

Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: 7th March 2017

Title of report: Children's Improvement Plan

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to;

- a) Explain in outline how it is proposed that the Council improve outcomes for children and young people by putting them at the heart of what we do and working collaboratively with our partners to achieve improvement against the 27 Ofsted recommendations as laid out in the Improvement Plan
- b) Seek Cabinet's endorsement to submit the Children's Improvement Plan to Ofsted by 9th March 2017(see Appendix 1) and delegate authority to the Councils Director for Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Family Support and Child Protection to finalise the Plan.
- c) Inform Cabinet how we are complying with our Department of Education Statutory Direction and what we are doing to actively explore possible alternative delivery arrangements

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes – affects all Wards
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?	Yes 6 th February 2017
The Decision - Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by Director & name Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director for Financial Management, IT, Risk and Performance? Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director - Legal Governance and Monitoring?	Gill Ellis Debbie Hogg Julie Muscroft
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Erin Hill, Family Support & Child Protection

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

2. Summary

Improving Children's services is an absolute priority for Kirklees Council, but we know that the outcomes our children and young people deserve cannot be delivered by the Council alone. We are proud that our partner agencies share our commitment to the well-being of children and young people in Kirklees and we recognise the need to improve both our strategic governance and operational arrangements.

Agreeing a set of shared outcomes for our children and young people will be key to this. Partners in Kirklees are currently being consulted on an outcomes framework for the district. These are the outcomes that all partners will collectively sign up to and work together to achieve.

Our Children's Improvement Plan

Our Vision is for all children and young people in our area, "to have the best possible start in life through every child and young person being safe, loved, healthy and happy, supported to be free from harm and having the chance to make the most of their talents, skills and qualities to fulfil their potential and become productive members of society."

We have structured our Improvement plan (see Appendix 1) around the four themes in the Single Inspection Framework, each of which clearly addresses a number of Ofsted recommendations:

Theme	Alignment to Ofsted inspection recommendations
Theme 1: Children who need help and protection	1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.
Theme 2: Children looked after and achieving permanence	3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26
Theme 3: Leadership, Management and Governance	5, 7, 8, 12 and 27
Theme 4: Effectiveness of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board	KSCB recommendations 1-10.

N.B The Local Authority are responsible for delivering improvement against the 27 Ofsted recommendations contained in the improvement plan and the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board is responsible for delivering improvement against the 10 KSCB recommendations. All 37 recommendations are combined within the improvement plan.

Alternative Delivery Arrangements for Children's Social Care

As part of the Statutory Direction, the Commissioner has been asked to take the following steps –

- Make recommendations for the immediate improvement for Children's Social Care, including additional support required
- Review the Council's Leadership and Management capability and capacity to drive the necessary changes
- Make a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether alternative delivery arrangements are the most effective way of securing and sustaining improvement

The Commissioner will provide her report to the Secretary of State by 31st March 2017, it is therefore critical that we fully explore alternative delivery models. A further report will follow to cabinet with more detail of this when detail of the Commissioners report is known.

3. Information Required to Make a Decision

Outcomes for children and young people

The seven draft outcomes are as follows, with 1, 3 and 4 being related to our Children's Improvement journey. Each of these outcomes has a number of supporting outcomes and progress will be measured using an Outcomes Based Accountability Model:

1. Children have the best start in life
2. People in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible
3. People in Kirklees have aspiration and achieve their ambitions through education, training, employment and lifelong learning
4. People in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe and are safe/protected from harm
5. Kirklees has sustainable economic growth and provides good employment for and with communities and businesses
6. People in Kirklees experience a high quality, clean, and green environment
7. People in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives

Our formal partnership arrangements reflect our commitment to joint and collaborative working and will be used to co-ordinate the delivery of these outcomes for our children and young people.

Our key partnership bodies are:

- **The Children and Young People Partnership Board** provides overall strategic direction for the work of all our partner agencies working to deliver services for the children and young. An important part of the work of this Board is focused on the engagement, voice and influence of children and young people.
- **The Health and Well Being Board** is responsible for producing the Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) which identifies and sets commissioning priorities to improve outcomes and safeguard children.

- **The Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board** provides the strategic and operational direction for safeguarding and continuous monitoring of performance in Kirklees.
- **Improvement Board**
The Improvement Board (IB) is the key partnership body with ownership of the improvement plan and responsibility for its delivery across the district. It is made up of strategic representation from partner agencies, working to agreed terms of reference. The IB is where all agencies will be constructively challenged and held to account for progress. The independent chair and the Commissioner, who is also a member of the board, both independently assure themselves of progress and the Commissioner will report directly to the Secretary of State. The chair of the KSCB is also a member of the Children's Improvement Board and reports on the progress made on the KSCB action plan.

Additionally, the Getting to Good Programme Board has membership made up of key Council officers, crucial to driving the improvement journey. Chaired by the Council's Improvement Director, the programme board will monitor, challenge, support and oversee the progress of the Children's Improvement Plan. It will also act as a point of resolution for escalated risks and issues and is accountable to, and reports directly into, the Improvement Board

Children's Improvement Plan

The Improvement plan needs to be signed up to and owned by the Council, strategic partners, staff and partner agencies through oversight of the Improvement Board. This plan is due to be endorsed by the Children's Improvement Board on 6th March 2017 (See Appendix 1). As there is a short period of time to do this, the recommendation is to delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Family Support and Child Protection to finalise the plan following the discussions with the Commissioner and Ofsted referred to below at paragraph 4.3

4. Implications for the Council

4.1 Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)

The Improvement plan has identified key activity to be undertaken against each of the 27 Ofsted Recommendations and 10 KSCB Ofsted Recommendations. This includes Ofsted recommendation number 27 ensuring that there is a robust needs analysis to underpin strategic planning and commissioning of services for children reflects the principles of early intervention and prevention in seeking to direct contacts to the appropriate level of support.

The detail of activity to improve the above sits within the detailed project plans within the Improvement programme. All actions have accountable leads with the responsibility of providing progress updates via the Improvement Board.

4.2 Economic Resilience (ER)

By enabling our most vulnerable children and young people to become economically resilient so they can contribute to the future prosperity of the local area and the region.

4.3 Improving Outcomes for Children

The Children's Improvement plan relates to improving outcomes for children and young people in Kirklees.

The local authority must produce a written statement of proposed action (the Improvement Plan) and submit this to the Secretary of State and HMCI within 70 working days of the receipt of the inspection report. This means that the Council has to submit the Improvement Plan (Appendix 1) to Ofsted by 9th March 2017.

The lead inspector will review the action plan (Children's Improvement Plan) as soon as possible after receipt to check that it reflects the recommendations contained in the inspection report. Ofsted is not responsible for 'signing off' or endorsing the action plan – this is the responsibility of the DCS. Ofsted's role is to advise the DCS about whether the action plan reflects the recommendations in the inspection report.

Ofsted's regional director will write to the DCS confirming whether the action plan reflects the inspection findings. If Ofsted considers that the action plan does not properly reflect or address the recommendations set out in the inspection report, the lead inspector and/or SHMI should discuss this with the DCS to ensure that the recommendations have been fully understood. Where this is not resolved, the regional director will write to the DCS setting out the area(s) of difference and the reasons. The lead inspector will keep the national director, social care informed.

The lead inspector will inform the interventions team at the DfE of the outcome of this process. If the differences are not resolved, the Secretary of State will be asked to consider what action (if any) the DfE wishes to take in response.

4.4 Reducing demand of services (& supporting children early)

The Improvement plan directly aims to address improvement against the 27 Ofsted recommendations which ultimately aims to reduce the number of children and families in need of high level intervention and therefore the demand on Children's Social Care Services.

All of the key activity contained within the plan aims to address reduce demand for Children's social care services however at the end of the 3 month review undertaken by the Independent Commissioner, there will a report produced making a judgement about whether Children's Services will remain within the Council.

5. Consultees and their opinions

The Improvement Plan has been shared with members of the Improvement board for further input and consultation with key partners and young people.

6. Next steps

Work has been undertaken by officers from Children's Services and key partners to draft our action plan (known as the Children's Improvement plan). An Action Planning workshop took place on 24th January with Ofsted. Key themes that were discussed included;

- Keeping children safe
- Ensuring proactive response, robust management action, oversight and challenge to ensuring children are safe
- Ensuring good quality social work practice including assessments, plans/planning and subsequent intervention
- Workforce-planning, sustainability and development
- Robust performance management and monitoring
- Multi-agency coordination and partnership working
- Commissioning and sufficiency for looked after children

The content of the above discussion has helped shape how recommendations are to be addressed in the Improvement Plan.

The Ofsted First Monitoring visit dates have been agreed within 4 weeks of receipt of action plan. It has been agreed that this takes place on 13th and 14th March. The scope of first visit was discussed and agreed-The front door (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

A further report will be provided to Cabinet in relation to next steps including alternative delivery models in order to consider the most appropriate way forward once the Commissioner reports her findings.

7. Officer Recommendations and Reasons

For Cabinet to endorse the submission of the Children's Improvement Plan (see Appendix 1) to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (as stated in The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007) by the 9th March 2017.

For Cabinet to delegate powers to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Family Support and Child Protection to finalise the Children's Improvement Plan prior to its submission to Ofsted.

8. Cabinet Portfolio Holder Recommendation

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder fully endorses the Improvement Plan and is happy for it to be submitted to the Secretary of State. The Cabinet

Portfolio Holder also recommends that Cabinet delegate powers to the Director for Children & Young People to finalise the Improvement Plan prior to its submission.

9. Contact officer

Kathryn Loftus
Head of Change (Children's Improvement Programme)

10. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Ofsted Report
Statutory Direction Notice

11. Director responsible

Gill Ellis, Director for Children and Young People