



Specialist Children's Services **BUSINESS PLAN 2017-18**

Children, Young People and Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:	
Corporate Director:	Andrew Ireland
Responsible Director:	Philip Segurola
Assistant Directors:	Sarah Hammond, Karen Graham Patricia Denney, Mark Thorn Stephen Fitzgerald, Naintara Khosla
Gross Expenditure:	£148.3M
FTE:	1087.40
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Foreword by

Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director, Social Care Health and Wellbeing; Director of Children's Services (DCS)

Philip Segurola, Director, Specialist Children's Services

The next financial year will bring with it a number of significant changes to the way we deliver children's services at Kent County Council. During this time we will be undergoing a period of structural realignment to ensure that our services are configured in the best possible way to enable us to provide the right support at the right time and in the right way to meet the needs of children, young people and their families. To achieve this, we will be bringing together Specialist Children's Services and Early Help & Preventative Services into one Directorate: Children, Young People and Education (CYPE). The CYPE Directorate is being created to deliver the council's vision for 0-25 services under one single Corporate Director who will also be KCC's statutory Director of Children's Services.

Our current Corporate Directors for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Andrew Ireland, and Education and Young People's Services, Patrick Leeson, will lead the way in managing the transition to the new arrangements. As such, during this time they will retain their current responsibilities and we will continue to focus on delivering our 2017-18 business plan priorities as laid out in this strategy.

This Business Plan sets out the important steps we will be taking to provide Specialist Children's Services in 2017/18. Our key objective as a Division is to make Kent the best place for children and young people to grow up, be supported and safeguarded so that they can flourish and achieve their potential. During this year, as in previous years, we will have to deal with additional pressures relating to our high numbers of care leavers and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. We will also carry on working with neighbouring authorities in response to changes in the adoption arrangements which are being introduced nationally. Furthermore, we have recently been subject to an Ofsted Single Inspection Framework inspection and will work hard to respond positively to the findings of this external review of our services, in-line with our commitment to continual learning and improvement. Finally, we need to continue to work hard to sustain a well-trained, high calibre workforce equipped to carry out consistently high standards of practice.

Despite the challenges that we will undoubtedly face this financial year, we are confident that we have the necessary resourcefulness, skills and abilities to deliver our priorities and achieve the right outcomes.



Andrew Ireland,
Corporate Director,
SCHWB



Philip Segurola, Director, SCS

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SECTION A: SCS Divisional Structure and Purpose

Who We Are and What We Do

Specialist Children's Services has a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Our Division is responsible for the protection, health and wellbeing of Kent's most vulnerable children and young people. Our driving vision is to deliver the best outcomes we can for these children, young people and their families.

“We want Kent to be the best place for children and young people to grow up, be supported and safeguarded so that they can flourish and achieve their potential.”

We place our children at the heart of everything we do, and their voices drive our service delivery and commitment to the process of continual improvement.

‘The Kent Our Children and Young People's Council ensures that the voices and opinions of Children in Care across Kent are heard...the aim is to improve the lives of Children in Care, offering them the chance to be heard and listened to and give them the motivation to reach whatever they desire without any limitations’

Annabelle Taylor, Chair of Our Children and Young People's Council

Our service supports all children and young people across the county, including:

- Children in need and their wider families. We work with children and families who are vulnerable and need extra support, in collaboration with colleagues at children's centres and with our partners in health, the police and adult services.
- Children requiring protection that are at risk of abuse or neglect. We safeguard all children and young people at risk in their homes and communities as well as those who are in local authority care. We do this working with adult social care services to ensure a better continuity of support through transition.
- Children requiring early support: we work to identify children and young people's needs as early as possible to improve their chances of success and to get the best from our limited resources.
- Children in our care. We strive to meet the needs of the children we look after and work to achieve permanence and stability.
- Children with a disability: whilst our service for disabled children has been realigned with Adult Services to form the Disabled Children and Adults Learning Disability and Mental Health Division, we ensure we maintain good links between our services so that these young people receive seamless support.

We, along with the rest of the council, are working together to attain the outcomes set out in our organisational Strategic Statement ‘Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes.’ Most centrally, we are working to ensure that children and young people in Kent get the best start in life.

Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020

In 2017-18 the Division is composed of the following key business areas:

Central Referral Unit (CRU)

Deals with all child contacts and enforces robust and consistent management of thresholds; includes representatives from Police, Health and Adult Services. During 2017 the CRU and Early Help Triage are being brought together into one team to provide a single front door which will ensure that contacts and referrals received are appropriately directed to the service which best meets the needs of individual children. The Out of Hours Service provides an emergency response outside normal working hours. Whilst the CRU focuses on the identification of cases meeting the threshold for targeted and specialist support, it works closely with the Early Help and Preventative Services Division which provides the intervention to respond many of these cases.

District Children's Social Worker Teams

At district level there are a dedicated number of Children's Social worker teams that are responsible for all cases from the point of referral up to the completion of any further engagement. The team works with Children in Need and those subject to Child Protection plans.

Adolescent Support Teams

Deliver front line services to adolescents and their families on the edge of care across Kent. Statutory tasks include completing C+F assessments and joint assessment with Housing and the formulation and implementation of robust CIN plans. There will be a focus on those in need of protection, and the wider safeguarding agenda, through the provision of high quality social work interventions and effective liaison with local partners.

Children in Care Service

Provides support to all Children in Care including unaccompanied seeking children. The service develops and drives the Child in Care plan, undertake lead professional for Children in Care and discharge parental responsibilities in partnership with parents' dependent upon the legal status of the child.

Fostering Service

Kent's Fostering Service seeks to provide stable and high quality foster care placements for children of all ages that value, support and encourage them to grow and develop as individuals. A key focus is ensuring appropriate matching is in place and there is support to enhance placement stability. In addition to promoting their health and general well-being, the service is also committed to ensuring that every foster carer recognises the importance of the educational achievement of Children in Care and work with KCC in raising the academic attainment for all Children in Care.

Adoption Service

Provides a comprehensive social work service under the Adoption and Children Act (2002) and offers expertise in adoption and permanency. There is placement choice, robust recruitment and assessment of adopters and decision making which reflects the individual needs of the children. Adopters are offered comprehensive post adoption support and the post adoption offer is supplemented with commissioned services which has supported the post adoption service development. The adoption service is responsive to national developments and new performance expectations.

The Care Leavers 18+ Service

Enables and assists care leavers to develop their skills and enhance life opportunities as they progress into adulthood. The service works to guide young people through the complexities of adulthood and the transition from care into independence. The care leaving service is ambitious for young people and seeks to provide the support that any parent would want for their child in order that they achieve their full potential. The service supports all young people having the opportunities to remain in education or training aged between 18 to 24 years. The care leaving service works with the Skills and Employability Team and Education and Young People's Services to ensure

there are clear pathways and matched placements to secure opportunities for young people to gain access to work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships.

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit

The core purpose of the Safeguarding unit is to provide a quality assurance service and ensure that the provision of services for vulnerable children and young people is compliant with national statutory requirements and performance standards. The unit also oversees that safeguarding practice across the directorate is effective and supports improved social work practice.

Local Authority Designated Officer service

Oversees and advises on allegations against those working in the children's workforce in Kent.

Virtual School Kent

The VSK is the champion for education and ensuring it meets the needs of looked after children. The virtual school is successfully improving the educational attainment of Children in Care and Young Care Leavers. It has been promoting their educational achievement as if they were in a single school. Ensuring that they receive a high quality education is the foundation for improving their lives. There has been success in narrowing the attainment gap between children who are in care and those who are not, but attending Kent schools.

Family Group Conferencing

Ensures all children in Kent at risk of entering care are given the opportunity of having a Family Group Conference; this is a partnership and decision-making process that engages the child's family and family network with Children's Social Services and other service providers in making safe plans for the child's care.

The Management Information Team

The team works with Specialist Children's Services, other directorates and partners to provide accurate, timely and relevant management information and performance data relating to children's social care. This covers data relating to levels of demand, performance and outcomes, and helps to promote and embed a culture of performance management within the Service. The team also oversees the centralised recording of information relating to: notifications of other local authority children placed in Kent; Persons who pose a risk to Children; and notifications to other local authorities when vulnerable children go missing. The team is also responsible for National Statutory Returns, Corporate reporting to Cabinet Committee, and the Cabinet Member, Freedom of Information requests, activity monitoring and analysis, and working with the Regional Performance Groups to influence the national developments of performance frameworks.

SECTION B: Progress Made Against the 2016-17 Divisional Business Plan Priorities

Priority	Progress
<p>Priority 1</p> <p>Continued development of best practice around Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and missing children at a strategic and operational level</p>	<p>We have continued to make progress in tackling CSE in 2016. We have recruited two qualified social care practitioners to work in the multi-agency CSE Team that was set up in 2015 to follow up intelligence, identify people and places linked with CSE and to secure prosecutions. We have also set up and run more training workshops on the use of the CSE Toolkit and return interviews with young people who have gone missing to enable professionals to quickly and efficiently identify and act upon risk factors relating to exploitation.</p>
<p>Priority 2</p> <p>Embedding the outcomes of Transformation and ensure sustainability</p>	<p>Over the past year, we have embedded the learning from the first phase of the children's transformation programme. The Care Leavers Pathway Project continues to focus on activities aimed at supporting young people to achieve independence. We have also run a series of roadshows to ensure staff are kept up-to-speed with the transformation agenda. Lastly, we have embedded Signs of Safety across the whole service, producing tangible benefits for families who appreciate the clarity of its approach.</p>
<p>Priority 3</p> <p>Development of the Corporate Parenting agenda</p>	<p>We have worked hard to obtain a better, more comprehensive understanding of our corporate parenting responsibilities across our officer and Member groups in 2016-17. We have held a number of well-attended Member briefings to ensure that our political leaders are aware of their duties towards Kent's Children in Care and care leavers. Following on from the findings of the Corporate Parenting Select Committee convened in 2015, we have also taken action in response to the Committee report's recommendation. To view a full breakdown of what we have done in order to strengthen corporate parenting provision in Kent, please click here. Finally, we have developed Challenge Cards, which give Children in Care the opportunity to have their voices heard and to hold their corporate parents to account.</p>
<p>Priority 4</p> <p>Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Social Work staff and ongoing development</p>	<p>In order to build and maintain employee resilience we have worked hard to recruit and retain our social workers over the past year. The majority of our caseholding posts (81.3% in January 2017) are now filled by qualified, permanent staff. We have further driven down the average caseload levels in our Children in Care and fostering teams and this has allowed our caseholders more time for direct work with families. We remain committed to maintaining a manageable caseload 'ceiling'. As a result of our efforts, staff turnover has reduced. We have also encouraged significant numbers of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) to join our organisation; following the successful recruitment of 46 NQSWs in September 2016, a further campaign is underway to recruit additional new social workers to Kent.</p>

SECTION C: Divisional Priorities for 2017/18

We have a number of overarching priorities for the next year, which will guide our work with children, young people and their families. They are:

Priority 1: Safeguarding

Maintaining good safeguarding practice and ensuring we remain responsive and adaptable in order to protect, support and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Priority 2: Corporate Parenting

Making sure that KCC Members and Officers understand their corporate parenting responsibilities and act to provide the right support to Kent's Children in Care and care leavers.

Priority 3: Budget

Planning and delivery of services in-line with the budget requirements for the 2017/18 financial year.

Priority 4: Transformation

Sustaining and embedding the transformation changes (phase 1) and planning for the next phase of the Children and Young Person's Integration Programme.

Priority 5: Inspections

Ensuring effective planning for, and management of, all inspection activities with the aim of securing a good inspection outcome.

Priority 6: Corporate

Making sure that key corporate responsibilities are effectively discharged (i.e. PREVENT, equalities duties, Keeping Active – SSAR Priority 2 - risk register, business plan, internal audit etc.)

Priority 7: Building and Maintaining a Strong and Resilient Workforce

Recruiting and retaining adequate numbers of qualified social work staff that have the right skills and are effectively equipped to continually learn and develop.

Our Division has agreed four equalities objectives for the year which will align to KCC's corporate equalities objectives. These are: to safeguard children and young people from harm with regard to sex, disability, race and age; improve life chances and outcomes for children and young people through service developments and transformation; the quality and range of services are improved through increasing engagement with service users; and recruit, retain and develop a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, and we will ensure our people feel valued and respected.

NB: These priorities are consistent with the key objectives set out in the Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Directorate Business Plan for 2017/18.

Balanced Scorecard

These high-level priorities are supported by a number of detailed, operational priorities which will enable us to deliver our services in the best way possible to achieve the right outcomes. Our operational priorities are shown below in our Balanced Scorecard of key deliverables:

Performance	Practice
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure full compliance with statutory requirements for placement arrangements and delegated authority • Maintain rigour of engagement and case progression in planning for Children in Need cases • Progress innovative practice arising from the Sense of Belonging programme in order to improve placement stability • Review PEP processes and practices to deliver good educational outcomes for Children in Care • Coordinate corporate resources in order to facilitate good accommodation options for care leavers whilst delivering best value 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the team around the Looked After Child to ensure quality of placement and safeguarding needs are met • Consolidate best practice to ensure the Voice of the Child continues to inform service delivery • Use case chronologies to inform assessment and decision-making • Progress our use of the Signs of Safety methodology into mature deployment in order to become a Centre of Excellence • Refine the Quality Assurance framework to deliver a measurable impact on service delivery
Partnerships	People
<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage constructively in the development of the new directorate and service structures to ensure an ongoing focus on outcomes for safeguarding and corporate parenting • Implement the revised model for the 'Front Door' • Contribute to the development of a Gang strategy suitable for Kent to combat the impact of developing gang culture • Increase EET opportunities through closer engagement with interdepartmental and cross-agency groups • Maintain liaison and engagement in the roll out of the Lifespan Pathway Programme • Actively engage and contribute to the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership Board 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the agreed action plan for the roll out of mobile working for frontline staff • Progress options for the formalisation of a post-qualification framework within the context of a Teaching Partnership • Further increase recruitment and retention levels and continually reduce the use of agency staff in frontline posts • Consolidate a framework to identify and celebrate success and increase engagement of staff • Maintain caseload ceilings consistently across the county

Details of how these operational priorities will be delivered are set out in the relevant service-level action plans.

Section D: Divisional Operating Environment

Internal Factors

KCC is undergoing a period of significant change to ensure that our services are configured in the best possible way to provide the right support to children, young people and their families. As part of this, we will be bringing together Specialist Children's Services and Early Help & Preventative Services into one Directorate: Children, Young People and Education (CYPE). Whilst we move to the new arrangements, our current Corporate Directors will lead the way in our managed transition. We recognise that a considerable amount of work will need to be undertaken over the coming months to establish how we can best forge and maintain linkages between our various Divisions and Directorates in order to provide a seamless service to children, young people and families. It will also take some time for the new operating environment to become embedded. But we know that the new arrangements will enable us to provide the best possible services into the future, and to help facilitate this we will resolutely focus on delivering the outcomes set out in this strategy.

Other internal challenges are likely to include responding to the findings of the Single Inspection Framework inspection as soon as possible, building on strengths identified and countering any areas of weakness; moving into new arrangements for the delivery of better adoption services at a regional level; and providing the best services to our large number of care leavers.

External Factors

There are also a number of external factors which are likely to have an impact on our service over the next three years. These are as follows:

1. Inspection:

Whilst KCC has already been subject to an Ofsted Single Inspection Framework inspection in 2017, we do not yet know the outcome of this assessment; the findings are likely to have a significant impact on our operating environment in the short to medium term. Furthermore, we may be subject to further inspection over the coming years in the form of a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI). The focus of the JTAs change over time, but the current themes are domestic abuse, intra-familial abuse and neglect.

2. Attracting adequate numbers of experienced staff and team managers:

The national shortage of experienced children's social workers continues to have an impact on KCC's recruitment success; it has meant we are yet to reach our target of 85% of our caseholding posts being filled by permanent staff. Whilst this problem is likely to continue into the future, we have - and will continue - to undertake a variety of recruitment activities to attract the best people to work in Kent.

3. Government reforms to social care:

Throughout 2016 Government has published a series of documents setting out its vision for the future of children's social care. This vision outlines various aspirational reforms to the sector, including a range of changes to child protection processes and improvements in the quality of service provision. Government has committed to making, or have begun implementing, these reforms by the end of this Parliament (2020). This means the operating environment for social care is likely to be subject to fundamental transformation over the next three years. These changes are likely to include: development of a new career pathway and targeted recruitment process for social workers; creation of a new centre of excellence for social work; the more widespread introduction of alternative modes of service delivery (e.g. via Trusts and social enterprises); and enabling children leaving residential care to 'stay close' to their former children's homes so that they can live independently but with ongoing support from that home.

4. Legislative change:

As part of the reform agenda there will be a number of changes to primary and secondary legislation over the coming years. These changes will put the Government's reforms on a statutory footing. The legislative changes will have a significant impact on the way local authorities provide children's services, and look set to include: an increase in the age at which local authorities have to provide support to care leavers up until 25; the abolition of Local Safeguarding Children Boards and the introduction of new local arrangements for the protection of children; changes to the Serious Case Review process; the creation of a new social work regulator and possibly providing select local authorities with the ability to trial 'new and innovative' ways of working via exemptions from some elements of child protection regulation.

5. Delivering high quality services within limited finances:

The climate of austerity and cuts to local government finances mean that our budgets have been stretched over recent years. At the same time, we have seen a rise in demand for children's social care services – particularly in relation to the high numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children which Kent supports. Whilst a significant number of these young people will become care leavers over the next year, the Government's reforms mean Kent may be expected to support more care leavers up until the age of 25 over the next three years. These factors combined mean that financial constraints will remain a challenge for Specialist Children's Services in the medium to long term.

6. Brexit:

Whilst the impact that the Brexit negotiations will have on local government is currently unclear, what is certain is that we will need to regularly review the implications of Brexit on the operation of our local services as the national and international situation progresses.

Section E: Risk Management

We recognise that proactive and effective risk management is essential to enable us to recognise and respond to threats and opportunities both now and into the future. KCC's risk management processes both inform our business planning and performance management activities – as well as our Divisional priority setting. Likewise, our Divisional Risk Register helps us to monitor and mitigate risks as they arise. In the coming financial year, we recognise that the following risks need to be taken into consideration as part of our strategic planning and service responses:

Key Topic	Key Areas of Risk	Impacts	Mitigation
Failure to ensure consistency of practice	Effective management and preparedness for Ofsted inspection	Failure to maintain service improvement could adversely impact on safeguarding, outcomes for children and young people, budget and staffing. A critical inspection could result in being placed on an improvement notice.	The 0-25 programme board provides a strategic overview of the work being carried out to ensure continuous service improvement. Following removal from improvement notice the Children's Improvement Plan has been revised and re-launched as a development action plan. The joint plan with EH&PS addresses high priority actions and addresses the recommendations made in the recent Ofsted CSE themed inspection and the actions identified during a recent external review.
Recruitment and Retention	Difficulty in recruiting and retaining experienced social workers	Reduction in the stability of the workforce effecting frontline delivery. Reduction of options surrounding savings linked to permanence within the workforce	A single data set was established in order to analyse performance and an enhanced recruitment and retention offer was introduced to ensure a more competitive offer for both current and new staff. Loyalty incentives are also in place in order to help attract and retain permanent front line staff. A recruitment action plan is in place to streamline the recruitment process and build upon progress to employ high quality permanent staff and this is regularly monitored through the resourcing group and DMT.
Safeguarding	KSCB Effectiveness and Challenge	Failure to demonstrate a high level of quality assurance, scrutiny and challenge, and the impact this will make, may result in Insufficient safeguarding of children and young people, lack of engagement with children and front line staff and an Ofsted rating of 'requiring improvement' or 'inadequate'	KSCB has developed a challenge log which records partnership challenges that are made at the board, these challenges are then followed up at future meetings to ensure resolutions are found. The chair of the quality and effectiveness group has overseen the development of an agreed multi agency dashboard and outcomes framework that provides the board with information from which It can gain re-assurance. The KSCB

Key Topic	Key Areas of Risk	Impacts	Mitigation
			business unit has been re-configured to offer more effective support to the board and the subgroup membership is reviewed annually.
Protect children at risk of going missing and Child Sexual Exploitation	Effective delivery of the CSE Strategy and action plan to protect children at risk of going missing or CSE, and response to the needs of those who are already victims of CSE.	Failure to meet statutory safeguarding responsibilities could leave children and young people at greater risk of exploitation.	A single robust data set is in place in conjunction with Early Help and Kent Police and the KSCB led action plan has been developed with work being progressed through the emerging vulnerabilities subgroup of the KSCB. A multi-agency Sexual and Criminal Exploitations panel also runs to share and make best use of hard and soft intelligence between agencies with an ongoing programme of audit activity to ensure quality assurance with regular reporting to SCSDMT and dissemination of lessons learnt.
Care leavers	There is a risk that there will be insufficient appropriate accommodation for care leavers as well as a funding shortfall, once new legal requirements are put in place.	KCC has always had a significant shortfall on the Home Office grant for care leavers. However the Authority will soon be supporting more over 18 former UASC than under 18, causing severe budget pressures going forward.	We will be increasing staff capacity within the asylum duty team in the short term. We will also make representations to Government to request that adequate funding is provided to support these young people.

Section F: Services Provided by the Division

Service Name	Internal or External	Contract end date.
Independent Adoption & Special Guardianship Order Support Services	External	30/09/2018
Safer Stronger Families	External	31/03/2017
Representation, Rights & Advocacy (RRA)	External	31/03/2018
Independent Fostering Framework	External	02/06/2017
Independent / Children's Homes	External	Spot purchasing (no end date)
Semi-Independent Accommodation	External	Spot purchasing until new accommodation services are in place
Adoption Improvement Support Services	External	31/03/18
Risk Assessments and Harmful Sexual Behaviours services	External	31/03/2019
Young Healthy Minds	External	30/03/2017
Post Sexual Abuse Services	External	31/03/2017
Community CAMHS contribution	External	31/03/2017
Supported Accommodation in a Family environment	External	31/05/2018

Section G: Significant Commissioning and Service Activity

Name of activity	Description	Lead Service	Expected value	Key decision date (if required)	Public consultation required
Specialist Children's Services					
Independent Fostering Services	Recommissioning of external fostering for Children in Care.	SCS	Approx £8M p/a (excluding UASC)	March 2018	N/A
Rights, Representation and Advocacy services	Review future service options for Rights, Representation and Advocacy services	SCS	£270K p/a	N/A	To be established
Independent Adoption and Special Guardianship Order Support Services	Review future service options for Independent Adoption and Special Guardianship Order Support Services	SCS	£376K p/a	N/A	To be established
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Enter into relevant legal arrangements with WK CCG as lead commissioner of CAMHS	WG CCG	£2.3M		
16-25 Accommodation and Support Programme	Commissioning of new supported accommodation offer for 16/17 Children in Care, care leavers and 16-17 vulnerable young people.	SCS	Approx. £2.9M p/a	Jan/Feb 2018	Already undertaken
Shared accommodation	Commissioning of a new shared accommodation service- investigation of both internal (GEN2) and external options	SCS	Approx. £2.4-£3.4M	Autumn 2017/Spring 2018	Covered under wider programme consultation

Section H: Budget and Staffing Resources

The summary of the budget allocated to our Division is shown below. These figures are based on the current 2016/17 structure.

The Division has a provisional total budget allocation for 2017/18 is set out below:

Division	Responsible Manager	Staffing	Non staffing	Gross expenditure	Internal income	External income	Grants	Net cost
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
SCS	Philip Segurola	£53,253.1	£95,063.3	£148,316.4	£-6,883.4	£-1,562.6	£27,486.6	£112,383.8

NB: Based on the draft budget book for County Council, with some pressures and savings are still to be allocated following the Council debate. Final resources information will be updated prior to publication, to reflect the final budget book and MTFP that is circulated to all Members before 31st March. Further details on financial resources are available in the [Medium Term Financial Plan](#) and [Budget Book](#)

We will also be working hard to achieve efficiencies and to improve what we do and the way we do it in 2017/18.

As part of this, we are undertaking a review of our administration functions to reduce any duplication in activity, improve performance and develop our staff group. It is anticipated this review will generate savings in the region of 7% on our staffing budget.

Section I: Organisational Development

Organisational priorities taken from the Organisation Development Medium Term Plan 2017-2022.

The County Council's organisational development vision builds on our history in workforce development and other ways of improving organisational performance and learning so that KCC, staff and partners are equipped to improve lives of Kent residents, communities and business. We do this through ways such as delivering change in direction, skills and culture that improves our performance; building resilience in all our people by anticipating and adapting to the factors affect public services; improving the employee deal through effective leadership and management and using people management processes, systems and data to empower our people.

The County Council's organisational development (OD) strategic priorities are set out in the Organisation Development Medium-Term Plan 2017-2022. The OD priorities for the whole council are set out in the diagram below.



Source: KCC Organisation Development Priorities - 2017-2022

The following priority areas have been agreed by the SC Directorate Organisational Development Group as key areas which we will take forward during this financial year. It is essential that we help staff to develop and maintain the necessary skill-set required for meeting our strategic and operational objectives of our businesses. The specific directorate actions that we will take forward this year include:

Development of workforce in relation to:

- Professional practice improvement and development
- Implementation of national accreditation scheme for children's social workers

Workforce planning in relation to

- Senior level succession planning and talent management
- Identifying gaps in critical roles and resourcing plans across the directorate
- Wider workforce and integrated workforce

Retention of staff

- Career progression pathways
- Apprenticeships (pathways to be developed to increase opportunities for people in Kent in-line with the

Apprenticeship levy)

- Open University and "growing our own qualified staff"
- Step up to Social Work/Frontline – Children's
- Think Ahead – Mental Health
- Connections with universities

Social Work Health Check – Minimum Standards for Employers

- Complete and evaluate current activity in Children's

To compliment this, we are developing Teaching Partnerships between Kent's higher education institutes (HEIs), our local authority and Medway Council to forge new approaches to achieving high quality training for social work students and qualified practitioners in the county. It is hoped this partnership will grow and develop over the coming year.

Furthermore, as part of our Administration Review we will also be recruiting greater numbers of apprentices. This will give us the opportunity to help Kent's young people into employment and to develop their future work skills.

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Section J: Performance Indicators and Targets

We need to know that we are providing our services in the right way and to help us do this we have a number of key performance measures and milestones that reflect what we set out to achieve. These Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) support the delivery of our key priorities set out in this business plan.

We routinely use our weekly and monthly performance reports to track how well we are doing. This allows us to quickly identify any areas where we may need to improve or take corrective action. Our overall performance in delivering against our Divisional priorities will be measured by these indicators, which are published in our various Performance Reports and reports to Members.

KPIs taken from quarterly performance reporting

The figures below have been identified as the six measures which most closely align with, and allow us to monitor performance against, the strategic priorities. However, we record a whole range of other performance indicators which enable us to track and assess the impact of our services across SCS. These figures are regularly scrutinised by KCC officers, Members and colleagues in partner agencies.

Figures updated in **January 2017** to reflect actual out-turns in 2016/17 and indicators for use in 2017/18. Floors and Targets have been revised where necessary.

Key Performance Indicators				
Ref	Indicator Description	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Floor	2017-18 Target
SCS01	Children in Care placement stability: same placement for last 2 years	71%	65%	70%
SCS02	Percentage of current CIC Foster Care Placements that are either KCC Foster Care or Relatives and Friends	86%	75%	85%
SCS03	Average number of days between BLA and moving in with adoptive family (for children adopted)	310 days	518 days	426 days
SCS04	Percentage of case holding posts filled by KCC Permanent qualified social workers	81%	75%	85%
SCS05	Percentage of children becoming child protection for a second or subsequent time	20%	<10% or >25	<15 or >20
SCS06	Percentage of online case file audits completed that were graded good or outstanding	67%	50%	70%

We also undertake further review activities, to complement our quantitative analysis and inform and enrich our process of continual improvement. These range from internal reviews conducted by ourselves or the Kent Safeguarding Children Board, to external reviews undertaken by third parties. For example, in November 2016 we requested that a Peer Review team come to assess the work of our Adolescent Support Teams. This Review was led by individuals from Southampton City Council, Bracknell Forest Council and Medway Council. The findings of the Review are helping to shape the work undertaken by of the service and are informing the team's revised objectives and action plans. The findings from such reviews are regularly reported to Members via mechanisms such as the Children's Services Improvement Panel.

To add to this, SCS undertakes regular performance surgeries or 'deep dives' into our KPI figures with staff and managers in our District offices. These sessions allow us to examine and interrogate our performance in detail, to ensure we are providing high quality provision to children from across the county.

Section K: Monitoring and Review

We will monitor our performance against our KPIs and other methods of delivery linked to our Divisional priorities. These monitoring activities will also be set out in the Strategic Statement Annual Report business planning priorities most relevant to the business of the future Directorate.

We will adopt a proportionate approach to how we do this, via our 'business as usual' processes such as regular management meetings and in our regular reports to Members.

The review process will be heavily informed by reviews of our business plan activities. These take place on a frequency determined by each Director. Furthermore, the review of the business plan is not undertaken in isolation. It will be informed by the monitoring and reporting activities which are reported in the KCC Cabinet Quarterly Performance Report, 0-25 Portfolio Board, Cabinet Committee performance report and through the budget monitoring processes at Divisional and Directorate levels. Depending on the outcome of the reviews the necessary remedial actions will be put in place.

DRAFT

Specialist Children's Services

Children, Young People and Education Directorate