



## CABINET

**Subject Heading:**

**A Business Case setting out an improvement plan and resource proposal for Children's Social Care.**

**Cabinet Member:**

Cllr Benham

**SLT Lead:**

Tim Aldridge

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**Policy context:**

This report proposes a robust plan to drive children's social care improvement and the resources needed to achieve this.

**Financial summary:**

This report recommends an investment of £0.75m for one year, starting from April 2019.

**Is this a Key Decision?**

YES

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

Quarterly, with a full annual review.

**Reviewing OSC:**

Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

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

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

**SUMMARY**

This report sets out an improvement plan for Children's Social Care Services in Havering, following an OFSTED ILACS inspection in June 2018. A corresponding business case describes a proposal to invest £0.75m for 19/20 to resource this improvement plan. Although the OFSTED framework is subject to review, and there are no set formulae or methods to guarantee the outcome of future inspections, the proposed investment would enable the service to develop the capacity and capability to respond comprehensively to the recommendations of the last ILACS inspection.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to approve the approach outlined below and agree the financial request for additional resources to be allocated to Children's Social Care for 19/20. This will provide an opportunity consolidate improvements delivered over the last two years, and achieve greater consistency across all service areas.

**REPORT DETAIL**

**1. Background**

1.1 In June 2018 Havering children's social care, were inspected by Ofsted 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**

1.2 The inspection report highlighted several areas for improvement in order to raise standards further, with a key factor being to ensure greater consistency and quality assurance across the service, and compliance with case recording.

1.3 The Children's Senior Management team have analysed the findings, and identified seven key themes within this programme of work. Senior managers are being allocated as Project Leads and each theme will form a team including practitioners, managers and partner representatives from across all social care services.

1.4 These themes are deliberately crosscutting, and designed to drive improvement across Children's Services, rather than in specific service areas. Each of the

project areas will have a finalised project initiation document, setting out clear aims, how we will measure success and the timelines the project will deliver in.

1.5 Progress against each project will be overseen by the Children's Services Improvement Board, with a rota focusing on two themes per meeting. Progress updates will be provided to the LSCB and SLT, the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and also the Executive.

1.6 The programme consists of an evaluation framework, to establish what is working and how we are progressing on our improvement. This includes;

- a. Practice week and special Quality Assurance audits on key themes.
- b. Feedback from staff.
- c. Feedback from service users.
- d. Peer Reviews (involving other Local Authorities).
- e. Challenge from an experienced independent auditor.
- f. A focused visit from Ofsted (prior to the next OFSTED inspection).

## **2. Themes and objectives**

**2.1 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 and the integration of Personal Education Plans into the care plan. 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 transitions phases for children who are in care or care experienced.

**2.2 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.

**2.3 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.

**2.4 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.

**2.5 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.

**2.6 Quality Assurance.** This theme will consider the auditing and other quality assurance activities across the services to ensure there is a robust framework to 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.

**2.7 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.

**2.8** All project initiation documents are available.

### **3. Resources**

3.1 In order to strengthen the improvement programme and achieve the objectives across all the themed project areas, it is recommended that key roles and resources are put in place.

3.2 Funding over 19/20 would be for £0.75m, covering an array of roles and areas. After the first year the programme will be reviewed, evaluated and certain roles funded by the service.

<b>Total Cost</b>					
	<b>Yr2 19/20</b>	<b>Yr3 20/21</b>	<b>Yr4 21/22</b>	<b>Yr5 22/23</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>One off Revenue costs</b>					
Ofsted Improvement	£0.75m				£0.75m
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£0.75m</b>				

3.3 These roles will not only provide support to the improvement programme, to help achieve its goals, but also ensure that current 'good' standards are maintained, sustaining a solid foundation to build upon.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Budget cost (with oncosts)</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Themes supported</b>
Head of Service Quality Assurance (additional role)	£15k	The opportunity for an existing Group Manager to take on a Service Manager role, leading on Quality Assurance across the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Quality Assurance</li> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Case Recording and Data Quality</li> <li>&gt; Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood</li> </ul>
Group Manager (backfill).	£80k	Backfill capacity for existing Group Manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Quality Assurance</li> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Case Recording and Data Quality</li> <li>&gt; Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood</li> </ul>
QA Support Officer	£39k	Officer to strengthen and support QA delivery and broader functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Quality Assurance</li> <li>&gt; Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood</li> </ul>
Family Therapists (and training)	£420k	5 Family Therapists roles to provide systemic and clinical support to social workers and contribute to the new model of practice. Training to include new modules around systemic practice, including in-house developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Workforce and Practice Development</li> <li>&gt; Case Recording and Data Quality</li> </ul>
Havering Social Care Academy (HSCA) Co-ordinator	£51k	Develop the HSCA and deliver against the vision for learning and development aimed at our workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Workforce and practice development</li> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> </ul>

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Practice Development Practitioner - AP	£74k	Role to help develop a new Practice Model – providing the ability to develop content, track progress, able to QA around the model, working across all delivery services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Workforce and Practice Development</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Case recording and Data Quality</li> </ul>
Project Manager	£51k	Focused to support all seven themes areas, to ensure all projects meet their aims, risks are mitigated and issues managed. Provide dedicated support in writing reports and evaluating what works. Work with other LAs and focus on national practice developments and writing bids to receive investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood</li> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Case recording and data quality</li> <li>&gt; Adolescent Safeguarding</li> <li>&gt; Quality Assurance</li> <li>&gt; Workforce and practice development</li> </ul>
Research in Practice Membership	£15k	Share and learn from best practice. Understand how we can research what works and best evaluate what we do. All recently inspected LA's with Outstanding features have a membership and used this to drive their improvement strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood</li> <li>&gt; SMART Planning</li> <li>&gt; Supervision</li> <li>&gt; Case recording and data quality</li> <li>&gt; Adolescent Safeguarding</li> <li>&gt; Quality Assurance</li> <li>&gt; Workforce and Practice Development</li> </ul>
Resources	£5k	Funding to procure a new social care website displaying our best practice to the national and local social care community. Video editing software licenses to develop content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Workforce and practice development</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£750k</b>		

**REASONS AND OPTIONS**

**Reasons for the decision:**

3.4 The proposed investment will enable the Children's Services to fully implement the improvement plan and achieve the best possible position in preparation for the next Ofsted ILACS inspection.

3.5 Since the publication of the June 2018 Ofsted report, the Service has been able to analyse the key areas for improvement. Through our participation in Regional Sector-led improvement, benchmarking the service against other Local Authorities, and engaging with those rated 'Outstanding', there is a high level of confidence in the improvement plan. There is a commitment to sustaining a robust level of external scrutiny throughout this improvement process.

**Other options considered:**

3.6 Other options have been explored, including alternative resource plans, but through the clarity attained during the scoping and analysis phase, it is considered that the right areas of focus have been identified and responded to. The recommended resource plan will enable the improvement plan to be delivered comprehensively, and at pace.

**IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

**4 Financial Implications and Risks**

4.1 Approval of the plan should not result in additional pressure for the children Directorate's budget in 2019/20 because the proposals will be funded from corporate budgets, for which a request has already been made. The expectation is for the plan to be delivered within the allocated funding however, any material underspends will be returned to the corporate budgets, ensuring the Authority is able plan and allocate resources to other key priorities.

4.2 The Financial management framework will ensure progress of the plans (including the spending profile) continue to be monitored as part of the ongoing budget monitoring arrangements. Although there is some risk of slippage due to having to recruit external resource for aspects of the initiative, any opportunity to mitigate the impact on successful delivery should be considered as long as it does not result in additional pressures and considers the value for money implications.

## **5 Human Resources implications and risks**

5.1 New roles will need to be created, evaluated, advertised and recruited to in line with the Councils Recruitment policy and HR procedures.

## **6 Legal implications and risks**

6.1 The Council is under a duty pursuant to the Children's Act 1989 (including 2004 amendments) and through reforms in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to safeguard and protect looked after children, and children in need in its area.

## **7 Equalities implications and risks**

7.1 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**

Children's Social Care Improvement Programme Plan.