

**17 March 2014****Agenda Item: 4****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND  
CULTURAL SERVICES****OFSTED FRAMEWORK FOR INSPECTIONS OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN  
IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND  
CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEWS OF LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN  
BOARDS****Purpose of the Report**

1. To raise Members' awareness of the current inspection regime for children's services and to provide an update on preparation activity underway.

**Information and Advice**

2. In November 2013, Ofsted published a revised framework for inspecting children's services. The new framework covers services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. Within the scope of the inspection are adoption and fostering services, which were previously subject to separate inspection regimes. Four inspections under the new regime have now been completed and published, with a further seven known to be underway.
3. In terms of Nottinghamshire service provision, the key areas subject to scrutiny under the new framework will include early help (primarily the early help unit, the work of case holding professionals such as family support workers in children's centres and targeted support case managers, and some areas of support to children with special educational needs and disabilities) and all elements of children's social care. The inspection will focus on the extent to which services for children and families make a difference to their lives, and safeguard those children and young people who are the most vulnerable, including cohorts such as children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation, children living in households with domestic violence, parental substance misuse or mental health difficulties, and children not in full-time school education.
4. The inspection itself will take place over a four week period and will include the following activities:
  - scrutinising social care and early help case files
  - directly observing frontline practice including multi-agency meetings
  - interviewing children, young people, parents and carers
  - interviewing officers, elected Members and staff in partner agencies

- scrutinising a wide range of documentation including strategies, plans, performance and quality assurance information.
5. Judgements under the new framework will be made against four areas:
- Overall effectiveness, which is a cumulative judgement derived from:
  - The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
  - The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence including graded judgements on:
    - Adoption performance
    - the experiences and progress of care leavers.
  - leadership, management and governance.
6. Inspectors will make their judgements on a four point scale:
- outstanding
  - good
  - requires improvement
  - inadequate
7. Officers within Children, Families and Cultural Services have undertaken a self-assessment exercise to assess current strengths and areas for development within the key judgment areas. The outcome from the self-assessment exercise is reflected in the presentation to Committee that accompanies this report.

### **Other Options Considered**

8. No other options have been considered.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

9. It is important that Committee members understand the current regulatory framework and implications in terms of service provision.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Implications for Service Users**

11. Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to providing high quality services that deliver improved outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. The Ofsted inspection framework will test this, therefore it is important that due attention is given to this area.

## **Financial Implications**

12. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

13. Achieving a good inspection outcome would imply high quality services that safeguard children and young people.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the information provided on the current Ofsted inspection regime and the preparation activity for a future Ofsted inspection be noted.

**Anthony May**  
**Corporate Director, Children, Families and Cultural Services**

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## **Constitutional Comments**

14. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

## **Financial Comments (KLA 21/02/14)**

15. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspections of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers – Ofsted December 2013  
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-and-evaluation-schedule-for-inspection-of-services-for-children-need-of-help-and-protectio>

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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