

CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Children's Social Care Improvement Plan
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Policy context:	Safeguarding of children and raising standards in children's social care.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[X]
Opportunities making Havering	[X]
Connections making Havering	

SUMMARY

This report seeks to update the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee about Havering's improvement plan for Children's Social Care Service following the Ofsted Inspection in June 2018.

The department achieved an overall 'Good' grading but there were several recommendations made to improve practice and process, to ensure greater consistency and understanding across the social care system in order to continue to improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee consider planning for improvement work within the Service and receive regular updates on the social care improvement plan.

REPORT DETAIL

Social Care Improvement

Background

In June 2018 Havering children's social care, was inspected under the new ILACS framework. The outcome of this was an overall '**Good**' rating and this comprised of three category judgements;

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families - **Good**
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection - **Requires improvement**
- The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers - **Good**

The inspection report highlighted several areas, which need to be improved, in order to raise standards further. A key factor is to ensure greater consistency and quality assurance across the service, and improvements with case recording.

Improvement priorities

The Children's Senior Management team have analysed the report, and identified seven key project areas within this programme of work. Each project will be led by at least one Head of Service, or two where the remit is shared or the project is of a large scale. Each project area will form a team including practitioners, managers and partner representatives from across all social care services. These themes are deliberately cross-cutting, and designed to drive improvement across Children's Services, rather than in specific service areas. Improvement work will be consistent with and align to the overarching systemic approach and "Purposeful, Planned and Focused" (PPF) practice model.

Each of the project areas will have a finalised project initiation document, setting out clear aims, how we will measure success and the timeframe. Progress against each project will be overseen by the Children's Services Improvement Board. A 'deep-dive' review of each theme will take place at regular rotation and the plan for each area reviewed in accordance with detail on key performance indicators (KPIs), risks and issues. Progress updates will be provided to the LSCB and SLT. The Leader of the Council has requested a detailed briefing for each area of

improvement which will be presented to Executive Briefing on the 3rd December 2018.

The key thematic project areas are as follows:

Theme 1: Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood

This theme builds on progress made across the Leaving Care and Intervention and Support service. The aim is to further improve the quality of care planning. This includes the development of a Health Passport for care leavers and the integration of Personal Education Plans into overarching care plans. This will involve partners across health and education. The work will further develop the co-production approach and include digital approaches such as Leaving Well and Digital Life Story Work.

There is also a focus on how we manage and make decisions around key transition phases for children/young people who are in care or care experienced.

Theme 2: SMART Planning (Including risk assessments and support for children returning home from care)

This theme relates to the approach to planning and recording across Children in Need, Child Protection, Strategy Discussions and risk assessments. The aim is to set out a consistent approach to ensuring plans are SMART and recorded in a clear, concise and consistent manner. The aim is to develop guidance and exemplars, deliver a range of training, and ensure effective quality assurance.

Theme 3: Supervision

The aim is to clarify what 'good' supervision looks like, and set out clear guidance and principles. This also involves looking at new ways of delivering case supervision including group and peer supervision models. A menu or 'offer' of supervision will be developed and different methods piloted and tested. An approach to recording and quality assurance will also be developed.

Theme 4: Case recording and data quality

Alongside the implementation of the new case management system, clear expectations of how practice should be recorded will be developed, and a rigorous quality assurance framework for data quality will be put in place. The aim is to ensure a more consistent approach to record keeping, whilst ensuring this is efficient and enables practitioners to spend significant time engaged in direct work with families.

Theme 5: Adolescent Safeguarding

The aim of this theme is to ensure there is a coherent approach to the range of risk issues that affect young people, including Serious Youth Violence, Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing, Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, and Radicalisation. A review of the governance structure, new strategy, model of practice, partnership working and intelligence will be developed as part of this work. The aim is to ensure we consider all contextual safeguarding issues together when reviewing risks and safety plans for young people.

Theme 6: Quality Assurance

This theme will consider the auditing and other quality assurance activities across the services to ensure there is a robust framework which supports us to achieve a more consistent quality of practice. The current auditing activity will be reviewed to respond to feedback from Ofsted. Specific attention will be given to the areas of activity covered by these improvement projects.

Theme 7: Workforce and Practice development

This theme will progress the work of the Social Care Academy and set out a route of professional development for all practitioners and managers within the service. This will include a review of career progression and fast-track options. The theme will consider the preparation of social workers for the national accreditation system, and link the professional development plan with the PDR process. The theme will also consider recruitment, retention, induction and recognition.

Reporting

Each project has a dedicated project officer, who will support and facilitate each area, managing risks and issues and all relevant reporting. A senior project lead is overseeing the wider social care improvement programme, working with senior management bringing together all activity under the programme. Performance data and business intelligence will play a significant role in helping us understand what is working well, and where we need to adjust our approach on our deliverables. All of these will help ensure there is progress, as agreed in their milestones and our wider plan.

Through the Improvement Board, the service will continue to look to address issues and risks throughout the social care system, review existing projects and consider if new areas of work need to be explored and developed. This will ensure that the service can both be proactive and reactive to the improvement needs.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no new financial implications or risks arising from this report, which is for information purposes. It is anticipated that planned actions for further improvements will be delivered within existing resources however any risks that arise will be communicated and managed as part of the regular Financial Management reporting arrangements.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no major issues with the content of the Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

The quality of planning, supervision and workforce development are key elements of the improvement programme of projects and will require robust and regular management reviewing and monitoring. This should work alongside effective staff engagement and involvement mechanisms.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None