
Report to: Housing, Health & Care Committee

Date of Meeting: 25 October 2012

Subject: Long Term Childcare Team, Action Plan and Progress Report Qtr 2

Report by: Acting Head of Social Services/CSWO

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This paper outlines progress made by the childcare long term team in relation to its improvement action plan during quarter two, 2012 / 2013.
- 1.2. Appendix One offers a more detailed update on all of the action areas which were initially agreed in June.
- 1.3. In light of recent decisions by the Council to invest in additional staffing in childcare services and of the support packages offered by other agencies, the initial action plan considered by Committee at this and the previous meeting will be further developed. The resultant fuller action plan will be submitted to next meeting of the Committee for review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that committee:
 - a) notes the progress made in taking forward the initial action plan arising from the independent review;
 - b) notes that a fuller action plan will be developed to take account of recent factors including increased staffing and support from external organisations.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. A substantial amount of work has taken place since the independent review was considered by Council in June this year. This report provides an update on progress in meeting the actions which arose from the recommendations of the independent review.

- 3.2 In taking forward these recommendations, a number of other workstreams and investigations have been identified and progressed. As a result of work undertaken to review the capacity of the service, a report was considered by a special meeting of Council on 11 October. At this meeting Council agreed to increase capacity in the Child Care Services by substantially increasing staffing at practitioner level and also agreed to invest in a new information system for childcare.
- 3.3 Progress in implementing these decisions will be provided at future meetings of the committee. This report does not duplicate the information on capacity provided to Council in October but rather focuses on reporting on the ten themes which were covered in the independent review, which were:
- implementation of GIRFEC
 - tools for the job
 - workforce capacity
 - skills and knowledge
 - practice standards and procedures
 - management capacity
 - performance management
 - staff engagement
 - partnership working
 - communication
- 3.4 A summary of progress on the above is provided in the Appendix to this report future reports to committee will incorporate progress reporting on new areas of work, such as the work of CELCIS.

4.0 Workforce Capacity & Current Issues

- 4.1 The management of immediate risk remains the priority and as such the focus has been on sustaining and improving operational practice, addressing staff underperformance and ensuring children's cases are being appropriately managed.
- 4.2 To support this, the following developments have taken place or are imminent:
- The use of agency / sessional staff has been agreed to accelerate the appropriate allocation of cases pending allocation from the Initial Assessment Team. There is an on going challenge to recruit enough experienced staff that can manage complex cases.
 - An additional Family Support worker is to be recruited to free up the more experienced staff for more complicated and complex work
 - Training continues to ensure that all staff are aware of and can appropriately navigate the new GIRFEC assessment tools
- 4.3 The current operational and staffing pressures within the service have required a rethink in terms of our improvement activities. To this end the PSIF

(Public service improvement framework) assessment within Clackmannanshire has been delayed until January 2013 in favour of an operational locus and a focussed improvement event targeting child protection practice. The improvement event will allow key business processes to be explored and will offer detailed information on current practice, areas for improvement and actions to be taken. Staff will be integral to this process and will focus on the interrelating activities of Child Protection in the HUB, the interface with SCRA and activity in the long term teams. A report will be made available at a future Committee for consideration.

5.0 Additional Assistance / External Scrutiny

- 5.1 The service has had additional support and assistance offered from both CELCIS (Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland) and the Care Inspectorate. This allows an objective view of progress and brings with it a specialised scrutiny to ensure our efforts remain appropriate.
- 5.2 Link inspector meetings with the Care Inspectorate have continued to take place on a quarterly basis, with these meetings being divided into two sections; overall scrutiny and the long-term childcare team improvement agenda. It is anticipated that monthly meetings with the Care Inspectorate (the Link Inspector + approach described in the special report to Council) will begin this month.
- 5.3 The emphasis of the Care Inspectorate has been one of support and challenge and their involvement has been helpful.
- 5.4 The Care Inspectorate is undertaking a separate Inspection exercise in relation to Child Protection services. This supported self assessment is a multi-agency initiative and impacts on all areas of childcare practice. It will be facilitated across the shared service with Police, NHS and Education colleagues. This will be focused on:
- Immediate response
 - Planning for the Individual child
 - Assessment of Risk
 - Early and Effective Intervention
- 5.5 The approach will be one of self –evaluation where four groups will be facilitated to consider challenges, priorities and ultimately the creation of an action plan. These four resulting plans will provide the improvement agenda for multi-agency child protection provision moving forward and a formal report.
- 5.6 The proposed support from CELCIS is around the following areas:
This support will focus on the following areas:
- provision of casework support and mentoring to individual social workers
 - support for the implementation of GIRFEC practice and principles
 - review of permanence cases which have been drifting and support for taking these through the court processes

- review of the quality of supervision
- support the development of a whole system model for the journey of care experienced by a child on a path to permanence
- development of team-building exercises.

5.7 This and any other external support will be factored into the revised action plan which will be reported to Committee from the next cycle of meetings.

5.8 This additional assistance is very valuable, yet it is essential that the service is clear what any intervention from partners is contributing to the service achieving its goals. To this end the service is developing a strategic framework, to support the improvement plan that will outline intent, progress and accountable party.

6.0 Stakeholder Engagement

6.1 Contact has been made with all the solicitors involved in the initial complaint against the long-term team and invitations extended to meet and discuss the way forward

6.2 Discussions have started with the children's panel members to build improved relationships. Specific themes have been identified that will indicate the shape & rate of progress. A further meeting will take place in December to review progress.

6.3 A meeting is planned with senior management from NHS Forth Valley to ensure the improvement agenda is supported within the partnership

7.0 Sustainability Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Resource Implications

8.1 Finance - Council has been advised of the resource implications of additional investment in capacity (meeting of 11 October, 2012)

8.2 Staffing - the implications of additional staffing were set out in the report to the special meeting of Council

9.0 Exempt Reports

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

10.0 Declarations

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

(1) Our Priorities 2012 – 2015 (Please double click on the check box)

- The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses
- Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive
- People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment
- Our communities are safer
- Vulnerable people and families are supported
- Substance misuse and its effects are reduced
- Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing
- The environment is protected and enhanced for all
- The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

11.0 Equalities Impact

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

12.0 Legality

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

13.0 Appendices

- 13.1 i. High Level improvement Action Plan

14.0 Background Papers

- 14.1 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)

Full action plan with operational detail available on request

Author(s)

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
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Elaine McPherson	Chief Executive	Signed: E McPherson

Recommendation		Action	Lead	Review Date	Progress
1	Implementation of Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate training 	JM	August	A multi-agency training programme is underway, with a second run to support further trainers taking place in September. Briefings sessions and training re operational processes is also in place specifically within social services. This will allow for roll out to an increasingly number of childcare staff.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAF tool rollout 	VdS	December	Phased implementation commenced on 20 August 2012.
2	Tools for the Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of business process 	JM	December	A focussed improvement event is being planned to take place over a 3 day period across Sept / Oct 2012. The programme will focus initially on the child protection HUB and if this works well will be extended to other areas of Child Care / Social Services
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT review 	VdS	October	Council agreement to invest in new management information system in childcare further to business case.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of individual ICT needs 	JM	July	All teams have completed a survey outlining their technology needs. This information will inform the new models of working moving forward and will be fed into the corporate accommodation review regarding service needs. Service Managers have been reminded to alert staff that if laptops or mobile phones are required, appropriately, they can be requested immediately
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide child friendly premises 	JM	August	Room 7 in LTH has been fully furnished and equipped as a family contact room. A bigger room for family work is available at Alloa Family Centre. Other options are being considered in wider community premises. A full scope has been agreed for the move to Kilncraigs next year.
3	Workforce Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long Term Team capacity exercise to benchmark needs 	VdS	December	Report was considered by special council meeting in October when significant additional staffing was agreed. Work ongoing in the service to benchmark against other councils and to analyse demands on service.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit staff to meet shortfall already identified 	VdS	August	Interim Service Manager commenced in post on 6 August Second Team Leader commenced 27th August Two additional social workers appointed, start date Sept / Early Oct
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review structure of teams across the Shared Service 	VdS	September	Proposal drafted for Shared Service Project Board meeting in September> A stock take on Shared Services is being

					undertaken and the work on structures will recommence pending the outcome of this review.
4	Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey • Comprehensive workforce Development Plan • Specialised training, mentoring and coaching for areas where gaps are identified 	JM	June	Survey complete - results to feed into staff engagement plan The results have been broken down into each LA area and for specific teams. Issues will be addressed in specific team plans
			JM	September	Formal monitoring process being introduced. Focus on audit to ensure supervision policies are robustly adhered to. An outcome focussed shared service supervision model, based on Stirling's documentation is being rolled out.
			VdS	December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme agreed with British Association of Adoption and Fostering. • Specialist mentor to provide coaching to Team Managers and specialist staff is in place. • Regular clinic with legal staff in place to review and track Permanency Planning processes • Agreement being finalised CELCIS/Scottish Government with a view to providing additional support to staff e.g. possible co working cases (CELCIS - Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland)
5	Practice Standards and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Evaluation programme being established with input from BAAF and Care Inspectorate (CI) • Process being established to ensure learning from audit outcomes • Policy Review and update • Up skill Managers in relation to HR processes 	JM	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Care Inspectorate have introduced a quarterly scrutiny system to consider both service progress, but also that of the long term team. Link Inspector + approach will also start soon (monthly meeting with link inspector focusing on long term team issues) • multi-agency CP self evaluation process has been agreed considering immediate response, risk management, early and effective intervention and individual children's planning. This is planned for a 3m period - anticipated Sept - December 2012.
			JM	August	The children's service performance forum is developing well. Currently working on establishing a single service plan including improvement work and a service specific balanced scorecard. Clear expectations will be outlined and monitored by the strategy service.
			JM VdS	August	A process for this is yet to be developed due to operational imperatives
			VdS	September	Programme of Development Events to review roles and maximise capacity being established
					HR link strengthened and regular meetings established

6	Management Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership and role expectations clearly communicated Establish Long Term Team Plan to ensure managers demonstrate clear planning and decision making Put in place adequate support and training for Team Leaders 	<p>JM VdS</p> <p>JM VdS</p> <p>JM VDS</p>	<p>December</p> <p>September</p> <p>October</p>	<p>Outlined in core competencies through PRD framework, Delivery Strategy and Staff engagement Plan. A separate paper will be presented to Committee following assistance from corporate services to address competencies, professional staffing levels, recruitment and retention etc. This paper will inform the way forward. This work will offer an evidence base regarding future decisions.</p> <p>Plan in development through Service Performance Group - focus on strengthening approach to risk assessment and management This work will encompass all Child Care Teams</p> <p>Cycle of Development sessions being established. In addition a Practitioner Forum for Team Leaders is being developed. Training on core GIRFEC principles continues including core practice elements.</p>
7	Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Care Performance Forum will track improvement plans and monitor progress Annual Audit cycle to monitor service quality Review of Looked After Children Review process Review all Long Term Cases in order to Quality Assure 	<p>JM VdS</p> <p>JM</p> <p>VdS JM</p> <p>JM VdS</p>	<p>October</p> <p>July</p> <p>September</p> <p>September</p>	<p>In place and in development to suit service need.</p> <p>In place. Audit findings will be amalgamated with PSIF actions, Care Inspectorate recommendations etc into a single service plan</p> <p>Underway, activity to move to Strategy Service to build in objectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Pending cases complete - plan in place to address actions. Additional sessional / agency staff have been agreed to manage these cases as a matter of priority. It had been agreed that a "quality panel" would be established to offer peer discussion of cases and review process. It is preferable due to 1) level of other activity and 2) the current complex set of pressures review / postpone this action. Attention is being given to the long term cases through supervision / other supports outlined above meantime

8	Staff engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Delivery Strategy and communicate progress to staff 	VdS	December	Senior Management Away Day to Review Shared Service progress held in July, with wider Mgt team event in August. Delivery strategy has been reviewed. 2nd run of engagement events with the whole social services workforce scheduled. Feedback will again inform both the Delivery strategy and the staff engagement plan. An action plan is in place for the latter to ensure actions are progressed.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team meeting schedules established 	VdS	July	In place
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular structured supervision sessions held will all long term staff 	VdS JM	August	In place. Audit cycle to monitor quality, provide support and training and challenge practice in place
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny work drives learning and improved quality 	JM VdS	December	Scrutiny actions are embedded in service plans and monitored by the strategy service. Progress in overseen by the service performance group and driven by the childcare performance group. Service managers are accountable for actions being progressed within their own service areas - using the service plan as a reference point.
9	Partnership Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance corporate engagement 	VdS	December	Transparent approach through performance reporting to committee
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop external partnerships 	JM VdS	December	Build on existing good relationships to establish feedback to partners on progress in implementing improvements to long term work with looked after children Priority currently being given to key stakeholders - see below
10	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve service reputation 	JM VdS	December	Communications group established to work on service profile and promote successes Solicitors have been contacted and appts offered. Discussion underway with Children's Panel members to improve relations Meeting arranged with chair of the Fostering and Adoption Panel Regular meeting between CSWO and CS Police and NHS Snr Mgt

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders to mitigate damage • Report to Members 	<p>JM VdS</p> <p>VdS</p>	<p>September</p> <p>January</p>	<p>Specific event agreed with NHS managers to seek a shared way forward in meeting improvement actions</p> <p>Meetings with key stakeholders will be arranged as noted above</p> <p>Regular update to Housing, Health and Care Committee</p>
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