

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and young people scrutiny committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Monday 2 October 2017</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Children's Wellbeing Self Assessment 2017</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Assistant director safeguarding and family support</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose and summary**

To consider if the children's wellbeing self-assessment provides the necessary assurance for the committee. In addition to agree any comments and recommendations to enable the self-assessment to be developed further.

The self-assessment is currently draft and input from the children's scrutiny committee will inform further development that will support our improvement journey.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) The committee considers the draft self-assessment as attached in appendix 1;**
- (b) the committee are asked to make any recommendations or further suggestions for the executive to consider in relation to how the assessment can be further developed; that will challenge and enable us to continue on our improvement journey.**

## Alternative options

1. The scrutiny committee could choose not to consider the self-assessment document however this would deny members the opportunity to comment upon and inform an important document which will, in due course, be shared widely.

## Key considerations

2. Within the West Midlands, there is an annual peer challenge event which takes place each autumn. Every council is asked to prepare a self-assessment of their Children's Directorate which is then challenged by peers. This event is regarded as a useful opportunity to test the evidence held within local authorities regarding their performance and areas for development.
3. In 2016 Herefordshire did not present a full self-assessment and instead presented a shorter document focussed on particular areas of development such as Early Help. On reflection this limited the benefit of the peer challenge event for Herefordshire. It was therefore agreed in early 2017 that a full self-assessment be prepared for the 2017 peer challenge
4. During 2017 Ofsted issued a draft framework for their new inspection regime which will begin in 2018. Included within this document is the expectation that every council completes an annual self-assessment of their Children's Directorate which then forms the basis of the subsequent inspection. In essence, the question asked will be: does the council know itself?
5. When Ofsted inspected Herefordshire's SEND offer recently, a self-assessment was prepared and it was agreed by all concerned that this not only assisted the work of inspectors but also acted as an important prompt for local professionals.
6. During 2017 heads of service across the children's wellbeing directorate have written the sections of the self-evaluation document relevant to their service area. During the summer of 2017 the regional Directors of Children's Service group agreed a draft template for self-assessments. This was designed to support the peer challenge event by ensuring that all reports contained the same range of information in the same order as well as enabling local authorities to prepare for the future Ofsted framework.
7. Officers will seek the views of key statutory stakeholders as part of this process.
8. Areas noted for development are included within the directorate's improvement plan.
9. Most recently, a new iteration of the Ofsted framework has removed the mandatory production of annual self-assessments however this does not diminish the benefit of annual reflection and challenge which will continue on a regional basis. It is also assumed that inspectors will ask for any self-assessment that does exist when they visit a local authority.
10. Once completed, the self-assessment document will be presented to the Cabinet Member for young people and children's wellbeing.

## Community impact

11. The council is committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance in order to achieve the council's vision of "people, organisations and businesses working together

to bring sustainable prosperity and well-being for all, in the outstanding natural environment of Herefordshire.” A principle of the council’s code of corporate governance is to implement good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner.

12. Ensuring that there are robust plans for improvement will support the council achieve its corporate plan and children and young people’s plan priority to keep children and young people safe and give them the best start in life.

## **Equality duty**

13. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
14. There is no equality impact arising from this report because there is no intention to reduce services for protected groups as a result of its approval.

## **Resource implications**

15. There is no financial impact arising from this report. The improvement actions are currently covered within the 2017/2018 children’s wellbeing budget plans.

## **Legal implications**

16. Sharing the self assessment with the committee will allow the document to be scrutinised and challenged and any recommendations put forward.

## **Risk management**

17. This document provides a context for the identification of risk within the directorate. There are no specific risks associated with this document. A decision not to produce a self-assessment could lead to the risk of either undue confidence or unsubstantiated pessimism.

## **Consultees**

18. None.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Herefordshire self-assessment 2017

Appendix 2 Safeguarding and family support improvement plan 2017-18

## **Background papers**

None identified.