

## **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 11 SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **OFSTED INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORCESTERSHIRE**

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#### **Summary**

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families and the Director (Designate) Children's Social Care and Safeguarding have been invited to the meeting to provide an update on the outcome of the Ofsted Safeguarding Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services which took place in June 2019.

#### **Background**

2. On 24 January 2017, Ofsted published their report entitled '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'.

3. The overall judgement for Worcestershire was 'inadequate'. Following the Ofsted judgement, an eight-point Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed by Children, Families and Communities Leadership Team to cover all of the recommendations made by Ofsted.

4. As a result of this judgement, Ofsted put in place a series of Monitoring Visits to track the Council's progress. There have been seven such visits in May 2017, September 2017, January 2018, April 2018, July 2018, October 2018 and January 2019.

#### **Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services Worcestershire**

5. The full Ofsted re-inspection of Children's Social Care Services, carried out under the ILACS Framework (Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services), took place between 17 and 28 June 2019 and Ofsted's report was published on 29 July 2019. The full Ofsted report can be accessed [here](#).

6. The report recognises that considerable progress has been made in many areas of the service. It acknowledges that outcomes for many children and their families have improved and there is evidence of a 'sustained trajectory of improvement'. The judgement from Ofsted is that all service areas require improvement to be good. Further details of Ofsted's findings are given in the presentation slides attached as Appendix 1.

#### **Next Steps**

7. Following our "Requires Improvement to be Good" judgement it is important we make the cultural shift with staff and partners into our next phase of service delivery. In this phase we will focus on sustaining the progress made thus far, ensuring we

have consistency in our recognised good practice and in continuing to develop and improve services as a “Continuous Learning” service.

8. Our aims and objectives are set out in the Worcestershire Children First Service Business Plan (see Cabinet Papers 5 September 2019 for full plan) and cascaded into directorate and service area based plans. Our plans will take into account the findings of the June 2019 inspection, the key priorities transferring from the previous service improvement plan and each service area will have in place a quality assurance programme to manage and monitor continuous improvement and evidence impact and outcomes for children and families.

9. From 1 October 2019, Worcestershire Children First will be accountable for delivering continuous improvement. The Quality Assurance and Monitoring arrangements for the company are set out in the WCF Business Plan. Our framework will continue to be based on three core principles:

- A continuous focus on service improvement at all levels of the organisation.
- Embed a culture of learning from quality assurance and performance management.
- Know the difference we are making to the lives of Children and Young People.

10. Monitoring of performance and progress will take place through the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). A number of KPIs will be monitored covering all service areas of the Company reflected in the Services Specification including social care, early help and education. These will be monitored monthly, quarterly or annually as set out against each Key Performance Indicator and set out against any future or amended Key Performance Indicators. KPIs will be reviewed jointly by the Council and the Company as part of the Annual Review.

## **Purpose of the Meeting**

11. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

- note the information in the report and Appendix 1;
- determine whether it would wish to carry out any further scrutiny; and
- agree whether it would wish to make any comments to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families

## **Supporting Information**

- Appendix 1 – Presentation Slides Ofsted Inspection of Children’s Services Worcestershire

## **Contact Points**

Specific Contact Points for this report

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children, Families and Communities) the following background papers relate to the subject matter of this report:

Agendas and minutes of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 August 2017, 24 October 2017, 22 March 2018, 16 May 2018, 14 September 2018, 16 November 2018 and 6 March 2019

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)