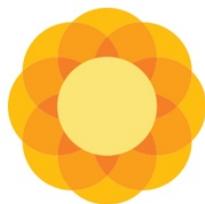




Strategic Business Plan

2018-2023

2019/20 (Year 2) Update



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**



Birmingham Children's Trust Business Plan 2018-2023 - 2019/20 (Year 2) Update

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Foreword from the Birmingham Children in Care Council and Care Leavers' Forum



Don't call me LAC... I am a child in care AND I am not LACKING in anything.

Birmingham's Children in Care Council and Birmingham's Care Leavers' Forum, as representatives of young people's groups across Birmingham Children's Trust, are very pleased and proud to have been asked to write something for this plan for the second year running.

We can't believe it's been a year already and it has been an orange rollercoaster ride for us!

In our last report we challenged the Trust to make a difference and this year has been a year of making a difference and we are SO PROUD to have been part of that!

This is the year that Ofsted called us dynamic (and we agreed). It's also been a year of challenges. So when we were asked to stand up and present in front of nearly 1000 people we did it! We have interviewed the most senior people (waves at Jenny); we have led on campaigns and been asked to comment on new pieces of work, new approaches and have influenced front-line practice. Looking forward to year 2 we can't wait to tell you what we have planned but you will be hearing even more from us!

We have grown as individuals and as a group. We invite in new young people all the time and pride ourselves that both groups are growing in numbers. We believe any child in care, care experienced or care leaver has something amazing to say and we want to hear it.

One of our proudest moments in 2018 was supporting our 'mind your language' campaign and we know this year the Trust is 100 percent behind it.

We believe if you change your language it changes how you think. If you can change the way you think it will change the way you behave and you will be more 'caring'. Isn't that what we all want? We want Birmingham Children's Trust to be an organisation that really cares!

Our top tips for everyone in the Trust remain the same:

- Listen to real first hand experiences.
- Work alongside me, work with me, explain things and then explain again! Remember I am at the centre.
- Don't think you know what I am trying to say, don't second guess me, use the words I choose to use.
- Talk to children and young people, have conversations, properly listen and take an interest in my life.

We are excited to be going into YEAR 2!

Birmingham Children in Care Council and Birmingham Care Leavers' Forum.

1. Introduction

This is the second business plan of Birmingham Children's Trust Ltd.

We have enjoyed an interesting, challenging, and ultimately successful first year operating as the Trust. Our Board is now well-established and providing a great level of challenge and support to executive officers to drive improvement. We have built an effective and successful relationship with the Council, as the owners, commissioners and key partners of the Trust. We have been active partners in the Children and Young People Partnership developments across the city. We have secured real improvements in the workforce of the Trust, and we have encountered real challenges around changing demand for services as we respond to emerging risks faced by young people in our communities as a result of gangs, county lines, knife crime. We are leading work with partners in the Police, the Council and the NHS to develop new models to respond.

We were clear in our first business plan that our key priority in our first year of operation was to improve services so that when we were inspected by Ofsted we would no longer have any services rated 'Inadequate'. Ofsted came in December 2018 for a full inspection of children's services, and they came back in January and February to inspect, separately, our fostering and our adoption service. The outcome of these inspections is that we achieved what we set out to: none of our services is rated 'Inadequate'. Our children's services overall, and our fostering service are judged as 'Requiring Improvement to be Good', while our adoption service is judged as 'Good'. Full Ofsted reports can be accessed by searching 'Birmingham' at: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

This is real progress for Birmingham. Social care services have been judged 'Inadequate' here for 12 years. The Minister of State, Nadhim Zahawi, wrote offering his congratulations to the Council and the Trust for the progress made. All of us who work to improve the lives of the city's most vulnerable children and families, whether in the Council or the Trust, should be pleased with the progress we have made. But it is just a start. We have reached first base. Some of the notable improvements Ofsted recognised included:

- More children are benefitting from early help
- No child was found to be at unassessed or unmanaged risk
- Practice has been revitalised by the Trust, and staff are proud to work for the Trust
- A strong and effective 'front door', with good partnership arrangements
- Comprehensive and timely assessments
- Responses to domestic abuse effective
- Social workers know their children and visit them frequently. They build meaningful and trusting relationships
- Voice of children in care and care leavers given a high priority
- Direct work with children is strong

They left us with 6 areas for improvement:

- The quality, effectiveness and pace of partnership working with external agencies, including partner-led early help services
- Trust and confidence between the courts and the Trust
- Effectiveness of the Fostering Service
- Robust and timely focus on all permanence options for children
- Alignment of the approach to contextual safeguarding
- The impact of the virtual school in improving provision for children in care

We have an action plan that addresses how the necessary improvements in these areas will be taken forward.

Ofsted will be back to inspect us again within 3 years. We must expect and strive to be 'Good' when they next inspect us. In the meantime we must make sure our internal and partnership evaluations, and the voices of those who use our services, give us an accurate picture of our progress towards being sustainably and consistently good.

We now have a strong platform on which to build, to start to design and deliver better services for children and families, and to develop stronger leadership and management as we set out our stall to further improve. This will involve some reorganising of roles and responsibilities, and some investment in new activity and expansion in some areas: doing more of what works. Where we are investing, we will do so through a robust project business planning process, and our investments will all be designed to better meet the needs of children and families and to save us money as a result (for example, through investment in family decision-making and Family Group Conferences, and expanding the reach of our Edge of Care services, we will secure better outcomes and change the demand for care placements, saving money as a consequence).

We face some financial challenges in the coming year to deliver agreed savings and contending with rising demand for care placements. We believe we have the necessary plans in place to enable us, once again, to manage our finances effectively and to live within our means.

The Trust continues to have but one focus: to deliver better services and better outcomes for the city's most vulnerable children, young people and families. We will do this by further strengthening the quality of practice across the Trust; by creating the conditions that enable better practice and management; by ensuring that we understand and act upon the performance and quality information we gather about our work; and by engaging and forging strong and purposeful collaboration with children, young people and families, with those we work with, with the Council as our commissioner, with our partners, and with our staff.

We have made a good start. Now the real work begins...



Andrew Christie
Chair



Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive

2. Strategic Context for the Children's Trust

Children's social care services nationally are under acute financial pressure. In Birmingham, thanks to a combination of judicious internal management, and a positive relationship with the Council, the Trust is in a robust financial position. We have significant challenges but we also have plans to change what we do to improve outcomes for children and families and to deliver necessary savings. As demand locally and nationally increases, we will work with the Council to address the challenges we face.

Like other children's services we are seeing the escalating impact on children's lives of deprivation, housing problems, parental mental health, substance misuse, and domestic abuse. Additionally, in Birmingham, the impact of knife crime, gangs and 'county lines' creates new and additional risks and challenges for our young people. We need to work differently with our partners to find new solutions to some of these challenges. Birmingham Children's Trust will continue to be an active partner, with the Council, the Police, the NHS, and the voluntary and community sector, to improve partnership working across the city. The Ofsted inspection of SEND services last year illustrates the scale of the improvement task we face, but we have all now been galvanised to act, together.

We plan, over the coming year, to change our shape, in terms of leadership and management, to develop and commission new services, and to invest in the practice and strategic leadership skills of our managers, working with partners who will deliver national programmes into the Trust in a bespoke way. This is one of the ways we will build sustainable improvement.

We know we also need to remain active in the strategic partnership arena, not least to ensure that partners come together routinely and effectively to redesign and deliver services around our most vulnerable children, young people and families, whose needs can never be met by one agency alone.

The Ofsted inspection outcomes have helped us to focus clearly on the key strategic developments and improvements we need to drive with renewed energy and pace.

The Trust's financial strategy has been to use Year 1 to understand activity and costs, and to ensure we deliver a balanced budget at year-end. Our intention in Year 2 is to draw, for the first time, on the Trust reserve, in order to fund some Invest to Save initiatives. Each initiative will be supported by a business case approved by the Trust's Executive and monitored by the Trust Board's Finance and Resources Committee. The revenue budgets affected positively by the invest to save initiative will be adjusted in order to reflect the savings intended, thereby replenishing the reserve. The areas we will target for investment include:

- Family Support and Prevention: bolstering services that support families to keep children and young people at home
- Family Decision-Making: overhauling and investing in Family Group Conferences and Family Meetings: empowering families to find solutions and identify the support they need to stay together
- Practice Leadership and Senior Leadership: drawing on financial support from DfE, we will run bespoke Practice Leader development for all of our team managers, principal social workers etc. We will also develop, with national partners, a bespoke development offer for middle and senior leaders in the Trust. These developments will be key elements of a new, enhanced Social Work and Leader Academy within the Trust
- Targeted enhancements to pay and reward: identifying the key points in our progression model where we lose staff, to make our offer competitive regionally
- Intensive Family Assessment: developing a model that offers a better alternative for the

- courts than expensive independent assessments of families in legal proceedings
- Pump-priming a new response to Contextual Safeguarding, with partners from Police, NHS and the Council
 - Changing the shape of the Trust workforce: introducing adult specialists (mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse) into our children's teams; and developing a more effective joint service for Transitions and Vulnerable Adults (both developed jointly with Adult Services)

We believe that prudent investment in these areas, alongside strategic reorganisation of current services, will enable the Trust to achieve better outcomes for our children, young people and families, and better value for money for the Trust and the Council.

3. Our Vision, Values and Outcomes

Our vision is to build a Trust that provides excellent social work and family support for and with the city's most vulnerable children, young people and families.

We will do this:

- With compassion and with care.
- Through positive relationships, building on strengths.
- In collaboration with children, young people, families and partners.
- By listening, involving and including.
- In ways that are efficient and deliver value for money.

Our Values

**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S
ONE TEAM
ACCOUNTABLE AND RESPONSIBLE
QUALITY
RELATIONSHIPS
HIGH SUPPORT HIGH CHALLENGE**

The Trust will further embed and refine these values in the coming year but, more significantly, we will work tirelessly with staff and partners to drive the behaviours, supported by strategies, policies and procedures that truly reflect them

Success will mean significant progress towards these outcomes:

- Healthy, happy, resilient children living in families.
- Families able to make positive changes.
- Children able to attend, learn and achieve at school.
- Young people ready for and contributing to adult life.
- Children and young people safe from harm.

4. Progress on our 2018/19 Priorities, and Our Priorities for 2019/20

We set out our 'plan on a page' in our first business plan. We have colour-coded the elements below reflecting where progress has been made:

Green: significant progress

Amber: further work required

Red: work not started or at early stage

| Leadership, Management and Governance of Practice | Support for Practice and Management of Resources | Quality and Performance | Partnership and Engagement |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce development: building a high performing, skilled and knowledgeable workforce • Creating the Trust culture: 'how we do things round here' • Embedding our practice model • Enabling, equipping, trusting practice leaders • Visible, responsive leadership • Supporting consistency of practice across city • Effective Trust Board: support, challenge, impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining strong family support offer • Maintaining manageable family support and social work caseloads • Swift, efficient, effective processes and systems • Reformed support service offer • Project Eclipse: better records, easier to use • Placement choice and sufficiency • Commissioning and procurement • Ensuring everyone knows their role and contribution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice standards and expectations; a shared view of 'what good looks like' • Practice evaluation and audit: focus on quality; practice weeks; Trust and multi-agency audit (Children's Advice and Support Service and Birmingham Children's Safeguarding Board) • Enhancing use of data to support practice and service development • L&D offer informed by practice intelligence • Enhancing role of Chairs, Independent Reviewing Officers in driving practice quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building effective partnerships: strategic; local, operational • Building collaboration in practice and service development • Enhancing links with schools • Supporting early help improvements • Involving children and young people, children in care and care leavers in all we do: they say we have made a positive difference • Involving our staff • Involving stakeholders • Enhancing our reputation and status |

The progress we have made reflects that our focus in Year 1 was absolutely about improving practice. In Year 2 we will make progress in reforming and strengthening support for practice in a range of areas.

We set out the following priorities in the first plan. Progress in these areas is reported below:

- **Placements, Choice and Sufficiency:** improving the recruitment and retention of carers for the Trust, and enhancing the quality of our commissioning and placement decision-making, will bring benefits both in relation to outcomes for young people and in economic terms for the Trust.

***Progress:** limited. Reform and reorganisation of our carer recruitment arrangements is underway but incomplete. We led the regional work successfully to establish a new framework for commissioning residential care, with a significant increase in the number of providers on the framework. We now need to build our relationship with suppliers to start to capitalise on our size and 'purchasing power' within the market. We also have a pressing need to improve the standards and, as a result, the Ofsted rating, for some of our 'in-house' residential care provision.*

- **Quality and Performance:** refreshing and embedding the Trust's approach to quality of practice, how we assure and enable quality, and drive improved performance and consistency of practice across the service and the city.

***Progress:** Ofsted reported favourably on our improved Practice Evaluation tool and its impact. We now need to embed the Trust's QA model. In the first year of our contract with the Council our performance in relation to the contractual PIs has been strong. Most have remained on or exceeding target; those that have dipped below target have been rapidly corrected to bring them back on track. The contract review will lead to a new approach to the way the Council monitors the Trust's progress and holds the Trust to account.*

- **Workforce Development:** the Trust's success will depend on the quality, skills and experience of its workforce. We will look at recruitment and retention, our learning and development offer for our staff, how we equip managers with the skills and the tools to be the best they can be, how we can change HR policies and procedures to improve performance expectations and support to all our staff.

***Progress:** Ofsted reported favourably on the progress made in establishing a stable and effective workforce. Vacancy rates and turnover are falling; the rate of agency social workers in the service is now below 12% (compared with 33% three years ago); caseloads are manageable; more people are joining than leaving the Trust each month. Next steps need to focus on retention, and the 'pinch points' where we lose experienced staff avoidably.*

- **Young People at Risk:** we recognise that the needs of young people, and the risks that many face in our community, require new and different approaches from public services to meet need and manage risk. Criminal and sexual exploitation and gangs are significant risks to our young people that require new and different service solutions. Police, schools and third sector organisations will be key stakeholders and partners in this work.

***Progress:** work is advanced, with Police and other partners, to develop a new multi-agency response to the Contextual Safeguarding risks young people in the city face (gangs, all forms of exploitation, county lines etc.). Progress is increasingly urgent in this area and we*

know we have more still to do.

- **Effective and efficient processes, systems and support:** ensuring value for money in all the Trust does, exploiting the benefits of Eclipse as a replacement for CareFirst, effective budget management, continued reduction in external agency and locums, smarter policy and procedures and reviewing of business management and support.

Progress: *Limited in this area. Eclipse, the new social care information system, goes live in March 2019, replacing CareFirst. Implementation will lead to a review of the support systems and services around social work and family support. We have made some progress in stabilising our Legal Service. We are expecting to reach year-end with a balanced budget, despite rising demand for care placements.*

In relation specifically to our **Ofsted** grading, we said our ambition was to achieve:

- A "Requires Improvement" grading in our first Ofsted inspection following go live.
- With the next inspection expected in 3 years, a "Good" grading in our second Ofsted inspection, providing the foundation for outstanding practice in the longer term.

The first of these is achieved and we remain focused and determined to be judged 'Good' in all areas by the time of our next full inspection which is likely to be in 2020.

Our priorities for 2019/20 are unashamedly set around the areas for improvement Ofsted identified:

- The quality, effectiveness and pace of partnership working with external agencies, including partner-led early help services
- Trust and confidence between the courts and the Trust
- Effectiveness of the Fostering Service
- Robust and timely focus on all permanence options for children
- Alignment of the approach to contextual safeguarding
- The impact of the virtual school in improving provision for children in care

In addition, we have priorities around workforce and practice, reflecting the outstanding areas of improvement still needed, including:

- Establishing efficient systems and processes that enable social workers and family support workers to increase the time they spend with children and families
- Reorganised leadership and management in the Trust to focus on priority areas for improvement
- Bespoke Practice Leadership and senior management development for all leaders and managers in the Trust (we are working with DfE and national partners to design and deliver this, and drawing on funding that means it will be delivered at no cost to the Trust or the Council)
- Stronger financial planning and management across the Trust, owned and led by operational managers trained to do it well

- Reviewing the pipelines that bring social workers into the Trust, and our effectiveness at retaining social workers through a competitive package of pay and non-pay opportunities: we intend to be the best place to learn and to practice social work in the west Midlands
- A full review of the Trust's use of property, including children's homes, administrative bases and service settings.
- A continued focus on social work and social care practice to ensure that we maintain the positive changes that have been made, but also further improvements in the quality of services with a particular focus on consistency.

The Trust Development Plan for 2019/20, agreed by the Trust Board and the Council, underpins this Business Plan. It incorporates our actions in response to Ofsted's December 2018 findings. The Development Plan will be available online from May 2019 at:

<https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/developmentplan>

5. Performance

The Service Delivery Contract included a framework of 15 performance indicators against which the Trust would be held to account. In addition, a bi-monthly report is provided to the Council on the Trust's qualitative activity (for example, practice evaluations and audits) to provide an additional tier of assurance.

The table below provides a summary of the Trust's performance in the period up to 31 March 2019.

| PI | Measure | No. where Target met or within tolerances last 12 months | % where Target met or within tolerances last 12 months |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1 | % of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours | 10/12 | 83% |
| 2 | % of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months | 9/12 | 75% |
| 3 | *% assessments completed within 45 working days | 12/12 | 100% |
| 4 | Child in Need cases open for more than 2 years | 12/12 | 100% |
| 5 | *% Initial CP Conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days | 10/12 | 83% |
| 6 | % of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years | 12/12 | 100% |
| 7 | *% of children (under 16 years) who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more, and in the same placement (or placed for adoption) continuously for 2 years or more | 12/12 | 100% |
| 8 | % of looked after reviews held on time | 12/12 | 100% |
| 9 | *% of care leavers who are in Education, employment, and Training (EET) | 12/12 | 100% |
| 10 | *Average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match (A2) | 12/12 | 100% |
| 11 | *% of young offenders that re-offend | 12/12 | 100% |
| 12 | % of agency social workers (including team managers) | 12/12 | 100% |
| 13 | % child protection plans ending within 3 months or less | 12/12 | 100% |
| 14 | Average caseload of qualified social workers | 12/12 | 100% |
| 15 | % of social workers who have had supervision (in month) | 12/12 | 100% |

In summary: 12 indicators met target or were within tolerances for all 12 months of 2018/19.

What went well in Year 1:

KPI 3: % assessments completed within 45 working days

Assessments continue to be completed in a very timely way, consistently exceeding the target.

KPI 5%: Initial CP Conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days

This indicator has exceeded both targets and tolerances with the exception of January 2019 when it fell due to the December holiday period and, in particular, access to school staff.

KPI 6: % of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years

This indicator has fallen consistently within tolerances and is now exceeding the target with significant and sustained improvement. The trend is an improving one. A lower number means that children who are subject to child protection plans are benefitting sustainably from the intervention.

KPI 8: % of looked after reviews held on time

This PI has either met or exceeded the target for the whole 12 month period.

KPI 9: % of care leavers who are in Education, Employment, and Training (EET)

This continues to improve, and is well over the national and statistical neighbour averages. Target exceeded for the whole 12 month period. The trend is one of improvement.

KPI 10: Average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match (A2)

Good performance and an improving trend, this target has exceeded both target and the tolerance for the whole 12 month period.

KPI 13 % child protection plans ending within 3 months or less

Much improved performance for this indicator compared with the previous year.

What we still need to improve:

KPI 1: % of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours

Performance has been variable as we ensure that all lateral checks are in place prior to making the referral decision. Performance has been affected, but we are making more appropriate decisions.

KPI 2: % of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months

Performance has fluctuated but remains just above the national average. This raises issues for the Trust around its decision-making, as well as for the wider partnership, and will remain a key area of focus.

The Trust and Council, having reviewed the **performance framework** in preparation for the annual contract review, have agreed a revised approach to the contractual performance measures, as follows:

- **Four small PI 'baskets'**, reflecting key elements of our business performance:
 - 'front door': repeat referrals; timely decision-making; timely assessments; timely initial child protection conferences.

- child protection: children with a plan for a second or subsequent time; children on a plan for 2 years+.
- children in care and care leavers: placement stability (short and long-term); timely children in care reviews; adoption timeliness and numbers; care leavers in education, employment or training and in suitable accommodation.
- workforce: percentage of agency social workers; caseloads; regular supervision for social workers.

Targets will be agreed with the Council's commissioners in preparation for the new fiscal year.

In addition, the Trust will share regularly the ChAT, the more comprehensive suite of children's services performance indicators.

- **Progress against our Development Plan:** highlight/exception reporting.
- **Our regularly updated self-assessment** which will be informed by our more qualitative assurance work: practice evaluation, case audit, practice weeks, complaints and compliments data, survey intelligence etc. This will provide the Council with regularly updated qualitative data about the Trust's performance.

This 'balanced scorecard' approach should give the Council a more rounded and detailed picture of how the Trust is performing in discharging the Council's statutory accountabilities. It will also support the Trust's internal performance improvement model. Reporting and monitoring will continue through the established routes of the Children's Trust Operational Commissioning Group and the Children's Trust Partnership Governance Group. The Trust will also routinely report on progress to the Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the City Council.

6. Governance Arrangements

The Trust is owned by the Council. But its day to day operational delivery is controlled by the Trust Executive Team which is accountable to the Trust Board in order to ensure operational independence. The role of the Board is to set the strategic aims of the Trust, oversee the management of the business and hold the Executive Team to account. It is the responsible body for the performance of the Trust in terms of delivering its legal and contractual obligations and achieving outcomes for children in Birmingham.

For the period during which children's social care and family support services remain subject to Government intervention, the Chair of the Board is appointed by the Secretary of State for Education. The Council retains "reserved powers" for certain significant matters including, for example, approval of this Business Plan.

The governance arrangements for the Trust are set out in the Articles of Association and its scheme of delegation. As was always the intention, the Trust became a Community Interest Company on 24 October 2018. The Service Delivery Contract details how the Trust will work with the Council to ensure the priorities and objectives specified within the contract are delivered, how decisions are made and how the Trust is held to account.

A Governance Side Agreement is in place between the DfE and the Council, describing those areas of the Trust's governance over which the DfE retains some control, or influence, whilst the Council is subject to intervention.

The Trust Board of Directors has a wide portfolio of expertise and knowledge in children's services, commercial, financial and other disciplines. The Board provides support and challenge on the direction and strategy of the Trust.

The Board consists of a chair and 7 non-executive directors. In March 2019 the Council and the Trust agreed to create an additional director position for a Council-appointed director. Details of current Board members are available on the Trust Website at: https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/who_we_are.

The Trust Board has established the following committees:

- Finance and Resources.
- Performance and Quality Assurance.
- Workforce.

In addition, Task and Finish Groups have undertaken work on engaging children and young people, and engaging staff, ensuring these voices are properly heard by and connected to the Trust Board.

The governance arrangements, between Council, Trust and DfE, have worked effectively during the Trust's first year. The framework of Operational Commissioning Group, Trust Partnership Governance Group and routine engagement at Overview and Scrutiny, alongside regular meetings between the Trust Chief Executive and the Council Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and Lead Member, have together proved successful in ensuring that the Council is well informed, and the Trust held accountable for delivering the right results and the necessary improvements.

The Trust's Executive Directors consist of the Chief Executive, the Director of Practice, the Director of Commissioning & Corporate Parenting and the Director of Finance & Resources. The Executive provides management oversight of operational activities of the Trust under a scheme of delegation

approved by the Trust Board. During 2018/19 a series of Operational Task & Finish Groups continued to operate to take forward the improvement work of the Trust. Each Task & Finish Group has a sponsor at Executive level and the progress will continue to be monitored and reviewed into 2019/20.

7. Trust Services

The Trust is commissioned by the Council to provide the following services:

- Family Support
- Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) and MASH
- Social Work Teams
- Services for Disabled Children
- Fostering and Adoption
- Residential Care
- Care Leavers' Service
- Youth Offending Service
- Independent Review and Child Protection Chairs
- Support Services

A pen portrait of our children and our service is appended.

8. Our People

We were clear, in our first business plan, about the vital importance of our workforce in driving the improvements we need to see in the Trust.

We were heartened and pleased to have Ofsted report, in all of their inspections (ILACS, Fostering, Adoption), that they found staff who were proud and motivated to work for the Children's Trust. This is a significant outcome, reinforced in the internal staff surveys and health checks we have carried out. We know we have more to do, but we have, by the end of the first year, built a solid platform in terms of our social work and family support workforce. We have the lowest rate of agency staff in the region, vacancy rates are falling and turnover is relatively low. More people are choosing to join, than to leave the Trust each month, and caseloads remain manageable, and amongst the lowest in the region.

We also know that, to be the best we can be, we have to make progress, change and improvement happen with the entire Trust workforce. We have a stable and high-performing Finance team. We have a new Head of HR and an HR team whose capacity needs strengthening. Our PSS staff provide invaluable support to social workers and family support workers but will need to change what they do once we launch the new social care information system, Eclipse. We have recruited a Head of Business Services and Support who will take this forward. Our Legal service has begun to stabilise, but there is more work to do around recruitment and retention. A new Head of Law for the Trust will be recruited in the coming year, following the sudden, tragic death of the previous lead last year.

9. Trust Financial Position and Budget

The year-end position for 2018/19 is a small overspend of £59,000, essentially a balanced budget.

The Three Year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is provided below, together with assumptions about the anticipated savings from the Council.

| Trust Budget | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | 2019/20 (£m) | 2020/21 (£m) | 2021/22 (£m) | 2022/23 (£m) |
| Funding | | | | |
| Contract sum – core BCC* | 183.0 | 179.4 | 179.4 | 179.4 |
| Contract sum – government grants | 7.3 | 11.2 | 11.2 | 11.2 |
| Contributions | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| Reserves | | | | |
| Troubled families | 3.5 | 1.3 | - | - |
| DfE | 0.8 | - | - | - |
| Draw on investment | 2.4 | - | - | - |
| Other reserves | 0.5 | - | - | - |
| Total | 200.3 | 194.7 | 193.4 | 193.4 |
| *Awaiting confirmation of additional pay inflation of £0.3m | | | | |

| Underpinning assumptions | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Existing BCC savings | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| Future step up in BCC savings | 4.0 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 5.6 |
| Additional savings agreed with BCC | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Total | 10.3 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 |
| Planned savings delivered for BCC | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 |
| Mitigating actions – residential to fostering / reduced external placements | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Support savings | 1.0 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Total | 10.3 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 |

Invest to Save Proposals for 2019-2021:

| Service Area | Investment £000 | Revenue impact | 'Payback' Timescale |
|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Family Support Services | £750 | Avoided and reduced care costs | 2 years |
| Improved Permanence: Family Decision-making | £500 | Avoided and reduced care costs | 2 years |
| Intensive Family Support and Assessment | £250 | Reduced number and costs of external assessments required by courts | 1 year |
| Contextual Safeguarding (Gangs, County Lines, Youth crime, exploitation) | £300 | Reduced/lower-tariff court disposals; diversion; reduced intensive SW intervention | 2 years |
| Targeted (non-contractual) pay and rewards investment | £640 | Increased recruitment/retention; reduced costs of agency SW | 2 years |
| Total Investment | £2440 | | |

Revenue budgets will be adjusted to reflect these proposals, such that the Invest to save facility is replenished over the next two years of the Trust's operation.

The service analysis of the Trust Budget for 2019/20 is set out below.

| Invest to Save Profile | 2019/20 £000 | 2020/21 £000 | 2021/22 £000 | 2022/23 £000 | Total £000 |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Family support services | 750 | | | | 750 |
| Reduced care costs | | -250 | -500 | | 750 |
| Improved permanence: family decision-making | 500 | | | | 500 |
| Reduced care costs | | -125 | -375 | | 500 |
| Intensive family support and assessment | 250 | | | | 250 |
| Reduced number and costs of external assessments required by courts | | -250 | | | 250 |
| Contextual safeguarding (gangs, county lines, youth crime, exploitation) | 300 | | | | 300 |
| Reduced/lower-tariff court disposals; diversion; reduced intensive SW intervention | | -150 | -150 | | 300 |
| Targeted (non-contractual) pay and rewards investment | 640 | | | | 640 |
| Increased recruitment/retention; reduced costs of agency SW | | -320 | 320 | | 640 |
| Total | 2,440 | - 1,095 | - 1,345 | | |

| | Service Area | Gross Spend 19/20 |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| CORE | Adoption | 7,927 |
| | Care Leavers | 7,292 |
| | Child Protection Resources | 161 |
| | Contact & Escort | 1,199 |
| | Disabled Children's Social Care | 6,809 |
| | Early Help & Brokerage Service | 209 |
| | External Placements | 56,219 |
| | Family Support Teams | 7,225 |
| | Fostering | 17,517 |
| | Persons from Abroad | 6,942 |
| | Residential | 5,303 |
| | Rights & Participation | 575 |
| | Safeguarding | 5,497 |
| | Social Work | 32,897 |
| | Executive Team & Corporate Services | 6,623 |
| | Therapeutic Emotional Support Service | 1,477 |
| | Troubled Families | 4,687 |
| | Youth Offending Service | 6,956 |
| SUPPORT SERVICES | Business and Support Services | 8,839 |
| | HR Team | 508 |
| | Finance Team | 635 |
| | Comms Engagement | 53 |
| | Business Change | 176 |
| | Commissioning Contracts | 2,267 |
| | Commissioning Staffing | 632 |
| | Pe rf & Data | 600 |
| | Legal Services | 1,955 |
| | Grand Total | 191,182 |
| | Support Service Contracts | 9,088 |
| | BCT annual Spend 2019/20 | 200,269 |

A breakdown of how the Trust spends its money is summarised below.

| Expenditure type | Gross Expenditure |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| | £m |
| Premises | 1.3 |
| Transport & related | 1.7 |
| Direct employees | 79.3 |
| Agency | 0.3 |
| Indirect employees | 0.7 |
| Supplies & services | 9.5 |
| Third party payments | 99.5 |
| Recharge expenditure | 2.8 |
| Transfer payments | 5.2 |
| Grand total | 200.3 |

Delivering The Trust's MTFP and Investment to Save

The Trust, having delivered a balanced budget in its first year, intends to draw on its loan facility to invest in some key areas of development where we believe we can be more efficient and change the existing profile of expenditure. Key to this will be changing the profile of our children in care population, specifically:

- Enhancing the early help and family support offer in key targeted areas
- Investing in family decision-making so more children get their needs met within their families
- Increasing the number of children in Trust foster care through enhanced recruitment and placement functions
- Managing differently our approach to supported accommodation for older young people
- Investing in capacity to tackle Contextual Safeguarding, diverting young people from the traditional Child Protection system (which was not designed to address Contextual safeguarding risks) and from the care system which in some cases increases rather than mitigates risk.

The Trust Board has endorsed outline proposals for investment of a net £2.4m across the period of the MTFP. This represents a critical element of the Trust's Development Plan and improvement actions to address both the Ofsted feedback and help deliver better outcomes for children and young people.

These "Invest to Save" proposals will be the subject of detailed business cases which will require the approval of the Trust's Executive. A key element of this approach will be to identify, capture and deliver savings and capture the benefits in terms of improved outcomes. The Trust's Finance & Resources Committee will be an important role in providing oversight and challenge in order to monitor the progress against these detailed business cases.

10. The Children's Trust and the Council

The Council retains statutory accountability for children's services, and continues to provide and commission all those services for children that are not within the Trust: education support, school safeguarding, special educational needs and disabilities, school admissions and place planning, virtual school for children in care, and early years services.

Improved outcomes for children, young people and families depend upon the Council and the Trust establishing and maintaining strong and effective partnership and joint working arrangements.

These 'dependencies' have been set out in the Service Specification of the Trust Service Delivery Contract. These reflect arrangements and services for children that the Council must put in place to enable the Trust to achieve its priorities and performance targets, and include:

- Ensuring all children have a school place.
- Ensuring where children are not in school, support is provided to help them return to school.
- Ensuring all children have 25 hours education a week.
- Where children are excluded, removed from roll or otherwise prevented from attending education full-time, the Council will speedily make alternative arrangements.
- That vulnerable children between the ages of two and four have access to free day nursery provision.
- Adequate housing for families in need.
- An improved early support and local offer for children with special educational needs and disabilities: this area needs to improve following the Ofsted inspection of SEND.
- Provision of the Virtual School for our Children in Care, ensuring children in care and adopted children make the best possible progress and receive appropriate support to enhance their potential in school. This area needs to improve following the Ofsted inspection
- Youth services that can be mobilised to support the city's most vulnerable young people in the community
- Further education, training and access to employment support.

11. Working with Partners

The Children's Trust has played a key role in building stronger strategic and partnership work across the city. There is more to do still, but there is now certainly some evidence of commitment to improvement as a partnership. It is of note that of the six areas for improvement identified by Ofsted, only two relate exclusively to the Children's Trust, the other four all pointing to partner improvements required. These are some of the improving areas on which we can now build:

- The strategic partnership is up and running and defining priorities, with some dedicated shared improvement capacity funded by partners.
- Constructive and innovative work between partners to build an integrated solution to the emerging Contextual safeguarding risks in the city faced by our young people
- Enhanced partner work as part of our Think Family programme is beginning to bear fruit in terms of some growing evidence of effective Early Help and increased claims for resource from the Government's Troubled Families programme. The Early Help and Safeguarding Partnership has taken this work forward.
- Embedded partner presence in the CASS/MASH which was inspected positively, having improved considerably since 2016
- The Youth Offending Service continues to deliver effective partnership responses. Whilst first time entrants into the criminal justice system remains high, re-offending rates are low, demonstrating the service's effectiveness
- The partner-prepared Written Statement of Action in response to a very poor Ofsted inspection of SEND services reflects a renewed partnership commitment, backed by investment, to improve services for children with additional needs.

The Children's Trust will remain an active partner in the coming years, supporting and challenging to ensure effective integrated strategic and operational alliances deliver better and seamless services to children and families across the city.

12. Managing Risk

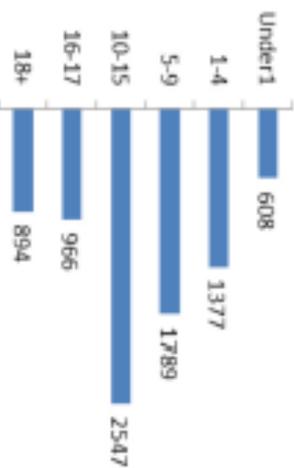
The Children's Trust actively manages risk through its risk register, which is routinely updated via its Executive and monitored through its Finance and Resources Committee. Key risks going into 2019/20 include contract management, relationships with partners, increases in cost pressure from placements, other unexpected and unpredictable cost pressures, Council dependencies, and the replacement social care IT system Eclipse.

Birmingham Children's Trust (January 2019)

Gross Budget
£ 196 M

8181
Open Cases

Ages



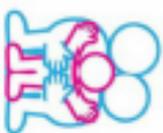
% Ethnicity Breakdown

| Percentage 0-17 | England | Birmingham Trust |
|-----------------------|---------|------------------|
| White/White Other | 78 | 43 |
| Asian/Asian Other | 10 | 20 |
| Mixed/Multiple Ethnic | 5 | 15 |
| Black/Black British | 5 | 14 |
| Other | 2 | 8 |
| | 100 | 100 |



2751 families supported by Family Support/Think Family

11% of children left care through adoption

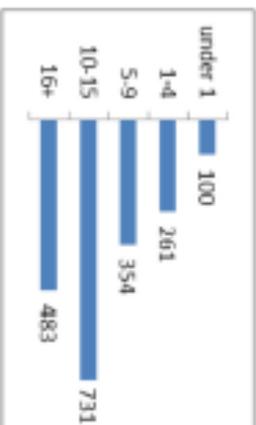


82 The number of children matched for adoption in 17/18

1308 Children with a CP Plan



1929 Children in Care who are aged:



37.4% YOS reoffending rate Eng & Wales 41.6%

654 Disabled Children

1931 Employees



- 130 unaccompanied asylum seekers
- 222 children in families with no recourse to public funds
- 479 BCC Foster Carers

4 Homes for disabled children