

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 1 April 2019

ITEM 5(a)

Title: The Effectiveness of Collaborative Working in North Tyneside

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr I Grayson

Report from: Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to present the recommendations of the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee's study, on behalf of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, into the collaborative working practices in North Tyneside.

The recommendations are set out in paragraph 1.5.4 below.

In accordance with section 9F of Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000, Cabinet is required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee within two months. In providing this response Cabinet is asked to state whether or not it accepts each recommendation and the reasons for this decision. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

1.2 Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet consider and formulate a response to the recommendations presented to them as a result of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee's study into the collaborative working practices in North Tyneside.

1.3 Forward plan:

The report was included in the Forward Plan published on 4 January 2019 for the period 4 January 2019 – 26 April 2019 under the heading 'matters arising from Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee and its sub committees'.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework:

The report supports the Our People theme in the Our North Tyneside Plan.

1.5 Information:

- 1.5.1 On 9 July 2018 the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee agreed to establish a Sub Group to review the collaborative working practices of the Authority to ensure they

were improving outcomes for children and their families with a focus on the most vulnerable and in need.

1.5.2 The remit of the Sub Group was to examine the existing collaborative working practices of the Authority, including the MASH (multi-agency safeguarding hub), the Tyneside Alliance, the North of Tyne Collaboration and proposals relating to the local safeguarding children board. Key questions to be answered included:

- a) Who is doing what?
- b) Who should be doing what?
- c) What could be done better?

1.5.3 The Sub Group met on a number of occasions to receive information and discuss their findings. Evidence gathering sessions were held with the Independent Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board; representatives of the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); social workers and front line staff in Children's Services; Northumbria Police; and senior managers within the Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Service.

1.5.4 As a result of the study the Collaborative Working Sub Group have identified eight recommendations for submission to Cabinet which are:

1. Cabinet notes that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee considers the education role in the MASH vital and recommends continued funding for the seconded post for education in the MASH for future years.
2. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding considers increasing the membership of the MASH to include on a more formal basis:
 - a) a mental health and drug and alcohol and /or CAMHS professional/advocate;
 - b) a Learning disabled advocate; and
 - c) the Dynamic MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conferences)
3. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to consider producing a universal 'brand' for use by all partners, including the community safety partnership and businesses in the area, to inform the general public in North Tyneside about what to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult so that the issue, how to identify it and what to do about it becomes familiar to the general public.
4. Cabinet informs the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding that the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee advocates the appointment of an Independent Chairperson for the new local safeguarding arrangements and the inclusion of schools, lay people and the ambulance service in the new arrangements and puts this forward to the North and South of Tyne Strategic Safeguarding Forum.
5. Cabinet reassures itself that the steps taken to "resource sufficient capacity within their own organisation, enabling senior managers and practitioners to work with host authorities to help them improve" for the Tyneside Alliance have left the Authority with sufficient experience and capacity to retain its own high level of performance.
6. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to ensure that Corporate Parenting Committee receives information on a quarterly basis on the percentage of the initial healthcare assessment which are being completed within the statutory period of 20 working days.

7. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to:
 - a) ensure that when social workers are referring children for Initial Assessments, they always give the detail (in the referral form) of why the child has become looked after and do not leave it vague e.g. 'family breakdown'. This will assist the doctor who undertakes the Initial Health Assessment, to have a full picture of the circumstances and improve planning for the child;
 - b) develop a robust process that ensures the health staff based in the RHELAC team receive a request for an Initial Health Assessment for a child who has become Looked After including the consent form, within the set time-scales so that the child can receive the assessment within the statutory time-scale of 20 working days; and
 - c) develop a robust system to ensure that GPs are always notified in a timely manner of when a child ceases to be 'Looked After'.
8. Cabinet requests the Head of Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding to review the process of dissemination of information to front line staff regarding changes at the Strategic Level to ensure it is efficient and effective.

- 1.5.5 The full report which outlines the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.5.6 At its meeting on the 18 March 2019 the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee approved the recommendations for submission to Cabinet. The Sub-committee noted that overall the Authority had very good collaborative working relationships with its statutory partners, its neighbouring local authorities and internally. The recommendations showed that there was some scope for improvement but in a challenging environment with competing demands the Sub-committee was satisfied that collaborative working was providing benefit to the Authority. Overall the balance between collaborative working and ensuring the service for North Tyneside residents was the best it could be was right and the effort taken to achieve this balance was not underestimated.
- 1.5.7 The Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee also agreed that the report should be submitted directly to Cabinet without first being formally endorsed by the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee (OS&PD).
- 1.5.8 The Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee took this action to avoid unnecessary delay as the next meeting of the OS&PD Committee would not be held until 17 June 2019. This would mean that the response from Cabinet would not be reported back to the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee until its meeting on 12 September 2019. By agreeing to submit the report directly to Cabinet a response to the recommendations would be expected from Cabinet to the first Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee meeting of the new municipal year on 11 July 2019.
- 1.5.9 The OS&PD Committee's Terms of Reference allow this. Paragraph 13 states that the Committee has the responsibility to:

"Consider and either approve or reject any reports and recommendations made by a sub-committee for submission to Cabinet, Council, an individual or outside organisation unless:

 - a) in exceptional circumstances, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee agree otherwise..."

- 1.5.10 At the meeting of OS&PD Committee held on 4 March 2019 it was agreed that the Chair of the Committee could agree that any completed studies be forwarded directly to Cabinet once agreed by the necessary sub-committee.
- 1.5.11 The Chair of OS&PD Committee, Councillor S Graham, has read the report and agreed that it should be submitted directly to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.5.12 Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee's recommendations within 2 months of receiving them. In providing its response Cabinet is asked to provide reasons for any recommendations which are not approved.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet accepts the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

Option 2

Cabinet does not accept the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.2 above and provides a response to the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee at the meeting.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to the Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee's recommendations within 2 months of receiving them. Option 1 is recommended as this option allows Cabinet time to consider and formulate a response to the recommendations.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Report: The Effectiveness of Collaborative Working in North Tyneside.

1.9 Contact officers:

Elizabeth Kerr, Democratic Services Officer Tel: (0191) 643 5322
Nik Flavell, Senior Manager, Interim Senior Manager for the Front Door and Senior Manager for Quality Assurance Tel: (0191) 643 7219

1.10 Background information:

- [North Tyneside Council Constitution](#)
- [Minutes of Children, Education and Skills Sub-committee meetings held on 9 July 2018 and 18 March 2019.](#)
- [Minutes of Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee meeting held on 4 March 2019.](#)
- Background information used in the compilation of the Collaborative Working report can be found in appendix 2 of the report.

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The financial implications associated with each recommendation will be included in Cabinet's response to the Sub Group's report.

2.2 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

The Sub Group which undertook this work on behalf of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee met with senior managers from the Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding Service, the Independent Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board; representatives of the North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); social workers and front line staff in Children's Services; and Northumbria Police.

Full details are listed in the Sub Group's report attached at appendix 1.

2.4 Human rights

There are no direct issues relating to human rights arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct issues relating to equalities and diversity arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no direct issues relating to risk arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no direct issues relating to crime and disorder arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no direct issues relating to environment and sustainability arising from this report.

PART 3

The following officers and Members have been sent a copy of the report for their information:

- Chief Executive
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Head of Service
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy and Customer Service