

## **ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**16 December 2019**

The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors met on 16 December 2019. The following substantive items were considered:

### **LGA SEND Peer Review**

The review team produced a report on their review which took place over a number of days in October. The report recognised the strengths in Richmond together with some areas for improvement. Their report would be used, together with the written statement of action following the SEND inspection, to focus on the areas in need of improvement in the service and how, from the peer group's view, these could best be achieved.

### **Managing Director's Report Q2**

The Board were informed that Kingston had agreed to re-commission AfC to deliver its children's services for the five years from April 2021. The decision in Richmond will be taken at Committee on 17 December. There will be a joint cross party scrutiny task and finish group to scrutinise the re-commissioning process. There will be some changes to the specification and this will come back to the Board when reviewed.

The MD announced he would be moving to the role of joint DCS on 1 January and the Board raised a concern around senior leadership capacity. A steer will also be needed from the Council on the position of the Chair of the AfC Board and the Board membership.

### **Performance Dashboard**

The Board noted that the dashboard showed an increase in the number in the workforce due to the moving of SEN Transport from Kingston council to AfC. The vacancy and agency rates have increased in AfC although voluntary turnover has slowed. A new Safety measure has been added to the dashboard and no incidents or near misses have been reported.

There has been an increase in demand around children subject to child protection plans with main presenting needs as domestic violence, parental substance misuse and parental mental ill health. There are a high number of Freedom of Information requests and Subject Access Requests being received with insufficient capacity to deal with the increase in and the complexity of some SARs.

### **Regulatory Services Report: Independent Fostering Agency**

Following the IFA inspection, the four regulatory recommendations have been addressed and the IFA is fully compliant with them. The four general recommendations are on track to be completed. RBWM is now registered as an arm of the Richmond and Kingston IFA and will have their own inspection. It was noted that any recommendations from the Kingston and Richmond IFA had been implemented across the three boroughs.

**Proposal for shaping Community Services in RBWM**

The Board were informed that a consultation is starting on a proposal to bring together a number of services into a family hub model. In April the feedback will be reviewed by RBWM and decisions made on the recommissioning of services to focus on the most vulnerable families and to target preventative services.