

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17TH DECEMBER 2009

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Children & Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Cunningham

2009 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE RATING OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Summary

The attached letter from Ofsted provides the 2009 rating for Children's Services in Stockton-on-Tees. The Council is rated as performing well.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet are recommended to receive the report and note the good outcome of the 2009 annual performance rating.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

The Children's Services rating is reported to Cabinet as part of the arrangements for informing members of the outcomes of Comprehensive Area Assessment.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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2009 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE RATING OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

SUMMARY

The attached letter from Ofsted provides the 2009 rating for Children's Services in Stockton-on-Tees. The Council is rated as performing well.

RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet are recommended to receive the report and note the good outcome of the 2009 annual performance rating.

DETAIL

1. The annual rating of children's services is carried out by Ofsted, within the overall framework for Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). As this is the first year of reporting under the new national framework, it is not possible to make direct comparisons with the 2008 annual performance assessment for Children's Services although the 'performing well' rating is in line with the 2008 grading of 'good' for the overall effectiveness of services. The 2009 ratings are based on the following scoring labels:

Performs excellently:	an organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
Performs well:	an organisation that exceeds minimum requirements
Performs adequately:	an organisation that meets only minimum requirements
Performs poorly:	an organisation that does not meet minimum requirements

2. The annual rating is based on the Ofsted performance profile of the quality of services and outcomes for children and young people in each local authority area. It draws together relevant findings from across Ofsted's inspection and regulation of education, care and skills and sets this evidence alongside the relevant Every Child Matters indicators from the National Indicator Set (NIS). Evidence in the profile covers three main areas:

- the findings from regular and ongoing inspection and regulation of services, settings and institutions;
- findings from safeguarding and looked after children inspections; unannounced inspections of contact, assessment and referral arrangements for children in need and children who may be in need of protection; evaluations of serious case reviews; safeguarding and looked after children findings from recent joint area review inspections; and findings from triggered inspections;
- performance against Every Child Matters indicators from the NIS.

3. Ofsted's annual performance rating of council children's services is reported within the CAA organisational assessment of councils, and contributes in particular to the CAA overall

managing performance score for councils. Ofsted's performance profile and a range of other available evidence also contribute to the joint inspectorate area assessment within the CAA framework which includes an evaluation of outcomes for children and young people.

4. The brief summary in the attached rating report identifies a number of strengths and a few areas for development. The report supports the Council's own assessment of its performance and will contribute to the review of strategic plans and service improvement plans, to ensure the necessary actions are in place to build on strengths and respond to the areas for development. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) provides the strategic framework for improvement in services, and includes a range of actions already in place to address areas for development.
5. The Council's progress in delivery and improvement of services will continue to be monitored through a range of meetings over the year with regional and national agencies. Progress in addressing performance will be reported to Cabinet through the quarterly corporate performance framework.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Resource issues to address areas for improvement will be managed through the annual cycle of service planning and review of the medium term financial plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. The reporting of the annual rating for Children's Services is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

9. The performance rating for Children's Services impacts across the core theme of 'Children and Young People'. Addressing the areas for improvement identified in the report will support progress in achievement of the key ambitions for this theme, and will contribute to progress in other themes, as identified in the CYPP.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

10. Consultation was not relevant in relation to this report.

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Background Paper

Ofsted report 'Rating of children's services 2009' for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, issued 9th December 2009.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

The 2008 APA letter is in the public domain and is available to all Councillors for information.

Property

The report does not have implications in relation to the Council's property.