

Supplement to the agenda for

Cabinet

Thursday 15 December 2022

2.30 pm

**Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4
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	Pages
7. CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN	
Scrutiny recommendations and draft executive response	3 - 8

Title of report: Children's Improvement Action Plan

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 15 December 2022

Report by: Cabinet member children and families.

Supplementary information

The Herefordshire Children's Services Improvement Action Plan was reviewed by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 13 December. The committee resolved to make three recommendations to Cabinet. These recommendations and the proposed responses from the Cabinet are set out in the attached table, which forms Appendix 1 to this supplement.

The committee also resolved to share with cabinet some responses from a Primary School teacher on the new Improvement Plan, as submitted by one of the committee's co-opted members. This is attached in Appendix 2.

The recommendations in the report are amended to:

Recommendation(s)

- (a) That the Executive Response to the scrutiny recommendations on Children's Services Improvement Action Plan (at Appendix 1), made by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 13 December 2022, be agreed;**
- (b) Cabinet endorse the Improvement Action Plan outlined in Appendix A; and**
- (c) Cabinet authorise the Corporate Director for Children and Young People in consultation with the council's Corporate Leadership Team to submit the action plan to Ofsted no later than 20 December 2022.**

Executive Response to the Recommendations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the Children Services Improvement Action Plan

On 13th December 2022 the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, having considered the Children Services Improvement Action Plan made three recommendations to Cabinet.

Executive Response	<p>Cabinet appreciates the consideration that the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee have given to this important topic and in the development of these recommendations.</p> <p>Cabinet agree that the recommendations be carried forward and delegate responsibility for this to the Corporate Director for Children and Young. Progress against the plan overall will be monitored by the Improvement Board and Cabinet and be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee.</p>
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Recommendation 1	That trauma awareness training for all relevant persons including council staff and members be included in the Children Services Improvement Action Plan and that this be signposted to the relevant staff at the appropriate times.
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Executive Decision	Agreed
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Actions	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
That the detailed activity of the delivery plan for workforce development be amended to state that trauma awareness training for all relevant persons including council staff and member of the council is included in the learning and development offer and that this be signposted to the relevant staff at the appropriate times.	Service Director (Improvement)	End of January 2023	The proposed learning and development offer for 2023-24 includes trauma awareness training	

Recommendation 2	That the targeted action to develop and launch a Family Group Conference model be targeted for implementation by April 2023, rather than "asap thereafter" as currently stated.			
Executive Decision	Agreed			
Actions	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
That the Children Services Improvement Action Plan targeted action to develop and launch a Family Group Conference model be amended to state this as targeted for implementation by April 2023, rather than "asap thereafter" as currently stated.	Service Director (Improvement)	20 December 2022	The Improvement Plan as submitted to Ofsted reflects the agreed amendment.	

Recommendation 3	That families are properly advised on the right information and advice and support on Public Law Outline (PLO) meetings and pre-court proceedings.			
Executive Decision	Agreed			
Actions	Owner	By when	Target / success criteria	Progress
That the Children Services Improvement Action Plan be amended to state that families are properly advised on the right information and advice and support on Public Law Outline (PLO) meetings and pre-court proceedings.	Service Director (Improvement)	20 December 2022	The Improvement Plan as submitted to Ofsted reflects the agreed amendment	

Written Submissions to the Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 13th December 2022 in consideration of the Herefordshire Children's Services Improvement Plan.

Primary Head comments on the Improvement Plan

Comments from a (Primary) Head Teacher

1.3 There is a disconnect where, if families may already have had Vennture, Early Help, CIN, CP, they are then not able to access a 'lesser' degree of support. There is a risk of families falling into/not being able to be supported by any category if they have already been involved in a different one.

3.00/3.6 Ann Marie Kemp leaving MASH leaves a hole for schools. She was respected and trusted and understood education. Schools are concerned about who will replace her when the Education lead, whilst good, is based far away so doesn't have local knowledge. How can this be mitigated?

4.3/5.4 Voice of the child not of the parent. When social care are supporting parents sometimes children's voices are not prioritised. This remains a concern amongst heads.

7.3 One family has waited over 2 years for this support (life story work) to be organised and implemented effectively. This means the child is constantly re-traumatised having to tell her story to, so far, 9 social workers. This concern has been shared at every PEP/LAC meeting we have attended since 2020.

10 There is a lack of confidence amongst head teachers with regard to SEND. We are concerned about capacity, lack of availability of places in specialist settings and lack of flexibility within the graduated approach where a child does not fit that system. There are huge pressures on staffing at all levels within the team which means that excellent staff are overloaded and we will lose them eg one social inclusion officer for the whole of Herefordshire.

10.1-10.6 are about paperwork and planning. Do the strategies that sit within them include increasing staffing? Provision for increased ASD places in Herefordshire? Provision for increased SEMH places? We are at a critical point now where there are no primary SEMH places in this county. The measures noted in this area don't mention these concerns. Perhaps they sit within the plans? If not I think they have to be. Timelines only work if there are options in order to meet children's needs at the end of them.

There is huge resource being put into social care which I understand. However, we are walking into a crisis with SEND. What additional resources have been given in order to meet our rapidly changing landscape? Crisis is a strong word but all heads I talk to about this would agree.

