

Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

DATE: MONDAY, 23 MARCH 2015

TIME: 5:30 pm

PLACE: Meeting Rooms G.01 and G.02, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

Members of the Committee

Councillor Dawood (Chair)
Councillor Senior (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Chaplin, Clarke, Cooke, Grant, Kitterick, Newcombe, Osman, Porter, Singh, Waddington, Westley and Willmott

Youth Council Representatives

To be advised

Members of the Committee are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

for the Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

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- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact Julie Harget, **Democratic Support on (0116) 454 6357** or email Julie.Harget@leicester.gov.uk or call in at the Town Hall.

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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

NOTE:

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Appendix A

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Select Committee held on 15 January 2015 have been circulated and the Committee will be asked to confirm them as a correct record.

5. REPORT OF THE FINANCE TASK GROUP

Appendix B

The Finance Task Group will report to the committee on the following items of business.

The minutes of its meeting held on 2 March 2015 are attached at **Appendix B1**, along with the following reports:-

- i) Revenue Budget Monitoring Period 9 2014/2015 (**Appendix B2**)
- ii) Capital Budget Monitoring Period 9 2014/15 (**Appendix B3**)

The Committee is invited to consider the report of the Finance Task Group on the items listed and comment as appropriate.

6. OFSTED REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

- a) Presentation from Strategic Director, Children's Services
- b) Discussion of Ofsted report by Committee members

Please note: the Ofsted report will be circulated following its publication on 20 March 2015.

Questions from Members and the responses to their questions are also attached.

7. SENIOR MANAGEMENT IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE

To consider senior management arrangements in Adult Social Care services

8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Appendix A

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: THURSDAY, 15 JANUARY 2015 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Dawood (Chair)
Councillor Senior (Vice Chair)

Councillor Chaplin	Councillor Newcombe
Councillor Cooke	Councillor Porter
Councillor Grant	Councillor Singh
Councillor Kitterick	Councillor Waddington

Also Present:

Sir Peter Soulsby - City Mayor
Councillor Palmer - Deputy City Mayor

Youth Council Representatives:

Arshad Daud
Nikhil Gondalia
Brahmpreet Kaur Guati

* * * * *

73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Osman, Westley, and Willmott.

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Senior declared an Other Disclosable Interest in items 10 and 11 of the published Agenda "Draft General Fund Budget 2015/16 to 2016/17" and "Draft Capital Programme 2015/16", as her partner was employed by the Council.

Councillor Porter declared an Other Disclosable Interest in item 12 of the published Agenda "City Council Golf Courses – Call-in of Decision", as he was involved in campaigns for the retention of open spaces.

Councillor Clarke declared an Other Disclosable Interest in items 10 and 11 of the published Agenda “Draft General Fund Budget 2015/16 to 2016/17” and “Draft Capital Programme 2015/16”, as a member of his family was employed by the Council.

Councillor Newcombe declared an Other Disclosable Interest in items 10 and 11 of the published Agenda “Draft General Fund Budget 2015/16 to 2016/17” and “Draft Capital Programme 2015/16”, as members of his family were employed by the Council.

In accordance with the Council’s Code of Conduct, the above interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors judgement of the public interest.

The Councillors were not, therefore, required to withdraw from the meeting.

75. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and informed the Committee that in the interests of the members of public present for the item concerning the Call-in of the City Golf Courses decision, he would reorder the agenda accordingly.

76. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview Select Committee held on 27 November 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

77. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

There were no updates on actions agreed at the previous meeting.

78. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

79. TRACKING OF PETITIONS - MONITORING REPORT

The Monitoring Officer presented a report which updated members on the monitoring of outstanding petitions.

The Committee was informed of further progress since the publication of the report as follows:

- In respect of petition 15/05/2014 (Vulcan Road) the pro-forma had been prepared and the Lead Executive Member would be briefed in the near future.
- In respect of petition 16/10/2014 (Trees, Park Hill Avenue) the proposal had been subject of a bid to the Aylestone Ward Community Meeting Budget and that the bid had been approved. A pro-forma would now be prepared.

Councillor Waddington, as lead petitioner, asked for clarification of the funding in respect of petition 16/09/2014 (Rally Park) as the detail had been omitted from the report. It was confirmed that the works were to be funded by the use of S.106 planning contributions.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report and current outstanding petitions be noted and;
- 2) that petitions 18/09/2014, 17/04/2014, 09/05/2014, 30/07/2014, 16/09/2014, 29/09/2014, 10/10/2014 and 29/10/2014 marked as 'Petition Process Complete' be removed.

80. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (1) Part 4E of the Council's Constitution, the Chair informed the Committee that the Monitoring Officer had received a Statement of Case from Mr Martin Cobb in relation to the closure of Western Park Golf Course.

The Chair informed the Committee that he would hear the Statement of Case but that there would be no debate as the issue was to be discussed at the reordered agenda item that followed; "City Council Golf Courses – Call-in of Decision".

At this point Mr Cobb thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the meeting and read his Statement of Case (as appended).

81. CITY COUNCIL GOLF COURSES - CALL IN OF DECISION

The Monitoring Officer reported that the decision by the City Mayor on City Council Golf Courses had been called-in, and was referred to the Committee for consideration under Council Procedure Rule 12 (f), Part 4D of the Council's Constitution:

The decision had been called-in for the following reasons:

- “The decision to close Western Park Golf Course will have a detrimental impact on golfers in West Leicester and on the city’s sport and outdoor leisure provision. This is a request to call in the decision to scrutiny.”; and
- “That the decision is based upon an incomplete consultation(s) and subjective evidence. The decision is significant and requires the scrutiny and consideration of the Full Council.”

The Chair explained that the call-in had been referred to this meeting in view of the Committee’s overarching brief and that there were no other relevant Scrutiny Commissions taking place prior to the Council meeting on 22 January 2015.

The Chair clarified that two separate call-ins had been received; one proposed by Councillor Barton and the other proposed by Councillor Porter. The Committee noted the advice of the Monitoring Officer in this respect that whilst there had been two call-ins, the matter would be treated as one process under Rule 12, as the call-ins related to the same decision.

Councillor Barton addressed the Committee and introduced her call-in as proposer.

Councillor Porter addressed the Committee and introduced his call-in as proposer.

The City Mayor responded to the points made in the Statement of Case by Mr Cobb and to the issues raised in the call-in notices.

In discussing the call-in notices and having regard to the points raised in the Statement of Case, the Committee noted the following points:

- Although accepting that the numbers of users of the Council’s golf courses had diminished, it was considered that more could have been done to engage with Club members and users to assist with their wish to continue the use and allow the Western Park course to remain open. The City Mayor responded that the Club had been invited to put forward a case for the sustainable future of the course and had provided their representations on this. In addition, two other proposals had been received and that, following public consultation and detailed analysis of the facts and requests for follow up information, he had considered that no alternative had been put forward which was sufficiently robust or well advanced to be regarded as a feasible or viable option.
- It was suggested however that greater engagement with the club, including dissemination of relevant financial information concerning the costs of running the course and facilities could have been undertaken.
- There was a need to ensure that all equalities data arising from the consultation had been taken into account in making the decision. The

lack of information concerning the impact on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people was highlighted in this regard. It was reported that advice had been sought concerning the equalities impact assessment throughout the process.

- Greater consideration of the Health and Wellbeing implications of the closure should have been taken into account, having regard to the pressures on health services and the benefits of golf as a leisure activity.
- The representatives of the Young People’s Council commented that the decision had a greater impact on the health and leisure opportunities for younger people, as they were less likely to be able to transfer to alternative courses.

The Committee acknowledged the City Mayor’s responses to the concerns raised.

Councillor Porter MOVED and Councillor Grant SECONDED:

“That the decision to close Western Park Golf Course be delayed until May 2015 to allow further engagement with users and the Club membership, with a view to a business plan being established to allow for the continued use and for the course to remain open.”

The Committee received advice that unless the call-ins were withdrawn the matter would proceed for submission at Full Council.

On the basis of this advice the Motion was withdrawn.

RESOLVED:

that the issues raised in the debate, and that the call-in would be considered at Full Council on 22 January 2015, be noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.05 pm and was reconvened at 7.15 pm.

82. PROCUREMENT BRIEFING

The Committee received a presentation concerning how decisions on the procurement of goods, services and contracts were taken at the Council.

A note from the City Barrister was submitted which commented on Member involvement in the procurement exercise.

The Committee expressed concern at the content of the City Barrister’s note, particularly at its comments concerning casework and involvement in scrutinising bids during the procurement exercise.

Concern was also expressed at the views concerning the rights to access

information and the restrictions on members' rights.

Having regard to the issues of concern raised, it was suggested that the matter be referred to Standards Committee to allow for the concerns of Members to be answered by the City Barrister and to report back to this Committee on its outcomes.

RESOLVED:

that the matter be referred to Standards Committee and a follow up report be submitted to this Committee in due course.

83. DRAFT GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16 TO 2016/17

The Director of Finance submitted a draft of a report which was to be submitted to Full Council on 25 February 2015 to consider the City Mayor's proposed budget for 2015/16 to 2016/17. It was reported that the budget plan covered the same period as the Government's national spending plans and identified the subsequent impact.

Minute extracts from the following Commission meetings were circulated and noted:

- Housing Scrutiny Commission – 10 December 2014
- Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission – 6 January 2015
- Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission – 8 January 2015

The City Mayor was invited to comment on the report and he referred to the need to continue to undertake spending reviews in accordance with the approach summarised in the report.

In considering the report the Committee made the following points:

- It was requested that monitoring information should be submitted to Housing Scrutiny Commission before any further cuts to the homelessness budget were made.
- In respect of the issues highlighted within the minute circulated from the meeting of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission, members considered that a danger existed in identifying targets for savings from care packages, as this might imply that financial factors affected assessments. The preference was to describe the review work in narrative form without a savings target. The City Mayor commented that, given the dire financial situation, every service was being pressed to find savings, and adult social care was such a large part of the budget that it could not be excluded. It was therefore right to set targets for reviews, to help ensure that the department focused on the need to make the

savings. This did not imply that individual packages would be top-sliced: they would be assessed in line with the Council's legal duties.

- The need to ensure that adequate provision existed for school transport within the Childrens, Young People and Schools' allocations was expressed, as it was reported that parents were facing financial difficulties in enabling children to get to school where allocated places were more than 2 miles from home.
- In response to a question, the City Mayor commented on the reasons why it was appropriate to make a contribution from the revenue budget for the capital programme.

RESOLVED:

that the points raised in the debate, and the recommendations to be considered at Full Council, be noted.

84. DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Director of Finance submitted a report which was to be submitted to Full Council on 22 January 2015 to approve the Capital Programme for 2015/16.

The City Mayor was invited to comment on the report and he made reference to the proposed continued investment in the range of services across the whole of the city, as described in the report.

The Committee referred to the proposed improvements and refurbishment of Town Hall Square and requested that details of the scheme and its cost be submitted to the appropriate Commission.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the proposed Capital Programme be noted for onward submission and consideration at Full Council on 22 January 2015; and
- 2) that details of the proposed improvement and refurbishment scheme at Town Hall Square and its cost be submitted to the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission.

85. QUESTIONS FOR THE CITY MAYOR

Members of the Committee were invited to raise questions to the City Mayor.

The following questions were raised:

Allendale Road Pharmacy

Councillor Grant asked the City Mayor, together with the Deputy City Mayor, to resist the proposals of NHS England in withdrawing the dispensing facilities at the Allendale Road Chemist. It was considered that the a dispensing chemist was essential to the viability of the Allendale Road and Francis Street shopping area, and was vital to the elderly population in the area.

The City Mayor and Deputy City Mayor replied that they were aware of the situation affecting this and other chemists and that they would be consult NHS partners to emphasise the importance of maintaining the facilities.

Clarendon Park– Residents Parking

Councillor Grant referred to the need to consider the residents of Clarendon Park and Queens Road in respect of parking restrictions, particularly due to the decision concerning the Queens Road Post Office.

The City Mayor commented that he had felt it was appropriate to defer the decision to consider the wider area and that it was understandable that residents would want to further discuss parking availability in the area.

Snibston Museum Collection

Councillor Clarke asked that the City Mayor considers the future of exhibits from the Snibston Museum collection, having regard to the decision to downgrade the attraction.

The City Mayor confirmed that many items in the collection were relevant to Leicester and its industrial heritage and that their importance should be recognised and the exhibits retained. He stated that without wishing to intervene in the decision to downgrade the attraction, he would hold discussions concerning the future of the relevant items.

Terrorist Attacks in Paris

Councillor Waddington commented on the appropriateness of the acts of condolence following the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and asked that the Committee's appreciation be forwarded to those concerned in the arrangements.

The City Mayor and Deputy City Mayor commented on the profound distressing effect of the tragic acts and stated that the events and the motivation behind them were deplored.

St Marys Allotments

Councillor Porter asked whether the City Mayor was aware of any development proposals for the former St Marys Allotments site.

The City Mayor confirmed that indicative proposals had been suggested over a significant timescale but that no detailed plans had been considered.

Western Park Golf Course

Councillor Porter asked whether the City Mayor was aware of any development proposals for the Western Park Golf Course.

The City Mayor commented that no discussions on the future of the site had taken place.

86. SCRUTINY COMMISSIONS' WORK PROGRAMMES

RESOLVED:
that the item be deferred.

87. CORPORATE PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

RESOLVED:
that the item be deferred.

88. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED:
that the item be deferred.

89. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Appendix B1

Overview Select Committee (OSC) Finance Task Group – 2014/15 Period 9

2nd March 2015, 9.30am

Room 4.07 City Hall

Present:

Cllr Baljit Singh, Chair of Task Group

Alison Greenhill, Director of Finance

Alistair Cullen, Principal Accountant

Apologies:

City Mayor

Deputy City Mayor

Please note – actions from the meeting are noted in text and listed at the end of the minutes

1. Revenue Monitoring Report

- 1.1. Cllr Singh acknowledged the recommendations in the report and Alison Greenhill explained that the Market Income reserve was designed to offset the loss in income anticipated as a result of the Council's scheme for improving the market facilities.
- 1.2. Alison Greenhill confirmed that progress has been made on reducing spending pressures since Period 6, turning a moderate forecast overspend into a small underspend. This is in part due to being able to reduce the level of budgetary provisions set aside as part of contingency planning as the year moves on.
- 1.3. Cllr Singh enquired about the holding of vacancies in Customer Services. Alison Greenhill explained that vacancies had arisen and that management focus has been on reviewing and refining systems and processes for customer access, rather than just increasing staff. For example, resources have been put into 'channel shift' to increase the availability of online or telephone services, which will therefore reduce the demand on face-to-face contacts (these being the most expensive form of contact for the Council). Online or telephone services are also more convenient for many residents who may not wish to come into the city centre.
- 1.4. Alison Greenhill confirmed that resources were being added to customer services to support particular needs such as electoral registration, but permanent appointments to the team were being held as part of the efforts to redesign the service and focus face-to-face resources on those who most need them.
- 1.5. Cllr Singh enquired about the Finance division's savings targets and the Business Service Centre's contribution to these. Alison Greenhill outlined that whilst there were initiatives to improve income and debt collection, such as the new legal debt recovery process, the majority of savings were driven by staffing changes.
- 1.6. Cllr Singh enquired about the Information Services division. Alison Greenhill outlined that budget pressures had become apparent in the area on top of the savings target that had been set as part

of the savings review process. She explained that IT was not part of the £3.9m Corporate Resources review, but had its own £2.5m savings target to be achieved through procurement savings as well as staff structures.

- 1.7. Cllr Singh enquired about the underspend in the Delivery, Communications & Political Governance division. Alison Greenhill explained that these vacancies were held deliberately to achieve savings targets in advance and avoid recruiting people to vulnerable posts. The structure of the service has been continually updated as staff leave or move roles.
- 1.8. Cllr Singh raised the issue of the Voluntary and Community Sector savings target. Cllr Singh outlined that it would be in the interests of all parties if the issues in this area could be resolved quickly.
- 1.9. Alison Greenhill confirmed that the saving in Legal Services is an early delivery of savings required in 2015/16 as a result of staffing changes. She also confirmed that the City Barrister has no jurisdiction to make significant changes to the management of costs in the Coroner's office.
- 1.10. Cllr Singh queries whether savings on vehicle replacement were likely to lead to higher maintenance costs. Alison Greenhill outlined that the Council's fleet maintenance was currently carried out to a very high standard and that whilst this delivered an exceptionally well-maintained fleet, it did offer some scope for reducing spend without compromising fleet quality.
- 1.11. Cllr Singh enquired about the costs of additional Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards requirements raised in the report and requested some additional information on the number of additional cases and the cost impact of these (ACTION). Alison Greenhill also explained that residential care costs were the subject to review by the Interim Director of Adult Social Care.
- 1.12. Alison Greenhill outlined that the Adult Care Service was intending to use their reserves of £3.2m to support their budget position in 2014/15, and that the one-off income related to the closure of the Connexions company would go into general reserves to help manage the Council's future position.

2. Capital monitoring report

- 2.1. Alison Greenhill confirmed that the funds available to support the capital programme form part of the Council's treasury management portfolio until such time as they are required to support actual spending, and that interest earned on these investments forms part of the revenue budget under the 'Capital Financing' line.
- 2.2. Alison Greenhill confirmed that capital receipts received in the year would support future years' capital budgets. She outlined that the Council's property assets were being reviewed on an ongoing basis to maximise value whilst also releasing resources for priority investments. Cllr Singh noted that he would like to see further information on the overall strategy that guides decisions on asset disposals provided for scrutiny.

3. Actions

- 3.1. Alistair Cullen to provide information on demographic modelling of adult care demand.



Leicester
City Council

Revenue Budget Monitoring – Period 9, 2014/15

Decision to be taken by: N/A

Overview Select Committee date: 23rd March 2015

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Simon Walton
- Author contact details: Ext 37 4053

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the spending position of the Council as at the end of December 2014. This is the third report in the annual cycle of budget monitoring.

Significant future budget reductions are required and although the managed reserves strategy adopted by the Council bought some time to properly plan for these, it is dependent on the implementation of decisions already taken.

The most significant issue reported is the pressure facing the Adult Social Care department, as reported at period 6 and which have stabilised.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Executive is recommended to:

- Note the outturn position detailed in the report
- Approve the transfer of £100k underspend from Legal Services to earmarked reserves for the replacement of the case management system and to cover transitional costs of the potential future transfer of Land Charges to the Land Registry (see Appendix B para 5.2).
- Approve the creation of a new earmarked reserve for Market Income and the transfer of £500k from the Corporate Budget underspends (see Appendix B para 22.1).

2.2 The OSC is recommended to:

- Consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it sees fit.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

The General Fund budget set for the financial year 2014/15 was £295.2m.

Appendix A summarises the performance of General Fund services against the current budget.

Appendix B provides more detailed commentary on the forecast position.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

4.1 Financial & Legal implications

This report is solely concerned with financial issues.
Alison Greenhill, Director of Finance, Ext 37 4001

4.2 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

This report is solely concerned with financial issues.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment

No Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out as this is not applicable to a budget monitoring report.

4.4 Other Implications

Other implications	Yes/No	Paragraph referred
Equal Opportunities	No	-
Policy	No	-
Sustainable & Environmental	No	-
Crime & Disorder	No	-
Human Rights Act	No	-
Elderly/People on low income	No	-
Corporate Parenting	No	-
Health Inequalities Impact	No	-

No other implications are noted as this is a budget monitoring report, and therefore no policy changes are proposed.

5. Background information and other papers.

Report to Council on the 26th February 2014 on the General Fund revenue budget 2014/15

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for Period 6, 2014-15 presented to the Overview Select Committee on 27th November 2014

6. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A – P9 Budget Monitoring Summary;

Appendix B – Divisional Narrative – Explanation of Variances;

7. Is this a private report?

No

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET
BUDGET MONITORING SUMMARY 2014/15 - PERIOD 9**

	Current Budget for Year	Forecast Outturn to Period 09	Forecast Variance over (under) spend
	£000	£000	£000
Local Services and Enforcement	27,122.5	27,121.5	(1.0)
Culture & Neighbourhood Services	15,561.8	15,688.6	126.8
Planning, Transportation & Economic Development	19,134.7	19,134.9	0.2
City Centre	518.3	519.4	1.1
Property Services	8,527.0	8,332.2	(194.8)
Departmental Overheads	682.8	749.9	67.1
City Development and Neighbourhoods	71,547.1	71,546.5	(0.6)
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	68,726.9	71,354.9	2,628.0
Care Services & Commissioning	20,427.5	21,896.6	1,469.1
Housing Services	5,145.4	5,012.0	(133.4)
Health Improvement & Wellbeing	13,453.0	13,453.0	0.0
Adult Social Care, Health and Housing	107,752.8	111,716.5	3,963.7
Strategic Commissioning & Business Development	5,214.9	5,214.9	0.0
Learning Quality & Performance Services	7,021.6	7,021.6	0.0
Children, Young People & Families	47,819.4	47,819.4	0.0
Departmental Resources	(6,762.4)	(6,762.4)	0.0
Education & Children's Services	53,293.5	53,293.5	0.0
Delivery Communications & Political Governance	7,011.0	6,611.0	(400.0)
Financial Services	10,943.3	10,331.0	(612.3)
Human Resources	2,850.9	2,850.9	0.0
Information Services	8,725.3	9,456.3	731.0
Legal Coronial & Registrars	2,226.1	2,112.9	(113.2)
Corporate Resources and Support	31,756.6	31,362.1	(394.5)
Housing Benefits (Client Payments)	527.6	681.0	153.4
Total Operational	264,877.6	268,599.6	3,722.0
Miscellaneous	16,924.0	13,745.2	(3,178.8)
Capital Financing	14,537.7	14,384.7	(153.0)
Total Corporate Budgets	31,461.7	28,129.9	(3,331.8)
Net Recharges	(2,500.0)	(3,200.0)	(700.0)
Public Health Grant	(21,995.0)	(21,995.0)	0.0
Use of Reserves	23,328.1	23,328.1	0.0
TOTAL GENERAL FUND	295,172.4	294,862.6	(309.8)

Period 9 Divisional Narrative – Explanation of Variances

Corporate Resources and Support

1. Finance

- 1.1. The Financial Services Division is forecasting an underspend of £612k. Half of this is due to vacancies in Customer Services which are currently not being recruited to on a permanent basis until sufficient progress is made with the service transformation project. Key information systems need to be replaced, such as the customer relationship management system, to enable the service to encourage self-service by customers and progress the channel shift agenda. Other vacancies within the division are not being recruited to in order to facilitate the delivery of £1.7m of savings arising from the councils' spending review programme.

2. Human Resources & Workforce Development

- 2.1. Human Resources & Workforce Development is forecasting a balanced budget.

3. Information Services

- 3.1. The Division currently shows a £731k budget pressure. This is due to a growth in the number of sites supported on the Council's network and the demand for significant bandwidth increases and previous reviews not delivering the level of savings required in order to achieve a balanced budget. A review of the senior structure within the division has now taken place which will lead to savings and a significant overhaul of the division's budget, method of operation and procurement strategy is underway.

4. Delivery, Communications & Political Governance

- 4.1. After taking into account the anticipated costs to the Council of the KRIII reinterment, the Division is forecasting an underspend of £400k. This is due to vacancies, some of which are being recruited to and others held to support the spending review.
- 4.2. The following spending review savings have been built into the budget since it was initially approved:
- 4.2.1. Voluntary & Community Sector – A review of the Council's support to the voluntary and community sector is anticipated to achieve a saving in 2014/15 of £66.1k (and £132.2k from 2015/16).
- 4.2.2. External Communications (£85k).

5. Legal, Coronial & Registrars

- 5.1. The Legal, Coronial & Registrars Division is forecasting a net underspend of £113k with a forecast overspend in the Coronial and Registration Service offsetting savings in Legal Services.
- 5.2. Legal Services is forecasting an underspend of £240k, due to not recruiting to vacancies (£160k) and £80k additional income within Land Charges due to a sustained upturn in the housing market. It is requested that £100k of this is transferred into earmarked reserves for the replacement of the case management system and to cover transitional costs of the potential future transfer of Land Charges to the Land Registry.
- 5.3. Coronial & Registrars are forecasting an overspend of £135k. This is due to an increase in the number of deaths together with the requirement for more costly investigation than was previously the case. The Registration Service faces a temporary loss of income due to changes at the Home Office affecting applications for British Citizenship.

City Development and Neighbourhoods

6. Summary

- 6.1. The department as a whole expects to stay within budget after balancing pressures within the individual divisions.

7. Planning, Transportation and Economic Development

- 7.1. The Division continues to forecast a balanced outturn on a net budget of £19.1m.
- 7.2. Responsibility for markets has transferred into the Division from the Property Division. Future budgets will be realigned to reflect the longer term changes arising from the redevelopment of Leicester Market.
- 7.3. The number of planning applications has increased this year, thus the fee income is expected to achieve the budgeted £1.2m, compared to £942k last year.
- 7.4. The Park and Ride spending review was approved in December 2014. By introducing a £1 day ticket for concessionary travel pass holders from January 2015 the Council is able to reduce its share of the subsidy required to fund the ongoing park and ride services operating from Birstall, Enderby and Meynells Gorse. The budget for 2014/15 has been reduced by £10.0k since the original approval (£50k from 2015/16).

8. Culture and Neighbourhood Services

- 8.1. The Division is forecasting an overspend of £127k against a net budget of £15.6m.
- 8.2. The main reason for this is Sports Services' income generation, which continues to be under pressure against the £5.3m budget, together with the effect of an unplanned closure of the Leicester Leys pool for critical maintenance earlier in the financial year. A number of initiatives have been implemented, with more planned, to increase participation and generate income and spending is being restricted to essential items.
- 8.3. The budget has been reduced since the beginning of the year as a consequence of the Transforming Neighbourhoods (West) spending review. Planned reconfiguration of neighbourhood service delivery is expected to achieve a saving of £32.0k in 2014/15 (£65.7k from 2015/16). A further Transforming Neighbourhoods spending review of the South is expected to achieve a saving of £80.0k from 2015/16.

9. Local Services and Enforcement

- 9.1. The Division is forecasting to break even on a net budget of £27.1m.

10. Property Services

- 10.1. The Division is forecasting to underspend by £195k on a net budget of £8.5m. This is largely due to management action to retain fleet vehicles for a longer period than planned and to rigorously challenge any proposed replacement or new vehicles, resulting in savings on financing costs. These savings are partially offset by short term transitional costs associated with the redevelopment of Leicester Market.

11. Resources

- 11.1. The Division is forecasting to spend £68k more than the budget of £1.2m, largely due to one off support for inward investment activity to drive economic regeneration. This can be accommodated by savings elsewhere in the department.

Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

12. Adult Care and Health

- 12.1. As reported previously, the adult social care budget is under significant pressures. These include:
- Costs associated with a significant increase in assessments relating to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. This follows the Cheshire West Supreme Court judgement in March 2014 on Deprivation of Liberty safeguards (DoLs). It is estimated that the court ruling has expanded the scope of DoLs by tenfold and the Council is now incurring significantly increased costs.

- Additional costs anticipated as a consequence of the Council's current review of fees paid to residential care homes, and which apply retrospectively.
 - There have been a number of previous budget reductions where implementation has been delayed compared to the assumptions made in the budget. The largest area of delayed savings relates to the programme of closure and sales of the Council's Elderly Persons Homes. The judicial review of this decision has further delayed the closure of one home and required considerable management capacity, creating delays in the programme overall, but has recently been resolved in the Council's favour.
 - Demand for services has risen above the levels forecast when the budget was set.
- 12.2. The period 9 forecast for the two adult social care divisions is that there will be an overspend of £4.1m on a gross budget of £127.7m and net budget of £89.1m.
- 12.3. The Department is undertaking a rigorous exercise to mitigate the forecast overspend. Some actions have already been implemented and the position has to some extent been offset by savings achieved through careful management of contracts, with reduced spending amounting to £0.9m. Savings are also anticipated in the Health, Improvement and Wellbeing Division which could affect the overspend.
- 12.4. Whilst the department is doing all it can to contain recurrent expenditure, it is clear that there are, and will continue to be, pressures on the department's budget. An earmarked reserve amounting to £3.2m has been created from within departmental resources (as reported at period 6) although this will also be required to mitigate 2015/16 pressures. Work is taking place to review the department's reserves.

13. Housing Services

- 13.1. The General Fund housing service is forecasting an underspend of £133k.
- 13.2. Vacancy management across the service is expected to result in an underspend of £120k on salary expenditure.
- 13.3. Occupancy rates in the council temporary accommodation are higher than budgeted, as a result an additional £50k housing benefit income is forecast.
- 13.4. Unbudgeted essential repairs on the CCTV system for Border House costing £25k were required.
- 13.5. The budget has been reduced as a consequence of the Homelessness spending review with resultant savings of £333k in 2014/15 (£567k in 2015/16).

Education and Children's Services

14. Summary

- 14.1. The Department is forecasting to spend £53.3m in 2014/15, in line with the budget.
- 14.2. During the first half of the year the Department has substantially completed the savings reviews outlined in the 2014/15 budget. These include the re-organisation of the children's centres (effective from 1 July), completion of the management review and organisational reviews of the Youth Service, Youth Offending service and the integration of the Disabled Children's teams. These will all deliver the required savings.
- 14.3. The re-organisation of Children's Social Care teams has been effective from April 2014. Liquid Logic, the Care First case management system replacement has gone live from 1 April.
- 14.4. A review of School Improvement started in October to not only address the budget savings targets already agreed, but also to contribute to the significant cut in the Education Services Grant (ESG) from 2015/16.
- 14.5. The reduction in the ESG and pressures on home to school transport are the major immediate budget issues from 2015/16. Proposals have been developed to address these issues and are reflected in the budget for 2015/16.
- 14.6. The Department is carrying out a review of its social care placement offer which will contribute to the spending review.
- 14.7. An inspection by Ofsted commenced in mid-January of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

15. Strategic Commissioning & Business Development

- 15.1. This Division is forecasting to spend £5.2m in line with the budget.
- 15.2. There remains a budget pressure on home to school transport, in particular for SEN pupils. This can be accommodated in 2014/15 and steps are in place as part of the budget process for 15/16 to address this on a more permanent basis.
- 15.3. City Catering have been successfully providing up to an additional 6,700 meals per day as part of the Universal Free School Meals for infant children. The revenue grant funding provided by the DfE is thought to be adequate at this stage. The grant is based on census data for take up in October and January 2015.

16. Children, Young People and Families

- 16.1. The division is forecasting to spend £47.8m in 2014/15, in line with the budget.
- 16.2. The review of children's centre and family support staff has completed and the new 6 cluster structure was effective from 1 July.
- 16.3. The reviews of the Youth Offending Service and the part time Youth Worker staff have also completed.
- 16.4. The savings anticipated from these reviews in 2014/15 will all be made.
- 16.5. The Connexions service has now moved from Halford Street to its new location in 16 New Walk. The service is now providing a traded careers service to 19 schools including 6 County schools.
- 16.6. The Troubled Families programme which began in April 2012 will end in March 2015. The programme was worth £3.5m to support 1,140 families in Leicester to improve educational outcomes, reduce youth crime and encourage parents back to work.
- 16.7. It has been announced that phase 2 of the Troubled Families programme will run from 2015 to 2020 covering an estimated further 3,500 families. The funding per family has reduced from £4,000 in the first programme to £1,800 for phase 2 and this will be reflected in the planned expenditure.
- 16.8. The two year old nursery education grant (NEG) entitlement funding will be changing from 2015/16. Currently funding is provided for 20% (approximately 1,100) of the 2 year old cohort representing the most deprived children, rising to 40% from September this year. From 2015 the two year old funding will be based on actual take up as is the case for 3 and 4 year old NEG. An Early Years' Pupil Premium is also being introduced from 2015 at a rate of £300 per pupil for those entitled. Initial estimates from the DfE suggest 1,712 3 and 4 year old pupils could be eligible with an allocation of £493k.
- 16.9. The organisational review of Social Care was completed at the beginning of April and will achieve the target savings in 2014/15. There will be savings in running costs from the integration of teams this year. Where necessary we are employing agency social workers within the Children in Need Teams both in 2014/15 and into 2015/16, until such time as vacancies have been filled with permanent staff.
- 16.10. The new case management system, Liquid Logic, went live from the 1 April and there is further work being carried out on implementing the Early Help module.
- 16.11. The number of looked after children (LAC) has been stable at around 525 for the majority of the year to date compared to 533 at the end of March 2014 although

there has been an increase in late December. The mix of placement type has varied from the previous year with an increase in residential placements particularly in secure welfare and a reduction in secure remand. The overall placement costs this year can be managed within the Division's budget.

- 16.12. A review of the placement offer has started which covers pre-care, in care and leaving care, to ensure that our provision is as effective as possible. This work forms part of the Education and Children's Services spending review programme.

17. Learning Quality & Performance Services

- 17.1. The division is forecasting to spend £7.0m, in line with the budget.
- 17.2. The integration of the disabled children's teams has been completed and the target savings will be made in 2014/15.
- 17.3. In June 2013 the DfE announced that the Education Services Grant (£6.2m) would be cut by 20% in 2015/16, equivalent to £1.2m. Following a further consultation in 2014 the DfE have announced revised funding rates which means that the reduction will now be £1.35m.
- 17.4. The grant is meant to cover a number of areas including School Improvement, Educational Welfare, asset management and some other statutory and regulatory services.
- 17.5. It was recognised in the budget last year that a review of the School Improvement Service was required to reflect the shifting role of the local authority from a direct provider of most school improvement services to one which ensures and supports capacity in the school system for improvement through brokering, commissioning and supporting partnerships. The DfE's position on this has been re-affirmed following the consultation on the Education Services Grant in June this year.
- 17.6. Whilst the review will not complete until early 2015 the savings required in 2014/15 will be achieved from savings in vacant posts.
- 17.7. The SEND team have been working towards the implementation from 1 September 2014 of the SEN code of practice which is statutory guidance published by the DfE on duties, policies and procedures relating to part 3 of the Children and Families Bill.
- 17.8. One of the major tasks is the conversion of all existing SEN pupils from statements to Educational Health Care plans. Funding has been provided to cover this and other transitional costs in the shape of the SEN reform grant.

18. Schools

- 18.1. The DfE plans to introduce a national school funding formula from 2015/16 have now been deferred and so there will be stability in the method of allocating funds. The individual schools' budget for 2015/16 has been agreed with Schools Forum. The 2015/16 formula includes small changes to how planned pupil growth is funded together with amendments to allowances for split sites and alterations to the method of distributing free school meal funds.

Housing Revenue Account

19. Housing Revenue Account

- 19.1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced income and expenditure account relating to the management and maintenance of the council's housing stock.
- 19.2. At period 9, the forecast for the HRA is an underspend of £0.3m (excluding revenue used for capital spending, which is described in the capital monitoring report).
- 19.3. The underspending is a consequence of work on the spending review programme, which has achieved savings in the cost of repairs and maintenance. More significant savings will be achieved in 2015/16 and later years.

Housing Benefits (Client Payments) & Corporate Items

20. Housing Benefits (Client Payments)

- 20.1. A review of the Housing Benefits budget has been undertaken at period 9 in line with the previous mid-year forecasts for the subsidy claim. This shows the forecast spend is £681k against the £527k net budget.
- 20.2. Whilst the cost of Housing Benefits is almost entirely met by government grant, the expenditure can be volatile with a number of uncertainties and risks associated with this. One of the areas is the grant claw back by DWP for prior years. Another area includes overpayments / overpayment recoveries, to the extent that these exceed budget. This continues to be monitored in line with the transfer of this function to the Business Service Centre; the Centre is now responsible for the billing and recovery of overpaid benefit.
- 20.3. The 2011/12 Subsidy grant claim has been finalised by the DWP with the final subsidy repayment for this claim being made in February 2015. However, 2 years still remain outstanding (2012/13 & 2013/14); the 2012/13 year should be finalised in due course. The Audited 2013/14 subsidy grant claim was submitted at the end of November 2014 to the DWP and we are currently awaiting the processing of that claim. A review of the provisions will be undertaken later on in the year when the next grant claim is finalised.

21. Corporate Items

- 21.1. Other Corporate budgets include corporate capital financing costs, items such as audit fees, bank charges and levies. It also includes a number of provisions that cover areas of concern when we set the budget.
- 21.2. Given the difficult financial climate, recent budgets have included provisions (e.g. a general contingency) to hedge against risk. This is good practice at a time when there are so many change programmes.
- 21.3. The need for these sums gets reassessed as the year progresses and as risk crystallises. Additionally, one-off sums may be received which help provide future savings.
- 21.4. At period 9, it is forecast that savings of £4.0m will be achieved, which exceeds the £2.5m forecast at period 6. Reasons for this increase are principally a dividend received on the winding up of the former Connexions company (£0.6m) and a rebate of £1m in respect staffing agency costs.
- 21.5. Corporate savings have also arisen due to in-year spending review savings as discussed earlier in the report, but reduced by the proposed markets transfer (see para 22.1 below).
- 21.6. To support the most vulnerable members of the community during the current period of welfare reform, the Council has promoted the available Council Tax hardship relief. Notwithstanding these efforts, the Council is still forecasting an underspend of £270k. This underspend will be transferred to the Welfare Reform Reserve (approved in the 2013/14 Period 9 budget monitoring report) to support residents in need, and those affected by welfare reform. The Government is ceasing the £1.9m per year grant received for crisis support, and the reserve will enable the Council to fund a continued (but time limited) programme. The estimated balance at 31st March will be £3.3m.
- 21.7. As a result of pro-active initiative work, the Council has been able to use the Proceeds of Crime Act to recover criminally gained money. Following a successful POCA confiscation investigation on a benefit fraud case we have recovered £36.2k this year to be transferred to the POCA reserve (which was approved in the period 9 2012/13 budget monitoring report). This reserve can then in turn be used for future initiatives around fraud or trading standards work to recover further criminally gained money.

22. Request for new earmarked reserve

- 22.1. Approval for the creation of a new earmarked reserve for 'Market Income' is being sought in this report. This is to enable temporary shortfalls in future years' income to be covered whilst development work continues. It is proposed that £0.5m of the corporate budget underspends be transferred into this reserve.



Capital Budget Monitoring – Period 9, 2014/15

Decision to be taken by: N/A

Overview Select Committee date: 23rd March 2014

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Ernie Falso
- Author contact details: ernie.falso@leicester.gov.uk

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to show the position of the capital programme for 2014/15 at the end of Period 9.

This is the third report of the financial year and final report will be presented at year end.

2. Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- Note the level of expenditure of £139.0m at period 9;
- Note the current level of spend (69%) of the £202.4m approved programme, which is higher than has been the case at this stage in previous years.
- Approve the use of Right To Buy receipts of £1.25m (that might otherwise have to be returned to the Government) to pay for new extra care and approve a transfer of £1.25m thereby saved to the City Centre accommodation project, as requested at Appendix 2, paragraph 4.4 and Appendix 4, paragraph 6.2
- Allocate £6.7m for new intermediate care to the category of “immediate starts” as described in Appendix 2, paragraph 4.2/4.3, so that the scheme can be committed, and extinguish the balance of the policy provision for adult social care transformation.

The OSC is recommended to:

- Consider the overall position presented within this report and make any observations it sees fit.

3. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

The 2014/15 Capital Programme was approved by Council on March 20th 2014.

The programme is being monitored on the basis of the 2014/15 approved programme. The appendices 2, 3 and 4 attached to this report provide further detail for each Strategic Director’s area of responsibility.

The approved programme included:

- Schemes classified as ‘immediate starts’, which required no further approval to commence; and;

- A number of separate 'Policy Provisions' which would not be released until specific proposals had been approved by the executive.

This report only monitors 'policy provisions' to the extent that spending approval has been given. Spending is monitored against the amounts approved for each scheme in 2014/15, regardless of any slippage subsequently reported.

4. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial & legal implications

This report is solely concerned with financial issues.

Alison Greenhill, Director of Finance, 37 4001

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

This report is solely concerned with financial issues.

5.4 Equalities Implications

No Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out as this is not applicable to a budget monitoring report.

5.5 Other Implications

Other implications	Yes/No	Paragraph referred
Equal Opportunities	No	-
Policy	No	-
Sustainable & Environmental	No	-
Crime & Disorder	No	-
Human Rights Act	No	-
Elderly/People on low income	No	-
Corporate Parenting	No	-
Health Inequalities Impact	No	-

No other implications are noted as this is a budget monitoring report, and therefore no policy changes are proposed.

5. Background information and other papers:

Capital Budget 2014/15 presented to Council on 20th March 2014

Capital Outturn 2013/14 presented to Overview Select Committee on 31st July 2014

Capital Monitoring report for Period 4 2014/15 presented to Overview Select Committee on 16th October 2014

Capital Monitoring report for Period 6 2014/15 presented to Overview Select Committee on 27th November 2014

6. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 - Period 9 Financial Position of Capital Programme 2014/15

Appendix 2 - Summary of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Projects

Appendix 3 - Summary of Children's Services Projects

Appendix 4 - Summary of City Development and Neighbourhoods Projects

Appendix 5 – Capital Receipts

7. Is this a private report

No

8. Is this a "key decision"?

No

9. If a key decision please explain reason

N/A

APPENDIX 1

Strategic Director	Division	Current Approved Programme 2014/15	Spend to end of Period 9	Forecast Year End Slippage & Savings	Percentage of Spend compared to Approved programme
		£000	£000	£000	%
Adult Social Care, Health & Housing	Adult Social Care	1,597.0	491.0	371.0	31%
	Housing Services (HRA)	35,652.0	19,046.0	2,417.0	53%
	Housing Strategy and Options	7,392.0	2,939.0	735.0	40%
Children's Services	Schools	12,048.0	9,030.0	2,296.0	75%
	Schools (BSF)	59,542.0	52,920.0	0.0	89%
	Children's Social Care & Safeguarding	116.0	8.0	74.0	7%
	Young People's Services	1,003.0	448.0	417.0	45%
	Learning Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0%
City Development & Neighbourhoods	Planning, Transportation and Economic Development	40,735.0	23,241.0	5,434.0	57%
	LLEP	15,753.0	8,737.0	3,153.0	55%
	Culture & Neighbourhood Services	4,398.0	3,670.0	0.0	83%
	Local Services and Enforcement	5,616.0	3,219.0	683.0	57%
	Property Services	18,331.0	15,217.0	925.0	83%
	City Centre	265.0	76.0	150.0	29%
	TOTAL	202,448.0	139,042.0	16,655.0	69%

Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Projects

1. Summary

- 1.1. The projects comprising the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Capital programme have spent £22.5m at the end of period 9.
- 1.2. This equates to 50% of their approved capital programme of £44.6m.
- 1.3. The Adult Social Care, Health and Housing programme is split into 2 distinct areas, Adult Social Care and Housing.

2. Adult Social Care

- 2.1. The table below highlights the £1.6m approved Capital Programme for Adult Social Care.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
ICT Investment - Phase 2	386.0	42.0	92.0	11%
Social Inclusion	551.0	264.0	103.0	48%
Supported Living	100.0	-	-	0%
Early Prevention and Intervention	149.0	149.0	-	100%
Improvement to Day Care Services	12.0	2.0	-	17%
Intermediate Care Facility	200.0	20.0	-	10%
Anchor Centre	199.0	14.0	176.0	7%
Total	1,597.0	491.0	371.0	31%

- 2.2. ICT Investment is for the development of the new Social Care IT system, Liquidlogic, which went live during April 2014. Although the system is in use, ongoing work was planned in the 14/15 budget for additional development after the system entered service. £294k will be spent on service packs, a new portal and staffing (including consultants). However, there will be slippage of £92k. This relates to a delay in implementing the module for Mobile Working due to other priorities taking precedence.
- 2.3. Social Inclusion covers a range of projects to provide access for disabled people to universal services, including community centres, libraries, leisure centres and other public services. Works include the adaptation of toilet facilities and the provision of specialised equipment – active schemes include the leisure centres at Cossington Street, Spence Street, New Parks, De Montfort Hall, Curve and the Phoenix Arts centre and two community centres. Slippage of £103k is forecast. £77k of this relates to the provision of facilities within the new Haymarket Bus Station. The remaining £26k relates to a Community Centre where works were delayed due to uncertainties around the future use of the building. Both schemes will proceed in the next financial year.

- 2.4. Supported Living refers to the redevelopment of Abbey Mills to provide additional supported living units. This is a partnership arrangement with ASRA Housing Association. The spend represents the Council's contribution to the overall scheme and the final payment was made in January 2015.
- 2.5. Early Prevention and Intervention involves the provision of assistive technology and telecare to reduce reliance on care packages and residential care. The available budget has been spent.
- 2.6. Improvement to day care services includes the refurbishment of Hastings Road (includes IT upgrades) to provide a flexible facility that enables people with learning disabilities and additional challenging needs to use the service. Hastings Road is a joint health and social care facility. The budget reflects slippage from 2013/14. No further slippage is forecast.
- 2.7. The budget for Intermediate Care (£200k) is to provide for surveying work and other professional services required in the opening stages of the project. The majority of this will be spent in the final quarter of the year.
- 2.8. Expenditure on the Anchor Centre is being delayed pending a strategic service review. Slippage of £176k is forecast.

3. Housing Services

- 3.1. The table below summarises the £43.0m approved Capital Programme for Housing Services and the related expenditure.

Programme Area	Funded	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage / Saving £000	% Spent
Decent Homes	HRA	17,576.0	9,195.0	546.0	52%
Business Investment	HRA	1,207.0	585.0	235.0	48%
Environmental and Improvement Works	HRA	7,519.0	3,697.0	786.0	49%
Increasing Affordable Housing	HRA	9,350.0	5,569.0	850.0	60%
General Fund Activities	GF	7,392.0	2,939.0	735.0	40%
Total		43,044.0	21,985.0	3,152.0	51%

- 3.2. Decent Homes (£17.6m) provides for works to kitchens and bathrooms, central heating, boilers, rewiring and other improvements to tenants' homes. The forecast is that spend will be £546k less than budget. Spend to date is £9.2m, with a further £1.2m of work that has been completed but not yet been paid for, bringing total spend at period 9 to £10.4m. Slippage relates to condensation initiatives (£150k), new door entry systems (£259k) and to St Peters Tower block redevelopment (£250k) as lift installation at Clipston house will now

take place in April. Additionally, there is an overspend of £113k on soffits and fascias as a result of additional works required as part of external wall insulation.

- 3.3. Business Investment (£1.2m). The forecast is, that spend will be £235k less than budget. Actual spend to date is £585k. Work to upgrade CCTV from analogue to digital was expected to take place this year but will now take place next financial year when the service relocates to a new site, resulting in £300k slippage. The go live date for the new Northgate Housing Information System has been delayed and the project will overspend by £65k this year.
- 3.4. The programme for Environmental and Improvement Works (£7,519k) covers a range of schemes across the city. These include:
- (a) Environmental works on estates (£1,617k) is forecasting total spend this year of £1,310k. The programme includes 133 schemes across the city to make improvement to facilities and communal areas used by tenants. The £307k underspend relates to: a saving of £35k on the Rowlatts Hill stairway improvement scheme to replace wooden slats with UPVC; slippage of £50k for new floors in communal areas in flats in St Peters where new floors have been laid in Pegasus Close and will be rolled out to other flats next year; slippage of £46k required for Glenhill Boulevard where the scheme has been delayed due to nesting swifts; slippage of £85k required for new parking bays and laybys in Humberstone and Saffron where Highways will begin work in February but will not complete until April; slippage of £91k for new door entry systems in St Matthews, Humberstone and New Parks where work has been delayed due to health and safety issues that have been identified.
 - (b) Disabled facilities (£1.4m) funds adaptations to the homes of HRA tenants, such as installing walk in showers, grab rails, lifts and ramps. The scheme will be fully spent this year and will have helped 800 tenants with minor works and 200 tenants with major works.
 - (c) Phase 1 of the Exchange Shops Redevelopment (£200k) is now complete and slippage of £125k is required to complete phase 2 in 2017, as reported at period 6.
- 3.5. Other Schemes which will be completed before the end of the year include: the Braunstone 3 to 2 bed conversion (£300k) to install an upstairs bathroom to 53 homes; Energy Efficiency Minimum SAP 75 Scheme (£500k) to address the 50 worst performing homes with a range of energy efficiency improvements and will also include improvements to other homes; and the Loft Insulation Scheme (£275k) to fit insulation to difficult to access properties.
- 3.6. Increasing Affordable Housing (£9.35m) budgets provide for increased stock. Forecast expenditure will be £800k less than budget which includes £500k on the conversion of Lower Hastings Street Hostel now planned for next year. Work is nearing completion at all three new build sites to build 96 new homes for rent and will be finished by March 2015. 23 units have already been completed and let by December; 36 are expected to be let in January; and, the remaining 22 will be let by March. Work to convert Upper Tichbourne Street Hostel

into 7 supported living and 8 general needs flats was completed in October and the units have been let.

3.7. The forecast spend for the General Fund Capital Programme will be £735k less than budget. Actual spend to date is £3.0m and a further £0.8m of work which has been completed but not invoiced bringing total spend at period 9 to £3.8m:

(a) Disabled Facilities Grants (£2.4m) provides grants to owner occupiers to make small adaptations to their home. The scheme will allocate the full £2.4m budget this year however it is expected that spend will be £427k less than budget as grant recipients have 6 months to complete the work and claim the funding.

(b) Work at two new Gypsy and Traveller sites (£2.3m) and the refurbishment of Meynells Gorse (£1.9m) will be completed in March. Slippage of £178k is required for contractual payments due to contractors in the next financial year.

(c) Due to difficulties encouraging private landlords to take up a scheme offering 50% grant funding for loft insulation there will be an underspend of £130k on private sector housing, as reported at period 6.

(d) The Street-scene Environmental Improvements programme budget has been increased by £50k to £100k. This will fund installation of 100 new alley gates this year, plus repairs to existing gates, new infills and fencing.

4. Policy Provisions

4.1. Prior to period 9, there was only one Policy Provision for Adult Social Care still awaiting formal approval for allocation to specific schemes. The recommendations to this report, if approved, would allocate the full amount:

Service Area	Project	Amount £000
Adult Social Care	Adult Social Care Transformation	7,750.0
Total		7,750.0

4.2. The provision includes £6.5m for new intermediate care. This scheme has now progressed through feasibility processes. Comments have been received on scheme specification following engagement with the ASC scrutiny commission and a range of officers. The Council's external Quantity Surveyor has advised that the scheme, as originally specified, would exceed the capital allocation. This is due to building cost inflation (it is 2 years since the costs were estimated) and revised assumptions regarding some aspects of the space requirements.

4.3. In light of this, and bearing in mind the comments made by stakeholders, officers have considered the relative priority of the scheme's features and made adjustments to the specification. This will ensure the full provision of the 60 beds that are required, in a high

quality, dementia friendly environment but reduce the public / community aspects of the building that are not essential to the delivery of intermediate care services. On this basis the Quantity Surveyor has advised that the Council should add £0.2m to the capital allocation. The scheme is now firm and it is recommended that the capital funding be released for its delivery.

- 4.4. The balance of the provision consists of £1.25m for new extra care, which can now be funded from right to buy capital receipts without detriment to the new-build programme. These receipts, if not applied in this way, could otherwise have to be passed on to central government. The recommendation in this report therefore reallocates this sum elsewhere in the overall capital programme.

Children's Services Projects

1. Summary

- 1.1. The projects comprising the Children's Services Capital programme have spent £62.4m at the end of period 9. This equates to 86% of their approved capital programme of £72.7m.
- 1.2. The Children's Service Capital Programme is reported, for monitoring purposes, in three distinct sections, schools (£12.0m), the Building Schools for the Future programme (£59.5m) and non-schools (£1.1m).

2. Schools

- 2.1. Since the previous report, the Executive has agreed the use of £11.9m of the £16.8m Basic Need Policy Provision. This consists of £2.6m to support the Kestrels' Field programme, £1.6m to support the Basic Need Phase 1 and £7.6m for the Basic Need Phase 2 programme. Phase 2 includes works at St Mary's Field Primary, Christ the King Catholic Primary and Hope Hamilton Primary. Of the £11.9m approved, £1.3m for Phase 2 will be spent this financial year.
- 2.2. St Mary's Field Primary works include the addition of a new junior block linked to the existing infant school to allow for an expansion of age range and to become an 'all through' primary school. Christ the King Primary school works include remodelling part of the current West Gate School vacated to allow for an expansion of the school to increase reception places by 40 from September 2015. Hope Hamilton Primary school works include an expansion of the school on its existing site to increase reception places by 15 from September 2015.
- 2.3. The table below summarises the £12.0m approved Capital Programme for Children's Services Schools Programme and the related expenditure.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Mellor Primary School	130.0	86.0	-	66%
Basic Need Works (Phase 1)	7,332.0	4,957.0	1,057.0	68%
Basic Need Works (Phase 2)	1,280.0	730.0	-	57%
Targeted Basic Need - Kestrels' Field	1,907.0	644.0	907.0	34%
Catherine Junior School	-	1,806.0	-	N/a
Reactive School Maintenance	371.0	194.0	-	52%
Individual School Access Needs	146.0	99.0	-	68%
Investment in Infant Free School Meals	882.0	514.0	332.0	58%
Total	12,048.0	9,030.0	2,296.0	75%

- 2.4. The Mellor Primary School rebuild was complete in previous years. The current year scheme is for remedial works relating to the sports pitch and this has been completed.

- 2.5. Basic Need Works Phase 1 are to be undertaken at 15 schools, providing 370 additional reception places across the city to meet the additional primary school places required by September 2015.
- (a) Works have been completed at six schools (Imperial Avenue Infants, Braunstone Frith Primary, Mowmacre Primary, Parks Primary, Eyres Monsell Primary and Stokes Wood Primary) to provide classrooms to accommodate an additional 120 reception places for September 2013. However, works to provide the remaining classrooms have continued into 2014/15. These works are complete at all schools except at Braunstone Frith and Eyres Monsell. Braunstone Frith is expected to be complete by the end of the financial year. There is currently a dispute with the contractor at Eyres Monsell.
 - (b) Works have been carried out at four schools (Alderman Richard Hallam, Rushey Mead Primary, Herrick Primary and Caldecote Primary) to provide classrooms to accommodate an additional 100 reception places for September 2014. These works are complete at Rushey Mead Primary. Alderman Richard Hallam will be completed this financial year and in September 2015 for Caldecote and Herrick Primary.
 - (c) The remaining five schools (Woodstock Primary, Whitehall Primary, Wolsey House Primary, Linden Primary and Sandfield Close Primary) will provide 150 reception places from September 2015. Construction works will now commence in the new financial year and as a result expenditure has been re-profiled. This is the main reason for the slippage of £1.1m in phase 1.
- 2.6. The Council has been successful in bidding for additional funding from the Department for Education to create an additional 420 places across all years at Kestrels' Field Primary School for September 2015. The total funding awarded is £3.9m. An additional £2.6m contribution from the Basic Need Policy Provision has been agreed which will bring the total project cost to £6.5m. The first phase of the scheme is expected to be completed by December 2015 and the budget for this project will require re-profiling resulting in £0.9m of slippage this financial year. Additional works to reconfigure the existing Primary school site to become the new infant block will be completed for September 2016.
- 2.7. Works at Catherine Junior School for repair and enhancements to the school building following fire damage were completed in June 2014. Expenditure incurred this financial year will, in part, be covered by insurance proceeds with discussions between the Council and the loss adjustor to finalise the level of insurance proceeds expected to be finalised shortly. Any expenditure not covered by insurance proceeds will be covered by previous years' capital underspends which are included in the Emerging Needs policy provision.
- 2.8. Reactive Maintenance is an annual provision for small capital maintenance works in schools and other buildings. Works include fencing at Overdale Infant and Junior School I and St Barnabas together with works at Netherhall to remove mobiles.
- 2.9. Individual School Access Needs is an annual provision for reactive works at schools that require specific modifications or equipment due to pupil disability. Current works funded by

this provision include alteration to the medical room and installation of a ramp at Alderman Richard Hallam and works related to acoustics at Overdale Junior School. Hearing impairment equipment will be provided at a number of schools this financial year.

- 2.10. Investment in Infant Free School Meals is a scheme of works to ensure that schools meet their obligation to provide free school meals to all infants in reception, year 1 and year 2 from September 2014. The necessary works were completed in time for the start of the new term and the additional meals are being served. Some of the increased meal demand is being provided by extending the capacity of a number of production kitchens on a temporary basis. Proposals for a longer term solution to provide this extra capacity are being considered and this will be funded by the slippage of £0.3m.

3. Building Schools For The Future (BSF)

- 3.1. The BSF programme is progressing well, with expenditure of £59.5m projected for 2014/15. A number of the new and refurbished buildings were handed over by the contractor during the summer and autumn, and are now being enjoyed by the schools. This includes Keyham Lodge, Millgate, New College, Ellesmere, Sir Jonathan North, Moat, Lancaster, English Martyrs, Babington, Ash Field, West Gate, Hamilton and Netherhall. Work continues at Lancaster Boys where additional remedial works were found to be necessary and at St Pauls with works to complete the dining room, external façade and windows. In addition, demolition and landscaping works are underway at a number of other schools.
- 3.2. Payments for the BSF construction programme are made at the point at which milestones in the building of each school are reached.
- 3.3. The majority of the remaining expenditure is expected to be incurred in 2014/15 with a relatively small amount of works in 2015/16 largely for demolition and landscaping. The final spend of the programme for ICT will not occur until 2019.

4. Non-Schools

- 4.1. The table below summarises the £1.1m approved Capital Programme for Children’s Services directly controlled projects.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Contact Centre Refurbishment	30.0	-	30.0	0%
Children's Home Refurbishment	86.0	8.0	44.0	9%
Children's Centre Maintenance	97.0	23.0	-	24%
Adventure Playgrounds and Youth Centres	127.0	63.0	-	50%
Early Years - Two Year Old Entitlement	779.0	362.0	417.0	46%
Total	1,119.0	456.0	491.0	41%

- 4.2. The St Andrews Family Contact Centre is a project relating to the conversion of a garage to a reception room at the St Andrew's contact centre. The conversion and refurbishment works have been tendered and the costs significantly exceed the approved budget. The project is currently on hold until the project requirements have been reviewed. As a result slippage of £30k is forecast.
- 4.3. Children's Home Refurbishment is an annual provision to cover refurbishment and small capital maintenance works. Health and safety works have been undertaken along with maintenance works at Tatlow Road and Netherhall Road. Works at Barnes Heath are currently on hold as a result of the tendered costs exceeding the resources available. As a result slippage of £44k is forecast.
- 4.4. Children's Centre Maintenance is an annual provision to cover refurbishments and small capital maintenance works. This will be used to modify centres following reconfiguration of services and the Children's Centre Review. This provision has also funded structural and grounds works at Mayfield Centre which was completed in December 2014.
- 4.5. Adventure Playgrounds & Youth Centres is an annual provision to cover refurbishments and small capital maintenance works. Maintenance works are complete at St Andrew's, Highfields and Northfield Adventure Playgrounds and on-going at Woodgate. Remedial works at Kingfisher and Armadale Youth Centres are being undertaken and it is expected that these works will be complete by the end of the financial year. The demolition and removal of St Marks Mobile and fencing has been completed from the Youth Centre provision.
- 4.6. The Two Year Old Entitlement scheme will provide resources to private, voluntary and independent providers to enable them to expand their provision to accommodate and provide the two year old free entitlement and enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations. The Department for Education (DfE) have funded the Council for a target number of 2,300 places from September 2014. Providers are still in the process of bidding for the remaining funds and this is expected to continue into the next financial year as take up increases. As a result slippage of £0.4m is forecast.

5. Policy Provisions

- 5.1. There are three Policy Provisions for Children's Services Projects:

Service Area	Project	Amount £000
Schools	New Primary School Places	4,939.0
Schools	Emerging Needs	886.0
Schools	Planned School Maintenance	9,947.0
Total		15,772.0

- 5.2. Decisions of the Executive are required before these sums can be released. The New Primary School Places policy provision has reduced to £4.9m following the Executive approving £11.9m for Basic Need Phase 1 and 2 programmes and Kestrels' Field.

City Development and Neighbourhoods' Projects**1. Summary**

- 1.1 The projects comprising the City Development and Neighbourhoods' Capital programme have spent £54.0m at the end of period 9. This equates to 64% of their approved capital programme of £85.1m.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage / Saving £000	% Spent
Planning, Transportation and Economic Development	40,735.0	23,241.0	5,434.0	57%
Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)	15,753.0	8,737.0	3,153.0	55%
Culture and Neighbourhood Services	4,398.0	3,670.0	-	83%
Local Services and Enforcement	5,616.0	3,219.0	683.0	57%
Property Services	18,331.0	15,217.0	925.0	83%
City Centre	265.0	76.0	150.0	29%
Total	85,098.0	54,160.0	10,345.0	64%

2. Planning, Transportation and Economic Development

2.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects relating to Planning, Transportation and Economic Development.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage / Saving £000	% Spent
Haymarket Bus Station	4,600.0	2,344.0	500.0	51%
Transport Improvement Works	3,347.0	1,256.0	148.0	38%
Street Lighting Replacement	5,000.0	2,469.0	1,400.0	49%*
Highways Maintenance	2,978.0	1,360.0	-	46%
Local Environmental Works	593.0	197.0	50.0	33%
Flood Risk Management	224.0	41.0	50.0	18%
Pay and Display Machine Replacement Programme	550.0	129.0	-	23%
Westcotes Residents Parking	185.0	99.0	-	54%
Small Highway Schemes	276.0	135.0	-	49%
Jubilee Square	2,076.0	1,942.0	45.0	94%
Cathedral Precinct	2,005.0	1,752.0	30.0	87%
Connecting Leicester Street Improvements	4,201.0	2,212.0	1,161.0	53%
Greyfriars' Townscape Heritage Initiative	93.0	26.0	47.0	28%
Friars Mill	3,293.0	1,315.0	-	40%
Leicester Market Improvements	4,929.0	2,502.0	1,829.0	51%
Mill Lane Pedestrianisation	154.0	26.0	104.0	17%
North City Centre Access Implementation Project (NCCAIP) Feasibility	70.0	48.0	-	69%
Archdeacon Lane - Land Purchase	315.0	313.0	-	99%
Waterside	184.0	54.0	-	29%
Leicester Food Park	4,178.0	4,107.0	-	98%
Retail Gateways	250.0	76.0	16.0	30%
Enterprising Leicester	835.0	566.0	-	68%
Dock	8.0	7.0	-	88%
Ashton Green	337.0	265.0	-	79%
Cleaner Bus Technology Fund	54.0	-	54.0	0%
Total	40,735.0	23,241.0	5,434.0	57%

* £1,400k is a saving from the street lighting replacement programme.

2.2 The Haymarket Bus Station project is the key contributor to achieving greater use of buses in Leicester. The scheme includes a new bus station building (increasing the number of bus stands at the bus station from 11 to 23) and a remodelled Charles Street/Belgrave Gate junction, together with extensive public realm improvements. The demolition and main contractor work commenced on site in early October 2014, with project completion due in early 2016, hence the majority of the 2014/15 spend falls into the second half of the year. The existing bus station (including toilets and shop mobility) closed in early January to allow the start of construction on the new concourse building. A temporary shopmobility centre

has been provided in the GS (former ABC) car park. The total scheme cost is £13.5m, which includes £3.5m 'pinchpoint' funding from the Government. Slippage of £0.5m is forecast, following an updated phasing of works after the appointment of the main contractor.

2.3 Transport Improvement Works include:

2.3.1 Congestion and Carbon Strategies (budget £771k). This provides funding for the Leicester North West Major Transport Scheme, local improvements for bus services, area traffic control network performance improvements and signing work. Design work has commenced on phase 1 of the Leicester North West Major Transport Scheme with public consultation completed in December 2014. Signing work for the King Richard III visitor centre is complete. The Aylestone Quality Bus Corridor scheme is substantially complete on site.

2.3.2 Accessibility Strategy (budget £1.6m). This provides funding for a programme of schemes including:

- a) The Real Time Information System project. The procurement is now complete and the supplier has been engaged. Testing of the system and signs has been undertaken and the live system will be rolled out between February and April.
- b) The Beaumont Leys Public Transport Interchange project (£402k) which is funded from the Local Sustainable Transport Programme. The scheme started in the autumn and is expected to be complete in March.
- c) Level Access at Bus Stops/DDA Requirements (budget £170k). The programme for 2014/15 is progressing well.
- d) St Margaret's Bus Station Kiosk (budget £24k). This extension to the kiosk at St Margaret's Bus Station is complete.
- e) The construction of the new Upper Brown Street car park (£210k) is underway and scheduled for completion in March.

2.3.3 Active Travel and Road Safety (budget £745k). This provides funding for a programme of schemes to promote active travel and improve safety for all road users. The St Georges Way/Charles Street Junction Improvement Scheme is complete (budget £257k). Other projects on this programme are Community Safety Lighting, Vehicle Activated Signs and the current on-going 20mph Schemes. Completed 20mph schemes include Sandhurst Rd, St Matthew's Area, Harrison Road, Bradgate Heights and Humberstone Village.

2.3.4 Local Transport Plan Monitoring – this budget covers the capital costs of staff engaged in monitoring transport schemes (£200k).

2.4 The street lighting replacement project had spent £2.5m as at period 9. The project is in its second year, and is on track with its trajectory, with over 17,000 luminaires replaced so far. The carbon figures for the financial year 2013/14 show that the benefits of the project are

already visible. By the final quarter the carbon emissions from street lighting were down by 20 per cent in comparison to the baseline year. As reported previously, it is estimated that the full scheme will cost at least £1.4m less than originally planned, as a consequence of technological improvements since 2012/13.

2.5 Highways Maintenance comprises normal maintenance projects (£2.4m), pothole repair funding (£446k) and severe weather funding (£92k).

2.5.1 Normal maintenance projects include comprehensive maintenance for hot rolled asphalt patching, surface dressing and pre-patching, joint sealing, footway slurry sealing & pre-patching, concrete road repairs, footways, unclassified road carriageways and bridges. Work is progressing well with a significant amount of work already completed including works on Welford Road, Saffron Lane, Beaumont Leys Lane, Attlee Way, Green Lane Road and others, as well as £960k spent on subway maintenance. Further works are programmed, including resurfacing Narborough Road and Parker Drive. The 2014 surface dressing programme is complete and payment will be made in the final quarter.

2.5.2 In June, the Highways service secured an additional £446k of pothole funding from the Department for Transport following a competitive bid process. Expenditure proposals have now been agreed following the City Mayor's ward member briefing sessions and highway repair works are underway up until the end of March.

2.6 Local Environmental Works covers various small scale improvements such as renewing/replacing road humps, replacement of trees and parking laybys. The programme of works commenced in the autumn and most expenditure is profiled in the final quarter of the year. Schemes at Hockley Farm and Keyham Lane have been completed and consultation is underway on a number of schemes. £50k slippage is forecast for works subject to consultation that once finalised will now be undertaken in early 2015/16.

2.7 For Flood Risk Management, feasibility works for flood defence schemes in Northfields and to Holbrook and Gilroes Brook are in progress. Community engagement exercises have been completed in Woodgate and the consultation on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy has begun. Design work is underway to alleviate ponding issues in Melton Road. Some consultancy work is now expected to take place in the spring/summer, hence £50k is shown as slippage. Other work is programmed for completion in the final quarter.

2.8 The Pay and Display Machine Replacement Programme is replacing the existing stock of on-street pay and display parking machines that is reaching the end of its useful life and does not incorporate newer technologies now available. The cost will be met from the on-street car parking account reserve and 2014/15 income. The pilot installation of 25 new machines was completed during 2013/14. The remaining work is for:

- (a) 17 machines with the addition of chip and pin payment for car parks
- (b) 27 machines with smartcard facility for residents parking schemes
- (c) 164 cash only for standard on-street parking

Delivery commenced in November and 22 machines were installed in December, being mainly smartcard machines in residential areas. The installations programme spreads

delivery across the City to minimise disruption to drivers. The majority are expected to be installed by the end of March 2015, and hence some payments will be made in the early months of 2015/16.

- 2.9 The Westcotes Residents Parking experimental scheme is in place and has been extended into the Western Park area.
- 2.10 The Small Highways Schemes are progressing to programme, with works completed to Mansfield Street, Market Place, Charles Street, Halford Street, St Georges Way, Belvoir Street and Welford Place.
- 2.11 Jubilee Square is complete. It is an integral element of the Connecting Leicester vision. Forecast slippage has reduced to £45k, which relates to contract retentions.
- 2.12 Works on the Cathedral Precinct are complete. The gardens were officially opened in July 2014 and improvements to Peacock Lane have been delivered. These complement Jubilee Square and the new King Richard III Visitor Centre.
- 2.13 Delivery of the Connecting Leicester Street Improvements project involves the delivery of pedestrian and cycling improvements to key city centre streets. To date the project has delivered reconstruction of Applegate, King Street, Newarke Street, Southgates, Berridge Street, Silver Street, Guildhall Lane, Greyfriars and Humberstone Gate West. Work is currently underway on St Nicholas Circle. Some planned works (e.g. Hotel Street) have been deferred until after the reinterment of King Richard III, resulting in slippage into 2015/16. After excluding the slippage, nearly three quarters of the remaining approved funding had been spent at the end of Period 9.
- 2.14 The Greyfriars Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme has been approved in the sum of £1.6m, to be funded by £0.5m from the Council and £1.1m external funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The delivery phase will commence in May 2015 and will include owner and developer contributions, resulting in an overall programme of improvements valued at over £2m. The monies will be spent on grants to building owners to bring empty space back into use, repair and restore architectural features, encourage activities and events to explore local history and to enable street improvements to make the area more pedestrian friendly and make it easier to find parking. Slippage of £47k is now forecast, as external fees were lower than expected and marketing activity to tie in with HLF timescales will now take place in 2015/16.
- 2.15 Friars Mill is the restoration of a complex of listed mill buildings and conversion to managed workspace. The project is in the heart of the Waterside regeneration area and will act as a catalyst for wider investment. Work started on site in mid-September and hence the spending is concentrated in the second half of the year. The profile is on track and the scheme is expected to be completed in the autumn of 2015. A procurement exercise for a third party operating company commences in January. The total project value is £6.5m.
- 2.16 The Leicester Market Improvements project is well underway. Phase 1 is complete and the new food hall has opened. Phase 2 is underway with the demolition of the former market

hall, as part of the wider regeneration of the area. Following the receipt of Local Growth Funding work will be progressed on development of a final phase of works with a resulting comprehensive budget position for the redevelopment of the market area.

- 2.17 The Council and De Montfort University have signed a partnership agreement to facilitate the pedestrianisation of Mill Lane. The work has been deferred to tie up with the development of the Fletcher Building by De Montfort University. Consultants have been appointed to commence a detailed design package by June 2015. Works are expected to go out to tender in the autumn of 2015 and anticipated to be on site in 2016. Further payments for design works will be paid in the final quarter.
- 2.18 Works are progressing on design work for Charter Street, Abbey Park Road and Belgrave Gate, as part of the feasibility stage of the North City Centre Access Improvement Programme.
- 2.19 The Archdeacon Lane land purchase is acquisition of freehold vacant land, required to support the delivery of proposed regeneration in the area. The purchase of the land is now complete and no further expenditure is expected.
- 2.20 The Waterside project involves the delivery of the Waterside regeneration area. A number of related work-streams under this heading include the production and adoption of new planning guidance and acquisition of land within a designated intervention area. The project will be funded by a package including Growing Places Fund, Local Growth Fund and Council funding. The amount added to the capital programme represents initial feasibility and outline planning costs. Spending is incurred in the second half of the year.
- 2.21 The Leicester Food Park is a new workspace providing nine high quality, bespoke food grade units designed to encourage start-up and smaller grow-on units for food manufacturing businesses. An official launch has been held, an operator has been contracted and it has proved to be an immediate success as all units have been leased. The Park contributes towards a key theme and priority in the Economic Action Plan, to achieve an enterprising Leicester and accelerating business growth in priority sectors, including food and drink manufacturing.
- 2.22 The Retail Gateways scheme aims to improve the vitality and viability of independent shopping areas, primarily on “gateway” routes and areas facing difficult trading conditions. This initiative includes Belgrave Gate, the Golden Mile, Narborough Road / Braunstone Gate, Churchgate and Granby Street. Upper floor improvements along the Golden Mile (£50k) and painting of Narborough Road railway bridge (£78k) are complete, although the full payments are not reflected in the Period 9 actual spend.
- 2.23 The Enterprising Leicester Grant scheme offers Leicester’s small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the opportunity to apply for up to £15k of grant funding and to support growth projects that will create jobs. All expenditure is fully funded by ERDF. Due to the volume and value of applications received, ERDF team approval has been received to increase the sum available; hence the programme value has increased since period 6.

- 2.24 Construction of Dock has finished and the letting of units is on target. The remaining budget relates to final fitting-out.
- 2.25 The Ashton Green project continues to make good progress. A first house builder/developer has been selected for a scheme comprising 101 residential units and subject to approval of planning reserved matters, a start on site is anticipated for later this year. Consultants have been recently appointed to lead the design and delivery of a £1.5m package of enabling infrastructure.
- 2.26 The Cleaner Bus Technology Fund is for the modification of buses to reduce harmful emissions. Payments are made to bus companies to enable them to fit the equipment. For 2014/15 a further grant of £100k has been awarded by the Department for Transport.

3. Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

- 3.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects relating to the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, for which the Council is the accountable body.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Growing Places Fund	6,953.0	2,020.0	2,953.0	29%
Regional Growth Fund Round 3	4,000.0	3,583.0	-	90%
Regional Growth Fund Round 4	2,375.0	2,234.0	-	94%
MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone	425.0	-	-	0%
Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park	2,000.0	900.0	200.0	45%
Total	15,753.0	8,737.0	3,153.0	55%

- 3.2 The Growing Places Fund (GPF) is a revolving fund which advances money for new development across city and county areas. Spend is largely dependent on participation of private sector beneficiaries and approval by the LLEP, and therefore difficult to predict. From a total GPF pot of £12.6m (across a number of financial years), the remaining unspent sum at the beginning of the year was £6.9m. A third round was launched and the proposals deadline closed in mid June 2014. Current approval and payment profiles suggest that £2.953m originally planned for 2014/15 will now be paid in 2015/16.
- 3.3 The Regional Growth Fund Round 3 programme (£4.0m for 2014/15) is on-target to exceed both job creation (1,248) and private sector investment (£35.1m) over the lifetime of the fund to June 2015. The defrayal of grants has been slower than originally anticipated due to the numbers of business applicants having to purchase machinery with long lead times and building projects requiring planning permissions. A marketing campaign continues to promote take-up of grants and delivery of the jobs and private investment. However, the anticipated spend has increased from £2.4m at Period 6 to £4.0m, although this remains subject to the approved grants being claimed. The scheme is expected to continue until June 2015.

- 3.4 The Regional Growth Fund Round 4 (£2.375m for 2014/15) is on-target to exceed both job creation (744) and private sector investment (£53m) over the lifetime of the fund to June 2015. The defrayal of grants has been slower than originally anticipated, as with Round 3.
- 3.5 The RGF programme is supplemented by ERDF “Catalysing Growth” funds, which will be brought into the programme as relevant expenditure is defrayed.
- 3.6 £425,000 has been added to this year’s capital programme for the first half of a capital grant to MIRA Ltd in respect of the MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone. It will pay for employment and skills support, business development personnel and marketing including key improvements to the website. This will be funded by present and future business rates uplift within the Zone, and is made by virtue of the Council’s role as accountable body to the LLEP. The total grant is £850k, with the second half expected to be paid in 2015/16.
- 3.7 As part of the City Deal, £2m has been allocated to the LLEP for the Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Parks (LUSEP) project. As the accountable body for LLEP, the Council will receive the funds and pay the £2m grant to Loughborough. It is expected that £1.8m will be paid in 2014/15 and £0.2m in 2015/16.

4. Culture & Neighbourhood Services

- 4.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects in Culture and Neighbourhood Services.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Football Investment Strategy	11.0	11.0	-	100%
City Centre Heritage Interpretation Panels	56.0	17.0	-	30%
Heritage - Improvement Works in Newarke Houses	11.0	11.0	-	100%
Richard III Visitor Centre	3,329.0	3,294.0	-	99%
Libraries Self Service Equipment	66.0	57.0	-	86%
Brite Centre (Braunstone Library)	35.0	10.0	-	29%
Soft Touch Gallery	50.0	50.0	-	100%
Charter Street Community Arena	840.0	220.0	-	26%
Total	4,398.0	3,670.0	-	83%

- 4.2 The Football Investment Strategy final project site at Riverside is complete.
- 4.3 Over 50 City Centre Heritage Interpretation Panels are being installed to provide residents and visitors with information and images relating to key sites. Further panel research is planned and in progress for the 2015/16 funding recently approved by Council.
- 4.4 The improvement works at Newarke Houses included a range of improvements to meet fire safety & DDA requirements to the back galleries, a ramp through to the street scene and works to the garden paving.

- 4.5 Investment in the flagship King Richard III Visitor Centre has completely transformed the 150 year old building which has been open since the summer. The centre has been very well received and welcomed its 10,000th visitor just one month after opening. In addition to the £4.0m spending originally planned, a further £0.6m has been provided from the Economic Action Plan and CDN reserves. This has enabled additional work to be carried out to refurbish and re-secure the gargoyles, fit out the café (instead of requiring a franchisee to do this) and to ensure displays and interpretation deliver a world class visitor experience.
- 4.6 Self Service units are now installed at the Central Library, Eyres Monsell Community Centre and St Barnabas Library, to be followed by New Parks Library which is scheduled for February. Payments will be made in the final quarter.
- 4.7 Work at the Brite Centre (Braunstone Library) on improving the building's presentation and maintenance is being delivered. Further minor building improvement works and replacement of the computers in the Adult Learning area are planned for the final quarter.
- 4.8 Soft Touch is a well-established local organisation with an outstanding reputation, working with young people across Leicester. They have acquired premises on New Walk and are developing a gallery space open to the public. This will enable them to develop their existing work with young people, who will be able to organise, run and create exhibitions and events there which are open to the public. This will develop skills and recognise talent in the visual arts, benefitting Leicester's future creative industries, as well as helping the young people they work with, who are often from disadvantaged backgrounds, to realise their potential. The project is supported by a grant of £620,000 from Arts Council. This contribution from Leicester City Council supports their remaining fundraising requirement.
- 4.9 A new community arena is to be built on Council owned land at Charter Street. This will bring significant benefits to the residents of Leicester and provide a base for Leicester Riders Basketball Club. The development will be a catalyst to the regeneration of the wider area. The latest total cost estimate is £4.5m, funding for which includes the Council's contribution of £1.5m, £840k from Regional Growth Fund, £500k from Leicester College and £1.25m from Sport England. The scheme is led by the new Leicester Community Sports Arena Ltd. Ground remediation works are underway on site and the construction contract is out to tender. The 2014/15 tranche of the Council's contribution is being paid by way of instalments mainly during the final quarter of the year.

5. Local Services and Enforcement

5.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects in Local Services & Enforcement.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Household Waste Recycling Centre	3,335.0	2,437.0	-	73%
Parks Plant & Equipment	320.0	87.0	-	27%
Saffron Hill Cemetery Extension	444.0	304.0	-	68%
Spinney Hill Park Restoration Project	485.0	140.0	-	29%
Public Conveniences	405.0	12.0	393.0	3%
Allotments Infrastructure	300.0	10.0	290.0	3%
Victoria Park Centenary Walk (Phase 1 - Toilets)	195.0	116.0	-	59%
Victoria Park Gates (HLF Grant)	25.0	23.0	-	92%
Victoria Park Cenotaph & Other WW1 - War Memorials Remedial Works	107.0	90.0	-	84%
Total	5,616.0	3,219.0	683.0	57%

5.2 The Household Waste Recycling Centre scheme incorporates a replacement facility for Bridge Road HWRC, a new Trade Waste facility to accept waste from businesses and a reuse facility that is likely to be operated by a local charitable organisation for the benefit of local people. The construction contract has been awarded to GF Tomlinson, a local company with recent experience of building three similar facilities for Leicestershire County Council. Construction commenced in June 2014 with the target completion date of March 2015, subject in particular to weather conditions. The project remains on track in line with this agreed timeline. The contractor has completed the majority of the construction work with only the road surfaces, power supplies, lighting and water outstanding along with the more cosmetic work inside the weighbridge and reuse building. The permit application has been made to the Environment Agency.

5.3 The Parks Plant and Equipment capital budget is to purchase replacement items of grounds maintenance equipment with an initial purchase value of over £5k per item. Each purchase will be funded via prudential borrowing with a 5 year repayment plan. Items such as ride-on mowers used to cut grass on housing sites, highway verges and parks areas are typical purchases. At the end of the grass-cutting season prior to an annual service programme for all plant and equipment, an assessment was made of the current stock in terms of maintenance history and running costs with a view to replace certain items on a rolling programme. Items to the value of £79k were purchased at the start of the grass-cutting season and the balance of the expenditure is programmed for the final quarter following a competitive procurement exercise with delivery to coincide with the 2015 grass cutting season.

5.4 The Saffron Hill Cemetery scheme is an extension to the existing cemetery in line with the agreed burial space strategy and will provide additional capacity for burials. The majority of the extension will accommodate Muslim burials. Work has started and comprises a new car

park, disabled toilet facility and the initial phase of the burial extension. The works are anticipated to complete in March 2015.

- 5.5 Spinney Hill Park Restoration - works to the brook have been completed and resurfacing of the pathway will be completed during January, for which payments will be made in the final quarter.
- 5.6 Public Convenience Improvements will deliver new toilets at Evington Park and Watermead Park. Planning applications have been submitted, with construction now expected to complete in the summer of 2015. As a result, forecast expenditure has been re-profiled.
- 5.7 As reported at period 6, the anticipated expenditure for the Allotment Infrastructure scheme is £10k for 2014/15, funding the essential work identified from the site audits, which are informing the developing Allotment Strategy. For 2015/16 the majority of the £290k capital will be used to address high priority works identified from the audits, concentrating on site security measures and path repairs. For works of a lower priority the Council's capital will be used as match funding, enabling the allotment societies to bid for additional external funding, and thereby enabling the capital to go further.
- 5.8 The new toilet block at Victoria Park was officially opened in December, as the first phase of the Centenary Walk project. The remaining payments will occur in the final quarter.
- 5.9 In support of the commemoration activities upon the centenary of the First World War, a £107k programme of remedial repairs and cleaning works to the City's main civic war memorial the Cenotaph on Victoria Park and smaller memorials at Evington Village Green and Bridge Road is largely complete.

6. Property Services

- 6.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects in Property Services.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage/ saving £000	% Spent
City Centre Office Accommodation	14,758.0	13,425.0	-	91%
Property Maintenance Schemes	1,534.0	950.0	-	62%
Leicester Business Centre Roof	85.0	89.0	-	105%
Great Central Railway Design	80.0	9.0	65.0	11%
Vehicle Replacement 2013/14	1,428.0	489.0	860.0	34%*
Hansom Hall Access	259.0	70.0	-	27%
Purchase of the Ship Inn	187.0	185.0	-	99%
Total	18,331.0	15,217.0	925.0	83%

* £860k is a saving from the vehicle replacement programme.

- 6.2 The works to all the City Centre Accommodation projects are in the final phase with practical completion now achieved (Sovereign House, Bosworth house, 16 New Walk, City Hall and Phoenix House). Additional costs of £0.6m have been incurred across the whole scheme, due to tender prices being higher than originally envisaged in some of the smaller

refurbishments, and changes to specifications during the course of the major refurbishment projects. The recommendations to this report will fund these additional costs.

- 6.3 As part of the accommodation strategy, notice has been given (and accepted) for the space we occupy in Wellington House. Exercising this lease break saves the council £750k per annum but requires the relocation of approximately 200 staff – mostly the Revenues and Benefits service. Now that Customer Services is integrating with the Revenues and Benefits service the most appropriate location for the whole service is York House. As such the project team have been able to relocate teams occupying York House within the existing estate (Bosworth House and 16 New Walk) to enable 200 Revenues and Benefits staff to move in. Some one-off capital expenditure is required to ensure that the office space is fit for purpose and reflects the design layout of the city centre estate.
- 6.4 The property maintenance scheme is being spent on works including boiler replacements, fire reduction and water hygiene measures.
- 6.5 The project to replace the roof at Leicester Business Centre (£85k) on Ross Walk was completed in July 2014.
- 6.6 It is expected that the £80k set aside to continue supporting the Great Central Railway's plans for a new museum at the Leicester North/Birstall station will be utilised mainly in 2015/16, hence slippage is now shown.
- 6.7 Savings will be made from the Vehicle Replacement Programme. This is because less vehicle are being purchased following a review of the replacement policy. Revenue savings will result from this.
- 6.8 Works to Hansom Hall mean that visitors are now able to enter the historic venue via the old lending library entrance on Belvoir Street, instead of having to follow a complicated route through the Adult Education College from Wellington Street. Contractors have knocked through a wall at the old library to create a direct link into the hall as part of a package of improvements that will benefit users of both the Hall and the College. Wheelchair users will be able to take the lift to the first floor, where they will be able to access the Hall via a gently sloping ramp. The works are now complete.
- 6.9 The Ship Inn is a 1930s public house which closed earlier in the year. It has been purchased by the Council, as previously reported.

7. City Centre

7.1 The table below summarises the current approved projects for the City Centre.

Project	Approved £000	Spend £000	Slippage £000	% Spent
Architectural & Feature Lighting	150.0	-	150.0	0%
Legible Leicester	115.0	76.0	-	66%
Total	265.0	76.0	150.0	29%

7.2 The Architectural & Feature Lighting scheme will deliver a city-wide architectural and feature lighting strategy followed by a pilot scheme in 2015, hence most spend is expected in 2015/16. The wider aim of the scheme is to develop a high quality and safe urban environment that maximises the city's architectural heritage, key buildings and spaces and enhances its capacity to be a premier business, retail, residential and tourism destination.

7.3 The Legible Leicester strategy aims to deliver a new city information system connecting destinations, spaces and streets and improving legibility for people who work in, visit, live and enjoy the city. This will include signage and information points and mapping. The approval covers the appointment of a specialist consultant to undertake a scoping study. The scheme has now started spending.

8. Policy Provisions

8.1 At the end of period 9 a number of Policy Provisions for City Development & Neighbourhoods projects still awaited formal approval for allocation to specific schemes.

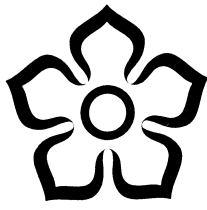
Service Area	Project	Amount £000
Planning, Transportation and Economic Development	Congestion and Carbon Reduction Strategies	30.0
	Economic Action Plan Phase 2	12,558.0
Local Services & Enforcement	Replacement Allotment Infrastructure	125.0
	Investment in Play	400.0
Property Services	Braunstone Hall	790.0
	Vehicle Replacement Programme 2014/15	1,250.0
Total		15,153.0

8.2 Since Period 9 the "Investment in Play" policy provision has been released for the development and refurbishment of play facilities across the city.

Capital Receipts

1. Summary

- 1.1 As part of the 2013/14 Outturn, the Council was able to use revenue underspends to 'forward finance' the proportion of the 2014/15 capital programme that was to be funded by capital receipts.
- 1.2 This gave greater certainty around the financing of the programme for 2014/15.
- 1.3 The value of capital receipts originally required for the programme, and set aside in 2013/14, was £2.5m.
- 1.4 At Period 9, the Council has realised around £3.5m of General Fund capital receipts (i.e. excluding Housing Revenue Account Right-to-Buy receipts). These include the sales of Nuffield House, Elizabeth House, the Douglas Bader Centre and 72 Belgrave Road. Plans are actively in place to sell further assets and the total value of General Fund receipts by the end of the year is expected to be around £3.8m
- 1.5 The Council is now seeking to budget for capital schemes using only receipts that have been realised. Receipts received in 2014/15 will therefore be available to support future capital programmes.



Leicester
City Council

SECOND DESPATCH

OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE 23 MARCH 2015

Further to the agenda for the above meeting which you should have already received, please find attached additional information for the following agenda item:

6. OFSTED REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD.

Please bring this paper with you to the meeting

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Leicester City

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

and

Review of the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board¹

Inspection date: 14 January – 4 February 2015

Report published: 20 March 2015

The overall judgement is that children’s services are inadequate

There are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. Leaders and managers have not been able to demonstrate sufficient understanding of failures and have been ineffective in prioritising, challenging and making improvements.

It is Ofsted’s expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection.²

The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:

1. Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
2. Children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
2.1 Adoption performance	Good
2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers	Requires improvement
3. Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate

¹ Ofsted produces this report under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report includes the report of the inspection of local authority functions carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and the report of the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board carried out under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (Review) Regulations 2013.

² A full description of what the inspection judgements mean can be found at the end of this report.

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The Local Authority

Summary of findings

Children's services in Leicester City are inadequate because:

Leadership and management

- There has been a corporate failure of leadership, which has resulted in services deteriorating to a point where children are not adequately protected. The current Director of Children's Services (DCS) has only been in post since October 2014 and the positive impact of this appointment is only just beginning to be felt.
- Failure to manage wholesale organisational change effectively in children's services from May 2014 has led to a high turnover of social workers and managers. This has resulted in unacceptable delays in the allocation of children's cases, frequent changes of social worker and in poor quality management oversight and direction.
- Serious and wide-scale failures in seeing and assessing children in a timely manner have resulted in children potentially remaining in harmful and unsafe situations, at risk of neglect and emotional abuse.
- Performance data and its reporting are poor. Leaders and managers at all levels do not have the information they need to manage effectively.
- While the local authority and its partners are well engaged in the key strategic boards, this is not significantly influencing frontline practice.

Quality of practice

- Social work practice is not robust, and in too many cases, assessments and plans are not of good enough quality.
- Changes of social workers and managers means that plans to reduce harm have been subject to drift and delay.
- Weak management oversight leaves poor practice unchallenged and children's needs unmet.
- The social work electronic recording system is under-developed both as a practice tool and as a data gathering and reporting mechanism.
- Practitioners are insufficiently aware of the indicators of child sexual exploitation to ensure early identification and social workers are not appropriately completing return interviews when children known to them go missing.

What does the Local Authority need to improve?

Priority and immediate action

Leadership and management

1. Put into place an effective performance management framework; this to include
 - comprehensive and reliable performance data
 - clear monitoring and quality assurance arrangements
 - effective performance management of teams and individuals.
2. Ensure that all staff receive regular reflective supervision, in line with the local authority's supervision policy, that provides direction and includes consideration of the individual's developmental needs and professional capability.
3. Ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to support and meet the needs of 16- and 17-year-olds who become homeless.

Quality of practice

4. Improve the quality and consistency of assessments so that risks and concerns are robustly considered and inform plans about what needs to change.
5. Improve the continuity of social worker for children and young people and ensure the timeliness and consistency of social work home visits.
6. Improve the quality and delivery of plans to meet the needs of children and ensure that they are not subject to drift or delay.

Areas for improvement

Leadership and management

7. Ensure effective oversight and examination of data and practice by the Scrutiny Commission and the Corporate Parenting Forum.
8. Ensure the local authority's full engagement with Cafcass and the Family Courts and improve the quality of pre-proceedings and court work.
9. With partners, ensure that professionals are fully aware of their role in contributing to the identification and support of children with additional needs, and where appropriate assist them to access early help services.
10. Ensure that the electronic social care recording system promotes good practice, supports managerial oversight and provides accurate performance information.

Quality of practice

11. Improve the timeliness of social work interventions and ensure effective permanence planning, including the consideration of all permanence options, within the child's timescales.
12. Improve the consistency and quality of case recording and chronologies and ensure that scanned documentation and key documents, such as looked after review outcomes, are more certainly and swiftly available on the electronic social care recording system.
13. Ensure that practitioners are aware of the indicators of child sexual exploitation so that risk is identified early and preventative measures can be put into place.
14. Ensure that when a child, in receipt of a social work service, goes missing from home or care, a return visit is completed promptly, that the outcome is appropriately recorded and that it informs the child's plan and local intelligence gathering.

Children looked after

15. Ensure that care plans are informed by regular and up-to-date assessments of needs.
16. Ensure that initial health assessments for children looked after take place within 28 days of their reception into care.
17. Improve the consistency and quality of personal education plans as a tool to improve the educational attainment and achievement of children looked after.
18. Ensure that effective re-unification plans are agreed by a statutory review and that these arrangements are monitored in a timely way following the child's return home.
19. Strengthen the capacity of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service to fulfil all aspects of the IRO Handbook, particularly enabling them to more effectively track and quality assure the progress of care plans in between statutory review processes.
20. Improve the timeliness and quality of foster carer reviews and strengthen the level of independent oversight provided within reviews.

Care leavers

21. Ensure that caseloads are at a level that enables personal advisors to work proactively with all care leavers allocated to them, including those aged 16 and 17 years.

22. Strengthen the pathway review process to ensure that formal reviews take place regularly with the contribution of other agencies and are subject to robust management oversight.
23. Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for all young people living in unsuitable accommodation.
24. Ensure that care leavers are provided with full information about their health histories prior to leaving care.

The Local Authority's strengths

25. The local authority has established an efficient and well-organised 24/7 duty and advice service that provides good quality information and appropriately refers children to early help or social care services. Children in need of protection are effectively responded to out of hours.
26. Disabled children are well supported by specialist staff and have voice and influence through the Big Mouth and Little Mouth fora.
27. Appropriate attention is paid to diversity, and the Heritage Panel plays a key role in ensuring that heritage needs of children and young people are addressed in all aspects of service delivery.
28. There is detailed sharing of information and local intelligence about children thought to be at risk of child sexual exploitation that is used to produce detailed multi-agency plans. Young people engage in the meetings, which consider these plans.
29. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has ensured that sound arrangements are in place to respond to cases when allegations are made about professionals who work with children.
30. Though 47% of children looked after are placed outside of Leicester City, 87% live within 20 miles of their home. The majority of young people placed out of authority are not disadvantaged by distance and have appropriate access to health and education services.
31. 79% of children looked after are placed with foster carers, higher than statistical neighbours and England levels. Appropriate use is also made of kinship placements, which enable children to remain with their families and communities.
32. Children looked after have good access to therapeutic help and recreational leisure opportunities, which promotes their health and well-being.
33. Children with an adoption plan are quickly matched and placed with adopters, maximising their life chances in their adoptive homes.

34. Post-adoption support is a significant strength, evidenced by the value placed on it by adopters and the lack of adoption disruptions.
35. Through the Big Lottery funded Y-POD, care leavers with complex needs have been provided with wraparound services which improves their outcomes. These benefits are planned to be rolled out to all care leavers in April 2015.

Progress since the last inspection

36. The previous permanent DCS left the authority in May 2013. The new and current DCS joined the authority in October 2014 and in the intervening period interim leadership arrangements were in place. The current DCS and interim Assistant Director (AD) have quickly grasped and begun to tackle some of the critical issues around staffing and performance information. Their efforts however, remain hampered by the poor quality of current performance data and difficulties in establishing clear sight of the current quality of front line services. The local authority's performance has deteriorated significantly in a number of areas since it was last inspected.
37. The previous inspection of Leicester City's children's safeguarding services was in December 2011. The local authority was judged to be adequate.
38. Some of the areas for improvement identified in that inspection are still areas requiring improvement. This includes the failure of some professionals in universal services to engage with the local authority's early help offer, improving the quality of management oversight and improving the quality and delivery of child protection plans.
39. LADO arrangements are now operating effectively.
40. Some of the strengths identified at that inspection, such as the sufficiency and stability of the workforce and the good quality performance information and monitoring of progress, have significantly deteriorated and this is now adversely affecting outcomes for children.
41. The previous inspection of Leicester City's services for children looked after was in December 2011. The local authority was judged to be good.
42. Some of the strengths identified at that inspection have not been maintained, such as the timeliness of health assessments, continuity of social worker, the numbers of care leavers in education, employment or training and the effectiveness of the IRO service. Children currently looked after particularly express their concern about changes in social worker.
43. The local authority has changed its infrastructure supporting the work of children's services staff. In May 2014, a reorganisation took place, which aimed to strengthen how social care and early help services were arranged and delivered across the city.

44. Through the innovative Y project, the local authority has supported a diverse community organisation that seeks to empower young people to achieve skills and independence through access to supported accommodation, education, arts, health and fitness.

Summary for children and young people

- Social workers always try to assist children and their families but sometimes they take too long to give them the support that they need. When this happens children and their families can get into more difficulties.
- Some children have had too many social workers in a short time. They told inspectors that this does not help them to get to know their social worker well and it takes new workers time to understand their life story and to get children the right help in the way that they want.
- Managers do not always check the work of their teams carefully. This is not helpful because when mistakes are made, it stops children and families getting the help they need quickly.
- Children told inspectors that the Children in Care Council works well with local authority officers to make the right changes.
- A new approach to working with families means that staff providing early help services meet and share information well and find helpful actions to deal with the problems that families are experiencing.
- Most children who cannot live with their parents/carers are placed quickly with their extended family or with friends or with adopters, and the local authority makes a lot of effort to keep brothers and sisters together. When adoption takes place, families receive good support which helps the placement to work well.
- Nearly all care leavers live in suitable accommodation and they can choose where to live. Care leavers need guidance on what to do about work or going to college, but the younger adults aged 16 and 17 do not get as much support as those aged over 18 to help them prepare for their future.
- The local authority works well with children and families from different cultural backgrounds and faiths and with different needs. For example, children from minority ethnic groups are matched to adoptive families from similar backgrounds, and children with a disability receive the support and help needed to protect them.

Information about this Local Authority area³

Children living in this area

- Approximately 79,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Leicester City. This is 24% of the total population in the area.
- Approximately 30% of the local authority's children are living in poverty.
- The proportion of children entitled to free school meals:
 - in primary schools is 22% (the national average is 17%)
 - in secondary schools is 22% (the national average is 15%).
- Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 59% of all children living in the area, compared with 22% in the country as a whole.
- The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian and Asian mixed and Black or Black British.
- The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:
 - in primary schools is 49% (the national average is 19%)
 - in secondary schools is 46% (the national average is 14%).

Child protection in this area

- At 31 December 2014, 2,150 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist children's service. This is an increase from 1,920 at 31 March 2014.
- At 31 December 2014, 349 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan. This is an increase from 326 at 31 March 2014.
- At 31 December 2014, three children lived in a privately arranged fostering placement. This is a reduction from seven at 31 March 2014.

Children looked after in this area

- At December 2014, 549 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 69 per 10,000 children). This is an increase from 530 (67 per 10,000 children) at 31 March 2014. Of this number:
 - 267 (or 47%) live outside the local authority area

³ The local authority was given the opportunity to review this section of the report and has updated it with local unvalidated data where this was available.

- 55 live in residential children’s homes, of whom 36% live out of the authority area
 - seven live in residential special schools⁴, of whom 100% live out of the authority area
 - 426 live with foster families, of whom 45% live out of the authority area
 - 25 live with parents, of whom 35% live out of the authority area
 - eight children are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- In the last 12 months:
- there have been 42 adoptions
 - 31 children became subjects of special guardianship orders
 - 136 children ceased to be looked after, of whom 7.4% subsequently returned to be looked after
 - 103 children and young people ceased to be looked after and moved on to independent living
 - four children and young people ceased to be looked after and are now living in houses of multiple occupation.

Other Ofsted inspections

- The local authority operates five children’s homes. Three were judged to be good or outstanding in their most recent Ofsted inspection.

Other information about this area

- The Director of Children’s Services has been in post since October 2014.
- The Chair of the LSCB has been in post since December 2012.

⁴ These are residential special schools that look after children for 295 days or less per year.

Inspection judgements about the Local Authority

Key judgement	Judgement grade
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
<p>Summary</p> <p>Too many children have experienced delay because of numerous changes of social worker or because they have not had a social worker allocated to them in a timely manner. As a result, children remain in potentially harmful and unsafe situations, at risk of neglect and emotional abuse for too long before plans are put in place to reduce the harm they may experience. Weak and inconsistent management oversight leaves poor practice unchallenged and children’s needs unmet.</p> <p>The quality of assessments is too variable and many do not have a sufficient analysis of risk to inform effective planning for children. The majority of chronologies are system-generated and do not tell the child’s story, and so a child’s history is not used effectively to inform assessments. Social workers visit children, but not as frequently as stated in plans; when they do visit, almost all social workers are making efforts to speak with children alone and secure their views. A minority of Initial Child Protection Conferences are not timely, in contrast with the 100% of review meetings, which are held on time. The high turnover in social workers has affected the frequency of core group meetings and contributes to the drift and delay in implementing child protection plans.</p> <p>Many children known to children’s services do not benefit from return interviews when they go missing. As a result, plans to reduce further missing episodes and tackle risks of missing are not in place. When young people are known to be at risk of child sexual exploitation, robust multi-agency action occurs to reduce these risks. However, for other young people, opportunities are missed or intervention does not happen when potential risks are first identified, and concerns escalate.</p> <p>Children and their families benefit from the support provided by the early help teams. The local authority drives early help work, and not all partners fully understand or contribute to the local early help offer. Partners continue to make inappropriate referrals to children’s services and do not fully understand local threshold arrangements and levels of intervention. The lack of a joint working protocol with Housing means that there is no clear arrangement in place to appropriately assess the needs of 16- and 17-year-old homeless young people.</p> <p>Disabled children are well supported by staff in a specialist service and effective plans are put into place, which are routinely monitored by managers. Parents of children with complex health need are particularly appreciative of the support their children receive to facilitate their transition to adult services</p>	

45. The local authority Early Help and Prevention Strategy 2013–15 was agreed by the Children’s Trust in 2013. It provided for the creation of early help teams based in children’s centres in six geographical areas of the city; these were formally established in July 2014. Practitioners from a range of professional backgrounds, including family support, youth work, and early childhood development backgrounds appropriately are part of these teams. Inspectors saw evidence of effective work, which is ensuring that children’s needs are met and their circumstances improve.
46. Early help teams receive referrals from universal services when children are identified as needing additional support. Currently, the lack of a strategically co-ordinated approach to the publicity about the early help teams means that referrals are low. In addition, universal services are not clear about their role in early help work. As a result, the numbers of children and families helped through the Common Assessment Framework has reduced. The Children’s Trust and the LSCB have not provided sufficient scrutiny of the effectiveness of the early help strategy.
47. In the cases sampled, children and their families benefited from the support provided by the early help teams. The quality of early help assessments is improving. More recent early help assessments clearly identify the difficulties that families are experiencing, and records demonstrate that a range of services are provided to families in a timely manner to meet identified needs. Progress is effectively tracked using a simple scoring system to which parents contribute. Some good examples were seen by inspectors whereby the early help support led to improvements in parenting skills, children’s behaviour and their attendance at school. Early help managers provide regular supervision to workers about individual cases. The depth of this management oversight remains inconsistent, with some managers not fully exploring the extent to which the help provided is improving the circumstances for the child.
48. Workers present cases to the monthly Early Help Review Panel when children’s circumstances do not improve as a result of the early help support families have received. The panel provides clear direction about next steps, which can include a referral to children’s social care for a statutory assessment. Step up and step down arrangements to and from social care are clear and well understood by practitioners.
49. The Duty and Advice Service (DAS) delivers a 24-hour, seven day a week service responding promptly and consistently to all contacts and referrals made to children’s services, including those made outside normal office hours. Qualified and experienced social workers provide consultation and sound advice to professionals who are concerned about children.

50. Staff in DAS have a good understanding of thresholds for statutory intervention and apply these consistently. Information sharing between DAS social workers and the DAS early help service is effective. This ensures that children who have identified needs but who do not meet the threshold for a statutory service are signposted to early help services. DAS early help practitioners provide timely short-term interventions and effectively evaluate outcomes achieved. When families require longer-term support, the DAS early help service ensures the prompt transfer to locality early help teams.
51. Children's services continue to receive too many inappropriate referrals from partners. In 2013–14, only 52% of referrals progressed to a single assessment. The local authority's own data for 2014–15 show a slight improvement to 58%, but this is below the local target of 70%; 29.3% of referrals received since April 2014 are re-referrals. In particular, cases referred by the police are not risk assessed, resulting in inappropriate referrals to DAS. Other inappropriate referrals demonstrate that staff in universal services do not fully understand the local threshold document or their contribution to the delivery of early help. There is no systematic analysis of these inappropriate referrals to inform plans to tackle this issue.
52. When children are referred to children's services because they are at risk of immediate harm, DAS takes effective steps to ensure that they are safe. Strategy discussions are promptly held with the police and next steps are well recorded. The involvement of other agencies in strategy discussions is less consistent but does take place in more complex cases. Joint investigations with the police take place routinely. On occasions when DAS agree with the police to undertake investigations as a single agency, the rationale for this decision-making is not well recorded.
53. When children require ongoing intervention by children's services, they are promptly transferred by DAS to Children in Need (CIN) social work teams. In most cases, this decision-making is sound. However, in a small number of cases seen by inspectors, section 47 investigations should have been initiated by DAS before transfer to ensure that children were appropriately protected. Until inspectors identified this, these cases had remained unallocated and children were left experiencing ongoing neglect and emotional harm.
54. In May 2014, children's services were restructured. This resulted in significant staff turnover in all nine CIN teams. Of the 62 social workers in post during the inspection, 22 were temporary agency staff. Many were recent starters replacing other agency staff who only worked with the authority for a short period. This staff disruption has adversely affected the timely allocation of cases, the progress of plans for children, management oversight and continuity of social workers for families.

55. Once the service restructured in May 2014, staff turnover became increasingly problematic and affected the ability of managers to allocate cases promptly. As recently as 17 December 2014, 291 children did not have a social worker. An increase of agency staff reduced this number to 38 by 21 January 2015. Because of this staffing instability, there has been significant delay between the decisions that a single assessment should be undertaken and the children being seen and their needs being fully assessed. Too often, a number of cases were allocated to new workers without management direction and prioritisation or any subsequent review. This built in further delay while social workers became familiar with cases and prioritised their visits to children and their families. In only two of the 33 cases sampled by inspectors were children seen promptly once the case had transferred to the CIN teams. In six of these cases, there was no evidence that the children had been seen prior to inspectors arriving on site, when dates of referral varied from August 2014 to December 2014. Once aware of inspectors' concerns, the local authority took immediate steps to ensure that the children were seen and were safe.
56. The local authority has no systematic management monitoring to confirm the timeliness and the quality of visits to children. Therefore, it cannot establish how long children wait to be visited by a social worker after they are first referred to the service. The authority recognises the need to address this, and during the inspection it started to develop a performance report to provide information about social work visits.
57. These capacity issues have led to direct delays in children having their needs assessed and responded to. The local authority's own data for 2014–15 indicates that around one third of assessments are not completed within their target timescale even though these timescales allows several weeks for the completion of most assessments. This is further compounded by management decisions to delay the allocation of cases where assessments are likely to be less complex. This delay means that these children are waiting too long before their needs start to be assessed.
58. The quality of assessments is too variable. Inspectors saw some high quality, thorough assessments with sound analysis, but many did not have a sufficient analysis of risk to inform effective planning for children. The majority of chronologies are system-generated and do not tell the child's story. A child's history is not used effectively to inform assessments and planning. This contributes to further drift and delay for children because new practitioners repeat interventions that have previously failed to improve their circumstances.
59. Once allocated, children are visited by social workers, but not as frequently as stated in their plans. Almost all social workers are making efforts to speak with children alone. While the quality remains variable, some good examples were seen of discussions with children about their experiences and what they wanted to change. Sustained relationships between children and their worker are not evident in many cases, due to frequent changes in social workers.

60. At 31 December 2014, 349 children were the subject of child protection plans. In the year 2013–14, the most prevalent categories of abuse were neglect (38.4%) and emotional abuse (37.54%). Inspectors found inconsistent use of pre-proceeding processes in these cases to bring about swift improvements for children.
61. The local authority's own data for 2014–15 identifies that only 54.9% of initial child protection conferences are timely which means that for these children there is a delay in decision-making. This is, however, an improving trend from a very low base of 26.4% in 2013–14. In contrast, the timeliness of review child protection case conferences is excellent, with 100% occurring in timescale; this performance has been sustained for more than 18 months. Concerns about some agencies' poor attendance and failure to provide reports has led the Safeguarding Unit to monitor attendance, and senior managers are now appropriately challenging the relevant agencies. This has led to improved attendance by some partners, but is yet to have an impact on others.
62. The turnover in social workers also contributes to delays in the progress of child protection plans. In some cases, core groups are not held routinely, with gaps because of changes in social workers. Most partners routinely attend core group meetings when they do happen, and share information about their involvement with the family. Parents are routinely invited and many do attend. Social workers take the minutes of core group meetings, but the quality of these varies. In particular, they do not always reflect the progress against the child protection plan, whether the plan is making a difference for the child, or if the plan needs to be changed. The electronically generated child protection plan template used does not assist good planning. As a result, plans lack specificity; they are not clear about who is taking action and by when and they do not prioritise the key changes needed. Not all plans are routinely updated following core group meetings. One parent reported to an inspector that the format is confusing, so they pay no regard to it.
63. Child protection chairs also chair initial child in need meetings. This brings improved focus to initial plans and seeks to improve partners' confidence in the child in need planning process. This is a very recent initiative and has yet to be evaluated for impact. Despite this, child in need work reflects many of the same inconsistencies as child protection work, due to the instability of the workforce.
64. In total, 25 cases were formally referred back to the local authority as having significant concerns in social work practice that left children with risks and concerns unassessed, needs not met, children not visited and insufficient action taken to ensure that they are safe. Of these, 19 children are held in CIN teams. In addition, a number of other cases were identified as examples of further poor or inconsistent practice that required senior management review. The local authority agreed with the poor practice identified and took appropriate steps in these cases to rectify identified deficits during the inspection.

65. The quality of management oversight is weak. This is in part due to the turnover of managers. While the majority of cases have evidence of some management oversight recorded on file, this is not always at the required frequency and some have extensive gaps. The quality of the direction provided is poor; previous actions are not always reviewed for their completion, and agreed actions routinely lack a timescale for completion. Most significantly, children's plans are not systematically reviewed in supervision to establish if they are reducing risks to children. Often, significant events are not well considered and appropriate plans put in place to respond to increased risks.
66. Despite the existence of a robust procedure, arrangements in CIN teams to undertake return interviews for children and young people who go missing are not well established. Visits, when they do take place, are not always timely nor often recorded as a case note. The agreed template is not used, so consistent information is not gathered over time that can be easily analysed and can contribute to safety planning. Managers do not consider the risks to young people from these missing episodes, nor ensure that plans are in place to reduce future missing episodes.
67. When children are not known to social care services, the early help service will undertake return interviews. These arrangements are recent, but already there is improved confidence in their certainty and quality. Visits to children are not always timely, but findings are reviewed at subsequent meetings, which inform support plans for families. As a result, very recent reductions have been seen in the frequency of missing episodes for some of these children.
68. The weekly multi-agency missing meetings provide a regular arrangement for information sharing and gathering intelligence between agencies about children who are missing from home, care and school. The education welfare service contributes to the information sharing about children's absence during the school day and supports schools to recognise the potential risks related to such absence.
69. This service also keeps a close check on the increasing number of children whose parents select home education as their preferred option. As well as providing support and advice for families, the service undertakes home visits to ensure that these children are safe from harm. It has also been instrumental in taking legal action to return a very small group of children to mainstream school. Partnership work across several services underpins monitoring of the whereabouts of those educated at home.

70. The One pupil data system is used to identify the status of pupils in or out of schools and to track those who do not attend regularly, and information sharing between the education welfare service and other services ensures that investigative work on children new to education in the city runs smoothly. Each early help cluster has an officer with responsibility for attendance and children missing education, and they employ a range of approaches to track such children and young people, beginning with local enquiries in the neighbourhood, contacting a range of local services, and then national services such as the Border Agency.
71. The local authority does not currently have a clear or comprehensive overview of all children receiving alternative educational provision. It is in the process of strengthening its arrangements to monitor the quality and take up of this provision. It has undertaken some effective project work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, which has significantly improved the school attendance of children from these communities.
72. When young people are at high risk of experiencing child sexual exploitation, multi-agency meetings are held and are well attended by professionals. Effective sharing of information and local intelligence is used to produce detailed multi-agency protection plans that are regularly reviewed and work well to reduce risks to young people. Attendance by young people at these meetings is a strength. Currently, 21 young people are subject to these regular meetings, of whom 11 are children looked after. A further four young people have an initial meeting planned in February 2015. Young people involved in child sexual exploitation are offered therapeutic support by the Child and Family Support Team.
73. The high turnover in staff means that many social workers and managers have not received training to enable them to identify early signs of potential child sexual exploitation. A specialist child sexual exploitation worker is available to provide advice to workers when they are concerned. This worker encourages the completion of child sexual exploitation risk assessment tools, but oversight to ensure their completion does not routinely occur. In some cases, inspectors saw delays in identifying the extent of the risk of child sexual exploitation and opportunities missed to intervene earlier. Managers accept that further work is needed to ensure a robust response to the identification of child sexual exploitation in cases held in CIN teams where this is not an obvious presenting issue upon referral.
74. The housing protocol does not describe a joint process for assessing 16- and 17-year-old young people who become homeless. The local authority has looked after five of the 49 young people presenting to homeless services in 2014–15 to date. However, the authority cannot identify whether those young people who do not become looked after are provided with appropriate support as children in need and have effective plans in place to meet those needs.

75. The Disabled Children's Service appropriately identifies when children are at risk and takes appropriate steps to protect them. Ongoing work with families supports the identification of concerns early. Proactive steps are taken to tackle and reduce these concerns. Consistent management oversight is provided that ensures the timely progression of plans for children.
76. Sound arrangements are in place to respond to cases when allegations are made about professionals who work with children. The interim LADO is relatively new to this post and has yet to develop robust monitoring systems to quality assure the decisions taken by those who undertake work within the team.
77. Regular Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meetings take place, which ensures timely sharing of information between professionals about those people at high risk of domestic abuse. Referrals from partners other than the police to MARAC is 43%, which is good performance and better than the Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) target of 25-40%. This demonstrates the commitment of partners to supporting victims of domestic abuse. A wide range of initiatives are in place to support families where domestic abuse is a concern, including programmes for perpetrators. The Freedom Programme is routinely delivered to support victims of domestic abuse, and interpreters are provided where necessary. The draft Domestic Violence Strategy does not, however, consider whether there is a need to run the Freedom Project in other languages to better engage victims whose first language is not English.
78. A very low number of children are privately fostered, with only three cases currently known to the local authority. When identified, private fostering arrangements are appropriately assessed and authorised. Plans work towards achieving better permanence options for privately fostered children, although these are not always achieved in a timely manner.
79. An advocacy service is available to children receiving services who are not looked after by the local authority. This is not effectively promoted to children by social workers and managers, and take up of the service is very low.
80. Appropriate attention is paid to diversity, with good and thoughtful use of interpreters when required. The workforce is also diverse, and that supports the authority in providing a good understanding of the different cultures present in Leicester City when assessing and planning for children.

Key judgement	Judgement grade
The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires improvement
<p>Summary</p> <p>The outcomes for children looked after are not yet good as a minority of children, when they are managed in the CIN teams, are experiencing drift and delay in the early stages of being looked after. Once transferred to the Looked After Child (LAC) service, outcomes for the large majority of children looked after improve because of better quality management oversight, continuity of social worker and timely social work visits.</p> <p>The vast majority of children looked after live within 20 miles of their home, and a large majority are placed with foster carers or kinship carers. They are suitably matched with carers who are meeting their needs. Placement stability is improving.</p> <p>The use of the Public Law Outline is improving and the average timescale for the conclusion of care proceedings has improved overall. The quality of court work is not yet consistently good.</p> <p>Care planning is not informed by up-to-date holistic assessments, and permanence planning does not always start early enough. Care plans and personal education plans are not routinely acting as a vehicle for improving the experience and progress of children looked after. The Independent Reviewing Officers demonstrate effective challenge in improving practice but there is insufficient capacity within the service to address all aspects of quality in care planning.</p> <p>There is good pastoral support in schools for children looked after but not enough is being done to ensure that the attainment gap with their peers in Leicester City's secondary schools is narrowed.</p> <p>Though initial health assessments are not timely, children looked after are accessing good quality therapeutic support and a wide range of recreational activities, which improves their emotional and physical wellbeing.</p> <p>Timeliness in effecting adoption plans is good. Children are matched and placed quickly and are supported well in their adoptive families.</p> <p>The local authority is in contact with the vast majority of care leavers, and almost all care leavers spoken to say that they feel safe and well supported. Pathway and transition planning for looked after young people and care leavers post-16 is not yet consistently good. Too many care leavers are not in education, employment or training and lack an understanding of their health histories. Care leavers with complex needs are well supported through the Big Lottery funded Y-POD.</p>	

81. There has been a year-on-year steady increase in the number of children and young people looked after in Leicester City. At the time of the inspection, there were 542 children and young people looked after, compared with 533 at 31 March 2014 and 519 at 31 March 2013. Inspectors did not see any children or young people entering care who should not have done so. Decisions that children should become looked after are made at an appropriate senior level. However, inspectors did see a small number of children whose needs would have been better met by action being taken at an earlier stage to safeguard their welfare.
82. When children are made the subject of a permanence plan or a full care order they transfer to the LAC and 16+ service, which provides a service to 78% of children looked after. Workforce stability and improved management oversight in this part of children's services have contributed to improved outcomes for a large majority of children looked after.
83. The Public Law Outline (PLO) is not consistently used well by the CIN service to ensure that timely changes are made for children. At the time of the inspection, 54 children were subject to pre-proceedings and 64 children subject to care proceedings. Inspectors saw evidence of Legal Planning Meetings and Family Group Meetings being used effectively to suitably engage parents, resulting in some parents making the required changes. However, in other cases agreed actions within pre-proceedings work, such as initiating Legal Planning Meetings, had not been progressed in a sufficiently timely way.
84. When legal action is necessary, the timeliness of court proceedings overall is improving, having reduced from an average of 55 weeks in 2012–13 to 37 weeks in 2013–14. However, the second quarter data for 2014–15 show an increase, with the reported average duration of 34 weeks compared to 32 weeks in the first quarter of the year. This is above both the national and Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland (LLR) average of 30 weeks and does not meet the national requirement of 26 weeks. There is insufficient engagement by senior managers with the Courts and Cafcass to develop a joint understanding of the reasons for delay and to implement strategies to improve performance.
85. The multi-agency Children Looked After Resources Panel (LARP) provides an effective oversight of those children entering care, designing packages of support for reunification or continued looked after arrangements. Where possible, decisions are made in a planned way for children to return home to the care of their parents, supported by reunification plans, which are mostly robust and comprehensive.

86. When returning home from care, some children are benefiting from good multi-agency support under a child in need plan which helps their parents to maintain and build on progress. Whilst episodes of repeated accommodation are low (six children in the six months preceding this inspection), inspectors saw evidence of reunification plans not being consistently implemented by social workers, with insufficient independent scrutiny of arrangements immediately prior to, or immediately after, children returning home following a period of voluntary accommodation. Stronger management oversight is required to ensure that plans have been properly implemented and arrangements for the subsequent care of children by their parents appropriately assessed.
87. The experiences and progress of children subject to a court order returned home under Placement with Parents regulations are regularly monitored to ensure that the placement continues to meet the child's needs and that they do not remain subject to statutory orders unnecessarily. At the time of the inspection, 16 of the 18 children subject to such arrangements who are living at home have a plan for revocation of the care order, and five of these are subject to legal planning to commence the court process.
88. Social workers see the vast majority of children and young people alone. However, visits to their placement are not consistently conducted within statutory timescales. Management oversight of the extent of non-compliance is hampered by poor performance information. The impact of frequent changes in social workers, particularly within the Children in Need service, means that social workers do not always know children well, and children are denied the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with social workers at an early stage in their looked after experience. Children spoken to expressed their dislike of frequent changes in social worker. Once children have a plan for permanence, they are transferred to the Children Looked After service, where the majority benefit from more stable and meaningful relationships with social workers, many of whom are experienced and tenacious in advocating strongly on their behalf and ensuring that their rights and entitlements are safeguarded.
89. At the time of the inspection, 187 children were open to the Youth Offending Service, of whom 21 (11.2%) were looked after. Of these, five (23.8%) young people have re-offended, all of whom are placed in custody. Whilst on remand, care planning in respect of this vulnerable group of young people is mostly effective and includes active consideration of potential risk posed by others whilst they are in a secure establishment.

90. There is active consideration of potential risks associated with missing from care episodes and child sexual exploitation, although when this issue is identified, not all risk assessments are undertaken in a timely manner. At the time of the inspection, 29 young people looked after were assessed to be at risk of, or to have experienced, child sexual exploitation. In Quarter 3 of 2014–15, there were 81 missing from care episodes involving 32 children. The management of risk through multi-agency protection conferences and core groups is robust in the vast majority of cases, and children and young people who are reported as missing or absent from their placement are proactively looked for and their situations regularly monitored.
91. Timescales for the completion of initial health assessments for children looked after are poor, with only 11% conducted within 28 days during April to November 2014. This means that individual health needs may not be identified and responded to in a timely manner. Actions to remedy this, such as the introduction of a new secure email notification system, are very recent and yet to demonstrate an impact. Health partners acknowledge this issue and there are plans to increase capacity within their services to improve performance.
92. The vast majority of looked after children’s health reviews, dental checks and immunisations are timely. Support for children and young people’s mental health is provided by a specialist team within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS) up to the age of 18 years. The Child and Family Support Service also provides a range of therapeutic interventions to children looked after, such as those relating to attachment, bereavement and loss, sexualised behaviour and post-abuse. Inspectors saw evidence of the positive impact of work undertaken by this team in improving young people’s understanding of their life histories and family background and strengthening their self-esteem and confidence. The local authority does not, however, use tools such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) to help build a better understanding of the individual and collective emotional health and well-being of children looked after to inform care and service planning.
93. Most children looked after enter school from low starting points and, for those looked after for an average of two years or more, the rate of progress at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 is rarely better than the national average for similar groups. Performance in the GCSE examinations at 5A*-C in all subjects improves from year to year, but standards in the proportion gaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C including English and mathematics are well below that which is expected nationally and that of their peers locally. The rate of progress is not yet rapid enough to close the attainment gap, and the better progress being made at Key Stage 2 for some children is not sustained throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.

94. For some children, pupil premium funding is used imaginatively to support their education. The Virtual School provides strong pastoral support, for example, using music as a therapy to engage children looked after in their learning. However, the impact of the pupil premium is not consistently evaluated in personal education plans. The quality of personal education plans (PEPs) is too variable; though 50% of the PEPs seen by inspectors were good, 50% were of poor quality. In those of poor quality, targets are not consistently SMART and too often fail to address adequately what has to be done to improve performance. Better quality PEPs were evident when the social worker, school and Virtual School were fully engaged in their development and review.
95. Since 2012, attendance is much improved. It is currently 95%, which is better than the national average for all schools. 'Welfare Call' is used very well to liaise with schools on a daily basis and provide alerts. Effective pastoral support in schools, mentoring and additional funding from the Virtual School contribute to reducing fixed-term exclusions, but the authority has yet to reach their 10% target for fixed-term exclusions. In the last three years, only one looked after child has been permanently excluded. Currently, 15 children looked after are in alternative and complementary provision. Of these, two thirds are involved in full-time education and/or a combination with work-based learning linked to their assessed needs. The local authority is in the process of identifying suitable managed moves for the five remaining young people in Key Stage 3 who are not currently in receipt of full-time education.
96. The Virtual Head Teacher knows the children looked after well and ensures that the majority attend good or better schools. The Virtual School does not currently, have sufficient overview of the education progress of looked after young people in further education. A review of the structure of the Virtual School is underway, as the local authority recognises the need to develop a more effective and rigorous approach to challenging schools about the performance of children looked after, to accelerate a narrowing of the attainment gap.
97. Access to a range of social, educational and recreational opportunities is a consistent strength in Leicester City. Leisure passes, sporting activities, dancing and singing lessons and involvement in theatrical groups are positive examples of how social workers, residential staff and foster carers actively promote leisure as part of looked after children's care arrangements, and this contributes well to improving their physical and emotional health and well-being.
98. Care plans are not consistently good. Many are not updated on a regular basis and plans are not routinely informed by an updated assessment to reflect the child's changing needs and/or circumstances. A small minority of plans seen by inspectors were not sufficiently SMART, and in a minority of cases did not clearly outline the rationale for the specific permanence plan and how this was to be achieved.

99. Experienced Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) review care plans regularly, and the vast majority of reviews (96%) are timely and involve key people in the child's life. There is evidence of challenge by IROs where plans are not sufficiently clear or where there is poor practice, and this leads to improved outcomes for some children. The IRO service, however, lacks sufficient capacity to fully address all aspects of quality assurance. The impact of changes of social workers and periods of children not having an allocated social worker means that IROs are too often engaged in discussions with social workers and team managers about 'getting the basics right', as one IRO put it. A small number of cases sampled by inspectors were referred to the local authority to ensure that plans for children are progressed in a timely manner. For some children, the impact of poor care planning has led to delays in securing their physical, emotional and legal permanence.
100. The large majority of children and young people live within foster homes that meet their heritage, social and emotional needs, and with their brothers and sisters where possible. 'Together or apart' assessments are undertaken to consider the contact needs of brothers and sisters and whether it is in their best interests to be placed together. Contact between children looked after and their family and friends is promoted well. A local contact centre contributes to parenting assessments, which form part of care plans. Children spoken to and their parents talked positively about the bespoke contact arrangements that are arranged for them and are well supported by social workers and their carers, particularly where children are placed out of the city.
101. 268 children (47% of the looked after population) live outside Leicester City, although 73% of these children are living within the county of Leicestershire and 87% are placed within 20 miles of Leicester City. Arrangements for children living within independently provided care placements are satisfactory. Social workers ensure that these children and young people have access to local health and education services, and more specialist services when required. The commissioning arrangements to monitor the quality of these placements are robust.
102. Foster carers are promptly assessed through the two-stage process to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of children. Spot purchasing of placements is used effectively to ensure that children who require foster care have access to placements that meet their complex needs. Most assessments of foster carers' suitability to foster are of an acceptable standard and demonstrate how carers will meet children's needs. However, supervising social work visits are not always timely enough to ensure that any issues are picked up promptly. Most foster carer files meet fostering regulations in relation to required documentation and checks to ensure that children are safely cared for. Foster carers have delegated authority to ensure that they are able to make day-to-day decisions in relation to the children and young people they care for, which helps to support and encourage children's emotional and social development.

103. The local authority offers sufficient training opportunities to foster carers, including online training. A low proportion of carers (32%) have completed the Training and Support Development (TSD) standards, and this is a declining picture from 2012–13 and significantly lower than the England average. Leicester City has a high number of kinship foster carer households, none of which have completed the TSD. Foster carer reviews are not timely and the majority of reviews do not address the training needs of carers nor how these needs can be met, resulting in the local authority not being able to adequately evidence how foster carers are developed to meet the changing needs of children.
104. The majority of children and young people looked after live in stable placements, which meet their needs well. Local authority data indicate that the proportion of children experiencing three or more placement moves in the last 12 months has improved from 13.2% in 2012–13 to 10.8% in 2013–14, although there are indications that this will rise marginally by the end of 2014–15. Improving placement stability is one of the key aims of the Prevention, Care Planning and Sufficiency Project, which is enabling the authority to develop a better understanding of the profile and needs of its looked after population. This is being used to inform future commissioning.
105. The local authority is making increasing use of special guardianship orders (SGOs) to secure children and young people's future, although the number overall remains comparatively low. In 2014, 27 children were made subject to an SGO compared to 19 children in 2013, the vast majority in respect of children living with 'connected persons'. In all cases seen by inspectors, decisions were appropriate and the support provided to carers was good, but in one of these cases an SGO could have been considered at an earlier stage for the child. The number of SGOs made to foster carers is low.
106. Preparation and matching for permanency, including adoption, is mostly good. Children's wishes and feelings are evident within assessments, case recording and plans, although not consistently strong in all cases. Case records and chronologies are not routinely up to date and the outcomes of children looked after reviews are not accessible on the system in a timely manner. Effective management oversight is inhibited by the use of different systems for recording information within the Looked After Children service. This means that the child's journey can be difficult to follow and information does not provide an up-to-date and accurate picture of the child's circumstances.

107. Children looked after have access to advocacy, provided by the Children's Rights Service, but take-up is relatively low; the limited capacity of the service means that it is operated on an 'opt-in' basis. Children's voices are represented through a well-established Children in Care Council, which works closely with the Corporate Parenting Forum to champion the rights and experiences of Leicester City children looked after and young people. A Children Looked After and Care Leavers Pledge is reviewed annually, and used in a thematic way to scrutinise services and identify areas for improvement, such as introducing work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for older looked after young people and care leavers, and improving contact between children and their social workers through the development of a mobile phone 'app'.
108. Good use of kinship carers enables children who become looked after to remain within their community or with family and friends with whom they have an established relationship and often share a common heritage. Social work practice is sensitive to children's cultural and religious needs, and there are examples of good practice supported by the work of the Heritage Panel.

The graded judgment for adoption performance is that it is good

109. There is a dedicated adoption team staffed by a stable and experienced workforce, with a good level of management oversight and a knowledgeable team manager who tracks and monitors performance. This helps to ensure that adoption processes are timely and of good quality.
110. Young children who are identified for permanence through adoption are matched and placed quickly with their adoptive families. The local authority performance against the Department of Education (DfE) adoption scorecard shows a positive picture in relation to both statistical neighbours and the national average. The average time from a child entering care to moving in with their adoptive family is 513 days, and the time between Placement Orders being made and the local authority deciding on an adoptive family match is 96 days. This latter figure is less than half that of neighbouring authorities and shows exceptional performance on matching children to their adoptive family. Children whose plan is for adoption do not wait longer than the national average for adoptive families from the time they enter care, and are placed quickly with their new families when matched.

111. Performance on the DfE adoption scorecard demonstrates that the Local Authority are performing well and showing an increasing trajectory of children being placed for adoption. In March 2014, there were 40 children with a Placement Order waiting for adoption. At the time of inspection, ten children had been identified as having a prospective match, with plans for presenting the match to panel imminent, and eight children were waiting for adoption. The local authority has achieved a significant reduction in the number of children waiting for adoption, successfully placing 22 children for adoption in the last 12 months, almost half being placed along with their brothers and sisters. This is a marked increase from the previous year (30 children) and is above both statistical neighbours and the England average.
112. Very few children experience a change of plan where adoption is the preferred permanence choice (four in the last 12 months), and where plans do change, these are informed by the assessed needs of the child. This demonstrates that where adoption is the permanence plan for a child, this is achieved for the large majority of children.
113. The local authority performance on placing older children, over the age of five years, in adoptive families is half that of statistical neighbours at 3%. In cases seen by inspectors, the authority has not given full consideration to adoption in permanence planning for a small minority of children early enough. Therefore, not all children have experienced sufficient opportunity to be placed in adoptive families. However, inspectors did see evidence of proactive family finding for children over the age of five, which resulted in some children being placed with adoptive families, including children who have additional needs, multiple complex heritage needs and those who need to live with their brothers and sisters.
114. The DfE adoption scorecard shows that recruitment of adopters has shown a slight decrease from 2013 from 34 adopters approved in 2012-2013 to 30 in 2013-2014. This is lower than statistical neighbours. Most adopters are assessed in a timely manner and the two-stage assessment process has been fully implemented in Leicester; 38% of adopters are approved within 3-6 months of application compared with the English average of 24%. Where there are delays in prospective adopters' assessment, these are not affecting children being matched with adoptive families. Adopters report that preparation training is of good quality and challenging, and they appreciate the involvement of birth families' experiences. The large majority of Prospective Adopter Reports (PAR's) are of a high quality, with evidence of good analysis and evaluation to ensure adopters' suitability to meet children's needs.
115. Consideration is given to brothers and sisters remaining together within an adoptive family where this meets the assessed needs of the children. Good quality 'Together or apart' assessments inform permanence plans and family finding; some children have remained with their brothers and sisters through the tenacity of the family finding efforts.

116. Fostering to adoption is in the very early stages of use, with some children who could have avoided a placement move not benefiting from this approach. The local authority policy and procedure is in draft form only, with a plan to review this prior to finalising. Adopters are asked as part of the assessment process whether they wish to be considered for Fostering to Adoption placements but the number of currently approved foster to adopt carers is low, reducing the pool of possible placement options for very young babies.
117. Evidence is clear of widening the net to find adoptive families for children in a timely manner when the local authority does not have in-house adopters. This is done through prompt referrals to the National Adoption Register, media promotion, and Adoption Activity days. This has resulted in some children living in adoptive families with their brothers and sisters, and most children from Black and minority ethnic groups are positively matched to meet all, or most, of their heritage needs. Disabled children and children whose developmental outcomes are uncertain have also been placed as a result of proactive family finding activities.
118. The local authority adoption panel is independently chaired with an experienced and knowledgeable chair, and the panel is appropriately diverse. Regular training and appraisal of the panel chair and panel members are undertaken to develop knowledge in relation to current issues. The panel offers a high level of challenge and probing to social workers and adopters to ensure the quality of reports and suitability of adopters. The Agency Decision Maker provides effective scrutiny to matching reports to endorse decisions to match children with their adoptive family. The process is clear and effective to ensure that children are appropriately placed with suitable families.
119. In a small number of cases seen by inspectors, Child Permanency Records (CPR'S) that are completed by the child's social worker are not of sufficient quality to give a full picture of the child's needs. Some CPR's do not give a clear enough rationale as to why adoption is the appropriate permanence option for the child. The quality assurance provided by the Adoption Panel is, however, robust and this ensures that children are appropriately matched with adopters. The local authority is aware of the variable quality of CPR's and has planned mandatory training for social workers to improve this area of practice.
120. Post-adoption support is a significant strength within the service and is provided by the Child and Family Support team (CFST). Pathways to support are clear and families are aware of the service and what can be provided. Adoption support has been provided to 23 children, young people and their families on a one-to-one basis over the last 10 months, and therapeutic oversight offered for a child placed for adoption out of county. Post-adoption support plans and reviews of intervention are child-centred, evaluative and analytical. The service offers timely intervention through one-to-one support based on evidenced therapeutic models such as theraplay. It has utilised its participation in the Adoption Support Fund National Pilot to offer more intensive services to children and their families where this is needed.

121. There have been no adoption disruptions in the last two years and the quality of the post-adoption service shows a clear contribution to this positive picture. It also provides an advisory role to schools, which includes how best to focus the use of the adoption pupil premium. The service is able to demonstrate positive progress for children, and some adopters spoken to by inspectors state that the service and intervention had enabled them to continue to care for their child where the family were approaching breakdown. One adopter said 'I don't think we could have done it without their support.'
122. The CFST offer support services to birth parents through independent birth parent counselling and, for adopted adults, birth records counselling is available, with the service supporting 70 adults since March 2014. Over 450 cases are supported through the post-box contact service and 10 adopted children are supported with ongoing direct contact with their birth families.
123. In cases seen by inspectors, the majority of children are being effectively prepared for permanence. However, in a minority of cases life story work is not carried out early enough with children to enable them to make sense of their place in the world. The majority of life story books seen are of good quality, but a minority lack the depth provided in the good examples seen by inspectors.

The graded judgment about the experience and progress of care leavers is that it requires improvement

124. Performance management in the service is not well developed with reliable key performance indicators only very recently in place. This inhibits managers' understanding of the effectiveness and delivery of the service.
125. Caseloads in the 16 Plus service are high and personal advisors do not always have sufficient time to spend with care leavers. This has led to the service prioritising its intervention with young people aged 18 and over, for whom they hold sole case responsibility. The impact of this was seen during the inspection in respect of 16- and 17-year-old looked after young people, who had not met their personal advisor until many months after allocation. This impairs the timeliness and quality of transition planning.
126. The local authority is in touch with almost all of its care leavers and personal advisors are, in the main, tenacious in trying to maintain contact with young people. In a number of cases seen by inspectors there was too much emphasis placed on young people attending the office for contact rather than being visited in their accommodation, and this limits the effective monitoring of their welfare.

127. The vast majority of care leavers (96%) are living in suitable accommodation. Those young people identified as not living in suitable accommodation are predominantly not engaging or had experienced a number of placement breakdowns, despite receiving appropriate support from the service. There is one young person living in bed and breakfast accommodation who was about to move into independent living. Though well supported, a formal risk assessment had not been undertaken in respect of the accommodation, so the local authority could not be assured that this was a safe option.
128. Care leavers are prioritised for social housing and can access a range of accommodation options, including those supplied by the local authority, private rentals and those commissioned by the authority's placement scheme (including bespoke support packages). The range of accommodation has been extended in response to a consultation with young people through the Children in Care Council.
129. At the time of the inspection, the local authority could not evidence through their data collection process that they are accurately collecting data about which young people are living in a house of multiple occupancy, though inspectors identified none as living in accommodation that was of concern. Where the authority uses accommodation with less structured support, this is commissioned through the placements team and is subject to quality assurance and annual review to ensure suitability. These placements are normally only used where they are appropriate to a young person's individual needs and are not considered as a permanent housing solution.
130. Young people looked after are encouraged to remain in their fostering placements after they reach their 18th birthday through the local authority's Staying Put scheme. There are currently ten young people in such placements as the scheme is only in the early stages of its development.
131. Practice in respect of pathway planning is variable, and some pathway plans contain insufficient detail about actions, timescales and contingencies. The local authority has introduced a new pathway plan format developed in consultation with care leavers. Those seen during the inspection better reflected the views of care leavers, as well as giving improved attention to independent living skills, education, training and employment.
132. Personal assistants together with the young person complete most reviews, rather than at a formal multi-agency meeting, and in some cases, reviews had not taken place at all after young people had moved to unregulated settings. This approach is not consistent with the local authority's own policy and means that it is not able to assure itself of the appropriateness of young people's plans.

133. The proportion of care leavers in education, training or employment (EET) has risen from 41% in 2013–14 to 49% at the time of the inspection. Although this is a slightly improving picture, it is still not at a level the local authority would aspire to for its care leavers. The authority is trying to address this through a range of approaches, including closer partnership working with Connexions, the Virtual School, local colleges and universities. Higher Education experience days are promoted, and work placements are provided through the Leicestershire Cares Flying Fish project. Care leavers have priority access to the 16-19 bursary paid to young people in education or training. Currently 15 care leavers are attending university.
134. The local authority has its own pre-apprenticeship scheme for care leavers, in addition to the wider apprenticeships available, with 25 pre-apprenticeship and six apprenticeship places per year, ring-fenced for the care leaver group. Out of the six care leavers who undertook the apprenticeship scheme in 2014, three have secured permanent employment in the authority.
135. Care leavers access appropriate support for their health and well-being through a range of universal services. Care leavers with more complex needs are supported by a wraparound service via the Big Lottery funded Y-POD, and care leavers spoken to are positive about the support this had afforded them. Work is underway to further develop this approach through the transfer of the Care Leavers service to a new site in April 2015, which will offer a range of services to all care leavers through a multi-agency hub.
136. Care leavers are not routinely provided with information about their health histories, which means that they may not be aware of this important information. Out of a group of six care leavers spoken to, only one had an understanding of their health history. The local authority has not yet introduced a system for health passports, but reports that it has an action plan in place to develop this through the Care Leavers Strategic Board.
137. Currently there are 16 (8.65%) care leavers in custody, seven of whom are on remand. The 16 Plus service works collaboratively with the Youth Offending Service (YOS) to provide these young people with an appropriate level of support which includes joint visits. YOS workers attend key meetings to ensure a joined up approach to the needs of young people in custody.
138. The Disabled Children's Service provides sufficiently early notification to the Adults Social Care Transitions team for disabled young people to progress their transition to adult services. Feedback from young people and their carers identifies that while appropriate services and support are provided, current arrangements do not always meet the holistic needs of young people. The local authority has appropriate plans to improve transition services through the development of a more comprehensive 0-25 service. For example, two full-time health transitions coordinators are co-located in the Disabled Children's Service to coordinate the transition of young people's complex health plans. Parents spoken to said they value this additional support.

139. Almost all care leavers who were spoken to by inspectors reported that they felt safe. They were positive about the support they receive from their personal advisors in helping them to move towards independence or to live independently. The majority had some understanding about the entitlements they should receive from the local authority, such as access to financial support, including the leaving care grant, which the authority has set at the nationally recommended level of £2,000. The majority of this group were in possession of national insurance numbers and birth certificates. Although some information is available to care leavers regarding their entitlements, the local authority recognises that more work is required to strengthen care leavers' understanding about the support and entitlements available to them, and is currently in the process of developing an App to increase access to information.
140. The local authority has a pledge which sets out its commitment to provide support and entitlements to care leavers, and which young people have been involved in reviewing. Care leavers' achievements are celebrated through individual letters of commendation and annual celebration events, which care leavers are positive about.

Key judgement	Judgement grade
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate
<p>Summary</p> <p>There has been a corporate failure of leadership and accountability for children’s services in the local authority, with the leadership team and elected members failing to ensure that they have a robust understanding of the local authority’s performance. The quality and accuracy of performance management information they receive, though improving, continues to be insufficient. Some of the recommendations from the last inspection in November 2011 are still areas of weakness today. Some of the strengths that inspection identified have deteriorated significantly.</p> <p>A major restructure of children’s services in May 2014 was poorly managed, culminating in a significant shortfall of social work and managerial staff in some parts of the service that has had a major adverse impact upon service delivery. The new Director of Children's Services (DCS) and Interim Assistant Director (AD) began addressing this with appropriate urgency when they came into post into October 2014; the workforce has now begun to stabilise, albeit through the services of a number of agency workers.</p> <p>The DCS and AD swiftly established improvement plans and an Improvement Board to monitor their implementation. However, the poor quality performance information does not provide the plans with a secure foundation, and the DCS and AD acknowledged during the inspection that this deficit has impaired their ability to fully and accurately assess the service’s strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>There is a collective commitment to improving services for vulnerable children that is reflected in the local authority’s strategic planning and priorities, as demonstrated by the authority’s current contribution to the multi-agency child sexual exploitation strategic activity. The DCS and AD have made significant progress with the most pressing issues, in a relatively short space of time. There is strong political support to deliver improvement and a commitment to provide the additional resources needed.</p> <p>Although there are some strong partnership arrangements and some innovative plans to improve joint delivery of services, significant challenges remain. For example, engagement of partners in the delivery of early help is weak and there is currently no protocol between housing and social care to ensure that homeless young people age 16 and 17 years old are appropriately assessed.</p> <p>The local authority has robust arrangements for learning from young people’s experiences, and young people’s participation is strong.</p>	

141. Services for children looked after and care leavers are not yet good and services for children who need help and protection are inadequate.
142. Some of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection in November 2011 remain. This includes ensuring that the management oversight of cases is clearly recorded on children's records, with the reasons for the decisions taken, and ensuring that all plans clearly outline required outcomes, responsibilities and timescales. The quality of performance information and tracking mechanisms to enable regular monitoring of progress, which were identified as strengths at that inspection, have significantly deteriorated.
143. Key strategic decisions designed to make services more efficient and cost effective have had unintended negative consequences. A decision to move responsibility for performance management data to the corporate centre has over time contributed to inaccurate and insufficient reporting. This is compounded by poor systems for collection of data within the local authority's electronic recording system and inconsistent management oversight. As a result, managers, senior leaders and elected members do not have a detailed enough knowledge of what is happening at the front-line to discharge their individual and collective responsibilities effectively. The Performance Team moved back into Children's Services in mid-2014 and additional resources have been secured. The quality and accuracy of performance management information, is improving but remains insufficient to provide the level of accuracy, detail and analysis needed to support external scrutiny or robust quality assurance by managers.
144. The reorganisation of children's services that took place in May 2014, although based on sound principles, was poorly managed. The negative impact it has had on the quality, consistency and timeliness of services continues to be experienced to varying degrees by many children. This poor management of change resulted in low staff morale, lack of understanding of, and compliance with, newly introduced electronic systems, and organisational instability. This culminated in an increasing backlog of work in Child in Need teams due to staff turnover, which peaked in December 2014. On identifying the issue, the current DCS took action to ensure that cases were allocated. Following intensive recruitment of interim and agency staff, the backlog of unallocated work had largely been cleared at the point the inspection started.
145. Lack of good quality management information means that senior managers did not always know the extent of the issues identified through this inspection, such as the number of cases reallocated where children had not been seen and assessed. They also believed improvements were more advanced than was the reality, and were unaware that managers were not regularly reviewing the progress of single assessments to ensure timeliness and appropriate depth.

146. The local authority's evaluation of the quality of practice was over optimistic in nearly half of the 20 cases it audited for the purpose of this inspection. This included four cases that the local authority auditor had not recognised were inadequate until inspectors evaluated these. Auditors did not always recognise the impact of delay and drift on children, or note the impact of frequent changes in social worker and infrequent supervision on the quality of assessment and the delivery of plans in the child's timescale. Previous local authority audit activity found many of the same practice issues as seen during this inspection, but it has not been effective in improving practice. Further work needs to be undertaken with managers at every level to ensure that there is a shared understanding of good practice, that auditing practices are consistently robust and that learning from audits results in improved outcomes for children.
147. Though the Chief Operating Officer has regular meetings with the Director of Children's Services and with the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Board, his understanding of the quality and effectiveness of services and Board activity is affected by the lack of accurate performance information. Performance management is too reliant upon verbal reporting with insufficient scrutiny of data, agendas, minutes or attendance at meetings. Challenge to date has been insufficiently robust.
148. The Lead Member and Chief Operating Officer express confidence in the new Director of Children's Services and Interim Assistant Director and their ability to deliver the required improvements swiftly. There is political support for change and improvement and a commitment to providing the additional resources needed.
149. The recently established Improvement Board, comprised of senior managers, meets regularly. Its self-assessment, which was refreshed in December 2014, identifies many of the deficits seen in this inspection. They are included as part of the Improvement Board priorities and worked on as part of its action plan. However, the current improvement plans are too wide ranging, which means there is insufficient focus on getting the basics right first. Nor do they have clear enough outcome measures. Due to poor performance data and insufficiently robust managerial oversight, the Board does not have a detailed enough understanding of whether it is focusing on the right things, nor of the impact that improvement work is having on social work practice and outcomes for children.

150. The current DCS and Interim AD have made significant progress with the most pressing issue of stabilising and increasing capacity in the workforce in a relatively short space of time. A short-term workforce development plan has been successful in filling the majority of social work vacancies that resulted from the restructuring and associated changes. This has appropriately focused on recruiting permanent and interim staff of good quality. Interim staff are employed on longer-term contracts and are offered the same working conditions and training opportunities as the permanent workforce. Although this has resulted in immediate benefits, such as reducing staff caseloads to manageable levels and ensuring that almost all children have an allocated social worker, it is too early to tell if this strategy will succeed. In Children in Need teams, interim managers who have been employed by the local authority for less than six months fill the majority of team managers' posts. There remain significant challenges in ensuring consistency of managerial oversight based on a thorough knowledge of local policy and procedures due to the turnover of staff in this critical layer of management.
151. A longer-term workforce strategy is under development, and skills audits have been undertaken with early help and social care practitioners and frontline managers. This has informed a clear training and development programme which will help to establish baseline standards of practice across the children's workforce. Team managers are being offered training in leadership, supervision and managing performance. The progression of social workers is clearly linked to the Professional Capability Framework and the local authority funds post-qualifying opportunities for experienced staff. The authority has developed a policy that is ensuring that social workers have manageable caseloads.
152. Senior staff generally receive regular formal supervision that is appropriately aligned to organisational priorities, and to their professional development. A culture of robust supervision practice is being permeated down through the service by the senior leadership team, but is not yet embedded at all points in the system including, most crucially, at the front-line. The quality and frequency of formal supervision of social workers is far too variable, with frequent gaps and few examples of completed staff appraisals, making it difficult to evaluate workers' developmental needs and to support them. The templates used are inconsistent and do not follow the local authority guidance. Reflective supervision was not evident in supervision records.
153. Staff report improved visibility of senior managers, including the DCS and interim AD, and feel supported. Although almost all staff spoken to referred to the difficulties experienced since the service reorganised, the vast majority of them understood the local authority's vision for the future and wanted to be part of it.

154. There is a collective commitment to improving services for vulnerable children that is reflected in strategic planning and priorities. For example, there is strong strategic activity evident on tackling child sexual exploitation. The Children and Young People's Plan and City Mayor's delivery plan are closely aligned. The safeguarding of vulnerable children and the local authority's responsibility as a corporate parent are appropriately included as key priorities. They are not, however, included as priorities within the Health and Wellbeing Board's Strategic Plan. The local authority and partners recognise the alignment between the Board's priorities and other key strategic plans needs to be strengthened.
155. The current Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) requires refreshing and this process has commenced. Prevalence information is insufficiently detailed to inform commissioning strategies or to project future need. The local authority estimate of prevalence of parental mental health issues is based on a research model, because this data is not collected, and so the estimate has no local factual basis to inform commissioning. There are ambitious plans to improve the effectiveness of joint commissioning arrangements through completion of a JSNA for children by autumn 2015, which will lead to a refresh of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in April 2016. It is expected that this will lead to more cost effective joint commissioning with a clear focus on improved outcomes, and result in greater alignment between the Health and Wellbeing Board's priorities and other strategic plans. However, this is at an early stage and the local authority recognises that it is not well placed to identify gaps in services, including in relation to children who live with parents who have multiple problems related to substance abuse, mental health, and domestic abuse.
156. The local authority sufficiency statements have identified gaps in its own placement resources to meet the needs of older children, those from minority ethnic groups and larger sibling groups. The authority spot purchases placements from independent fostering agencies and independent children's homes when unable to match appropriate placements from its own resources. Arrangements for the monitoring and quality assurance of these placements are appropriately rigorous. Findings are reported to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Corporate Parenting Board, ensuring strategic oversight.
157. The Scrutiny Commission is properly constituted and is well attended. Two young people attend regularly and are active members. It is tenacious in endeavouring to fulfil its function effectively, despite the lack of performance information to support its functions.

158. The Safeguarding Panel is constituted of elected members, and exercises a scrutiny role in respect of performance information relating to children’s social care. Members of the Panel undertake Regulation 33 visits to Children’s Homes, the outcomes of which are reported to the Panel. The Panel has ensured that all councillors receive regular safeguarding training and, through effective challenge, has helped to ensure the sufficiency of child sexual exploitation training for professionals working with children and young people.
159. The Lead Member chairs the Corporate Parenting Forum, which includes two young people from the Children in Care Council, and this is well established and suitably aspirational. It does not, however, have a sufficient understanding of the performance of local services and their impact on all outcomes for children looked after and care leavers. The lack of regular reporting of performance information and audit activity, including oversight from the Independent Reviewing Officer Service, means that challenge and priority setting is not linked strongly enough to what is happening to children and young people, the quality of services being provided to them and their outcomes. In the absence of good quality performance information, it does use other sources of intelligence, and its scrutiny of the quality of care leavers’ accommodation led to visits by Forum members to provision. This resulted in the closure of an establishment found to be providing unsuitable accommodation and support.
160. Strategic partnership working with the Family Justice Board and Cafcass is weak due to the local authority’s poor engagement in the Board and its Performance Sub-Group. The opportunities this group offers to develop more effective partnership working, and for the authority to influence improved joint performance with regard to the length of care proceedings and the quality of court reports, have not been prioritised.
161. The local authority aspires to be a learning organisation and has mechanisms in place for learning from themes arising from advocacy and complaints. Learning from the Local Government Association Peer Health and Wellbeing Challenge undertaken in February 2014 led to the lead member for children’s services becoming a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and other learning from this challenge has been incorporated into its improvement planning, as have best practice examples drawn from research. It undertakes its own research to inform best planning for individual children and future service configuration. The Prevention, Care Planning and Sufficiency project, for example, gives a detailed analysis of the last five years’ data on the profile of children looked after. It outlines appropriate key aims, including improving provision of early help and help to children at the edge of care. The benefits of this activity are, however, constrained by the local authority’s overall lack of knowledge and understanding about its own performance.
162. Young people’s participation is strong. Young people sit on strategic panels, there is an active and enthusiastic Children in Care Council, and groups such as ‘Big Mouth’ and ‘Little Mouth’ provide an opportunity for disabled young people to make their voices heard.

163. The local authority responds well to children's diversity needs in relation to race, culture and sexuality; for example, through appropriate use of interpreters and referral to the Heritage Panel, which considers ways of improving practice and identifies gaps in services, and provides support and advice to practitioners to ensure that the heritage needs of children receiving services are met.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is inadequate

The arrangements in place to evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and board partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children are inadequate.

Summary of findings

The LSCB is inadequate because:

Scrutiny, awareness and challenge

- The Board's recent arrangements to monitor frontline local authority practice have been ineffective. As a result, it has not had sufficient awareness and understanding of the weaknesses in key child protection services such as those within children's social care. This lack of effective scrutiny has meant that it has not held agencies sufficiently to account to improve these services.
- The Board has not been receiving adequate performance management data of safeguarding activity from partners and it is therefore unable to hold agencies effectively to account.
- The Board has not provided robust challenge to the partners nor ensured effective co-ordination of all key services. The good engagement of board members has not resulted in meaningful impact upon front line practice.
- Engagement with young people in order to drive improvement to safeguarding practice and effectiveness is at an early stage, so its work is not yet directly informed by the views of young people.

Quality and evaluation

- The Board has not provided effective scrutiny to evaluate the impact of the early help offer. Partners are not clear about their early help responsibilities, and referral thresholds are not well understood.
- Although the Board has been aware of major changes that have taken place within the local authority in the past nine months, it has not foreseen or assessed the impact of these on the workforce and their practice.
- The Board's own understanding of the quality of practice is restricted by limited audit activity within the partnership.
- The development of a child sexual exploitation strategy is at a relatively early stage and it is too soon to evaluate impact. Training has not been sufficiently targeted to ensure that practitioners understand and act upon the indicators of child sexual exploitation.

What does the LSCB need to improve?

Priority and immediate action

164. Establish and implement a robust performance management framework and dataset that can enable the Board to exercise scrutiny of service effectiveness and outcomes for children. This should include reliable quantitative data, qualitative information, service user's views and experiences and practitioner's views.
165. Monitor the effectiveness of statutory services and practice provided to children in need of help and protection.
166. Establish a clear line of sight and reporting from front line practice to the Board so that concerns and challenges can be identified more promptly and accurately.

Areas for improvement

Scrutiny, awareness and challenge

167. Ensure that the information reported to the Board contains challenging analysis that enables members to identify the key priority areas for improvement and generate an effective Business Plan.
168. Increase the number frequency and range of multi-agency audits initiated by the Board.
169. Produce and implement a plan to engage with children and young people in order to hear and act upon their voice.

Quality and evaluation

170. Produce an Annual Report that is consistent with all the requirements of Working Together (March 2013).
171. Evaluate the current operation of the early help offer, including partners understanding and implementation of their early help responsibilities and the understanding and application of service thresholds.
172. Ensure that an evaluation of the impact of recent CSE initiatives relating to prevention, protection, prosecution and disruption is undertaken and that the right support is being made available to victims.

Inspection judgement about the LSCB

173. Leicester City LSCB is properly constituted and has appropriate representation from partner agencies. It has appropriate links and protocols with the Children's Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board, although safeguarding children has not been a regular agenda item at the HWBB. The Chair meets regularly with the City Mayor, Lead Member and senior officers of the council and has a programme of formal meetings with Chief Executives of statutory partners and officers. Through these meetings, the Chair has raised a number of challenges including in key areas such as the need to improve performance monitoring and to listen to the voice of the child. However, at the time of the inspection the local authority had not made these improvements. There is an appropriate range of sub-groups, chaired for the most part at a suitable level, but which operate with different levels of effectiveness. The Safeguarding Effectiveness Group, in particular, is not driving improvement. The Board has joint working arrangements with the Boards in Leicestershire and Rutland. The LSCB Chair is also Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board, and there is good engagement with agencies and services that focus on adults. The local Health Trusts are engaged and Leicestershire Police is a particularly vigorous partner.
174. The LSCB undertook a review of its own governance from September 2014, seeking to ensure that its constitution, membership and chairing of sub-groups were fit for purpose. The current business plan is mainly aspirational and is not supported by good quality management information. Similarly, the annual report is not supported by robust performance data and, although it does set out its priorities, including recognition of the weaknesses identified in this inspection, there is no cogent plan to deliver them. The revised governance arrangements were approved by the Board in December 2014 and have been implemented. The reforms include a new framework for the Business Plan, which sets out how priorities will be identified and delivered.
175. The Annual Report for 2013–14 does express the commitment to improve the quality and consistency of work with families, but does not set out a clear plan of how the Board will assist in doing this. It is not sufficiently challenging of partners and is not supported by performance information. There is little analysis and it does not clearly enough identify key areas of weakness or vulnerability which require improvement. The report does not therefore provide a rigorous assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services.

176. The Board has received an Indicators Report in 2014, which is the beginning of a dataset that is appropriate for Board members to use as the basis for mutual challenge. However, the report is heavily reliant on local authority data, which is incomplete and not fully reliable. There are key and basic gaps in the data available to the Board. It does not receive data on the attendance of parents, young people or agencies at Child Protection Conferences, for example. The Demands Reports, which the Board receives as a measure of service pressures, are helpful but are not supported by performance information and are too discursive in nature. The local authority understands that the implementation of its client information system has been problematic, and accurate data collection and analysis are not yet completely reliable; this is hampering the Board in its efforts to identify and grasp key performance issues. The Safeguarding Effectiveness Group has expressed an intention to bring together multi-agency datasets in a Results Based Analysis model and 'overlay' these in order to produce a picture of partnership working, yet at present there is not an adequate dataset, nor analysis, which meets basic requirements.
177. Arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency frontline practice are not well developed. The system of monthly Multi Agency Case File Audits (MACFAs), where practitioners come together with agency leads to discuss one case, does not give sufficient coverage of the range of vulnerable children. Only eight MACFAs were held during 2014. No thematic audits are undertaken. The experiences of young people are not yet being collected and used to inform service improvement. The Board is not fully sighted on frontline practice and cannot therefore hold agencies properly to account.
178. LSCB partners make appropriate contributions to the overall work of the Board, which is well resourced. All agency Section 11 audits have been signed off following a senior officers' challenge meeting attended by all statutory partners. The LSCB has identified the need for a more robust Section 11 process in August 2014 and this is now being implemented.
179. A Learning and Improvement Framework is in place, which sets out how the learning from review processes, audits, performance information and external scrutiny will be taken forward. However, there is evidence that at least two of these four arms are insufficiently developed. Serious Case Reviews have been effectively managed and published, and the learning captured and disseminated to staff at multi-agency events, although several social workers spoken to had not had the opportunity to attend the briefing sessions. Learning from serious case reviews, both local and national, also informs to LSCB training and audit programme. The Board receives the annual report of the Child Death Overview Panel, which is chaired by the Consultant in Public Health. The CDOP report for 2013–14 did contain some analysis of cases reviewed and made appropriate recommendations for health agencies.
180. Policies and procedures are in place; however, the impact of these has not been formally evaluated. Revised procedures were implemented in October 2013 and are compliant with the Working Together 2013 statutory guidance.

181. The Thresholds document, which sets out partner responsibility for working with families at various levels of complexity, was re-issued in early 2014. The current early help strategy has not had sufficient buy-in from partners, and some practitioners are continuing to refer inappropriately to social care and appear unaware of their responsibility to carry out an early help assessment. The number of early help assessments fell significantly (by 23.1 %) from quarter 1 to quarter 2 during 2014, and this downward trend was reported to the Board by the Safeguarding Effectiveness Group as a critical issue but this has not yet received an effective response.
182. Child sexual exploitation has been a local priority area for the Board for several years but the increased national focus has led to a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) joint strategic approach, which is now driven by the LLR Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Trafficking sub group. This group is developing an understanding of prevalence across the three local authorities through an analysis of the data held by a range of agencies. An operational multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation group has been established that also works across the three local authorities and this aims to establish a tri-borough multi-agency hub. In Leicester City, a range of awareness-raising materials has been produced and circulated and over 8000 young people have been engaged through the film 'Chelsea's Choice'. There is training and a toolkit available to elements of the private sector, such as taxi firms and hotels. A training programme is in place but more work needs to be done to ensure that this is effectively targeted and to ensure its impact is evaluated. Weekly multi-agency meetings share intelligence and plan disruption activity. The Board is at the beginning of an understanding of the issue of radicalisation and it is too early to demonstrate any impact of this work.
183. The LSCB has in the past been an influential participant in helping to monitor and shape services for children in Leicester. When the partnership became concerned at the high level of contacts and referrals from partners coming into Social Care, it commissioned an evaluation of the work at the 'front door' which was undertaken during 2013. This resulted in the creation of the Duty and Advice Service that was working well at the time of the inspection. However, the quality of the Board's scrutiny more recently has been insufficient. Multiple changes enacted during 2014 had powerful and unintended consequences. These changes included the closure of some area offices and a centralisation of staffing, the introduction of a new client information system and a new telephone system. The impact of this poorly managed change and lack of positive staff engagement led to a high level of staff turnover in children's social care and affected the quality of frontline practice in some teams. Information presented by partners to the Board on the impact of these changes was not sufficiently timely or robust and the Board was too slow in seeking this information or acting on the concerns it did have. As a result, the Board was ineffective in providing robust challenge and holding agencies to account. It was hampered in this by management changes and gaps in the business and professional support provided to the Board. The Board has recently begun to acknowledge and appreciate the severity of these problems.

184. Multi-agency training in child safeguarding is available to practitioners in Leicester and this and attendees report that it is of good quality; a project coordinator supports this. Evaluation of training impact on practice is beginning, and a voluntary sector organisation is commissioned to report on the impact of the learning and development offer. Attendance at training events is increasing and the number of no-shows is reducing.

What the inspection judgements mean

The Local Authority

An **outstanding** Local Authority leads highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** Local Authority leads effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and those who are looked after and care leavers have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a Local Authority that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the authority is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children, young people and families.

A Local Authority that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after or care leavers not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

The LSCB

An **outstanding** LSCB is highly influential in improving the care and protection of children. Their evaluation of performance is exceptional and helps the Local Authority and its partners to understand the difference that services make and where they need to improve. The LSCB creates and fosters an effective learning culture.

An LSCB that is **good** coordinates the activity of statutory partners and monitors the effectiveness of local arrangements. Multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective and evaluated regularly for impact. The LSCB provides robust and rigorous evaluation and analysis of local performance that identifies areas for improvement and influences the planning and delivery of high-quality services.

An LSCB **requires improvement** if it does not yet demonstrate the characteristics of good.

An LSCB that is **inadequate** does not demonstrate that it has effective arrangements in place and the required skills to discharge its statutory functions. It does not understand the experiences of children and young people locally and fails to identify where improvements can be made.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences of children and young people who have needed or still need help and/or protection. This also includes children and young people who are looked after and young people who are leaving care and starting their lives as young adults.

Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children, young people and families. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with families and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the Local Authority knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

The inspection of the Local Authority was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was carried out under section 15A of the Children Act 2004.

Ofsted produces this report of the inspection of Local Authority functions and the review of the local safeguarding children board under its power to combine reports in accordance with section 152 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The inspection team consisted of eight of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted.

The inspection team

Lead inspector: Carolyn Spray

Deputy lead inspector: Shirley Bailey

Team inspectors: Andrew Wyatt, Pauline Turner, Graham Tilby, Tina Shepherd, Donna Marriott, Carmen Rodney

Quality assurance manager: Nicholas McMullen

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In order to focus discussion for our meeting on Monday there will be 9 Significant Events in the Review of Children's Social Work. We require some factually responses which should be fairly straightforward and some answer that require opinions; we would like to get as many answers as possible in writing in order to make best use of the meeting time for supplementary questions or clarification of the written answers. I intend taking questions on each event in the order presented here and would appreciate all witnesses to making themselves available throughout the examination of these events.

EVENT 1 – Inception and design of the Review

When was the review incepted and designed?

The Business Case for the review was developed in the Autumn of 2013, consultation with staff and Trade Unions happened from October 2013 through to the end of January 2014, a period of staff slotting into the new structure and appeals happened throughout February and March. The review was implemented in April and May of 2014.

What was the purpose of the review? Specifically was it a budget driven review (i.e. was there a savings target attached? Or was it primarily a service driven review? How many posts were there pre & post review?

The purpose of the review is set out in the forward of the business case, the full business case is available on the Council's intranet:

“The focus of the review is on redesigning statutory services for children in Leicester based on the child's journey, whilst securing better integration with locality early help services. The service is also required to make budgetary savings due to new budgetary constraints imposed by central government; however this is an opportunity to transform services and create a structure that is fit for purpose for the next 5-10 years. Transforming statutory services around the journey children, young people and their families take will ensure that the child's voice is central to the social work task and lead to improvements in the quality of practice and ultimately outcomes for children, young people and families.

The review is evidence based and informed by the work commissioned by the Leicester Safeguarding Children Board and carried out by Professor David Thorpe and his team. The focus of this work was on referral taking and assessment practices in Leicester in the context of the increasing numbers of referrals, re-referrals and subsequent social care activity taking place in children's social care. The redesign of services is also informed by the outcome of quality assurance activity undertaken by senior managers in the division, with the overall aim of improving the quality and consistency of the service social workers give to children, young people and their parents/carers in Leicester.”

The business case stated that £16,653,800 would be required to run the new services, a reduction of £1,853,495 than was required previously.

Across all teams in scope there were a total of 448.38 fte posts and the review reduced this to 382.08 fte posts. This was the result of modelling and allowing for social worker case-loads of 18 – 20.

What was the composition of the programme board?

There was no programme board, the review team as detailed in the business case was:

“The Review Lead Manager will be Andy Smith, Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding. He will be supported by Jane Pierce, Project Manager, and Parvathi JaganMohan from Human Resources; Jasmine Nembhard, Interim Head of Service Children's Fieldwork and Cheriell O'Neill, Head of Service Looked After Children Services, Caroline Tote, Head of Service Children's Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit; Alison Moss, Head of Admin and Business Support; Louise Remzi-Browne, Corporate Business Support Manager and Bhavna Patel and Nick Rimes, from Finance.”

Was the review referred to CYPs Scrutiny?

Committee Services have confirmed that, “No item in relation to the review was placed on the agenda for either Committee (Children’s and Overview) and a request had not been lodged by either Committee.”

Was there anything the review design that could have been done differently to avoid the outcome?

Ofsted described the review as well intentioned and showed support for its objectives, what they have been critical of is the implementation of the move from the old model to the new model.

EVENT 2 – Implementation of the new structure

What was the date of the implementation of the new reviewed structure?

The new structure and service model was implemented in April and May 2014, the Ofsted report describes the implementation date as May 2015.

EVENT 3 – Problems emerge with the new structure

When did social workers start complaining about the new structure?

Concerns were raised through the consultation stage and changes were made to the business case to address those concerns.

When did social workers start handing in their notice?

In Safeguarding Assurance Meetings at the 31st March 2014 it was reported there were 5 social worker vacancies and in the meeting at June 12th 2014 the Director reported 8 social worker vacancies, at the meeting on 19th September 2014 15-17 vacancies were reported. At all meetings positive recruitment activity was described as taking place and the use of agency cover was also described. All meetings reported that there were no unallocated cases. Social Worker case-loads peaked at 22-25 cases, above the desired 18-20 cases but were described as “still in line with the average caseloads identified in the Social Work Task Force Report (published by the government in 2009)”. The September meeting reported that “all social work vacancies have been filled with social workers joining the service from this month caseloads will reduce to the figure identified in the review (18 – 20).”

Why did social workers start handing in their notices?

A combination of different factors were reported to the Safeguarding Assurance meetings such as career development, relocation, workers not buying into the new structure following the organisational review, and workers choosing to leave the council in favour of working for an agency for financial reasons.

Were the following aware of the social worker discontent and if so when did they become aware, if not why didn't they know?

CYPs MANAGEMENT

CYPs UNIONS

CENTRAL HR

CENTRAL FINANCE

SENIOR CORPORATE MANAGERS

EXECUTIVE POLITICIANS

SCRUTINY POLITICIANS

EVENT 4 – Unallocated social worker cases go up to a worrying level.

What is a worrying level of unallocated cases?

Difficult to put a number on this as it depends on the circumstances within the service, urgent referrals get picked up through DAS. By example if on a day there are 16 new referrals, an agency worker leaves and at a stroke the number is close to 40. If these cases can all be allocated the same or the following day, then this number wouldn't necessarily be a concern.

The 291 cases are said to be low risk. What does that mean? Who decided they were low risk and how?

Of the 291 cases on December 17th 2014, 73 were existing cases awaiting re-allocation to new social workers arriving (these had been seen and assessed). 218 were children who had been referred for single assessment. We ensured that these cases were quickly allocated.

The majority of the 291 cases were children who had been referred through for a single assessment. Urgent safeguarding concerns were dealt with through DAS in a timely way (as evidenced in the Ofsted report – page 14, point 53) carrying out a section 47 assessment, and are not included in the 291 cases.

Thresholds are agreed by joint LLR (Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland) boards and those determine which children might be eligible for a social care service.

When was this level reached, for what period did it last?

December 17th, for one day, cases were already being allocated, this was not a static situation.

Why was this level reached?

Not enough Social Workers, we would have put more children at risk if they had been allocated to Social Workers with already full case- loads.

Who referred these children to the Dept? What were they told when the children were not allocated social workers?

A combination of schools, health, police and families or self-referrals. Every referrer should be written to but this didn't happen all the time and is one of the areas of inconsistency that Ofsted discussed with CYP management.

How long did the children have to wait for social workers to be appointed?

From October 1st 2014 to January 17th 2015, 1355 new single assessments were due for allocation to the CiN teams. Of those, 1006 were allocated, and over that period, a maximum of 291 (at the highest point in December) were allocated to team managers, waiting for new workers to arrive. In November 2014, 2,606 cases were open to the CIN service. In November 2014, there were 138 Section 47 (S47) enquiries.

291 cases

Of the 291 cases on December 17th 2014, 73 were existing cases awaiting re-allocation to new social workers arriving. 218 were children who had been referred for single assessment.

We ensured that these cases were allocated as soon as we had social workers in place to take them. They are now allocated, all children have been seen and assessed. On a daily basis there are approximately 20 cases being passed through from DAS to the teams for allocation.

We are now doing some further analysis of the current situation with the 291 cases which will more fully answer the questions posed and check progress with the children. It is not yet complete but can be reported at a later stage. Where there are concerns about practice or management oversight of these cases, this is being dealt with immediately.

Urgent safeguarding concerns were dealt with through DAS in a timely way (as evidenced in the Ofsted report – page 14, point 53) carrying out a section 47 assessment, and are not included in the 291 cases.

Were the following aware of the level of unallocated cases and if so when did they become aware, if not why didn't they know?

CYPS MANAGEMENT
CYPS CABINET MEMBER
CYPS UNIONS
SENIOR CORPORATE MANAGERS
CITY MAYOR & OTHER EXECUTIVE POLITICIANS
SCRUTINY POLITICIANS

What are the reporting and monitoring arrangements for allocation of children to social workers and did these go to, Corporate Board, CYPS Cabinet Member and City Mayor?

A log of case allocation is now overseen daily by managers and a weekly performance meeting to look at a range of performance indicators of frontline social care work happens.

The weekly monitoring information includes:

Supervision

Chronologies

Unallocated cases

Case recording

Team Managers, Service Managers, Heads of Service, the Divisional Director and the DCS see this information.

Previously CYP Management Team discussed performance reports monthly but it now seems used unreliable data manually collected from teams that gave an overly optimistic view of the service. The department also relied on sample case audits that were carried out by other managers, Ofsted found that the findings of these were overly optimistic. Some audits were done externally but now all audits will be supported by professionals independent of the service while the staff are developing their skills so that they recognise what good looks like.

Assurance Safeguarding Meetings instigated by the City Mayor, reported key safeguarding information to the City Mayor, Assistant City Mayor and Chief Operating Officer quarterly at April, June, September and December in 2014. It was only in the December report that numbers of unallocated cases were reported and significant recruitment and retention issues were reported. All previous meetings reported no unallocated cases and no recruitment concerns regarding frontline social workers.

EVENT 5 – Frances Craven takes up post, Elaine McHale leaves as Interim Director of CYPS

When did Frances Craven take up her post?

Frances started in the authority on 18 September 2014. There was an induction period and she formally took up the role on 10 October when Elaine McHale left the role.

When did Frances Craven suspect a problem with unallocated cases?

Frances asked on the 21st October for the numbers of cases unallocated to be provided on a daily basis – staff could not provide this for 48 hours which suggested that management oversight was not robust.

When did Frances Craven begin further investigation?

The same day and has been relentless about it since – this information is received daily and is now located in the performance team, data that is received on a daily basis shows the impact of the measure taken to put in place the full teams of social workers by mid-January.

When did Frances Craven have enough information to take concerns higher?

Concerns were taken higher as soon as it was realised.

When did Frances Craven take her concerns to other people?

CABINET MEMBER FOR CYPS
THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
THE CITY MAYOR
SCRUTINY and AUDIT and RISK

Event 6 – A recovery plan is developed

When was a recovery plan implemented and how was it implemented?

Actions were taken in early November with HR and the Service which focused on recruiting a cohort of agency workers as a bridging strategy to a more permanent workforce. This began to have impact but social workers were still leaving the service alongside continued demand. A project manager with social work qualifications was employed working alongside HR, the service and new agency staff started at the beginning of December. Her role was to recruit retain and induct agency and permanent staff. In December because demand was greater than the number of workers could safely manage a team was formed of experienced family support staff supervised by qualified social work managers to see children and initiate the outstanding single assessments and the Duty and Advice Team followed up the priority assessments and made sure children were seen.

In four months, twenty six social workers and five team managers have been recruited. A further seven social workers are due to start. It is important to recruit quality social workers and follow safe recruitment practices. References need to be checked and DBS checks carried out. The recruitment work is continuing.

Alongside these short terms actions work was started on a longer improvement plan. This draft plan is now being reviewed against all the Ofsted findings and recommendations.

We are told that agency social workers have been appointed to deal with the back log. How much has this cost compared with what would have been spent if the 30 permanent staff had been retained?

The typical LCC social worker cost is £24/hour compared to agency cost of £39/hour

We are forecasting to overspend on CiN teams staffing costs by £375k in 14/15 against a budget of £3.7m.

Were the following aware of the recovery plan and if so when did they become aware, if not why didn't they know?

CYPS MANAGEMENT
CYPS CABINET MEMBER
CYPS UNIONS
CENTRAL HR
CENTRAL FINANCE
SENIOR CORPORATE MANAGERS
CITY MAYOR AND OTHER EXECUTIVE POLITICIANS
SCRUTINY POLITICIANS

Event 7 – OFSTED Arrive

When did OFSTED inform us they were coming?

13 January 2015

When did they actually arrive?

14 January 2015

Would the non-allocation of social workers have come to light had OFSTED not inspected?

See above – this matter was already robustly being dealt and Ofsted have commented on the current management teams grasp on the issues

Event 8 – OFSTED Indicate there were serious problems

When did OFSTED Indicate there were serious problems

They identified the problems that Frances had uncovered in their first week. It was on reading the draft report that the full extent and context (history) of the problems became apparent.

How did the following react to this indication?

CYPS MANAGEMENT
CYPS CABINET MEMBER
CYPS UNIONS
SENIOR CORPORATE MANAGERS
CITY MAYOR & OTHER EXECUTIVE POLITICIANS
SCRUTINY POLITICIANS

Event 9 – The Removal of Executive Lead CYPS & Interim Corporate Director

Who was responsible for the appointment of the interim CYPS Head? and why was the interim appointment so long?

The previous DCS and Assistant Mayor for Children’s Services appointed the interim post holder. She was interviewed by both of these after being put forward by a specialist recruitment agency. References were supplied by the agency, including from the most recent employer.

Frances was appointed on our 3rd attempt to secure a permanent DCS.

When did the City mayor decide to remove the CYPS Lead and previous interim director?

After reading the draft Ofsted report and it was clear that a significant problem had been developing over a 6/9 month period.

When was that decision implemented?

Very quickly afterwards

Why did you do this?

The position of both of them was untenable.

Why did you not do this earlier?

Frances had been reacting to the situation as it was emerging, she had not had the time to piece together the recent history in the same way Ofsted had. Ofsted had a team of 8 inspectors that worked over 3 weeks and were incredibly helpful in piecing things together.

MOVING ON

What efforts have been made to ascertain whether harm has been done to children not allocated social workers?

All of the Children have been seen and assessments have been completed.

Do we know what harm has been done to children & their families because of the failure to allocate social workers?

The majority of the 291 cases were children who had been referred through for a single assessment (73 were cases needing to be reallocated). Urgent safeguarding concerns were dealt with through DAS in a timely way (as evidenced in the Ofsted report – page 14, point 53) carrying out a section 47 assessment, and are not included in the 291 cases.

What immediate measures have been taken to prevent a repeat of this incident?

See previous answers

Questions from Cllr Sue Waddington

Question	Category	Response
1. Would this situation have come to light, that is would we have known about it, without the Ofsted inspection?	Context Political	<p>When the new Director of Education and Children’s Services (DCS) and the interim Divisional Director came into post in October 2014, they began to asked questions about the day to day running of the service which began to bring the situation to light.</p> <p>The length of time it took the service to identify the number of unallocated cases and to present accurate information (circa. 48 hours in the first instance) suggested to them that the day to day management information was either not available or was not reliable.</p> <p>A combination of different factors had been reported to the Safeguarding Assurance meetings such as career development, relocation, workers not buying into the new structure following the organisational review, and workers choosing to leave the council in favour of working for an agency for financial reasons. We now believe that the factors Ofsted reported had a much bigger impact than had been reported throughout 2014.</p>
1a. When did the Assistant Mayor know about it?	Political	The Assistant Mayor was informed about emerging problems in the third week of October 2014.
1b. When did the City Mayor know about it?	Political	It was formally reported by the new Director at the December Safeguarding Assurance meeting, although they had informed the City Mayor of emerging problems at the same time as the Assistant Mayor.
2. What was the purpose of this review? What were the intended savings in posts and money?	Review	<p>The purpose of the review is set out in the forward of the business case, the full business case is available on the Council’s intranet:</p> <p>“The focus of the review is on redesigning statutory services for children in Leicester based on the child’s journey, whilst securing better integration with locality early help services. The service is also required to make budgetary savings due to new</p>

		<p>budgetary constraints imposed by central government; however this is an opportunity to transform services and create a structure that is fit for purpose for the next 5-10 years. Transforming statutory services around the journey children, young people and their families take will ensure that the child's voice is central to the social work task and lead to improvements in the quality of practice and ultimately outcomes for children, young people and families.</p> <p>The review is evidence based and informed by the work commissioned by the Leicester Safeguarding Children Board and carried out by Professor David Thorpe and his team. The focus of this work was on referral taking and assessment practices in Leicester in the context of the increasing numbers of referrals, re-referrals and subsequent social care activity taking place in children's social care. The redesign of services is also informed by the outcome of quality assurance activity undertaken by senior managers in the division, with the overall aim of improving the quality and consistency of the service social workers give to children, young people and their parents/carers in Leicester."</p> <p>The business case stated that £16,653,800 would be required to run the new services, a reduction of £1,853,495 than was required previously.</p> <p>Across all teams in scope there were a total of 448.38 fte posts and the review reduced this to 382.08 fte posts.</p>
3. Was this review subject to Scrutiny by the Commission and if so what information was provided?	Review	Committee Services have confirmed that, "No item in relation to the review was placed on the agenda for either Committee (Children's and Overview) and a request had not been lodged by either Committee."
4. Why did 30 social workers leave and when did they leave?	HR	The staff turnover between May and December 2014 resulted in a significant number of vacancies at any one time in the service. Combined with 'normal' turnover, staff on sick leave and staff on maternity leave, teams were depleted over a period of about 7 months.

		<p>The council offers an exit interview but this is not mandatory. The reasons social workers left were not formally collated.</p> <p>Reasons given by the then Divisional Director at the time for vacancies in the service were “career development, relocation, workers not buying into the new structure following the organisational review, and workers choosing to leave the council in favour of working for an agency for financial reasons”.</p>
5. What was the time line of the review and the staff leaving and the children not being allocated social workers?	Review Practice	<p>The organisational review was implemented in April/May 2014.</p> <p>The staff turnover in the year 2014-15 resulted in a significant number of vacancies at any one time in the service. Combined with ‘normal’ turnover, staff on sick leave and staff on maternity leave, teams were depleted over a period of about 7 months.</p> <p>The recruitment of agency and new permanent workers were insufficient to fill these vacancies, and the social workers in post (permanent and temporary) had an average of 25 cases and were unable to take on significant quantities of new work. Work could not be allocated to existing social workers because it would have created additional risk for children and young people by overloading them with cases they could not manage. As new workers came into post, they took on the caseloads of departing workers. Where possible, single assessments were allocated to workers in post.</p> <p>Context: In November 2014, there were 2071 initial contacts to the DAS service. Of those 367 met the criteria for a referral to social care to be assessed. Of those referrals, 60% required further single assessments.</p> <p>From Oct 21st 2014 to 17th Jan 2015, 1,355 new single assessments were passed through for allocation to the CiN teams. Of those, 1,006 were allocated and over that period a maximum of 291 at the highest point in December were allocated to Team Managers.</p>
6. What monitoring requirements were in place	Current/Past practice	A log of case allocation is now overseen daily by managers and a weekly performance meeting to look at a range of performance indicators of frontline social

<p>with regard to the allocation of social workers to cases? How often was monitoring information produced (weekly, monthly etc)? Who saw and sees this monitoring information?</p>		<p>care work happens.</p> <p>The weekly monitoring information includes: Supervision Chronologies Unallocated cases Case recording</p> <p>Team Managers, Service Managers, Heads of Service, the Divisional Director and DCS see this information.</p> <p>Previously CYP Management Team discussed performance reports monthly but it now seems used unreliable data manually collected from teams that gave an overly optimistic view of the service. The department also relied on sample case audits that were carried out by other managers, Ofsted found that the findings of these were overly optimistic. Some audits were done externally but now audits will be supported by professionals independent of the service while the staff are developing their skills so that they recognise what good looks like.</p> <p>Assurance Safeguarding reports were reported to the City Mayor, Assistant City Mayor and Chief Operating Officer quarterly at April, June, September and December in 2014. It was only in the December report that numbers of unallocated cases were reported and significant recruitment and retention issues were reported.</p>
<p>7. What are the governance requirements within the dept? Was the Director given regular monitoring information? Was the Assistant Mayor given regular</p>	<p>Practice</p>	<p>The Carefirst system produced limited performance information that was used to monitor service performance. When that system ended and the new electronic recording system (Liquid Logic) started, information was migrated and by October 2014 the gradual accumulation of information about children that was recorded on Liquid Logic enabled the service to start drawing off performance information. The performance information, however due to the changeover to Liquid Logic was either</p>

<p>monitoring information?</p> <p>How often did the managers/ assistant mayor meet for regular updating? Do they have standard issues on their agendas?</p> <p>What reports go to the City Mayor?</p>		<p>unreliable or unavailable.</p> <p>A fortnightly Lead Member Briefing was in place which included the Assistant Mayor, DCS and Divisional Directors.</p> <p>Quarterly Performance Reports to DMT showed a positive picture of the service.</p> <p>In addition to informal briefings from the Assistant Mayor, the City Mayor instituted a system of formal Safeguarding Assurance meetings that received reports featuring the key performance information on Safeguarding, at which it was continually reported there were no unallocated cases in Leicester.</p> <p>A report presented on 15th December 2014 at the Safeguarding Assurance meeting with the City Mayor, Chief Operating Officer, and the Assistant Mayor identified some of the issues which the Director and Divisional Director had picked up.</p>
<p>8. What role did HR have in raising awareness of problems caused when 30 key front line staff left?</p> <p>Did they alert managers or the assistant mayor/city mayor? If not why not?</p>	HR	<p>No specific alert was given on the issue of 30 frontline social workers leaving the two CiN teams in Children's Social Care.</p> <p>HR and the Business Service Centre did provide regular Divisional and Departmental reports to CYP management on staffing issues including starters and leavers. The HR and Payroll system doesn't provide very detailed information, without a specific request or interrogation. It is currently being retendered and quality management information and reports will be an important aspect of the new specification.</p> <p>The working relationship with HR and the current DCS and Divisional Director started in October and has been very strong due to this issue. Prior to that HR were supporting the previous management regime with recruitment and agency activity.</p>
<p>9. Who appointed the interim post holder responsible for this service? How was she appointed? Were references</p>	HR Corporate	<p>The previous DCS and Assistant Mayor for Children's Services appointed the interim post holder. She was interviewed by both of these after being put forward by a specialist recruitment agency. Positive references were supplied by the agency, including from the former employer.</p>

<p>sought? Were they received and what did they say?</p> <p>Why was this post holder then transferred to ASC? Who appointed her to that post?</p> <p>What is the usual process for appointing interim directors? Should these be revised?</p>		<p>At the time of Deb Watson announcing her leaving, Frances was already appointed. Elaine was a former Strategic Director of Family Services covering both the Children's and Adults functions and responsibilities. At the time the Assistant Mayor for Children's was supporting the Assistant Mayor for Adults, both spoke to the Chief Operating Officer about the idea of appointing Elaine to Adults, on an interim basis. At the time Vi was supportive of the work Elaine had done in Children's. The COO similarly thought Elaine had done some good work for us. The changes she introduced to the DAS services on the back of the Thorpe report have been viewed very positively by Ofsted. The review in Children Social Care and changing Social Worker roles, so the journey of the child is at the heart of the service we provide, have been described (by Ofsted) as the right direction of travel and well intentioned. She inherited a budget deficit of nearly £10 million that was virtually all dealt with and she led a good management development programme with her senior managers that used action learning tools. Very problematic issues with the review that has now been criticised, unallocated cases and Liquid Logic implementation were not known about at that time. In fact quite the opposite the September Safeguarding Assurance meeting had a very upbeat report.</p> <p>The COOs reservations at the time were more about Frances not being undermined by the continuing presence of Elaine on an interim basis in Adults. It was agreed to transfer Elaine over to adults but Elaine was asked to take a month off to help her empty her head of children's work and to give Frances some space to begin to establish herself and to help her begin a positive relationship with Vi. Elaine's contract in Adults commenced on 17th November 2015.</p> <p>There is no set process or approval process for interims and yes we should put in place better processes based on seniority and cost. We should also review the other interims that we currently employ that meet the thresholds we set.</p>
<p>10. The 291 cases are said to be low risk. What does that mean? Who decided they</p>	<p>Practice</p>	<p>Of the 291 cases on December 17th 2014, 73 were existing cases awaiting re-allocation to new social workers arriving. 218 were children who had been referred for single assessment. We ensured that these cases were allocated (refer to context</p>

<p>were low risk and how?</p>		<p>regarding new social workers). We are now doing some further analysis of the current situation with the 291 cases which will more fully answer the questions posed. It is not yet complete but can be reported at a later stage.</p> <p>The majority of the 291 cases were children who had been referred through for a single assessment. Urgent safeguarding concerns were dealt with through DAS in a timely way (as evidenced in the Ofsted report – page 14, point 53) carrying out a section 47 assessment, and are not included in the 291 cases.</p> <p>Thresholds are agreed by the joint LLR Boards and those determine which children might be eligible for a social care service. Decisions about the unallocated single assessments were made by experienced managers.</p> <p>Thresholds are agreed by joint LLR (Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland) boards and those determine which children might be eligible for a social care service.</p>
<p>11. We are told that agency social workers have been appointed to deal with the back log. How much has this cost compared with what would have been spent if the 30 permanent staff had been retained?</p>	<p>Budget</p>	<p>The typical LCC social worker cost is £24/hour compared to agency cost of £39/hour</p> <p>We are forecasting to overspend on CiN teams staffing costs by £375k in 14/15 against a budget of £3.7m.</p>
<p>12. Who referred these children to the Dept? What were they told when the children were not allocated social workers? How long did the children have to wait for social workers to be appointed?</p>	<p>Practice</p>	<p>Of the 291 cases on December 17th 2014, 73 were existing cases awaiting re-allocation to new social workers arriving. 218 were children who had been referred for single assessment. The 218 were referred by either health, schools, the police and families or self-referrals. All of the children have been seen and assessments carried out.</p>
<p>13. Has there been an enquiry</p>	<p>Practice</p>	<p>Analysis is being conducted. Although answering the questions about consequences</p>

<p>into the consequences for the children who were not allocated social workers? What has it found?</p>		<p>of the delay can be very difficult to answer.</p> <p>The majority of the 291 cases were children who had been referred through for a single assessment (73 were cases needing to be reallocated). Urgent safeguarding concerns were dealt with through DAS in a timely way (as evidenced in the Ofsted report – page 14, point 53) carrying out a section 47 assessment, and are not included in the 291 cases.</p>
<p>14. Do the Director, Assistant Mayor and City Mayor believe that the only person responsible for this situation was the interim director?</p>	<p>Corporate</p>	<p>No but the interim Director of Children Services when taking the role agreed to specific responsibilities that go with that post and also agreed to be accountable for those responsibilities. Elaine's position was untenable after such a poor Ofsted judgement that ultimately found children were at risk of being harmed because of failures within the service whilst she was the strategic leader. There was also a team in place to manage the review in question led by the then Divisional Director for this area, this is detailed in the business case. There were also programme board arrangements in place for managing the implementation of Liquid Logic, for children's again led by the Divisional Director. The Ofsted report has also found some weaknesses in practice and supervision that we will need to address. In future we need to work harder to ensure the implementation of reviews are given as much if not more focus than the development of business cases and the consultation process. The COO needs to make sure that better performance and management information and analysis happens in our critical areas and not just leave it to the division and the department. The whole senior team need to make sure there are open channels of communication into the organisation, different techniques and initiatives have been tried to promote this over the past few years but clearly more needs to be done. Over the last 6 months Directors and HR have led a piece of work developing our organisation culture and values and this will be an important aspect of this, finally the whole organisation needs to ensure a culture of listening and escalation but without disempowering staff and Managers.</p>
<p>15. How can such a situation in this area of the Council's</p>	<p>Practice</p>	<p>High quality well trained social workers and managers are key to the delivery of an effective service for children, young people and families. The recruitment and</p>

<p>work and others be prevented from happening again?</p>		<p>retention plans in place are to ensure that the council is able to have a full complement of staff to deliver the service.</p> <p>Development work was already underway which will incorporate Ofsted's priority actions to put in place an effective performance management framework. This has been strengthened by engaging external expertise to complete the performance and quality assurance framework which will form the basis of information to managers, elected members and the LSCB.</p> <p>Between October 2014 and March 2015 we were using a developing suite of performance indicators to track and monitor progress. KPIs have been developed that can be seen daily or weekly for critical information about children.</p> <p>These and other improvements will be overseen by a Performance Group led by the Chief Operating Officer. There will be regular reporting arrangements in place to the Improvement Board and to the Scrutiny Commission.</p> <p>See the responses given above.</p>
<p>16. What if any action was taken following the Ofsted inspection in 2011 to improve the service? Why was there no improvement forthcoming?</p>		<p>An action plan was developed against the recommendations from the 2011 inspection. The plan was owned by the Divisional Director at the time. The plan had 4 themes and progress was regularly reported to the CYP management team throughout 2012.</p> <p>It is difficult to offer an opinion on the second question.</p>

