

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 29 October 2020

Subject of Report: Scrutiny of the Children's Improvement Plan

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair of Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Key Decision: No

Reason: It does not meet the criteria for being a Key Decision.

Recommendations

That the CYPS Policy and Scrutiny Panel agree:

- the arrangements outlined below in regard to the continuance of the current Task and Finish group
- the proposed new name for the group
- the input of the Local Government Association (LGA) in supporting the work of the group

1. Summary of Report

Following the publication of the Ofsted report in June and its presentation to the last Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Panel, it was agreed that a sub-group would be set up to scrutinise the Action Plan that we were required to submit to Ofsted by 17 September 2020. The sub-group had sight of the report and met to provide their comments/views to officers. There was a subsequent discussion between the Chair and the Director in which it was agreed that the sub-group should continue beyond the submission of the Action Plan because the Department for Education (DfE) had advised that they were concerned as to why North Somerset continued to 'require improvement to be good.'

2. Policy

Local Authority Children's Services are subject to regular inspection by Ofsted and are expected to continuously improve their services to achieve the best outcomes for children and their families.

3. Details

Following the discussion with representatives from the DfE it was agreed that the current Quality and Performance Board (chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by the Leader, the Lead Member for Children's Services and officers) should be broadened to include representatives from partner agencies, DfE colleagues, North Tyneside (our Partner in Practice) and our newly appointed DfE adviser.

Officers went on to work on the necessary governance arrangements and also had discussions with the Chair of CYPS Scrutiny and colleagues from the LGA. Two key points emerged: firstly that the sub-group needed to progress from being a Task and Finish group to becoming a longer-term group focused at a strategic level on scrutinising the delivery of the Children's Improvement Plan. The second point was a recognition that in order to fulfil such a role Members needed some peer support, via the LGA, from colleagues who had been on a similar journey - we are awaiting further contact from the LGA following a very positive conversation with the Chair. With regard to the first point, it is suggested that the group be renamed as the Children's Improvement Focus Group.

4. Consultation

None.

5. Financial Implications

As the Children's Improvement Plan progresses there will be the need for the Executive to consider the necessary resources. The continuing sub-group will have a role in scrutinising the progress of the plan and the Council's commitments. At the time of writing this report the work on possible resources is yet to be finalised.

Costs

See above.

Funding

See above.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

Not applicable.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

8. Risk Management

Not applicable.

9. Equality Implications

Not applicable.

10. Corporate Implications

None.

11. Options Considered

Not applicable.

Author:

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Appendices:

None.

Background Papers:

Ofsted report 'Inspection of children's social care services', 2 March 2020 to 13 March 2020
<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50151810>.

Plan for Continuous Improvement of Services for Children, Young People and Families
2020 – 2022.