



23rd February, 2021

To the Members of the Cabinet

## Performance Challenge of Doncaster Children's Services Trust: Quarter 3, 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 Covid-19 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. New governance arrangements were introduced in April 2019 and 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, two are measures externally provided from the Youth Justice Board and have not been made available due to Covid-19 and seven that have been agreed not to be reported upon in quarter 3.
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 will be shared with officers in DMBC and are within this report.
9. This report provides a summary overview of operational and financial performance.
10. The Trust continues to respond to Covid-19, 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. Breakdown of contractual performance indicators as follows:
  - a. Three indicators performing better than BAU target,
  - b. One indicator performing at target level,
  - c. Five are reporting within target range and
  - d. Three have been suspended due to Covid-19 but will recommence from quarter 4 (agreed in the contract management framework)

**Note:** All the active measures above are performing ahead of the Covid-19 adjusted target.

14. Breakdown of the strategic partnership indicators as follows:

Service Area	Performance			Unavailable Measures	
	Outside tolerance range	Within tolerance range	On/Better than target	Not available due to Covid19/ Suspended	Annual KPI not Yet Due
Parent & Family Support	1				
Child & Family Assessment		3	2		
Child Protection		1	1	1	
Looked After Children	1	2			1
Placements (Adoption, Fostering and SGO)	3	1	2		
Care Leavers			3		
Youth Offending				2	
Workforce			2		
Governance					
<b>Total</b>					
<b>% of reported</b>					<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>

15. Of the 27 strategic partnership indicators, two are annual measures and two are measures externally provided from the Youth Justice Board and are not available due to Covid-19. The Ministry of Justice are focussing on priority analysis and statistics due to limited PNC access and therefore these KPIs have been excluded.
16. The strategic partnership measures reported this quarter breakdown can be seen in the above table. Where set and available each target is based upon national benchmarking data which sets an ambition for performance to be at least comparable to good and outstanding organisations; however, some indicators are locally derived and therefore have no benchmark. In these cases targets are derived using historical trends and ambitious targets have been set. 17 out of the 22 (c.83%) are within or better than target range. 5 strategic partnership measures sit outside target range and are covered in more detail later in this report. The measure for case file audits was suspended during quarter 3 so that action plans could be put in place and this measure will recommence in quarter 4.
17. Contact and referral rates continue to be monitored daily and have increased during the quarter by 135 (c.3%) and 960 (c.27%) on the same period last year. Contacts from educators has seen the biggest increase from quarter 2 to quarter 3 with an additional 196 (c.75% uplift) and although South Yorkshire Police remain the highest contributor the volumes have dropped by 159 (c.4%) in quarter 3. Contacts indicating Neglect have increased by 81 (c.8%) since last quarter and 314 (c.28%) from the same period last year.
18. During quarter 3 there were 1285 referrals, 336 (c.36%) more referrals in comparison to the same period last year however largely comparable with quarter 2. If referrals continue at the same rate as 2020/21 forecasted outturns will demonstrate an 855 (c.22%) increase in comparison to last year.
19. Demand has led to increased activity across all social care services with 942 (c.29%) more assessments initiated in comparison to the same period last year and 253 (c.21%) of the assessments proceeding to a statutory service. The number of children in need is 2,511 at a rate of 377 per 10,000. This has increased by 290 (c.13%) children compared to the same period last year however slightly down 81 (c.3%) on quarter 2 results.

Demand Measure	2019/20			2020/21		
	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3
Contacts to CSC	5590	5262	6150	5349	5624	5678
Referrals	924	946	1052	1117	1331	1285
Children in Need	2289	2221	2264	2317	2580	2511
Children on Protection	299	311	300	322	383	395
Looked After Children	537	519	509	513	519	522

%Change against...	
Previous quarter	Same quarter last year
1%	8%
-3%	36%
-3%	13%
3%	27%
1%	1%

20. We have seen increases numbers of children in need 290 (c.13%) and Children subject to a child protection plan 84 (c.27%) in comparison to the same period last year. The number of children in care have increased slightly from quarter 2 to 522 have analysis covering the performance against each indicator is provided below and summarised in the table at appendix one.
21. Despite increases in demand and activity at the front door and across Social Care the number of children open to the early help partnership remains largely stable from quarter 2. However there are now 90 (c.5%) fewer children compared to the same period last year. The early help pathway volumes remain stable with 983 (51%) of children are open as single-agency and 951 (c.49%) have a multi-agency response. However, PAFSS (the Trust's early help service) have seen an 82 (c.43%) increase in allocations in comparison to the same period last year.
22. Social worker caseloads are monitored closely for average/maximum values and the majority of workers were carrying high caseloads. Therefore the Trust has created an additional Assessment team and employed more agency social workers temporarily to bring this down during quarters 2, 3 and 4. It remains the Trust's preference to recruit permanent staff but the recruitment of agency staff is the quickest way to meet demand and seen as a temporary measure. As a result the assessment average has dropped to c.21.5 (c.-26%) and workers having a caseload of more than twenty-five has reduced to 36%. Child Protection and Children in Care Services are lower at an average of 16.1.
23. **Operational performance against contractual KPIs indicators**
24. Analysis covering the performance against each indicator is provided below and summarised in the table at appendix one.
25. Contract KPIs On or better than target range
- **Percentage of children subject to child protection plan seen within expected timescales.** The number of children subject to a child protection plan has increased month on month since February 2020 and 84 (c.27%) more compared to this time last year. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic the Trust has set an expectation that children are seen whilst adhering health and safety guidance to reduce the risk of infections to them and to families during this time.
  - 370 (c.90%) children have been seen within the last 2 weeks with 367 (c.99%) 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.** 141 children were subject to an initial child protection conference in quarter 2. 100% of these conferences were held within timescale. These high rates mean that families that are taken through this process do not experience the anxiety of delay. Additionally, of the 125 review child protection conferences that took place with the majority have been undertaken virtually whilst blended conferences continue. 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”.** This has been better than target for over two years Performance at 8% with 39 children experiencing 3 or more placement moves in the last 12 months. 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.
- **Proportion of looked after reviews completed within timescale.** Performance at 95%. 475 of the 499 reviews have been recorded in timescale, with a further 45 mid-way reviews undertaken by the child’s Independent Reviewing Officer. Children and young people made a meaningful contribution in their review 90% of the time and 95% 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 Covid-19 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.

26. Contract KPIs within target range albeit exceeding Covid-19 adjusted targets

- **Timeliness of single assessments.** A downward trend across the quarter means overall performance is below target at c.84%. Despite the downturn 890 C&F assessments completed within timescale and the child was seen in 94% of completed C&F assessments. The Trust increased the Assessment Team capacity by adding an additional team and temporary agency staff to alleviate pressure of the additional demand 273 (c.29%) during quarter 3 in comparison to the same period last year.
- **Children in need with an appropriate and current plan in place:** Performance has reduced slightly by 4% at the end of this quarter but still within target range at 90%. This decrease is likely to be due to the volume of 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.
- **Percentage of care leavers that the Trust remains in touch with.** Performance remains stable and above the National Average of 91% nationally albeit just fallen below target to c.94% however the use of the case tracking and management oversight means we are consistently in touch with 223 of care leavers in their 17th-21st year and work hard to maintain engagement. The Performance in the previous ten consecutive quarters demonstrate continued high in touch rates with care leavers.

- **Care Leavers with pathway plans that have been reviewed in timescale.** Performance has increased this quarter to 88% and remains within target range. There were 169 care leavers with active pathway plan. 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 additional Personal Advisors to manage caseload and to return performance to tolerance. There are currently 232 care leavers aged between 17 and 21; of the care leavers open to the Inspiring Futures Team 181 (c.78%) have been in touch within the last 6 months.
- 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 Covid-19 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
- **Front line staff receiving supervisions in timescale.** Supervision of Front Line Staff in tolerance at 80%, with 778 front line staff supervisions undertaken throughout this quarter. Capturing the data is reliant on Managers inputting data manually which creates recording issues however continued monitoring by the service managers will ensure the supervision trackers are completed each month to reflect performance.

27. Contract KPIs currently outside target range

- There are no Contract KPIs outside target range and all have exceeded the revised Covid-19 targets.

28. **Strategic Partnership Indicators**

29. 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.

30. The table at earlier in the document provides a summary breakdown of these indicators reporting that 17 (c.63%) are within or better than target range with a further 5 (c.18%) not reported this quarter for varying reasons.

31. **There are 17 reported Strategic Partnership Indicators on/better than target or within target range:**

- Families demonstrating improved outcomes at point of closure to Parenting and Family Support Team
- Percentage of Children in Need open for >6 months < 1 year
- Percentage of Children in Need open for >1 year < 2 years
- Child Protection Plans lasting two years or more for child protection plans which have ended during the year

- Average time in days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family
- Rate of 19 & 20 year olds Staying Put with their foster carers after their 18th birthday
- Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (age 19-21)
- Care Leavers in Employment, Training and Education (age 19-21)
- Full time equivalent posts covered by agency staff
- Staff turnover rate
- Referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months
- Assessments completed within 20 days
- Percentage of Children in Need open for > 2 years
- Children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time
- Long term stability of placement of children in care: %of long term children in care in stable placements
- Percentage of LAC that had a missing incident in the year
- Trust residential settings rated good or better
- Children ceasing care to be looked after under a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

32. **There are five Strategic Partnership Indicators outside tolerance:**

- **Length of intervention from family support services.** Performance has improved in quarter 3 by 11 days to 181 which is 1 day out of tolerance (180). However, this continues to be 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. PAFSS workers continue to visit and work with staff in the community; however, Covid-19 restrictions and those not being able to attend school (because not in priority groups) will cause delay.

PAFSS performance is strong throughout quarter 2, re-referrals are stable at 10%, c.95% of children have been seen in timescale, c.94% of assessments completed in timescale, 87% of TAC meetings, initial and review have been held in timescale and 79% of families recorded improved outcomes measured by family star.

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 remains a challenge with 110 (c.58%) of the 191 cases on-track. Cases issued down by 13% in the last quarter with an average case length of 37 weeks versus the national average of 40 weeks. It is worth noting that performance is dependent upon court, CAFCASS etc. so not entirely within our control. Due to this it is important that 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.
- **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.** This measure will fluctuate depending on how many children are adopted. During quarter 3 two children were adopted which drove the measure outside tolerance.

- **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 and 12 (c.33%) of children leaving care moved onto independent living or returned home but not through a Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order, 4 (c.14%) left on an SGO. There were 2 children adopted during Q3.

- **Rate of Children adopted from care.** 2 children leaving care this quarter were adopted moving performance down to 6% however this figure will fluctuate. During 20/21 a total of 13 children have been adopted giving an outturn of 14%.

### 33. **Financial performance - Summary**

34. The Children's Trust forecast 2020/21 as at quarter 3 2020/21 is an operating overspend of £2.6m (including £0.16m funding for quality work that is no longer available due to the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's finances); no significant change since quarter 2. In December the Trust received £1.3m of funding from the Council to cover the estimated additional costs to the Trust due to the impact Covid-19 previously reported in the overall total overspend. The Trust underspent last year by £1.24m.
35. 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.
36. 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 the Trust's MTFS discussions.
37. The estimated pressures due to Covid-19 that have been funded by the Council are: increased costs for Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £0.29m; a six month delay to the opening of two-bed homes £0.19m; a potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers £0.48m and Agency costs of £0.25m due to a spike in the referral numbers from July onwards which is expected to continue for the rest of the financial year. The Trust will work on estimating, probably via previous trends and statistics, the costs of Covid in quarter 4.
38. In July-December 2020 the Trust saw an increase in referrals of +39%, C&F assessments +59% and S.47s initiated +42% and is still cautious about what may happen for the remainder of this year, and 2021/22, due to both local and national lockdowns, with an impact on next year's costs likely to be adversely affected.
39. 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.
40. The projected overspend of £2.6m not due to Covid-19 is mainly Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £1.6m, 16+ CiC Placements £0.3m, and Staffing (mainly agency) £0.9m. The 2020/21 projected outturn summary is:



Overall Heading	2020/21 Budget			2020/21 Outturn			2020/21 Variance			Variance due to Covid 19	Change from Q2 non Covid 19	Change from Q2 due to Covid 19
	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	32,421	-3,948	28,474	35,638	-4,546	31,092	-3,217	599	-2,618	-973	158	140
Other Children and Family Services	1,544	0	1,544	1,601	0	1,601	-58	0	-58	0	-6	0
Family Support Services	3,044	0	3,044	2,805	0	2,805	239	0	239	0	-31	0
Youth Justice	1,817	0	1,817	1,824	0	1,824	-7	0	-7	0	-81	0
Safeguarding Children and Young People's Services	13,324	-39	13,285	14,124	-46	14,078	-800	8	-793	-280	-10	-89
Services for Young People	292	0	292	406	0	406	-114	0	-114	0	-116	0
Contract Value	0	-51,468	-51,468	0	-52,866	-52,866	0	1,399	1,399	1,304	62	1,304
Support Services and Management Costs	4,605	-1,591	3,013	4,824	-1,200	3,624	-219	-391	-611	-58	10	-58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>57,045</b>	<b>-57,045</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61,222</b>	<b>-58,659</b>	<b>2,564</b>	<b>-4,177</b>	<b>1,614</b>	<b>-2,564</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>1,297</b>

#### 41. Financial Performance – Introduction

42. The 2020-21 contract value at quarter three is £55.2m, and there is a projected operating overspend of £2.6m. In December the Trust received £1.3m of funding from the Council to cover the estimated additional costs to the Trust due to the impact Covid-19 previously reported in the overall total overspend.
43. The forecast is based on the current cohort and mix of placements plus an assumption that there is a 5% increase in Children in Care numbers following a spike in the referral numbers from July onwards which is expected to continue for the rest of the financial year, as well as an increase in agency costs due to workloads. Due to the recent lockdown and school closures there is anticipated workload and cost pressures that will impact on 2021/22 and place pressure on the MTFs and 2021/22 budget.
44. The number of Children in Care of DCST at the end of December is 520, an increase of 6 since the referral spike in July. The number of 520 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.
45. At the end of quarter three there were 50 OOA placements, which is the same as at quarter two, plus one mother and baby placement. 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 8 by July 2021, if open. The timing of the planned opening of the two-bed homes has been pushed back to the first quarter of 2021/22 due to the impact of Covid-19 on the timeframe of completing the house purchases.
46. The split of fostering placements remains has improved by 2.2% since quarter two to 40.2% Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) and 59.8% In-House Fostering. The MTFs target is a 40% / 60% split by 31 March 2021. The overall fostering placements numbers are 2 less since April 2020; 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 as part of the Covid costs review in quarter 4.
47. 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.
48. The Trust has a higher level of agency in 2020/21, mainly social workers, of which 6 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. Plans are to reduce agency numbers have been shared with the Council.

49. As reported at quarter two, there are 2 remand cases costing £32k p.m. 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.
50. In addition to the contract sum, the Trust has drawn down its £0.22m underspend from 2018/19 that was in the Council's earmarked reserves to use on Ofsted preparation and to offset the current overspend. Prior to Covid-19 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 Covid-19 on the Council's finances. The £0.16m was previously reported as a Covid pressure but from month six onwards this is included in the operating overspend to be consistent with the Council's reporting.
51. There are potential future budget implications from Ofsted proposals that 16+ homes may be 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.
52. **Key Variances over/under £250k**
53. There are four significant (£250k+/-) variances - Looked after Children, Safeguarding, Support Services and Management costs, and Contract Value; details below:
54. **Looked After Children - £1.65m operating overspend (£2.62m total overspend including £0.97m due to Covid-19)**
55. In the DfE Vulnerable Children and Young People Survey Summary Wave 8 over 80% of LAs estimate an increase in the cost of fostering and residential placements.
56. **In-house Residential, including two-bed homes, £0.11m operating overspend (£0.07m total underspend including £0.18m cost savings due to Covid-19)**
57. There is a projected overspend of £0.23m for the existing In House Residential homes, due to current staffing numbers being over-establishment. The staff over establishment were due to transfer to the two-bed homes in the second half of the financial year but since quarter two the timing of the planned opening of the two-bed homes has been pushed back to the first quarter of 2021/22 due to the impact of Covid-19 on the timeframe of completing the house purchases. The revised assumptions have resulted in a £0.30m cost saving for the two-bed homes in 2020/21 less £0.12m additional cost of the staff over establishment, therefore the overall cost savings to this service area due to the delays from Covid-19 is £0.18m. This is offset by loss of savings being delivered in Out of Area Placements of £0.38m, as below:
58. **Out of Area Placements - £1.6m operating overspend (£2.51m total overspend including £0.91m due to Covid-19)**
59. At the end of quarter three there were 50 OOA placements, which is the same as at quarter two, plus one mother and baby placement. In quarter three there were four new placements offset by four leavers (three to 16+ care provision and one turned 18). The forecast has increased by £0.29m since quarter two due to increased costs from placement moves, less leavers by the end of March 2021 expected by the Head of Placements, a child no longer being eligible for Health funding, and the timing of the planned opening of the two-bed homes has been pushed back to the first quarter of 2021/22 due to the impact of Covid-19 on the timeframe of completing the house purchases.

60. There is one child who turns 18 before the end of 2020/21, the mother and baby placement is due to end before April 2021, and a further net reduction of 1 placements has been factored into the forecast per the assumptions of the Head of Placements. The forecast assumes there will be 48 OOA placements by the end of March 2021, two more than assumed at quarter two.
61. The pressures due to Covid-19 are increased costs for Out of Authority (OOA) Placements £0.29m, a six month delay to the opening of two-bed homes £0.38m, and the potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers £0.24m which equates to two additional OOA placements.
62. The budgeted funding from the DSG High Needs Block was increased to £3.2m for 2020/21, and the projected income is currently £0.49m above this, an increase of £0.09m since quarter two.
63. **Independent Fostering Agencies - £0.01m operating overspend** (£0.18m total overspend including £0.17m due to Covid-19)
64. No significant change since quarter two. The projected spend includes additional costs of £0.17m for a potential 5% increase in Children in Care numbers due to the impact of Covid-19. 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.
65. **In House Fostering - £0.1m operating overspend** (£0.17m total overspend including £0.07m due to Covid-19)
66. No significant change from quarter two. The overspend is due to the average cost of placements being above budget and the impact of Covid-19 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.
67. **16+ CiC Placements - £0.34m operating overspend**
68. The projected spend has increased by £0.08m since quarter two, due to three OOA placements moving to 16+ care provision. There are currently five expensive 16+ packages costing from £2,999 to £6,325 per week and these cases are being reviewed in the same way as the OOA packages.
69. **Allowances Savings target - £0.1m not achieved in 2020/21**
70. As part of the MTFs for 2020/21 there is a savings target of £0.3m from the review of allowances. Savings of £0.08m have been achieved already via audits carried out, and there is forecast savings of £0.12m in the last quarter of the financial year from the new policy going live. The remaining balance of the savings target will be achieved in 2021/22.
71. **Safeguarding Children - £0.51m operating overspend** (£0.79m total overspend including £0.28m due to Covid-19)
72. The reason for the overspend 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. Agency costs of £0.25m for six workers that are expected to be needed until the end of March 2021 are included in the forecast

following a significant increase in referral numbers from July onwards due to Covid-19, which is expected to continue for the rest of the financial year and into 2021/22.

73. **Support Services and Management Costs - £0.55m operating overspend (£0.61m total overspend including £0.06m due to Covid-19)**

74. Prior to Covid-19 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 Covid-19 on the Council's finances. The £0.16m was previously reported as a Covid pressure but from month six onwards this is now included in the operating overspend to be consistent with the Council's reporting. 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 also reduced its costs.

75. **Contract Value - £1.4m additional funding (£1.3m to fund Covid pressures)**

76. In December the Trust received £1.3m of funding from the Council to cover the estimated additional costs to the Trust due to the impact of Covid-19. The other additional funding of £0.1m is in year grant increases passed onto the Trust and budget to cover an increase in the DIPS SLA.

77. **Action being taken to achieve 2020/21 efficiencies and reduce the overspend**

- 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 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 520 (12.3% reduction) in less than three 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 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 most current adopters) and the £400k will be achieved, albeit a later implementation.
- Other efficiencies will be pursued - e.g. savings that accrue from homeworking.

78. **External scrutiny and evaluation within Quarter 3 20/21**

79. There were no Ofsted inspections in quarter 3.

80. **Activity in Quarter 3 20/21**

81. The Trust was involved in the following activities in quarter 3:

- October – Fostering Network Sons and Daughters Month in October – linking into the national campaign.
- 12-18 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 November – Anti-Bullying Week
- 25 November – Fostering Information Event
- 11 December – Save the Children – Christmas Jumper Day
- 16 December – Adoption Information Event
- December – Fostering Campaign – Festive fostering myths
- December – Staff festive wellbeing/ Virtual Events throughout the month

**82. Activity in Quarter 4 20/21**

83. 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.
84. The Trust has responded to Covid-19, 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. This has continued during Lockdown 3.
85. The Trust will continue to take action in response to Covid-19 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.
86. During Covid-19 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.
87. The following events are scheduled or have taken place in quarter 4:
- 11 January at 4.30pm to 7.30pm – Adoption Information Event
  - 13 January at 11am and at 3pm – Fostering Information Event
  - February and March – Fostering Campaign
  - 1-7 February – Children’s Mental Health Week, linking into the national campaign.
  - 9 February – Safer Internet Day linking into the national campaign.
  - 10 February at 4.30pm to 7.30pm – Adoption Information Event
  - 10 February at 11am and at 3pm – Fostering Information Event
  - 8 March – International Women’s Day
  - 10 March at 11am and at 3pm – Fostering Information Event
  - 15 March at 4.30pm to 7.30pm – Adoption Information Event
  - 16 March – World Social Work Day
  - 18 March – National Child Exploitation Awareness Day linking into the national campaign
  - 18 March – Star Awards presentation ceremony
  - 19 March – Red Nose Day

88. **IMPACT ON COUNCIL'S KEY OBJECTIVES**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayoral priority – creating jobs and Housing</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: protecting Doncaster's vital services</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our Communities</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Bringing down the cost of living</li> </ul>	<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"> <li>• Mayoral priority: creating jobs and Housing</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our communities</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: bringing down the cost of living</li> </ul>	<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 Trust, recognising that formal arrangements for monitoring and challenge exceed the requirements set out in the contract between the two organisations.</p>

89. **RECOMMENDED OPTIONS**

To note the report.

90. **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS [RM 01/02/2021]**

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

91. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [RM 01/02/2021]**

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report except for the potential aforementioned amendments to contractual measures to reflect Covid-19.

92. **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [LE 01/02/2021]**

There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

93. **HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS [LE 01/02/2021]**

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

94. **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [RM 01/02/2021]**

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

95. **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [JT 01/02/2021]**

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.

96. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [RM 01/02/2021]**

Included within the body of the report. The financial impact of Covid-19 for 2020/21 is estimated at this time pending schools' reopening.

97. **CONSULTATION**

Consultation has taken place with key managers and Directors.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix 1: Summary of key performance indicators for quarter 3 2020/21

## ACRONYMS

<b>CAFCASS</b>	<b>Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service</b>
<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>Child and Family</b>
<b>CiC</b>	<b>Children in Care</b>
<b>CiN</b>	<b>Children in Need</b>
<b>CP</b>	<b>Child Protection</b>
<b>DCST</b>	<b>Doncaster Children's Services Trust</b>
<b>DfE</b>	<b>Department for Education</b>
<b>DMBC</b>	<b>Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council</b>
<b>DSG</b>	<b>Dedicated School's Grant</b>
<b>IFA</b>	<b>Independent Foster Agency</b>
<b>IRO</b>	<b>Independent Reviewing Officer</b>
<b>KPI</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Local Authority</b>
<b>MTFS</b>	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>
<b>OOA</b>	<b>Out of Authority</b>
<b>OSMC</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Management Committee</b>
<b>PAFSS</b>	<b>Parenting and Family Support Service</b>
<b>PNC</b>	<b>Police National Computer</b>
<b>Qtr</b>	<b>Quarter</b>
<b>RAG</b>	<b>Red Amber Green</b>
<b>SGO</b>	<b>Special Guardianship Order</b>

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