

## **Report of the Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) to the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel to be held on 10 September 2018**

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**Subject: Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Annual Report 01<sup>st</sup> April  
2017- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

### **Summary statement:**

The IRO Manager should be responsible for the production of an Annual Report for the scrutiny of the members of the corporate parenting board. This report should identify good practice but should also highlight issues for further development, including where urgent action is needed. IRO Handbook section 7.11

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Deputy Director  
(Children's Social Care)

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### **Portfolio:**

Children's Services

### **Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

Children's Services

## **1. SUMMARY**

### **1.1 The IRO Annual report should make reference to:**

- Procedures for resolving concerns with an analysis of the issues raised including the outcomes.
- The continued development of the service including IRO case load numbers, make up and diversity of the team.
- Participation of children and families.
- Timeliness performance of review meetings.
- Outcomes of quality assurance audits in relation to the organisation, conduct and recording of reviews.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

IRO Annual Report includes data collected for our Children Looked After (CLA) from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31st March 2018. It presents the IRO overview of service delivery to our CLA for this Panel.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

The Strategic Director has agreed to recruit to an additional full time IRO vacancy. The advert has gone out and we aim to interview on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

There are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

The Government made it a legal requirement for an IRO to be appointed to participate in case reviews, monitor the local authority's performance in respect of reviews, and to consider whether it would be appropriate to refer cases to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass). This is set out in section 26 of the 1989 Act, as amended by the 2002 Act

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None.

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

IRO's are experienced social work practitioners independent from social work teams. This enables an independent overview of the child's planning and provision of care. IRO's will challenge drift and delay in the implementation of care planning and inadequate or poor care plans.

A part of the review will look at diversity and leisure needs of the child. This will include all aspects of diversity such ethnicity, gender, cultural, language and religious needs. The reviews are key in protecting and prompting the child's background and identity.

## **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

IRO's review care plans for Bradford's Children Looked After. The objective is to achieve good timely outcomes for our most vulnerable children and in doing so support them from early childhood through to independent living. The effective independent review of care plans to ensure that the local authority is identifying and meeting the needs of the district's most vulnerable children.

## **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

Not applicable.

## **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

## **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

A Solicitor is not consulted in completing this annual report.

Children Looked After are entitled to have their care planning and provision of care reviewed by an independent professional.

## **7.6 TRADE UNION**

Not applicable.

## **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

## **7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)**

Not applicable.

## **7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

It is a statutory expectation that all Looked After Children have a regular review of care plans.

## **7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

Not applicable.

**8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

**9. OPTIONS**

See recommendations below.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Corporate Parenting Panel endorse and approve the key priorities suggested for the service in section 12 of the main report.

**11. APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1- IRO Annual Report.**

**12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- Bradford's 2017/18 Annual CLA Data provided by the Data Analytics & Intelligence Officer.
- Reference to the IRO Handbook.
- National IRO Managers Partnership Meeting Minutes.
- Viewpoint questionnaire feedback.