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| Report to: | RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE |
| Relevant Officer: | Diane Booth, Director of Childrens Services |
| Date of Meeting | 29 June 2017 |

CHILDREN'S SERVICES UPDATE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the work undertaken by Children's Services on a day to day basis and to update on the progress and implementation of developments within the areas.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1
- To note the contents of the report and to ensure that current work continues to meet statutory obligations and that work to prepare for external inspections continues.
 - To continue to meet statutory monitoring, challenge and support obligations.
 - To work with schools to support improvement and preparation for external scrutiny and support the work of the Blackpool Challenge Board in order to improve the progress and attainment of Blackpool Children especially at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
 - To identify any further information and actions required.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 For Members of the Committee to be fully informed as to the day to day work of the Children's Services Directorate and have assurance that Blackpool is continuing to meet its statutory obligations for future inspection requirements. The Local Authority remains and retains a statutory responsibility to monitor all schools in order to support improvement and raise the attainment and progress for all children in the Local Authority Area.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:
Services are subject to national and statutory frameworks.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Children's Social Care

The challenge: currently demand is high in relation to contacts, referrals, section 47 enquiries, child protection plans and children looked after. A Demand Management Strategy is developing which incorporates an improvement approach which will be driven by a recent end to end review of services.

5.2 Opportunity Areas

The draft Delivery Plan was due to be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of April 2017. However, once the General Election was called this significantly slowed down progress due to purdah. Additional information has since been gathered to develop further the draft delivery plan which will now progress.

5.3 Free School

The Local Authority has had approval from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Education to proceed with the Expression of Interest submitted for a Social Emotional and Mental Health Free School to be opened in Blackpool. There is currently no time line attached to this due to Purdah, and Schools Forum will be updated as things progress.

5.3.1 The capital for the build will be funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency as will the place funding. It is anticipated that the Education and Skills Funding Agency will cover the place funding for a maximum of three years and the local authority should anticipate having to cover the place funding long term. The top-up funding for the school will need to be covered by the high needs funding block from when the school opens. The school has been allocated 48 coeducational places to cover the age range 10-16, and the potential site for the school is yet to be agreed.

5.4 Review of high needs provision

The Department for Education has given the local authority £57,000 to carry out a strategic review of high needs provision. The council is seeking applications from interested organisations to carry out the review in respect of provision for Blackpool pupils. The review will consider the effectiveness and value for money of the full range of provision both locally and out of area.

5.5 Blackpool School Admissions

For September 2017 intakes offers for Blackpool families were issued on/by the national statutory dates (1 March 2017 for secondary and 16 April 2017 for primary). In relation to primary reception starters for September 2017 a total of 1,558 applications were received. Of these 1,246 were submitted on-line (80%) and 312 on paper (20%). The breakdown of offers for primary places was as follows:-

| <u>Primary</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 st preference | 1,471 (94.4%) |
| 2 nd preference | 50 (3.2%) |
| 3 rd preference | 16 (1.0%) |
| Non preference | 21 (1.3%) |

- For September 2017 there were 98.6% of applicants who received an offer for one of their preferred primary schools / academies.

5.5.1 In relation to secondary Year 7 starters for September 2017, a total of 1,414 applications were received. Of these 1,174 were submitted online (83%) and 240 on paper (17%). The breakdown of offers for secondary places was as follows:-

| <u>Secondary</u> | <u>2017</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 st preference | 1,174 (83.0%) |
| 2 nd preference | 141 (10.0%) |
| 3 rd preference | 42 (3.0%) |
| Non preference | 57 (4.0%) |

- For September 2017 there were 96.0% of applicants who received an offer for one of their preferred secondary academies.

5.5.2 Parents have submitted 41 secondary and 23 primary admission appeals. All of these are scheduled to be heard during June 2017.

5.5.3 Processes for admissions during the school year will be reviewed in liaison with schools and academies with a view to streamlining administration and management and clarifying the relevant pathways for all parties. This relates to In-Year admissions, Managed Moves and Blackpool's statutory In Year Fair Access Protocol. An Inclusion Plan is being developed.

5.6 School Improvement

The Blackpool School Improvement Board continues with their implementation of the five priority areas that will improve outcomes for Blackpool children. The five priority areas are Achievement and Aspiration, Transition, Leadership, Teaching and Learning and Inclusion. Sub groups have been formed around each priority area. Each sub group is constituted of cross phase and cross agency representatives of the education sector.

5.6.1 The Blackpool School Improvement Board is now in the process of bidding for funds through the School Improvement Fund, which is a national fund that can be used to support appropriate actions. Three bids are being drafted that will include Inclusion, Leadership and Teaching and Learning/Transition/Achievement and Aspiration.

5.6.2 The bids will compliment actions identified through the Opportunity Area Fund and will support regional actions, particularly in the North West sector of School Improvement.

5.7 Ofsted Inspections

Since the last report the following schools have been inspected:

- Kinncraig. Was Good and retained Good. 9/5/17
- St Mary's High School. Was Good and retained Good. 21/3/17
- Christ the King. Was Good and retained Good. 16/05/17
- Boundary Primary. Was Requires Improvement, moved to Good. 03/05/17
- Ed Diversity. Was Good and retained Good. 03/05/17

5.8 Promotion and Publicity Campaign for 30 hours Early Years Childcare

A media campaign is underway that would have linked with a national campaign, which unfortunately was cancelled due to Purdah. A new publication for businesses, stakeholders and partners has been produced which informs and outlines the 30 hours free childcare policy and asks for support in spreading the message to parents.

5.9 Early Years and Childcare Team - Ofsted Inspections

One group setting report has been published since the last report, the setting was judged to Require Improvement, and members of the Early Years and Childcare team are working closely with the setting to ensure the necessary improvements are made. One childminder report has also been published, the childminder was judged to be Good.

This gives overall % of good and outstanding as:

- Childminders – 100%, Childcare on non-domestic premises – 95.2%, all registered provision – 97.7%

This compares to national figures as at 31 December 2016 of 91% CMs, 95% PVIs, and 93% all provision.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

6.0 List of Appendices:

6.1 None

7.0 Legal considerations:

7.1 None

8.0 Human Resources considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Equalities considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Financial considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Risk management considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Ethical considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

13.1 None

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None