

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee - Tuesday 28 May 2019

Children and Families Improvement Plan

Recommendation

- a. Members are recommended to receive the progress report which explains how the County Council is working with partners to address the areas for improvement outlined in the Ofsted focussed visit held 26th-27th June 2018 and the Ofsted Inspection of children social care services held 4th- 8th February 2019

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The overall aim of this report is to provide Select Committee with an update of the improvement plan post the outcome of Ofsted's focused visit to Staffordshire County Council on the 26-27 June 2018 and the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services held 4-8 February 2019, which rated services overall as "good"

Report

Background

2. In June 2018 Ofsted Inspectors evaluated the local authority's arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adolescents. Inspectors observed that the local authority has clear strategic plans in place to strengthen their approach to vulnerable adolescents and praised the work taking place within Staffordshire along with partner agencies. However, at the time of this visit Inspectors also identified areas where further improvements could be made. These included:
 - a. Proposed changes to the auditing process to include a greater focus on the quality of practice taking place
 - b. High workloads in specific parts of the service impacting on case planning for children and young people
 - c. Plans for children and young people not being outcome focused and SMART enough linked to timescales
 - d. Management oversight and supervision to progress plans for all children and young people
3. The local authority quickly responded to the areas identified within the focused visit and an improvement plan was implemented in August 2018 focusing on a number of key

areas- recruitment and retention, quality of practice, management oversight and caseload reduction.

4. In February 2019, Ofsted undertook an inspection of local authority children's services and reported that children's services in Staffordshire are good. Leaders and managers have made impressive progress since the focussed visit in in 2018. The findings of the Inspection are set out below:
 - a. The impact of leaders on social work practice within children and families: Good
 - b. The experience and progress of children who need help and protection: Requires Improvement
 - c. The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: Good
 - d. Overall effectiveness: Good
5. The report highlighted a small number of areas for improvement and these have been built into the plan that was developed in August 2018.
6. The children and families' improvement plan continues to build on the progress made since August 2018 and is subject to regular review by the Children's Social Care Management Team and the Children's Improvement Board.

Contact Officer

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List of Appendices:

Appendix A - Staffordshire Focused Inspection Report July 2018
Appendix B - Staffordshire ILACS Report February 2019
Appendix C - Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services

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