

Corporate Parenting Board – July 2016

Title of paper:	Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2015-2016	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman, Director – Children's Integrated Services Helen.Blackman@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	Wards affected: All
Report author(s) and contact details:	Clive Chambers, Head of Service – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance clive.chambers@nottinghamcity.gov.uk 0115 8764266	
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Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)		
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>The report summarises the work of the Independent Reviewing Service during the course of 2015 - 2016. The service has three core functions, two of which directly relate to the Corporate Parenting function of Nottingham City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the implementation of the care plan for looked after children. • Annual reviews of Foster Carers. 		
Recommendation(s):		
1	That Corporate Parenting Board members note the activity of the Independent Reviewing Service over the 2015 - 2016 financial year.	

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The report from the Independent Reviewing Service provides an important insight into the experience of highly vulnerable children and young people. It is also reported to the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board and will inform the Board's Annual report, which is a published document.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 The service is based in the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Section of Nottingham City Children's Integrated Services Directorate. The Independent

Reviewing Officers (IRO) Service operates within the framework of the updated version of the IRO handbook, national guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and the national guidance for Fostering.

2.2 The report summarises the work of the Independent Reviewing Service during the course of 2015 - 2016. The service has three core functions:

- Children looked after – The primary focus of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) with Children Looked After is to critically examine and quality assure the Care Planning and interventions of the Local Authority in respect of each child or young person looked after. Central to this is ensuring that the child's wishes and feelings are given full consideration in planning and enabling, by their role, improved outcomes. Work in this area is based on national guidance contained within the IRO Handbook;
- Child Protection – In this context IROs chair Child Protection Conferences, which make decisions about whether children should or should not be subject to a protection plan, and scrutinise the work undertaken. IROs also chair meetings which look at specific risks to children and young people e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation;
- Fostering – The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (Fostering), is to ensure that the Department's Foster Carers provide suitable care to children in care and to a standard that meets or exceeds the Department's legal responsibilities.

2.3 The report provides an update on the key achievements during the course of the year. This includes:

- agreement to re-grade IROs with a view to increasing capacity to permanently recruit to posts;
- increase the use of monitoring of the IRO caseload to ensure a balanced distribution of the work;
- the introduction of a system to provide an overview of outcomes for children in care;
- supported a range of wider initiatives across the directorate.

2.4 The Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2015 – 2016 is available in its entirety within the appendix (please see 8.1).

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 None.

4 FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 None.

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)

6.1 None.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because the report does not contain any proposals or financial decisions:

8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

8.1 Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report 2015 - 2016

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

9.1 None.