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| Item No. 8. | Classification: Open | Date: 16 April 2024 | Meeting Name: Corporate Parenting Committee |
| Report title: | | Southwark Homes for Southwark Children Programme Update | |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | | All | |
| From: | | Director of Children Services for Children and Families Directorate | |

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee note the contents of the update on the Southwark Homes for Southwark Children programme of improvement work for the delivery of services to looked after children and care leavers.
2. That the Corporate Parenting Committee feedback their comments on the progress of the improvement work programme.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Southwark Homes for Southwark Children (SHfSC) programme is a large programme of improvement activity embedding change in service delivery for children in care, care leavers, foster carers and children on the edge of care.
4. This programme of work aims to deliver the Corporate Parenting Committee priorities as set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024.
5. This programme intends to deliver improvements to service delivery through the following projects:
 - Delivering additional placement capacity in-borough through opening two in-house ran children's homes
 - Achieving greater retention of foster carers, improving the experiences of children placed in foster care and attracting new carers through piloting the Mockingbird model of fostering service delivery
 - Introducing quality assurance mechanisms for placements of children in care through reform of the Access to Resources service. This will include implementing a Young Inspector team

- Attracting higher numbers of highly skilled prospective foster carers through a refresh of the fostering recruitment strategy which will introduce new marketing assets and a streamlined process
 - Embedding the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment to strengthen the assessment of risks, needs and strengths of children in care and care leavers to better able the organisation to respond to these effectively.
6. The attached update report also sets out the priorities for the programme over the next year to include reforms to:
- The support offer available to Special Guardianship carers
 - Joint working protocol with Housing and Children’s Social Care
 - In-borough semi-independent placement capacity
 - Edge of care service delivery.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. A project update report is attached as Appendix 1 to this cover report.

Policy framework implications

8. The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 outlines several key priorities around the delivery of services for looked after children and care leavers. The SHfSC programme aims to deliver key parts of this strategy over 2024.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

9. The delivery of the key priorities of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 is intended to improve the life-chances, opportunities and long-term outcomes of children in care and care leavers.
10. The decision to note this report has been judged to have a small but important impact on local people and communities. The work relating to children in care and care leavers is intended to improve the outcomes for them.
11. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, lays out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The council’s approach to equality commits the council to ensuring that equality is an integral part of our day to day business.

12. The council's children's services involves working closely with all relevant stakeholders and partners across the sector and collectively we are committed to upholding the responsibilities towards advocating the Public Sector Equality Duty and complying with the Equalities Act 2010. 13. The PSED enables public bodies to consider the diverse needs of groups and have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. Due regard is about considering the different needs of protected characteristics in relation to the three parts of the duty.
13. The Equalities Act 2010 define the following as protected characteristics; age; disability, gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement 15. The report takes account of the ethnicity, age and disabilities of care leavers, as well as their racial ethnic background and considers these areas in light of commitments set out by Southwark Stands Together.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

14. This report outlines the progress in the delivery of the Southwark Homes for Southwark Children improvement programme.
15. The council is committed to delivering fair and just services to the residents of the borough. The improvement of services for children in care, care leavers and foster carers will ensure that services delivered to these groups improve their short and long-term outcomes demonstrating a commitment to eliminating discrimination.

Health impact statement

16. Children in care experience adverse long-term health outcomes, the improvement activity set out in the SHfSC programme aims to increase the longer-term life chances of children in care and care leavers.

Climate change implications

17. There are no identified climate change implications with the SHfSC improvement programme.

Resource implications

18. The report provided is an update to the improvement programme for SHfSC with no additional resource implications identified.

Legal implications

19. The report provided is an update to the improvement programme for SHfSC

with no additional legal implications identified.

Financial implications

20. The report provided is an update to the improvement programme for SHfSC with no additional financial implications identified.

Consultation

21. The report provided is an update to the improvement programme for SHfSC with no additional consultation required. Consultation and engagement with children and young people and foster carers is ongoing as part of the wider programme.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance

22. A concurrent was not applicable for this report.

Strategic Director of Finance

23. A concurrent was not applicable for this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2024 | Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH | Helen Woolgar 020 7525 0654 |
| Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s99637/Appendix%201%20Dr%20aft%20Corporate%20Parenting%20Strategy%202021-2024.pdf | | |
| Equalities Act 2010: S149 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) | Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH | Helen Woolgar 020 7525 0654 |
| Link: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149 | | |
| Council Assembly, 25 November 2020, Item 6.1 Refresh of the Council Plan 2018 - 2022 – | Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, 160 Tooley Street, | Helen Woolgar 020 7525 0654 |

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Appendix A | London, SE1 2QH | |
| Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s92006/Appendix%20A%20Southwarks%20Borough%20Plan%202020.pdf | | |
| Council Assembly, 14 July 2021, Item 6.1 constitutional changes: Climate Emergency and Equality, Council assembly role and functions – Appendix 3 PART 3B Cabinet Role | Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH | Helen Woolgar 020 7525 0654 |
| Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s99855/Appendix%203%20-%20Part%203B%20Cabinet%20role.pdf | | |
| Southwark Council's Delivery Plan, Appendix 1, Item 8 – Cabinet 17 October 2023 | Children and Families Directorate, 4 th Floor, 160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH | Helen Woolgar 020 7525 0654 |
| Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s116779/Appendix%201%20Southwark%20Council%20Delivery%20Plan%20Annual%20Performance%20Report.pdf | | |

APPENDICES

| No. | Title |
|------------|--|
| Appendix 1 | Southwark Homes for Southwark Children – Programme Update to the Corporate Parenting Committee |

AUDIT TRAIL

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Lead Officer | David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children Services | |
| Report Authors | Clare Pitchford, Senior Service Development Officer Helen Woolgar Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting | |
| Version | Final | |
| Dated | 8 April 2024 | |
| Key Decision? | No | |
| CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER | | |
| Officer Title | Comments Sought | Comments Included |
| Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance | No | No |
| Strategic Director of Finance | No | No |
| Cabinet Member | No | No |
| Date final report sent to Constitutional Team | | 8 April 2024 |