

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP SERVICES

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	5 OCTOBER 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY - UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR GAVIN	PORTFOLIO:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES
SERVICE:	SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVEMENT	WARDS:	ALL
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress and achievements of the Children's Services Workforce Strategy 2016-2018, agreed at the ACE Committee March 2016.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note the progress and achievements of the Children's Workforce Development Strategy 2016-18
- 2.2 For the committee to approve the proposal to review and refresh the strategy and action plan in readiness for reporting in January 2018.

#### 3. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Children's Workforce Development Strategy 2016-2018 was agreed at ACE Committee in March 2016 and was relevant at the time of agreement to meet the demands of service. The strategy was divided into three themes:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Developing and Supporting Staff

- 3.2 Although the themes identified above are still relevant, it has been necessary to adapt the strategy to respond to the current demands, the recommendations set out by Ofsted and changes to the management structure.

3.3 As part of the strategy, an action plan was developed to measure and monitor the progress of the initiatives identified to meet the objectives of the strategy. The progress and achievements are included in Section 5.

#### 4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 It is recognised that there is a need to adapt and refresh the current strategy to reflect further feedback from Ofsted and the planned changes and status of Children’s Services going forward. It is therefore proposed that a revised strategy (with relevant action plan) is developed to be presented to the ACE Committee in early 2018.

#### 5. ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

5.1 There has been significant progress made with regards to three themes of the previous strategy. These are listed below:

- Regular benchmarking of salaries undertaken and salaries and market supplements adjusted accordingly to remain competitive
- Bespoke recruitment microsite for Children’s Services launched in Summer 2017
- An updated, bespoke, coordinated and facilitated induction in place, supported by an extensive range of on-line tools and e-learning
- A comprehensive NQSW programme in place supported by facilitated sessions from Buck New University and a cross-Berkshire assessment panel
- Monitoring of caseloads of social workers undertaken by the senior management team
- Engagement in the “Step up to Social Work” partnership programme
- 8 currently employed staff are undertaking professional social work training. Due to complete June 2019
- Research in Practice champions identified in each team to promote up to date practice and research resources
- Managers Induction Checklist reviewed and revised to promote effective induction of managers
- Development of Institute of Management level 5 and 7 courses to be delivered in early 2018
- Staff consultation undertaken to establish a preferred practice model

5.2 The tables below show the current recruitment figures. It is likely that these will significantly increase due to the current recruitment initiative

##### 5.2.1 Number of externally recruited permanent staff

Role	Number recruited
Team Manager	4
Higher Specialist Social Worker	1
Social Worker	2

##### 5.2.2 Number of Agency staff converting to permanent contracts

Role	Number recruited
Service Manager	5
Team Manager	4
Higher Specialist Social Worker	1
Social Workers	6

## **6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

6.1 Ensuring that we have a sufficiently skilled workforce and an increase in the number of permanent and committed staff will support the following strategic priorities:

- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
- Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;
- Remaining financially sustainable to deliver these service priorities.

6.2 And will contribute to promoting equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all

## **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

7.1 There are no statutory requirements to consult with communities about the Workforce Development Strategy as it is an internal document to the council.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

8.1 The overall strategy will not adversely impact on any group with a protected characteristic and has been developed to promote equal opportunity and inclusion.

8.2 As initiatives and further proposals are developed, equality impact analyses will be undertaken and presented as appropriate.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None except where referred to in the body of the report.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 It is planned that the initiatives and activity in the strategy are delivered within existing resources/budgets already identified.

10.2 Any additional budget/resources required, proposals will need to be made to the Corporate Management Team for consideration.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 None