



Herefordshire Children's Services Improvement Plan
7 June 2023 Improvement Board
Progress Update Report for May 2023

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0.01	Draft	24/11/2022	Draft for Operational Board		28/11/2022
0.02	Draft	28/11/2022	Draft for Corporate Leadership Team		01/12/2022
0.03	Draft	01/12/2022	Draft for Improvement Board	Appendix A and B	11/01/2022
0.04	Draft	15/12/2022	Draft for Cabinet	Pages 9, 22 & 24	20/11/2022
3.0	Final	19/12/2022	Final version for Ofsted	Pages 7, 9, 15, 22, 24, & 25	11/01/2023
3.1	Final/update	11/01/2023	Improvement Board Progress Report Update	All pages from 10 to 39	01/03/2023
3.2	Final/update	01/03/2023	Improvement Board Progress Report Update	All pages from 10 to 39	19/03/2023
3.3	Final/update	19/04/2023	Improvement Board Progress Report Update	Pages 6 & 7 plus 10 through to 70 and page 72	07/06/2023
3.4	Final/update	07/06/2023	Improvement Board Progress Report Update	All pages from 10 to 39	19/07/2023

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Background

Children’s Services were inspected by Ofsted in July 2022 under the Inspecting Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) framework.

The inspection report was published on 21 September 2022 and is available on the Ofsted website¹.

The overall judgement was that Herefordshire Children’s Services are ‘inadequate’. The judgements contributing to this outcome are as follows:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate

Following the inspection, we have moved openly and swiftly to acknowledge the key areas for improvement, many of which we had already identified and incorporated into our existing Transformation Programme. We have taken immediate action to increase capacity where it was needed to strengthen our MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) and other frontline services for children and young people.

At the time of the inspection, we were already developing a number of practice priorities within the service and were focussing on addressing some wider systems issues. We have increased the pace of this activity and we know that in order to realise our vision and aspiration for improved children’s outcomes, a comprehensive transformation of our service is required to achieve the long-term and sustainable changes that local children, young people and families in Herefordshire need, deserve and expect.

This high-level Improvement Plan has been prepared in collaboration with a range of stakeholders including children, young people, parents and carers, our workforce and our multi-agency / cross sector partners. Some of this engagement has been very challenging, particularly given the impact and legacy of inadequate service delivery. It has been necessary to do this however so that we can confront and abate the current problems and make improvements as quickly as possible. We intend to continue engaging with our stakeholders to further develop a local conversation whereby we will listen, address feedback and take appropriate action as an integral part of our improvement journey as we move forward.

¹ <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50192875>

Our transformation programme

Our plan sets out the first phase of our post-inspection improvement activity as a direct response to receiving the inspection feedback and report. Having accepted the service's shortcomings, we are focusing on what we need to do to deliver safe and effective core services as quickly as possible. It focuses on the next 12-18 months although the transformation activity will necessarily take longer than this and the plan will be reviewed, refreshed and further developed as required. This builds upon the activity undertaken before the inspection to diagnose the extent of existing weaknesses and is followed up with a focus on strengthening core systems, clearing backlogs, securing thresholds and stabilising the service. We will continue to work at pace to problem solve and assure the quality of our practice moving forward.

The plan carries forward the key elements of the previous plan and reflects changed priorities following the recent Ofsted inspection. Our transformation programme has a number of Projects, including Workforce, Service and Practice Development, Performance and Quality Assurance, Commissioning Resources, Early Help and Partnerships, Corporate Parenting and Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND). Improving outcomes for children with Special Education Needs and/or Disability is not restricted only to the SEND work stream and is included in each of the work streams. Each work stream has a member of the Corporate Leadership Team as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)

The corresponding project plans have all been reviewed and aligned to address the high level actions for each of the priority improvement areas identified by Ofsted inspection, and the LGA peer review of SEND services. A diagram outlining the governance arrangements is included at Appendix A and outlines the relationship between the Projects, the plan, and the Improvement Board.

For ease of accountability, responsible leads are primarily senior officers of the council but there is an increased focus on partnership working reflected in the various task and finish groups and in the project plans that sit behind this high-level plan.

Our improvement activity will be supported and driven by strengthened performance management and quality assurance arrangements, with clear lines of accountability that are overseen by single and multi-agency governance arrangements reporting into our Improvement Board, which is independently chaired by our Department for Education (DfE) Improvement Advisor.

We will be reflective and embrace the learning opportunities that are afforded to us from working in partnership with our Commissioner, Sector Led Improvement Partners and through an open dialogue with support and challenge provided by our colleagues in the DfE and Ofsted.

How we will achieve success

Success is dependent upon a county-wide approach working together with the Service, the Council and all stakeholders, including working in partnership with parents and carers and taking full account of children and young people's voices.

High support and high challenge will be essential, backed by robust governance arrangements and effective partnerships. In addition to the work of the Improvement Board, key partnerships including the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Corporate Parenting Board, Children and

Young People’s Partnership, SEND Partnership Group, Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety Partnership will each have a significant contribution to make to deliver improved services and achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families in Herefordshire.

Our workforce

Our workforce is our greatest asset and we are building an organisational culture characterised by strong relationships, high support and high challenge. We are committed to working with our workforce and have established a Staff Reference Group, have appointed a Principal Social Worker and developed other engagement fora, to ensure our workforce has a voice that is championed to inform and influence our improvement activity. The Staff Reference Group meets monthly and their representation is heard at the Improvement Board.

Evidencing Improvement Activity and Impact

Improvement priorities set out in this plan will be measured in terms of progressing the pace of improvement activities as well as the impact that these are having on outcomes for children, young people and families. The progress reporting will provide a BRAG rating to determine if the progress of improvement activity is on track as well as BRAG rating the impact it is having. BRAG Ratings will be informed by the Transformation Programme Delivery Dash Boards, including consultation with Senior Responsible Officers and Service Leads as well as analysing quality assurance reporting about the standard of practice and performance reporting in respect of management information data.

Impact ‘BRAG’ rating guide:

The BRAG ratings will report on the status of both the improvement activity (the tasks/actions) and the overall impact and outcome of these in respect of improving outcomes with children, young people and their parents, carers and families. This will show the status of the activity being undertaken both in terms of its timeliness and progress as well as confirming if it is having the desired impact to deliver improved outcomes. Details of the BRAG descriptors are as follows:

Blue ratings in terms of improvement activity will indicate when activity has been completed according to agreed plans. In terms of impact, the improvement activity delivers a consistently good or better impact on practice and performance that is secure, embedded and improves outcomes for all/vast majority of children.

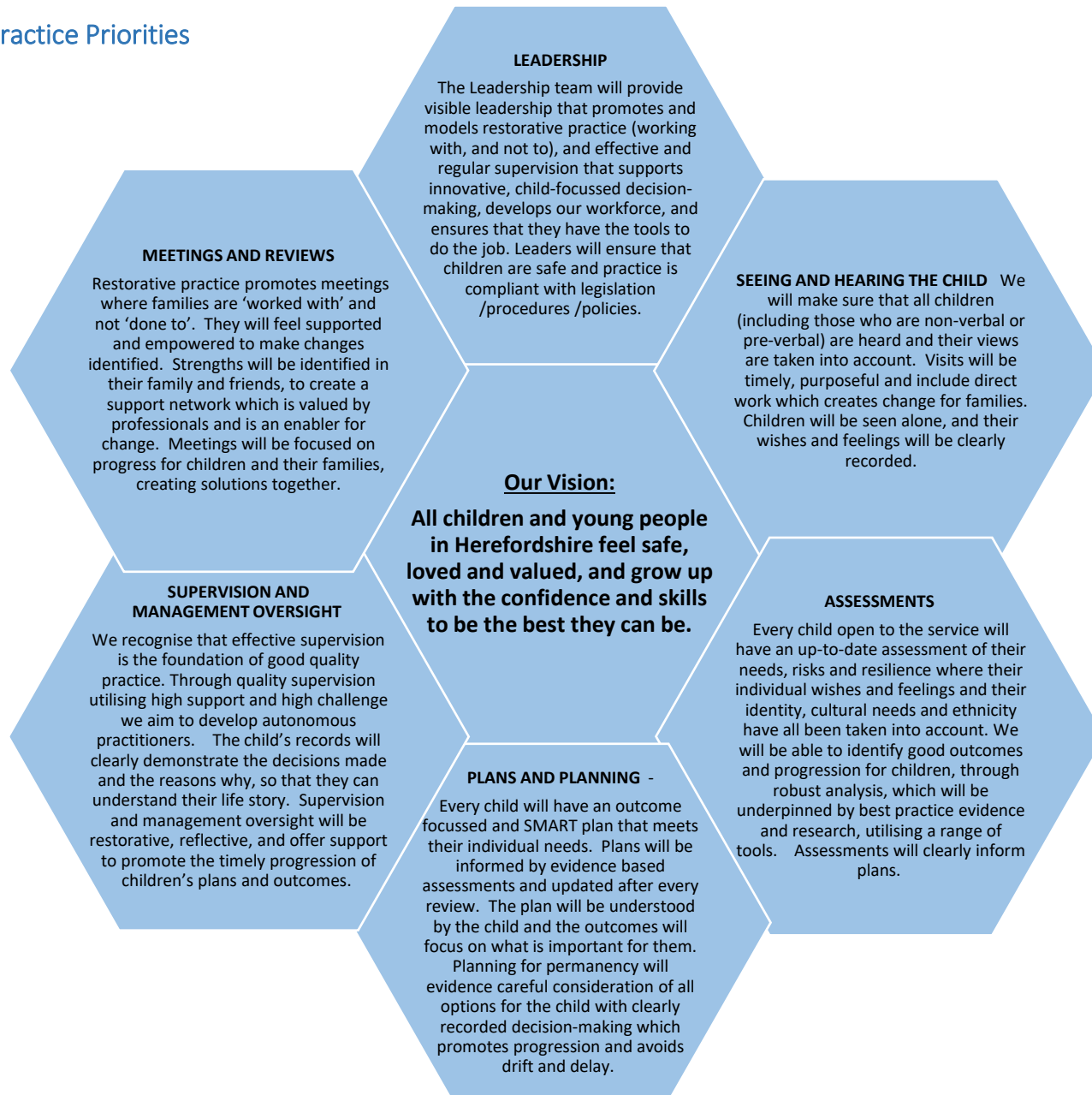
Red ratings in terms of improvement activity will indicate where activity has not started, has stalled or stopped due to unresolved issues which are preventing progress, causing delay and presenting significant risks. Inevitably, this has an adverse impact so children, young people and their parents/carers experience very limited or no positive outcomes.

Amber ratings in respect of improvement activity will indicate where activity has started and although some issues have been identified these are being dealt with but are causing some delay. In terms of impact, an Amber BRAG rating indicates that whilst there is some positive impact this is not yet consistent or widespread for all/most children.

Green ratings in terms of improvement activity will indicate when activity has started, is on track and progressing according to agreed plans. In terms of impact, a Green BRAG rating indicates that this is impact is positive with most children and young people experiencing a consistently good service that improves outcomes.

<p>Activity/Impact Key</p>	<p>Activity Not yet due to start Impact Activity not started/too early to measure impact yet</p>	<p>Activity Started and on track Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Started with some issues/delay Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and does not consistently improve outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Not on track and at risk Impact Very limited or sporadic impact on improving outcomes for a few children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Completed and now 'business as usual' Impact Achieves consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>
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Our Practice Priorities



Areas for Improvement

The Ofsted inspection report identifies the following nine improvement areas which provide the framework for this high level Herefordshire Children's Services Improvement Plan:

1. Corporate responsibility for the help and protection of children and those in care and care leavers, so this is prioritised and embedded across the council and partnerships.
2. The sufficiency and stability of staff across the workforce, including sufficient numbers of foster carers, so children receive a timely response to having their needs identified and met across the service.
3. The timely and robust identification and multi-agency response to children and young people who are at risk of harm, including, but not limited to, the response to pre-birth children and babies, 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless, children living in private fostering arrangements and children who go missing from home and care.
4. The quality of practice including assessments, plans, planning and purposeful visits that are responsive to risk and need.
5. Timely and effective multi-agency arrangements to ensure children are protected and enter care when required.
6. Monitoring and tracking to prevent drift and delay. This includes the monitoring and tracking of children in the Public Law Outline (PLO), permanence planning, children subject to deprivation of liberty orders and those placed in unregistered children's homes.
7. The availability of support and services to meet children and young people's needs, including timely access to therapeutic interventions, access to dentistry, life-story work, emotional and mental health support, help for young people to support transitions into independence and sufficient suitable accommodation.
8. Management oversight and grip across the service to include clear structures and service pathways, and regular and effective supervision.
9. Performance and quality assurance arrangements to support and test service improvements.

In addition to the nine improvements areas outlined above, the plan also includes a tenth improvement area that focuses on Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). This improvement priority has been included following a SEND Peer Review undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) in October 2022.

1: Corporate responsibility for the help and protection of children and those in care and care leavers, so this is prioritised and embedded across the council and partnerships.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
1.1 Allocate additional corporate resources with dedicated project management support to strengthen strategic and operational planning for the improvement and transformation activity.	Director of Programme Management Office & Performance	October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-inspection, Corporate Senior Responsible Officers and Service Leads were aligned with the Transformation Programme Delivery Boards Programme Management Officer resources were allocated New Improvement Director appointed (October 2022) These corporate/service enablers and activities has largely addressed the 2022 inspection concerns that “Improvement planning requires further strengthening to provide strategic cohesion and detailed operational plans, with clear timescales to inject pace, prioritisation and accountability.” (pg. 9) Greater pace is required to address improvements. The March 2023 Ofsted monitoring visit letter stated: “While leaders understand the scale of improvement, and have started to implement a comprehensive improvement plan the pace of improvement is too protracted.” 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A stock take of the Improvement Board proposed changes to streamline, coordinate, improve accountability and add pace – completed May 2023 • Proposals are outlined in the Improvement Plan cover report for the June Improvement Board • Proposed changes to be made with immediate effect in advance of the next Improvement Board in July 2023 		
1.2 Introduce trauma awareness training as part of the Children’s Service learning and development offer for all relevant staff and members of the council so they can be signposted when appropriate.	Service Director (Improvement) **	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoped transactional options for trauma awareness raising training, including adverse childhood experiences, (ACES), including partnership consultation with Police and Health to collaborate about a joined up multi-agency approach • Task & Finish Group convened with Social Care Academy, Council OD and HSCP to explore and agree tiered approach. • Identified an e-learning modular programme commissioned by the OPCC West Midlands (WM) and funded by the Home Office Early Intervention Fund in partnership with Barnardo’s • Other local authorities and safeguarding partnerships in the WM region are already hosting this programme which includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brain Development in Early Years 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Impact of Childhood Adversity ○ Social, Health and Community Impacts of ACEs Early Trauma ○ Protective Factors ○ Looking at ACEs through a Trauma Informed Lens ○ Building Resilience ● Identified local learning platform solution with funding and technical options being decided. Estimated time line of up to 3 months (for September 2023) ● Scope of Tier 2 options being explored with local partners. Potentially looking at a conference with local and guest presenters and workshops facilitated by local presenters/leads. Task and Finish Group meetings on-going. ● ** Following consultation with the HSCP Chair – this improvement priority action will be progressed under the auspices of the HSCP to reflect the partnership focus 		
1.3 Re-establish the Children and Young People’s Partnership (CYPP) to create a multi-agency/cross sector forum to develop an Early Help offer with families	Director of Public Health	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CYPP Board and Terms of Reference (TOR) completed with revision of membership due 27 February 2023 - completed ● First Board meeting took place on 28 November 2022 - completed 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Workshop scheduled for 30 March 2023 to review CYPP Action Plan - completed • CYPP Action Plan to be presented at subsequent Board Meeting on 24 April 2023 • CYPP now established with TOR, membership and plan. • Impact measures are being progressed as part of the implementation of the new health and wellbeing strategy. Public health are currently working with analysts to develop a shared outcomes framework focusing on the best start in life and good mental wellbeing following a logic model/theory of change approach that will go on to inform meaningful actions to deliver against the two health and wellbeing board priorities. To include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Children enjoy good health and wellbeing For example, we will reduce the levels of obesity and improve the oral health of children ii. Children are protected from harm at home and in their community For example, we will develop and broaden access to our early help and prevention offer across our communities iii. Children are able to achieve their early development milestones For example, children achieving good communication skills and in receipt of their full early years entitlements 		
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			iv. Parents are well-supported during pregnancy and post-birth and able to access appropriate information, resources and services For example, a greater proportion of pregnant women have a healthy pregnancy and are supported in relation to stopping smoking and being a healthy weight		
1.4 Work quickly and collaboratively with the community and voluntary sector to utilise assets and increase capacity for undertaking Early Help assessments and providing family support.	Head of Service (Early Help)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement event held and baseline position established • Early Help & Prevention Strategy completed and presented to SMT 14 February and DLT on 20 February in time for CYPP Board on 27 February 2023 - completed. • Working Group established to implement Early Help and Prevention Plan • Early Help assessment training already provided to identified partners and monitoring underway to analyse performance and impact • EHA demand fluctuates (124 March & 66 April 2023) but the proportion of completed remains fairly static with 49% completed by Children’s Services and 51% by partners, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education Primary ○ Education Secondary ○ Health Visitor ○ Housing 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact measures tbc 		
1.5 Review the work of the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) and the local offer for care experienced young people, including access to education, employment and training	Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPB TOR and membership agreed • Review of Corporate Parenting Strategy including review of a refreshed Care Leaver’s offer completed • Engagement with care experienced young people to establish the Child in Care Council to inform and strengthen the relaunch of the Care Leaver’s Offer • Corporate Parenting Strategy, Action Plan and Care Leaver’s Offer presented to CPB 15 February. To be presented to DLT 5 June 2023. • Change request of formal launch deadline to July 2023 to take account of election period. • Recent elections held and Cllr Ivan Howell identified as Lead Member & Chair of the CPB. Councillor representation from each party yet to be announced. • LGA Member Training to be undertaken for CPB. • Impact measures and progress updates to be reported directly to the Improvement Board. 		
1.6 Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) to identify a corporate lead as a council-wide ‘champion’ for corporate parenting.	Chief Executive	September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Director (Community Wellbeing) appointed as council-wide lead • Corporate Parenting Staff Group being developed with support from OD to establish mechanism for promoting corporate parenting across the Council. 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental membership, focus and progress to be decided and reported to future Improvement Boards in line with the CPB activity 		
1.7 Ensure multi-agency governance arrangements provide a clear framework for decision making and accountability, specifically in relation to the Improvement Board and the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (HSCP), but also in relation to other key partnerships.	Corporate Director for Children and Young People	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping process with relevant HSCP Sub Group Chairs completed HSCP Business Plan developed to align with the Children's Improvement Plan as it relates to HSCP priorities – completed March 2023 Improvement Board stock take proposes HSCP to be directly accountable for identified improvement actions – see cover report. Impact measures and progress updates to be reported directly to the Improvement Board by the HSCP 		
1.8 Implement a Communication Strategy so 'Messages that Matter' are disseminated clearly and regularly to all key stakeholders.	Service Director (Improvement)	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provisional scoping of the strategy completed in accordance with the existing Corporate Communication Strategy – completed November 2022 Joint meeting with Corporate Communications Team held January 2023 with funding identified to appoint dedicated children's improvement communication lead as SPOC for internal & external messages and campaigns. 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two consecutive recruitment campaigns identified candidates who initially accepted but subsequently declined the role due to the location of Herefordshire. • New interim Service Director now appointed and convened joint meeting with 'Be Bold' external PR and Media Company in April 2023 to commission outstanding communications strategy as a service priority. • Consultation with 'Be Bold' scoped new comms strategy/plan to address Children's internal and external improvement messaging plus priority improvement campaigns. Draft signed off May 2023 • Preliminary meeting held to identify priority developments and associated comms priorities including Ofsted monitoring visit letter, publication of the Independent Panel report, Commissioner's stock take and first review and long term Practice Improvement Partnership developments • Post-board comms – Chair's letter to continue to be published following each Improvement Board 		
1.9 Launch a Leadership Pledge to communicate the purpose, values, strategy and goals for improving outcomes for local children and young people.	Corporate Director for Children and Young People	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be launched as part of Communication Strategy (see above) and relationship with Leeds • Revision of approach to encompass new 'restorative' Practice Framework. 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term practice improvement partnership with Leeds has been agreed (subject to final sign off form Minister) • Leeds improvement partnership activity has begun and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On site joint audit activity 12 – 14 June ○ Staff focus groups ○ ECHO service development consultation ○ Supervision consultation ○ DLT development 		
1.10 Ensure there are strong and effective arrangements in place to address identified concerns about multi-agency safeguarding practice/arrangements which includes escalation to the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) for swift resolution when required.	Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Independent Scrutineer	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of HSCP arrangements and development work approved by Executive Partnership Group. • Independent Scrutineer completed an assessment and presented recommendations in November 2022, including a recommendation for a HSCP Workshop to scope Business Plan • Confirmation from HSCP Scrutineer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Escalation policy, with learning guide, available via HSCP website ○ All escalation notifications received by HSCP Business Unit ○ 2022 data reports x 5 escalations ○ 2023 YTD data reports x 3 escalations ○ Recent Level 4 escalation identified issues with the process which resulted in delay 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HSCP Quality & Effectiveness Sub Group standard agenda item – update report due at next Improvement Board in July 2023 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected Members and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) will take timely and necessary action, supported by accurate data that makes a difference for children and young people. (Performance data and records of decisions) • Multi-agency partners will hold equal responsibility and accountability for children who are identified at risk. This success will be seen in the reduction of children on repeat child protection plans and children requiring court intervention. (Performance data and quality assurance activity) • All of those with corporate parenting responsibilities will have sufficient understanding of their role to offer robust challenge to ensure positive outcomes for children in our care and those that we have previously looked after. (Feedback)

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
Number and % of care experienced young people aged 19 – 21 in education, employment and training	47/87	56/89	47/89	46/89	47/91
	54%	52%	53%	52%	52%
Number and % of Early Help assessments completed by services other than the Herefordshire Council Early Help Team	35/62	28/36	62/124	24/49	77/94
	56%	78%	50%	49%	82%

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2: The sufficiency and stability of staff across the workforce, including sufficient numbers of foster carers, so children receive a timely response to having their needs identified and met across the service.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
2.1 Reinvigorate our Workforce Strategy, informed by a comprehensive workforce profile, by increasing our recruitment and retention activity so there is an increasingly stable, permanent, skilled and experienced workforce providing continuity of support and intervention with children, young people and families	Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development and Deputy Chief Executive (Children's Improvement)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft strategy and implementation plan now led by the Deputy CEx (Children's Improvement) in consultation with Director of HR and OD • Recruitment microsite launched November 2022 • Dedicated Recruitment Team established October 2022 • Workforce profile completed • Workforce data update 17 May 2023: <p>Social workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 65 Permanent Social workers required ○ 0 Permanent social workers recruited in month to date ○ 2 agency conversions to date 		

Activity/Impact Key	<p>Activity Not yet due to start</p> <p>Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact</p>	<p>Activity Started and on track</p> <p>Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Started with some issues/delay</p> <p>Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Not on track and at risk</p> <p>Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Completed and now 'business as usual'</p> <p>Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>
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			Wider directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83 Vacancies (16 vacant & 67 filled with agency) 		
2.2 Refresh and relaunch induction arrangements for new starters so they receive a comprehensive Herefordshire welcome, orientation and introduction to our practice priorities and ways of working with local children, young people and families	Principal Social Worker (PSW)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New permanent Principal Social Worker appointed November 2022 Refresh of induction arrangements completed December 2022 Consultation with staff in January/February 2022 Relaunch children’s social care induction March 2023 New starter’s induction to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Day 1 Corporate Induction Day 2 MOSAIC training Day 3 Service’s new starter induction Half Day 4 Service’s new manager induction Plus core foundation CPD 4 x 2.5 hour modules re: Practice priorities, standards and principles 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation process due to obtain feedback from new starters. • Need to explore and build resilience through Social Care Academy to support PSW delivery 		
2.3 Develop the Academy’s continuing professional development (CPD) offer and progression pathway for professionals working directly with children, young people and families to ensure it is aligned with our priorities and their learning needs.	Principal Social Worker (PSW)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Social Worker’s Career Progression Pathway approved and launched with 2 SWs progressed at first panel. • Future panels now scheduled. • 2022/23 Qtr 4 Social Care Academy (SCA) CPD – completed • Core Foundation Training (4 x 2.5 hour modules) for all existing social care staff was launched January to March 2023. Evaluation report due April 2023 for DLT. • 2023/24 SCA CPD programme for launch in April 2023, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Induction (PSW to facilitate, as outlined above) ○ Core Foundation Programme x 4 modules (SCA/PSW) 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supervision (Dr Anna Harvey & Associates, tbc) ○ Restorative Practice (Leeds LT Improvement Partner, introductions June 2023) ○ Trauma informed/ACES aware (see above) ○ HSCP multi-agency training ○ Aspirant Team Manager Development Programme (Ingsons) ○ ASYE (SCA learning & support programme) ○ Apprenticeship Programme (Regional bid tbc) ○ Practice Educators (Regional bid tbc) ● Social Care Academy to evaluate each component of the CPD ● Exercise to undertake visits to performing Social Care Academies to scope and develop best practice in HCC 		
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<p>2.4 Review the Fostering Service capacity and capability to support Herefordshire’s foster carers and launch a new Campaign to recruit more local foster carers.</p>	<p>Head of Service (Fostering, Adoption & Placements)</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recruitment to build officer capacity to provide assessment and support remains a challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rolling advert has yielded no permanent SWs. ○ Successful recruitment of agency SWs is on-going. ○ The Assessment Team has 3 SW vacancies being recruited to, 2 SWs identified and interviews for 3rd SW is on-going. These vacancies are due to 2 agency SWs who joined and left within a few days. ○ The Fostering Support Team is fully staffed ○ The Permanence Support Team is fully staffed. ○ Service and Permanence Support Manager vacancies are out to advert with no applicants to date. ○ Recruitment of a clinical therapist is out for advert with 5 applications received. ● Stakeholder engagement events with foster carers initiated in 		
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			<p>early November 2022 proved very challenging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There continue to be monthly meetings with HC reps association and bi monthly meetings with all foster carers. ○ There are less complaints and good engagement with the reps regarding co-production to help develop the service. Minutes and actions of meetings sent out to all foster carers ● One to one consultations and remedial / reparatory action to retain existing foster carer households continues to rebuild trust and relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HOS has undertaken over 25 x 1 to 1 visits with foster carers with specific worries. ○ 2 x All Foster Carer Meetings have been convened, with one attended by Service Director ○ From June 2023, monthly All Foster Carer Meetings are 		
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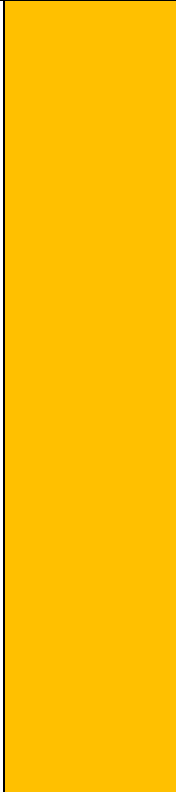

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			<p>scheduled in addition to monthly meetings with identified Reps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A number of LADO/Standard of Care concerns have been resolved by the Service Manager and HOS. ○ HC Fostering Reps escalate matters to Service Manager and HOS appropriately when required ● Foster Carer fees and allowances uplift: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paper due back for DLT consideration on 5 June 2023 ● Fostering cost of living and fees benchmarking exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completed and to be considered by DLT on 5 June 2023 (represents a £327,000 budget pressure) ● Training Needs Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completed by Fostering Network in January 2023 and proposal approved ● Foster Carer recruitment and retention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment Strategy and Action Plan agreed by SMT and DLT (NB: 		
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			<p>slight revision required for 2023/2024 following discussions regarding sufficiency and recruitment of Marketing Officer halfway through the year).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On Friday 26 June, DfE launched and invited bids for Fostering Cluster Groups (of between 7 to 12 LAs in one cluster group with one host LA plus one recruitment 'front door' - impact on our recruitment to be considered). ○ Part 2 of the DfE initiative is inviting funding bids for the Mockingbird to commence/expand this programme. The HOS recommends applying for the Mockingbird funding. This is 2 year funding at which point the service will need to mainstream the costs into the budget. ● Marketing Officer - now appointed and due to start on 2 June 2023 		
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<p>2.5 Review our Sufficiency Strategy to increase the availability and choice of homes, including foster homes, to meet the needs of children and young people in our care</p>	<p>Service Director (All-Age Commissioning)</p>	<p>March 2023.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Commissioner appointed to review Sufficiency Strategy - review complete • New Home Finding Team (HFT) recruitment campaign completed and HFT permanent staff in post • 903 placement data project to cleanse and correct placement data - completed • Children in Care needs profile - completed. • Options appraisal to scope children’s residential accommodation placement options - completed • Further draft of Sufficiency Strategy completed - to be presented to DLT 5 June 2023 • Cabinet member decision (non-key decision) planned for post-election due July 2023 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce profiling data, average caseload data, and improving performance data will together evidence increased capacity to implement and achieve improvement at pace, supported by strong leadership. (Performance data) • Children and young people will experience minimal changes in allocated worker. (Performance data and feedback) • All new starters will have a meaningful induction on joining children’s services to ensure that our workforce understand what is expected of them, what support is available, and key systems and processes. (Performance data, and feedback) • More families will be supported to continue caring for their own children and young people where this is safe and in their best interest to do so (Performance data, and feedback) • More foster carers will be recruited and retained to provide local placements for local children and young people when they are unable to remain living with their own family (Performance data)

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
% of the established workforce that is permanent (established posts currently set at 284.96 FTE.)	67%	69%	72%	56%	44%
Average social worker allocation (excluding Newly Qualified Social Workers)	16.2	16.7	17.1	17.6	16.9
Number of social workers more than 24 children allocated	12	7	11	19	12
Number of in-house foster care households*					
Number of in-house foster care placements offered					186
% of available in-house fostering capacity utilised					98.9

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3: The timely and robust identification and multi-agency response to children and young people who are at risk of harm, including, but not limited to, the response to pre-birth children and babies, 16- and 17-year-olds who present as homeless, children living in private fostering arrangements and children who go missing from home and care.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
3.1 Confirm Information Sharing Protocols and issues of consent with the partnership to ensure there are no barriers to safeguarding children and young people in a timely and informed way	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership leads have met to agree way forward Original MASH information sharing protocol signed off in November 2021 and updated by at the MASH Strategic Board on 16 February 2023 Issues of consent resolved Ofsted monitoring visit letter March 2023: "Parental consent for agency checks are routinely gained." (pg. 2) 		
3.2 Accelerate the co-location of agencies in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to improve the multi-agency identification and response to risk	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASH Co-location complete and operating from Plough Lane offices Ofsted monitoring visit letter March 2023: "Appropriate consideration is given to 		

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			historical information, strengthened by the co-location of key partners in the MASH which enables timely analysis and recommendations.(pg. 2)		
3.3 Urgently refresh arrangements for identifying, assessing and responding to the needs, risks and circumstances of unborn babies in collaboration with relevant Health partners	Head of Service (MASH & Assessment)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed handbook and guidance agreed by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership – completed December 2022 Pre-birth pathway - Completed September 2022 New multi-agency Panel in place – Completed October 2022 Pre-birth tracker in place Reviews of pre-birth process completed December 2022 and February 2023 Impact: The MASH identifies the needs, risks and circumstances of all unborn/new born babies to ensure they, and their parents, receive the right help at the right time so the risk of likely significant harm is managed effectively and unborn/new born babies are safer. 		

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<p>3.4 Develop promotional material and collaborate with the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) to promote awareness about Private Fostering across Herefordshire so notifications, assessments and support are timely and responsive to need.</p>	<p>Head of Service (Fostering, Adoption & Placements)</p>	<p>February 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of information leaflet to raise awareness completed and signed off by HSCP December 2022 • The PSW presented to the Practitioner Forum 24 March 2023 • Promotional material circulated to partner organisations to deliver internally to their own staff. • HSCP partners identified upcoming staff forums, networking events, newsletters that can be used for implementation • Roll out of awareness raising campaign due from April – October 2023 – communication plan developed to be supported by HSCP • Private Fostering - quick guide added to Tri.x • Current PF arrangements = 0 • Impact measures tbc (including number of PF notifications from HSCP, assessments and overall PF arrangements) 		
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<p>3.5 Revise and relaunch our joint protocols for safeguarding and supporting 16 and 17 year old young people who present as homeless</p>	<p>MASH Head of Service / Head of Service (Strategic Housing Manager)</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Protocol complete • Protocol launched for implementation following a table top ‘walk through’ exercise • Number of vulnerable homeless 16/17 yo referred and subject assessment since launch of protocol = 1 • Service Lead confirming impact measures with Housing Lead 	<p style="background-color: #00AEEF; color: white; text-align: center;">On Track</p>	<p style="background-color: #D3D3D3;"></p>
<p>3.6 Work collaboratively with safeguarding partners to strengthen multi-agency contextual safeguarding arrangements to identify and manage risk outside of the home</p>	<p>Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)</p>	<p>April 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Director appointed as HSCP Sub Group Chair - September 2022 • Scoping of Contextualised Safeguarding models complete October 2022 • Review of response to young people and care experienced young people undertaken October/November 2022 • HSCP Sub Group agreed recommendation for the ‘Get Safe’ model and ‘Get Safe Plus’ model to support children as victims of exploitation 	<p style="background-color: #00B050; color: white; text-align: center;">On Track</p>	<p style="background-color: #D3D3D3;"></p>

<p style="background-color: #6A329F; color: white; text-align: center;">Activity/Impact Key</p>	<p style="background-color: #D3D3D3; text-align: center;">Activity Not yet due to start Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact</p>	<p style="background-color: #00B050; text-align: center;">Activity Started and on track Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p style="background-color: #FFD700; text-align: center;">Activity Started with some issues/delay Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people</p>	<p style="background-color: #FF0000; text-align: center;">Activity Not on track and at risk Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p style="background-color: #00AEEF; text-align: center;">Activity Completed and now ‘business as usual’ Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to HSCP December 2022 with agreement to establish Task and Finish Project Group which is now in place • Implementation of Get Safe/Get Safe Plus is scheduled for June with delivery of partnership training programme • Conference to launch Get Safe/Get Safe Plus is scheduled for September/October 2023 and the OPCC has agreed to contribute funding for this • HSCP impact measures tbc 		
3.7 Revise and relaunch multi-agency protocols for safeguarding and supporting children and young people who go missing from home and care and improve the quality of return interviews by exploring 'push-pull' factors and using available intelligence to support effective planning.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The missing annual report is due by the end of June 2023 • All missing Return Home Interviews are reported and reviewed on a weekly basis. • Feedback from the 1st Ofsted monitoring visit was positive; 'Return home interviews when children are missing from home are used well to enhance plans to help keep children safe and enable 		

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			<p>an effective response if they go missing again.’ (pg. 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Mercia Police are leading on the consultation and launch of the new draft missing procedures • These went to the Strategic MASH Board on the 18 May and the Child Exploitation Strategic Group on the 22 May for consultation and are scheduled for discussion at the next two strategic meetings. • The Philomena Protocol is in place (this is a national scheme encouraging agencies, carers, guardians, families and friends to record vital information which can be used in the event of a vulnerable young person going missing). • Refresh of impact measure tbc in line with launch of new missing procedures 		
3.8 Review, relaunch and then evaluate the impact of the multi-agency Neglect Strategy	HSCP Independent Scrutineer	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Neglect Strategy and Delivery Plan are in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) - The GCP2 review has been 		

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			<p>completed and HSCP now needs to consider the implications of the review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The partnership has renewed its commitment to review the impact of the Neglect Strategy during 2023/2024 and it will be part of the Business Plan due for sign off on the 14 June. ○ Whilst a data set has been developed for the partnership work on a neglect scorecard still need to be resourced and completed. 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MASH is high performing with capacity and capability to manage the nature and level of demand and complexity so children and young people have their needs identified and responded to efficiently and effectively. (Performance data, and feedback) • Partners work well together and in partnership with parents to safeguard children and young people in a timely and effective way so they are safe, well and able to fulfil their potential throughout their childhood and beyond. (Performance data, quality assurance activity, and feedback) • The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership has strong and effective arrangements in place to safeguard children and young people at risk of harm from a range of different presenting circumstances (Performance data, quality assurance activity, and feedback) 	

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Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Apr-23
Number and % of child and family assessments completed within timescales	236/304	142/183	198/236	164/157	139/191
	78%	78%	84%	96%	73%
Number and % of strategy meetings created and completed in timescale	173/178	149/153	97/115	86/103	123/140
	97%	84%	84%	84%	88%
Number and % of Initial Child Protection Conferences convened within 15 days (of the strategy discussion at which the need for child protection enquiries was agreed)	20/37	20/22	26/33	20/22	32/34
	54%	91%	79%	91%	94%
Number and % of return interviews which took place within 72 hours of the missing episode ending (excluding declined)	7/7	3/5	20/22	10/17	11/15
	100%	60%	91%	59%	73%

4: The quality of practice including assessments, plans, planning and purposeful visits that are responsive to risk and need.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
4.1 Review and refresh our Academy learning and development offer to ensure a clear focus on our practice priorities, principles and standards including practice guidance and tools.	Principal Social Worker (PSW)	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice Priorities, Standards and Principle Tools developed - December 2022 Quarter 4 of 2022/23 Social Care Academy (SCA) Continuing Professional Development Programme refreshed 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Foundation Programme facilitated by Practice Development Leads on 17 January 2023 to end of March 2023 • Evaluation report prepared for DLT April 2023 • Core Foundation Programme to be incorporated into all new starter’s induction programme and delivered by the Social Care Academy and PSW 		
4.2 Develop and implement a service wide Engagement and Participation Strategy to ensure children and young people’s voices are heard and taken into consideration.	Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Engagement and Participation Strategy is in draft format and will be presented to SMT and DLT by end June 2023 • Engagement and participation staffing - participation worker post will be advertised week beginning 12 June. The TM post and apprentice post need a business case to secure funding and is scheduled for 30 June 2023 • Engagement and participation activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initiated and being led by PAs with young people in care. The participation group is looking at plans for care leaver’s week, safety 		

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			<p>planning documents, new pathway plan format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Activities include a reading group, CV writing group and a weekly parent and child group is also up and running. ○ The football team are holding a regional event in the coming weeks. There was also an event with the Army on 31 May 2023. ● Child in Care Council / Your Voice Matters Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-production meetings have started and the activity is underway but not yet finalised ● Consultation - Service Lead met with the previous consultant who undertook the detailed scoping for children’s engagement and participation – completed and informing plans 		
<p>4.3 Champion the voice of the child to take account of their views, wishes and feelings by promoting direct work skills</p>	<p>Principal Social</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct work practice guidance finalised by Principal Social Worker and Permanence Champion 		

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<p>and purposeful visiting so this remains a central feature of our engagement and relationship with them.</p>	<p>Worker (PSW)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of direct work tools / resources completed December 2022. • Funding to order direct work tool kits for teams / services - agreed January 2023 and delivered February 2023 • Core foundation training Qtr. 4 2023/23 includes new practice principles including ‘purposeful visiting’ and ‘voice of the child’ • Direct work tools/resources have been distributed to all teams and service areas • Direct work Champions to be identified in teams/service areas to support practice development and use of tools and resources • Core Foundation CPD to continue for all new starters plus refresher sessions to include direct work, purposeful visiting and voice of the child • Social Care Academy to develop direct work learning and development workshop with Direct Work Champions 		
<p>4.4 Revise, develop and launch our practice model to emphasise the importance of relationships, respect and restorative practice for how we will work <i>with</i> children,</p>	<p>Corporate Director for</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLT completed provisional position statement regarding practice model – March 2023 		

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<p>young people and parents/carers, especially where this may not have been their experience previously.</p>	<p>Children and Young People</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development due in line with the long term practice improvement partnership with Leeds the introduction to restorative/relational practice will begin in June/July 2023 as part of the preliminary consultation and development work with DLT. 		
<p>4.5 Strengthen quality assurance activity in accordance with the re-launch of the Quality Assurance Framework to provide robust assurance that the quality of practice is improving.</p>	<p>Service Director Improvement</p>	<p>December 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised QAF complete November 2022 • Re-launch in December 2022 • First monthly QAF report to January Improvement Board, and to every subsequent Board, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ QA highlight report ○ QA compliance report ○ Quality Matters summary report ○ Best Practice Briefing • First report of ‘Good’ moderated audits • Spring review completed – May 2023 		

<p>Expected Outcomes (how we will know)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Academy promotes and supports continuous learning and development that is evidence based, research informed and makes a demonstrable impact on improving practice. (Performance data, quality assurance activity)

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- Practitioners and managers know what is expected of them, are supported to practice confidently and capably and are increasingly more restorative in their approach which builds trust and strong relationships. (Quality assurance activity and feedback)
- The needs of children and young people are of paramount importance, their voices are championed and they report feeling safe, well and able to meet their full potential (Quality assurance activity and feedback)
- Practice is routinely audited against best practice standards and evidences increasingly good and better practice that improves outcomes for children and young people (quality assurance activity)

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
Number of Audits completed	31	15	10	14	23
Number and % of audit grades at inadequate (post moderation)	16	6	4	3	6
	52%	40%	40%	21%	26%
Number and % of audit grades at requires improvement (post moderation)	10	6	4	8	8
	32%	40%	40%	57%	39%
Number and % of audit grades at good (post moderation)	5	3	2	3	3
	16%	20%	20%	21%	35%
Number and % of audit grades at outstanding (post moderation)	0	0	0	0	0
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

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5: Timely and effective multi-agency arrangements to ensure children are protected and enter care when required.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
5.1 Re-launch and embed the partnership thresholds to improve awareness, understanding and application in relation to decision making across the child’s pathway from needing to receiving support, protection and care	HSCP /Corporate Director for Children and Young People / Independent Scrutineer	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit referral activity to analyse evidence and feedback to partners about the application of thresholds and the effective use of the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) HSCP ‘Right Help, Right Time’ Partnership Network Meeting to inform next steps 		
5.2 Review and address MASH social work capacity and management decision making capability to ensure there are consistent responses to concerns that evidence professional curiosity and analysis	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MASH diagnostic completed w/commencing 6 February 2023. Review and analysis of diagnostic report to inform ‘next steps’ and preparation for \Ofsted monitoring visit. Impact - Ofsted monitoring visit March 2023 letter: “Since the last inspection the functioning of the MASH has significantly improved from a very low base, meaning that most children's needs are now 		

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			promptly identified and responded to when referrals and contacts are made. Effective systems have been established along with increased capacity to gather the information required to decide what is the right level of support to offer children and families.”		
5.3 Review and adjust the interface between Early Help and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to ensure robust screening arrangements with a clear and effective pathway are in place to ensure needs are addressed promptly.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed guidance to clarify Early Help / MASH relationship, roles, responsibilities and expectations about decision making complete Step Up / Step Down audit with refreshed protocols and pathway completed and agreed EH Pilot with additional resources in place to strengthen triage and pathway to services CHAT helpline relaunched January 2023 February 2023 MASH diagnostic to be reviewed to inform ‘next steps’ and Ofsted monitoring visit preparation Impact - Ofsted monitoring visit March 2023 letter: “The interface 		

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			between early help and the MASH has been strengthened. A children’s help and advice team has been relaunched which provides a timely and helpful advice service, signposting families promptly to universal and targeted services, making sure that children and families receive the help they need before needs escalate.”		
5.4 Work collaboratively with the partners to ensure there are always appropriate resources to convene child protection strategy meetings when required so these are timely, involve all relevant partners and protect children at the point they are referred and when they are already known to the service and subject to existing support, protection or care plans.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support) & Detective Superintendent, West Mercia Police	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police action during the inspection has provided additional resources and built capacity • Audit activity October 2022 indicated improvements in MASH / Assessment which are largely secure now • Audit activity October 2022 indicated delays still evident in other teams elsewhere in the service • Change request from December 2022 to end of March 2023 to further review the timeliness of 		

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			<p>strategy meetings across the whole service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact – Ofsted monitoring visit March 2023 letter: “When children are at risk of immediate significant harm multi-agency strategy meetings within the MASH are held promptly. Managers in the MASH chair all strategy meetings which provides oversight and understanding of the most vulnerable children, which informs immediate planning to safeguard children.” (pg. 3) 		
5.5 Re-establish and strengthen multi-agency arrangements to improve safety planning and risk management arrangements whenever child protection enquiries are being undertaken.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact - Ofsted monitoring visit March 2023 letter “Safety planning within strategy meetings is limited to immediate safety and there is an over-reliance on police action to prevent alleged perpetrators from having access to children and adult victims. There is insufficient consideration of future risk and how this can best be mitigated in the longer 	✓	

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			<p>term, when police action such as bail conditions expire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessment and Safety Planning Pilot launched on 22 May with review in 6 weeks • Young people’s feedback has been ascertained to inform the draft safety plans and will be included in the review 		
5.6 Develop a multi-agency/cross sector ‘Edge of Care’ offer supported by the existing Edge of Care and Home (ECHO) Team and other allied services that build on family strengths and resources so children and young people are able to remain with their families where it is safe and appropriate to do so	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	April 2023**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of proposed service expansion and redesign of ECHO and FGC agreed • Additional budget approved and scoping of new service structure drafted • ECHO criteria to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Prevention</u> of reception into care ○ <u>Reunification</u> home from care for children who are subject to Placement with Parents Regulations and those ‘potentially suited’ • Leeds long term practice improvement partner is embarking 		

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			<p>on service consultancy and design to support the ECHO service developments – June 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended deadline to September 2023** to allow for the next phase of the recruitment process 		
5.7 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 when all family options have been exhausted.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocated funding and resources identified in January 2023 Two additional ECHO FGC Coordinators recruited – completed April FGC training for FGC Coordinators with the Family Rights Group – completed May Additional FGC capacity available through spot purchase arrangements established through All Age Commissioning - completed Leeds long term practice improvement partner is embarking on service consultancy to support the ECHO service developments – June 2023 Impact 		

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<p>5.8 Take action to strengthen risk management arrangements with disabled children and young people so their additional needs, risks and circumstances are appropriately addressed.</p>	<p>Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional social work Service Manager appointed into Children with a Disability (CWD) team to strengthen safeguarding arrangements. • There has been an increase in children being referred to CWD, 18% increase between January 2023 – May 2023 and caseloads are higher as a result. • The service is recruiting an additional Managing Practitioner, to provide additional supervisory capacity and build resilience • An additional SW has also been recruited. • Working in consultation with the Social Care Academy, the service took on 3 x NQSWs last month • The Short Break assessment template is working well from a SW perspective now and consultation is now underway to co-produce parent carer views • Practice Standards have been reviewed and tweaked to ensure 		
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			<p>reporting data is correct to include all children having a short break whether this is under s17 or s20 (CA 1989) or s2 (CSDPA, 1970).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with commissioners is underway to improve the provision of short breaks - evaluations of tenders are underway with moderation due for group activity providers. • Consultation and co-production with Parent Carer Voice is on-going in relation to this activity • CWD and SEND currently work together to approve and provide targeted short breaks. • Work has begun to address the quality of EHCPs • The service has identified that some planning has been based on a resource led assessment. The 6 month data about unmet need is being collated as part of the review process to inform a meeting with All Age Commissioning on 1 June 2023. 		
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted activity is underway to address MOSAIC systems and data reporting developments 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thresholds are well understood and applied consistently across the partnership so children and young people are identified and have their assessed needs, risks and circumstances responded to in a timely manner so they are supported, protected and cared for. (Quality assurance activity, feedback) Children, young people and families are provided with the right help at the right time. (quality assurance activity, feedback) Safety planning and risk management arrangements engage all partners to work well together so children and young people are protected from the risk of harm. (quality assurance activity, feedback)

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Apr-23
Number of Family Group Conferences (FGC) (when established)	1	2	4	1	3

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6: Monitoring and tracking to prevent drift and delay. This includes the monitoring and tracking of children in the public law Outline (PLO), permanence planning, children subject to deprivation of liberty orders and those placed in unregistered children’s homes.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
6.1 Review all Public Law Outline (PLO) pre-proceedings and on-going care proceedings with Legal Services to establish a clear position across all teams and services and continue to track and report this on a monthly basis to achieve and maintain compliance with national standards.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review baseline position for all children subject to PLO process complete August/September 2022 PLO process reviewed and updated See PLO/Care Proceedings report for the Improvement Board 7 June <p>Summary of PLO pre-proceedings data for April 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31 children (22 families) subject to PLO proceedings, an increase of 5 from the previous month 2 Children entered PLO in the month 5 children exited PLO in the month All children where the decision to enter PLO was made in March had their initial PLO meeting with parents within 10 working days. This is the second consecutive month where this has been achieved. 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average time in pre-proceedings for all children was 10.2 weeks with the shortest being 1 week and the longest being 24 weeks. The target is 16 weeks. • Pre-proceeding over 16 weeks - relates to 3 children (10% of the total) in 2 families. • Pre-proceedings over 25 weeks - due to complexity. The progress is being monitored through compliance panel and HOS oversight. • Pre-proceedings over 20 weeks – a very young child with complex assessments required that could not be progressed until 6 weeks following birth • Pre-proceedings outcomes - 5 children exited pre-proceedings and 100% were stepped down due to progress being made with the threshold for issuing care proceedings no longer being met <p>Summary of Care Proceedings data for April 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 59 children (from 50 families) subject to care proceedings in 		
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			<p>This is unchanged from the previous month</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness - The national target is 26 weeks, with a local target of 16 weeks • 30 children (50.8% of the total cohort) were subject to care proceedings lasting 16 weeks or over. This was 40% in the previous month. • 5 children (8.5%) are significantly over the National Target of 26 weeks. • Causes of excessive delay/cohort outliers; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2 siblings at 60 weeks where there are complex evidential and medical issues concerning possible NAI that are causing necessary but prolonged delay. Final hearing due 19 May 2023 ➤ 1 child at 46 weeks with possible NAI. Conflicting medical evidence and need for a re-assessment of injuries is causing delay. The court has been requested to timetable to IRH on 3 July 2023 subject to the medical evidence being available. ➤ 2 siblings at 33 weeks where the 		
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			independent social worker’s report was not completed within the timescale leading to the proceedings being extended for 8 weeks. Final hearing scheduled from 2 to 4 May 2023.		
6.2 Establish improved leadership and management oversight of PLO practice to address any drift or delay, ensure families are effectively engaged where there are concerns that may lead to court proceedings and so children receive legal protection when required.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further reviews of PLO practice and progress due February 2023 and July 2023 • Action to repair and strengthen relationship with the judiciary commenced and is on-going via the court user group. • ‘Learning together’ sessions focusing on the quality of Social Work Evidence Template (SWET) and collaboration with Legal Services reviewed in January 2023 with on-going improvement practice underway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TOR for Legal Gateway Panel - Letter before Proceedings - FAQ and leaflet for parents - Web link from HCC to Family Rights Group website 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial improvements in collaboration with Legal Services include reviews of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of s20 - Short notice hearings - Refreshing the Legal Gateway Planning Meeting Process • See PLO/Court Proceedings report presented to 7 June Improvement Board 		
6.3 Information for families with children subject to Public Law pre-proceedings will be added to the Council’s website so that they are properly informed about Public Law pre-proceedings meetings and proceedings.	Service Director (Improvement)	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital link to the Family Rights Group website and the Council’s website was established February 2023 • Additional ‘family friendly’ information has been developed to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLO Leaflet - Frequently Asked Questions - Plus a revised ‘Letter before Proceedings’ to share directly with parents • The digital link has been built, tested and can be accessed as a new page in the following section on the website: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/corporate-parenting with a 		

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			<p>link to it from the children’s improvement page: https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/childrens-services-improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action being taken to report on number of ‘hits’ to the website pages More targeted QA user feedback to be ascertained from parents/carers whose child/ren are subject to PLO/court proceedings 		
6.4 Increase the leadership and management oversight for any child placed in an unregistered setting and publish revised guidance for our staff to ensure there is a clear understanding of what is a placement unregulated by Ofsted and what is an unregistered placement.	Service Director (All Age Commissioning)	February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No child to be placed in any unregistered placement without the authority of the Corporate Director for Children’s Services Revised guidance published Full review of the Home Finding Team underway to strengthen leadership, capacity and capability with interviews completed December 2022 and all staff in post for February 2023 Head of Service developing a Service delivery plan to complete an end to end review of home finding policies, procedures and processes by new team 		

Activity/Impact Key	<p>Activity Not yet due to start</p> <p>Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact</p>	<p>Activity Started and on track</p> <p>Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Started with some issues/delay</p> <p>Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Not on track and at risk</p> <p>Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Completed and now ‘business as usual’</p> <p>Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is 1 child currently placed in an unregistered placement as at 31.05.2023. There were 0 children at the last Board. 		
6.5 Revise the Permanence Policy and Procedures to achieve legal, emotional and placement permanence with children and young people as soon as possible.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Permanence Policy completed by Permanence Champion February 2023 SMT consultation and sign off Formatting and branding being finalised Implementation March 2023 		
6.6 Develop and implement a reunification framework to assess and support children and young people who are able to return home to the care of their parents/families when it is safe and in their best interest to do so.	Service Director (Improvement)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Reunification Guidance completed December 2023 Consultation with SMT/ DLT completed Launch of guidance in March 2023 with 6 month pilot with cohort children subject to Placement with Parents regulations and those 'potentially suited' to reunification with their birth families Two supernumerary social workers are appointed to provide challenge and support to progress permanence planning Fast track legal/court process agreed to discharge care orders 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All permanence time scales to be reviewed, reset (where necessary) and confirmed asap with children and families • Weekly panel chaired by HOS and weekly progress reporting to Service Director in place • Impact and progress updated to be reported to the next Board 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents with children subject to PLO pre-proceedings are helped to appreciate the concerns about their parenting and supported to make changes in a timely manner so their children remain safe and well g and Family Support for so that care proceedings are not necessary. (quality assurance activity, feedback) • Families are encouraged and supported to come together to explore opportunities, problem solve, plan and makes decisions that promote family based solutions to address identified concerns for children and young people. (Performance data, feedback) • Where parenting concerns persist and children continue to be at risk of significant harm they will be safeguarded and legally protected so that alternative permanent care can be achieved in a timely manner. (Performance data, quality assurance activity) • Plans are reviewed over time to make sure that if and when circumstances change there are opportunities for children and young people to return to the care of their parents and family, so long as this is safe and is in their best interest (Performance activity, quality assurance data) 					

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Measures that Matter					
Measure	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
Number and % of children for whom PLO pre-proceedings were completed within 16 weeks (Rolling Year)	5	2	0	0	2
	33%	0%	0%	0%	40%
Number of children in unregistered provision (with Corporate Director's oversight and decision is recorded on the child's record)	2	0	1	2	1
Number of children subject to Deprivation of Liberty (DoL), including the % of these children where DoL has been in place for 6 months or more	6	4	4	4	4
	33%	50%	50%	50%	50%

7: The availability of support and services to meet children and young people's needs, including timely access to therapeutic interventions, access to dentistry, life-story work, emotional and mental health support, help for young people to support transitions into independence and sufficient suitable accommodation.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
7.1 Work with the Director of Public Health and with the Integrated Care Board to review the availability, accessibility and quality of support in Herefordshire to provide services that make a difference for children and young people in need of support, protection and care	Corporate Director Children and Young People / Director of Public Health	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round table strategic scoping meeting scheduled with Health stakeholders due 27 February 2023 Outcome of scoping to establish the position and necessary activity was due March 2023 however meeting postponed due to NHS 		

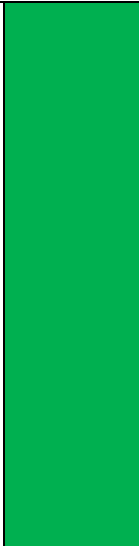

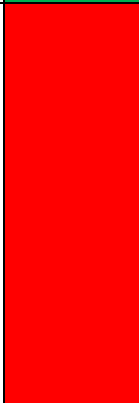

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			<p>strike action and needs to be re-scheduled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation has taken place with Health partners who are leading on identified work streams • Health report to future Improvement Board proposed 		
7.2 Complete a partnership mapping exercise to establish the availability of local services and publish this with clear pathways to ensure children and young people in care and preparing to leave care are supported to access timely and appropriate multi-agency support and, where identified, address any gaps.	Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Parenting Board has convened and agreed partnership contributions in October 2022 • Draft Care Leaver’s Offer prepared and presented to Corporate Parenting Board on 15 February • Details of Offer being produced in a young person friendly format for launch and dissemination • Care Leaver’s pathway being reviewed with the MOSAIC systems team • All care experienced young people due to have an up to date Pathway Plan to take account of the refreshed Offer • Pathway Planning training has been delivered in April 2023 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate parenting health report proposed for future Improvement Board 		
7.3 Ensure there is sufficient support and provision in place to meet the demand for high quality life story work with children and young people	Service Director (Improvement)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life story work task and finish group in place to develop this practice Life story best practice guidance developed Newly appointed Principal Social Worker (PSW) to champion implementation of best practice guidance alongside Permanence Champion Permanence Champion completed scoping of children in care needs in March 2023 Scoping of resource implications to address legacy, current and future demands for life story work based on outcome of above Child in Care review of needs. Further analysis required to confirm nature and extent of the need in June 2023. 		

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<p>7.4 Review, refresh and publish our Sufficiency Strategy to increase the choice and availability of suitable accommodation for children and young people.</p>	<p>Service Director (All Age Commissioning)</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist children’s commissioner appointed to refresh the Sufficiency Strategy • 1st review complete October 2022 • 2nd draft complete and presented to DLT & Commissioning & Resources Board December 2022. • DLT recommended SEND accommodation and transition to Adult Services to be incorporated into the Sufficiency Strategy • Further draft of Sufficiency Strategy being shared with CPB, SMT and DLT in May / June 2023 		
<p>7.5 Ensure that care experienced young people are provided with their health histories with all the essential information they need to become an independent young adult.</p>	<p>Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This requires co-production with Designated / Named Health leads for care experienced young people • Consultation with care experienced young people also required • Sample health history to be developed in collaboration with care leavers • Model of implementation to be proposed in consultation with Health 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change request from March 2023 to May 2023 to ensure task and finish group to prioritise this priority action • To be addressed in proposed Health report to future Board 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people in need of support, protection and care have a range of suitable therapeutic, emotional and mental health support services and receive priority access so their needs can be assessed and supported without delay. (Performance data, quality assurance activity, feedback) • The partnership is increasingly knowledgeable, skilled and experienced at working together to identify the range of local services and pathways so children and young people receive prompt support that addresses their needs effectively. (Quality assurance activity, feedback) • The choice and number of available accommodation is suitable to meet the assessed needs of young people so they are settled and secure. (Performance data, quality assurance activity)

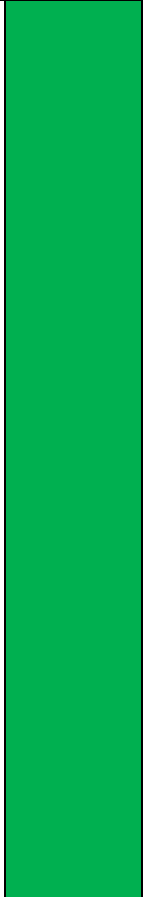

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Measures that Matter					
Measure	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
Number and % of children in care with an up-to-date initial health assessment	40/56	38/57	73/61	7/35	9/43
	71%	67%	61%	20%	21%
Number and % of children in care with an up-to-date dental check	123/293	133/297	203/282	229/312	252/370
	42%	45%	71%	73%	68%
Number and % of children in care for 6 months or longer who have a life-story book				120/348	
				34%	
Number and % of care leavers aged 19 -21 who live in suitable accommodation	75/81	76/81	76/82	76/82	79/85
	93%	94%	93%	93%	93%

8: Management oversight and grip across the service to include clear structures and service pathways, and regular and effective supervision.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
8.1 Review the structure of the Directorate Leadership Team and the Heads of Service Group to ensure there is sufficient capacity and capability to lead and manage the service.	Corporate Director for Children and Young People	October 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure reviewed and recruited to with interim Heads of Service. 		

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<p>8.2 Review supervision and management oversight to ensure it is regular, reflective and well recorded so those working directly with children, young people and families receive clear direction and support.</p>	<p>Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision audit of 70 records completed December 2022 with findings and proposals to support review of policy completed • Audit summary with options appraisal for 1:1 supervision (and reflective case discussion model of supervision, see below) proposed to inform review and refresh of Supervision Policy • Revised draft Supervision Policy completed for SMT consultation with SMT February 2022 with DLT endorsement to follow • Proposed Morrison 4x4x4 supervision model agreed with SMT • Social Care Academy is pursuing a training provider (Dr Harvey & Associates - DfE subject expert for Practice Supervisor Development Programme) • Joint meeting between Dr Anna Harvey and Associates and Leeds Improvement Partner to confirm focus and approach 		
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement underway ready for pre-summer induction/introduction – June/July 2023 		
8.3 Introduce a reflective case discussion model of group supervision to create emotionally informed thinking and promote respectful uncertainty and healthy scepticism.	Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit completed (as above) with summary report and options appraisal for reflective case discussion model of supervision proposed to inform review and refresh of Supervision Policy December 2022 Revised draft Supervision Policy completed for SMT / DLT consultation – completed February 2022 Proposed Reflective Case Discussion Model of Group Supervision by Professor Gillian Ruch (2007) Refer to 8.3 above 		
8.4 Review and adjust where required the service structure and pathways to ensure these are clear, responsive and support practice and service delivery.	Service Director (Improvement)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End to end service review of the child’s pathway through the service to explore options to streamline and rationalise internal transitions and ‘hand offs’ ‘Walk through’ Workshop completed with Heads of Service 		

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			<p>and MOSAIC systems lead - completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress noted in several areas but areas of most concern relate to pathways for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with Disabilities Service Corporate Parenting Service Home Finding Team Position statements being completed to summarise the nature and extent of the issues in order to inform next steps 		
8.5 Review and relaunch policies and procedures on tri.x (commissioned company) to ensure these are up to date and fit for purpose.	Policy & Procedures Lead	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of interim lead completed October 2022 Review of tri.x local procedures completed November 2022 Detailed programme of remedial action underway November 2022 Detailed work with individual Heads of Service and Lead Officer underway Report to DLT prepared February 2023 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business as usual (BAU) updating and review to be established for end of March 2023 		
8.6 Re-launch the Independent Reviewing Officer Dispute Resolution Protocol (DRP) to address the needs of children where there are concerns	Head of Service (Safeguarding & Review)	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised DRP is now in place for IROs and Child Protection Chairs, having been re-launched in mid-January 2023. A new escalations tracker has been in place from February 2023 and Service Managers for IROs and CP Chairs review this weekly. Escalations and CP Chair oversights are reported monthly at Performance Meeting. There are 13 DRPs open in the IRO Service. These are concerned with drift and delay in care planning; delays in children achieving permanence and recommendations from Reviews not being progressed. There are 4 DRPs open from the CP Service. As before, these are concerned with poor quality of reports; reports not being shared with families 48 hours before 		

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			<p>Conferences; and lack of evidence of child’s voice in assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Service Managers monitor the DRP Trackers weekly and escalate unresolved issues to senior managers as required. Work continues to take place with teams to ensure that escalations are responded to within timescale. 		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The workforce is sufficient, stable, skilled and experienced to lead, manage and respond to the nature and level of service demands so practice and performance improves, is in line with established best practice standards and in accordance with legislation and statutory guidance. (Performance data) Supervision routinely provides high quality management, development, support and mediation to ensure children and young people receive the best support possible and staff have the knowledge, skills and support they need to undertake their role confidently and competently. (Performance data, quality assurance activity, feedback) 	

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- The service structure and pathways are enablers to achieving good outcomes with children and young people and support staff to undertake their role efficiently and effectively. (Quality assurance activity, feedback)
- As an employer of choice, the conditions within which staff are undertaking their roles, and the resources that are available to them, in Herefordshire are conducive to supporting and promoting consistently good quality practice and performance. (feedback)

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
Number and % of allocated children who have an up-to-date (within the past month) supervision completed on their record	627/987	477/1001	650/938	400/843	425/733
	64%	48%	69%	47%	58%
Number and % of concerns raised and were resolved at stage one of the Dispute Resolution Protocol	3/4	1/2	2/3	2/2	0/1
	75%	50%	67%	100%	0%
The number of unallocated cases in the service without SW allocation	14	0	6	7	41

9: Performance and quality assurance arrangements to support and test service improvements.

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
9.1 Launch and publish a revised Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) that will test practice by analysing all available evidence, including practice performance and improvement activity, and take	Service Director (Improvement)	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh of the QAF completed November 2022 with DLT sign off • Formatting and design completed ready for launch in December 2022 		

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<p>into account what relevant stakeholders, including children, young people and parents/carers, are telling us.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication and launch January 2023 • Schedule of QA launch activity January – February 2023 • First monthly QA reporting completed for presentation to the Improvement Board January 2023, and each Board thereafter, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highlight report ○ Compliance report ○ ‘Quality Matters’ summary ○ 7 minute thematic best practice guide • QAF Spring review and draft report completed 14 April 2023 for DLT consideration with recommendations about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Achieving and sustaining compliance and quality – committing to do fewer but better quality audits with protected time, buddying and a moderation process that engages the Auditor in the process 		
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Auditors working <i>with</i> allocated SWs and TMs to review practice ○ Ascertaining views of children, young people and parents/carers as part of the audit process ● Leeds long term Improvement Partner on site from 12 – 14 June to undertake joint audits as part of their preliminary review 		
9.2 Decide on a performance reporting framework and deliver a timely and accurate monthly performance and management data report with analysis to support management and drive improvement	Corporate Director for Children and Young People	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance reporting framework agreed and built for December 2022 ● Regular monthly reporting due for January / February 2023 ● First monthly Performance reporting for presentation to Improvement Board January 2023 ● Measures that Matter report completed for March 2023 Improvement Board ● PowerBi performance reporting being further developed across the service 		

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent discrepancy in performance reporting identified by the service and subject to urgent review by the performance team to seek assurance about the QA verification processes. Corrections made and republished. 		
9.3 Review and address the MOSAIC system changes to ensure it is fit for purpose, user friendly and supports the service’s workflow and reporting requirements	Corporate Director Children and Young People	July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope of preliminary issues completed with timeline to complete project plan – this is continually reviewed and updated in light of progress evaluation of emerging pressures and priorities To date, actions completed include: Contact & Referral; Assessment; Assessment visit; CIN plan; CIN review; and CIN Visit Current focus includes: Early Help and CIC and Care Leavers (including decision to accommodate; placement request; home finding work flow; CIC visit; CIC review’ SW report for CIC review; health assessments; and Pathway Plans) 		

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			<p>which are due to be completed in August 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next steps to include: Child protection; Supervision; and request to convene a meeting. 		
9.4 Develop and launch refreshed recording standards setting out clear expectations about what good quality children’s records and reports look like and including ‘Language that Cares’ guidance used with and about children and young people is appropriate	Service Director (Improvement)	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of recording standards policy, including Language that Cares – complete • Fit for purpose and not requiring a change or refresh • Instead, draft Practice Guidance has been prepared ready for SMT consultation and sign off - June 2023 		
9.5 Work collaboratively with other agencies across the safeguarding partnership to develop and publish a quarterly multi-agency data set to safeguard children and young people.	Herefordshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership / Independent Scrutineer	April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping and development of multi-agency data set in conjunction with Worcestershire SCP – complete • HSCP meeting to consult on proposal - April 2023 • HSCP meeting to agree a targeted data set - June 2023 • HSCP to confirm regular reporting 		

Expected Outcomes (how we will know)

Activity/Impact Key	Activity Not yet due to start Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact	Activity Started and on track Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people	Activity Started with some issues/delay Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people	Activity Not on track and at risk Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people	Activity Completed and now ‘business as usual’ Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people
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- The quality assurance and performance frameworks and the system that supports them are robust, reliable and routinely provide evidence and analysis to support and drive continuous improvement and assurance. (Performance data, quality assurance activity)
- The day to day management of operational practice and performance is supported by quantitative data, information and intelligence that is readily available and easy to access so practitioners and managers have a clear view and appreciation of what this shows and what it means for them and the children, young people and families they are supporting at an individual, team and service level. (quality assurance activity, feedback)
- The focus, findings and follow up to quality assurance activity provides a shared narrative based on qualitative evidence of what the service has done, how well it has done it and what is required to address recommendations and remedial action to improve outcomes for children and young people (Performance data, quality assurance activity)
- The partnership achieves and maintains a shared appreciation of quantitative and qualitative data, information and intelligence to fulfil its statutory functions to assess the effectiveness of help being provided to children and families, whether partners are fulfilling their obligations, assure the quality of joint practice and identify lessons, as well as monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of training.

Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
Number and % of children’s file audits completed by Managers, Child Protection Conference Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers	31/48	15/37	7/10	10/14	21/24
	65%	41%	70%	71%	91%
Number and % of completed children’s file audits moderated by senior leaders (DLT members)	13	15	5	5	1
	42%	41%	50%	50%	5%
Number of outstanding priority actions on the audit tracker following an inadequate audit outcome where concerns were escalated about the likelihood of significant harm		6	1	3	2

Activity/Impact Key	Activity Not yet due to start Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact	Activity Started and on track Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people	Activity Started with some issues/delay Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people	Activity Not on track and at risk Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people	Activity Completed and now ‘business as usual’ Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people
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10: Services to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability (SEND)

Action	Lead	Deadline	Progress	Activity BRAG	Impact BRAG
10.1 Relaunch the revised Special Education Needs and / or disability (SEND) Strategy across the local area, with co-production at the heart	Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)	January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Strategy is now on the Council's Cabinet forward plan Political Consultation completed April 2023 Strategy, SEF and action plan agreed and signed off by SEND Assurance Board April 2023 Easy read SEND Strategy document completed for children and YP April 2023 Roadshows planned for Autumn term to engage stakeholders in the launch of the new SEND Strategy SEND strategy priorities underpin the SEND Action Plan & team leads for each work stream are 		

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			<p>regularly reporting into the partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Children and families report being clearer about Herefordshire’s priorities and how these respond to what they have said about what needs to change and improve 		
10.2 Establish the SEND Strategic Board with appropriate representation from each sector to provide strategic oversight and direction for improvement.	Corporate Director for Children and Young People	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOR and membership proposed for first meeting set for January 2023 TOR and membership revised at January 2023 SEND Strategic Board and due for sign off at the February 2023 SEND Strategic Board Impact: The Strategic Board report confidence in the SEND Action Plan which is gaining traction e.g EHC plans issued within 20 weeks = 100% in April 2023 		

Activity/Impact Key	<p>Activity Not yet due to start</p> <p>Impact Activity incomplete/too early to measure impact</p>	<p>Activity Started and on track</p> <p>Impact Mostly positive and consistent impact which delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Started with some issues/delay</p> <p>Impact Some positive impact but this is variable and not yet consistent enough to improve outcomes for most children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Not on track and at risk</p> <p>Impact No/very limited impact on improving outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Activity Completed and now 'business as usual'</p> <p>Impact Achieved consistently good and better impact that delivers improved outcomes for children and young people</p>
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<p>10.3 Strengthen the SEND Partnership Group with current participants from the strategy group.</p>	<p>Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)</p>	<p>November 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership has met and has full representation Chairing now by Service Director Partnership is receiving regular and good quality reports for all key stakeholders Representation from Schools has increased Impact: Work to develop engagement and participation is a particular priority with children and young people's views informing and shaping the focus of the SEND Strategy 		
<p>10.4 Review the graduated response with a focus on early identification of support for children and young people with SEND.</p>	<p>Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)</p>	<p>January 2023 (Amended via Change Request to April)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working party established to agreed follow up with draft presented to partnership group in the autumn term School survey now developed to establish feedback about the current use of the graduated pathway to inform next steps. 		



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey will become digital 22.02.2023 for dissemination after half term. • Change request from January to April 2023 to review School survey responses and address feedback about the graduated pathway • Responses have been reviewed and graduated response adapted. • Impact: The All Age Graduated Response Guidance is now published with the local offer – 47 responses have been received from schools and most reported positively that the Graduated Response is useful • Impact: Parent Carer feedback reports that the offer adaptations are easier to navigate and improves access to information. 		
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<p>10.5 Review the Education, Health and Care (EHC) planning process and establish a procedure with a clear pathway that is understood by all so all Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) are within timescale, high quality and include contributions from all partners</p>	<p>Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)</p>	<p>Spring 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA (April 2023) follow up to review of quality of completed EHC plans and reported positive findings: <i>‘We were impressed with the professional and dedicated team of case workers who were appreciative of the demands placed on other agencies but determined to complete the ECHPs. The common theme was the safety of children, their well-being and the opportunity to develop to their full potential.’</i> • 100% of new EHC plans are issued within statutory 20 week timescales (above national performance) • Over 90% of phase transfer annual reviews were completed prior to admissions deadlines. 		
<p>10.6 Develop a Preparing for Adulthood Strategy for young people with additional needs to receive timely and well-coordinated transitional arrangements and support</p>	<p>Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)</p>	<p>December 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Preparing for Adulthood strategic approach is incorporated into the new SEND Strategy • <i>Change request</i> to incorporate 10.6 into 10.1 above and close 		

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<p>10.7 Add Review and develop a SEND Sufficiency Plan</p>	<p>Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Change request</i> – this is not a strategy but an addendum plan to the existing and up-to-date capital SEND Strategy • Impact: Sufficiency planning for September 2023 is on track to open: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ 4 new mainstream Autism bases (2 x Primary & 2 x Secondary) offering 24 additional places ➢ New Satellite Hub for SEMH ➢ School’s Re-Building Programme - Westfield Special School will be prioritised for re-building <p>So pupils with SEND will be able to access suitable local education provision to meet their assessed needs and be supported to reach their potential.</p>		
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Expected Outcomes (how we will know)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND Strategy is shared publically and with all stakeholders; Strategy widely supported and used to shape/complement other areas of work supporting children and young people. (feedback) Data dashboard in place and all partners/service providers provide timely and accurate information; Each sector has a clear data matrix which defines the specific measures being used to evaluate individual success of the strategy Pathways identified on the Local Offer and can be easily found and understood by families and young people. (Feedback) Graduated approach co-produced and published Phase transfers are completed within statutory timescales ensuring that children / young people have an updated Education, Health and Care Plans for their next setting and parents are assured where their child / young person will be attending.(Performance data, quality assurance activity, feedback) There is an increase in the proportion of Education, Health and Care Plans published within statutory timescales. (Performance data)

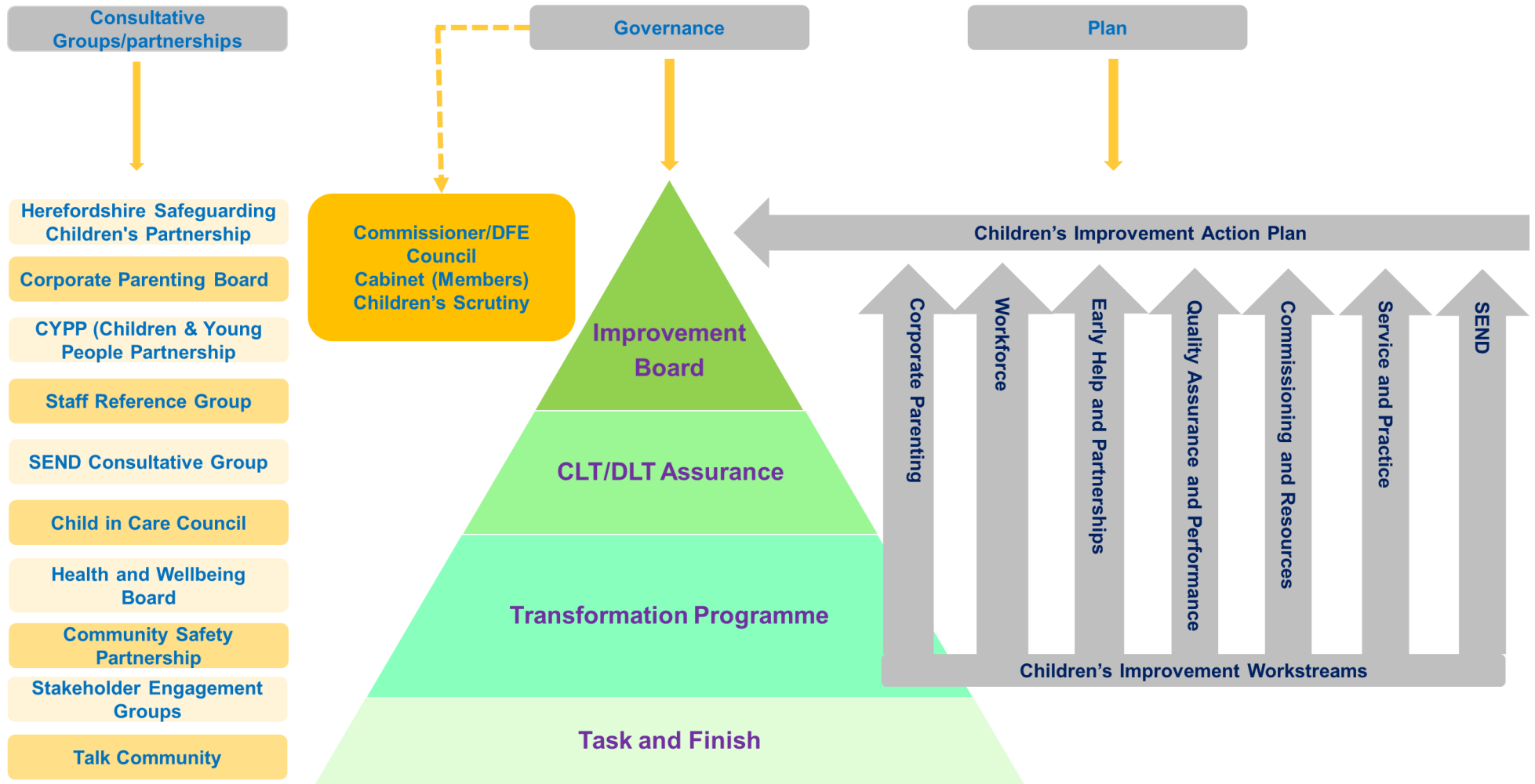
Measures that Matter					
Measure	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23
Percentage of EHC Plans issued within the period that were deemed to meet the required standard following audit.	0%	0%	0%	48%	
Percentage of Final EHCPs issued by the LA within 20 weeks as a proportion of all EHCP's issued in the year.	73%	74%	78%	100%	95%
Percentage of Draft EHCPs issued by the LA within 16 weeks as a proportion of all EHCP's issued in the year.	92%	93%	94%	100%	92%

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Percentage of children with a EHCP in Yr6 who had their annual review completed and EHCP issued in time for primary Admission round allocations	24%	81%	84%		
Percentage of children with a EHCP in Yr11 who had their annual review completed and EHCP issued within timescale for secondary Admission round allocations.	3%	7%	84%		
Percentage of newly issued EHC Plans where Health Care advice was received within deadline.	94%	88%	67%	87%	82%
Percentage of newly issued EHC Plans where Social Care advice was received within deadline.	82%	71%	83%	80%	82%

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Appendix A – Herefordshire Children’s Services Improvement Plan Governance



Appendix B - Glossary of Roles with Names:

Chief Executive	Paul Walker
Corporate Director for Children and Young People	Darryl Freeman
Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	Tracey Sampson
Head of Chief Executive's Office	Joni Hughes
Director of Public Health	Matt Pearce
Detective Superintendent, West Mercia Police	Jon Roberts
Head of Service (Corporate Parenting)	Julie Mephram
Head of Service (Early Help)	Nicky Turvey
Head of Service (Fostering, Adoption & Placements)	Robina Khan
Head of Service (MASH & Assessment)	Denyse Wellington
Head of Service (Strategic Housing Manager)	Hayley Craine
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Independent Scrutineer	Kevin Crompton
Policy and Procedures Lead	Michael Nugent
Principal Social Worker	Kerry Oddy
Service Director (All-Age Commissioning)	Ewen Archibald
Service Director (Education, Skills and Learning)	Liz Farr
Service Director (Improvement)	Gail Hancock
Service Director (Safeguarding and Family Support)	Rachel Gillott