

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT		
COUNCILLOR	PORTFOLIO	DATE
Mhairi Doyle	Children Services	7 November 2022

Children's Social Care

- A monitoring visit by Ofsted is to take place on the 1st and 2nd of November. The focus on the inspection will be:
 - Timeliness and quality of screening
 - Application of thresholds
 - Quality of child protection enquiries – such as strategy discussions or S47 enquiries
 - Child in need assessments
 - Step-up from and step-down to early help
 - No further action/signposting
 - Out of hours responses
 - Designated Officer response

- The commissioner's report has been published Friday 28th October. Briefings to staff have been completed.
- Recruitment for all Service Manager posts has been completed and successfully appointed to. Two service managers start 31st October 2022, with the final appointee starting the beginning of 2023.
- The Children's Services improvement plan has been completed and submitted to Ofsted. Briefings to staff have been completed.
- Training is underway to all staff on our care experienced offer, roles and responsibilities.
- The social work academy is now launched with 22 newly qualified social workers. Recruitment is ongoing. We will now be looking to extend this offer to social workers who wish to return to the profession.

- The “Family Time Team” has now been launched which will be focussed on ensuring supportive, fun and safe contact between children and their parents whilst they are in care proceedings on in alternative care settings.
- Work continues to be underway with the new approach to working with children affected by Extra Familial Harm. The new “S.P.A.C.E. service (named by our young people) is a multi-agency approach to reducing risk in both the present and future terms.
- Targeted family support team has now launched. Training is underway with the team and the focus of the work will be supporting families who are on the cusp of Children’s Social Care intervention.
- We are in the process of moving children who are subject to care proceedings into the Cared for Service. We have successfully recruited 2 teams and they will commence in December.

Youth Justice Service

Performance

- Sefton’s performance against the current Key Performance Indicators is positive. The First Time Entrants numbers have reduced marginally, and the reoffending rate has also reduced. This doesn’t reflect the levels of need and complexity that children accessing the service present, although the new suite of Key Performance Indicators will provide greater context. The new reporting arrangements commence in early 2023.
- There is one child who remains in custody. One child was recently released from custodial remand and was sentenced to a community order, so far they are doing well.
- The performance will be scrutinised at the next Youth Justice Partnership Board on 3rd Nov, at this Board we will welcome our new chair Dawn McNally who is the Superintendent for Sefton Local Policing.

Audit Plan

- YJS has refreshed the Audit Plan to capture some area identified for development. A recent audit for out of court work identified some areas that framed a staff workshop that resulted in additional Practice Standards being created to ensure improvement. A further workshop is planned for November.

Turnaround Programme Funding

- The Ministry of Justice has awarded Youth Justice Teams a sum of money to strengthen the prevention offer. Sefton Youth Justice has been awarded £250 between Dec 2022 to end March 2025. The programme plan is being developed as whilst the eligibility criteria is tight, there is flexibility for interventions and delivery. This will be agreed with the Lead Member, Senior Leaders and the Youth Justice Partnership who will provide governance.

Community Connectors

- Localities managers have successfully secured additional funding for Community Connectors from the Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership. This project is in response to recent case mapping for girls within the Youth Justice system in Sefton. The funding will be used to recruit four Community Connector posts who will work with girls to support their mental health needs and reduce their offending and risk-taking behaviour. There are opportunities to link this project to the Turnaround Programme.