

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and young people scrutiny committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Monday 4 December 2017</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Children's Wellbeing Self-Assessment 2017 - update</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 a living document and will continue to be updated and the input from the children's scrutiny committee will inform further development that will support our continued improvement journey.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) The committee considers the current final version of the self-assessment as attached in appendix 1;**
- (b) The committee is asked to consider this version and provide challenge and make any recommendations or further suggestions for the executive to consider in relation to how the assessment can be further developed; that will 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 services directorate, which is then challenged by peers. This event is regarded as a useful opportunity to test the evidence held by councils regarding their performance and areas for development. This will take place on 22 November 2017 and a verbal update will be provided at the committee meeting when the item is presented.
3. The current version of the self-assessment (as attached) was submitted by officers following consultation with the Cabinet member for young people and children's wellbeing before it was submitted to the West Midlands Association of Directors of Children's Services (WMADCS) for moderation and challenge.
4. Earlier in 2017, Ofsted issued a draft framework for its 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 services directorate, which then forms the basis of the subsequent inspection. In essence, the question asked will be 'does the council know itself?' A more recent iteration of the Ofsted framework has removed the mandatory requirement to produce 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 council.
5. When Ofsted inspected Herefordshire's special educational needs and disability (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. The submitted self-evaluation follows a format developed by the regional Directors' of children's services group to ensure consistency of approach.

## Community impact

7. The council is committed to achieving its corporate plan vision to keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life. 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.

## **Equality duty**

8. 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.
9. 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**

10. There is no financial impact arising from this report. The improvement actions are currently covered within the 2017/18 children's wellbeing budget plans.

## **Legal implications**

11. The committee has the power to make reports or recommendations to the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive or which affect the inhabitants of the county. Any recommendations that the committee determines must be considered by the executive in accordance with the council's scrutiny rules.

## **Risk management**

12. This document provides a context for the identification of risk within the children's wellbeing directorate, although there are no associated risks.

## **Consultees**

13. The self-assessment was submitted by officers following consultation with the Cabinet member for young people and children's wellbeing.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Herefordshire's self-assessment 2017

## **Background papers**

None identified.