
Update on Children's Services OfSTED Improvement Plan

Committee considering report:	Communities Select Committee
Date of Committee:	11 April 2017
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lynne Doherty
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	NA
Report Author:	Strategic Support (cover report)
Forward Plan Ref:	

1. Purpose of the Discussion

- 1.1 To receive an update on the progress of Children's Services subsequent to their Ofsted grading of 'inadequate' published on 18th May 2015 through the delivery of a presentation by the Head of Children's Services – Mac Heath.

2. Recommendation

To note the contents of the presentation and ask questions of the Officer and Portfolio Holder regarding progress to date, future planned activity (including obstacles and opportunities).

3. Introduction

- 3.1 In March 2015, Ofsted carried out an inspection of West Berkshire's Children and Families' Services. The outcome of this inspection was that our "services for children in need of help and protection" were judged to be "inadequate" and therefore the local authority's overall effectiveness in delivering children and family services was judged to be "inadequate" too.
- 3.2 The Ofsted report contained 17 recommendations. Of these, four were for "Priority and Immediate Action" and a further 13 are considered "Areas for Improvement".
- 3.3 Children's Services created an Improvement Action Plan to address the recommendations detailed within the OfSTED report. It showed how our Improvement Commitments link to Ofsted's recommendations and in a section headed "How will we know we have done it", showed what would be measured, monitored, observed or established to demonstrate that we have met our improvement commitments
- 3.4 The Improvement Plan was approved by the Department for Education in August 2015 and was the core document against which Children and Families Services improvement would be monitored and evaluated going forward.
- 3.5 An Improvement Plan is mandatory in response to an Ofsted "inadequate" judgement. It records and evidences the progress that is being achieved and in deciding our improvement partners to advise on the Council's work, the Secretary of State has shown confidence in our ability to improve with only minimum

intervention. It has therefore been accepted as a constructive tool to track our improvement journey.

4. Background

- 4.1 The topic was first considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15th September 2015.
- 4.2 Members were recommended to:
 - a. Endorse the progress being made by Children's Services subsequent to the Ofsted Inspection
 - b. Be informed of the improvement journey to ensure Children's Services becomes 'good' in line with the Council's Strategy
- 4.3 Members concluded that the improvement plan should continue to receive robust challenge and would be invited back to a future scrutiny meeting.

5. Supporting Papers

Appendix 1 – Presentation slides (to be delivered at the meeting 11th April 2017).