

Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee

Making Every Intervention Count

Title:	Making Every Intervention Count update on progress
Meeting Date:	9 June 2016
Information in this report was produced on behalf of	
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Date Submitted:	May 2016

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with an overview of the progress of the ‘Making Every Intervention Count’ (MEIC) transformation programme.

It is an opportune time to review as it is a year since the organisational restructure which was an important step in achieving budget savings and putting in place building blocks to sustain longer term transformation.

Introduction

Making Every Intervention Count is the ‘umbrella’ transformation programme for service developments within Children and Young People’s Specialist Services and Early Help services. It includes:

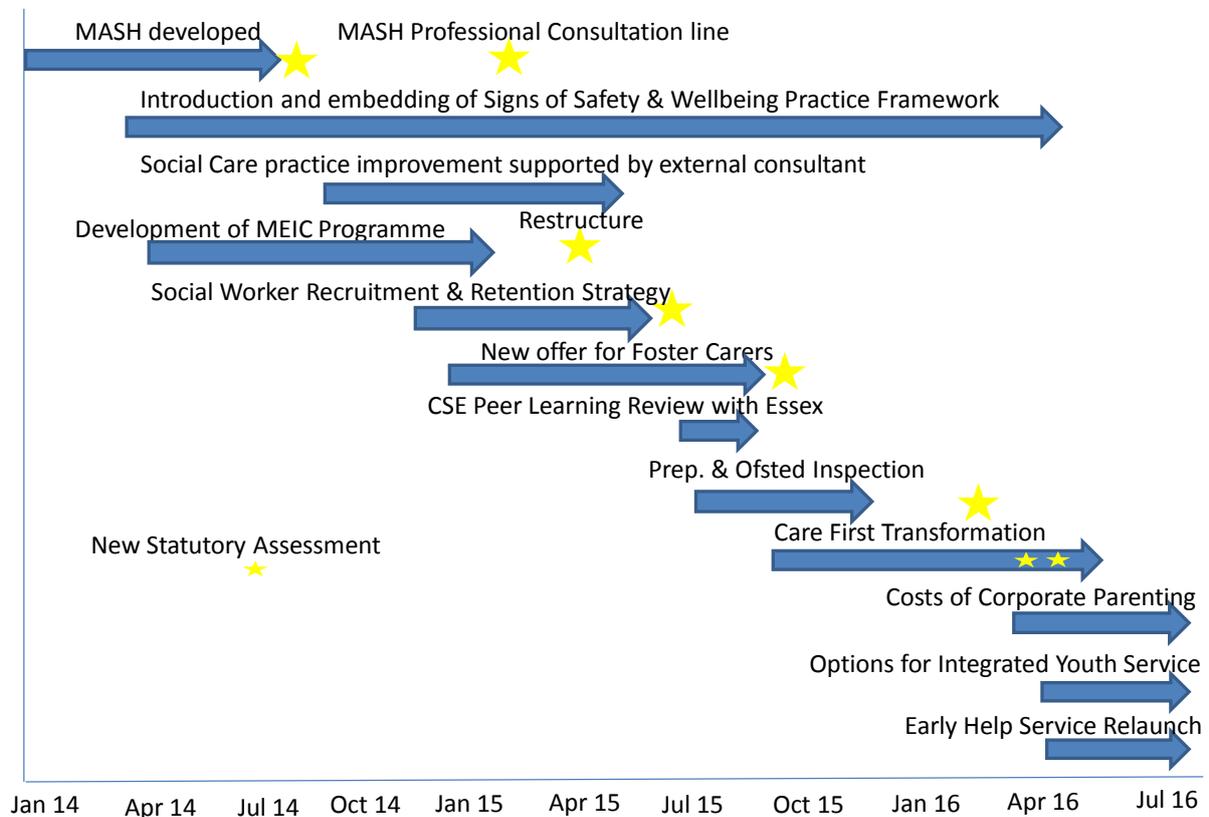
- Social Care Services / Children With Disabilities
- Corporate Parenting / Fostering & Adoption
- 16+ Children in Care and Leaving Care Service
- Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer Service
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- Early Help / Children’s Centres / Community Health
- Youth Offending Service

- Suffolk Family Focus
- School Attendance

It also incorporates a number of support functions

- Commissioning
- Intelligence Hub
- Engagement Hub
- Quality Assurance & Professional Development
- Workforce Development
- Programmes

Some of the key service developments and milestones reached for services within the scope of the MEIC programme are highlighted below:



Evidence

The MEIC programme set out with a number of key principles and key drivers. There is evidence of progress against each of these summarised in the following tables.

Our progress and direction of travel has been further reinforced by the overall 'GOOD' judgement from the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services carried out in November / December 2015.

A dashboard at the end of this paper, produced to aid this Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny, shows some example measures supporting this. *(The dashboard should print as A3 size)*

Key MEIC Principles

Goal	Progress
<p>Children, young people and families at the heart of what we do</p>	<p>We reflected on existing feedback from children, young people and families and incorporated this into our service design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-19 service supporting consistency of social worker and minimising transition across teams • Engagement Hub supporting a more systematic process of collecting and reviewing of service users feedback • Engagement Hub supporting co-production, for example the new ‘Promise’ to Children in Care & Care Leavers and the development of the Emotional Well-Being Transformation Programme • Development of Family’s Networks Meetings as central to practice • SoS practice framework ensuring the family co produce their family’s plan • Analysis by Customer Rights shows the ‘Attitude of Practitioners’ has been dramatically reducing as significant factor in complaints.
<p>Suffolk Signs of Safety & Wellbeing at the heart of how we practice</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffolk continues to be among the most ambitious Local Authorities in implementing Signs of Safety. This is now the way we work throughout Children’s Services. Over 2000 practitioners have undertaken the 2 or 5 day training. Very many Schools and Early Years settings have participated in this training or half day awareness raising sessions (see Dashboard) <p><i>“Suffolk is well regarded for breaking ground with its system wide commitment to implementation”</i> Eileen Munro</p> <p><i>“Suffolk is gaining more momentum and getting earlier results than I have seen anywhere else internationally with their implementation of Signs of Safety. By applying it to all children’s services and taking a strong and comprehensive approach to implementation, they are setting a great example for how to bring about better outcomes for children and families in England.”</i> Terry Murphy</p>

	<p>Results of this are being seen in practice and outcomes for families. Thematic and case audits are now showing a rising proportion of cases audited as Good or better which should be seen in the context of rising expectations of 'what good looks like' (See Dashboard)</p>
Effective early help and, where needed, intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a reduction in the capacity of the Early Help Service following MEIC restructure and savings. The service has reduced its caseload to continue to deliver a good quality service that has impact. • CYP has integrated Health Visiting and Children's Centre teams to create a more joined up service that makes best use of resources. • The vast majority of service users say that things have got better as a result of the interventions
One Family, One Plan, One Lead Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking a 'whole person' / 'whole family' approach is clearly recognised as important in achieving sustainable change. • There is good multi-agency working in the MASH and in Social Care and Early Help casework • This is supported by the Suffolk Family Focus ways of working which have been mainstreamed • Taking this to the next level, with other professionals increasing their confidence, skills and capacity to locally resolve more issues that would otherwise be referred to CYP and taking the lead on cases was an area that was always going to be difficult in an environment of significant demand and budget pressure on all agencies. For example Schools/Academies are responsible for approximately 50% of open CAFs, but assume Lead Professional roles in only 3% (School Pastoral teams will manage many more issues locally) • A more joined-up IT case-management system, which is now being procured, will be an important enabler to achieving this.
Making the best use of community assets and universal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.suffolk.gov.uk/infolink continues to improve as a resource that families and practitioners use to find local resources. This is complemented by more specialist portals such as www.thesource.me.uk for young people and www.access-unlimited.co.uk for children with additional needs and disabilities
A strong local network of professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a focus of local Practice Manager roles, for example in attending termly meetings with local groups of schools. • As part of Connect Sudbury and Connect East Ipswich closer working relationships across

	<p>agencies have been fostered through a Practitioner Directory, 'Learning Lunches', shadowing and multi-agency focus on 'high demand' cases across agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong local networks of professionals are supporting integrated multi-agency work around MASH, Child Exploitation, Missing Children and Radicalisation
Building resilient families and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key focus of Suffolk Signs of Safety and Wellbeing is to support families to make sustainable changes for themselves. This is seen, for example, in the use of Family's Network Meetings and families increasingly creating their own plans. • A combined new Localities and Partnership team hosted in the Public Health and Protection Directorate now incorporates the Building Community Capacity Officers from CYP and will support strengthening communities alongside local voluntary and community services and Community Action Suffolk.
A skilled and confident workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is wide availability and good take-up of training and development opportunities by staff and partner organisations • The large number of individual role descriptions have been consolidated into clearer families of job roles to support more integrated working, flexibility and career progression. • There is a strong and stable first and middle line management group • A Social work recruitment and retention strategy, and resources to deliver this, are in place. Turnover of social workers has reduced to 12%. • There are fewer locum staff in the workforce • Regular collaborative Learning Audits (case audits) are well established across teams. Findings are discussed at management meetings and in supervision providing important support and guidance to staff. • The majority of practitioners now have their own laptop. A programme of rolling out smartphones to staff is underway
Building on what works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Good Practice Guide provides a comprehensive on-line resource for practitioners. • The impact of services are reviewed holistically and through thematic audits

Key MEIC Drivers

There is equally evidence of progress against the key drivers of the MEIC Programme.

Driver	Progress
<p>Better managing and meeting the increasing levels of help sought and needed. - This covers a wide range of areas including; family relationships, behaviour, emotional well-being, neglect, disabilities, domestic violence, drugs and alcohol, child exploitation, missing children, caring responsibilities, education, training, jobs, accommodation, offending.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand at the front door is managed in a timely and proportionate way by the multi-agency MASH. There is positive evidence of a sustained reduction in the number of Contacts to MASH (See Dashboard). The number of contacts converting to Referrals (i.e. Social Care Assessments) continues to be stable indicating that thresholds are robust • The MASH Professional Consultation line launched last year is providing a helpful point of contact, direct with a Social Worker or other relevant professional, to provide guidance about whether a referral is needed or alternative courses of action
<p>Addressing what children & families said they wanted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consistent relationships with people that support them and open, honest communication that builds trust b) Their voices to be heard with empathy and understanding of their needs and not in judgement c) Their involvement in meetings that concern their future to help shape their next steps d) Clear information and advice to help themselves and to understand what support and services are available e) Early help when they need it f) More joined up service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The restructure of services in April 2015 sought to further support these: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 0-18 teams supporting consistency of worker, Signs of Safety training b) Engagement Hub, Signs of Safety practice framework c) Family's Network Meetings, Co-production of services d) On-line resources, building cross-service and cross-agency knowledge e) Depth of Early Help maintained. There are over 2000 open Early Help (CAF) cases with a good throughput of approximately 350 cases opening and closing each month f) CYP teams are now pre-dominantly co-located and co-terminus. On-going drive to integrate; One Family, One Plan, One Lead worker vision
<p>CYP need to achieve significant budget savings in 2015/16 (£5.1m), 2016/17 (£0.5m) and 2017/18 £1.4m) Similar challenges were, and are, facing partner agencies and voluntary and community services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015/16 - The £5.1m of savings for 15/16 have been achieved with the staff establishment reducing by approximately 135 FTEs and making best use of on-going Suffolk Family Focus (Troubled Families) Payments By Results monies to continue to support front line services • 2016/17 - Budgets for the Workforce

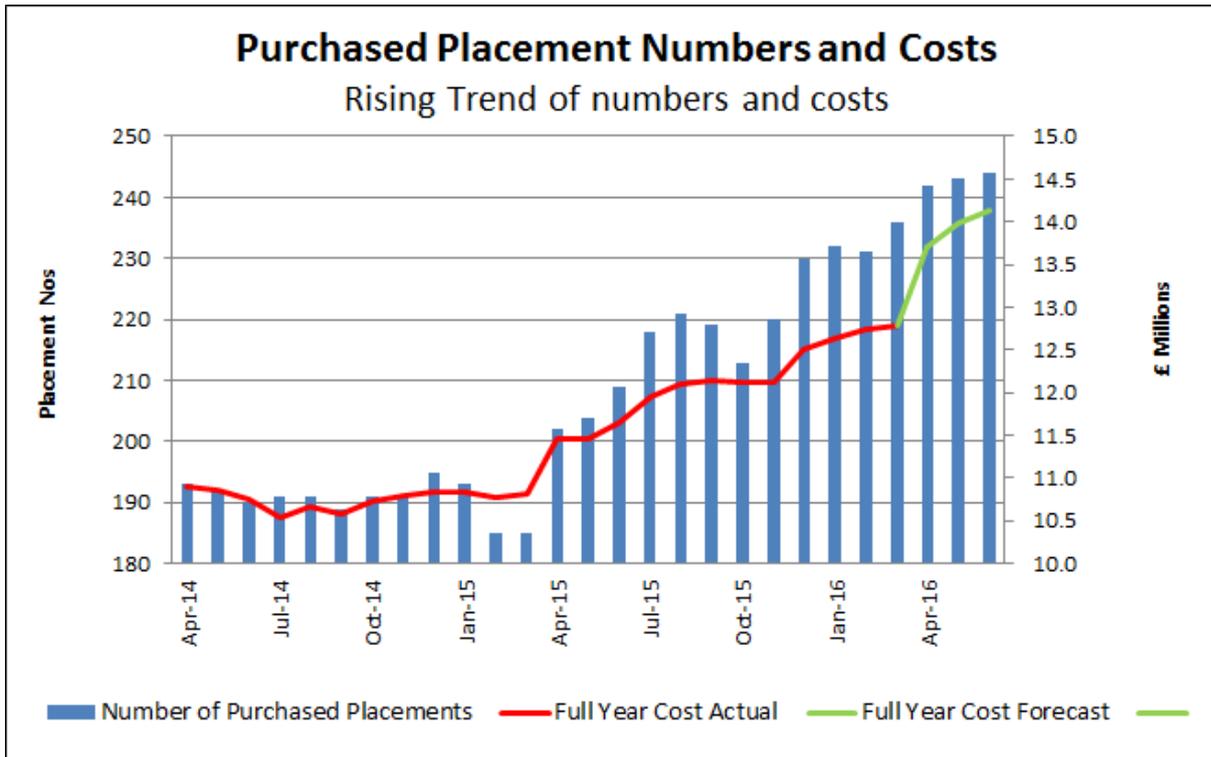
	<p>Development Team, Legal Services and the Engagement Hub have been reduced by £0.5m. Outturns are on track to be achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While staffing budgets and numbers have been reduced there has been significant and growing pressure on the Corporate Parenting Budget which supports the costs of Children in Care and permanency for children leaving care through Fostering, Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders. (See below)
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Financial Challenges

In 2015/16 there was a small overspend versus budget across CYP services.

However, there continues to be underlying and growing pressures on the Corporate Parenting budgets. Current 2016/17 forecasts are for an over-spend against the Purchase Placement and In-House Fostering budgets of £5m with a further £1m for Special Guardianship Orders. Currently these are covered by underspends elsewhere. This will be closely monitored.

Key underlying reasons for this pressure are the 12% growth in the numbers of children in care, (particularly adolescents), over the past 2 years to a current position of 800, and many of the required placements having to be met through increased use of higher cost Purchase Placements



Sustainably addressing these over-spends is a top priority for CYP and some key actions have already been taken. The changes to foster care rates last year was an important development to support recruiting and retaining of more 'in-house' foster carers for children with more challenging behaviours to reduce reliance on Purchased Placements. This will take some time to come to fruition, but is an important for long-term sustainability. More systematic approaches aimed at reducing the number of children that need to enter care and to quickly reunify children that do come into care are also planned.

Ofsted Judgement on Progress

The Ofsted inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers took place in November / December 2015. The overall judgement for Suffolk was 'GOOD'. This places Suffolk in the top quarter of all Authorities inspected so far.

This provided further endorsement that the strategic changes as part of the MEIC programme have been appropriate and that performance has been positive in a time-frame when major transformational change could otherwise have adversely affected outcomes being delivered for children and families.

“Suffolk County Council is led by dynamic and capable leaders and managers and is delivering a good service overall to children and their families. Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of what needs to be achieved and have made sustained progress since the inspections of services for looked after children in 2010 and child protection in 2013, which were both judged to be adequate. Services for children looked after are particularly strong for younger children and in securing permanence, with some aspects showing outstanding performance.”

“A strong and energetic senior management team with a clear sense of purpose and direction, robust governance arrangements and clear lines of accountability is transforming the way in which services are designed, developed and delivered.”

“Social workers and their managers know children well, and often very well. Social workers visit children frequently, spending time alone with them to help establish a trusting relationship and getting to know their hopes and wishes. ... Almost all children say they have trust and confidence in their social worker.”

“Children and their families in Suffolk receive a timely and comprehensive early help service.”

“For children who require protection, action is taken promptly and risk is well understood”

“Decisions to look after children are appropriate and children are not taken into care unless it is necessary....Children looked after by the local authority receive a good service, with a range of permanence options being secured in a timely way for almost all children.”

Performance comparison versus Statistical and Regional Neighbours

The Department for Education maintain a publically accessible interactive spreadsheet for comparing data about children and young people across all local authorities in England: www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait. CYP also shares and analyses performance information with Local Authority Neighbours in the Eastern Region. This is used to identify exceptional performance whether, positive or negative and to focus on the underlying reasons. For example, in light of their relatively low numbers of Children in Care, Senior Managers from CYP will visit Essex counterparts in July to better understand how this has been achieved and to take any appropriate learning for Suffolk.

Impact on Staff

A number of measures are in place to help manage the pressure on staff. These include:

- A recruitment and retention strategy for social workers has been funded and is in place. An agreement is also in place with LAs across the region in respect of the costs of locum social workers. More than 90% of the social care workforce are now permanent staff and the turnover of Social Workers has reduced to 12.7% from around 16% 2 years ago.
- An agreement is in place to 'over-recruit' social workers to help even out the pressures of staff turnover and the annual cycle of newly qualified staff.
- Case loads are monitored closely.
- Regular individual and peer group supervision takes place throughout CYP services.
- There a wide training offer for staff and most practitioners have their own laptops.
- CYP are jointly procuring a new social care case management system with ACS. This will take up to 2 years to procure and implement but is anticipated to offer a step-change in flexibility and functionality.

The Ofsted Inspection Report: noted *“A joined-up approach to recruitment, retention and development is making Suffolk a more attractive place to work. Staff morale is good.”*

The SCC staff survey, last conducted in autumn 2015, provides a direct perspective from staff. There has been a strong and positive direction of travel since 2014.

'I have trust and confidence in the DMT' (increase of 12%) and *'... the CMT'* (increase of 14%).

'I feel able to communicate upwards to more senior members of staff' (increase of 6%)

'The council has an open and honest culture' (increase of 10%)

'I feel able to speak up and challenge the way things are done' (increase of 9%)

Encouragingly staff are presenting a more positive perception around transformation and change as well as resilience to change and adaptability. In terms of change management and transformation, scores for CYP have also improved:

- An increase of 17% of respondents saying that they are aware of the transformation programmes
- A 7% increase in those agreeing that the reasons for change and transformation are clearly explained
- A 7% increase in those that agree 'I am adaptable when dealing with change'

Service Development

Achieving transformation is a long term challenge needs to continue to evolve to pro-actively prepare and respond to new challenges. There are a number of key Service Developments within the scope of MEIC that will take place over the next year:

- Focus on the costs of Corporate Parenting
- Reviewing options to develop and integrate services for vulnerable adolescents to support more effective transition to adulthood
- Focus on the consistency and delivery of SMART plans
- Strengthening practice around working with the Family's Network
- Developments with partners, including the Emotional Well-Being Transformation
- Service developments for children and young people with a Statement of Special Education Needs and/or Disability (transferring to more joined up Education, Health and Care plans)
- Consolidation and improvement of case-management systems and business processes

Conclusion

The transformation of CYP services within the umbrella of the MEIC programme has realised a number of the objectives of the programme. There is evidence for this in our casework, audit & performance and from the recent Ofsted inspection.

A number of the key building blocks for the future have been strengthened



These building blocks will help sustain progress in light of pressures:

- Financial, from budget reductions and cost pressures in CYP and partner agencies
- Rising standards and expectations, for example the focus on long-term permanence and successful transition to adulthood
- 'New' challenges including exploitation, e-safety, radicalisation, female genital mutilation

The MEIC programme has further to run to address these challenges and a number of service developments, outlined above, are in train to achieve this.

MEIC Dashboard to support Education & Children's Services Scrutiny

(This is a subset of a much wider range of Performance Indicators used to monitor and target performance)

