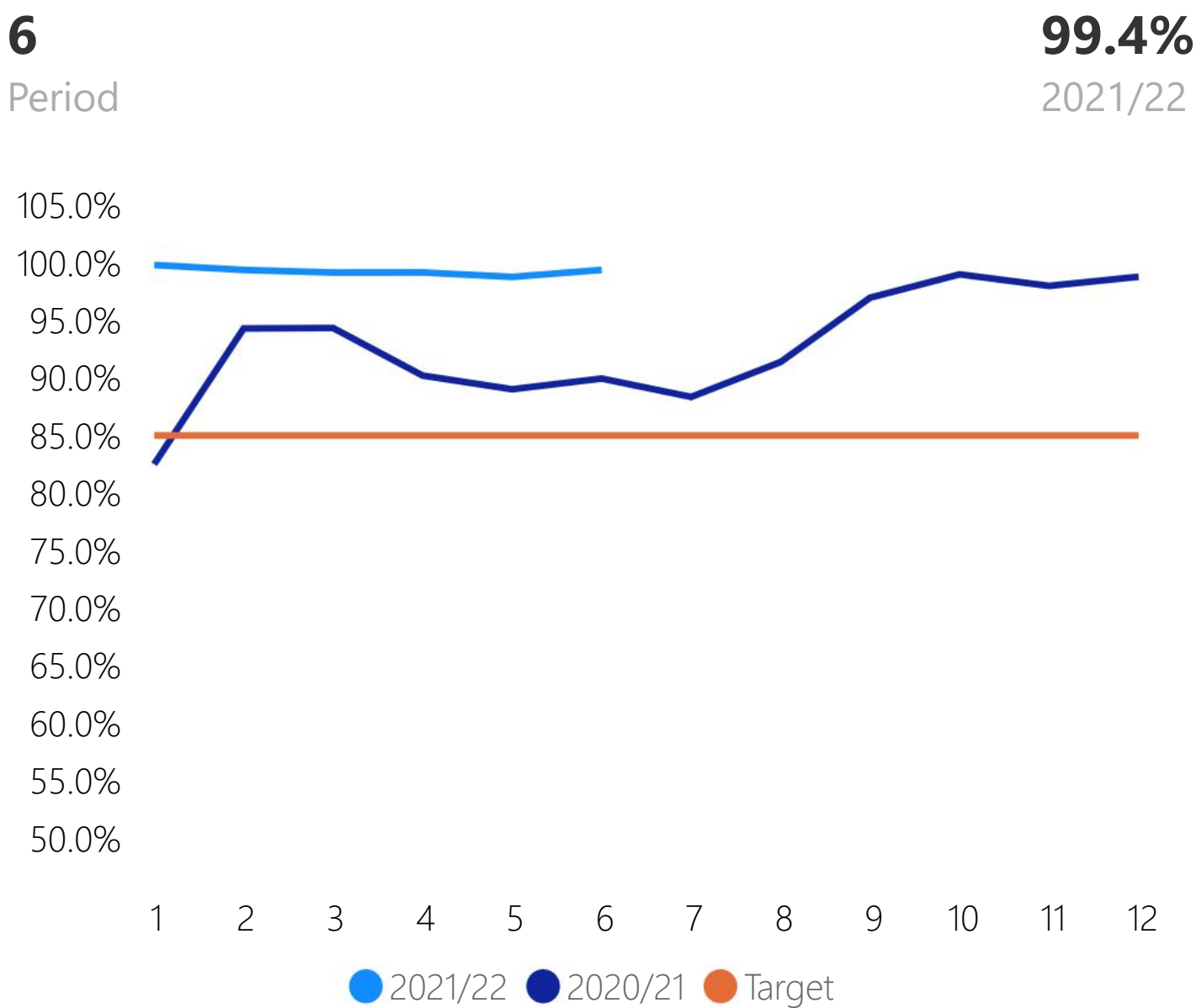
Performance has improved during September remains above target. 10 children did not have their visit in time during September.

% of Cared for Children with 3+ placements in the last 12 months



Performance remains stable and lower than target. There were 48 children that have had three of more placements in the last 12 months.

% of Cared for Children with an up to date Education Plan



Performance remains stable and above target.

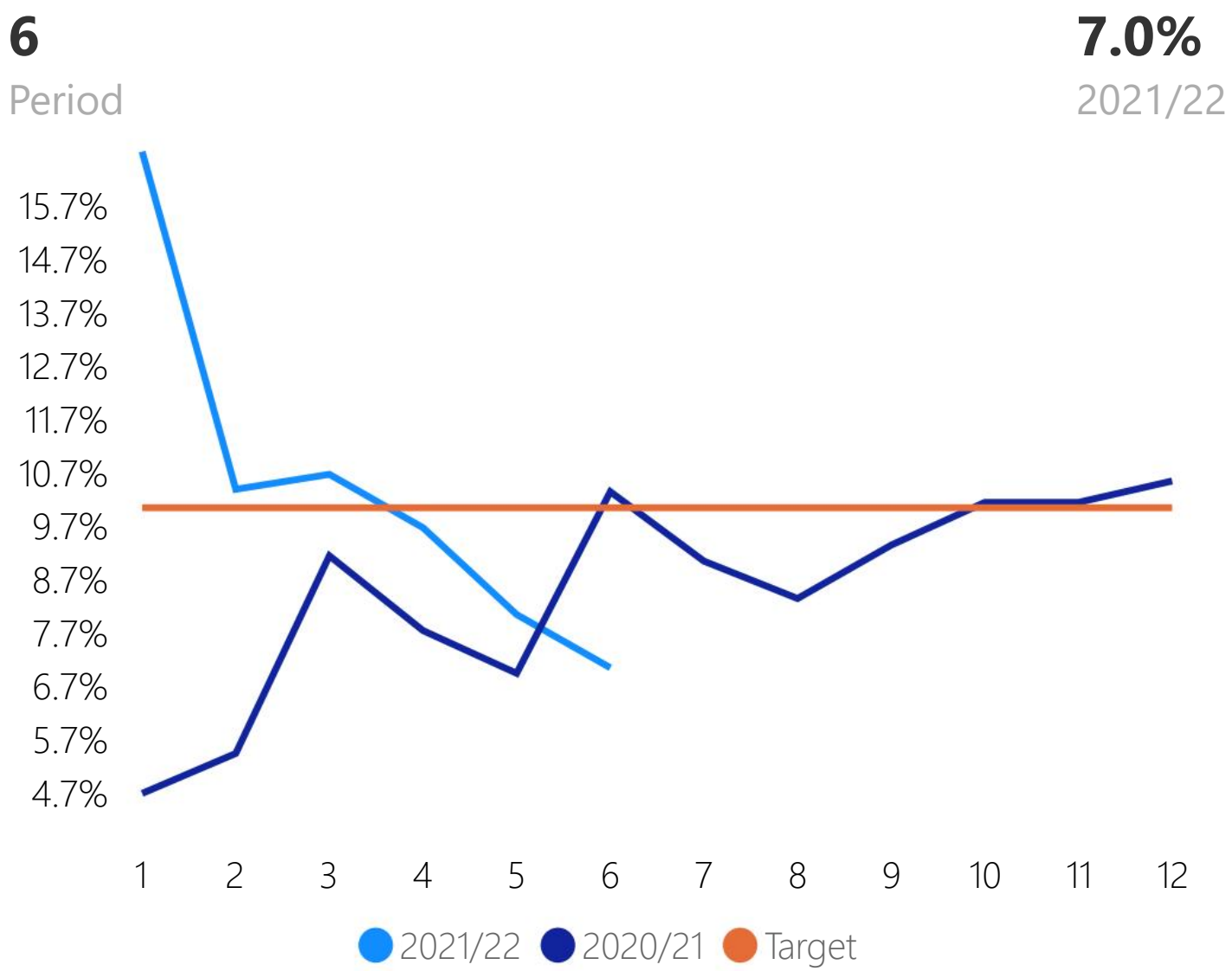
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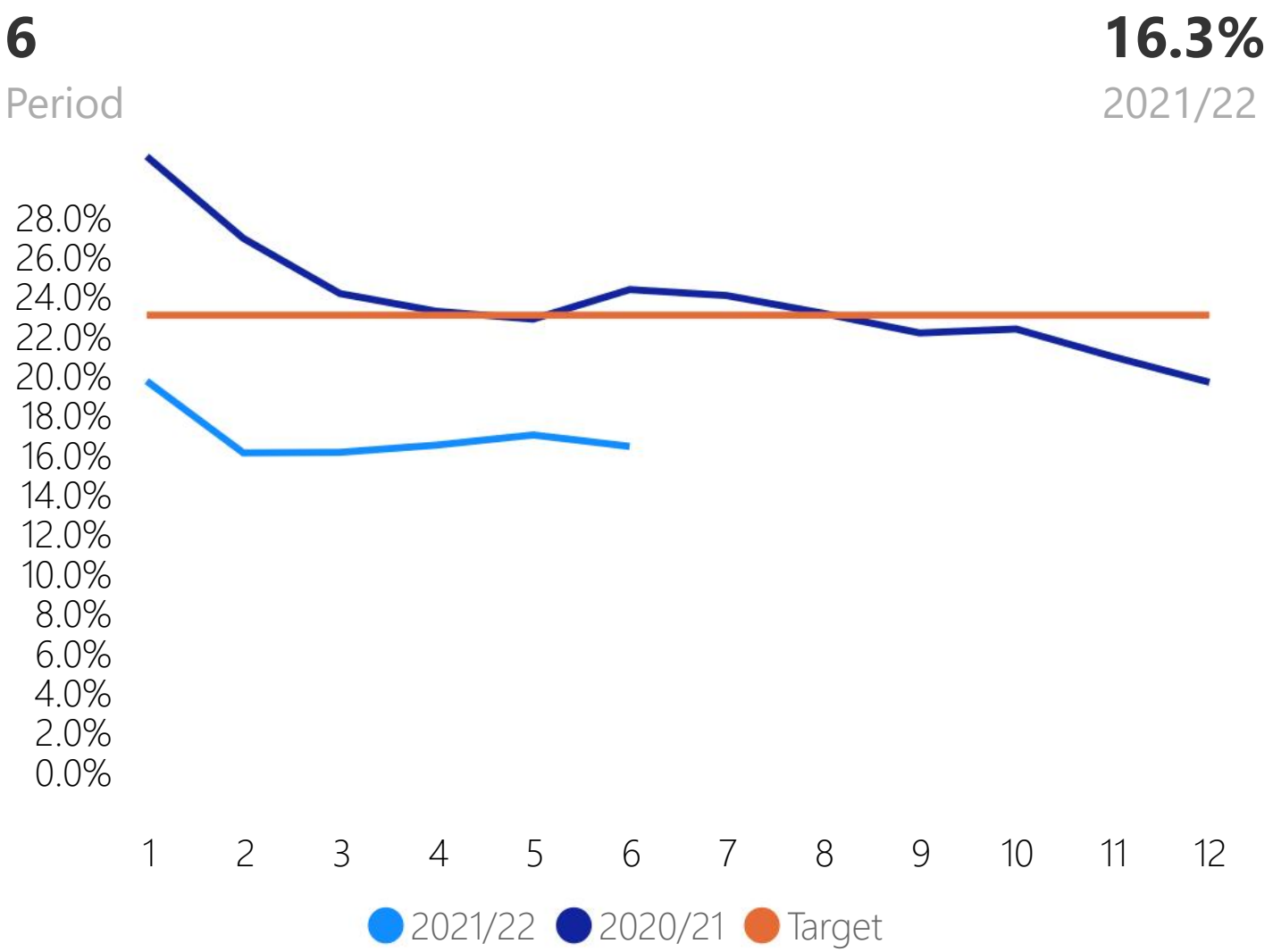


TfC Supporting Measures (Contractual and City Plan)

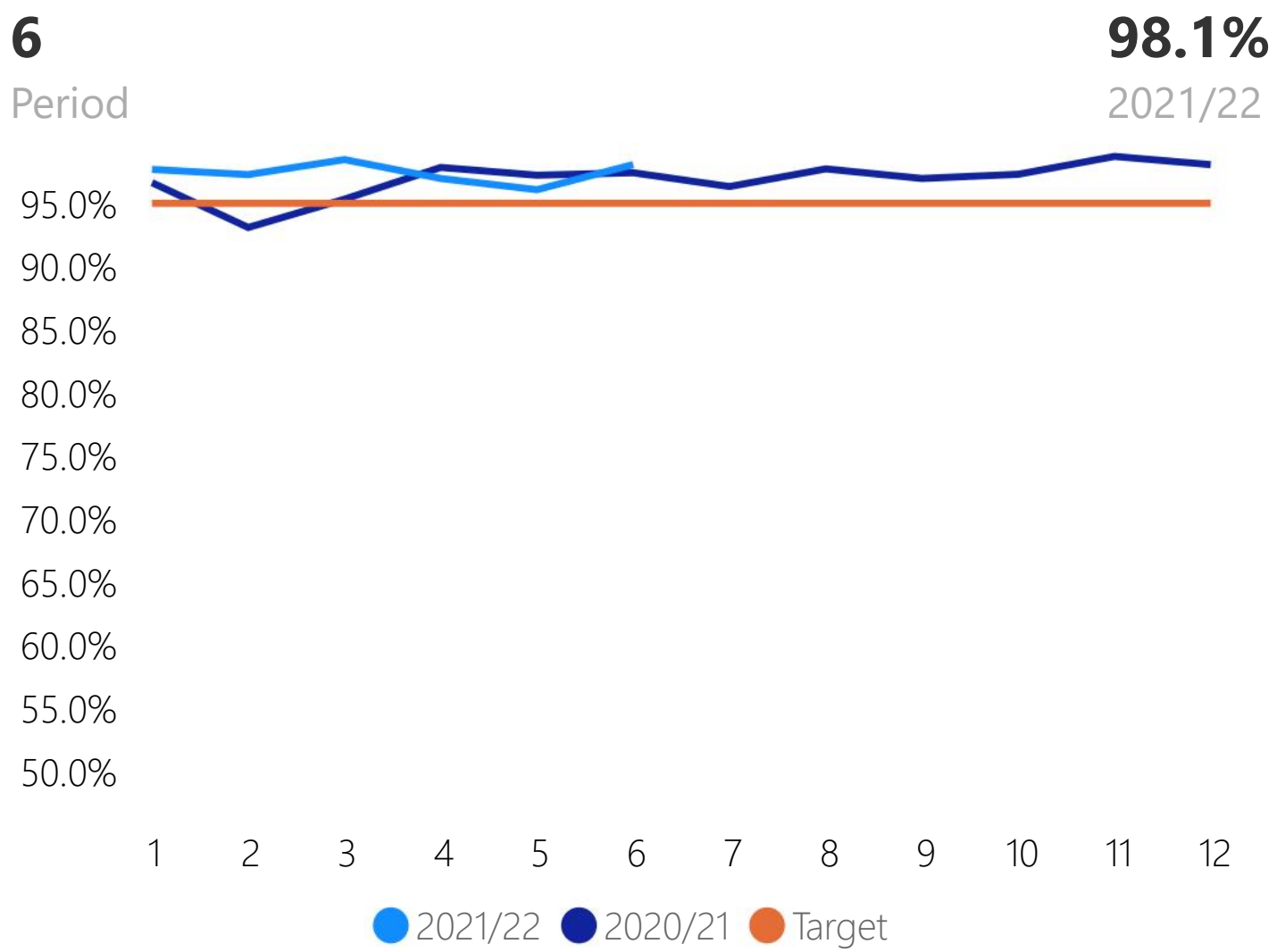
% of children subject to a repeat child protection plan (within 2 years)



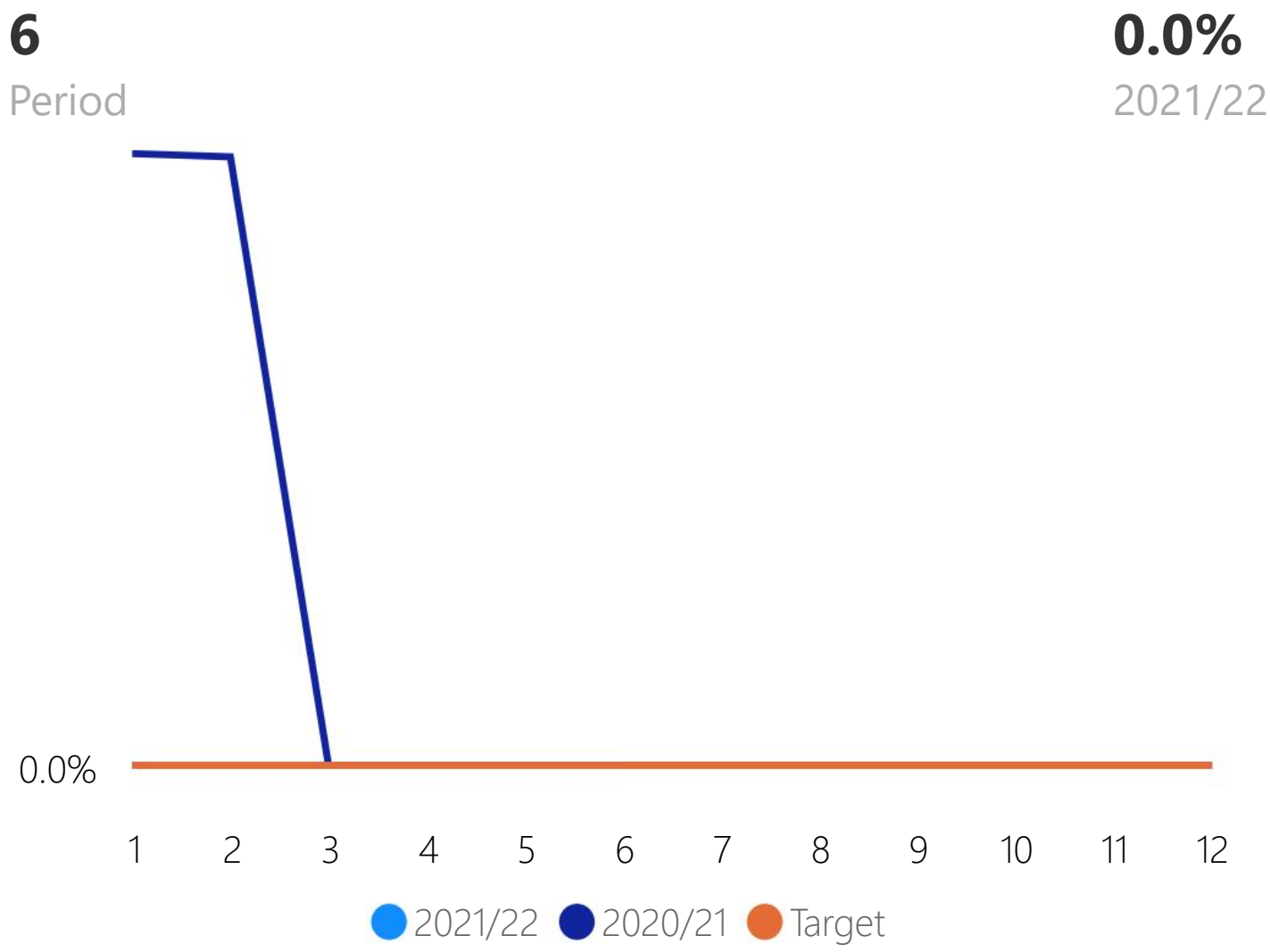
% of referrals that were re-referrals within 12 months



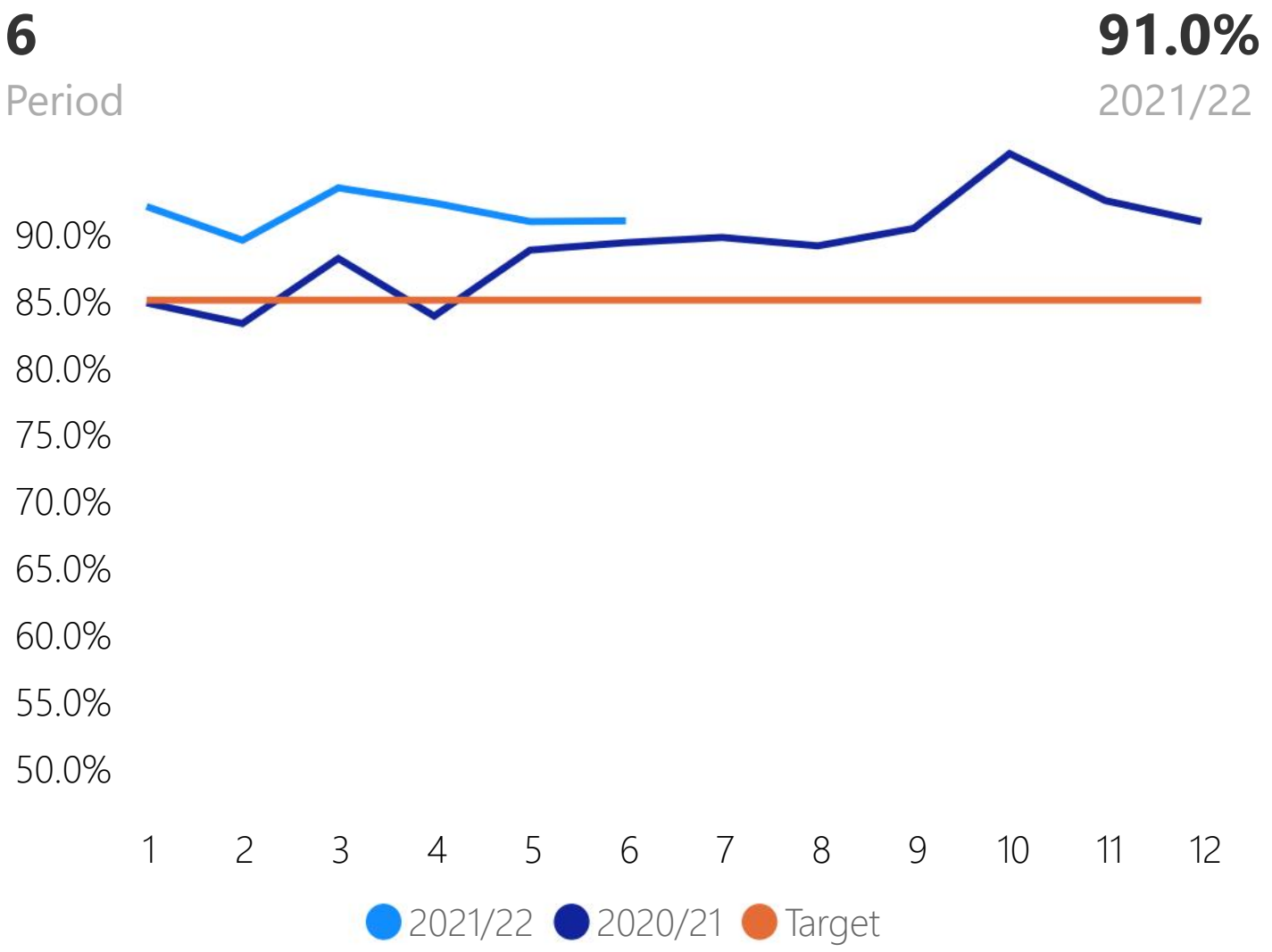
% of Cared for Children who have received a statutory visit within timescale



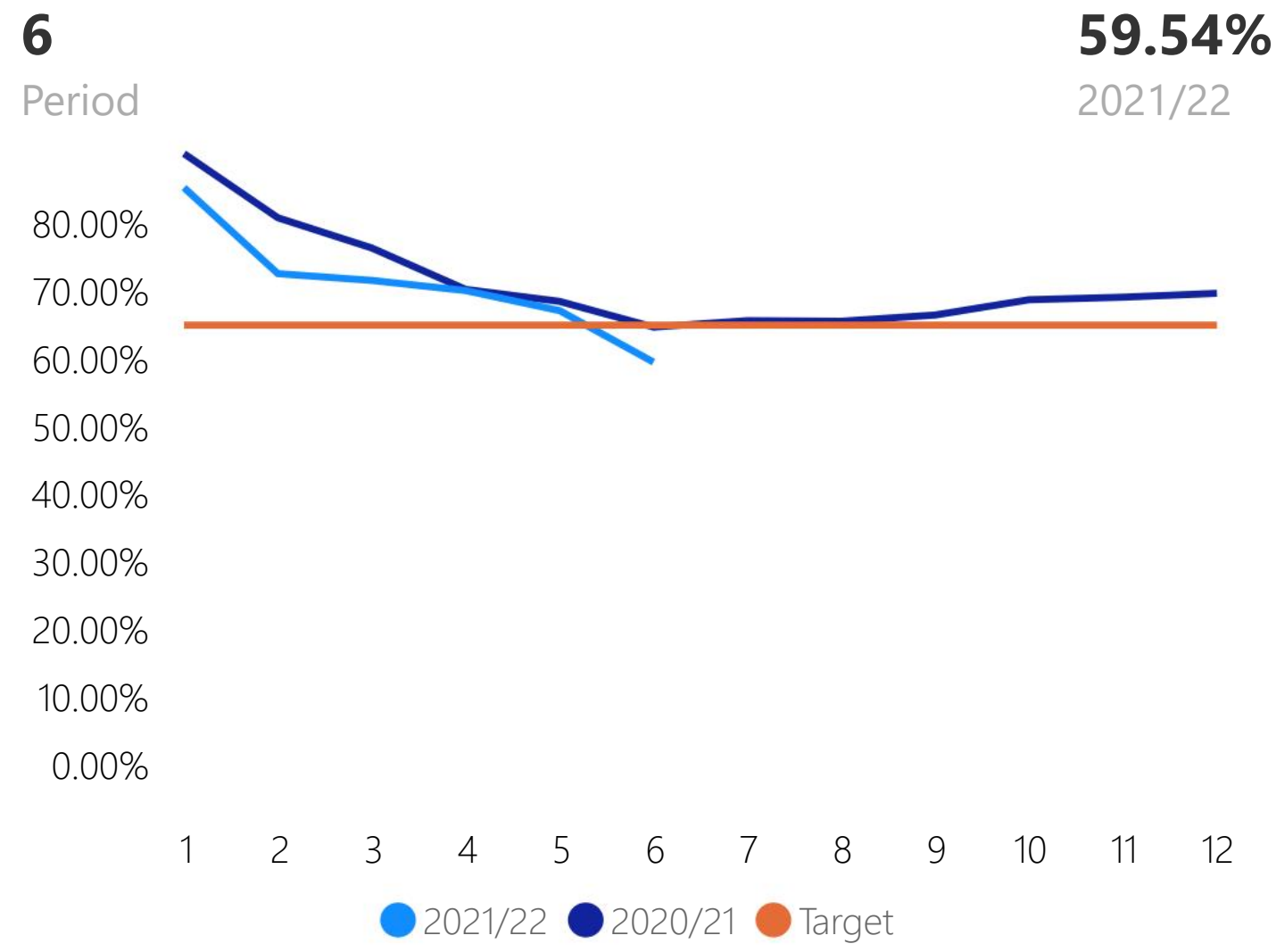
% of children subject to CP plan longer than 2 years



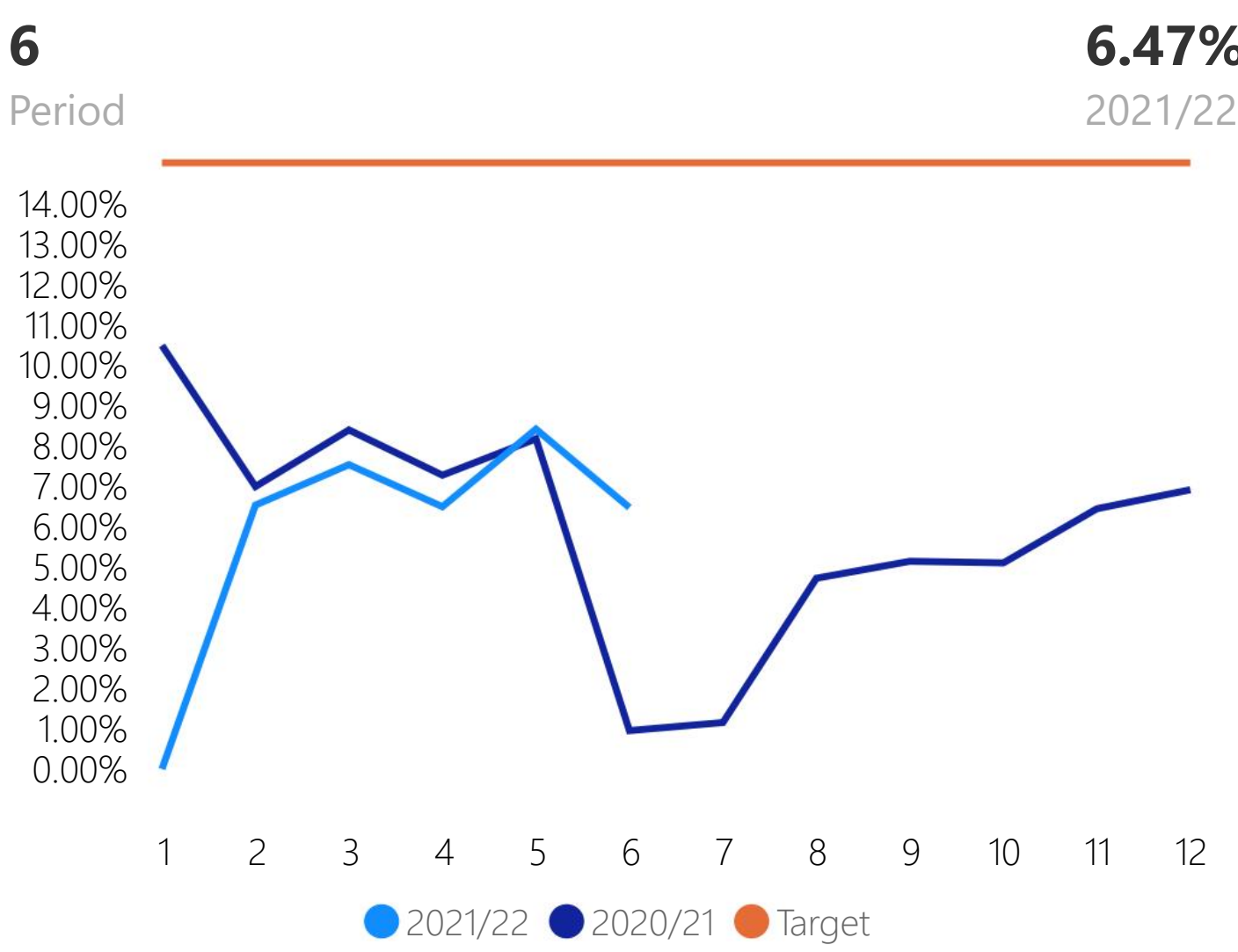
% of Care Experience Young Peopled contacted within 8 weeks (17-21)



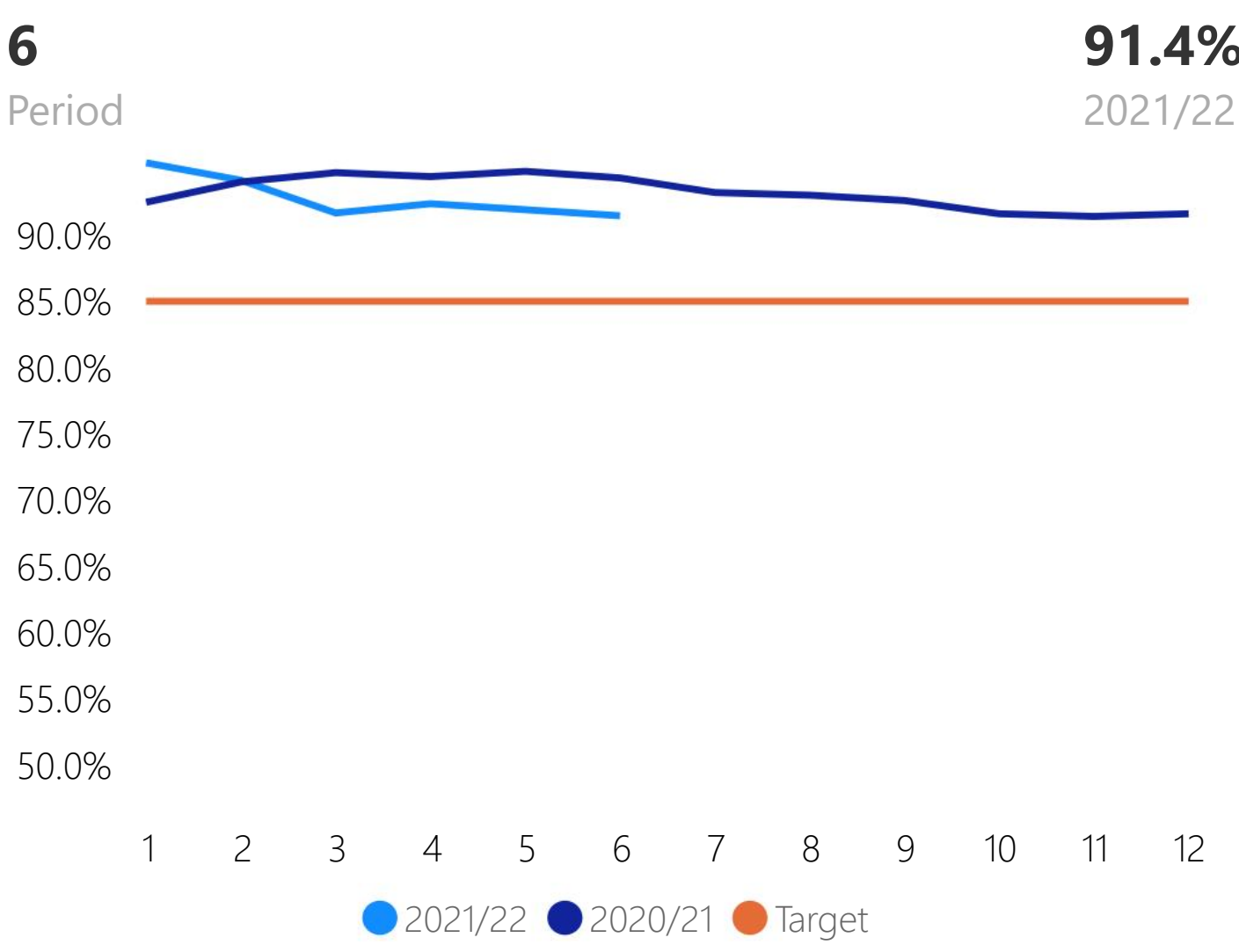
Proportion of Education Health Care plans issued in 20 weeks (excluding exception cases)



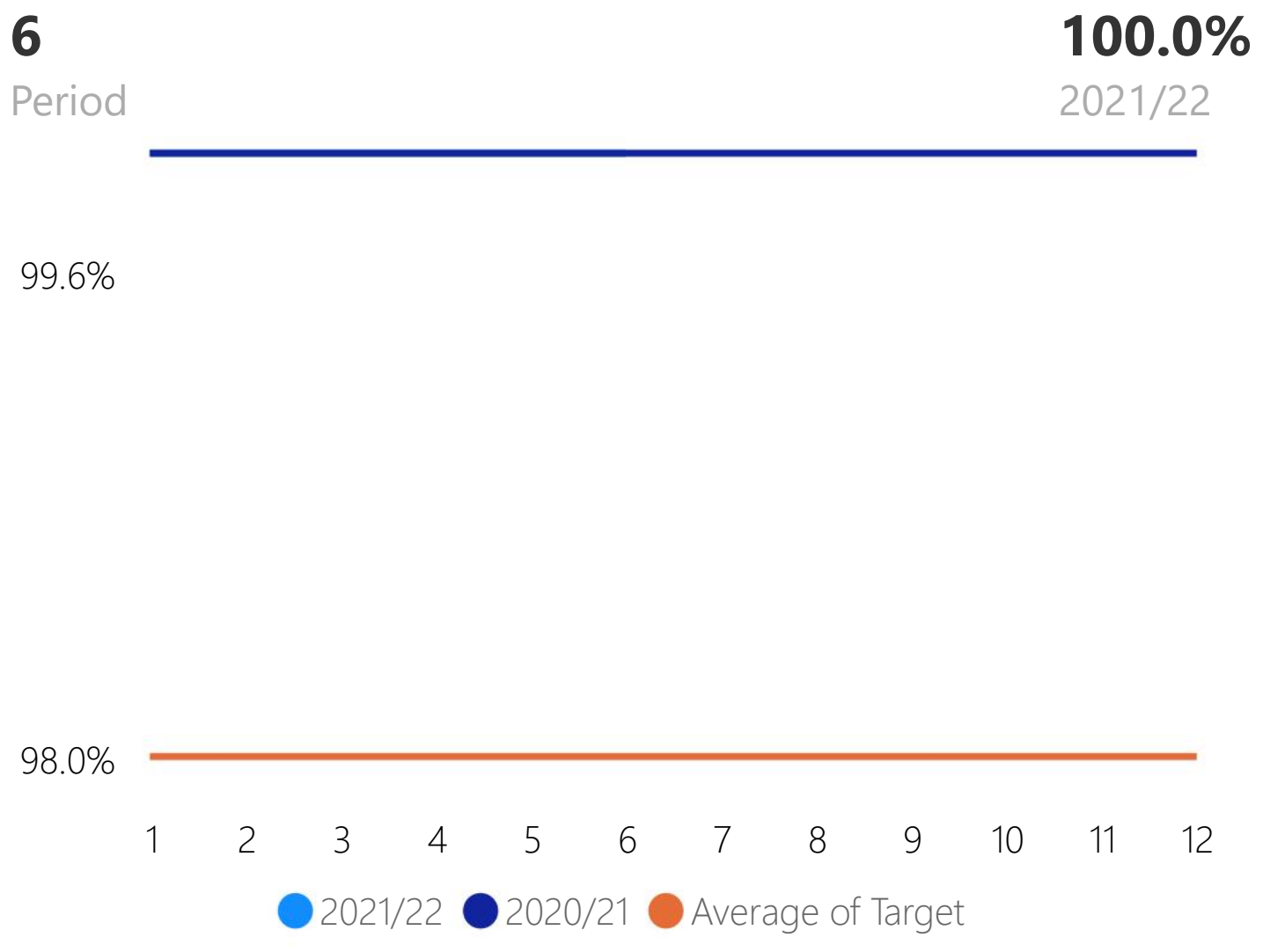
% of established social worker posts that are vacant



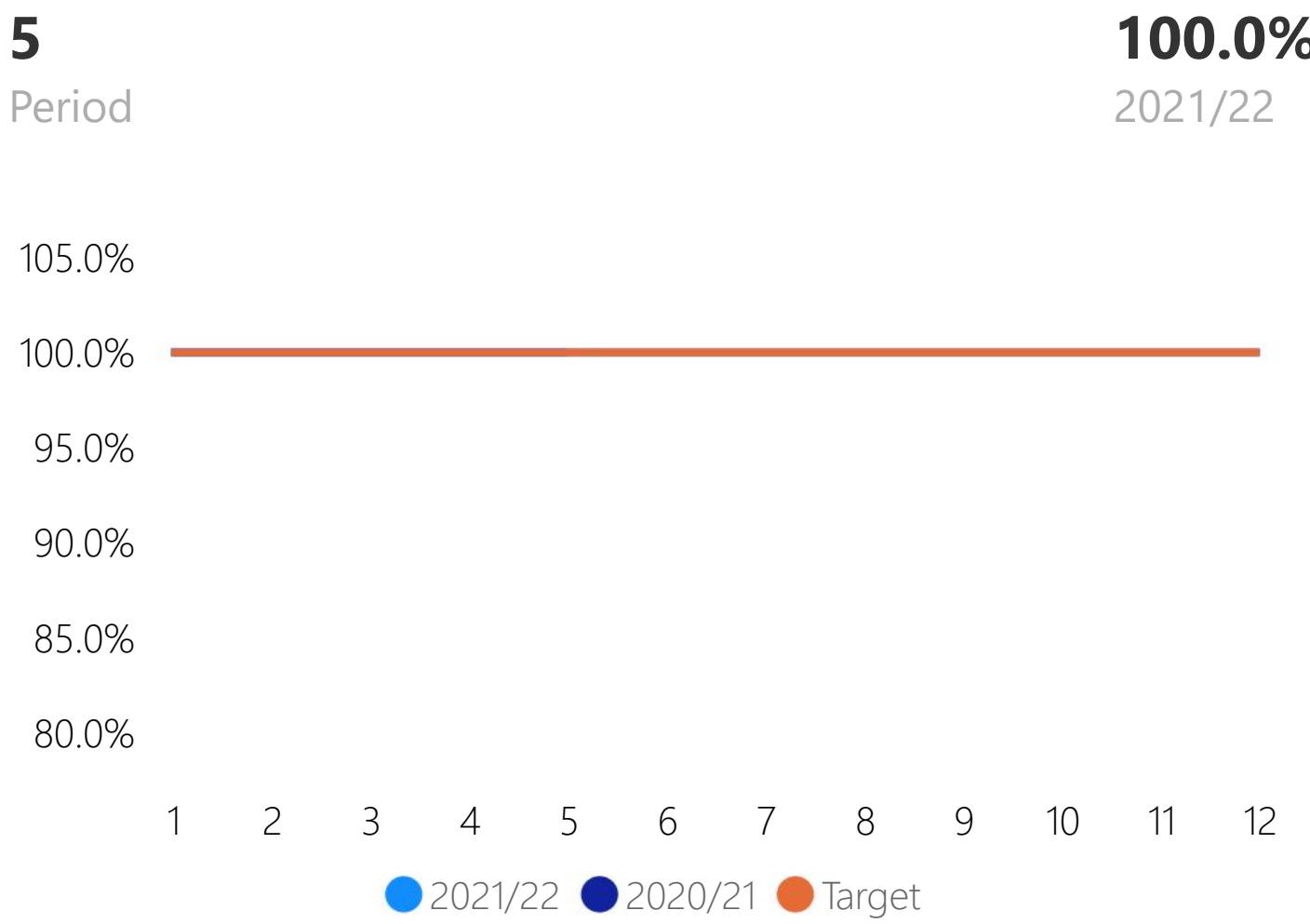
% of Child in Need assessments authorised within 45 wds



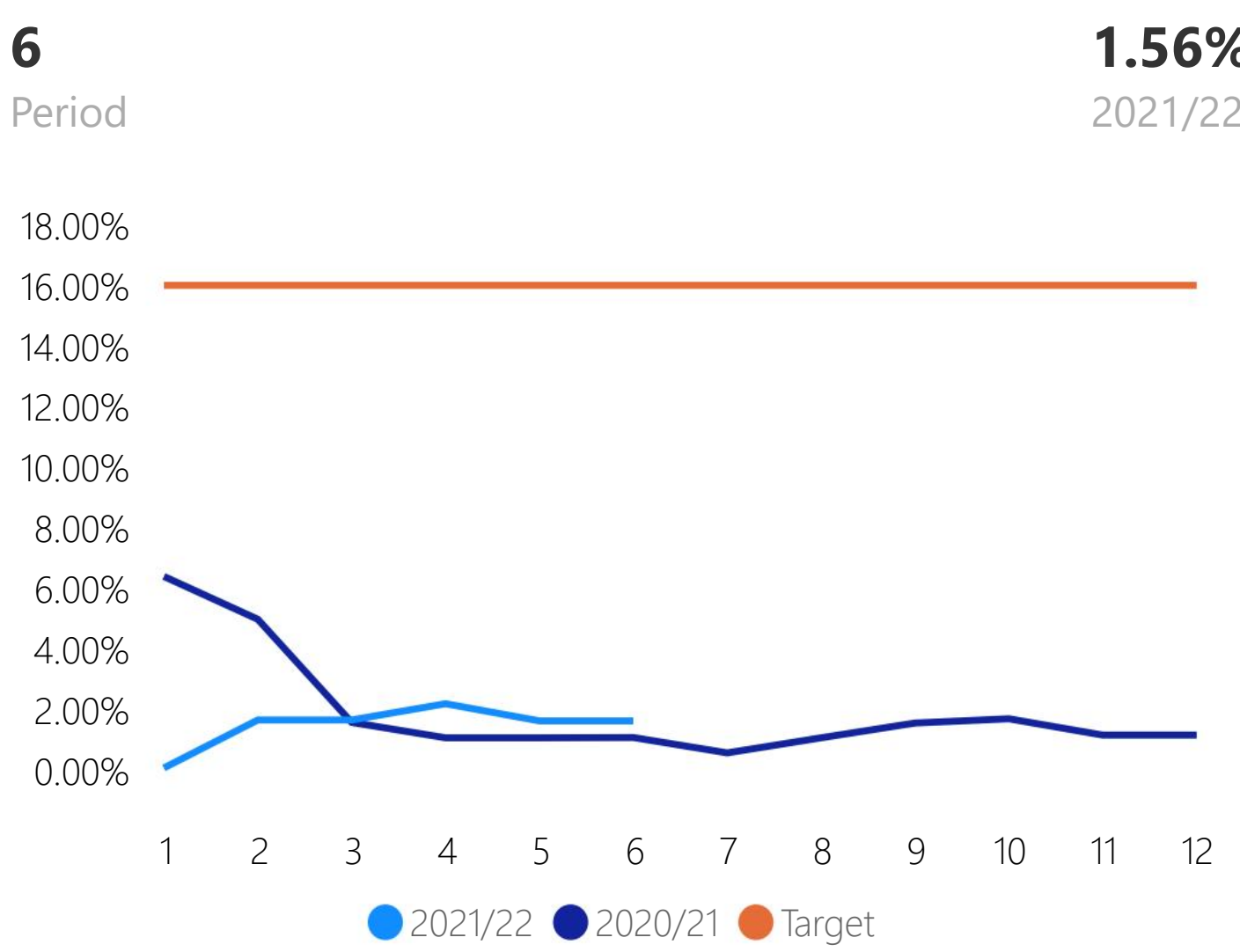
% of children identified at risk of MSET who have a completed MSET Framework



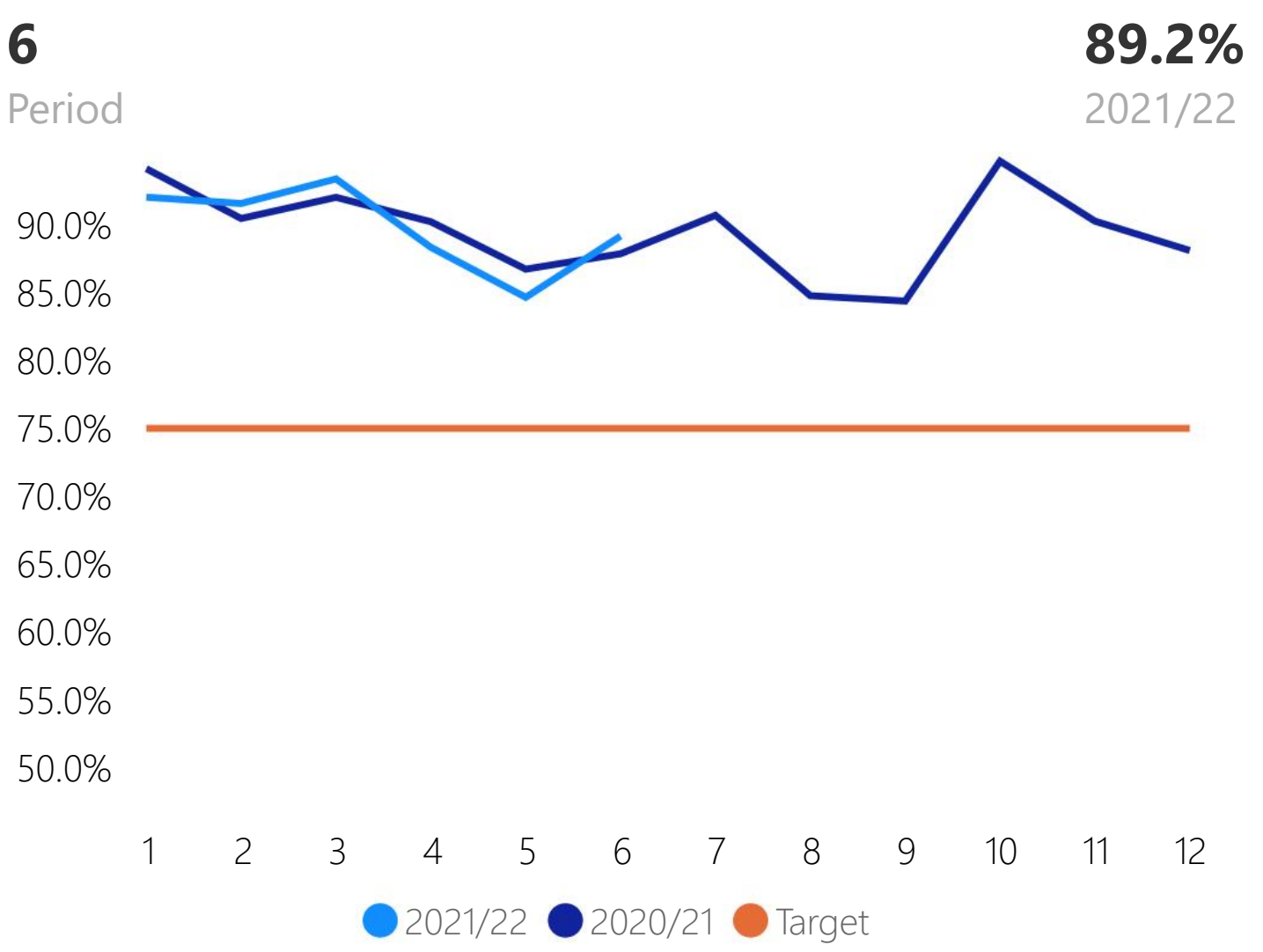
The provision of a detailed financial update report to the Executive Director of Corporate Resources within 5 days of the Company Board



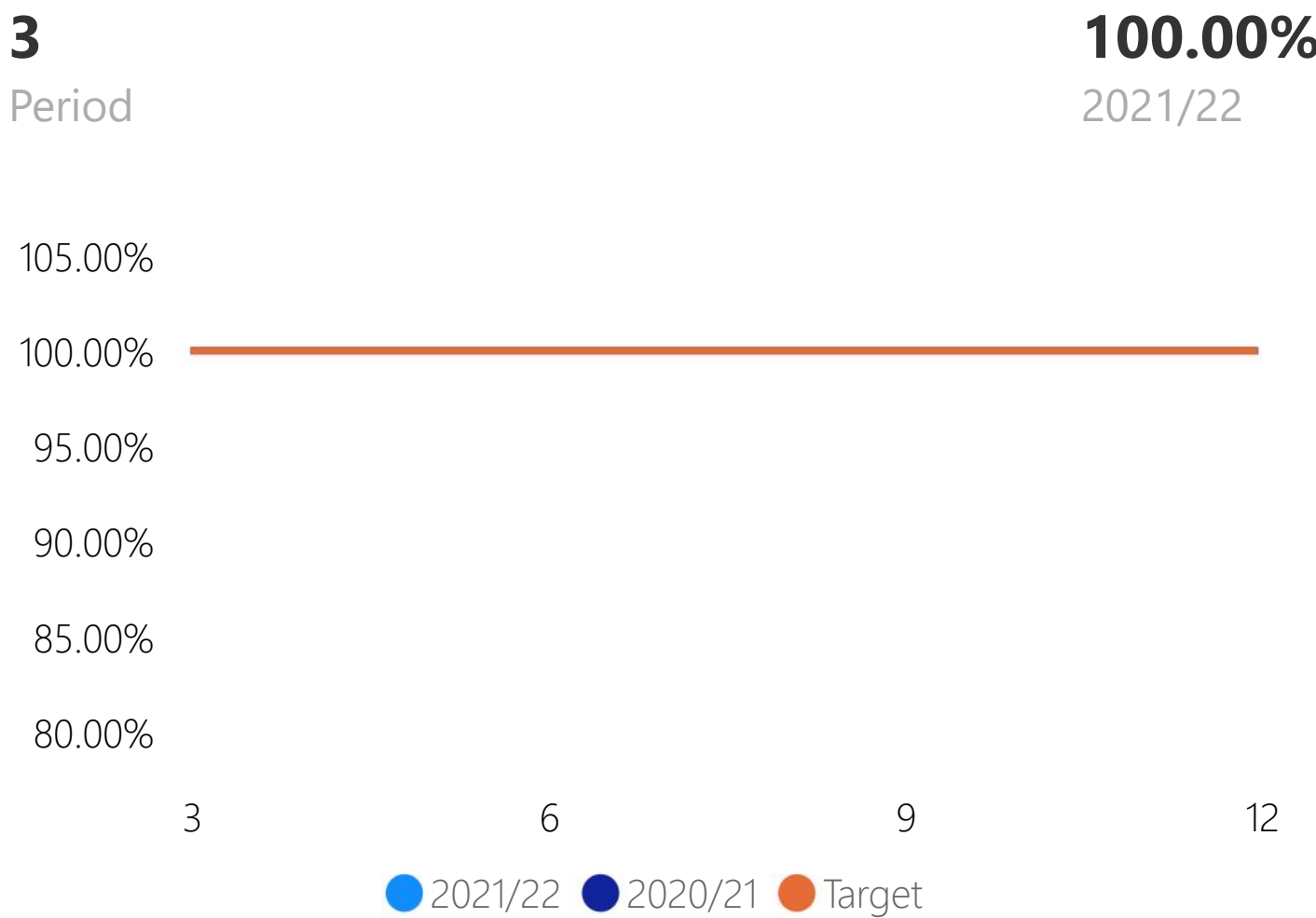
% of established social worker posts filled by agency/interim staff



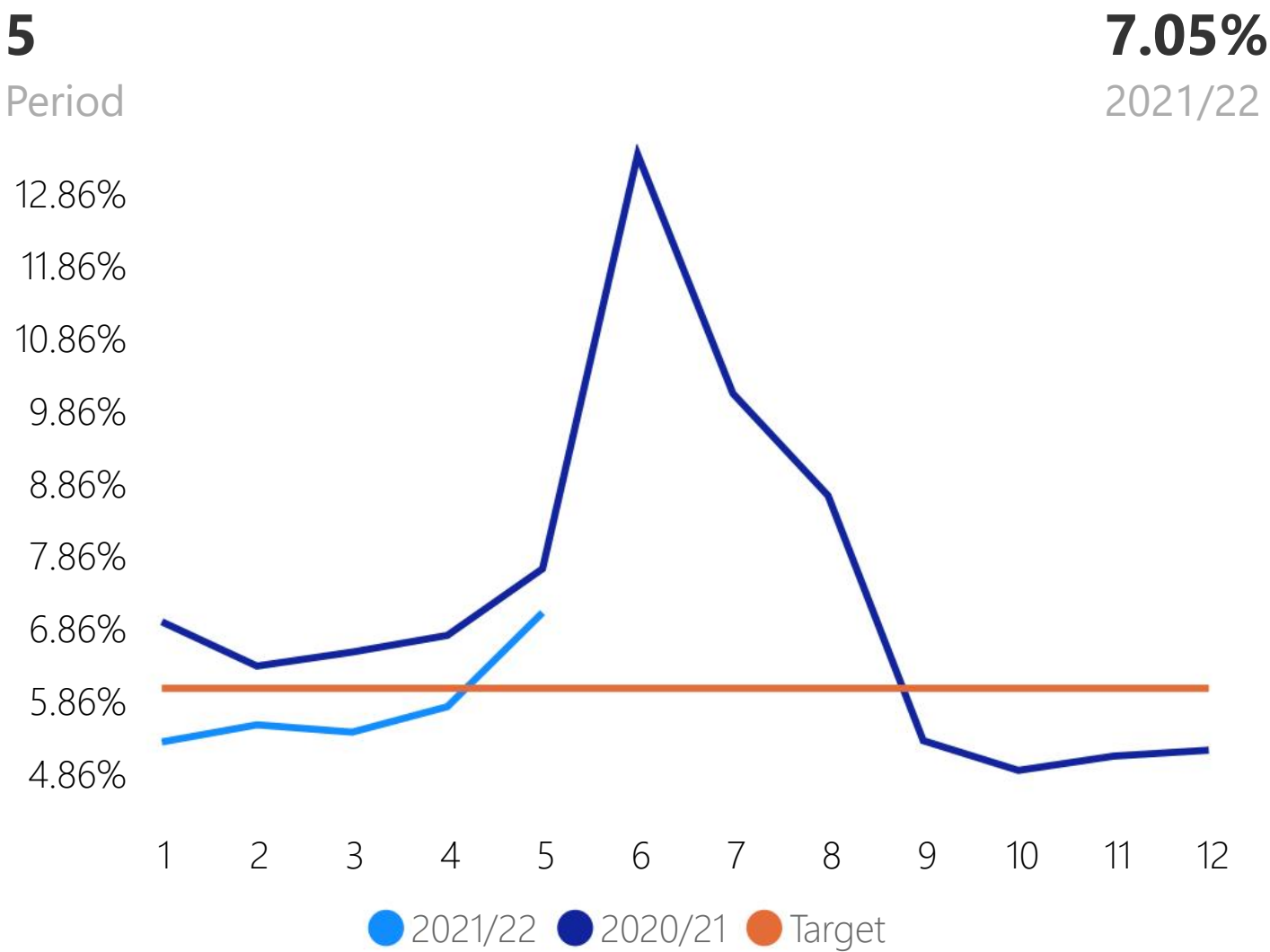
% of children subject to CIN plan who received a visit within timescale



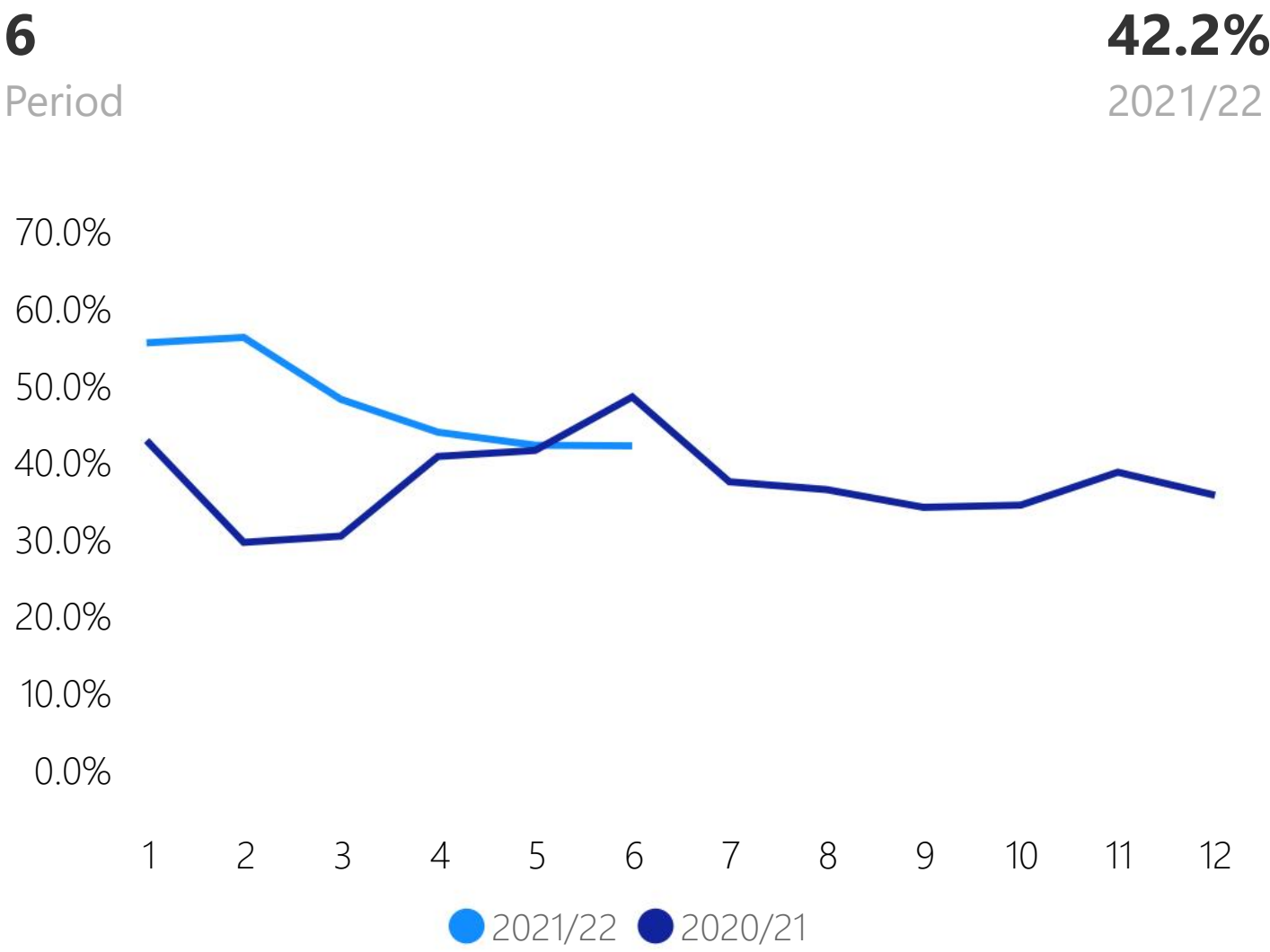
The provision to the S151 Officer of timely School's Finance Reports within 5 days of each Schools Forum meeting



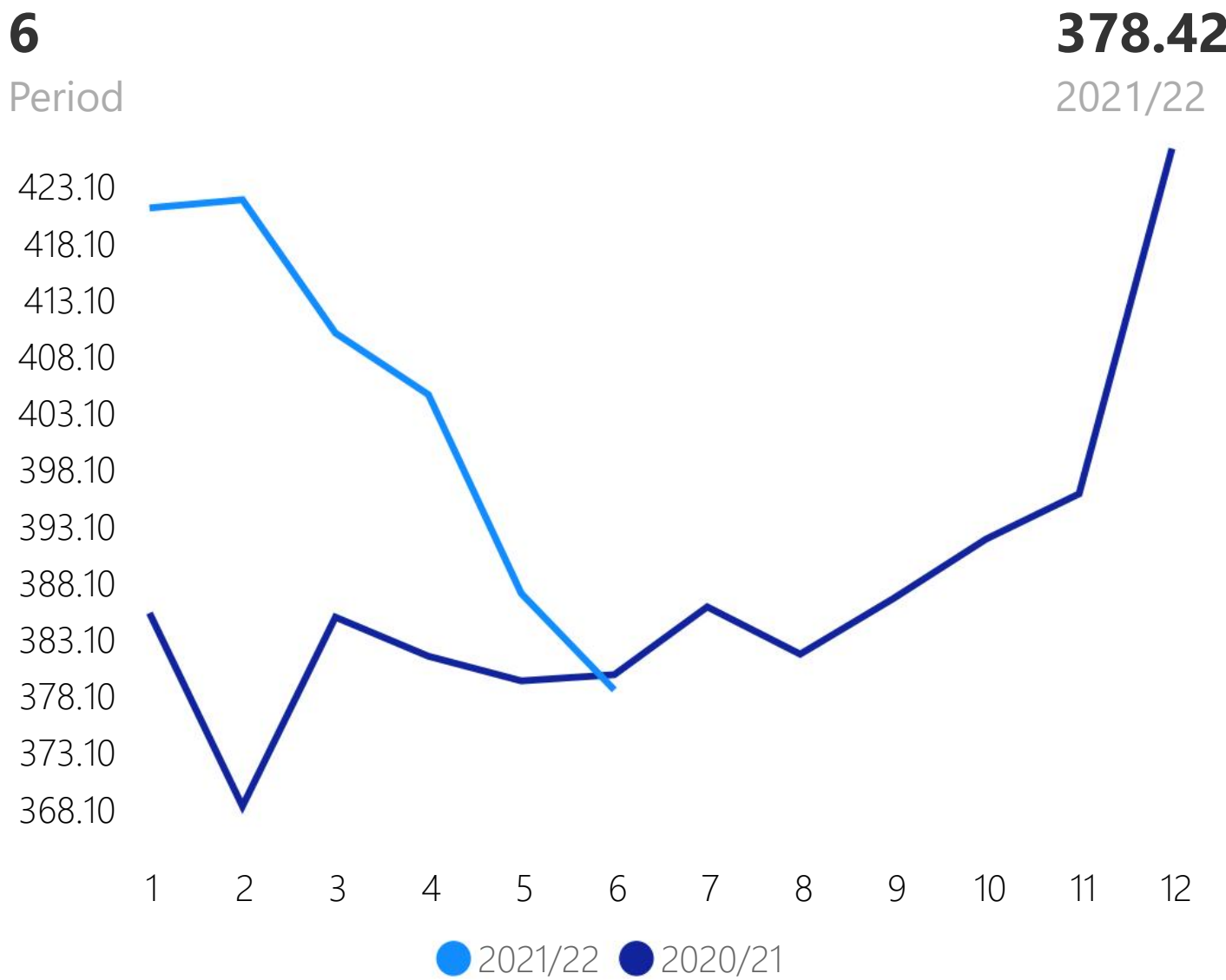
% of young people who are NEET or whose activity is not known (age 16 – 17)



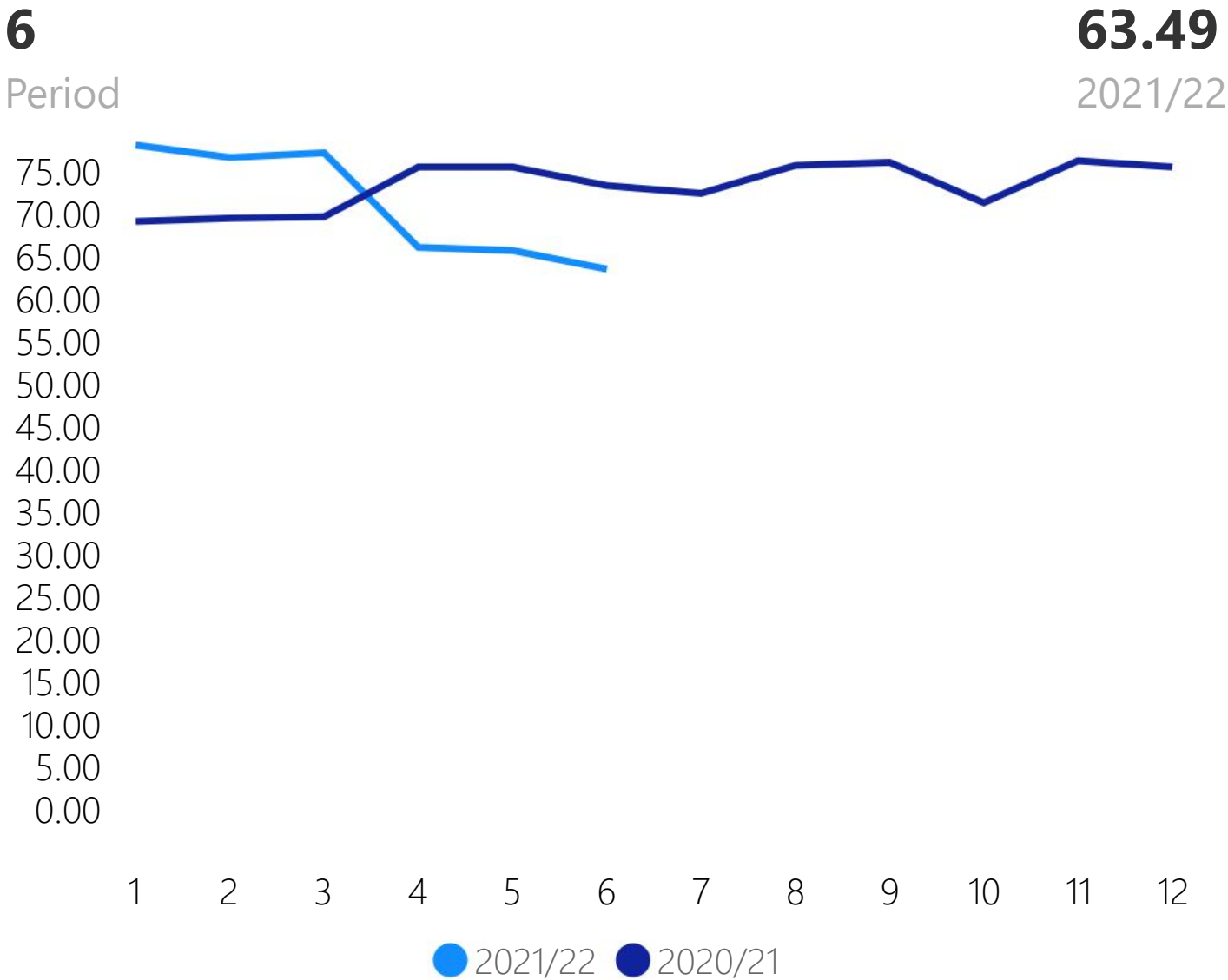
% of Cared for Children with a single plan of permanence by second review



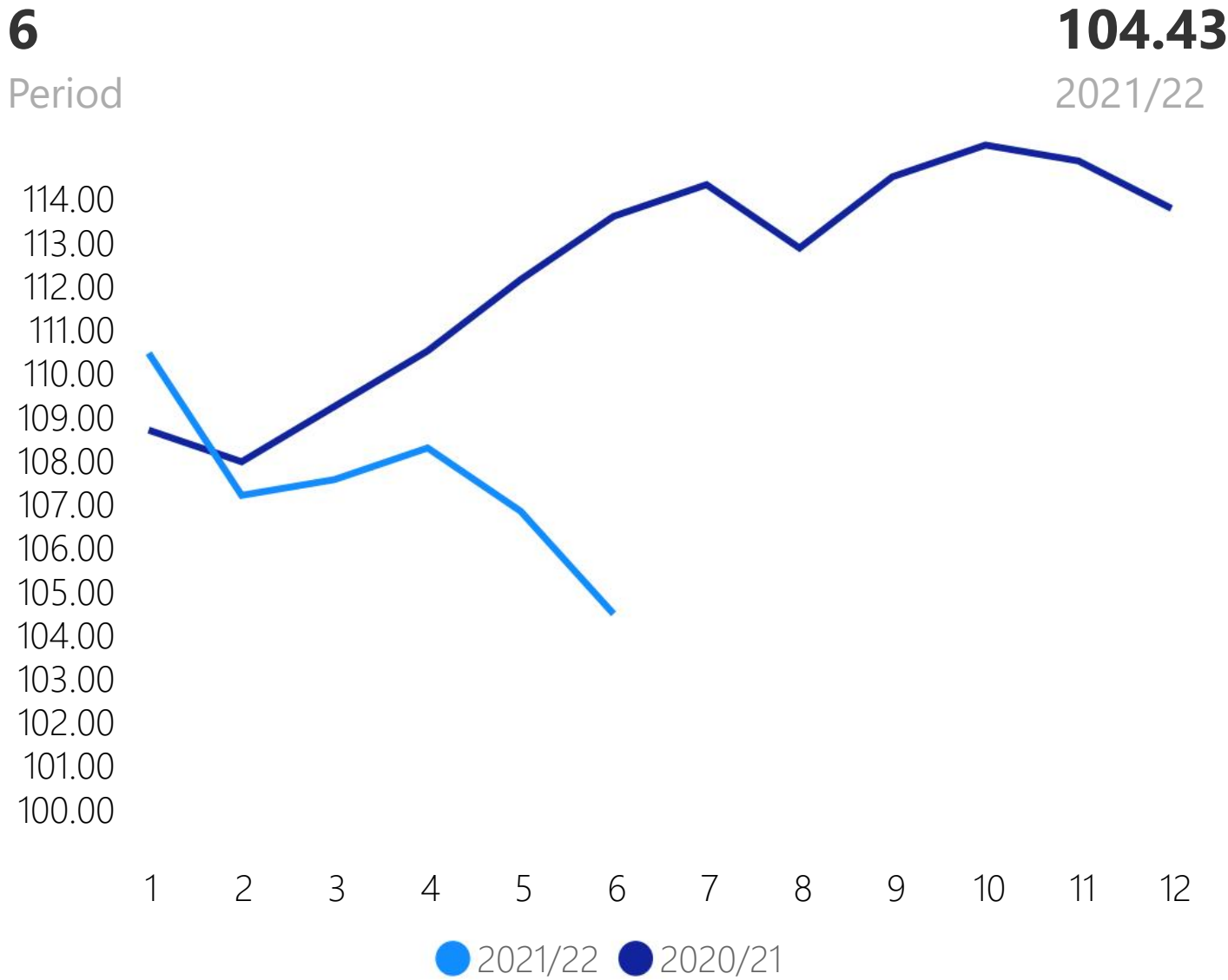
Rate of CIN (per 10K population)



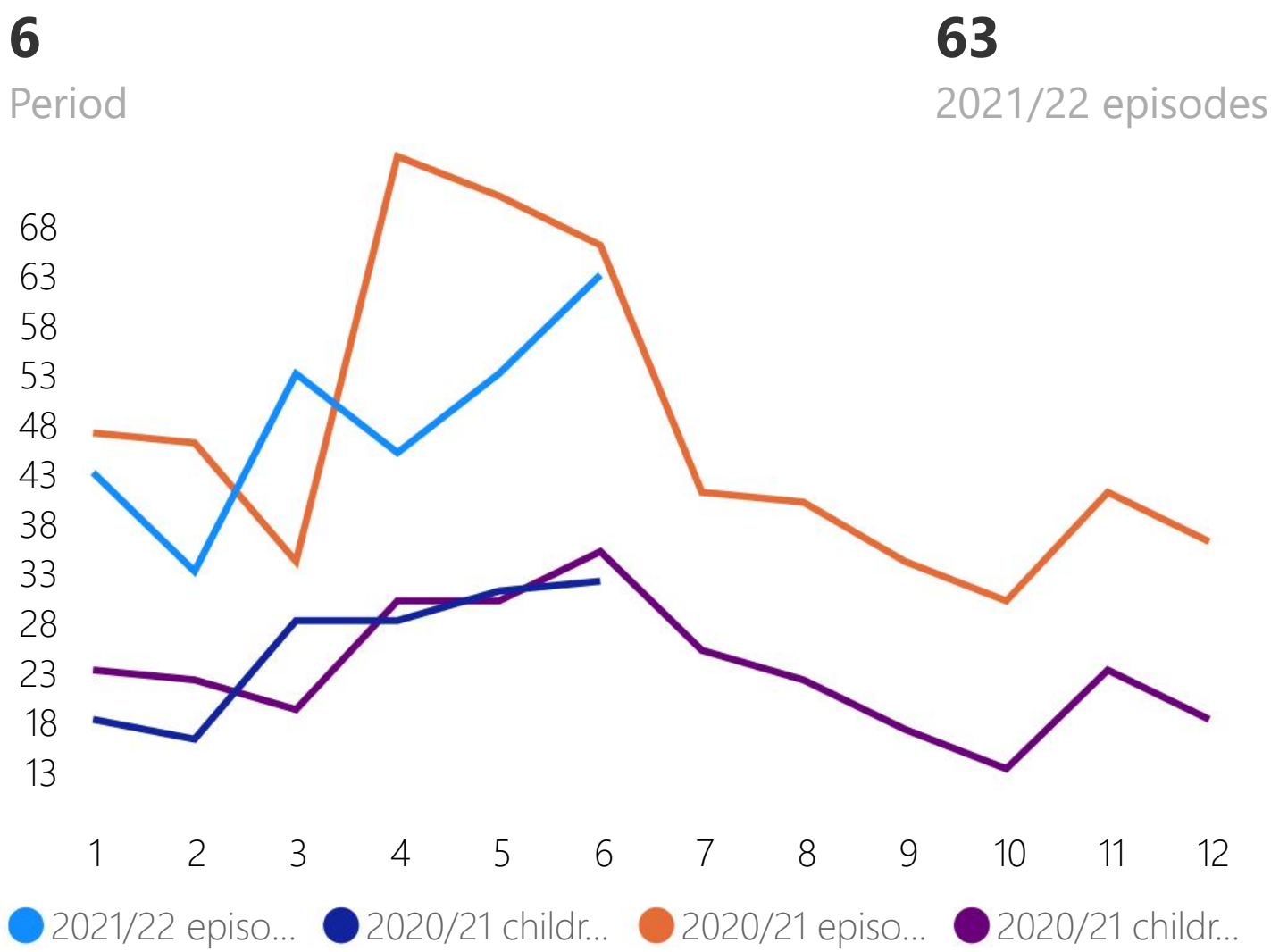
Rate of CP (per 10K population)



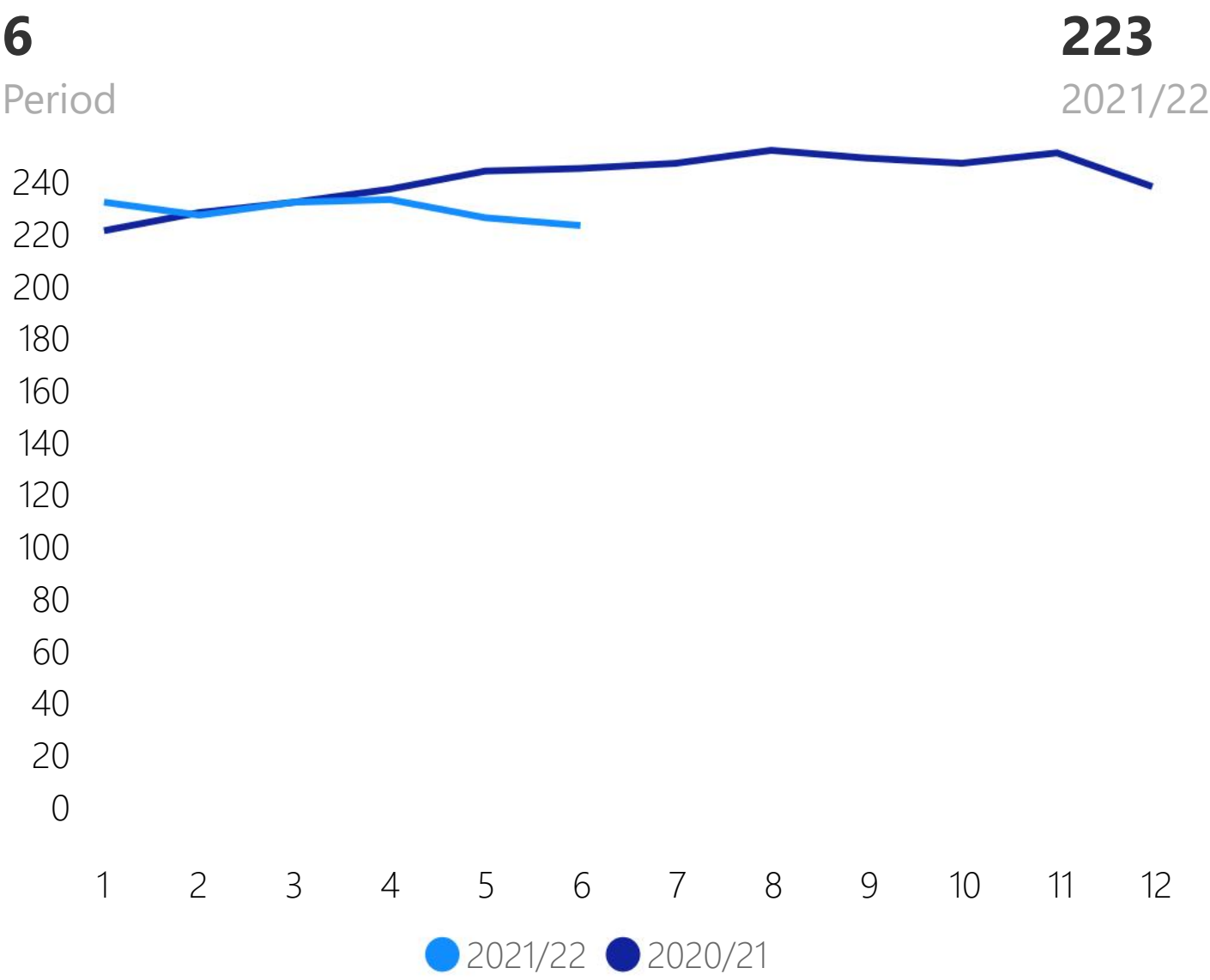
Rate of CfC (per 10K population)



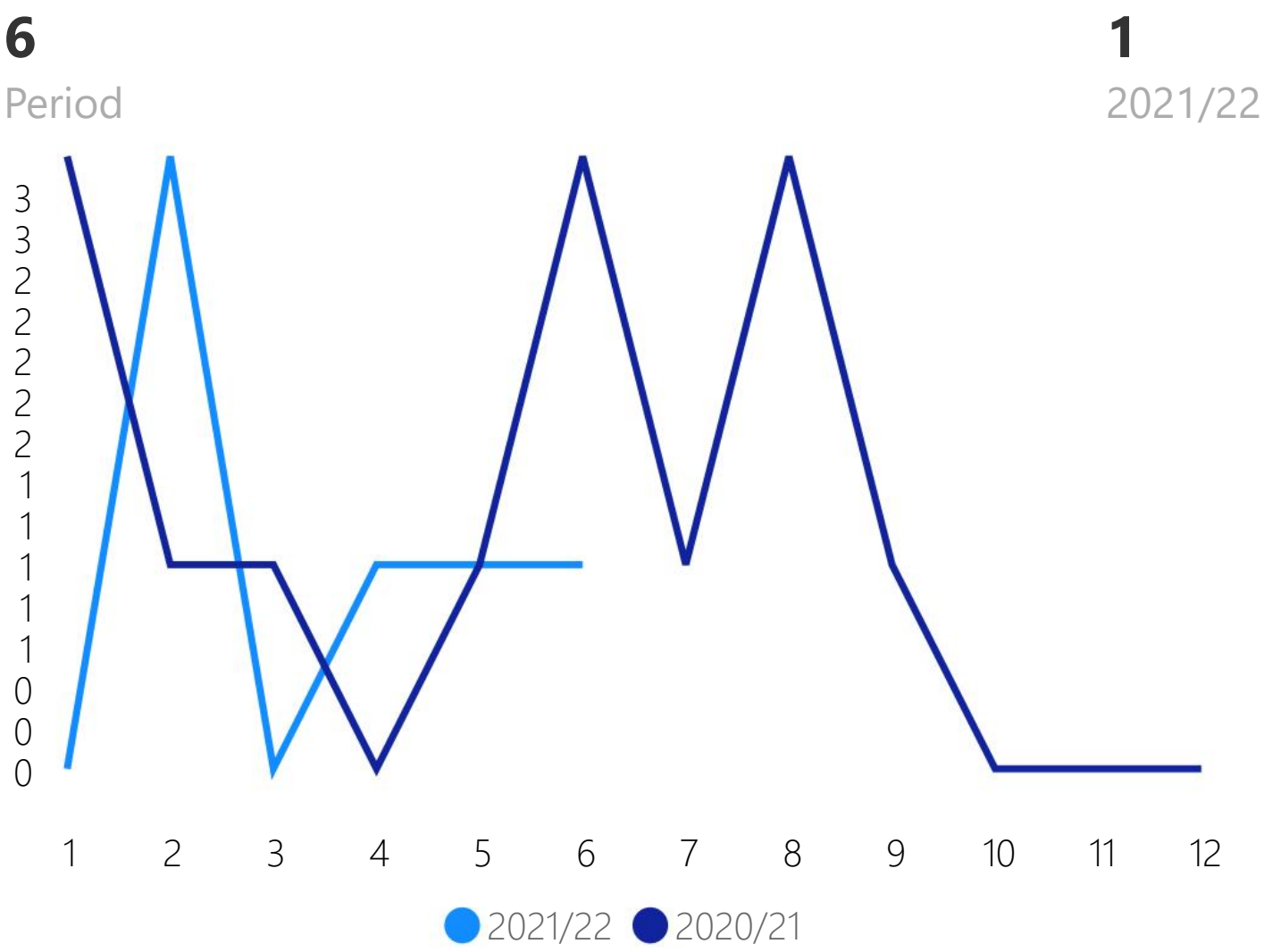
Number of missing from care episodes (& children)



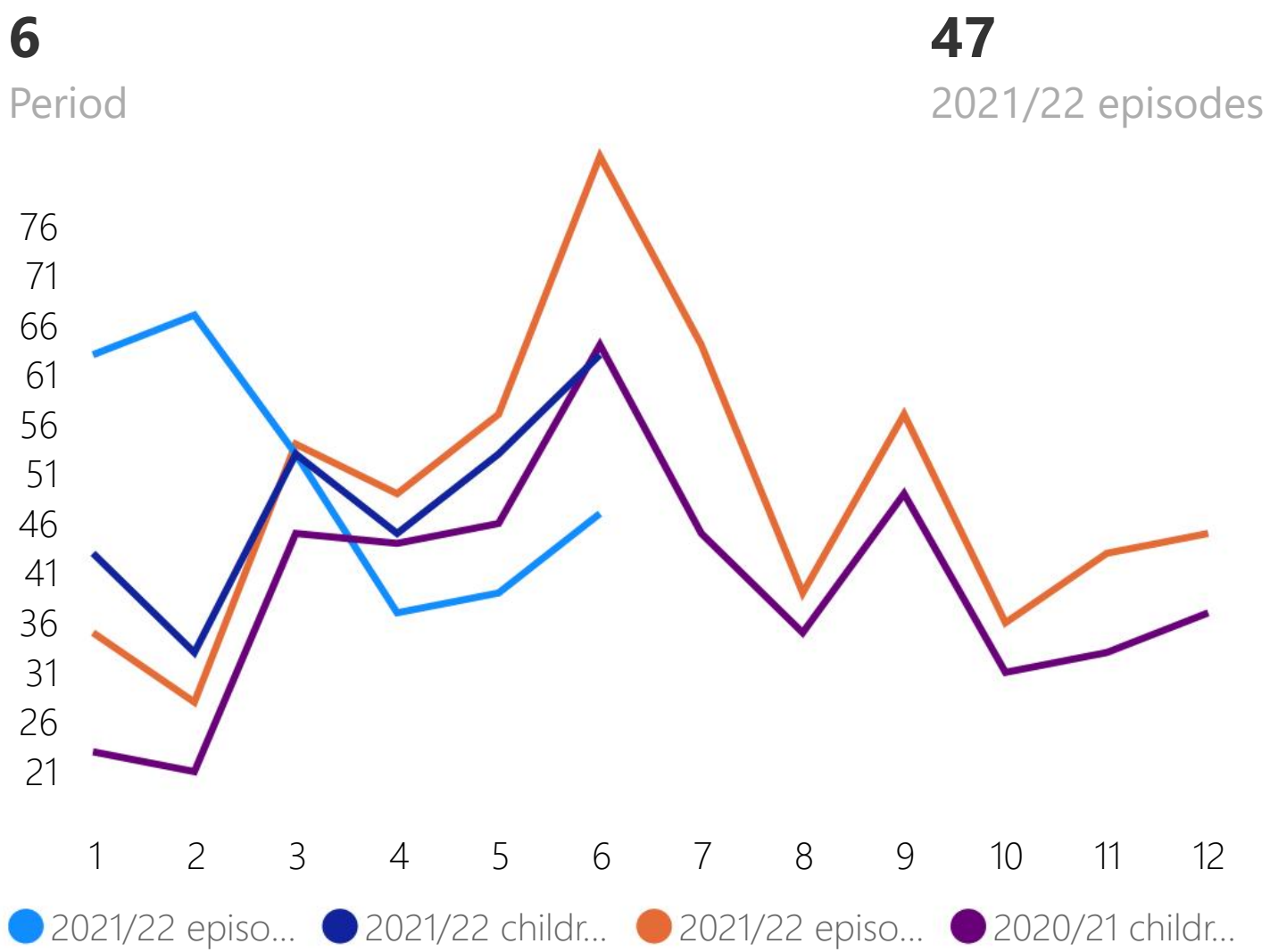
Number of internal foster carers



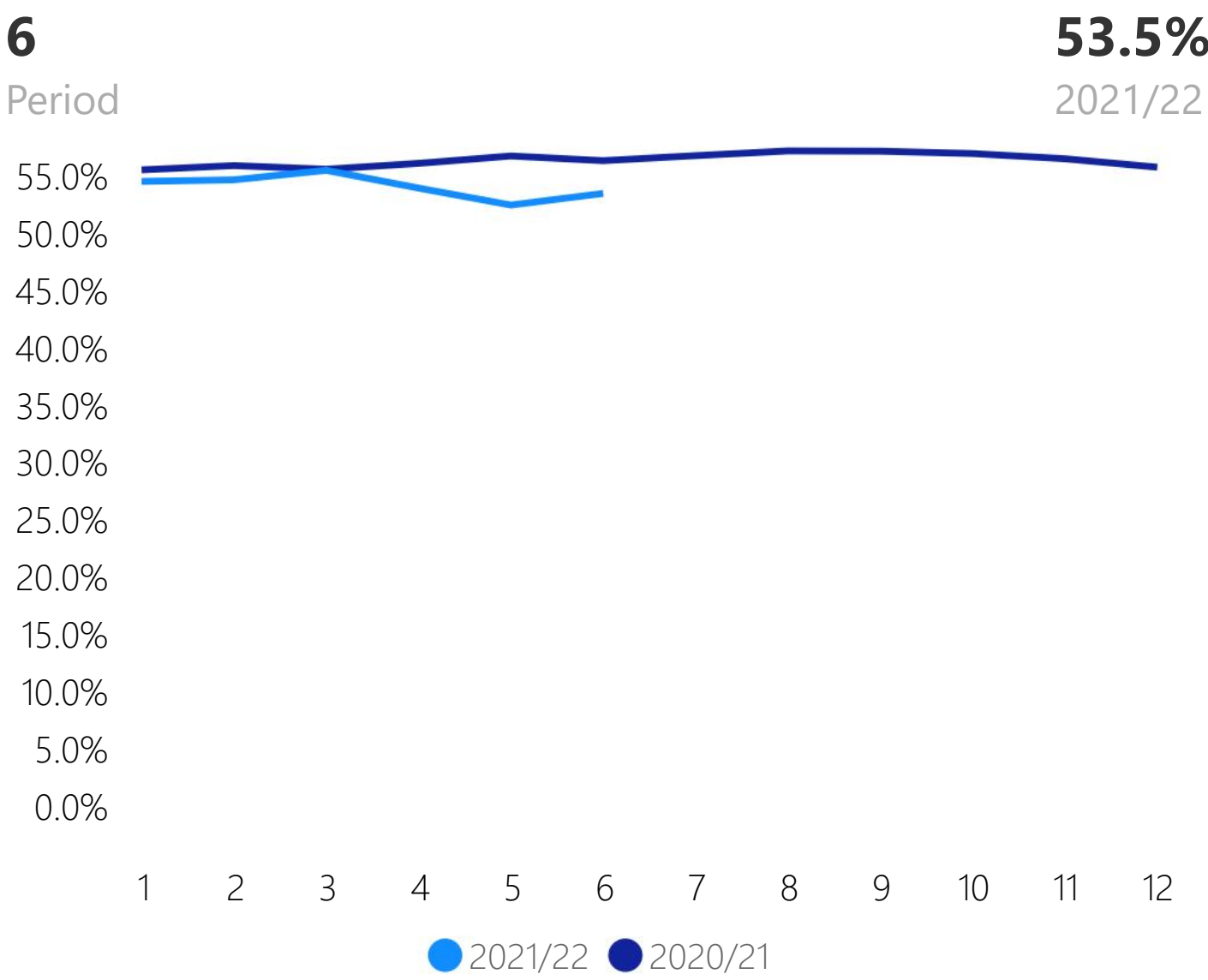
Number of CfC who have had unplanned placement moves in the period



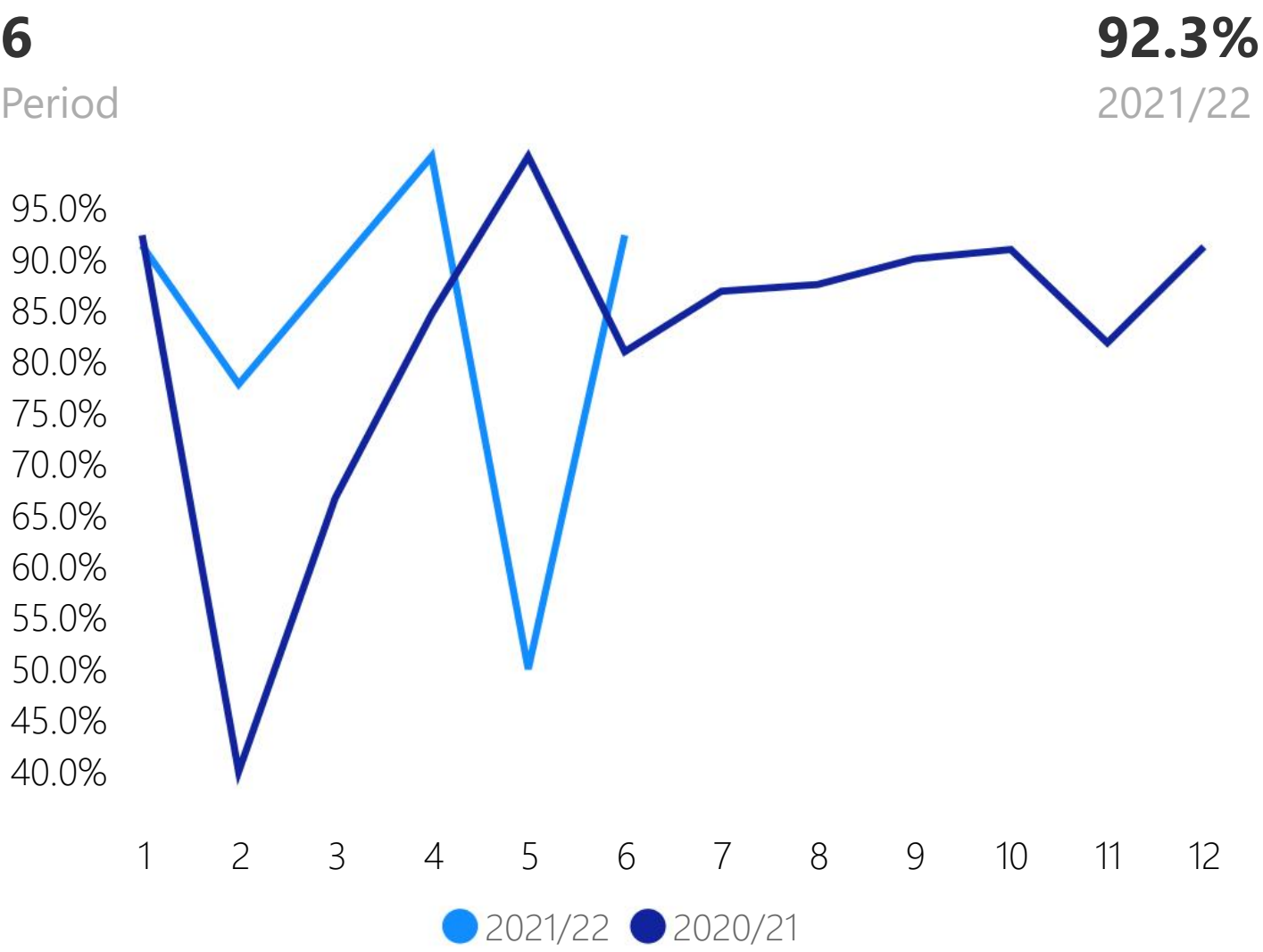
Number of missing from home episodes (& children)



% of children placed with internal foster carers



% of Early Help cases that were closed with two or more successful outcomes (Partner)



% of care experienced young people in suitable accommodation (19-21)

Period

These charts are blank as the data has not yet been released. They will be updated during the year, once the releases take place

% of care experienced young people who are in employment, education or training (19-21)

Period

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Additional TfC City Plan
measures (non contractual)

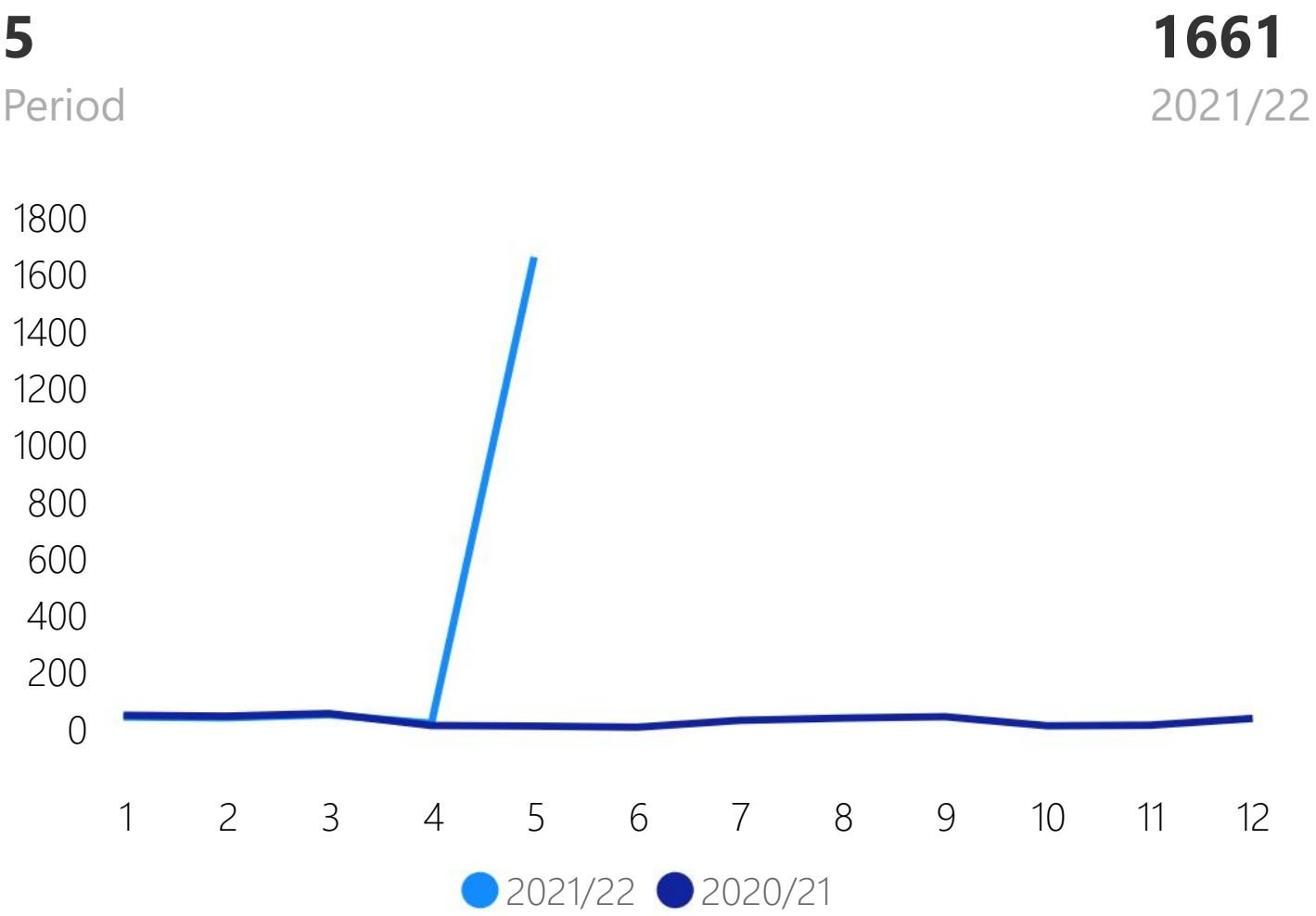
% of students achieving grade 4-9 in Maths and English

Period

% of care experienced young people who are in employment, education or training (19-21)

Period

Numbers (unique) of CYP involved in an consultation activity that informs the design, delivery or evaluation of services

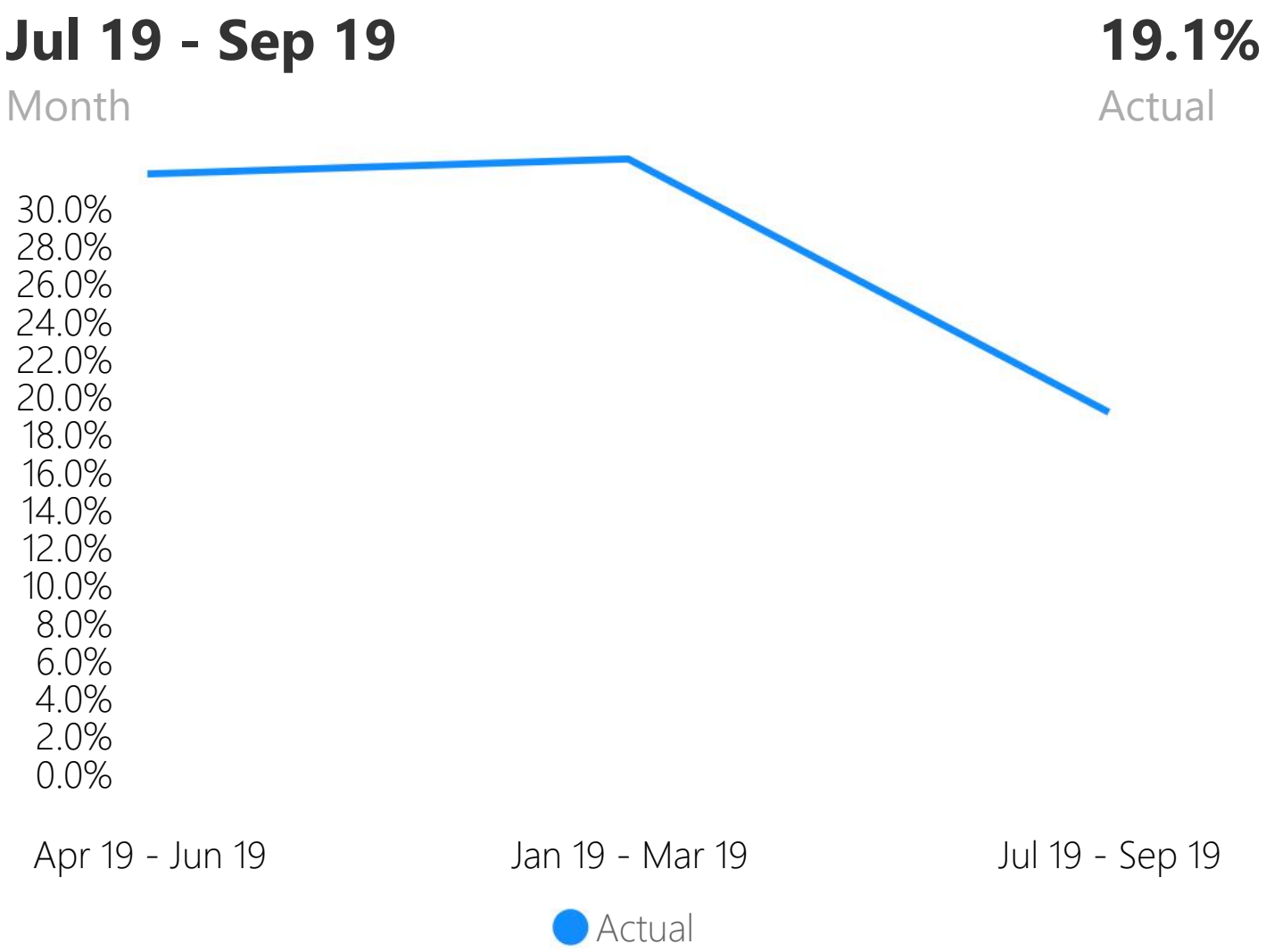


% Cared for Children achieving the the expected level in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2

The three charts with a blue outline are blank as the data has not yet been released. They will be updated during the year, once the releases take place.

Following DfE guidelines we are not collecting Key Stage 2 assessment data from schools, so this measure will not be updated this year.

Proportion of young offenders who reoffend (% binary rate)



Item 7

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 2021

4

TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SIX MONTHLY REPORT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the Committee with information relating to compliments and complaints received by Together for Children in the period April 2021 – September 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 Together for Children is committed to listening to those who use its services, and learning from compliments, complaints and feedback in order to improve those services.
- 2.2 This report presents an overview of complaints and feedback received for the six-month period April 2021 – September 2021.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 Further relevant reports will be presented to Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis. This will ensure Members are provided with the most current information available to allow for the monitoring of themes and trends in a timely manner.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the information provided regarding the feedback report.

Together for Children Customer Feedback Six Month Summary Report April 2021- September 2021



HIGHLIGHT SUMMARY

What are our key achievements?

- We have refreshed our complaint processes with the aim to improve customer experience and resolve concerns more quickly.
- We have received 121 compliments so far this year from children, young people, families, and professionals.
- We have successfully helped 107 customers to receive satisfactory resolutions to their queries, issues or concerns informally, without having to initiate a complaint.
- Overall, the number of complaints received so far this year has reduced by 42% with many of our services seeing a decrease in the number of complaints.
- The timeliness of stage two complaints is improving, and fewer complaints are escalating.

What are our areas of focus?

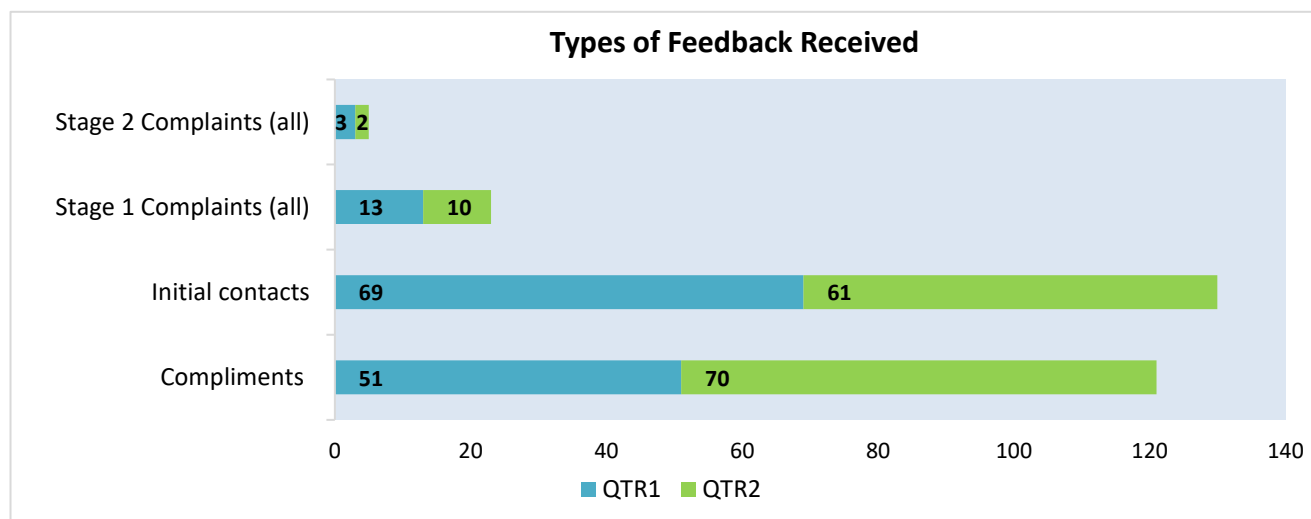
- Continued focus on improving the timeliness of stage 1 responses.
- Continuing to improve stage 2 investigation and adjudication timescales.
- Reviewing how we record complaints so that emerging themes can be analysed easier and, in more detail, where needed.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. This report covers the period 1st April to 30th September 2021. Together for Children (TfC) welcomes all forms of feedback as a way of improving service delivery to children, young people and families. The report provides an overview of customer feedback received in the last six months, identifying topics and trends in relation to complaints information and areas of organisational learning that have taken place in response to feedback received.

2. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

- 2.1. The Customer Feedback Team are responsible for receiving, recording, and responding to feedback received from children, young people and families regarding services delivered by Together for Children. The following graph shows the different types of feedback received in quarters one and two.



3. COMPLIMENTS

- 3.1. We have received 121 compliments in the last six months from children and young people, parents and other family members, foster carers, external professionals, and staff within TfC. Compliments are communicated to workers and management structures of the relevant teams and they are used to congratulate workers and teams and to inform service developments and best practice. Compliments are also shared more widely with the Senior Management Team and the TfC Communications Manager, so all staff can be recognised for their dedication and hard work. Below are some examples of the compliments we have received in the last six months:

Business Support, Social Care

"I know I have mentioned this previously but just wanted to again highlight what a credit XXX is to Business Support. The quality of her minute taking and all work she completes in general, her attention to detail and her willingness to go over and above always stands out as exemplary to me".

Cared for Children Service

"I just wanted to share with you that I just had a catch up with XXX and she is absolutely loving it within Permanence. She said that XXX and the team have made her feel so welcome and she is excited every day to come to work and feels confident knowing that there are so many people who are there to help her if she needs it. I have never seen her so happy!"

Child Protection Service

"I just wanted to take the time to express how impressed I have been with the work of XXX on the XXX case. This wasn't an easy case to be assigned to with many complicating factors which have spanned across almost a decade. However, XXX came in and has been tenacious in unpicking the chronology and getting to the crux of the situation for the children and family. She took the time to speak to all professionals and has got to the know

the children extremely well. For children who have been through so much, she listened to them and recognised when they needed further support; highlighting the professionals to provide it and checking in to make sure that the support had made a difference. She has kept everyone informed of situations that have arisen and has also given us the heads-up when she believed the children would have a difficult day. Her chairing of meetings has always been firm and fair - giving everyone the opportunity to share their views and her paperwork has been detailed and accurate. She works with compassion, confidentiality and integrity. I absolutely cannot fault her case management or the support she has given us as a school. XXX is one of the stars in your service and I felt that I needed to take the time to make you aware of all that she has done to make the difference to the lives of the children she is there to protect. I take my hat off to her for the way she has managed this case and given the children the opportunity to thrive”.

Fostering Service

“XXX is always contactable by phone, mobile, email or What’s App in case we have any queries or issues. XXX is great at setting the next supervision date before she leaves each month and arrives on time, every time. I always feel listened to in my supervisions (even if it’s just a case of containment) and XXX will work with me to find acceptable solutions to any issues which have arisen. She keeps me grounded when I might otherwise be going off on a tangent, not an easy thing! I am always prepared with a list of any things I want to discuss or anything I need to update XXX about. She is happy to answer my questions and is very knowledgeable in all social work issues and will seek answers elsewhere if she is unsure”.

Children’s Independent Reviewing Team

“I just wanted to get in touch following a review conference I was involved in yesterday. We always hear at the start of meetings how we can complain or compliment and I wanted to take the time to compliment XXX on her professionalism and conduct yesterday. I always feel as though we are in safe hands when XXX is chairing our meetings. She conducts her meetings in a lovely calm and controlled manner and leaves no stone unturned. Our core groups leading up to yesterday’s conference have at times been challenging however, the review conference was managed so well by XXX that it went without issue and I feel that we came away with a robust plan in place to move forward”.

Assessment Team

“I would like to give you some feedback regarding working with your social worker XXX. I feel that her professional, responsive, reactive, and supportive approach to working with the XX family should be shared. This is a very diverse and challenging family, and it has not been easy to keep a level head and balance throughout, however I feel that XXX has achieved this, a calm approach but not afraid to challenge when necessary. It is easy to complain and criticise and people always find time for that, however, praise and recognition should be highlighted too, and I feel XXX deserves this, a kind considerate and caring professional, and a pleasure to work with”.

Early Help

“Thank you for everything you have done for myself and XXX, most of all thank you so much for always having his back and believing he’s a good kid underneath it all! Thank you for fighting for him and believing in him when others didn’t. You have been the only one I can count on for support so thank you again”.

Children’s Homes

“I want to take the opportunity to tell you that XXX is the very best communicator in a children’s home I have come across since returning as an IRO in December 2016. He is exceptional at letting other professionals know what is happening to XXX which is invaluable to an IRO. I would like this compliment to be placed on his supervision file”.

Anti-Social Behaviour Service

“Loved all the activities, group work and sweets”. “We are more aware of what behaviours are anti-social and raised awareness. Gave strategies for support”. “Wear Kids staff were lovely and felt confident to ask questions and played an active part”.

Connexions Service

"I went to see XXX yesterday and I just wanted to pass on again some really positive comments she has given me. XXX told me that college hadn't got her email and you have been in contact with her and have sorted all of this out for her and XXX couldn't have been more thankful highlighting she wouldn't have been going to college if it hadn't been for your help. XXX hasn't always felt supported by school staff so I just wanted to say thank you because at this time in XXX life and the pressure she feels from school it would have been easy for her to have lost interest and motivation in accessing additional education despite her clear capabilities".

Children with Disabilities Service

"To everyone at the office who has helped me over the years. You have all helped me make my childhood a lot better by being there and supporting me through the difficult times, so thank you"

Customer Feedback Service

"Right from the beginning XXX took a significant amount of time to get to know me and understand my complaint, she was extremely patient when I went back to her with amends regarding the complaint outline, she kept me updated throughout and was extremely compassionate but also totally professional. She actually helped me restore my faith in TFC as an organisation and I feel she is a complete asset to your organisation. I just wanted to pass on my feedback as I know it's important for appraisals and reviews to understand how clients find the service received from your department's representatives."

4. INITIAL CONTACTS

- 4.1. Following the refresh of the complaints process in 2020/21, we replaced 'pre-complaints' with 'initial contacts', expanding our definition so that we could log and account for every customer contact received via the Customer Feedback Team. Initial contacts presented by customers can be queries, concerns, information requests or issues that require a resolution. Whilst customers are provided with information about the complaints process and their rights to complain, we aim to achieve informal resolution at the earliest opportunity so that the customer receives a quick resolution and has a better experience. The table below shows the initial contacts data for quarters one and two:

Initial Contacts	Q1 (Apr – Jun)	Q2 (Jul – Sep)	Total
Number Received	69	61	130
Percentage resolved as Initial Contact	81%	85%	82%
Percentage progressed to Stage 1	19%	15%	18%

- 4.2. We have received 130 initial contacts in the last six months. Through responding to contacts at the outset, we have helped 107 of our customers to receive satisfactory responses and resolutions informally with only 23 contacts (18%) progressing to a formal stage one complaint.

5. COMPLAINTS PROCESS

- 5.1. The Complaints Process for Statutory Children's Services follows the statutory guidance. This is a 3-stage process as follows:
- **Stage One** – the initial stage of the process is investigated by an Officer in the Customer Feedback Team. It is hoped a local resolution can be achieved within 10 working days, however an extension of up to 20 working days can be requested for more complex cases.
 - **Stage Two** – on receipt of the response to their stage one complaint, customers have 20 working days to request their complaint is progressed to stage two if they are unhappy with the initial outcome. At this

stage, an Investigating Officer and an Independent Person will be appointed to investigate the complaint and it can take up to 65 working days to complete.

- **Stage Three** – if the customer remains unhappy with the outcome of the stage two complaint, they have 20 working days to request their complaint is progressed to stage three. The review should take place within 30 days of the request. At stage three, a review panel will be appointed to review the complaint. This will consist of three independent people who will make recommendations to the Director of Children’s Services.

5.2. If the customer remains unhappy, they can raise their complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman.

5.3. Any complaints that do not relate to Statutory Children’s Services, are handled under the Corporate Complaints Procedure which consists of two formal stages. Corporate complaint figures are included in this report.

6. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

6.1. The table below shows the number of complaints we received across each stage of the complaints process:

Children’s Social Care Complaints:	Q1	Q2	Total	
Stage One	11	7	18	↓
Stage Two	3	1	4	↓
Stage Three	1	0	1	↓
Total	15	8	23	↓

Corporate Complaints	Q1	Q2	Total	
Stage One	2	3	5	↓
Stage Two	0	1	1	↓
Total	2	4	6	↓

Overall Totals	17	12	29	↓
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6.2. **Overall Total (all stages)** - In the first six months of the year we received 29 complaints compared with 50 in the first six months of 2020/21 which is an overall decrease of 42%. Broken down further this shows Children’s Social Care complaints have reduced by 41% and Corporate complaints by 60%.

6.3. **Stage One Complaints** – we have received 18 children’s social care stage one complaints compared with 28 for the same period in 2020/21. We also saw a decrease in the number of corporate stage one complaints, receiving 5 compared with 11 in the same period last year.

6.4. **Stage two Complaints** – we have received 4 children’s social care stage two complaints of which 1 has progressed to a stage 3. Only 1 of the corporate complaints progressed to stage two, compared to 4 last year.

6.5. The number of stage two complaints has reduced from Q1 to Q2 this year suggesting that as we continue to implement the new complaint processes, customers are having their concerns addressed earlier, at stage one.

Number of Complaints by Young People:

6.6. There were 0 complaints received by young people in the first six months of the year which is a decrease of 3 when compared to the same period last year.

7. STAGE ONE COMPLAINTS

7.1. The table below shows the number of stage one complaints received by service area.

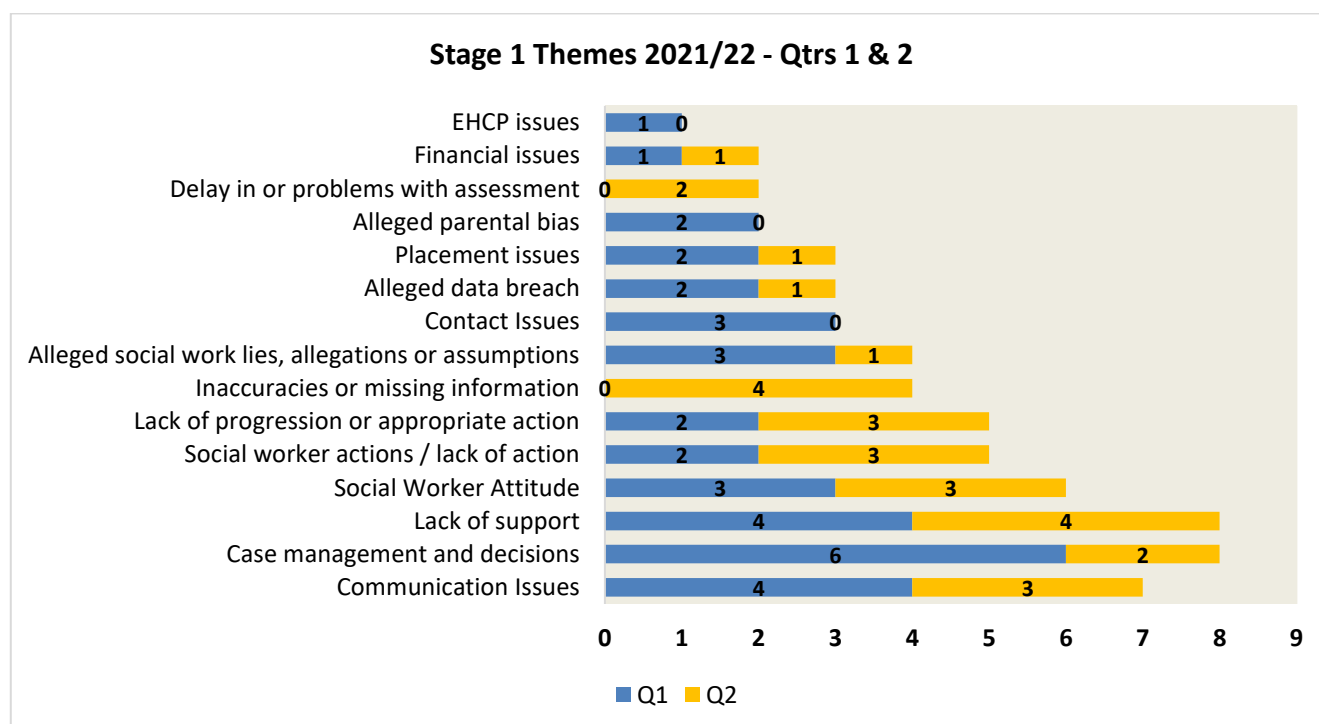
TEAM	% of Stage 1 Complaints Received
Adoption Service	2%
Assessment Service	33%
Child Protection Service	24%
Early Help Service	4%
Education	4%
ICRT Service	4%
Cared for and Permanence Service	4%
SEND Service	9%
Children with Disabilities Service	13%
Fostering Service	2%
TOTAL	100%

7.2. 33% of complaints received in the first six months relate to the assessment service however there has been a 20% decrease in the number for complaints relating to this service when compared with the previous year. 24% of stage one complaints received in the first six months relate to the child protection services but again there has been a 50% decrease in the number of complaints relating to this service when compared with the same period in the previous year.

7.3. Overall, the number of stage one complaints have decreased across most services other than the Children with Disabilities service who saw a slight increase of 3 when compared with the previous year.

Themes:

7.4. The main themes of the complaints received at Stage one in 2020-21 are shown in the table below:



7.5. Complaints relating to lack of support have almost doubled when compared with the same period in 2020/21 and is now one of the top three themes together with case management decisions and communication. This

shows a difference when compared to the top three themes in the previous year (social worker action /lack of action, contact issues/Family Time and inaccuracies or missing information).

- 7.6. Complaints regarding social worker actions/lack of action has significantly reduced when compared to last year and has moved from being the top theme in 2020/21 to the fifth in the first six months of this year. Although complaints regarding communication and case management decisions are now in the top three themes, the numbers of complaints have not increased when compared to the same period last year.
- 7.7. The reduction in the number of complaints overall together with a shift in the top three themes demonstrates the positive impact of learning from complaints and proactivity addressing emerging themes. The refresh of the complaints process has strengthened the initial contact stage which is contributing to an overall reduction in complaint numbers.

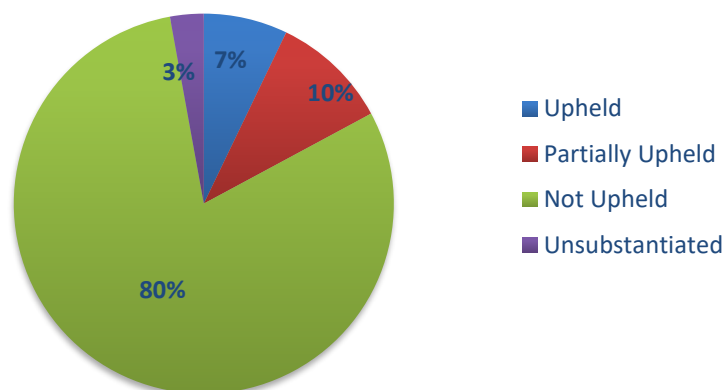
Timeliness of Response to Stage One Complaints:

- 7.8. In the first six months of 2021/22 the timeliness of all stage one complaints has fluctuated as we have moved to the refreshed complaints process. The main changes to the process have included managing all stage one complaints within the Customer Feedback Team with a greater focus on customer conciliation, mediation, and speedier resolution e.g., offering opportunities for customers to meet with workers and managers so they can listen, discuss, and resolve their issues rather than moving to the lengthier stage two process (where this is possible). Whilst this change in process has increased customer satisfaction by resolving issues at this stage, it has consequently taken some stage one complaints (in Q2) out of timescale which has impacted the year-to-date figure. Moving forward we will be focussing on how to achieve the same result but within the 10 or 20 working day timescales.

% of all stage 1 complaints responded to in timescale	Q1	Q2	YTD
	73%	33%	52%

Stage One Complaint Outcomes:

- 7.9. There were 70 elements of complaint identified within stage one complaints that have concluded in the first six months of 2021-22. The outcomes of those stage one complaint elements are shown below.



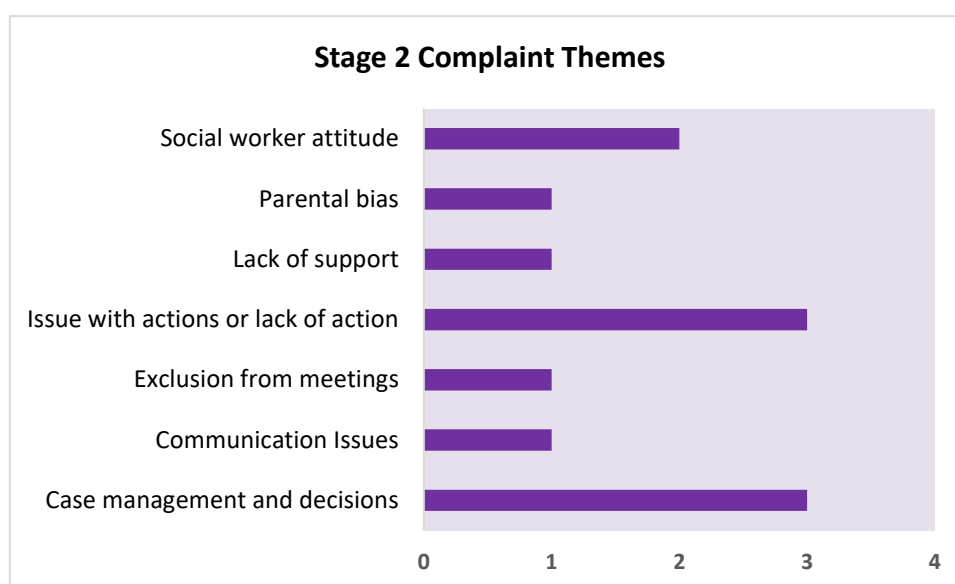
- 7.10. Most complaint elements (equating to 80%) were not upheld and a further 3% were unsubstantiated or not investigated. This is significantly higher than the same period last year where 49% of elements were not upheld.
- 7.11. 10% of elements were partially upheld and 7% were upheld. The five upheld complaint elements related to poor communication, a missed visit, inaccurate information and impact of Tfc involvement.

8. STAGE TWO COMPLAINTS AND STAGE THREE REVIEWS

- 8.1. In total 5 stage two complaints have been received in Q1 and Q2. 4 of the stage two complaints relate to the Children with Disabilities Team, Assessment Team and Child Protection Team. The 1 corporate complaint relates to the SEND team. Overall, we have received 37.5% fewer stage two complaints when compared with the same period in the previous year.

Themes:

- 8.2. The number of themes relating to stage two complaints have reduced this year in line with a decrease in the number of complaints and a decrease in the number of elements within each complaint. The main themes for 2021-22 are shown in the table below (*note one complaint can have multiple themes*):



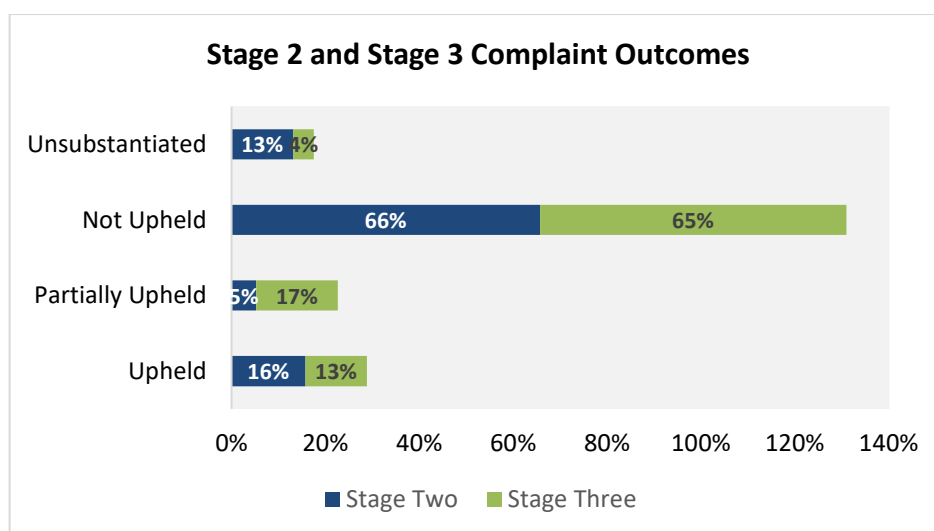
- 8.3. Most stage two themes relate to case management and decisions, issues with action/lack of action and social worker attitude. The increase of themes relating to case management and decisions aligns with the increase at stage one.
- 8.4. When compared to 2020/21, lack of action remains a top theme however themes around communication issues have reduced and assessment reports is no longer identified as a theme, suggesting learning and improvement actions are having a positive impact for our customers.

Timeliness of Response to Stage Two Complaints:

- 8.5. In the first six months of 2021-22, 8 stage two complaints were concluded (*figures differ to numbers received, as there were complaints open at the start of the year from 2020/21 and complaints that remain open moving into 2021-22*). Four of the stage two complaints were completed within the 65-day timescale (50%). This is a significant improvement compared with the same period in 2020/21 where only 8% of stage 2 complaints were completed in timescale. The average number of working days taken to complete stage 2 complaints in the first six months of this year is 71.6 days compared with 129 for the same period last year.
- 8.6. This improvement is due to the changes that were made to the complaints process. The changes streamlined the process to improve the customer journey and realigned timescales and resources for the adjudication task. Although these changes are having a positive impact on the timeliness, further improvement is required which remains an area of focus for the Customer Feedback service.

Stage Two and Three Complaint Outcomes

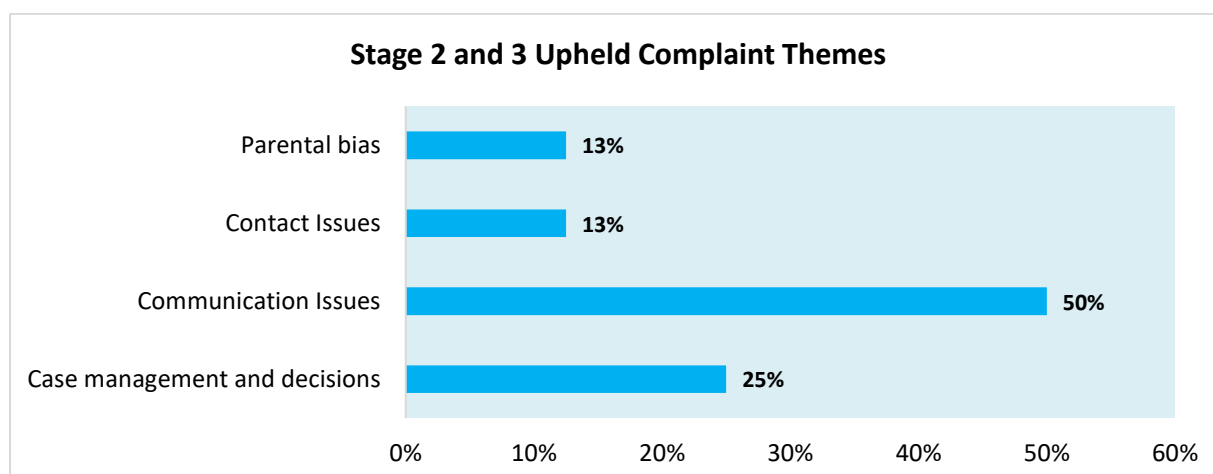
- 8.7. There were 38 elements of complaint identified within all stage two complaints that concluded in the first six months of 2021/22 and 23 elements concluded at stage three (Children's Social Care). This is a significant reduction when compared to 202 stage 2 elements in the same period last year together with 35 elements at stage 3. The outcomes of those stage two and three complaint elements are shown below.



8.8. At stage two, the majority of complaint elements equating to 66% were not upheld and a further 13% were unsubstantiated or withdrawn. 5% of elements were partially upheld and 16% were upheld.

8.9. At stage three 13% were upheld, with a further 17% partially upheld. 65% were not upheld and 4% were unsubstantiated or withdrawn.

8.10. Since April 2021, of the 23 elements that went to Stage Three Panel, no outcome was changed by Panel. The main subject areas of elements upheld at stage two and three are as follows:



8.11. Comparing upheld elements with the same period in the previous year, communication is a recurring upheld theme at stages two and three. However due to the individualised nature of complaints it is difficult to say if the reasons for this is due to a limited impact of recommendations or if it is due to other reasons. Parental bias and case management and decisions are emerging themes when compared with the previous year. To assist with the analysis of themes, the upheld elements identified in both stage two investigations and stage three panels are reviewed regularly by the Children's Social Care Senior Management Team. The Customer Feedback Team identifies any reoccurring complaint elements and feeds this back to the relevant services.

9. OMBUDSMAN REFERRALS

9.1. There have been 4 complaints highlighted to the Customer Feedback Team by the Local Government Ombudsman so far this year; 1 was escalated to Stage 2, 1 was closed with no further action, and 2 remain in progress (at investigation stage).

9.2. At the start of this year there were 4 LGO still being investigated that have now been concluded. 3 of the investigations were upheld and 1 was not upheld.

10. COST OF COMPLAINTS

- 10.1. The total cost of investigating claims in the first two quarters of 2021/22 is £12,039 compared with £41,182 for the same period in 2020/21. This reduction is due to all new complaints (since the introduction of the refreshed complaints process) being managed internally by the Customer Feedback Team with no external allocations.
- 10.2. So far this year the compensation costs paid in relation to upheld complaints has totalled £27,315.52. This is significantly higher than previous years due to one complaint dating back to 2017 whereby a large payment was made to remedy lost care provision of 3.5 years dating back to 2017.

11. ABUSIVE, UNREASONABLE PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

- 11.1. There have been no recorded Abusive, Unreasonable Persistent or Vexatious Complainants in the first six months of 2021/22.

12. LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT

- 12.1. Together for Children are committed to getting it right for the families in Sunderland. To do this we continue to drive improvement from learning from the complaints and compliments raised. An action plan is maintained by the Customer Feedback Team which includes actions and recommendations from stage two investigations and stage three panels. The action plan is closely monitored by the team. Reminders are sent to managers with responsibility for the recommendations each month and reported into Senior Management Team meetings to ensure that the learning is shared across the whole service.
- 12.2. In the last six months we have been making progress to address the recommendations in the 2020/21 Annual Customer Feedback Report. We have already seen positive impacts from this work through continued reductions in complaint numbers, a significant reduction in the number of complaint elements and a reduction in the reoccurring themes from last year.
- 12.3. We have been working with services to implement the refreshed complaints processes with a view to improving timeliness and responding more proactively to customer concerns. Although there is still work to do to improve timeliness, particularly at stage one, it is evident that fewer complaints are escalating through the stages. This together with positive feedback received from customers is suggesting that concerns are being resolved at an earlier stage and therefore customers are not having to proceed through the lengthier stages unnecessarily. The Customer Feedback Team have already held a 3-month review of the refreshed process to check that the expected benefits are being realised and have the 6-month review planned for October 2021.
- 12.4. We will continue to work through the remaining recommendations set out in the Annual Report to identify further improvement activity and to explore more possibilities. From analysing the themes in the first six months of this year, it is apparent that some new themes are emerging. The Customer Feedback Service will proactively work with services to analyse these themes to identify learning and improvement opportunities. The Customer Feedback Service is also focused on developing skills with its team and has attended refresher training on the LGO Remedy Guidance and is looking to attend Complaints Handling and Investigations training to achieve a BTEC Level 5 qualification.

Item 8

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 4 NOVEMBER 2021

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2021-2022

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT COORDINATOR

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report sets out for members' consideration the work programme of the Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year.

2. Background

- 2.1 The work programme is designed to set out the key issues to be addressed by the Committee during the year and provide it with a timetable of work. The Committee itself is responsible for setting its own work programme, subject to the coordinating role of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.
- 2.2 The work programme is intended to be a working document which Committee can develop throughout the year, allowing it to maintain an overview of work planned and undertaken during the Council year.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that the Committee is able to undertake all of its business and respond to emerging issues, there will be scope for additional meetings or visits not detailed in the work programme.
- 2.4 In delivering its work programme the Committee will support the Council in achieving its corporate outcomes.

3. Current position

- 3.1 The current work programme is attached as an appendix to this report.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The work programme is intended to be a flexible mechanism for managing the work of the Committee in 2021-22.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 That Members note the information contained in the work programme.

Contact: Gillian Robinson, Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator

REASON FOR INCLUSION	JUNE 21	JULY 21 (CANCELLED)	9 TH SEPT 21	7 TH OCT 21	4 TH NOV 21	2 ND DEC 21	6 TH JAN 22	3 RD FEB 22	3 RD MARCH 22	31 ST MARCH 22
Policy Framework/ Cabinet Referrals and Responses									Scrutiny Annual Report – 21/22	
Scrutiny Business	Corporate Parenting Review			Engagement and Participation with Young People (Jane Wheeler)	Domestic Violence Update (Karen Davison) Draft Safe Accommodation Strategy (Gerry Taylor)	Welfare Inequalities Holiday Fund - Operation	Impact of Covid 19 on Child Mental and Physical Health (CCG) SEND Monitoring Report (Jill Colbert/Dave Chandler)	Youth Offending and Anti Social Behaviour	Apprenticeships and Employment opportunities	
Performance / Service Improvement	Ofsted Focused visit to Children's Services - Feedback		Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services – Feedback (Jill Colbert)	Inspection of SEND - Feedback (Jill Colbert)	Together for Children – Performance Monitoring Report (Jill Colbert) Children Services Customer Feedback (Jill Colbert)				Together for Children – Performance Monitoring Report (Jill Colbert) Children Services Customer Feedback	
Consultation / Awareness Raising	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 21-22	

Additional Issues – Working Group with Young People

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF KEY DECISIONS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT CO-ORDINATOR

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an opportunity to consider the items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Holding the Executive to account is one of the main functions of Scrutiny. One of the ways that this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Notice of Key Decisions) and deciding whether Scrutiny can add value in advance of the decision being made. This does not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.2 To this end, the most recent version of the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions is included on the agenda of this Committee. The Notice of Key Decisions is attached marked **Appendix 1**.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 In considering the Notice of Key Decisions, Members are asked to consider only those issues where the Scrutiny Committee or relevant Scrutiny Panel could make a contribution which would add value prior to the decision being taken.
- 3.2 In the event of Members having any queries that cannot be dealt with directly in the meeting, a response will be sought from the relevant Directorate.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To consider the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions at the Scrutiny Committee meeting.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Cabinet Agenda
-

28 day notice
Notice issued 18 October 2021

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Notice is given of the following proposed Key Decisions (whether proposed to be taken in public or in private) and of Executive Decisions including key decisions) intended to be considered in a private meeting:-

Item no.	Matter in respect of which a decision is to be made	Decision-maker (if individual, name and title, if body, its name and see below for list of members)	Key Decision Y/N	Anticipated date of decision/ period in which the decision is to be taken	Private meeting Y/N	Reasons for the meeting to be held in private	Documents submitted to the decision-maker in relation to the matter*	Address to obtain further information
210505/587	To approve the procurement of a Contractor for the Repair Works at Hendon Foreshore Barrier, Port of Sunderland.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210419/577	To approve the dilapidation settlement figure and the procurement of the dilapidation works in respect of the CESAM building.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

Item no.	Matter in respect of which a decision is to be made	Decision-maker (if individual, name and title, if body, its name and see below for list of members)	Key Decision Y/N	Anticipated date of decision/ period in which the decision is to be taken	Private meeting Y/N	Reasons for the meeting to be held in private	Documents submitted to the decision-maker in relation to the matter*	Address to obtain further information
210528/601	To consider the establishment of a Bus Enhanced Partnership.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210607/608	To seek approval to proposed funding arrangements with Siglion Investments LLP.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	Y	The report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report will contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210623/610	In respect of the Gambling Act 2005, to review of Statement of Principles.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

Item no.	Matter in respect of which a decision is to be made	Decision-maker (if individual, name and title, if body, its name and see below for list of members)	Key Decision Y/N	Anticipated date of decision/ period in which the decision is to be taken	Private meeting Y/N	Reasons for the meeting to be held in private	Documents submitted to the decision-maker in relation to the matter*	Address to obtain further information
210709/612	To authorise the Executive Director of City Development to deliver the Washington F-Pit Museum Heritage Visitor Centre and Albany Park Improvement project, including to procuring of consultants and contractors.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210729/617	To approve the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) Interim Planning Policy Statement for adoption.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210920/640	To agree to make acquisitions within the Riverside Sunderland area.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	Y	This report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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211005/641	To agree the proposed development strategy of Northern Spire Park and appropriate delegation to officers.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	Y	This report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
211006/642	To approve the Capital Programme Planning 2022/2023 to 2025/2026.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
211007/644	In respect of the Gambling Act 2005 - To Review Statement of Principles	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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211007/645	Procurement of Care and Support within a new build Supported Living scheme at Cork Street	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
211011/647	To consider the Local Carbon Progress Report.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
211011/648	To consider the details of the City Plan 2019-2030 assurance process.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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211011/649	Subject to consultation being undertaken, to adopt the powers for moving traffic contraventions to give the Council the ability to adopt the powers and therefore the means to enforce specific moving traffic contraventions which are listed under schedule 7 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.	Cabinet	Y	16 November 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
170927/212	To approve in principle the establishment of a new police led Road Safety Partnership (Northumbria Road Safety Partnership) embracing the Northumbria Force Area.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 16 November to 31 st December 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
210510/588	To approve the receipt of external funding for the public sector decarbonisation scheme and green homes grant local programme and the procurement of the necessary contractors to deliver the schemes.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 16 November to 31 st December 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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210728/613	To seek approval for strategic land acquisitions in Sunnyside, Sunderland.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 16 November to 31 st December 2021	Y	This report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200813/494	To approve funding mechanisms for the acquisition of residential properties.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 16 November to 31 st December 2021	Y	This report is one which relates to an item during the consideration of which by Cabinet the public are likely to be excluded under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) The public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
211006/643	To approve the Budget Planning Framework and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 16 November 2021 to 31 December 2021	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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211018/650	To authorise the Executive Director of City Development to deliver the Levelling Up Fund Programme	Cabinet	Y	During the period 7 December 2021 to 28 February 2022.	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

Note; Some of the documents listed may not be available if they are subject to an exemption, prohibition or restriction on disclosure. Further documents relevant to the matters to be decided can be submitted to the decision-maker. If you wish to request details of those documents (if any) as they become available, or to submit representations about a proposal to hold a meeting in private, you should contact Governance Services at the address below.

Subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of documents submitted to the decision-maker can also be obtained from the Governance Services team PO Box 100, Civic Centre, Sunderland, or by email to committees@sunderland.gov.uk

***Other documents relevant to the matter may be submitted to the decision maker and requests for details of these documents should be submitted to Governance Services at the address given above.**

Who will decide;

Councillor Graeme Miller – Leader; Councillor Claire Rowntree – Deputy Leader; Councillor Paul Stewart - Cabinet Secretary; Councillor Louise Farthing – Children, Learning and Skills; Councillor Kelly Chequer – Healthy City; Councillor Linda Williams – Vibrant City; Councillor Kevin Johnston – Dynamic City.

This is the membership of Cabinet as at the date of this notice. Any changes will be specified on a supplementary notice.

Elaine Waugh,
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

18 October 2021