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Overview and Scrutiny
Town Hall
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Dear Member

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - WEDNESDAY, 18 JULY 2012

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the Overview and Scrutiny Board to be held on Wednesday, 18 July 2012, the following reports that were inadvertently omitted from the agenda when it was originally published.

Agenda No	Item	Page
6.	Children's Partnership Improvement Plan - Progress Update and Report Card	(Pages 46 - 57)
7.	Adoption Services - Peer Review and Improvement Plan	(Pages 58 - 91)

Yours sincerely

Kate Spencer
Overview and Scrutiny Lead

Agenda Item 6



Title: **Children's Partnership Improvement Plan – Progress Update and Report Card**

Wards Affected: **All**

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Board** On: **18 July 2012**

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1. **Key points and Summary**

- 1.1 This report updates the Board on the progress made across the seven projects that make up the Children's Partnership Improvement Plan. It also provides an overview of progress via the improvement report card (appendix 1)

2. **Programme action progress**

Project 1 – Management development

- 2.1 **Performance Management** - The introduction of a new performance management system is underway and on schedule. A competency framework based on the national professional competency framework has begun to be piloted with key social care managers in June. Social workers have been consulted about the competency framework and supervision model.
- 2.2 **Improved Case Supervision** -The priority to introduce a new reflective model has begun and is being currently in the process of being implemented across social care. This is in line with the expectations to address this as a priority area. Peer implementation of the model has begun across some teams and will be backed up by formal training in September 2012. The wider implementation of the supervision and appraisal model is being rolled out in phase 3 starting mid September.
- 2.3 **Improving Case Management** - Significant actions in the case management package have been reviewed and reallocated to other existing work packages. The actions underlying this work package will be carried out elsewhere in the programme.

Project 2 – remodelling social work structures

- 2.4 **Restructuring Social Work** - The introduction of a new structure for community services has been completed and the work package has been closed down in light of the sustained lowered caseload levels and improvements in the level of reported access to front line managers compared to 2011. Ongoing monitoring of the impact will be continued through the Children's Improvement Board (CIB) report card via (T26, T28 & 29) and the new services level report card that has

been developed from the Quality Assurance Framework developed under Project 5 work package 3.

In light of the improvements required in Adoption and Fostering a new work package is being created to deliver the structural changes in this service.

- 2.5 **Recruitment and Retention** - Vacancy rates remain high in social care. A detailed proposal to improve the recruitment and retention of social workers was approved by the council (25/5/12). The new recruitment and retention plan will significantly enhance the recruitment package offered staff including the use of hosts, offer retention payments to community social care staff. In addition, national recruitment fares are being targeted plan and Local Authorities currently losing social care staff. A recruitment agency is being employed to head hunt managers and the online recruitment site is being upgraded.
- 2.6 **Re-engineering of Business processes and systems.** A work package addressing improvements to the business support and IT support process has been properly initiated. A first quick win to remove all unnecessary ICS boxes from core assessments has begun. The work package will also see the implementation of improvements to the electronic capture of care costs that will see the removal of outdated and cost paper based processes.

Project 3 – Improving Assessment & Case planning

- 2.7 **Children in Need (CIN) Planning Process, Integrated Assessments and Improving Chronologies.** The initiation of the work package on CIN planning has been deferred subject to the development of an outline framework for CIN and early help. A key session introducing the outline framework will take place on the 27th June. The Draft brief for this work package will be reviewed in light of the 27th June.
- 2.8 **Introduce Practice Standards Manual.** A core standards document has been written and is being considered for implementation. A more thorough consideration of the planned rapid introduction of policies is currently being reviewed in light of the feedback from the Peer review. The timescales for this change will be extended.
- 2.9 **Commissioning of Specialist Assessments.** A new and improved process for commissioning high cost parenting assessment went live in May 2012. The Peer review commented favourably of this change and the potential for its impact on the progression of court ordered assessments.
- 2.10 **Prevention from Harm.** A draft brief has been produced for the implementation of a range of tools to improve the assessment and planning for drug and alcohol abuse, adult mental health and domestic violence. The brief is now being reviewed by senior managers in social care and health. Implementation can be once this review has been completed.

Project 4 - Integrating frontline practice

- 2.11 **Remodelling, including co-location** – Co-location and workforce development is being split. Co-location will be led by a senior manager from health and workforce development will be led by a colleague from Children Services.

- 2.12 **Multiagency workforce development** - The newly formed work package will take forward the development of shared workforce development opportunities including, shared induction and greater opportunity for cross professional peer learning through job shadowing etc. A voluntary sector representative will be identified as part of this group.
- 2.13 **Integrated working, early help** - The integrated working and early help package will start following the session introducing the outline framework on CIN and early help on the 27th June.
- 2.14 **Intensive Family Support Services** - The intensive family support service will enter close down subject to the feedback from an external review which is due to produce its draft findings in July. The Peer review was positive about this provision. The ongoing monitoring of this service will be maintained through the CIB and Children's Services report card.
- 2.15 **The Child's Journey** - The child's journey work package is entering close down subject to more evaluation of its impact. Ongoing monitoring of the impact of the child's journey will be possible through the CIB report card (indicators T1, T2, T4 and T6). Actions that impact on the Hub will be carried out by the collocation and CIN work packages. The impact operation of the Hub will also continue through the new service level report card in Children's Services.
- 2.16 **Improving infrastructure for receiving referrals** - The safeguarding hub is fully operational and is working with 120+ contacts a week. An initial evaluation with stakeholders completed before 21st May identified that the hub was having a positive effect on practice. The work package will continue with the trialling of a multi-agency enquiry form based around the child's journey. Ongoing monitoring of the impact of the child's journey will be possible through the CIB report card (indicators T1, T2, T4 and T6).
- 2.17 **Improving the response to domestic violence** - Work on the development of services to address domestic violence is being taken forward by community safety.
- 2.18 **Outcomes Star Performance Measurement** - The piloting of the outcomes star model for developing family led targets and the potential of measuring distance travelled will begin in July. The group managing the implementation is benefiting from the contribution of lead Children's Partnership Improvement Programme (CPIP) voluntary sector representative.

Project 5 – Improving the Quality and Management of Child Protection

- 2.19 **Developing local Child Protection (CP) policy & guidance** - The development of local CP policy and guidance is in the early stages. A team development plan identifying the deficits and the actions required to change practice was developed in time for the peer review. A work package lead partners has been potentially identified to lead this work.
- 2.20 **Developing & Implementing Assessment Tools – This has been merged into Project 3 – Prevention from harm work package.** A single standard risk assessment tool has been agreed and begun to be implemented across social care. Paris matches the requirements of the risk assessment tool.

- 2.21 **Developing and Implementing Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)** - The first phase of development and introduction of the Quality Assurance and performance management framework is nearing completion. The new case audit tool, originally drafted following the new agreed practice standards, is now being simplified following testing by Children's Services Senior Leadership Team. Additional guidance to support consistent judgements was also identified as a need following the testing of the previous audit tool. The next phase to develop a report card to support the implementation of the QAF is underway, with a first draft of the card to be ready by June 30th. This will provide managers with the most extensive set of qualitative and quantitative yet to support a thorough review of service quality and impact.
- 2.22 **Review all existing CP plans** - The review of CP cases begun with the pilot testing of the new audit tool by a multi-agency group W/S 23/4/12. An additional audit 22 CP case 18 months plus has been completed and the findings has been reported.
- 2.23 **Review Emergency Duty Service (EDS) arrangements** - Review of EDS is being led Health as the lead commissioner. An external person has been secured to review the operation of EDS. A consistent operational lead has been identified to engage with MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) and a work package lead has been identified will help ensure this work package starts.

Project 6 – Development of Governance

- 2.24 **Partnership responsibilities and relationships -& Raising awareness of Safeguarding and the Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB).** The development of partnership responsibilities and raising awareness are both underway and on schedule. A range of new promotional materials including highlighting the themes from SCRs has been produced and a major neglect conference scheduled will have taken place on the 26th June. Going forward the raising awareness package will be led the voluntary sector CPIP lead.
- 2.25 **Commissioning for improved safeguarding standards** - An initial project on commissioning occurred in May. A brief is underdevelopment that draws on the experience and knowledge of the work and practice developed through the regional purchasing arrangements already in place for the commissioning of children's residential and fostering placements.

Project 7 – Involving the community and using Knowledge and skills

- 2.26 **Creating the book** - The creating the book work package has been disbanded. There were no Serious Case Review (SCR) actions underpinning this work.
- 2.27 **Childhood poverty including corporate responsibility** - The child poverty strategy will presented to council in July.
- 2.28 **Developing social capital** - The development of social capital led by the voluntary sector has started and 7 programmes have been funded. The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) community engagement and development model has been promoted across the voluntary sector and with members. More work is needed to ensure that pace is maintained that will involve the use of the voluntary sector secondment.

2.29 **Torbay Community directory** - A new whole council community directory is on track to be operational before the end of the year and is ahead of schedule.

Programme level risks and issues

2.30 No programme level risks are being noted at this time. Partnership engagement is improving but is still quite tentative.

2.31 Following a peer review of adoption services the delivery of the action plan will be managed from within the CPIP.

Performance issues to note (fuller commentary embedded within the report card)

2.32 Rate of CP has significantly improved since the start of April 2012 from nearly 290 in February to below 250.

2.33 Rate of Children Looked After remains at or around 250

2.34 Further improvement in the timeliness of initial and core assessments is being impeded by the current vacancies.

Richard Williams
Director of Children's Services

Appendices

Appendix 1 Children's Partnership Improvement Plan – Report Card

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

CIB REPORT CARD

CIB PI ref	Description	2010/11															
		Stat neigh AV	Not Av	Outturn 2011/12	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	DOT
C 1	Number of contacts			791.3	732	654	680	552	769	678	629	769	624	621	553	629	
C 2	No. of referrals to social care			331.6	315	298	280	232	316	303	246	336	264	202	238	251	
C 3	Number of children in care			247	230	239	250	246	244	245	256	262	252	247	251	251	---
C 4	CIC per 10,000	73	59	97	90.6	94.1	98.5	96.9	96.1	96.5	100.8	103.2	99.0	97.0	98.8	98.8	---
C 5	No. of children subject to CP plans	196		287	252	253	249	253	268	283	282	289	288	287	250	246	1
C 6	CP per 10,000	53.3	38.7	114.2	99.2	99.6	98.1	99.6	105.5	111.4	111.4	113.8	113.6	114.2	98.4	96.8	1
C 7	Number of children in need			1376.0						1149.0	1134.0	1391.0	1483.0	1376.0	1183.0	1172.0	
C 8	Number of children in need per 10,000	395.3	343.4	583.2						409.6	404.3	495.9	528.7	583.2	465.9	461.5	

Additional information and commentary on the context Number of children in care / CIC per 10,000

The numbers of children in care have now begun to plateau at or around 250. National and local factors that have impacted on this include –

- o **An increased practitioner sensitivity/awareness of child protection issues** arising from local and national reported tragedies. (Professionals make 90% of the referrals into Children Services.) Nationally the overall numbers of children in care has risen by over 7% since Baby Peter. Locally the levels of awareness has been impacted by the numbers of high profile incidents addressed as serious case reviews (5 in the last 4 years) and a large scale complex sexual abuse investigation. The impact of this can be seen in the increased numbers of children and young people being referred to Child Services. 2011-12 is on track to be one of the busiest for referrals, with a number of referrals running well in excess of 2010/11.
- o **Southwark ruling.** This ruling requires all authorities to ensure it fully discharges its duties in respect to young people who are under 18 and appear to be without suitable accommodation or not within the care of their family. This has led to an increase in the numbers of young people entering care the care system particularly for those aged 16 and over. This is a national trend and the numbers of entrants into care at 16 + is now as significant as those entering the care aged under 5.
- o **Clearing the backlog.** A review of all 500 + cases caught in the historical backlog (report to the CIB in 2011) has led to a necessary increase in the numbers of children in need of immediate protection.
- o **Adverse social and economic circumstances.** Families already under pressure and experiencing difficulties have been further negatively affected by the national downturn and the local prevailing economic climate. For example the levels of deprivation in Torbay have increased over the last period and now are second only to Bristol in the south west. Torbay is also currently experiencing levels of children in need that are the highest amongst our statistical neighbours. This demand includes families who are new to the area and who arrive with significant levels of need. This is helping to fuel the overall demand rates across social care.

No. of children subject to CP plans/ CP rate per 10,000

During 2011-12 Torbay experienced increasing demand for the numbers of children with plans. In this same period Torbay's rate of CP per 10,000 rose to being one of the top five nationally and was over twice the national average. Although the context has not changed and the pressures remain **Torbay has actively reduced its CP rates over the last 2 to 3 months through increased rigour and challenge.** A batch of dual registered children were also removed.

- o **Increased practitioner sensitivity/awareness towards child safety** has, as outlined above, had an impact on the numbers of children being brought to Children's Services attention.
- o **Consistency and quality of decision making.** Steps have been under taken within the CPIP to address this via the introduction of the child's journey, safeguarding hub and the transformation of the safeguarding team. New practice standards have been introduced and a comprehensive practice manual will be published in May that covers CP and other processes. A new manager has been appointed and started in March. The new manager, with some support from Bournemouth Borough Council, will undertake a large scale review of CP plans to identify detailed practice issues and to see if 'risk averseness' has entered the decision making process. The start of an outline plan detailing the actions to be taken by is being drafted following an initial team development day on the 28/3/12. Torbay is in line with the national profile for the types of abuse category used, length of time on a plan, age profile and rate of child subject to plan for second time.
- o **Review of CP thresholds.** An audit of 22 cases where children have been on plans for more than 18 months will start in early May. This will thoroughly explore all aspects of practice in these cases and draw out key intelligence on whether the system has become risk averse.

- o **Clearing the backlog.** The review of the 500+ cases in the backlog did lead to children being put on plans in addition to the receipt of new cases referred in during the same period.
- o **Adverse social and economic circumstances.** The impact of increase levels of poverty and deprivation is closely correlated to increases in the potential for neglect within some families. Some of this demand is being added to by the arrival of complex families that are new to the authority area.

CIB PI ref	Description	Project interface	2010/12		2011/12												Targets					
			Stat neigh Av	Not Av	Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Numerator/Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013	
T1	Referrals going on to initial assessment rolling 12 months	Project 4 -infrastructure, Childs journey, integrated working early help	71.6	72	50.5	63.1	59.8	58.1	60.7	59.6	58.2	57.2	55.7	54.1	50.5	76.7	54.5		...	65%	76.0%	
T2	number of contacts going on to CAF (new and existing)	Project 4 -infrastructure, Childs journey, integrated working early help															57.00		I	50+		
T3	% of case files audited - quality of practice	Project 3 practice standards			536	5	60	59	72	45	89	41	78	51	9	15	19		D	60+ month	75+ month	
T4	% active cases audited (cases audited/CIN number)	Project 1 performance management, Project 3 practice standards, Project 4 workforce development, Childs journey and integrated early help, improving infrastructure for receiving referrals Project 5 assessment tools and implementation of QAF																				5 to 10%
T5	% of case files judged adequate or better	Project 1 performance management, Project 3 practice standards, Project 4 workforce development, Project 5 assessment tools and implementation of QAF																				
T6	% of repeat referrals within 12 months	Project 4 -infrastructure, Childs journey, integrated working early help	25.4	25.6	31.9	64.4	47.9	46.9	42.6	45.1	35.4	38.5	37.8	48.4	31.9	38.3	36.0		I	25	25	

Number of cases audited and % of cases judged to be adequate or better individual case auditing is being carried out by social care managers in charge of social work teams. A new audit tool based around core practice standards was trialled in June by CS SLT however this has proved to be too cumbersome to roll out to managers. A new approach has been developed in its stead that is based on the Ofsted inspectors check list which has been cross referenced with the practice standards and the CYPF outcomes of CRIP. This will much more succinct as a tool and in principle it has been agreed with the TSCB business manager that it could be the same one that the TSCB QA subgroup adopt for its regular audit process. This new simplified tool will be tested by CSLT on July 15th. Practice managers and team managers will be still expected to complete 3 audits a month, as per the agreed PMF and these outcomes will be fed up to CSLT who will also complete their own picking up on a theme. Formal assessment skills training using a DFE backed scheme started in May for all social workers. This training along with agreed practice standards, the simplification of PARIS, the promotion of learning from SCRS will underpin improved standards which regular case auditing will regularly examine.

% of referrals going onto initial assessment. The safeguarding hub is still bedding down but initial stakeholder feedback completed in May was generally positive. A pilot of a new multi-agency enquiry form during the next 2 months will further help the partnership apply the child's journey approach and thereby improve the quality of referrals. This figure does fluctuate month on month the latest in month figures for June are back about 70%+ which would make the cumulative figure for 2012 to be 72%. An additional resource is being allocated to the Hub to increase the amount of decision making capacity following issues with decision maker capacity being tested at times of illness and leave.

% of re-referrals within 12 months. Steady improvement continues. A reduction in repeat referrals is an indication of improvements in the way referrals are being responded to by the Safeguarding Hub it is also an early indicator of improvements in the quality of referrals following the child's journey training.

CIB PI ref	Description	2010/11		2011/12												Targets						
		Stat neigh AV	Nat AV	Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Numerator/Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013	
17	% initial assessments completed in 10 days - 12 month rolling.	83	79.6	59.8	56.2	57.9	55.4	57.1	58.9	60.1	59.9	60.1	60.1	59.8	66.4	61.5	62.8	1052/1675	I			
18	Initial Assessments on time by month				57.9	66.4	40.5	66.3	70.7	71.2	57.9	61.9	58.7	48.9	66.4	62.3	73.0	89/122	I	79%	88.0%	
19	Timing of core assessments 12 month rolling				37.9	39.1	37.0	41.9	42.9	45.4	45.6	45.4	46.3	44.9	48.1	49.1	51.8	598/1155	I			
110	Core Assessments by month				39.6	42.2	30.5	76.1	50.0	63.2	47.8	43.8	60.0	24.5	48.1	58.1	77.4	65/84	I	70%	76.0%	
111	Number families supported by IFSS cumulative			22.0									18.0	22.0	29.0	39.0				98	215	
112	% Initial ICPC completed in 15 days - 12 month rolling	89.5	69.2	70.6						60.5	63.8	68.1	70.0	70.6	77.8	76.8	74.8	220/294	I			
113	Cumulative from april initial CP Conferences on time									88.9	86.7	86.4	96.3	96.1	55.5	81.3	73.7	42/57	I	70%	87.5%	

Initial Assessments on time within the month over 2011/12 an average, 6 out every 10 initial assessments were completed on time. Performance since April 2012 has consistently been above 60%. Progress beyond this level will need to be supported by the appointment of more permanent staff. This is being addressed through a new R&R programme (SEE T31). The early indicators are that the operation of the Safeguarding hub is appropriately re-routing work through to the common assessment framework (SEE T2), more work is going through for early help that may have been NFA'd in the past. Managers meet weekly to ensure work is passed on in a timely way to the safeguarding and family support teams. However the nature of the work and the number of cases requiring further work i.e. a section 47 investigation etc is putting increasing pressure on the safeguarding and family support teams. In response, core assessments not requiring a section 47 investigation are now being completed by the initial response team to alleviate some of this pressure. Manager / decision maker capacity within the Hub has been tested at times of illness and leave and so additional manager resource is being sought that will increase the amount of decision making capacity available to the Hub. Business process issues identified earlier this year have been addressed, but ongoing vigilance is being asked of managers to ensure that this does not arise again. Each social work team (pod) has access to dedicated business support and the PARIS trainer is available for adhoc 1 to 1 sessions with staff.

Core Assessments on time within the month. Over 2011/12 an average, half of all core assessments were completed on time. 2011 /12 saw increased numbers of children subject to section 47 investigations. This put increased pressure on the Family support and safeguarding teams who also hold all the child protection plans. As a result CYP requiring core assessments and not section 47 investigation are now being completed by the initial response team to alleviate some of this pressure. Since April there has been a reduction in the numbers of ICPC being requested which may be the early signs of a change in the very high levels of demand that occurred in 2011. This change is helping to contribute to the number of core assessments completed on time during April, May and June.

CIB PI ref	Description	Project interface	2010/12		2011/12												Targets				
			Stat neigh AV	Nat Av	Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Numerator/Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013
T14	% of health reviews for CIC on time <u>cumulative</u>	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards	89.2		70.8	19.3	27.2	37.8	50.3	47.3	54.0	54.6	58.1	64.9	70.8	7.4	14.0	24/171	I	80%	90.0%
T15	% of LFC's attended by the Police (compared to invites)	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards				95.0	100.0	97.0	86.0	91.0	100.0	100.0	96.0	95.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	15/15		100%	
T16	% of strategy meetings attended by the police (compared to invites)	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards				87.5	84.2	90.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	7/7		100%	
T17	Reviews of child protection cases on time 12 month rolling	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance, review of all cp cases Project 3 practice standards; Project 1 improving case supervision and case management Project 2 BPR	96.3	97.1	94.0	96.2	96.2	96.2	95.3	93.4	93.4	93.4	93.4	91.9	94.0	99.4	98.0	194/198	I	95	97%
T18	Participation of CIC in reviews	Project 1 improving case supervision and case management			89.1	93.9	95.1	95.8	93.6	90.6	90.3	90.4	90.7	90.5	89.1	64.9	87.6	155/177	I	97%	97.0%
T19	Average length of care proceedings	Project 1 improving case supervision and case management; Project 2 BPR. Project 3 , Commissioning of specialist assessments								861	794.1	2553.0	634.1	537.0	186.8	111.7					

% of health reviews for CIC on time. Monthly tracking meetings are taking place between health and social care to progress work and identify solutions. However some delays are being experienced with the notification and transfer of information from social care staff.

Children engaged in reviews. Performance earlier in the year dipped following the re-organisation of the service. Staff turnover in this team has been an issue. Vacancies are currently being advertised but applications are minimal. A review of the JD is being potentially

CIB PI ref	Description	Project interface	2011/12												2010/12		Targets			
			Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	May-12	Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013
T20	Duration on a CP Plan	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance, review of all CP Project 3 practice standards.	5.8	8.0	8.3	6.5	5.4	4.9	4.9	5.4	4.9	4.9	5.4	5.8	5.1	5.3	12/226	I	5.5%	4.5%
T21	Placement Stability**	Project 1 improving case supervision and case management	15.4	2.8	3.2	4.8	5.9	7.1	9.5	11.1	11.5	15.5	15.4	0.8	0.8	0.8	2/247	D	12.5%	10.7%
T22	Long term stability of children looked after	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards, commissioning specialist assessments Project 1 improving case supervision and case management	68.4	68.0	68.0	70.7	72.0	72.0	69.3	68.0	68.0	70.7	68.4	67.1	67.5	52/77	I	75	75.0%	
T23	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards, commissioning specialist assessments Project 1 improving case supervision and case management	487.0	686***									487.0	0.0	368.0		D	660	639	
T24	Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards, commissioning specialist assessments Project 1 improving case supervision and case management	252.0	171***									252.0	0.0	197.0		D	260	213	
T25	Adoptions of children looked after (BVP1163) - Cumulative	Project 5 developing local policy and guidance Project 3 practice standards, commissioning specialist assessments Project 1 improving case supervision and case management	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.0	0.0	0.5	1/191	D	10%	15.0%	

Adoptions of children from Care

Over the last 4 years Torbay has consistently managed to complete between 10 and 15 adoptions a year. However, 4 children were adopted in 2011/12. A task force headed by John Skinner has completed a thorough self assessment and an action plan has been developed. A new interim manager to lead this improvement process is in place. The self assessment and plan has been independently tested by a peer review team commissioned by the DfE. The improvement work will be carried out as a new project within the CPIP. More immediate safeguarding concerns and demanding court work (Torbay is still currently experiencing high numbers of cases going through court). This work demand has been compounded by the need for significant improvements which has played out in very long timescales and lower than acceptable numbers being adopted.

CIB PI ref	Description	Project interface	2010/12		2011/12												Targets				
			Stat neigh AV	Nat Av	Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Numerator/Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013
T26	% of CIC allocated to QSW	Project 1 Management Development Project 2 restructuring social work, Project 3 Improving Assessment and Care Planning			97.7	99.1	99.6	99.6	98.8	97.6	98.2	98.6	96.8	100.0	99.6	99.6	99.6	246/247	...	100%	
T27	% of cases supervised in last 2 months	Project 1 Management Development				57.8	55.1	57.8	60.9	63.1	69.4	67.5	40.7	46.7	49.0	55.1	760/1379	D	90%	95.0%	
T28	Safeguarding and Families Team average caseload per social worker	Project 2 restructuring social work.														11.2	49.35/551		18.00	18.00	
T29	Initial Response Team average caseload per social worker	Project 2 restructuring social work.														16.6	13.81/220		20.00	20.00	
T30	Permanence Team average caseload per social worker	Project 2 restructuring social work.														17.9	6.9/125		15.00	15.00	
T31	Vacancy rate for Social care (managers and frontline)	Project 2 recruitment and retention											40.0%				28.6/76	...	25%	15%	

Frequency of supervision. Performance is being negatively impacted by the turnover in agency practice managers. This is being addressed through R&R.

Vacancy rate in social care. There has been a turn over in both agency and permanent staff in the last 6 weeks. This is being addressed through the implementation of a range of R&R measures which include the head hunting of practice managers, career grade for social workers, enhanced relocation package, employment of hosts to aid the relocation process, retention payments, national recruitment fares and targeting authorities that are losing social care staff.

MAX 31 SAF cases 18 CP (3 of WHICH THEY WERE CO-WORKER - KEY WORKER IN ALL OTHER CASES) 11 CIN CASES AND 2 CIA - MAX 21 IRT CASES 9 CP CASES, 10 CIN and 2 CIA - KEYWORKER FOR ALL CASES MAX 24 PERMANENCE CASES 21 CLA, 1 CP, 2 CIN (Key worker for all cases)

Management TARGETS

CIB PI ref	Description	Project interface	2010/12		2011/12												Targets				
			Stat neigh AV	Nat Av	Outturn	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Numerator/ Denominator	DOT	By Dec 2012	By Jul 2013
T32	Cases allocated to CAIU	Project 5 Improving the Quality and Management of CP				168 Qrt total						160 Qrt total					44 in month	44.0			
T33	% of health and school nurse caseloads that involve more than 70% of CP cases	Project 5 Improving the Quality and Management of CP															0.0				
T34	Public Health (Provider) sickness rates																4.08%				
T35	Public Health (Provider) FTE Turnover																10.7%				

* new structure

** Will be recalculated on a 12 month rolling basis

***average over 3 years

Agenda Item 7



Title: **Peer Review of Adoption Services – Improvement Plan**

Wards Affected: **All**

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Board** On: **18 July 2012**

Contact Officer: **John Skinner**

☎ Telephone: **01803 208949**

✉ E.mail: **john.skinner@torbay.gov.uk**

1. Key points and Summary

1.1 This report updates the Board of the core outcomes from the peer review of Torbay's Adoption services and outlines the actions being taken to improve adoption.

2. Summary

2.1 In May the Department for Education published a set of data on the performance of Adoption agencies (Appendix 1) across the country. Torbay was identified as being within the bottom 20 local authorities nationally.

2.2 Identification within the bottom cohort qualified Torbay for a nationally commissioned peer review process which concluded on the 22 May 2012.

2.3 In advance of this peer review process, a local task force was put together to develop a thorough self assessment and an improvement plan. A suitably skilled and knowledgeable manager is in place to lead the delivery of this plan.

2.4 The main conclusions of the peer review were:

- Torbay has fully realised the urgent task it has in respect of adoption performance, including the causes of delay, but is not about blaming
- Action planning is developing every day and needs to maintain pace
- The Leadership Challenge is significant in terms of defining direction and destination
- Staff need to see clarity, priorities and commitment in order to disengage from the past and focus on the opportunities. Capitalise on their enthusiasm
- Don't lose the focus on adoption within the wider safeguarding children agenda
- BUT do avoid fragmentation and continue to strive for integrate pathways that focus on the child's journey and achieving the best possible outcomes for Torbay's children (see appendix 2 for the full report)

2.5 The adoption service is working on a series of actions which are summarised in appendix 3.

Richard Williams
Director of Children's Services

Appendices

Appendix 1	Torbay Adoption Scorecard (published by the Department for Education (May 2012))
Appendix 2	Peer Review of Adoption Services in Torbay
Appendix 3	Outline Action Plan

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Adoption Scorecard

Torbay			
Children			
	Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)	731	Children who wait less than 21 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)
LA 3 year average (2008-11)		292	25 (41%)
Trend - Improvement from previous year (2010)		n/a	n/a
England 3 year average (2008-11)		171	9440 (58%)
Distance from 2010-13 performance threshold		79 days	n/a
		91 days	

Average Time Threshold Indicators

Related Information													
Adoptions from care (number adopted and % leaving care who are adopted)	40 (15%)	Number and % of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	10 (18%)	Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (number adopted and % of BME children leaving care who are adopted)	x (x%)	Adoptions of children aged five or over (number adopted and % of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted)	10 (7%)	Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)	53	Number of children awaiting adoption (as at 31 March 2011)	20	Number of approved prospective adopters (as at 31 March 2011)	Data not available
Adoptions from care (number adopted and % leaving care who are adopted)	9570 (12%)	Number and % of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption	1030 (7%)	Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (number adopted and % of BME children leaving care who are adopted)	1590 (7%)	Adoptions of children aged five or over (number adopted and % of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted)	2560 (5%)	Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)	52	Number of children awaiting adoption (as at 31 March 2011)	4290	Number of approved prospective adopters (as at 31 March 2011)	Data not available

Prospective Adopters	
The time taken from registration of interest to decision of suitability to adopt (days)	The time taken from receipt of application form to decision of suitability to adopt (days)
Data not available until 2014	
LA 3 year average (2008-11)	
England 3 year average (2008-11)	

28th June 2012

Mr Richard Williams
Director of Children's Services
Torbay Council

Dear Mr Williams

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT OF TORBAY ADOPTION SERVICES

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the diagnostic assessment which has been developed to support local authorities to explore how delay can be minimised for children who need permanence through adoption. Your local authority was offered this opportunity to be part of the Children's Improvement Board (CIB) initiative as the timescales between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, and between obtaining court authority and matching a child with an adoptive family, are outside the three year averages for England local authorities and greater than those of your statistical neighbour local authorities (as reported in the DfE Adoption Scorecards).

The Outcomes UK and BAAF consultants were onsite at Torbay Children's Services from 18th – 22nd June 2012. The team was led by Marion Davis (Outcomes UK Associate) and she was joined by myself for the first day and by Julie Cooke (BAAF Associate) for 4 days.

We are very grateful to all those involved for making themselves available to us at such short notice and in particular would like to thank the small team who responded to our administrative needs and supplied files, documents and other information very willingly and efficiently. It was also extremely helpful to be able to communicate very regularly with key senior managers and test out our findings so that when we gave our feedback presentation on the final day of the diagnostic assessment there should have been no surprises.

Methodology

The team had advance access to publicly available documents such as Ofsted inspection reports, the Children's Partnership Improvement Plan (CPIP) and the Torbay Adoption Scorecard. You provided us with your recent review of the Torbay Adoption Service with its Priorities and Action Plan for the service and for the Adoption Panel. Torbay identified advance 4 key lines of enquiry; our findings in respect of these are woven into the text of this letter

1. Measuring timeliness: how Torbay measures adoption performance and collects data.
2. Integrated pathway for Looked After Children: understanding when adoption becomes part of a child's plan and how plans are worked towards effectively.
3. Infrastructure of the Adoption Service: identifying appropriate structures, strategy deficits, policy, procedures and processes.
4. Recruitment and assessment of adopters in Torbay: clarifying timescales, strategy and recruitment of sufficient and appropriate adopters.

On the first morning senior managers presented an overview of the story behind the Adoption Scorecard.

During the week we were able to meet with managers and staff from Safeguarding and Family Support, Permanence, Adoption and Adoption Support, Recruitment, Training and Assessment (Fostering and Adoption), Safeguarding and Reviewing Teams, Commissioning and Performance, Legal Services, and the Medical Adviser (and temporary Chair) of the Adoption Panel. We also spoke with several adopters and were able to undertake some case file reading. We were also pleased to meet with Cllr Chris Lewis, Lead Member for Children's Services.

After making a presentation on the final day, the diagnostic assessment team led a brief workshop, following which senior managers worked on a response to our diagnosis which is included in this letter.

KEY FINDINGS

It is important to locate our findings in the context of Torbay Children's Services recent history. Following the Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection of November 2010 which resulted in an overall judgement of "Inadequate", the Council's Children's Services became subject to intervention, has seen the departure of the former Director of Children's Services and other key staff, and is currently having to manage a vacancy rate in excess of 40%, including front line and management posts.

The diagnostic assessment team was given a searingly honest picture of the challenges that Children's Social Care faces and the precedence that the remedial actions in safeguarding have taken. Although a few staff told us they had perceived shortcomings in the Adoption Service for some time, the majority appear to have been taken by surprise by the picture that the Adoption Scorecard revealed of significant delays for children being placed for adoption and that Torbay's performance compares so unfavourably with its family of statistical neighbours. This formerly low profile for adoption can probably be attributable to

the understandable priority that safeguarding improvement has required and the historically poor quality of data and performance management.

The Local Authority should be credited for the speed with which it has responded over recent weeks to accelerate plans and bring in additional capacity. The commitment to improvement from the political and managerial leadership is strongly evident. Last month the Council underwent a Local Government Association (LGA) Safeguarding Peer Review which recorded evidence of decisive action and coherent planning and an enthusiastic attention to the delivery of improvement.

Some staff have described publication of the Adoption Scorecard as a “wake-up call” and “a jolt” and the analysis that has followed has accurately identified where the main causes of delay occur within Children’s Social Council are and the looked after children system and does not seek to displace this onto external agencies. The quality of data appears to have been of a poor quality for some years making it difficult for the local authority to easily discern the extent of the problem and track performance.

The leadership team has taken management action in respect of poor performance, is explicit about a “no blame” culture and is trying hard to focus on the future rather than the past.

1. OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN, BIRTH PARENTS AND ADOPTERS

Torbay’s CPIP states it focuses on establishing “an integrated service delivery model that is based on clear pathways and coherent arrangements for children, young people and families that will deliver better outcomes for those in greatest need.” Actually much of Torbay’s improvement planning focus is on getting the basic processes and procedures right rather than an explicit outcomes approach that measures impact for children. However staff are starting to talk about “the child’s journey” and the newly developed performance management framework includes qualitative information regarding outcomes for children. Overall it was difficult for the diagnostic assessment team to find detailed data that identified trends and outcomes.

Elected members have all undertaken corporate parenting training in which young people participated and this is believed to have helped in raising the place of the child at the centre and to have maintained the commitment to additional funding for Children’s Services.

A well-regarded family group conferencing scheme works actively with children and families to identify best solutions and has the potential, if extended (to all children at the edge of care) to contribute to progressing faster to permanence plans.

There is a need for a more strongly evidence-based approach to guide planning to consider effective permanent options at an earlier stage and thus avoid delay for children in this part of the process. There do appear to sometimes be delays in progressing cases to court proceedings. Although court processes are currently completed at average national timescales, this could deteriorate as the volume of proceedings is rising.

Once cases have progressed towards Adoption Panel there is commitment to avoiding delay with additional meetings held if necessary. In discussion with two Adoption Panel members and with the Adoption Team Manager it became clear that active work is now underway to address the historical delay between placement order and matching. Over the past three months the Panel has noted cases of earlier matching of children with adopters.

The adopters we spoke to were very positive about the initial response they received from Torbay (for one this was in contrast to their contact with another Adoption Agency), with the information they received and the swift progression to preparation groups and assessment. From this small sample it appears that a high number of home visits (12 – 14) were made to the prospective adopters, (potential for streamlining) but they were generally satisfied with the process and most applications are presented to Panel within recommended timescales.

There is a range of post-adoption support available to children, adopters and support to birth family members with contact arrangements but the shape and scope of adoption support needs better definition. At present the counselling of adult adoptees is not prioritised with a backlog of people seeking access to birth records and counselling waiting up to a year so long term outcomes of adoptions may not be known.

2. VISION, STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP

There is now a new leadership team in place (though not all are permanent appointments) who acknowledge that there is much to do to improve the adoption service, and they understand the urgency and scale of the task. An Action Plan has been drawn up by a recently recruited interim Service Manager. It is a strong analysis, is comprehensive in terms of a range of actions that will ensure the Council is compliant with regulations and guidance and has policies and procedures that are fit for purpose, and has set appropriately demanding deadlines.

However the vision and strategy for adoption needs to be clearly articulated, prioritised and led by the Director of Children's Services and by the Executive Head, Safeguarding & Well Being, together with the Lead Member for Children's Services. The diagnostic assessment team's view was that this senior team is committed to providing the necessary leadership and are heading in the right direction.

The diagnostic assessment team were told by many people they met that they were confused by the structure of Children's Services and unclear about how responsibility for children's plans and outcomes progressed through the various parts. During the course of the week adjustments were still being made to the structure and the "final" version we saw seemed much more coherent and supported. However it needs to be quickly communicated as the settled structure with a rationale for the roles and responsibilities people have within it.

There is also a need for senior managers to better articulate the vision for the Adoption Service, perhaps through drawing a "road map" that describes what the service will look like and what it will achieve for children, and guides staff in getting there and knowing when they have succeeded. Further development and intelligent use of the recently developed data set will support this journey.

It felt to the diagnostic assessment team as though there is a "window of opportunity" with staff now feeling more confident in the leadership of Children's Services with some describing it as an "exciting" or "dynamic" time. This opportunity needs to be grasped so that the feeling some have of being "in flux" is removed and the commitment of staff maximised. This will be a demanding task whilst the level of vacancies and agency staff remain high. Torbay is somewhat unusual in having social work vacancies in its specialist teams. Tackling recruitment and retention at front line and management levels is a priority and Torbay has recently engaged a private sector partner to assist in recruiting to key posts.

3. WORKING TOGETHER

Within the Council there are examples of supportive relationships within Children's Services including adoption and we heard of good collaborative working with partners such as health and CAFCASS at strategic and practice levels. Traditionally relationships with the courts are good but these will need nurturing in the face of increased workloads. The Head of Legal Services regularly attends Family Court Business Meetings and seeks to involve relevant colleagues from Children's Services.

Torbay uses Parents & Children Together (PACT) for inter-country adoption, is part of the South West Adoption Consortium, has a reciprocal arrangement with 3 other local

authorities for using adopters and has recently visited one of its statistical neighbour local authorities with better outcomes in adoption. Senior staff told us that they were committed to learning from and developing and sharing best practice with neighbour authorities. Relationships throughout the South West Adoption Consortium are strong and reciprocal

There is still room for a stronger outward-facing culture to maximise learning from good practice. Torbay is committed to exploring this dimension and working with improvement support from the CIB or elsewhere.

The team came across some examples of where other parts of the Council might be able to offer more support to the adoption service, including in IT and finance. One skill that is greatly needed is some specific marketing and communications input to raise the effectiveness of recruitment of prospective adopters and foster carers, which would also free up professional social work time for family finding and placement support.

One area that needs tackling is working together across teams involved in planning for children so that the potential loss of momentum and changes in relationships that can occur at transitions between teams is minimised. There are multiple points in the system at present where delay could occur if an integrated permanency planning pathway is not implemented and well understood.

The separation of case-holding responsibilities from the family finding role is to be welcomed, as is the combination of the IRO role with conference chairing and the reconfigured Safeguarding and Reviewing Service has the potential and the determination to assist with and quality assure planning.

At an improvement planning level Torbay has made an important decision to ensure that the Action Plan for adoption is integrated with the overall CPIP, but with a specific project covering adoption so that the focus on this specialist area and monitoring its performance is not lost.

4. MANAGING RESOURCES

Torbay's Children's Services have been stretched by the rise in the number of children subject to child protection plans and looked after, and elected members have demonstrated their commitment to improvement by investing additional budget in the service.

Adoption is a cost-effective way for local authorities to deliver good outcomes for children in comparison to remaining in care for long periods. It is therefore vital that the resources are directed into the front end of the system to a) identify the right children at the right time for whom adoption (or another form of permanence) is the right plan and b) to actively recruit a larger pool of adopters who match the needs of children likely to require placement.

Finally in this section, data is a resource that requires better management, to accurately reflect activity, communicate performance trends, spot issues earlier and drive improvement. Many people, including the diagnostic assessment team, experienced problems with PARIS (the Council's electronic record and IT system) and the fact that much of the work of the adoption service is not incorporated onto the system needs addressing. Difficulties in using the PARIS system meant that the diagnostic team were unable, in the time available; to complete as systematic and comprehensive a set of case file audits as would have been desirable.

5. SERVICE DELIVERY, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Through talking to staff and the team's limited case file reading (some paper and some electronic files) we came across a number of examples of good practice but we are unsure how well learning is shared. We also however picked up examples of delays for some children in the early stages of planning and for others at the family finding stage.

The authority is now much clearer about where the shortfalls in service delivery are and is committed to change and measurable improvement. Once delays in adoption were widely identified there has been a lot of work to speed up the process for a backlog of children's plans. However the starting level is low and requires a sustained focus at many points in the system. Activity to update policies, procedures and processes is urgent and will give staff more confidence in their practice, but longer term success will depend very much on how effectively the permanent workforce can be strengthened and supported.

Recruitment of qualified and experienced social workers and managers is the first step but retention needs to be improved through providing staff with greater certainty about roles, the tools to do the job with and the investment in practice detailed in the Munro Review.

The Adoption Panel is a key element in improving Torbay's Adoption Service and has suffered from the loss of its Chair and other important members. It needs to be reconstructed and its membership and processes strengthened if it is to promote effective adoption practice and provide the appropriate element of challenge to the system. We are pleased that during our week in Torbay an experienced interim Chair was

appointed to the Panel and that plans are underway for recruitment of a permanent chair and other members. An urgent matter outstanding is the identification of the professional adviser to the Adoption Panel.

KEY AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION

The team delivered a full presentation to approximately 30 staff and partners on the last day of the diagnostic assessment listing “Strengths” and “Areas for Consideration” under each of the 5 headings above. The response suggested that our diagnosis was recognised and that people are willing to address the challenges. This honesty and openness is an important first step but there is a real urgency and a number of fronts on which to balance attention if children’s progress to permanence is to pick up the pace it needs to deliver better outcomes for them in the longer term.

We identified some key practical, systemic and cultural areas for urgent consideration:

1. Lead and communicate a compelling vision for adoption in Torbay
2. Quickly finalise the new structure, clarify roles within it and support it by
 - urgently take steps to raise recruitment and retention
 - collect best practice procedures and processes manuals from elsewhere and disseminate them
 - promote enquiring use of data and provide the tools to performance manage effectively
 - reform and strengthen the Adoption Panel.
3. Don’t lose the focus on adoption within the wider safeguarding improvement agenda
4. Avoid fragmentation by devising an integrated pathway that focuses on the child’s journey and achieving the best possible outcomes for Torbay’s children.

A workshop was held on the last day of the week and the local authority’s response to the diagnostic assessment was as follows:

Vision, strategy and leadership

- Create a clear service vision plan and critical pathway for the Adoption Service
- Clearly define service structure to include detailed individual roles and responsibilities
- Create an additional project and work packages for adoption within the CPIP framework

- Create a communication and marketing strategy

Service Delivery and effective practice

- To develop and implement an integrated permanency planning pathway across Children's Services
- Ensure that a permanency plan is created at the 2nd statutory review in line with twin tracking protocol
- Develop and implement practice standards, guidance, policy and procedures for the adoption service
- Reconstitute the Adoption Panel with the guidance and regulations ensuring the legality and compliance
- To raise the profile and integration of the Adoption Panel within the wider service
- Create and implement an outcomes and impact evaluation measurement tool
- Develop an outward facing learning culture which takes account of good practice models and national research

Workforce Development and Re-modelling

- Implement recruitment and retention strategy
- Implement training and development plan
- Re-model the family placement service
- Re-launch and fully implement recent legislative and regulatory changes
- Complete a core skills analysis of all staff within the service
- Ensure that there is an effective contribution from partnership agencies

Performance Managing

- Fully implement the performance managing strategy including a supervision policy
- Create additional or re-engineer existing Business systems structures and processes
- To review PARIS functions and capacity to ensure the completion of the data / information required for the Adoption Service
- To create a core data set for the Adoption Service
- Review and implement any outstanding recommendations from the 2009 Ofsted inspection report

The Council's plan seems to be accurately focused and conveys an understanding of the challenges to be tackled. In order to engage the necessary groups of staff the Council may wish to consider holding a series of development days, including a wider conference that would include key partners (e.g. Health, Courts, CAFCASS) so as to raise the profile of adoption, learn from research and best practice and give attention to some specific topics

that can reduce delays such as improved family finding and a development of twin tracking and concurrent planning.

These are areas which could well benefit from sector-led improvement opportunities within the region.

This diagnostic assessment was intended to achieve a balance of support and challenge and felt collaborative in spirit and that a good degree of agreement was reached about what is needed to improve the service.

We would therefore like to acknowledge the work already started, hope that our contribution has helped cement your commitment and accelerate improvement. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Seamus Jennings
Senior Consultant, Outcomes UK

Outline Action Plan

Torbay Adoption Service Review

Graham Puckering Interim Service Manager

6/1/2012

A detailed review of Torbay's current policies, processes and procedures has taken place and its compliance has been matched to the National Minimum Standards and Regulations, Adoption Guidance, An Action Plan for Adoption document and previous inspection reports. A further review of adoption practice in Torbay against nationally recognised standards is underway. This outline action plan has been drawn up and will be further developed as information and needs are identified.

Adoption Service Review

Outline Action Plan June 2012

Date	No.	Issue of Concern	Action	Person responsible	Date of expected completion	Review of action/outcome	Date of Review/ Outcome
29.05.12	1	<p>There is no permanent or clear temporary Responsible individual or registered Manager identified with OFSTED for Torbay Adoption Service.</p> <p>Unclear if OFSTED have been notified of changes to structure with respect to adoption support and adoption agency management. (s 18)</p> <p>OFSTED currently have the incorrect address for the service registered.</p>	<p>Identify individuals for responsible individual and registered manager positions.</p> <p>Notify OFSTED of interim arrangements and change of office.</p> <p>Inform OFSTED of changes to structure of the team.</p>		Within 1 week		
29.05.12	2	<p>Data collection and presentation for the Adoption scorecard assessment MAY not be accurate.</p> <p>At least one child placed and adopted earlier this year has not had all work completed on the systems and may not have shown</p>	<p>Review the information that was gathered for the scorecard and review figures accordingly. This won't change scorecard but can be reflected to inspectors and give Torbay a clearer understanding of</p>		By end June 2012		

		<p>as a completed adoption.</p> <p>A second child's case has not been closed on PARIS following a completed adoption.</p>	<p>where they are at.</p>			
29.05.12	3	<p>Recommendations from previous adoption inspection November 2009 may not be fully addressed and adhered to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. endeavour to widen the diversity of approved adopters available locally so that there is a wider choice available when matching children with adopters who can best meet their needs b. continue to develop effective strategies to ensure that children are matched and placed without delay with adopters who best meet their assessed needs c. ensure that there is evidence on staff files to confirm that telephone enquiries were made to each referee to verify written references 	<p>Review each of the recommendations in detail and identify evidence to demonstrate. If recommendation is not met then add key issue to action plan and address fully.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify how this occurs currently and how this has changed since the last inspection. Check whether diversity of carers has increased. b. In view of scorecard look at current strategies for identifying and placing children promptly and the process for matching. Identify any disruptions or adoption 	By end June 2012		

		breakdowns and review circumstances. Consider issues of matching in breakdown.			
			c. Review staff HR files and evidence of telephone checks. Set up a document and system for these checks if not in place.		
			d. Identify current support and resources available. If deficit identified then look at need and identify resource implication.		
			e. Identify the current practice and policy in respect of Birth parents allocated support. If deficit identified then look at need and identify resource implication.		
	d. ensure that there are sufficient resources in place to respond promptly to the requests of and work with people affected by adoption				
	e. ensure that, in all cases, birth parents have access to a support worker independent of the child's social worker from the time adoption is identified as the plan for the child				
	f. ensure that there are no potential conflicts of interest in management roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to the role of agency adviser to the adoption panel				
	g. continue efforts to recruit sufficient staff to meet the needs of the service (breach of national minimum				
	h. ensure that all staff involved in adoption work are receiving appraisals,				

		<p>which identify training and development needs</p> <p>i. ensure that personnel files for all staff contain all the required information detailed in Schedule 3, including a full employment history and proof of identity</p> <p>j. review the premises available to ensure that they are suitable for purpose, particularly in relation to storage space for archived records, interview facilities for adults affected by adoption and premises used for adoption panel meetings</p> <p>k. implement plans for safeguarding and backing-up archived records.</p>	<p>f. Urgent review of panel and roles required. Identification of an appropriate panel advisor needs to occur promptly. Review other management responsibilities and potential conflict of interest.</p> <p>g. Review current staffing, vacancies and use of temporary staff. Ensure there is a clear strategy in place to address any issues.</p> <p>h. Check that all staff involved in adoption work have received appraisals, which identify training and development needs. Consider current policy and ensure that any non compliance is</p>			
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			<p>addressed.</p> <p>i. Check that personnel files for all staff contain all the information required detailed in Schedule 3, including a full employment history and proof of identity. If deficits are identified then action to remedy should be taken quickly.</p> <p>j. Review suitability of accommodation in respect of the adoption service and particularly around the storage of archived files.</p> <p>k. Review plans for safeguarding and backing-up archived records. Ensure these are appropriate and compliant.</p>			
29.05.12						

		<p>Children's guide to adoption agency is not reflective of current legislation/addresses and contact details. (S18.5)</p> <p>Only one children's guide to adoption is available and does not fully reflect differing ages and abilities of children. (s.18.5)</p> <p>There is no children's guide to adoption support. Any completed should be reflective of the children's age and abilities who may need to use it. (S18.6)</p> <p>No evidence of children (where appropriate) being given a copy of the children's guide of the adoption agency and adoption support agency.</p>	<p>Set up a working group to develop a new set of guides for the adoption agency and adoption support. Young people should be involved in this development.</p> <p>Consider children's rights service involvement in the development of the guides.</p> <p>Children's guides should be reflective of the services and the diversity of the young people using them.</p> <p>Once completed evidence of distribution to children and young people should be available.</p>			
29.05.12	4	<p>Statement of purpose is out of date and does not reflect fully the correct information in line with schedule 1</p> <p>Formal approval of the statement of purpose is required and should be evidenced accordingly.</p> <p>No evidence of birth families and children (where appropriate) being given a copy of the statement of</p>	<p>Set up a working group to develop a new statement of purpose which is reflective of the adoption service and meets the criteria and guidance set out in the standards.</p> <p>Review similar agency documentation.</p> <p>Formal approval of new</p>	To commence within 1 week and complete in six weeks.		

29.05.12	5	<p>purpose of the adoption agency.</p> <p>Adoption policies and procedures are generally out of date and are not fit for purpose or adhere to the Adoption guidance Feb 11 in terms of content or process development or review.</p> <p>There are missing policies not available to the adoption service. These are numerous and include adoption recruitment, Medical advisor's role, detailed adoption support policies, relinquished child, IRM, adoption by foster carers or family members revocation of Placement Order and information to the adopted child.</p> <p>Adoption panel policy and procedure documents do not fully reflect the recent changes and are not detailed enough to ensure clear understanding of responsibilities and roles.</p> <p>Adoption panel has not been progressed in line with recent</p>	<p>statement of purpose to be made and evidenced</p> <p>Once completed evidence of distribution to service users should be available.</p> <p>All current policies that are not compliant with current standards and regulations and guidance should be removed</p> <p>New policies should be drawn up to reflect all areas of adoption practice and should be compliant with guidance and standards</p> <p>Panel policies and guidance should be drawn up once changes to panels and its membership have been agreed.</p>	<p>Removal of obsolete policies to occur within 1 week.</p> <p>New policy development to commence within 1 week and to be completed by end July 2012</p> <p>Panel policies to be completed within 4 weeks</p>	<p>Commmence urgent</p>
29.05.12		<p>Review of adoption panel roles and functions,</p>			

<p>statutory changes.</p> <p>There is currently no independent adoption panel chair.</p> <p>No clarity on the links between panel and court creating potential for delay for the child.</p> <p>There is no central list for the current adoption panel.</p> <p>No policies or procedures on the recruitment to and maintenance of the central list.</p> <p>No evidence of Quality Assurance feedback from the panel to the agency (17.2)</p> <p>Monthly panels take place on the majority of occasions however there is an anomaly in August when panel doesn't sit for 6 weeks which takes it out of the standard (17.3)</p> <p>There are not two independent vice chairs.</p> <p>No evidence of induction, training of panel members.</p> <p>No annual joint training with panel</p>	<p>membership and full compliance with current regulations to be undertaken within 1 week.</p> <p>Specific action plan to be drawn up to address all areas of need to meet requirements.</p> <p>Prioritise and implement progress of outstanding work.</p> <p>Quality assurance feedback to be drawn up from panel business over the last 6 months.</p> <p>Consider the formation of an adoption and permanence panels.</p>	<p>review with 1 week.</p> <p>Complete review and actions within 6 weeks</p>			

						members and the adoption service. 23.15 (chapter 1 section 3)		
						No evidence of annual review and associated processes.		
						The timing and completion of minutes and decision making are not within the guidance.		
						No clarity in policy regarding approval and matching at the same panel		
						No identified line management responsibilities for the panel.		
						No clear panel advisor with appropriate skills and no conflicts identified.		
						No clear policy or procedural guidance in relation to complaints regarding the adoption panel		
						Adoption panel minutes of poor quality.		
						Adoption panel membership and roles not clear and raise some concern around legality.		
						Appears to be some disconnect		

29.05.12	6	<p>between agency decision maker decisions and panel. Minutes and decisions are separate.</p> <p>Management information expected on a six monthly basis as part of guidance has not been produced in recent months.</p>	<p>Provide a report to the executive of the Local Authority of up to date management information.</p> <p>Consider whether this should be done retrospectively.</p> <p>To demonstrate</p> <p>The number, type and age of children waiting for an adoptive placement.</p> <p>How long they have been waiting</p> <p>The agency's responsiveness in relation to applications to adopt (timescales chapter 1)</p> <p>Progress in relation to recruitment</p> <p>The number of children placed for adoption since the last six monthly report</p>		<p>To complete and produce management information within 1 month</p>		
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			<p>(need to agree a six monthly reporting system)</p> <p>The number of children who have experienced disruptions</p> <p>The number of children where there has been a change of plan</p>			
29.05.12	7	<p>IRO role in reviewing adoption plans is not cohesive or clear and may not adhere fully to the care planning regulations 2011.</p> <p>Documentation and process within the independent reviewing officer role are not reflective of the specific adoption plan</p>	<p>Review the role of IRO's in adoption planning in line with 2011 regs.</p> <p>Consider the twin or multi track planning processes where adoption is part of the plan. Clarify the agreement and notification of these processes.</p> <p>Link in with regulations and IRO functions and ensure compliance</p> <p>Provide specialist training to IRO on their role within adoption in line with recommendations of the IRO handbook if not already undertaken</p>	To be completed by the end of August 2012		

29.05.12	8	Recording and information management is not consistent across the service with some elements of recording being completed electronically and others not.	Review current recording mechanisms and identify those which can be changed or developed. Be mindful of current corporate policies and systems regarding recording.		To be completed by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	9	Adoption assessment process for new applicants has potential significant delays built in. There is not always a level of consistency in approach.	Review current practice and process. Ensure that the process is in keeping with new adoption timeframes set out in the guidance. Develop a policy and procedure which reflects more fully the issue of timeliness in assessment		To be completed by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	10	Participation of children and young people is lacking in a number of areas of practice.	There should be "a sharper focus upon the child" throughout the adoption service. Identify current practice around children and young people participation and where areas should be more evident.		To be completed by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	11	Children are not routinely referred to the Adoption Register at the latest by 3 months of the decision to place for adoption. There is no cohesive process in place.	There needs to be a review of the current process and protocol. Referral to adoption		To be completed by the end of July 2012	

			Currently approved adopters are not being referred to the Adoption Register before three months in any event. (standard 13.2) Unclear if adopters are informed of their rights and consent with this issue.	registered should be considered earlier and recorded appropriately Clarify and record consent process for adopters being referred to the adoption register and that they are given appropriate information				
29.05.12	12	No identified liaison officer for the IRM (chapter 1 guidance)	Identify a liaison officer and clarify roles and responsibility. Complete appropriate documentation for liaison and associated policy documents	To be completed by the end of July 2012				
29.05.12	13	Feedback is not clearly identified or recorded with respect to adoption support from adopters. S15.6	Identify system for recording feedback from service users. This should include recording on the service users form and should be also held centrally	To be completed by the end of July 2012				
29.05.12	14	Adoption support services adviser role is not identified within the service. S.15.4 There is no clear evidence of appropriate service advice around	Clarify the role and responsibilities within the adoption service for the advisor role. Ensure information is	To be completed by the end of July 2012				

29.05.12	15	tax credits benefits and services that are available. S.15.4 The existing adoption recruitment strategy is out of date and does not fully reflect the needs of the service currently. S.10.1 The existing strategy has not been reviewed in line with the standard.	included within appropriate information provided	Monitor and evaluate the appropriateness of the current strategy and then identify a new strategy that meets with the guidance and needs of the service. Identify and set up a monitoring and evaluation of the recruitment strategy on an ongoing basis.	To be completed by the end of August 2012		
29.05.12	16	Standard 16 Intermediary Services and responsibilities are not currently being addressed. Section 98 (children and Adoption Act 2002) requests not being addressed in a timely manner.	Review intermediary support services in detail. Check that they are compliant with the standards regulations and guidance. Consider current workload and backlog in relation to Section 98 requests. Identify a strategy for addressing the backlog and ensuring that future requests are dealt with in a timely manner.	To be completed and backlog of requests cleared by the end of August 2012			
29.05.12	17	Timescale for adoption panel considering plans for children	Identify the number of cases not meeting the current	To be completed			

		within six weeks of statutory review decision not adhered to. (17.8)	timescales and identify cause for delay. Link to IRO role and create policy/ procedure to ensure this is meeting the standard.		by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	18	Sharing agency decision makers with parents and applicants not within identified timescale (S17.11)	Identify how this information is communicated and then how it is recorded. If necessary create policy and/or procedure and documentation to ensure this is meeting the standard.		To be completed by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	19	Staff employment and recruitment issues need to be carefully reviewed to ensure compliance with all area's of s.21. Compliance with telephone checks on references and recording of these to be clarified in line with the last adoption inspection recommendation. S.21	Liaise with HR and undertake audit of staff recruitment records and processes. Ensure checks processes are clear within recruitment policy and guidance. Ensure system and recording process for telephone checks on references.		To be completed by the end of August 2012	
29.05.12	20	No clear policy or procedural guidance in relation to complaints regarding the adoption agency. S.27.5	Develop a clear and complements policy and guidance specific for		To be completed by the end of August 2012	

29.05.12	21	<p>No clear policy or system in place for notification of significant events to appropriate authorities.s.29 (schedule 4 2003)</p>	<p>adoption. Ensure this is centrally recorded. Identify where possible how complaints and allegations regarding the adoption agency are currently recorded. Policy which reflects how children are consulted and given information about how to complain.</p>				
29.05.12	22	<p>No evidence of a business continuity plan. s.28.3</p>	<p>Consider whether all events that require notification have been notified. Any outstanding notifications to be sent Identify process and procedure for recording both on individual files and centrally.</p>	<p>To be completed by the end of August 2012</p>			<p>To be completed by end August 2012</p>

29.05.12	23	<p>No clear policy on the format and content of agency files on children and prospective adopters.s.27.1</p> <p>Data protection, confidentiality and process of managing information and files has no policy. S.27.2</p>	<p>Ensure plan is available to all staff to access</p> <p>Create a written policy that clarifies the purpose format and content of information to be kept on the agency's files, on the child's file and prospective adopters case file</p> <p>Ensure a policy is available for removal of files from the premises is put in place and all staff including panel members are aware of this.</p> <p>Develop a system for monitoring the quality and adequacy of record keeping</p>	<p>To be completed by end August 2012</p>		
29.05.12	24	<p>Unclear how children are given information about advocacy services and access to the children's Rights Director S.1.4</p> <p>Unclear how children's wishes and feelings are gathered recorded and addressed within the process. S1.1 1.2</p> <p>Unclear how the agency records children's wishes feelings and views</p>	<p>Develop information and recording opportunities to demonstrate this occurs.</p> <p>Identify resources which will meet this standard and the needs of children involved in adoption.</p> <p>Identify mechanisms for children to gain feedback on concerns or complaints.</p>	<p>To be completed by end August 2012</p>		

07.06.12	25	and how these are taken account of for the purposes of agency monitoring and service development.	Demonstrate how children's views are taken into account in monitoring and developing the service.				
07.06.12	26	Life Story books are not given in stages within the timescales set although they are generally completed by the Adoption Order. S.2.7 There is no clarity on who should be completing them and there is differing practice evident. S.2.5 Later life letters are generally completed on time although there are a small number out of date. S.2.8	Develop clear policy on timescales for completion of life story work and later life letters and identify key responsibilities for completion. Consider and review standard of life story books and later life letters and consider training needs if necessary	To be completed by end August 2012			
07.06.12	27	Oral and written communications are not available in a format that which are appropriate to the physical, sensory and learning impairments; difficulties; and language of the individual.S.25.12 and S.26.7	Address communication processes and develop a policy to reflect the needs of this standard. Identify if there are resources available to meet the standard	To be completed by end August 2012			
07.06.12	27	Adoption support policy relating to children living outside of the area	Policy to be developed to set out clearly	To be completed			

		within three years of an adoption order being made is not evident. Liaison between Local Authorities in line with adoption guidance is not clear.	responsibilities and understanding of processes in line with standards. Consider processes for liaison between Local Authorities when a child(ren) are placed out of the area and there may be more than one Local Authority involved.		by end August 2012	
07.06.12	28	Step-parent adoption policy is not reflective of practice.	Review step-parent adoption processes and develop a coherent policy.		To be completed by end August 2012	
07.06.12	29	Policy with regard to financial support in all areas of pre adoption and adoption support needs to be clarified in line with statutory guidance and standards.	Review all financial policies and processes and develop a coherent policy and process that is reflective of guidance.		To be completed by end August 2012	
07.06.12	30	Detailed information processes and policies are not evident on specific areas of intermediary services.	Consider policy and protocol for various area's of intermediary support. This will include veto by an adopted person, consent to disclose information, provision of information where consent is refused.		To be completed by end August 2012	
07.06.12	31	Detailed information, processes and policies are not evident on specific areas of Access to information in post-commencement adoptions	Consider policy and protocol for various area's of Access to information in post-commencement adoptions		To be completed by end August 2012	

07.06.12	32	Detailed information, processes and policies are not evident on all areas of overseas adoption, children being brought to the UK for adoption, section 83 and 85.	including responsibility for keeping information, information to be kept, storage and manner of section 56 information, disclosure of information.				
07.06.12	33	To develop process maps to illustrate the processes within adoption and use as a guide for the development of policy and procedure.	To create accurate process maps and link to standards and regulations. Develop links through process maps to IT systems and policy development	To be completed by end August 2012			
07.06.12	34	Consider statistical neighbours, strengths and challenges and identify key messages to inform development of the adoption service.	To gain an understanding of services and processes that are going well. Use the information gained to inform the development of the service in Torbay.	To be completed by end August 2012			

Notes: There are a range of child focused standards which need to be evidenced through a review of childcare services work with children. S.1 to 7.