7. Improvement Performance and Quality Service Profile
(2026/27)

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Purpose of Plan

This Business Plan provides an overview of the service, and sets out its key priorities, high level objectives, key deliverables, and key performance measures. It will be supported by individual team plans which contain more detail about how teams work towards meeting priorities and measuring success.

The priorities and actions set out in the Business Plan focus only on key areas of development, improvement, and transformation, and does not cover all detailed aspects of service delivery. The identified priorities will link directly into the Council's contribution towards the Community Plan and achievement of productivity and savings targets.

Progress against the service plan will be reviewed on a regular basis within directorate teams, by the Corporate Strategy Team, and in consultation with Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

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1. Service Overview

Service Description

Children Young People and Family Services (CYPFS) Improvement, Performance and Quality (IPQ) provide myriad services which are ‘arms-length’, being removed sufficiently from operational activity in children services ensuring that a level of independence can be maintained and robust challenge can underpin effective decision-making for children and their families.

The Strategic Lead Improvement Performance and Quality is the lead for the government national reforms, Families First Partnership Programme which supports the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools bill. There are five key Reform strands, Family help, Multi Agency Child Protection, Family Group Decision Making, Kinship care and Information/Data/Enablers. All of the reform stands are intertwined with the role of the LA Virtual School, children not in school, children electively home education and those on reduced timetables. The vision of the Department of Education is that we have an effective, integrated and joined up system that supports and connects services from a universal level through to children social care interventions. The Strategic Lead for IPQ ensures that all systems, culture and practice across the partnership supports system changes that are needed to deliver effective and

Services within IPQ are arranged across a number of areas, with each respective area lead reporting to the Strategic Lead for IPQ:

- Safeguarding Partnerships. The Head of Safeguarding Partnerships oversees and has strategic and operational management of the Hull Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Hull’s Safeguarding Adults partnership to ensure an effective partnership which meets all statutory requirements and which helps to improve multi-agency safeguarding practice to improve outcomes for children and their families, alongside ensuring improved outcomes for vulnerable adults. This includes leading and developing the strategic and operational functions of the HSCP, advising the HSCP Executive Board of key strategic risks and develop and maintain a risk register. The HSCP ensures key national and regional initiatives, new policy and relevant research is provided to the Executive Board, including the National Families First Partnership Programme. The Head of Safeguarding Partnerships alongside partner agencies monitors the quality and consistency of safeguarding practice and training across all partner agencies in Hull, ensuring continuous improvement in practice whilst also contributing to broader planning, commissioning and delivery of services.

- Performance and Quality: performance, data and quality assurance functions for CYPFS are managed by the Head of Performance and Quality. This includes all Department for Education statutory returns and submissions under the Families First Partnership Programme. The performance and data function, quality assurance function and the Head of Performance and Quality heavily support all regulatory inspections and visits. The quality assurance function does contribute to overseeing of the freedom of information requests and the quality assurance function supports continuous improvement activity.

- Safeguarding Standards: the Head of Safeguarding Standards oversees functions that support safeguarding services, including the complaints service. This includes fulfilling statutory obligations under the Children's Act regarding complaints and responding to all Local Government Ombudsman requests and returns. The independent reviewing service provides an independent reviewing officer for every child who is looked after, monitoring their care and ensuring their care plan is progressing accordingly and effecting positive change; independent fostering reviewing officers review each foster carer annually to ensure support needs are fully met, consider any challenges and acknowledge what has been achieved. Local Authority Designated Officers manage allegations against adults who work with children and child protection chairs oversee the safety planning and review process for every child who is the subject of a child protection plan.

- The Principal Social Worker and the Social Work Academy coordinates, supports and develops social work and alternatively qualified childrens services practice. The Social Work Academy, works with ALL practitioners within children services providing learning, development and training to ensure our workforce is supported to understand their role, roles of others and the role of the council, developing a workforce that is knowledgeable and accountable to the children, young people and families of Hull. The Academy and the principal social worker heavily support all Inspection work and visits, including regulatory inspections and visits for our childrens homes and fostering services. The Social work academy are at the forefront of developing practice standards for the family First partnership and the Principal Social Worker is leading on the Family Group Decision Making workstream which is integral to ensuring that families and connections are central in the work we undertake with children, young people and their families.

- Court Case Manager has full oversight, monitoring and reviewing of legal work in children safeguarding service. The manager ensures all co-ordination of all aspects of pre-proceedings work to ensure processes are completed within timeframes, with the additional responsibility of of ensuring that all expert assessments are proportionate and timely for children's needs. The court case manager is the lead for our Local Family Justice Board supporting regional and local practice development and escalating whenever necessary to the courts. Senior managers and elected members are informed and advised regarding highly complex court related matters which may have an impact on children's lives and the council reputation.

Strategic Direction / Future Plans

There is an opportunity to design robust team and service structures that are scalable and provide resilience to business-as-usual activity. To do this IPQ seeks to bring together roles with shared goals, roles and responsibilities within team structures. At the forefront of this shared approach will be the assurance of accountability to provide utility and better outcomes for children and their families, as well as ensuring a workforce that is valued and motivated and with high levels of morale.

Significant investment has already been made to support social workers in learning and development through the Social Work Academy. Whilst the social work workforce has now stabilised considerably, the requirement for ongoing learning and development will continue. The introduction and implementation of Families First Partnership Programme will drive forward the significant need to accommodate learning, development and continuing

professional development into a larger workforce. The introduction also of the use of Artificial Intelligence and the differing training needs across the whole service with be a significant challenge.

The Families First Partnership (FFP) is a national programme launched by the Department for Education to support local safeguarding partners in delivering key reforms to children, young people and their families, ensuring that there is the right person, at the right time, in the right place working with the family. The whole focus on the reforms are to ensure the right level of intervention is undertaken at the earliest opportunity by the best placed person, ensuring relational based practice is at the heart of everything we do. There are several strands to the Family First partnership programme, supporting the whole system. These strands are Family Help, working at the earliest stage with children and families, bringing together early intervention and statutory intervention. Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs) to ensure highly skilled and multi agency approach to the child protection work, improving experiences of children and families who need this level of intervention. Family Group Decision Making, which supports family meetings to help support and identify as early as possible who in the network, family, community can be involved to support the family. Kinship Care is a element of work that focuses on ensuring that Kinship cares are supported both emotionally, physically and financially in providing care to connected children and young people. The whole programme is underpinned by principles of co-production and multi agency collaboration.

With the advent of new technologies, particularly in conjunction with case management systems, services will be able to better evidence the high-quality practice being undertaken across CYPFS, including capturing the voice of the child and family feedback. Children services are at the forefront of exploring opportunities in the digital world, including testing intelligence inspired solutions such as co-pilot and also magic notes/reports. As providers of systems changes and adapt, it is essential that all technology continues to work together seamlessly to ensure efficiency and improve services, with corporate transformation supporting the core business in this area. Any future case management adaptations need to be led by the business and Department of Education/Government driven legislation to ensure the system is “fit for purpose” especially in the context of families First Partnership Programme. Any system change must be undertaken with full regard to practice improvement activity.

The ambition for a stable workforce beyond 2025 will be heavily reliant on retention of the current workforce against a backdrop of local, regional and national challenges, not least the competitive renumeration of qualified practitioners and any associated retention incentives.

Grant funding has, historically, been used to fund many short to medium term programmes across CYPFS. Short-term funding does not give adequate assurance to commissioned providers of services and so embedding new service models, e.g., the rollout of the Family First partnership across the partnership, alongside the Best Start in Life will require ongoing investment in terms of engagement in order for the voluntary and community sector and partners to fully commit to all programmes.

The advent of new guidance, policy and legislation change provides an opportunity for service review that can reinvigorate working practice and introduce new ways of working that may not have been previously considered, e.g., the implementation of the Families First Partnership Programme, The Best Start in Life programme, Young Futures, Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Children Schools Wellbeing Bill. There is an

opportunity to co-work and shape service re-design to ensure current and future needs of children and families are fully considered. However, changes in political landscape, both nationally and locally can present challenges as new areas of priority are identified, bringing increased, and sometimes unforeseen, pressures which can lead to previously embraced initiatives being abandoned prematurely.

Overall Service Priorities

Service Priority	**Strategic Driver (Community Plan Ambition, Government, Organisational, etc)**
Ongoing development and adaptation of the current Social Work Academy (SWA) transitioning to support training and development needs of new and prospective social workers and the newly created Family Help Workers alongside the continuing professional development requirements and retention of existing practitioners. The SWA need to drive forward for all children services an embedded learning loop to sustain continuous improvement in operational service delivery. The SWA will work with all practitioners supporting the National reforms including Family Help (FH) Multi Agency child Protection Teams (MACPT) and the clear practice of Family group decision making (FGDM) This will also be supported by ensuring that we act upon any recommendations of the Council Wide Investors in people survey – that is due to take place in DEC 2025.	Community Plan – nurturing talent with inclusive opportunities and helping adults to thrive in their work. Government – ensuring a fit-for-purpose workforce, adequately training and responsive to the needs of children and families, that meets the needs of the National reforms. Partnership – bringing together key legislation and policy to achieve safeguarding objectives for all children and families. Organisational – maintaining a stable and professionally qualified workforce that is confident in ensuring children and families get the right help, at the right time, from the right people, supporting by a corresponding reduction in the volume of statutory complaints. Acting upon the council wide investor in people survey to ensure the workforce feel the council is responsive to their needs ensuring they are equipped for the roles and work with children, young people and families.
Embed Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Childrens and Schools wellbeing bill across the organisation and HSCP in conjunction with readiness for implementation of the Family First Partnership Programme.	Community Plan – children feel safe and protected from harm and have the best start in life and are ready for school; their voices are heard and respected. Government – legislation and statutory guidance to strengthen multi-agency working across the whole system. Ensure national reforms both in the context of working together and children and schools wellbeing bill

	Partnership – bringing together key legislation and policy to achieve safeguarding objectives for all children and families. Organisational – improving practice to help, support and protect children at the right time, from the right people
Ensuring the core case management systems of CYPFS to be fit-for-purpose, up-to-date and fully developed to support high-quality practice evidenced in improved outcomes for children and sustained reduction in statutory intervention. This includes the introduction of a case management system for Family First Partnership Programme and ensuring that partnership systems are also integrated for overall information sharing.	Community Plan – making Hull a Child Friendly City. Government – regulatory inspectorate frameworks, policy and legislation. Partnership – bringing together key legislation and policy to achieve safeguarding objectives for all children and families. Children and young peoples plan, telling their story once, early intervention. Organisational – continuous service improvement to ensure children and families get the right help, at the right time, from the right people. One assessment and one plan focus for all practitioners working with children and young people.
In preparation and anticipation of regulatory visits and the full ILACS inspections, the Hull Youth Justice Inspection, IPQ will focus efforts on supporting operational services areas to improve quality of practice, evidenced in improved outcomes for children and sustained reduction in statutory intervention.	Community Plan – making Hull a Child Friendly City. Government – regulatory inspectorate frameworks, policy and legislation. Partnership – bringing together key legislation and policy to achieve safeguarding objectives for all children and families. Organisational – continuous service improvement, including further embedding of the Signs of Safety practice model, to ensure children and families get the right help, at the right time, from the right people. Implementation of the family First partnership model particularly in the area of Family Help and FGDM.
Ensuring the links between the Corporate parenting plan, Voice and Influence plan, bright spots survey results for children in CLA and Care leavers all work together ensuring one system for progression of the work and improving outcomes for children looked after and care leavers.	Community plan – making Hull a safe place and child friendly city Government – new frameworks and legislation for care leavers and children in care – ensuring corporate parenting duties are progressed alongside kinship arrangement wherever possible Partnership – bringing together key agencies to ensure objectives to achieve safeguarding priorities are met.

	Organisational – continuous improvement for our children in care and care leavers ensuring that we have a council wide approach to corporate parenting including the progression of corporate parenting week.

2. Service Resources and Assets

Staffing and Financial Resources (including grants)

Budget 2026/27	**£000'**		
Staff Costs	4,180	**Budget Changes**	**£000's**
Other Expenditure	462	26/27 Efficiency Savings	
Gross Expenditure	**4,642**		
Fees & Charges	-384	25/26 Savings undelivered	
Grant Income	0		
Other Income	-30	Removal of Grant Income Budget Line	2,146
Gross Income	**-414**		
		Investments	
Net Expenditure	**4,228**	Funding of Base Pressures	