

Committees: Safeguarding Sub Committee	Dated: 02/05/2018
Subject: Service Improvement Plan and Ofsted Improvement	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
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Summary

The Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was fully refreshed for April 2017 – March 2018. This update covers the period December 2017 to February 2018.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Background

1. The actions are 'RAG' rated, with red meaning 'fully stuck', amber meaning 'more work needed or resolvable issue in sight', and green meaning 'in progress, no barriers to continuing'.
2. The anticipated challenges with service improvement presented to the last board were around change management with staffing in the Children's Social Care and Early Help Service and increased caseloads due to an unusually high number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs) presenting within the City of London within a short time period. The last period has been managed well with the team now fully staffed following the recent return of a full-time senior social worker after a period of maternity leave.

Current Position

3. Three of the four action points that were flagging as amber and 'in need of particular attention' at the last board are now 'in process with no obvious barriers to continuing': Priority 2 – action point 2.11, Priority 4 – action point 4.9 and Ofsted recommendation 3.2.

4. It is positive that 10 actions previously rated as 'in process' are now complete: Priority 1 – action point 1.5, Priority 2 – action point 2.12; Priority 4 – action points 4.11 and 4.12, Ofsted recommendation 2 – action points 2.4, 2.12, A5.1, and A7, Ofsted recommendation 3 – action point 4.5 and Ofsted recommendation 4 – action point 7.1.
5. Following the last Service Improvement Board meeting on 6 March 2018, it was agreed that all recommendations and learning from recent audits and Serious Case Reviews would be added to the SIP as appropriate. The Children's Services Manager and QA Service Manager will take this forward.
6. The SIP also contains the full Ofsted Action Plan. The plan is a live tool that seeks to build continuous improvement into the work of the service. If evidence emerges through quality assurance / audit, performance information or service user feedback that there needs to be new targeted work on aspects of the plan that may have previously been identified as Blue or Green, these areas will be re-prioritised accordingly to ensure that improvement is continuously monitored and that the SIP is not frozen but is a dynamic tool to drive up standards on a sustainable basis. This approach helps to inform our ongoing process of self-evaluation.
7. There are six main recommendations in the Ofsted Action Plan, with the majority of actions for each completed. The external audit in November 2017 identified that work needs to be undertaken to ensure that all plans are consistently SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time specific) , child focused and measurable. As such, it was agreed that Ofsted action point 1.4 should be changed from 'completed' to 'in process' to enable the impact of training and targeted improvement work regarding plans to be evidenced. Alongside this , the associated Practice Standards require revision and as such Ofsted action point 2.3, has also changed to 'in process'.
8. Positively there is just one action point now classed as amber:
 - Common Assessment Framework completion by partner agencies remains low.

The Early Help Coordinator reports that there have been consistent challenges encouraging and enabling senior health and education managers to complete CAFs. A task and finish group, therefore, has been established to look at alternative ways to facilitate this process. At the same time, referrals are increasing from partners, as is engagement in contributing to CAF assessments. This is primarily because the new Early Help worker encourages involvement as an essential part of the process. CAF audits are about to begin which should provide evidence of this increased involvement and of the difference it makes.

Conclusion

9. The Service Improvement Plan for 2017/18 has informed and guided significant progress across all service areas in the last year and is now in the process of being signed off. A full review and refresh is currently taking place to remove all the completed actions (blue) and consider all those remaining in progress (green). If necessary, these will be added to the new plan for 2018/19. In addition new action points will be added, taking into account learning and recommendations from external audits, thematic audits, case reviews, research and the Children and Families Survey. As such, the SIP will continue to be a key driver in helping the service to measure its key performance and development areas.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Service Improvement Plan

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