

# SLOUGH JOINT DELIVERY PLAN Cover Sheet

Report to: Education & Children's  
Services Scrutiny Panel  
Date: 8 December 2016  
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## **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To outline the key actions that Slough Borough Council and Slough Children's Services Trust have taken, and will be taking, to deliver the improvements required in the services. This delivery plan has been approved by Ofsted, following the publication of Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in February 2016.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panel:
- a) note the progress being made to deliver the Joint Delivery Plan; and
  - b) consider the areas within the Joint Delivery Plan where Members require further information to assess impact of the improvements on children and young people in Slough.

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### **3 Background**

- 3.1 The four week inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers took place in November and December 2015. Services delivered by Slough Borough Council and the Slough Children's Services Trust were within the scope of the inspection.
- 3.2 The full Ofsted report was published on the 17 February 2016. The report found children's services in Slough to be 'inadequate'.
  - Services for children in need of help and protection – inadequate
  - Children looked after and achieving permanence – inadequate
  - Adoption performance – requires improvement
  - Experiences and progress of care leavers – inadequate
  - Leadership, management and governance – inadequate
- 3.3 Following the inspection report, the Council and the Trust collaborated to develop a joint delivery plan, focused on the Vision for Children's Services and the priorities for improvement demanded by the findings of the inspection.

### **4 Governance**

- 4.1 The Plan is a joint plan, with lead officers for activities identified from within both the Trust and council, and the two organisations are working together, along with partners, to deliver the improved services that our children and young people require and deserve.

4.2 In order to ensure that these improvements are taken forward and having a positive impact on the lives of our vulnerable children, the council and Trust have set up a Joint Improvement Board (terms of reference are attached as Appendix A) to oversee, and take ownership of, the activity to deliver the improvements required.

## 5 Joint Delivery Plan

5.1 The Joint Delivery Plan has been developed in line with four key themes:

- **Improving Quality** – improving the quality of social work and safeguarding practice in Slough
- **Improving Learning** – establishing a learning culture, ensuring knowledge is shared in order to improve practice and result in a continuous improvement
- **Improving Information** – improving the quality and availability of information for staff, partners and communities to underpin the other three themes of improvement
- **Improving Workforce** – ensuring there is a stable workforce and leadership team in place to deliver good outcomes for children and families and to drive the programme of change and culture of continuous improvement

5.2 The full Joint Delivery Plan is attached as Appendix B. The priorities for the first six months of the Delivery Plan have been improving the quality of practice, particularly in terms of the front door to ensure that the right children and young people are coming into the system and being supported.

5.3 Key activity has included:

- the introduction of a new social work model, Safe, Secure and Successful within the Trust;
- the establishment of the MASH;
- a strengthened response to those at risk of, or experiencing, child sexual exploitation;
- stabilising the workforce, with 80% of social workers located within the Hubs that have gone live being permanent. Ensuring a safe transition to the new social work model through the use of high quality agency staff, above establishment;
- appointing a permanent Virtual School Head and ensuring that 100% of Slough's looked after children have a Personal Education Plan;
- being selected as one of three local authority areas to be in the first cohort (involving 32 practitioners) of systemic training by the Centre for Social Work Practice;
- developing a suite of corporate parenting documents setting out our promises to our looked after children and care leavers, and the establishment of a new Joint Parenting Board to oversee the delivery of these promises; and

- working with our contractual partners to improve the quantity and quality of work experience, apprenticeships and other training opportunities for looked after children and care leavers.
- 5.4 Whilst completing the actions set out in the Joint Delivery Plan is important, it is vital that we understand the impact that they are having on the experiences of the borough's vulnerable children and young people. The Joint Improvement Board is setting up an Impact Programme to begin the process of gathering evidence to assess how the work that has been done impacts on the outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.5 Using evidence from performance data, audit (cases and themed), feedback from children and young people, foster carers, adopters, social workers, partners and the Ofsted monitoring visits, the Joint Improvement Board aims to build up a picture improvements being made.

## **6 Ofsted Monitoring Visits**

- 6.1 Ofsted are undertaking quarterly monitoring visits to local authorities that are judged to be inadequate as a result of an inspection. The purpose of the monitoring visits is to ensure continued progress is made against the Ofsted recommendations and to support ongoing improvement activity.
- 6.2 The first visit to Slough took place on 2-3 November 2016, focusing on our early response to risk within families, looking at the application of the threshold and how cases progress, including how well children at risk of CSE are assessed and help.
- 6.3 Ofsted will produce a letter as a result of the monitoring visit which will be a short two page summary of their visit. The letter will be published on 2 December 2016.

## **7 Role of Scrutiny**

- 7.1 The Impact Programme would benefit from constructive external scrutiny to ensure that the expected improvements in service provision are supporting better outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. This can be done through themed scrutiny reports looking at individual pieces of work within the overall Joint Delivery Plan, such as corporate parenting, housing, or CSE.

## **8 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The report sets out the key activity undertaken to date in order to deliver improvements in the services provided to Slough's vulnerable children and young people.

## **9 Appendices**

- A - Joint Improvement Board Terms of Reference
- B - Slough Ofsted Delivery Plan

## **10 Background Papers**

- 1 - Ofsted Report: Slough Borough Council. Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (4 November – 17 December 2015)