

Report for: INFORMATION



<b>Contains Confidential or Exempt Information</b>	NO - Part I
<b>Title</b>	Ofsted Improvement Plan – progress update
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Alison Alexander, Managing Director/Strategic Director Adults, Children and Health Services
<b>Contact officer, job title and phone number</b>	Hilary Hall, Head of Commissioning Adults, Children and Health
<b>Member reporting</b>	Cllr Natasha Airey, Lead Member Youth Services and Safeguarding Cllr L Targowska, Deputy Lead Member Ofsted and Corporate Parenting
<b>For Consideration By</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date to be Considered</b>	26 May 2016
<b>Implementation Date if Not Called In</b>	Immediately
<b>Affected Wards</b>	All

## REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update on progress against the Ofsted Improvement Plan implemented in Children's Services following the Ofsted inspection, March 2015. The inspection of services judged the Council's overall effectiveness as Requires Improvement, with recognition of the significant progress over the last two years and support of the anticipated trajectory of improvement.
2. Ofsted made 16 recommendations for improvement and the Royal Borough subsequently developed an Improvement Plan to address these recommendations. This report confirms that all actions in the Improvement Plan have been completed and all 16 of the recommendations have been addressed.
3. The Royal Borough is committed to securing a Good or Outstanding Children's Services and therefore the Phase 2 Improvement Plan is currently under development, taking account of other authorities' recent inspection reports, most notably those rated Outstanding, Westminster and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. This report provides an overview of the themes of that Phase 2 Improvement Plan.

<b>If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit?</b>	
<b>Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit</b>	<b>Dates by which residents can expect to notice a difference</b>
1. Families will receive consistently high quality safeguarding services, whether early help or specialist, that meet their needs, prevent those needs escalating and support residents to become economically independent, active citizens.	Ongoing

## 1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet:

- i. **Notes the completion of the Ofsted Improvement Plan in respect of the 16 recommendations from the March 2015 inspection, published in May 2015.**
- ii. **Notes that the safeguarding peer review will now be undertaken through the Local Government Association in December 2016.**
- iii. **Requests the Managing Director/Strategic Director Adults, Children and Health Services provides Cabinet with a progress report against the Phase 2 Improvement Plan in January 2017, alongside the outcome of the Local Government Association safeguarding peer review.**

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

### Inspection 2015

- 2.1 The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Children's Services was inspected by Ofsted between 3 and 25 March 2015. The inspection was unannounced and covered services for children in need of help and protection, including early help, children in care and young people leaving care. In the inspection report published on 13 May 2015, the Borough was judged as Requiring Improvement, see box 1.

### **Box 1: Ofsted judgements, May 2015**

#### **The overall judgement is that children's services require improvement**

The authority is not yet delivering good protection and help and care for children, young people and families. It is Ofsted's expectation that, as a minimum, all children and young people receive good help, care and protection

The judgements on areas of the service that contribute to overall effectiveness are:

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Children who need help and protection</b>     | <b>Requires Improvement</b> |
| <b>2. Children in care and achieving permanence</b> | <b>Requires Improvement</b> |
| a. Adoption performance                             | <b>Requires Improvement</b> |
| b. Experiences and progress of care leavers         | <b>Requires Improvement</b> |
| <b>3. Leadership, management and governance</b>     | <b>Requires Improvement</b> |

2.2 Unlike previous inspection frameworks, the current one makes no judgement as to capacity for improvement. However, in response to the Lead Member's question at the feedback session, Ofsted confirmed that the Council was making positive progress and should continue with its current plan. As at 16 April 2016, 90 local authorities have been inspected under this framework:

- 2 have been judged Outstanding, 2.2%.
- 21 have been judged Good, 23.3%.
- 44 have been judged Requires Improvement, 48.9%.
- 23 have been judged Inadequate, 25.6%.

### **Improvement Plan 2015-2016**

2.3 Ofsted identified 16 recommendations on which they advised the Council to take action. The actions could mainly be owned by the local authority but some required the active engagement of partners, including Thames Valley Police. The actions identified in the Improvement Plan in respect of the 16 recommendations have been completed, see Appendix 1. It should be noted that some of the actions are marked as completed in 2015-2016 but will be ongoing as part of business as usual.

2.4 Actions implemented through the Improvement Plan to strengthen safeguarding services delivered to children, young people and their families in the Royal Borough include:

- Substantial updating of procedures in relation to children in need, private fostering, 16/17 year old homeless young people and return interviews for missing young people, underpinned by systematic training across the workforce.
- Development of practice guidance around permanence options and case recording, underpinned by training for the whole workforce.
- Membership and referral rates to MARAC systematically reviewed and robust action plan in place.
- Targeted campaigns around raising awareness of private fostering and recruitment for foster carers, particularly for older young people.
- Improved data systems to collect information on children missing education, receiving alternative provision and electively home educated.
- Key processes, including Core Groups and pathway planning, strengthened and training provided for the workforce.
- Comprehensive development programme for front line managers delivered and underpinned by appraisal.
- Strengthened role of the Corporate Parenting Forum, including the involvement of young people.
- Further development of the Children in Care Council, Kickback, focusing on the involvement of younger children in care.

2.5 Appendix 1 sets out where ongoing compliance in respect of certain actions will continue to be monitored, for example, through the Performance Quality Assurance Group, the monthly case audit programme or sub-groups of the Windsor and Maidenhead Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Phase 2 Improvement Plan**

- 2.6 The Royal Borough is committed to securing a judgement of Good or Outstanding for its Children's Services. Children's Services has always sought to identify and implement best practice from other local authorities to strengthen the services it delivers to residents. In March 2016, two local authorities were judged Outstanding by Ofsted – Westminster and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea – and the Royal Borough has used the learning from their inspection reports to inform the development of its Phase 2 Improvement Plan, see box 2 for particular strengths identified in these inspection reports.

**Box 2: Key strengths of Westminster and Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Children's Services**

- “Services to help and protect children are good because thresholds for accessing an outstanding early-help offer and for receiving help from social workers are understood and applied well by the multi-agency partnership.”
- “Rigorous performance management means that senior leaders are extremely knowledgeable about the performance of services provided to children.”
- “A dedicated and highly coherent model of commissioning ensures that children and families in Westminster are offered extensive, holistic early help, and targeted and specialist services.”
- “Young people at risk of child sexual exploitation receive excellent support, which is delivered with great sensitivity and persistence by dedicated professionals. Robust monitoring and understanding of children missing is driven assertively and confidently by a missing children coordinator.”
- “Services for children looked after or those requiring adoption are outstanding. The local authority is a highly ambitious corporate parent.”
- “Children and young people at risk of radicalisation, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based violence are protected through a range of excellent initiatives.”
- “Excellent workforce planning means that the tri-borough partnership has a very stable and experienced workforce, and this enhances consistency and quality of service.”

- 2.7 Based on this analysis and the learning from the 2015-2016 Improvement Plan, the Phase 2 plan is shaped around eight key themes, see Appendix 2 for more detail. The detail of the plan is currently being developed and will be signed off by the Lead and Deputy Lead Members in mid May.

- Integration of Early Help Hub and early help processes, including Children's Centres.
- Missing/child sexual exploitation and other emerging risks, including radicalisation.
- Recruitment and retention of staff, including a talent programme.
- Corporate parenting.
- Education improvements for those eligible for free school meals.
- Alternative provision offer.
- Quality assurance and performance management.
- Commissioning.

- 2.8 In September 2015, Cabinet noted that, in order to secure an external assessment of progress, the Council had commissioned the Local Government Association to carry out a safeguarding peer review in March 2016. However, a key element of the process would be a review of the operation of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding

Hub (MASH). Given that the MASH went live in January 2016 and requires at least six months to embed, it was agreed, with the Lead Member, to postpone the review to December 2016.

- 2.9 Whilst not an inspection, the review will provide an objective external assessment against a validated benchmark and methodology. The team will comprise an elected member, director of children’s services and senior managers from other authorities, together with health and police representation. A specific request has been made to the Local Government Association to secure peers from authorities that are Good or Outstanding.

Option	Comments
<p>The local authority actively works with its partners to secure Good or Outstanding children’s services through delivery of the Phase 2 Improvement Plan and continues to secure continuous improvement in its safeguarding services.</p> <p><b>Recommended</b></p>	<p>The local authority, with its partners, delivers in full the Phase 2 Improvement Plan and continues to secure continuous improvement in its safeguarding services; in doing so, it complies with its statutory responsibilities to keep children and young people safe.</p>
<p>The local authority does not seek continuous improvement in its safeguarding services.</p>	<p>Failure to secure ongoing improvement in services for children, young people and families in the Royal Borough could result in the local authority failing in its statutory responsibilities to keep children and young people safe.</p>

## 1. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
<p>Percentage of actions achieved in the Phase 2 Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Below 100%</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>100% by January 2017</p>	<p>100% by December 2016</p>	<p>31 March 2017</p>
<p>Rating secured within December 2016 safeguarding peer review</p>	<p>Below Good (or equivalent)</p>	<p>Good (or equivalent)</p>	<p>Outstanding (or equivalent)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>September 2016</p>

## **4. FINANCIAL DETAILS**

### **Financial impact on the budget**

- 4.1 No additional budget is being sought to deliver the Phase 2 Improvement Plan. All the work undertaken is within the base budget of Children's Services. The cost of the September 2016 safeguarding peer review will be subsidised 50% by the Local Government Association, giving a total cost to the authority of £10k which is budgeted for.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The statutory framework for the local authority to deliver services for children in need of help and protection, children in care and young people leaving care includes:
- Children Act 1989.
  - Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.
  - Adoption and Children Act 2002.
  - Children Act 2004.
  - Working Together 2015 (statutory guidance).
- 5.2 The report sets out in detail the progress that has been made in relation to each of the 16 action points that were identified in the Ofsted report. It further sets out the themes of the Phase 2 Improvement Plan.
- 5.3 From a legal perspective, there are no concerns with the content of the report. It makes clear that the Authority has actively sought to address the issues identified in the Ofsted inspection. It highlights that there has been improvement in the areas identified and that there are mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of compliance. The fact that an external peer review is going ahead, even though not mandatory, highlights the drive to make such improvements to address the issues identified by Ofsted. This makes it clear that the local authority is seeking to ensure that it properly complies with its legal obligations regarding its duties towards children in need of help and protection, children in care and young people leaving care, and that it is striving to do this to a high standard, rather than only meeting the minimum requirements. Failure to make such changes could lead to potential risks to vulnerable children and young people in need, and a failure of the local authority to comply with its legal obligations.

## **6. VALUE FOR MONEY**

- 6.1 Investment in services to help and protect children, young people and their families should ensure that their needs are met at the appropriate time with the right service and prevent escalation of those needs to more expensive services.

## **7. SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT APPRAISAL**

- 7.1 None

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The local authority does not deliver the actions identified in the Phase 2 Improvement Plan.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monthly monitoring by Deputy Lead Member and Directorate Management Team.</li><li>• Quarterly monitoring by Lead Member, Corporate Parenting Forum and Cabinet.</li></ul>	Low
Despite delivering the actions identified in the Phase 2 Improvement Plan, the local authority fails to achieve an improved rating.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Systematic quality assurance and audit activity to ensure that actions are sustained and embedded.</li><li>• Robust remedial action identified and implemented in a timely way by senior managers</li></ul>	Low

## 9. LINKS TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

9.1 Working with partners to safeguard children and young people predominantly links to the Strategic Objectives around Residents First and Delivering Together. Specifically, it:

- Supports Children and Young People.
- Encourages Healthy People and Lifestyles.
- Works for safer and stronger communities.
- Strengthens Partnerships.

## 10. EQUALITIES, HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY COHESION

10.1 Effective safeguarding will contribute to eliminating discrimination and victimisation of vulnerable children and young people within the community.

## 11. STAFFING/WORKFORCE AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

## 12. PROPERTY AND ASSETS

12.1 None.

### 13. ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None.

### 14. CONSULTATION

14.1 Comments on the report and the outline Phase 2 Improvement Plan have been provided by the Deputy Lead Member.

14.2 A presentation on the draft content of the report was considered by Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 19 April 2016. The Panel asked that the local authority benchmarked the actions in the Phase 2 Improvement Plan with the outcome of the inspections of local authorities rated Outstanding.

### 15. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Date	Details
5-9 December 2016	Local Government Association safeguarding peer review
31 March 2017	Delivery of the Phase 2 Improvement Plan

### 16. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – 2015-2016 Improvement Plan monitoring report. (available electronically)
- Appendix 2 – Outline Phase 2 Improvement Plan. (available electronically)

### 17. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Cabinet report, 25 September 2015

### 18. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
<b>Internal</b>				
Cllr Burbage	Leader of the Council			
Cllr N Airey	Lead Member	22/4/16		
Cllr L Targowska	Deputy Lead Member	21/4/16	24/4/16	
Russell O'Keefe	Strategic Director Corporate and Community Services	22/4/16		
Alison Alexander	Managing Director/	21/4/16		



<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Post held and Department</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date received</b>	<b>See comments in paragraph:</b>
	Strategic Director Adults, Children and Health			
Simon Fletcher	Strategic Director Operations and Customer Services	22/4/16		
Edmund Bradley	Finance Partner	22/4/16		
Chris Targowski	Cabinet Policy Manager	22/4/16		
Terry Baldwin	Head of HR	22/4/16		
Shared Legal Solutions		22/4/16		
<b>External</b>				

## REPORT HISTORY

<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Urgency item?</b>
For information	No

<b>Full name of report author</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Full contact no:</b>
Hilary Hall	Head of Commissioning Adults, Children and Health	01628 683893