



# You Said, We Did

August 2016



# Introduction

This report is a summary of what has been done by Children's Services in the past 12 months as a result of the views of children, young people, and parents/carers that were gathered in 2014/15.

## 'You Said'

934 parents/carers, children and young people took part in a survey to find out what they thought of the service, of these:

- 94% said that their needs, feelings and wishes had been taken into consideration;
- 96% felt that they had been treated with respect by staff; and
- 95% were generally happy with the services.

## 'We Did'

Below explains how teams across Children's Services have responded to things people have said about their service.



Aug 2016 ● 16-17 114

## Children's Centres

### 'You Said'

#### Service User Feedback Issue

The area that Children's Centres appeared to be having least impact on families was around parents' 'knowledge about keeping my child safe'.

### 'We Did'

#### Action Taken

The new joint Children Centre Service with Health Visiting will focus its support on families needing extra support (at level 3 on the continuum of need), including those where people have concerns that the child is not safe. The Health Visitors will use the 5 mandated health visiting checks to find out which families need extra support. If the family needs help around keeping their child safe then this support will be offered.



## Children's Disability Service

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>Some parents wanted more access to community activities for their disabled children.</p>	<p>A Practice Manager within Children's Disability Service sits on a panel for grants and makes sure that grants are awarded for activities for disabled children with complex needs. The Children's Disability Duty and Assessment Team will liaise with the Early Intervention Service to refer disabled children with complex needs who need more help to access activities if their parent is unable to provide this.</p> <p>The Operations Manager raises awareness of disabled children in the Local Offer working group in order to make sure that information about suitable activities are available in the local offer information.</p>
<p>Having money for the things we need.</p>	<p>The Children's Disability Service workers are aware of the issue arising from not having enough money, as well as the ongoing issues for families with particular needs such as substance misuse, mental health etc. as well as the impact of having a disabled child.</p> <p>The workers will tell families about the i-go card so they can access leisure activities at reduced rates.</p> <p>As more families receive personal budgets for their disabled child, so they will have more flexibility to arrange support that helps the whole family.</p> <p>Social workers tell families about organisations that can help with financial, childcare and housing issues.</p>
<p>BME respondents were less likely to agree that their Needs, Wishes and Feelings have been taken into consideration.</p>	<p>This feedback has been discussed in team meetings and workers encouraged to attend faith and diversity courses and will continue to be carefully monitored by managers.</p>

# Complaints

## 'You Said'

Service users across the department raised the issue of communications. They told us that:

- queries/actions could be followed up more quickly; and
- reports, information and plans need to be more detailed, accurate, clear and shared with the service user in a timely way.

## 'We Did'

The Complaints team have made several changes to the way complaints are handled in order to make the process more simple and timely.

1. Complaints pages updated to .GOV style to be more focussed on what information customers need in order to make a complaint, using simple, clear information.
2. A simple web form was introduced that asks all the information needed from the customer in order to process their complaint first time so that we do not need to go back to the customer to ask dates of birth, outcomes request, social worker name etc.
3. The complaints case management system was updated so that it offers automatic updates and reminders to make sure complaints are responded to in time.

## ESCC Early Help Service 5 – 19 years (Targeted Youth Support)

<b>‘You Said’</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>‘We Did’</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>Statistics show that the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) population is under represented proportionately in the service cohort that took part in the survey.</p>	<p>The service takes referrals from a range of partners. Each referral is considered based on the needs of the child, young person and family.</p> <p>Information about the service is written in plain English and workers take the time to explain how the service works. Where language is a barrier the service accesses interpreters.</p> <p>Where referrals are for a family identified as being from a BME background the service tries a range of methods to begin working with the family, starting with speaking to the referrer about the best way to make contact with the family.</p> <p>The service will make sure they undertake Parent / Carer Satisfaction Surveys on a 1-2-1 basis with parents to make sure they get their feedback.</p>
<p>Just over 8% of parent / carers responding to the Parent / Carers Satisfaction Survey stated they had a disability.</p>	<p>Undertaking more in-depth assessments involves speaking to wider family members. This has helped the service find out where parents may have a disability and then work out the best type of support that can be offered to the family and also if the child / young person has a caring responsibility for their disabled parent.</p>
<p>Only 6% of respondents to Parent / Carer Satisfaction Surveys were male.</p>	<p>The data shows that the majority of parents / carers the service worked with previously were female.</p> <p>Through the Early Help Assessment which is carried out to develop the Early Help Plan, practitioners will work hard to make sure the voice of the father is represented.</p> <p>Where fathers have played an active part in the work the service will ask them to complete a Parent / Carer Satisfaction Form.</p>
<p>More young women reported improved relationships with their parents following the TYS intervention than young men reported.</p>	<p>The introduction of The Early Help Plan and involving parents in this has led to more open discussion between practitioners, parents / carers and young and finding out which issues to include in the Early Help Plan. This now allows the parents views to be heard and issues to be dealt with that relate to both the young person and the adult.</p>

## The SEN and Disability advice service at Information for Families

Response from service users was low so this year the service carried out a telephone survey with a small number of service users. This has provided more in depth feedback which will be used to inform service development.

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>Some respondents did not find the information/advice to be up to date or accurate.</p>	<p>The team always aim to give the most up to date and accurate advice. More training has been given to staff and new staff members to make sure information is kept up to date.</p>
<p>Some service users find that it is difficult to know how to access the right advice and support services.</p>	<p>The local offer has been developed to make sure that families with children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can have early access to support through the Council website. Young people and parents and carers are involved in this through focus groups and user testing. We asked the East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) Young Inspectors to do an inspection of the online information for young people with SEN and disability to tell us what needs to be improved, We have also published new information on the service, and other places to get help or advice.</p>
<p>Service users feel that there are not enough resources across the services.</p>	<p>There has been a review of the SEND Information, Advice and Support service. As a result of this review additional funding has been identified for the service, including for a worker to develop the advice service for children and young people. Going forward the service will also be developing an online advice and guidance offer which will provide resources for parents, carers, children and young people.</p>

## Locality Social Work and Family Assessment

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>84% of parents say their social worker is helping them make changes that will improve things for their family.</p> <p>All children and young people knew why they had a social worker and reported that they had made a difference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality will keep up the good work!</li> </ul>
<p>Parents and children report being unable to understand what is written about them in reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality has continued work to try and make sure social workers are using accessible language, the importance of this is already included in 'legal workshop' and 'risk assessment' training.</li> <li>• Social workers use the participation toolkit which has a range of methods to help social workers communicate and families understand what we are concerned about and how we will work with the family to improve things.</li> <li>• The introduction of the new children's recording system (LCS) has allowed us to make the templates for reports that are more family friendly and we are working with staff to record in a simpler and clearer way.</li> </ul>
<p>Children and young people and parents complain about having too many social workers and having to repeat their story, or that new social workers don't understand enough about their story and they have to repeat it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We know it is difficult when children and families have a change of social worker, and we will make sure our social workers know families feel like this. It is unavoidable at the end of a Family Assessment when ongoing social work support is needed. However, apart from this transfer point we try not to change worker unless the social worker leaves or goes on maternity leave.</li> <li>• Introduction of a chronology tool will make it easier for new social workers to find out background information but it is still important for social workers to check out with families that they have understood the history.</li> <li>• Training on using chronologies (timeline of important events) is offered on an ongoing basis, so that social workers understand the importance of and how to use chronologies.</li> <li>• Continuing to encourage social workers to make use of the participation toolkit.</li> </ul>

## Locality Social Work and Family Assessment (continued)

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
Children report not seeing their social worker where they want to be seen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will make sure our social workers know children and families have said this and ask social workers find out this information at assessment.</li></ul>
Parents report not being involved in deciding what help their family need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing to encourage social workers to make use of the participation toolkit.</li><li>• Our senior practitioners will support our social workers to develop their skills around building relationships with families.</li><li>• The Safeguarding Unit have been trialling a new approach in Child Protection Conferences that is more focused on making sure parents are involved in deciding what help the family needs and why we are concerned about the safety of their children. Once the trial has finished we will see if there is anything Locality Social Work teams can learn from this about how to best involve parents.</li></ul>

## Locality Social Work and Family Assessment (continued)

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>Children and young people and parents don't know what a child's plan is and report not being involved in its development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will have a discussion with practice managers about good practice. Social workers use the participation toolkit which has a range of methods to help social workers communicate and families understand what we are concerned about and how we will work with the family to improve things.</li> <li>• The introduction of the new children's recording system has allowed us to make the templates for reports that are more family friendly and we are working with staff to record in a simpler and clearer way.</li> <li>• We offer 'Communication with children' training to our social workers to improve their skills around talking to and working with children so that children are able to engage in and understand the work that is going on in their family.</li> <li>• We will ask the trainer of the above course to have a focus on communication for the child's plan.</li> <li>• We will highlight some of the key techniques, tools and ideas to senior practitioners from the training so these can be shared with their teams.</li> </ul>
<p>Children feel judged by their social worker.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to encourage social workers to make use of the participation toolkit</li> <li>• Our senior practitioners will support our social workers to develop their skills around building relationships with families.</li> <li>• The Safeguarding Unit have been trialling a new approach in Child Protection Conferences that is more focused on making sure parents are involved in deciding what help the family needs and why we are concerned about the safety of their children once the trial has finished we will see if there is anything Locality Social Work teams can learn from this about how to best involve families.</li> </ul>

## Looked After Children (LAC)

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p><b>LAC are happy and feel safe in their placement</b>            81% said where they are living now is the right place for them. This has remained constant, as in 2013 81% also answered this. 79% say they are treated fairly by their foster carer. 84% say they feel very safe where they live.</p>	<p>The LAC Service will keep up the good work!</p>
<p><b>LAC want to be kept informed</b>            The new survey asks questions about how the child felt when they first came into care. 48% said they felt scared. 60% said they didn't understand why they were going into care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We do send out information about carers to social workers but the quality is not always good. We will work to improve these.</li> <li>• We are going to look at using a range of different media to make sure up to date 'Family Books' of foster families are held on our case management system which can be emailed to social workers to show to children before they come into care.</li> <li>• We will remind social workers and update training on what we need to do by law to meet timescales for placement plans.</li> </ul>
<p><b>LAC feel listened to but don't feel they have much choice in key decisions about their lives.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of MOMO, an app for LAC to share their views for their LAC review.</li> <li>• Review and make available Social Worker tools and resources that help them work with children in a way that listens to them and engages them. Training to make use of new ICT technology, including social worker hybrids, to improve information sharing of more child-friendly information about foster families through use of different social media.</li> <li>• We are reviewing and looking to extend our accommodation and placement options for LAC and Care Leavers.</li> </ul>

## Looked After Children (LAC) continued

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<b>LAC feel able to make a complaint but don't know how to access an advocate.</b>	To work with the Children In Care Council to look at the information that is given to children and young people at the point they enter care, including what information is shared through social media, to make sure it includes all important information.
<b>LAC feel supported by their foster carers in their education and training.</b>	Continuing to look at the support and training that is given to Foster Carers and Supported Lodging providers around Education, Employment or Training and making sure it meets our children's needs.

## Safeguarding

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>The areas where there was less agreement, although still the majority, were understanding about the worries that people have for their family, what they need to do to keep their child safe and how involved they feel in deciding what help the family need.</p>	<p>A new approach to Child Protection Conferences is underway in which family involvement is really central. Child Protection Advisors make use of the following headings (as written on sheets on the wall) to guide the discussion in the Conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What's working well? (Strengths)</li><li>• What are we worried about? (Risks/needs)</li><li>• What will it look like when things improve? (Goals)</li><li>• Who does what, by when?</li></ul> <p>The meeting, structured in this way, helps make sure that parents understand the worries, are involved in deciding what help they need and what they need to do to keep their child safe.</p>

## Youth Offending Team

<b>'You Said'</b> <b>Service User Feedback Issue</b>	<b>'We Did'</b> <b>Action Taken</b>
<p>Almost half of the respondents said that there were things that made it harder for them to participate fully in their sessions with YOT. The most frequently cited reasons for this were learning needs, finding it difficult to explain things and where they live (it's a long way or transport is difficult).</p>	<p><b>Speech &amp; Language Therapy (SALT) Training :</b></p> <p>A series of joint training courses on SALT issues have been delivered to YOT and Police staff. Further SALT training is taking place with Magistrates across Sussex in order to improve communication with young people in the court setting. A Speech and Language Therapy Screening Tool is now used as part of the referral process for speech and language assessments to help find out speech and language needs.</p> <p><b>Learning styles identification and evaluation during YOT order:</b></p> <p>Learning and diversity meetings are now held for all young people with new orders. The YOT Education Officer will give feedback to practitioners with suggestions of how best to support case work. This is looked at again after three months.</p>