

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**14 JULY 2016**

**REPORT OF STRATEGIC  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION**

**Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs McCoy**

**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY; 2016-18 REFRESH**

1. Summary

This report sets out the proposed refresh of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy for 2016-18. It has been developed as a more partnership oriented approach, developed through the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership, which in turn reports into the Children and Young people's Partnership. It includes an overall strategy, a refresh of the pledge and an update of the sufficiency strategy element.

2. Recommendations

1. Members are requested to agree the strategy.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To endorse the new strategy as the basis of a work programme for the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership for 2016-18.

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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**LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY: 2016-18 REFRESH**

**SUMMARY**

This report sets out the proposed refresh of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy for 2016-18. It has been developed as a more partnership oriented approach, developed through the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) which in turn reports into the Children and Young People's Partnership. It includes an overall strategy, a refresh of the pledge and an update of the sufficiency strategy element.

2. Recommendations

1. Members are requested to agree the strategy.

**DETAIL**

1. Although it is not a statutory requirement to produce a Looked After Children and Care leavers Strategy, it is considered good practice to have a strategy which sets out the range of commitments to children and young people, and which is clear about roles and responsibilities.
2. There is currently a LAC and Care Leavers Strategy for 2015-17. The strategy was a very detailed and technical document, which was considered by the Partnership to be not specific enough about outcomes, priorities and actions, and was also not clear about what difference a strategy was seeking to make. Agencies were not clear what their contributions were, and this was resulting in a lack of accountability for progress through MALAP.
3. MALAP therefore considered a report at its meeting in February 2016 which set out options for refreshing the strategy, ranging from a light touch update to a more radical refresh. MALAP agreed to more fundamentally refresh the strategy, and agreed:
  - a. That it should be shorter and sharper
  - b. That there should be greater clarity on what was being proposed for corporate parenting
  - c. That there should be a closer link to the refreshed pledge which was being developed at the same time
  - d. That although there needed to be oversight on performance and achievement of outcomes, the role of MALAP was not to be solely about monitoring data.

4. The detailed strategy is attached at Annex 1
5. The following points are made in summary:
  - a. This strategy forms part of an overall planned suite of documents which also includes:
    - i. The revised pledge to the Looked after Children of Stockton - this has been developed by the Let's Take Action Group at Annex 2, and is also presented as an emoji version (Annex 3)
    - ii. A refreshed sufficiency strategy which fulfils the statutory duty on the Council to develop a sufficiency and commissioning plan, which includes details about current and future need. This latter document is currently being developed.
  - b. The strategy is much shorter and organised around a number of business priorities as well as thematic priorities;
  - c. It also separates out more clearly the actions associated with service delivery from those associated with corporate parenting;
  - d. It includes a specific set of actions for 2016/17 which form the basis of MALAP work programme for 2016/17;
  - e. It is deliberately written and proposed as a partnership strategy which will require all agencies involved to sign off through appropriate governance arrangements.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6. There are no new financial implications from this Report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no new legal implications from this Report.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

8. This issue is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk. Individual elements in the approach link to specific risk assessments.

## **COUNCIL PLAN THEMES**

9. The approach has clear proposals for:
  - a. Protecting the most vulnerable through the proposals for early help, assessment and targeting of services
  - b. Promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention through the emphasis on early intervention, prevention, targeted and specialist services

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

10. This report is not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment because it does not relate to a new policy or strategy.

## **CORPORATE PARENTING**

11. The strategy is directly focused on both a range of service responses to the needs of Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers as well as focusing more explicitly on the corporate parenting role, and the opportunities for partners to play a role as 'extended family' members.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

12. Consultation has taken place with the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership, the Children and Young People's Partnership and with the Let's take Action Group.

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### Background Papers

### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not applicable

### Property

There are no implications for Council property