

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

AGENDA ITEM 10 (a)

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| <p>CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS REPORT</p> |
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15 September 2015

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board with an update on the work of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel.

BACKGROUND

Safeguarding and Children in Care

2. Services for children in care are provided through a mix of in-house local authority provision and commissioned services from providers in the private and voluntary sector.
3. The commissioning of services should reflect the diverse needs of children in care and ensure that there are a variety of ways to support children. The commissioning process is an important mechanism for meeting the needs of local children.
4. Effective commissioning can improve the choice and quality of placements and associated services for children in care. Having the most suitable placements available is a vital factor in improving placement stability, which in turn is a critical success factor in relation to improved outcomes for children in care.
5. At the time of writing, the next meeting of the scrutiny panel is scheduled to take place on 9 September 2015. At this meeting, Members will consider evidence in the context of Terms of Reference a) and b):
 - a) To examine how the Local Authority commissions services that reflect the needs of children in care.
 - b) To assess the quality of placements, how stable they are and whether they work well for children.
6. Neil Pocklington (Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Children's Care) and Rachel Mawer (Commissioning Manager) will be in attendance to provide Members with information in respect of commissioning services, the quality of placements, budget

pressures, the profile of children in care, maintaining relationships, the views of children in care and placement stability.

RECOMMENDATION

7. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the progress of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel.

COUNCILLOR JEANETTE WALKER

CHAIR OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL

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