

Report Title:	Progress update on the outcome of the reviews of Achieving for Children and Optalis delivery arrangements
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health
Meeting and Date:	Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 9 June 2021
Responsible Officer(s):	Hilary Hall, Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing Lynne Lidster, Head of Commissioning - People
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

As part of the budget setting process for 2020-2021, it was recommended that the arrangements that the Royal Borough has through Achieving for Children and Optalis for the delivery of children's and adult services respectively should be reviewed to ensure that they were fit for purpose. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) was commissioned in April 2020 to undertake the review. The aim of the review was to understand whether the current arrangements, which have been in place since 2017, were still the appropriate models to deliver the Council's ongoing strategic transformation objectives for adult and children's services.

Both reports were presented to Cabinet in July 2020; Cabinet accepted the recommendations in both reports and recommended that the actions be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Following the Cabinet decision, action plans were developed in partnership with Achieving for Children and Optalis, to implement the recommendations (Appendices 1 and 2).

All the actions are either completed or have made substantial progress for completion by September 2021.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Adults, Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the report and:

- i) Notes the progress made to implement the recommendations made by Cipfa following the reviews undertaken of Achieving for Children and Optalis in 2020.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Note the progress made to implement the recommendations following the Cipfa reviews of Achieving for Children and Optalis This is the recommended option	This is the recommended option to ensure the recommendations in the reports are implemented.
Do nothing	This is not recommended as the Overview and Scrutiny Panel has been asked to note the progress on the action plans in order to ensure the recommendations are implemented.

- 2.1 As part of the budget setting process for 2020-2021, it was recommended that the arrangements that the Royal Borough has through Achieving for Children and Optalis for the delivery of children's and adult services respectively should be reviewed to ensure that they were fit for purpose. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) was commissioned in April 2020 to undertake the review. The aim of the review was to understand whether the current arrangements, which have been in place since 2017, were still the appropriate models to deliver the Council's ongoing strategic transformation objectives for adult and children's services.
- 2.2 Both reports were presented to Cabinet in July 2020; Cabinet accepted the recommendations in both reports and recommended that the actions be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Following the Cabinet decision, action plans were developed in partnership with Achieving for Children and Optalis, to implement the recommendations (Appendices 1 and 2).
- 2.3 Appendices 1 and 2 show that all the actions are either completed or substantially underway, with completion of all outstanding actions scheduled by September 2021. In relation to both companies, a review of the capacity and skills in the Royal Borough's finance team has been undertaken and a new structure is in development. Similarly, additional capacity in the strategic commissioning service was agreed in the 2021-2022 budget and a new structure there is also in development.
- 2.4 Specifically, in relation to Achieving for Children, improvements have been implemented in terms of:
- A shared understanding of the costs of children's services between the Royal Borough and Achieving for Children.
 - Approval of Achieving for Children's business plan and Medium Term Financial Plan by Cabinet, with approval of the Sufficiency Strategy in June 2021.
 - Development a new data pack (management information including finance).

- 2.5 In relation to Optalis, a business plan through to 2023 has been agreed and work with Wokingham Borough Council on a revised shareholder agreement is progressing well. Optalis is a key player in the adult social care transformation programme, specifically leading on the review of the “front door” and the reconfiguration of the Short Terms support and Reablement Service.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Delivery of Achieving for Children and Optalis action plans	Action plan not achieved	100% of actions completed	n/a	n/a	September 2021

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
Failure to deliver the action plans	MEDIUM	Robust management and monitoring through Commissioning Board and Overview and Scrutiny Panel	LOW

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- a. Equalities. The recommendation in this report does not change the existing Equality Impact Assessments undertaken at the time the two companies were established.
- b. Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate / environmental impacts associated with these proposals.

- c. Data Protection/GDPR. No personal data is being processed and a Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A number of interviews with representatives of the Royal Borough, Optalis and Achieving for Children were undertaken by CIPFA as part of the reviews. The final reports were taken to Cabinet and shared with the respective joint owning councils – Wokingham Borough Council (Optalis); Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames and London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (Achieving for Children).

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
September 2021	Completion of all remaining actions in the action plans

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by two appendices:
- RBWM AfC action plan updated May 2021
 - RBWM Optalis action plan updated May 2021

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 This report is supported by one background document:
- Cabinet report: Outcome of review of Achieving for Children and Optalis delivery arrangements, July 2020 [Microsoft Word - Cab rpt CIPFA Optalis AFC reviews 03.07.20.docx \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Hilary Hall	Executive Director of Adults, Health and Housing	27/05/21	28/05/21

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
N/A	N/A	N/A

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