

Children, Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

20 June 2018

Report title	Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan: 2017-2018 - Update on Progress and 2018-2019 Improvement Plan	
Referring body	City of Wolverhampton Council	
Councillor to present report	Councillor Paul Sweet	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Director for Children's Services, People	
Originating service	Children and Young People	
Accountable employee	Tel	Louise Haughton, Principal Social Worker 01902 555534
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Report to be/has been considered by	People Leadership Team	14 May 2018
	Strategic Executive Board	5 June 2018

Recommendation(s) for action:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Consider and challenge progress on delivery and completion of the 2017-2018 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan.
2. Support the completion of the Ofsted recommendations with those not yet completed transferring to the 2018-2019 Improvement Plan.
3. To comment on the 2018-2019 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides a progress update on delivery against the 2017-2018 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan including the Ofsted recommendations (Appendix One). A performance report is also attached (Appendix Two).
- 1.2 This report also includes the 2018-2019 Children and Young People Service Key Priorities (Appendix Three) Improvement Plan (Appendix Four). The panel is invited to comment on the plans for panel comment.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Our vision for Children and Young People Services is to develop respectful and empowering relationships with children, young people and families, to ensure children are at the centre of everything that we do and to have high aspirations and high expectations of our staff and the families with whom we work.
- 2.2 The Children and Young People Service Plan 2017-2018 and associated Improvement Plan was approved by Strategic Executive Board on 16 May 2017 and Scrutiny Panel for Children and Young People on 14 June 2017.
- 2.3 The plan is broken down by service area and each area's Head of Service has overall responsibility for delivering the actions identified for their area. Progress against delivery of the plan is monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to the Children and Young People Management Team, Transforming Children's Services Programme Board, People Leadership Team and Strategic Executive Board.
- 2.4 Scrutiny Panel has been provided with an update of the progress against the plan during the first and second quarters of 2017-2018.
- 2.5 The Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan also includes actions which directly respond to recommendations from the 2017 Ofsted inspection. A separate progress report on Ofsted recommendations is presented on a six-monthly basis to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust Board for comment/approval. It is proposed this Action Plan should be signed off as complete, with any outstanding actions being transferred into the 2018-2019 Improvement Plan.
- 2.6 The Children and Young People Management Team have developed and agreed the Improvement Plan for 2018-2019.
- 2.7 Progress against delivery of the plan will be reported to Scrutiny Panel in January (Quarter Two) and June 2019 (Quarter four).

3.0 Progress Against 2017-2018 Improvement Plan (Appendix 1)

- 3.1 Throughout the year, significant progress has been made in delivering actions contained within the plan. The majority of actions and milestones have been completed (blue)

however there are a few actions which either require further time to evidence impact or require further development (green or amber).

- 3.2 The Ofsted Action Plan have been completed with the exception of three areas. The Ofsted Action Plan has now been signed off and any actions not complete will be incorporated into the 2018-2019 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan.
- Improving the quality of supervision (Ofsted 1.2 and Ofsted 1.5)
 - Improving the quality of assessments and care plans (Ofsted 5.3)
 - Improved prominence of the voice and experience of the child (Ofsted 6.2)
- 3.3 The service has a robust workforce development plan that ensures social workers have access to training on assessment, analysis and planning. The service offers a range of training opportunities that incorporate the importance of the voice of the child, including restorative practice.
- 3.4 The recruitment and retention of high quality social workers is a key function that supports the delivery of good and safe social work practice. Effective recruitment and retention enables the development of a stable workforce which, in turn, can improve the quality of work undertaken with children, families and adults with additional needs. A stable workforce is an integral part of any improvement journey as it allows the Council the opportunity to train staff, set expected standards of practice and establish these practices across the whole system.
- 3.5 It is recognised that a number of factors impact upon good recruitment and retention of social workers. Community Care research, "What do social workers want when they look for a new job"? (2016) found that *"The top draw of any job is its work-life balanced and, compared with two years ago, more social workers are now looking for jobs that will have less stress and lower caseloads. Many are also keen to work for an employer with a good reputation"*.
- 3.6 The Children and Young People Service has achieved a "Good" Ofsted judgement and has a Recruitment and Retention Strategy that includes targeted work to reduce caseloads, increased leadership support to frontline workers and promotes clear career pathways that enable social workers to plan their career development within the City Council.
- 3.7 The City of Wolverhampton's Children and Young People Service has experienced a slight increase in social work turnover over the last twelve months. It is believed that this is largely due to some senior management changes and difficulties that were experienced in recruiting first line social work managers. Both of these factors impact slightly on the stability of frontline teams and created some reliance on agency staff. Nationally the demand for permanent, experienced workers significantly outstrips supply (children's social work is now on the national occupational shortage list). Regional data published by the Association of Directors of Children's Services also identifies staff turnover as a regional challenge with most local authorities in the region experiencing similar turnover rates.

3.8 Some areas of the wider Improvement Plan which have not been progressed have been impacted by the delay in the implementation of the new social care system, Eclipse. Both of these areas have been reviewed by senior management and interim solutions are in place:

- Production of a new data quality strategy (PMQA 1.2) – There has been a “light touch” data quality strategy and a full strategy will be developed once timescales for the development of Eclipse are known.
- Making the recording of ethnicity a required field (PMQA 2.1) – This has been put on hold until the implementation of Eclipse, during which time it is envisioned that ethnicity can be made a mandatory field.

3.9 Areas which have been included in the 2018-2019 plan in order to allow time to measure impact or allow for further redevelopment include:

- Early Intervention production of local area profiles (EI 2.1 and EI 2.2) – Profiles have been developed for all of our eight Strengthening Families Hubs. These profiles have been incorporated into the business plans and priorities for 2018-2019. The Quarter three assessment of impact is now underway. However, it will take some time to review overall impact.
- Ensure Wolverhampton is fully compliant with the changes outlined in the Children and Families Bill, now the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (LAC 5) – All work to ensure we are compliant has been completed except for the Care Leaver Offer which will be finalized and launched in September 2018. This will be included in the 2018-2019 Improvement Plan.

3.10 Other areas, such as PMQA 7.3, EI 3.3, and IS 3, still require further development or more time to measure impact, but these will be included in local action plans and developed as business as usual. These will be monitored by via the Children and Young People Management Team and Heads of Service.

4.0 2018-2019 Key Priorities (Appendix 3) and Improvement Plan (Appendix 4)

4.1 The 2018-2019 Key Priorities and Improvement Plan have been developed in line with the self-evaluation that was submitted to Ofsted in February 2018. The plan itself has been slightly revamped to encourage more of a focus on the impact of the actions in the identified areas. This plan now includes a column titled “Evidence of Impact”, which includes key indicators for how we will know that we are making a difference for children and young people, and be assured of the embedding of the actions long term.

4.2 In addition to what has been listed above, key priorities for the new year include:

- To bring together performance and quality assurance information to allow greater insight and analysis of the quality of frontline practice.
- To continue to embed restorative practice across the workforce.
- To improve the reflective and continued professional development functions within supervision.
- Establishing the Regional Adoption Agency.

- Increasing the number of Troubled Families identified who have made significant and sustained outcomes.
- Increasing the use of and engagement with family group conferencing to prevent family breakdown and reduce reliance on services.
- Building capacity within schools to identify and provide effective support for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- To ensure that children with a disability have up to date reviews and are visited on a regular basis.
- To increase the Out of Court offer to young people to reduce the number who reoffend and formally enter the Criminal Justice System.
- Ensuring that the HeadStart programme reaches the expected number of children/young people in Wolverhampton.
- Narrowing the educational attainment gap between Looked After Children and Care Leavers, and their peers.

5.0 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any costs associated with the Improvement Plan are contained within existing budgets within the overall approved budget for Children and Young People.

[AS/31052018/Q]

6.0 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.

[TC/25052018/D]

7.0 Equalities implications

The Children and Young People Service provides support to the whole community, including the full range of diverse groups. The Improvement Plan highlights how the City of Wolverhampton will ensure that the workforce is highly skilled and has the knowledge and resources needed provide a high-quality service to the community.

8.0 Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

9.0 Human resources implications

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.0 Corporate Landlord implications

There are no Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report.

11.0 Schedule of background papers

- 11.1 Report to Scrutiny—6 September 2018; Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan: Update on Progress - Quarter One 2017-2018
- 11.2 Report to Scrutiny (distributed outside of Panel)—November 2018; Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan: Update on Progress - Quarter Two 2017-2018

12.0 Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix 1: 2017-2018 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan
- 12.2 Appendix 2: Quarter Four Performance Report
- 12.3 Appendix 3: 2018-2019 Key Priorities Plan on a Page
- 12.4 Appendix 4: 2018-2019 Children and Young People Service Improvement Plan