

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting17th July 2014

1. Title of Item/Report

Children's Social Care Activity And Performance

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given a report on Children's Social Care Activity and Performance. In light of the Ofsted inspection of child protection in January 2013, it had been decided to review the content and format of future children's social care reports to Cabinet.

In addition to a range of measures to illustrate the pressures experienced by the service, a number of performance indicators would also be included so that Cabinet could more closely monitor the impact of these pressures on performance and outcomes for children.

As a way of achieving this, the use of a 'process model' was approved by Cabinet on 13 June 2013.

Given the importance and profile of these issues it had been agreed that the new activity and performance reports be brought to Cabinet on a bimonthly basis i.e. every alternate Cabinet.

The report was based on the available data at the end of quarter 4 (31 March 2014).

A summary of the available data at the end of quarter 3 (31 December 2013), along with a brief commentary highlighting the main issues raised from analysis of the information and the data which informed the report was attached for Members.

In summary, the overall picture reflected in the analysis was as follows:-

- Inputs – a continuing high level of demand on services, but with a reduction in the volume of contacts and referrals compared to the previous year.
- Processes – some improvement in timeliness of assessment and child protection processes.
- Outputs – a reduction over the year in the number of children in

need and with child protection plans, although numbers still remain high compared to benchmark groups. Support provided for children requiring social care intervention continues to be largely effective, although there are some challenges for care leavers.

The areas for further consideration and improvement, together with the issues arising from the previous 'critical friend' review and other learning and improvement activity had been incorporated into a draft improvement plan which was attached to the report. This would be presented to Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) for agreement in due course.

One element of the improvement plan worthy of specific mention was the development of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Following initial discussions with partner agencies, it had been agreed to develop a joint MASH with Hartlepool Borough Council, Cleveland Police and Health colleagues. In light of the scale and complexity of the proposed change programme, a formal project structure was being established to take this work forward.

Given that Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council already leads on the Tees Valley Emergency Duty Team (EDT) and Tees Adult Safeguarding Unit, it had been agreed that Hartlepool would lead on the MASH project and service delivery.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The continued workload pressures and associated activity in the children's social care system and the consequent impact this is having on both performance and budget be noted.
2. Further update reports be received on a bi monthly basis in order to continue to monitor children's social care activity and performance.
3. The outcome of the recent Local Government Association (LGA) safeguarding practice diagnostic and resulting improvement plan be noted and updates on progress be received in future reports.

3. Reasons for the Decision

There are significant and continuing pressures in the children's social care system 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, 25th July 2014

Proper Officer
21 July 2014