
Report To:	Community Health & Care Partnership Sub Committee	Date:	28th August 2014
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Subject:	Preparation for the Joint Inspection of Children's Services by the Care Inspectorate		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide information for members on changes to the arrangements for Inspection of Children's Services by the Care Inspectorate and action being undertaken in preparation for the next inspection of Children's Services in Inverclyde.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Care Inspectorate has redeveloped the approach to scrutiny and inspection across social services generally. In doing so, it has effectively widened the scope of its inspection regime in relation to services for children and young people and will now focus on all agencies and levels of intervention. It is however anticipated that future inspection will retain a focus on child protection and other services for vulnerable children.
- 2.2 The strategic leadership and management accountability for future inspection will now rest with the Community Planning Partnership and Chief Officers groups in Local Authority Areas. The Child Protection Committee will however continue to lead on services for the most vulnerable children.
- 2.3 It is proposed that a steering group is developed from the current SOA6 (Best Start in Life) membership, with representatives from each agency providing services for children and young people in Inverclyde. The steering group will oversee the preparation for and co-ordination of the inspection and will report through the SOA6 Group to the Alliance Partnership and the Chief Officers Group. This will provide consistency and continuity of approach across the partner agencies who provide services for children and young people in Inverclyde. The Child Protection Committee will link with the steering group; however will continue to have key responsibility for co-ordination of child protection matters.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members note the information provided and endorse the proposals.
- 3.2 Members contribute their views if there are any other activities that they feel should be considered as part of the preparations.
- 3.3 Members note that they will receive further information regarding the progress of preparations in due course.

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4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 There have been two previous inspections of child protection services in Inverclyde in 2008 and 2010/2011. These were undertaken by the then joint inspection authority HMIe. Members will recall that Inverclyde performed well in both inspections in terms of our joint services for protecting children.
- 4.2 Since that time, there has been a review of the scrutiny of social services more generally, culminating in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010. This has brought the inspection of social services under a new body, the Care Inspectorate which commenced its role in September 2011. The general principles in accordance with which the care Inspectorate carries out its functions are:
- The safety and wellbeing of all persons who use, or are eligible to use, any social service are to be protected and enhanced;
 - The independence of those persons are to be promoted;
 - Diversity in the provision of social services is to be promoted with a view to those persons being afforded choice;
 - Good practice in the provision of social services is to be identified, promulgated and promoted.
- 4.3 The Care Inspectorate has redeveloped the approach to scrutiny and inspection across social services generally. In doing so, it has effectively widened the scope of its inspection regime and in relation to services for children and young people, it has embraced the principles of GIRFEC. As such inspections will focus upon services for children and young people more generally, across agencies and levels of intervention it will no longer focus solely upon child protection services. That said, inspections will wish to focus upon vulnerability and how services respond effectively to produce better outcomes for children who are experiencing adversity.
- 4.4 Given this expansion in the scope of the inspection, the leadership and management accountability focus will no longer be upon the Child Protection Committee (CPC) but instead will rest upon the Community Planning Partnerships and Chief Officers Groups in each local authority area. This change in approach aligns with GIRFEC principles and the duties and responsibilities that will come with the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 4.5 The Care Inspectorate has run a series of pilot inspections to test out the new approach. Against this background, it has now commenced its first full round of joint inspections of children's services. The key principles for joint inspections are:
- User- focused: involving service users in the design and delivery of scrutiny.
 - Outcome focused: targeting inspection at improving the quality of outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people based on the GIRFEC framework.
 - Partnership-orientated: emphasising the collective responsibility of community planning partners and the effectiveness of partnership working to improve outcomes for children and young people, making best use of resources.
 - Transparent: providing a complementary approach to robust self-evaluation for improvement and independent inspection of children's services.
 - Intelligence-led and risk-based: taking a proportionate approach to inspection which is influenced by reliable information and robust self-evaluation.
 - Integrated and coordinated: a multi-agency focus drawing on the collective participation of relevant scrutiny bodies and the Audit Scotland – led Shared Risk Assessment.
 - Improvement-led: supporting continuous and sustained improvements.
- 4.6 Indications from our Link Inspector, who met with the combined Child Protection Committee and Single Outcome Agreement 6 Group (SOA6) on 14th July 2014, are that we are unlikely to be inspected within the current round of inspections. Given the procedures involved in co-ordinating the next round of inspection, we are advised that we may be inspected any time from May 2015 onwards. As such early preparation for inspection would be a prudent course of

action, especially in terms of informing the self-evaluation that will be requested approximately twelve weeks in advance of any inspection.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Early preparations have included an alignment between the Performance Management sub-group of the CPC and a Self-evaluation sub-group of the SOA6. Although work is at an early stage in the latter group, the Performance Management sub-group has been operating over a number of years and throughout the last two inspections. It is anticipated that this group will be able to support the SOA6 group in the development of the pre-inspection self-evaluation, in terms of the provision of data and information collected in relation to child protection/vulnerability activity across agencies through the regular multi-agency audit and quality assurance activity of the CPC.
- 5.2 The experience of other areas already inspected is that there is benefit in creating a strategic steering group to oversee the preparation for and coordination of the inspection. It is suggested that this steering group should be derived from the SOA6 group with representatives from each agency involved to ensure a consistency of approach
- 5.3 Beneath this group, a series of single agency working groups could then be created to plan and implement action for each individual agency relative to their particular roles, responsibilities and requirements.
- 5.4 The Steering group will act as a conduit for reporting to and advising the full SOA6 group and the Chief Officers Group.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 At this stage, it is difficult to anticipate specific costs attributable to this activity. However, our experience in the last two inspections has shown that all of the activity around the inspection is extremely costly in terms of staff time. In the previous inspections it had been possible to identify additional resource to support the considerable additional activity. Given the current financial challenges it is unlikely that additional resource will be available and therefore services will require to meet demands from within the current arrangements.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

- 6.2 None.

Human Resources

6.3 None.

Equalities

6.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

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YES (see attached appendix)

NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Repopulation

6.5 None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 N/A

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 N/A