

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting10th June 2010

1. Title of Item/Report

Children's Social Care Workload Pressures

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was advised of the latest position with regard to the recent growth in the number of social care referrals being received by the Council.

The number of referrals and assessments during January and March 2010 had continued to rise sharply. Members were provided with a table demonstrating this trend. This had placed the service under extreme pressure and would impact on key performance indicators.

The overall number of children who were subject to a child protection plan had remained at a high level and the total number of looked after children had increased significantly to a peak of 289 in March.

Reference was made to staffing issues and it was noted that the situation in terms of vacant social work posts had deteriorated further.

Members noted that as at 25 May there were 9 children in need, 7 child protection and 4 looked after children cases unallocated.

The budgetary impact of the pressures continued to have an impact on key areas and was being considered as part of the overall Medium Term Financial Plan. Members noted the overspends involved.

Members were provided with the final action plan arising from the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements in the Borough. It was noted that most of the actions had been completed and fully implemented. Outstanding actions would be carried into mainstream business planning processes,

Cabinet noted that the Social Work Taskforce 'Building a Safe, Confident Future' addressing key areas. A Reform Board had been established to take forward the 15 recommendations made by the Taskforce. The Reform Board had asked all Local Authorities

introducing a voluntary health check across adult and children's services. The North East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership had established a project team to support all 12 local authorities in the region.

RESOLVED that :-

1. the continued workload pressures within the social care system and the associated impact this was having on caseloads, performance and budget be noted.

2. further update reports be received on a quarterly basis in order to continue to monitor the impact of these workload pressures.

3. the final action plan arising from the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements in Stockton-on-Tees which took place on 5 and 6 January 2010 be noted.

3. Reasons for the Decision

There was a significant and continuing rise in social care workload which could potentially impact on the Council's ability to effectively safeguard children, fulfil statutory duties and remain within allocated budget

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday, 18th June 2010

Proper Officer
14 June 2010