

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 12 June 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: The Children and Social Work Act 2017

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report is to inform members of the changes to statutory duties to children and young people and the reform of social work outlines in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This will be in the form of a presentation to members of the board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members note the changes to statutory duties.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduces the following changes:

- Strengthens the duties to children in care and the corporate responsibilities of the local authority and partners
- Extends duties to care leavers until 25 and introduces revised and strengthened rights for care leavers including the publication of a care leaver offer
- Introduces compulsory relationship education in primary schools and compulsory relationship and sex education in secondary schools
- Abolishes Local Safeguarding Childrens Boards to be placed by a safeguarding performance framework agreed by the local authority, the police and Clinical Commissioning Group in consultation with relevant safeguarding partners
- Establishes a new regulator for social work called Social Work England to replace the current regulator the Health and Care Professionals Council

3.2 Statutory regulations that outline in more detail the impact and implementation of the specific changes will be published later this year for consultation before formal implementation of the relevant parts of the act.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children & Young People in Halton

As corporate parents, we have a duty to ensure children in our care are supported to achieve to their best of their ability with their education, physical and emotional health and succeed as adults. The Act strengthens those core principals.

4.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

As corporate parents, we have a duty to support and advocate for our children in care and care leavers to have access to and participate in a full range of education, training and employment opportunities. The Act increases the duty to ensure care leavers are in employment, education or training.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

Children in Care may have experienced a number of issues before care that may impact long-term on their emotional health and well-being which need appropriate support and services in response. If these issues are not addressed, they may act as a barrier to successful outcomes in education and employment and later adult life. The Act increases the duty to identify and respond to those needs including emotional health and well-being.

4.4 A Safer Halton

Stable placements and support reduce the risk of children in care becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and crime and also reduce their vulnerability to exploitation.

4.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 There are significant resource and financial implications with the duties under the Act, and as yet it is unclear if there will be additional financial support from central government to assist with this or if councils will be expected to meet these from within existing budgets.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

10.1 Children in Care will have a range of issues because of their identity and their needs which require an appropriate response and access to a range of specific services as required.

**11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.