


Report To:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
Date:	10 March 2016
Cabinet Deputy / Reporting Officer:	Councillor Peter Robinson, Executive Member, Children and Families Assistant Executive Director, Children's Services
Subject:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEVOLUTION UPDATE AND THE REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY PROGRESS REPORT
Report Summary:	This report provides the Health and Wellbeing Board with updates on the seven workstreams currently running under the scope of the Fundamental Review of Services for Children in Greater Manchester and the Regional Adoption Agency developments.
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board to note the contents of the report and continue to support Tameside involvement in the Devolution and Regional Adoption agendas 2. Board is asked to note the views of the Department of Education that partners in the CCG are crucial to successful pre adoption planning and post adoption support. 3. To note that service progression on the 0-25 offer will not wait for devolution decisions to be made but will be progressing with them in mind in order that duplication and delay is avoided
Links to Community Strategy:	Safeguarding Children and preventing need in families is throughout all community strategies.
Policy Implications:	Policy Implications will be explored when the workstreams are arriving at firm proposals for action.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)	<p>The Childrens Service Directorate within the Council is currently projecting additional net expenditure of £4m compared to budget available for the 2015/16 financial year. It is estimated that this will increase to £5.8m in the 2016/17 financial year due to inflation and service demand related factors.</p> <p>This report provides supporting details of the potential opportunities to reduce Childrens service expenditure within Greater Manchester under Devolution. It is essential that proposals are progressed urgently to ensure cost savings and demand reduction opportunities are realised as early as possible.</p> <p>Details of the potential cost reductions to be realised will be included within the workstream business cases. These are due for submission by 7 March 2016 and details will be reported to a future Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	Children's Services form part of the Single Commissioning budget so it is important that we have a clear understanding of how this impacts on current budget reductions required to ensure service affordable in meeting statutory requirements.

Risk Management:

The report recognises the risks to vulnerable children and the need to ensure a sufficient budget is provided to achieve the Council's objective to support vulnerable people, consistent with and proportionate to its other responsibilities.

Access to Information:

Background papers and information can be obtained by contacting Dominic Tumelty, Assistant Executive Director, Children's Services, by:

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1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Devolution Manchester offers a number of opportunities for Children's Services to share resource and service transformation across the footprint in order to maximise outcomes for children whilst potentially achieving significant savings for each Council.
- 1.2 There are seven work streams that have been set up and further detail of each is set out in this report. Each work stream is headed by a Director of Children's Services and there is evidence of significant and important buy-in from Councils, other Governmental departments and the Voluntary Sector. The Department For Education (DfE) is committed to three weekly meetings which will include other government departments as required.
- 1.3 In addition, following Central Government announcements regarding Regionalisation of Adoption, Tameside Children's Services have been collaborating extensively with colleagues. This report provides an update of the progress to date.
- 1.4 For all of the above there will be a need to bring more detail through Governance processes as that detail is developed and the implications for Tameside are better understood. As such, this report remains as an update report rather than seeking permission for specific actions at this stage but we are mindful that in year 2016-17 there will be a number of reports coming to Board requesting authority to progress.
- 1.5 There has to date been some presentation to AGMA leaders of the work to date, dialogue has been started with the Departments of Education and Communities and partners from KPMG (management and accountant consultants) are assisting the process as commissioned.

2. SPECIFIC WORKSTREAMS

- 2.1 **Complex Safeguarding Workstream** is exploring the feasibility of addressing the more high profile areas of Safeguarding Children. This includes child sexual exploitation, serious and organised crime (including Sham Marriages and modern slavery), Female Genital Mutilation and honour based crime, violent extremism and radicalisation, gangs and violence. This will build on the work of the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Board, with a review of all Local Safeguarding Children Boards which will be part of the wider review announced by the Prime Minister, due to report in March 2016.
- 2.2 This workstream has started work with a comprehensive workshop which was attended by a large number of colleagues and partners from across Greater Manchester Children's Services but also including Police, Health, Immigration, Licensing, Voluntary Sector, Education and Adults Safeguarding Services. Further sessions are booked throughout February to enable the detailed work plan to be developed.
- 2.3 From a Tameside perspective, we are keen to embrace the best practice examples whilst acknowledging that currently not all of the areas of work are present to a large extent in our area. However, looking forward we know, for example, that we are expecting a higher birth rate in the population which are susceptible to Female Genital Mutilation.
- 2.4 Working to build on the positives from Operation Phoenix, extending it to children who go missing from home and care and into the areas above should have a positive effect for Tameside children who we know go to Manchester when they abscond frequently and where they are at high risk.
- 2.5 **Looked After Children Workstream** has begun work to explore how the aspiration of a reduction in the numbers of children in care by 20% across the Greater Manchester area

can be achieved safely, maximising savings and ensuring positive outcomes for children. Data collection is underway and dates booked through February to take this work forward.

- 2.6 For Tameside this is a crucial piece of work given the numbers of children in our care, the numbers of other Local Authority children living in our area and the expenditure incurred. Again, workplans will be delivered following sessions in February.
- 2.7 **Youth Offending Services** across Greater Manchester already enjoy close working together at Head of Service Level but this workstream seeks to bring in more partners and fresh ideas on collaboration, e.g. as Courts have centralised to Manchester town centre it seems evident that practitioners need a new working model to maximise efficiency and consistency. Three key aims are to (a) review local justice arrangements and explore single commissioning across Greater Manchester, (b) establish a common youth justice offer and (c) review the use of custody, particularly Wetherby Youth Offender Institution (YOI). Dates are in place across February as above.
- 2.8 For Tameside there are some clear opportunities to this approach being successful, not least the cost of remand beds and the opportunity to share our approach to restorative justice which can avoid custody and prevent cost.
- 2.9 **The Integrated Health Commissioning Workstream** has agreed to prioritise the offer for Early Years and Early Help, linking to joint workshops which will discuss a Greater Manchester wide approach. In addition the group is exploring the possibility of targeted intervention for specific cohorts, e.g. learning disability and maternal health, and a review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) within the mental health strategy. Dates are similarly booked in and participation positive.
- 2.10 From a Tameside perspective we will be able to align our recent review of the Early Help offer and the ongoing work on Early Years with this workstream.
- 2.11 **Complex Dependency Workstream** seeks to build on the Public Service Reform (PSR) work, Troubled Families agendas and Early Help offers to explore whether approaches which have thus far been within individual councils can be scaled up across Greater Manchester to increase effectiveness. Crucially this will include the role of schools as a universal provision for children in need which needs to be developed further.
- 2.12 Tameside will contribute the experiences of the PSR Hub, Place based work and Troubled Families experience to the group in its considerations.
- 2.13 **The Quality Assurance Workstream** is also running and has positive stakeholder involvement, including from CAFCASS (Children and Families Court Advisory Service), the Department of Education and Ministry of Justice (under whom CAFCASS sit). The aim of this group is to explore the role and function of those involved in scrutinising the work of Councils as far as their duties to the Courts and children in care are concerned. There is a working hypothesis that the role of Independent Reviewing Officers and court appointed Children's Guardians has some duplication which could be removed and that the Court process is unnecessarily complex and expensive.
- 2.14 Clearly Tameside will benefit from reduction in cost in this area although the risk factor is that currently our Independent Reviewing Officer service costs less than many others due to lower salary costs.
- 2.15 **Finally the Education Workstream** has begun its work and has agreed priority areas to be pupil place planning, school improvement redesign and the collaboration with Early Years and Early help. Links with the regional schools commissioner to connect with Academies and Free Schools agendas are an integral component of this agenda.

- 2.16 For all work streams, a work plan is required for March 7 with presentation to Wider Leadership Team on March 11, followed by submission to the Department of Education for approval. Any areas where immediate action can be taken, it will be.

3. REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

- 3.1 The Regional Adoption Agency is separate to Greater Manchester Devolution, having been announced and established beforehand, but an equal experience of collaboration across Local Authority and Voluntary Sector boundaries. The Department of Education set out proposals and expectations that Regional Adoption Agencies should be established in order to improve the quality and timeliness of the adoption process, both for people wanting to adopt and children needing to be adopted.
- 3.2 All Councils undertook an exercise which looked at demographics, service design, performance and other factors when determining who would be part of each collaboration.
- 3.3 Tameside was pleased to join a consortium consisting of Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Bolton and Blackburn with Darwen as well as Caritas Care and Adoption Matters, two leading performers from the Voluntary Sector. This brings together several of the highest performers for Adoption into a collaboration which is proposed to be called the West Pennine Adoption Agency.
- 3.4 The Department of Education established a system whereby potential collaborations were assessed and graded, essentially on a scale from “requires further work” to “proceed and implement”. The West Pennine bid has been given the latter and is now at a stage where a detailed transition plan is to be submitted to DfE by March 31. At present the partners are working at strategic level to determine potential shape and scope of the service and it will be necessary for each Council to return to respective Executives and Boards when the detail is finalised. However it is anticipated that this piece of work, whilst not directly linked to a savings target, will in fact improve efficiency greatly by speeding up the recruitment, assessment and matching processes thereby reducing the time a child is in care, saving worker time and eliminating the need to pay external agencies for services.
- 3.5 As part of the input from Department of Education, they have been keen for Health and Wellbeing Boards and CCG colleagues to be invited to consider the offer to the adoption service, both pre Adoption (Health assessments, CAMHS and support to planning) and for adoption support services.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Business cases for each workstream are in the process of development and will include projected financial implications and are expected to include bids to the national transformation funding.
- 4.2 Board is asked to note the developments highlighted in this report and agree that the work continue on the understanding that future plans and proposals return for the appropriate governance approvals as and when necessary.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 As detailed on the front of the report.