

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 1st October, 2020 at 5.30 p.m.

This meeting will be held remotely. Joining details will be emailed to all participants.

The meeting will be livestreamed for the public to view on the Council's YouTube channel, 'sunderlandgov' at :-
<https://youtu.be/lrP1nsiAdO0>

Membership

Cllr Crosby, Hunt, Mann, McDonough, Mc Keith (Vice-Chairman), F. Miller, Rowntree, Samuels, Scanlan, P. Smith (Chairman), Tye and K. Wood

Coopted Members – Mrs. A. Blakey and Ms. J. Graham

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	Part A – Cabinet Referrals and Responses	
	No Items	
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E. WAUGH,
Assistant Director of Law and Governance,
Civic Centre,
SUNDERLAND.

23rd September, 2020

At a meeting of the CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held REMOTELY on THURSDAY 9TH JULY, 2020 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor P. Smith in the Chair

Councillors Crosby, Hunt, Mann, McDonough, McKeith, F. Miller, Rowntree, Samuels, Scanlan, Tye and K. Wood.

Also in attendance:-

Mr Martin Birch, Director of Children's Social Care, Together for Children
Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer, Law and Governance, Corporate Services Directorate
Mr. Luke Hall, Sunderland Youth Council
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

The Chairman opened the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Ms Graham and Ms Blakey.

Minutes of the last meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 5th March, 2020

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee held on 5th March, 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

No declarations of interest were made.

Update from Together for Children – Covid 19

Mr Birch present a report of the Chief Executive, Together for Children, (copy circulated) which provided a summary of issues that had arisen during the Covid19 pandemic and the associated restrictions, together with the actions taken to

safeguard children by service area. The report also provided a summary of Together for Children's performance data from February 2020 to date.

(For copy report – see original minutes.)

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Tye, Mr Birch advised that none of TfC's young people being fostered or adopted during the pandemic had been displaced. If Councillor Tye was aware that children had been displaced it was possible that these cases were ones involving private fostering agencies. Councillor Tye replied that this was probably not the correct forum to pursue the matter and he would contact Mr Birch off-line.

Councillor Crosby highlighted the reference in the report to 'Neighbourhood Teams' and asked how these were organised. Mr Birch advised that they were locality based so there were 2 teams covering Washington, 2 teams covering the Coalfield, 2 teams in North Sunderland and 4 teams covering the rest of the city.

Councillor Hunt referred to the rate of child safeguarding referrals and asked if it was likely to see an increase with the easing of lockdown and the return to school of all year groups in September. Mr Birch replied that this would probably be the case and TfC were preparing on this basis however it was educated guess work and nothing was predictable. In normal circumstances the referral rate from schools was around 6%. During lock down, referrals had continued to be received through the Police Force.

Councillor Rowntree highlighted the reference in the report to the 'Mind of Our Own' service and welcomed the increased levels of engagement during the period of lockdown. She asked how this level of engagement would be maintained and in particular how would the voice of a child without access to the internet be heard? Mr Birch advised that every disadvantaged child or a child TfC had concerns about in this regard had received a laptop as part of the Government sponsored roll out. With regard to the wider engagement TfC had promoted the 'mind of our own' as much as was possible. Where it was not possible Social Workers would use direct contact to alleviate any concerns. The app was less popular among older teenagers but this group were always quick to get in touch if ever they had any issues.

Councillor Mann referred to TfC's residential children's homes and acknowledged the seriously difficult, challenging and testing time that had been faced by the service. She was aware that some staff redeployment had taken place and asked how quickly this had been organised and whether staff and residents had been tested for coronavirus. Mr Birch replied that some staff had been redeployed. The service had anticipated that there could be problems in respect of the children's homes as not all young people fully understood the requirements around lockdown and social distancing. In some cases children had left their home and mixed with friends in the wider community and this had caused anxiety among some members of staff. There had been no serious issues however and there were only one or two members of staff who were self-isolating. Two members of staff had tested positive for the virus but this had been while away from the homes in which they worked. Mr Birch praised the commitment and flexibility of the staff in TfC which had allowed it to bring in staff from other service areas very rapidly to support its residential homes.

Mr Birch confirmed that staff were being tested. He was not aware that testing of children was being undertaken but he would check and advise the Committee accordingly.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Samuels Mr Birch advised that TfC had not been able to operate its direct family time service for its looked after children in the usual manner and that this had been undertaken virtually instead. This had been in line with the picture nationally as a lot of foster carers were in at risk groups however from this week TfC were looking to reintroduce face to face contact. This would be judged on a more or less case by case basis, with each being risk assessed based on the particular circumstances of the child, family, carer and social worker.

Councillor F. Miller advised that she worked at a food bank three days a week and it had become apparent that there were children there presenting with issues including drug abuse. She asked if members had a safeguarding concern about a child, how should it be reported. Mr Birch advised members to continue to use the normal reporting process. Concerns would be picked up at the 'Front Door' and addressed at the early help stage or via a social worker intervention. To do otherwise would circumvent the appropriate recording measures and would not be welcomed by Ofsted.

Councillor McDonough referred to the other agencies involved in the safeguarding process and whether joint working had been impacted because of the restrictions around the pandemic. He also referred to the re-referral rates and asked if it was likely that these would increase. Mr Birch advised that the partnership work with other agencies had remained strong. From the perspective of the MASH the various agencies had been in constant contact and maintained the dialogue throughout whether via face to face meetings or remotely. There had been no issues.

With regard to re-referral rates these were down to 22% and were remaining fairly static. This contrasted with the picture regionally with the performance indicator data for most local authorities showing a rise in re-referrals. This reflected well on the work being undertaken in Sunderland. A new system had been introduced which RAG rated every referral. Any re-referral was flagged as red and immediately picked up to assess the rationale behind it (why has it come back to us? how can we take action to mitigate any future concerns?). Mr Birch stated that if anything, he would expect the re-referral rates to reduce rather than increase going forward.

The Chair referred to section 3.9 of the report regarding the virtual school, which informed members that TfC had purchased laptops for all children in children's homes and had worked with schools on the use of pupil premium to buy laptops where this was necessary. The Chair having asked how many laptops had been purchased, Mr Birch advised that to date 1,100 laptops had been rolled out.

The Chair referred to the recent peer review which had identified consistency of recording as a key area for focus. She stated that members had heard this being identified as an issue year after year and asked what was being done to address it. Mr Birch replied that the service had recently changed its social work model to the 'signs of safety'. It was estimated that the model would take around 5 years to fully bed in and that TfC were still at the very start of that journey.

There being no further questions or comments for Mr Birch the Chairman thanked him for his presentation and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the contents of the report and presentation be received and noted.

Annual Report

The Scrutiny and Members' Support Coordinator submitted a report which sought approval from the Committee for the report as part of the overall scrutiny annual report 2019/2020.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. James Diamond, Scrutiny Officer, presented the report, advising Members that as in previous year's the annual report would be a single combined report of all four Scrutiny Committees and would be presented to Council via the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee. The report would outline the development in the scrutiny function and provide a snapshot of their work during the last twelve months.

There being no further comment or questions, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee Annual Report be approved and included within the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2019/20.

Annual Work Programme 2019/20

The Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided members with details of the development of Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2020/21

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. James Diamond, Scrutiny Officer, presented the report, advising Members that the Covid-19 crisis had obviously impacted the work programme planning which would normally have taken place in May/June 2020, and with social distancing still in place a large-scale event would not be recommended currently. There was still the opportunity however to develop work programmes during July/August through individual workshops which would be more manageable through the processes that will be in place at this time to address the Covid-19 crisis.

The Chair having highlighted the need to retain a focus on the issue of apprenticeships within the work programme, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that approval be given to the development of the Committee's work programme through individual workshops organised and developed through the scrutiny function. Such workshops to take place during July/August with the aim of providing a number of relevant issues and topics for consideration and approval by the Committee.

Notice of Key Decisions

The Scrutiny and Members' Support Co-ordinator submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from the 15th June, 2020.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Councillor Crosby drew members attention to item 200604/486 (to approve the first revenue review 2020-21) which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 14th July. She advised that papers for that meeting outlined that £10m was to be allocated to TfC. £8.6m as a response to COVID related issues, £1.5 to cover lost income and £0.6m to cover lost income at Derwent Hill. She stated that this highlighted the pressures being faced by Children's Services currently.

There being no further questions or comments, it was:-

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

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked members and officers for their attendance and contributions.

(Signed) P. SMITH,
Chairman.

Item 4

CHILDREN EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 OCTOBER 2020

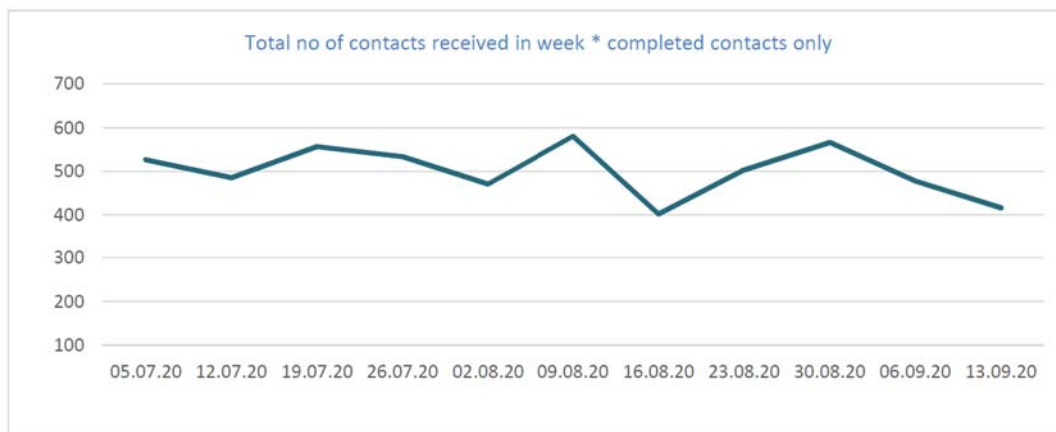
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN

UPDATE FROM TOGETHER FOR CHILDREN – COVID 19

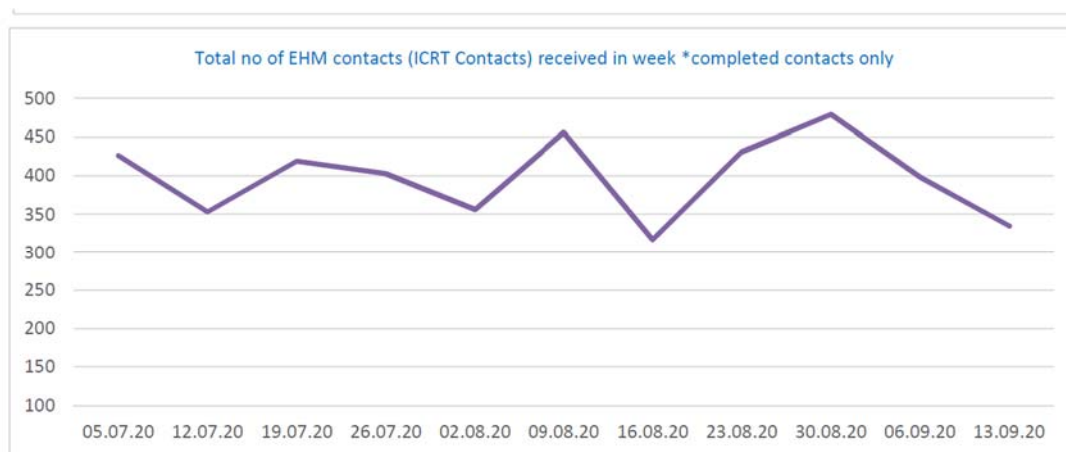
1. Purpose of the Report
 - 1.1 This update provides a summary of current issues and actions during the recent Covid pandemic and provides a summary of associated service performance.
2. Summary of Current Performance Data
 - 2.2 From the outset of Covid 19, TfC has reported data (Social Care, Education and SEND) to a range of audiences including the Department of Education, Regional and National Association of Directors of Children's Services, the Council, the Improvement Board and the TfC Board.
 - 2.3 The following information presents a summary of this performance data.

This section summarises in more detail:

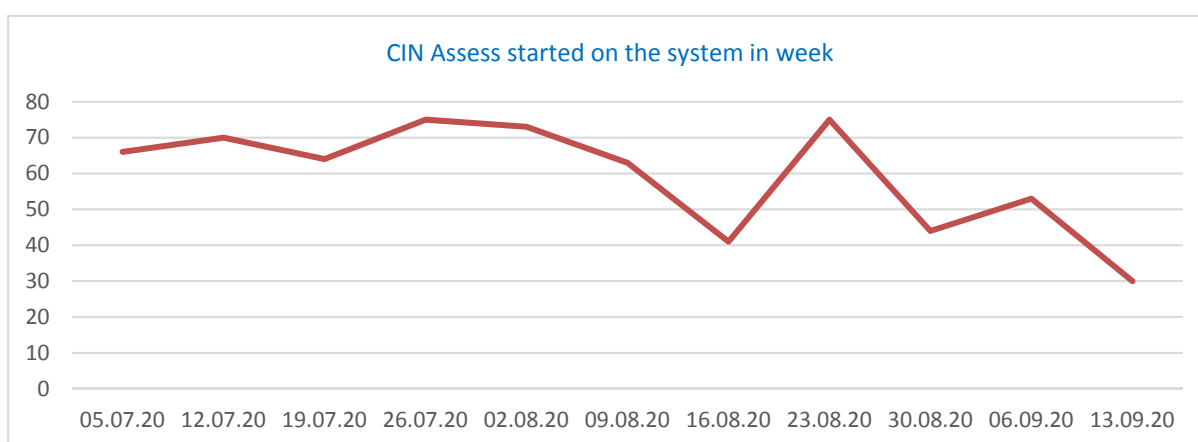
- i) ICRT (Contacts and Referrals)



Whilst overall the amount of contacts being received by the safeguarding front door are lower than previous from all sources, the service has remained very busy with contacts from the Police which have at times exceeded pre-Covid levels. On average 20% of contacts progress to an Early Help intervention or offer of support as you can see below.

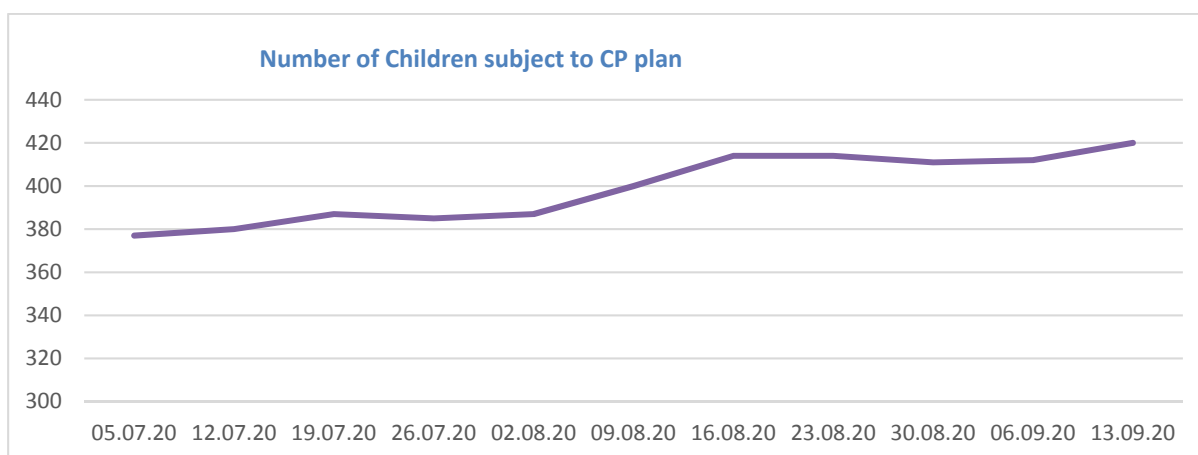


ii) Child in Need

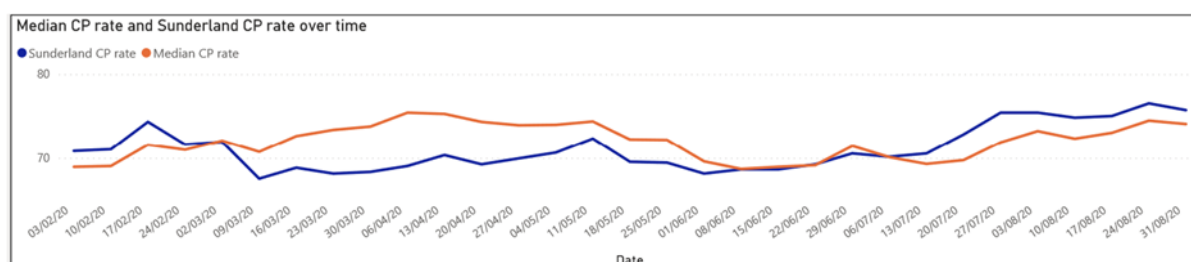


This graph shows the number of CIN assessments commenced, rather than completed. The summer holiday period impacted as it would normally with a lower level of assessments required through the early summer period. Even during when the number of assessments peaked later in August, timeliness remained between 97-100% for achievement of the timescales for completion of assessments.

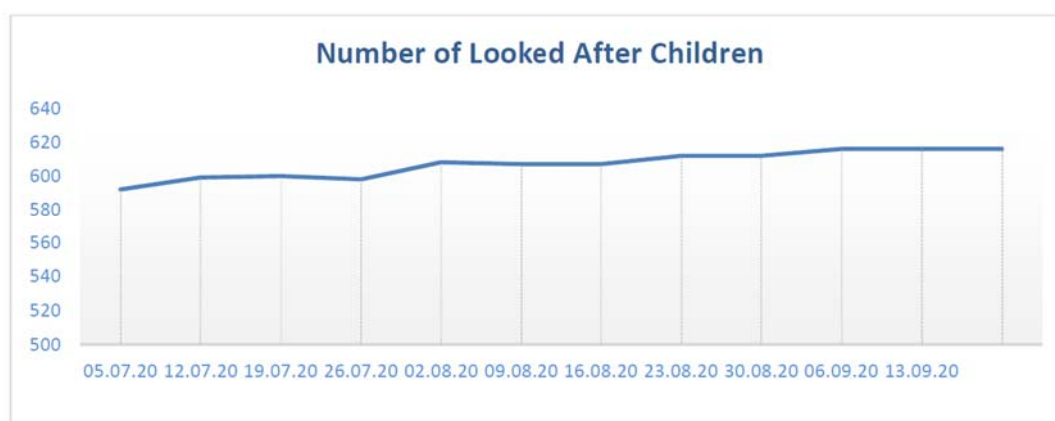
iii) Child Protection



The number of children subject to a Child Protection plan has been at a lower than regional median level (see graph below) for a considerable period but has started to increase more recently. The total number of children on a plan is 410 which still remains considerably lower than historically experienced.



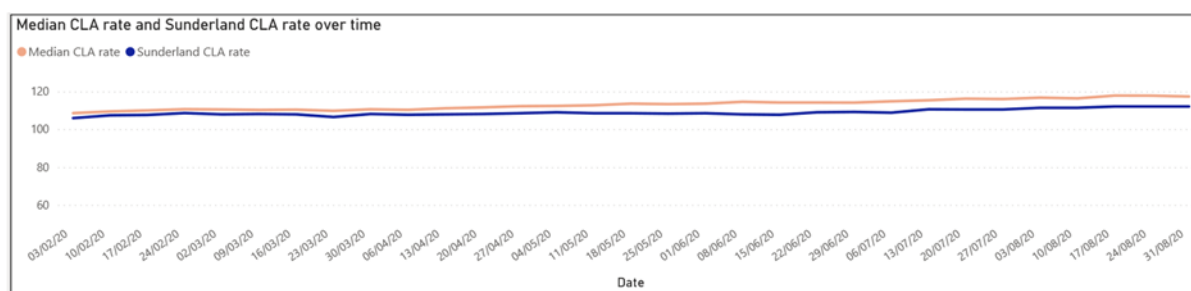
iv) Cared for Children ('children looked after')



The graph above shows a slight increase in the overall number of cared for children. The number includes those children whose Court Orders have not been discharged due to the delays in the Family Justice system, approximated to be 11% of all cases nationally. This would include for example, children waiting to be placed with adoptive parents and those children who are safely returning home without intervention.

The graph below shows the regional context with Sunderland represented as the blue line. Since 16 March 2020 the TfC rate of the number of cared for children per 10,000 is 3.9% higher than before 16 March 2020.

That represents the 5th lowest change in the region.



v) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Throughout the lockdown period children and young people continued to receive a range of short break services and other support through a range of creative means. They also continued to have access to overnight short breaks from Grace House. As is the case for the majority of other direct service provision, services are now more routinely available directly, subject to clear risk assessment. In terms of Education, Health and Care plan processes, the team continued to undertake new and ongoing assessments. Government did make some temporary legal changes to the statutory timescales for the provision of plans but it made very little material difference to the service who made every effort to operate as normal.

In July 2020 there were 25 new requests for Education, Health and Care needs assessments and 39 final EHC plans issued. No plans in that period had the allowable exceptions applied.

In August 2020 there were 2 new requests for Education, Health and Care needs assessments and 16 issued. Again, there were no plans where the allowable exceptions were applied.

3. Temporary legal flexibilities

3.1 The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 were implemented from 24 April to 25 September and permitted Local Authorities to deviate from statutory requirements in a number of areas.

3.2 TfC made minimal use of the range of legal flexibilities provided, largely as a result of maintaining service resilience. The five specific flexibilities were used as follows:

- Temporary approval of foster carers and an extension to the length of time that approval lasts (for urgent placements required due to the pressures related to Covid)
- Placement planning timescales extended (to recognise that social workers may have been able to respond as quickly as normal)
- Independent visits to children placed in residential accommodation to be virtual (to reflect the fact that residential providers did not want visits from external agencies)
- Electronic means for the supervision of children's welfare in placement (to replace face to face visits during the height of the lockdown)

3.3 The application of these flexibilities was reported regularly to the Improvement Board and the appropriateness of their use will be tested by Ofsted on their forthcoming Focused Visit. The test at all times will be the degree to which decisions were made in the best interests of the child. The overwhelming majority of the flexibilities lapsed on 25 September and are no longer in place at this time.

4. Direct service provision update:

- i) Staff continued to undertake direct work with children and families during the lockdown on a RAG rating basis. All open cases were risk assessed by the Social Care and Early Help teams and the most at risk cases continued to receive direct visits. The timeliness of child protection and cared for children statutory visits was reported on a fortnightly basis and was consistently at 98%. Welfare and safety assessments were agreed with schools and domestic abuse referrals through Operation Encompass continued to be received.
- ii) As lockdown measures eased direct face to face work with all children and families was resumed, with appropriate risk assessments in place around Covid risks. For example, Family time, Family Group Conferencing, and parenting interventions have resumed and some children's centre activities where social distancing is feasible. Face to face child protection conferences have resumed with Independent Reviewing Officers providing both virtual and face to face meeting options, as an example of the creative ways in which services are operating.
- iii) An increased number of children have registered with Mind of My Own and further work is underway to train more staff to use it. An urgent safeguarding alert system was set up with Mind of my Own so that any concerns raised by children would go directly to ICRT for immediate action.
- iv) Young people's participation groups had resumed their to face to face meetings where appropriate, using social distancing and other measures. The status of these types of sessions will be reviewed in light of the new restrictions in place across the region.

5. Future Ofsted activity

- 5.1 The Ofsted ILACS framework for the inspection of Children's Services has been in place since 2017 and has governed all inspections of Local Authority Children's Services, and Trusts (which is how TfC is described for the purposes of the framework) since that date.
- 5.2 TfC was subject to a full ILACS inspection in 2018 and as a result of the graded judgement of Inadequate a regime of Monitoring Visits (MV) commenced in 2019. To date three MV have been conducted with the last one in February 2020. A fourth MV was due in May 2020 but cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. The ILACS framework requires a minimum of four MV to be conducted before a full reinspection is undertaken.
- 5.3 Shortly after the full national lockdown was announced, Government requested Ofsted to suspend all inspection activity (of social care, providers, schools etc.) and that was then formalised in temporary amendments to the primary legislation and that remains in place. On 17 August 2020 Ofsted announced its plans to recommence activity in advance of full inspections recommencing

(January 2021 at the earliest). This short note describes the implications for TfC and partners.

- 5.4 Ofsted have indicated that from September onwards they will undertake focused visits to Local Authorities to look at the experiences of children and how Local Authorities and providers have made the best possible decisions for children in the context of the pandemic. This includes how they have joined up schools and social care services while schools were closed, to stop vulnerable pupils from 'slipping through the net'.
- 5.5 The focus will be on the quality and impact of decisions made for children and the scope crosses help and protection, children in care and care leavers, and aspects of the impact of leaders on practice.

Inspectors will evaluate:

- the effectiveness of the front door, with specific reference to any rise in and response to referrals, Section 47 enquiries and strategy discussions
- the progress of children subject to child protection and child in need plans (those who have experienced abuse, neglect or exploitation)
- the progress of those recently stepped up or stepped down to early help and the exercise of thresholds.

In the children in care and care leavers area, inspectors will evaluate:

- edge of care/pre-proceedings, particularly those subject to a letter before proceedings
- the focus on physical and mental health of children in care and care leavers, including how the Local Authority has maintained contact with children and young people and how they have facilitated contact with families
- placement decisions, including the quality of matching, particularly when sufficiency is a challenge.

In the impact of leaders area, inspectors will evaluate:

- the quality assurance of practice and 'line of sight' to the quality and impact of practice with children and families
- management and workforce capacity, including responses to staff well-being
- the effectiveness of leaders in leading and contributing to multi-agency working that leads to effective social work practice.

The visit results in a short letter setting out strengths, what needs to improve and, where necessary, areas for priority action. There will be no graded judgement in the letter.

The focused visit varies from the MV in the following ways:

- 10 days' notice is provided before Inspectors conduct field work although for those 10 days Inspectors will conduct interviews, analysis and develop their key lines of enquiry before they interview Social Workers about their case work
 - There will be four social care HMI and one schools HMI undertaking the focused visit, unlike the usual two social care HMIs for a MV
 - Where necessary the visit will be delivered remotely using MS Teams and Skype
6. TfC expects to be prioritised for a focused visit given the length of time that has elapsed since the last MV. Preparations are underway for the visit in the usual fashion, and partners have been appropriately briefed.
- 6.1 Ofsted will be aware that Sunderland is now subject to enhanced local Covid restrictions but there has been no indication that would prevent a focused visit from going ahead and it would not be the view of the service that a deferral should be requested. There is a strong desire to proceed with a visit to provide assurance to the public regarding the continued improvements and to continue to receive feedback on the service. The context within which services are operating is very important however and it would be essential for Ofsted to consider the impact of Covid on all aspects of practice.
7. Recommendations
- 7.1 The Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment on the report.

1 October 2020

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SCHOOL REOPENING UPDATE AND COVID RESTRICTIONS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To update members of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee on the progress schools are making and the services available to support schools and academies.

2. Background

- 2.1 After several months of partial closure schools reopened fully on 2 September 2020. School leaders have developed a set of clear risk assessments to ensure that the reopening of schools is as safe as possible. The Sunderland City Council Health and Safety Team worked closely with all schools providing a risk assessment template and guidance to supplement national guidance. Maintained schools are required to submit plans to the Health and Safety Team for assurance but a similar offer has been made to all academies who required additional support although the statutory assurance of plans for non maintained schools rests with the Trust Boards of each academy.
- 2.2 Schools and settings opened in a staggered start with many schools particularly in the secondary sector choosing to open with a planned staged return. By the second week in September all schools had returned and are now able to operate fully. The LINK School has some children on a blended timetable based on their needs, all children attend school in some form on a daily basis and will be reintroduced fully as soon as they are assessed to be ready.
- 2.3 In preparation for opening, a joint public transport plan was created with TFC, Sunderland City Council and Nexus to identify the capacity and requirements for public transport across the city. A weekly report has been established to understand any issues and to enable feedback from schools to be shared with nexus as appropriate. A communications campaign to encourage cycling and walking to schools has been implemented and additional support to schools to assist travel planning has been offered. Sunderland City Council travel team

are also undertaking site visits to monitor behaviour outside schools to offer advice and liaise with enforcement agencies as appropriate. Public transport capacity has not proved to be a major concern however the behaviour of parents entering and leaving schools has been more of an issue. The transport team will respond to complaints as appropriate and undertake regular school visits to monitor behaviour.

- 2.4 To facilitate the full opening of schools, Together for Children's services working in partnership with Sunderland City Council services have provided a wide range of guidance and support. We are collecting daily attendance figures from schools tracking attendance trends and contacting schools causing concern to understand reasons/themes. We are feeding concerns to partners such as Nexus and reporting data to DfE on a daily call. TfC Early Help attendance teams are already doing work to support specific families and we will continue to support them to ensure children return to school.
- 2.5 TfC school improvement officers are having weekly individual contact meetings with all headteachers to review progress and identify any specific issues. Schools requiring more intensive support have received a daily call. Communications with schools has been vital and as well as a regular call all schools receive a daily briefing which includes new guidance, advice and contact details for school improvement, HR, Health and Safety, Public Health and media support.
- 2.6 TfC school improvement safeguarding team are monitoring increases in electively home education numbers and will liaising with Sunderland City Council officers responsible for this. We will review any increases and identify appropriate responses to support affected schools.
- 2.7 The SEND officers are also tracking issues specifically with children with complex needs including transport issues. This group of children have a comprehensive individual risk assessments which are RAG rated and so a review of risk will be ongoing. SEND caseworkers will liaise directly with parents if children fail to return to school.
- 2.8 If a school is notified of a confirmed case of coronavirus in either staff or pupil or staff or pupils are exhibiting symptoms there is a clear pathway to advice. The DfE and the regional Health Protection Team have telephone advice lines in place. Sunderland Public Health Team have also established an email advice line and a telephone help desk. Schools can access support from any of the services available but feedback from schools has praised the local offer as being far quicker and providing excellent advice. Schools can seek advice seven days a week and into the evening and Sunderland Public Health staff

and TfC Education staff have worked extended hours to ensure the cover is in place.

- 2.9 The process for dealing with confirmed cases is well established. The closing of 'bubbles' within schools is part of the risk assessment procedures and schools liaise closely with Public Health to understand the duration and scope of a partial school closure. The closures due to confirmed cases tend to be age specific. For younger aged children the closure tends to be for a whole class or group simply because tracking of close contacts for young children is not possible with any accuracy. For older children it is easier to have much smaller group bubbles and more disciplined social distancing and therefore closures can be kept to smaller groups although this is not always possible in every case. Children in the special school environment also find disciplined social distancing difficult and the required physical contact and support by staff also makes this environment challenging and has resulted in frequent closures. Schools have remained focused on safety whilst accessing appropriate public health advice and we have seen well established partnerships working to meet the challenge in all settings.
- 2.10 Vulnerable children including cared for children and those with EHCP's are monitored closely. If a child is forced to self-isolate for a period then a risk assessment is designed to support the child. In partnership with schools the children's social work teams and virtual school team monitor the child's progress against a RAG rating and ensure support is provided as appropriate.
- 2.11 Children isolating in receipt of means tested free school meals are entitled to their meal if they remain at home and it is the school's responsibility to ensure they are provided. Schools with contracts with Sunderland City Council catering services are provided with a weekly meal box for each eligible child which is delivered to the home. Schools and academies with alternative catering providers are offering a range of support including food parcels and vouchers.
- 2.12 HR support has also been vital in supporting schools manage staffing issues throughout. The HR team have designed additional advice and risk assessments to support schools in assisting vulnerable and pregnant staff. One challenge schools have had to face is the conduct of staff outside schools and their adherence to social distancing rules particularly in social environments. Several cases in schools have been traced back to staff attending group social functions. The HR team have updated the advice around codes of conduct with specific advice to support headteachers and governing bodies manage the situation.

- 2.13 There is a weekly Joint Consultative Forum with education trade unions which ensures good communication. This has helped prevent issues across the city but also assists staff to deal with individual school based issues.
- 2.14 There is a daily call with DfE and a bi-monthly regional call with the DfE and the Regional School's Commissioner. This enables local issues and challenges to be shared and support requested as appropriate.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the information set out in this report.

CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 October 2020

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT COORDINATOR

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider issues for inclusion in the work programme of the Committee for the municipal year 2020/21.

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 To be most effective, the work programme should provide a basis and framework for the work of the Committee, while retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to any important issues that emerge during the course of the year. The work programme is therefore intended to be a working document that the Committee can develop and refer to throughout the 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 The remit of the Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee covers the following:-

To review and scrutinise any matter relating to the service performance and commissioning for children, young people and their families including Safeguarding and Child Protection, Family Support and Children's Social Care, Corporate Parenting, Educational Attainment and Skills, Relationship with Schools and Youth Services.

- 2.5 The work programme should reflect the remit of the Committee and the need to balance its responsibility for undertaking scrutiny, performance management and policy review (where necessary). The work programme should also reflect and be aligned to the key priorities of the Council as set out in documents such as the Sunderland Strategy and Corporate Plan.

3. Draft Work Programme 2019/20

- 3.1 On 11 August 2020, the Committee held a work programme development session to discuss the issues to be considered in the year ahead. Jill Colbert, Karen Davison and Simon Marshall were also in attendance.

- 3.2 Reference was made to the importance of focusing on those issues of most importance. This should help the Committee to achieve more positive outcomes. It was also felt that the use of themed meetings or focusing on a particular topic should be considered where appropriate.
- 3.3 The table below provides details of the issues considered for inclusion in the work programme:-

Regular Work Programme Items	
Children Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee Work Programme (Monthly)	To receive the committee's work programme outlining future meetings of the committee and the items scheduled for those meetings.
28 Day Notice of Key Decisions (Monthly)	To consider the Council's 28 Day Notice of Key Decisions.
Single Item (Items to be scheduled when dates known)	
Child Exploitation and Missing Children	To receive an update on the work going on in the city to tackle this problem. It is suggested that this be undertaken through a special briefing meeting with Members.
Apprenticeships	To discuss with apprenticeship providers the operation of apprenticeship in the city.
Preparations of Schools in Response to Covid -19	Consider an example of good practice in a particular school and ways in which children can access learning.
Operation of Assessment Services for CYP with ASC and ADHD	Consider the operation of relevant services in Sunderland and the challenges faced. Discuss work done in schools via the Parent Carer Forum.
Impact of Covid 19 on Children and Young Families	To assess the impact on young families, single parents and young carers.
Impact of Covid 19 on school attendance	To consider how far the disruption caused by Covid 19 has had an impact on school attendance.
Impact of Covid 19 on Child Mental Health	To assess the longer term impact on child mental health through discussions with the CAMHS partnership. Consider joint meeting with Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
Anti-Social Behaviour Amongst	To assess whether there has been any

CYP	affect levels of crime and disorder as a result of Covid 19. (NB – this issue will be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee. Issues can be fed back to this Committee for further consideration)
Drug Use Among Young People	To consider the impact of Covid 19 on the level of drug use in the city. (NB – this issue will be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee. Issues can be fed back to this Committee for further consideration)
TfC Performance Monitoring Report	To receive periodic performance monitoring information.
Ofsted Improvement Plan	To consider the progress being made in relation to the children services Ofsted improvement plan.
TfC Ofsted Monitoring Visit - Feedback	To consider the feedback received following an Ofsted inspection or monitoring visit.
Children's Services Complaints Report	To receive periodic performance monitoring information.
Visit to front Door of Children's Social Care	Visit to be rearranged following disruption caused by Covid 19.

3.4 A draft Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/20 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3.5 It should be noted that the work programme is a 'living' document and can be amended throughout the course of the municipal year. Any Elected Member can add an item of business to an agenda for consideration (Protocol 1 within the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook outlines this process).

4. Recommendations

That the Scrutiny Committee consider the feedback from the work programme session and consider the issues for inclusion in the work programme for the coming year.

5. Background Papers

None

REASON FOR INCLUSION	9 JULY 20	3 SEPT 20 (CANCELLED)	1 OCT 20	22 OCT 20	26 NOV 20	7 JAN 21	4 FEB 21	4 MARCH 21	1 APRIL 21
Policy Framework/ Cabinet Referrals and Responses	Scrutiny Annual Report – 19/20 (JD)								Scrutiny Annual Report – 20/21 (JD)
Scrutiny Business	Covid 19 – Update (Martin Birch)		Impact of Covid on Children and Young Families (Jill Colbert) Preparations of Schools in Response to Covid 19 (Simon Marshall)	Impact of Covid 19 on Young Carers and SEND (Carers Centre Parent Carers Forum)	Impact of Covid 19 on Child Mental Health (CCG)	Safeguarding Partnership Update	Impact of Covid 19 on School Attendance	Operation of Assessment Services for CYP with ASC and ADHD	Apprenticeships
Performance / Service Improvement						Together for Children – Performance Monitoring Report (Jill Colbert) Children Services Complaints Ofsted Improvement Plan – Update (Jill Colbert)			Together for Children – Performance Monitoring Report
Consultation / Awareness Raising	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21	Notice of Key Decisions Work Programme 20-21

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
-

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
200604/484	To approve the proposed Better Care Fund arrangements with Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group for the period 2020-2021.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 31 October 2020.	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 from 15 September to 30 November 2020.	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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190823/385	To approve the proposed Governance Arrangements for the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Advanced Manufacturing (CESAM) and related matters.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 30 November 2020.	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
190906/402	To consider expansion proposals by an existing Council tenant in respect of a strategic property and the associated capital funding and revised lease term proposals.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 30 November 2020.	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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200810/491	To procure a Letting Agent at Hillthorn Business Park.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 31 October 2020.	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
200813/493	To approve the Triggering of pre-emption rights to acquire HCA interests in Sunnyside and disposal of land to facilitate regeneration proposals.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 30 November 2020.	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
200813/494	To approve the establishment of a funding mechanism for the acquisition residential properties.	Cabinet	Y	During the period from 15 September to 30 November 2020.	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
200827/498	To approve the strategic acquisition of property interests at High Street West, Sunderland	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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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200827/499	To approve the strategic acquisition of property interests at Robinson Terrace, Hendon	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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
200902/500	To approve the acquisition of Bridge House, Bridge Street	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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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200902/501	To approve the acquisition of Pinewood House, Hendon Road	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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
200902/502	To authorise proceeding with detailed design, procurement and construction of a 750 space Multi Storey Car Park at Farrington Row as part of the Riverside Sunderland scheme.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 13 October to 31 December 2020.	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200903/503	To approve the Capital Programme Second Review 2020/2021 (including Treasury Management).	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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
200903/504	To approve the Revenue Budget Second Review 2020/2021.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200903/505	To approve the Budget Planning Framework and Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200907/507	To consider the award of a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) Contract.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200907/508	To procure a Low Carbon Refuse Collection Vehicle.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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
200907/509	To procure an Electronic School Meals Menu Software System.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200907/510	To consider proposals related to the sustainability of Coalfields based Early Years Provision.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200907/511	To seek approval to undertake a procurement process to put in place a 4-year Framework for Professional Services to support the delivery of the Housing Delivery and Investment Plan.	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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200909/512	To approve the acquisition of a building adjacent to the Nissan Plant, Washington	Cabinet	Y	13 October 2020	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
200903/506	To approve the Capital Programme Planning 2021/2022 to 2024/2025 and Capital Strategy	Cabinet	Y	During the period 13 October to 30 November 2020	N	Not applicable	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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200914/513	To approve the updated business plan for Siglion LLP and related matters.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 13 October 2020 to 31 December 2020.	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
200914/514	To consider a revision to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy to amend the counterparty list.	Cabinet (for referral to Council if approved)	Y	During the period 13 October 2020 to 31 December 2020.	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk
200914/515	To consider grant support for voluntary sector organisations.	Cabinet	Y	During the period 13 October 2020 to 31 December 2020.	N	Not applicable.	Cabinet Report	Governance Services Civic Centre PO BOX 100 Sunderland SR2 7DN committees@sunderland.gov.uk

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181024/312	To receive an update report on the Regional Adoption Agency proposals and to agree the next steps	Cabinet	Y	17 November 2020	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 Paul Stewart – Deputy Leader/Cabinet Secretary; Councillor Louise Farthing – Children, Learning and Skills; Councillor Geoffrey Walker – Healthy City; Councillor Linda Williams – Vibrant City; Councillor Rebecca Atkinson – 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

14 September 2020