

Herefordshire Council
Directors' Assurance Statement – 2017/18

Directorate:	Children's Wellbeing
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1. Have any staff under your control or any other person either inside or outside the council raised any concerns with you regarding the management of risk and/or internal control?

- Yes
 No

If you have answered Yes please confirm whether the concerns have been notified to either the Chief Executive or the Monitoring Officer

I can confirm that the concerns have been notified to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

2. Have you reviewed the content of the directorate and corporate risk registers in respect of your directorate and made changes as necessary, recognising evolving risks and/or internal controls that require strengthening or review?

- Yes
 No

If you have answered No please use the box below to explain the reasons:

3. Have any issues been identified in the service manager's assurance statements which indicate a breach of any law, regulation, policy or procedure may have taken place which has not previously been notified to the s151 Officer or Monitoring Officer?

- Yes
 No

If you have answered yes please use the box below to explain the issue(s) and action taken.

4. Have any issues been identified in the service manager's assurance statements which indicate a weakness in the assurance systems may exist?

Yes

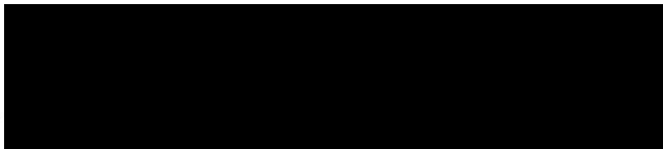
No

If you have answered Yes please use the box below to explain the weakness(es) and action planned to address:

1. Historic use of Section 20. A high court judgement found historic failures in the use of Section 20 regarding two children's social care cases. The judge also found fault in a number of others. Actions were put in place to update practice and further audit work and action on individual cases is being carried out. Children's Scrutiny and HSCB will be reviewing progress in 2018/19.
2. Full understanding of some council policies and procedures, which are being refreshed at a corporate level. Training is being planned for managers at a corporate level to enable them to manage more effectively.
3. Compliance with PPDP review schedules is variable across the directorate. This is monitored at CBW SMT to promote compliance.

I have ensured that services within my directorate routinely monitor and review the internal controls related to their service. Within my directorate the development and maintenance of effective internal control is sufficient to provide reasonable assurance of the achievement of the council's corporate objectives in accordance with the code of corporate governance.

Signed ..



Name ..

Christopher Bard

Date ..

13 April 2018

Herefordshire Council
Statutory Officer Assurance Statement – 2017/18

Statutory officer designation:	Director Children's Wellbeing
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1. Have any issues in relation to the effective fulfilment of your statutory duties arisen during the year which may need to be highlighted in the annual governance statement?

Yes

X No

If you have answered Yes please use the box below to explain the issue and confirm whether the concerns have been notified to either the s151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer

2. Have any weaknesses or areas for improvement in relation to the effective fulfilment of your statutory duties been identified during the year?

X Yes

No

If you have answered yes please use the box below to explain the issue(s) and the actions planned to address it:

1. Historic use of Section 20. A high court judgement found historic failures in the use of Section 20 regarding two children's social care cases. The judge also found fault in a number of others. Actions were put in place to update practice and further audit work and action on individual cases is being carried out. Children's Scrutiny and HSCB will be reviewing progress in 2018/19.
2. A criminal investigation has been underway since September 2017 primarily in relation to judgement exercised. This is ongoing and has required additional management capacity at a number of levels to be brought in. It has been logged on the council's risk register.
3. LGA Safeguarding Peer review noted areas for improvement including:
 - Social work capacity and caseloads
 - Development of preventative/early help services
 - Performance management information
 - Clear approach to supporting Children in Need

I confirm that during the financial year 2017/18 I have had sufficient resources, systems and processes in place to enable me to fulfil my statutory functions.

This is because the council has supported the overspend on looked after children costs and placements which could not be contained within the Children's Wellbeing budget.

Signed 

Name Christopher Baird

Date 13 April 2019