

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting7th March 2013

1. Title of Item/Report

Children's Social Care Workload Pressures

2. Record of the Decision

Members received a report that provided an update on the pressures relating to significant and continuing increases in children's social care workload, which could potentially impact on the Council's ability to effectively safeguard children.

Members were provided with data relating to referrals and assessments, child protection, the looked after system, plus details of staffing and budgetary issues.

It was explained that Ofsted undertook an unannounced child protection inspection between 7 and 16 January 2013. This was the first inspection in the North East region, under the new framework, which was generally acknowledged to be a harder test.

In the course of the inspection the inspectors looked at over 100 cases and were satisfied that appropriate action had been taken to protect all children at risk of immediate harm. There were a number of areas for further development identified, particularly in relation to the referral and assessment team, which reflected the Council's own self assessment of the service. The overall judgement was adequate.

The report, which was published on the Ofsted website on 15 February 2013, contained a number of recommendations for immediate action which had all been addressed and work was underway to respond to the recommendations to be completed within 3 and 6 months respectively.

A full Action Plan would be brought to Cabinet for consideration in June 2013 and the Children and Young People Select Committee would be presented with regular reports and updates regarding the action plan.

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. a full Ofsted Action Plan be received, for consideration in June 2013.

4. it be noted that the Children and Young People Select Committee would be presented with regular reports and updates regarding the action plan.

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

N/A

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

Midnight on Friday, 15th March 2013

Proper Officer
11 March 2013