

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 25 September 2018

REPORT TITLE:	Reality Check Visit To Cheshire Lines Monday 30th July 2018
REPORT OF:	The Chair of the Committee – Councillor Tom Usher

REPORT SUMMARY

The committee have previously agreed to undertake a series of ‘Reality Check’ visits by small groups of members to enable direct engagement with frontline staff. The full report for this Reality Check Visit can be found as **Appendix 1**

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1) Notes the report.
- 2) Considers any recommendations.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

The reality visit and subsequent recommendations will enable Committee members to complete part of the Committee’s work programme.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Principles of Reality Check visits

Key to the success of scrutiny is the ability of members to check evidence from a variety of sources. While members routinely receive reports from senior management and have access to performance monitoring reports, it is suggested that greater access to frontline staff and service users would enable scrutiny members to triangulate evidence with other sources and would give members greater confidence in the outcomes of their scrutiny work. It was, therefore, agreed at the meeting of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee held in July 2017 to establish a programme of Reality Check Visits through which scrutiny members could engage independently and directly with frontline staff.

Key operating principles for the visits include:

- A programme of visits will be scheduled and will form part of the Committee's work programme. A visit will normally take place approximately every eight weeks. Visits will be set or amended taking into account the programme of externally set scrutiny by Ofsted and the Department of Education.
- There will be no direct relationship between each visit. Therefore, Members may volunteer to participate in any particular visit.
- Prior to each visit, a short briefing note will be prepared to inform members of the function of the service area and background information
- Each visit will comprise a maximum of six members supported by a scrutiny officer. A visit will usually take a maximum of 2 hours.
- The visits will give Members the opportunity to talk directly to staff so they can understand their perspective of the service. Members will be able to ask questions directly, for example, on caseloads, support offered to staff, auditing of cases and the outcomes for children and families.
- The findings from each visit will be reported to the next meeting of the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

Not Applicable

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

Not Applicable

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information to members and there are no direct equality implications.

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APPENDICES: 1 – Reality Check Visit to Cheshire Lines Feedback Report

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date