



**Report to Children, Young People & Family  
Support Scrutiny & Policy Development  
Committee  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

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**Report of:** Policy and Improvement Officer

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**Subject:** Children's Social Care Task Group report

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**Summary:**

This report provides the Committee with a summary of the work of the Children's Social Care Task Group. It also outlines the recommendations that the Task Group have formulated as a result of their work and which will be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

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**Type of item:** The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	<b>x</b>
Other	

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**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

- Note the work that has been completed by the Task Group and
- Agree the recommendations to be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration

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**Background Papers:** None  
**Category of Report:** OPEN

## **Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee, Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

- 1.0 The Scrutiny Committee set out its intention early in the year, to scrutinise a piece of children's social care policy work, with a view to influencing it in its formative stages, and to ensure that the Committee's views on effective support to and safeguarding of vulnerable groups, improving services to residents in the city and meeting the Council's commitments around Fairness and Poverty are taken on board during the development of this policy.

The Committee set up a Task Group in October 2017, to fulfil this purpose. Initial meetings were spent gathering information on the key challenges facing Children's Social Care, as set out within its Recovery and Improvement Plan. Whilst the full Committee scrutinised the plan in its entirety, during its meeting in January 2018, the Task Group decided to focus on two key elements of the plan:

- Sufficiency and developing the local offer
- Workforce development strategy.

- 2.0 Membership of the group is outlined below:

- Cllr Mick Rooney – Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee Chair and Task Group Chair
- Cllr Cliff Woodcraft – Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee Deputy Chair
- Cllr Mohammed Maroof – Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee Representative
- Cllr Jim Steinke - Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee Representative
- Cllr Bob Pullin - Children Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee Representative

The Task Group review was undertaken from October 2017 - February 2018.

- 3.0 The Task Group used a range of approaches to gather data for the review including desk top research and evidence gathering sessions, as part of these sessions the Task Group met with the following individuals / representatives from organisations:

- Carly Speechley, Director of Children and Families
- Victoria Horsefield, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Joel Hannah, Assistant Director of Children and Families (Provider Services)
- Helen Sweaton, Assistant Director, Prevention and Early Intervention
- Matthew Sampson, Head of Improvement and Sufficiency
- Claire Warren, Advanced Social Work Practitioner
- Jane Wood, Senior Fieldwork Manager

The Task Group reviewed the evidence gathered and identified a set of findings and recommendations as outlined in the next section.

- 4.0 The Task Group formulated its recommendations under three key headings. It recommends that the Council:

### **Sufficiency**

- 4.1 Continues with the very positive developments in Family support, providing valuable assistance to vulnerable families in Sheffield
- 4.2 Carries out an evaluation of a range of potential incentives to becoming an in house Foster Carer, for example exemption from Council Tax.
- 4.3 Should continue with the strong philosophy that Sheffield children should, wherever and whenever possible, stay in Sheffield.
- 4.4 Should establish a BME sub group of the Voices Foster Carers group, to focus on this sector and to pull together a specific plan to address the issues.
- 4.5 Should adopt a strong corporate approach to Children's Social Care by ensuring that all of its key plans including the Housing and Growth Strategies, can demonstrate clear deliverable links to the Improvement and Recovery Plan.
- 4.6 Ensures corporate awareness and understanding of the Signs of Safety initiative, leading to full senior level support of its implementation. This should include officers and Elected Members.

### **Recruitment and Retention**

- 4.7 Recognise the positive attitude that many existing staff have towards working for Sheffield.
- 4.8 Also recognise that, whilst motivation is not always monetary, there is a clear need for a recognition of experience, skills and levels of responsibility
- 4.9 In light of 4.7 and 4.8, develop a clear offer for Social workers in Sheffield which includes remuneration and the USP for working in Sheffield.
- 4.10 Aim to increase investment in the Hub, including consideration of mobile phones, installing large screens for monitoring calls and addressing the accommodation/space limitations.

### **Cross cutting issues**

- 4.11 Develop a clear role description of critical friend for the Ward Councillors with Residential Homes in their wards. This should include two distinct roles:
- Standards and scrutiny – assisting with scrutinising the home to ensure it meets designated standards
  - Community Cohesion – facilitating a positive relationship between the home and its surrounding community
- 4.12 Considers how it might best progress towards the development of all age social care, identifying the barriers to joint working across adult and children's social care.
- 4.13 Considers the role of Scrutiny on the Challenge Board, for example offering the Chair a place on the Board.

**5.0 The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

- Note the work that has been completed by the Task Group and
  - Agree the recommendations to be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration
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