

Subject:	Annual Performance Assessment of Services for Children and Young People in Brighton & Hove Council 2008		
Date of Meeting:	19 January 2009		
Report of:	Director of Children's Services		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Steve Barton	Tel: 29-6105
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Ofsted's annual performance assessment of services for children and young people in Brighton & Hove (APA) is attached as Appendix 1. Brighton and Hove has been awarded Grade 3 (good) for all services. This was in line with our Self Assessment, submitted in June 2008, apart from Capacity to Improve, which we assessed as a grade 4 (excellent).
- 1.2 This is a significant achievement as in 2008 standards were set to a higher level than in previous years and, as result, many authorities received lower grades. An action plan will be drawn up to address any important weaknesses and areas of development identified by the APA.
- 1.3 Following the emergency Joint Area Review undertaken in Haringey in November and December 2008 the APA regime has itself been called into question. Paragraph 3 summarises proposals for future arrangements for the assessment of services for children and young people.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board notes the results of the Annual Performance Assessment 2008.
- 2.2 That the Board receives updates on the APA action plan through regular Performance Improvement Reports.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Ofsted to provide an annual performance rating for each council's children's services. This is currently undertaken through the APA process.
- 3.2 The Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT) submitted an APA Self Assessment in June 2008. This was followed up by a meeting between senior

managers and the Ofsted inspectors in November to clarify specific issues raised during the overall assessment process which included review of a comprehensive data set and separate assessment reports from other external bodies such as the National Strategies, the Government Office and the Youth Justice Board.

- 3.3 APA and Joint Area Reviews (JAR) of local children's services come to an end in December 2008 and will be replaced by the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) from April 1st 2009.
- 3.4 Ofsted's consultation on proposals for assessing local authority services for children and young people closed on December 3rd. Proposals include:
- A new Performance Profile for each local authority, updated quarterly to provide the basis for the statutory annual performance rating for council children's services (3 sections: Inspected Services; ECM Indicators; Direction of Travel) which will form the 'backbone' of Ofsted's contribution to the new CAA organisational and area assessments.
 - Revised Self-Assessment demonstrating improvement through: shared strategic vision through the CYPP; robust governance and inter-agency cooperation; effective commissioning strategies; policy framework during integrated processes/joint working; listening to and acting on views of users
 - A new 3 yearly inspection of services for looked after children and for safeguarding of CYP – single/proportionate inspection event, with a max 4 week notice period
 - A short unannounced 'no notice' safeguarding visit to social care services to look at thresholds, referral and assessment processes

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The APA Self-Assessment was completed in consultation with all lead managers and relevant council directorates and partners.
- 4.2 The findings of the 2008 APA have been shared with 3rd tier managers.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: David Ellis

Date: 15/12/08

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The report is for noting only and sets out how the CYPT meets the statutory requirements for annual performance rating, as set out in The Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Lawyer Consulted: Hilary Priestly

Date: 15/12/08

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Ofsted's inspection framework places considerable emphasis on equalities and this is reflected in the Self Assessment submitted by the CYPT in June. The 2008 APA letter does not identify equalities as an area for development.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability issues were identified in the Self Assessment submitted by the CYPT in June. The 2008 APA letter does not identify this as an area for development.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 Ofsted's inspection framework places considerable emphasis on crime and disorder in respect of children and young people involved in, at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity. The CYPT's work in this area is reflected in the Self Assessment submitted CYPT in June. The 2008 APA letter identifies this as an area for development i.e. 'The proportion of supervised young offenders engaged in education, training or employment, while improving, remains well below that of similar councils and the target set for all councils of 90% engagement' (page 4)

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Consultation on proposals for the future assessment of children's services closed on December 3rd. The proposals reflect the overarching priorities in the new Comprehensive Area Assessment regime, led by the Audit Commission, which places considerable emphasis on risk and opportunity management. The APA letter makes the following statement, for each area of activity, which highlights the CYPT's approach to risk and opportunity management 'The council's analysis of its strengths and areas for development for this outcome area is consistent with the admissible evidence'.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The grade awarded to children's services has a positive impact on the council's overall rating from the Audit Commissioning.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 Completion of the APA is a statutory requirement.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Board is asked to note the results of the 2008 APA and arrangements to address any important weaknesses and areas of development identified.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Copy of the APA 2008 letter from Ofsted.

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None