

## Wiltshire Council

### Children's Select Committee

14 March 2017

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#### Executive Response to the Final Report of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group (2016-17)

##### Purpose of the report

1. To present the response of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to the Final Report of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group.

##### Background

2. On 31 January 2017, the Children's Select Committee endorsed the Final Report of the Task Group.
3. The Committee resolved to refer the following Task Group's recommendations to the relevant Cabinet member for response at the Committee's next meeting on 14 March 2017.

##### Executive response to the Task Group's recommendations

###### That the Children's Select Committee:

<b>Recommendation No.1</b>	<b>Notes that overall the Task Group has confidence in the consistency and cohesion of the council's child protection audit process and the process to select the themes and identify the trends (and take necessary actions where appropriate);</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
Noted			

<b>Recommendation No.2</b>	<b>Considers working arrangements with the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) further when more information on national plans for LSCBs is available;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			

The Children's Trust Exec continues to work with the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board post publication of the Wood review to plan future arrangements. Furthermore, DfE guidance will be considered on publication.

**That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services considers:**

<b>Recommendation No.3</b>	<b>Adding dedicated "practice weeks" to the council's social care learning and improvement framework;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
The established audit programme in Children's Services allows for Senior Management oversight and learning alongside social care staff. There is an embedded programme of auditing, learning and development that allows for a more dynamic analysis to lead directly to practice improvement. Consideration has been given to "practice weeks" but it is not viewed at this juncture to be an improvement on the current programme.			

<b>Recommendation No.4</b>	<b>Amending social care structures and processes so that, to the greatest extent possible, children and families have the same social worker for the whole of their journey in the social care process;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
This model was implemented by Wiltshire in 2013 with only one transfer point for children who become permanently looked after.			

<b>Recommendation No.5</b>	<b>Exploring if introducing a "Specialist Practitioner" role or similar to provide an alternative career pathway for experienced social workers who wish to remain in frontline practice rather than move into management would deliver similar benefits for Wiltshire.</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
We consider the Level Four Social Work role to be commensurate with the Specialist Practitioner post. There are significantly more opportunities in Wiltshire as a result. For those wishing to explore management there is the Aspiring Manager role.			

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<b>Recommendation No.6</b>	<b>The possible benefits of having “supplementary” social care teams and services in-house rather than commissioning them to external agencies</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
Wiltshire do not commission social care services / teams outside Children’s Services. Wiltshire Council has the Family Support service which delivers what could be termed a “supplementary” social care service. This is an in-house team.			

<b>Recommendation No.7</b>	<b>Introducing a systemic model of child protection casework, similar to those evidenced in other authorities;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
There are a number of social work models currently implemented across the sector many of which are subject to innovation research and analysis. Wiltshire are developing their intervention on the Relationship Based Practice model and its integration into the new Children’s Services Integration (CSI) model.			

<b>Recommendation No.8</b>	<b>In keeping with a systemic model of child protection casework, defines a “case” as a family (potentially including multiple children) rather than an individual child, with internal case numbers counted as such, thereby ensuring that families have a single social worker (while recognising that the case numbers reported to central government have to reflect individual children);</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
Wiltshire works with children and families and social workers are engaged in a whole family approach. DfE statistics and collation of data does not direct our engagement model. The focus is on the individual child as part of a holistic family approach.			

<b>Recommendation No.9</b>	<b>In keeping with a systemic model of child protection casework, introducing an alternative model for assessing children's additional needs, such as the Family Star System;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
The CSI project is exploring alternative models for assessing children's additional needs and outcomes. This recommendation is focused EI assessment tools and scales and as such the matter will be referred to WSCB Early Intervention sub-group.			

<b>Recommendation No.10</b>	<b>Working with the Cabinet Member for Housing, and while recognising the clear differences between small, urban London boroughs and the rural county of Wiltshire, reserving an allocation of properties on the housing list for care leavers to support their transition into independent living, thus removing the necessity of placing care leavers on the emergency band for housing;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
Children's Services and Housing wish to launch a pilot supported housing scheme for Wiltshire's care leavers. Housing Associations and other housing providers perceive care leavers and other young people as high risk tenants and therefore there are insufficient housing options for this group. As a consequence the Council has been forced towards purchasing more costly housing options for care leavers. In launching the project we seek to demonstrate that group living, in small schemes, can be successful and lead to longer-term secure tenancies for care leavers. To pilot we need to reserve a small number of properties and make these available through the supported housing scheme to care leavers.			

<b>Recommendation No.11</b>	<b>Supporting the CAF/CASS+ pilot as a potential way of easing pressures within the family court system;</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
This is an initiative Wiltshire would welcome and discussions with the regional CAF/CASS director are ongoing.			

<b>Recommendation No.12</b>	<b>Outlining how the Mind of My Own (MoMO) app is currently used in Wiltshire as a way of ensuring the child's voice is heard in the social care process.</b>		
<b>Reason for recommendation</b>			
<b>Cabinet member</b>	Cllr Laura Mayes	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Terence Herbert
<b>Executive Response:</b>			
Mind of My Own (MoMO) is currently used in Wiltshire to gain the views of children and young and evidence their wishes and feelings in preparation for sharing within meetings such as Looked After Review, Child Protection Conferences and Child In Need Meetings. Children and young people are also able to complete a Make a Change Statement or make a formal complaint via the MOMO App.			

### **Proposal**

4. To note the executive response to the Final Report of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group (2016-17).

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**Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

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