18. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

19. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015 were confirmed as correct subject to the inclusion of Councillor Bill Turner in the list of members who were present.

20. Health Visiting Update Report

The Corporate Director of Children’s Services (CDCS) presented a report which updated the Committee on progress following the transfer of commissioning responsibilities for the 0-5 health visiting services to the Council from October 2015, and set out the proposals for the development of a service model for 0-19 services in the borough, as outlined to Cabinet in June 2015. The Council had awarded the contract to provide 0-5 health visiting services to North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) for a period of two years, with an option to extend for a further year, on the basis that the current market for suitable health visiting providers was relatively limited. The contract duration period allowed for an assessment of the provider market and the development of a procurement strategy for the commissioning of more cost-effective services. The 0-5 health teams were aligned with children’s centre localities and GP surgeries.

Members asked what the strengths and challenges were in delivering the service following the transition. The CDCS stated that the service was a very essential part of the Council’s early health offer and had safeguarding benefits because families using the service were in touch with professionals with strong links to the Council. There were a number of challenges including recruiting to the number of posts required, the lack of experience of health visitors, pressures on the Council’s Public Health Grant and the lack of funding specifically for posts required to supervise health visitors.

Members asked what the main barriers to recruitment were. The CDCS stated that an increase in the child population meant that the number of health visitors required was now higher than it was a few years ago. It appeared that this was not
planned for; colleges did not put up enough health visiting training and there had not been enough initiative in encouraging health visiting as a career option for students. The challenges were similar to the challenges around recruiting social workers and this Council was not the only one facing recruitment challenges.

In response to a question the CDCS stated that:

- Children’s centres were fairly evenly spread across the borough and there was some capacity to move staff around to meet need and
- The service did employ temporary health visitors when needed.

21. **Work Programme**

Members agreed the latest version of the Work Programme.