

REPORT TO: Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 14 September 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

PORTFOLIO: Children, Education & Social Care

SUBJECT: Update on Ofsted Inspection Action plan and presentation on sufficiency and support for care leavers

WARD: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform members of progress against the Ofsted Inspection Action plan and to brief members on the development of services to support care leaver accommodation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

2.1 That members note the report and presentation.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Part 1 of the Ofsted Action plan is in progress. An interim duty and assessment team has been established to ensure consistency of response and improve the quality of assessments and initial plans. This additional capacity will support an anticipated increase in referrals when the schools return full-time and will also support social workers in having additional capacity to undertake more direct work with children and families.

3.2 Audit work has continued to review the response on cases in response to Covid and the revised quality and assurance framework will be implemented as planned by the end of September. Eclipse, the new case recording system is fully implemented from 6 September and revised practice guidance on assessments has been issued.

3.3 The development appraisal approach for all staff using the Knowledge and Skills Statements has been piloted and will be launched mid-September. This will inform the workforce strategy and training and development for staff to support improvements and consistency in practice.

3.4 The presentation will inform members of steps taken to improve the sufficiency of accommodation options and support for care leavers as part of improving our sufficiency of placement choice.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Ofsted will monitor the progress of our action plan in its future inspection activity.

5.0 **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The additional Covid grant money has been used to support the introduction of the interim duty and assessment team while the approach is evaluated.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Children and young people will be supported by an improved and consistent response in the duty assessment service and care leavers will have more placement options and the additional capacity will support an anticipated increase in demand.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

A wider range of placement options for care leavers will support the plan to encourage and support engagement in all options for employment, education and training.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

It is anticipated that there will be a number of emerging emotional health and well-being needs emerge post-Covid for all children and young people.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified

6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 We are currently profiling what the impact of increased demand may mean for the service. This will have an impact on staffing costs and support as we need to increase our use of agency staff and will have an impact on the budget pressures. An increase of children on child protection plans, entering care and remaining in care for longer and more intense support for care leavers will also place further

pressures on the budget.

7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 This is included in the new assessment standards.

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

None.