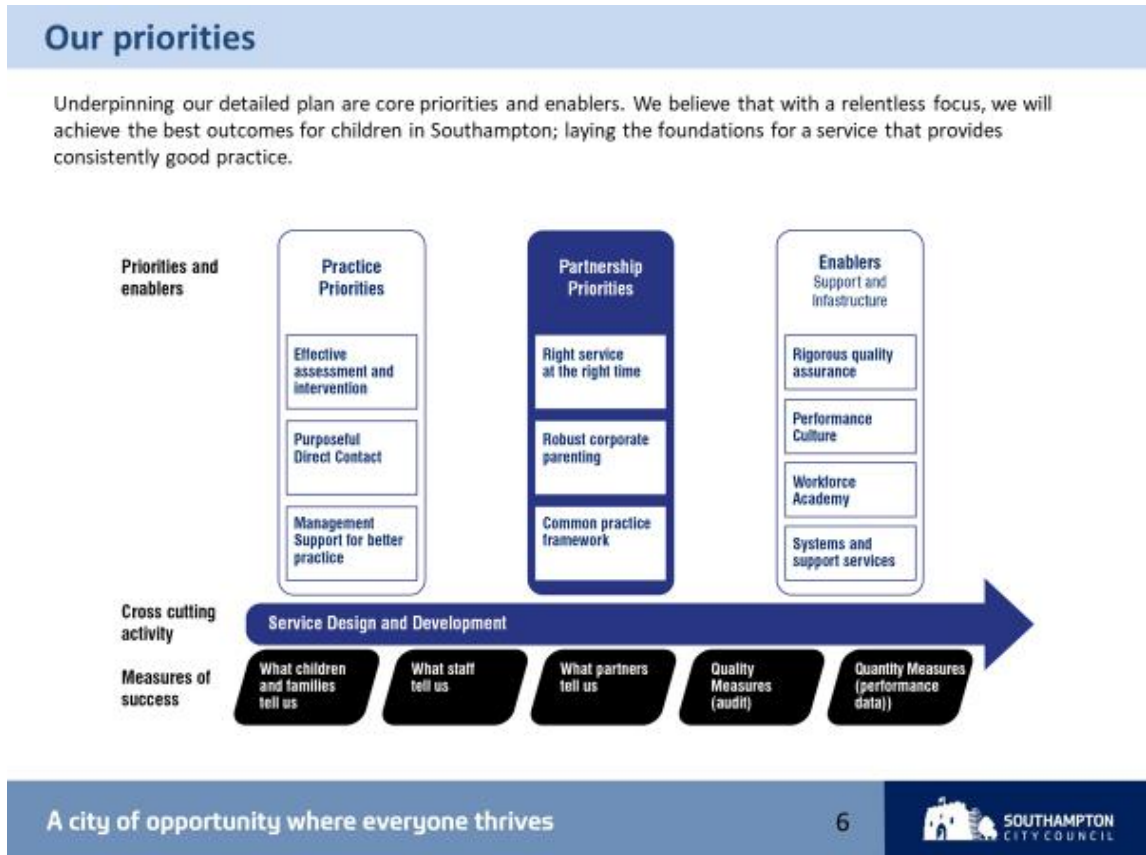


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| DECISION-MAKER: | CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL |
| SUBJECT: | CHILDREN'S AND LEARNING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 4 NOVEMBER 2021 |
| REPORT OF: | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING |

| <u>CONTACT DETAILS</u> | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--|----------------------------|
| Executive Director | Title | Children and Learning | |
| | Name: | Robert Henderson | Tel: 023 80 834 899 |
| | E-mail | robert.henderson@southampton.gov.uk | |
| Author: | Title | Head of Service – Quality Assurance | |
| | Name: | Stuart Webb | Tel: 023 80 834 102 |
| | E-mail | stuart.webb@southampton.gov.uk | |

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| STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY | |
| Not applicable | |
| BRIEF SUMMARY | |
| To brief the Panel on progress against the revised Children and Learning Improvement Plan. | |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: | |
| | (i) That progress be noted |
| | (ii) That there is a further update to the Scrutiny Panel in March 2022 |
| REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS | |
| 1. | To enable oversight by the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel of the Children and Learning Improvement Plan. |
| ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED | |
| 2. | None |
| DETAIL (Including consultation carried out) | |
| | Review of Plan |
| 3. | In May 2021, Southampton's Children and Learning Service was subject to a focused visit under Ofsted's Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework. Inspectors identified two areas of priority action (effective and rigorous senior management oversight of children in care who are placed in unregistered settings, are at home with their parents or are with connected carers in emergency circumstances <i>and</i> effective management oversight of services to care leavers) and two areas for improvement (the quality of supervision and management oversight of children on child protection <i>and</i> child-in-need plans and visits to vulnerable children who are electively home educated (EHE). |

4. The service has reviewed its improvement plan to address the inspection findings (Appendix 1). The plan has been re-structured to focus on 10 core priority areas which will make the most difference to achieving better outcomes for children:



The plan is high level, underpinned by and referring back to a series of service improvement and development plans owned by Heads of Service in the Children and Learning Service and across the Council and aligned with cross cutting multi-agency plans overseen by senior leaders. The service delivery plans detail clear actions, owners, and timescales against which progress is monitored by the Executive Director and the Improvement Board. Underneath these are more granular action and project plans.

5. The plan references improvements over the past 12 months:
- Review of the service vision; overriding strategy and strategic plans
 - Review of Improvement Board arrangements and appointment of independent chair
 - Work to address the findings of the 2020 whistleblowing report
 - Agreement to progress with Child Friendly City accreditation
 - Development of the Destination 22 service redesign programme
 - Confirmation of senior leadership team
 - Recruitment of Principal Social Worker and Performance Manager
 - Launch of Practice Framework and Workforce Academy
 - Strengthening of corporate parenting function

The Destination 22 improvement programme will build upon these foundations. The Panel is scheduled to receive a presentation on Destination 22 on 25th November 2021.

6. Progress will be reported to the improvement board using a revised performance template; supported by a new core data set, developed by the service Performance Manager (Appendix 2).

How we will provide assurance

In addition to progress reports on the priority actions and recommendations arising from Ofsted; the service will provide the improvement board with reports on:

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| Effective assessment and intervention | Qualitative and quantitative data on focus 5 outcomes (chronologies, assessment, plans). Qualitative data on practice framework. |
| Purposeful Direct Contact | Qualitative and quantitative data on focus 5 outcome (direct contact). Qualitative data on practice framework. |
| Management Support for better practice | Qualitative and quantitative data on focus 5 outcome (supervision). Evidence of how the supervision framework and reflective practice is being embedded across the service; including data on caseload supervision; audit findings and staff feedback |
| Right service at the right time | Report on multiagency training to support Pathways document launch. Qualitative and quantitative data on MASH performance and decision making |
| Robust corporate parenting | Evidence of how the service and partners are supporting placement, staffing and education stability. |
| Common practice framework | Evidence of how the partnership is embedding restorative practice, trauma informed practice and Strengthening Families and the impact. |
| Rigorous quality assurance | Evidence of how the service audit programme is being embedded, the learning from this and how this is informing better practice. |
| Performance Culture | Evidence of how the assurance clinics are supporting better performance |
| Workforce Academy | Quantitative data on workforce recruitment and retention. Staff Reference Group qualitative feedback. |
| Systems and support services | Implementation of Care Director Case Management system and business support review. |

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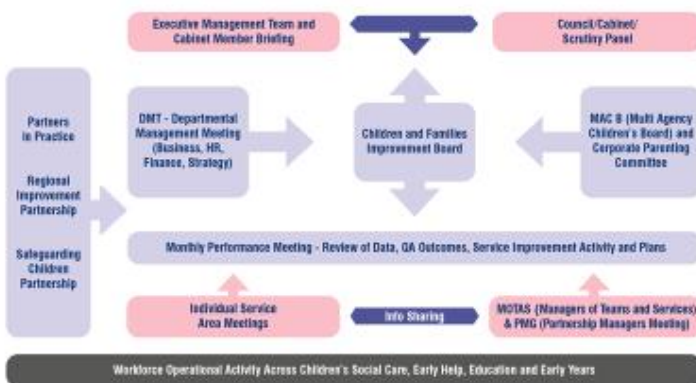
Governance and Scrutiny

7. The Service Improvement Board reconvened in November 2020 with revised membership and terms of reference. Membership now includes senior leaders from safeguarding partner agencies; improvement leads from the Department for Education and Local Government Association and the chairs of the staff reference group. An independent chair assumed her responsibilities in January 2021. The board receives bi-monthly performance updates, alongside thematic reports (see forward plan, Appendix 3).

Governance Structure

Our improvement plan is reviewed by a bi-monthly Improvement Board, chaired by the Executive Director for Finance. The Board receives and considers performance data; progress (exception) reports and presentations from service managers. Membership has been extended to include key partners and will also include practitioners, with an interface with our practitioners reference group.

Further oversight is provided through the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel.



Children and Families Improvement Board:

- Executive Director – Finance and Commercialisation (Chair)
- Chief Executive (annually)
- Deputy Chief Executive
- Cabinet Member, Children and Learning
- Cabinet Member, Finance and Resources
- Shadow Cabinet Member, Children, Young People and Learning
- Executive Director, Children and Learning
- Executive Director Resources
- Service Director of HR
- Head of Children's Social Care Services
- Head of Integrated and Specialist Services
- Head of Education and Learning Services
- Southampton CCG Managing Director
- Chief Superintendent Southampton Police
- Safeguarding Children Partnership Chair
- LGA representative
- DfE representative
- 2 x representatives from Staff Reference Group
- Partners in Practice representative
- Secondary and Primary Head teacher
- Special School Head teacher

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8. The improvement plan has been reviewed by the service Partner in Practice (Hampshire Children's Services) and the DfE Improvement Advisor allocated to Southampton. The service is required to respond to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, Vicky Ford by January 2022.

9. The Scrutiny Panel forward plan has been designed to ensure ongoing focus on service improvement; with a social work practice improvement theme in January 2022. It is recommended that a further update on the improvement plan is provided in March 2022. The Panel requested a timeline of improvement activity and this is appended to this document as Appendix 4.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

10. None at this stage

Property/Other

11. None at this stage

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

12. S.111 Local Government Act 1972

Other Legal Implications:

13. None

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

14. The overall improvement plan is risk assessed.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

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|-----|---|
| 15. | <p>This developing improvement plan is an important contributor to achieving the outcomes desired for children in Southampton.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan 2021 to 2025 sets out the following ambitions: <i>‘We are committed to improving health and learning for our children and adults across the city. Through the journey of our UK City of Culture 2025 bid, we want a city in which people can start well, live well, age well, and live happy and fulfilling lives. We will be a city that prevents and intervenes early, promotes wellbeing, and allows people to live independently for longer, enjoying their lives and all our great city has to offer. We will create a city that provides excellent education and development opportunities for our young people and adults, that builds strong relationships with our partners and carers to help solve the challenges we face and create a city of opportunity for all. Through embracing our culture, heritage, parks, green spaces, and our unique waterfront opportunities we want a to be a happy, hopeful, and ambitious city. (We will) achieve our ambition to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City by 2024/25.’</i></p> |
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| KEY DECISION? | No |
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| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | All |
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

| | |
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| 1. | Children and Learning Improvement Plan – October 2021 |
| 2. | Proposed core dataset |
| 3. | Improvement Board Forward Plan |
| 4. | Improvement timeline |

Documents in Members’ Rooms

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| 1. | None |
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Equality Impact Assessment

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| Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out? | No |
|--|-----------|

Data Protection Impact Assessment

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|---|-----------|
| Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out? | No |
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Other Background Documents

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. | None |