

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	<b>Children's Services Improvement Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feedback from Monitoring Visit 2 - October 4th and 5th Children in Need and those subject to a Child Protection Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Feedback from the DfE Improvement Adviser's First Report – October 2022</b></li> </ul>
Meeting date	22 November 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>BCP Childrens Services was inspected, under the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACs) framework in December 2021. The outcome was an overall inadequate judgement. As a result the Secretary of State of Education issued a Statutory Direction and appointed a DfE Improvement Adviser to support the Council in their improvement of Childrens Social Care Services.</p> <p>As a result a Childrens Services Improvement Plan is in place to ensure progress is made at pace in Childrens Social Care in line with the recommendations of the December Inspection and in accordance with the statutory direction notice received by the Council in March 2022.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny require regular updates on themes regarding improvement. In October 2022 Childrens Services had their second Monitoring Visit, the letter published by Ofsted is presented for scrutiny alongside, the DfE Advisers first report. The DfE Adviser in their role is required to review the pace and progress of improvement at 6 months to ensure it is sufficient and report on this to the Secretary of State.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p>For information and scrutiny</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Childrens Overview and Scrutiny have statutory powers to scrutinise decisions and plans for the service. The outcome of the Monitoring Visit 2 Children in Need (CiN) and those subject to child protection plans and the DfE Advisers first report are being presented for scrutiny so the committee can offer constructive challenge, share any voices of concern and support in order to contribute to the improvement journey.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike White, Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Corporate Director	Cathi Hadley, Director of Childrens Services
Report Authors	Rachel Gravett, Director Quality, Performance Improvement and Governance
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Update

## Background

### **Monitoring Visit 2 -Children in Need and those subject to a Child Protection Plan**

1. Ofsted visited Childrens Services on the 4th & 5th October 2022 to carry out their second Monitoring Visit.
2. Monitoring visits are part of the regular improvement journey inspections. Ofsted will carry out 3 or 4 per year and usually up to 6 before re inspecting under the Inspection of Local Authority Childrens Services (ILACS)
3. Two inspectors visited, one who was the lead inspector in the December ILACS visit. Whenever possible, the same inspector will lead all the monitoring visits in the same local authority.
4. Monitoring visits focus on where improvement is needed the most and this visit concentrated on Children in Need (CiN) and those subject to child protection plans. Inspectors will also check that performance in other areas has not declined since the inspection.
5. Ofsted published their report on the local authority's progress following the inspection. It was published on 8th November 2022.
6. The presentation accompanying this report details the findings of the Monitoring Visit.

### **DfE Improvement Adviser's First Report**

7. The Improvement Adviser will support the Council in continuing to develop and implement robust, realistic, and achievable plans to improve its children's social care functions, in particular those areas which have been judged by Ofsted to be inadequate or where other serious concerns have been identified. In particular they:
  - 7.1. Provide effective oversight to ensure the pace of improvement is appropriate and that improvements to children's social care are sustainable.
  - 7.2. Provide support and advice as necessary when assessing and driving progress, taking account of the weaknesses identified by Ofsted and of other diagnostic work.
  - 7.3. Apply their expertise and experience to support and challenge the Council's Director of Children's Services, Chief Executive, Members, and wider corporate leadership team in addressing areas of weakness and system/ strategic blockages to improvement; this may also include working with practitioners of different levels to:

- 7.3.1. to develop competence and improve performance.
  - 7.3.2. and to help foster a culture of reflection, challenge, and support.
  - 7.4. Make use of wider contacts to support and advise the Council on potential solutions to issues and signpost examples of good practice where possible.
  - 7.5. To Chair the Council's Children's Services Improvement Board.
  - 7.6. Work closely with any other local authority improvement partners to maximise impact of work and avoid unnecessary duplication.
  - 7.7. Engage with the wider partnership.
  - 7.8. Identify key deliverables and produce a plan detailing the outputs and KPIs which the Improvement Adviser will meet over the duration of their appointment and agree this with the Department for Education ("DfE") within 6 weeks of appointment.
  - 7.9. Participate in any DfE-led review of the Council's progress; and
  - 7.10. To deliver quarterly written updates on the Council's progress to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, which is to include a six-month review on whether the pace of progress of improvement is sufficient.
- 8. BCP published the report on 8th November 2022.
  - 9. The presentation accompanying this report details the findings of the DfE Improvement Adviser in his first 6 months.

#### **Options Appraisal**

- 10. Not applicable

#### **Summary of financial implications**

- 11. Not applicable

#### **Summary of legal implications**

- 12. Not applicable

#### **Summary of human resources implications**

- 13. Not applicable

#### **Summary of sustainability impact**

- 14. Not applicable

#### **Summary of public health implications**

- 15. Not applicable

#### **Summary of equality implications**

- 16. Not applicable

#### **Summary of risk assessment**

- 17. Not applicable

## **Background papers**

18. Not applicable

## **Appendices**

1. Ofsted Monitoring Visit 2 Letter (Appendix 1)
2. DfE Improvement Advisors First Report (Appendix 2)
3. Monitoring Visit 2 CIN and CP feedback /DfE -Improvement Advisors First letter - Power Point presentation (Appendix 3)