



| <u>Committee and Date</u> |
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| Cabinet                   |
| 21 July 2010              |
| 12:30 pm                  |

| <u>Item</u> |
|-------------|
| <b>17</b>   |
| Public      |

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## **OFSTED UNANNOUNCED SAFEGUARDING INSPECTION**

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Cabinet of the outcome of the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment processes within Shropshire Children's Services that took place on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

### **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet notes the Ofsted letter and action plan.
2. That Cabinet refers this to Scrutiny Committee to assess the progress of the action plan by December 2010.

### **Background**

The inspection was undertaken by two Ofsted inspectors accompanied by a third inspector (in training). As outlined in their findings (attached at Appendix 1) this was a detailed inspection which included the sampling of a range of records and interviewing many staff and managers.

The inspectors gave positive feedback on seven areas which led them to conclude that these were being delivered in accordance with national guidance. These included the systems for dealing with referrals, the allocation of cases and the supervisory arrangements. Four areas of strength were identified as outlined on page 2 of the letter.

The areas of development are areas that have been already identified by the Social Care and Safeguards Division. These were the subject of individual action plans, for example in relation to the timeliness of assessments and the recruitment and retention of staff.

A data quality review and the Help Desk Review were already underway. Attached at Appendix 2 is a summary of the action plan that responds to the Ofsted Inspection and the internal reviews, covering the following critical areas:

- recording and data accuracy
- timely, quality assessments
- management, supervision and quality assurance processes
- referral processes
- recruitment and retention of staff

Attached at Appendix 3 is the full action plan which is now subject to consultation for agreement by 7 July 2010. As will be noted this is a comprehensive plan which has some significant areas of development. The overall goal is to build upon existing achievements and ensure that social care staff time is used as efficiently and effectively as possible in the task of safeguarding Shropshire's vulnerable children.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

**Human Rights Act Appraisal**

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.

**Environmental Appraisal**

There is no environmental impact

**Risk Management Appraisal**

The authority has a very considerable responsibility in respect of children at risk. It should keep under regular review its capacity to deliver these duties effectively in light of revised statutory guidance.

**Community / Consultations Appraisal**

Service evaluation and consultation with partners takes place through the Safeguarding Children Board.

**Cabinet Member**

Cllr Cecilia Motley

**Local Member**

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Ofsted Inspection Report

Appendix 2 – Summary of Action Plan

Appendix 3 – Full Action Plan