

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE: **THURSDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2014**

REPORT BY: **CHIEF OFFICER (SOCIAL SERVICES)**

SUBJECT: **SAFEGUARDING AND CARE PLANNING OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS WHO EXHIBIT VULNERABLE AND RISKY BEHAVIOUR**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide Elected Members with the Inspection Report by Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) on the Inspection carried between 24th March 2014 and 27th March 2014 into Safeguarding and Care Planning of Looked After Children and Care Leavers who exhibit vulnerable and risky behaviours and the resulting Action Plan.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 As highlighted in the report the inspection was carried out as part of Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) national thematic inspection programme. The methodology for the review included three and a half days fieldwork in each local authority across Wales, between January and May 2014.

2.02 The aim of the national inspection was to assess the quality of care planning across Wales and whether it effectively:

- Supports and protects looked after children and care leavers;
- Identifies and manages the vulnerabilities and risky behaviour of looked after children and care leavers;
- Promotes rights based practice and the voice of child;
- Promotes improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers;
- Promotes compliance with policy and guidance

2.03 The inspection focused on the work undertaken with looked after children over eleven years of age and care leavers who were identified as being vulnerable and/or involved in risky behaviours, against defined criteria.

2.04 The case sample reviewed, encompassed some of the most challenging and complex case management issues and represented only a small cohort of

the authority's wider looked after children and care leaving population.

- 2.05 As well as inspecting cases in respect of the assessment, care planning and review systems the inspection also considered the extent to which the corporate parenting, management and partnership arrangements acted to promote improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. Consideration was also given to how organisational structures including workforce, resources, advocacy and quality assurance mechanisms impacted on the quality of care planning.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 In the report there are five questions that the inspectors posed resulting in positives and areas for improvement. Significantly there was a positive feedback on Corporate Parenting and Elected Members. This stated "Elected members were knowledgeable about the issues facing vulnerable looked after children and young people and very committed to improving the services they were receiving. Corporate parenting arrangements were strong and evidenced how outcomes had been influenced. There were regular opportunities for children and young people to give their views to elected members and senior officers".
- 3.02 It was clear from the report that safeguarding was a priority for all staff and that child protection processes were being used effectively. In relation to the issue of sexual exploitation the report recorded that agencies were working well together especially in relation to missing young people and child sexual exploitation.
- 3.03 The report was complimentary in relation to the reviewing system for Looked After Children stating that Flintshire is compliant with guidance and reviews were timely and updated accordingly.
- 3.04 Importantly it was reported that social workers were making strong efforts to ensure that young people understood their lives and were empowered to represent their views in care planning.
- 3.05 A number of areas for improvement of the service were identified. These have been fully documented and our response recorded in the comprehensive action plan which is included as appendix 2.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 For Members to receive and consider the report from CSSIW and resulting action plan.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 None.

6.00 **ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None.

7.00 **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None.

8.00 **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None.

9.00 **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None.

10.00 **CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 None.

11.00 **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 None.

12.00 **APPENDICES**

12.01 CSSIW National Inspection, Safeguarding and Care Planning of looked after children and care leavers who exhibit vulnerable or risky behaviours.

12.02 Action Plan

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None

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