

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Joint Meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
and Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** 26<sup>th</sup> October 2016

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **FIRST YEAR PROGRESS UPDATE FROM SLOUGH CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST)**

##### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Members on the first year progress of the achievements of Slough Children's Services Trust (SCST) in delivering outcomes for Slough's children, young people and families against the backdrop of the agreed Improvement Plan and collaborative working with Slough Borough Council (SBC) and other partners.
- 1.2 To provide an opportunity for Members to consider how the Council can best support this work.

##### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee / Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panel:
  - a) note the progress made by SCST in its first year of operations
  - b) discuss the opportunities for how the Council's services can further support the most vulnerable children in the Borough.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

###### **3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

- Safer Communities
  - Carrying out the statutory role of the local authority to provide services for children in need, to safeguard them and look after children whose parents are unable to do so.

### 3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

#### **Outcome 5: Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances**

The establishment of the SCST aims to make Slough children's services one of the best providers of children's social care in the country, providing timely, purposeful support that brings safe, lasting and positive change.

### 4 Other Implications

#### (a) Financial

There are no financial implications specific to the recommendations in this report.

#### (b) Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with this report.

#### (c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

In September 2015, the Secretary of State issued a Direction transferring various children's services to Slough Children's Services Trust ("the Trust"). Although the Trust discharges functions on behalf of Slough Borough Council, the Council retains all its legal obligations for the statutory duties.

On 30 September 2015, the Council entered into a contract with the Trust governing the provision of services by the Trust. The Trust went 'live' on 1<sup>st</sup> October and staff were brought together on 5<sup>th</sup> October. The contract with the Trust sets out how the relationship between the Trust and the Council should operate in the best interests of securing high quality services for the most vulnerable children and young people in Slough.

#### (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA in relation to this report.

### 5 Background

5.1 The Trust was established following successive poor Ofsted reports on Slough's Children's Services. This is only the second such Trust in the country.

5.2 The Trust assumed responsibility for children's services on Thursday 1 October and launched a "Vision for the future of Children's Services" on Monday 5 October, the same day staff moved into the new accommodation in St Martins Place. Following the Trust's commissioning of a benchmarking audit by independent social care specialists an Improvement Plan was developed by SCST. Ofsted re-inspected in November 2015 when the Trust had only been in place for 7 weeks. Ofsted again found the services to be inadequate and the Council and Trust have jointly prepared an Improvement Plan. The Improvement Plan follows the themes already established as the Trust's Improvement themes:

- Improving Quality
- Improving Learning
- Improving Information
- Improving Workforce

- 5.2 The partnership between SBC and SCST is underpinned by a formal Service Delivery Contract (SDC), dated 30 September 2015 which includes, inter alia, schedules relating to: services in scope; Council responsibilities and dependencies; and performance framework.
- 5.3 Governance arrangements include scheduled Partnership Boards and a Joint Improvement Board. These forums provide an opportunity to exchange information and views in a collaborative way and in the context of the Trust's and the Council's progress in delivering on the Improvement Plan. At the time of drafting this report, a meeting of the Joint Improvement Board is scheduled for 17 October 2016.
- 5.4 The creation of a Head of Children's Partnerships (HoCP) post within SBC supports the partnership arrangement between SBC and the Trust. This post reports to the statutory post of Director of Children's Service (DCS) and was agreed amongst all stakeholders. The HoCP commenced in post on 26 September 2016. Members will also wish to know that a Head of Education Services post was recently created and filled. This post also reports to the statutory DCS. Overall, these appointments further underline the commitment of all parties to deliver joined-up sustainable improvements in outcomes at pace for Slough's residents across the *full remit* of Children's Services.

## 6 **Summary of First Year Progress (Separate Report to Follow)**

- 6.1 The Trust has prepared a report about its first year containing full information about successes and challenges which will provide Members with data and accompanying narrative. The Scrutiny Committee will receive a presentation summarising the key points from the Chief Executive of the Trust. This will create an opportunity for Members to debate and consider the outcomes of the Trust's establishment. Members will be provided with the Annual Report by the Trust prior to the meeting.

## 7 **Background Papers**

None.