

From: Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services
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To: Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee – 5 July 2016

Subject: **ACTION PLANS ARISING FROM OFSTED INSPECTIONS**

Classification: Unrestricted

Previous Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: All

<p>Summary: This report provides the Committee with an update on key themes and lessons learned from the Ofsted findings regarding other local authorities. It also builds on previous reports on the subject of the continued development of existing practice and services, as well as our internal preparation activity.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee is asked to CONSIDER AND COMMENT ON the content of the report.</p>
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the twelfth regular report to Cabinet Committee on progress made in improving practice and developing services provided to children and young people in Kent. The last report of this nature, was in December 2015, and outlined progress to that date.
- 1.2. Since 2012, KCC Specialist Children's Services have undergone five Ofsted inspections:
- Fostering Services – published report 31 July 2012 (*adequate*);
 - Children in need of help and protection (Safeguarding) – published report 15 January 2013 (*adequate*);
 - Adoption support services – published report 18 June 2013 (*adequate*);
 - Children in Care / Care Leavers – published report 23 August 2013 (*adequate*);
 - Thematic inspection of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) – joint national report on the findings of eight thematic inspections, published November 2014;

2. When will Kent be inspected?

- 2.1 The Single Inspection Framework (SIF) was launched in 2014. At the end of May 2016, 104 local authorities have had their SIF. This leaves 48 authorities (including Kent County Council) to be inspected. Ofsted have committed to assessing each local authority under the Single Inspection Framework by December 2017.
- 2.2 The SIF is not the only inspection framework currently looking at the effectiveness of care and support for children and young people. Ofsted has been collaboratively working with the regulators for partner agencies: Care Quality Commission (Health services and Adult Social Care), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (Police) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (Probation and Community Rehabilitation Companies). The Joint Targeted Area Inspections bring together all four inspectorates to identify how a partnership, as a whole is identifying and protecting vulnerable children and young people. As Ofsted's National Director for Social Care, Eleanor Schooling, noted "The responsibility of safeguarding cannot rest with one agency alone."
- 2.3 Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAs) were launched in January 2016. These shorter, one-week inspections, drill down on a specific theme and highlight good practice as well as areas for improvement. The current area of focus for the JTAs looks at the multi-agency response to tackling CSE and children going missing from home, school or education. The inspections assess processes and responsiveness of staff at all levels. From a practitioner perspective, regulators will look to see how children and young people are identified, tracked, assessed and the potential risks investigated. On a broader level, the multi-agency inspection will evaluate how the leadership and management prioritise awareness and training, and are able to analysis patterns of behaviour, therapeutic needs, and disrupt perpetrator's activity.
- 2.4 Additionally, the JTAI framework seeks to understand "whether local elected members scrutinise and challenge services and the impact of this [challenge] on practice."
- 2.5 Between February and August 2016, the inspectorates have committed to visiting six areas. At the end of May 2016, South Tyneside, Oxfordshire and Central Bedfordshire have been visited and their reports published. The JTAs do not give an overall judgement like the SIFs do; they instead focus on a narrative of partnership effectiveness.
- 2.6 There is also a third assessment framework. A joint venture between the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted, a programme of inspection was launched in April 2016 looking at local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This will evaluate the contribution of health, education and social care services to supporting children and young people.
- 2.7 From a corporate parenting perspective, Inspectors will pay particular attention to children and young people whose specific circumstances require additional consideration; for example, children in care and young adults leaving care with

learning needs and/ or disabilities; or who will require a supported transition to Adult Social Care.

- 2.8 The SEND inspection framework was piloted over 2015 with five local authorities. Ofsted invited Kent to participate in the pilot inspections in developing the new inspection framework. To this end, in May 2015, a fieldwork team of Her Majesty's Inspectors (CQC and Ofsted inspectors) visited Early Years settings, schools and colleges as well as hosting a webinar for parents. Pilots did not result in published findings; but feedback was given by the Lead Inspector to local authority senior managers. Kent's pilot findings were positive overall, with Kent's SEND Strategy and Parent Carer Forum highlighted as particularly strengths.
- 2.9. Since the framework was launched in April 2016, Ofsted and CQC have committed to undertaking at least eight SEND local area inspections before the 2016 school summer holidays. Whilst there is no surety as to when Kent County Council will receive their SEND inspection, this authority was one of the programme's pilot authorities. Since the April launch of the SEND framework, it is known Brighton and Hove were visited by Ofsted and CQC in May 2016. Over the next five years however, all local areas will be inspected at least once.

3. What makes a local authority "Outstanding"?

- 3.1 Under the Single Inspection Framework (SIF), the majority of local authorities continue to be found by Ofsted to be "Requiring Improvement". For the first time, in March 2016, two local authorities were found to be "Outstanding". The tri-borough consisting of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham were inspected at the same time, but were three separate inspections. Westminster and Kensington, and Chelsea were found to be "Outstanding", with Hammersmith and Fulham achieving an overall effectiveness of "Good". Mike Sheridan, Ofsted's Regional Director for London has urged all local authorities to learn from their example.
- 3.2 In the endeavour of being a learning organisation, findings from the three, tri-borough inspections were one of the topics explored within the April 2016 Early Help and Preventative Services (EH&PS) and Specialist Children's Services (SCS) joint Deep Dive.
- 3.3 For an authority to achieve an overall effectiveness of 'Outstanding', it must achieve 'Outstanding' in three or more of the five domains:
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection;
 - The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence;
 - Adoption performance;
 - The experiences and progress of care leavers;
 - Leadership, management and governance;
- 3.3.1 There is no statutory requirement to carry out a Local Safeguarding Children Board inspection; however a review of performance is permitted under s.15A *Children Act 2004*.

- 3.4 For background, in 2015, the Tri-borough was awarded £4 million from the Department for Education Innovation Programme and named one of the government's Partners in Practice (flagship authorities). 'Partners in Practice' is seeing the Tri-borough be given more freedom over how children's services are run. An element of this has included the three authorities sharing usage of a 'Focus on Practice' initiative, which Inspectors across the board were positive about. 'Focus on Practice' involves a mixture of intensive, accredited training, and a range of models of practice. "Dual teams" include clinical psychologists and family therapists embedded with social work teams. They offer a consultancy role, alongside social workers specialising in CSE, domestic abuse and children's mental health. The consultancy element was found to be effectively extended to co-working complex cases.
- 3.5 There was a clear benefit to the tri-borough's multi-disciplinary teams of wide-ranging expertise at all thresholds of need; extending from Early Help to leaving care services. From a preventative perspective, the tri-borough's Early Help services usage of qualified social workers had led to significant reductions in "step-ups" and re-referrals to statutory Specialist Children's Services.
- 3.6 Another common theme was the co-location of mutually supportive services. Early Help teams were, for instance, in the same offices as Child In Need and Child Protection practitioners, supporting a shared understanding of thresholds and collaborative working. This was echoed for Children in Care, where the Virtual School and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services were colocated with social workers, facilitating decisive and responsive interventions. This "exemplary" amalgamation achieved not just consistency of good practice, but also substantial savings from the flexible deployment of resources.
- 3.7 It was repeatedly emphasised that "Management oversight is a clear strength". Inspectors saw evidence of oversight and planning in relation to the most complex and challenging cases from all tiers of management, up to and including director-level input. This was described by Inspectors as an "exemplary working culture". Similarly, elected Members were praised for their scrutiny role and "challenging questions on service delivery that hold officers appropriately to account".

4. Learning and quality assurance to support assessment preparedness and service development in Kent

- 4.1 The enhanced Deep Dive process was launched in early 2016. It builds on the existing monthly audit programme to include face-to-face discussions with social workers. Each month, 70 children and young people's experiences are electronically selected for peer review. This involves an audit against the child's electronic (Liberi) file. Cases are peer-reviewed by randomly selected management at all tiers, from team managers, up to and including the Corporate Director. From that initial 70, 7 (10%) are selected for an enhanced face-to-face audit and evaluation.
- 4.2 Enhanced audit allows for a more holistic understanding of a child or young person's experience and the social worker's direct work, beyond the electronic case record. It also increases senior manager's knowledge about the successes of, as well as challenges for, front-line practitioners.

- 4.3 This model has been translated over to the Deep Dive progress. As of January 2016, there is an enhanced element to the Deep Dives, which focuses on cases and interviews with practitioners about their experience. An evaluation is then drawn up to focus discussion on areas for improvement, as well as share learning on areas of good practice.
- 4.4 The first Joint EH&PS and SCS Deep Dive examined the effectiveness of the Children and Young People's Step-down Panel process, an output of the 0 – 25 Transformation Programme. The enhanced element of the Deep Dive sampled twelve cases and considered the strengths or otherwise of the transitions between services, including threshold application. The Deep Dive enhanced element, gives the Social Care Health and Wellbeing Corporate Director additional opportunities to directly oversee work with vulnerable children and young people. Similarly, it allows senior management to assess how the Signs of Safety practice model is being implemented and integrated, both internally and with partner agencies.
- 4.5 With six JTAI inspections (CSE and children missing from home, care or education) expected before summer 2016, there is no certainty Kent agencies will be selected to be assessed under this framework. There is no complacency however, and the Kent partnership has embraced the release of this framework as a learning opportunity.
- 4.6 As part of the local authority, Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) and local partnership's inspection readiness, there have been two multi-agency meetings exploring the JTAI framework and requirements. The outcomes of these efforts is a developing 'Annex A' of strategic documentation and performance data from all agencies. This portfolio highlights the local area's extensive efforts, notably such work as a recent [multi-agency Deep Dive by KSCB](#), which looked at "Exploring links to Child Sexual Exploitation for children who have repeat missing episodes"; alongside the [Operation Willow](#) campaign and multi-agency Children's Sexual Exploitation Team (CSET).
- 4.7 In addition, a multi-agency case evaluation took place in late June and was run in accordance with the JTAI framework and inspection timetable. Each agency brought their anonymised information on a child or young person and there was a collective evaluation of agencies' work together to identify, protect and support a child at risk of harm. The findings are being drawn together into an overarching joint commentary.
- 4.8 Briefings on a range of key service issues are regularly disseminated to front-line staff, from the SCS Service Manager for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. These are designed to enable learning and understanding on topics such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Kent's values and Prevent (protecting children from radicalisation).

5. Suggested areas for Member's further consideration

- 5.1 In order to ensure Members are kept well informed of current work, an All Member's Briefing on 21 June 2016 will focus specifically at the topic of Child Sexual Exploitation and efforts to tackle this in Kent. This is supplemented by increased engagement with local member's briefings e.g. for Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 It is unknown when exactly Kent will receive their inspection, but it will likely be in the next nine months. There are no inspections scheduled during August 2016. There are earmarked members of staff with specific roles and responsibilities in the event of the inspection call; and the Annex A data and document set is regularly reviewed and quality assured.
- 6.2 The expectations of what 'Good' Children's Services should deliver (Single Inspection Framework [Annex M](#); alongside statutory responsibilities) drive business as usual decisions and quality assurance activity. There is a strong chain of feedback up and down the organisation, and visible leadership. The Director and Assistant Directors regularly meet with front-line staff, via roadshows, team meetings, Access to Resources Panels, visits to district offices and whole county service manager meetings. Knowledge of the service's strengths and areas requiring improvement is further enriched by daily, team-specific performance data (Team Operational Dashboard/ TOD). There is furthermore a robust programme of audit, both by practitioners within the Directorate, externally through the KSCB and Corporately by the Internal Audit team.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee is asked to CONSIDER and COMMENT ON the content of the report.
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8. Background Documents

None

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