

## CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**4 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

### **CABINET DECISION**

**Children and Young People Lead Member – Councillor Ann McCoy**

#### **REVIEW OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS – CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

1. Summary

The report highlights some of the current challenges in Children’s Services, and the need to review the Service delivery arrangements.

2. Recommendations

(1) Cabinet note the report.

(2) Cabinet agree to receive a further report from the Corporate Director with proposals.

3. Reason for the Recommendation/Decision

To review the service delivery and succession planning arrangements in Children’s Services to ensure delivery of effective services to children, young people and their families.

4. Members’ Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Council’s code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of paragraphs 12 - 17 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in paragraph 16 of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the code, 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 and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

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Detail

1. The current delivery arrangements for Children’s Services have changed considerably since 2011, there have been a significant number of Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Reviews and Service Reviews as well over the last three years.

2. In 2011 there were Four Heads of Service who had Children’s Services responsibilities within their remit:

- Head of Business Support and Improvement
- Head of Children and Young People’s Services
- Head of Education, Early Years and Complex Needs
- Head of Children and Young People’s Strategy

One of the above posts was jointly funded by Primary Care Trust (NHS), and one post’s remit spanned both Children’s and Adult Services.

3. As a result of the changes within the NHS in 2011, the joint post was no longer required. At the same time there was a significant reduction in the funding of the Early Intervention Grant, so a decision was taken to delete the post and allocate the responsibilities to the remaining three Heads of Service.
4. Since that time there has been significant increase in legislative changes and revised Government policy that has led to further and continued challenges and demands on Children's Services. These have included:
  - 0-25 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Reforms
  - The changing focus on Schools/Academies and the Local Authority's role in that
  - Ofsted Inspection Framework of Local Authority School Improvement, where Good is now the minimum expectation
  - Revised Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care, where Good is now a minimum expectation across all Services
  - Greater focus on LSCB Board with a separate Ofsted Judgement as part of the Inspection framework
  - A greater focus on the Early Help Strategy and Offer and the need to evidence the effectiveness
  - A greater focus on commissioning of Children's Services i.e. Children's Centres/ Youth Service, will continue
5. More recent developments have also contributed or will contribute to increased demand within the Service, including Health and Wellbeing Board and the newly revised partnership arrangements, the proposed development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with Hartlepool and the Troubled Families work. Members will be aware the Head of Service post which previously had responsibility for Troubled Families has been deleted. The Government has recently announced a national Phase 2 of the programme for a further five years, until 2019/2020 and this work will be led by Children, Education and Social Care (CESC). The Service has also seen a significant increase in Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs).
6. There continues to be a significant impact on workloads as a result of Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services. There have, for example, been 22 Ofsted Inspections in Stockton between January – July 2014 across Schools, Children's Centres and Children's Homes.
7. The Local Authority will also receive a four week Inspection of Services for children in need of help, protection, looked after and care leavers, along with a review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) sometime over the next two years and there is a real need to continue to focus on Inspection preparation and implementing the Improvement Plan following the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review earlier in the year.
8. Cabinet are aware Children's Social Care continues to have increased pressures on the budget relating to Looked After Children as they receive, on a quarterly basis, "Children's Social Care Activity and Performance" report. (The last report to Cabinet was 17 July 2014.) The two key areas of budgetary pressure being external placements and independent foster care provision and there is a need to undertake more focussed work around this area, particularly relating to foster care provision now that the Joint Venture arrangements for residential provision are progressing.
9. The ability to commit more focussed time and capacity to look at some of the longer term strategic challenges to reduce the number of children who become Children in Need, Children Looked After and Children in Need of Child Protection Plan is

however limited with the ongoing extensive operational demands on the two key Heads of Service.

10. The Corporate Director, in agreement with the Chief Executive and Lead Member, did bring in some additional capacity for six months in early 2014, to assist with Ofsted preparation, the revision of the Early Help Strategy, the development of the new HWB arrangements, and to undertake a piece of work around Fostering moving forward which was beneficial, and enabled the service to complete a number of key priority pieces of work, but additional capacity will be needed to progress any further work moving forward.
11. Over the last year in particular, there have been increased competing demands placed on the Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care, as along with the challenges in Children's Services, the introduction of the Care Act and the Better Care Fund, along with the increased focus on the quality of provision within Adults Services has meant she has needed to focus more of her time on Adult Services.
12. The Corporate Director is also expected to focus time on the Corporate work relating to the innovation and budgetary challenges in the organisation including Chairing the Big Ticket Children's Social Care Programme Board and Adult Social Care Programme Board, as well as focussing on the services within her remit. She is also involved in both Regional and National meetings relating to her role as Director of Adult Social Services / Director of Children's Services.
13. The temporary increase in staffing capacity in Adult Services has assisted the Director in ensuring the key strategic priorities in Adult Services are being delivered, along with EIT Reviews, and ensured there is strong focus on operational services which was reflected in the recent LGA Review of Safeguarding. The Adult EIT Reviews have also made their target savings.
14. This additional capacity will need to be revisited in 2015 to assess whether the interim arrangements are required longer term on a permanent basis and whether there is a need to look at structural changes in Adults in light of the Care Act implications and the National/Government agenda regarding the integration of Health and Social Care Services.
15. There will be a need to consider the current arrangements for receiving Adult referrals in light of the Care Act and the proposed MASH developments. This will need to take place over the coming months.
16. As part of the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services, the Annual Assurance Review will be requested of the Chief Executive regarding the Director of Children's Services undertaking more than one role.
17. The arrangements currently in place in Adult Services and the proposals to review Children's Services will be reflected in an update of the Assurance Review.

### Succession Planning

18. The Council has supported a long term, organisation wide, approach to succession planning, staff development and capacity growth – in the Shaping a Brighter Future Programme. Cabinet will receive a further update on this in November. Some of the early work in CESC is already highlighting some very pertinent facts:

19. None of the current permanent Heads of Service in CESC wish to consider applying for the Corporate Director's role when she retires.
20. There is a pressing need to consider future succession planning in Children's Services CESC, as part of the Shaping a Brighter Future (SBF). There is currently still some resilience in Adult Services, but a review of Adult Services should be considered in 2015, in light of the Better Care Fund and Care Act implications.
21. At least two of the current Heads of Service working in Children's Services have indicated they do not intend to work beyond 2016.
22. A number of Third Tier Managers in Children's Social Care are considering other work options due to the demands of the role.
23. There are also emerging challenges in relation to recruitment in Children's Services. Whilst we have always had challenges around recruiting experienced Children's Social Work staff and Team Managers, we are now seeing emerging challenges relating to more specialist roles.
24. Early work indicates there are some opportunities within Children's Services for succession planning, and these will be explored as part of the review of Children's Services and more broadly as part of the Shaping Brighter Futures Programme.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

25. A detailed report of the financial implications will accompany a further update report to Cabinet.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

26. The Service needs to be able to continue to meet its statutory obligations effectively.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

27. Low-Medium – existing management controls and arrangements are sufficient to manage the risks.

#### **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

28. The review supports Children and Young People Improvement priorities.

#### **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

29. An EIA will be undertaken for any options proposed and included in the final report.

#### **CORPORATE PARENTING**

30. The proposed review should strengthen Corporate Parenting arrangements within Children's Services.

## **CONSULTATION, INCLUDING WARD COUNCILLORS**

31. The review will be subject to consultation with staff, Trade Unions and relevant partner agencies.

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