

Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday 30 September 2021
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Committee Room 2, Shire Hall

Membership

Councillor Yousef Dahmash (Chair)
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jo Barker
Councillor Brett Beetham
Councillor Barbara Brown
Councillor Peter Gilbert
Councillor Brian Hammersley
Councillor Marian Humphreys
Councillor Justin Kerridge
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince
Joseph Cannon
John McRoberts
Rev. Elaine Scrivens
Sean Taylor

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting - 20 July 2021

5 - 12

2. Public Speaking

Question Time

3. Question to Cabinet Portfolio Holders

Up to 30 minutes of the meeting are available for members of the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to put questions to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

The work programme attached lists any briefings circulated to the Committee since the last meeting and any items listed in the Council's Forward Plan for decision by Cabinet or individual Cabinet Portfolio Holders over the coming months.

Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant Directors

Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant Directors are invited to provide any updates they have on issues within the remit of the Committee.

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| 4. Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030 | 13 - 28 |
| 5. Update Children's Transformation Plan | 29 - 42 |
| 6. Complaints Report | 43 - 58 |
| 7. Work Programme | 59 - 62 |

To consider the enclosed work programme, updated following the meeting of the Chair and Group Spokespersons. The programme includes an update from the Forward Plan showing items relevant to the remit of this Committee.

8. Any Other Business

Update to the Committee on the recent SEND inspection.

9. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting has been scheduled for 19th October 2021 at 10am. The meeting will be held at Shire Hall, Warwick.

Meetings for 2021/2022 have been scheduled as follows –

- 16 November 2021 @ 10am
- 22 February 2022 @ 10am
- 11 April 2022 @ 10am

10. Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider passing the following resolution:

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

11. EXEMPT Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021

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Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

Disclaimers

Webcasting and permission to be filmed

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live broadcast on the internet and can be viewed on line at warwickshire.public-i.tv. Generally, the public gallery is not filmed, but by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed. All recording will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. Any changes to matters registered or new matters that require to be registered must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after they arise.

A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web

<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

Public Speaking

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 20 July 2021

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Jo Barker
Councillor Brett Beetham
Councillor Brian Hammersley
Councillor Marian Humphreys
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince

Officers

Helen Barnsley, Democratic Services Officer
John Coleman, Assistant Director - Children and Families
Sally Nash, Service Manager (Youth Justice)
Nichola Vine (Strategy and Commissioning Manager, Legal and Democratic)

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Yousef Dahmash
Councillor Barbara Brown
Councillor Pete Gilbert
Councillor Justin Kerridge
Mr John McRoberts

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest were made.

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

2. Public Speaking

There were no public speakers at the meeting.

3. Question Time

(1) Question to Cabinet Portfolio Holders

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and Chair of meeting) asked Councillor Jeff Morgan (Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education) whether, as part of the development of the outdoor education strategy, consideration will be given to the creation of a bursary scheme that will allow young people from less affluent households to benefit from outdoor education opportunities.

Councillor Jeff Morgan replied stated that this is an interesting idea that will sit alongside other ideas that work on the strategy will consider. The Council, he stated, is keen to assist young people to enjoy the challenge and fun of outdoor education.

(2) Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant Directors

The committee was reminded that the OFSTED SEND inspection had been completed and that a report is now awaited.

4. Youth Justice Plan 2021-2022

The Chair welcomed John Coleman (Assistant Director, Children and Families) and Sally Nash (Service Manager, Youth Justice) to the meeting.

Sally Nash opened by explaining that whilst the presentation of the Youth Justice Plan to committee is a routine matter it is also of importance. Youth Justice is enshrined in statute and it is a condition of the Youth Justice Board that in order for Youth Justice Services to receive their funding they must produce an annual plan. The plan must be acceptable to the Board and demonstrate compatibility to the Council's corporate aims and objectives. The plan is owned by the Youth Justice Partnership and by the Chief Officer Board. The overall objectives of the Youth Justice Service are to provide the safest environment as possible and to help young people to be as safe as possible. Youth offending is not a popular topic. Nevertheless, the service has the confidence of the courts and has been able to continue to maintain contact with the courts and young people throughout the Pandemic.

The committee was informed of a number of challenges.

1) Serious youth violence Serious youth violence has grown. It now serves as a golden thread through the work of the Safer Warwickshire Partnership. The overall level of youth violence has not escalated although there have been a number of high-profile cases.

2) Engagement by young people in education, training and employment The Pandemic has had a serious negative impact on vulnerable young people. School age children who do not have

proactive parents have fallen behind on their education. It has been found necessary to realign resources to secure specialist support for these young people.

Whilst case-loads through courts have dropped owing to the Pandemic case loads generally have remained static.

Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince asked about out of court disposals. These were first time appearances but is it a case of “three strikes and you’re in court”? How many of the first offenders are likely to be seen again?

In response the committee was informed that out of court disposal is a multi-agency approach. Decisions regarding when a young person should be required to attend court rest with the police. With Youth Conditional Cautions if a young person does not comply then they will be required to attend court. It was stressed that out of court disposals are a serious sanction. It is not a case of young people “getting away with it” but the aim of the legislation is to keep children out of the court system. Sometimes children do come back into the system, but it remains preferable to manage them away from the courts if possible.

Councillor Marian Humphries welcomed that children are put first adding that it is important to identify and address the reasons behind a child’s behaviour. In response Sally Nash reminded members that these young people are children first and offenders second. There are no excuses for bad behaviour, but it should be recognised that they are children. School, she added, teach discipline but if children are not in school they are not benefitting from this.

Councillor Jo Barker asked if entry level offenders are offending at a higher level. In response the committee was informed that there have been cases of children committing high level offences as their first offence. One child has recently been sentenced to five years imprisonment for their first offence. The Pandemic has seen a number of low level and high-level offences. There has been a gap in mid-range offences, but these are possibly down to policing decisions.

Sally Nash was asked about bespoke parenting initiatives. The committee was informed that recognising that the parents of young offenders have specific needs the youth justice Service has been running a pilot project around this. Bespoke remand accommodation is operated in Warwickshire. This is a fostering service for children awaiting remand.

Councillor Brett Beetham asked for information about re-offending rates. The committee was informed that information on these is two to three years old and is of limited use. Software companies are developing products that will provide real time information. The Youth Justice Service has yet to take this forward having been delayed by the Pandemic. For it to work effectively the police will have to agree to undertaking more real time reporting. Discussions will be needed with the Chief Constable as in other areas of the country this has been a challenge.

Councillor Beetham also enquired about engagement with education. He was informed that in the Youth Justice Service has recognised the value in employing a specialist whose principal focus will be education and the people involved in its delivery. A job description has yet to be drafted.

Councillor Brian Hammersley recognised that children who are not in school become bored and this can lead to them getting into trouble. He asked what local authorities are doing to ensure that children are kept occupied. In reply Sally Nash stated that this is known as “diversion”. The County

Council is investing heavily in more youth work and the Pandemic has seen virtual youth clubs being run. In addition, small grants have been made available to community groups to help keep young people occupied.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse stressed the need to maintain the preventative agenda. John Coleman reported significant falls in the level of alcohol and drug abuse and the number of young people carrying bladed weapons as a result of early intervention initiatives. With the Priority Family initiative, it is possible to claim payment by results. Warwickshire has seen a 100% return.

Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince asked about “county-lines” and whether there are differences in approach depending on whether the offender is to the east or west of Warwickshire. The committee was informed that there are information sharing agreements with partners the aim being to prevent offending. Much cross-border work is police driven. Courts reflect local communities and whilst there are sentencing guidelines they are not always applied consistently. An agreement exists already to the west as it is recognised that offenders are using the train line from Birmingham down to Leamington. In time there may be agreements to the east with Leicestershire and Northamptonshire but presently the focus is on the West Midlands.

With county-lines it is important to appreciate that the children involved are not making their own choices.

John Coleman emphasised the need to ensure that information is shared freely between partner agencies. Police forces work in different ways and it is important to ensure that these differences in approach do not get in the way. Information comes from children who have been missing but who have returned home. If they have been interviewed in Warwickshire it is important to ensure that the outcome of that interview is shared with the home authority.

Councillor Jeff Morgan welcomed the discussion regarding the role of the youth service. In response to a question regarding “early help” the committee was informed that an early help assessment includes a section on “potential to commit crime”. The Priority Families initiative also considers this. Although the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years young children will, if not supported, continue to move into crime. Early interventions have the potential to change behaviours and demeanour.

Resolved:

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve and Support the 2021/22 Youth Justice Plan. Associated actions will be tracked and monitored by the Youth Justice Chief Officer Board in line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

5. Update on Scrutiny Review

The Chair welcomed Nic Vine (Strategy and Commissioning manager – Legal and Democratic) to the meeting. The key elements of the published report were set out to the committee. It was explained that a consultant had been commissioned to undertake the review and that her findings had been very positive. A series of recommendations had been developed for how scrutiny could be improved at the County Council.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse suggested that scrutiny should have a closer alignment to data and performance.

Resolved:

That the Committee notes the findings of the independent review into Overview and Scrutiny.

6. Year End Council Plan 2020-2025 Quarterly Progress Report (April 2020 to March 2021)

John Coleman explained that the Council is seeking to develop a one data set approach which will be more accessible to people.

A series of highlights were identified.

1. Early Help. The Pandemic has led to a 40% increase in early help provision. More family support workers have needed to be recruited. The main focus has been on mental health support, education and reintegration.
2. An increase in the number of children in care. There has been a significant increase in the number of non-accompanied child asylum seekers in Warwickshire.
3. Disadvantaged children. It is recognised that there is more work to be undertaken with disadvantaged children who are under-achieving. A virtual head teacher role is to be created to support children who are in need. The focus will be on support for the most disadvantaged.

Some pressure areas were highlighted.

1. Children in care continue to provide pressure. There is a need to progress permanency plans.
2. Mental Health issues. Work is continuing with the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust although this slowed during the Pandemic.

Councillor Brian Hammersley sought assurance that the Council has sufficient capacity to manage its children in care portfolio. John Coleman stated that the Council does have capacity. The biggest issue is with placements. The Family Therapy Team helps to provide stability in placements. There remains a significant pressure for foster carers. The cost of placements has increased during the Pandemic to £3200 per week for a placement in a residential home. To assist in addressing this the Council is investing in the construction of three care homes in addition to the one that is close to completion in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Councillor Jeff Morgan stated that the Council has been doing a good job in difficult circumstances. There remain concerns over CAMHS. The Council is keen to increase the number of domestic placements and it will be a major step forward when the new children's home in Stratford is opened.

The Council is working in partnership with Kent County Council to assist with the accommodation of unaccompanied child asylum seekers. The Council does get financial support with this. It is a topical issue with the government recently announcing additional resources for it. Support is extending beyond that for Syrian refugees to those from other countries such as Afghanistan.

It is difficult to keep track of outcomes for unaccompanied asylum seekers. Some children, particularly those from Asia, do go missing. Within around five days they will have been picked up by human traffickers. Working with the police these young people are usually found in other parts of the county. The key is to get them safely into foster placements before they can be taken. Young asylum seekers are often keen to engage in the education process. This presents its own challenges as there is usually a language barrier to overcome. The Council is keen to work with local colleges to provide long term courses as opposed to the short ones currently offered to asylum seekers. In response to a question from Councillor Brian Hammersley the meeting was informed that generally when a child makes the journey to the UK, they lose contact with their families. If they have a relative who is already in the country efforts will be made to unite them. However, families rarely manage to follow on behind children.

There is a backlog of asylum claims. In order to address this Immigration officers are invited to the Myton Road centre to administer claims. A challenge that success in this area presents is that once a claim for asylum has been settled the government ceases its funding for that individual. However, the Council considers that it would be wrong to cease any kind of support immediately, so it continues to provide when there is no additional funding to do so.

Councillor Marian Humphries welcomed the references to holiday activities and food. In Atherstone there is a boxing club run by the police. This provides a useful means of engaging with young people. John Coleman explained that the Council has invested heavily in youth workers. Sessions will be offered to young people across the County every day of the summer school holidays. Support is to be provided to any young person who may struggle with engaging in the sessions.

Resolved:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) notes the progress of the delivery of the Council Plan 2020 - 2025 for the period as contained in the report.
- 2) requests that a briefing note regarding support for asylum seekers be produced and shared with all members.

7. Work Programme 2021 - 2022

The work programme for the committee was agreed.

8. Date of the Next Meeting

It was noted that a special meeting of the committee was to be held on Tuesday 27 July 2021 to consider a call-in.

9. Minutes Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved:

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. Restricted Minutes from the previous meeting (23.02.2021)

The restricted minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

The meeting rose at 11.37

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Chair

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Children and Young People
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

30 September 2021

DRAFT Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030

Recommendation

That the Children and Young People Overview And Scrutiny Committee comment on the draft Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021 -2030 before it is finalised and goes to Cabinet on 14th October 2021.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is a Draft Warwickshire Children's Strategy which is coming to committee for final comments and shaping before this is finalised. The establishment of the first Warwickshire Children's Strategy offers a real opportunity to take positive steps forward prioritising children and childhood in our post pandemic recovery work and in the future Council Plan.
- 1.2 The Warwickshire Children's Strategy has been designed by cross-services within the Council and with partner agencies. This allows for a whole council and partner, long-term plan. This is a County Council strategy but to be successful it is vital that we build and use the power of partnerships. Mult agency endeavours underpinned by one aim, one set of collective principles, ambitions, outcomes, and measures will allow us to collectively improve the life chances and outcomes of children, young people and families.
- 1.3 The strategy establishes a clear and simple aim: to achieve a Child Friendly Warwickshire. This means that Warwickshire is county that puts children at the heart of all we do. This will support our Council's overall vision for Warwickshire to be the best it can be.
- 1.4 Accountability for the plan will be held by the Strategic Director People in their statutory role as Director of Children's Services. However, it will be overseen on a regular basis by the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board. Other partnership boards will have some cross over into the strategy too including the Corporate Parenting Board, Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership and the Warwickshire Together for Children Board.

- 1.5 In forming the strategy we have engaged with many people. This has included cross Council teams and partner agencies including headteachers, health colleagues, police, various commissioned services and voluntary and community organisations. Over 138 individual comments and suggestions were received. We have also engaged with 1,807 children and young people through the Child Friendly Warwickshire survey which helped identify our priority areas and with the parent and carer forums.
- 1.6 The strategy is brief, five pages. This was completed on purpose to ensure the document remains high level but it incorporates key priorities and ambitions. This will be used to formulate a detailed delivery plan to assign individual leads and clear timescales for completion.
- 1.7 We have worked with colleagues in Leeds City Council as part of the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Project in formulating the strategy. In particular, the establishment of clear measurable objectives has been established. This will allow us to have one children's outcomes framework which we intend to implement within power BI to help elected members and senior managers to measure, monitor and scrutinise the delivery of the strategy. The five outcomes, fourteen priorities and twenty-four measures are designed to incorporate all parts of Children's Services. They will merge into one performance framework to enable members to measure progress, impact and outcomes achieved for children.
- 1.8 The Obsessions section has been significantly debated but parents, young people and professionals chose the three obsessions. It was felt that if we get these things right then we know children and young people will be supported in Warwickshire to have the best childhood. All children attending school, engagement in education, training, or employment at 16 plus and reduced numbers of children requiring care by the County Council, will be monitored across Children's Services in Warwickshire on a weekly basis to make sure all children are being supported to achieve.

2. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this strategy. Any specific projects that have a financial implication will need to be managed by the Assistant Directors within the current budget or through separate business case through the Council Change Gateway.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 There are no adverse environmental implications.

5. Implementation of the strategy

- 5.1 The table on pages 3-5 will be formulated into a more detailed delivery plan. An update on progress the of strategy will be timetables on at least an annual basis at the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an update of the strategy, with any revisions will be provided to Cabinet on an annual basis.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Overview and scrutiny committee are asked to comment and shape the draft Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030.

7. Background papers

- 7.1 There are no background papers.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – DRAFT Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030

Report Author	John Coleman, Assistant Director, Children & Families	johncoleman@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Nigel Minns	nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jeff Morgan	jeffmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk

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Warwickshire Children and Young People Strategy 2021-2030



Foreword

Warwickshire County Councillor Jeff Morgan, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families and Education.

Welcome to the first Children and Young People Strategy 2021-2030. This is the first strategy of its kind for the county's children and young people and has, at its heart, the Child Friendly Warwickshire programme.

In order to best understand what this strategy aims to achieve, there is for me, one question that needs to be answered at the outset.

What does Child Friendly Warwickshire mean?

Child Friendly Warwickshire is a programme which forms part of a wider £12 million change, partly funded by the Department for Education, in how Warwickshire County Council's Children and Families' services work.

This programme will enable us to meet our ambitions for children and young people. These include improving school attendance, reducing the number of young people not in education, training or employment and safely reducing the number of children in care.

To help us to achieve these ambitions, our strategy aims to bring the county together in a collective effort to ensure our children and young people have a voice and that they are heard, that they are safe, happy and healthy and that they are equipped with the skills to have the best lives they can.

Having the best life possible does not happen by accident. It needs involvement from a range of groups beyond the children themselves. So, this strategy looks at how Warwickshire County Council will work with not only the children

and young people but also with parents, carers, communities and other agencies – all composite parts that, when brought together, create a county that is child-friendly, one where children and young people have every opportunity to flourish in all aspects of their lives. A Child Friendly Warwickshire.

How have we come up with this strategy? As with all good plans, it started by listening. Children and young people are at the heart of all that we do but, as adults, we may have lost sight of what a child needs in such a fast-changing world. Earlier this year we surveyed youngsters in all sorts of settings asking them how we can make ours a county that is committed to creating an environment in which they can thrive. Their responses guided our ambitions and the priority areas outlined in the strategy where we will give focus. Alignment to the Council Plan and its core objectives was also critical and we will deliver our plans to ensure our resources are managed well and that the economy and environment are supported.

That is the first step and there will be many more. It is a long term vision and one that will evolve as we learn. I am very proud to be launching it now, though, as we take the first steps in not only making Warwickshire the best it can be for our children and young people, but also helping our children and young people be the best they can be for Warwickshire.



Councillor Jeff Morgan
Portfolio Holder for Children and Families
and Education, Warwickshire County
Council

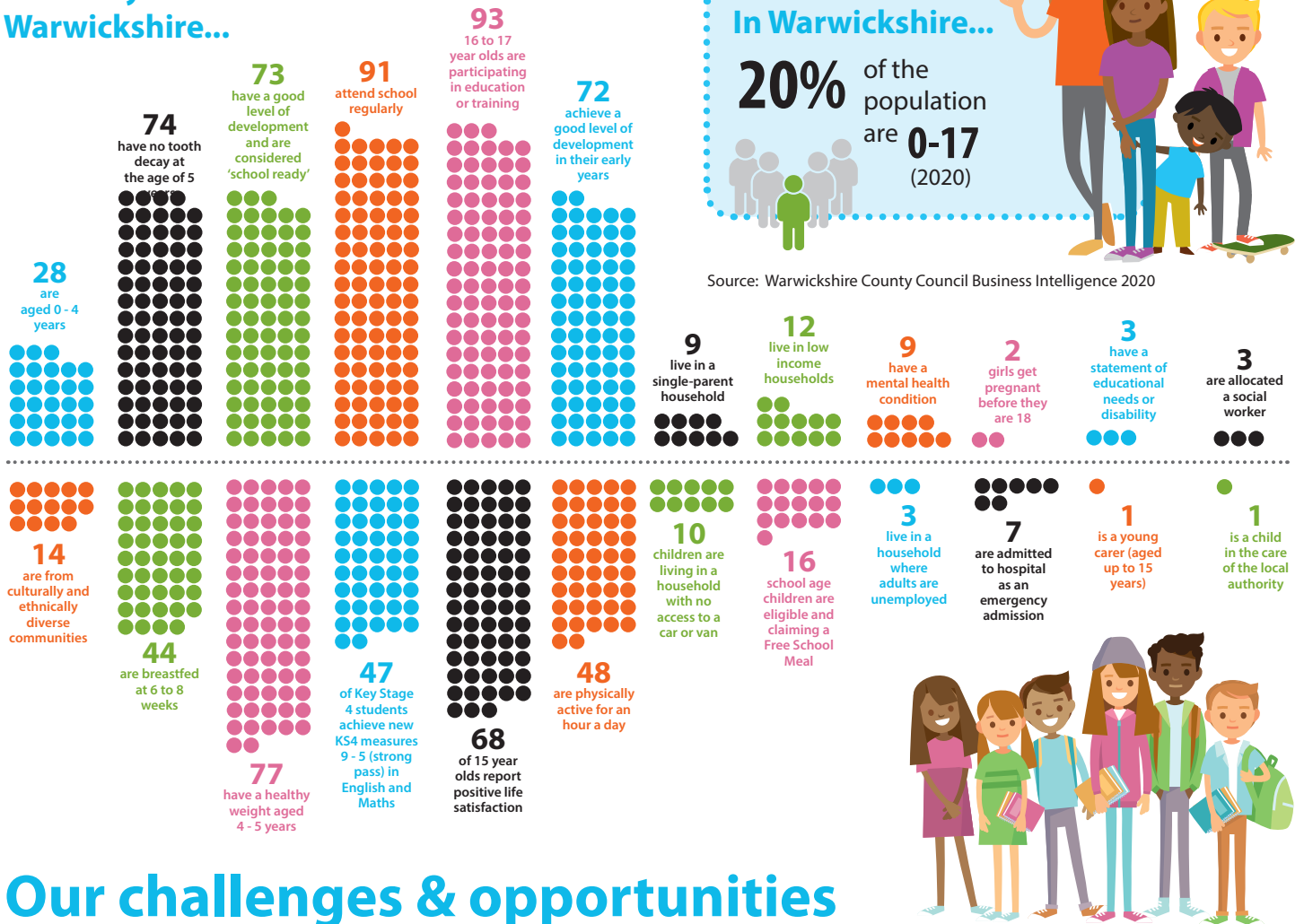
Introduction

Our aim is for Warwickshire to be a Child Friendly County.

This strategy will establish how Warwickshire County Council will work with parents, carers, children, young people, communities, and other agencies to ensure children in Warwickshire can be the best they can be. It sets out how we will create a child friendly county and a safe place for children to grow up and reach their full potential.

Did you know?

For every 100 children in Warwickshire...



Our challenges & opportunities

This strategy will seek to address the following challenges and utilise these opportunities to achieve better outcomes for children.

Warwickshire has a high number of children in care compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has experienced a decrease in the number of children aged 2 plus accessing free early years provision compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has a rising number of children in Year 6 who are obese.

Warwickshire has long waiting lists for Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnostics.

Warwickshire has high levels of hospital admissions for children and young people needing tier 4 mental health and for alcohol specific conditions compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has seen a 39% rise between 2017-2020 in the number of children with an Education, Health and Social Care Plan.

Warwickshire County Council has an ambitious £13m change programme for Children's & Education (SEND) Services, focusing on support for our most vulnerable children.

Warwickshire children (71%) achieve a good level of development in early years.

Warwickshire children (49.5%) in Key Stage 4 achieve education outcomes above the national average (43%).

Warwickshire has lower levels of young people aged 19 who are not in education, employment or training (6.9%) compared to the national average (10.9%).

Warwickshire Together for Children Partnership is implementing the Warwickshire Family Values programme, a recommended approach to support children & their families.

Warwickshire children (41.5%) go on to achieve a degree or equivalent qualification above the national average (35%).

Warwickshire schools have decreased permanent exclusions by 29% since 2018/19.

The voice of children & young people

Children and young people are at the heart of all we do. We are committed to listening to their voice as this will ensure it has impact and influence to shape services. In 2021, we started an annual survey of children and young people asking them how we can make Warwickshire a child friendly county.



1,807 children responded and they said...

81% considered the area they lived in was child friendly. This figure reduced by age and varied by location.

Children said their family, friends and school make them feel safe.

What would make your area more Child Friendly?

- 1 Places to play
- 2 Clean environment
- 3 Good schools
- 4 Enough food for everyone
- 5 Children to be involved in important decisions
- 6 Enough housing for everyone

If children and young people were in charge of their town, they said they would prioritise:

- 1 More homes and stop homelessness
- 2 Reducing child poverty
- 3 Support to stop Domestic Abuse
- 4 Improving access to training and jobs
- 5 Making young people's voices heard in creating services
- 6 Improving play, leisure and cultural activities

Our Principles

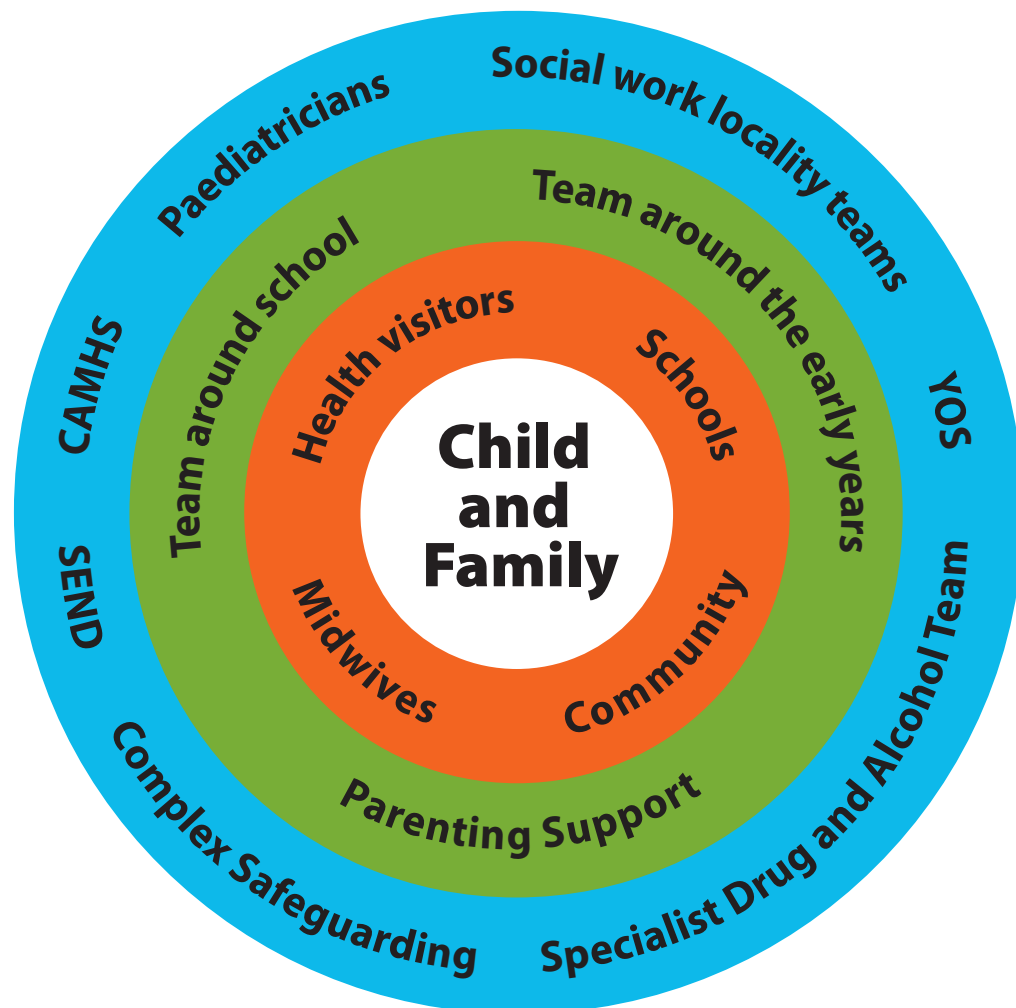
The County Council is committed to building services for children and young people that are:

- Aspirational and inclusive – equal opportunities for all children and young people.
- Based on a strengths-based approach, that is restorative and trauma informed.
- One integrated approach that is multi-disciplinary and multi-agency.
- A local and community-based approach that considers the level of need/context.
- Provision of timely and helpful support for children, young people, and parents/carers.
- Prioritising prevention and early help. Always providing the right service, at the right time.
- Enabling and empowering children, young people and families to be resilient.

Our Approach

We value relationships and partnership. When strategic partnerships work together to respond to need, the opportunities are enormous. Collaborative commissioning and delivery models will be a priority. We will reimagine Children's Services, through interdependent working. A Council led coalition of partner agencies across the county will reach children and young people in need of help and protection. Working this way leads to better outcomes for children and young people.

By 2030 we will build integrated, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency services. We will have a fully integrated leadership and management team and children's commissioning model. The objective is in each locality there will be a dedicated integrated multi-disciplinary team, wrapped around school consortia. We want to take an incremental approach to integration, achieved by consent, together with people and to improve the system. We will start with areas where we have the biggest challenges and make support systems better. Our initial priority areas are mental health, health services and SEND.



Achieving integrated services and commissioning will require transparency, strong strategic leadership and ownership across the whole system. An integrated system will achieve better outcomes by:

Improving mental health and wellbeing for children and young people.

Improving school readiness and education outcomes.

Improving health outcomes.

Helping more children to safely remain within their family and community.

Reducing domestic abuse, child exploitation and youth violence.

Support children and families earlier.

Improving integration and reducing inequality.

Improving children and their families and professional's morale and satisfaction.

One integrated impact and outcomes performance framework

Across Warwickshire we will adopt a new integrated performance framework. This will have three performance obsessions which we believe will help all children and young people achieve.

Parents, young people and professionals helped determine Warwickshire's three obsessions for children. If we get these things right then we know young people will be well supported to have the best childhoods.


Our obsessions are to:


- 1** Improve school attendance.
- 2** Reduce the number of young people not in education, training or employment.
- 3** Safely reduce the number of children in care.



This is supported by five goals and fourteen priorities which we want to achieve by 2030.


Our outcomes and priorities have been chosen as critical measures for success as these are the things young people said were most important to them. In early 2021 over one thousand young people took part in our Child Friendly Warwickshire Survey and their feedback highlighted the things that matter most to them and would make them feel that they live in a child friendly county.

Our delivery plan will detail how we will do this, who will be responsible and offer a timetable for activity and a performance framework will be developed to measure the impact of this strategy. This will enable elected members, senior officers and interested parties to review progress to ensure real change is evidenced and achieved.

Five outcomes we want to achieve	Fourteen priorities we want to focus upon:	We will achieve this by...	We will measure success by...
 <p>Be healthy - Happy, healthy, resilient children.</p>	<p>Improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work collaboratively across health, social care, education and with communities to ensure children and young people with special educational needs and a disability (SEND) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) are identified and receive support earlier. We will redesign the system to focus upon prevention of emotional and mental health issues escalating. Focusing upon earlier solution focused approaches such as improving social prescribing and self-harm support pathways. We will significantly reduce the number of children requiring tier 4 mental health provision. We will work with partner agencies in health to ensure access to diagnostics and treatment is timely and effective for all children, particularly vulnerable children. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children in care and the number of children/parents experiencing a second or subsequent instance of having a child or children enter care. Number of children and young people subject to a child in need and child protection plan. Number of closed Family Group Conference (FGC) which contributed to preventing family breakdown.
	<p>Encourage physical activity and healthy eating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will provide access to opportunities in school and the community to value physical activities and exercise, from an earlier age. We will provide advice and support to parents and carers to ensure children grow up in an environment that enables them to make good health eating choices. We will tackle the causes of health-related problems to reduce the impact of ill health and inequalities on people's lives, their families, and communities. 	

	Provide play, leisure, culture, and sporting opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure all children have local access to play and leisure activities. • We will invest in our Youth Services to increase access to targeted support and outreach work in schools, colleges, and local communities. • We will ensure continued support for children during school holidays through the Warwickshire Welfare scheme. 	
 <p>Be safe - Children and young people are safe from harm.</p>	Help children live in safe and supportive families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We value family and will utilise the full strengths of their family and community. • We will continue to invest in Family Group Conferencing and restorative approaches, which support children and their families to establish their own solutions to problems. • We will provide support to reduce the impact of parental conflict upon children when parents separate. • Where children are unsafe, we will act working with families, through high support and high challenge so children are safe from harm. 	4. Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of school readiness and development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
	Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will tackle young people and family homelessness by supporting families to maintain their home and increase access to more homes across Warwickshire. • We will provide access to a range of early interventions, so issues are addressed and do not escalate. • We will provide children subject to child protection plans with timely and effective support to reduce the risk of harm. • When children need to be in the care of the Council, we will ensure access to therapeutic support and good quality foster care and residential homes that are local and within children's own community. • We will support more children in care to achieve permanency, by increasing support for parents to enable safe reunification and for connected others, special guardians, and adopters to care for children who cannot live with their parents. • We will continue to prioritise our corporate parenting responsibilities and to influence the care market, ensuring children are provided with local, good quality and stable care. We will remain focused upon keeping families together, recruiting and supporting more foster carers and opening our own Children's Homes. 	5. Infant mortality rates.
	Create confident workforce with a common core of knowledge and understanding about children's needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are committed to ensuring all organisations are connected and work together to deliver and commission services for children in Warwickshire. We will streamline ways of working to ensure pathways for services are integrated and accessible. Integration could include streamlined ways of working together, co-location and/or full structural integration. We will decide on this together, by consent and only if this benefits children, young people, and their families. • We develop a learning culture, which includes investment in develop opportunities and where the environment enables restorative practice and trauma informed approaches to be implemented across the whole of the children and young peoples' workforce. • We will ensure there is a clear and consistent understanding and application of the Spectrum of Support, particularly focusing upon early and targeted support. 	6. Percentage of new school places in good and outstanding schools. 7. Attendance at primary and secondary schools. 8. Number of fixed-term exclusions from primary and secondary schools.

		<p>9. Percentage of children and young people seen within 18 weeks (Referral to Treatment Time) by RISE and the number of children and young people waiting more than 12 weeks for a follow up appointment.</p>
 <p>Be happy - Families able to make positive changes.</p>	<p>Access to helpful and earlier solution-focused and evidence-based interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will build local partnerships around our schools and children and family centres, • We value voluntary and community services. We will provide support particularly to organisations providing youth services to maintain quality, consistency and availability of activities and support to children and young people. • Support our workforce to work with all family members, particularly engaging fathers more, ensuring support is provided through our Caring Dad's programme. <p>An open, honest, and transparent approach to supporting children and their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with our partner organisations to ensure people have access to the support and information they need and, where possible, are able to manage their own support. • We will invest in evidence-based parenting strategies. To ensure parents and carers have access to a wide range of parenting information, courses, and specialist one to one support. • We will invest in whole family approaches, to ensure multi agency integrated support is provided to address issues such as mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse. • We will enhance support for children who experience domestic abuse by increasing access to provision for domestic abuse counselling and therapeutic support. • We will remain inquisitive in our practice, to ensure all decision makers, professionals, volunteers, and community leaders keep children at the centre of all we do. • We will provide high support and high challenge to others and ourselves. Working <u>with</u> children, young people, and families, not doing "for" or "to" them. 	<p>10. Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths at the end of Key Stage 2.</p> <p>11. Progress 8 score at the end of Key Stage 4.</p>
 <p>Be skilled - Children are able to achieve at all levels of learning and have skills for life.</p>	<p>Support children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will increase the number of children accessing free early years provision from the age of two. • We will ensure fair access to good and outstanding education providers. • We will ensure health checks and support are provided to identify earlier health and care issues. This will enable us to ensure children are supported earlier to thrive and achieve their full potential. <p>Close the achievement gap at all levels of learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure children have access to high quality teaching, together with strong leadership, which enables schools to meet the needs of disadvantaged children. This includes early years, as education starting at age 2 can have an impact on long-term social mobility. • Schools will be supported to ensure maximise Pupil Premium funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged young people. • We will increase targeted support for children not in education, for those in alternative education or not in school full time. We will ensure children who are electively home educated are supported. • We will rigorously use data to identify gaps and to make them visible, pinpoint pupils at risk of underperforming and challenge those whose progress needs to accelerate. This will enable us to reach out to the families of disadvantaged learners and the communities in which they live to raise pupil aspirations/engagement. 	<p>12. Percentage of disadvantaged children achieving Grade 5+ (strong pass) in English and Maths GCSEs at Key Stage 4 (age 16)</p> <p>13. Destinations of young people with special educational needs and/or a disability when they leave school.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing effective practice between schools and teachers. Applying the findings to the classroom focusing on using structured phonics instruction, cooperative learning, frequent assessment and teaching meta-cognitive skills which can significantly raise outcomes. 	<p>14. Prevalence of children at age 11 who are a healthy weight.</p> <p>15. Proportion of young offenders who reoffend.</p> <p>16. Number of children identified and protected from child exploitation.</p> <p>17. Under-18 conception rates.</p> <p>18. Admission episodes to hospital, including alcohol-specific conditions: under-18s.</p> <p>19. Percentage of students achieving a level 3 qualification at age 19.</p>
 <p>Be heard - Young people are active citizens and are ready for and contributing to adult life.</p>	<p>Support schools to improve attendance, to become more inclusive and develop positive behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide support and training to ensure education providers are skilled and enable to meet the needs of children with SEND, so our schools become more inclusive. • We will implement a “one meeting, one plan approach”, so that the Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP) is the single plan for the child or young person with special educational needs or a disability. • Implement a new Attend Framework to support attendance and tackle persistent non-attendance. • Provide wrap around support to schools and children to reduce temporary and permanent exclusions. • We will work with providers to achieve high standards in alternative provision, ensuring the focus is supporting children back to mainstream education provision. 	
	<p>Increase participation and engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage and coproduce integrated services with children, young people and parents so they co design and shape services that impact upon them. • We will build upon the success of our voice and participation team, to ensure all children are listened to and this impacts upon the design of our services. • We will support our Youth Council to become more inclusive, widening engagement and increasing influence of children and young people in Warwickshire at a local, regional, and national level. • We will strengthen the voice of all parents, carers, adopters, and special guardians. In particular, improving engagement and communication between the Council and SEND Parent Carer Voice. 	
		<p>Reduce crime and child exploitation.</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will always treat young people as a child first and as an offender second. But we will ensure that young people understand and take responsibility for their behaviour. • We will remain focused on preventing young people from offending and re-offending. By improving the quality of young people’s lives, we will seek to ensure that they are diverted from the criminal justice system. • We will increase integrated support to parents with substance and alcohol misuse through the implementation of Family Drug & Alcohol Courts to ensure parents receive the right support, so children and families can remain safely together. • We will support children and their families to safely access the internet and technology. • We will reduce missing episodes and ensure victims of exploitation are listened to, believed, and supported. • We will identify and manage risks in the community and keep a strong multi agency response to bring offenders of exploitation of children to justice by harnessing Police, Council and Court powers to protect children from harm. 	

	<p>Support young people to successfully transition into adulthood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will help young people to develop life skills and be ready for work by further developing and increasing access to our independence training accredited programmes. • We will support parents and carers to begin independence work earlier with young people. • We will maintain and extend our offer for Care Experienced young people. With a particular focus upon extending the House Project. • We will continue to build strong links with businesses to increase opportunities for work experience, internships, apprenticeships, training, and jobs for our children to build successful adult lives in Warwickshire. • We will provide bespoke support where needed for young people, so they are able between 16-25 years old to be engaged in education, employment, or training. 	<p>20. Number of young people who are not in employment, education, or training, or whose status is 'not known'</p> <p>21. Number of young people who have completed independence accredited training.</p>
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This strategy is linked to the Warwickshire County Council Plan. It does not replace other strategies but is an overarching approach to services for children, young people and their families. The Warwickshire Children's Strategy will be overseen and championed by several partnership boards listed below.

- **Warwickshire County Council's Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Warwickshire County Council's Corporate Parenting Board**
- **Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board**
- **Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership**
- **Warwickshire Together for Children Partnership Board**





Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Update on the Children and Families change programme

30 September 2021

1. Recommendation

The committee are asked to note the progress and impact of the Children and Families change programme.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Children and Families service are part of the Department for Education (DfE) national '*Strengthening Families, Protecting Children*' programme. This programme includes three different evidence-based models, and the service have adopted the '*Leeds Family Valued*' model. This model forms part of the overall Children and Families service change programme which has been designed to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and young people. The service has received £12m of additional one-off funding to implement the change programme, £3.993m from the Department for Education (DfE) and the remainder provided by the Council's Children Transformation fund (sourced from two years of social care grants and residual Children and Families Transformation funds) agreed by the Council in February 2019 and 2020.
- 2.2 As part of the change programme the Children and Families service have successfully implemented a significant number of evidence-based initiatives to improve outcomes for children and families. These changes have included, new services, the expansion and improvement of services and additional training and resources to practitioners and partners
- 2.3 The change programme has been rigorously managed to ensure drift and delay has been minimised and outcomes are optimised. Challenges posed by the pandemic have impacted some aspects of delivery.
- 2.4 The programme is being externally and internally evaluated to monitor impact and inform future developments.
- 2.5 This report outlines progress, achievements, and next steps.

3. Children and Families change programme

3.1 Evidenced based approach

- 3.1.1 The Children and Families change programme is made up of over 20 individual work areas.
- 3.1.2 The DFE '*Strengthening Families, Protecting Children programme*' (SFPC), includes three different evidence-based models. The Children and Families service have adopted the '*Leeds Family Valued*' model. The other models in the national programme are also reflected in some elements the Children and Families change programme, specifically the '*Hertfordshire family safeguarding*' model, which focuses on meeting the needs of children and adults (parents and carers). The Children and Families service approaches are known as

- Warwickshire Family Valued
- Warwickshire Family Safeguarding

- 3.1.3 The three models included in the SFPC programme were identified and evaluated via the national Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. Independent evaluation found that these models reflected 7 features of practice, which lead to positive outcomes. The 7 features are;

1. Using a clear, strengths-based practice framework
2. Systemic approaches
3. Enabling staff to do skilled direct work
4. Multi-disciplinary skills working together
5. Group discussion
6. High intensity and consistency of practitioner
7. Whole-family focus

These features are reflected across the whole of the Children and Families service programme.

3.2 What do we want to achieve?

- 3.2.1 The change programme supports the development of a child-centred, family focused and relational approach across the whole service. By working with children and families, partners and communities and strengthening and building relationships the service aims to improve outcomes for children.
- 3.2.2 The change programme is structured into the following projects, consisting of individual work areas:
- Early Help (including Community and Partners)
 - this includes improving and expanding early help support across communities to ensure the right support is provided at the right time.

- Child in Need and Child Protection
 - this includes expanding and making services more accessible with multi-agency teams supporting children and families to help improve mental and physical well-being
- Children in Care and Care Leavers
 - as corporate parents ensure that all children remain close to home, are well supported, appropriately educated and have strong identities
- Workforce, training and programme resources
 - building strong meaningful relationships with all children and families, partners, and communities, to ensure that Warwickshire is the best it can be for children and young people

3.3 Challenges

- 3.3.1 The change programme was temporarily paused in March 2020 as the service responded to the Ofsted inspection and the pandemic. From June 2020 key areas were then prioritised, and planning and implementation was progressed.
- 3.3.2 The pandemic continued to pose additional challenges, specifically an increase in demand for statutory services. The recruitment of additional posts and training was moved online, and some services that did not traditionally lend themselves to online delivery such as the Caring Dad's programme, which required careful planning.

3.4 What progress has been made?

- 3.4.1 As part of the change programme a number of services have been created, expanded and improved, additional training and resources to practitioners and partners has also been provided. A number of these work areas started to be delivered from September 2020 onwards and some have only recently been implemented, progress has been detailed below.
- Early Help (including Communities and Partners)
 - expanded the Parenting Programme to ensure
 - that the diverse needs of the community are catered for
 - developed a clear Early Help Network accessible to communities
 - recruited two headteacher coaches to support schools to safeguard children

- recruited additional Youth Workers to focus on reducing alcohol misuse and knife crime
 - created a new Community Youth Services Fund, and allocated funding to community and voluntary organisations
 - expanded the Different Futures project and provision of therapeutic support to those parents who have had multiple children removed from their care
- Children in need and child protection
 - expanded the Family Group Conferencing service
 - developed a peer to peer programme for parents to support other parents with behavior management and parenting concerns
 - created a new Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme (Caring Dads)
 - expanded and strengthened the Domestic Abuse Support team
 - creating a new adolescent support team working with children and young people who are potentially at risk of coming into care with focused intervention and prevention work
 - working together with partners to deliver joined up services, specifically working with Mental Health Parenting Practitioners , Substance Misuse Parenting Practitioners and a Child Exploitation Nurse
- Children in care and care leavers
 - increased the number of Life Story Workers and provided additional training to practitioners to ensure all children develop strong identities and understand their journey
 - increased support to Special Guardians and Connected Others to enable more children to stay within their families
 - developed and enhanced the Foster Carer recruitment campaign and expanded support provided to Foster Carers
 - increased support to care experienced young people to support them into education, employment and training.
- Workforce, training, and programme resources
 - continued to embed Restorative Practice across the Children and Families service to develop a culture of high challenge and high support, working alongside families rather than doing things to them, for them or just not doing them at all
 - investing in new areas of learning and development and creating a new Children and Families Academy, which is starting with the assessment and accreditation for social workers in their early career progression, this will gradually develop into the whole workforce Academy.
 - expanding support to social workers, with a specific focus on their health and wellbeing.

- Child Friendly Warwickshire - inspiring child friendly initiatives and practices throughout Warwickshire.
- providing opportunities for Care Leavers to become apprentices to support the change programme.

3.5 What difference has been made?

- 3.5.1 All work areas have been planned to identify and capture management data to ensure the impact of these work areas is measured. This has included changes to recording and reporting processes, some of which are still taking place. Appendix A details some emerging benefits.
- 3.5.2 All changes have been communicated to staff and practitioners via a number of different methods, which have included live broadcasts, blogs, intranet guidance and team meetings to ensure practitioners are clear on the additional support available to children and families and themselves. As with all change programmes it takes time to embed new ways of working and promote cultural change across teams.
- 3.5.3 Senior leaders monitor progress and impact at programme and project board meetings. In addition, the service has an extensive quality assurance programme to monitor outcomes these include, monitoring performance data, case file reviews and audits, feedback from children and families, staff and partners.
- 3.5.3 This is a large and cultural change programme across Warwickshire and as such the service recognise it will take time to fully embed and for positive impacts to be realised. The service is seeing early positive signs of change, and these have been detailed below.
- positive feedback from headteachers and dedicated safeguarding leads
 - evidence of practitioners applying relational approaches in work with Children and Families as evidence in case file audits
 - more young people being supported by Youth Workers and achieving positive outcomes
 - more support to community and voluntary youth organisations via nine community grants
 - positive feedback from children and families
 - timely support from expanded services, for example the Domestic Abuse team and Family Conferencing team
 - strengthened relationships with families with an increase in the number of children living with Special Guardian and connected others
- 3.5.5 In addition, over the last 12 months (Sept 20 - Aug 21) and excluding Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children the number of children entering care has decreased slightly in comparison to the same period last year (by 4) and the number of children leaving care has increased in comparison to the same period last year (by 11). During this same period, the service has also seen less children escalating within social care, the number of children

escalating from a child in needs status to a Child Protection Plan has decreased by 11 in comparison to the same period last year and the number of children escalating from a child in need status to a child in care has decreased by 38 in comparison to the same period last year.

- 3.5.4 Partly due to the pandemic the service has seen an overall increase in the number of children in care, and the number of child in need and child protection plans as also seen by many other Local Authorities. The service is confident that the improvements and developments made will specifically target these areas, and once fully embedded will start to see a positive impact.

3.6 Evaluation of the programme

- 3.6.1 The service will continue to monitor all the work areas. Key deliverables and measurable benefits have been identified for each work area. The work areas are being reviewed by regular project board and programme board meetings. The programme is also being externally evaluated by the What Works Centre and monitored and reviewed by Leeds City Council to ensure external scrutiny and challenge is applied. The evaluation of the work areas and the programme will also include savings and avoided costs.
- 3.6.2 A 'road map' has been completed to start to plan final evaluation of these areas six months before the funding has ended, this will inform future developments and if and how these work areas will be sustained.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The change programme funding is time limited. The investment equates to £12.008m of which £3.933m is funded by the Department for Education, the remainder funded, in the most part, by two years of earmarked Social Care Grant. The investment will be spent approximately. over 3 financial years (2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23 and partially into 2023/24).
- 4.2 The Period 5 2021/22 forecast spend is £5,645,176, this is part slippage and part under-spend of £670,417, the service estimates the majority of this underspend will be spent over the remainder of the programme. The slippage is due to some delays across the work programme linked to recruitment, responding to the pandemic and over estimation of some costs specifically the cost of programme management.
- 4.3 The service recognises there are challenges in relation to financial sustainability of the programme. There are a number of decisions and deadlines that do not neatly align, these being timescales for the Medium Term Financial Plan and the different end dates of fixed term posts linked to the individual work areas. Due to delays in recruitment and a focus on responding to the pandemic, individual work areas in the programme started at different times. Decisions on sustainability will be based on initial findings alongside the interim external evaluation report. The Children and Families Assistant Director and change programme team are preparing to establish a

sustainability plan for Corporate Board to consider, this plan will detail what the Children and Families service may look like in April 2023. The service aims to have an initial detailed plan by January 2022.

5. Environmental Implications

5.1 Environmental implications are limited

5.2 The use of virtual tools will be used to minimise travel as appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix A: What difference has been made

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Anita Lekhi, Delivery Lead Dan Atkins, Interim Service Manager	anitalekhi@warwickshire.gov.uk danatkins@warwickshire.gov.uk
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local members: none

Other members: none.

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Children and Families Change Programme

What difference has been made?

Early Help (including Communities and Partners)

Work area	Impact
Parenting Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between September 2020 and July 2021 113 parenting programmes / workshops have been delivered by our new trainers 98% of parents agreed that the programme has helped them to support their child's behaviour
Early Help Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between October 2020 to June 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 89 headteacher mentor visits were completed. After the visits 94% of headteachers responded that they feel supported by the early help process
Youth Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of young people being supported with 1-1 support has increased from 222 as at the end of September 2020 to 313 as at the end of July 2021 As at June 21 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.5 average increase in young people scores across all 6 youth work outcomes (Emotion Management, Empathy, Initiative, Problem Solving, Responsibility and Team Work) 85% of young people agreeing to 'Yes' to 'Did working with a youth worker help you make positive change in your life?' (167 responses) improved substance and alcohol usage scores between the initial and final assessment a reduction in considering carrying a bladed article scores between the initial and final assessment
Community Youth Service Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 organisations have received funding and will be delivering youth work to young people across the county who previously didn't have access to youth work provision
Different Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of a new practitioner 14 additional clients have received support 10 clients are receiving additional support via Psychological Assessments and/or receiving therapeutic support Currently working with 44 clients, who between them have had 96 children removed from their care. Of those engaged with the service there have been no children born.

Children in need and child protection

Work area	Impact
Family Group Conferencing team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of families being supported by a Family Group Conference or Mediation has increased from 45 as at the end of September 2020 to 95 as at the end of July 2021 (monthly snapshot) Families are provided with timely support to increase engagement. No families are on a waiting list, and all families are allocated 2 days (on average) within a request Between January 21 and June 21 207 positive outcomes were reported following an FGC or Mediation, positive outcomes included, addressing key areas of concern and preventing escalation (please note multiple positive outcomes can be chosen by families) Between January – August 2021, 18 Family Group Conferences (with 38 children) have supported families to plan to prevent children or young people coming into care. As of 1 September, 15 of these families have no children in care (34 children). Between January – August 2021, 10 Family Group Conferences (with 18 children) have supported families to plan to prevent children or young people remaining in care. As of 1st September, 9 of these families have no children in foster care (15 children are placed with parents or kinship placements)
Caring Dads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 dads are being supported as part of cohort 1 and 2. Positive impact with one dad stating 'this is the programme that works'
Domestic Abuse Support team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The no. of families awaiting a service from the team has reduced from 78 in July 2020 to 10 in July 2021 and no one is waiting for a service longer than 4 weeks.
Child Exploitation Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved joint working with Sexual Health clinic nurses and other health professionals to ensure more young people attend clinics and appointments to help improve the health and wellbeing of our young people Supporting specific young people connected to large scale child exploitation operations
Empowering Families Peer to Peer mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This recently was implemented and 1 family has been match with a volunteer and is being supported (August 2021)
Family Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently implemented and partner practitioners have started their roles and new ways of working underway

Children in care and care leavers

Work area	Impact
Life Story Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">39 life story books have been completed with children in care to help them understand their journey
Special Guardian Order (SGO) support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved relational practices and support to carers with 37 children leaving care with a SGO in March 2021, this was an increase from 31 in March 2020. Of these 37, 34 SGOs were made to former foster carers resulting in a financial saving for the service.
Foster care recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">There has been a high conversation rate of foster care enquires to visits, with 72 visits completed between Sep 20 – Mar 21, compared to 47 visits completed over the same period last year. It is hoped foster care applications will be returned following these visits.

Workforce, training and programme resource

Work area	Impact
Family Valued Programme - Restorative Practice (RP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In July 2021 Over 400 external partners, including over 200 school staff, have attended RP sessions • Positive feedback from staff and parents, with one parent previously known to the service commenting on how they felt listened to and were being supported to care for their child, and how different the service feels. • In June 21, following the training programme an initial feedback form is completed by attendees, 93% (152/164) of attendees reported that they were very confident or confident that they will use the approaches, tools and techniques they have learned in the session. • In June 21, 6 weeks after their Restorative Practice training sessions 57% (31/54) of attendees reported that the training has improved outcomes for the children and families they work with or care for. • Feedback from children and families remains positive, with average scores during Q1 2020/21 above 4.5 (out of 5) across all four key areas – explanation, planning, listened to and satisfaction. • Increases in the number of children placed with families / friend foster carers (from 122 as at Sept 20 to 130 as at Jul 21) and children placed with parents or persons with parental responsibility (from 56 as at Sept 20 to 96 as at Jun 21) demonstrating improved relational practices and support to families.
Child Friendly Warwickshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from a recent survey of children and young people across Warwickshire are being used to help identify key priorities and plan activities
Programme support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two care experienced young people are supporting the programme and ensure the new work areas are informed where possible from views of children and Families

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Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Feedback Report Financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

30 September 2021

Recommendations

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Comment on the content of this report
2. Note the number of stage 1 complaints which progress to stage 2 are to be monitored and any trends identified.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Summary of feedback received

The Children and Families (C&F) services receive 4 types of feedback: comments, compliments, complaints and questions. There were 282 cases created during 2020/21 which is an increase of just over 6% (265) on 2019/20. 2019/20 saw a decrease of almost 10% (293) on 2018/19.

- 1.2 Customers have a choice of channels to provide their feedback: digitally via a self account they can set up through the Warwickshire County Council (WCC) website, telephone, face to face at an outlet or by post. Generally over recent years the use of a self account has been steadily increasing; during 2018/19 and 2019/20 it was around 70% for the authority. During 2020/21 this has risen to over 77%. For C&F services it is 30%, which is up nearly 2% on 2019/20 and almost 6% up on 2018/19.

- 1.3 During the financial year 2020/21 the volume of cases processed and closed (277) decreased by over 12% (316) on 2019/20, however it is 6.5% (260) higher than during 2018/19.

- 1.4 WCC has specific Service Level Agreements (SLA) for timeliness of response to feedback classed as a question or a complaint. Most cases that are received by WCC are dealt with by the appropriate directorate team. During 2020/21, there were 274 cases assigned to teams within C&F. Of the cases assigned and processed during the period, 63.5% (67% of questions and 47.3% of complaints) were closed within the appropriate SLA. The corporate SLA performance target for complaints is 70%.

1.5 Complaints

- During 2020/21 there were 167 complaints closed by C&F teams which is a decrease of 25% on 2019/20, however this is 5% more than during 2018/19. Of those closed cases 79 achieved the SLA (i.e. timeliness requirement), which means that 47.31% of complaints were managed within required timescales. This is an increase of over 18% from 2019/20 and nearly 13% on 2018/19.
- Most of the complaints raised focused on perceived issues with: Communication, protection of user, and WCC service standard. However, Contact Us currently only allows the selection of one complaint reason for each complaint raised therefore this may not provide a holistic view of all issues.
- Just over 34% of the complaints closed were not upheld
- Almost 22% of complaints have been upheld either fully or partially
- Almost 16% of questions have been answered as part of a complaint.

1.6 Compliments have increased by just over 31% on 2019/20 and 12% on 2018/19.

1.7 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

During the financial year 2020/21 there were 21 complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO in respect of Warwickshire County Council. Of those the area of Children Social Care represented 2 cases, 1 of which was upheld and 1 of which was closed after initial enquiries.

Further information is available on the LGSCO website [here](#)

1.8 Learning from feedback

Putting things right where they have gone wrong and learning from issues raised is the most important part of our customer feedback process. Where there are opportunities for learning and change beyond the individual complaint raised, we look carefully at how best to do this.

From the information captured on the system the main categories of learning have been recorded as follows:

- Poor communication by officers both internally and with the customer
- Better planning required
- Staff training needed
- Improve the time for completing cases – Work has been initiated on this point with recommendations from stage 2 reports being shared and monitored with the appropriate services to ensure these are actioned and lessons learnt.

2 Financial Implications

- 2.1 The investigation, administration, actioning and analysis of feedback has costs, although these cannot be quantified, and lessons can be learned from feedback which improve the effectiveness with which resources are used in future.

3 Environmental Implications

None

4 Supporting Information

4.1 Performance highlight

- Number of cases created during 2020/21 was 6.4% up on 2019/20 however, nearly 4% down on 2018/19.
- Percentage of complaint cases closed within the SLA was 47% which is 18% higher than 2019/20 and 12% up on 2018/19.
- Compliments have increased by just over 31% on 2019/20 and 12% on 2018/19.
- Cases created digitally for C&F is currently (2020/21) almost 30% of all cases compared to approximately 77% corporately.
- 90% of the complaint cases were in relation to:
 - Communication 63%
 - Protection of User 14%
 - WCC service standards almost 13%

5 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

Not applicable.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Children and Families Feedback report 2018/20

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Maureen Oakes	maureenoakes@warwickshire.gov.uk
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This report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:
Councillors Dahmash, Roodhouse and Brown.

Children and Families (C&F) Feedback Report

Financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail the four types of customer feedback which have been received by Children and Families Service (C&F) during financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 including volume, efficiency of processing and outcome for the customer.

Background

This report will detail and analyse the following:

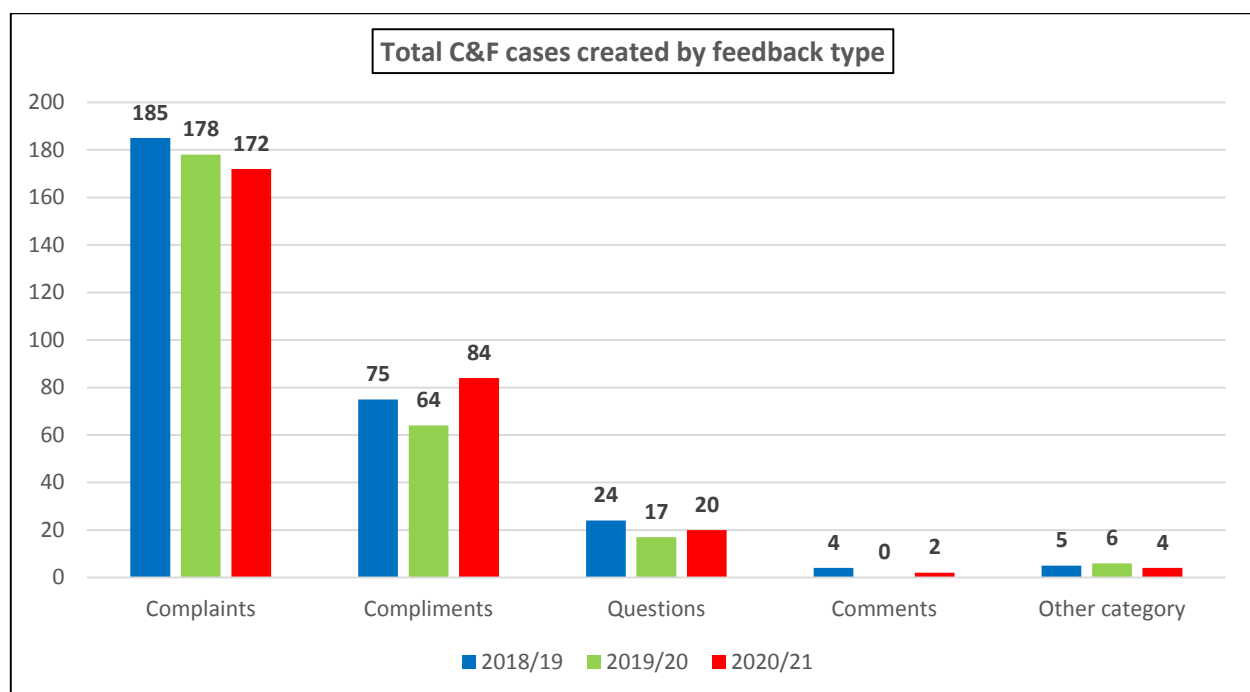
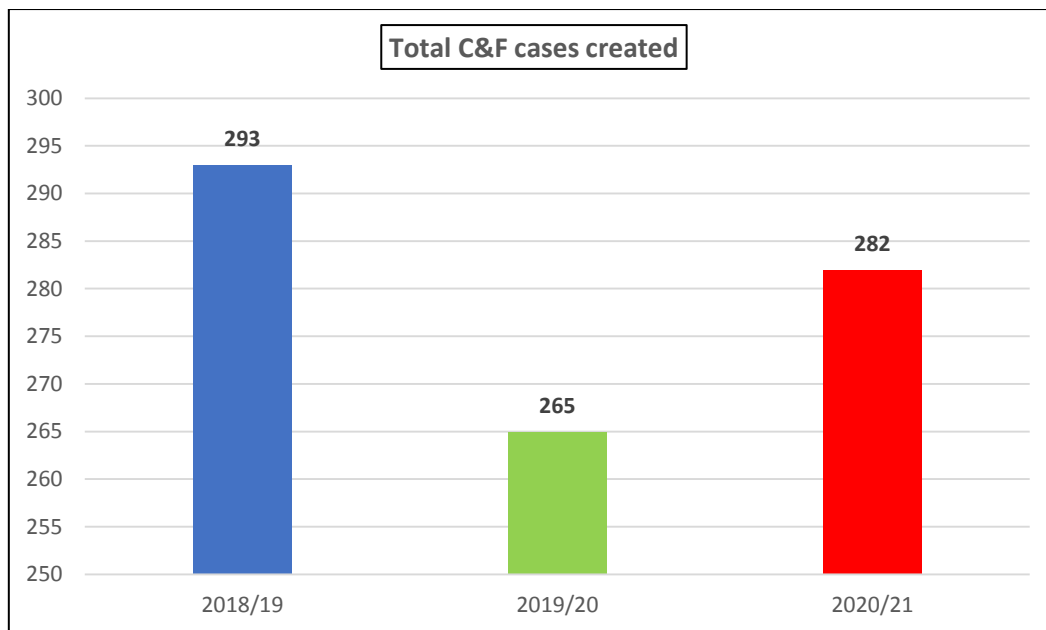
- Volume -
 - Cases created during the period – compliments, complaints, questions and comments
 - Cases processed and closed within the period
- Timeliness – Feedback closed within the appropriate Service Level Agreement (SLA)
- Complaint issues
- Outcomes and remedies for customers
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)
- Learning from feedback

Overview of performance – C&F

This report focuses on the feedback received from users and customers of C&F services within People Directorate during the period of this report.

Volume

The tables below detail the number of cases created in relation to C&F services and the number of each of the 4 types of feedback received during 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.



Please note that 'Other category' are cases that provide additional information on closed or open cases.

Cases created are all feedback cases that have been received within the period. This does not include cases that were created in the previous year which had not been closed in the same financial year. The total number of cases created during 2020/21 was 282 which is an increase of over 6% on the created cases (265) during 2019/20. 2019/20 saw a decrease of almost 10% (293) on 2018/19.

Cases created during 2019/20 compared to 2018/19:

- Complaints have reduced by almost 4%

Appendix 1

- Compliments have reduced by nearly 15%
- Questions have reduced by just over 29%
- Comments have decreased by 100%, however the percentage is high due to the low absolute numbers.
- Other category feedback has increased by 20% again low absolute numbers.

During 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 feedback has increased apart from complaint and other category cases:

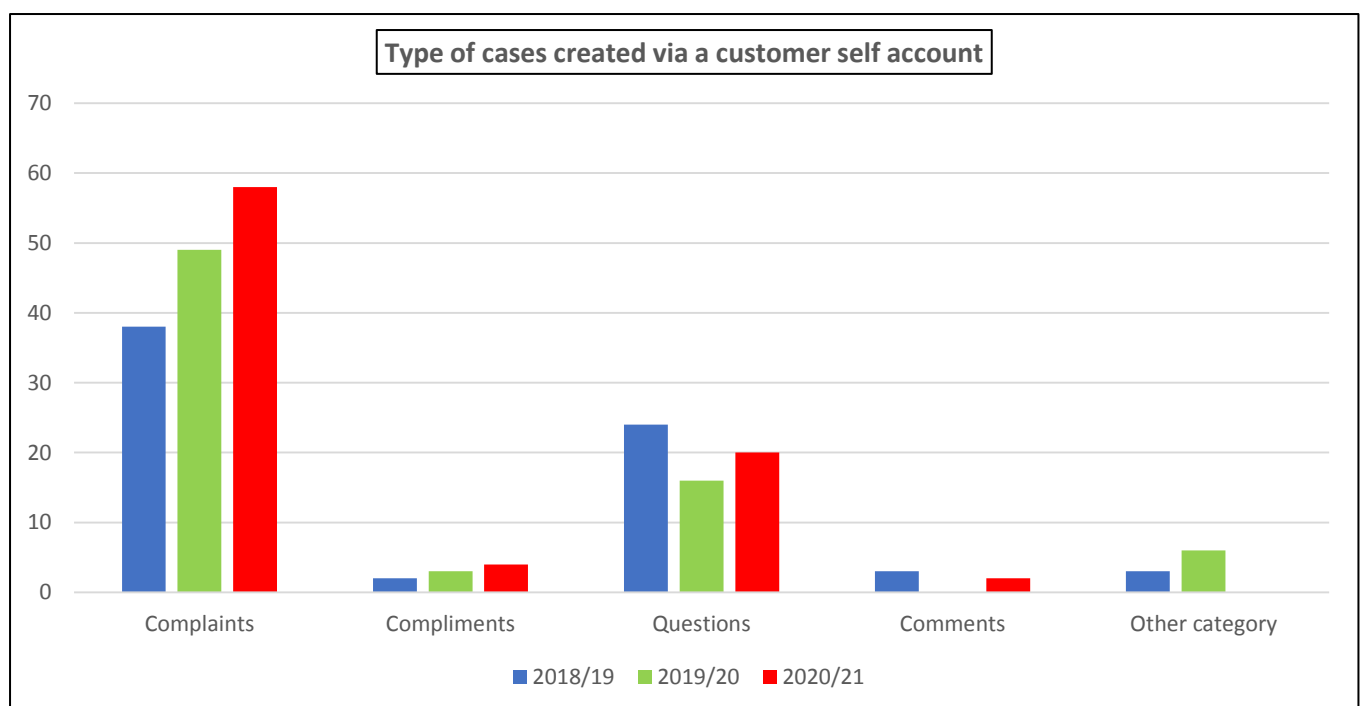
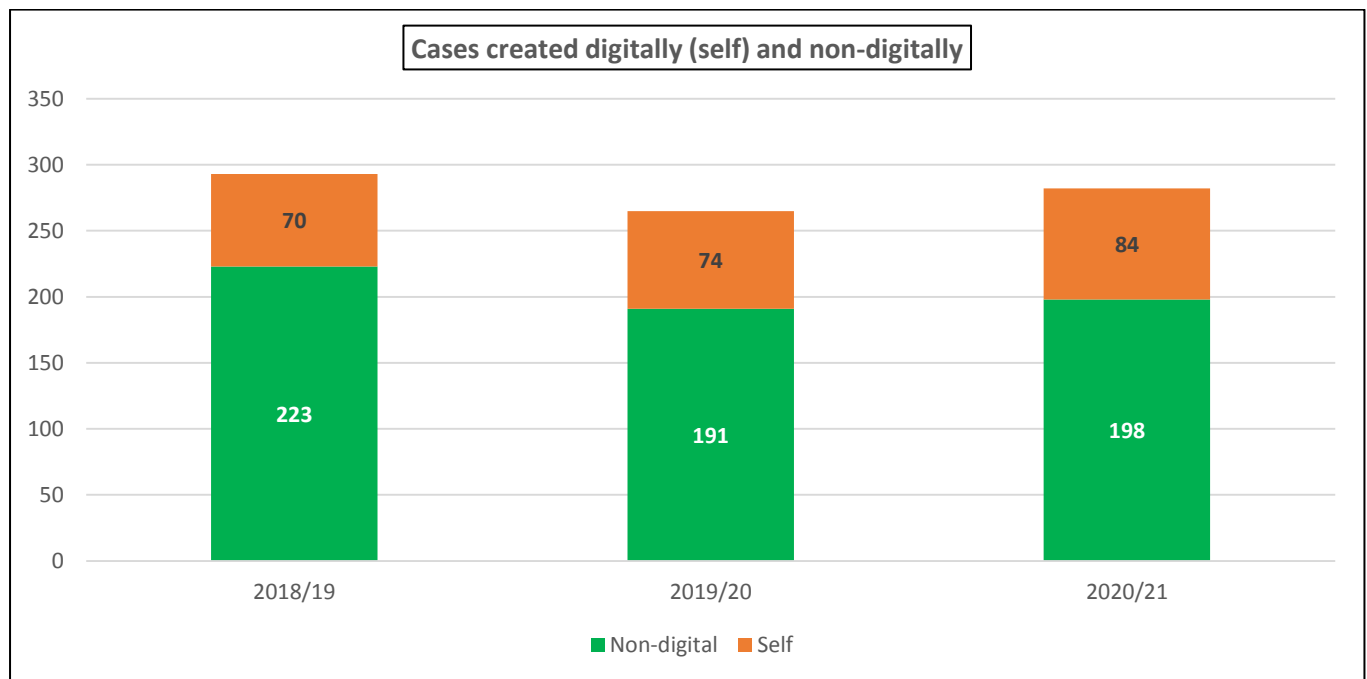
- Complaints have reduced by 3%
- Compliments have increased by just over 31%
- Questions have increased by nearly 18%
- Comments have increased by 200%, however the percentage is high due to the low absolute numbers.
- Other category feedback has decreased by one third, again low absolute numbers.

Complaint cases in 2020/21 amounted to 61% of all feedback cases received by C&F. The table below details which teams were allocated complaint cases created during the periods of this report.

Number of complaints created, and teams allocated			
Team	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Bedworth and North Warwickshire Childrens Team	22	37	22
Children in Care 14018	0	0	4
Childrens Assurance IROs LADO	3	0	0
Childrens Corporate Parenting	1	5	0
Childrens Countywide Fostering Adoption Asylum	6	0	0
Childrens Early Help and Targeted Support	0	0	3
Childrens Emergency Duty Team	0	0	3
Childrens Fostering	0	0	1
Childrens Independent Reviewing Officer Team	0	1	2
Childrens Initial Response	4	19	28
Childrens Leaving Care	10	9	2
Childrens MASH	10	13	17
Childrens North & East A&I	8	13	21
Childrens Ops North Bedworth	14	0	0
Childrens Ops North Nuneaton	4	0	0
Childrens Ops North Rugby	5	0	0
Childrens Ops North Warwickshire	18	0	0
Childrens Ops South Central	10	0	0
Childrens Ops South Stratford	8	0	0
Childrens Ops South Warwick	11	0	0
Childrens SEND Social Care	5	0	0
Childrens Special Intervention Family Focus	2	0	0
Childrens Strengthening Families	1	4	10
Childrens with Disabilities	9	31	11
Family Information Services	0	2	0
Innovate	0	0	5
Local Authority Designated Officer Team	0	0	1
Nuneaton Childrens Team	11	17	9
Rugby Childrens Team	12	4	8
Stratford Childrens Team	6	13	13
Warwick Childrens Team	5	10	11
Youth Justice Service	0	0	1

Use of self accounts

Customers have a choice of channels to provide their feedback: digitally via a self account they can set up through the WCC website, telephone, face to face at an outlet or by post. The chart below shows the total cases which were created* both digitally (Self account) and non digitally during 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. Generally, for WCC over the past few years this has been steadily increasing and is currently over 77% overall, for C&F services it is 30%, which is up nearly 2% on 2019/20 and almost 6% up on the previous year.



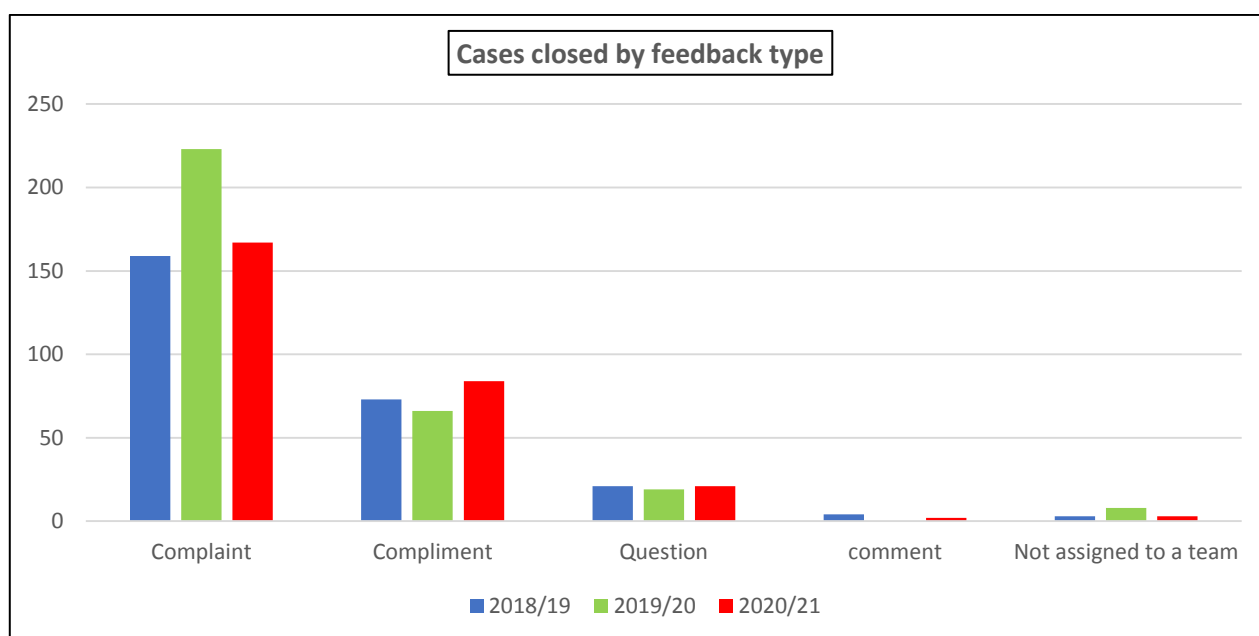
* Note cases created is different from cases closed.

Cases closed

All cases received into Contact Us have to be processed prior to closing in the system. There are 2 different types of processing required:

1. A complaint or question relating to WCC and/or its services requires processing and a response provided to the customer within an agreed timescale i.e. SLA, as set out in our complaint policy link [here](#) , Customer Care Charter and Standards link [Customer care](#) or in legislation.
2. Feedback received within the system which is not with regard to WCC or the services it delivers or not appropriate for the system requires a specific response (generally signposting) to the customer.

The chart below details the number of cases that have been processed and closed by C&F teams over the past 3 years.



It should be noted that cases closed during a period represent those that have been processed, however there were existing cases which were carried over from the previous financial year, just as there were cases received but not processed by the end of the current period.

Timescales

Cases Closed at Initial Triage

WCC has specific SLA's for timeliness of response to feedback classed as a question or a complaint, customers do not receive a response to comments or compliments made. Where a response is required, most of these cases are dealt with by the appropriate Directorate team. However, there are cases which are submitted digitally by customers via

their self-account that are either not for WCC or not appropriate for the Contact Us process. These cases are:

1. Services delivered by another authority, a district or borough or another organisation
2. The reporting of an initial service request, generally highways related
3. Anonymous submission of question or complaint whereby it is not possible to fully process and respond to the customer.
4. Or can be answered by the Customer Relations Team immediately

Cases which fall into the above categories are closed at initial triage and the customer responded to accordingly. These cases are referred to as 'not assigned a team/closed at triage'. **All these cases are closed within the SLA.** In addition, comments and compliments do not require a response to the customer and are generally processed and closed at triage. Those that are not closed at triage are those that have been incorrectly classified by the customer and do require a response from WCC.

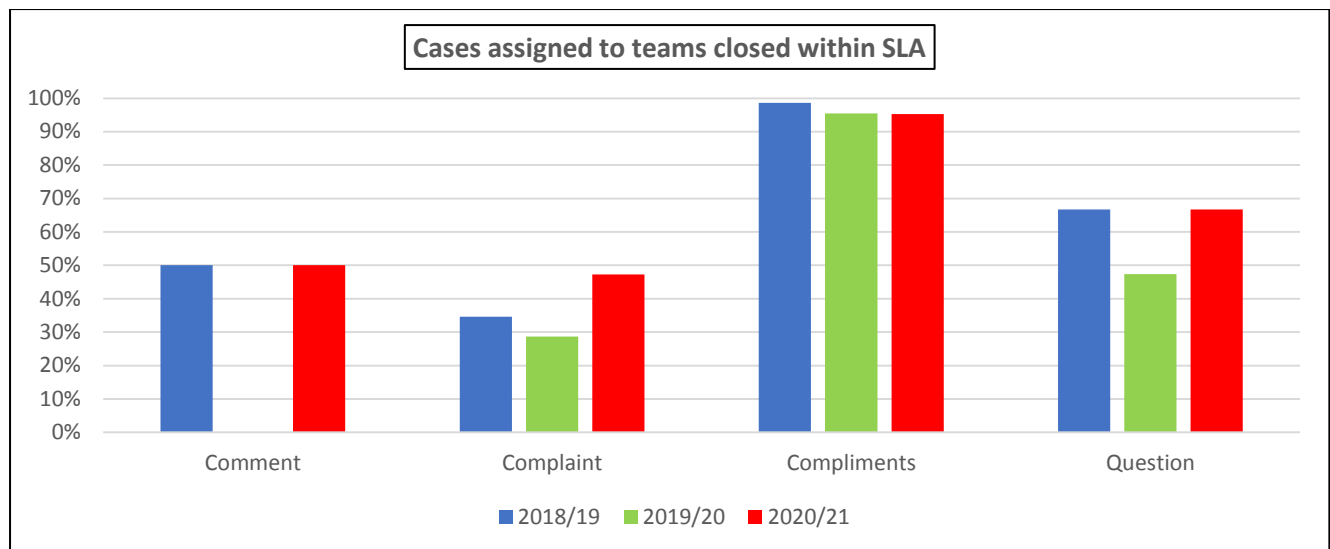
Cases closed within SLA

During the financial year 2020/21 the volume of cases processed and closed (277) decreased by over 12% (316) on 2019/20, however is 6.5% higher than 2018/19.

The table and diagram below show the split by type of feedback of cases that were closed within the appropriate SLA. Complaints are the only feedback type which have a WCC performance target for response. The target is 70% within SLA, the average response time within C&F over the past 3 years is 36%.

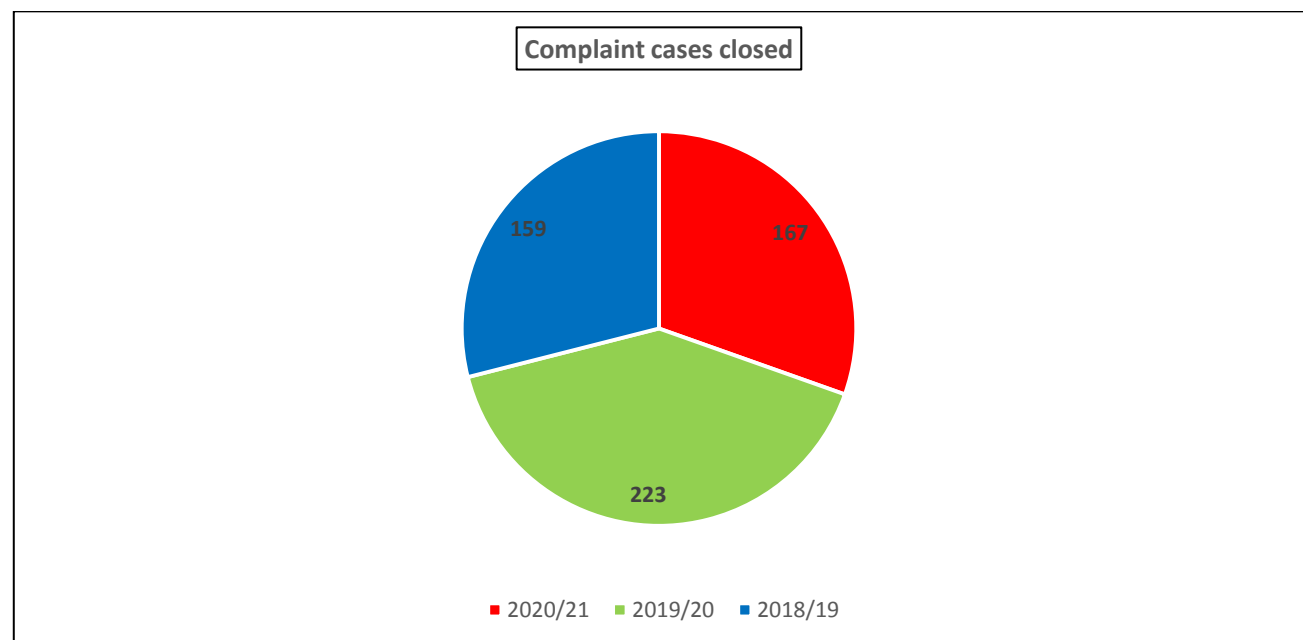
Of the 167 complaint cases processed during 2020/21, 79 cases achieved the SLA (i.e. timeliness requirement), which means that 47.31% of complaints were managed within required timescales. This is an increase of over 18% from the previous financial year.

	2018/19			2019/20			2020/21		
	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%	No. of Cases	Within SLA	%
Comment	4	2	50	0	0	0	2	1	50
Complaint	159	55	34.59	223	64	28.70	167	79	47.31
Compliments	73	72	98.63	66	63	95.45	84	80	95.24
Question	21	14	66.67	19	9	47.37	21	14	66.67
Total assigned	257	143	55.64	308	136	44.16	274	174	63.50
Not assigned to a team	3	0	0	8	1	12.50	3	3	100
Total	260	143	55	316	137	43.35	277	177	63.90



Closed Complaints

During 2020/21 there was a reduction of over 25% in the number of complaint cases closed than during 2019/20 however it was 5% higher than during 2018/19.



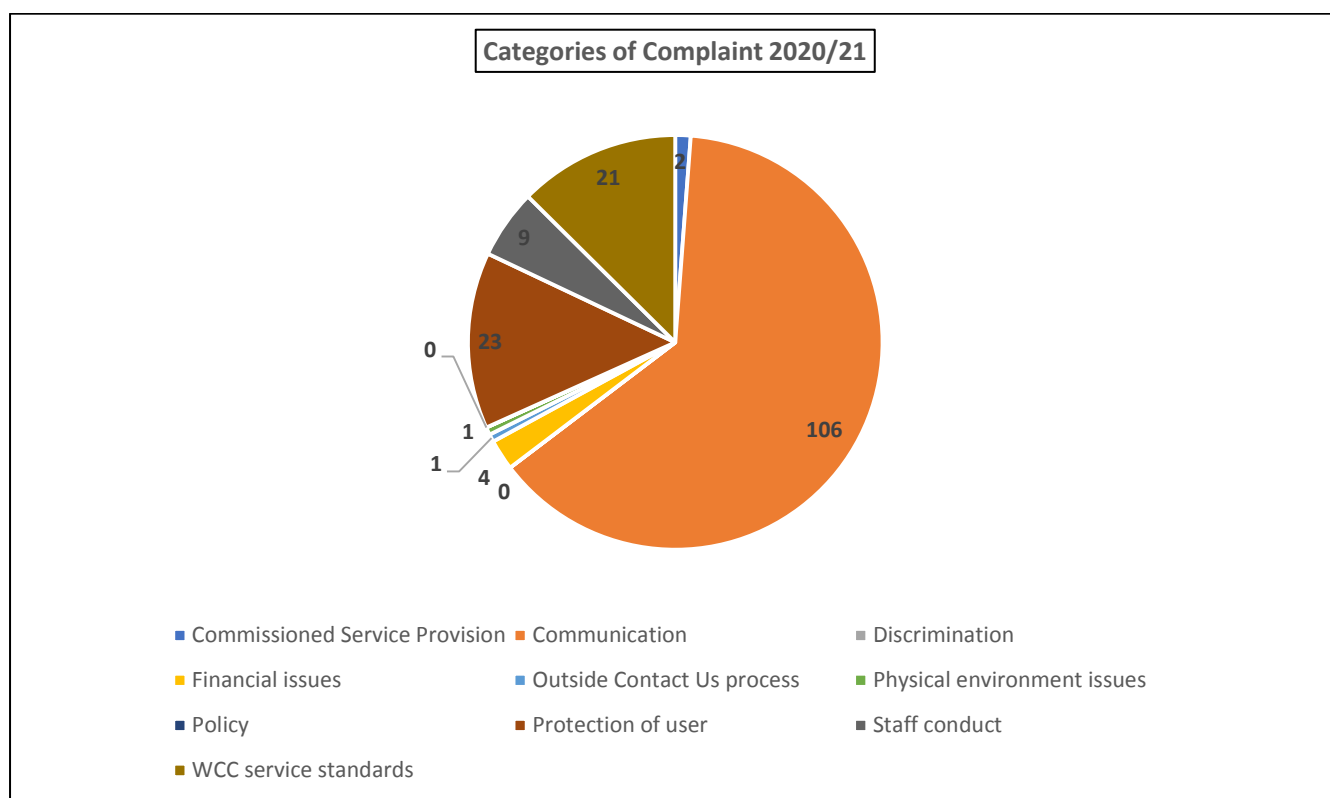
Complaint Issues

Most of the complaints raised focused on perceived issues with: Communication, protection of user, and WCC service standards. However, Contact Us currently only allows the selection of one complaint reason for each complaint raised therefore this may not provide a holistic view of all issues.

The table below shows the trend in categories of complaint to C&F services during the past 3 financial years.

Complaints by Category			
Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Commissioned Service Provision	2	2	2
Communication	23	65	106
Discrimination	3	0	0
Financial issues	3	4	4
Outside Contact Us process	3	2	1
Physical environment issues	1	0	1
Policy	7	12	0
Protection of user	13	16	23
Staff conduct	37	49	9
WCC service standards	67	73	21

The pie chart details the categories of complaints closed during 2020/21.



Outcome and remedy for customers

Complaints closed by Outcome			
Outcome	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
No outcome provided	0	0	3
All: Transferred	2	0	3
Complaint: Deemed to be Withdrawn	6	6	7
Complaint: Inconclusive	6	9	7
Complaint: Not upheld	76	74	57
Complaint: Partially Upheld	29	42	25
Complaint: Upheld	12	14	11
Complaint: Withdrawn by Customer	2	7	4
Question: Answered	19	57	26
Question: Partially Answered	1	4	0
Question: Unable to Answer	5	10	24
	1	0	0

During 2020/21:

- Just over 34% of the complaints closed were not upheld
- Almost 22% of complaints have been either fully or partially upheld
- Almost 16% of questions have been answered as part of a complaint.

Complaints by Remedy			
Remedy	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Apology	25	52	30
Explanation	135	192	131
Financial Remedy	3	2	2
Policy Change	0	0	0
Process	2	2	4
Service	56	35	17

There can be more than one remedy to a complaint, but most of customers' issues have been resolved - at least partially - with an explanation being provided. A further significant proportion have been resolved by providing an explanation and/or apology.

Investigation Actions

Complaints by Investigation Action			
Action	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Complete Evidence Review	4	13	7
Confirm Investigation Action Plan	12	13	5
Contact Complainant to agree issues, desired outcomes and timescales	1	1	4
Finalise Response or Report	42	13	19
Make Recommendations	8	6	10
N/A - Question Answered	47	41	28
Reviewed Necessary Documents	141	204	144
Draft Response and Update with Comments	4	5	6
Use Evidence to Demonstrate Findings	3	3	5

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

During the financial year 2020/21 there were 21 complaints and enquiries received by the LGSCO in respect of Warwickshire County Council. Of those the area of Children Social Care represented 2 cases, 1 which was upheld and 1 which was closed after initial enquiries.

Further information is available on the LGSCO website [here](#)

Learning from feedback

Putting things right where they have gone wrong and learning from issues raised is the most important part of our customer feedback process.

As mentioned, the current complaints case management system, Contact Us, is under review due to failings around the level of information it captures, as well as its ability to manage that information in a user-friendly, customer-centric way. Much of the detail in relation to learning from our customers' feedback therefore has been captured outside the system. There is a field 'Lessons learned' within Contact Us which should be completed by

the investigating officer once the complaint has been closed however on most occasions this field is used for case notes, is marked N/A or is left blank.

However, from the responses captured on the system the main categories of learning for the authority have been recorded as follows:

- Poor communication by officers both internally and with the customer
- Better planning required
- Staff training needed
- Improve the time for completing cases

Summary

Understanding our customers and their views is key to delivering the best possible service, which is something Warwickshire County Council is committed to striving to achieve.

Managing the timeliness of our responses is a high priority and this will be helped by a new case management system as it will give us greater visibility.

Performance highlight

- Number of cases created during 2020/21 was 6.4% up on 2019/20 however, nearly 4% down on 2018/19.
- Percentage of complaint cases closed within the SLA was 47% which is 18% higher than 2019/20 and 12% up on 2018/19.
- Compliments have increased by just over 31% on 2019/20 and 12% on 2018/19.
- Cases created digitally for C&F is currently (2020/21) almost 30% of all cases compared to approximately 77% corporately.
- 90% of the complaint cases were in relation to:
 - Communication 63%
 - Protection of User 14%
 - WCC service standards almost 13%

Maureen Oakes

July 2021

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee: September 2021

Meeting Date and status	Reports	Details
30 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Strategy Update on Children's Change Programme The Overview Feedback report (feedback received during financial years 2018-2020) 	
19 October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploitation Annual Report and briefing on contextual safeguarding and interfamilial abuse 	
16 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress of Integrated Front Door (MASH) Performance Report (Q1) 	
22 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Workers in Schools 	
11 April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post Covid – impact on services (to include an update from RISE) 	

Outstanding Reports

None at present (22/09/2021)

Future Items to be added to the Work Programme

- The recent SEND Inspection may generate items for the work programme
- Joint meeting with the Adult Social Care and Health OSC in relation to Mental Health and its impact on Children
- Family Support Worker's Service – performance information to be added to the regular performance report

Motions from Council

None currently

Briefing Notes/Information to be circulated outside the meeting

- Annual Reports; Corporate Parenting; Fostering, adoption and IRO reports to be circulated jointly
- Exclusions rates and reasons
- Information relating to children on the school roll but not currently in school
- Nitrous Oxide Canisters – Nigel Minns to provide data from Trading Standards and the Drug & Alcohol team.
- Post Covid – impact on services/RISE/Family Support Workers etc (ahead of April meeting).
- School Placement Allocation
- Social Engine
- The use of small children's homes
- Update relating to the Emergency Duty Team

Items on the Forward Plan relevant to the remit of the Committee

Decision	Description	Date due	Decision Maker
Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030	To agree Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030	14 October 2021	Cabinet

Briefing notes and reports circulated –

- Keeping families together – sent 17th June 2021
- Warwickshire Parenting Approach 2021 – 2024 – sent out 26th July 2021

- **Next Chair and Spokes Meeting - these meetings will be held virtually**
 - 7th October @10am
 - 3rd November @10am
 - 2nd February @10am
 - 30th March @10am

- **Next Committee Meeting – please note additional meetings may be added for additional agenda items such as performance reviews. These meetings will be held at Shire Hall, Warwick.**
 - 30 September 2021 @ 10am
 - 19 October @ 10am
 - 16 November 2021 @ 10am
 - 22 February 2022 @ 10am
 - 11 April 2022 @ 10am

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