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| DECISION-MAKER: | CABINET | | |
| SUBJECT: | RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY INQUIRY INTO THE CHILDREN'S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT | | |
| DATE OF DECISION: | 18 JANUARY 2010 | | |
| REPORT OF: | CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES | | |
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None.

SUMMARY

On 10th September 2009, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) endorsed the recommendations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel following their Inquiry into the Children's Annual Performance Assessment (APA). These recommendations were received by Cabinet on Monday 23rd November. The seven scrutiny inquiry report recommendations and the Cabinet's response to them are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to respond formally to the recommendations within two months of receiving them.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve the Cabinet's responses as set out in Appendix 1
- (ii) To delegate, within existing budget provisions, authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services and Learning, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, as appropriate, to take further decisions in relation to recommendations where further investigation is required.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 As part of the Council's Constitution the Executive need to consider all inquiry reports that have been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and formally respond to the recommendations contained within them within two months of their receipt.

CONSULTATION

- 2 The Children and Young People's Trust Board has been consulted as part of a Board meeting on the recommendations that are relevant to its purpose. NHS Southampton City has been consulted and has responded on the recommendations that require action from that organisation.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3 None.

DETAIL

- 4 From July to August 2009 the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel undertook an inquiry into the Children's APA. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) considered the final draft of the inquiry report on 10th September 2009 and approved it for submission to the Executive. The scrutiny inquiry, containing seven recommendations and a further four sub recommendations was received by the Cabinet on 23rd November 2009 and this report sets out the formal response of the Executive to the recommendations.
- 5 The approved objectives of the inquiry were:
 - To consider whether the actions in the action plan are appropriate, achievable, and will deliver the necessary improvements to overcome the weaknesses identified
 - To consider whether the plan can demonstrate sign up from key partners and partnerships including the Children and young People's Trust and the Governors' Forum
 - To consider performance in these areas since the APA letter was received
 - To identify lessons learnt and how they can be reflected in assessments of performance to drive year on year improvement in key areas within Children's Services and Learning activities
 - To identify any areas for more detailed investigation and support.
- 6 The OSMC considered the inquiry panel's final report at its meeting on 10th September 2009. It resolved that the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel had met its terms of reference for the review and agreed that the inquiry report should be forwarded to the Cabinet to enable the Executive to formulate its response to the recommendations contained within it.
- 7 The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel inquiry concluded that the Southampton APA Action Plan is appropriate and can demonstrate sign up from key partners and partnerships.
- 8 The Panel recognise that outcomes for children and young people in Southampton have improved in a number of areas since the APA judgement was made; however there has been limited progress or a decline on performance levels in other areas.
- 9 The inquiry's recommendations set out a number of proposals to support the continuing improvement of children's services. Appendix 1, attached, is a schedule setting out the inquiry recommendations and the associated response proposed by the Cabinet Member following consultation with his colleagues and advice from officers and partners.
- 10 The Cabinet member for Children's Services, Councillor Paul Holmes, has been nominated as the lead Cabinet Member to respond to the Scrutiny Inquiry recommendations.
- 11 The recommendations are all accepted and will, or already are being implemented. They include Councillor Holmes's indication of the timescales for implementation or further consideration.

- 12 Recommendations d (i) within the inquiry report requires action from NHS Southampton City. Associate Director Stephanie Ramsey has formally responded to these three recommendations and her responses are incorporated into Appendix 1.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital

- 13 No additional capital costs were identified during the course of the inquiry.

Revenue

- 14 All actions proposed in response to the recommendations, within the inquiry report can be progressed by re-focussing officer and partner's time, existing work programmes and budgets.

Property

- 14 There are no specific property implications contained within the inquiry report.

Other

- 15 None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

- 16 The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This report is presented in accordance with Section 7.1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules which requires the Executive to submit its response to inquiry recommendations within 2 months of their receipt.

Other Legal Implications:

- 17 None.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 18 The proposals contained within the appended report are in accordance with the Council's Policy Framework and, if implemented, the recommendations will help to deliver priorities within Southampton's Children and Young People's Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

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| 1. | Inquiry into the Children’s Annual Performance Assessment |
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Documents In Members’ Rooms

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| 1. | Final report of the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel – the Children’s Annual Performance Assessment Inquiry |
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Background Documents

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

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| | None. | |
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KEY DECISION

No

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| WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: | All wards would be affected by the Executive’s implementation of the recommendations contained within the inquiry report. |
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