

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES ELEMENT OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE
DELIVERY PLAN 2017/19**

Reason for the Report

1. This report should enable the Members to gain an overview of Children's Services portion of the Social Services Directorate Delivery Plan 2017/19, **attached at Appendix A** whose work falls within the responsibilities of this Committee, and to review and appraisal the Directorate's key achievements during the previous year, their contributions to the Council's Corporate Plan 2017/19, and the future challenges facing Children's Services.

Establishing a New Policy Framework

2. The Cabinet at its meeting on 6 July 2017 approved a report "Capital Ambitions" setting out the administrations ambitions for Cardiff as well as establishing the Cabinet's key priorities for the coming municipal year, together with how the Council's corporate and partnership planning framework will be reshaped to deliver the new vision. The relevant section for Children's Services is detailed below:

Children & Families: Councillor Graham Hinchey

Cardiff should be a great city for all our children to grow up in. That's why this Administration is committed to investing in aspiration and life chances from an early age, particularly for those children from our city's most deprived communities or troubled families.

In the face of austerity we have invested in recruiting new social workers, and some big strides have been made in improving statutory children's services. This Administration is determined that this continues. We will focus on the most

vulnerable children, particularly on making sure that children in our care system are healthy and safe, and are given every opportunity to succeed in life.

We will work to align services and funding – from across the public and third sectors – around what each individual child and family needs. In doing so, we want to see a step-change in partnership working at a community level between our social services, our schools and other public services like health and police.

Families do best when they're healthy and empowered, and are able to play an active role in community life. We will do all we can to make sure that this happens. Early intervention will be critical, making a difference in the early stages to tackle an issue before it develops and addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences. Again, this will rely on partnership working across the public sector and with our staff, citizens and communities, and building on partnerships like the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

We will:

- Continue to improve Children's Services and our work to attract, recruit and retain more children's social workers.
- Further develop effective early help for families, so that fewer children need to be looked after by the Council.
- Continue to improve outcomes for looked after children and further enhance their experience of care, with a particular focus on reducing the number placed out of area.
- Enhance the support for young people when they leave local authority care, making sure that they're given the opportunities to succeed, including continuing the Council's Corporate Traineeship Programme for Looked After Children.
- Pilot a 'Children First' approach to joining-up services and funding in support of children and families in a specific locality in the city.
- Improve engagement with communities at large - and faith communities in particular - to improve the safeguarding of children and adults across the various communities in Cardiff.
- Implement the 'Disability Futures' Programme, remodelling services and improving outcomes for disabled children and young adults.
- Take forward 'Signs of Safety', a strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection casework.

- Explore the potential of a new or discounted bus travel scheme for young carers.

Delivery Plan 2017 - 2019

3. This report has been provided to assist Members to gain an overview of the responsibilities vested in Children's Services. A copy of the Delivery Plan for Social Services has been attached at **Appendix A**. The delivery plan includes:

- Corporate Introduction– Page 3;
- Social Services Directorate Profile – Pages 5 & 6;
- Directorate Self-Assessment of performance during 2016/17 – Pages 7 to 10;
- Moving Forward: Context, Opportunities and Challenges – Page 11;
- Delivering the Welsh Language Standards – Page 12
- Strategic Directorate priorities – Page 13

These are:

- Safeguarding** - Children and adults are protected from significant harm and are empowered to protect themselves.
- Prevention & Independence** - Children, young people and adults are supported to live safely and independently within their families and communities with the lowest appropriate level of intervention
- Care & Support** (including transitions) - Adults and looked after children experience the best care and support to help them recognize their abilities, have aspirations and achieve what matters to them; and Young people have the necessary skills and support to prepare them and their Carers for a smooth transition to adult life and optimum independence.
- Workforce** - Cardiff is the destination of choice for committed social work and social care professionals
- Resources** - Social Services are provided on the basis of the most efficient and effective use of resources.

Within each Strategic Directorate Priority is detailed the Performance measures, Commitments to Action, and Risk management, which cover both Children's and Adults services, many of which are specifically directed to services for Children & Young People.

- Directorate Profile – Page 50;

Children's Services key actions (Pages 14 to 49)

- Renew the safeguarding vision and strategy across the Directorate by March 2018 in order to take account of new national policy and practice guidance currently under development (page 15);
- Develop and implement a mechanism to improve engagement with communities at large and faith communities in particular by March 2018 to improve the safeguarding of children across the various communities in Cardiff (page 15);
- Embed First Point of Contact / Information, Advice and Assistance functions across Social Services by March 2018 in order to enable people to identify their own needs and achieve their own outcomes (page 20);
- Continue to increase the number of children and adults with care and support needs in receipt of Direct Payments by March 2018 to enable people to make their own choices and take control over the care services they receive (page 22);
- Undertake a campaign by March 2018 to raise Young Carers' awareness of their entitlement to a Young Carers Assessment (page 23);
- Conclude the implementation of Signs of Safety in Children's Services by March 2020 in order to ensure that all staff within the Directorate are able to engage with families using the Signs of Safety Risk Assessment Framework (page 24);
- Implementation of the Youth Offending Service Improvement Plan by March 2018 in response to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation inspection findings (page 25);
- Implement new services in 2017/18 in order to promote family stability and reduce family breakdown (page 27);
- Implement the "Disability Futures" Programme by December 2018 to remodel services for disabled children, young people and young adults aged 0-25 across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to improve effectiveness and efficiency of services and outcomes for disabled young people and their families (N.B. Includes transitions) (page 35)

- Deliver the Corporate Parenting Strategy by 2019 to ensure that the Council and partners collectively fulfil their responsibilities to all children and young people who are in their care by seeking exactly the same positive outcomes that every good parent would want for their own children (page 37)
- Review and revise Support Services to Care Leavers by March 2018 in order to improve service effectiveness and outcomes for young people (page 38)
- In collaboration with the Health Service, determine the services and resources required to meet the health needs of looked after children and children in need by March 2018 (page 40)
- Review Directorate posts by March 2018 to support a coherently aligned Social Services workforce career path to ensure compliance with Care Council for Wales standards (page 43)
- Improve recruitment and retention of children's social workers, ensuring the Council achieves and maintains a vacancy rate below 18% by March 2018 to raise standards and drive the quality and competency levels of staff through effective workforce development in order to enable those with care and support needs to achieve what matters to them (page 44)
- Implement Integrated Service and Finance Strategy for 2017-2022/27 in order to secure the future plan for the Directorate (page 46)
- Recommission Families First Services by March 2018 to maximise the impact on outcomes for children and families (page 46)
- Consider options for a regional Youth Offending Service model by March 2018 in order to better align inter-agency resources (page 48)

Scope of Scrutiny

5. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the operations of Children's Services and its objectives for this year. It will also enable Members to enquire as to:
 - i. How these objectives were identified and what criteria were used?
 - ii. How was it judged that the associated actions will help either improve or make more effective, services for young people?
 - iii. The key challenges for the next year.

Way Forward

6. At the meeting, Councillor Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Children & Families) may wish to make a statement. Tony Young (Director of Social Services) will be in attendance to brief the Committee on the work undertaken by the service and the key challenges facing Children's Services during the coming year.
7. Members are invited to note the information set out in the report, extracts from the Directorate business plan, and presentations from the officers, and identify any issues for the Committee's work programme.

Legal Implications

8. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

9. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may

arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) review the information contained in this report; and
- (ii) Identify any issues which should be considered for inclusion on the Committee's 2017/18 work programme.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance and Legal Services

13 July 2017