ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
CHILDREN’S SERVICES

1 Purpose of item

1.1 To provide details of the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) undertaken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and Ofsted.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That Committee receive the Annual Performance Assessment Report (APA) prepared by CSCI/Ofsted.

2.2 That the Director of Children’s Services reports to a future meeting of the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny committee on progress concerning the areas that CSCI/Ofsted have identified as requiring improvement.

3 Background

3.1 The APA replaces the current performance assessment of children’s social care by CSCI and the existing basis for the education rating used in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

3.2 APA ratings, on a 4 point scale (see below) are made on:-

- the overall contribution of children’s services to the five outcomes for children and young people;

- the Council’s capacity to improve

3.3 2005 ratings use evidence relating to the 2003/4 school year for education And the 2004/5 financial year for social care. The ratings range from Grade 4, the highest - a service that delivers well above minimum requirements for
users, to Grade 1 - a service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users.

3.4 Self-assessment of impact is an important feature of both APA and JARs (Joint Area Reviews). JARs will judge, for the first time, the extent to which public services collectively contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people. To avoid duplication, the JAR (for Medway in May/June 2006) will act as the annual assessment and its ratings will contribute to the CPA assessment, which takes place at the same time.

3.5 Medway’s APA self-assessment was judged to be “robust and honest”. However, overall the Council was graded at 2, (delivering minimum requirements for users, with adequate capacity to improve). The APA letter sets out strengths to sustain, areas to improve and identifies areas for exploration in the JAR. In addition, JARs will always focus on safeguarding and child protection arrangements and review support for children vulnerable to poor outcomes (children in public care, children with learning difficulties or disabilities). As in the case of Medway, if there has not been a recent youth service inspection an enhanced inspection will take place.

3.6 The APA will be reported to Health and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (12 December 2005) and then subsequently reported to Cabinet on 13 December 2005.

4 Financial implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal implications

5.1 The Annual Performance Assessment arises from the requirements of the Children Act 2004.

6 Background papers

The Annual Performance Assessment for Medway Council (attached)

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