

Education, Children and Families Committee

10:00am, Tuesday, 23 January 2024

Children's Services Improvement Plan and Edinburgh Residential Services Improvement Plan Update

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked:
 - 1.1.1 To note the positive progress made against the Children's Services Improvement Plan, and the Edinburgh Residential Services Improvement Plan, last reported November 2023.
 - 1.1.2 To scrutinise those areas where progress is slower than planned and ensure effective mitigations are in place.

Amanda Hatton

Executive Director Children, Education and Justice Services

Contact: Kathy Henwood, Service Director of Children, and Justice Services

E-mail: Kathy.Henwood@edinburgh.gov.uk

Contact: Steve Harte, Head of Corporate Parenting

E-mail: steve.harte@edinburgh.gov.uk

Report

Children's Services Improvement Plan and Edinburgh Residential Services Improvement Plan Update

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Progress has been made in all areas of the Children's Services Improvement Plan. In some areas progress hasn't been at the pace expected; this primarily relates to ongoing delays in recruitment which is a national challenge.
- 2.2 Some areas of progress have moved back to amber to be considered within the wider service review/redesign that has just commenced.
- 2.3 This report sets out the improvements in the Residential Services Improvement Plan from the last report that went to the Education, Children and Families Committee in November 2023.

3. Background

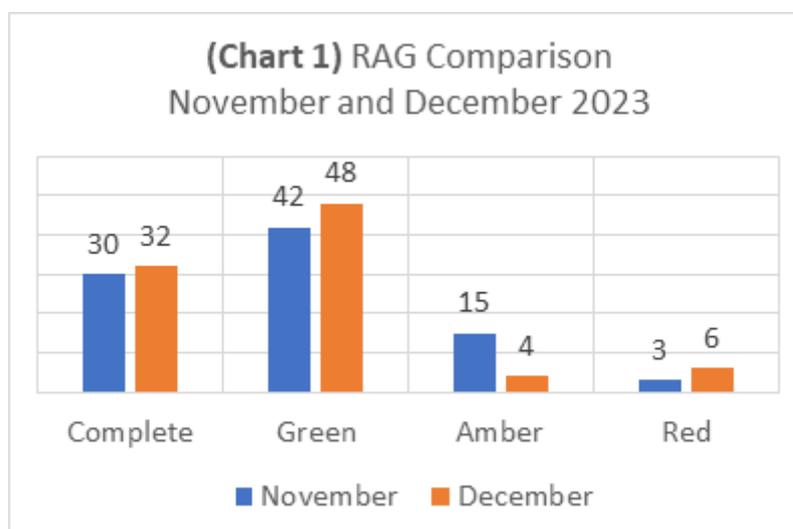
- 3.1 The Executive Director led significant due diligence activity which resulted in a self-assessment and Improvement Plan for Children's Services. This was shared as a B agenda with Committee on 27 April 2023. It was agreed that updates would be reported at each committee cycle.
- 3.2 On 15 November 2022 the Education, Children and Families Committee requested that the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services would:
 - 3.2.1 Continue to deliver on the Edinburgh Secure Services and Residential Services Improvement Plan; updates have been shared with members.
 - 3.2.2 Continue to report at each cycle the ongoing improvement work.

4. Main Report

- 4.1 Several actions within the Children's Services Improvement Plan are now complete, on track, or progressing well. Although delays in recruitment continues to be an issue in some areas, plans have been put in place to mitigate this including

reallocation of resources; and the development of an enhanced assessment team and child protection resource, sitting at the front door. This resource is operational from 8 January 2024 and will enable more timely responses, greater scrutiny of demand and capacity and a move to full allocation of cases, ensuring best use of existing resources.

- 4.2 This additional resource will enable a greater focus on the practice standards, which were implemented in November 2023 and feeds into regular performance monitoring, in line with our key performance indicators and ambition to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.3 Within the improvement plan we still have one action sitting at red in relation to improving child focussed understanding of safe and together approach to domestic abuse. This is being progressed as a multi-agency through the Child Protection Team and an update will be provided in March 2024.
- 4.3 Significant improvements have been made in our residential improvement plan. Since November's committee the Care Inspectorate have inspected two of our houses for young people. Oxgangs on 8 November 2023 and Southouse on 10 November 2023. Once these Inspection reports are published on the Care Inspectorate website, we will bring these reports and their findings to committee.
- 4.4 Chart 1 shows a comparison in the progress of the Residential and Short Breaks Consolidated Improvement Plan between November and December 2023.



- 4.5 The Improvement Plan is dynamic because of the interdependence of milestones. This is kept under regular review.
- 4.6 Since the November 2023 Committee Report, three Amber Actions have been reclassified to Red Actions and relate to:

Complaints' training and quarterly sampling of complaints by Governance, Quality and Regulation.

Currently, social work complaints sit as a separate complaints service within the City of Edinburgh Council. This has been subject to review and the service will

integrate back into the wider Complaints Service of the Council. As this transfer of responsibility is not yet complete, we have scored this action as Red to maintain focus and oversight of the plan until the new Governance arrangements are in place.

This shift will enable the Governance, Quality and Regulation Service to focus on the delivery of case file audits across Children's Services and the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, as they will no longer be undertaking quarterly dip sampling and reporting on the handling of complaints for Children's Services as specified in the Action Plan.

A review of the completion rates of mandatory complaints training have shown a need for this area to be reprioritised, and a plan is in place to ensure this training is in place and staff enabled to attend. It has been agreed that additional resource will be put in place to drive this work forward. We expect to report back to committee that this milestone is met.

In relation to ongoing capacity and demand, and in response to the findings of a whistle blowing action, further resources are being allocated to learning and development to progress these priorities and further workforce planning.

Development of service specific training about safe recruitment practice in residential childcare. All recruiting managers across the council must complete online Safer Recruitment training. Current practice is compliant with [the Care Inspectorate Safer Recruitment Guidance 2023](#). However, there was an ask to create a specific training module for recruiting managers in our residential houses, focusing on additional considerations when recruiting to residential posts. The development of this training has been delayed due to capacity issues and staff vacancies, and it has fallen outside of a comfortable completion date. Work is being undertaken, as a priority, to develop this training by colleagues in Learning and Development, it is anticipated this work will be completed by end of September 2024. The increased learning and development capacity will enable this, with a contingency to commission externally to ensure timescales are met.

Multi-Agency Quality Assurance Group (MAQA). The MAQA provides Senior Managers with assurance and management oversight of the quality of care provided to young people in our houses and external provision. We are currently reviewing the Terms of Reference through the lens of Integrated Service Planning and quality assurance across the partnership, in line with the requirements of The Promise and Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). Membership of the Children's Services MAQA, which is led by the Chief Social Work Officer and Service Director for Children and Justice Services, is also subject to review, to ensure its effectiveness in driving required change. We have identified this as a Red action until this update is completed by April 2024.

- 4.7 Six Amber actions have progressed to Green, and one Amber action has been accepted as Completed. Key highlights include the implementation of a new Incident Form for recording of safe holds of young people and annual objective setting/improvement planning across the service.
- 4.8 A historic record of training is now accessible in one place through the My Learning Hub. This will allow managers to see more easily what training people have

completed. This will be further augmented by the new case recording system that social work is progressing.

- 4.9 In January 2024 the RAG Status will be reviewed again and updates on progress will be provided to future committees.
- 4.10 Regarding the update on the re provision of Edinburgh Secure Service, we are continuing to develop an emergency reception service. A change of service requires Registration with the Care Inspectorate to finalise, and we continue to work to achieve this and co-design our new service with input from our children, young people and their families. Meantime we have created the family-support outreach provision, Edge of Care support service, to enable young people to remain living at home. The service has already prevented some young people coming into care and assisted some young people to return home from care. Since October 2023 we have admitted 10 young people to our residential services. From this one moved from adult accommodation after an age assessment. Five emergency admissions, two as a result of Child Protection issues. One of the five has already moved to live with family. Four planned admissions, two from out of authority and returned to Edinburgh. This is a clear example of delivering The Promise with a commitment and vision to maintain/support children and young people to live within their own families/communities, wherever possible, to do so. Strategic planning through the Childrens Services Partnership and The Corporate Parenting Board are developing key drivers for this service area.
- 4.11 The Committee will be further updated on the progress of the Action Plan at the next committee.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The service will continue to drive the improvement agenda and learn through the process and inform Committee of progress.
- 5.2 This will inform future decision making and enable us to capitalise on best practice and build on our strengths in a way that makes the greatest difference for children and young people and their families.
- 5.3 The Improvement Board will have monthly progress reports against the Improvement Plan and will also receive audit reports. This will be managed under the Corporate Change Programme Board to ensure scrutiny by Corporate Leadership Team.
- 5.4 The Improvement Plans will remain live documents which drives improvement and where an area is deemed to be completed this will be added to the audit plan to ensure continued compliance.

The manager of Residential Services has received the membership of the Committee Members and will be inviting the Committee to attend a local house in the near future.

6. Financial Impact

- 6.1 A report was submitted to Finance and Resources on [10 March](#) which detailed costs associated with temporary staff. An update on the Swift replacement and associated costs was presented to Finance and Resources on completion of analysis, in October 2023. A further report will be submitted to Finance and Resources on 25 January 2024.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 The Improvement Plan ensures that we are meeting our statutory obligations to the most vulnerable children, young people, and their families in Edinburgh.
- 7.2 Our commitment is to ensure that Edinburgh is the best place to live and grow up.
- 7.3 We are securing connections with community planning partners, strategic partnership groups and the tackling poverty work, seeing poverty as the largest single cause for children and young people coming to the attention of statutory services.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 There will be no impact on this.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The focus of the plan is to improve the children and families social work practice and approach and ensure safety for our most vulnerable children.
- 9.2 It is recognised that children and young people live within families and communities and as such partners are key in driving forward any change agenda.
- 9.3 Whilst we seek the views of children, young people, and their families on an individual basis, we are eager to ensure we enter greater debate around family and community capacity building, codesign and production of services. This will be reflected in our three-year strategy.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 None

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - Updated Children's Services Improvement Plan

1. Ensuring Safety							Progress		
Review and Strengthen the front door									
Action	Lead	Start	End	Outcome	Evidence	Progress	Progress as 21st August 2023	Progress as of 10/10/2023	Progress as of 05/01/24
<p>Improve team working and develop a learning culture</p> <p>•Currently SCD provides a single point of access to the services that help keep children safe. As part of whole family support there is a need for greater emphasis on supporting and building resilient communities. There will be an increased focus on prevention, early help and asset-based community development working across all life stages.</p>	HOS Early intervention	1st April	Mar-24	Seamless early help offer in place and threshold document agreed by partnership	reduction in the number of needing social work support.	We have a partnership whole family support plan in place and are currently recruiting to the team	Permanent Head of Service in post as of 7th August. Integrated Front Door Project Implementation document now approved at CLT and project manager in place. Strategic and operational boards to be actioned. Partnership whole family support transformation post now recruited and in place. Early help coordinators and participation and business support posts to develop family information directory. Additional team leader post recruitment successful however 5 social work vacancies remain unfilled. Further recruitment in place and agency cover will remain to ensure capacity until recruitment is successful. New model is having positive reduction on work volume going to practice teams.	Recruitment continues to be an issue. Child protection cases are currently being reallocated to ensure timely intervention in line with need. Work on integrated Front Door continues with HSCP colleagues. Visits arranged to neighbouring authorities to share good practice models.	The front door remains the single point of access to services. The resource has been developed into an assessment team and a child protection team, both which will be operational from 08/01/24. This resource has been drawn from existing staff, internal secondments and agency staff. The team will provide better data and analysis of pathways through services, outcomes and experience, to inform a wider service review/redesign, that is being taken forward across children and families social work. This resource will also allow the practice teams to move to full allocation of cases. This work will feed into the wider planning around scoping an integrated front door. March 2024.
<p>•Team to be physically co located with their managers and rota to build in time for team meetings and collaborative time.</p>	HOS Early intervention	Jun-23	Review September 2023	Better team cohesion and support	Reduced sickness improved morale	Additional capacity in the form of a bridging team and a new grade 12 put into the front door	Significant improvement in practice with tighter systems and processes in place. However still recruitment needed as evidenced above. Return to the office tied to wider organisational review of future of work questionnaire to ensure equity. Questionnaire currently out to all staff.	Use of space and place within Waverley Court, City Chambers and Locality Offices still subject to ongoing review and short term moves in line with identified need. A Development Day has been held and further dates in calendar, Family Based Care Team now relocated to Drumbrae allowing closer working alignment with social work practice teams colleague. Further team movement is part of wider review through Our Future Work	Waverley Court, City Chambers and Locality Offices are still subject to ongoing review -alongside the wider residential estate. All options for staff coming together and keeping connected are being supported. The use of office space and accommodation will be part of the wider service review/service redesign. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.
<p>•Office space to be re modelled to support collaborative learning and working if necessary</p>	HOS Early intervention	Mar-23	May-23	As above	As above		In progress Strategic Asset Partnership Manager looking at collaborative work space. Police also requesting collaborative space. Some delay because of need to link to wider corporate property strategy which has now been agreed at P and S Committee	As above, this is being progressed alongside the Our Future Work developments.	As above -this is being progressed alongside Our Future Work developments. The need for office space is further challenged by the need for safe working spaces, for direct work with children, families and adults and planning and protection meetings with partner agencies. March 2024
<p>•Working with Education needs to be better supported to ensure that all notifications from police can be effectively communicated to schools and capacity to deliver Girfec can be enhanced through a dedicated point of contact for education colleagues in schools and settings. Therefore an education safeguarding officer will be developed in social care direct.</p>	HOS Early intervention -	Mar-23	Sep-23	Improved communication with schools and education focus in planning	Reduction in repeat referrals from schools, better use of team around the learning community	Post established in the whole family support team – currently out to advert.	Schools safeguarding post out for advert and recruiting. Weekly complex cases panel in place with social care and education to ensure information sharing for our most complex young people. Further work needed to ensure education are equal partners in IRD processes hence this is amber.	Recruitment still being progressed, GIRFEC and Child Protection processes being reviewed to ensure timely and appropriate response from all partners. Critical Review of child wellbeing into child protection across the partnership to inform future working is now in place.	Recruitment of Education Child Protection lead and GIRFEC lead in place. Review of GIRFEC being undertaken, especially in line with interface between well-being and child protection. The new child protection resource and assessment team will be able to further inform this work and all data will feed into the service review/redesign. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.
<p>•Development of reflective group learning offer to support team development and consistency of practice.</p>	CSWO	Apr-23	Programme in place September 2023	Clarity in relation to what good looks like and a body of positive evidence	Case audit 85 percent adequate or above.		Practice standards in place which articulates what good looks like. Audit programme in place and beginning to evidence practice improvement - most recent audits showing all cases had assessment and management oversight. Learning loop from audit still needs to be embedded and further work required on understanding the data now being captured at the frontdoor - hence this is amber.	Practice Standards finalised and implemented and will be part of performance measure reporting and included Development Days scheduled.	The establishment of the child protection and resource and assessment team will allow practice teams to move to full case load allocation. This will provide an operating model that ensures practice standards can be fully applied and monitored in terms of implementation and impact/outcomes. These provide the framework for practice going forward. Monthly business reports are being developed and staff are being recruited to ensure this performance monitoring is in place. The new case recording system will assist greatly in the development of this performance focus. August 2024.
<p>Manager oversight from CEC manager on all case decisions in place</p> <p>•Base note type will be used for management oversight</p> <p>•Nothing will be closed or passed to a practice team without manager signing this off.</p>	HOS Early intervention	1st March 1st April	On going Review effectiveness June 2023	Consistency of decision making	As above	All actions now outcome by a manager	Additional team leaders now recruited. All actions outcomes by a manager. Audit will now be used to ensure this remains consistent	Practice Standards finalised and implemented and will be part of performance measure reporting.	As above
<p>•2 additional staff to be added to the team in the short term to ensure that all contacts can be managed within the week on duty process.</p> <p>•The permanent structure of the team will be enhanced by 6 social workers and 2 student placements in addition to the current senior practitioners in place. This will be done from existing social work establishment as a stronger front door will significantly reduce the amount of work going through to practice teams. Initial data shows that currently only 8 cases per week are moving through. This data will need on going weekly monitoring.</p>	HOS Early intervention	April 2023 April 2023	September 2023 September 2023	Children get a timely response which supports prevention.	Reduction in work going to practice teams No cases on a wait list Decisions making within 24 hours	Bridging team have added another manager to the team so there are 2 managers in place which is providing additional support and supervision to the team. This post needed to be added to the structure as a permanent post and to provide progression opportunities for staff in the	Completed HOS now in post as of 7th August. Practice change has happened and no child is closed without manager sign off. Audit programme will be used to ensure continued compliance.	Practice Standards finalised and implemented and will be part of performance measure reporting. This work is under further review to provide assurance of compliance.	As above
<p>•Recruitment campaign which focuses specifically on the front door to be put in place to recruit permanent staff for both children's and adult services. This will include (and be an opportunity to test) :-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new brand for social work in Edinburgh – Working for Edinburgh Children 2. Recruitment specific microsite 3. Open days with director input and an opportunity to meet potential colleagues and see the offices. 	As above	Apr-23	Sep-23	Front door resilient and well-staffed	Reduction in cases which transfer to practice teams Reduction in staff sickness	Initial open day planned for 3rd May. Comms plan in development for revised campaign.	Successful recruitment at team leader level with high demand for these posts but 5 social work vacancies remain	Reallocation of cases work and wider service review. Ongoing Absence Support Panels held at Senior Management Level and part of monthly performance reporting to HOS. Active recruitment continues with support from HR colleagues.	Child protection resource and assessment team to be operational from 08.01.2024. Update can be provided in March 2024.
<p>Assessment pod in place as a test of concept model</p> <p>•Pod is currently live and has reduced significantly the amount of work going through to the practice teams.</p> <p>•Weekly monitoring of this approach is now in place and an options appraisal report will be developed when the team has been in place for 12 weeks.</p>	HOS Early intervention - Change project lead	Mar-23	May 2023 - formal review	Early support and assessment in place which links to community capacity	Reduction in work going to practice teams No cases on a wait list		The assessment pod has supported 269 children. All have been responded to in 24 hours and have had an assessment completed within 45 days. Of this group 61 have needed support from the locality teams and 156 have required no ongoing support from social work the rest are supported short term by the assessment pod. All children have been seen alone.	This is part of case reallocation and further review of demand and capacity to ensure right people in right place. Practice Standards are used to monitor workflows.	Child protection resource and child assessment team now in place will better capture pathways through services and data/analysis will inform wider service review/redesign that is being taken forward. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.
<p>Weekly tracking data in place</p>	HOS Early intervention - Change project lead	Apr-23	May 2023 - formal review	Better understanding of need and demand that can be used to inform commissioning and resource allocation	Weekly spreadsheet used at performance management meetings	Data pack developed and in place – beginning to demonstrate reduction in work being passed to the practice teams	11/08/2023 completed and weekly data now moved to monthly progress report from swift rather than weekly manual collection.	Reviewing in line with case reallocation and service review to give assurance re ongoing compliance.	In place since Sept 2023 -informing pathways through services and impacts/outcomes
<p>Partnership Whole family support plan in place</p>	HOS Early intervention - Change project lead	Feb-23	Dec-23	Children and their families get earlier support.	Reduction in children who need social work support Reduction in repeat referrals Increase in numbers of GIRFEC plans in place.	Plan in place and agreed by the partnership – funding secured and team out to advert.	Partnership transformation post now recruited to and will support Head of Service.	Postholder developing strategy with partners and Whole Family Wellbeing fund open to application (January 2024)	Process for applications now in place, March 2024.

Additional senior manager recruited •Interim manager in place to provide additional support •Grade 12 advert out week beginning 27th February •Interviews week beginning 27th March	Exec Director	Mar-23	Sep-23	Additional leadership in place to develop robust early support	Less children require social work support	Interim in post March 2023	Completed Permanent head of service in place 7th August.	Now complete	Now complete	
Options appraisal report to move to an integrated front door in place this to include :- •Review the existing contact centre arrangement Development of operational manual to embed consistency approach and thresholds applications •Development of integrated Front Door including Adult Social Care and stakeholders to enable collective decision making •Development of Social Care Direct practice and performance framework •Development of Assessment and Child in Need teams to ensure the children's needs are assessed and identified at the earliest opportunity in order to provide appropriate support and intervention. This will help the service to reduce re-contact and re-referrals and avoid drift and unnecessary delay •Development of robust Management	Change Project Lead	Mar-23	Aug-23	Ensure we build our model based on best practice across the country	Report presented to CLT		Project initiation document agreed by Corporate Leadership team. Project manager in place. Project now being monitored as part of the Change Programme.	Progress in place, report to CLT. Visits to other local authorities being undertaken to inform required change.	Scoping being undertaken in line with other Local Authorities. Report by project manager to be presented to the board. Transfer of responsibility and planning to move to HoS early intervention, for children, families and justice services. Update on progress will be provided in March 2024.	
Full allocation model in place Review all current waitlist cases and allocate in line with need •This is dependent on additional audit capacity	HOS Practice Teams	Mar-23	Jun-23	All cases on wait list have been allocated	Audit reports in place	We have identified a number of additional audit staff – 2 will start in March and will begin to audit waitlist cases in the north of the city. Senior manager has ensured all waitlist cases have management review and oversight and is working to full allocation.	Whilst caseload averages remain reasonable there is significant variation across the teams and individual team members. There are a number of staff members who have reduced caseloads due to ongoing health issues which will require more support. Additional resources are being moved to the assessment team to ensure children in need are supported in a timely manner. Initial referral discussions will now be managed in a dedicated team and those children needing an annual financial review of their kinship placement will also be supported by a dedicated resource.	Cases being reallocated to enable this to happen and additional resource being sought to cover staff vacancies.	Data cleansing and work load analysis undertaken -with support from audit team. This has enabled closure of cases and confidence that the right cases remain open and supported. The new child protection resource and assessment team will enable full case allocation for practice teams. Update in March as Team start on 8 January 2024.	
Case dual allocation to team leaders and managers •Current data on case numbers is inaccurate – exercise need to be undertaken to make this accurate. All teams have been asked to complete a data exercise to clarify numbers on current caseloads and the nature of the cases •This will then clarify the number of social workers required to ensure purposeful practice and manageable workloads (no more than 22 children and 15 for those in their first year post qualification)	HOS Practice Teams	Mar-23	May-23	No cases are allocated to a manager	Case load lists	A caseload exercise has been undertaken. Average caseloads are currently 14.5 based on the data provided.	There are still a small number of children allocated to team leaders but this is temporary as their new social workers are coming into post.	Onboarding progressing, further adverts out for recruitment to vacant posts.	Caseloads will be part of the monthly business reporting. Moving to full case allocation and having a structure that picks up child protection and assessment work should further enable this. Update will be provided in March 2024.	
Revise and re model current duty system leading to allocation by locality •This is dependent on the completion of the assessment pod and caseload data identified above. •Working group with all levels of staff represented to devise the new model	HOS Practice Teams	Mar-23	Aug-23	Children have a social worker they are able to build a relationship with and not have to tell their stories multiple times	All children have an allocated social worker		Draft structure developed and managing change process about to be initiated.	Discussions with trade union colleagues to discuss change management process to commence in November 2023	Service review/redesign has been started -moving to a full managing change activity -to deliver within 18 months	
Re allocate resource between teams to support capacity for full allocation – once the work above has been completed.	HOS Practice Teams	May-23	Sep-23	As above	As above		on track- additional staffing moving to assessment team to support early action and intervention.	Subject to further review in line with case reallocation of child protection cases and will be brought into wider service review.	Child protection resource and assessment team in place from 08.01.24. Service review/redesign will further inform this. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.	
Case audits and QA										
Audit a sample of children on the CP register	CSWO	Feb-23	Mar-23	The quality of practice is understood and we are able to evidence continuous learning and improvement. We are able to identify and celebrate good practice	Audit monthly report Audit action tracker	Plan in place and audit activity re launched in Feb 2023. Moderation, tracking and learning plan needs to be established and embedded.	Completed – audit programme in place and quality assurance framework that includes self-evaluation being developed with managers for full rolled out in September.	Now complete	Now complete	
Audit a sample of edge of CP cases	CSWO	Apr-23	Jun-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 - audit of all children with a CP plan completed and actions for children added to tracker for follow up.	Now complete	Now complete	
Audit a sample of CIN cases	CSWO	Apr-23	May-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 completed and report completed - actions added to tracker for follow up	Now complete	Now complete	
Audit a sample of transition cases	CSWO	Apr-23	Jul-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 completed and report completed - actions added to tracker for follow up	Now complete	Now complete	
Audit a sample of through care and aftercare cases	CSWO	Apr-23	Jul-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 completed and report completed - actions added to tracker for follow up	Now complete	Now complete	
Audit sample of emergency reception into care	CSWO	Apr-23	May-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 completed and report completed - actions added to tracker for follow up	Now complete	Now complete	
Monitor and coordinated support for the ESS/RES Consolidated Improvement Plan and the transition from targeted intervention to BAU	HOS Corporate Parenting	Aug-22	ongoing	Children and young people are able to be looked after locally in a placement that is stable and meets their needs.	Improvement board reports demonstrate on going improvement	Improvement board in place since to monitor progress. Reporting in place to each ECF committee. Who Cares give an external review from a child perspective and they are identifying significant positive progress. On going CI programme in place.	27/07/2023 Ongoing. There is also oversight provided to the Children's Services Multi-Agency Quality Assurance (MAQA). This includes service feedback as well as analysis and response to CI reports. Report to each committee on progress	Work progressing well, update to committee scheduled.	Work continues to progress well and updates continue to be provided to each committee	
Develop a document and evidence library	Ops Manager	Apr-23	Jul-23	We have a library of good practice, an evidence base for all aspects of our self-assessment and improvement plan.	Document and evidence library in place and accessible.	Request made to add page to Orb and information being gathered for going live date.	In progress Quality Assurance Team are collating documents for next inspection as part of inspection planning. Examples of good practice are being captured in audits and examples where possible are reported to committee in the business bulletin.	Repository now live on the Orb and communication sent out to all staff - Complete.	Complete, live on orb	
SCIM team to take forward the next stage of the review of historic ESS cases	CSWO	Apr-23	Sep-23	Children who may have been subject to historic abuse in our care are supported to tell their story and all appropriate action has been taken	Review reports	External review of possible cases has been commissioned and this is linked to national enquiry. We are now working on a potential redress scheme.	work is ongoing but is delayed pending legal and insurance advice on options in relation to possible redress.	Legal and Insurance advice still pending.	Legal and Insurance advice still pending, an update will be provided in March 2024.	
Section 25 case review completed and improvement plan in place	CSWO	Feb-23	Apr-23	Ensure that children who are cared for but not on an order are in the appropriate place and all family / kinship options have been considered	Review report and action plan in place	Review now completed – child level planning in place – strategic governance systems being developed.	Initial review completed and plans in place for those children. Reviewing office manager has been continuing to review children subject to being looked after under section 25. This cohort of children are now to be tracked to ensure permanence planning is progressing.		Further review of children on permanence orders being undertaken to inform practice. March 2024	
Implementation plan for full QA model in place – including each team having their own improvement and QA plan	CSWO	Mar-23	Sep-23	We have a robust understanding of the quality and impact of our practice.	Audit reports Each leader has their own line of sight plan Annual CSWO report	QA framework now developed. Launched with teams April and May for them to then develop their team plans.	Full launch in August and renewed self-evaluation to be undertaken in October		Complete	
Children's Services and Justice Senior Management Teams will engage in the development of an annual programme of audit	CSWO	Mar-23	May-23	We understand the quality of our practice, have a learning loop in place and capture and build on best practice.	Annual plan in place Evidence of continuous improvement	Draft plan in place	Audit plan in place linked to Quality Assurance Practice Learning Framework, self-evaluation and supervision policy and procedure		Complete	

Review complaints process and resource and ensure learning from complaints.	CSWO	May-23	Sep-23	People are listened to, we learn from what complaints are telling us and any themes.	Learning from practice and reduced complaints		24/07/2023 Complaints being looked at regarding resource - QA team focus has been in relation to auditing, and so to change focus on learning from what children and young people are telling us about the service		Complaints being moved to corporate team. Further update for March 2024.
Self-assessment in place and agreed with partners	CSWO	Mar-23	Jun-23	Staff and partners are able to articulate where services are strong and what improvement needs to happen. They own the improvement	Self-assessment in place ratified through the partnership and frontline sessions. Each team has their own version of the self assessment and plan.	Staff engagement and self-assessment events planned April and May.	24/07/2023 self-assessment planned in April and May moved to October given improvement plan and Launch of new ways of working / practice standards in August to ensure self-evaluation can provide more reflection of progress.		Self-evaluation being actively progressed by March 2024
Residential improvement plan •Current demand for placements is exceeding supply – emergency measures have been put in place to mitigate this and an ongoing placement sufficiency plan in development.	HOS Corporate Parenting	Mar-23	Jul-23	Children and young people are able to access placements that meet their needs locally	Number of children placed at a distance, placement stability is strong.	Weekly meetings in place – action plan re UASC, in place, governance systems in development, test project with housing in place. Capacity has now improved and enabled children to move back to the city. Tracking system now needs to be embedded.	27/07/2023 Agreement made to review the Senior Management Review Group (SMRG) that meets very second Thursday to review requests for Out of Authority Placements Review of Family Based Care Intake procedures has begun. The new process for care placements will be work flowed and recorded on SWIFT, allowing for reporting. The new process will require more detailed information regarding the reasons why care is required and what the exit strategy is to return the child to their family. Work to provide throughput of young people in our care is beginning to create capacity. As well as new strategies for supporting UASC population, we have also reviewed the use of our in house provision to better meet need. Numbers of children in our care, in out of area residential and in secure are safely reducing.	Children and families strategy to ensure all ch/yp can remain living in Edinburgh with their family or local community, with a plan to expedite ch/ypps plan to return to Edinburgh from out of area residential and foster care arrangements as safe and appropriate.	Weekly meetings in place, still subject to active review.
Supervision recording and improvement • Case supervision to be recorded on a child's file in the specific case note tab so reporting is enabled.	HOS Practice Teams	Apr-23	May-23	Drift and delay is minimised	Monthly report in place Annual supervision survey		Completed - supervision/ manager consultation tab added to swift. Practice standards rolled out which now has supervision case record recording.	Will be part of monthly reporting performance reports	Will be part of monthly reporting performance reports
• Currently supervision focuses predominantly on staff welfare and not case management and case reflection. Leaders of practice across all areas of services need training and support to ensure effective supervision is in place. Therefore training will be commissioned and mandatory for all staff in a management role.	CSWO	Mar-23	Oct-23	Managers are able to effectively support reflective practice and children get support that makes a difference and delivers positive outcomes.	Monthly report in place Annual supervision survey	SG Chief social work officer asked for support to identify effective development programmes in these areas.	Practice standards launched on 10th August contain requirements in relation to supervision. Supervision policy update is in progress and on track for launch date/ training in October. Corporate learning and development to support with supervision training	12/10/2023 On track and Progress has been made in developing a Trauma informed supervision model that incorporates personal and child's case management. Roll out and training is being planned for Nov/December - Trauma Lead is supporting with this.	Impact of effective supervision to be part of performance reporting -to feed into application of one supervision model across social work. Building on existing work and training undertaken and identifying gaps and associated work plan. Further update for March 2024.
•Supervision policy will be revisited to ensure all staff have at least monthly supervision with those in their first year in practice at least fortnightly. Supervision policy will be revisited to ensure all staff have at least monthly supervision with those in their first year in practice at least fortnightly.	CSWO	Apr-23	Aug-23	As above	As above		24/07/2023 Supervision policy update is in progress and on track for launch date and training in October.	12/10/2023 practice standards in place for supervision frequency and audits and learning from audits in place. Feedback regarding Trauma informed supervision model and approach being sought from Managers in October and training has been planned for November and December with Trauma lead supporting.	As above
Howden Hall options report in place to establish an emergency placement and intensive edge of care provision in place.	HOS Corporate Parenting	Jan-23	Jun-23	Edge of care and emergency resource is in place to prevent emergency admission to care which is currently 75%	Reduction in numbers in care and emergency placements.	Formal project in place as part of the change programme	27/07/2023 ESS is now closed as a Secure Unit. The Care Inspectorate are indicating a timeframe of 6 months from conception to approval for the re purposing. Initial actions re Registration are in place and we expect a dedicated Inspector to assist us with Registration soon.	Further to Committee detailing progress made, reliance on partners re physical changes to the building being progressed through CLT.	Further scoping of residential space being considered with data around current profile of need in Edinburgh and redesign/review of social work services. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.
2. Building a Platform for Success									
Action	Lead	Start	End	Outcome	Evidence	Progress			
Consideration of the development and embedding of a recognised practice model	Service Director / CSWO through the Child Protection Committee	Oct-23	Mar-24	Edinburgh will have a collaborative recognised practice model that helps make sure that children, parents and family are at the centre of the assessment and any decision making, with a rigorous focus on child safety and wellbeing. There is potential for CEC to adopt the signs of safety model as a practice model instead of child protection conferences.	Improved Practice and assessment of children's needs with more co-production and direct work with children young people and families. Demonstrated in quality assurance case file audits reduction in complaints. Improved assessment of children's needs performance data. This fits without family group decision making approach, the UNRCR. The Promise and strengths based work. It is also known to secure better outcomes for children and young people through trauma and challenge	Early discussions are taking place with the partner agencies to map out the need/timing for a wider stakeholder consultation and scoping plan.			Review of GIRFEC paperwork, principles and tools is being progressed through the partnership and CSP. Dedicated training, to be delivered within 2024, around assessment and supervision is being sought for all social work staff -as part of the investment into staff development and adoption of a consistent model/approach. Further update in March 2024.
Establish a governance structure for this plan which includes an improvement board with an independent chair •Independent chair appointed •Board in place with care inspectorate and who cares as full members. •Frontline practitioner board also in place with 2 seats on the improvement board. Consideration of Trade Union membership	Service Director	Jun-23	Sep-23	Plan on track	Reports to IB	Requests for frontline board out. Existing IB in place for residential care.	Independent chair of the Child protection committee in post. Re formatted improvement board now managed as part of the change programme. Who Cares independent advocacy, Care Inspectorate and Independent Chair of CPC will all be members. Agenda planning meeting 28th August 2023.	Monthly CPC meetings in place, CP self-evaluation completed in timescales given and reports to Chief Officers Group - Public Protection	Monthly CPC meetings in place, CP self-evaluation completed in timescales given and reports to Chief Officers Group - Public Protection
Establish and enhance improvement resource and office of CSWO •Separate the CSWO from the Service Director post to provide additional capacity and also separation of quality assurance from the responsibility for practice management. •Review the capacity in the QA service given the needs in both adult and children's services •Ensure an annual QA plan is in place in both adults and children's services	Exec director	Mar-23	Sep-23	Ensure we have capacity in place to support social work improvement across adult and children's services.	Report to Council	Agreement in principle in place report required to Council and then recruitment process. CSWO post currently being Jed - update June 2023 post agreed through full council and recruitment process in place - target for approval of appointment to September full council	Completed Recruitment process in place - final interviews 29th July 2023.		Completed
Recruitment campaign •Develop a rolling annual recruitment plan for social work in Edinburgh informed by the work outlined above in relation to the front door.	CSWO	May-23	Sep-23	Staff are able to make effective relationships with the people they work for which support change and positive outcomes.	Caseloads remain in tolerance evidenced in weekly reporting.	Recruitment and retention short life group established	There is now a recruitment program in place, and this is resulting in localised and central recruitment. With a rolling program of recruitment events held in collaboration with HSCP. Two held since April. We had 24 vacancies across the Practice teams - we now have 2. There is also a grow our own initiative in place with implementation of the HSCP social work student hub, roll out to children's for next cohort of students. We have recruited two full time Practice Educators to provide intensive support. They will take several final placement students each year and look to retain these students until they finish their course and join as social workers. First year students will also be taken, with final placements sought in the third sector in Edinburgh to again encourage recruitment into the workforce. We have successfully sponsored seven City of Edinburgh employees from across H&SC, C&F and CJ to undertake Post graduate Social Work Course beginning in February 2024. These successful candidates will return to Edinburgh council as social workers on completion of their course. All newly qualified social workers will have a supported year in employment to ensure retention.		Recruitment ongoing, vacancies are being filled. This will be part of the wider service redesign/review. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.

Establish an effective communication strategy to support the re launch of social work in Edinburgh to include :- •Weekly CSWO blog •Monthly newsletter for partners •Re-establish face to face pride in practice events •Establish a regular pattern of learning events	CSWO	Jun-23	Sep-23	Staff feel informed and included	Feedback at events	Townhall events in place Comms development group in place.	weekly learning and development CSWO blog will be created once CSWO recruited in permanent position. training needs analysis and training plan to be developed by QA/ L&D. Development day held on the 10th August. Draft comms plan in place.	12/10/2023 Progress being made improving communication , corporate colleagues supporting with newsletter with a learning and development focus. Photographs of Both CSWO and Service Director now both in post achieved. Visits out to teams planning being completed. Planning for learning events stalled due to capacity in learning and development and business case regarding more capacity in this area being written.	Newsletter still in development to be signed off by March 2024	
Develop a workforce strategy which includes actions to improve:- Student placements and joint appointments with universities (option to buy into the newly created HSCP Student Hub, or develop a city wide hub – centre of excellence that celebrates students and PE as part of wider Learning Culture). Recruitment – specifically development of a new brand for SW in Edinburgh, new advertisement and rolling recruitment process. Develop from your own qualification routes Induction – consider social work academy models used successfully in other local authorities. Career development – this is dependent on the structure review identified below Succession planning – as above Mandatory training – to be reviewed	Service Director	Jun-23	Nov-23	Stable workforce who feel included and supported to deliver effective outcomes for the people they serve.	Workforce data considered at monthly performance meetings	Practice educator payments have now been increased to £1000 which has expanded the pool and is comparable with other Local Authorities. Pilot in place for Open University grow your own scheme and costings being developed for a wider scheme as interest in this is high. Initial interest for a post-graduation grow your own programme has seen 18 coming forward for 2 places.	see above	Part of the wider service review ensuring we have pathways of progression for social work assistants to social workers and to support students in placements.	Part of wider service review. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.	
Ensure all policies and procedures are up to date, relevant and understood. •Develop an on line policy and procedure directory •Each policy to have an owner who is responsible for an annual refresh of the policy •Understand of an adherence to policy to be reviewed via monthly audit and QA and learning and development highlighted by audit put in place.	Service Director & CSWO	Mar-23	Dec-23	Staff feel safe to practice, children and their families are clear on their rights and get consistent and good quality support.	Audit reports and QA activity	Initial review in place and baseline established. Corporate support agreed	On-going work to update all policy and procedure. Discussions have taken place with Try-ex . A company who are wanting to develop a procedures and protocol web based support hub in Scotland which pulls all National Policy Procedure and guidance together in one place.	Dedicated leads identified to support this work with anticipated completion date on track.	On track for completion date	
Develop and begin working to practice standards •Draft practice standards for consultation circulated 7th November •Working group in place •Standards launched •Review	CSWO	Nov-22	May 2023 launch and review November 2023	As above	As above	•Draft practice standards for consultation circulated 7th November •Working group in place •Standards in final draft stage currently.	Practice standards have been rolled out a development day with all managers and team leaders, and will continue to be embedded and monitored via quality assurance activities. Delay in launch as awaiting new service director and senior team coming into post.	Compliance will be part of the monthly performance reports	Practice standards have been implemented and will be reported on monthly	
Develop performance tracking and weekly reporting against the practice standards	CSWO	May-23	Review November	As above	As above	As above	In progress and also looking at Scottish Government new data request. launch date		In progress and also looking at Scottish Government new data request. launch date	
Enhance the use of swift to improve performance data and weekly reporting •Re-establish the use of case note types •Team leaders to do a monthly recording check list on all files	CSWO	Mar-23	Jun-23	Effective recording in place so children can understand their stories. Performance data to support improvement in place.	Performance reports in place	Casefile check list is in place.	On-going work with Data support and business support to ensure we have a data set to be able to monitor progress. Balanced with no incurred costs given move to new operating system which will provide improved data and performance reports.	On-going work in relation to data cleansing and ensure correct data to enable improved performance reporting. In the transition from SWIFT to new operating model Some performance reporting is needing to be undertaken via excel in the interim such as permanence tracking and promise brother and sister data.	Still work in progress, part of wider service review. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.	
Build a business case for swift replacement and delivery plan.	Service Director	Jan-23	May-23			Full project plan in place as part of the Change Programme	The Business Case for the replacement system was approved at R&F on the 20th June 23. We will now move into the due diligence stage with the preferred vendor. Delivery plan for next steps to be devised, CGI need to be part of this and it will be discussed at SWIFT board replacement Model on 28th June 23. Further paper to be presented to R&F and full council Autumn 23 with plan to commence work with the new provider Jan24	This work is being led by Improvement Partner and Head of Customer and Digital Services. Business Case completed for additional resource within the directorate to undertake tasks required. Report going to Committee shortly on current position.	This work is on track	
3. Owning the Change										
Action	Lead	Start	End	Outcome	Evidence	Progress				
Re launch social work with children in Edinburgh – all staff events to launch the new vision, standards, workforce support	Service Director CSWO	Apr-23	Nov-23	Clarity of role and ability to deliver effective outcomes for children	QA reports demonstrate continuous improvement and learning.	Initial launch events in the diary	Re-launch day held in August which was positive and regular bi-monthly sessions to be set up to ensure continued development.	Dates in the diary for continued bi-monthly sessions with relevant stakeholders.	Dates in the diary for continued bi-monthly sessions with relevant stakeholders.	
Establish frontline practice boards and working groups	Exec Director	Mar-23	Jul-23	Clarity of frontline issues in place	¼ meetings with Exec Director and part of IB	Managers asked to nominate staff for the board	CSWO setting up Practitioner Boards to ensure improved frontline practice issues.		In progress to report March 2024	
Deliver the review of through care and after care	HOS Corporate Parenting	Mar-23	Mar-24	Young people get consistent support until 26	Reduction in the number of young people supported on duty.	Initial scoping paper in place	27/07/2023 Business Plan to advance an Organisational review of TCAC is near completion - this will be done when Mark Crawford returns from sickness on 07/08/2023. The Champions Board has reviewed what TCAC should be from a service users perspective and we anticipate co-design of the TCAC service.	Work progressing well, recent positive inspection report encouraging. Continued reporting to Committee and informing elected members on inspection outcomes.	This will be considered as part of the wider service review. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.	
Devolve budget holding to line managers	Service Director	Oct-23	Mar-24	Budget decision making is made closer to children to ensure more efficient use of resources	Budgets are managed without overspend	Work in place to clarify spend and impact in a number of areas for example, external placements.	Service Director reviewing budget and looking at proposals on track for Mar 24	Forms part of the wider service review and linking with Internal Audit findings.	As above	
Consult on structure review to ensure appropriate supervision ratios and capacity to have full allocation in place.	Service Director	Aug-23	Jan-24	Stable workforce who feel included and supported to deliver effective outcomes for the people they serve.	Caseload data Outcome data for children and young people			This is instrumental in informing the need for reallocation of child protection cases and wider service review. Trade Union consultation and proposed review commence in November 2023	As above	
Undertake a service review of out of hours	Service Director	Aug-23	Mar-24	OOH practice is good	Audits evidence good practice.			As above, this is part of the wider service review and will link in with HSCP and plans for an integrated front door.	As above	
4. Embedding and Innovating										
Action	Lead	Start	End	Outcome	Evidence	Progress				

Leading practice programme to be developed based on the leading for equity approach successfully used in schools	CSWO	Oct-23	Jul-24	Supporting and developing leaders and systems in creating conditions for learning that "interrupt historically discriminatory practices, supports democracy and achieves fair, inclusive, and just outcomes."	Improved learning environment that caters for all and creates system leaders. A workforce that have a voice in discussions and contributions and ability to learn through reflection and critique A workforce that has access to learning and development. A workforce with measurable achievements and defined measurable outcomes.				Reflective sessions planned as regular occurrence in diaries as part of practice governance. This will be considered as part of wider review. It is anticipated this should be in place by August 2024.
Monthly audit and practice improvement cycle in place and evidence of impact, this highlights areas for review and innovation	CSWO	Mar-23	Ongoing	Continuous improvement in place – audit ratings improve month on month	Monthly report		manager and quality assurance team audit program in place and revised monthly report		Complete
Review of the rest of the residential estate to ensure we have access to placements which meet the needs of children to be cared for and then effectively move on from care.	Head of Corporate Parenting	Sep-23	Mar-24		Sufficiency strategy in place		Howden Hall being re modelled as an emergency reception into care offer. Revised pathway to ensure unaccompanied asylum seeking children are supported appropriately is in place. Consideration being given to re modelling another of the houses to support moving into independence.	Repurposing of Howden Hall continues. The Care Inspectorate are now involved in assisting with registration elements. A review of the fabric of current residential accommodation has been completed. One building is nearing the end of its lifespan and a business case will be submitted regarding funding for a replacement in the coming years. Analysis indicates we have more older children staying in our residential care and we are developing a strategy to consider dedicating one children's residential house to young people aged 18+. A new information system will allow us to analyse the needs of children more efficiently than we can currently achieve and this will allow us to develop the current care strategy to meet children's needs better.	On track for completion date
Ensure an effective multi-agency contextual safeguarding policy, procedure including our response to children who go missing and child exploitation. Refreshed training / briefings.	Service Director	May-23	Dec-23		Audits evidence good practice.		Policy and Procedure being updated. Multi-agency discussions taking place in CPC.	This will be informed by the new Child Protection guidance.	On track for completion date
Improved child focussed understanding of safe and together approach to domestic abuse - refreshed training/ briefings from audit findings	Service Director	May-23	Dec-23		Audits evidence good practice.		Refreshed training to ensure child is seen as a priority is being developed by L&D.	Currently under review by the Child Protection Committee as multi-agency funded.	Currently under review by the Child Protection Committee and social work as multi-agency funded - March 2024