

Children and Education Select Committee

DATE: 6th March 2019

TITLE: Internal Audit Response



Purpose of report: Responses to the findings of the Internal Audit Report into Children Families and Learning Care Assessments

Introduction:

1. In January 2019 the Internal Audit into CFL Care Assessments was published, giving the opinion that due to the nature of the controls in place there was a high risk to the ability of the systems and service to meet its objectives
2. This report gives CFL's responses to The 7 findings on which that opinion is based to show what measures are currently in place to mitigate the risks

Responses from Corporate Parenting Service

Each response is numbered with reference to the numbering of the findings in the Internal Audit Report already circulated

1A- IT systems Care Management for LAC

1. An end to end review of LCS will be commissioned, scope yet to be agreed
2. A reconciliation is being undertaken between LCS and the financial database of the care placements, and exception reporting has assisted in the cleansing of data
3. An audit was completed recently which indicated a 10% variance
4. While the new Gateway team now updates the latest placement in the child's record, there remains a data cleansing activity to be completed, in order to ensure 100% accuracy.

3A Care Needs Assessment LAC

1. TRI IX- a new policy and procedure system will go live on April 2019 and procedures will be located in a single place
2. Procedures have been agreed by the operational service

3. An Assistant Director leads on performance and consistency of practice across the County for LAC, and regularly meets with LAC Service Managers
4. Transitions manager funded by both CSC and ASC ensures that there is a focus on those children who will need ongoing support into adult hood. Monthly meetings are held and the post holder attends a monthly resource panel

4. Care Package Approval CSC

1. A placement panel, chaired by an Assistant Director, has been established in each of the Quadrants and for Children with a Disability (CWD). These panels are attended by: AD for the Quadrant, Social care service managers, Finance, Care Leaver service and Assistant Head of Virtual School
2. The CWD panel has, in addition to above, representatives from Health and Transitions and agrees packages for direct payments, short break packages, and equipment in addition to care placements
3. All requests for new children's placements/packages are presented to the panel to be agreed or declined, there is no other route to establish a package of care
4. A High Needs panel was established in December 2018 to review on a monthly basis, all those packages that need tri-partite funding. This panel reviews existing as well as any new packages of care, to ensure that the costs are proportionally allocated to Health, Education and Social care according to the needs of the child
5. A record of the meeting is kept and placed on LCS for each child
6. The financial implications are recorded and forecast included with review dates set to ensure the package continues to meet the child's needs

5 Commissioning and Procurement of Care

1. A Gateway team has been established, with an outward facing placement officer for each area who brokers all placements
2. No individual Social Worker can now agree a package of care
3. Quality Assurance for all placements is via the Gateway team or through contract management framework

4. There is now a hierarchy pathway for the agreement of packages of care, which includes AD for the Quadrant and AD for Countywide services
5. All packages have a known cost and an agreed review date
6. If a child is to be placed at a distance or in secure accommodation then the Director of Corporate Parenting also has to agree and sign off the package
7. No agreement for funding external packages will be agreed until there is evidence that internal resources have been fully explored

6 Cost Identification, forecasting and financial monitoring

1. All CSC placements are now commissioned through the Gateway Team (since Oct 2018)
2. Spot purchasing for placements has been considerably reduced and only used in circumstances where there are specific needs for the child, this is undertaken by Gateway Team
3. Commissioning Frameworks have been established for Independent Fostering Agency's (IFAs) and external residential homes to ensure best value
4. Supported lodgings are now commissioned by Gateway through a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
5. Two finance officers ensure effective forecasting of the placements and are an integral part of the team
6. Work has been undertaken with finance to establish the true average cost of internal fostering and residential care to ensure it remains competitive and best value
7. DPS is currently being mobilised for Independent SW's, Specialist assessments, DNA and substance misuse testing, agreement for these from April will go through Gateway
8. No additional extras for placements (e.g. 2:1 care) have been commissioned by individual social workers since January 2019
9. Looked After Sufficiency project has been established (with CSC , commissioning, performance and finance) to ensure that there is sufficient provision for the needs of our children; to drive up quality of provision; to challenge costs through regular contract

visits and feedback; to target high end packages to identify alternatives for children; to increase in house capacity both in foster care and residential homes; to identify those children in residential care who can be stepped down to foster care or go home.

10. All invoices are checked by the service manager for Gateway and approved by AD/Director dependent on delegated financial authority
11. In the new structure (from April 2019) a dedicated team of Family Support Workers will review all non-residential packages for CWD
12. Two Social Workers have been appointed to ensure that all Special Guardianship financial Packages are appropriate and annually reviewed

7. Review of Care Packages

1. The fact that at the point of the audit, that a number of children have not been visited for 8 weeks is not an indication about whether or not the child should remain as an open case because there have been issues of;
 - a. timely recording;
 - b. some children are inappropriately classified as CIN because there is not a current pathway for children who are just open to Occupational Therapy
 - c. some children have a package of support only and have been wrongly classified
2. All CIN in CWD have been reviewed and by 01/03/19 the child will be appropriately allocated according to their need
3. In the new structure a dedicated team of FSW's will review all non-residential packages for CWD
4. All CIN in the quadrants have been independently reviewed to determine the right course of action
5. Practice standards will be published on 19/03/19 so workers are clear about expectations

Responses from Education and Lifelong Learning Service

(Each response is numbered with reference to the numbering of the findings in the Internal Audit Report already circulated)

1B- IT systems Care Management for LAC

1. Reconciliation has been undertaken between SEN ONE and the financial database of the Financial commitments made to placements, and exception reporting has assisted in the cleansing of data.
2. Data cleanse completed of 10,500 records in December 2018 across SEN System resulting in closure of old SEN involvements and improve data quality. This has resulted in lower variance reports, and improved data quality.
3. Redesign of financial processes across the county to develop common approach implementation Feb 2019.
4. Revisions to be made (March 2019) to ONE which will make the input in to ONE more effective.
5. Compulsory training programme to be launched April 2019 across all frontline staff.
6. Options appraisal underway for recommissioning of case management system to cover across education and work seamlessly with systems used across Children's and Adults Social Care.

2 IT Financial Administration

1. Complete mapping of financial processes across Surrey identifying a large number of different approaches and points of failure
2. A new policy and procedure system will go live on April 2019 and procedures will be located in a single place
3. IT&D business analysts underway with testing an approach that will 'intelligent AI' links between form input and enable automatic updates to finance spreadsheets
4. Initial scoping underway to activate financial module within ONE which will feed directly in to the recommissioning of a case management system for Education that links across Adults and Children's Social Care systems

3b Care needs assessments: SEND

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1. Casework procedure manual updated and refreshed in the Autumn term and published on SharePoint
2. Monthly performance compendium (via tableau) available from Insight and Innovation team which is being used across quadrants to drive performance improvements and performance management
3. Graduated response pathway is being developed to support transparent fair SEND decision making, integrated professional development. Shifting resources to early intervention and drive the recommission of services
4. A first draft SEND Profile of Need has been developed through coproduction with parents (5 workshops) and in close partnership with school SENCOs (7 workshops), Early Years practitioners (2 workshops) and health partners through the Clinical Reference Group. A second draft profile will be tested by all stakeholders from April to July 2019 for full implementation from September 2019. The Profile provides the essential tool to underpin consistent identification of need and the appropriate response at all four stages of the SEND continuum of need (universal, individual, SEND assessment and support, and statutory intervention). This early stage of work appears to already be positively impacting on the number of requests for statutory assessment being received
5. A new SEND Gateway model is in the final stages of development for implementation from the beginning of the school summer term. This model will ensure integrated, consistent, fair and transparent statutory decision-making in line with the SEND Code of Practice, underpinned by the SEND Profile of Need

Conclusions:

3. ~~Bring together key points from the report to give direction to the Scrutiny Board.~~

Recommendations:

4.
 - a) ~~List a), b), c) etc as necessary.~~

5. All recommendations should have clear and measurable outcomes and be able to be understood without reference to particular sections of the report.

Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

Report contact: [Name, post title and service of the person able to respond to detailed enquiries]

Contact details: [Telephone/Email]

Sources/background papers: [List of all documents used in compiling the report, for example previous reports/minutes, letters, legislation, etc.]

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