

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Chris Coyle, Assistant Director Children's Services
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	21 September 2023

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE UPDATE: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

### 1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To inform the Committee of the improvement plan of Children's Social Care in response to the OFSTED inspection of December 2022. The plan runs up until October 2024.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To challenge performance of the service against the improvement plan.

### 3.0 Reason for recommendation(s)

3.1 To ensure robust scrutiny of Children's Service's improvement.

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

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

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered

4.1 There is not an alternative improvement plan. However this plan will be subject to review and will be a dynamic document.

### 5.0 Council priority

5.1 The relevant Council priority is:

- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

### 6.0 Background and key information

6.1 The OFSTED inspection was formally published in February 2023. It highlighted areas of significant improvements since the previous inspection in 2019. However there were

areas that required improvement specifically, the multi-agency response to children suffering domestic abuse or long-term neglect, and to those children with complex needs. Other areas of improvement included the work with partners to strengthen their contribution to early help and neglect, the Council's approach to ensuring there are sufficient placements to meet children's assessed needs and the timeliness of meeting children's dental and emotional needs.

- 6.2 This plan sets out how we aim to address those issues. It is however not confined to those issues solely but rather aims to express how we aim to improve Children's Services and the experience of children and families in Blackpool who come into contact with those services.
- 6.3 As identified in the plan we have two overarching strategic aims in Children's Services. For more of our children who come into contact with Children's Services to live with their families and for more of our children to engage positively in education.
- 6.4 The key to achieving this as set out in the plan is practice. The specific work we do with children and families. Practice needs to be at the heart of our improvement the individual interaction with a family and with a child needs to be the best it can be. We aim to "do the basics beautifully".
- 6.5 However it needs a wider approach to drive that practice and the focus will be upon an approach that prioritises helping early. That prioritises the importance of partnership working. That as stated focuses on the practice, the work we do with children and families. This approach has robust oversight and is focused upon achieving positive outcomes.
- 6.6 These elements then boil down to the factors that drive the plan. Early Help, Our Transformation work. Our approach to neglect and to Domestic Abuse. Our approach to permanence and stability of homes for Our Children and a focus upon education as the key driver to improving children's futures.

6.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## **7.0 List of appendices**

7.1 Appendix 6(a): Blackpool Children's Social Care Improvement Plan.

## **8.0 Financial considerations**

8.1 No specific financial considerations.

## **9.0 Legal considerations**

9.1 No specific legal considerations.

**10.0 Risk management considerations**

10.1 Risk management will be reviewed through existing governance and oversight structures.

**11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people**

11.1 As stated above the plan aims to improve the services provided to children and families in Blackpool, and thus to improve their experiences of such services.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations**

12.1 No specific sustainability climate change or environmental considerations.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken**

13.1 Internal consultation has been completed. External consultation is ongoing through the monitoring of the plan.

**14.0 Background papers**

14.1 None.