

**Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers
Inspection Action Plan September 2014**

	Area for improvement	Required action	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Completed
1	(a) Impact of planned restructure of children service.	Appointment to the new Senior Manager, Safeguarding post is being made during the autumn and the person appointed will have a lead responsibility for children services.	October 2014	Chief Officer	
	(b) Possible reduction in administrative support	A review of current administrative services is underway with a view to creating a more flexible business support function across all operational services.	December 2014	Craig McLeod	
2	Clearer Strategic direction for the service based on identifying clear and prioritised actions from the existing head of service Improvement Plan	HOS plan requires reviewing and updating with the identification of specific prioritised actions that will improve outcomes for looked after children. The Leaving Care Forum will provide a key advisory role in this respect.	November 2014	Ray Dickson Peter Robson	
3	Range of in-house placements not sufficient to meet the requirements of young people with challenging behaviour and additional needs.	Acknowledging that this is a challenge to every children service, the existing placement strategy will be reviewed with a view to identifying action that might expand the range of available placements.	December 2014	Ronnie McMahon	

4	The lack of a profile of need for looked after children including vulnerability and risky behaviours	This should be part of an effective placement strategy and necessary action will be included in work identified above in reviewing the existing placement strategy. The outcome will be a data base to inform on an ongoing basis the profile of need.	December 2014	Ronnie McMahon assisted by performance team and IROs.	
5	Despite good working engagement the resilience of the authority's relationship with health services remain overly dependent on children's social services providing funding and resources to assess and meet the therapeutic needs of looked after children and care leavers.	This reflects national problems with regard to CAMHS. A meeting will be arranged with appropriate senior managers from the Health Board to explore how therapeutic services can be improved.	December 2014	Peter Robson and Ray Dickson	
6	The terms of reference for the Out of County Placement Panel needs to more clearly reflect the national strategy for looked after children contained in 'Towards a Stable Life and Brighter Future'	The terms of reference for the OOC Panel will be reviewed in the context of the national strategy	December 2014	Peter Robson	
7	Core Assessments not routinely updated.	This will be addressed through the established process of supervision of social workers and will also become a focus for the programme of case file audits.	Ongoing	Fieldwork Team Managers and Service Managers	

8	Inconsistent Care Planning and provision of services not always timely	This is a professional quality assurance issue and will be addressed through a training programme that will be tailored to staff needs.	April 2015	Ray Dickson with Peter Lund	
9	Delay in accessing Mental Health Services	See (5) above this needs to be discussed with the health managers responsible for the local CAMH service	December 2014	Peter Robson and Ray Dickson	
10	Additional Risk Assessments for young people and lack of sharing with partner agencies	This would normally happen through the statutory review process for all looked after children. The effectiveness of this process will be reviewed and any required changes will be incorporated in the training plan identified in (8) above.	April 2015	Team Managers IROs Peter Lund	
11	Case transfers between social workers and between teams	The structure of the operational teams is geared to the most effective management of demand and will entail changes of workers as cases progress. This is sensitively managed but will be monitored to identify issues arising. It will also be subject to discussion at the Children's Forum to ascertain the perspective of children and young people	April 2015	Team Managers Peter Robson through Children's Forum	
12	Pressure on staff to cover for	Team managers are responsible for			

13	absent colleagues	ensuring that there is appropriate cover for cases when staff are absent. The workload management scheme ensures that no worker is placed under inappropriate pressure. This is subject to continuous monitoring and review	Immediate and ongoing	Team Managers and Ray Dickson	
14	Little evidence of the recording of decisions made in supervision and inconsistent arrangements for supervision meetings.	There is an existing requirement for all decisions made in supervision to be recorded in PARIS. Team managers will be reminded of this requirement and compliance monitored through the case file audit process.	Immediate and ongoing	Ray Dickson with Peter Robson	
15	The format of assessment and plans on PARIS is not conducive to effective recording.	Develop a systematic process within the PARIS database for effective planning and recording	April 2015	PARIS Development Team with Ray Dickson	
16	The effectiveness of the independent reviewing service could be compromised by a recent re-grading of independent reviewing officer posts.	This is being managed through the single status grading review process and we will ensure that the role is not compromised in any way	Ongoing	Chief Officer	
17	Lack of quality assurance in the service overall.	The Independent Reviewing Officers have an overview of service quality and outcomes in this area and we will establish a process for collating this centrally and through the performance management process acting on findings as necessary	April 2015	IROs and Service Managers	

18	The actions identified in the Placement Strategy lack timescales and identified staff to implement.	See (3) above, there will be a review of the strategy and any specific tasks required will be identified and allocated for action.	April 2015	Ronnie McMahon Liz Byrne	
19	Perceived gaps in the Homeless Protocol relating to LAC and Care Leavers	The existing protocol will be reviewed in partnership with Housing and required action will be identified.	April 2015	Ronnie McMahon with a representative from Housing	

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