

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	OFSTED ACTION PLAN		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	27 NOVEMBER 2014		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	INTERIM HEAD OF SERVICE, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE		
<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
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<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>
None

### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

On July 7<sup>th</sup> OFSTED undertook a second unannounced inspection of Southampton Children's Services and Southampton LSCB over a period of three weeks. This followed the previous inspection which had been declared by Ofsted to be flawed. The report of inspection and the required action plan has now been published. The improvements that have followed the transformation programme were acknowledged by the inspectors and they deemed the leadership and management of the service to be strong. However due to there being insufficient evidence yet of the impact of the changes to children's Services and the LSCB, both were overall judged to Require Improvement. In addition the Leaving Care service was deemed to be inadequate due to systemic failures in the multiagency commitment to this group of young people. Ofsted identified a number of issues that need to be addressed before Children's Services' could be considered to be good. The appendix contains the Ofsted report and the draft action plan. Ofsted will re-inspect Southampton Children Services in 12-18 months' time and will expect to see all the actions completed and the service demonstrating that it is a good service. Children's services have accepted Ofsted's offer to work together to devise an effective action plan to ensure that services for children in Southampton are good and a meeting took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> October. The overall action plan was considered acceptable but some amendments were proposed and these have been incorporated into the Action Plan. Any amendments by Hosp will also be included.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) The committee review the action plan in order to monitor progress and confirm the direction of travel

### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. This Ofsted Report and Action Plan is a statutory requirement and it is important that it is scrutinised by HOSP
2. HOSP needs to be aware of the concerns that need to be addressed and the

proposed actions to address these concerns

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

3. It is a statutory requirement to respond to the Ofsted Inspection report and produce an action plan and that there should be sufficient scrutiny by the council. One of the requirements identified by Ofsted is that scrutiny of Children's Services by Southampton City Councillors should be improved. Therefore no other actions were considered.

### **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

4. The Panel received the report at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014, and requested an update on the action plan to be submitted to their next meeting. The Ofsted Inspection report contains the findings of a thorough inspection of Children's Services, which included consultation with service users and staff. The report highlights that services require improvement because:
  - a) Politicians have not been meeting their corporate parenting responsibilities to champion looked after children and care leavers and ensure that their needs are met.
  - b) Too many care leavers are not in education, employment and or training. Only three care leavers are currently in higher education.
  - c) Over 30% of care leavers are either not in touch with services or assessed as living in unsuitable accommodation.
  - d) Adoption is not achieved quickly enough for a small minority (17%) of looked after children.
  - e) Care plans for looked after children are neither thorough nor comprehensive and therefore are not effective in assisting practitioners in their work to ensure that all children's needs are being met.
  - f) The majority of looked after children do not receive good quality life story work.
  - g) Looked after reviews are too often delayed or not held at the right time
  - h) Arrangements to respond to children who go missing from home and care are not sufficiently robust.
  - i) Strategy discussions do not always include all appropriate agencies and are poorly recorded.
  - j) Case recording is often not sufficiently detailed nor purposefully linked to the care plan of the child.
  - k) The supervision of social workers does not consistently promote reflective practice.
  - l) Performance management arrangements are not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of work with children and families.
5. Under each of these points there is a detailed list of what the Local Authority needs to do to improve the services for children and the Local Authority is required to provide an action plan within 90 days in order to move from Requires Improvement to Good. The attached draft action plan addresses each of the requirements and the RAG rating shows the progress to date.

### **ACTION PLAN**

6. The Action Plan to address the issues raised has been compiled by staff of the new Quality Assurance Business Unit in consultation with senior managers, the LSCB and Ofsted Inspectors. In order to keep the plan manageable, actions will be aligned with the existing transformation plan and those actions arising from the previous Ofsted inspection which are not yet complete. A senior manager has been identified for each action and they will maintain an active overview of the progress against each action. Some actions, particularly those in relation to care leavers, will require the commitment of other services both within and outside the council and a strategic commitment to support the improvement.
7. The majority of the Actions are on track and will be completed in the time frames indicated. These actions are marked as amber. Some actions are already complete and are marked as green. The red actions will be completed on time but activity on these has not yet started or they are in the very early stages of development

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Capital/Revenue

8. There are no capital costs to these proposals and it is anticipated that revenue costs will fall within the existing budget for Children’s Services. Successful implementation of the required changes have the potential to lead to reduced costs in the future as children’s needs are met earlier and there will be less demand for placements for looked after children.

Property/Other

10. There is no impact on property in the Action Plan

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

11. All the actions in this report fall within the statutory powers already accorded to Children’s Services. Ofsted, as a statutory body, has required an improvement in the delivery of Southampton Children’s Services and Southampton City Council Children’s Services is required to comply

**Other Legal Implications:**

12. There are no other legal implications

**POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

13. There are no Policy Framework Implication

**KEY DECISION?** No

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	The Ofsted Inspection report applies to children in the whole of Southampton
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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices**

1.	SCC Children's Safeguarding Inspection Ofsted Action Plan
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Equality Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out	No
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**Other Background Documents**

**Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.		
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