

**OFSTED SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

**To:** Children and Young People Committee

**Meeting Date:** 18 November 2014

**From:** Adrian Loades, Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults Services

**Electoral division(s):** All

**Forward Plan ref:** N/a **Key decision:** No

**Purpose:** To update the Committee on:

- the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and the review of the effectiveness of the local safeguarding children board which took place in June 2014
- the action plan developed in response to the inspection findings

**Recommendation:** The Committee is asked to:

a) note the achievement of an overall rating of Good in relation to services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

b) note and comment on the action plan that has been developed in response to the areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted report.

c) note the establishment of the Next Steps Board which will continue to provide oversight and scrutiny of continued improvement.

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Following an Ofsted judgement of 'Inadequate' in relation to Arrangements for the Protection of Children in September 2012, Cambridgeshire implemented a robust Improvement Plan. The plan sought to address all the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and therefore ensure that services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers were of a consistently high quality. Ofsted returned in June 2014 and issued an overall judgement of 'Good' for these services. The effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board was also assessed as Good.

## **2.0 MAIN ISSUES**

- 2.1 The Ofsted report was published on the 8 August 2014 and is largely positive. It provides extensive evidence that Cambridgeshire has responded fully to the areas of improvement identified in both the previous inspection and the subsequent Notice to Improve issued by the Department for Education (DfE). The report can be found at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 As a result of the Ofsted judgement, and on the basis of other evidence provided, Edward Timpson MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, wrote to Cllr Count on 12 September 2014 announcing that the Notice to Improve would be lifted with immediate effect.
- 2.3 The overall judgement on the Ofsted report is that children's services are "good" in Cambridgeshire, but there is one area which requires improvement and this is in "Children who need help and protection". All the areas identified for improvement are ones that are fully recognised and are being addressed and monitored through a post-inspection action plan (**Appendix 2**).
- 2.4 The action plan has been developed in consultation with a wide range of staff. It will also be considered by the LSCB. It is intended to review and update the action plan on a regular basis in order that it remains relevant and reflects current improvement priorities.
- 2.5 It is acknowledged that there are other areas, not covered by the inspection which would also benefit from increased improvement focus. The structures and mechanisms that oversaw the improvement from the Inadequate Ofsted judgement will be maintained. The Improvement Board agreed at their September meeting to transition into a Next Steps Board which will continue to provide scrutiny and oversight to ongoing improvement activity, including both the post-inspection action plan and a broader Next Steps plan which will have a wider improvement remit. The post-inspection plan and Next Steps plan will be monitored and reviewed by the Next Steps team, led by the Performance Management and QA Service.

## **3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

### **3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

- 3.1.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

3.2.1 There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

3.3.1 The implementation of the post-Ofsted action plan and the continued focus on improvement for services provided to vulnerable children will help to ensure the effectiveness of the support and protection that the Council provides to the most vulnerable children and young people.

## **4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Resource Implications**

4.1.1 There are no significant implications within this category. The action plan will be delivered within current resources.

### **4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

4.2.1 The protection of vulnerable children is inherently a high risk area of activity for the Council. Implementation of the action plan will reduce risk.

### **4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**

4.3.1 There are no significant implications within this category.

### **4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications**

4.4.1 There are no significant implications within this category.

### **4.5 Public Health Implications**

4.5.1 There are no significant implications within this category.

### **4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement**

4.6.2 There are no significant implications within this category.