

Cabinet Member Responses to Recommendations

Agenda item	Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee (CYPSSC) recommendations (30 June 2021)	Response
Children First Improvement Update	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlights that Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing is a key area of concern and the Committee will consider, with HASC, how scrutiny can be taken forward of this issue. 2. That areas of focus for future Children First Improvement Update reports be considered by the Committee's Business Planning Group to help provide evidence and assurance that steady progress continues to be made on the improvement journey. Areas for consideration to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcomes of the recent Ofsted Monitoring visit and areas highlighted by the recent Commissioner update, for example consistent social work practice. • The Social Work Retention offer and the impact this is having on reducing social worker turnover for children. • Any examples of evidence and/or modelling being presented to the Commissioner and Ofsted to demonstrate the progress the service is making. • Monitoring the progress of cultural change within the service to improve the quality of service to residents. 	<p>Response from Cabinet Member for Children and Young People</p> <p>The service recognises the impact of the pandemic on children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health and are working with partners and schools to provide continued support and resources for young people and their parents and carers.</p> <p>Point two is acknowledged and agreed. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is committed to continue to provide updates to the Committee on the progress of the Children First Improvement Programme.</p> <p><i>The Committee's Business Planning Group considered both of these items on 10 September 2021, updates to which are outlined in the Committee's work programme contained within Item 8 on this agenda.</i></p>

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Fostering Initiative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agrees and welcomes the fostering service review and asks to be kept updated on the impact phase 1 is having on foster carer recruitment and retention. 2. Requests that members are involved in the phase 2 service review as it develops and that a further item is brought to the Committee following the review to consider the findings and proposed improvements to the service and how these will provide an improved service for children and foster carers. 3. Welcomes the improving picture of the court processes following the pandemic and agrees for the Chairman to speak with Service officers and the Cabinet Member to explore how the Committee can assist in lobbying government to further improve this service. 	<p>Response from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:</p> <p>Early evidence on the impact of phase 1 of the fostering initiative to increase allowances for foster carers caring for multiple children continues to demonstrate a positive picture as follows:</p> <p>The dataset below represents a direct comparison for April - August 20 and April - August 21.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique visitors to the Council's fostering website have increased by 76% • Fostering enquiries have increased by 36% • Generic fostering placement approvals have increased by 33% • Transfer requests (Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) & other Local Authorities) have increased by 140% • 26 new fostering assessment are underway - an increase of 47% • Approvals for 2+ children have increased by 400% • Approximately 60% of current applicants being assessed are in their 40s, which represents a younger cohort of foster carers coming into the service <p>The Service continues to work on the development of phase 2 of the Fostering Initiative and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People welcomes that the Committee will review the proposals in early 2022 and that it is included on the Committee's work programme.</p>

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		The service and the Cabinet Member continue to lobby the government on the importance of a timely court process and will discuss with the Chairman of CYPSSC on how the Committee can assist with this.