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**To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)**

**14 February 2019**

**Subject: Sign off of the Final Children's Services Improvement Plan**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the sign off of the Children's Services Improvement Plan reported to the Children's Services Improvement Board on 24 January 2019.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the signed off Children's Services Improvement Plan and performance trajectory
  - 2) To note the new arrangements replacing the current Improvement Board with a Continuous Improvement Executive Group
  - 3) Identify any further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 The Ofsted Inspection of Coventry's Children's Services and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), published in March 2014, judged services and the LSCB to be inadequate. As a result the Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The two year review was held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and focused on quality of practice; the effectiveness of the children's services system and partnership working. Ofsted re-inspected Children's Services on 6<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> March 2017, the outcome of the inspection was published on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2017, Children's Services were judged as "requires improvement to be good". Services for Children are no longer inadequate.
- 3.2 The Department for Education (DfE) removed Children's Services from intervention on 13 June 2017, the service is no longer subject to an improvement notice. Supervision and support has been provided by the DfE up to June 2018. This has now ended.
- 3.3 To oversee the improvement journey and as a response to the inadequate rating a Children's Service Improvement Board was established. An experienced Improvement consultant and retired Her Majesty Inspector (HMI), chairs the Children's Services Improvement Board. The Board includes elected Members, Council representatives and representatives from partner agencies in the City as well as a representative from the Department for Education. Progress is reported to the Improvement Board every twelve weeks.
- 3.4 The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have both given public commitment that Children's Services remains a key priority for the Council. This includes prioritising funding for Children's Services to maintain its capacity to improve. The Council, alongside partner organisations continue a relentless focus on securing improvements in services for children, young people and families to ensure they are safeguarded and achieve positive outcomes.

- 3.5 Ofsted's revised new framework includes focused visits to local authorities who are judged to be 'requires improvement' the first visit was held on 30-31 January 2018. Two Inspectors spent two days reviewing the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), and speaking to social workers and partners. Visits were also made to two area social teams to review children in need cases. The letter confirming the outcome of the visit was published on 22 February 2018.
- 3.6 The next Ofsted Annual Conversation with regional representatives has been scheduled to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The meeting is part of a broader meeting covering education and early years. Coventry Children's Services are anticipating a Joint Targeted Inspection (JTAI) or a focused visit during 2019 prior to the next standard Inspection which is likely to be undertaken between December 2019 and June 2020. A revised updated Children's Services self-assessment is currently being finalised in preparation for the Ofsted Annual Conversation in February.

#### **4 Children's Services Progress and the Improvement Plan**

- 4.1 Updates were provided to board members on improvements with the review of School attendance; health service review of health histories; emotional and mental health support offer to care leavers; strengthened arrangements at the front door and initiatives in response to Gangs in Coventry.
- 4.2 Board members agreed to sign off the current improvement plan as concluded. The plan has been reviewed and updated to provide overall progress and impact against all actions detailed in the plan. Two rag rating have been applied to each action to demonstrate whether the action is complete and whether the impact/performance measure has been met.
- 4.3 The plan contains 109 actions, the table below provides a summary by rag status of actions completed. Full details of progress against the plan is highlighted in **Appendix 2**.

<b>Actions Completed</b>	<b>Performance Measure/Impact Completed</b>
101	71
8	33
0	5
109	109

#### **5 Performance**

- 5.1 The service continues to experience increasing numbers of Looked After Children. As at 31 December 2018 this was 724. The pressures concern an increase in connected person's placements as a result of a court process, a rise in the number of 16 year olds presenting as homeless and the number of children exiting care reducing. This continues to be addressed.
- 5.2 YTD there has been an increase in the number of contacts completed within timescale. The volume of contacts continues to impacts on the timeliness of decision making. Every contact is reviewed the day it is received and RAG rated. All urgent referrals are progressed within timescale.
- 5.3 Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub Assessment completion timeliness is 61.6% YTD performance has begun to steadily improve.
- 5.4 Re-referrals have decreased this quarter month on month, YTD remains at 25.9%, although performance was 21% in December 2018 which is closer to the target of 19%. Management oversight continues to drive improvement in this area.
- 5.5 40% of children have had their care plans recorded within 10 days. (CP1 11) Further work has started to understand the reasons and action plan developed to address this issue. Area Team Managers attend monthly performance management meetings to address this issue.

- 5.6 Children and Family Assessment Timeliness is an improving picture month by month, but is still below target.
- 5.7 Child Protection Conferences held within timescales is showing strong performance and meets the target of 95%, this is significantly better than the England average and that of our statistical neighbours.
- 5.8 A summary of the critical performance indicators and current trajectory is highlighted in Appendix 1. The Children's Services Leadership team will identify the gaps to improve consistency and a plan will be produced for the next 12 months to improve performance trajectory of what is needed to get to good. This will be monitored by the new Continuous Improvement Executive Group.

## **6 Continuous Improvement Executive Group**

- 6.1 A report on the future arrangements for continuing and sustaining improvements in Coventry was presented by the Independent Chair and the Director of Children's Services at Improvement board on 3 October 2018. There is a requirement in the current improvement plan to consider future arrangements for monitoring the continuous improvement of Children's Services beyond the end of the current plan.
- 6.2 The Children's Services Improvement Board will be replaced by an Executive Group to retain political and corporate oversight of Children's Services continuous improvement beyond the current improvement plan.
- 6.3 The new Continuous Improvement Executive Group will ensure tighter focus on continuous improvement and Ofsted preparation. The impact of performance will be managed and monitored by the group. This is an interim measure before returning to business as usual in accordance with the revised arrangements for Children's Safeguarding, and subject to satisfactory inspection by June 2020. At this time the Executive Group would cease and oversight transferred to the revised Safeguarding Partnership and monitored as business as usual. Board members fully supported the revised arrangements and membership of the group.
- 7.3 The Independent Chair of the Improvement Board will chair the Executive Group, effective from March 2019 and will be held on a bi monthly basis until Inspection. The Independent Chair has capacity and authority to call an extraordinary meeting to deal with critical issues should they arise. Progress will continue to be reported to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board on a regular basis.

## **8 Overview Summary**

- 8.1 Concluding the current improvement plan marks a significant point in our journey in "Getting to Good". The plan containing 109 actions demonstrates significant progress across Children's Services in collaboration with partners to improving good outcomes for children and young people.
- 8.2 In the lead up to the next Inspection, the Children's senior leadership team and extended leadership will continue to work together to drive practice improvements and service changes. This phase of improvement relies heavily on corporate support and the support from partners to ensure that improvement continues and is sustained and the improvement plan can be signed off. There is explicit intention to ensure that Children's Services reaches a position where it is continuously achieving good outcomes for the Children of Coventry. A revised Children's Services Strategic Plan 2018-19 our journey in "Getting to Good" will be developed and will provide direction going forward to embed the good practice achieved and fully embed areas requiring further development.

## **9 Communications**

- 9.1 The e-newsletter continues to be produced focusing on Children's Services. This is issued to all staff in Children's Services, all partners, senior managers and Members to ensure everyone is aware of the progress made so far, what has still to be achieved and the role all employees can play in supporting the service in 'getting to good.' The Director of Children's Services holds open sessions for all staff and gets out and about visiting teams and talking to staff. In addition to this Children's Services also hold 'Lets' Talk Children' Sessions to engage further with staff.

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## Appendix 1

### Children's Services Critical Performance Indicators as at December 2018

#### Current performance trajectory

ID	Definition	Rolling 12 months*	Current (YTD)	Target	Progress Towards Target
CPI1	Contact completion timeliness (1 working day)	60.4%	59.1%	75.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI2	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Assessment completion timeliness	62.6%	61.6%	70.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI3	% Re-Referrals (Referrals started within 12 months of a previous Referral start date)	25.4%	25.9%	<19%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI4	Children seen within 7 working days of being Referred to Children's Services	54.3%	56.5%	90.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI5	Children & Family Assessment Timeliness (45 working days)	72.0%	75.8%	90.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI6	Child Protection Conferences held within timescale (ICPCs & RCPCs)	92.8%	95.0%	95.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI7	% repeat Child Protection Plans	29.4%	26.2%	<17%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI8	% subject to a Child Protection statutory visit during the 4 weeks prior to month-end	90.7%	91.9%	95.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI9	% new episodes of care where the child was previously looked after in the previous 12 months	7.8%	5.9%	<8%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI10	% LAC statutory visits to children in placement for less than 12 months	88.4%	88.7%	95.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI11	% LAC Initial Care Plans recorded within 10 working days	41.0%	40.0%	80.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI12	% LAC with 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months**		10.2%	<9%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI13	% LAC long-term stability		62.4%	75.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI14	A1 - Average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children that have been adopted		904	426	<div><div></div></div>
CPI15	% first LAC Review held within timescale	84.6%	83.8%	98.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI16	% care leavers EET (Relevant & Former Relevant Care Leavers) [17 to 21]		51.0%	65.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI17	% Care leavers in suitable accommodation (Relevant & Former Relevant Care Leavers) [17 to 21]		97.6%	95.0%	<div><div></div></div>
CPI18	% up-to-date management oversight		84.4%	90.0%	<div><div></div></div>

\*Rolling 12 month figure for those indicators which accumulate over the course of the year

\*\*Figure is a snapshot of the LAC cohort as a period end, which considers how many placements each child within the cohort has been in over the previous 12 months