

Report to OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Getting to Good Children's Improvement Programme Update

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Purpose of the Report

This report will provide the Overview & Scrutiny Board with an update on the progress of Children's Services.

Ofsted Improvement Plan Update**1 Background**

- 1.1 Oldham Council has the highest ambitions for our children and young people. We want Oldham to be a place where children and young people thrive.
- 1.2 We have made significant strides to understand ourselves better and know that more needs to be done to deliver on our ambitions.
- 1.3 Senior Leaders in Children's Services are aware of the challenges and a clear plan of activity was developed in September 2018. This formed the development of the Structural Investment Plan and Transformation Programme for Children's Services that will be delivered throughout 2019 and 2020.
- 1.4 A new operating model for Children's Services was designed in October 2018 and submitted to Leadership for approval on the 3rd December 2018. Subsequently £12m of additional funding has been allocated to Children's Services between 2019-2021 to support the transformation journey for improvement.

2 OFSTED Inspection of Children's Services January 2019

- 2.1 Oldham Council's Social Services was inspected by OFSTED under the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) regime on Monday the 21st January 2019 until its completion on Friday 1st February 2019.
- 2.2 OFSTED published the inspection findings on Monday the 4th March 2019 and returned a judgement of "Requires Improvement to be Good" with six recommendations of improvement activity to which must be undertaken.
- 2.3 A requirement has been placed on Oldham Council to produce an Improvement Plan to detail the actions that meets the recommendations within 70 days of the inspection. The deadline for submission of the plan was the 11th June 2019.
- 2.4 OFSTED acknowledge the transformation of services in their judgment and the intended effects that the transformation activity will have on children in Oldham over the next three years.

3 Production of Children's Social Care Improvement Plan

- 3.1 Following the inspection in January 2019, Oldham Council Children's Social Care have developed an Improvement plan throughout April and May 2019.
- 3.2 The areas identified for improvement in the inspection are listed as follows;
 - The quality of assessments to effectively analyse risks and parents' capacity to meet children's needs.
 - Effective assessments of the needs of disabled children that lead to well-coordinated planning to meet their needs.
 - The quality of evidence gathering during child protection investigations.
 - The timeliness and effectiveness of pathway plans that lead to provision of effective support into independence.

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- The internal audit of practice to provide effective analysis of the impact on children.
 - Management oversight and practice leadership at all levels in the organisation to ensure that consistent, and good quality social work practice is in place.

3.3 The activities contained within the plan have been constructed to address the specified areas of improvement identified with named officers of responsibility, an update against progress and an overall delivery rating.

4. Summary

4.1 The Improvement Plan has been submitted to OFSTED in draft on Tuesday the 11th June 2019. The plan will remain in draft pending formal feedback from OFSTED confirming that the plan is fit for purpose.

4.2 The monitoring of progress against the activities contained within the Improvement Plan will formally commence once the plan has been approved. It should be noted that work has to continue to take place in advance of the plan being approved by Ofsted. Progress of the actions contained within the plan will be captured and monitored through the Children's Change Board that is chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive.

4.3 The Cabinet Member for Children's Services will scrutinise progress at the Getting to Good Portfolio Members Briefing with regular updates being provided to assure the Cabinet Member that sufficient progress is being made.

4.4 Overview and Scrutiny are asked to note the contents of the Improvement Plan and agree an update to the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting following feedback from OFSTED.

4.5 There remains a considerable amount of work to do in order to bring services to the standards consistent with a "Good" Authority however, the contents of the Improvement Plan and the activities of the Transformation Programme give Oldham the best opportunity to improve services and outcomes for children and families.