

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 15 December 2020

BY: Chief Social Work Officer

SUBJECT: Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2019/20

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report presents to Members the Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report for 2019/20. The report is attached at Appendix 1.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council is asked to consider the content of the 2019/20 Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The requirement that every local authority should have a professionally qualified CSWO is contained within Section 45 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1994. This report is prepared in line with the national guidance - The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer - published by the Scottish Government in 2016. Further, this report fulfils a statutory requirement for the CSWO to produce an annual report on the activities and performance of the social work service within East Lothian.

- 3.2 Given the workload implications of the pandemic, the government's chief social work advisor set out a requirement for this year's report to focus on the following areas:

- Governance and accountability arrangements
- Service quality and performance
- Resources
- Workforce
- COVID-19

- 3.3 The report reflects the strategic and operational delivery of services across children's (social work) services, justice social work, mental health social and adult social work services including social care. It provides an overview of the professional activity for social work and social care in East Lothian through the delivery of the statutory functions and responsibilities held by the Chief Social Work Officer.
- 3.4 The landscape for all Council Services will change over the coming years as a consequence of COVID-19 and statutory social work and social care will be required to adapt to ensure we support the recovery, rising demand and renewal associated with protecting and caring for our most vulnerable citizens and all those who are at risk in our communities. The impact of the pandemic on the health and social inequalities for the most vulnerable adults as citizens, carers and parents is significant, it is growing in magnitude and will last for a long time.
- 3.5 At the heart of the social work profession lies a commitment to enabling and supporting vulnerable individuals to make positive, sustainable changes to their lives to achieve the best outcomes for them, their families and communities as a whole.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct policy implications of this report. However, the report highlights the areas of practice, service delivery and policy that will require further review as the full impact of the pandemic on services becomes clearer.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – there are no financial implications arising from the report; however, it does refer to the financial challenges facing the delivery of social work and social care services.
- 6.2 Personnel - None
- 6.3 Other – None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Chief Social Work Officer Report 2019/20 attached at Appendix 1

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DATE	24 November 2020



East Lothian

**Chief Social Work Officer Annual
Report 2019/20**

Introduction

I am pleased to present the Chief Social Work Officer's annual report for 2019/20. The report provides a summary of social work and key social care activity, including key developments and information on statutory decisions made by the Chief Social Work Officer on behalf of the Council and Council services. The report is not intended to be exhaustive but gives an indication of trends, priorities, challenges and opportunities over the past year. In recognition of the arrival and impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, the report includes a summary of how our services have responded and adapted that go beyond the end of the reporting period, setting out some of the implications for service delivery and the workforce.

Our staff have worked incredibly hard to meet the challenges of fulfilling the social work task within the context of COVID, and I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to them for their commitment and dedication to protecting and improving the lives of the most vulnerable people in our East Lothian communities.

Judith Tait
Chief Social Work Officer

Section 1. Governance and Accountability

Overview of Governance Arrangements

The strategic direction for the role and contribution of social work and social care services in protecting and improving the wellbeing and outcomes of East Lothian residents sits within the context of community planning, and the integration of health and social care. **The East Lothian (community planning) Partnership Plan 2017-27** sets out its high level focus for: Reducing inequalities across our area; tackling poverty; and working to prevent problems - and acting quickly when problems start. **East Lothian Council's Plan 2017-22** and its vision, for *an even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy, that enables our people and communities to flourish* continued as the vehicle for delivering on the overarching objective of 'reducing inequalities within and across our communities'.

The Plan sets out the following strategic goals which will make the biggest impact in delivering these key themes and objectives:

- Reduce unemployment and improve the employability of East Lothian's workforce.
- Reduce the attainment gap and raise the attainment and achievement of our children and young people.
- Improve the life chances of the most vulnerable people in our society.
- Extend community engagement and decision making and increase community and individual resilience.

- Deliver transformational change and harness the opportunities technology offers in the provision of services.

1.1 In 2019, **East Lothian IJB published its second strategic plan 2019-22.** The vision for services remained the same, *to support all people in East Lothian to live the lives they want as well as possible, achieving their potential to live independently and exercising choice over the services they use.* The strategic objectives were updated below for the 2019-22 plan and those that are particularly relevant for social work and social care are focused on:

- Making health and social care services more sustainable and proportionate to need
- Early intervention and prevention
- Enabling people to have more choice and control
- Reducing health inequalities
- Providing care closer to home and in an integrated model
- New models of community provision which involve local communities and encourage less reliance on health and social care services

1.2 Social work services in East Lothian are delivered between East Lothian Council and East Lothian Integration Joint Board. Adult social work and social care services, including justice social work are delegated to the IJB and delivered and managed by the East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership services. Children and families social work services are managed and governed by the council and in June 2019, became part of a joint Education and Children's Services department. The role of **Chief Social Work Officer** was included in the post of Chief Operating Officer, Children's Services and is a full member of the Council's Management Team.

1.3 Social work and social care services play a vital role in championing and addressing the impact of poverty and inequality in the lives of vulnerable people and are well placed to inform the prevention and early intervention agenda that is embedded in the key strategic plans for East Lothian. Most social work functions take place within the context of joint operational working with colleagues within the H&SCP and council services and across key partner agencies including the third sector. The principle strategic partnerships that lead and direct the work to protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people are:

- East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC)
- East Lothian Children's Strategic Partnership (CSP)
- East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership (ELH&SCP)
- East Lothian Community Justice Partnership (CJP)
- MELDAP (Mid and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership)

- 1.4 **Role of CSWO in governance and accountability** The CSWO meets regularly with and reports to the council's chief executive. The CSWO attends East and Midlothian Critical Services Oversight Group (chief officer group) for public protection in an advisory capacity, and is a member of the EMPPC and sub-groups for performance and quality improvement and ICR/SCRs. The CSWO is a non-voting member of the IJB and is a member of the clinical and care governance committee. The latter provides an important opportunity for oversight and assurance of key service and practice achievements and risks across adult and justice social work services. The CSWO represents East Lothian at the Lothian and Borders MAPPA strategic oversight group.
- 1.5 As part of the response to the pandemic, the government raised the profile of the role of the CSWO in the enhanced governance and accountability arrangements for care home and care at home services. The CSWO for Midlothian attends the Lothian care home strategic oversight group on behalf of the four Lothian CSWOs. At an East Lothian level, the CSWO is part of the now thrice-weekly care home "huddle" in order to receive intelligence and contribute to discussions about the assurance and oversight of the quality of care home and care at home services during the pandemic. Weekly online meetings with the Care Inspectorate support the identification and assessment of service risks that might impact on the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people using regulated care services. In terms of public protection, the CSWO acts as the strategic lead for East Lothian in terms of child and adult support and protection, violence and women and girls and MAPPA. At the start of the pandemic, weekly meetings of strategic leads were implemented to provide oversight of key operational processes for protecting people and monitor data trends, including domestic abuse.
- 1.6 **Role of the CSWO in assuring social work practice.** As chief operating officer for children's services and CSWO, it is important to balance the challenge of maintaining sufficient objectivity in line management and budget decisions, alongside accountability for professional practice standards and the safety of service users. The people and financial impact of the pandemic on council and IJB services will test this balance further during the months to come. It is essential for the CSWO to have opportunities to have a "window into practice" in order to remain connected to the core business and standards of assessing and responding to risk and need for vulnerable people. This is achieved through:
- the role of agency decision maker endorsing decisions of the fostering and adoption panels;
 - authorising decisions about secure care placements and monitoring assessments and plans of young people whose liberty has been removed;
 - chairing senior officer resource panels and reviewing plans of children placed in external resources;
 - Implementation of the performance and care governance framework in children's services;

- Strengthening the arrangements for oversight of welfare guardianship applications;
 - Single Point of Contact for Contest: Prevent
 - Monitoring of MAPPA business and membership of MAPPA 3 meetings;
 - Member of ICR/SCR sub-group for public protection;
 - Principal counter-signatory for SSSC endorsements
- 1.7 Aside from MAPPA and ICRs/SCRS in adult support and protection, it is more challenging for the CSWO to have a direct “window into practice” across adult social work services where there are no line management responsibilities. However, the IJB chief officer fully recognises and supports the role of the CSWO in providing professional accountability for social work practice. Senior social work managers in adult services consult with the CSWO about practice issues. The role of lead social worker in adult services provides a formal link with adult services and (amongst others) deputises for the CSWO during annual leave commitments. The development of a governance framework for adult social work services was impacted by COVID but will provide an important central point for collating quality assurance and oversight evidence.
- 1.8 Regular meetings for social work managers across children’s, justice and adult services with the CSWO provide important opportunities to discuss cross-cutting themes, feedback from national meetings such as Social Work Scotland CSWO network and standing committees and an opportunity to reflect on practice dilemmas. Since the start of the pandemic, the frequency of these meetings has increased. They provide a supportive “space” for managers in recognition of the impact of the COVID restrictions on social work practice and the increased risks to vulnerable people of a reduced face to face service offer.

Section 2. Service Quality and Performance

Children’s (Social Work) Services

- 2.1 In 2019, the then Chief Executive Officer, Angela Leitch commissioned a two-phase “**vulnerable children’s project**” to conduct a detailed analysis of the trends in spending and causes of overspends from April 2017 and bench-mark performance and spend against other local authorities. The work was carried out within the context of the merger of children’s social work and education services and referenced the ongoing review of Additional Support for Learning (ASL). The context within which both these two key business areas operated were clear and pertinent to the children’s services overspend. Phase one made recommendations for change/improvement concluded in October 2019 and the full report and findings were accepted by the Council Management Team in November 2019. Phase Two would focus on implementing the recommendations and explore the services / approaches that are being successfully deployed elsewhere to prevent children needing to become accommodated and returning those in external placements.

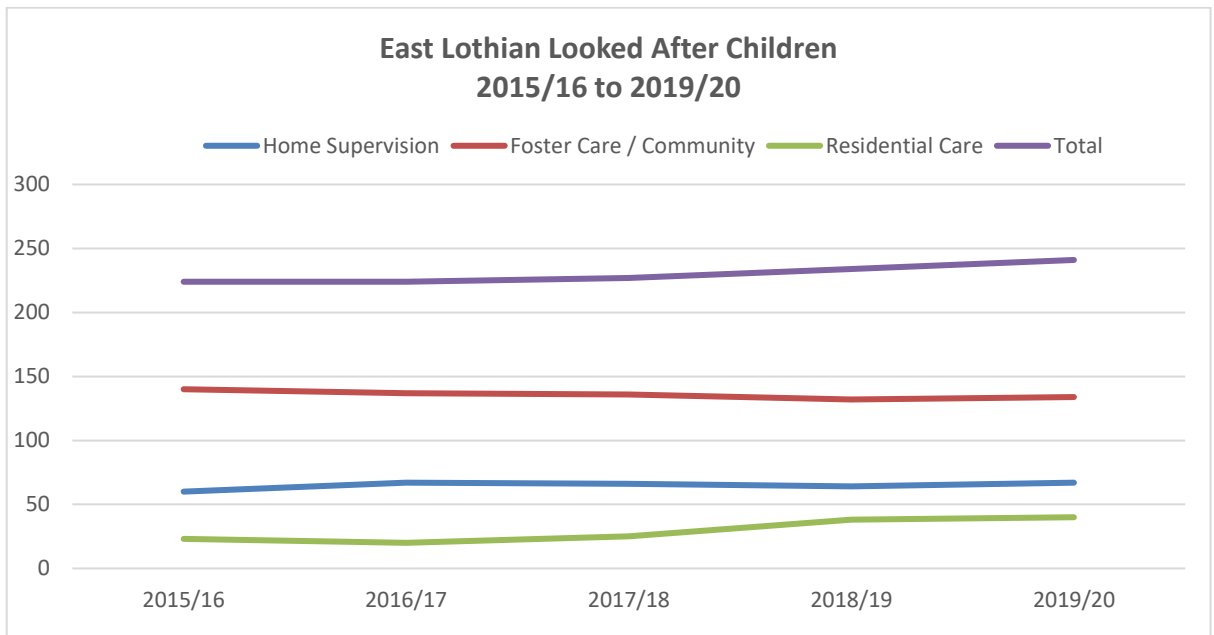
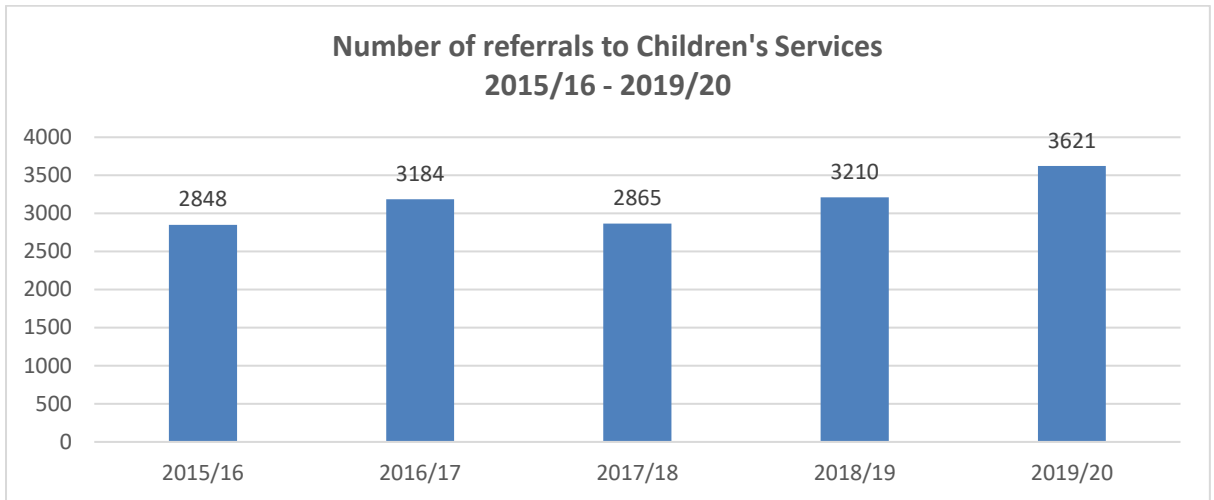
2.2 The main areas of financial and service pressure were clear within the context of continued increase in referral levels:

- *External Placements:* The biggest single issue impacting on the budget overspend in children's social work was the number of children and young people in external placements.
- *Foster carers:* In 2019 East Lothian approved 3 new foster carers but at the same time there were 9 foster carer terminations (due primarily to retirement and ill health) leading to a net loss of 6 foster carers. Terminations have been outstripping approvals for the last five years.
- *Staff:* There was a high staff turnover in children's social work where experienced workers were being replaced by less experienced workers and newly qualified workers.

2.3 Key findings recognised there was no single course of action that would redress the budget overspend immediately. East Lothian was behind the curve in relation to other authorities who had begun to alter practice and do things differently. The evidence from visits to, and engagement with other authorities was that it would take time and investment / re-direction in preventive resources to create the capacity to achieve sustainable changes to practice.

2.4 During the life of the project, work was already underway to target areas of practice and process that had emerged from the self-evaluation work carried out in 2018. Measures to strengthen the governance and oversight of decision making for individual children and young people in partnership with education were implemented throughout 2019/20. In addition the council supported the investment in additional resources through the cost reduction fund aimed at keeping children and young people within their families and their communities. The following section highlights key improvement work commenced in 2019/20.

Key performance and service developments



2.5 2019/20 was a record year for referrals – 3,621 – averaging 70 per week. This was a 13% increase on 2018/19 figure and presented a significant challenge for the service.

- There was an average of 241 looked after children during the year - a rate of 11.3 per 1,000 – well below the national average.
- However there was an average of 42 young people in residential care – a rate of 2.0 – well above the national average. East Lothian has 13 places in its residential units therefore 69% of young people requiring residential care were in external placements.

- 2.6 88 care experienced young people were receiving a service or support from the aftercare team. This was 84% of the total number of care experienced young people who were entitled to aftercare. The national average figure is 58%. Over 44% of those were in positive destinations (i.e. employment training or education) whilst the national average was 25%. The children's disability team was working with around 150 children and their families.

Early Intervention

- 2.7 2019 saw Olivebank child and family centre service look towards the implementation of the government's 1140hours of early learning. The nature of the service provided for the most vulnerable children, birth to school-age highlighted the need to review the role of Olivebank within East Lothian's early years "offer". The centre started to move into ante/perinatal work and worked alongside education colleagues towards moving older children into mainstream school nursery provision to strengthen the transition to primary 1. In 2019, **Olivebank child and family centre** was included within the scope of an Education Scotland inspection into family learning and received excellent feedback. It was an important learning experience for all involved.
- 2.8 As a response to the significant rise in external residential placements in 2018/19, children's services developed and implemented a range of new and strengthened approaches and additional services during 2019/20. Children's services worked in partnership with Children 1st to redirect and augment the existing **Family Group Decision Making** service to identify family-based solutions, support child-centred family plans and reduce the need for children and young people to be accommodated out with their family network. This was further enhanced by seconding a senior practitioner to work within the service and help to embed the expectations and aspirations of this way of working. Consideration of FGDM became a mandatory part of decision-making for placements. Referral rates increased significantly and there is good evidence of successful outcomes and placements prevented.
- 2.9 2019 saw continued challenges for the **assessment hub**, the "front door" to the service. The year on year rise in referrals and limited early intervention resources available to schools led to a backlog of work and the team being unable to intervene as effectively or promptly. A variety of changes to process and structure were tested during the year, alongside with partnership work with colleagues in universal services to re-visit our approach to GIRFEC. Whilst COVID has brought many challenges for the delivery of children and families social work services, it has highlighted the opportunities to strengthen the relationships and the "reach" of children's services into universal services to support early recognition and effective response to children with emerging needs. As the front door of the service, the assessment hub have been working with the contact centre and education colleagues to make sure that we have the correct tariff of work coming in for statutory services. Referrals from police have been very high with domestic violence being a particular area of increase in referrals. East Lothian has invested in "**safe and together**" as a supportive way of working with survivors of domestic abuse. Working with professional

colleagues regarding the level of and number of referrals coming through to Children's Services is ongoing.

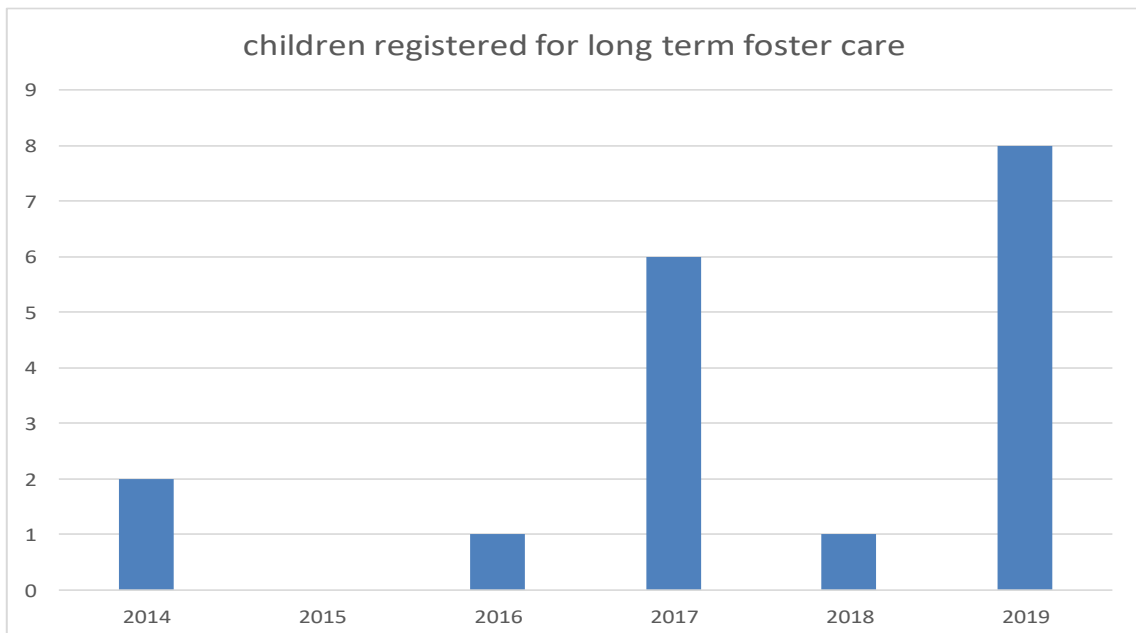
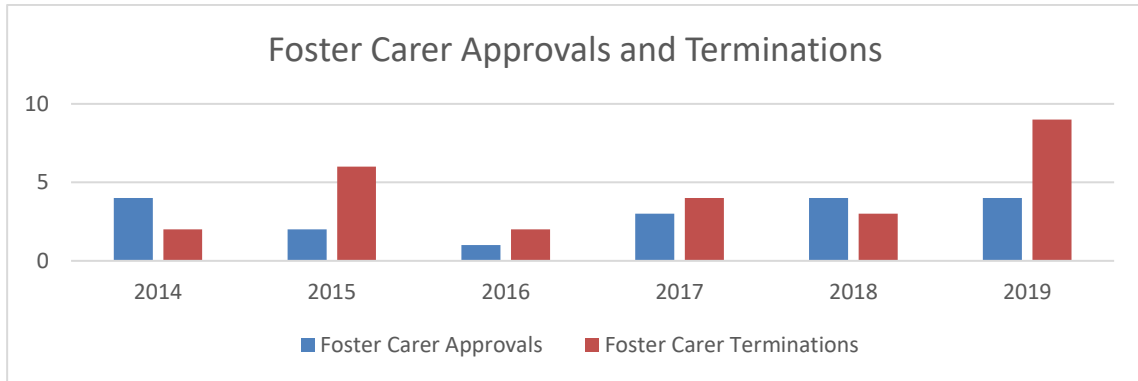
- 2.10 The service launched the “**Prevent and Return**” project with a dedicated officer as the lead. The overall aim of ‘prevent and return’ is to enable children and young people to remain with their families and or communities where appropriate. The initial focus was on identifying and supporting looked after young people to return to East Lothian from external placements. This project has enabled multi-agency partners to have continued oversight of all children and young people in external placements and ensure children and young people’s plans are outcome and future focused. The ‘Prevent and Return’ approach encourages workers to maximise the use all third sector supports in facilitating a return to East Lothian or preventing accommodation. The long term success of the project is reliant on wider service developments including ‘intensive family support’ and foster carer recruitment. However, there is now a more systematic approach to returning Children and Young People to their East Lothian Community. Within the first eight months of the project, ten young people returned from external placements.

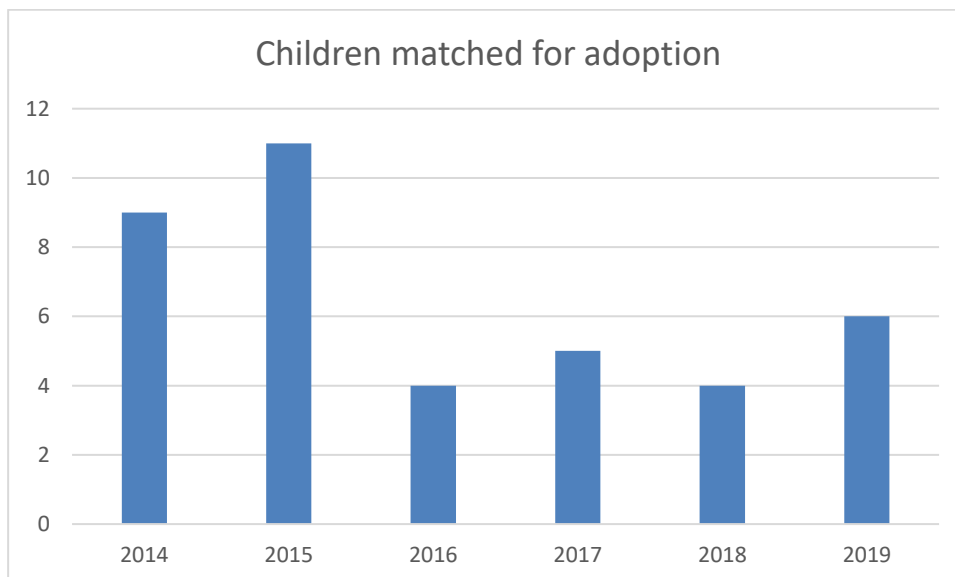
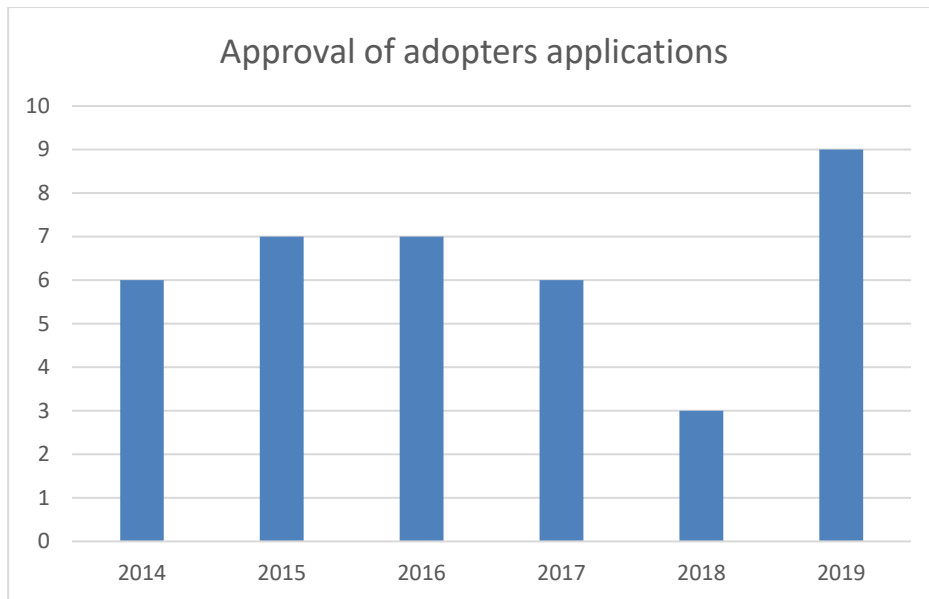
Assessment, Intervention and Review

- 2.11 Joint decision-making arrangements required to access resources were reviewed and strengthened to promote both alternative and creative solutions for children. This included the option of flexible personal budgets to support family plans. 2019 saw the full implement an enhanced **Independent Reviewing Officer** service with 2.6 FTE staff to review children subject to child protection measures and those who are looked after. This service has continued to develop over the past 12 months and the IRO’s play a key role in improving quality and performance through support to staff with assessments, file audits and providing a critical friend role to team leader colleagues.
- 2.12 As one of the last local authorities to be supported by the **PACE programme** (Permanence And Care Excellence) managers are continuing to track timescales for children achieving permanence and have continued to make improvements in this area of practice. An improved system for joint work with legal services for advice and tracking children’s journeys and the permanence consultation group continues to support practitioners and ensure progress of children’s timescales. We have improved our chronologies both in content and how we use these as working documents.
- 2.13 Managers have transformed the **Kinship Care Service** with a clearer referral system, assessment team and crucially a support service. We have been much more proactive with finance around Kincare. Tracking this monthly and ensuring we don’t fall into huge back payments so that forecasting can be as accurate as possible. There continues to be a need to make changes in this area of service in terms of policy guidance, ensuring agreements are completed timely and linking in with continuing care policy. We also hope to have a wider social media presence and grow this opportunity for working in a different way.

- 2.14 Specialist **Youth Justice** Workers continued to work with young people with offending behaviours. The emphasis has shifted markedly towards early intervention and prevention. This aligns to Scottish Government strategy of de-criminalising children's behaviour where possible and appropriate and supports the development of creative ideas for diversionary measures, including Early Effective Intervention (EEI). The quality of youth justice assessments and interventions continues to be high. However, the service recognises there is room for improvement in the timing of these interventions commencing and this will be a priority in 2020/21. During 2019/20, the groundwork was completed for the implementation of the **Youth Crime Oversight Group** - a multi-agency professional group that will focus on young people giving rise to significant concern about their behaviour and safety in the community. In recognition of the complex needs of a small number of young people with high risk behaviours, including sexually harmful behaviours, the service has increased capacity in the use of specialist risk assessment and risk management planning meetings.
- 2.15 **The 15+ team** engaged with more than 80 young people receiving a statutory aftercare service during 2019/20. Significant improvements were achieved in the capacity of accommodation options available for care experienced young people. Supported accommodation for care leavers increased with the funding for **My Place**, a joint housing and social work innovative supported accommodation for care leavers, focusing on what makes a house feel like a home and somewhere they belong. The Rock Trust were awarded the contract to support this project.
- 2.16 The extension to **North High Street flats** was opened and began providing greater support for young people leaving care. Housing and social work negotiated that care leavers would have 2 spaces in the Haddington New Horizons supported accommodation unit. Increased funding to With You provided additional supported tenancies in Edinburgh. This led to the development of the 15+ Housing and Support Panel, bringing all partners together to make referral decisions for these resources and allow for creative collaboration to meet the housing needs of this group. Despite the increase in local options, the provision of suitable and appropriate accommodation was not available for all of our care leavers in 2019, with many spending considerable periods in bed and breakfast, in breach of the 1995 Act.
- 2.17 As a result of the additional statutory duties to care leavers introduced with the 2014 Act, the throughcare/aftercare service has struggled to meet demand. This impacts on the quality and timeliness of transition planning for care leavers. 2019/20 started to embed **Continuing Care** as a clear pathway for young people. The financial implications of what is a laudable and important commitment to care leavers has been well documented but remain a significant challenge to the service.
- 2.18 The **Fostering Service** continued the recruitment campaign launched in 2018/19. There have been successes, with a steady stream of interest and real commitment within the team to support high quality assessments. However the numbers recruited only replaced those carers retiring or leaving, rather than

grow our own fostering community. The introduction of emergency foster care approval arrangements introduced as part of the Coronavirus legislation has brought new people into the service. The numbers of children and families requesting post adoption support continued to grow, as the complexities of children placed for adoption increased.





2.19 As discussed in last year's CSWO report, the **Children's Disability Service** developed a revised co-produced approach to assessing and allocating resources for children. Implementation of the new system has been very successful, with all full S23 and carer's assessments discussed at the multi-disciplinary panel to agree eligibility, use the tool to score which supports the allocation of personal budgets that are fair and equitable. The introduction of *Proportionate S23 and Carer Assessments* means the team were able to reach more families and requiring less staff resource as these can be agreed and authorised by Team Leader which reduces waiting time for support planning. Improvements to reviewing arrangements of support plans has resulted increased the frequency of reviews and the consistency of threshold for support planning.

- 2.20 **Lothian Villa**, our care home for young people was inspected by the Care Inspectorate in April 2019, receiving evaluations of “Excellent” for the quality of care and support provided to our young people and the quality of staffing. The Lothian Villa service is provided across two houses, offering high standards of care to 13 young people. During 2019/20, residential staff offered increased levels of enhanced outreach support to support fragile family situations and help keep young people at risk of care within their family homes.
- 2.21 During 2019/20, children’s services management group continued to develop and refine the **Performance and Care Governance Framework**. This brings together key performance and activity data, measures of children and young people’s involvement in their assessments and plans, qualitative information emerging from complaints, the development of a systematic audit schedule and learning from single and multi-agency reviews. Quarterly review meetings provide an effective opportunity for the interrogation of data and appropriate challenge and support between peers.

Corporate Parenting

- 2.22 The **East Lothian Champions Board** provides a platform for Care experienced young people to have their voice heard and influence positive changes to policy and practice with the care system. Achievements within 2019/20 included a successful trip to Columba 1400 in Skye where the champions completed a five day leadership programme. The champions were also joined by some of the ‘ambassadors for change’ where they explored the commitments of the Ambassador’s to sustaining the East Lothian Champions Board. In 2019, the champs board also worked closely with the virtual head teacher for care experienced young people and influenced some of the project activities being delivered through the care experience attainment fund.
- 2.23 In January 2020, the champions facilitated a successful consultation event with the Care experienced community. ‘Make Yourself Heard’ aimed to consult with and celebrate care experienced young people. It was run by East Lothian Council and Who Cares? Scotland with funding from ‘In Control’ (a charity organisation which supports young people with disabilities and additional needs to be included have more control in the decisions in their lives). Representatives from the local police, the NHS, ELC’s social work, education and housing departments, and In Control, came to ask the children and young people specific questions that would help improve their services in relation to care experienced people across East Lothian. This celebration of care and commitment to improving services had special significance as it was held just two days after the launch of the [Care Review’s ‘The Promise’](#).



2.24 In 2019, the Champions Board was successful in securing two additional years funding from the Life Changes Trust. The funding continues to covers the staffing costs for two part time care experienced participation assistants and one part time development worker post. Life Changes Trust funding will end at the end of March 2021. The champs board is now faced with the challenge of securing ongoing funding and are working closely with East Lothian Corporate Parents to identify possible funding sources.

2.25 For 2019/20, the Champs Board identified 7 priority areas for action in order for care- experienced children and young people to have better outcomes in life. The priority areas included:

1. Better outcomes in education
2. Improved Housing support and housing options
3. Improved mental health
4. Keeping loved ones together- improved contact arrangements with family and friend and keeping families together
5. Improved aftercare support
6. Better relationships with police
7. Better understanding of benefits and support to manage money

These priorities will be developed and incorporated into the new corporate parenting plan 2020-23.

2.26 **Key Risks to service delivery and areas for improvement**

- Reduce referrals and the demand for social work service – *ensure the strategic approach to preventing Violence Against Women and Girls and domestic abuse reduces the incidence*
- Reduce numbers of children and young people becoming looked after – *ensuring the GIRFEC response across universal services is effective in*

identifying need and taking prompt action to reduce the need for targeted services

- Lack of foster placements – *a fostering recruitment strategy is in place with a rolling programme to recruit foster carers. Creative partnership working and a high profile and widely supported communication strategy is essential.*
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – *we have limited controls possible for those” spontaneous arrivals”. However, the proposed national transfer scheme will present additional resource and financial pressure.*
- Emergency accommodation for young people. *Increased housing options are required to eradicate the need for B&B*
- Increase in continuing care – *positive for young people, but impacts on an already pressured group of foster carers.*
- Transitions policy and protocol for young people into adult services
- Review of policies and procedures to update in light of changes to national policy, strategy and legislation.

Justice Social Work Services

2.27 Key performance and activity data

Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
CPOs (imposed – all requirements)	166	153	141
CPOs – number of months for supervision	1271	1271	1287
CPOs – number of hours for unpaid work	13,614	14,812	13,123
CJSWRs – number of reports requested	268	222	218
DTTOs – number of Orders imposed	17	19	15
Statutory Throughcare – individuals in custody	37	30	46
Statutory Throughcare – individuals in the community	25	27	18
Voluntary Throughcare – number of individuals supported	41	27	24
Diversion – inputs provided	34	33	35

2.28 In November 2019, the service negotiated an agreement with City of Edinburgh justice social work service undertake **Bail Supervision Assessments** on our behalf at no additional cost. This now provides a

Supervised Bail Service to anyone aged 18 years or older, with additional funding of £4,800 from Scottish Government due to this increased activity.

- 2.29 The service continues to provide an in-house **Voluntary Throughcare** service, which allows the service to direct provision to those in greatest need. An information sharing protocol with the Scottish Prison Service was finalised in March 2019 giving managers full access to admissions and release data. Justice social work also provide a service to those on remand (untried prisoners) where appropriate, with specific focus on those fully committed (three + months).
- 2.30 The numbers of **Community Payback Orders** has continued to decline since the closure of Haddington Sheriff Court on 01/02/2015. Justice Social Work Services continue to offer the full range of requirements, however the Courts have mainly used unpaid work/other activity and supervision, with programme, conduct and compensation requirements featuring less frequently.
- 2.31 Delivery of statutory **Throughcare** has remained relatively stable, with an average of 30-40 individuals in custody with 25-35 in the community, subject to statutory oversight.
- 2.32 **Presumption Against Short-term Sentence** was introduced in July 2019 with the presumption that sentences of 12 months or less will not be imposed and community disposals will be imposed in their stead. It was anticipated that there would be a 7.5% increase in community business – this has not yet been noted in East Lothian but we are prepared for the expected increase in complexity such individuals present.

The implementation of the Outcome Star was embraced by Justice Social work staff. This will enable the service to measure and demonstrate the effectiveness of social work interventions and report on the outcomes for the individual in terms of what is important *to* them along with what is important *for* them. Further development of this approach is a priority for 20/21.

Quality Assurance

- 2.33 An audit of Community Payback Orders was undertaken in July 2019 and identified key areas for improvement which have been highlighted and built into the service plans. How Good Is Our Service was facilitated and supported by organisational development and will be progressed to practitioners once current lockdown has ended as the management section was completed in full. In March 2020 just prior to lockdown, the service was ready to launch a self-evaluation programme which would incorporated case file audits, quality assurance documentation and practice evaluations, alongside PRD and developmental Team Meetings. This will be further progressed in 2020/21.
- 2.34 In 2019/20, managers commissioned an externally facilitated evaluation of the unpaid work/other activity service. It highlighted areas of good practice, specifically around our customer-facing activities but also highlighted areas for

improvement including updating aspects of our service provision and increasing the capacity to offer 'other activity'.

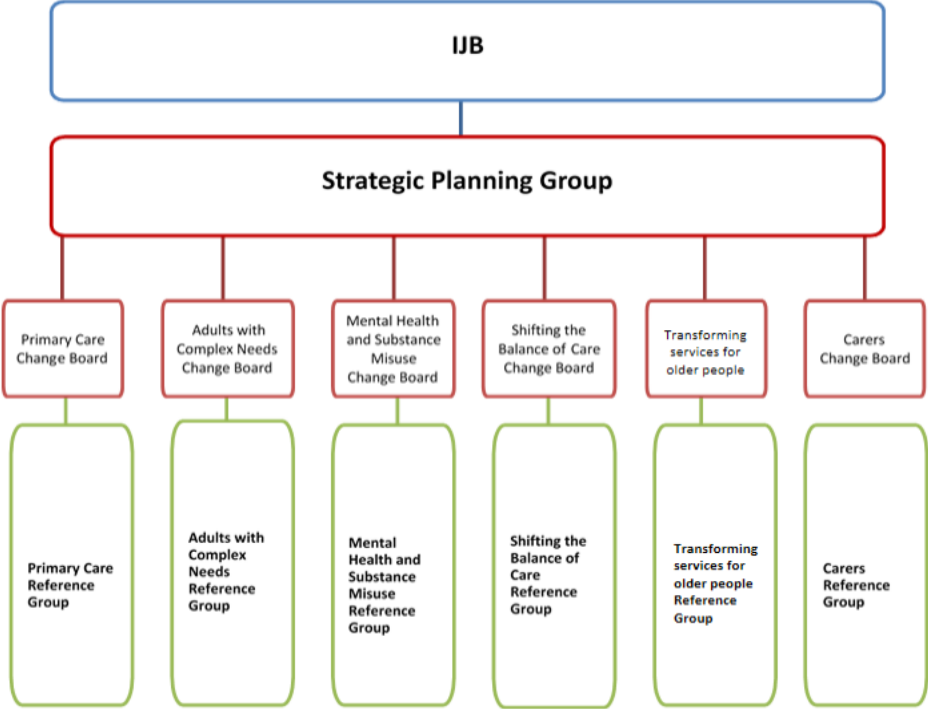
- 2.35 MAPPA Level 1 Audits are completed every six months and they highlight that justice social work staff are working within stated guidelines and promoting good partnership working with Police Scotland colleagues. From the start of the pandemic, the justice manager has provided regular MAPPA oversight reports to the CSWO. In addition, an assessment of the impact of the COVID restrictions on the safe delivery of the justice social work service was developed and regularly updated.
- 2.36 Four Serious Incident Reviews were completed and submitted to the Care Inspectorate in 2019/20. The initial analysis was deemed suitable in each case and managers were not required to undertake a Comprehensive Review. Partners in Midlothian also completed SIRs and arrangements have been made for a joint MAPPA-led 'Learning Event' – scheduled for May 2020 but has been rescheduled to October 2020 due to the lockdown. The event will focus on SIRs as well as Initial Case Reviews and Serious Case Reviews across Scotland – it will be an opportunity to share best practice and learning.
- 2.37 Learning from multi-agency reviews: an SCR identified that the perpetrator had shared mental health concerns during a period of unpaid work but the workers did not have the appropriate training to progress the concerns confidently. This led to a review of the training needs of unpaid work supervisors relating to their responsibilities for child protection, protection of vulnerable adults and to address violence against women and girls.

Community Justice Partnership

- 2.38 East Lothian community justice partnership requested, with the support of the Care Inspectorate, to undertake a supported and validated self-evaluation. Scheduled activities took place between October 2019 and February 2020. The self-evaluation focussed on three specific quality indicators; "planning and delivering services in a collaborative way", "effective use and management of resources" and "leadership of strategy and direction". This work was completed by the entire CJP but was exceptionally well supported by ELHSCP's Justice Social Work team. The evaluation consisted of several months of evidence gathering followed by a comprehensive review and assessment of the services offered against the standards of each quality indicator.
- 2.39 The self-evaluation was well received by the care inspectorate who noted a strong commitment to collaborative working and to developing a well-informed outcome improvement plan. They recognised that East Lothian had examples of effective services being delivered through the collaborative use of resources and agreed with our view that the initial implementation of the community justice agenda had been slowed by changes in senior personnel. The self-evaluation informed an action plan which partners will progress in 2020/21.

Adult Social Work and Social Care

2.40 During 2019/20, the health and social care partnership continued to refine its management structures, building on the learning since the inception of the partnership. The focus has been on maximising opportunities for integrated and aligned service delivery and delivering better outcomes for people. This included re-aligning adult social work service and OT services. The planning structure is supported by change boards that represent the key strategic priorities.



Adult social work activity data	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
Referrals	7,323	7,673	8,031	Full year
Assessments	3,985	3,522	3,094	Full year
Care at home hours delivered	21,441	21,490	20,129	Final week of year
Care at home clients	1,353	1,344	1,344	Final week of year
Residential clients	648	652	674	Final week of year
Reviews	1,156	1,237	1,416	Full year

Self-directed Support

2.41 The professional social work task is to make an assessment of risk and need and work alongside people who need services, to ensure the plan for intervention promotes and protects their independence within the context of

risk and vulnerability. Within the context of COVID and the challenge of balancing the protection of health with the protection of choice and control, it is vital that we remain committed to these principles.

- 2.42 The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 was implemented on 1 April 2014. The legislation and national strategy were designed to encourage significant changes to how services are provided; to give people more say in decisions about local services and more involvement in designing and delivering them. It was based on fundamental principles of participation; dignity; involvement; informed choice; and collaboration and further principles of innovation, responsibility and risk enablement that were added subsequently. Social care should be provided in a way that gives people choice and control over their own lives and which respects and promotes human rights.
- 2.43 In 2019, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership was one of six partnership areas to receive a joint thematic review of the implementation of self-directed support by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland. Overall this was a positive review with many strengths identified¹

Care Inspectorate Findings

- Supported people consistently experienced good outcomes that had a demonstrably positive impact on their lives. Staff were having good conversations that delivered choice and control to the majority of supported people and unpaid carers
- Many supported people experienced good conversations and were afforded choice and control over their care and support.
- Community capacity building projects were helping to develop alternative, community-based networks of support and there was good collaboration with carers' agencies, technology enabled care and community networks of support all designed to further embed a self-directed support approach.
- Referrals for support were screened effectively through developing personal outcome focussed arrangements and supported people were being well informed about their eligibility for services. Assessments were of a good quality and proportionately reflected the needs for the majority of supported people. Refreshed delegated financial authority arrangements were in place and working well.
- The partnership had effectively communicated and engaged its stakeholders and promoted more flexible commissioning strategies. Front line managers welcomed having greater delegated authority and this had resulted in increased transparency and accountability of decision making.

- 2.44 Areas for improvement were identified including recording and reporting outcomes for supported people; helping supported people to better understand the options and benefit from advocacy; use of management and performance information to evidence the impact of the work; and the need to further embed the principles across health services and in all aspects of strategic planning. Progress against these are reported through the clinical and care governance committee.

¹¹ <https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/5133/Self-directed%20support%20in%20East%20Lothian%20June%202019.pdf>

TOTAL UPTAKE FOR EACH OPTION	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
All Option 1 (Direct Payment—service user or carer selects and arranges services out of an agreed personal budget)	112	126	126
All Option 2 (Service-user chooses provider, but ELHSCP or other agency manages budget)	98	196	176
All Option 3 (ELHSCP selects and arranges support for the service-user)	845	831	908
All Option 4 (included in Options 1, 2 and 3) (A mixture of options)	129	151	203
TOTAL UPTAKE FOR WHERE PEOPLE SELECT ONE OPTION ONLY	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Option 1 only	36	72	58
Option 2 only	45	92	99
Option 3 only	716	687	785
Option 4 (mixed)	129	151	203
TOTAL CLIENTS	926	1002	1145

Supporting carers in East Lothian – 2019/20



14.5% ↗ increase in adult carers accessing support through COEL

22% ↗ of carers in East Lothian are known to COEL

£580,000 ↗ gain for COEL carers on benefits over 6 months

87 ↗ young carers supported by East Lothian Young Carers

2.45 2019/20 was focused on implementing the East Lothian Carers Strategy with the development of an action plan to guide activity over the next few years. The work continues to be led by the Carers Change Board that also directs the use of the additional funding provided by the Scottish Government towards increasing support available to carers. We are currently in year two of the 5 year increase in funding. Key developments included:

- Adult Carer Support Plans (ACSP) and Young Carer Support Plans are now embedded within staff practice prompting good conversations with carers. Creative practice is clearly evident within the support plans from Children's Services.
- The majority of the Carers Act funding for 2019/20 has again been passed directly to our local carers organisations. Funding has been used for a variety of purposes with organisations increasing their staffing with the aim of improving the identification of carers but also their capacity to respond to increasing demand on their services as more carers are identified.
- Children's services have been working closely with schools to raise awareness of young carers. A new young carer referral pathway was developed and to date 80% of Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers have been briefed on how young carers can be referred for services.
- East Lothian Young Carers continue to work with schools to raise awareness and are offering lunchtime drop in sessions for young carers at Preston Lodge High School and Ross High School. Places in Young carers club have been increased to provide more young carers with access to breaks from caring.
- The ELHSCP website has been re-designed and a new carers page has been developed
- A review of advocacy was initiated in 2019/20 and will continue in 20/21. An additional 30k was allocated to the three advocacy providers to allow them to provide additional support. Adults with autism, adults with physical disabilities and adults with substance misuse issues were highlighted for the focus for this funding.
- Implementation of prepaid cards supports flexibility over choice and spend.
- Carers' views have been represented through continued engagement (Big Breakfast 2017 event, Life Changes Trust event) and in 2019/20 carers have been asked for their views on how and where they would like the Partnership to commission carer services. The carers change board also includes representation by the IJB carer representative.
- The Carers procurement process is currently underway. Engagement with carers will determine how carers want their services to look and where funding would be best directed. Carers will continue to have flexibility as to how they purchase their services through individual budgets through the use of the pre- paid cards.
- COEL have also set up a new counselling service for carers. Although the service is in its initial stages, the plan is to develop capacity within this further through the recruitment of volunteer counsellors and trainees.

- COEL increased the capacity of their parent carer support service by making this post full time in 2019. This is in response to a continued increase in referrals from parent carers to the service.

2.46 **Franks Law** was implemented in May 2019 and briefing and training provide to all assessors. People who were being charged for services were written to outlining the changes in their charge as a result of Franks Law. From 1st April 2019 workers were required to clearly detail a service users personal and non-personal care needs and total these separately in support plans in order to ensure accurate purchasing and charging. They also advised self-funders under the age of 65, or their family, of their entitlement to FPC/FPNC payments, and of the need to declare FPC/FPNC payments to the DWP.

2.47 A number of new approaches were developed during 2019/20:

- With winter monies the service developed 7 day working for social work to facilitate hospital discharge. This ran for 12 weeks and offered important learning about flexible options for service delivery.
- A further test of change was the allocation of social workers to specific wards in our local East Lothian Community Hospital. This provided a main point of contact, allowed effective relationships to develop with ward staff, and with families. This model has continued throughout the year.
- There was collaboration with ihub on the design opportunities and commissioning models for community support.
- Implementation and review of the Charging Appeals Panel
- Agreement to move Management of Client Funds from an externally purchased service (ICMS) into an internal service. (This is now starting but the decision was made in 2019/20).
- Implementation of regular “council officer” meetings to provide learning and support for staff involved in the work who might sit within different teams; bi-monthly peer auditing of ASP cases; and enhanced management oversight of ASP work, monitoring all live cases and identifying risks/challenges.

Community and Day Services

2.48 2019/20 saw continued pressure on **Care at Home Services**, with capacity unable to meet demand. Refinements to the allocation processes led to reduced travel time for providers and improved efficiency in service delivery. An internal audit completed audit of directly provided homecare service completed in February 2020, made a number of recommendation for improvement of the service. These included improvements to rotas, reduction in travel time, service to improve adherence to GDPR and Data Protection. The overall structure of Homecare is also being considered and closer links to Hospital to Home services are established. The improvement actions will be included in next year’s report.

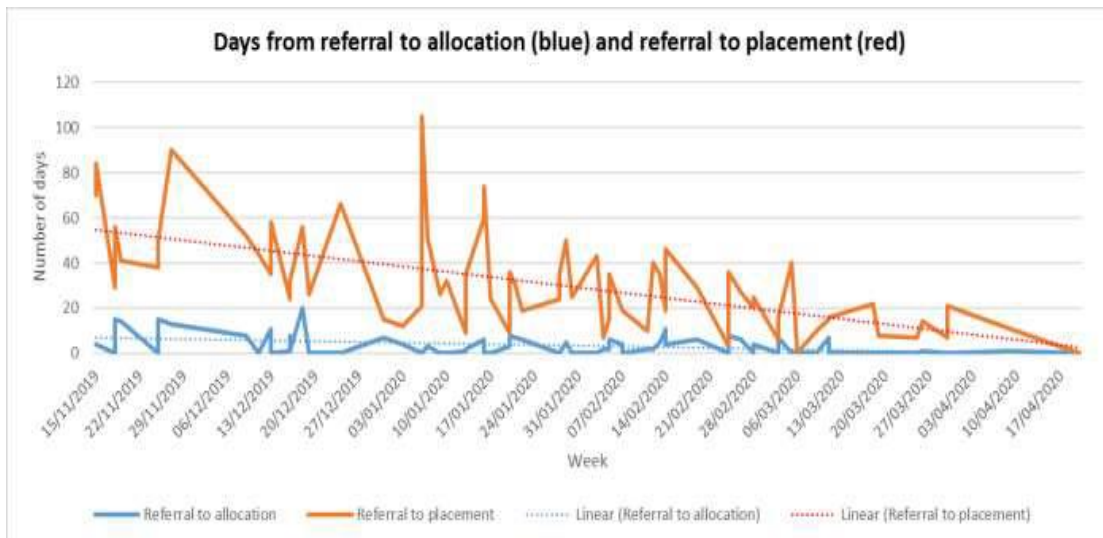
2.49 All **day services** were inspected and action plan agreed in January 2020. Of the 10 building-based centres, one centre has decided to longer provide services in East Lothian. As a result of the inspection which reported in late 2019 a number of recommendation were put in place to improve services across the county. These recommendations have now been superseded by Covid-19 Legislation and the partnership is reviewing its approach to day services.

The Care Home Assessment and Review Team (CHART)

<p>There are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17 care homes in East Lothian• 674 placements funded by East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership• 246 new placements in 2019 alone including 160 care home placements from hospital.• A further 13 people were returned home supported by Home First

2.50 The Care Home Assessment and Review Team comprises a team of social workers dedicated to supporting people to access the most appropriate community support to meet their needs when they are leaving hospital. They support complex discharge planning, through person-centred assessments that take into account wider social and family circumstances, and information from their family, friends, Power of Attorney, and others who support the person. Recommendations may include the type of support that is required on discharge or potential placement in a residential or nursing care home where a return home is not possible. CHART also upholds Adult Support and Protection legislation, including robust investigation of concerns or complaints, and regular reviews and monitoring of placements to ensure individuals receive a good quality of service. This also feeds into the Best Value process.

2.51 CHART also has a wide-ranging role in monitoring and evaluating care homes in East Lothian. It is the team’s aim to see people able to access their care home place as soon as possible as safely as possible. The table below shows that they have made a significant impact on shortening the length of time between the time a person is referred for allocation and their referral to a placement.



2.52 The Team is the point of contact for any incidents within care homes, operating a ‘duty’ system to deal with immediate concerns, including any Adult Protection issues. A Link Social Worker role has been developed for all East Lothian care homes, improving communication between providers and the HSCP. Where necessary, and guided by the Public Protection Office, the Team takes a lead role in Large Scale Investigations within care homes across East Lothian. In 2019-20, there was an average of 30 care home incidents and one Adult Protection investigation per month.

Care Homes for Older People

2.53 The Care Inspectorate carried out an unannounced inspection of Crookston Care Home, one of East Lothian’s three directly provided services in December 2019, maintaining evaluations of very good for supporting wellbeing and care planning. Inspectors reported that people were happy with their care and support. Relatives told them that the home keeps them well informed about their loved one and staff were always kind towards them when they visited. Eskgreen and The Abbey care homes for older people were also evaluated as providing very good and good support for wellbeing and care planning, maintaining or exceeding inspection findings from previous years.

....And the Care Inspectorate officers were particularly impressed with the work of staff to ensure its residents could vote. The report said: “We visited the service in the run up to a General Election and could see that residents were actively supported to vote and exercise their citizenship rights.”

Supported Housing

2.54 Adult Services, in partnership with council services secured and developed a core and cluster development for supported living in the Prestonpans area. This cluster of accommodation now supports five individuals with shared on-site support, including an overnight response service. This model of care is

enabling a more efficient use of our valuable staff resources and allows us to support more individuals to live independently in the community. H&SCP staff continue to work in partnership with colleagues in council services to identify further opportunities to expand this model of care and support.

Services for People with Learning Disability

2.55 ELHSCP in partnership with NHS Lothian and housing provider Castlerock Edinvar secured a property in Haddington which is being developed to provide a residential short breaks service for people with complex needs. NHS Lothian provided funding to refurbish the property, inside and out, to deliver a bespoke care environment. This service will provide opportunities for short breaks for 2 or 3 people at a time plus will give us the option to provide emergency short term accommodation for an individual as circumstances demand, rather than pursue unnecessary hospital admissions. This service will open in 2020/2021.

Shared Lives East Lothian

2.56 Shared Lives East Lothian recruits and supports Shared Lives Carers who work on a self-employed basis. The Shared Lives Carers provide an alternative form of care and/or support for adults with complex needs where the Shared Lives Carers use their homes as a resource, giving people the opportunity to engage in family and community life. Shared Lives arrangements are set up and supported by Shared Lives East Lothian and the care and accommodation people receive is provided by ordinary individuals, couples or families in the local community. Individuals and their Shared Lives carers enjoy shared activities and life experiences. The types of care or support that can be provided are:

- long-term accommodation and support
- short breaks/respice
- day time support.

2.57 The people who can make use of Shared Lives arrangements are aged over 16 and have a specific support need that may be associated with a learning disability, physical disability, sensory impairment, autism, age and/or mental health. People may use the service if they have had a social work assessment that identifies support needs that we are likely to be able to meet. People referred to the service often have difficulty living on their own or need support to remain living in their own home. People also use the service to give their main carers a short break.

Mental Health Officer – Statutory Functions

2.58 A mental health officer (MHO) is a specially trained social worker who has training, education, experience and skills to work with people who have a mental disorder. The role of the mental health officer is set out in Section 32 of the Mental health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, and is a statutory responsibility of local authorities, who have a requirement to appoint

a “sufficient “number of persons to undertake the role. MHOs are responsible for making decisions about compulsory admissions to hospital for people who are in the MHO’s judgment at significant risk to their health, safety and welfare. The MHO also has a number of duties under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 including providing a professional, independent and non-medical perspective on decisions which affect the civil liberties of individuals with mental illness, learning disability and other related conditions.

Mental health team activity data	2017	2018	2019
LA welfare guardianship	10	15	11
Private guardianship	13	13	21
Emergency detention	31	28	37
Short term detention	60	85	91
Current supervised private guardianships	120-140 each month	144-154 each month	150-161 each month over the year
People waiting on MHO waiting list	8-29 each month	9-24 each month	18-34 each month

There has been an increased demand for statutory functions linked to legislative, policy and practice change, and it is nationally recognised that MHO services across Scotland are under significant pressure. The core MHO establishment in East Lothian had remained unchanged for ten years leading to increased waiting times and difficulty meeting statutory requirements and pressure on staff. In 2019, following a service review, a commitment was given to increase the establishment of the MHO team, an increase of two FTE MHOs.

Key risks and pressures for service delivery across adult services

- Increased demand for commissioned care services, particularly clients with learning and physical disabilities and the provision of overnight support being the most significant.
- The current fragility of provider organisations in the home care and care homes sector may require action and investment to secure sustainability in these important services.
- Carer stress in the context of the availability of day services and care at home services
- Impact of the resumption of the courts on the capacity of justice social work services.

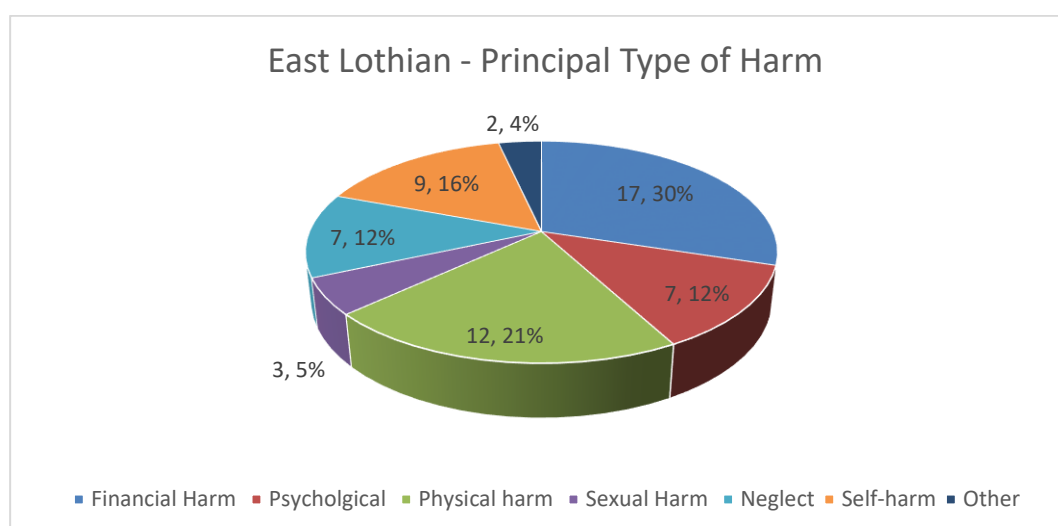
Public Protection

2.59 The East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) brings together the full public protection agenda under a single governance structure and across two local authority areas.

Adult support and protection

Measure	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Referrals	493	530	791	778	562
Investigations	69	148	112	86	57
Initial ASP Case Conference	15	21	12	28	18
Protection orders	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Number of Large Scale Investigations	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Principal Type of Harm Investigated	-	-	-	Physical harm 32/86	Financial harm 17/57 (30%)

2.60 The number of Adult Support and Protection referrals submitted to East Lothian has reduced by 28% in comparison to the previous year. This reduction is linked to an inaccuracy in the recording of Adult Support and Protection referrals in 2017/18 and 2018/19, resulting in what we consider to be an over-inflation of referrals data in those two years. We are satisfied that these anomalies have been rectified and the data reported at fiscal year-end is a more accurate reflection of the number of Adult Support and Protection referrals received in the year.



2.61 Building on last year's successful events to raise awareness of Financial Harm in our communities, EMPPC delivered a number of smaller events targeted specifically at more vulnerable communities in collaboration with Police Scotland, Trading Standards, and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service who

promoted their Free Fire Home Safety Visits. In recognition of the National Adult Support and Protection Day 20th February 2020. This year East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee welcomed the expertise of Professor Michael Preston-Shoot, the Professor (Emeritus) of Social Work at the University of Bedfordshire, who delivered an excellent half days' learning on self –neglect and hoarding with the key message of self-neglect and hoarding is not a “Lifestyle choice” and that it a requires a multi-agency response. East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee also launched the EMPPC Self-neglect and Hoarding Protocol².

2.62 The service delivery and the quality of the multi-agency response to adults at risk of harm is reviewed and evaluated each quarter through a set of Performance indicators which evaluate agencies responses to; Multi- agency communication, assessment and management of risk, support and protection planning, service user participation and timely responses for adults at risk of harm. Following on from the Adult Support and Protection Thematic Inspection 2017-18. EMPPC has worked in partnership with the strategic link inspector for Midlothian to review and amend the Care Inspectorate’s evaluation template to undertake a self –evaluation of social work case files in East Lothian and Police Scotland files.

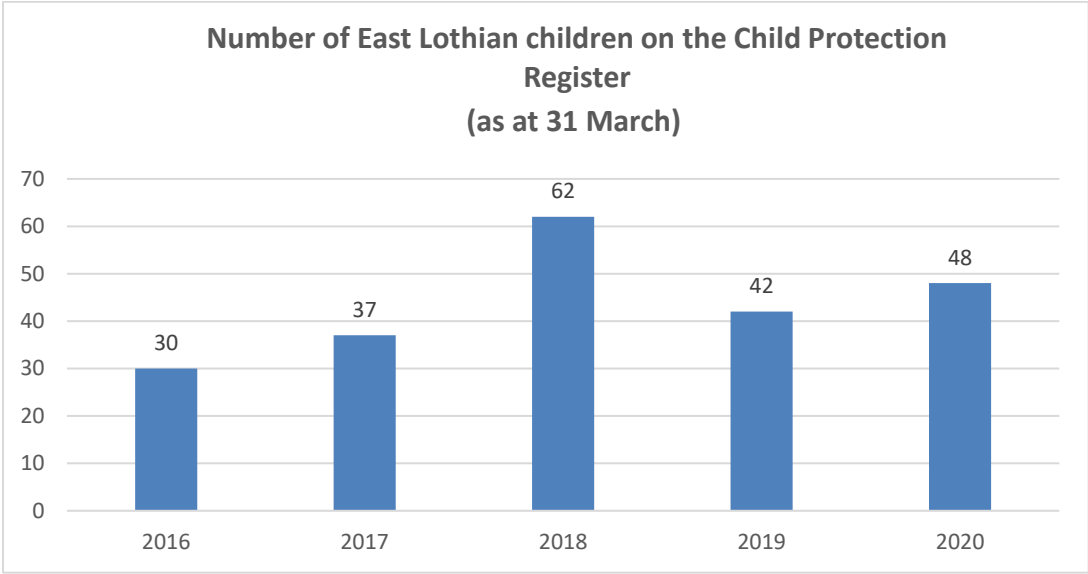
2.63 This case file read involved the reading of 15 cases which is 20% of the overall number of ASP cases that had progressed to Initial/Review case conference across the reporting period. (2017-2019). Self-evaluation activity revealed a mixed picture of strengths and areas of improvement with evaluations ranging from Very Good to Adequate. Furthermore, auditors noted that there was an improving picture evolving across all Adult Support and Protection activity within East Lothian. Additionally, there was clear evidence of the improvement of the safety and wellbeing of most of the adults at risk of harm. However, this appeared to be most challenging where there were complex issues such as problematic alcohol and substance misuse.

2.64 **Challenges and areas for improvement**

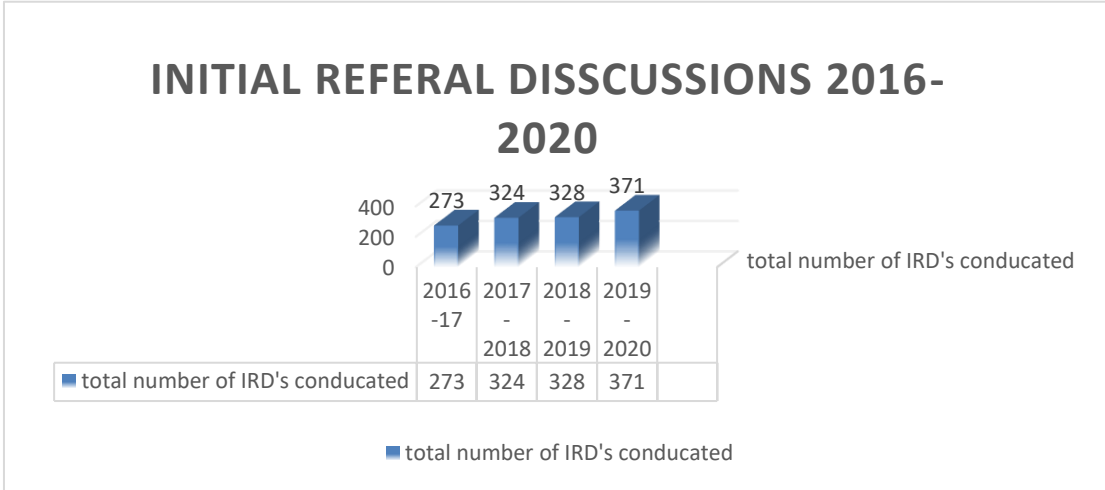
- EMPPC is committed to developing a continuous framework for multi-agency self –evaluation. The impact of COVID19 has meant that this area of work has been temporarily suspended and consideration is required as to how to undertake this work safely.
- All adult support and protection training planned for the year 20 -21 has been postponed. EMPPC is working towards transferring critical training for staff onto an online platform to ensure continued learning and development in the practice of Adult Support and Protection.
- East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership is in the process of developing multi –agency Risk Management Protocol in response to the management of escalating concerns where the adult is presenting with significant risk but does not meet the criteria of an adult at risk of harm.
- Service user and carer feedback and self-evaluation is at an early stage but will be progressed during 2020/21

² https://emppc.org.uk/file/Adult_Protection/EMPPC_-_Multi-agency_Protocol_on_self-neglect_and_hoarding_-_17-12-2019_v1.pdf

Child Protection



2.65 There was an average of 48 children on the child protection register during the year. The rate of 2.5 was below the national rate of 2.9. There were 371 Inter Agency Referral Discussions in East Lothian during the reporting 2019-2020 reporting year. This represents an increase of 13.1% in a 12 month period. The Inter-agency Referral Discussion (IRD) overview group continues to meet on a fortnightly basis. An IRD is a discussion, risk assessment and decision making process between Police, NHS and Social Work when a Child Protection concern is identified. Its purpose is to provide quality assurance and data collection in relation to decisions made as part of an IRD, the robustness of the planning and information sharing.



2.66 East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee was selected in October 2018 as one of three test partners in the development of the National Minimum Dataset for Child Protection Committees. Since then, the Committee has worked in partnership with the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children

in Scotland (CELCIS) to develop, test and refine the Minimum Dataset package. The implementation of the national minimum dataset for Child Protection has given us the opportunity to review our existing suite of performance data, how we present and analyse that data and what it is actually telling us, which helps improve outcomes for the people we serve. This will be subject to further work in the coming year, with the support of CELCIS and partnership analysts.

- 2.67 The EMPPO led an exercise to improve our multi-agency response to Looked After and Accommodated Children who go, or at risk of going missing. This has involved developing a senior oversight and an operational implementation group. The committee agreed a local inter-agency partnership protocol, following the national pilot. This has been supported by a series of trainings and local briefings, for both local authority and voluntary sector partners. The Police Scotland 'J' Division Missing Persons Coordinator provides a weekly intelligence report is shared with social work partners to help identify those who most frequently go missing and target our response accordingly.
- 2.68 **Multi-agency self-evaluation:** A programme of single-agency self-evaluation and audits has taken place. The first focused on targeting areas for audit that had been identified in the improvement plan and for which training had taken place. This was initiated in September '19 across both authorities and looked at actions after children had had their names removed from the Child Protection Register. The Audit examined chronology, record keeping and evidence of continued multi-agency meetings post registration. Evidence was triangulated and findings presented to the Committee. A further audit was undertaken looking at the increasing numbers of children who were subject to more than one IRD in the 12 month period. Findings noted a cohort of children who were subject to accumulative concerns over a period of years and from a number of agencies. Work is underway to further support practitioner development in addressing early and effective intervention across the partnership.
- 2.69 CSOG commissioned an audit to examine whether learning from a previous Initial Case Review (ICR) and a Significant Case Review had been embedded into practice. Audit activity was undertaken in both East and Midlothian which was reported to the Practice and Quality Improvement Subgroup which was overseen by the EMPCC. Areas of further development were addressed through the Child Protection Improvement Plan as well as individually in agency.
- 2.70 There has been a re-focus on the impact of poverty and its significance in child protection in response to the publication of Child Welfare Inequalities: A Four Nations Study (Bywater et al 2018) that evidenced the inverse correlation between poverty and child abuse and neglect. As a response, all families with children whose names are on the child protection register and those who are looked after at home are supported to attend welfare rights appointments to maximise their income. Within the context of COVID and the increasing levels of deprivation within some parts of our communities this will be an area for continued attention.

Section 3. Resources

Financial Pressures

3.1 Children's services received a budget of £14.44 million in 2019. At the end of the financial year the actual spend stood at £17.569 million, an overspend of £3.126m Employee costs accounted for 42% of the total. The £1.87 million budget for external residential provision was overspent reflecting the huge demand placed on the service during the latter part of 2018 and 2019 including an increase in young people requiring secure accommodation. Other smaller pressures included external fostering placements and kincare costs.

3.2 **Ongoing pressures:**

- External fostering resources; currently unable to meet demand within our own fostering community.
- Ongoing placement costs for existing external residential packages for young people for whom we have been unable to identify a local resource
- Bespoke packages for young people we are able to return from external placements
- Unaccompanied Asylum seeking Children and Young People
- Costs of emergency accommodation for homeless care leavers / young people who have not been able to sustain supported accommodation
- Financial pressures around the financial impact of COVID for families.
- Kincare support is an area we continue to grow as a local authority. This is in line with our service plan and strategy but is not without financial cost. The impact of continuing care on the Kincare budget will also continue to grow.

The plans to address these financial pressures sit within the service itself; within the relatively new joint structure of education and children's services; within the broader children services strategic partnership and across other council service areas. It is clear from the analysis and self-evaluation work completed to date, that sustainable financial recovery will require strategic commitment towards early intervention and prevention across council and partner services in order to reduce vulnerability and the demand for targeted services. The following is a summary of improvement work commenced in 2019/20 and will carry forward through 2020/21:

- Children's Services Service Improvement Plan 2019 - 21
- Re-launch of the GIRFEC pathway
- ASN review
- Whole system re-design of family support
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy and associated services and supports
- Re-designing the children's social work service for better outcomes
- Transforming services for children programme – council and partners

Adult Social Work and Social Care

2019/20	Funding £	Expenditure £	Surplus £
Health	124,533	123,732	801
Social Care	47,284	47,459	(175)
Total	171,817	171,191	626

- 3.3 Throughout the year there have been financial challenges, these being mainly within the social care budgets and the financial pressure at the year-end was a significant overspend within adult services, specifically for those clients with complex needs with learning and physical disabilities. This pressure was offset by an underspend in services for older people. Within the social care budgets the pressures lay within increased demand for commissioned care services, particularly clients with learning and physical disabilities and the provision of overnight support being the most significant. This led to a £2m pressure at end of 2019 – 2020.
- 3.4 Financial modelling and improvement work underway or targeted in 2020/21 to better inform budget setting include; strengthened social work assessment and decision making processes; forecasting transitions and complex young adults requiring residential/ supported accommodation solutions; tracking ordinary residence commitments; implementation of pre-paid cards for direct payments.

Section 4. Workforce

Workforce Planning: Children’s Services

- 4.1 Overall, the service has achieved more stable staffing levels from the end of 2019 onwards with more successful recruitment campaigns following positive work to re-design our offer as employers. In particular, staffing across disability team, fostering and adoption and the 15+ team has provided excellent continuity of worker in the work being undertaken with families and young people. We know that relationships are key to better outcomes.
- 4.2 strategies in place to address recruitment and retention of registered social workers included:
 - Revisited wording on advertisements
 - Pay scale can be negotiated dependant on experience
 - We currently fund *limited* places for Family Support Workers on the Open University undergraduate and post graduate degree courses. We may consider revisiting/ extending numbers and return to the ‘Grow your Own Model’.
 - Active promotion of practice learning across the service and work in partnership with University of Edinburgh / University of Stirling & Open University to facilitate placements.

- Practice Learning Courses
 - Ensure staff have adequate access to learning and development opportunities – particularly within Leadership and Supervision.
 - Active promotion of the Healthy Working Lives / Employee Assistance Programme (Particularly throughout lockdown)
- 4.3 We have a substantial amount of newly qualified social workers. It is essential that they receive high levels of support, particularly in light of COVID and very restricted numbers of staff within the current office base. We are currently in the process of liaising with Midlothian and Scottish Borders to explore options around a joint programme of support / information for NQSW. The pay scale for social workers continues to be challenging for us as a local authority.

Workforce Development: Children's Services

- 4.4 Strong collaborative working between children's services and corporate learning and development staff led to the **Social Work Leadership and Supervision Programme** (Accredited by the CMI at Cert Level 3). The programme was aimed at team leaders and senior practitioners. The first cohort ran in Autumn 2019 was very positively evaluated. The second cohort commenced just prior to lockdown and unfortunately is currently suspended. The service continues to support one manager each year on the post graduate Stirling Management and Child Protection and Welfare Courses. Other key learning and development opportunities included continued training in the core practice models of Signs of Safety and Safe and Together.
- 4.5 Protected learning sessions provided valuable opportunities on topics that included; baby bruising; court skills; trauma informed practice; sexual abuse; domestic abuse; permanence and the law. Protected Learning Session have been suspended since March 2020 in light of COVID.
- 4.6 In terms of formal practice learning arrangements, during 2019/20 children's services facilitated 8 social work placements. The current practice learning strategy identifies this as a core organisational function that encourages a learning culture; develops leadership and management skills; encourages reflective and research-minded practice; supports recruitment and retention and generates income. COVID has had significant implications for practice learning arrangements and we are working in partnership with universities and other stakeholders to explore future options.
- 4.7 In order to meet our SSSC employer commitments, the service must provide recognised levels of support for newly qualified staff. Developments include a well-established group for staff across children and adults services and the learning and development E-bulletin with up to date information and research.

Justice Social Work

Workforce development:

- 4.8 In recognising team challenges and dynamics managers held a workshop facilitated by organisational development (March 2020) to improve the team's functioning. Unfortunately the follow-up activities were curtailed due to the lockdown and progress will need to be reviewed in 2020/21. Managers are developing staff training and promoting a shared understanding of SSSC Codes of Conduct as well as the expectations of all social work qualified and para-professionals.
- 4.9 We reviewed and updated our core local guidance documents – these support practitioners at all levels to better understand their task and role as well as providing a service that is safe and risk-focused, but able to identify and address welfare and needs.

Public Protection

- 4.10 Prior to Covid 19 EMPPC delivered two development sessions for all staff across the partnership including third sector staff to address the crossovers between Adult Support and Protection and Violence Against Woman and Girls, with a total of 56 staff attending. These sessions focused on learning disability and gender based violence; this session was supported by NHS Scotland, Gender-based Violence Team. This sessions was informed by the new practitioner guidance on learning disability and gender based violence and to raise awareness of the intersections between gender based violence and adults age 16+.
- 4.11 The EMPPC learning and development function oversees the development and delivery of core and mandatory public protection training. The reduction in capacity within the PPO team has impacted on the delivery of these functions. Discussions are underway within the partnership and this will be an area of focus for the new PPO manager. Online alternatives for traditional face to face approaches are required.

Adult Social Work and Social Care

- 4.12 Workforce planning developments included the successful application to Mental Health Officer Capacity Building Grant Scheme to support our Mental Health Team. One social worker successfully completed the MHO training in September 2020. The review of homecare led to improvements in the terms and conditions of staff to attract more people into the workforce. Two social workers started the practice educator's programme in 2019/20 and will complete in early 2021.
- 4.13 Key training and staff development opportunities were delivered in
- self-directed support options 1 and 2;
 - Frank's Law

- Replacement care
- TEC training
- Dementia bus; helping mentally able people to understand what it is like to experience dementia
- Staff briefings: Violence Against Women and Girls; Resolution (Mediation) service; new housing legislation and support for women with substance misuse issues.

In addition, Social work staff who volunteer in anticipation of having to provide humanitarian aid are regularly invited to informal learning and development sessions to consider the impact of emergency planning in communities, and in responding to incidents that require emergency assistance and the provision of immediate shelter and support. The sessions have include opportunities for volunteers to reflect and share their own experience in previous incident along with formal presentations e.g. trauma informed practice and the role of partners in providing aid.

Section 5. COVID 19

Early Indications of Impact on Workforce and Services

- 5.1 Social work is a profession that is predicated on establishing meaningful relationships with vulnerable and often distressed people and with those who may be resistant to our involvement. Therefore, the impact of the restrictions to working arrangements as a result of the pandemic on the very core of social work business has been profound. Making a safe and accurate assessment of risks and needs for children and adults with very reduced or compromised opportunities for face to face contact has been extremely challenging and remains the case. Staff are carrying higher than usual levels of stress and anxiety from the additional risks. As the months progress, the need for support and recognition of the challenges involved increases
- 5.2 Overall to date across adult, justice and children's services staffing levels have remained high with low levels of COVID-related absence, although numbers of staff with underlying health conditions were higher than anticipated. Many staff have welcomed the increased flexibility of working from home, in particular the absence of the commute and the ability to meet child care commitments.

Children's Services

- 5.3 As an immediate response to the pandemic restrictions, the service implemented a crisis response team model that operated on a five-day on/off basis. Good use was made of Skype to enable staff to communicate internally and come together quickly. All teams RAG rated their caseloads to ensure the most vulnerable children and young people were prioritised for the most

meaningful and effective contact and interventions. Children whose names were on the child protection register were seen on a weekly basis wherever possible. All supervised family time was suspended. As restrictions eased, a blended working model was implemented allowing staff to return to their own team structure and line management arrangements.

- 5.4 Despite the school closures, the number of referrals to social work continued to rise month on month from March 2020. The absence of a structured school day on vulnerable families – particularly those with disabilities and complex needs - resulted in high levels of family stress and a significant demand for staff to prevent children needing to be accommodated. Some of our older young people and care leavers were unable to sustain positive destinations and this has led to their behaviours becoming a risk to themselves and others, with serious consequences and poor outcomes. The assessment hub and practice teams carried the additional impact of most of the third sector services ceasing face to face contact with families in the initial months of the pandemic.
- 5.5 The Government's focus on vulnerable children from the start of lockdown was a lever for some excellent partnership working with some groups of vulnerable older young people in East Lothian. The youth work response highlighted the possibilities and potential for creative and joined up approaches that will be developed over the coming months.
- 5.6 The support from colleagues across the council to facilitate requests for additional space / has been welcomed. The changes to working arrangements have impacted on all staff across council and partnership services, but for the purposes of this report the following areas remain challenging for service delivery:
- The absence of a single IT platform across public services – impacting on the effectiveness of multi-agency working with vulnerable children
 - Child and family engagement in online meetings – while some have welcomed it, many have not felt fully included in decision-making or have found it intimidating.
 - Waiting lists for assessment and changes to support plans from the disability team have increased beyond current capacity
 - Limited appropriate space for supervised and court mandated family time (previously called contact)
 - COVID safety concerns for foster carers – facilitating parental and sibling contact involving multiple households
 - Reduced office capacity to ensure compliance with physical distancing; impacting on face to face access to team members which is important for safe social work practice.

Justice Social Work

- 5.7 Staffing levels have been high – working from home has improved work/life balance and staff have been able to be more flexible so undertake tasks at a time that suits their lives. The service is exploring a more flexible working

regime and considering quite radical changes within the service that would have significant implications for staff and users, but would not reduce efficiency or effectiveness.

- 5.8 The current focus is on the safe reopening of face-to-face interventions for reports and offence-focused interventions as well as engaging in welfare and signposting activities. However, the anticipated increase in work from domestic abuse and online sexual offending behaviours will impact on staff wellbeing when working from home.
- 5.9 The provision of unpaid work is extremely problematic – with a van-based and group model 1:5 (maximum) ratio with equipment training or building-based activities where supervisor and service user work closely (within 1-2 meters). The service needs to develop larger projects and increase access to placement or individualised oversight from colleagues within HSCP and the Council as well as small groups with 1:2 or 1:3 ratio and expectation of either self-travel or more appropriate muster points.
- 5.10 The pandemic has seen the closure of Courts across Scotland, however Hub Courts have dealt with the most serious business since lockdown was announced on 23/03/2020. As a result there are various estimates relating to the backlog of Court business and in East Lothian this will have an ongoing impact for the foreseeable future. Although business is now going through courts at the rate of approximately 80% of last year's comparative totals (September) this is not addressing the backlog and there has been a notable increase in Diversion report requests. This move away from using Court time to hear cases (and, therefore, address offending behaviour) will lead to an increase in justice social work business, to provide reports and, where appropriate, short interventions.

Adult Social Work and Social Care

- 5.11 The mainstay of our Covid-19 response to **carers** was working in close partnership with:
- staff who were supporting carers, for example, care-at-home workers, community care workers and social workers. This began immediately and centred on learning from staff what the key issues were in terms of delivery and support, for example, PPE, dealing with isolation/shielding and sustaining good mental health and physical wellbeing
 - carers representative groups - Carers of East Lothian, East Lothian Young Carers and Bridges Project. This helped us to respond to carers needs as much as possible and share information about support, advice and resources. Carers of East Lothian produced a weekly resources guide which we shared with staff, third sector partners and community resilience groups
 - Community Resilience Groups, who kept us informed about the wellbeing of carers they were working with and specific help needed. Third and

Independent sector partners also kept us informed of issues, for example, around the correct putting on and taking off of PPE and when to wear it.

- 5.12 In terms of community support services for younger adults, at the start of the pandemic all providers provided a RAG rating of services users, a business continuity plan and a detailed action/closure plan. The RAG rating assisted colleagues in social work to identify priorities for additional care and support in the community. All building-based services were closed with the exception of one centre for people under 65. This centre was used to provide day support to these people who were most at risk of support failing at home. At that stage, external community provision consisted of outreach support from peoples' homes for those with identified critical needs. The providers have looked at alternative ways of providing support e.g. Zoom calls. Weekly telephone calls are also in place to offer support and monitor any changes in need.

Care Homes

- 5.13 The Care Home Team and District Nursing teams supported staff to adhere to up-to-date guidance and advice and have been at the forefront of East Lothian's response to ensuring our care homes have been equipped and supported to manage and control the virus as effectively as possible. This has included:

- Ensuring the safe application and disposal of PPE
- Escalated support to homes with positive cases to ensure robust infection control
- Arranging urgent PPE from East Lothian hub stock if required
- Circulating all current guidance and ensuring our homes have access to information that is circulated
- Visiting homes to demonstrate PPE donning/doffing and infection control
- Educational components focused on infection control, including helping staff understand PPE, including 'how safely to put it on and take it off
- Video links of training provided and offers to all care homes for visits as needed
- Continued emotional and phone support for staff
- Delivery of face-to-face training where agreed.

Care Home Assessment and Review Team

- 5.14 The care home assessment and review team's (CHART) role in the COVID response included:

- All care home support visits were jointly undertaken with a social worker alongside a health colleague, and feedback was given for each visit which was as a collaboration between health and social work.
- Providing challenge and support to care homes where infection control practices were not sufficiently robust.
- Funding was secured for a number of vacant care home placements in two care homes for people waiting for packages of care or care homes to move to

temporarily. Each of these individuals were assessed by social workers and the CHART team monitored each placement. This provided an immediate solution for residents and demonstrated a flexible response and good joint working with independent care homes.

- Social workers undertook PPE training early in the pandemic so that they had sufficient knowledge to support and challenge practice in care homes.
- The CHART team manager is involved with the care homes daily huddle.

5.15 Changes in practice due to Covid

- Ensuring that Covid testing happens for people moving in to care homes, as per health protection guidance, alongside other practical arrangements for hospital discharge to care homes.
- Only starting now to be able to attend care homes to carry out reviews. This is not consistent and is dependent on different practices across care homes. Many reviews are still being carried out by phone.
- Responding to regular calls and complaints from families about not being able to visit their relatives.
- Move to home / hospital working with a rota in place to ensure at least one social worker is on site every day.
- Supervision and team meetings carried out mainly via Skype.

Challenges and Risks Facing Social Work and Social Care

Key challenges for recovery include:

- Rising incidence of domestic abuse, and its impact on children, young people adults and families. The human and financial costs of this mean it requires a coordinated strategic and partnership response.
- The cumulative impact of carer and family stress as a result of limited or reduced availability of services that may not return to pre-COVID levels.
- The widening social and health inequalities that the capacity to cope with adversity and increase reliance on services.
- Ensuring the social work and social care workforce is supported to develop and maintain its own resilience.
- Rise in demand for services - resumption of services (e.g. courts and children's hearings) and as a result of poverty, stress and increased vulnerability.
- Financial cost of responding to the pandemic and impact on decisions about budgets for vulnerable people's services.
- The capacity of commissioned services to meet current and future levels of need.

- Implementation of The Promise and learning from the Independent Care Review - will not be achievable without further investment in preventive services to release the costs of crisis services.

The most vulnerable people in our communities have been the hardest hit, and will take longer to recover from the impact of the pandemic. Social work services will continue to play a critical role, working in partnership to protect our citizens, promote their rights and support them to live safely and independently.

Judith Tait
Chief Social Work Officer
16 October 2020