

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Corporate Improvement Board
2.	Date:	15 th January 2007
3.	Title:	Joint Area Review
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People's Service

5. Summary:

The Joint Area Review of the Children and Young People's Service took place in May and June of 2006. The draft report was received from the Inspectors in July but the results of the review were strictly embargoed until 9th October. The results are now published and this report covers the highlights of the findings. The full report is available on the Council's website: www.rotherham.gov.uk.

6. Recommendations:

That the Corporate Improvement Board receive the report.

7. Proposals and Details:

Although the results are good and there are very few recommendations, we have made a firm commitment to broader improvements and have used the detail of the grade descriptors to develop a Grade 4 Plan. Work is being undertaken towards achieving this, some of which may be medium to longer term. However, the rule of thumb is that the grade can be achieved if at least 80% of the descriptors can be met and evidenced. It may therefore be possible to achieve improved grades in some of the outcome areas in time for the 2007 Annual Performance Assessment. The Inspection recommendations will be implemented within the required timescales and work is already ongoing as these areas for improvement had been identified in our self assessment.

The grades we have been awarded are as follows:

Grades awarded: 4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall	Council services	Health services
Being healthy	3		
Staying safe	3		
Enjoying and achieving	3		
Making a positive contribution	3		
Achieving economic well-being	3		
Service management	3		
Capacity to improve	3	3	
Children's services		3	
The education service		3	
The social care services for children		3	
The health service for children			3

The recommendations are as follows:

For immediate action

- Improve information and access to services for young carers, so that more young carers can benefit from provision and all relevant agencies understand their needs.

For action over the next six months

- Ensure more timely access for non-urgent paediatric occupational therapy cases.
- Improve the timescales for completing core assessments of children in need.
- Improve participation rates in post-16 education.
- Ensure borough-wide post-16 education and training options meets the needs of all young people, including young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and young people who have offended.
- Reduce the number of changes of social workers for children who are looked after by the council.

For action in the longer term

- Ensure voluntary sector provision is part of a wider commissioning strategy.
- Improve the range of carers who offer placements to children who are looked after by the council, so that their varied needs are met.

8. Finance:

There are likely to be financial implications to achieving some of the measures, however, we may also gain some efficiencies through further integration.

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

There are risks and uncertainties about the grade descriptors and whether all of these can be achieved within the allocated resources.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

The Joint Area Review fed into the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment. We are required to complete and return an action plan to Ofsted within 70 working days.

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

Joint Area Review inspection report

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