

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....1st September 2016

1. Title of Item/Report

Ofsted Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers and Review of the Effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided details of the findings from Ofsted inspection of Services For Children In Need Of Help And Protection, Children Looked After And Care Leavers And Review Of The Effectiveness Of The Local Safeguarding Children Board.

In Autumn 2014, Ofsted introduced a newly revised Single Inspection Framework (SIF) for the Inspection of Children's Services. All Local Authorities would receive a SIF by November 2017.

The arrival of the four week Inspection was announced the day before the Inspection Team arrived on site.

The Inspection Team comprised in total of 8 Inspectors, a Shadow Inspector, a Data Analyst and the Team was overseen by a Quality Assurance Manager.

The Local Authority had prepared its own Self-Assessment in advance of the Inspection and provided a number of briefing notes/case responses for Ofsted during the four weeks.

Ofsted also had a range of performance information already available to them prior to the Inspection, along with views from children, young people and their carers via Annual Questionnaires.

During the four week Inspection Ofsted examined over 250 children's files.

The Ofsted Judgements were divided into a number of categories:

a. There was an overall Judgement for Children's Services and also Sub-Judgement. The Judgements that could be given were:

- Inadequate
- Requires Improvement
- Good
- Outstanding

b. Sub-Judgements related to the following:

- 1) Children who need help and protection.
- 2) Children looked after and achieving permanence iV with specific focus on adoption and the experience of care leavers.
- 3) Leadership Management and Governance.

c. Alongside the Inspection of Children's Services, a Review of the Effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was also undertaken iV this was also given a separate Judgement.

Throughout the Inspection process the Ofsted Inspectors tracked or reviewed a number of specific cases, including:

- „X Children who were at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation
- „X Children in Need of Help and Protection
- „X Children Looked After placed in and out of the Local Authority
- „X Children placed with Foster Carers
- „X Children who have been placed in Children's Homes who are known to have run away
- „X Children who have recently returned home
- „X Children who have a plan for adoption
- „X Children who are care leavers
- „X Children receiving Early Help Services

During the Inspection the Local Authority was also asked to Audit a number of cases and share their findings and Judgements with Ofsted.

The Inspection Team undertook around 80 meetings, including meetings with:

- „X Partner Agencies, including Police, Health, Schools.
- „X Local Authority staff
- „X Representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector
- „X Children, Young People and their Carers
- „X Foster Carers and Adoption Carers
- „X Elected Members
- „X Children in Care Council Representatives

As the Multi-agency Children Hub went live during the Inspection, Ofsted undertook a visit to the Service in Hartlepool during the Inspection process.

Ofsted Inspectors also undertook a number of interviews with Children's Services practitioners and managers in order that they understood what was happening on the ground in relation to:

- „X Supervision and Management oversight
- „X Workloads for staff
- „X The availability, quality and impact of training and development
- „X The impact of learning from Serious Case Reviews
- „X Whether Senior Managers and Elected Members were visible and approachable

The overall judgement for Services in Stockton-on-Tees was good.

Details were provided of the sub-judgment findings and the key strengths.

Whilst there were 25 specific recommendations throughout the report, a number related to similar themes, which led to 10 overall recommendations.

As of 5 August 2016, 104 Inspections of Children's Services had been published and there were 50 remaining Local Authorities to have their reports published by the end of 2017.

Of the 107 Inspections to date, only 28 Local Authorities had received a Good or Better overall Judgement and only 4 Local Authorities had received an Outstanding Judgement for Care Leavers. Details of the current national judgment were provided at the appendix to the report.

There had now been eight Local Authorities in the North East inspected under the SIF:

- „X Three Local Authorities had received an overall Good Judgement.
- „X Three Local Authorities had received an overall Requires Improvement Judgement.
- „X Two Local Authorities had received an Inadequate Judgement.

No other Local Authority in the North East Region has an Outstanding Judgement for Care Leavers.

Cabinet congratulated and thanked all staff involved in the inspection.

RESOLVED that

1. The report be noted.
2. A further report outlining the progress in relation to the recommendations made be considered at a future Cabinet meeting.
3. Reasons for the Decision  
To inform Cabinet of recommendations and actions arising from the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services.
4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected  
None
5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest  
Cllr Jim Beall declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 10 - Ofsted Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protections, Children Looked After and Care Leavers and Review of the Effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board as his wife was employed by Children's Services.
6. Details of any Dispensations  
N/A
7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed  
Midnight, 9th September 2016.

Proper Officer  
05 June 2016