

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Cabinet

### Date: 11 September 2017

#### ITEM 6(g)

Action Plan resulting from  
the Ofsted Inspection of  
Children's Services

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area:

Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding

Responsible Officer:

Jacqui Old, Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Tel 0191 643 7317

Wards affected:

All

## PART 1

### 1.1 Executive Summary:

Between 27 February 2017 and 23 March 2017 North Tyneside Council's services for children were inspected by Ofsted as part of their national inspection programme. Ofsted published their findings by way of Report on 13 June 2017. Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of children's services in North Tyneside to be 'Good', placing the Authority within the top ten performing Children's Services within the country.

Ofsted made seven formal recommendations to the Authority about areas for development. All areas were known to the Cabinet Members and Officers and improvement work was on-going at the point of inspection. The Authority is required to provide an 'Action Plan' relating to the recommendations for approval by the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, no later than 20 September 2017.

### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

Note and approve the proposed Action Plan to address the recommendations of the Ofsted Inspection of North Tyneside's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

### 1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this Report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 14 August 2017.

### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

The Our North Tyneside Plan states that 'Our people will':

- Be listened to, and involved by responsive, enabling services
- Be ready for school – giving our children and their families the best start in life
- Be ready for work and life – with the skills and abilities to achieve their full potential, economic independence and meet the needs of local businesses
- Be healthy and well – with the information, skills and opportunities to maintain and improve their health, wellbeing and independence
- Be cared for and safeguarded if they become vulnerable

The Ofsted Inspection of the Authority's services for children confirmed the quality and performance of Children's Services contribution to these priorities. The Inspection highlighted seven areas for development to improve services further. This Report and appended Action Plan details how the Authority will deliver these improvements.

## **1.5 Information:**

### Background to the Inspection

Between 27 February 2017 and 23 March 2017 North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers were inspected by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) as part of their national inspection programme.

The inspection took place over a four week period. The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Ofsted and three additional inspectors. The inspection team were onsite for fifteen working days and read case files, observed staff working with children and families and other professionals and discussed with staff and safeguarding partners the help and care given to children and young people. They also talked directly to children, young people and their families.

The Inspection focused on the overall effectiveness of services based upon judgments about:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection;
- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence;
- adoption performance;
- the experiences and progress of care leavers; and
- leadership, management and governance.

### Outcome of Inspection

Ofsted published their findings by way of Report on 13 June 2017. Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of children's services in North Tyneside to be 'Good'. Ofsted define this grading as being achieved when inspectors find work of good quality, with some outstanding elements and which is delivering measurably improved outcomes. This overall judgment was based on the following findings:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection were judged to be 'Good';
- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence were judged to be 'Good';
- adoption performance was judged to be 'Good'; and
- leadership, management and governance was judged to be 'Good'.

Ofsted judged the experiences and progress of care leavers in North Tyneside to be 'Outstanding'. Ofsted define this grading as being achieved when inspectors find work of the highest quality which is delivering improved outcomes that exceed expectations.

Alongside these very positive findings, Ofsted formally identified seven recommended areas for development. All areas were known to Officers and improvement work was on-going at the point of inspection. The recommendations were:

1. Ensure that assessments are regularly updated to reflect the changing needs of children and that they fully consider children's identities, contingencies and research.
2. Ensure that support to children who are privately fostered is timely, managed well and effectively meets the needs of children.
3. Improve the timeliness with which designated officers complete investigations.
4. Improve the oversight of IRO's (Independent Review Officers) of the progress of plans between child protection conferences and between children looked after reviews, and evidence this on the child's records.
5. Ensure that life story work and later life letters are of consistently good quality and completed in a timely way to ensure that children and their adopters have a clear understanding of a child's history in preparation for placement and for later life understanding.
6. Ensure that supervision for all staff is consistently of good quality because it is reflective, directive, regular and well recorded.
7. Ensure that actions identified as a result of audits are specific and measurable and have timescales.

The Authority is required to submit copies of the Authority's Action Plan to address these recommendations to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector no later than 20 September 2017.

#### **1.6 Decision options:**

The following options are available for consideration by Cabinet

##### Option 1

Cabinet accepts the recommendations set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

##### Option 2

Cabinet does not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above and requests that Officers revise and amend the proposed Action Plan.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

#### **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

The Action Plan will enable the delivery of the seven formal recommendations by Ofsted following their inspection of the Authority's services for children. The Action Plan is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-limited and will improve services for vulnerable children and young people within the Borough.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

- i. Ofsted Report on the Inspection of North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board published 13 June 2017
- ii. North Tyneside Council Post-Inspection Action Plan

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Jacqui Old, Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (0191) 643 7317  
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## **1.10 Background Information**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author. This report is appended and is also available electronically at:

- [Ofsted Report - Inspection of Children's Services](#).

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

There are no financial implications as a result of implementing the proposed Action Plan. The Action Plan will be delivered from within the existing resources allocated to Children, Young People and Learners.

### **2.2 Legal**

The inspection of North Tyneside Council by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) was carried out under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The Authority is required to submit copies of the post inspection action plan to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector no later than 20 September 2017 (The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007).

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

The Action Plan has been produced following consultation with key stakeholders.

## 2.4 Human rights

There are no direct human rights issues arising from this Report and appended Action Plan.

## 2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct issues of equality and diversity arising from this Report and appended Action Plan.

## 2.6 Risk management

The Ofsted Inspection of North Tyneside Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers focused on the management of risk to children and young people. The Report identified seven areas for development. It is a requirement that the Authority produce an Action Plan for agreement by Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. The Plan will need to be delivered to improve services for vulnerable children and young people within the Borough.

## 2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues arising from this report.

## 2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability issues arising from this report.

## PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head(s) of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy