

**Family and Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (FACS)**

**Date: 4th April 2019**

**Children's Social Care Improvement Plan 2019**

**Report of the Executive Director of Adults Social Care and Children's Services, Cath McEvoy-Carr**

**Cabinet Member for Children's Services: Councillor Wayne Daley**

**Purpose of report**

To present this committee with a new Improvement Plan in relation to Children's Social Care.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

- 1) This committee satisfies itself that the key areas arising from the recent self assessment are covered in this plan.
- 2) Members are requested to identify any areas that they feel require additional scrutiny or challenge.

**Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the Cared for and Organisational Development corporate priorities.

**Key issues**

- This is a new Improvement Plan based on the key findings from February's CSC self assessment. As well as being presented to this committee, its progress will be monitored by the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board, the Executive Leadership Team and the Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Advisory Group.
- The plan identifies the priorities and actions that are needed to address the key areas for improvement identified within children's social care (see page 3). The previous Improvement Plan for 2018 has been signed off as

part of the self assessment process, with any remaining areas for action being pulled through into this plan for 2019.

- It is monitored on a monthly basis by the Management Team to ensure progress is being made and to track the impact it is having. There has been 1 such meeting since its implementation.
- In the recent Annual Conversation, Ofsted commended the self assessment, saying it was accessible and focused on the right areas for improvement although identified the need for impact to be sharper and more detailed. Ofsted discussed and recognised the progress made from the previous SIF inspection in 2016.
- The 3 key priorities are different to the previous year, reflecting how the service is developing. We are satisfied it provides the correct focus for developing the quality of practice and making sure that children receive services that meet assessed need. The 3 key priorities are:
  - Embedding family-focused practice
  - Workforce stability, development and succession planning
  - Right service/right time/right child/family
- The updated Improvement Plan is set out in Appendix A. Members can see progress so far based on the first month of monitoring of the new plan. Things that are central to this Improvement Plan succeeding are: the Signs of Safety model which is being implemented across Children’s Social Care and will help drive practice forward; and retention of experienced social workers, which continues to be a challenge in parts of the county.

## BACKGROUND

This is a plan for continuous improvement. It contains eight key priorities which are based on the evidence arising from the 2018 self assessment. The priorities outlined within the plan have links to other relevant plans and lead officers are tasked with progressing them within defined time scales. A four point scale is used to evaluate progress on a monthly basis, and it is presented to this committee at its start so that Elected Members can monitor progress throughout the year.

<b>Right service/right time/right child / family</b>	<b>Embedding family-focused practice</b>	<b>Workforce stability, development and succession planning</b>
Quality of assessment	Improved * SMART planning	Management oversight and Quality Assurance
Strengthening corporate parenting arrangements	Continually improving leadership and our outcomes-led approach	

- SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound

## IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<b>Policy:</b>	Delivering the improvements in this plan will contribute to developing the organisation
<b>Finance and value for money:</b>	All the priorities in the Improvement Plan should focus on delivering value for money
<b>Legal:</b>	Improving SMART planning includes a focus on our legal planning work
<b>Procurement:</b>	None
<b>Human Resources:</b>	Succession planning and developing the workforce are key priorities
<b>Property:</b>	None
<b>Equalities:</b> (Impact Assessment attached) <b>Yes No N/A</b>	None  N/A
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	Progress against each priority is risk assessed every month
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder:</b>	None
<b>Customer Considerations:</b>	Seeking the views of service users is a key dimension of evaluating the impact of our work
<b>Carbon Reduction:</b>	None
<b>Wards:</b>	All

## CONSULTATION

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services has been consulted

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

The baseline Improvement Plan is attached as Appendix A

Report sign off.

Finance Officer	N/A
Monitoring Officer/Legal	Liam Henry
Human Resources	Sarah Farrell
Procurement	N/A
I.T.	N/A
Chief Executive	Daljit Lally
Portfolio Holder(s)	Wayne Daley

Report Author

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