	<p align="center"><b>Children and Education Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b></p>
<p><b>Title</b></p>	<p><b>Family Services Quarterly Update</b></p>
<p><b>Date of meeting</b></p>	<p>7 March 2024</p>
<p><b>Report of</b></p>	<p><b>Executive Director for Children’s Services</b></p>
<p><b>Wards</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p><b>Status</b></p>	<p><i>Public</i></p>
<p><b>Urgent</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Appendices</b></p>	<p>Appendix A – Childhood Matters (ADCS)  Appendix B – Children’s Services Analysis Tool (ChAT) Performance Report.  Appendix C- Annual Complaints Report</p>
<p><b>Officer Contact Details</b></p>	<p>Chris Munday, Executive Director for Children’s Services</p>
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	
<p>This report gives an update on Family Services progress and asks Members to scrutinise performance data.</p>	
<p><b>Recommendations</b></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Children and Education Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the service update in this report.</li> <li>2. That the Children and Education Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the ChAT performance report summarised in this report and in appendix.</li> <li>3. That the Children and Education Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and scrutinise the annual complaints report.</li> </ol>	

## 1. Reasons for the Recommendations

**Childhood Matters - The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) identifies pressing priorities for children, young people, and families. (Appendix 1)**

- 1.1 Childhood Matters is a policy paper from the ADCS which updates the Association's 2017 report 'A country that works for all children', and seeks to capture the key challenges facing children, young people, and families, such as poverty and poor mental health, as well as the public services they rely on. This paper was developed in consultation with leaders of local authority children's services across the country, including Barnet.
- 1.2 The paper calls for a comprehensive vision and plan for childhood accompanied by a long term, sustainable funding settlement. The priorities identified across government include, among others, the following:
- Cabinet Office should develop and co-ordinate an ambitious cross government plan for childhood, which pays specific attention to understanding, mitigating, and removing income, health, racial, geographical, and educational inequalities, alongside a resourcing and implementation strategy.
  - Treasury should ensure sustainable multi-year funding predicated on a long-term view of the return on investment in children's futures for the whole public sector.
  - Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities should review the outdated methodology to funding local government, and children's services, to better reflect local contexts, populations, and levels of actual need.
  - Department for Education should broaden the review of Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 that Stable homes built on love committed to and take the opportunity to cement early or family help in statute, as it is for adult social care.
  - Department of Health and Social Care should embrace integration with children's social care by delegating the resources and responsibilities for commissioning and provision of all children's community and mental health services to place based integrated partnerships.
  - NHS England should commit to a root and branch review of children's mental health services.

### **Overview of National Policy Changes**

- 1.3 Since 2022, the publication of the report findings of a number of children social care reviews (including the Independent Review of Children Social Care; Child Safeguarding Practice Review 'Child Protection in England'; Review of safeguarding of children with disabilities and complex healthcare needs and Competition and Markets Authority Review of Children's Social Care) and inquiries (Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse), have fed into important national policy changes. The Government launched Safe Homes Built on Love as the overarching policy response and recently published a suite of documents to address those findings.
- 1.4 The following DFE policy priorities form the context to the policy changes:
- Improving school attendance and support for vulnerable children.
  - Identify and meet SEND needs earlier, creating a more inclusive system.
  - Early Years and Childcare: extending childcare provision to help eligible working families.
  - Children social care- more meaningful and effective early support.
- 1.5 The main strategy documents launched are as follows:

1.6 [The National Kinship Care Strategy](#). This follows through on Government's commitment to the importance of family networks, emphasised throughout Stable Homes Built on Love 2023 and includes:

- Increasing and improving support to Kinship Carers. Measures include: 8 areas trialling the matching of allowances for kinship carers to foster carers (to be potentially expanded to all areas after the trial); the Adoption Support Fund to be renamed Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund –to ensure kinship carers understand their eligibility; improved training, information and advice for carers; new guidance for employers on supporting kinship carers in the workplace or the expansion of the role of Virtual Heads to cover kinship care and updated guidance and standards on the availability of advocacy for children in kinship care.
- Support and improvement of Local Authority practice. Measures include: updated statutory guidance (including a new statutory definition '*any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent*'); improved social work training and work to promote improved / expanded use of family group conferencing pre-proceedings; a new 'Kinship Care Ambassador' to work with LAs to improve practice, and improved use of digital innovation to help social workers understand kinship families.
- Other measures also include updated training and guidance for Ofsted inspectors, work with the Law Commission to simplify and streamline legal orders and statuses for kinship carers, and work with the Ministry of Justice on data join up.

1.7 [Children's Social Care Data and Digital Strategy](#). Aims to set the foundations for a long-term plan for harnessing the potential of data and digital to ensure services to achieve their full potential and to improve outcomes through addressing:

- Culture and leadership
- Systems and technology
- Information sharing
- Data collection, insights, and analysis
- Supporting children, young people, and families to tell their stories.
- Trust and confidence in the use of children's social care data.

1.8 [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#). This statutory guidance emphasises multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children. It includes new principles for agencies when working with families, such as:

- Partnership working with families built on strong, trusting, and co-operative relationships, including guidance on appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Greater emphasis on family networks and the use of family group In conferencing, with practitioners empowering parents and children to participate in decision making and involving parents, carers, families, and local communities in designing processes that affect them.
- New expectations for multi-agency working covering 'collaborate, learn, resource, include and mutual challenge'.
- Strengthens guidance around whole family working in early help and introduces new policy of non-mandatory reporting of care leaver deaths up to 25.
- A broader range of practitioners can be the lead practitioner for families under section 17, not just social workers – local areas should agree local protocols about how this should work and emphasises the importance of providing support to children with disabilities under section 17.
- Introduces new multi-agency child protection standards (including harms outside the home and online harm) and new requirements for safeguarding arrangements.

In addition, this strategy requests local areas to:

- Review current multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and identify improvements needed to strengthen services (including effective information sharing) and reflect the requirements of the strategy. Revised multi-agency arrangements should be published by December 2024.
- Identify named lead and delegate safeguarding partners for each relevant statutory agency and to appoint one delegated partner as the partnership chair removing the role of the independent chair.
- Consider the role of education partners in multi-agency arrangements and strengthen this role if needed.
- Publish and submit an annual report by September 24.
- Agree how independent scrutiny will be delivered.
- Review funding arrangements.

1.9 [National Framework and Dashboard for Children's Social Care](#). This is statutory guidance covering purpose and principles for social care and will be supported by the Children's Social Care Dashboard. It sets out in detail how senior leaders; practice supervisors and practitioners should seek to support / deliver the outcomes. The framework is underpinned by the following principles:

- Children's welfare is paramount.
- Children's wishes and feelings are sought, heard, and responded to
- Children's social care works in partnership with whole families.
- Children are raised by their families, with their family networks, or in family environments whenever possible.
- Local authorities work with other agencies to effectively identify and meet the needs of children, young people, and families.
- Local authorities consider the economic and social circumstances which may impact children, young people and families.

1.10 The framework aims to achieve the following outcomes for children:

- Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need.
- Children and young people are supported by their family network.
- Children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes.
- Children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes.

1.11 To achieve the stated outcomes, three enablers have been identified, these are: Multi-agency working is prioritised and effective, Leaders drive conditions for effective practice and the workforce is equipped and effective.

1.12 There is a one-year implementation period – by December 2024, LAs are expected to have begun work to implement the new framework and align practice and systems to it. The Dashboard will provide a visual representation of key metrics and indicators which will show how outcomes and enablers of Framework are being achieved. It is intended to improve timeliness, accessibility, and data comparability of children's social care data nationally and to be a learning tool for central and local government (rather than a tool to assess performance). The first iteration of the dashboard will be published in 2024.

1.13 [National Review of Children with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs in Residential Care](#). Central government have published their response to the review published in April 23. It states that many of the failings identified will be addressed by current policy (SEND and AP Improvement Plan, Stable Homes, and NHS Long-term Plan) but that improved safeguarding relies on concerted

joint effort between LAs, ICBs and the Police in partnership with central government, providers, and regulators. There is central government commitment to:

- Identifying inspection and regulatory changes with Ofsted and CQC.
- Strengthening advocacy provision for those with complex communication needs.
- Considering professional registration for children's homes workforce and the development of new Knowledge and Skills Statements and a national leadership programme for managers.
- Piloting Regional Care Co-operatives in 2 areas to identify the impact these might have.
- Identifying changes to the LADO role which could address identified failings.
- Reviewing the law around children with disabilities to inform future change to legislation and guidance.

1.14 A number of these approaches across all of these policy areas are embedded in Barnet's practice. We will be considering the reforms at an event with partners to identify actions for local implementation this has been arranged for 21st February 2024.

### **Barnet Leading the Development of a Secure Children's Home for London**

1.15 Children with particularly complex needs including those who are at significant risk of causing harm to themselves or others, including risk to life, can be placed in a secure children's home when no other type of placement would keep them safe. Children who need a secure welfare placement are likely to:

- Have suffered a great deal of trauma in their lives.
- Have unmet emotional, mental, and physical health needs.
- Have experienced a lot of instability.
- Have missed a significant amount of education.

1.16 There is a significant national shortage of secure children's home provision, as highlighted by Ofsted, ADCS and the Judiciary. London has no provision. Due to the shortage, children can wait several months for a placement, and these are usually around 200 miles from the capital, far from their families, friends and other people that are important to them. This distance also has a negative impact on the work we do to prepare children to leave secure care and settle back into the community.

1.17 The numbers of children placed are small, but the placements expensive. Where places are not available, the alternatives, often requiring multiple ratios of staff for each child, are amongst the costliest placements for children's services. The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) highlighted more than twenty local authorities paying over £20K per week (£1 million per year) for such placements. There is also a worrying increase in applications to deprive children of their liberty (DOLS) in less suitable provision because secure welfare provision is not available.

1.18 Barnet is leading a London-wide project to develop and establish a secure children's home (SCH) in London to bring additional capacity to the market, with capital provided by the Department for Education. The new provision will provide up to 24 specialist welfare placements. It will include accommodation for up to four children who no longer need to live within a secure environment but need a period of extra support to help them achieve a positive transition back into the community. It will help boroughs provide the right specialist care, education, and support, at the right time, to improve outcomes for London's most vulnerable children, as well as helping to alleviate the capacity issues.

- 1.19 This requires a pan-London approach and Barnet is leading the design and construction phase on behalf of London boroughs, working with the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA), the sector-led improvement partnership of the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS). In November 2022, the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee agreed in principle for the London Borough of Barnet to become a member of a not-for-profit company, now known as the Pan London Vehicle for Children's Complex Commissioning Ltd (PLV Ltd). Other boroughs also agreed and the company, owned by London local authorities, has now been established to oversee the development and running of the new secure children's home provision as well as other key pan-London commissioning arrangements that will improve the lives of London's children and young people. The PLV will be a means to share the risks and benefits associated with running the SCH.
- 1.20 Part of the existing Thames Water Depot on Lea Bridge Road, in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, has been identified as the most suitable location to build this facility. The proposals, which have been developed by LBB's strategic construction partner Grahams Construction Limited working with specialist architects firm Keppie Design, are sensitive and respectful of the surrounding area and local context, whilst also meeting the requirements for the new secure children's home. Consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders about the proposals has recently started, before an application for planning permission is submitted to the local planning authority.

#### **Visit from Minister for Loneliness to Barnet's Care Experienced Young people's Hub.**

- 1.21 On 18 February Onwards and Upwards, were visited by the Minister for Loneliness, Stuart Andrew. His visit to the Care Experienced young people's hub was to support a greater understanding of the importance the hub plays as a safe space for Barnet's young people to develop and maintain social connections with their peers and with the wider leaving care corporate family, who are based at the hub.
- 1.22 During the visit, the Minister had a tour of the hub's facilities, which include access to a range of onsite services, such as laundry and kitchen; blended learning spaces and quiet zones to access therapeutic, health and wellbeing support. He met with colleagues from Barnet's Education and Learning Service, who offer onsite, wrap around support to access, and sustain education, employment and learning to Barnet's care experienced young people.
- 1.23 He also met a group of young people and discussed their experiences, and the challenges they face as young people navigating the cusp of adulthood as a uniquely vulnerable group. One of our former asylum-seeking young people shared with the Minister that when he arrived in the UK 2 years ago, he felt he had nothing and no one, but through the support of the Service, he now can speak English, he is in his long term tenancy, where he enjoys residing in and he has a part time job in a bakery while he studies part time. One of the young people has also since shared with his social worker, that spending time with the Minister was a validating experience. Young people shared how their experiences of positive structured activities, like sports, education, and employment post 18, helped them overcome isolation and grounded them in interactions with others in team settings.
- 1.24 The Minister also met for a one-to-one discussion with a care experienced parent, who shared her journey as someone for who the LA has simultaneously been her corporate parent, whilst initiating care proceedings for her child. Supported by her Leaving Care practitioner, she recently graduated from the Early Years' Parenting Hub, supporting parents to be able to mentalise their

children's needs, she shared with the minister the journey of her child returning home to her care. She said, 'he was very understanding, made me feel comfortable and listened to my views'.

- 1.25 Minister for Loneliness Stuart Andrew said: "Today's visit to Onwards and Upwards was a great opportunity to see how care leavers are supported to establish and maintain social connections, helping them avoid the negative effects loneliness can have. "I was particularly impressed by the personal approach the hub took to supporting care leavers, helping them develop the skills and confidence to take their next steps. "Tackling loneliness amongst children in care and care leavers is a key focus of mine, and I will soon be meeting with ministers from across government to discuss what more can be done."
- 1.26 Following the visit, Kate Jeffrey (Head of Service), and Julie Harpin (Assistant Head of Service) were invited to meet with representatives from the DCMS and DFE to share more about the work of Onwards and Upwards. Chris Munday was invited to attend a round table event on 19<sup>th</sup> February, being organised by the Minister to discuss what more can be done to better understand care experiences and how this group of young people can be supported to tackle loneliness.

### **Ministry of Justice visit to Jonah House, London Accommodation & Resettlement Pathfinders (LAP)**

- 1.27 On 8th December 2024, Alan Webster, Deputy Director, Youth Justice Policy from the Ministry of Justice visited Jonah House in Barnet. Jonah House is a 5-bed London Accommodation & Resettlement Pathfinder alternative to custody placement for children and young people within the Youth Justice System. The project involved 5 other local authorities in North Central London (Barnet, Camden, Islington, Haringey, and Enfield) and provides for therapeutic accommodation as alternative to remand. The LAP accommodation provides a wraparound support including education, training and mental health support and is targeted at Black and Other racially minoritised ethnic groups who are over-represented in the secure estate. Alan Webster was very positive about the LAP in his closing remarks. The rest of the Ministry of Justice team spoke about positive energy and optimism they felt from the staff, a stark contrast to their experiences in visits to the secure estate (Youth Offending Institutes). The project is also running in East London (Newham) and will be extended nationally, if successful.

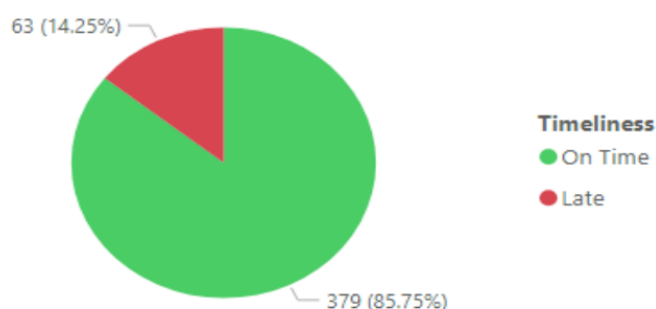
### **Family Services Performance Update (ChAT, appendix 2)**

- 1.28 There is a fair overlap in the period between the previous performance analysis reported to Committee in January 24 (which covered six months up to November 2023) and this reporting period – with just two additional reporting months.
- 1.29 In the current reporting period, covering between July 23 – January 2024, there were 11,350 contacts to MASH, which is 7% higher than the same period in the previous year (n=10,556) and 20% higher than pre-pandemic reporting (n=9,118 between Sept 19- Feb 2020).
- 1.30 There were 1,419 referrals to Children's Social Care in the period July 2023 – Jan 2024 which is a 12% increase from the reported in the first six months of the year (n=1,247), although 5% lower than the same reporting period last year (n= 1,495).
- 1.31 There is a 3% reduction of Early Help Assessments (EHA) in this reporting period when compared to the same reporting period in 2022-23 (n=1,874>1,814). However, as previously noted, the volume remains significantly higher than the period between September 2019 – February 2020 when the number of open EHA's totalled 1,473.

- 1.32 The current number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan is 218 in this reporting period which is a 10% reduction from the reported in the previous update (n= 241; reporting period April – November 2023). Children subject to a repeat Child Protection Plan have remained stable at 22% (28 children) since the last reporting period.
- 1.33 The number of Children in Need in the reporting period is 1,546 which is a 21% increase from the first six-months of 2023 (n=1,214). The volume is 4% lower than reported in same period in the previous year (n=1,611).
- 1.34 61% of Social Work Assessments were completed within the 45-day timescale in the reporting period, this is a small decrease from the previous update and from the same time last year (67%). The data reflects staffing challenges during the reporting period and the subsequent closure of open assessments. Live data reported on PowerBi indicates 85% of Social Work Assessments are completed in 45 days; this is due to stabilisation in the workforce achieved through a range of system initiatives. Further analysis also highlighted some assessments being started incorrectly therefore not progressing, this was problematic to this data set. These have now been cleared and should no longer impact this data.

Timeliness of Assessment

PowerBI, Assessments, accessed on 14/02/2024.



- 1.35 66% of s47s did not require an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC), a slight decrease from the previous update (70%). This is being closely monitored by managers to ensure that children are not subject to s47 enquiries unnecessarily. 96% of children who progress to an ICPC are made subject to a Child Protection Plan which demonstrates appropriate thresholds being applied consistently (99% in previous reporting) for children in need of a Child Protection Plan to safeguard their welfare.
- 1.36 ICPC's held within 15 days of a Strategy Discussion has decreased slightly from 78% in previous reporting period to 74%; this can be due to the availability of interpreters and new mother's in the period immediately following the birth of a child.
- 1.37 During this period 114 children came into care of the Local Authority slightly up from 110 during the previous period, and 17% higher than reported in same period in the previous year (n=94). 102 children ceased to be looked after by the Local Authority, higher than the 74 as reported in the previous update, and 28% higher than reported in same period in the previous year (n=82). Of these, 21% were UASC, increasing consistently in each reporting period since the 18% reported in same period in the previous year. The total number of children in care currently is 349, a slight



decrease from previous reporting (n=374) yet higher than that reported in same period in the previous year (n=336).

- 1.38 Among the reasons why an episode of care ceased for children, there has been a considerable improvement in adoption figures reaching 7% -i.e. 7 children adopted in this reporting period compared to 3 in the previous update, yet similar to those adopted during same period in the previous year (7). There has also been an increase in Special Guardianship Orders (12%) from the previous update (9%).
- 1.39 Children looked after who have had a health check in the last 12 months has risen again from 73% in the last update to 80%. 85% of children looked after have had a dental check, this is a significant improvement. However, as reported in January, there are known data collection issues which are being addressed.
- 1.40 Number of care experienced adults is at 329, a slight yet consistent increase from the 323 and 319 in the last two reporting periods. Our performance on staying in touch with 17-18 year olds and 19-21 year olds remains at 100% and accommodation suitability remains high for both cohorts at 97% and 94% (on average for both age sets) respectively.

### **Family Services Annual Complaints and Compliments report 2022-2023 (Appendix 3)**

- 1.41 Listening to what our residents say about the service we deliver is key for continuous service improvement. Failure to investigate and deal with our residents' complaints in a transparent and timely manner risks legal challenge and loss of confidence by our residents, presenting a reputational risk. Overall, the number of recorded complaints is declining as the service spends time resolving any issues as they arise.
- 1.42 During this year we received 99 compliments, compared to 45 complaints. The number of formal complaints that we receive has fallen consistently since 2017 which reflects the commitment of staff to listen to, and resolve, any concerns at the first opportunity. Where complaints progress to the formal stage, they sometimes take longer to resolve as they are usually complex and need to be thoroughly investigated. Of the 45 stage 1 complaints received, 17% were upheld and 38% partially upheld. The attached report details the reasons and areas.
- 1.43 An emerging issue is how we deal with complainants that appear to be using the complaints process to continue asserting control over former partners during and following Private Law proceedings. We will consider the latest research and how a restorative approach can support the early resolution of such complaints.

### **Workforce update**

- 1.44 Despite some challenges, we are utilising multiple approaches to create a more permanent workforce of Social Workers, with opportunities for training and development in an elongated hierarchy. This helps reduce reliance on agency workers. We are seeing some positive results. Our cumulative turnover of permanent Social Workers decreased to 10.8% in 2023 (14.8% in 2022). In December 2023 we had 47 agency workers covering vacancies, 23.5% of the workforce (vs. 52 agency workers and 25.8% of the workforce in December 2022).
- 1.45 Our retention of Newly Qualified Social Workers into Social Work roles or our 'grow your own approach' is very successful. We have introduced a range of measures to remain an attractive

employer in a competitive market. Newly Qualified Social Workers have been placed in the teams with the most vacancies/agency staff.

1.46 Following difficulties in attracting quality Social Workers, we reviewed and increased our retention rates across Barnet's permanent Social Worker and Advanced Practitioner roles, to make the offer of permanent work more appealing and to acknowledge the skill/demand in this role. It was increased in the most difficult to recruit to teams.

1.47 Due to pressures in the system caused in part by vacancies we adopted a solution focused approach where we have either offered, created, or appointed:

- Part time and job share Social Work roles. These have not yet yielded any appointments.
- Family Support Workers to assist the I&P teams (with the most vacancies) to support Social Workers with tasks that did not need a qualified worker to complete.
- Overtime to Social Workers to complete one off pieces of work which generated a fair amount of interest. This was offered to Social Workers across the service which supported development and helped ensure that children's needs are effectively met in a timely way.
- Development of Social Work Apprenticeships, supporting internal professional development opportunities for the existing 'otherwise qualified' workforce.

## **2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended**

2.1. None

## **3. Post Decision Implementation**

3.1. None

## **4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations**

### **Corporate Parenting**

4.1 In July 2016, the Government published their Care Leavers' strategy Keep on Caring which outlined that the "[the government] will introduce a set of corporate parenting principles that will require all departments within a local authority to recognise their role as corporate parents, encouraging them to look at the services and support that they provide through the lens of what a reasonable parent would do to support their own children.'

4.2 The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and;
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living

### **Risk management**

4.3 Any Family Services risks are recorded on the Family Services Risk Register and monitored each quarter by the Senior Leadership Team with escalations to CMT if necessary.

### **Insight**

4.4 Family Services uses a comprehensive suite of performance information, as part of its self-assessment and to support decision making and, including local and regional datasets, audit and financial analysis. This information is scrutinised by Senior Leaders in a variety of forums including Placement Board, Performance Board, MTFs Board and quarterly meetings with the Lead Member for Children and Families, and the Chief Executive.

### **Social Value**

4.5 All commissioning activity includes social value as a standard monitoring item.

## **5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)**

5.1 None in the context of this report

## **6. Legal Implications and Constitution References**

6.1 Local authorities have specific duties in respect of children under various legislation including the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004. They have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area and, if this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing services appropriate to the child's needs. They also have a duty to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing services appropriate to the child's needs, provided this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare.

6.2 They should do this in partnership with parents, in a way that is sensitive to the child's race, religion, culture and language and that, where practicable, takes account of the child's wishes and feelings. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities must consider how the child or young person can be supported to facilitate their development and to help them achieve the "best possible educational and other outcomes".

6.3 Local authorities have specific duties to care leavers under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The corporate parenting duties and powers under the 1989 Act include:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living</li> </ul> <p>6.4 Under the Barnet Constitution Part 2 C, the Children &amp; Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee shall perform the overview and scrutiny role and function in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All matters as that relate to Children’s Social Care</li> <li>• All matters which relate to services pertaining to the education and well-being of children and young people including youth services.</li> <li>• Receive and comment upon any external inspections and reviews.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Consultation</b></p>
<p>7.1 My Say Matters is the Family Services consultation and participation programme for children and young people.</p>
<p><b>8. Equalities and Diversity</b></p>
<p>8.1 Decision makers should have due regard to the public sector equality duty in regards</p> <p>8.2 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which Page 11 of 12 requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.</li> <li>• advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups.</li> <li>• foster good relations between people from different groups.</li> </ul> <p>8.3 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.</p> <p>8.4 Equalities and diversity considerations are a key element of social work practice. It is imperative that help and protection services for children and young people are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, race and ethnicity, faith or belief, sex, gender reassignment, language, maternity / parental status, and sexual orientation. We continue to closely monitor this, as report appendixes notes, in our performance data.</p>
<p><b>9. Background Papers</b></p>
<p>9.1 None</p>

