


<p style="text-align: center;"><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>25 APRIL 2016</b></p>	
<p><b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification:</b> For Information <b>Key Decision:</b> No</p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected:</b> All</p>	
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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides a brief overview of recent developments of relevance to the Children's Services department for members of the Policy and Accountability Committee to consider.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report

## SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING

### 3. OFSTED INSPECTION OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF HELP AND PROTECTION, LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & CARE LEAVERS AND REVIEW OF THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

- 3.1. At previous meetings of the Committee, Members were updated about the inspection which was announced on 11 January 2016 and concluded on 4 February. The report following the inspection was published on 29 March 2016.

- 3.2. Ofsted's judgement regarding the overall effectiveness of children's services in Hammersmith & Fulham was that they were "good". Ofsted made sub-judgements about adoption performance and leadership, management and governance which were both found to be "outstanding".
- 3.3. The overall effectiveness judgement was a cumulative judgement derived from:
- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection which were judged to be "good".
  - the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence were also judged to be "good". This was informed by two graded judgements on:
    - adoption performance which was judged to be "outstanding"
    - the experiences and progress of care leavers which were judged to be "good"
  - leadership, management and governance were judged to be "outstanding".
- 3.4. In addition, there was a separate judgement following a review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB), which was found by Ofsted to be "good". The LSCB was one of 31% of LSCBs to have been judged to be good by Ofsted under this inspection framework.
- 3.5. While inspection grades tend to have a degree of subjective judgement about them, it is worth noting that Ofsted's assessment of Hammersmith & Fulham ranks local services as being 3rd equal out of 89 local authorities that have been inspected so far. Of these inspections, the borough is one of 23 or 26% which have been judged to be good or better. 49% were judged to "require improvement" while 26% were found to be "inadequate". Hammersmith & Fulham is one of 7 or 8% of authorities nationally to have both adoption performance and leadership, management and governance to be judged as "outstanding".
- 3.6. Six recommendations were made for the local authority in the report:
- Collate information drawn from return home interviews of children who go missing from home to identify patterns and trends and assist disruption activity.
  - Review out of hours arrangements to ensure that children and young people are offered a standard of practice consistent with daytime services.
  - Ensure that children who are subject to the child protection process have access to a suitable independent advocate if they want one, to help them make their views known and understood, and inform decisions about their life.
  - Ensure that assessments and care plans for children looked after are updated following significant events.
  - Improve the quality of the minority of pathway plans that are not yet good, so that outcomes are improved and the results of actions can be assessed more effectively.
  - Increase the number and range of apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers to reduce further the proportion who are not involved in education, training or employment.

3.7. An action plan has subsequently been developed to ensure these recommendations are addressed.

3.8. Meanwhile the review of the LSCB resulted in 5 recommendations as follows:

- Review the extensive dataset to ensure that it is aligned to the board's priorities.
- Devise a system for ensuring that actions arising from data scrutiny are carried out in the individual boroughs.
- Ensure that recommendations from multi-agency themed audits are carried out and analyse their impact on improving practice.
- Develop an overarching SCR action plan to track the progress of work arising from individual case reviews.
- Devise a system to escalate concerns about infrequent partnership attendance at the board.

3.9. These recommendations, where not already addressed, will be responded to through the LSCB's 2016/17 Safeguarding Plan.

#### **4. PARTNERS IN PRACTICE**

4.1. The Department for Education (DfE) have invited Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster to be part of a new initiative called 'Partners in Practice'. Over the next three to four years, the DfE aim to work with up to 10 local authorities as "exemplars" to improve understanding of "what works".

4.2. The programme will inform developments to reform the social work practice system, promote professional confidence and autonomy at all levels and equip more front line staff and managers to be effective. The initiative will include some freedoms and flexibilities for participating authorities if these can be shown to overcome barriers to improved practice.

4.3. Work will take place with the DfE to identify what practice is effective and why as well as providing practice models and advice for other local authorities to follow. We believe this initiative will help build on our significant Focus on Practice programme, demonstrating good practice that is emerging from this.

#### **COMMISSIONING**

#### **5. SCHOOL MEALS**

5.1. Contractors submitted final bids for the provision of meals at Hammersmith & Fulham Schools on 8th of February 2016. School representatives, as well as council officers have evaluated and moderated the bids leading to Eden being awarded the contract to deliver school meals for Lot 1 (Nursery, Primary, and Special schools) and Caterlink being awarded the contract for Lot 2 (secondary school establishments). The contract is for three years, with the option to extend

for a further two years. Mobilisation has recently commenced and the contract is due to go-live on the 6th June.

- 5.2. Eden and Caterlink both demonstrated their commitment to social value within their tender submissions. They committed to providing a total of 22 apprenticeships (across the two contracts) and maximising local employment throughout the contract. They also committed to developing the local community through the provision of cooking classes and a kitchen garden.
- 5.3. The new specification looks to ensure that the meals continue to be delivered the highest possible standard both in terms of the food cooked and prepared and the skill and consistency of kitchen staff. This includes providing a diverse menu to cater for all cultural and dietary needs.
- 5.4. The contract is expected to deliver over 8,000 meals to 34 nursery, primary and special schools and 8 secondaries each day.

## **6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONFERENCE**

- 6.1. Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Public Health held a successful Conference for staff on 26 February 2016. The theme of the conference was promoting mental health awareness and wellbeing in the workplace. It was attended by over 200 staff. Anecdotal feedback was positive and a more formal evaluation is now taking place. A film to be used in ongoing training of staff was also produced on the day.

## **7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

- 7.1. I will be retiring from the role of Executive Director of Children's Services in May 2016 and have previously updated the Committee about progress with recruiting my successor.
- 7.2. Shortlisted candidates have been interviewed by officers, with plans in place for more recent elected member panel interviews and I will update the Committee on any more recent progress at CEPAC.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate legal implications. However any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, here are no immediate legal implications. However any legal issues will be highlighted in

any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **10. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate financial and resource implications. However any financial and resource issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000** **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

None.