
Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 8th February 2018

Subject: Social Services Review

Report by: Head of Social Services

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The report will summarise the actions taken to undertake an in depth review of Children and Families Social Work.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Note the context of the report and question/challenge as appropriate.
- 2.2. Agree the conclusion of the scrutiny review.
- 2.3. Note the changes to the current caseload allocation system.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. On the 21st April 2016, the Resources and Audit Committee agreed the scope, approach, resourcing and reporting arrangements for undertaking a Social Services Scrutiny review.
- 3.2. Work progressed to date has been undertaken using internal staff resources. The work has been undertaken by the Executive Director, Head of Social Services, Accountancy, and Service Manager from Strategy.
- 3.3. The scope provided an option for external specialist advice to be procured to assist with aspect of the review. Up to £10k is available to Scrutiny Committee for these purposes. An approach was made to MKM consultants to undertake a review on thresholds for intervention in children and families.
- 3.4. Since September 2016 a series of member briefings and Scrutiny Review Group meetings have taken place. The aim of these meetings has been to consider and discuss data analysis prepared in line with the agreed scope and to enable feedback to be provided to officers on additional areas of enquiry and further analysis required. These meetings have included –

- A briefing for all elected members was held on the 20th October 2016 to present environmental, financial, social and demographic data. An analysis pack was also prepared for members setting out this data in detail.
- A briefing for all elected members was held on the 3rd November 2016 to present information on financial pressures in childcare and potential causal factors and mitigations.
- A series of Scrutiny Review Group meetings have been held (9th November; 23rd November and 6th December 2016) and briefings and additional information provided on key areas of enquiry identified by members of the Review Group.

3.5. A progress report to October Scrutiny Committee was presented on progress to date as was originally agreed in the Scope for June and October 2016.

Progress Against Scope

3.6. The key aspects of the scope are detailed in Table 1 below. A summary of progress to date and key aspects of work outstanding is provided against each area.

Table 1: Summary of progress and outstanding issues against the agreed scope for the Scrutiny Review of Social Services

Scope activity	Progress	Outstanding activity
Social and economic environment of Clackmannanshire (Scope paragraph 3.4)	Complete Data pack presented to all member briefing 20 th October 2016. Further data and analysis provided to briefing on the 3 rd November 2016 and Review Group meetings on the 9 th November; 23 rd November and 6 th December 2016.	None
Child care statistics, trends and forecasts: for instance re number of Looked after children, child protection referrals (Scope paragraph 3.5)	Complete Presented to all member briefing 3 rd November 2016 and Review Group meetings on the 9 th November; 23 rd November and 6 th December 2016. Recovery Plan being implemented and progress reported to Audit and Finance committee.	None
Significant areas of childcare expenditure (Scope paragraph 3.6, BP 1)	Complete Presented to all member briefings 20 th October and 3 rd November 2016 and Review Group meetings on the 9 th	None

Scope activity	Progress	Outstanding activity
	November; 23 rd November and 6 th December 2016.	
Examination of the specific causes of financial pressures on childcare to establish whether these might be mitigated (Scope paragraph 3.6, BP 2)	<p>Complete</p> <p>Presented to all member briefing on 3rd November 2016</p> <p>Review of 3rd sector Children's services provision in Clackmannanshire and gap analysis on family support provision (linked with Realigning Children's Services project)</p>	None
Analysis of the demographics of Looked After Children (Scope paragraph 3.6, Bullet point 3)	<p>Complete</p> <p>Presented to all member briefings 20th October and 3rd November 2016. Further analysis presented at Scrutiny Review Group meetings on 9th November; 23rd November and 6th December 2016.</p>	None
Financial governance including compliance with Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation and managerial controls (Scope paragraph 3.6, Bullet Point 4)	<p>Governance for the 2015/16 overspend obtained via Resources and Audit Committee (25th February 2016 and Council 3rd March 2016)</p> <p>Social Services Finance Report and Financial Management Action Plan presented to Audit and Finance Committee 17th November 2016.</p> <p>New working protocols between Service Management and Accountancy highlighting significant reduction in spend</p>	None
Service policies, processes and models of care offer Best Value (Scope paragraph 3.5)	<p>Service Recovery Plan, Audit and Finance Committee 15th September 2016</p> <p>Independent review of thresholds for intervention in children and families</p> <p>Vanguard scoping exercise undertaken over 3 sessions in November 2016.</p> <p>16/17 Finance Report and Financial Management Action Plan to November 2016 Audit and Finance Committee.</p> <p>Information presented to Scrutiny Review Group on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland; 	Completed

Scope activity	Progress	Outstanding activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision making process in Social Services; • The Children’s Hearing System in Scotland; • Extract from National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. 	

3.7. Reports detailing the work of the review were presented to Scrutiny Committee on 20th October 2016, 15th December 2016 and 31st January 2017

4.0 Service Outcomes

4.1. The following key areas of progress have taken place over the last year :

4.2 Improved governance including budget management and significant reduction in areas of overspend

4.3 Local Government Benchmarking Framework evidencing the *shifting balance of care*: Child Protection referrals and registrations in keeping with the national average, reduction of children Looked After and Accommodated away from home, increase in number of children looked after at home, reduction on overall spend and now in keeping with other comparator authorities

4.4 Project board set up to progress a new social work information system which connects to the finance system and gives “real time” financial information and reports

4.5 Increased governance and decision making for sign off of high cost placements initiated to allow overview of the “balance of care” and project expenditure

4.6 Phase 1 and Phase 2 of a robust fostering campaign including an open evening, social media advertising, advertising on council vans, advertising within the council has increased pool of internal foster carers and adopters

4.7 Robust recruitment processes which have attracted a high calibre of new and experienced staff into the service

4.8 Complete removal of all high cost agency staff from the service

4.9 A partnership with Action for Children to implement Functional Family Therapy showing evidence of improved outcomes and preventing children coming into care

4.10 Review of the child protection referral process which has resulted in more accurate performance reporting, with the Child Protection Register sitting alongside the National Average

- 4.11 Robust review processes for all existing and new “high-cost” placements resulting in a reduced budget overspend
- 4.12 Completion of Phase 1 of redesign of the service to ensure good governance, staff supervision, caseload oversight and improved practice and interventions
- 4.13 A simplified and clear tiered management matrix from Head of Service to social worker, which has accrued staffing savings of circa 500k
- 4.14 Single agency audit of all child protection cases
- 4.15 MRM Consultants audit of thresholds and decision making
- 4.16 Re-establishment of Alloa Family Centre as a community hub to take forward intensive support services
- 4.17 Consultation with all staff and Trade Unions on Phase 2 of redesign of service, establishment of the intensive support service
- 4.18 Review of caseloads allocations to bring about consistency across all children and families services

5.0 Future Work Plan

- 5.1. The following areas of work are now progressing
- 5.2 Establishment of a responsive 5/7 intensive support service with existing staff and the 3rd sector
- 5.3 Engagement and review of all 3rd Sector providers to inform strategic commissioning of services for children and families focussing on the outcomes identified from the Scrutiny Review, Realigning Children Services, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and City Deal
- 5.4 Presentation to Child Protection Committee to consider findings from MRM audit and to firmly establish GIRFEC in children’s services
- 5.5 Redesign of the key posts in the Strategy Service to support the functions of the service
- 5.6 Establishment of a Core and Cluster model to accommodate older young people and to continue to bring young people back from high cost placements
- 5.7 Process mapping of *first point of contact* in children’s services and progression towards Contact Centre facility
- 5.8 Joint planning and scoping of interventions across social work and education services to establishing more collaboration and shared resources

6.0 Sustainability Implications

- 6.1. The service has set a 5 year transformational change programme, set to redress the balance of care; empower families and ensure best value for the Council

7.0 Resource Implications

7.1. Financial Details

- 7.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes

- 7.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes

7.4. Staffing

8.0 Exempt Reports

- 8.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all
Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life
Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

- (2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

- 8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes No

- 8.2 This report is for information only. No policy changes or changes to service provided are recommended.

9.0 Legality

- 9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

none

11.0 Background Papers

- 11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Celia Gray	Head of Social Services	Tel: 01259 225017

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Celia Gray	Head of Social Services	Signed: C Gray
Elaine McPherson	Chief Executive	Signed: E McPherson

