

PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

CABINET

22ND FEBRUARY, 2007

Wards Affected

Countywide.

Purpose

To continue the routine reporting on the improvement in outcomes and performance management.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT progress and remedial work in relation to particular aspects of project management be noted.

Reasons

To update Cabinet on progress as at February 2007.

Considerations

1. The November 2006 report to Cabinet outlined a change in the action – plan arrangements. The new approach was endorsed by GOWM and the updated plan is attached at Appendix 1.
2. The December 2006 Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) Improvement Board for Herefordshire endorsed the achievements for 2006. These are attached as Appendix 2 and will inform the second report to the Minister along with the positive but separate outcomes for 2005-06.

On two key indicators Herefordshire has achieved excellent results.

Education qualifications of children looked after – Herefordshire, is TOP nationally.

Stability of placements of children looked after, Herefordshire, is 2nd nationally. On several others the Council is in the top group :-

- Education, employment and training for care leavers – 6th nationally.
- Children looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption – 21st nationally.

- Reviews of child protection cases – 18th nationally.
 - Adoptions of children looked after – 20th nationally.
 - Timing of core assessments – GOOD.
3. A summary of the current position on improvement was part of the Integrated Performance Report to Cabinet in January 2007. The achievements summary for 2006 was presented as part of that report also:
 4. The exceptions highlighted were Disability Strategy and Workforce Strategy. The concerns both from the Council and GOWM perspectives were the pace of the projects and the standard of the strategy reports presented.
 5. Additional capacity has been secured to ensure comprehensive – reports are available for the March GOWM Board.
 6. The test is now to demonstrate that in these two areas, project management approaches are sustainable into the future. GOWM are holding a review with the respective project teams prior to the March 2007 GOWM Improvement Board.
 7. There will be an independent evaluation by the Institute of Public Care of the progress on performance management reporting to the March 2007 GOWM Board. An Interim Performance & Improvement Manager is now in place and the recruitment process is underway for the substantive post. The team is being built currently from existing resources and the action plans are on track.
 8. The social work staffing position is that 45.3 are filled. Of these 5 are agency staff. This means the agreed target for March (50) is on track.
 9. The third and currently final report to the Minister will be presented after the March Improvement Board. It remains the ambition to ensure sufficient progress against the agreed success criteria to satisfy GOWM and Department for Education and Skills so that routine performance assessment and improvement activity can be re-established.

Alternative Options

No alternative options proposed.

Risk Management

The risk log is maintained and monitored and the action to secure comprehensive reports for March is in place.

Consultees

Not applicable.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Appendix 2 – List of Achievements

Background Papers

None identified.