

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Corporate Director for
People

to

People Scrutiny Committee

on

12th July 2016

Report prepared by: John O'Loughlin, Head of Children's
Services

Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the LSCB

Executive Councillor: Councillor Courtenay
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the People Scrutiny Committee of the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

To advise the Committee of the actions taken to date in response to the outcome of the Inspection and Review and of actions which are planned.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the findings of the Inspection and Review.
- 2.2 To note that an Improvement Plan is being prepared and will be submitted to Cabinet on 20th September 2016.

3. Background

- 3.1 Ofsted inspected Children's Services over a 4 week period from 26th April to 19th May 2016. A team of 10 inspectors undertook the inspection and were on site for 9 days across the 4 week period. The Inspection was based on the Ofsted single inspection framework which covers all service areas from Early Help, First Contact (referrals), Children in Need, Children subject to Child Protection Plans, Looked after Children and Care Leavers, Fostering and Adoption services.
- 3.2 The inspection team gave initial feedback on their Inspection findings on 19th May. Their findings were then moderated and a draft report was shared with the Corporate Director for People on Friday 17th June. A number of factual inaccuracies were identified, some of which were accepted by Ofsted. The final report was published on 7th July 2016 and a copy is attached at **Appendix 1**.

- 3.3 To date 99 local authorities have been inspected under this new inspection framework and 24% have been judged as inadequate, 51% requires improvement, 23% good and 2% outstanding (as at 30th June).

The report sets out the key judgements on Southend Children's Services as: "Overall, Children's services in Southend-on-Sea require improvement to be good". Individual judgements were:

1. Children who need help and protection - Requires improvement (nationally 57% rated as requires improvement).
 2. Children looked after & achieving permanence - Requires improvement (nationally 56% rated as requires improvement).
 - 2.1 Adoption performance – Good (nationally 46% rated as good).
 - 2.2 Experiences and progress of care leavers – Good (nationally 33% rated as good).
 3. Leadership, management and governance - Requires improvement (nationally 49% rated as requires improvement).
- 3.4 The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) was also reviewed during the inspection and deemed to require improvement. (See pages 34 - 39 of the Report at **Appendix 1.**)
- 3.5 Within 70 working days of the publication date of the final Report the Council is required to submit a post-inspection Improvement Plan to the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (**The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007**). The last submission date will be **14 October 2016**.
- 3.6 The Improvement Plan will now be prepared to address the issues identified by the Inspection and Review and to meet the Council's aspiration of being a good/outstanding authority. Support and challenge for this process will be provided by the Eastern Region Sector Lead Improvement advisor and consultation will be undertaken with key partners in the LSCB. The Improvement Plan will be presented to Cabinet on 20th September 2016.

The Improvement Plan will be overseen by an Improvement Board consisting of senior Members, officers and key partners to ensure robust delivery

- 3.7 During and after the inspection, action has already been taken in relation to a number of areas:
- the early help and social care front doors are now co-located;
 - increased audit activity of decisions to take no further action on contacts, together with management oversight;
 - The timescales for Section 47 processes (child protection investigations) have been corrected; and
 - additional management oversight is being provided to decision making at point of referral.

4. Background Papers

None

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 Southend Final report - Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the LSCB