

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Select Committee - Self Regulation</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> September 2011</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Children’s Peer Challenge October 2011</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executives, Commissioning, Policy and Performance</b>

### 5. Summary

Children and Young People’s Services will be undergoing a Peer Challenge facilitated by Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

A set up meeting was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 with representatives from LGID at which there was an early indication of the areas that would be covered.

- The effectiveness of the delivery and commissioning of early intervention services and the use of CAF , thresholds and effectiveness
- How the council and its partners can learn from and improve the service user experience
- An independent perspective on our approach to improving Key Stage 2 results.
- Review the effectiveness of the multi-agency resource panel in relation to Out of Authority Placements and value for money.

### 6. Recommendations

- (i) That members accept this report.
- (ii) That members receive the final report following the conclusion of the challenge.

## 7. Proposals and Details

Safeguarding Children Peer Challenges are facilitated by the Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID), these are not inspections but a supportive and challenging approach to assist councils and their partners in celebrating strengths and identifying jointly areas for improvement. These challenges are now forming very much part of the Coalition Government's thoughts on sector led improvement.

As part of the removal of the Notice to Improve in January 2011 it was suggested by the Intervention Team of the Department for Education that we take part in such a review to ensure that the improved direction of travel continues around the particular areas for improvement and further added independent challenge that a peer review would bring.

A set up meeting was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 to commence the process which will lead to the peer challenge taking place from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> October. Discussions took place around key areas for the challenge and the four key areas were agreed.

- The effectiveness of the delivery and commissioning of early intervention services and the use of CAF , thresholds and effectiveness
- How the council and its partners can learn from and improve the service user experience
- An independent perspective on our approach to improving Key Stage 2 results.
- Review the effectiveness of the multi-agency support panel in relation to Out of Authority Placements and value for money.

Generally these peer challenges from the LGID are safeguarding focussed, but the review team will look at facilitating a Key Stage 2 attainment element to give an independent view of the work that has been taking place around this specific issue in Rotherham over the past few years

There are a series of deliverables which have to be in place prior to the review commencing which need to be complete and submitted by the second week in September, some of which are included in this report.

- Reading list – documents including LSCB business plan, Children and Young People's Plan, OFSTED Performance Profile, child protection procedures etc and in particular the framework for analysing the documents.
- A Key Lines of Enquiry document needs to be agreed and populated based on the additional themes agreed jointly with the challenge team.
- A data sheet which includes key safeguarding and child protection statistics

Other key pieces of work are:

- Case mapping group exercise – a small group of partners will conduct a case file mapping exercise, members of the RSCB are taking part in this exercise.
- Results from a survey of partners – a wide range of partners will complete a self-evaluation questionnaire
- A timetable is required for the challenge team detailing all interviews and visits taking place during the challenge week

The LGID will convene a team to deliver the challenge representing a variety of backgrounds and expertise from an integrated children's sector, typically comprising of: Director of Children's Services, lead member, operational manager or senior social worker, a NHS manager/practitioner plus the peer challenge manager and analyst ( LGID staff). It is intended that the team leader will be Helen Jenner, Director of Children's Services in Barking and Dagenham ( who has an Education background)

The council have nominated a Challenge Sponsor ( Joyce Thacker – Strategic Director of Children's Services) and a Challenge Organiser ( Sue Wilson – Performance and Quality Manager)

#### **8. Finance**

The LGID now carry out the peer challenges free of charge, there will however be some costs associated with refreshments etc for the reviewers during the on site week, details will be kept of all costs incurred and to attempts will be made to keep these minimal.

#### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Clarity in relation to the scope of the review will develop over the coming weeks as part of the development of the Key Lines of Enquiry document. The completed report will be shared with partners involved in the challenge as well as the Department for Education, but will not feed into any formal OFSTED Children's Services Assessments ratings, however it could be used as evidence with OFSTED to demonstrate our continued direction of travel.

#### **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Although not a mandatory requirement in the letter from Tim Loughton MP in January 2011, there is an expectation that Rotherham take part in a peer challenge and that results are forwarded onto the DfE for their information.

#### **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

- Staff briefing note
- Document analysis framework
- Safeguarding / child protection data sheet
- Key Lines of Enquiry for additional areas for challenge

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