

Children, Young People, Families & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Commission**1:30 p.m. – 4:35 p.m. Monday 20th October 2025****Room 77, The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull, HU12AA and MS Teams****Present:**

Councillors: Payne (Chair); Henry (Deputy Chair); M. Collinson; Grozav; Harper (Substituting for Councillor A. Thompson); Kennett; M. Collinson.

In attendance:

Councillor Tock, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Hull City Council
K. Crabtree, Business Partner, Financial Planning, Hull City Council
A. Campbell, Strategic Lead Improvement, Performance and Quality Service, Hull City Council
T. Zvauya, Head of Safeguarding Standards, Hull City Council
L. Davidson, Head of Safeguarding Partnerships, Hull City Council
K. Durrant, Independent Chair, Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership
R. Roberts, Strategic Lead for Early Help and Prevention, Hull City Council
D. Davis, Youth Work Manager, Hull City Council
P. Turner, Executive Director Children/Family Services/Deputy Chief Executive, Hull City Council
P. Todd, Scrutiny Officer, Hull City Council
A. Holgate, Head of Governance, Hull City Council

Apologies:

Councillors Kassim, Kemp and A. Thompson.

Minute Number	
22	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (2)
There were no declarations of interest made.	
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) N/A.	a) N/A.

23	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (3)
<p>P. Todd (Scrutiny Officer) submitted the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025.</p> <p>It was highlighted that Councillor M. Collinson’s name was misspelt and for it to be corrected.</p> <p>The Chair advised the Commission that she has spoken with the Chief Executive to express her concerns over the lift at Lil-Biloca House and was advised that it had been made safe with new parts, and that renewing the lift had been acknowledged.</p>	
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:

a) That the minutes of the meeting of this Commission held on Monday 15 th September 2025 be taken as read and correctly recorded.	a) N/A.	
24	PERIOD 5 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (5)	
<p>K. Crabtree (Business Partner, Financial Planning) attended the meeting to provide an overview of the budget position for Children, Young People and Family Services at Period 5 the end of August 2025, how the budget was influenced by demand levels, what performance measures were used to monitor this and the service actions to control demand and mitigate overspending while improving quality. The officer highlighted the budget pressures outlined in the report.</p> <p>The Commission discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The financial capacity of the Council to support children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) once the proposed changes, under the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill, come into law. The Commission was informed that there was still some clarity required on the upcoming changes however there was an expectation that support would be available in all mainstream schools without the need for an EHCP. ii. There was uncertainty around the future of EHCPs, the impact on children that currently had an EHCP should it be taken away and any associated risks with managing the transition between children and adult services if children were no longer in receipt of an EHCP where they previously would have been. The Commission were advised that the situation was still unknown until the bill had progressed further and it was requested that the matter be referred to Audit Committee to ascertain the risks to the Council. iii. The budget pressures associated with staff turnover and persistent vacancies, and the pressure due to being staffed appropriately. The Commission was advised that budget issue was known and would be addressed. iv. There was a budget pressure associated with educational psychologists however the report showed a steady increase to EHCP applications. The Commission was advised that previous figures showed a decrease in applications between 2023 and 2024, therefore 		

<p>there was an expectation these requests would reduce further for 2025. Due to the increase in applications, there was a requirement of additional agency staff to manage the workload.</p> <p>v. How the Council managed the list of applicants for EHCPs to ensure statutory timeframes were being adhered to. The Commission was informed that the statutory assessments were required to be completed within 20 weeks, however the Council was not able to meet the deadline on all applications.</p> <p>vi. The support that was provided to families, by Children’s Services, that had opted for elective home education (EHE). The Commission was advised that there was a statutory duty for the Local Authority to visit the family once per year, and the Council had seen a year-on-year increase to families opting for EHE. Extra staff were required to support the increase in EHE, and additional posts would be required should more families choose to home educate.</p> <p>vii. There was a need to utilise permanent children’s homes, rather than using additional temporary children’s homes as they placed further pressures on the budget. The Commission was advised that the Council planned to appoint permanent staff to those homes, so as not to destabilise other permanent children’s homes by borrowing their staff.</p> <p>viii. There were additional costs associated with the use of agency or temporary staff, and savings on the expenditure could be made by having a full complement of permanent staff. The Commission were advised that there would be a reduction in costs to having a full complement of permanent staff as well as the Council having their own children’s homes over that of temporary homes.</p>	
<p>Recommendations:</p>	<p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p>
<p>a) That following discussion on the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill and the impending changes to Education Health and Care Plans, resulting in a potential lack of support and financial implications, Audit Committee are invited to look at the risks in further detail, and</p> <p>b) That an off-agenda update be provided to detail the cost difference between permanent staffing and agency staffing.</p>	<p>a) To provide assurance that the risks had been assessed.</p> <p>b) To demonstrate the financial savings of the Council being fully staffed instead of using agency staff.</p>

25

**SERVICE BASED PERFORMANCE MEASURES – 2025/2026
 QUARTER 1 (6)**

A. Campbell (Strategic Lead Improvement, Performance and Quality Service) attended the meeting to report the latest available service-based performance measures for 2025/2026 Quarter 1. The Officer provided an overview of the report and highlighted that

- i. There were now 813 children who were Electively Home Educated (EHE), with 61 of those children since the start of the new school year;
- ii. There had been an experience of dissatisfaction in the allocation of school places, which attributed to the rise in EHE;
- iii. The Council were working with schools to bring a focus on belonging and provide support to reintegrate children into the mainstream settings;
- iv. Data showed a downward trend in re-referrals made to Children’s social care which demonstrated interventions made had been effective;
- v. The level of need in early help and prevention services could now be targeted due to the data being reported;
- vi. There was an upward trajectory for Children’s Social Care Assessments being completed with the 45 work day timescale;
- vii. There had been a reduction in Children in Need plans, numbers were sustained for Child Protection plans and a slight increase in Looked After children;
- viii. Performance remained stable attributed to the level of support going in at the right time.

The Commission discussed:

- i. How the Council monitored children who were being home educated by parents to ensure they were receiving a good quality of education. The Commission were advised that the Attend framework was used to make sure there were opportunities to learn, to attempt to return children to the mainstream education setting or look at other alternatives, however the Council was under no legal duty if the family had chosen to home educate.
- ii. The disparity between the reasons that parents and schools had provided for why families had chosen to home educate and remove children from the mainstream setting.

- iii. What the category of domestic abuse covered within the referrals as there were also categories of physical and sexual abuse within the report. The Commission was advised that domestic abuse covered a large range of situations and that a full definition would be circulated off agenda.
- iv. The early intervention work showed positive results as those children would have been at risk otherwise.
- v. The Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) data showed good progress as there was a steady decline.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That an off-agenda update be provided to give the Commission a full definition of Domestic Abuse and what it covers.	a) To provide the Commission with a clear definition to understand the data within the report.

26	COMPLAINTS SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT (7)	
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T. Zvauya (Head of Safeguarding Standards) attended the meeting to provide the Commission with the annual report on Compliments, Complaints, MP, and Councillor Enquiries for April 2024 to March 2025. The Officer provided an overview of the report and highlighted:

- i. Children’s Services: There had been an increase in complaints received for Children’s Services, most of which were resolved at stage 1; 16 complaints were referred to the Ombudsman, of which 11 were rejected; There had been 104 compliments which was also a 6% increase; Learning from complaints and compliments was shared and used to inform and prioritise directorate wide practice, process and policy developments.
- ii. Learning and Skills: There had been a decrease in complaints received in relation to Learning and Skills, most of which were resolved at stage 1; 7 complaints were referred to the Ombudsman which were accepted for investigation; There had been 104 compliments which was a 142% increase; A tracker had been implemented and demonstrated a commitment to learning from complaints and embedded learning within the team and across the wider system.

The Commission discussed:

<p>i. The measures that had been implemented which resulted in a decrease in complaints. The Commission were informed that the decrease in certain areas could be linked to not accepting the complaint, the learning offer to ensure themes were tracked and linked, meeting the service areas to learn from the complaints and reflecting upon the work that had been undertaken.</p> <p>ii. How the increase in complaints received by Hull City Council compared to that of national statistics. The Commission was informed that nationally there had been an increase in complaints received. There was a national trend in communication issues such as people wanting more information or feeling like they had not been listened to.</p> <p>iii. The difference in issues that were covered under a corporate complaint and a statutory complaint. The Commission was advised that a statutory complaint was complaints linked to requirements of the Children’s Act and were made by the child or the birth parents of the child. The corporate complaints could be similar in nature and involve the extended family, or they could be linked to a Council policy issue.</p>

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That the report be noted.	a) N/A

27	HULL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP YEARLY REPORT – 2024-2025 (8)	
<p>L. Davidson (Head of Safeguarding Partnerships) and K. Durrant (Independent Chair, Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership) attended the meeting to present the Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report – 2024-2025.</p> <p>The Commission discussed:</p>		

- i. How the report was produced and the role of the independent scrutineer. The Commission was informed that a host of triangulated methods were used to gather feedback and bespoke work undertaken to ensure a review of the partnership arrangements and undertaken conversations on issues. The scrutineer was in all reviews to observe and challenge those who were not contributing.
- ii. The safeguarding risks associated with electively home educating (EHE). The Commission were informed that from a statutory perspective there was a challenge. Partnerships with community groups were key to cases where there were safeguarding concerns, to ensure someone had eyes on the child in question and could use the system to raise their issues.
- iii. The approach that was taken to mitigate the safeguarding concerns linked with children who were EHE. The Commission was informed that strategies included home visits and making arrangements to integrate children into youth clubs or other activities. The reasons why the child was not in school was analysed and there had been an increase in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), where parents did not believe the provides met the needs of their child and therefore elected for home education.
- iv. The concern that if a child, with safeguarding concerns, becomes EHE they are only required to receive 1 assessment per year. The Commission was informed that the law was clear it was a parental right to choose home education however the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill sought to increase the powers of the Council. At this time there was a small number with safeguarding concerns that were EHE.
- v. How learning from experiences had led to changes in the partnership working. The Commission were informed that parties they had contact with were asked to review their involvement, which was then analysed across the system to see how the partnership performed and what could be improved on. Once a change had been identified, it was reviewed to ensure it had been embedded to prevent any future issues occurring. Learning points would also be shared at multi-agency meetings and all reviews were published on Hull Collaborate Partnership’s website.
- vi. The next steps for the partnership over the coming year. The Commission was advised there would be a review of the national reforms, that include the Family First Partnership and, throughout November, there were multi-agency seminars which would provide further information and allow for partnership conversations.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That dates for the multi-agency seminars running throughout November 2025 be provided to Members of the Commission.	a) To provide the Commission with further information and the chance to undertake conversations with partners involved in safeguarding children.

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28	YOUTH SERVICES IN HULL & UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY (9)	
<p>R. Roberts (Strategic Lead for Early Help and Prevention) and D. Davis (Youth Work Manager) attended the meeting to provide an update on developments across youth services in Hull which included completed refurbishments, potential capital developments, Youth Work Week 2025, the CYPFS Youth Development Service Training Week and progress of the new National Youth Strategy. The officers provided an overview of the report.</p> <p>The Commission discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Ainthorpe Youth Centre had submitted a bid under The Better Youth Spaces Programme and had not yet received funding. The Commission were advised the other 3 bids had been successful and that once the Council had been informed about the Ainthorpe Youth Centre the Commission would be informed. ii. The activities taking place over Youth Work Week. The Commission was guided to 3.5 of the report which contained all the detail of the events taking place. iii. How the Mobile Youth Van would be setup and used throughout the city. The Commission was informed the van would be equipped with screens for presentations and gaming, awning for outside use and furniture, heated and lit, and equipment to suit young people's needs. It would be a focal point that would allow for access to youth work and a trusted adult in the community and would be situated where the demand required. Area teams would be involved alongside Ward Councillors to ascertain the locations that required youth services. It was further noted that it would take time to build trust and relationships, therefore it would be important to ensure there was consistency and not move the van on a regular basis. iv. How the gaps in provision were identified. The Commission was informed that a mapping exercise had taken place in the Area Teams to identify provisions in the community. This demonstrate the areas that were missing youth service provisions, which could be targeted and 		

<p>provided with the Mobile Youth Van's offer. There was a strong network of youth centres across the city and a high demand for the services.</p> <p>v. The future plans to further increase the youth service provision and address the demand. The Commission was informed that the National Youth Strategy could present future funding opportunities, and the voluntary community sector would be well placed to apply for that funding. The Council would ensure the city would make the most of the opportunity to make use of future funding.</p>	
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That the report be noted.	a) N/A

29	OUTCOME REPORT FROM YOUTH WORK EVENT – SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH YOUTH WORK – RECHING THEIR POTENTIAL – 10TH JULY (10)	
<p>R. Roberts (Strategic Lead for Early Help and Prevention) and D. Davis (Youth Work Manager) attended the meeting to provide an update on the outcomes from the event and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. There were over 200 professional and some very high-profile national speaker from central government and the national youth agency; ii. There was a full compliment of workshops linked to current issues that young people faced in the city; iii. The Portfolio Holder and the Hull Young Lord Mayor launched the Children and Young People's Plan; iv. Follow up work provided a steer for the next steps that included more networking events and opportunities to discuss and link together as a youth sector; v. Work has started with partners to develop a Hull Youth Alliance that brings people together to discuss key issues which would also help with the launch of the National Youth Strategy. 		

<p>The Commission discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. When the National Youth Strategy would be implemented. The Commission was informed that it had been planned for autumn, however it was expected the review would be extended and an announcement would be made for 2026/27. It was unlikely to be implemented during the 2025-26 financial year. 	
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That the report be noted.	a) N/A

30	CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILY SERVICES UPDATE (4)	
<p>P. Turner (Executive Director Children/Family Services/Deputy Chief Executive) attended the meeting to update the Commission on current/key issues and for members to identify matters to be considered and raise questions and issues that may lead to further work being undertaken. The Executive Director informed the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. A pilot had been commissioned alongside the Corporate Transformation team to engage with AI tools to help and support workers which would allow them to spend more time with families. ii. It had been confirmed that the Health Holidays Fund would continue for 3 more years. The Council submitted data for the summer 2025 programme which included 62000 participation opportunities, and a focus was now being placed on the winter programme and the future 3 years. iii. Work continued to enhance the services and facilities available at the Parks Family Hub to increase access to community resources. iv. The Hull Safeguarding Partnership reported a strengthening of the partnership. 		

- v. Individual officers and teams had been named finalists in national awards.
- vi. The Virtual School celebration was planned for 23rd October 2025.
- vii. Planning and nominations were open for the Blue Diamond Awards which celebrated the achievements of care-experienced young people and those supported by the Leaving Care and Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Teams (RAST).
- viii. The second Family First Partnership meeting was held with the Department for Education which highlighted Hull had made significant progress over the summer and was consistent in the approach to the data requests as other regional colleges.
- ix. Breast feeding rates had reached 49.1% in the last quarter.

The Commission discussed:

- i. How the rates of breast feeding were measured and the comparisons to demonstrate the improvements in the statistics. The Commission were informed that data was collected over 16 weeks following birth. Historically the breast-feeding rates were under 20%, and the increase could be attributed to the work of the family hubs.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That the update be noted.	a) N/A

31	YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY ENGAGEMENT GROUP FEEDBACK (11)	
P. Todd (Scrutiny Officer) submitted the report to update the Commission on the most recent outcomes and feedback from the Young People Scrutiny Engagement Group.		

The Commission welcomed the update and asked if there was a date for when the Enterprise Hub visit would take place. The Scrutiny Officer advised they would stay in contact with the Enterprise team to establish a suitable date once the building was ready. A discussion took place around the next meeting with Humberside Police, and it was advised that the police officer representative might have changed, therefore a follow up should take place to ensure it would still be Detective Superintendent Blackwood.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
a) That the Scrutiny Officer follow up with Humberside Police to confirm the representative for the next meeting of Young People’s Scrutiny.	a) To ensure the correct representative from Humberside Police attend’s the meeting of Young People’s Scrutiny.

32	CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION – OUTSTANDING ACTIONS (12)	
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P. Todd, Scrutiny Officer submitted the outstanding action list.

The Commission discussed the action list and agreed that the completed items be removed and the Scrutiny Officer follow up those actions that were still awaiting a response.

It was noted that the off-agenda update on elected home education generated further questions, and it was requested that the Scrutiny Officer pass on the information to H. O’Grady to respond during the agenda item at the December meeting of the Commission.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:

<p>a) That the Scrutiny Officer provide the Head of Access and Inclusion with the minutes of this meeting, off-agenda update and questions raised by the Commission to be responded to during the Elective Home Education agenda item scheduled for the December meeting.</p>	<p>a) To ensure the Members of the Commission are able to receive a details response on all concerns raised regarding Elective Home Education.</p>
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<p>33</p>	<p>REFERRAL REPORT (13)</p>	
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P. Todd, Scrutiny Officer submitted the referrals for consideration.

The Commission discussed the referrals and agreed how to progress them.

<p>Recommendations:</p>	<p>Reasons for Recommendations:</p>
<p>a) That an item be added to the work programme on Section 17 Payments for investigation and to provide assurance.</p> <p>b) That an item be added to the work programme on Direct Children’s Payments for investigation and to provide assurance.</p> <p>c) That an off agenda update be provided on food avoidance and what support might be available through SEND</p>	<p>a) To ensure the appropriate actions are being taken to address the audit risks, and what will be implemented in future to prevent the issues reoccurring.</p> <p>b) To ensure the appropriate actions are being taken to address the audit risks, and what will be implemented in future to prevent the issues reoccurring.</p> <p>c) To provide further detail on the support available.</p>

(Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Autism Services.	
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34	CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26 (14)	
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P. Todd, Scrutiny Officer submitted the draft work programme.

The Commission requested that an update be provided on the Family First Partnership in the New Year when further detail was available at a national level.

A further discussion took place around the policy documents and the review dates on the work programme. The Commission was informed that there was outdated information on the work programme, and the Scrutiny Officer would work with the Executive Director to update the documentation and update the Commission at the next meeting.

Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) That an item be added to the work programme, for the February meeting of the Commission, to provide an update on the Family First Partnership. b) That all policies are checked to ensure they are within their review period and an update provided to the next meeting of the Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To provide the Commission with detail on the change in legislation and how this impacts the Council. b) To ensure policies are up to date, and have been scrutinised where appropriate.

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