

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	20 March 2017
<b>Title:</b>	Joint Targeted Area Inspection - report and letter of findings
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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### 1. Executive Summary

**1.1.** The purpose of this paper is to provide Cabinet with an overview of the recent Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to abuse and neglect in Hampshire and the positive letter of findings.

### 2. Contextual information

**2.1.** Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) were introduced in 2016 as a multi-agency inspection that evaluates 'front door' and safeguarding services in an area across agencies that work with children, young people and their families. The term 'front door' in this context means the initial multi- or single agency response to a referral about the neglect or abuse of a child. As well as assessing front door services, the inspection also considers the response to specific children and young people through a 'deep dive' theme.

**2.2.** These multi-agency inspections involve Ofsted, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation). The lead inspector of the JTAI is always an Ofsted inspector which represents the local authority's statutory role in leading the partnership for children.

**2.3.** From February to June 2016 five areas were inspected, evaluating the deep dive theme '*the experiences of children and young people at risk of, or subject to, child sexual exploitation and missing from home or care*'.

**2.4.** From September 2016 the deep dive theme became '*children living with domestic abuse*' and this was the theme for Hampshire.

**2.5.** Hampshire received notification from Ofsted on 22 November, with the week of on site inspection commencing on 5 December.

**2.6.** The inspection takes place over a three week period with at least 12 inspectors on site during the last week. During the on site week, the

inspectors work across inspectorates in three pods to evaluate leadership, front door services and the deep dive theme.

- 2.7. The two weeks prior to the inspection team being on site are for the local authority and partners to gather the information required, including an extensive data requirement, known as Annex A.
- 2.8. From Annex A, produced by the local authority, the lead inspector selects 20 cases for additional information. From this 20, 5-7 cases are selected for a multi-agency audit. In Hampshire we found that the data requirements exceeded this 20 with a further requirement of;
  - 10 good practice cases
  - 10 multi-agency cases
  - 10 Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) cases
  - 10 Probation cases
- 2.9. It is estimated that 150 files were ultimately audited by the Children and Families branch prior to their submission to the lead inspector.
- 2.10. During the week on site inspectors;
  - Track the cases selected for multi-agency audit, meeting with the front line staff and discussing the case in depth
  - Forensically sample the other cases selected
  - Follow cases through front door arrangements onwards through children's social care
  - Attend multi-agency meetings
  - Meet with key people both from within the organisations being inspected and in the community, such as voluntary organisations.
  - Speak to children, young people and their families

### **3. Performance**

- 3.1. Please note the final letter regarding the inspection attached.
- 3.2. This is an exceptionally positive report, and although no graded judgements are given in such reports it reads as one of the most positive JTAI feedback letters written nationally. There is recognition of the strong performance of the Children and Families branch in tackling the issue of domestic abuse and also particularly positive in respect of the mature multi agency children's safeguarding partnership arrangements across Hampshire, that are seen to be making a real difference to children and families. The inspection stated clearly that *'the local authority shows a clear commitment to partnership working'* and this is threaded through the report in terms of the local authority's leadership of the partnership, its support of other partners and the visibility and transparency of senior managers.
- 3.3. No priority actions were identified and only one area for improvement directly relates to children's social care.

### **3.4. Key joint area headlines are;**

- a) *It is evident that leaders in all organisations are committed to the partnership and that they appropriately prioritise the protection of these children. This shared commitment results in strong, established and mature partnership working.*
- b) *Strategic arrangements for responding to domestic abuse in Hampshire are robust and effective*
- c) *Across all partners, the overall standard of practice is strong and the areas for improvement are minor*
- d) *It is evident that leaders in all organisations are committed to the partnership and that they appropriately prioritise the protection of these children.*
- e) *The HSCB [Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board] is dynamic and forward thinking*

### **3.5. Key Hampshire Children's Services headlines are;**

- a) *The open style of leadership and innovation is creatively driven by the director of children's services. Considerable support for this innovation is offered from both the lead member and the chief executive*
- b) *Good examples of a sophisticated understanding of domestic abuse are evident through the innovative role of the domestic abuse workers in the family intervention team (FIT), which is based within the local authority child in need teams*
- c) *Social workers place a high priority on the voice of the child and know children with whom they work well. This was evident in all work and particularly strong in longer term casework*
- d) *There is a high level of senior leadership awareness of the 'front door' service and domestic abuse, which is assisted by a continuity of leadership and a focus on keeping in touch with frontline practice and individual outcomes for children. The director of children's services and the assistant director have a good understanding of the experiences of children in Hampshire.*
- e) *The style of both senior and operational management encourages learning and reflection within a strong culture of performance management, including, for example, the robust, well-embedded peer review process.*
- f) *Frontline social workers are committed and highly knowledgeable about individual children*

## **4. Other Key Issues**

- 4.1.** The JTAI process requires that a *statement of action* is completed which details what each partner organisation will do to address the areas of improvement identified in the feedback letter. The local authority is identified as the coordinator of the statement albeit there is only one small area of suggested improvement.

**4.2.** Children's Services is coordinating the writing of this action plan, which will go to the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) in April for approval.

**4.3.** The HSCB will then monitor progress against the plan.

**5. Recommendation(s)**

**5.1.** That Cabinet note the exceptionally positive JTAI letter.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Maximising well-being:	yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	
Joint Targeted Area Inspections are conducted under section 20 of the Children Act 2004.		

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

**1.1.** The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

See guidance at <http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/equality/equality-assessments.htm>

*Inset in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state*

- (a) Why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) Will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

#### **2.1.**

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?