

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Scrutiny **DATE:** 29th January 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Martyn Cockram
(Interim Transformation Programme and Development
Manager Looked After Children and Care Leavers)

(For all enquiries) 01753 875411

WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Mann Commissioner for Education and Children

PART I**TEAM AROUND YOU****1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Scrutiny on progress and development of a transformational approach for Looked After Children and Care Leavers which builds upon the improvement work undertaken to date by Children's Services and the requirements outlined for improvement in the OfSTED inspection of November 2013. The developments are also to be sustainable going forward in the delivery of the best outcomes possible for the Looked After Children and Care Leavers of Slough.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

This is an opportunity for Scrutiny members to be brought up to speed with developments in the LAC and Care Leavers transformation programme and to make their contribution to the programme of activity. It also provides members with the opportunity to consider how they may wish to be involved, at whatever level in their communities as we seek to ensure that "we get it right for the children of Slough"

Our looked after children do not achieve consistently good enough outcomes as care leavers and young adults. At present, the local system does not work well enough together with adolescents on the edge of care, looked after children and care leavers. Some young people achieve very good outcomes but not enough and good outcomes are not achieved on a consistent basis and they are not achieved because the system is designed so that there is not a consistent team around the young person (a team around you), all working towards shared outcomes.

Although improving we need to continue the improvement of integrated arrangements for adolescents on the edge of care that can prevent the need for them to come into care and ensure better outcomes within their families; we need to improve the experience of young people who are looked after and enhance their engagement in determining their own plans, ensuring their voice is centre stage; we need to ensure that pathway plans are more meaningful and are firmly focused on good outcomes with high aspirations and

expectations both of the young person but also the services and practitioners who are able to help them achieve the outcomes.

We want to design a local system of integrated approaches, high quality services and intelligent commissioning to benefit young people in Slough. Our approach will ensure that all young people who are on the edge of care will receive a comprehensive, multi-agency assessment that identifies needs and risks. The assessment will lead to a 'team around you' plan, irrespective of whether the young person remains within their family or becomes looked after – seamless help either side of the looked after threshold. The plan will be designed to provide high quality help to the young person and their family, positive experiences and deliver good outcomes – outcomes that all good parents would want for their children. For those young people who are care leavers or have significant needs as young adults, the help provided needs to take them through to their 25th birthday and beyond if necessary.

Our model will be young person led (working with Slough young people to design a system and operating model that meets their needs and aspirations); include needs led commissioning and market development and a workforce that is highly skilled, valued, flexible and motivated. We propose to take a cross-sector approach wherever possible, utilising concepts such as social responsibility. Finally, our model will be evidence based and take learning from good practice elsewhere.

Our thinking originates from the ADCS work on 'What is Care For?' and the research review undertaken to underpin the propositions that emerged. Joined up help will be provided earlier; more young people will achieve better outcomes within their birth family and will not need to become looked after; children who do become looked after will be placed in Slough or much nearer to Slough; work will take place with families and other important people to maintain links and improve relationships; better use (to the benefit of young people) will be made of the Slough economy and high achieving education sector to improve outcomes. Once in the looked after system, young people will be supported by identified and consistent adults (guardian mentors), their voices will inform, influence and determine their journey; they will be placed in settings that are of a high quality, where carers are supported to and expected to achieve good outcomes for the young people.

Outcomes and measures of success we would want to achieve overtime include the following:

- Redesign of pathways and related commissioning activity to secure rapid and sustainable improvement.
- Permanency needs of children made in timely way and early in the Child Protection pathway
- Effective multi agency care planning and working for families on the edge of care
- Voice of the child central to all discussions
- Decision making and planning is consistent with changes to family law system

- More children successfully placed for adoption
- More older children successfully placed in long term foster care
- Children placed within 20 miles of Slough
- A market that ensures effective alternatives to care including alternatives that prevent placement breakdown for children and young people who are in care
- Unplanned admissions to care are reduced and are rare
- Education attainment is improved and placement choice, quality and stability increased
- Housing, training and employment opportunities for care leavers are improved
- All council departments and partners prioritise the needs of looked after children and care leavers

We would expect to see a value for money impact – improved commissioning and decision making at the point of becoming looked after – leading to reduced unit costs, a reducing spend on residential placements and resources re-directed to helping families care for their young people.

In order to test our approach, we will pilot some of our thinking with young people. The pilot will last for three months from the end of February 2015 through to the end of May. After this time, there will be a period of evaluation which will enable the programme board and key stakeholders to consider the findings, suggest changes and consider roll out. This will be undertaken under the control of the Looked after Children and Care Leavers Programme Board and Stakeholder Group.

Approach and the Pilot

For the purposes of the pilot, we are proposing to work with young people aged between 14-18. An important element will be that the young person is at the centre of the thinking and that their voice is clearly identified as the solutions are built around them. The design of an operating model (appendix A) and the delivery of front line co-production workshops have highlighted that there are three core pillars which will make the approach work. These are:

- Commissioning
- Outcomes based Practice
- Intelligent Client (Data and Performance)

Work is underway to develop the **Commissioning** approach; this will see Heads of Service within CS potentially act as Strategic Commissioners and be accountable for the outcomes delivered. For the purpose of this pilot we will investigate how this commissioning approach might work in a key area, maybe market development and quality assurance.

Outcomes based practice considers how we might deliver solutions which are specific to individuals, are personalised and which result in outcomes

being achieved in a timely, consistent and sustainable manner. For the purpose of the pilot we will consider (but not exclusively) the following areas:

- IRO's - young people fully involved and engaged in their own conferences, they help to record the meeting and populate their pathway plan, work with their PA and Social Worker. The pathway plan should be aspirational, purposeful and look to the future.
- Transitions - young people moving through the system, maybe to semi or independent living and a test on how well their needs are met from social care and housing
- Young person on the edge of care - how and what actions are taken which enable them to remain at home.
- Fostering - can we work with business to increase the pace and stability of the fostering opportunity. This might be identifying new fosterers, respite foster carers or a process with business by which we identify and produce a wider fostering "market".
- Mentoring - we will test the approach with children by bringing back two previous children in care in Slough. Training will be provided for the young people involved in mentoring as will any legal requirements be considered and dealt with.

We will also test situations which require a health, youth justice and education solution. In the case of health we will consider whether therapeutic solutions are required early in a pathway, will also consider the positive impact of working with young people to avoid significant interventions from the youth justice system as well as looking to specifically help a young person in an educational setting in terms of their learning and employment aspiration. It is envisaged that there will be a key role throughout the pilot for commissioning, participation and a Guardian Mentor.

In terms of **participation**, the young people identified to take part in the pilot will be met and the approach discussed with them. This will enable us to capture their thoughts and opinions before the pilot begins. Additionally, throughout the pilot they will be met on a monthly basis, some in groups, some on a 121 basis to assess their thoughts and opinions around:

- what is working well
- what might be better
- what should we be doing that we aren't
- what is different, if anything to their previous experiences
- what should we do next?

Similarly, those professionals involved will be met to ascertain similar points of view, as essentially this piece of work not only challenges the way we do things, it also challenges the culture and ability to develop and change. Admittedly, the latter element is not in doubt as Slough has changed over the

last year to 18 months - this though will capture the evidence. The same will apply to the mentors and mentees, as well as the Guardian Mentor(s)

The purpose of the Team around You is as explained designed to personalise the offer to LAC and Care Leavers. By personalisation this does not mean in terms of personal budgets, although over time this maybe something worth considering. In this context personalisation means "making it personal", my story, my data, my outcomes. The next element of the pilot to consider is therefore the outputs required from data and performance.

In terms of **finance** we will investigate building the immediate budget around the young person and then forecasting for the future based upon the intervention and need. The purpose of this is to identify the lifetime potential cost and potential pathway and outcomes for the young person. This will enable, overtime the ability to forward plan budgets and likely budgets. If too, early action is considered a pathway budget could identify true cost if one course of action is taken and different outcomes if another is considered. This would enable budgets to be forward planned in terms of best and worst case scenario. In achieving this type of thinking through the pilot this will help consider future commissioning and practice requirements, as well as budgets. This of course also, when developed with partners helps to consider where financial burden might rest across services as well as where there are budgetary pressures consider sources of alternative funding - community, pooled, social finance or normal business arrangements. It also enables invest to save opportunities to be clear, as well as reinvestment potential of any savings - dependent upon the Childrens organisation and corporate responsibilities.

Data will be built around the young person and will be built so that it means something to the individual, to the social worker, key workers and organisation. This means that social workers or key workers can use data at a micro level for hypothesis and planning. It will also help identify trends and specific outcomes. This data will be able to be presented at team level to identify performance and will migrate to an overarching business balance scorecard from which organisational decisions will be made.

In the delivery of three core pillars of Commissioning, Outcomes based practice and intelligent client the rest of the operating model will also be delivered through the diagram at Appendices A and B

The purpose of the pilot is to wrap the service around the individual. This means that there will be a "virtual" hub built around them. If the hub can be physical then this will help realistically. The hub approach may if desired lead to organisational redesign of structure and role, as an unhelpful scenario will be an over reliance of protocols and bureaucracy. There will be it is accepted situations where this is not practical and there will need to be arrangements around such areas as governance, finance, accountabilities, matrix management and accommodation. The implications of this area will become clear as the pilot progresses and develops.

There will potentially be support from external bodies whilst the pilot takes place. These come from a high quality University, Social Finance and an

individual who has been through the care system and now works with the DfE, OfSTED, Universities and other Care Leavers as a core part of their career.

The role of a Guardian Mentor, an independent advocate will also be developed through the pilot and those undertaking this role will be given a broad remit which they will be able to test, develop and change as the learning from the pilot becomes clearer.

3. Evaluation

The pilot is designed to test and evaluate the approach of "team around you" and to test the outcomes across the three core pillars of commissioning, Practice, Data and Performance. There will be a set of evaluation criteria which will be delivered through:

- The voice of the service user, the young people who take part in the pilot
- The voice of the coaches who work with our young people
- The voice of our people – our staff and partner staff who engage and work on the pilot
- The voice of those businesses we work with.
- The commissioned outcomes we are able to manage and assess
- The data information which as a “bespoke” approach evolves through the pilot
- The financial information which emerges – both in real terms and projection.
- The observations of partners and associates who work on the pilot with us.

The key facet of the pilot will be the analysis of what changes, the “so what” moment. It is accepted that in some instances there will not necessarily be clear results, but there will be trends which allow the Programme Board and Stakeholder group see the direction of travel. There will equally be some outcomes which are tangible and clear around commissioning, data, culture and engagement. This will enable discussion and analysis to take place during June/July which enables the Programme Board to consider how roll out might take place over the next phase likely to begin late July/August.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3.1 Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities

The Operating model outlined above at Appendix A meets the sustainable community strategies in the following key areas:

Economy and Skills

- Business and Partnership Management
- Education
- Mobilised and Engaged Workforce
- Managing the Market
- Commissioning Strategy, Planning and Policy Development
- Intelligent Client

Health and Wellbeing

- Health
- Adoption and Fostering
- Participation

Housing, Regeneration and Environment

- Social Responsibility

Safer Communities

- Outcomes for LAC and Care Leavers

3.2 Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy: Cross-Cutting themes

The approach to Team around You is designed in such a manner that it enables the children of Slough to be the best they can be, and in achieving this they are then able to make a full and positive contribution to the town. The operating model tackles all of the areas mentioned previously in the report as key outcomes and will deliver:

- Redesign of pathways and related commissioning activity to secure rapid and sustainable improvement.
- Permanency needs of children made in timely way and early in the Child Protection pathway
- Effective multi agency care planning and working for families on the edge of care
- Voice of the child central to all discussions
- Decision making and planning is consistent with changes to family law system
- More children successfully placed for adoption
- More older children successfully placed in long term foster care
- Children placed within 20 miles of Slough
- A market that ensures effective alternatives to care including alternatives that prevent placement breakdown for children and young people who are in care
- Unplanned admissions to care are reduced and are rare
- Education attainment is improved and placement choice, quality and stability increased

- Housing, training and employment opportunities for care leavers are improved
- All council departments and partners prioritise the needs of looked after children and care leavers

Through delivery of the above we will be able to ensure that all LAC and Care Leavers contribute positively through educational attainment, through being healthy, in finding meaningful employment and through contributing positively into their community. The role of the community and business, as well as partners is recognized through partner and business engagement and their contribution to their social responsibility, which again will enable the development and sustainability of a successful Slough.

3.3 **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The approach for Team around You and engagement with health and partners will deliver outcomes which:

- Reduce inequalities in health as LAC Children and Care leavers learn of the importance of their health responsibilities to themselves and their community.
- Improve transitions into housing arrangements
- Increase skills and employment opportunities through raised attainment by working with the Virtual School Head and the education community within Slough and across border.
- Through early action will help those children on the edge of care receive the appropriate and timely interventions.

3.4 **The Five Year Plan 2015-19**

The Plan's objectives are:

1. Slough will be the premier location in the south east for all businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow and stay.
2. There will be more homes in the borough, with the quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough.
3. The centre of Slough will be vibrant, providing business, living and cultural opportunities.
4. Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
5. Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances.
6. More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs.
7. The Councils income and the value of its assets will be maximised.
8. The council will be a leading digital transformation organisation

The outline of development of Team around You highlighted in this document supports the aims and direction of the plan and specifically outcomes: 1, 4, 5 and 6. through:

Slough will be the premier location in the south east for all businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow and stay.

- Business and Partnership Management
- Mobilised and Engaged Workforce
- Managing the Market
- Commissioning Strategy, Planning and Policy Development
- Intelligent Client

Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley

- Social Responsibility
- Education

Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances.

- Adoption and Fostering
- Participation
- Outcomes for LAC and Care Leavers

More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs.

- Health

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

The development of the Team around You will realise a more joined up way of working which will lead to better Commissioning, better outcomes and better use and management of data. The approach will realise savings through the delivery of the operating model which will see financial benefits achieved through more effective commissioning, which in itself means continued improvement in the identification of need (and outcome), better market development, better engagement, a mixed economy of delivery avenues and thereby better outcomes.

Work in this area is underway and the route to savings are being identified along with colleagues from Finance and Resources and Commissioning.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	None	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	
Employment Issues	None	

Equalities Issues	None	
Community Support	None	
Communications	Communications strategy in place, signed off and being delivered through the Programme Board	Raising awareness of the approach to Team around You and the outcomes required across the council, working with council colleagues, Corporate Parenting Panel, partners, business and education
Community Safety	None	
Financial	Identification of potential savings and areas for potential savings as the model is developed, tested and embedded	Savings to be realised through effective Commissioning, market development, fostering and participation opportunities
Timetable for delivery	Programme plan developed and agreed by LAC and Care leavers Programme Board	Programme Board contributes to the development of the Team around You as does a Stakeholder Group comprised of the relevant members of council, partners and CVS representatives
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	

5 **Conclusion**

The Team around You model offers a focused approach to the delivery of the aims and objectives of the outcomes below:

- Redesign of pathways and related commissioning activity to secure rapid and sustainable improvement.
- Permanency needs of children made in timely way and early in the Child Protection pathway
- Effective multi agency care planning and working for families on the edge of care
- Voice of the child central to all discussions
- Decision making and planning is consistent with changes to family law system
- More children successfully placed for adoption

- More older children successfully placed in long term foster care
- Children placed within 20 miles of Slough
- A market that ensures effective alternatives to care including alternatives that prevent placement breakdown for children and young people who are in care
- Unplanned admissions to care are reduced and are rare
- Education attainment is improved and placement choice, quality and stability increased
- Housing, training and employment opportunities for care leavers are improved
- All council departments and partners prioritise the needs of looked after children and care leavers

The purpose of this report to Scrutiny is to update members and to invite comments and advice which will be helpful to the ongoing development of the approach. One key question often asked in the design of this programme has been “would this be good enough for my child?” – contributions to ensuring this programme will be are invited.

7 **Appendices Attached (if any)**

‘A’ Operating Model for Team Around You

‘B’ Team Around You – Individual Model

Only attach appendices if absolutely necessary to the understanding of the report. Otherwise include a note in the text advising where the information can be viewed..

8 **Background Papers***(This is compulsory)*

None.