

AGENDA ITEM

**REPORT TO CORPORATE
PARENTING BOARD**

7 FEBRUARY 2020

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Children in Our Care transformation work: Dartington Service Design Labs

SUMMARY

In 2018, we commissioned Dartington Service Design Labs to undertake research and analysis into how services could be organised and delivered to better support children being able to live safely at home, whilst receiving support from Children's Services.

A summary of their final recommendations, October 2019, is attached at Appendix 1; the recommendations will inform the upcoming Children's Services Transformation Work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporate Parenting Board to discuss and consider the recommendations from Dartington.

DETAIL

1. Dartington Service Design Labs are a research based third sector organisation, who use 'systems thinking' approaches for strategy development and service redesign. They have worked with a number of public sector organisations, here and in the USA.
2. We commissioned Dartington, from May 2018 to October 2019, to work with us to help develop a better insight into the social care system especially as it relates to CIOC transformation work. Project objectives included:
 - a. achieving better outcomes for children
 - b. a reduction in the CIOC rate
 - c. improved social work practice
 - d. establishing consensus and momentum around change
 - e. wider learning for the sector.
3. The following outputs were delivered by Dartington: workforce engagement and consultation workshops; early support for the *Coming Home / Going Home* reunification work; a *Behaviour Map* of the Children's Social Care System; a *Matching Needs & Services* thematic review; a dynamic modelling tool; and interim and final reports.

4. Most of the work was conducted “off-site”. With hindsight, this, coupled with the length of time for the work, presented some challenges in maintaining the profile of its work amongst the workforce.

5. Despite those challenges, the Project has provided some good insights into the children’s social care system as it operates in Stockton on Tees and will be used to inform future developments to be undertaken by the upcoming Transformation Work.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None – all activity has been within existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

RISK ASSESSMENT

Inaction will lead to rising numbers of children in our care.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

None

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