



Doncaster Council

To the Members of the DMBC Cabinet

Performance Challenge of Doncaster Children's Services Trust: Quarter 2, 2020/21

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nuala Fennelly Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools	All	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As part of the Management Agreement and governance arrangements for Doncaster Children's Services Trust (DCST) the Trust provides a quarterly report of operational and financial performance.
2. This report provides an opportunity to feedback on performance successes and issues against the 2020/21 key performance indicators and management information.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

3. Not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. That the Cabinet note the progress of DCST performance outcomes and the contribution that the Trust makes to support the Council's strategic priorities.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

5. This report includes current progress of DCST's performance, including the response to the Covid19 local epidemic curve which may impact on the delivery of services to the people of Doncaster, as well as the reputation of public services across the Borough. The Trust has taken steps to mitigate this risk, working closely with DMBC and DMBC's Director of Children's Services.

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

6. As a result of the new governance arrangements since April 2019, officers in DMBC and DCST have worked together to devise a new service specification with associated

metrics. The 39 KPIs are separated out into 12 contractual KPIs and 27 strategic partnership indicators, two of which are annual measures.

7. Three of the strategic partnership measures have been changed to operational measures during quarter 2. It was agreed with the DMBC that target and tolerance ranges were not required for these measures. Two of the strategic partnership measures which did not previously have a target have now been agreed.
8. In addition to these operational performance indicators the latest monthly management accounts report is shared with officers in DMBC and is included in this report.
9. This report provides a summary overview of operational and financial performance.
10. The Trust continues to respond to Covid19, risk rating all children and young people and ensuring all visits to children and young people are at the forefront. Performance demonstrated through the DfE Covid Vulnerable Children Survey is comparable with national, regional and statistical neighbours.
11. Finalised 2019/20 outturns for Children in Need and Children Looked After are strong with the majority of measures showing improved performance. 2019/20 outturns will not be published until later this year therefore current benchmarking is against the latest national data from 2018/19.
12. **Summary of Operational Performance and Management Information**
13. Of the 12 contractual indicators:
 - a. 5 are currently performing better than target;
 - b. 5 are reporting within target range; and
 - c. 2 have been suspended due to Covid19 (agreed in the contract management framework)
14. Of the 27 strategic partnership indicators:

Service Area	Performance			Unavailable Measures	
	Outside target range	Within target range	Better than target	Not available due to Covid19	Annual KPI not yet due
Parent & Family Support	1		1		
Child & Family Assessment		3	2		
Child Protection			3		
Looked After Children	2	1			1
Placements (Adoption, Fostering and SGO)	1	2	2		
Care Leavers		1	2		
Youth Offending				2	
Workforce			2		
Governance					1
Total	4	7	12	2	2
% of reported	17%	31%	52%	-	-
% overall	15%	26%	45%	7%	7%

15. Of the 27 strategic partnership indicators, two are annual measures and two are measures externally provided from the Youth Justice Board and have not been made available due to Covid19. The Ministry of Justice are focussing their efforts on priority analysis and statistics due to limited PNC access during this period. These KPIs are not included in this report. Of the measures reported this quarter, 19 out of the 23 (83%) are within or better than target range. 4 measures sit outside target range and are covered in more detail later in this report. Where set and available, each target is based upon national benchmarking data that sets an ambition for performance to be at least comparable to good and outstanding organisations. Some indicators are locally derived (11 of the 27) and therefore have no benchmark. In these cases targets use historical trends to set ambitious targets that would demonstrate improvement.
16. Contact and referral rates continue to be monitored daily, comparing contacts and referrals from w/c 9th March 2020 to the same period in the previous year. To date there has been 535 fewer contacts from schools, 129 fewer contacts from health but 449 more contacts from the Police. 26% of these contacts are converting to referral, 3% higher than the conversion rate last year. Contacts with a presenting need of Neglect have increased and are comparable with last year but with the increased contacts from the police domestic abuse has risen by 45% (310) with a total of 1,006 referrals in comparison to 696 in the same period last year.
17. Throughout quarter 2 there were 1,331 referrals, 44% (407) more referrals in comparison to the same period last year with a 67% (183) increase in July and a 61% (208) increase in September. The Trust was anticipating a further spike from until December due to children returning to school (but the referrals have continued to be from the Police and have not increased from schools or health professionals). If referrals continue at the same rate 2020/21 forecasted outturns will demonstrate a 19% increase in comparison to last year.
18. Increase in demand at the front door has led to increased activity across all social care services throughout quarter 2. 44% (400) more assessments have been initiated in comparison to the same period last year; with 30% (295) of the assessments proceeding to a statutory service. The number of children in need is 2,580 at a rate of 386 per 10,000. This has increased by 316 (14%) children over the last six months and is now higher in comparison to the same period last year when the rate per 10,000 was at 342. The regional dataset at the end of quarter 1 indicated that the rate for Doncaster was 25.3 per 10,000 higher than the regional average, ranking 9th across the region at that time. Quarter 2 comparison data is not yet available

	2019/20			2020/21		%Change against...	
Demand Measure	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Previous quarter	Same quarter last year
Contacts to CSC	5590	5262	6150	5349	5624	+5%	+1%
Referrals	924	946	1052	1117	1331	+19%	+44%
Children in Need	2289	2221	2264	2317	2580	+11%	+13%
Children on Protection	299	311	300	322	383	+19%	+28%
Looked After Children	537	519	509	513	519	+1%	-3%

19. These increases have subsequently led to increasing numbers of children in need, 13% (291) more children than in the same period last year. Children subject to a child protection plan has increased by 28% (83) since the end of March and the number of children in care has increased by 11 to 519.
20. Despite increases in demand and activity at the front door and across Social Care the number of children open to the early help partnership has reduced. There are now 11% (204) fewer children than at the end March, the lowest number of children ever recorded on an early help pathway. 50% (955) of children are open as single-agency and 50% (957) have a multi-agency response. However, PAFSS (the Trust's early help service) have seen a 12% (84) increase in allocations since March in comparison to the same period last year. PAFSS hold 436 (46%) of multi-agency cases across the early help partnership; education including nursery providers hold 44% (419) and 4% (40) are open to health providers.
21. Social worker caseloads are monitored closely for average, maximum caseload and the proportion of workers carrying high caseloads. Due to the increased demand at the front door the average caseloads for the assessment service are above the average at 29.2 with 65% of workers having a caseload of more than twenty-five. Child Protection and Children in Care Services are lower at an average of 16.1.
22. **Operational performance against contractual KPIs indicators**
23. Analysis covering the performance against each indicator is provided below and summarised in the table at appendix one.
24. Contract KPIs better than target range
 - **Timeliness of single assessments.** Due to the increase in demand 43% (402) more assessments throughout quarter 2 have been initiated in comparison to the same period last year. Despite this increase the number of C&F assessments completed in 45 days exceeds target with 92% completed in timescale. The latest regional dataset for Qtr 1 demonstrates current performance is 8% above the regional average, ranking Doncaster 4th across the 15 authorities. Quarter 2 comparison data is not yet available.

The Trusts re-alignment was in place from the 1st June, creating three new assessment teams at the front door; due to the increased demand and high caseloads across this service area a further assessment team has been functional since early September. Each assessment team has access to tracking reports to ensure that assessments are timely.
 - **Percentage of children subject to child protection plan seen within expected timescales.** The number of children subject to a child protection plan has increased by 28% (83) over the last six months and also in comparison to the same period last year. Since the start of the Covid19 pandemic the Trust has set an expectation that children subject to a child protection plan are seen in person every two weeks; whilst adhering health and safety guidance to reduce the risk of infections to them and to families during this time. 93% (321) children have

been seen within the last 2 weeks with 99% (342) seen within the last 4 weeks, the national measure.

The fortnightly DfE Covid Vulnerable Children Survey demonstrates better performance for children on protection seen within the last four weeks than that of national at 68% in the latest published figures for Wave 11.

- **Percentage of child protection conferences held within 15 working days of section 47 enquiry.** 135 children were subject to an initial child protection conference in quarter 2. 100% of these conferences were held in timescale. These high rates mean that families that are taken through this process do not experience the anxiety of delay. Additionally, of the 109 review child protection conferences taking place throughout the quarter, 99% were in timescale.

173 child protection conferences have taken place in quarter 2, the majority have been undertaken virtually whilst blended conferences were being introduced and trialled. Blended conferences request the child protection chair, children and families to attend in person whilst running virtually with partners. Further technology has been identified and agreed to allow this new process to be a success whilst we move into further lockdown restraints. The Trust has seen the benefits of undertaking virtual conferences, proving to be easier to convene and are better attended by partners.

- **Proportion of children in care experiencing three or more placements in a 12 month period. This measure is known as the “short term stability measure.”** Performance at 8%, with 46 children experiencing 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months. This has been better than target for four consecutive quarters. This measure will include children with very challenging behaviours as well as planned moves early in a child's care pathway where they may be moved to long term or adoptive placements and where placements moves are in the child's best interests.

The Trust's Independent Reviewing Officer Manager monitors placement stability weekly and monthly, pre-placement breakdown meetings are in-place chaired by IROs and all children receive a review of their plan on a six-monthly basis. A tracker is in place for all children who are subject to 2+ placements. All placements moves are reviewed at Children in Care Support and Challenge forum where clear recommendations are made which have included further placement support meetings.

- **Percentage of care leavers that the Trust remains in touch with.** Performance remains better than target at 95% (210). Continued use of the case tracking and management oversight means we are on average in touch with 98% of care leavers in their 17th-21st year and work hard to maintain engagement. Performance over the previous nine consecutive quarters demonstrates continued high in touch rates with care leavers and continues to be better than the latest regional and statistical neighbour performance.

25. Contract KPIs within target range

- **Children in need with an appropriate and current plan in place:** Performance has reduced slightly by 2% at the end of this quarter but still within target range

at 94%. This decrease will primarily be due to the 44% increase in referrals and initial assessments undertaken throughout the quarter in comparison to the previous year; which is impacting on the timeliness of the assessment closure or the initiation of a plan.

The routine monitoring of plans through regular case supervision, case tracking, six-monthly reassessment and audit has stabilised performance at an average of 95% throughout the last year.

All cases continue to be risk assessed at referral and RAG rated in response to Covid19. The DfE no longer collect this information but the latest published information in Wave 8 continued to demonstrate performance than that of national, regional and statistical neighbours.

Regular dip samples of those where a plan does not appear up to date take place; these cases tend to relate to instances where plans are in transition or at closure stage. Weekly tracking reports ensure that delayed plans do not drift.

Proportion of looked after reviews completed within timescale. Performance at 91% within target range. 439 of the 480 reviews have been recorded in timescale, with a further 68 mid-way reviews undertaken by the child's Independent Reviewing Officer. 95% of children and young people made a meaningful contribution in their review and 98% of care plans are in timescale. Young People are encouraged to take innovative and creative approaches to their reviews, such as videos, power points and journals. The Trust have trailed video conferencing for distant reviews and for contribution over the last two quarters due to the Covid19 Pandemic and children have been consulted via a range of multimedia options, which were not previously available. Children and Young People continue to embrace these changes.

- **Care Leavers with pathway plans that have been reviewed in timescale:**

Performance has reduced this quarter to 83% but within target range. 183 (96%) care leavers have an active pathway plan with 157 (83%) reviewed within the last six months; additionally 9% of plans are out of timescale by just one month. This continues to remain a challenging target, but the Trust continues to see an increase in the overall timeliness and the participation of plans being completed online and reviewed in timescale, which are translated on the case management system. Care Leavers really like the App, it gives them the means to contribute towards to a dynamic conversation in their pathway plan.

The Inspiring Futures team recruited three additional Personal Advisors to manage this caseload and to return performance to tolerance. There are currently 184 care leavers aged between 17 and 21; of the care leavers open to the Inspiring Futures Team 85% of pathway plans are in timescale for the 17-21 year olds and 85% for 19-21 year olds.

- **Front line staff receiving supervisions in timescale.** Supervision of Front Line Staff in tolerance at 85%. 874 front line staff supervisions were undertaken throughout this quarter. Performance information demonstrates that staff supervision recorded for each of the front line teams who are case holding in July was slightly above 90% but reduced in August and September which could be due slightly higher sickness levels and more people taking annual leave over the summer period.

Continued monitoring by the service managers will ensure the supervision trackers are completed each month to reflect the staff supervision which has been undertaken for these specific teams. Performance has been consistent throughout quarter 1 and quarter 2 of this year at 85% and is above the average of 82% throughout 2019/20.

- **Proportion of cases audited graded as “Good” or better.** A new audit tool and tracker was introduced in mid-July to increase the volume of casework sampled. Throughout August and September 74 social care and PAFSS audits were undertaken and completed. This has more than doubled previous monthly audit activity and all audit findings have been shared with the Senior Leaders and form the basis of the Service Improvement plan. In total 104 audits were completed throughout quarter 2.

Of the 86 Social Care audits completed throughout quarter 2; 61% (52) were graded as good or better. 8% (7) were graded as outstanding, 52% (45) good, 36% (31) requires improvement and 3% (3) inadequate.

Of the 18 PAFSS audits completed; 94% (17) were graded as good or better, and one graded as requires improvement. There was no inadequate audits.

In addition to case file audits, thematic and deep dive audits continue to be undertaken.

26. Contract KPIs currently outside target range

- There are no Contract KPIs outside target range.

27. **Strategic Partnership Indicators**

28. The Trust’s has 27 “strategic partnership” indicators. These are differentiated from the contractual measures as they measure outcomes and activity that are either:

- not entirely within The Trust’s direct control and therefore impacted by the partnership’s response and practice in the Covid pandemic; or
- closely linked to an existing contractual indicator, so reported in addition.

29. The table at paragraph 14 provides a summary breakdown of these indicators reporting that 83% (19) are within or better than target range with a further 14% (4) yet to be reported; these will be reported by exception – those better than target and those outside target tolerance.

30. The 19 measures reported as better than target or within target range are:

- Improved outcomes for families that have received family support on closure
- Re-referrals in the last 12 months
- Timeliness of Single Assessments: less than 20 days
- Percentage of CiN open 6 months to 1 year
- Percentage of CiN open 1 to 2 years
- Percentage of children in need for two or more years
- Percentage of children becoming subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time within a two-year period
- Percentage of Child Protection Plans lasting two years

- Percentage of monthly case file audits rated as 'requires improvement or better'
- Percentage of Trust residential settings rated good or better
- Average time in days between the Local Authority receiving a court order to placing a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family
- Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family
- Children ceasing to be looked after due to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
- Percentage of children in care adopted
- Number of 19 & 20 year olds on a Staying Put placement with former foster carers after their 18th birthday
- Percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation
- Percentage of Care Leavers in employment, training and education
- Percentage of permanent posts covered by Agency Staff
- Staff turnover rates

31. The 4 measures reported outside target tolerance are:

- **Length of intervention from family support services.** 192 days. Outside tolerance. This continues to remain a challenging target for the Trust due to the length of intervention including the number of days cases have been open to the partnership prior to transferring to PAFSS. With this taken into consideration the length of intervention for PAFSS is lower than the early help partnership overall, 87 fewer days in comparison.

PAFSS performance is strong throughout quarter 2, re-referrals are stable at 5%, 97% of children have been seen in timescale, 93% of assessments completed in timescale, 85% of TAC meetings, initial and review have been held in timescale and 91% of families recorded improved outcomes measured by family star. Audits undertaken on eighteen PAFSS cases demonstrate 94% (17) were good or better. 27% (5) were Outstanding.

Continued case tracking ensures there is no drift and delay in cases, but cases will remain open whilst intervention is required to ensure they are not escalated to Social Care or re-referred for early help support.

- **Care Proceedings on Track to be completed within 26 weeks.** The proportion of care proceedings cases on track to meet the national expectation of 26 weeks is a challenge. 52% of cases (98 of the 187 cases) are on-track. CAFCASS have recorded that 50% of cases concluded in 26 weeks in quarter 1 and have noted that this is positive performance notwithstanding the current challenging working environment experienced by all family court colleagues. The average number of weeks to conclude is 33 for Doncaster, better than the national average of 35 weeks.

Quarterly meetings with CAFCASS service managers continue to take place with legal services, the ACPS Head of Service and principal social worker in order to review performance, to identify any requirements for thematic audits and share practice improvement ideas.

- **Long-term placement stability children in care.** Placement stability for children in their placement over 2 years has increased to 57%, a five percent increase in comparison to the end of quarter 1. Seven children experienced a placement move throughout quarter 2. There are regular placement stability meetings which

has minimised disruption and increased placement support available to carers. This is part of wider Trust arrangements to monitor the progress and experiences of our children in care, and discussed as part of the monthly Support and Challenge Forums.

This measure will include planned moves that were in the best interests of the child, including young people moving into independent living arrangements as they prepare for adulthood. As the Trust continues to manage placement costs and develops the placement offer some young people in care will change placement this will, in turn, impact on this measure. The Independent Reviewing Officer Manager monitors placement stability weekly, pre-placement breakdown meetings are in place chaired by IROs and all Looked after Children receive a review of their plan on a six monthly basis.

This measure is to be considered alongside the “short-term” placement change measure, which identifies those children experiencing three or more moves in a year. Performance has improved for this measure demonstrating that strategies early into care are stabilising placements and these now need to be applied to longer-term care cases.

2019/20 outturns at 60.4%, better than target. Statistical releases have not yet been published to benchmark performance against the national, regional and statistical neighbours.

- **Children ceasing to be looked after due to a Child Arrangement Order (CAO).** The target and tolerance range was agreed for this measure in September but due to the low numbers of children leaving care performance will be volatile as moves to independence, adoption or special guardianship orders increase.

No children ceased to be looked after in this quarter through a child arrangement order. 44% of children leaving care moved onto independent living or returned home but not through a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order, 12% left on an SGO and 24% of children leaving care were adopted.

32. **Financial performance - Summary**

33. The Children's Trust forecast 2020/21 as at Q2 2020 is an **operating overspend of £2.4m** (excl. £0.16m funding for quality work that is no longer available due to the impact of Covid19 on the Council's finances) and a total overspend (incl. Covid19 costs of £1.3m) of £3.8m; an increase of £0.9m since Q1 mainly due to increased costs in Out of Authority (OOA) Placements and 16+ CiC Placements. The Trust underspent last year by £1.24m.
34. Some cost-pressures (particularly care ladder) were brought forward, on a reduced budget. Additionally, there continues to be roughly twice as many social work staff on maternity compared to average, creating an agency social worker cost pressure.
35. The Trust has action plans to manage the cost pressures, including care ladder and agency spend. Some cost pressures are due to phasing rather than not being achieved. DMBC are updated in our Finance & Care Ladder, Contract and MTFS discussions.

36. The estimated pressures due to Covid19 are: increased costs for Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £0.29m; a five month delay to the opening of two-bed homes £0.35m; a potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers from October onwards £0.48m and Agency costs of £0.16m due to a spike in the referral numbers from July onwards which is expected to continue at least in the first school term.
37. In the DfE Vulnerable Children and Young People Survey Summary Waves 8 over 80% of LAs estimate an increase in the cost of fostering and residential placements.
38. The projected overspend of £2.5m not due to Covid19 is mainly Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £1.31m, 16+ CiC Placements £0.26m, and Staffing (mainly agency) £0.51m. The 2020/21 projected outturn summary is:

	2020/21 Budget			2020/21 Outturn			2020/21 Variance			Variance due to Covid 19	Change from Q1 non Covid 19	Change from Q1 due to Covid 19
Overall Heading	Gross £000's	Income £000's	Net £000's	Gross £000's	Income £000's	Net £000's	Gross £000's	Income £000's	Net £000's	Net £000's	Net £000's	Net £000's
Children Looked After	32,401	-3,948	28,453	35,682	-4,313	31,369	-3,281	365	-2,916	-1,113	-515	-139
Other Children and Family Services	1,544	0	1,544	1,595	0	1,595	-51	0	-51	0	-38	0
Family Support Services	3,044	0	3,044	2,774	0	2,774	270	0	270	0	165	0
Youth Justice	1,817	0	1,817	1,743	0	1,743	74	0	74	0	36	0
Safeguarding Children and Young People's Services	13,277	-39	13,238	13,971	-40	13,931	-694	1	-693	-191	-217	-165
Services for Young People	292	0	292	289	0	289	2	0	2	0	17	0
Contract Value	0	-51,468	-51,468	0	-51,500	-51,500	0	32	32	0	10	0
Support Services and Management Costs	4,672	-1,591	3,081	4,844	-1,200	3,644	-172	-391	-563	0	-251	161
Grand Total	57,045	-57,045	0	60,898	-57,052	3,846	-3,853	7	-3,846	-1,304	-794	-143

39. Introduction

40. The 2020-21 contract value at Q2 is £55.2m, and there is a projected operating overspend of £2.5m and a total overspend, including Covid19 costs of £1.3m, of £3.8m against the contract. The Council are to request payment of the £1.3m Covid costs to the Trust in their quarter 2 Finance and Improvement report, which if approved, payment will be made to the Trust week commencing 14th December. A year-end reconciliation will be carried out for the Covid funding transferred to the Trust.
41. The forecast is based on the current cohort and mix of placements plus an assumption that there is an increase of 5% in Children in Care numbers from October onwards following a spike in the referral numbers from July onwards which is expected to continue in the first school term, as well as an increase in agency costs due to workloads. The number of Children in Care of DCST at the end of September is 518 which is 7 more than June. The number of 518 may increase if the status of some 16+ children are re-categorised as Children in Care by a review being carried out by the Trust and nationally; there may be additional costs too.
42. At the end of September there were 50 OOA placements, a net increase of six since June. In the first two weeks of October there have been a further two new placements which have been included in the forecast; taking the number of OOA placements to 52. With the closure of Tickhill Square there are 5 fewer in-house residential beds. The Trust is reviewing the OOA and the Future Placements Strategy and the 4 x 2 bed homes should reduce OOA placements by eight by April 2021, if open. The assumption for the first 2 x two-bed homes opening has been pushed back to March 2021 due to the impact of Covid19 on the timeframe of completing the purchase of the houses.

43. The split of fostering placements is 42.4% Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) and 57.6% In-House Fostering, the MTFS target is a 40% / 60% split by 31 March 2021. The overall fostering placements numbers are 18 less since April; the Trust are looking into this to see if this is linked to Covid and whether a lack of availability in fostering has led to some of the increase in OOA numbers.
44. There is a Courts' backlog resulting in delays in Child Arrangement Orders and Special Guardianship Orders being agreed. Growth is built into the forecast for the cases due at Court and this will continue to be monitored as payments can be backdated.
45. The Trust has a higher level of agency in 2020/21, mainly social workers, of which 3 (with 4 more to start in the coming weeks) are due to the increased referral numbers from July onwards, whereas the budget for agency cover has been reduced in the MTFS, causing an overspend. Outline plans are to reduce agency numbers have been shared with the Council.
46. Since Q1, there are two remand cases costing £32k per month into early 2021 but the Youth Offending Service have managed to contain the costs of this by keeping posts vacant for the rest of the financial year and other efficiencies in the service.
47. In addition to the contract sum, the Q2 figures assume the Trust can draw down its £0.22m underspend from 2018/19 that is in the Council's earmarked reserves to use on Ofsted preparation and to offset the current overspend. Prior to Covid19 the Trust requested £0.16m of its £1.24m 2019/20 underspend to support its quality work; this is no longer available due to the impact of Covid19 on the Council's finances. The £0.16m was previously reported as a Covid pressure but Q2 this is now included in the operating over spend to be consistent with the Council's reporting.
48. There are potential future budget implications from Ofsted proposals that 16+ homes may registered for the current SILS provision and future provision proposed as part of the Future Placements Strategy, and these are included in the updated MTFS.
49. **Key Variances over/under £100k:**
50. There are four significant (£100k+/-) variances - Looked after Children, Family Support Services, Safeguarding, and Support Services and Management costs; details below:
51. **Looked After Children - £1.80m operating overspend (£2.91m total overspend including £1.11m due to Covid19):**
52. In the DfE Vulnerable Children and Young People Survey Summary Waves 8 over 80% of LAs estimate an increase in the cost of fostering and residential placements. The detail of the care ladder finance projections and activity are at appendix 1.
53. **In-house Residential, including two-bed homes, £0.17m overspend**
54. There is a projected overspend of £0.17m for the existing In House Residential homes, due to current staffing numbers being over-establishment. The forecast is £0.1m less than at Q1 as the two-bed homes will begin to be staffed in January 2021 in preparation for the first two homes opening in March 2021, which is two months

later than previously assumed due to the impact of Covid19 on the timeframe of completing the house purchases. The assumption for the second round of two-bed homes opening has been pushed back to April 2021 because of this also.

55. **Out of Area Placements - £1.31m operating overspend** (£2.19m total overspend including £0.88m due to Covid19)
56. At the end of September there were 50 OOA placements, a net increase of six since June. There have been eleven new placements in July to September (the forecast at Q1 was for three new placements in this period) offset by five planned leavers (these assumptions were included in the forecast at Q1). In the first two weeks of October there have been a further two new placements (the Q1 forecast was for one new placement in October) which have been included in the forecast; taking the number of OOA placements to 52. A net reduction of two placement has been factored into the forecast for November to March. The overall change since Q1 is an increase of £1.1m on OOA placement expenditure.
57. With the closure of Tickhill Square there are five fewer in-house residential beds. The forecast for the opening of the two-bed homes were revised in the previous month, with the assumptions now that four placements move to the two-bed homes in March 2021 and four in April 2021.
58. The pressures due to Covid19 are increased costs for Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £0.29m, a five month delay to the opening of two-bed homes £0.35m (was three months at Q1), and the potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers £0.24m which equates to two additional OOA placements.
59. The budgeted funding from the DSG High Needs Block was increased to £3.2m for 2020/21, and the projected income to fund the education elements of the OOA placements is currently £0.40m above this, an increase of £0.37m since Q1 offsetting some of the £1.1m increased expenditure.
60. **Independent Fostering Agencies - £0.03m operating overspend** (£0.20m total overspend including £0.17m due to Covid19)
61. No significant change from Q1. The projected overspend includes additional costs of £0.17m for a potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers due to the impact of Covid19. The forecast also assumes that the continued trend of IFAs converting to In-House Fostering continues and the 40% / 60% split is achieved by March 2021.
62. **In House Fostering - £0.13m operating overspend** (£0.20m total overspend including £0.07m due to Covid19)
63. No significant change from Q1. The overspend is due to the average cost of placements being above budget and the impact of Covid19 as the forecast assumes a 5% increase in Children in Care numbers with additional costs of £0.67m. Like IFAs, the forecast assumes that the required number of IFAs convert to In-House Fostering to achieve the 40 % / 60% split target by March 2021.

64. **16+ CiC Placements - £0.26m operating over spend**
65. The projected spend has increased by £0.28m since Q1 due to 7 expensive 16+ packages costing from £2,905 to £6,884 per week, and these cases are being reviewed in the same way as the OOA packages.
66. **Allowances Savings target - £0.09m not achieved in 2020/21**
67. As part of the MTFS for 2020/21 there is a savings target of £0.3m from the review of allowances. Savings of £0.1m have been achieved already via audits carried out, and since Q1 there is now forecast savings of £0.11m in the last quarter of the financial year from the new policy going live, ending appeals. The remaining balance of the savings target will be achieved in 2021/22.
68. **Family Support Services - £0.27m operating underspend**
69. There is an underspend due to staffing vacancies; an increase of £0.17m since Q1 as the assumptions for filling posts have revised.
70. **Safeguarding Children - £0.50m operating overspend (£0.69m total overspend including £0.19m due to Covid19):**
71. The reason for the operating overspend, an increase of £0.21m since Q1, is due to increased staffing costs, mainly due to agency cover for vacancies, abnormally high maternity leave and Front Door Covid cost pressure, against a reduced budget. Assumptions have been made in the forecast about future recruitment of newly qualified social workers, with Agency workers forecast to reduce. However, since Q1 Agency costs of £0.16m for 3 workers that have started and an additional 4 more that may be needed are included in the forecast following a significant increase in referral numbers from July onwards due to Covid19, which is expected to continue at least into the first school term.
72. **Support Services and Management Costs - £0.56m operating overspend:**
73. Prior to Covid19 the Trust requested £0.16m of its £1.2m 2019/20 underspend for Ofsted preparation work; this is no longer available due to the impact of Covid19 on the Council's finances. The £0.16m was previously reported as a Covid pressure but at Q2 this is now included in the operating overspend to be consistent with the Council's reporting. There has been an increase of £0.07m to the Ofsted preparation costs since Q1 as the costs are now expected to continue until March 2021. The one-off £0.22m from the Council's earmarked reserves is allocated here as-is the DfE income (assumed to reduce in 2020/21); the Trust has reduced its costs.
74. **Action being taken to achieve 2020/21 efficiencies and reduce the overspend**
75. The Trust is actively reviewing costs across a number of headings, such as:
- OOA placements have been / are reviewed with a specific focus on pathway progression and the Future Placements Strategy. This should support the return of children home to the Borough, families and friends. The outline plan has been shared with the Council.

- The CiC strategic Group that has been successful in reducing the overall Looked After Children numbers down from 593 to 518 (12.6% reduction) in less than two years, and will continue to pursue proven successful strategies.
- The number and cost of agency has reduced significantly since the start of the Trust. The number and use of agency workers is reviewed regularly, balancing caseloads safely across the Trust. The Trust has shared initial draft proposals with the Council in relation to a “social worker academy” and the recruitment and retention of social workers.
- Included in the MTFS was an intention to reduce allowances by c. £400k. A new policy went live on 1 October 2020 (effective 1 January 2021 for current adopters, pending appeals) and the £400k will be achieved, albeit a later implementation date.
- Other efficiencies will be pursued - e.g. savings that accrue from homeworking

76. External scrutiny and evaluation within Quarter 2 20/21

77. There were no Ofsted inspections in quarter 2.

78. Activity in Quarter 2 20/21

79. The Trust was involved in the following activities in Q2:

- July 2020 – Promotion of Pathways to Progression
- 15 July 2020 – Fostering Information Event
- 20 July and throughout the Summer Holidays – Promotion of the Summer Staycation Offer in partnership with Doncaster Council and partners
- 1 August – Yorkshire Day
- 6 August – National Stress Awareness Day
- 13 August 2020 – Ministerial Virtual Visit to hear about the Improving Mental Health Assessment of Children Entering Care Pilot Project in Doncaster
- 13 August 2020 – Social Worker Online Recruitment Information Event
- 19 August – Fostering Information Event
- 23 September – Fostering Information Event
- September – Be the Difference Foster. Fostering campaign

80. Activity in Quarter 3 20/21

81. The Trust will continue to work with colleagues in DMBC on the delivery of the Integrated People’s Solution (DIPS project), including secondment of DCST staff into the project team and in the form of subject matter experts.

82. The Trust has responded to Covid19, risk rating all children and young people and will continue to ensure visits to children and young people are at the forefront of our work.

83. The Trust will continue to take action in response to Covid19 including: regular meetings with the Council, the Council’s DCS and the Children's Directorate, develop action plans to support our work, support vulnerable children to attend school, update internal performance measures and work with Team Doncaster partners.

84. During Covid19 we will continue to use Public Health England and local Public Health to guide our decisions, operate 'business as usual' when possible, review the contract with DMBC to reflect current circumstances, promote the wellbeing of our colleagues and use technology where possible e.g. virtual CP conferences.
85. The following events are scheduled or have taken place in quarter 3:
- Fostering Network Sons and Daughters Month in October – linking into the national campaign.
 - 12 to 18 October - National Adoption Week
 - 19, 20 and 22 October – Staff virtual summits
 - 21 October – Fostering Information Event
 - 22 October – Fostering Information Event
 - 26 October to 1 November - Care Leavers Week
 - 4 November – Stress Awareness Day
 - 11 November – Remembrance Day
 - 14 November – Adoption Information Event
 - 16 -20 – Anti Bullying Week
 - 25 November – Fostering Information Event
 - 16 December – Adoption Information Event
 - December – Fostering Campaign
86. **IMPACT ON COUNCIL'S KEY OBJECTIVES**

Outcomes	Implications
<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral priority – creating jobs and Housing • Mayoral priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans • Mayoral priority: protecting Doncaster's vital services 	<p>The Council and The Trust as major partners in the Children and Families Partnership Board share the Children's plan outcome that all children should achieve their potential – in removing barriers and developing good quality service delivery children will be able to access the benefits of a thriving economy and will themselves be participants in creating and sustaining the strength of the economy.</p>
<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our Communities • Mayoral priority: Bringing down the cost of living 	<p>Ensuring children and young people are free and feel from harm are key ambitions of both the Council and The Trust.</p>
<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral priority: creating jobs and Housing • Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our communities • Mayoral priority: bringing down the cost of living 	<p>Delivering against the service delivery contract between the Council and The Trust has clear implications for safeguarding communities, in reducing risk and exposure of risk to children; improved early help and thus better outcomes for families.</p>
<p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance</p>	<p>Ofsted, in its inspection report commented favourably on the relationship and governance arrangements between the Council and The</p>

Outcomes	Implications
	Trust, recognising that formal arrangements for monitoring and challenge exceed the requirements set out in the contract between the two organisations.

87. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS [RM 04/11/2020]

Risks and assumptions specific to the key performance indicator set, operational and financial context are identified in the body of this report.

88. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [RM 04/11/2020]

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report except for the potential aforementioned amendments to contractual measures to reflect Covid19.

89. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [LE 04/11/2020]

There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

90. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS [LE 04/11/2020]

There are no specific human resources implications directly arising from this report.

91. TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [RM 04/11/2020]

There are no information technology implications directly arising from this report.

92. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [JT 04/11/2020]

Health and social care services are inextricably linked and are working in robust partnership to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families. The move towards integrated health and social care delivery models supports these partnerships and create shared outcome objectives. Health colleagues are keen to support Doncaster Children's Trust to achieve the quality and performance levels they aspire to as this will impact on the wider health and wellbeing outcomes for Doncaster families.

93. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [RM 04/11/2020]

Included within the body of the report. The financial impact of Covid19 for 2020/21 is estimated at this time pending schools' reopening.

94. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place with key managers and Directors.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Summary of key performance indicators for quarter 2 2020/21

CONTACT OFFICERS AND REPORT AUTHORS

Claire Harris
Performance & Transformation Manager
Telephone: 01302 735252
Email: claire.harris@dcstrust.co.uk

Rob Moore
Director of Corporate Services
Telephone: 01302 735200
Email: rob.moore@dcstrust.co.uk

James Thomas
Chief Executive Officer
Doncaster Children's Services Trust