

## **Cabinet – 25 July 2012**

### **Response to the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel working Group report - Safeguarding Services for Disabled Children**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Rachel Andrew

**Service:** Children’s Services

**Wards:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Forward plan:** No

#### **1. Summary**

Cabinet at its meeting on 20 June received and noted the report and recommendations of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel working party on safeguarding services for disabled children. This report responds to the recommendations of the working group.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet accept the recommendations of the working group.
- 2.2 That the recommendations be incorporated into the ‘working smarter for disabled children change programme’ which is being established following the transition of the disability service to the council. This will be informed by the findings of the recent Ofsted inspection of children’s services once received.

#### **3. Report detail**

- 3.1 During the last municipal year the children and young people scrutiny panel convened a working party to review safeguarding services to disabled children. The working group’s activity included meeting with parents whose children access disability services. Members of the working group also undertook visits to two residential homes, while also receiving guidance on a new build facility for disabled children.

The working group report was presented by Councillor Cassidy to the Children’s and Young People Panel at its meeting on 8 March 2012. The Panel voted unanimously to endorse the report and to recommend to Cabinet the proposals as set-out in the report specifically that:

- Officers commissioning or delivering services ensure that appropriate consultation with disabled children and their parents informs decisions;

- Officers continue to support groups for parents with disabled children;
  - The outcome of the working group's work is shared with parents;
  - Children's Services and other council services, including adult social care, work effectively to effect smooth transitions when children reach the age of eighteen;
  - Further attention be paid to the training of helpers and volunteers working with children with a disability to create a more consistent workforce;
- 3.2 The children's disability service has recently transferred to the council from Children's Services SERCO as part of phase one of the education transition programme. A review of services is taking place and the subsequent change programme will be informed by the recommendations of the scrutiny working party and the recent Ofsted inspection.

#### **4. Council priorities**

- 4.1 Health and wellbeing – services to children and young people, informed by the findings of the scrutiny working party will support improved safety and promote health and wellbeing of disabled children and their families
- 4.2 Communities and neighbourhoods – improved services will ensure that disabled children can be supported to become positive contributors to their communities and will help promote community integration and cohesion.

#### **5. Risk management**

None associated with this report

#### **6. Financial implications**

Any financial implications of service improvement will be managed as part of the medium term financial plan

#### **7. Legal implications**

Section 17 of the children Act 2004 requires local authorities to provide support to children in need and their families.

#### **8. Property implications**

The council is currently re-providing a short break and support centre as part of its capital programme.

**9. Staffing implications**

None

**10. Equality implications**

Providing good quality and flexible support to disabled children will help improve their life chances and will contribute to the council's equality strategy.

**11. Consultation**

Parents staff and children and young people have been consulted by both the disability services and the working group and their views will inform service planning and development.

**Background papers**

The children and young people scrutiny panel review of safeguarding services for disabled children, reported to Cabinet June 2012.

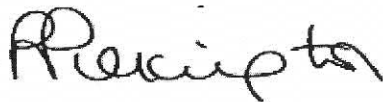
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