

## **Torbay's Children's Continuous Improvement Plan**

**Prepared by:** Stephen Hart, Independent Chair, Torbay Children's Continuous Improvement Board

**Date prepared:** 13 July 2022

**Meeting:** Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board

**Date of meeting:** 25 July 2022

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This short report informs members of the Board that the final plan has been published and the implementation phase is progressing accordingly.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1. Councillors will know that a report was presented to Cabinet on 24.8.2021 by the Chief Executive that set out proposals to strengthen the Councils governance arrangements for Childrens Services and to provide focus and drive for Childrens improvement beyond the Department for Education intervention. This was unanimously agreed. At its subsequent meeting on 18 October 2021, members of the then Improvement Board voted unanimously to move towards initiating a Children's Continuous Improvement Board (CCIB) in recognition of the progress that had been made in children's social care since the publication of the Ofsted inspection report in 2018 which judged Torbay's Children's Services to be inadequate overall. This confidence was shown to be well placed as Ofsted has subsequently (in May 2022) judged Torbay to be good in every aspect of its Children's Service.
- 2.2. In order to take forward the changes, membership has been broadened to reflect the intention of the Council to develop services for children that go beyond the parameters of a traditional children's (social care focused) service. As a result, the new Children's Continuous Improvement Board (the CCIB) will oversee progress against key improvement priorities for children and young people that

have been developed by other partnership boards such as the YOT and SEND boards, the Corporate Parenting and the Early Help boards and the Adults Improvement Board. Representatives from these Boards are now sitting on the CCIB joining other recently appointed members drawn from the child health professional community.

- 2.3. The newly constituted Torbay Children's Continuous Improvement Board approved, subject to two amendments that were immediately made, the first Torbay Children's Continuous Improvement Plan at its meeting on 18 May 2022. This plan incorporated the four recommendations from the latest Ofsted Inspection Report that was published on the same day.

### **3. Summary of Key Actions and Milestones**

- 3.1. The Children's Continuous Improvement Board has adopted three key actions to quality assure the delivery of improved services to children and young people and is mindful of a fourth relevant activity that supports the substantive quality assurance activity.

- 3.1.1. The Continuous Improvement Plan is accompanied by a requirement for those accountable for improvement priorities to present documentary evidence of progress and an analysis of impact for children and young people to the Continuous Improvement Board at set intervals of no more than six months. The precise timetable for presentation is contained in a formalised forward plan. Any barriers to improvement will be recorded in the risks and issues log and the members of the CCIB will consider actions to overcome them on an ongoing basis.

- 3.1.2. Throughout the improvement priority implementation phase, the quality assurance (QA) framework will be used to monitor progress through a combination of dip sampling and 'deep dive' audits. Outcomes of these QA activities will be formally reported to those accountable for the individual priority to enable findings to be factored into the work that is being undertaken.

- 3.1.3. In addition to the formal oversight undertaken by the CCIB executive group, its Operations Board will systematically monitor 6 weekly progress updates and highlight concerns to both the accountable person and to the CCIB.

3.1.4. Councillors will be aware of the periodic focused reviews undertaken by the Chief Executive and the Independent Chair of the Children's Continuous Improvement Board. These reviews will continue and a work programme for the next year is currently being developed and it is confidently expected that a number of the improvement plan's priorities will be selected for review and in the fullness of time, reported to the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **4. Key Issues**

4.1. This report has set out the arrangements for implementing and monitoring the progress of the first Torbay Children's Continuous Improvement Plan. Its range of social care and partnership priorities are designed to benefit children, young people and their families and together form a key element of the council's ambition for Torbay to become a child friendly area.

#### **5. Key Risks**

5.1. No major risks are evident that would compromise the full implementation Continuous Improvement Plan. All members of the CCIB are committed to and have contributed to the plan that will provide the foundation for further improvement to services available to children and young people throughout its three year cycle. Should unanticipated risks arise, we will advise the Committee accordingly and will take steps to mitigate any impacts for children and young people.