

18 May 2015**Agenda Item: 11****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE****LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2015-18****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to invite the Committee to comment on the proposed Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy (attached as an **Appendix**) and recommend it to Policy Committee for approval at its meeting on 17 June 2015.

Information and Advice

2. The proposed Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy sets out the Council's ambition as Corporate Parents *to ensure our looked after children and care leavers have all the opportunities that good parents afford their children.*
3. The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 is a revision to the Looked After Children Strategy 2012-15. An evaluation of the previous strategy was undertaken in January 2015 which used statistical data, feedback from children and young people and information from partner agencies to identify areas where good progress has been made and areas where improvement is required.
4. The new strategy has been developed by the multi-agency Looked After Children Strategy Group which includes members from children's social care, education and health. The strategy has been influenced by the evaluation report, and local and national research. It aligns with the expectations set out by Ofsted in relation to looked after children and care leavers.
5. Looked after children and young people in Nottinghamshire have been consulted on a number of occasions as part of the development of the strategy. The Children in Care Council (No Labels) reviewed the strategy on 28 April 2015 and will also play a key role in monitoring and evaluation.
6. The 2015-18 strategy will drive improvement in six outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in Nottinghamshire:
 - looked after children and care leavers are happy and healthy
 - looked after children and care leavers are safe
 - looked after children and care leavers achieve their potential
 - looked after children and care leavers are prepared for adulthood

- looked after children and care leavers are listened to
 - looked after children and care leavers build positive relationships.
7. Progress is expected across all outcomes within the next three years. In order to ensure that the associated planned activity is realistic, deliverable and focused, the Looked After Children Strategy Group is developing an Annual Action Plan. This plan will be reviewed quarterly, and evaluated annually with input from looked after children and care leavers.
 8. The LAC Strategy Group will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Annual Action Plan. The Children in Care Council (No Labels) and the Children's Services Leadership Team will review progress on a quarterly basis.
 9. In addition there will regular reporting to the Health Safeguarding Committee and updates provided to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Trust. The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee will have ownership of the strategy and action plan.

Other Options Considered

10. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. To ensure the effective delivery of services which will drive the improvement of outcomes for looked after children and care leavers in Nottinghamshire within the resources available to the Council and its partners.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, 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.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications

13. The strategy and action plan seek to strengthen support and practice which will ensure looked after children and care leavers continue to be safeguarded.

Implications for Service Users

14. Looked after children and care leavers will benefit from improved services and multi-agency working aimed at improving outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Committee comments on the proposed Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2015-18 and recommends it to Policy Committee for approval at its meeting on 17 June.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 21/04/15)

15. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (SS 24/04/15)

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

Background Papers and Published Documents

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.

Looked After Children Strategy 2012-15

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0619