

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 6.00 pm in Meeting Room 3, Darby House, Telford**

**PRESENT:** Councillors M. Ion (Chair), G. Green, J. Greenaway, J. Loveridge, C. Turley and Co-optees S. Ali and S. Rayner.

**Attending:** A. Mason, Chair Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board; Cllr. P. Watling, Cabinet Member Children, Young People and Families; K. Perry, Assistant Director Children's Safeguarding; S. Jones, Scrutiny Officer.

#### **CYPSC-14 MINUTES**

On reviewing the minutes, Mr. S. Ali pointed out a typing error on p. 5 in the final paragraph that "bay" should read "baby". Cllr. Greenaway asked for clarification on the dip in the number of Strategy meetings / Section 47 visits completed within 24 hours at the beginning of September and the Assistant Director explained this was due to sickness which could not be foreseen. Trends in busy periods such as the first and last week of school terms could be anticipated and planned for and although the numbers could fluctuate, performance had improved considerably since the Ofsted inspection.

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> November be confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to correction of the typing error on page 5.

#### **CYPSC-15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr. A. Mackenzie and Co-optees A. Atkinson, R. Aveley, E. Ofori and M. Ward.

#### **CYPSC-16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

#### **CYPSC-17 OFSTED IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Chairman welcomed Andrew Mason to the meeting. Mr. Mason had been invited as Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB) as some of the recommendations on the Ofsted report related to the Board. There was a need to align the governance and reporting structures for Children & Young People (CYP) services as there was the potential for duplication between the TWSCB, Scrutiny and other Council-led Boards and there would be further discussion about this. Mr. Mason was invited to talk through the presentation circulated as Appendix B2 to

provide the Committee with a better understanding of the role, function, structure and priorities of the TWSCB. Mr. Mason then highlighted the key points from the presentation:

- The presentation opened with a poster to publicise the Board and its work, and to remind people of the deaths of the young children which had driven changes in legislation around safeguarding.
- The definition of safeguarding (giving children and young people the best possible chance in life, protection from harm or ill-treatment, ensuring health or development is not damaged, growing up safely, cared for) adopted by the TWSCB is based on the Working Together to Safeguard Children strategy with a focus on prevention.
- The Children's Act 2004 required children's services authorities to establish a Safeguarding Children Board and to promote co-operation between partners.
- The Board's scope covers responsive work (to protect children from harm), targeted pro-active work or any activity affecting children such as bullying.
- The functions of the Board include developing policies and procedures, service planning, monitoring and evaluation. A key function is to carry out Serious Case Reviews and a sub-group of the Board co-ordinates the response to unexpected child deaths.
- Board membership is designated by government and includes representatives from the authority, health, police, probation, Youth Offending Service, education etc. and community members.
- Members are responsible for representing their organisation on the Board and representing the Board back into their own organisation, for scrutinising the functions of the Board and ensuring continuous improvement.
- The sub-structure includes an Executive Group which meets every 6 weeks to keep business going, two sets of sub-groups themed around priorities and functions with a number of cross-cutting work streams and professional practices embedded throughout.
- The presentation set out the range of key activities under each priority. The pro-active and preventative work, such as the anti-bullying chatterboxes, had been recognised nationally as best practice.

Mr. Mason highlighted the Board's key role in co-ordinating work across partners and providing challenge to ensure a shared understanding. There was some cross-over with the Scrutiny Committee and the Children & Families Board in terms of scrutiny and governance, but the TWSCB had the ability to look across the whole patch and to join up partners. Mr. Mason had been appointed at the start of December but had already visited Family Connect and had been very impressed with application of technology and sharing of information.

Following the presentation members asked a number of questions and Mr. Mason and the Assistant Director provided the following additional information:

- The Board meets quarterly. Around 30 people attend meetings, but this included Board members and non-member supporting officers. Members were all named

decision-makers within the organisation they represent. Substitutions were not allowed to encourage continuity and discourage delegation to non-decision makers. Attendance and commitment was generally good, and Ofsted had commended the effectiveness of the Board. There were challenges, for example the fragmentation of health services and the establishment of the Health & Wellbeing Board meant there was no one organisation or board that speaks for health services, and all member organisations were going through a time of change which made continuity of representation more difficult. The good news was that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which would be responsible for commissioning the designated doctor and nurse safeguarding roles which the government had agreed would continue.

- The Board scrutinises a wide range of activity as a “critical friend“, and there would need to be a discussion with the Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Chairman to agree how this would align with scrutiny to avoid duplication.
- There is currently no statutory responsibility for agencies to contribute financially to the Board but guidance was forthcoming. Historically, agencies had been willing to contribute funding as well as in-kind contributions, but budget pressures within each organisation made financial planning more difficult. Funding was needed for training, the business planning and development and QA functions etc., and a Serious Case Review cost around £10-20k so there always needs to be a level of contingency.
- The Munro report would continue to have implications. The on-going reconfiguration of services had taken Munro into account and changes to the inspection regime were expected in the summer. There had been delays to guidance on Working Together guidance which it was hoped would be released by the end of the year. The Board’s work on child abuse and Children Abused Through Exploitation (CATE) were well recognised - and it needed to continue to be responsive and operate within budget.
- Both professional practice themes came from a serious case review. “Invisible Men” was about taking account of the role men play in children’s lives, both positive and negative. “Cultural Competence” reflects the need for a the children’s workforce to be aware of and take into account diverse needs of children and their families in assessment and care planning; Telford’s population, especially amongst children and young people, is becoming increasingly diverse
- As Chair of the Board, Mr. Mason was accountable to the Director of Children & Family Services but was responsible for working with all members. The Chair had been appointed by a panel of board partners. The initial appointment was for one year with a view to moving to a three yearly term. Mr. Mason worked as a Management Consultant and business owner, was previously a governor and vice-chair of Madeley Court school, a board member of Telford Business Partnership and had been a non-Executive member of the Telford & Wrekin PCT Board for 7 years, the last 3 as Chair, and he continued as a non-Executive member of the PCT Cluster Board until the end of March 2013 when the PCTs

would be abolished. He had had a lot of involvement with safeguarding at the PCT. The post had been advertised externally nationally.

When there were no further questions, the Chair thanked Mr. Mason for the introduction and extended a standing invitation to future scrutiny meetings to keep the dialogue going.

The Chair reminded members that the Ofsted Improvement Plan had been developed in response to the recommendations made by Ofsted following the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services in the summer. The Committee had received an informal briefing on the outcome in August when a commitment had been made that the Plan would come to a future meeting for detailed scrutiny. Recommendations requiring immediate and three month action had been made by Ofsted which had now elapsed, and the Cabinet Member and Assistant Director had been invited to present progress on actions to address the recommendations.

The AD was invited to talk through the Plan circulated as Appendix B1. Progress had been made on all three month actions but there were some that had not been completed for appropriate reasons. The recommendation to define the roles and responsibilities of the community social work team was still in progress as this needed to be done in the context of, and not in isolation from, the on-going service reconfiguration. The requirement for all children to have a qualified social worker was being addressed in a way that was in the best interest of the children so that existing strong relationships with non-qualified staff were not disrupted. It was felt that these approaches were appropriate and that were Ofsted to re-visit they would agree.

The recommendations had been grouped under 8 priority themes and there was a presentation and discussion about the highlights:

- **Priority 1** related to immediate actions relating to response times to concerns which had already been addressed.
- **Priority 2** related to the reconfiguration of safeguarding services to support the child's journey. A key action was to minimise changes of social worker for the child. The service was being redesigned to move away from a process-driven structure (meaning children changed social worker through different stages) to one which balanced the need of the child for continuity and strong relationships without losing the support of specialist social workers. This is a complex piece of work which had started with a social work conference in November and there had been positive buy-in. In the meantime, there had been a very successful recruitment campaign with all but 5 Senior Social Worker posts being filled. One new senior social worker had been filled in the Family Placement team which was important for supporting the rest of the team in preventing disruptions and recruiting more internal foster carers. The council is good at retention of newly qualified staff and there had been 2 or 3 promotions into Senior Social Worker positions. Appointments would be made from the Step Up to Social Work Programme which had produced some excellent candidates. Although agency staff could be very able, there were issues with turnover, so the recruitment of permanent staff would significantly help to minimise changes of social worker. There were currently 70.6

social workers in total, of which there had been 12.7 agency workers in October, now down to 10.9 and projected to be 9 by the end of December. The target was to reduce to 6 agency workers by March 2013, 2 by September 2013 and 0 by March 2014. The Chairman said that he found this progress very encouraging.

- **Priority 3** related to the quality of **social work practice**. A new format for child protection conferences was being piloted. Child protection plans were down from 220 to 155. Fewer children were coming off plans at 3 months which was an indicator of how partnership working was improving so that only the right children were being put on plans in the first place. There are fewer children who had been on a plan for longer than 2 years - after this length of time children generally need to be off a plan or in care. The quality of assessments had improved and Family & Cohesion services were putting packages around the child to reduce the need for protection plans or care. With regard to recommendation 19, a temporary post had been agreed to increase IRO capacity but it was not envisaged this would be needed longer term as the numbers in care reduce.
- **Priority 4** related to **mental health and emotional wellbeing**. Much of this work was tied into the review of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Members asked about the timeliness and performance indicators for CAMHS interventions. The Cabinet Member explained that the target for referral to treatment was set by government at 18 weeks which was not a helpful indicator and there was a need to think about a better local indicator. Issues had been raised with the Children and Families Board about long waiting times for assessments and this was being looked at. CAMHS had now been incorporated into the Family Connect triage service from early in the new year which was a huge step forward and further work would continue. The AD said that it was also important for professionals to distinguish between mental illness and mental wellbeing so that referrals are appropriate and work was being done on this.
- **Priority 5** related to the **involvement of children and young people in service redesign**. The Care Council had worked with IROs to redesign assessment and review meeting forms to make them child-friendly. Work was also needed on the engagement of parents and an audit was being carried out to identify when parents had been involved in reviews and the reasons for non-involvement. The reviews were for the child and there is sometimes a good reason why parents do not attend review meetings is at the wishes of the child.
- **Priority 6** related to **sharing knowledge, skills and capacity**. Doctors in hospitals had received training to help them understand and tackle safeguarding issues robustly. A key piece of work was the input of social workers into the new workforce development strategy to develop career pathways and the concept of a Telford Social Worker. This was a big piece of work which would make a significant difference to the skills, capacity and recruitment of social workers and their managers.
- **Priority 7** related to **health** and the NHS had lead responsibility for these actions. Christine Morris, Senior Nurse safeguarding lead on the CCG, was leading on

health related actions in the Plan. Performance was good on the frequency of health assessments, although assessment on coming into care could be improved.

- **Priority 8** related to the **transition to independent living**. A Transition Group had been set up. The Council was working with care leavers to shape services. There had been a workshop with a presentation from care leavers about their experience of leaving care and of the support services, including care leavers who were young parents, to help shape options.

At the end of the presentation and questioning, the Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and AD for the helpful presentation and commented that he felt there was much to celebrate in the progress reported.

## **CYPSC-18 REPORTS CIRCULATED FOR INFORMATION**

Members considered three reports which had been circulated for monitoring.

The Dashboard of children in care performance had been circulated as Appendix C. The AD highlighted changes since the last meeting:

- The number of children in care had risen to 315 due to children from 3 large families (6/4/4) being taken into care, which showed the impact a small number of families could have on numbers and costs. They had all been placed with internal carers, except one family which was with an external carer to keep siblings together. The Cost Improvement Plan had been developed around a care number of around 300 and this was being refined. The Cabinet Member was confident that this would make a difference in terms of cost and stability of placements.
- The number of internal and agency foster carers had increased, and the upward trend was greater for internal carers.
- Following the discussion at the last scrutiny meeting, the Dashboard had been updated to reflect the actual cost of internal and relative carers from October. The average unit cost for internal care was £417 per week, as opposed to around £600 which was the average national costing discussed at the last meeting. The calculation of the cost base now included the cost of support carers, but it was not possible to adjust the calculation retrospectively. The Chairman was concerned that the presentation of costs on the Dashboard should make this clear because it looked as though there had been a sudden increase in costs. The average unit cost of relative carers was lower at £368 because generally the children in relative care were younger and the allowances were lower.
- The cost pie-chart again illustrated the need to reduce the number of residential placements. A regional framework contract for supported lodgings was almost complete.

- There were two performance areas flagged red, but these were not considered to be matters of concern. The number of adoptions varies over the year and the AD was confident that this would be improved over the whole year. The AD felt that the indicator for the number of new foster care households approved in the year was not a useful indicator because it was based around approvals and deregistration and not whether carers were providing placements. There were 19 assessments in progress which it was hoped would go to panel by the end of the year.

Cllr. Green raised the issue of how information about costs is presented to Members and the public so that they understand what is behind them, for example the reasons why children are coming into care and the fact that taking a large family into care can have a significant impact on costs. The Chairman replied that the scrutiny committee was looking at long-term strategies to reduce costs but that there could be no compromise of safety. Cllr. Watling suggested this could be taken up by the Corporate Parenting Group.

A breakdown of 2012 KS4 results for children in care by gender and schools in and out of the borough, and Telford & Wrekin children in care results compared to borough and national averages had been circulated as Appendix D and E.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the bar charts showing the achievement and trend gaps of children in care in Telford & Wrekin compared to all children in the borough and national averages for children in care at KS2 L4 plus and KS4 and that generally this showed an encouraging picture. The 2012 KS4 data showed 34.5% of children in care achieving 5+ GCSEs including English and Maths, compared to 60.7% for all children in the borough. Comparing this to the trend national averages for children in care in previous years, this showed an encouraging picture. However, it was noted that the numbers in the cohorts were small which could impact significantly on the percentages achieved and the Committee might want to unpick the data in more detail at a future meetings.

## **CYPSC-19 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

The Chairman updated members on the work of the sub-group since the last meeting. The sub-group had met to take stock of work so far and had agreed further work which had been built into the work programme. Documents were tabled to show the actions agreed and how they were being taken forward.

It was noted that the next meeting would be at 6.00pm on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> January. Confirmation on the venue was awaited and Members would be advised in due course.

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm.

**Chairman:.....**

**Date:.....**



Telford & Wrekin  
COUNCIL

# MISSING CHILDREN PROCESSES FOR TELFORD AND WREKIN.

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

---

## Introduction

---

**Purpose of document**

**Background**

**Objectives.**

## Missing C&YP procedures in T&W

---

**Relevant young people**

**Missing C&YP process**

**Criteria for Return Interviews**

**Police Safe and well check**

**Children Missing from Education**

**Children missing from Home/Care Return discussion guidance**

**Return Interview**

**General discussion suggestions to aid return interview**

**Questions to consider**

**Procedural reference**

# Appendices

---

- 1 Missing Notification
- 2 Found Notification
- 3 Criteria for Return Interview
- 4 1 or 2 missing episodes pathway for C&YP KNOWN to services
- 5 Pathway for missing episodes of 3 or more
- 6 1 or 2 missing episodes pathway for C&YP NOT KNOWN to services
- 7 Pathway for missing episodes of 3 or more
- 8 Initial missing persons letter
- 9 Young person feedback form

## Additional papers.

---

- 1 Return Home Interview Template
- 2 Return Home Interview Guidance

# Glossary

---

<b>SAS</b>	<b>Safeguarding Advisory Service</b>
<b>C&amp;YP</b>	<b>Children and Young People</b>
<b>MAW</b>	<b>Multi Agency Worker</b>
<b>EI</b>	<b>Early Intervention</b>
<b>F&amp;CS</b>	<b>Family and Cohesion Service</b>
<b>YP</b>	<b>Young Person</b>
<b>SW</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>
<b>CM</b>	<b>Case Manager</b>
<b>CRM</b>	<b>Case Record Management</b>
<b>YOS</b>	<b>Youth Offending Service</b>
<b>CATE</b>	<b>Children Abused Through Exploitation</b>
<b>Allocated Worker</b>	<b>Social Worker</b>
	<b>Case Manager</b>
	<b>Youth Offending Service</b>
	<b>Targeted Youth Support CATE</b>

## Introduction.

---

## Purpose of the document.

---

The purpose of this document is to describe the processes involved in working with young people in Telford and Wrekin who have gone missing. This should be used as the overall Framework for undertaking this work. This document will outline the processes from the initial police Missing/Found Notifications to the Return interview and proposals for further intervention.

## Background.

---

This is a statutory requirement for Telford and Wrekin and will be monitored by the Local safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) along with actions as identified by the Sub Group for missing Children. This document is local guidance based upon the West Mercia Joint Protocol for Missing Children 2011.

## Objectives.

---

To enable staff to be clear about their own responsibilities regarding missing children as part of this process.

To enable a process of recording and monitoring.

To enable reporting, to ensure that we meet the statutory requirement of holding a Return Interview within 72 hours of the missing episode.

To identify, as early as possible, those young people and families who are in need of services following a Return Interview.

To provide a Pathway to services for Early Intervention or Cohesion.

To hold workers, teams and agencies to account when working together within this process.

# MISSING PERSONS PROCEDURES IN TELFORD & WREKIN.

---

This document should be read alongside the West Mercia Joint Protocol for Missing Persons as agreed by all 4 West Mercia Authorities.

The following document concerns internal procedures for Telford and Wrekin which explain how young people who go missing are to be dealt with through their journey of going missing; being located and the local authorities response to these missing episodes.

## **Relevant young people:**

- Young people placed in care by Telford and Wrekin who remain within Telford and Wrekin.
- Young people who live within Telford and Wrekin but reside with family, live independently or are care leavers.

## **Missing persons falling outside of this process include:**

- **Young people placed within Telford and Wrekin by another local authority.**  
In these circumstances the home authority Social Worker will be notified of this missing episode and it is then their responsibility to undertake the Return Interview. In some circumstances the home authority may ask for assistance to undertake this Return Interview and these requests will be managed on a case by case basis.
- **Young people placed outside of the Telford and Wrekin area by Telford and Wrekin.**  
In these situations T&W authority will have agreed and identified the relevant process for missing episodes in whatever authority and whichever establishment the T&W young person resides. The relevant Social Worker will then need to expedite a Return Interview within 72hrs or agree with the host authority and establishment how this will be achieved.

## **MISSING CHILDREN PROCESS**

In Telford and Wrekin when a Young Person is reported as missing from care or home the police will complete a Missing and then a subsequent Found Notification and these notifications get emailed to FAMILY CONNECT.

familyconnect@telford.gov.uk

(See appendix 1 and 2) for Notifications.

Upon receipt of these Notifications in Family Connect:

- If the child is open to a Social Worker this notification will be forwarded to [ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk](mailto:ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk) in order for this to be recorded onto Protocol. As well as being forwarded to the relevant social worker and their manager to action appropriately.
- If open to locality services the notification will be sent to the relevant worker and their manager to action appropriately.
- If the young person is not known the case will be recorded onto the Family Connect CRM database.
- If after investigation by Family Connect, of all relevant systems, the **young person is not known** to the local authority, they are assessed by the attending Triage staff to ascertain the most appropriate way forward for this individual episode.

In order to agree a way forward the Triage will:

REMEMBER THAT

Reported incidents are not always as they seem

CHECK INVESTIGATE DECISION

**The Joint Protocol has adopted the Children's Society criteria for return interviews so this has been applied in terms of a threshold for young people missing in Telford and Wrekin. The missing for 24hrs will not be applied at this stage.**

**The relevant criteria are that:**

- The child has been missing on 2 or more occasions
- The child has engaged or is believed to have engaged in criminal activities
- The child has been hurt or harmed whilst they have been missing or this is believed
- The child has mental health issues
- The child lives in a household where there are mental health, child protection, domestic abuse and/or substance misuse issues
- The child is at risk of or thought to be at risk of sexual exploitation
- The child has had contact with persons posing a risk to children, including boyfriends/girlfriends/partners that are more than two years older than the young person.  
(See appendix 3)

If the child is open then **“The Pathway for missing children who are known”** should be followed from this point (See Appendix 4+5)

And

If the child is open then **“The Pathway for missing children who are not known”** should be followed from this point (See Appendix 6+7)

**The initial outcomes of the information gathering and assessment process of the case could be:**

- If this is the first missing episode for this young person an “Initial missing letter” should normally be sent by Family Connect. (Appendix 8)
- If after assessing all of the gathered information the concerns are such that it is felt necessary to visit on this first occasion then it is necessary to follow the return interview Pathway. (See Children Society Criteria for relevant concerns.)
- If this is the second or more episodes on going missing then the relevant Pathway **should** to be followed.

Depending upon the agreed Pathway/process the Family Connect Advisor will enter onto CRM that an outcome has been made i.e. passed to another team/worker.

**If the young person or family is open to Social care**

The Family Connect Advisor will email the Notifications to [ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk](mailto:ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk)

the relevant Social Worker and cc their Team Manager. This is in order for the notifications to be recorded on Protocol, the case to be dealt with by the Social Worker, and in their absence allocated by the Team Manager for another worker to complete the return interview, within 72 hours.

If the Social Worker is unable to complete the return interview within the allotted 72hrs they must discuss this with their Team Manager and agree how this can be achieved. This may be to request assistance from other workers or teams including Early Intervention or Family and Cohesion Services.

There is a Return Interview template to assist in this process. It is very important that upon completion of the Return Interview that confirmation of this is sent to Family Connect in order for that particular episode to be closed on CRM. If the worker fails to complete the Interview in the allotted 72hrs the worker will receive a reminder via CRM’s automated system. A confirmation reply from this email is required in order to prevent continued emails from CRM about this Return Interview.

**If the young person or family is open to locality services**

The Family Connect Advisor will email all of the gathered information including Notifications to the relevant Case Manager immediately and cc the Group Manager. This is in order for the case to be dealt with by the case manager, and in their

absence allocated by the Group Manager for another worker to complete the return interview, within 72 hours. If the worker is unable to complete the return interview within the allotted 72hrs they must discuss this with their Team Manager and agree how this can be achieved. This may be to request assistance from other workers or teams including Early Intervention or Family and Cohesion Services.

There is a Return Interview template to assist in this process. It is very important that upon completion of the Return Interview that confirmation of this is sent to Family Connect in order for that particular episode to be closed on CRM. If the worker fails to complete the Interview in the allotted 72hrs the worker will receive a reminder via CRM's automated system. A confirmation reply from this email is required in order to prevent continued emails from CRM about this Return Interview.

### **If the young person or family is unknown to locality services or closed to social care**

These cases will be passed by the Family Connect Advisor into the Triage process. If it is assessed within Family Connect Triage that a return interview is required the relevant Triage manager (Early Intervention or Cohesion) will refer to the relevant Group manager/Team Leader for allocation.

Upon receipt of the notification/information the Group Manager/Team Leader will ensure that the parent/carer of the young person is contacted in order to discuss with them an opportunity to visit and speak to the young person, the parent/carer within 72 hours. If the young person is aged 16+ it will need to be decided if Parent/carer should be contacted first.

They will inform the parent/carer that it is usual for an independent person to be in contact with every young person who goes missing on more than one occasion, upon their return home in order to ascertain the reasons for going missing and to ensure issues of safeguarding are addressed.

The parent/carer may also have received a missing notification letter on a previous occasion already so may recall that it will say "any future episodes of going missing may result in you being contacted by the Local authority and may lead to a return interview being suggested".

It will also be useful to request the option of seeing the young person at school or other education facility if parent/carer is happy with this. Not being at home or in any care setting might mean the young person is happier to speak openly to someone acting as an independent person.

Before seeing the young person it is likely that the Police will already have carried out a Safe and Well check as the young person has returned home. On occasions if the young person is a Looked After Child the police will rely on information provided by the carer and forego a Safe and well check on this basis.

## **Police Safe and Well Check**

'A Police Safe and Well Check is carried out as soon as possible after the person has returned. Its purpose is to check for any indications that the young person has suffered harm, where and with whom they have been, and to give them an opportunity to disclose any offending by or against them.

Where a person goes missing frequently, it may not be practicable to see them every time they return. In these cases a reasonable decision should be taken with regard to the frequency of such checks. This will mainly apply to young people missing from care who are likely to have other key people responsible for their welfare to check this. Every effort should be made to visit those young people missing from home on every occasion.'

There are processes to follow as the Young person goes missing more frequently which includes Return Interviews and strategic meetings to progress the case and identify appropriate action plans to reduce the level of missing episodes. ( See Appendix 4 onwards).

### **If the Return Interview is not undertaken.**

There will be some cases in which it is felt by the case manager and manager that a return interview is not required for whatever reason. It is very important in these cases that both the case manager and manager have a discussion about this and confirm that no return interview is going to take place. If this is the decision of the manager it is important that the CRM generated email reminding of the return interview is responded to in order to confirm this decision and by whom and also to allow CRM to complete the case therefore preventing the need to send continued reminders.

# CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION PROVISION

---

## **Children going missing from school during the school day.**

This relates to young people going missing on their way to, or going missing from school it does not involve young people who are failing to attend for any other reason.

- When a child goes missing on their way to school there should be clear procedures in place to follow up on their whereabouts. This should include robust registration procedures so that at the earliest opportunity parents/carers can be informed at once should their child not turn up at school. The school should have relevant contact numbers and be contacting these should registration be completed and a child not be in school. Registers should always be up to date and each child's attendance recorded accurately. This includes and is especially important during afternoon registration.
- Ensure that there are specific procedures in place for pupils who are deemed to fall into the high risk /vulnerable category.
- The school should also have in place robust late reporting systems and follow these in accordance with agreed procedures that parents are routinely informed of and can have access to should the need arise. This protects the school and the parents.
- If a child goes missing or is not where they should be during the school day every effort should be made to locate them before notifying parents/carers of their being missing. This could include school staff and trusted older pupils or hosts at the school in appropriate cases.
- The Police would not normally record or investigate reports of absences that are clearly truanting incidents. Each case will need to be assessed on its presenting risks and /or whether this is out of character for the pupil.
- If a pupil goes missing the school need to identify the appropriate person to contact parents/carers and this person will need to agree with the parent who is the most appropriate person to be notifying the police to report the pupil as missing. This will usually be the parent, however, if it is felt that concerns related to the home situation then the school should also be contacting the police to report the incident.
- All school staff should be aware of these procedures and follow them rigorously to ensure the safety of school pupils whilst also enhancing the expectations and reputations of the school.
- All pupils should be reported to the police as missing by the end of the school day if not located AND the school have been unable to contact the parents/carers.
- If you are not sure if a child should be reported to the police as missing then telephone them for advice.

# Procedural Reference.

Police Notifications to Family Connect (FC)			
NO	Process	WHO	Procedure
1	Missing child Notification received from Police.	FC	<p>FC receives automated email from police Compact system to inform them a C&amp;YP has gone missing. This is screened and checked on Protocol/EI/Cohesion/CRM systems.</p> <p>If open to social care the notification will be sent to <a href="mailto:ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk">ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk</a></p> <p>And relevant social worker and their manager.</p> <p>If open to locality services the notification is sent to the allocated worker and manager.</p>
2	Found Notification received from police	FC	<p>FC receives automated email from police Compact system to inform them a C&amp;YP has been found/returned. This is screened and checked on Protocol/EI/Cohesion/CRM systems.</p> <p>If known to the system the allocated worker and manager will be notified by email. If open to social care email to .</p> <p>If not known the <a href="mailto:ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk">ChildProtection@telford.gov.uk</a> info will be discussed in FC triage for appropriate referral.</p>
FC emails Triage manager consideration			
1	Email received from FC to Triage manager re: Found Notification.	Attending Triage Manager	<p>FC to check details of notification. Discuss with Triage and explore systems for information.</p> <p>If known a locality worker – email the worker to inform of missing episode – copying in Group Manager.</p> <p>Assess information gathered to identify next step.</p> <p>If not known, Triage discussion re next step to be Missing Letter or allocation to EI or F&amp;C.</p> <p>Email including Notifications to be sent to relevant EI or Cohesion Group manager/Team Leader requesting</p>

			<p>allocation for Return Interview</p> <p>If 1<sup>st</sup> episode of missing send missing letter.</p> <p>If 1<sup>st</sup> episode but additional concerns consider processing to return interview.</p> <p>If second or more episodes of missing continue to return interview.</p>
<b>Triage manager Emails relevant person</b>			
1	Email received from Family Connect Triage requesting the undertaking of a return interview with the attached police Notification.	Allocated worker/	<p>If not in work manager will re allocate.</p> <p>Upon receipt begin to action in order to complete Return Interview within 72 hours of missing episode.</p> <p>Contact parent/carer/yp.</p> <p>Agree time and place for Return Interview.</p> <p>Request seeing C&amp;YP alone.</p> <p>Note: this is probably the 2<sup>nd</sup> plus episode.</p> <p>Locate relevant missing children documents and read to familiarise yourself.</p> <p>Print and take a copy of return Interview form for signing.</p> <p>Follow missing children document processes.</p> <p>After Interview ensure all documents are completed and forwarded to identified person.</p> <p>If any further intervention required discuss with your manager for allocation.</p> <p>Record as required.</p>
2	Email received from FC Triage requesting the allocated worker to undertake a return interview with the attached police Notification	Manager	<p>If the allocated worker is absent and unable to complete the Return Interview within 72 hours you will need to re allocate this to another worker.</p> <p>If necessary please contact EI or F&amp;C services to assist.</p> <p>If open to SW it will be important to follow this up at next meeting and to record on relevant documents placement records.</p>
<b>FC Triage Email to Team/Group Manager for unallocated case.</b>			
1	Email received from FC Triage requesting allocation for worker to undertake a return	Group Manager Team Leader	<p>Upon receipt consider allocation to appropriate worker in order to complete within 72 hours of missing episode.</p> <p>Allocated worker to be informed of the</p>

	interview with the attached police Notification		<p>need to:          Contact parent/carer/YP.          Agree time and place for Return Interview.          Request seeing C&amp;YP alone.          Note: this is probably the 2<sup>nd</sup> plus episode.          Locate relevant missing children documents and read to familiarise yourself.          Print and take a copy of return Interview form for signing.          Follow missing children document processes.          After Interview ensure all documents are completed and forwarded to identified person.          If any further intervention required discuss with your manager for allocation.          Record as required.</p>
<b>Completed information forwarded</b>			
1	Information received from completed Return Interviews	FC	FC to update CRM with details received from return Interview.
2	Information received from completed Return Interviews	F&C Team Leader Admin	Scan onto Child File if known. Open Child file for C&YP if unknown and scan Return Interview document into it. Open Spreadsheet for Return interview completions.
3	Information received from C&YP feedback form following Return Interview	F&C Team Leader Admin	Scan onto Child File if known. Open Child file for C&YP if unknown and scan Feedback document into it. Add details onto Spreadsheet for Return interview completions.

## Appendix 1

### **COMPACT Missing Person Notification from West Mercia Police**

Pnc ID : **07/1586717Y**  
Police Ref : **MPFDIV/882/12**  
Case Ref No :  
Station Code : **22FA**  
Report Date : **25/04/2012 18:59:00**  
Status : **M**  
Officer Dealing : **HASLAM, PS1303: 03003333000**  
M P Last Name :  
M P First Name :  
M P Middle Name :  
M P House Name : **DINTHILL**  
M P House Number :  
M P Street :  
M P Locality : **FORD**  
M P Town : **SHREWSBURY**  
M P County :  
M P Post Code :  
M P Country :  
M P Dob : **24/12/1995 00:00:00**  
M P Age Approx : **16**  
M P Gender Code : **F**  
Date Last Seen : **25/04/2012 11:30:00**  
R A Code : **NotSet**  
Informant Last Name : **MARCH**  
Informant First Name :  
Informant Relationship : **CARER**  
Informant House Name : **DINTHILL**  
Informant House Number :  
Informant Street :  
Informant District : **FORD**  
Informant Town : **SHREWSBURY**  
Informant County :  
Informant Postcode :  
Informant Country :  
Informant Phone : **0456234123**  
Local Authority Code : **16**  
Previously Missing : **Y**

No Times Previously Missing : **28**

Child Services Notified :

Accommodation Type : **Social Services Care**

Ethnicity : **WHITE - NORTH EUROPEAN**

Build : **Slim**

Hair Colour : **red**

Height : **178**

Marks : **N**

Scars : **N**

Tattoos : **N**

Application Ref : **41621**

Circumstances : **OIS 0564-S -250412 \*ABSCOND  
CARE\* LAST SEEN AT 1130 HOURS  
AT ..... COMMUNITY CENTRE.  
SHE JUMPED OUT OF CAR AND  
RAN OFF WITH HER BOYFRIEND,  
..... THEY RAN OFF ACROSS  
THE RAILWAY LINES TOWARDS  
TELFORD TOWN CENTRE.**

## Appendix 2

### Local Authority Found Notification

**This email has been sent automatically due to a found report being filled in for the misper.**

Case Number : **MPFDIV/882/12**  
Surname :  
Forenames :  
Date of Birth : **24/12/1995**  
Circumstances : **MISPER WAS WITH HER BOYFRIEND, ..... SHE WAS FOUND BY POLICE, AND THEN SHREWSBURY OFFICERS TOOK HER TO A NEW home.**

Case Papers held at : **22 G DIVISION**  
Photograph Available : **Yes**  
Publicity Authorised : **No**  
Home Address : **DINTHILL, FORD, SHREWSBURY,**  
Address Where Found : **12 welsh rd**  
Informant Name : **PC 457 BLAXALL**  
Informant's Contact No. : **03003333000**  
Informant's Address : **WEST MERCIA CONSTABULARY,  
POLI, VICTORIA ROAD,  
WELLINGTON, Telford,  
SHROPSHIRE, TF1 1LQ**

Found Report Date/Time : **25/04/2012 22:00:00**  
Distance found from home : **11 - 20 MILES  
: 20 MILES.**  
Found by : **POLICE  
:**  
Found how : **PRESENTED TO POLICE**  
Found where : **STREET / PUBLIC PLACE  
:**

Transport provided : **POLICE**  
Time missing : **0 - 8 HOURS**  
Suffered harm : **No  
: NO TYPE OF HARM SPECIFIED**

Committed crime : **No  
: NO TYPE OF CRIME SPECIFIED**

Reason(s) for missing : **OTHER REASON(S) NOT COVERED**  
Reason details : **ABSCONDED TO BE WITH HER BOYFRIEND.**

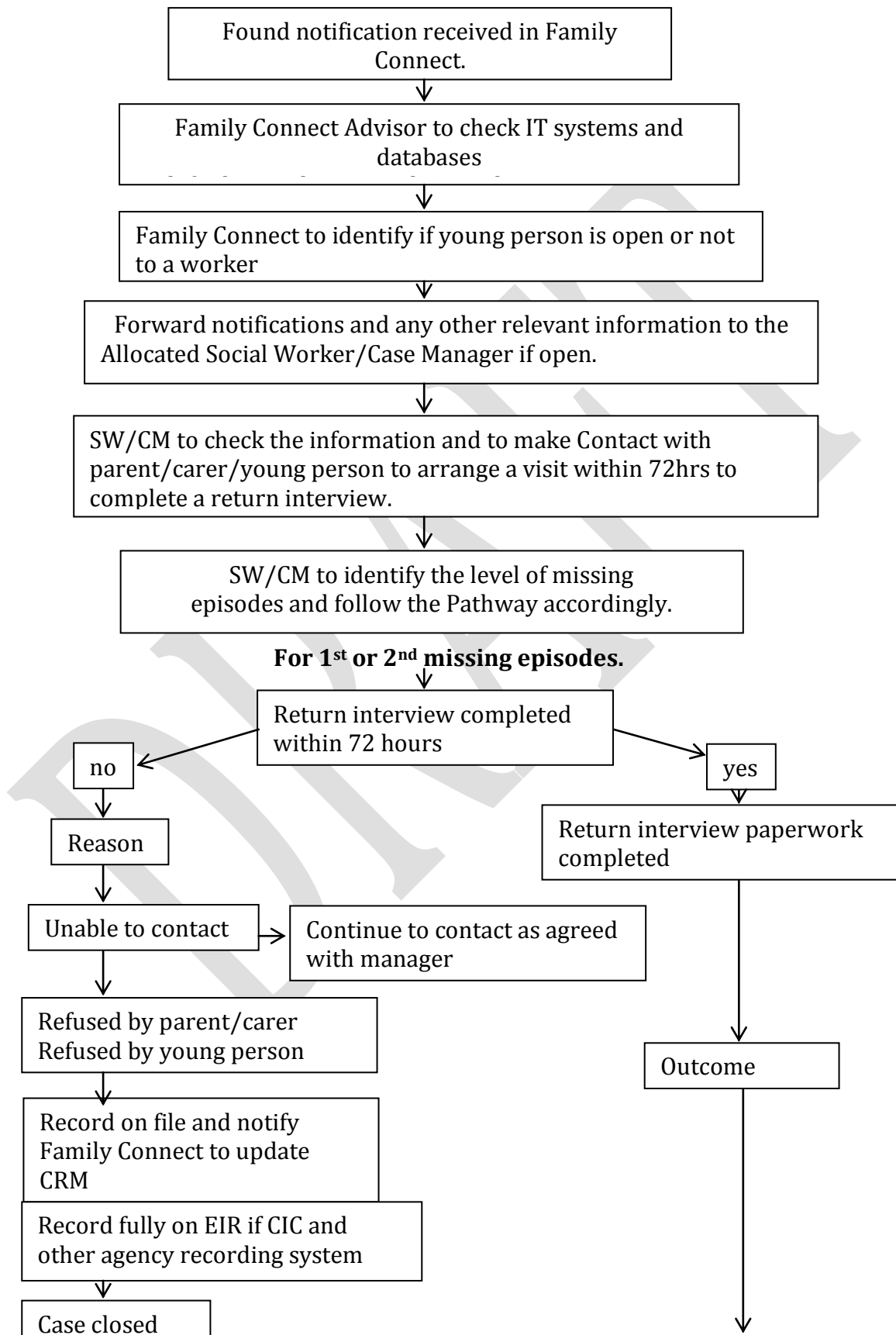
## **Appendix 3**

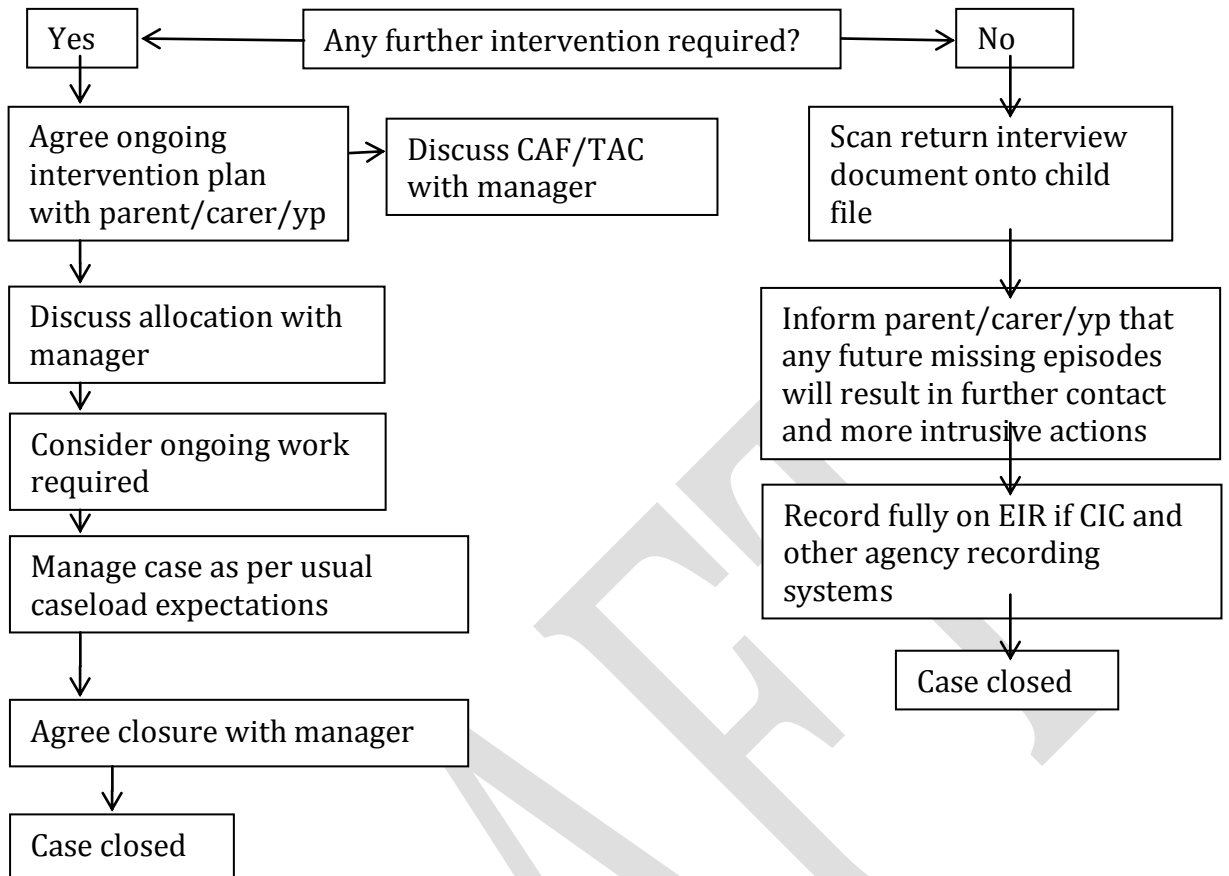
The Children's Society has applied the following criteria for return interviews:

- The child has been missing for 24hrs
- The child has been missing on 2 or more occasions
- The child has engaged or is believed to have engaged in criminal activities
- The child has been hurt or harmed whilst they have been missing or this is believed
- The child has mental health issues
- The child lives in a household where there are mental health, child protection, domestic abuse and/or substance misuse issues
- The child is at risk of or thought to be at risk of sexual exploitation
- The child has had contact with persons posing a risk to children, including boyfriends/girlfriends/partners that are more than two years older than the young person.
- In addition it is recommended that a Return interview should take place if there are other factors that a professional judge requires the child or young person to be seen.

## Appendix 4

### 1 or 2 MISSING EPISODES PATHWAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE OPEN TO SERVICES.

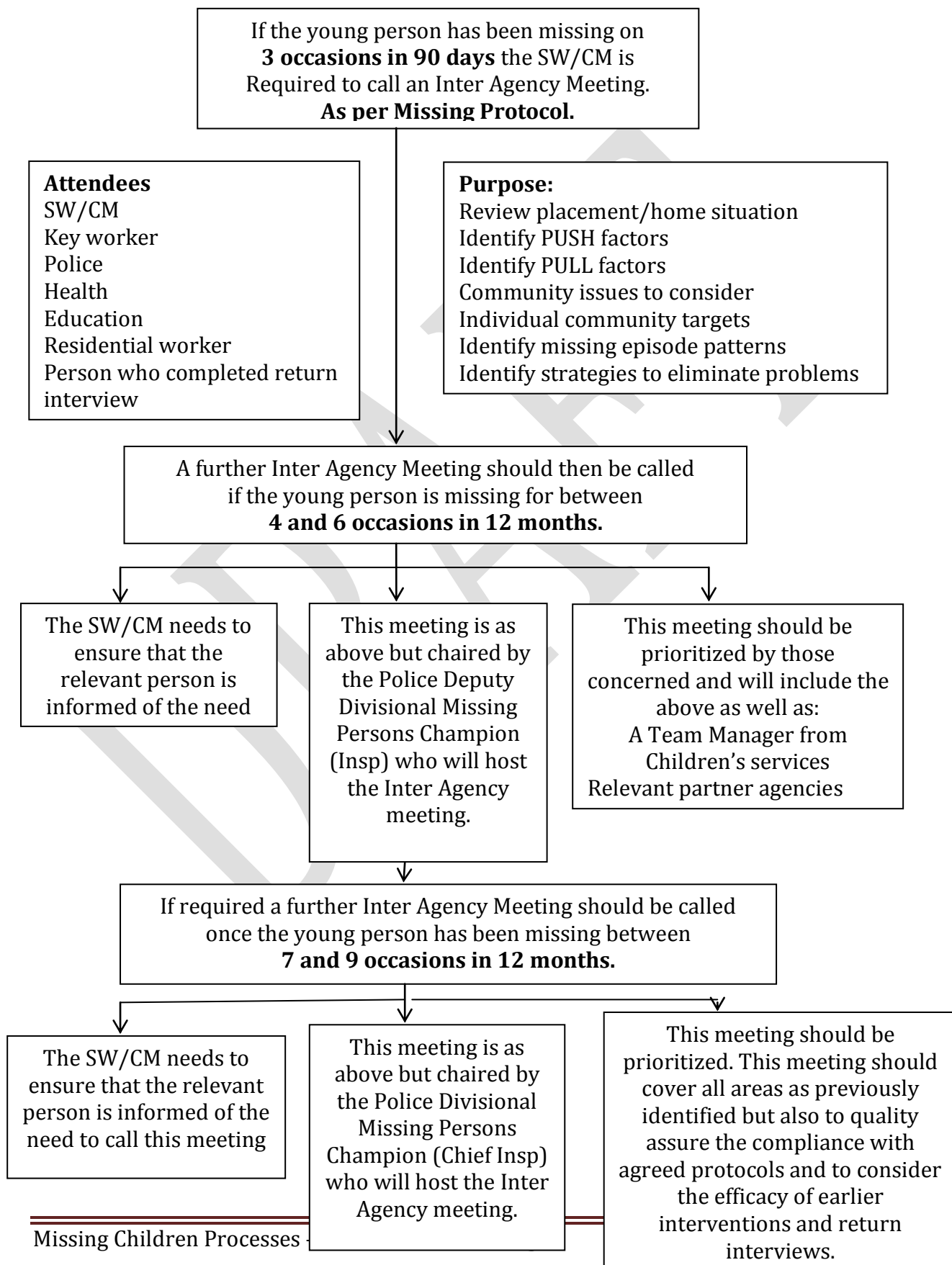




**FOR MISSING EPISODES OF MORE THAN 2 FOLLOW 3 OR MORE MISSING EPISODES PATHWAY**

## Appendix 5

### FOR MISSING EPISODES OF 3 OR MORE



The outcome of this meeting should also to agree a report to be forwarded to the Force missing persons strategic lead.



If missing episodes continue beyond this level then consideration should be made to the appropriateness of intervention from the Assistant Chief Constable.

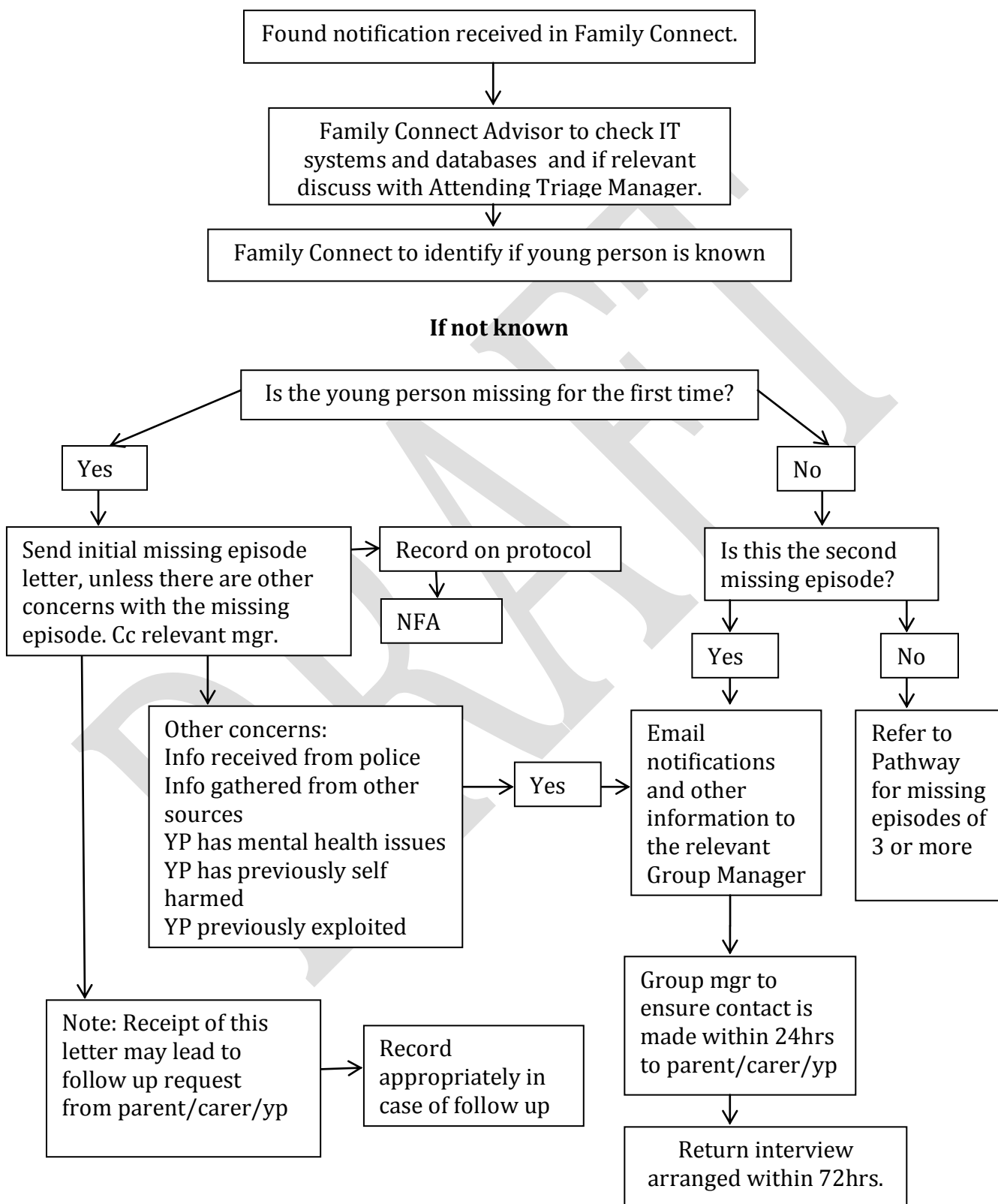


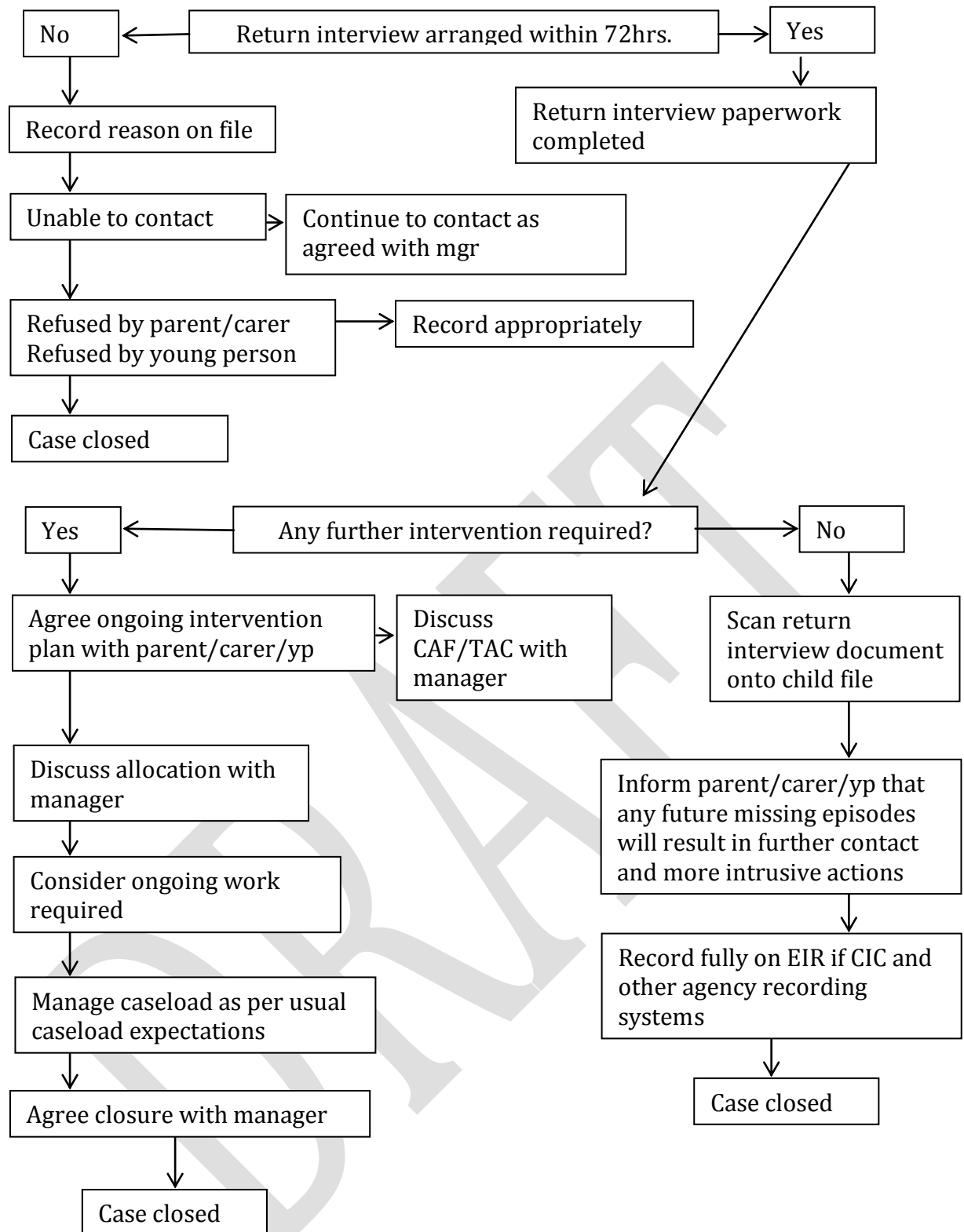
This should also be considered where:

- Any cases where the risks involved in a single future episode are **Very High**.
- Cases where it has been identified that **Immediate** action is necessary to ensure the well being of the person.

## Appendix 6

### 1 or 2 MISSING EPISODES PATHWAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE NOT OPEN TO SERVICES.

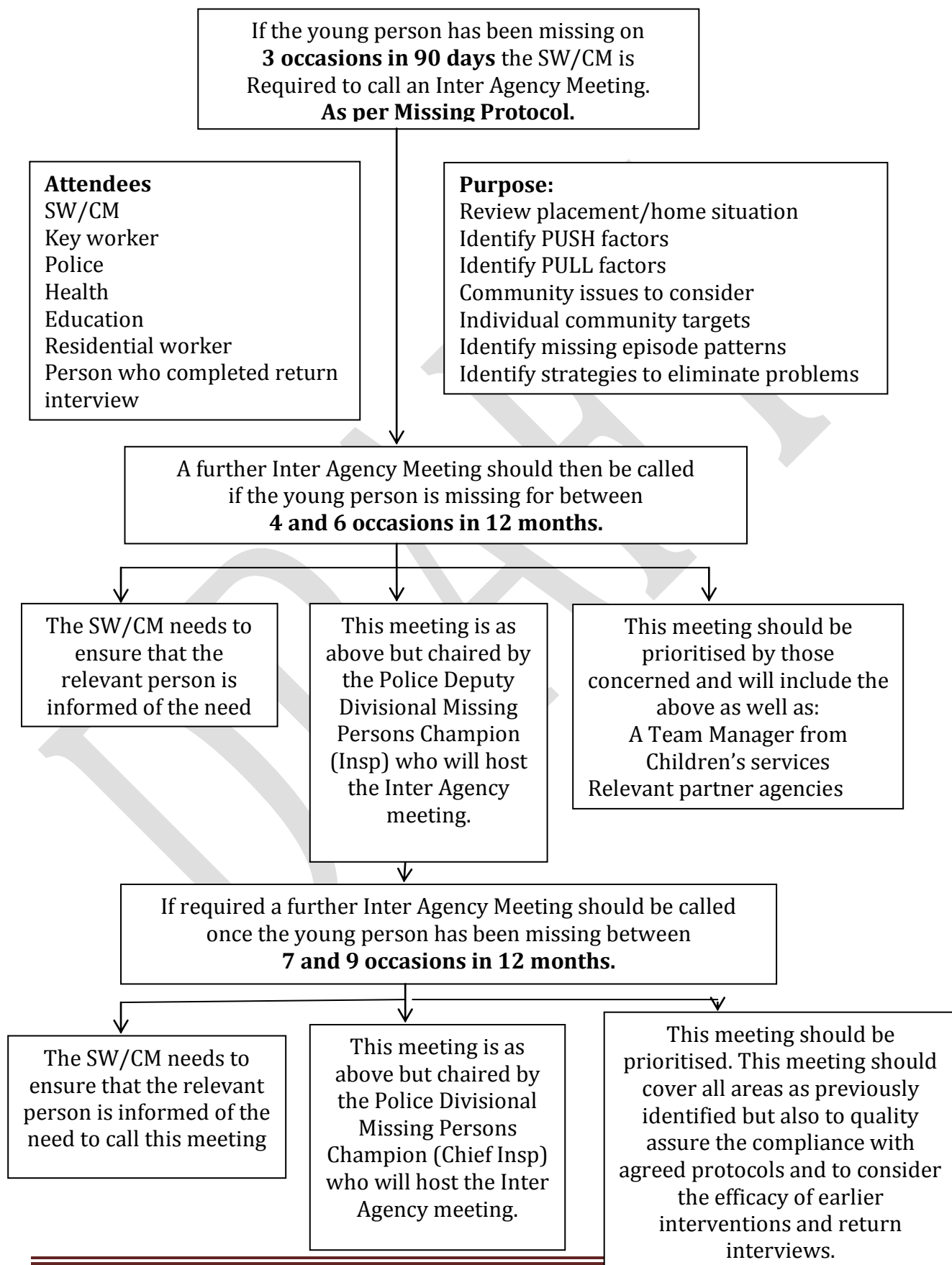




**FOR MISSING EPISODES OF MORE THAN 2 FOLLOW 3 OR MORE MISSING EPISODES PATHWAY**

## Appendix 7

### FOR MISSING EPISODES OF 3 OR MORE



The outcome of this meeting should also to agree a report to be forwarded to the Force missing persons strategic lead.



If missing episodes continue beyond this level then consideration should be made to the appropriateness of intervention from the Assistant Chief Constable.



This should also be considered where:

- Any cases where the risks involved in a single future episode are **Very High**.
- Cases where it has been identified that **Immediate** action is necessary to ensure the well being of the person.

**FOR MISSING EPISODES OF MORE THAN 2 FOLLOW 3 OR MORE MISSING EPISODES PATHWAY**



**Appendix 9**  
**(TO BE ELABORATED)**

**CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS FEEDBACK FORM FOLLOWING DISCUSSION RE  
POST MISSING EPISODE.**

Name:

Address:

Please circle:

Were you happy discussing information with the independent visitor? YES NO

Did they treat you sensitively and with respect? YES NO

Did you find talking to them helpful? YES NO

Is there anything else that you wish to ask or say?



**Telford & Wrekin**

**C O U N C I L**

***RETURN HOME***

***INTERVIEW***

---

***TEMPLATE***

---

# RETURN HOME INTERVIEW

- This form should be used for all relevant young people missing from home or care
- The interview should take place within 72 hours of the missing episode
- The return interview should be undertaken by the appropriate case worker or where deemed necessary, an independent person.

Name of YP:	DOB:
Living with parents: Y N	Ethnicity:
Child in Care: Y N	Home Authority:
Address missing from:	Address located if relevant:

You need to inform the C&YP that:

*".. if during your discussion they disclose an incident whereby either they or another C&YP was harmed or are at risk of harm, or that a criminal offence has been committed, that you have a duty to disclose this matter to other social service professionals and/or the police."*

Are you happy to continue on that basis?	If YES Please tick:
--	---------------------

If No then please get the C&YP to sign here indicating that the option has been given. If the C&YP refuses to discuss the matter then the interview can go no further. Please note why they have refused.	Signature of C&YP:
If C&YP has refused to continue the discussion please get parent/carer to sign indicating this also. If they are present. Note refusal.	Signature of parent/carer:

If the young person is happy to continue and you consider the C&YP to be fit and healthy, both physically and emotionally then proceed. If you have other concerns

about the ability of the young person to complete the interview now then make these known and address them.

The following areas should be discussed with the parent/carer/young person and recorded as fully as possible.

Relevant information discussed with parent/carer.
Can I please discuss with you, why did you leave?
Where did you go? Why?
Who were you with? Who did you see?
What did you do whilst missing?

Did anything happen to concern us whilst you were missing?
Did you witness anything that you want to talk about?
Did you do anything illegal or that would concern us whilst you were missing?
What needs to happen for this not to happen again? Is it inevitable?
What do you do in your spare/free time?  Would you be interested in joining a club or local youth group?
Would it help you to talk to me again or someone else to prevent the need to go missing any more?

**OUTCOME OF INTERVIEW:**

If after meeting with the young person and/or their parents you have any immediate Safeguarding concerns contact FAMILY CONNECT at the earliest opportunity on 01952 385385 <b>Or contact your Team Manager for advice to agree a way forward.</b>
No further contact required. Please tick:
Further investigation needed. Please tick: What needs looking at further:
Referral to other services. Please tick: Referral to:
If further intervention is needed please outline what this needs to be, who needs to do it and how YOU will ensure this gets completed:

Date of Return Interview:
---------------------------

Name of worker completing the interview: Printed and signed:
Position of worker completing the interview:
Team and/or agency of worker completing the interview:

<b>Once this form is completed please forward to</b> <a href="mailto:Sarah-jane.ballantyne@telford.gov.uk">Sarah-jane.ballantyne@telford.gov.uk</a> <b>for recording/monitoring.</b>
<b>ALSO REPLY TO EMAIL FROM FAMILY CONNECT CONFIRMING COMPLETION OF THE RETURN INTERVIEW INCLUDING THE DATE AND PERSON COMPLETING THIS.</b>



**Telford & Wrekin**  

---

**C O U N C I L**

***RETURN HOME  
INTERVIEW  
GUIDANCE***

# CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME/CARE.

## RETURN DISCUSSION GUIDANCE.

---

This document is to be used as an aide to the return home interview. It is a guide to accompany the Return Home Interview paperwork.

The overall purpose of the Return Home interview is to ascertain the views of, and to assess the Health and safety of, Children and Young People (C&YP) who go missing. This can be from care, those living at home with their parents or those living independently in Telford and Wrekin.

It can also be used to identify any imminent/immediate concerns as well as events that are likely to happen that need to be addressed.

As the allocated person in this process you will need to complete the relevant factual information detailed in the return Interview form. This should be gathered from the parent or carer, including a description of their thoughts and concerns about the fact that the C&YP has gone missing.

Discussion with the parent/carer is also to identify any issues that could arise through the discussion with the C&YP that may be sensitive or concerning previous history that needs careful handling.

The parent/care may be suspicious of you at this point so it is important you put them at ease and clearly explain why you are there.

The purpose of the return interview is to:

- Discover the **factors** which led to the missing episode.
- Inform efforts to **prevent** further episodes.
- Inform any **future** missing person investigation should that person go missing again.
- **Learn** of the activities, associates, risks and victimisation involved in the missing episode, and where possible to **address** those risks.

The guidance then proposes that a Return Interview be conducted to consider in more depth the reason why that person has gone missing and to consider what further action is required to safeguard that young person in future.

# GENERAL DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS TO AID THE RETURN INTERVIEW.

---

Many young people who run away or go missing need to build up trust with somebody before they will respond to an interview and discuss the reasons why they decided to run away.

The interview and actions that follow from it should:

- identify and deal with any harm the child has suffered, including harm that might not have already been disclosed as part of the Police Safe and Well Check (his/her medical condition should be discussed and any need for medical attention assessed);
- understand and try to address the reasons why the child ran away; and
- try to prevent it happening again.

It will be useful to get to speak to the young person alone if they are happy to do so and the parents/carers are happy with this.

Introduce yourself to the young person and explain the purpose of your discussion, the following is a guide:

“You have been reported missing by your parent/ carer/ family and it is usual practice once you have been missing on more than one occasion, for you to be seen by an independent person to understand the reasons why you went missing. This is to ensure that you are safe and well and to give you the opportunity to speak to someone independent. Also to help us to understand if anything happened to harm you or others in any way whilst you were missing. This is about keeping you safe and also to keep other young people safe who may be even more vulnerable than you. It may be that you are more able to talk to an independent person outside of your family or care setting especially if it is because of something that happened in those settings that led to your going missing.”

As with all meetings with young people you need to inform them of the rules concerning your discussion with them. The following could be used as a guide:

You need to inform the C&YP that:

*“.. if during your discussion they disclose an incident whereby either they or another C&YP was harmed or are at risk of harm, or that a criminal offence has been committed, that you have a duty to disclose this matter to other social service professionals and/or the police.”*

Now that the introductions and the basis of your discussion have been outlined you need to ask if they are happy to continue with the interview. On the Return Interview form (Appendix 9) you will see the following consent to continue box below. If the young person is happy with what you have explained they should be happy to continue and sign the form as should the parent carer. If they are not it would be useful to investigate with them why they do not wish to continue. There could be an inference made if they refuse to go on with the process and it is

important that you record what they say and what you feel about their refusal. Do you have Safeguarding concerns at this refusal? If so please discuss with your Team Manager at the earliest opportunity. If you have immediate concerns for the young person's safety, contact Family Connect immediately.

Are you happy to continue on that basis?	YES
--	-----

If No then please get the C&YP to sign here indicating that the option has been given. If the C&YP refuses to discuss the matter then the interview can go no further. Please note why they have refused.	Signature of C&YP:
If C&YP has refused to continue the discussion please get parent/carer to sign indicating this also. If parent is present. Note of refusal.	Signature of parent/carer:

Once you have decided that the young person is happy to continue and you consider them to be fit and healthy, both physically and emotionally, then please use the below questions/suggested pointers as aids to the discussion.

This is not to be used as a list to ask the young person as this prevents the young person flowing. Please familiarise yourself with the nature of what the interview is attempting to elicit from the young person and interview accordingly.

It is important to recognize signs of potential abuse and be able to discuss this with parent/carer/young persons as part of the interview process as sensitively as possible. In order to provide some guidance of the reasons young people go missing and also the elements to look out for when considering whether a young person is possibly being exploited or not. Also included in this Guidance is a useful list of these in order to assist you in identifying what may constitute further concerns.

**Certain groups of vulnerable children are more likely than others to go missing.**

- Young people who have committed offences
- Children living in women's refuges
- Children of homeless families, perhaps living in temporary accommodation
- Young runaways
- Children with long-term medical or emotional problems
- Looked After children
- Children with a gypsy/traveller background
- Young carers
- Children with transient families
- Teenage mothers
- Children who are permanently excluded from school
- Migrant children, whether in families seeking asylum or economic migrants
- Trafficked children

For detailed guidance, see 'Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities in England to identify children not receiving education', published by the DfE in February 2007.

---

## WARNING SIGNS AND VULNERABILITIES CHECKLIST.

The following are typical vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality).
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect).
- Recent bereavement or loss.
- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang associated CSE only).
- Attending school with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Learning disabilities.
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families.
- Friends with young people who are sexually exploited.
- Homeless.
- Lacking friends from the same age group.
- Living in a gang neighbourhood.
- Living in residential care.
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer.
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence.
- Young carer.

The following signs and behaviour are generally seen in children who are already being sexually exploited.

- Missing from home or care.
- Physical injuries.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Involvement in offending.
- Repeat sexually-transmitted infections, pregnancy and terminations.
- Absent from school.
- Change in physical appearance.
- Evidence of sexual bullying and/or vulnerability through the internet and/or social networking sites.
- Estranged from their family.
- Receipt of gifts from unknown sources.
- Recruiting others into exploitative situations.
- Poor mental health.
- Self-harm.
- Thoughts of or attempts at suicide.

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER.

---

Can you tell me briefly why you have been reported missing on this occasion?  
Are you aware once you are reported missing the police and other agencies are notified?  
Have you been missing before?  
Can you share with me why you went missing on previous occasions?  
If this was the first time....How has things improved by going missing?  
Does going missing make things go away?  
When you were missing can you tell me where you went?  
Can you tell me what you did whilst missing?  
Can you tell me if you saw anyone? Were they older than you? Can you tell me who they were?  
Was this pre arranged?  
Were they missing also? Are they now safe?  
How did you get to where you went? On foot? Picked up?  
How did you return home? Self? Collected? Returned by someone?  
Have you a mobile phone? Did anyone try to contact you?  
Were you in any danger whilst missing? Specify?  
Were you hurt or harmed in any way? Specify?  
Were you scared?

## **If not already clear?**

What led up to you going missing?  
Were you running to someone/something? Specify?  
Were you running away from someone/something?  
Have you ever been hurt or harmed in any way that has led to you going missing? Or whilst you have been missing?  
How are things generally at home/in care for you?  
Is there anything that I can help you with in terms of activities or signposting you to some clubs? Youth clubs/positive activities groups/someone to talk to mentor/peer?  
Discuss situation at school.  
Are you aware of local activities that you could get involved in?  
Is there any reason that you can see as of today that would lead to you going missing again?  
Is there anything the C&YP can do to reduce the chances of going missing?  
Is there something any one else can do to reduce this.  
Is there something I as Independent visitor can do?

Ask the young person:

## **What is the most important thing to do now?**

The young person may now feel comfortable talking to you so suggest if they wanted to talk to you again rather than going missing then they can call you on your office number. Inform them that if you are in the office you will talk to them and if not you

can ring them back. Unless on holiday. This will make the young person feel important and cared about.

If you feel that you now have enough information to make an informed decision about what to do next, if anything, you can begin to wind up the interview.

Upon completion of the interview please pass the feedback form for the young person to complete (Appendix 10). They can either complete this now or forward once they have done this. Please provide them with SAE to do this if they so wish.

The feedback form will be returned to Sarah Jane Ballantyne Family and Cohesion Services Team Leader Administration who will collate record and monitor.

Meeting: Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday 8 January 2013

Report Title: Recruitment of Foster carers for Children in Care

Report Author: Angela Yapp- Service Delivery Manager , Fostering and CIC

---

## **1 Purpose of this Report**

- 1.1 To provide an overview of past, current and future activity in relation to the recruitment and retention of the current internal Telford & Wrekin(T&W) Foster carer workforce, required to meet the needs of children in care.
- 1.2 To note the improvements made to our recruitment model to increase our pool of internal foster carers to meet specific needs and further increase our positive placements stability.
- 1.3 To note the specific challenges, which have impacted upon recruitment activity during 2012/13.

## **2 Telford & Wrekin's Internal Fostering Service- historical context**

- 2.1 Telford & Wrekin Co-Operative Council, acquired the responsibility of running its own Fostering service when the authority became a unitary authority in 1998.
- 2.2 National Statutory Childcare legislations governs how Local Authorities and Independent Sector providers, manage and deliver fostering provision. Fostering provision, is highly regulated by specific standards, regulations, schedules, guidance and subject to separate and integrated inspections for Children in Care by Ofsted.
- 2.3 The Telford & Wrekin(T&W) Fostering service within the last 7 years has had other services added to its core fostering business ,as a consequence of national legislation, and internal decisions as to where to locate specific service provision. These added services are: Private Fostering introduced nationally in 2005; Special Guardianship and Residence order assessments, transferred from the Joint Adoption Team to the Fostering service during 2008; New national guidance on services to Family and Friends carers introduced in October 2011 and significant revisions to the National Fostering Standards and regulations , introduced in April 2011.
- 2.4 As a consequence of the additions to the functions of the fostering service frontline additions were made. The restructure of the Safeguarding service addressed some significant service limitations in relation to managerial capacity and a 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Manager was created along with 2 senior social work posts. This has enabled us to realign our service provision into 2 teams- one leading on Mainstream fostering and short breaks. The other team leading on Family and Friends provision . The 2<sup>nd</sup> Team Manager ( new post – for Family and Friends Team) took up post in late August 2012 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Senior social worker is due to take up post in February 2013. The Managerial capacity between December 2010 up to August 2012 was compromised due to lack of managerial continuity.

2.5 The Fostering Service achieved an Overall rating of 'Good' in its Ofsted inspection in November 2009. This was the first time during the services history under Telford & Wrekin Management that the service had been rated as 'Good' by Ofsted.

2.6 The recruitment of foster carers was affected by a number of challenges:

- the lack of a dedicated budget to advertise for foster carers
- very limited strategic direction and support (campaigning and media support)
- limited capacity to recruit, assess, train and support foster carers
- extremely limited capacity and systems to record, monitor and performance manage the recruitment of foster carers.

### **3. Summary of our Foster carer workforce and Recruitment activity - what we have learnt over the past 18 months.**

#### **3.1 Profile of our Foster carers as at 30.11.2012**

- Telford & Wrekin has **88** Mainstream Foster carers and **26** Kinship foster carers approved on its register. A total number of **114**.
- The majority **81%** of our internal foster carers reside within the Telford & Wrekin Area
- **19%** of our internal foster carers reside outside the Telford area. However, the majority of these carers **15%** live in the wider Shropshire area and **4%** live outside the wider Shropshire area.
- **82%** percentage of our foster carers are aged between 20 – 59 age range and **18%** of carers are aged 60+
- Telford & Wrekin have **above** the national average number of foster carers in the following age groups 30-39 and 40-49.
- Many of our carers who are in the 60+ age group are Connected person's carers (grandparents) not mainstream foster carers.
- **58%** of our foster carers are women and **42%** men.
- **59%** of our fostering households are Married; **28%** single; **12%** co-habiting couples; **1%** same sex relationship
- **4%** of our Fostering households are from black and minority ethnic groups.
- The average length of time spent fostering for our current approved foster carers is **4.7 years** and for those who have retired recently is **5.8 years**.
- Foster carer resignations : 13 approved foster carers resigned during 2011/12: it is significant to note that of those 13, 4 were mainstream carers, 3 Kinship carers and 6 support carers: None of our foster carers resigned in order to move to work for another local authority or independent fostering agency. The main reasons for resigning were due to deciding to retire: the foster carer obtaining a Special Guardianship Order, or the child placed with them became 18 and other personal circumstances affecting the foster carers ability to continue to foster.

- So far this year 2012/13 there have been 13 resignations : those resignations relate to children returning home( Connected person’s carer), Special Guardianship Orders being granted, children becoming 18.
- Despite the number of resignations the number of placements with mainstream carers increased by 18 children between November 2011 and November 2012. See table below.

Date	Number of CIC	CIC placed with internal foster carers	% placed with internal foster carers	CIC placed with external foster carers	% placed with external foster carers	CIC placed with F&F	% placed with F&F
30.11.11	300	96	32%	88	29.3%	47	15.7%
30.11.12	321	114	35.5%	95	29.6%	41	12.8%

### 3.2 Recruitment activity 2011/12

- Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 30 November 2012 the fostering service has received 92 inquiries and made 45 follow up visits to households this has generated 19 assessments of aspiring foster carers.
- National research on the recruitment of foster carers indicates that only **20%** of inquiries **1 in 5** result in approved foster carers- we are therefore not out of step with national statistics on the recruitment of foster carers.
- Of the 19 positive applications 15 will be presented to foster panel with a recommendation for approval by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and a further 4 in April 2013.
- We have increased our activity to attract foster carers and have a weekly presence in the Town Centre shopping arena, attendance at local community events, and increased publicity through a range of media.
- We are clear from statistical data on the types of activities which generate more inquiries such as our website, newspaper ads, and our own foster carers assisting in generating interest amongst their family and friends.
- We have a robust plan for 2013/14- which includes the inclusion of our own foster carers in promotional recruitment events, targeting of specific foster carers to meet specific children’s needs; the introduction of emergency foster carer scheme, targeting prospective carers for teenagers, sibling groups, sole placements and mother and baby.

### 4. Conclusion

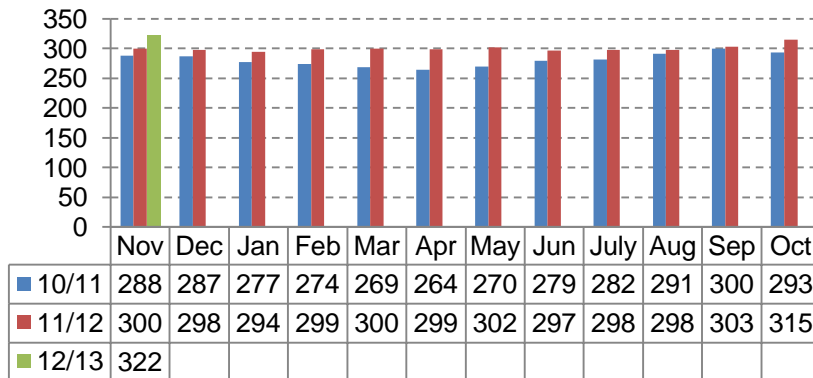
- Following an increase in managerial capacity through the safeguarding restructure process we are able to focus more effectively on the recruitment, assessment and ongoing support and training of foster carers
- There is a fostering recruitment strategy, supported by a budget and the Corporate Communications Team and an Intern.
- Due to improvements in the service our use of internal carers has increased.
- We are very successful at recruiting for children under 10; we are looking at exploring the development of a contract carer to concentrate on recruiting some carers for teenagers.

However, it must be acknowledged that our competitors in the independent sector also have challenges in recruitment for that age group.

- External children's improvement board money has been used to commission an expert in fostering to undertake a critical review of the service to see if there is anything else we can do to improve further.

# CHILDREN IN CARE – MONTHLY PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD 30/11/2012

## Children In Care at Month End (November 2010 - November 2012)



From Nov 10 – Nov 11 the average number of children in care monthly was 281. From Nov 11 – Nov 12 the average number of children in care was 300. This is a 6.8% increase, October 2012 saw a significant increase due to 3 large families (6,4,4) entering and remaining in care

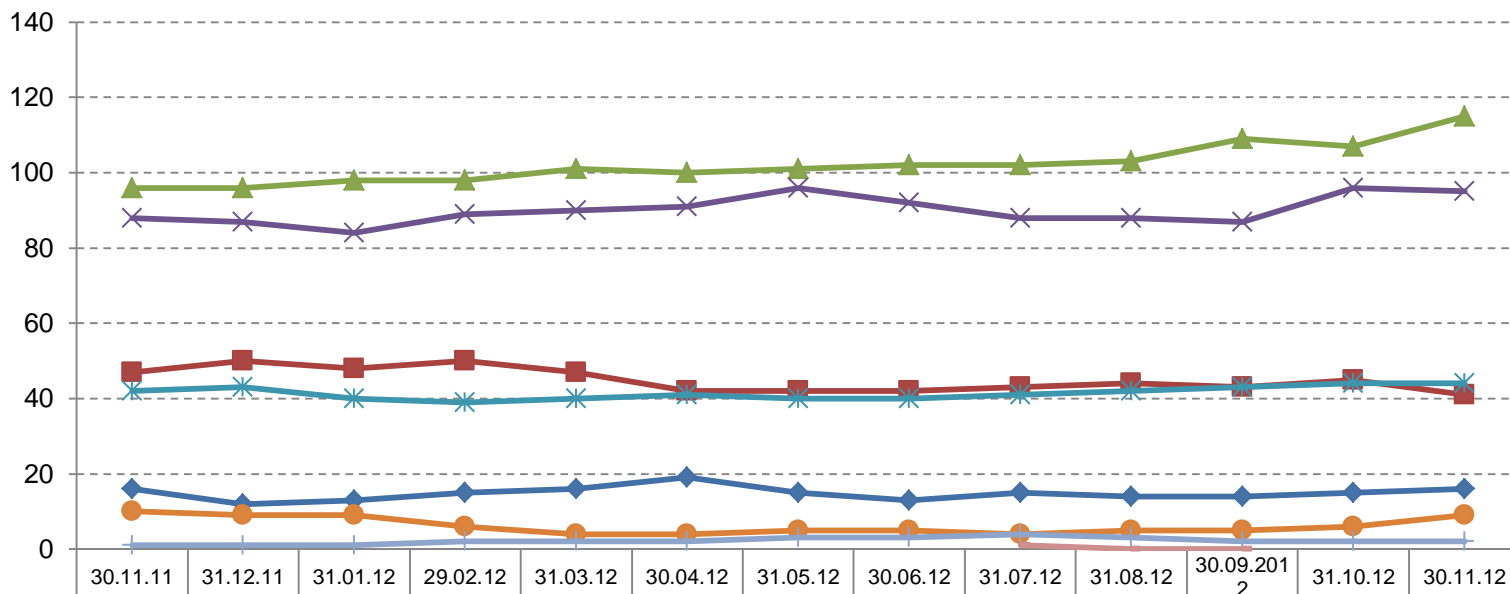
## New Children In Care Episodes by Age Group and by percentage of CIC population (Based on a rolling year)

	01/12/09 – 31/12/10	% of new CIC	01/12/10 – 31/12/11	% of new CIC	01/11/11 – 31/10/12	% of new CIC
Under 1	32	29.36%	34	23.60%	29	21.64%
1-4 Years	20	18.35%	32	20.50%	32	23.88%
5-9 Years	15	13.76%	34	22.80%	24	17.91%
10-15 Years	37	33.94%	37	29.90%	46	34.33%
16+ Years	5	4.59%	3	3.20%	3	2.24%
	<b>109</b>		<b>140</b>		<b>134</b>	

In comparison to the same period last year, latest data shows an increase in the percentage of 1-4 year olds coming into care and a decrease in the percentage of 5-9 years olds coming into care and an increase in the proportion of 10-15 year olds coming into care. The proportion of under 1's coming into care has dropped significantly since the same period in 09/10.

	Cessations in 2011-2012 split by age and reason							Total Cessations Apr- Nov 2012
	Under 1	1-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-15 Years	16+ Years	Grand Total	% of total cessations	
E11 - Adopted – application unopposed	1	4	1			6	4.8%	7 (10%)
E12 - Adopted, consent dispensed with		19	1			20	16.1%	9 (12.9%)
E4 - Returned home to live with parents (no order)	5	15	12	27	2	61	49.2%	23 (32.9%)
E41 - Returned home - Residence order				1		1	0.9%	3 (4.3%)
E43 - Special guardianship order made to former foster carers		6				6	4.8%	3 (4.3%)
E44 - Special guardianship order made to carers other than former foster carers							0%	1 (1.3%)
E5 - Independent arrangement with formalised support					18	18	14.5%	14 (20%)
E6 - Independent arrangement (no formalised support)		1			2	3	2.4%	
E7 - Transferred to adult social services					2	2	1.6%	3 (4.3%)
E8 - CLA ceased for any other reason	1	1	2	1	1	6	4.8%	7 (10%)
E9 - Sentenced to custody				1		1	0.9%	
Grand Total	7	46	16	30	25	124		70

## Children In Care / Supportive Accommodation at Month End by Placement Type (based on a rolling year)



- 35.7% of children were placed in LA foster Care at end of November 2012 which is an increase from the same point last year (32%)
- Overall 78.8% (251) of our looked after children are placed in foster care, including relative/ friend carers, this is slightly higher than the same point last year (231/300, 77%).
- The percentage of children in residential homes as at the end of November 2012 (13.7%) this mirrors the same point last year where 42/300, 14.0% of children were in residential homes.

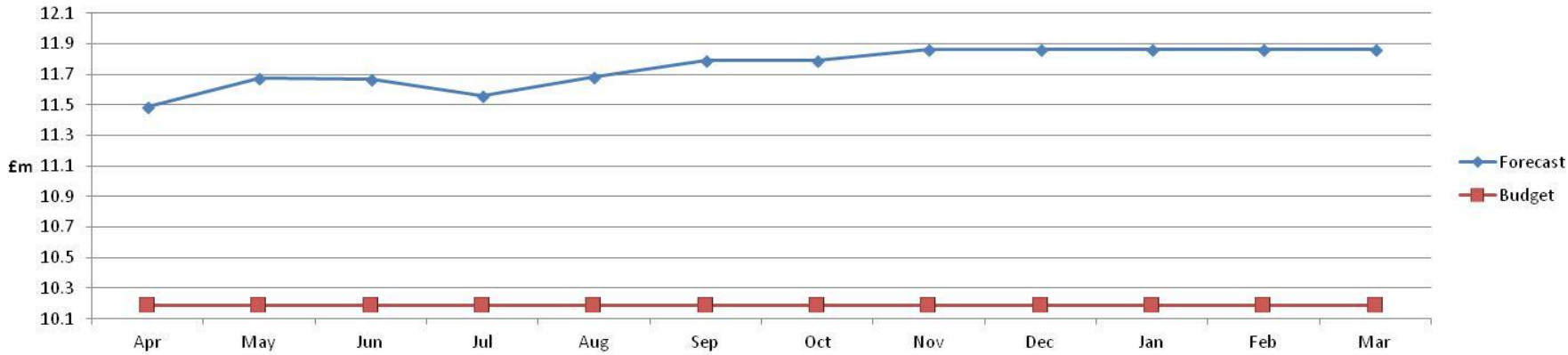
## Unit costs – 31/10/2012

Placement Type	Children in Care at 31.03.12	Weekly Unit Cost 2011/12	Children in Care at 30.09.12	Weekly Unit Cost 30.09.12	Children in Care at 31.10.12	Weekly Unit Cost 31.10.12	Children in Care at 30.11.12	Weekly Unit Cost 30.11.12
Placed for Adoption	16	N/A	14	N/A	15	N/A	16	N/A
Relative/Friend Carer	47	N/A	43	N/A	45	£368	41	£398
LA Carer	101	N/A	109	N/A	107	£417	115	£415
Agency Foster Carer	90	£798	87	£806	96	£807	95	£802
Residential Placements	40	£3,493	43	£3,002	44	£3,004	44	£2,925
Placed with Parents	4	N/A	5	N/A	6	N/A	9	N/A
Supportive Lodgings	2	N/A	2	N/A	2	N/A	2	N/A
Other Placement			0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
<b>TOTAL =</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>*£832</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>£790*</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>£863*</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>£866*</b>

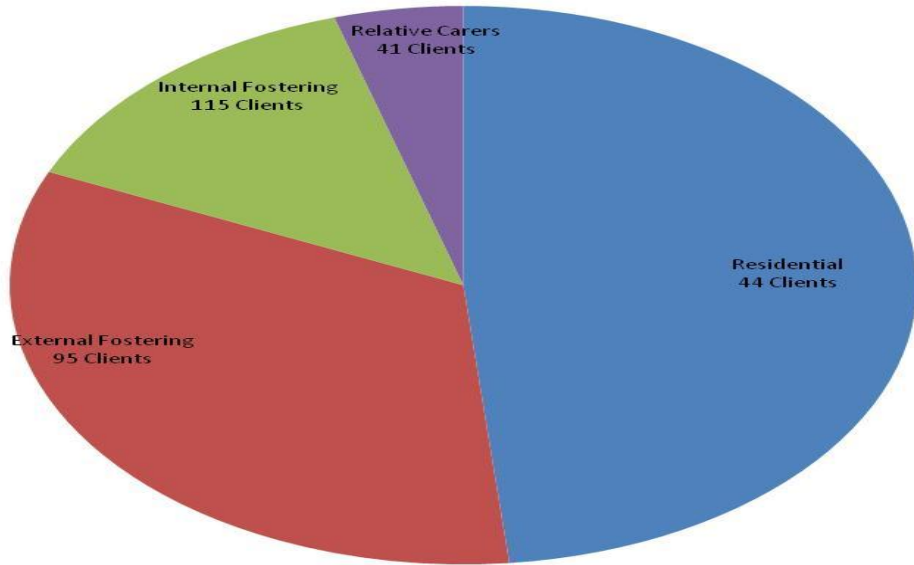
- Unit Cost for Local Authority Carer and Relative Friend Carer calculation revised at 31.10.2012, these will be reviewed as part of the Review of the Family Placement service to ensure they represent a full cost approach
- Unit costs for these both placement types now include an apportionment for overheads. Comparison between October and previous month's unit costs is therefore not possible due to this change in calculation.
- Overheads relate to both the Social work Fostering team, management and other associated support costs.
- \* The Total weekly unit cost is calculated by dividing the full year forecast (including above overheads) for all placements by the total number of weeks forecast for all placements.

# Placement Cost Analysis – Year 2012/2013

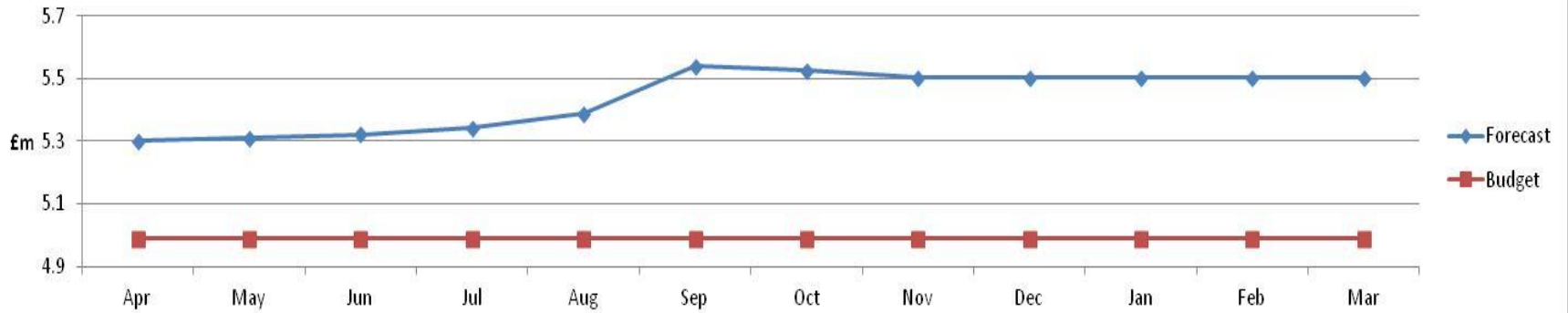
## Total Placement Costs



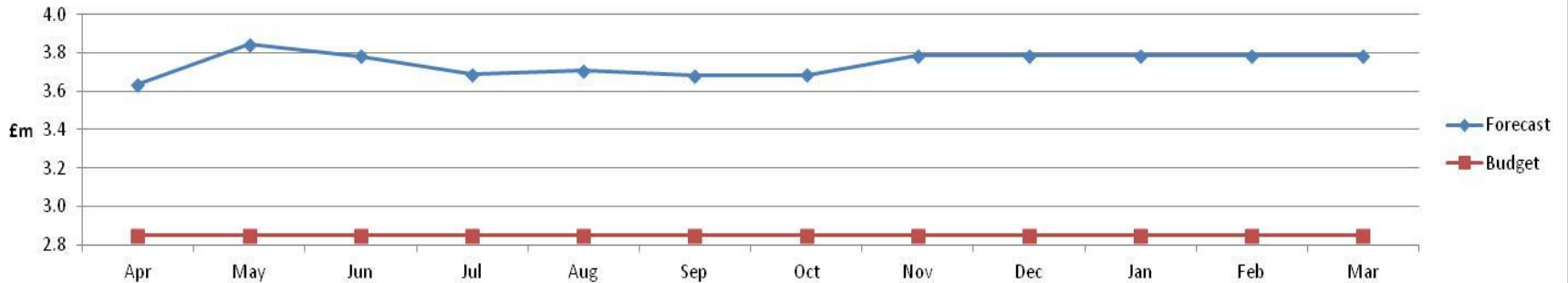
## Total Cost of Placements 2012/13



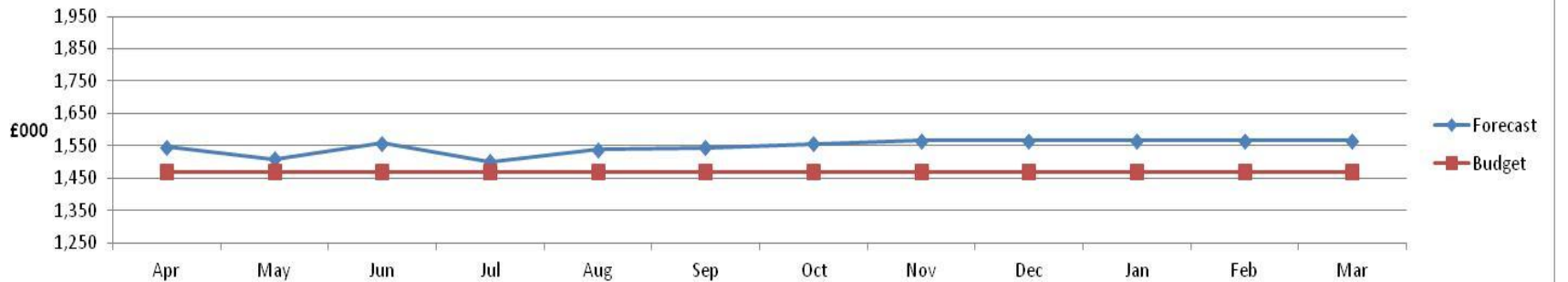
## Residential

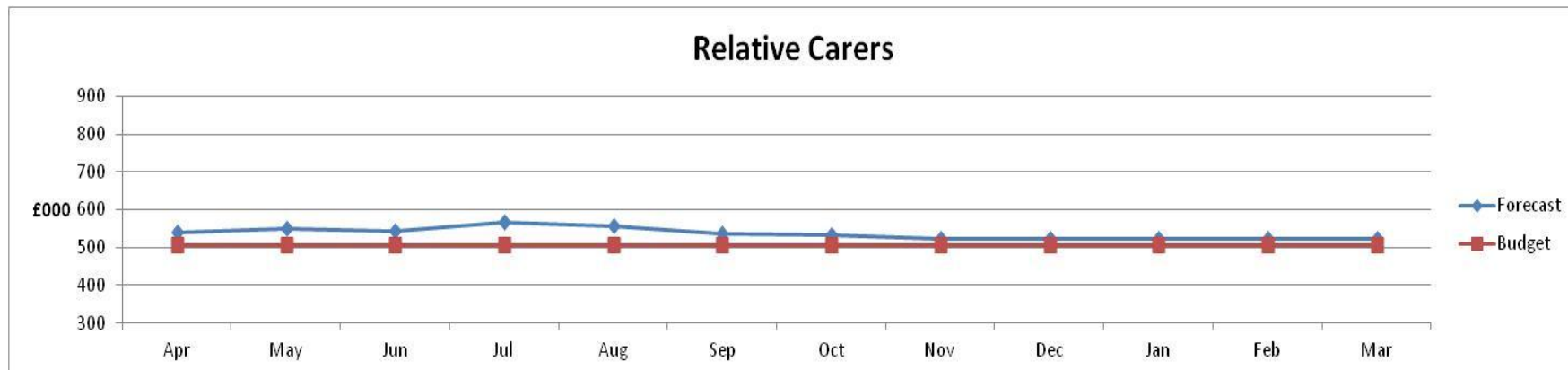


## External Fostering



## Internal Fostering





## Key examples of progress on delivery of actions in cost improvement plan

### Objective 1 Improve recruitment & retention of social worker staff

Last recruitment campaign filled all the SW vacancies and 2 of the 6 SSW posts, the Advanced SW Practitioner post and both Team Manager posts.

Key ingredients of the workforce planning and development strategy agreed

### Objective 2 Review Placement Strategy (change placement mix)

Potential contract carer identified

SSW post appointed to in Family Placement

CIC SW identified to support children in residential care who could be fostered – target children identified

Additional Fostering Panels planned to approve carers whose assessments are near completion

### Objective 3 Reduce the numbers of children in care

Weekly Resource Allocation Management Panel established – chaired by AD – no CIC placements without RAMP approval (or AD approval in an emergency)

2 case studies of recent admissions to care undertaken by council senior managers – more planned with external support for the new year

### Objective 4 Utilise commissioning approach to drive down costs

Scope for review of Family Placement Service agreed - aim to complete in Jan 2013

Bid made for external funding for project to enhance current plans to better support vulnerable pregnant women

Visit undertaken to another local authority to learn from their experience

Performance Area	Target	November 2012	Rolling Year Data (If applicable)	Status and Comments	2011/2012	Good performance direction
% of LAC aged 10-16 in foster placement or placed for adoption	80%	78.2% (93/119)	N/A	The percentage of children placed in a foster placement or for adoption is slightly lower than the same point last year (Nov 2011 – 91/113, 80.5%).	78% (89/114)	Higher = Better
Number of looked after children adopted during the year as a percentage of the number of children looked after 6 months plus as month end	12%	7.8% (20/258)	<i>Number adopted</i> 01/12/10 – 30/11/11 38 01/12/11 – 30/11/12 29	At the same point last year 23 children had been adopted (10.4%) Between 01/04/2012 and 30/11/2012, 16 children have been adopted and 4 had a Special Guardianship Order. New arrangements to track route to permanence including Special Guardianship and Residence Orders agreed .	12.8% (32/250)	Higher = Better
Adoptions within best interest timescales	100%	100% (16/16)	N/A	Performance on timeliness of adoption is very good as compared to nationally	96.1% (25/26)	Higher = Better
Increase in numbers of children placed with internal carers	18	Rolling Year 18 additional CIC with internal Foster Carers		This KPI has been revised ; it is more valid to monitor increase in use of internal foster carers rather than the increase in number of registrations, although continued recruitment is necessary to achieve high number of active, high quality carers. Currently there are 19 assessments ongoing – the significant majority are expected to be positive and approved by March 2012	N/A	Higher = Better
% of children with 3 placements plus in the year (this includes repeat episodes of care)	8%	5% (16/322)	01/12/10 – 30/11/11 7.3% (22/300) 01/12/11 – 30/11/12 8.7(28/322)	As at the end of November 2012 , 16/322 (5%) children had three placements plus This is the same outturn as at 30/11/2011 when 15/300 (5%) of children in care had had 3 placements plus. Rolling year figures show that the percentage of placement changes is slightly higher than the same period last year, however we are still currently exceeding target. There are currently 50 children who have had two placements so far in the year.	8.3% (25/300)	Lower = Better
CIC for 2.5 years with same placement for 2 years	79%	80.7% (88/109)	N/A	As at the same point in the previous year (October 2011) 73.6% (78/106) of children who had been looked after for 2.5 years were in placement for two years, therefore this a positive outturn at this point in the year.	79.2% (84/106)	Higher = Better

# VACANCY AND RECRUITMENT INFORMATION 30/10/12

## Staff Vacancy and Recruitment Statistics Oct 31st 2012

Team	Establishment				Vacancies				Agency Social Worker			Notice Given (Resignation, Retirement, Maternity & Adoption leave)				Job Offer Accepted			Long Term Sick > 3 Weeks			Maternity Leave or secondment			NQS in post				
	TM	ASWP	SSW	SW	TM	ASWP	SSW	SW	TM	SSW	SW	TM	ASWP	SSW	SW	TM	ASWP	SSW	SW	TM	ASWP	SSW	SW	TM		ASWP	SSW	SW	SW
Emergency Duty Team	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children in Care Team	1		2	6.5**	0		1	2	0	0	1.8	0		Rs	0	0		0	2	0		0	0	0		0	0	0	2
Family & Friends Fostering	1		1	5	0		1	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0		1	0	0		1	0	0		0	0	0	0
Mainstream Fostering Team	1	1	1	6.48	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	M	0	0	0	0	1
(Central) ACMTeam	1		2	5*	0		0	0	0	0	1	0		0	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0	2
(North) ACM Team	1		2	5*	0		0	0	0	0	1	0		Rs	0	0		0	1	0		0	0	0		0	0	0	3
(South) ACM Team	1	1	2	5*	0	1	1	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Child Protection Team	1		5	3	0		2	2	0	4.5	0	M		RS	0	1		0	1	0		0	1	0		0	0	0	0
Safeguarding Duty Team	1	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0.4	0	0	0	M	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Social Work Team	1		4	2	0		0	0	0	0	0	Rs		Rs	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	1
DCT - Inclusion and support	1		0	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	1	0
DCT	1	1	0	4.6*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b></b>	

### Key

\* includes 1 supernumary SW

\*\* includes 2 supernumary SW

ACM Assessment and Case Management

DCT Disabled children Team

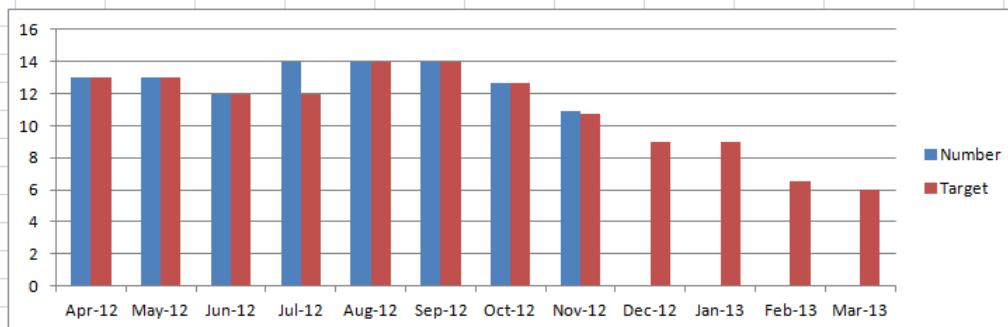
Safeguarding Service

Family and Cohesion

### Numbers of Agency SWs

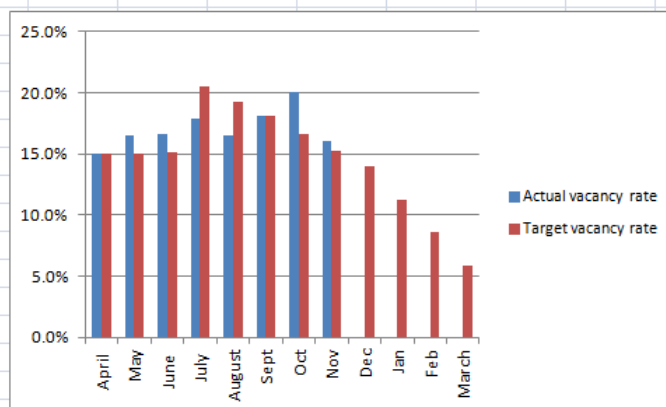
Month	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
Number	13	13	12	14	14	14	12.7	10.9				
Target	13	13	12	12	14	14	12.7	10.7	9	9	6.5	6

increase in Agency SWs - 1 in the Helpdesk (impact of Ofsted) 1 in CiC team (impact of longterm sickness and Ofsted)  
01/07/2012, targets reset



### Vacancy rate for Social Workers

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Actual vacancy rate	15.1%	16.5%	16.6%	17.9%	16.5%	18.1%	20.1%	16.10%				
Target vacancy rate	15.1%	15.1%	15.2%	20.5%	19.2%	18.1%	16.6%	15.3%	13.9%	11.3%	8.6%	5.9%



N.B as at 30/11/12, 8 SW practitioners due to take up post in the next few weeks (and 2 team managers)

## Safeguarding and Early Help – Cost Improvement Plan

December 2012

### Agreed Aims

- To be in a position where there is no overspend in Safeguarding by the end of March 2014
- To make a contribution towards the overall Council savings target by the end of March 2015
- To make significant savings whilst improving the quality of service provided to children, young people and their families including satisfying requirements identified by OFSTED during our recent inspection of Safeguarding and Local After Children's services.

To reduce the average cost of placing a child in care or reducing duration in care

### Underlying Principles

- All available options will be reviewed before making a decision to accommodate child/children.
- More children will be looked after by their families.
- Culture change initiated by the previous phases of the children and families service review will be key to our success
- Joint ownership will be fostered through more detailed action plans which will sit behind our agreed aims and fed through senior managers to the entire Children's Service workforce (both LA and partners)
- These aims assume that the impact of benefit reforms can be met from existing resources and that there will no demographic impact from these changes.

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
-------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------	----------	------------------

**Objective 1:** Emma Wilcock (Karen Perry)

**Recruitment & Retention** – develop recruitment and retention (workforce planning and development) strategy for children’s services social workers.

**Performance Indicator (PI)** - number of agency social workers employed across children and family services. *Includes impact of over recruitment to avoid agency staff requirements (Current number of agency staff at the end of October is 12..7)*

<p>Max 6 Agency SWs by April 13</p> <p>Max 2 Agency SWs by September 13.</p> <p>Max 0 Agency SWs by April 14</p>	<p>300</p>	<p>620<sup>1</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market the concept of the Telford Social Worker (co-operative offer) (EW)</li> <li>• Review approach to recruitment – “LEAN analysis of all parts of process” (RF)</li> <li>• Using generic interview panels programmed in throughout the year (AW)</li> <li>• Improved forecasting of timescales for taking up posts. (SDM’s)</li> <li>• Maintaining a competitive advantage (Unique Selling Point) and pay parity with other local authorities (EW/HR)</li> <li>• Improved management reporting - vacancies, appointments and agency cover (HR)</li> <li>• Step Up students to be proactively targeted for recruitment (AW) spring/summer 2013</li> <li>• Explore SW to SSW progression by Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preliminary discussion re workforce planning and development strategy held with Workforce Manager and Principal SW (PSW) – draft version to come to CFSLT early Jan</li> <li>• Managers and PSW attended event at another LA to understand how they do Assessment days</li> <li>• Young people produced poster of “what makes a good SW” and interviewed a SW to be used as promotional materials in recruitment and illustrative as part of co-operative offer</li> <li>• Interviews dates for SW posts highlighted in advert to reduce lead time</li> <li>• Last recruitment campaign filled all the SW vacancies and 2 of the 6 SSW posts, the Advanced SW Practitioner post and 1, possibly 2, of the 2 TM posts.</li> <li>• Online recruitment tracking sheet accessible to all key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p>April 13</p> <p>Sept 13</p> <p>April 14</p>
--	------------	------------------------	---	---	--

<sup>1</sup> Based upon appointing 5 social workers over establishment.

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
-------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------	----------	------------------

**Objective 2:** Viv McKay/Angela Yapp (Karen Perry)

**Placement Strategy** – review placement strategy to ensure that number of placements meet need.

**Performance Indicators** - reducing residential placements (RP) by 10, drive down cost of placements, knock on effect on numbers of external foster placements by reduction in use of internal foster placements for babies, appointment of contract foster carer (LA employed carer).

<p>40 RP by end of March 13.</p> <p>32 RP by the end of March 14</p> <p>30 RP by the end of March 14 (with 1 contract carer)</p>	<p>1,031</p>	<p>1,413</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs analysis by type of placement, modelling existing commitments and identifying best practice elsewhere. (VMcY)</li> <li>• Predictive management information models for the early identification of likely requests for placement (VMcY)</li> <li>• Using different commissioning approaches to procure lower cost placement solutions e.g. intensive foster care “Keep Model”. (VMcY)</li> <li>• Reducing no. of babies fostered through use of potential adoptive parents (MW)</li> <li>• Prioritising assessment of any prospective internal foster carers who show an interest in taking teenagers. (AY)</li> <li>• Targeted marketing activity, including making links with employers with strong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisional agreement from staff member to go forward as contract carer. Investigate possibility of recruiting further contract carers</li> <li>• Completed initial scoping re CAMHS placement stability team; existing resources identified and priority brief for team agreed</li> <li>• SW within fostering team identified for flexed caseload pilot of fast track assessments of foster carers</li> <li>• Weekly fostering recruitment staff in town centre well established and providing an average of 1 high quality enquiry per week</li> <li>• Feedback obtained from adoptive carers re potential arrangements for fostering to adopt, and initial discussions to identify potential (as yet unborn) babies; Telford staff meeting with Joint Adoption service before Christmas</li> </ul>	<p>March 13</p> <p>March 14</p> <p>March 14</p>
--	--------------	--------------	--	--	---

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
			<p>culture of social responsibility (AY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a JIGSAW house as an assessment centre if this is confirmed as a viable option (VMcY)</li> <li>• Recruiting 2 contract foster carers (VMcY/AY)</li> <li>• Consider external procurement of respite care</li> <li>• Advertise for foster carers for individual hard to place children “be my foster carer”</li> <li>• Recruit additional SSW in Family Placement to reduce disruptions family and friend’s carers and more capacity to assess mainstream carers.</li> <li>• Pilot new recruitment of foster carers model – flex SWs caseload to assessments and offer additional hours to part-time staff</li> <li>• Increase Children In Care Team SW hours from half to fulltime for 6 months to focus on getting YPs in residential care into foster placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance of Assistant Director at Local Strategic partnership produced some useful leads for follow-up; to be repeated</li> <li>• Employer with strong culture of social responsibility identified and link made for future targeting visit</li> <li>• CAMHS advice available to foster carers via Family Connect from February 2013</li> <li>• SSW Family Placement appointed – in post by Feb 2013</li> </ul>	

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
-------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------	----------	------------------

<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Karen Perry/Clive Jones</p> <p><b>Children in Care</b> - Review approach /strategy for reducing CiC placements.</p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b> – Reduce number of CiC, reduce number of child protection plans (CP) and reduce time spent in care</p>					
<p>300 CiC by April 13</p> <p>294 CiC by April 14</p> <p>9 fewer CP Plans by April 13</p> <p>21 fewer CP Plans by April 14</p> <p>Average time spent in care reduced by 6 weeks by April 13</p>	<p>556</p>	<p>1,009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Family Support Model” in place. Early appropriate intervention and resolution and hence lower cost solution which may be longer term. <i>(DL)</i></li> <li>• Targeted approach to dealing with most vulnerable families (SF Task Force) <i>(JB)</i></li> <li>• Embedding culture of integrated safeguarding and early support practice across the Borough on a multi-agency basis (Telford Compact) <i>(DL)</i></li> <li>• System in place for monitoring impact of interventions <i>(DL)</i></li> <li>• Learning culture in place - audit/review recent high cost admissions <i>(JBr)</i></li> <li>• New “early support” approaches for children living with domestic violence or suffering neglect in place. <i>(JB)</i></li> <li>• Resource Allocation Management Panel established for preventing non emergency admissions to care, especially teenagers <i>(KP/CJ)</i></li> <li>• Reduced time in care (use of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of involvement of F&amp;C in complex safeguarding cases underway</li> <li>• Families who meeting SF criteria with whom SW teams involved identified</li> <li>• Draft thresholds document discussed at LSCB policy and procedures group and joint Safeguarding/F&amp;C management meeting</li> <li>• 3 families (totally 14 children) recently CIC being analysed for joint audit at Childrens’ Service Improvement Team on 14<sup>th</sup> Dec</li> <li>• Weekly RAMP in place</li> <li>• Emerging model in draft for addressing Neglect. Pilot commenced for improvement in CP conferences and CP plans</li> </ul>	<p>April 13</p> <p>April 14</p> <p>April 13</p> <p>April 14</p> <p>April 13</p>

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
			<p>Permanence Panel) (<i>JBr</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Predictive modelling/ review of approach for babies with disabilities/complex health needs who may become CIC and those in residential school who require 52 weeks support. (<i>VMcY</i>)</li> <li>• Council services working together to mitigate against bringing a child/s into care. (<i>KK/CJ</i>)</li> <li>• Implement Community Action Research Programme (part of Strengthening Families Task Force (<i>CJ</i>))</li> <li>• Commission Morning Lane to undertake case analysis of recent admissions as part of externally funded support for safeguarding reconfiguration</li> </ul>		

## Action Plan

Target (PI)	Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k	Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k	Actions	Progress	PI When By
-------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	---------	----------	------------------

**Objective 4:** Viv McKay (Karen Perry)

**Utilise commissioning approach** to review in detail the following processes/services within safeguarding:

**Performance Indicators** – will be determined during the course of the review

	150	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change delivery model for fostering, and contact and parenting assessments (Use of IEWM). (VMcY)</li> <li>• Provide better support to vulnerable pregnant mothers (JBr)</li> <li>• LEAN Review of key early help and safeguarding processes (VMcY)</li> <li>• Review value for money of existing arrangements for using translation service. (VMcY)</li> <li>• Fully understand cost differential (child/adult cost per place) and identify options for reducing cost per place where possible. (VMcY)</li> <li>• Investigate options for reducing cost of court ordered contact. (VMcY)</li> <li>• Review use of escort arrangements and opportunity for independent travel when transporting CiC (VMcY)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up meeting with external resource to review Fostering Service Planned for 14<sup>th</sup> December.</li> <li>• Visit to another LA to learn from their practice re better support to vulnerable pregnant mothers, plus submission of bid for funding from Dee</li> <li>• Potential SW attendees for Parenting Assessments Manual training (April 2013) being identified</li> <li>• Discussion re more cost effective arrangements for contact planned before Christmas</li> </ul>	April 13
--	-----	-----	---	--	----------

**Action Plan**

<b>Target (PI)</b>	<b>Target Saving 13/14 p.a. £k</b>	<b>Target Saving 14/15 p.a. £k</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>PI When By</b>
Total Savings	2,037	3,392			
Proposed Investment	600				
Total	2,637				
Additional Savings	161				
Proposed Budget 13/14	2,798				

## Risk Matrix

Risk	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture change within our workforce and across agencies will be resisted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive engagement/communication strategy and plan put in place to support change</li> <li>• Detailed action plans to be shared and owned by workforce and agencies, starting with our own SDMs</li> <li>• Re-launch Telford Safeguarding and Integrated Services Early Help Training.</li> <li>• Invest in longer term “co-production” model with community through strengthening families and homelessness task forces.</li> <li>• Support and funding attracted from west midlands region to support this work.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconfiguration uncertainty – Safeguarding review underway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive engagement/communication strategy and plan put in place</li> <li>• Ensuring social workers understand the need for change</li> <li>• The concept of the Telford Social Worker</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of capacity at SDM level – previous reviews have reduced substantially capacity at manager level across children and family service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Capacity Fund and existing balances to provide additional one off capacity where needed</li> <li>• SDM taken on to support transformation and to ensure practice quality is maintained during change</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of capacity in Commissioning &amp; Family Placement teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some LA pay a premium or have concluded single status work resulting pay inequity across the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review inequity and make recommendations for addressing any inequity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverse impact of benefit change on demand for children and family services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact to be assessed by Strengthening Families and Homelessness Task Force. Not looking to drive savings out of this money.</li> <li>• Realistic targets regarding CiC numbers/CP plans and savings</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of foster carers nationally – there is a shortage of foster carers across the region, particularly for older teenage children in care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review package and support offered</li> <li>• Review marketing strategy as above</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perverse incentives to make children subject of CP plans for children’s workforce who are not SWs and some SW teams as we are currently structured</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LSCB develop and endorse Risk Model</li> <li>• More robust “Step Down” arrangements</li> <li>• Clear, well understood and endorsed models of alternatives to CP plans for (some) DA and Neglect cases</li> <li>• Reconfiguration of Safeguarding Service</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of Family Law reform on capacity in ACM teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be short term and pending promised national simplifications of care plans</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Business Support Officer (BSO) capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review service requirements as part of the restructure</li> </ul>

## Report to Scrutiny Committee – January 2013

### Option for Children's Internal Residential Care Home Provision

Members requested that we consider the option of managing our own children's homes. We have care homes premises available to us on the Jigsaw site, any other option would include additional capital or rental costs. Although four properties are on the site the close proximity of the four properties does not lend itself to a safe and non institutionalised environment. It is recommended therefore that only two of these should be used as children's residential care homes and that this service is tendered following consideration by Cabinet in January 2013

#### Context: Legislative Requirements

All children's homes are required to meet 25 National Minimum Standards for children's homes and be registered with Ofsted.

The judgements used by Ofsted in relation to registered children's homes are:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Adequate
- Inadequate

In order to meet these requirements it is necessary to:

- Produce the relevant policies and procedures and review on a regular basis
- Have safe systems for staff recruitment and vetting
- Implement staff training and development programmes to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures
- Implement appropriate Quality Assurance and management processes and capacity with a registered person and registered manager responsible for the running of a home
- Undertake Regulation 33 visits on a monthly basis by an independent professional
- Set up and implement robust out of hours arrangements

#### Costs & Benchmarking

**Our estimated base service cost for running a Local Authority care home on the Jigsaw site is identified on the attached spreadsheet as £2844/week. This costing assumes 2:1 staffing ratio and does not include any assumptions on additional senior management support/out of hours support or costs towards corporate functions such as payroll, IT, legal etc which would add an additional costing of around 10% (an increased in the cost to £3128/week). It should be noted that the building/property costs are an added hidden cost as these form part of the PFI costs**

We have a regional residential care framework contract with 13 other Local Authorities with an average weekly costing of £2876 (including building and property costs).

Figures quoted by the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) 2011 identify the cost of local authority children's homes per resident per week to be

£2965. This figure assumes a void rate of 85% per week and other external costs of £198 per week (i.e. education and health services)

The costs of the service for residential care beds on the Jigsaw site contracted with Castle Care are an average of £2677.14 per week.

### Volumes

Without having undertaken a business modelling process it is anticipated that there is a critical mass level which would make a children's home estate viable i.e staff, systems and resources can be shared across the estate making it feasible and cost effective. Our commissioning strategy has the objective of reducing reliance on care homes in favour of foster care provision.

### Risks of opening a Local Authority care home:

- Reputational risk to the Authority if our homes fall below acceptable Ofsted judgement levels
- Risks to the children and young people if our homes fall below acceptable Ofsted judgement levels
- Risk of funding voids in a property if we are not utilising to full capacity (compared to spot purchasing with an independent provider for example)
- Risks and potential additional management costs and out of hours capacity in our current CYP LA structure
- Risk of using the premises for inappropriate placements in times of need
- Financial risks in the case of long term absence of staff in a home
- Reputational risks and officer time deployed in the case of public concern re opening of homes in local areas

### Benefit of operating a Local Authority care home

- Lower commissioning, contact management or procurement transactional costs
- More direct control on utilisation/operation of the premises

### Conclusion

In conclusion the costs and risks including perverse incentives to running our own care home/s provision would indicate that our best option is to procure these services

Vivianne McKay  
Interim Service Delivery Manager  
Commissioning (Children and Family Services and Transport)