

Children and Young People SELECT COMMITTEE		
Report Title	Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 5
Ward	All	
Contributors	Stephen Kitchman, Director of Children's Social Care	
Class	Open	Date: 10 th November 2016

1. Summary and Summary of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information to members regarding the Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy to retain and recruit high quality staff within the Directorate.
- 1.2 The strategy is set within the context of a broad transformation programme for Children's Social Care (CSC) following the Single Inspection of Lewisham by Ofsted in 2015, the need to drive efficiency and maximise budget impact as well as being part of our drive for continuous improvement in outcomes for vulnerable children. It sets out the policy context underpinning the strategy and the processes to be employed to deliver the strategy.
- 1.3 The report acknowledges that capable and talented workers keep children safe, help them flourish and support parents to understand what they need to do to improve and deliver the care they give them.
- 1.4 It clarifies our objective to have a qualified, experienced and permanent workforce, where best practice is continually promoted and consistently delivered.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Members:
 - Note and comment on the Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy.
 - Agree to receive annual updates on the development and impact of the Strategy moving forward.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1 There have been significant national changes over the past five years which have impacted on workforce planning and development for the children's social care workforce including:- *The Munro Review*; *The Social Work Reform Board*; *Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)*; The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) and the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS).

3.2 Building on these national changes the department has developed a clear vision for improving outcomes and making a difference to the well-being and life chances of children and young people in the Borough. At the same time recognising the crucial impact our workforce has on achieving this vision at a time of challenge in relation to social worker sufficiency and capability and the general recruitment challenges for experienced social workers across the sector.

4. Details

4.1 The Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy has been developed to assist in the development of a permanent, skilled, talented and well supported workforce, who are guided by capable managers to ensure good outcomes are realised for vulnerable children in the Borough.

4.2 To support this we have analysed the needs of our current workforce and are using this analysis to identify both current and future workforce requirements, skills and competencies.

4.3 There are currently 250 workers within CSC within five services areas – Referral & Assessment; Family Social Work; Looked After Children, Leaving Care & Adoption; Business Strategy, Fostering & Placements and Quality Assurance. The Director of Children's Social Care also has an aligned responsibility for the social work aspects of the Children with Complex Needs service in the Targeted Services & Joint Commissioning Division.

4.4 The priorities we have set for the Strategy include:-

- **Recruitment & Retention:** This includes a broad range of activities, including: Marketing & Recruitment activity; support for Newly Qualified Social Workers; supporting career pathways for more experienced staff; pay and reward.
- **Learning & Development:** Ensuring a coherent learning and development offer is in place for social workers at different points in their career, including: coherent , induction arrangements; completion and follow up of a training needs analysis; alignment to and dissemination of research and best practice; maximising opportunities through our work as a member of the Dfe funded Teaching partnership.
- **Models of Practice:** Promoting support to service delivery through effective, evidence based models of intervention, that social workers are trained and confident in delivering these and that we are reviewing and understand the impact of these.
- **Resources & Support:** Ensuring that workers are supported through effective and efficient use of digital technology, including mobile working; that business support promotes efficient delivery of statutory requirements through effective process design and promotes social work time being protected to allow greater 'face to face' work with children and their families; performance systems, including IT and management scrutiny, are in place to ensure that work is timely and meets standards set and delivers.

5. Monitoring, delivery and review of the Strategy

5.1 In order to deliver these priorities clear governance arrangements have been put in place, this includes a Workforce Strategy Board, chaired by the Director of Children's

Social Care. The arrangements are supported by newly developed structures such as a monthly 'All Managers Meeting' and bi-annual 'All Staff Forum,' to promote open communication and ongoing service development.

5.2 The delivery of the Strategy is further assisted by the Corporate Policy Team as well the Borough's Human Resources service; a Principal Social Worker is soon to be recruited to further strengthen delivery.

5.3 The strategy is the driver for our broader Children's Social Care Transformation program, branding of this has been consulted on by staff and feedback is currently being sought from children and young people to decide on the name for this.

5.4 An action plan is in place which is tracked by the Workforce strategy group. Performance measures for the strategy are soon to be delivered; this will include statistical measures such as retention and recruitment rates but more qualitative indicators such as feedback from children and young people, parents and partner agencies.

6. Financial implications

6.1 The work in the strategy is all within existing budgets but the service is also seeking funding from external sources wherever possible to benefit from nationally funded initiatives.

7. Legal implications

7.1 The legal implications are that the Council is required to fulfil its social care functions in accordance with statute and under the direction of the Secretary of State (Local Authority and Social Services Act 1970), and is also subject to inspection from time to time from OFSTED as to efficiency and efficacy of its services.

7.2 In order to work as a social worker, it is a legal requirement that an employee be qualified and registered with the HCPC. Anyone the council employs as a social worker therefore must meet these statutory requirements. As part of the clearance process, the HR Team checks their social work qualification and registration. They are then required to keep their registration updated whilst in our employment.

8. Crime and disorder implications

8.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

9. Equalities implications

9.1 Lewisham is committed to creating an inclusive culture based on the values of dignity, courtesy and respect and as a public body, has duties under equality legislation.

9.2 When implementing this workforce strategy we will ensure that, in conducting our work, we integrate consideration of equality and diversity issues into each item of business with a view to valuing and promoting equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination.

10. Environmental implications

10.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

11. Background documents and originator

11.1 Please see accompanying Workforce Strategy

If there are any queries about this report, please contact Stephen Kitchman (Director Children's Social Care) Tel: 020 8314 8140 email: stephen.kitchman@lewisham.gov.uk