

Council Report

Improving Lives Select Commission – Tuesday 12th September 2017

Title

Scrutiny Review – Alternative Management Arrangements for Children’s Service in Rotherham

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Director Approving Submission of the Report

Chief Executive

Report author(s):

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

The scrutiny report (attached as Appendix 1) presents the latest analysis and current thinking of the Improving Lives Select Commission’s cross-party review group on the range of Alternative Management Arrangements (AMAs) for children’s services. It evaluates the relative strengths and challenges of the primary options available to the Council. The paper then provides initial recommendations for future management arrangements.

Recommendations

- 1) That Improving Lives Select Commission approve the report and recommendations as outlined in Section 11 of Appendix 1;
- 2) That Improving Lives Select Commission forward the scrutiny review to Cabinet and Commissioners for their consideration;
- 3) That the response of Cabinet and Commissioners be fed back to this Committee.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Review - Alternative Management Arrangements for Children’s Service in Rotherham

Annex 1 – Full Option Appraisal

Annex 2 – Terms of Reference and background information

Annex 3 – Isos Partnership: 2nd Workshop Summary

Annex 4 – Letters from Partners

Annex 5 – Children and Young People's Plan

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Cabinet/Commissioner's Meeting 16th October 2017

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review – Alternative Management Arrangements for Children’s Service in Rotherham

1 Recommendations

- 1) That Improving Lives Select Commission approve the report and recommendations as outlined in Section 11, Appendix 1;
- 2) That Improving Lives Select Commission forward the scrutiny review to Cabinet and Commissioners for their consideration;
- 3) That the response of Cabinet and Commissioners be fed back to this Committee.

2 Background

2.1 The scrutiny review underpinning this report has been undertaken by cross-party members of the Improving Lives Select Commission. In October 2016, (former) Lead Commissioner Sir Derek Myers wrote to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Chris Read, and the Chief Executive, Sharon Kemp, commending the Government’s policy paper “Putting Children First” (Department for Education, 2016). The publication sets out a challenge to all councils to think about how they can make and sustain improvements across children’s services, including considering alternative delivery models or management arrangements.

3 Key Issues

3.1 This report presents the latest analysis and current thinking of the Improving Lives Select Commission on the range of Alternative Management Arrangements (AMAs)¹ for children’s services which might secure the long-term success of Rotherham’s Children and Young People’s Services. It evaluates the relative strengths and challenges of the primary options available to the Council and provides initial recommendations for future management arrangements.

3.2 The review concluded that a Practice Partner model would secure the most rapid and sustainable improvements in the short term (two years) and present the lowest risk to the Improvement journey. In particular, its evidence suggested that the Practice Partner model will:

- Establish the right balance of political ownership, oversight and accountability for CYPS at the same time as rigorous external challenge;
- Enable the good progress being made on the improvement programme to continue at an accelerated pace with minimal disruption to partners, wider council priorities or management focus; and
- Avoid high transition and operating costs associated with each of the AMAs and enable spend to be focused on front line delivery.

3.3 It is acknowledged that the peer practice partner model is by definition temporary. Once there is consistent good quality front-line practice, the Council will actively consider other options to work with others through integration, collaboration or further commissioning if this would secure more rapid and sustainable improvement.

¹ The review defined alternative management arrangements as the delivery of children’s services other than through traditional in-house local authority services. For example creating a new entity (i.e. trust) that will take operational responsibility for delivering children’s services or whereby some or all of children’s service(s) are provided by an existing entity or entities.

4 Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 An option appraisal was undertaken to provide an objective analysis of the range of alternative management arrangements available to the Council. It evaluates the relative strengths and challenges of these options. This is detailed in Section 8 of the report, with the full option appraisal attached as Annex 1.
- 4.2 The options appraisal recommended that a Practice Partner model would secure the most rapid and sustainable improvements (as outlined in para 3.2).

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The views of Improvement Board partners and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) were sought on this preferred option. Each partner supported the continuation of the Practice Partner model and agreed that it was likely to secure better and sustainable outcomes for children and young people in Rotherham.

6 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 For ongoing discussion with the Commissioner for Children's Services.

7 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The following criteria were considered as part of the option appraisal:
- Provide a sustainable, long term platform for high quality children's services in Rotherham;
 - Avoid significant and avoidable detrimental costs, for example, the treatment of VAT; and
 - Avoid protracted and complex negotiations that may be a distraction from the improvement journey (e.g. treatment of overhead/recharge).
- 7.2 Whilst there would be significant financial and procurement implications that would require careful consideration should there be a future decision on the adoption of alternative management arrangements, these are difficult to quantify at this time. However the preferred option would secure the most rapid and sustainable improvements in the short term (two years) and would avoid high transition and operating costs associated with each of the other options and enable spend to be focused on front line delivery.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report. There would be significant legal implications that would require careful consideration should there be a future decision on the adoption of alternative management arrangements.

9 Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 The following criteria were considered as part of the option appraisal and the preferred option scored most highly in this area:
- Builds on the progress made in recruitment and retention;
 - Ensure that quality staff are attracted to and stay in Rotherham;

- Facilitate ongoing investment in the development of CYPS staff;
- Engage staff throughout the improvement journey.

10 Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The review considered which model would secure the most rapid and sustainable improvements in the short term (two years) and present the lowest risk to the Improvement journey of CYPS. The specific considerations for Rotherham in any AMA are:

- Recognising the additional effort required to ensuring continued organisational ownership of a whole family approach;
- Clarifying additional pathways and relationships that maybe required to retain connections between critical services such as Adult Services;
- Consideration to budget/demand challenge and mechanisms to ensure continued prioritisation/flexibility.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 The preferred option would not require any additional equality impact assessment.

12 Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 See 5.1.

13 Risks and Mitigation

13.1 See option appraisal (Section 8 of the report, with the full option appraisal attached as Annex 1)

14 Accountable Officer(s)

14.1 Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive

Approvals Obtained from:

Assitant Director of Finance and Customer Services: Graham Saxton

Service Manager - Litigation and Social Care: Neil Concannon

Head of Procurement (if appropriate): N/A

Name and Job Title. Caroline Webb Senior Adviser (Scrutiny and Member Development)

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