



# Slough Children's First Business Plan for 2024-25

**Building on our vision from our 2023-  
26 business plan**

**2024-25 (Year 2) Update**

**OWNER**

Simon Baker, SCF Chair of  
the Board

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Director of Children's  
Services

**VERSION**

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**DATE**

November 03, 2023



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# Contents

- Overview from the Board Chair and Chief Executive .....3
- Our Financial Position .....4
  - Our Profit and Loss Account.....4
  - Our Demand-Led Service .....5
- Our Plans for 2025/26 .....5
  - Our Balance Sheet .....7
- Appendix 1 - Our Improvement Plan .....8

## Overview from the Board Chair and Chief Executive

We are moving into the second year of our 2023-26 business plan still with a clear vision that children in Slough are **Happy, Thriving, Safe & Loved**.

Slough Borough Council (SBC) continues to face extraordinary financial challenges which are reflected in the Section 114 Notice and continued oversight and scrutiny by Commissioners appointed by DLUHC (the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). Inevitably these financial challenges affect the work of Slough Children First (SCF).

Despite these constraints we must demonstrate that we provide services effectively and efficiently therefore evidencing best value for money. SCF is held to account by the Department for Education (DfE) appointed Commissioner who also scrutinises services for children with SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities).

Year one of our 2023-26 business plan represented bringing SCF into a steady state, focused on improving the quality of practice and building solid foundations on which to deliver our key priorities.

- Priority 1** Children and their families should be able to easily access Early Help and know where to go and who to speak to when they need it.
- Priority 2** Education and learning are vital to ensure that our children have the best start in life and are empowered to go on to rich and fulfilling lives through work.
- Priority 3** Children in our care will have a stable place to live and our care experienced young people can access their own affordable homes.
- Priority 4** Children and their families will have effective support and care from a stable workforce. This will mean that children do not experience lots of changes of worker and they can develop a trusting relationship with someone who will help them and their family.
- Priority 5** We will work with our children and young people to enable them to participate and shape services with us.
- Priority 6** We will work in partnership with colleagues across the Council and all services that work with children, young people and their families. We believe that it is only together that we can make a difference. We value our relationship with Community and Voluntary Sector partners who know their communities well.

In year 2, and those that follow, we will drive forward business re-design and our 'invest to save' projects that will create further improvements, efficiencies, and value for money.

We know that social care services provided by SCF will be reviewed by Ofsted through their inspection framework in the form of a focused visit or a Joint Area Inspection to review the progress made since the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in January 2023. It remains our ambition to evidence, at that time, that services are much improved and being delivered to Ofsted's definition of a 'Good' standard.

## Our Financial Position

As a demand led service our operational costs are driven by the demands made on the services we provide. We are now able to demonstrate the financial position we as a Company are in and how changes in demand and funding contribute to this. As a result our current funding requirement for 2024/25 is as per the agreed Contract Sum of £39.049m and is a £1.465m reduction from the 2023/24 expected requirement.

The Business and Improvement plan delivers a saving off the contract sum, whilst also incurring inflationary growth. Therefore, in order to deliver a balanced budget, circa £2.5m of efficiencies and savings from 23/24 expenditure is required to be found.

Fully reviewing the funding requirements for 2024/25, and monitoring how changes experienced in the last 12 months can be managed within the same funding envelope, we are now forecasting:

- An increase in the cost of placements as even though there are a decrease in the number of placements, an increase in the average weekly rate will lead to an overall increase of £493k
- An increase in the Care Leavers' weekly rate is partly negated by an anticipated reduction in numbers leading to an overall reduction of £138k
- Successful focus work in care proceedings means our legal costs are expected to reduce by circa £200k
- An increase in inflation rates on placements, care leavers, contracts and legal costs to 5% in alignment with SBC
- Staffing changes via reconfigurations
- Separately pay inflation is assumed at 4% in line with SBC
- Additional expected income through reviewing fees and charges and also maximisation of grant funding

## Our Profit and Loss Account

The table below shows the projected profit and loss account over the life of this business plan reflecting the amended Core Contract sum (against that previously Sept 2023 cabinet). 2026/27 is a 'new 3<sup>rd</sup> year' as the three-year cycle moves forward.

	Plan 2023/24 £000's	Plan 2024/25 £000's	Plan 2025/26 £000's	Plan 2026/27 £000's
<b>Income</b>				
SBC Income	(40,514)	(39,049)	(39,022)	(38,183)
SBC other income	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
DFE Income	(853)	(749)	(749)	(749)
Grant Income	(5,142)	(4,981)	(4,251)	(4,408)
Other Income	(1,104)	(1,316)	(1,350)	(1,442)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(47,713)</b>	<b>(46,196)</b>	<b>(45,472)</b>	<b>(44,882)</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Pay	20,439	19,645	20,354	20,478
Placements	17,564	16,995	16,026	15,093
Support to children and young	4,531	4,464	4,130	4,402
Legal fees	1,814	1,875	1,739	1,657
Overheads	3,188	3,216	3,224	3,253
Transformation costs	178	0	0	0
<b>Total revenue expenditure</b>	<b>47,714</b>	<b>46,195</b>	<b>45,473</b>	<b>44,883</b>
<b>Revenue (Surplus) / Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The overall position is an improvement for 2024/25 with a decrease in the following years. This has come from a 'roll forward' of the original 2023-26 business plan which has then been revised based on actual caseloads and placement data.

## Our Demand-Led Service

As a demand-led service although we use projections and models as far as possible we still need to analyse the change in demand of activities we undertake in order to start to explain our financial position. A re-alignment of baseline rates for placements alongside an analysis of actual placement data has led to us to forecast as shown below:

	Forecast 23/24			Budget 24/25			Variance		
	FTE	Rate	Total	FTE	Rate	Total	FTE	Rate	Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
<b>Children Looked After</b>									
External Residential	20	4,801	4,991	18	5,640	5,234	2	-839	-243
Asylum Seeker 16-18 (Semi-Independent)	50	581	1,514	45	832	1,966	5	-251	-452
Semi Independent < 18's	14	2,161	1,569	15	1,684	1,329	-1	477	240
Secure Remand	1	1,918	100	1	4,725	248	-0	-2,807	-148
<b>Total Children Looked After</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>8,175</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>8,778</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-276</b>	<b>-603</b>
<b>Permanency</b>									
Adoption Allowances	71	226	835	74	236	913	-3	-11	-78
Special Guardianship Order	152	209	1,652	157	203	1,664	-6	6	-12
<b>Permanency total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>2,487</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>2,576</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-89</b>
<b>Fostering</b>									
External Fostering Agency	71	1,159	4,289	70	1,084	3,970	1	75	319
In House Foster Carers	72	412	1,551	67	478	1,670	5	-66	-120
<b>Fostering Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>5,640</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Total Placements</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>16,501</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>16,995</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-25</b>	<b>-493</b>
<b>Total Care Leavers</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>2,245</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>138</b>

## Our Plans for 2025/26

Our financial modelling includes the delivery of our improvement plan in Appendix 1 and covers the actions being undertaken in Year 1. However, this business plan is a three-year plan and additional approaches include:

- The Company is on a journey of improvement and is planning to consider projects to better deliver services. These include an edge of care focus, based on the No Wrong Door Model and collaboration with other authorities on placement provision. However, these are unlikely to deliver savings of any significance until 2025/26
- Health contributions to placement costs make up nearly £1m of income and we will regularly review to ensure maximising this
- Reduction of legal fees requires a shift in culture and practice to reduce reliance on legal advice. However, improved practice in decision making is intended to reduce the overall number of children subject to proceedings

- Reconfiguration of caseloads across frontline teams
- Deep-dives to be undertaken on standalone services to review structures, locations, sell additional capacity and benchmark fee/payment schemes

The financial model we have used reflects the activities required to achieve **Our Priorities** for our children and our aim is to deliver better outcomes for children by **doing differently for less** with a clear focus on improving practice.

Slough maintains a high level in the complexity of needs, children presenting to Slough seeking refuge from unsafe situations in their own countries, a cost-of-living crisis and rising prices. We have also included an increased demographic growth by 1% per year and our higher than the national average of numbers of 0-25 year olds. Our financial model reflects this and incorporates the key activity needed in 2024/25 to realise benefits, as well as further phases of our plan, such as Family Group Conferencing and Family Hubs in later years.

Our modelling reflects **Priority 1** in Early Help through targeting a **5% reduction** in the number of families stepping up into statutory social care. This is by medium-term funding for an additional Targeted Early Help team. In addition to this teams, the continuing development of partnership working (**Priority 6**) will mean that half of the children in need plans that close will be stepped down to Early Help teams and half to community partners.

Children who are being considered for care but have not entered it (defined as 'Edge of Care') will be supported with a specific Edge of Care focus to support them to remain in their family home. This will **avoid entering care** alongside an **increase in the reunification** of children coming home from care (where appropriate).

With this support and the focus on **Priority 3** our **placement numbers will start to fall**, particularly in the high-cost residential placements for those children with complex needs around Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The edge of care focus will also impact legal fees as they will also reduce as the volume of proceedings reduce.

Despite a reduction in the number of placements the total costs are expected to rise following an increase in weekly rates. Therefore work will be expedited to look into the feasibility of establishing an in-house residential facility, along with other transfers to in-house provision.

Our in-house fostering service will continue to develop their support model and make Slough a great place to be a foster carer. Increasing their numbers and developing their specialist skills will help **avoid placing** with external fostering agencies also removing the margins we are charged by third parties - all driving greater **value for money**. We are on target for **six new carers** by the end of year 1 and will target **a further three new carers** by the end of this year with further recruitment planned in future years.

Our spending on placements for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and Care Leavers is also expected to benefit from some commissioning initiatives aimed at targeting the rates paid and **driving better value for money**. This will be done through identifying multiple occupancy accommodation available for Semi-Independent and Independent living.

A stable workforce where Slough is a preferred employer is **Priority 4** for the company. Through successful international recruitment and our on-going ASYE programme, the ratio of permanent to agency social work staff is modelled at 77%:20% with the remaining 3% factored for vacancies. This is based on our current data and in future years we expect to **improve this by 1 percentage point** each year. The Company is working with Frontline to further grow our own sustainable and stable workforce. This has enabled the safe release of two managed agency teams earlier than we had originally thought. Those savings have allowed additional capacity to focus on improving practice and keeping caseloads at a manageable level.

Overall the financial modelling shows that we will break even from 2024/25 onwards, this includes £2.03m of inflation added to Slough Borough Council's (SBC) Income.

## Our Balance Sheet

SCF's balance sheet shows that following September's Cabinet agreement to fund previous in-year losses of £5.3m we are demonstrating a balanced position from 2023/4 onwards.

### Slough Children First Ltd

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>as at 31 Mar 2023</b>	<b>as at 31 Mar 2024</b>	<b>as at 31 Mar 2025</b>
	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>	<b>£000's</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	6,860	8,889	4,622
Cash at bank and in hand / (overdrawn)	2,216	4,531	7,693
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>9,076</b>	<b>13,420</b>	<b>12,315</b>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>(9,388)</b>	<b>(8,420)</b>	<b>(7,316)</b>
Total current liabilities	<b>(9,388)</b>	<b>(8,420)</b>	<b>(7,316)</b>
Net current assets / (Liabilities)	<b>(312)</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>
<b>Long Term Creditors - Receipts in Advance</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>
Total long term liabilities	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>
<b>Net Assets / (Liabilities)</b>	<b>(5,312)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>
<b>Reserves</b>			
Income and Expenditure Account	<b>(5,312)</b>	0	<b>(0)</b>
<b>Reserves</b>	<b>(5,312)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>

# Appendix 1 - Our Improvement Plan

## Executive Summary

The purpose of SCF's immediate plan was to identify the key themes and areas for improvement that arose from the Ofsted inspection outcomes that were published in March and to ensure robust actions were in place to improve children's services in Slough. The timeframe was from April to June 2023 and was succeeded by this Continuing Improvement Plan which also incorporated those actions exceeding that short period.

This plan is being used to monitor progress and provide assurance by reporting regularly to the SCF Board, Slough Borough Council and Getting to Good Board (chaired by the DfE Commissioner).

A central and essential part of our plan is that it reflects the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people and these will be identified throughout the plan. We will look for opportunities for children and young people to participate.

The actions listed within the Company's Improvement Plan are not the limits of the work being undertaken – each Service has their own individual delivery plan which underpins the wider improvement plan.

## Improvement Plan

Using the 7 enablers for improving children's services, the following key themes have been identified for this improvement plan:

1. Strategic approach, leadership and governance
2. Engaging and supporting the workforce
3. Engaging partners
4. Childrens voice and influence
5. Practice and performance
6. Fostering innovation
7. Better use of resources



Impact for children through	Action	Due by
<b>Strategic approach</b>		
To ensure focus on improvement and transformation leading to better outcomes	Ensure that key priority strategic actions have Programme and Project support	30 September 2023
To support practice improvement and carry forward sufficiency transformation work.	Resource, appoint and deploy a 'Building Practice' Lead to promote and support Quality Assurance and Practice Improvement	30 April 2023
Ensure there is sufficient resource to support practice improvement and carry forward sufficiency transformation work.	Resource, appoint and deploy a 'Sufficiency lead' to lead the development and implementation of: Sufficiency Strategy; Corporate Parenting Strategy; Permanency strategy	30 September 2023
To identify emerging trends and inform strategic planning and transformation work	To develop forecasting and demand models through contribution to wider SBC review on future investment in IT and Informatics	30 November 2023
To support the development of a 'High Support and High Challenge' culture who are better informed and more able to champion the needs of C&YP	Create a system which supports a learning model for the whole child's journey to work across children's services by launching a revised Quality Assurance Framework	30th March 2024
To ensure senior managers have sufficient capacity and oversight of key decision-making processes and the timeliness and impact of outcomes for children.	Develop and implement a revised, robust QA audit programme	30 September 2023
To improve the performance framework	Developing a focused performance dashboard aligned with the improvement plan that drives the quality of practice and supports senior leaders in understanding the quality of practice	31 December 2023
Produce a sufficiency strategy based on current demand and needs of our CLA population and forecasted demand	Develop and gain agreement for the Sufficiency Strategy and move into a Sufficiency Project Board	30 August 2023
To strengthen the impact of the Youth Justice Board	Seek an LGA/ Peer review of Youth Justice and prepare for inspection and SEF through task and finish group	30 September 2023
To ensure strategy in place for Children and Young People to have opportunities to shape the services they receive	Co-produce a Participation Strategy with Children and Young People.	30 September 2023
To support participation of young people in a meaningful way	Provide training to young people to enable them to contribute to high level meetings, recruitment etc.	30 November 2023
<b>Leadership &amp; Governance</b>		
To develop a shared vision and approach to the transformation of services for children and young people.	Consult with Staff in SCF on vision for ownership of Business and Improvement Plan	01 June 2023
To increase capacity to support the delivery of QA and performance	Submission of business case to DFE to increase capacity at senior level for 6 months	30 June 2023
Put into place good corporate parenting for our children in care and care experienced young people	Take forward the recommendations from the Peer Review of Corporate Parenting and move into Task and Finish Group to develop a clear action plan with the new Lead Member,	30 September 2023
Address recommendations for Corporate Parenting Board	Reset Corporate Parenting Panel structure and governance ensuring that all Members and Officers are clear on their role.	30 September 2023
Ensure members of the CPB have the training required to fulfil roles	Corporate Parenting training offered to all Members in accordance with their involvement with Children's Services	30 July 2023
Care Leaving to become a Protected Characteristic	To write proposal and take to Cabinet via Lead Member	30 September 2023
Involve Members and senior officers in Practice shadowing opportunities and Practice Weeks	Develop a programme of Shadowing Practice opportunities for CEx, Lead Member, DCS, DSC and CP Champions – twice per year.	31 December 2023
Ensure governance framework drives improvement across the partnership with membership from multi-agency partners, Council leaders and elected members.	Key strategic partners are members of the G2G Board and are enabled to provide high support and challenge to support the improvement of services for children. A G2G Board away morning to be arranged to strengthen the Boards role and oversight.	30 November 2023
Develop a robust and effective framework for self-assessment and evaluation that is subject to ongoing continuous review to ensure it is providing the evidence necessary to accurately inform the authority of the quality and impact of Children's Services	SEF preparation framework to be aligned with our QA and audit programme to develop challenge sessions within Children's Improvement Group and SMT to regularly review our practice and update the SEF.	31 October 2023

Improve and streamline the governance between Slough Children First and the Council	Business plan to be agreed between SCF and the Council based on service provision to children and families, including identifying realistic options to save money and invest to save approach.  Agree the monitoring arrangements between Council and SCF and the key indicator reports. Agree use of report format which is in line with reporting to other Boards so one report services all meetings to prevent additionality of reporting.	01 July 2023
Leaders will implement and demonstrate our practice model across the organisation We build a culture in which practice flourishes	Leaders will consistently demonstrate our model in practice. This includes how meetings are chaired, interaction with the workforce and across the partnership. Feedback will be received through staff surveys conducted throughout the year. All practitioners and managers will demonstrate the practice model in their assessment and planning work.	30 September 2023
<b>Engaging and supporting the workforce</b>		
Young people will have their voices heard in the recruitment process	Involve children and young people in redesigning our online recruitment strategy	31 October 2023
To support staff pipeline opportunities for Newly Qualified Social Workers	Launch Slough's first Frontline Unit through recruitment to new posts	01 September 2023
To support staff pipeline opportunities for career progression to enhance retention	Complete and implement the Career progression Framework	31 December 2023
To enhance the skills, knowledge and experience of the whole Children's workforce to better meet children's and young person's needs.	Undertake a skills gap analysis to inform a workforce training programme across frontline staff, managers and leaders.	31 December 2023
To ensure that the workforce are clear and engaged about their role in the Children's Services Improvement Programme.	Process to begin for all staff in Children's Services to have an annual appraisal	30 September 2023
To progressively strengthen the quality of strategic and frontline leadership.	Design a leadership development programme for leaders and managers at all levels of the system of support for children	30 September 2023
For other stakeholders to directly contribute to the Getting to Good Board.	To set up an ongoing shadow Getting to Good Board	31 July 2023
To present SCF as an employer with clear focus on staff's wellbeing to existing workforce and for those considering joining Slough	To formalise the wellbeing offer including, MHFAs, wellbeing check and launch	31 December 2023
To review expectations of home v office-based working	To develop guidance about hybrid working and approach	31 December 2023
To provide apprenticeships for care experienced young people	Increasing opportunities for apprenticeships and work experience placements across Slough council and partner agencies	31 March 2024
To ensure staff understand their responsibilities for health and safety	Raise profile of H&S	31 December 2023
<b>Engaging with partners</b>		
Work across the partnership to develop and embed local priorities, such as Supporting Reduction of childhood obesity, reducing Antisocial behaviour and support the implementation of the domestic abuse strategy	Put in place an escalation policy and process for partner where they want to raise concerns or compliments about practice including a reporting back mechanism Agree clear and achievable strategic priorities as a partnership.	30 September 2023
Invite and sustain partnership involvement in the Getting to Good Board to develop a culture of 'High Support and High Challenge'	Strategic partners to be active members of the Improvement board to support challenge and support 'unblocking' of issues	31 August 2023
To demonstrate clear improvements in working alongside Community and Voluntary Sector; and faith leaders/ groups.	To produce firm action plan to deliver EH Strategy that includes Comm and Vol sector and faith leaders	30 September 2023
Undertake regular multi-agency audits into key themes	Include multi-agency thematic audits with regular reports to SPB and G2G	30 September 2023
To facilitate ongoing support and training around complex safeguarding issues	To design and implement a regular training cycle for FGM, HBV, radicalisation and exploitation.	31 October 2023
To increase awareness of Private Fostering arrangements through campaign	Review materials and devise comms plan to raise Private Fostering across the partnership to support identification of children who are privately fostered to ensure that referrals to access support are made to Social Care	31 October 2023
To strengthen the MASH Partnership	Look to increase partnership presence in the MASH	31 March 2024
To raise the focus of Youth Justice within the Company	Include Youth Justice Service in Children's Improvement Group and maintain audit programme to drive improvement in delivery of support to this cohort	30 September 2023
SEND linkages	Tracking and escalation process to be in place to ensure that EHCP advice requests to be returned within one week with good quality information	30 May 2023

To provide support for care experienced young people - clear and concise in support available to them	Work across the partnership including housing, to deliver local offer.	31 December 2023
<b>Practice and Performance</b>		
Clarify and strengthen the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements	Revise the policy and practice framework of MACE and relaunch to provide clear distinction between Operational and Strategic MACE	30 September 2023
Provide targeted practice support to improve the quality of services to children and review impact	Put in place programme of Workshops and Practice Learning sets, including staff feedback, to support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision and Management oversight</li> <li>• Use of chronology to inform practice.</li> <li>• Plans and planning.</li> <li>• Case summaries to support direction of travel.</li> </ul>	30 June 2023
Embed audit programme to improve the quality of services to children and review impact	Our audit work tests impact of workshops on practice.	31 May 2023
Improve management oversight and touch-points to support driving and delivery of plans within the child's timeframe.	Practice standards for team managers supervision and oversight will be reviewed and measured through performance surgeries	31 December 2023
Increase the timeliness of decision making for Children	To re-educate operational teams on providing timely and accurate information so that Initial Child Protection Conferences take place within the statutory timescales	31 December 2023
To prevent unnecessary court applications and look for more supportive outcomes	Reduce emergency applications to Court by having clear senior manager oversight of all decision via legal gateway.	30 June 2023
Children entering PLO will benefit from their wider family and network being explored to provide support, or to be a carer if they cannot stay at home.	Where needs may require legal intervention, this is done in a planned way and utilising PLO (Pre-Proceedings)	30 June 2023
To provide a clear and rationalised plan for the child, including clarifying the support provided.	We will ensure that tracking is completed within the legal gateway process and that final care planning meetings are undertaken	31 August 2023
A clear process is in place to review children's permanence arrangements, including supporting children to their permanence plan as soon as possible	Review mechanism for children living at home subject to placement with parents to be developed within a Permanence Monitoring Group framework.	31 August 2023
To link into wider Council plan to develop 'self-serve' access to live data	To contribute to SCF requirements re PowerBI and Annex A	31 March 2024
To finalise Practice Standards	Revise all practice standards and ensure that a central library and toolkit is available (Tri-X as example). Provide access to partners to our practice standards.	01 October 2023
IROs and CP chairs through their oversight will support consistency, challenge and a focus on the child's needs and voice.	To implement Escalations in 'Forms' within ICS - will provide an audit trail and be reportable in line with Dispute Resolution policy	30 September 2023
Children will have plans that are progressed in a timely manner - any drift and delay will be addressed	Midway form already in place for CP, need to implement for CLA - can then formally report	30 September 2023
Safe space for care experienced young people	Provide a pop-in space for care experienced young people to be scoped and found	30 October 2023
For LADO to provide scrutiny and oversight where professional issues have been raised.	To schedule LADO work into the Audit cycle as part of dip sampling.	30 November 2023
Children are supported by right team to meet their needs.	Review and amend the case transfer policy. Supports good practice and timely arrangements in place for children transferring between teams, there will be handover arrangements and case work will be completed to a good standard	30 September 2023
Children subject to child protection plans are reviewed to avoid drift and delay.	A Child protection challenge panel will be implemented to Review Child Protection Plans open for over 12 months to provide additional review point specific to supporting driving the plan to meet the child's needs.	31 December 2023
Adoption plans are progressed for children where this is appropriate	We will strengthen early permanence considerations through legal gateway and RAA sitting on panel.	30 September 2023
Joint housing protocol benefits from CSC input	Contribute to discussions with Housing to ensure meeting legislation and CEYP requirements	30 November 2023
YP know how to access help and professionals with regards to homelessness	Revise and refresh homelessness for 16 and 17 year old leaflets	30 September 2023
<b>Fostering Innovation</b>		

To identify opportunities to locate social work teams in the Early Help	To locate Frontline unit within Early Help to provide opportunity for early support and brief intervention to prevent needs escalating.	30 October 2023
Support children to stay at home by preventing family breakdown	Identify opportunities to create edge of care support within the Borough – No Wrong Door, Multi Systemic Therapy (MST), Functional Family Therapy (FFT) etc	30 October 2023
To widen the use of Mockingbird	Explore introducing second Mockingbird constellation	30 October 2023
To reduce high number of referrals for unborn children, need to be able to demonstrate relationship with <b>early permanency</b> .	To develop practice standard; consult on existing pre-birth tool and build into system	30 November 2023
Explore option for court work progression manager to increase oversight of care proceedings, improving grip and reducing drift and delay	To look at options for supporting Court Work Progression	30 September 2023
To review operating model to provide locality/ teams around school model and frontload help and support.	Review demand and forecasting and review current operating model effectiveness. This is with a view to 'front-loading' and providing support earlier on; and reducing changes in social workers for children and families	30 October 2023
Family led decision making to avoid escalation of risk and improve safe planning for children and making permanence decisions as early as possible.	Develop and launch a Family Group Conference model of approach to engage, support and promote family based arrangements to address identified needs, risks and circumstances and ensure there is robust decision making for children entering care	01 January 2024
To review MACE arrangements across the partnership to strengthen operational and strategic oversight	Get agreement at MACE to revise contextual safeguarding strategy - establish t&F group (revise policies and procedures around CS)	31 December 2023
To strengthen the oversight of children who become missing from home	Clarify what is our policy and procedure - guidance for staff. Try to prevent silos - work across company as partnership	30 September 2023
To strengthen the oversight of children vulnerable to exploitation.	Review, update and launch risk assessment tool - following #71	31 March 2024
<b>Judicious use of resources</b>		
For the Company to live within financial means so as to deliver support needed	Deliver an SCF's approved Business Plan	31 March 2024
To gain oversight of all external placements	Put in place external placement panel in place to regularly review all external placements	30 June 2023
To reduce overall spend in Joint Legal Team space which has arisen because of high demand	Put in place gatekeeping to reduce reliance on legal to provide care planning advice and decisions, ensuring that they are able to advise on a well-articulated and considered plan. (social worker is the expert)	31 March 2024
To reduce cost of independent assessments in PLO cases	Explore options to create a 'bank' of ISW's to complete work Explore Court Assessment Team (CAT) options internally to reduce legal spend	30 October 2023
To delete the managed teams from the current structure	Put in place plans to exit the remaining Innovate team	30 August 2023
To identify drift, avoid high-cost placements and support children to live in appropriate accommodation.	Implement revised process, TOR, scope and chairing arrangements for Legal Gateway, Permanency Management Group and High cost placement panel	31 August 2023