

# CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item 52

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Children and Families Social Work Improvement Plan</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Children and Families</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>James Dougan</b>	<b>Tel:</b> <b>01273 295511</b>
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<b>Key Decision:</b>			
<b>Wards Affected:</b>			

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

##### 1.1 Summary

##### 1.1.1 The report is to update the CYPOSC of the Children & Families Social Work Improvement Plan.

The Improvement Programme is a result of the work undertaken following the unannounced two day Ofsted inspection to initiate a significant step change in quality of social work services provided to children, parents and carers in Brighton & Hove.

##### 1.1.2 The improvement plan has four key elements which sit alongside the Value for Money Programme:

1. Areas for development plan (improving practice)
2. Management and delivery structure
3. Quality Assurance Framework
4. Workforce Development

##### 1.1.3 The aims of the improvement programme are:

- i. Promote an effective management culture throughout Brighton & Hove Children & Families Children's Social Work Service
- ii. Focus on performance and delivery of high quality services
- iii. Develop the talents and skills of the workforce and fully engage staff in the strategic development and operational work of the service
- iv. Ensure VfM by effective control and the most efficient use of the funding and resources
- v. Take account of national developments in social work

- 1.1.4 Social workers have a unique and pivotal role alongside their professional colleagues in the Police and Health Visiting, in the task of protecting the most vulnerable in our society.
- 1.1.5 Whilst systems and procedures play an important role in the protection of children, the protection of children fundamentally relies on sound professional practice by social workers equipped with skills in assessing risk, skills in working directly with families and most importantly in a spirit of respectful scepticism, with these skills and confidence in these skills to make inherently difficult judgements. To do this difficult task social workers need to be supported with the necessary resources alongside professional supervision, training, management and leadership.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To inform the CYPOSC of the progress of the improvement programme.

## **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 The Children's social work milestone planner which details the milestones for the improvement programme (Appendix 1)
- 3.2 The Areas for Development Plan (Appendix 2)

## **4. Consultation**

Not applicable

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### **5.1 Financial Implications:**

There are a number of activities outlined in the report. As these develop and detailed proposals become available specific costings will need to be calculated in order to understand the full financial implications of the proposals.

Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis

Date: 9th March 2011

### **5.2 Legal Implications:**

The actions outlined in the Development Plan directly address core statutory functions of the Local Authority in relation to child protection and therefore form an important and integral part of meeting the legal duties imposed by statute. By definition the Human Rights [as enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998] of children and families

affected by the exercise (or not) of these statutory duties must be taken into account by the Local Authority.

Lawyer Consulted: Natasha Watson Date: 9th March 2011

Equalities Implications:

5.3 None

Sustainability Implications:

None

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.5 None

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

5.6 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.7 None

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 None

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 To comply with the Areas for Development as outlined in the Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within Brighton and Hove children's services

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Children's Social Work Milestone Planner
2. Areas for Development Plan

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. None

**Background Documents**

1. None

