

Salford City Council

Final

**SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN**

**Monthly Report
Card**

December 2008

Please note - this is a snapshot as at 31st December 2008.

Colleagues

Welcome to the final report card of 2008.

First let me congratulate you all on the work you have done to help us achieve an improvement in our grade from 'inadequate' to 'adequate' in relation to the 'staying safe' outcome area in this year's APA. Although we have not yet received notification of the outcome, you will also be aware that December is the key decision point in determining whether the DCSF requires a formal Government intervention in the running of Salford's children's services and is the month by which the targets we were set for the 'Salford 7' have to be achieved. Although our performance against those specific measures will not be the only factor to be taken into account in determining whether our improvement notice is to be lifted, it is a very important element. It is therefore very encouraging to note that our objectives have been met for all of the indicators for which December targets have been set.

Actual figures for all the indicators in the report card are shown in the table on the facing page and a detailed commentary is provided in the body of the report. As you can see, we have:-

- Exceeded our target for the number of referrals.
- Exceeded our target for the number of initial assessments.
- The conversion rate from referrals to initial assessments has fallen this month but the year to date average meets our December target.
- The timeliness of initial assessments has improved again this month and the direction of travel indicates that we will meet our target by the end of the year.
- Exceeded our target for number of children with a child protection plan which we have now been doing since February 2008
- Reduced the number of children in care below the target set for the 31st March 2009 in the Local Area Agreement.

We still have some challenges:-

- This month's figure for the percentage of children subject to a second or subsequent protection plan is, at 15%, above target, but the figure of 12% represents the midpoint of an optimum range between 10 and 15% so still represents a good performance. A detailed case by case analysis does not indicate any cause for concern.
- There are still some concerns with regard to the timeliness of initial and core assessments but the overall trend is upwards and the prediction is for the targets to be met by year end.

As indicated above, December is the key decision point for us with regard to the success of the Improvement Programme. I am very grateful to all of you for the tremendous effort that you have put in to achieving the degree of success which is reflected in this report. I thank you all for your hard work and commitment and wish you all a Happy New Year.

Jill Baker
Strategic Director of Children's Services

SALFORD 7 PRIORITIES

Below are the Salford 7 key performance measures. This Report Card provides data to chart progress against the agreed target for each measure and for linked priorities.

Our progress up to December 2008 will inform the Government's decision on whether to order external intervention in Salford's safeguarding services. We want the Report Card to be a powerful tool for you to track that progress and to look at the causes and forces at work driving the trend line in the right or wrong direction ('the story behind the curve'). We hope that everyone involved in safeguarding children will use it to identify areas for improvement in their service.

Universal Code	Description of Measure
2017SC	Percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments (KIGS CH143)
2021SC	Number of core assessments of children in need per 10,000 population aged under 18. (KIGS CH145)
2023SC	Children and young people who are the subject of a child protection plan, or on the child protection register, per 10,000 population aged under 18. (KIGS CH01)
2028SC	The percentage of children who became the subject of a child protection plan, or were registered, during the year, and were the subject of a child protection plan, or were registered, at 31 March, who had been previously registered. (PAF CF/A3)
2042SC	Children looked after per 10,000 population aged under 18. (KIGS CH39)

6010SC	Gross expenditure on children in need but not looked after, as a percentage of gross expenditure on all children's services. (PAF CF/E4):
6021SC	Social Workers and care managers specifically for children (WTEs) per 10,000 population aged 0-17. (KIGS ST12)

Lead officers provide all data through CareFirst. The Information Unit in Children's Services assembles the Report Card, with support from colleagues in Community, Health and Social Care

Additional Guidance Notes

1. In order to meet new requirements we have added below a RAG rating (red, amber and green) which shows whether we are on target or not.

RAG Rating

The key indicators in this report card have been RAG (Red/Amber/Green) Rated as follows:

Page	Indicator	Current Performance	Target	Desired Direction	RAG Rating
4	Number of Referrals	257	197	↑	Green
6	Number of Initial Assessments	169	126	↑	Green
8	Initial Assessments as a Proportion of Referrals	66.7%	63.2%	↑	Green
10	Initial Assessments completed within 7 Days	76.6%	80.0%	↑	Amber
12	Number of Core Assessments	51	31	↑	Green
14	Core Assessments completed within 35 Days	76.9%	85.0%	↑	Amber
16	Number of Children with Child Protection Plan	185	116	↑	Green
18	Re-Registrations of Children with Child Protection Plan	15.23%	12.00%	↓	Amber
20	Number of Children Looked After	500	506	↓	Green

↑ indicates a higher figure is preferred

↓ indicates a lower figure is preferred

Outcome: Staying Safe

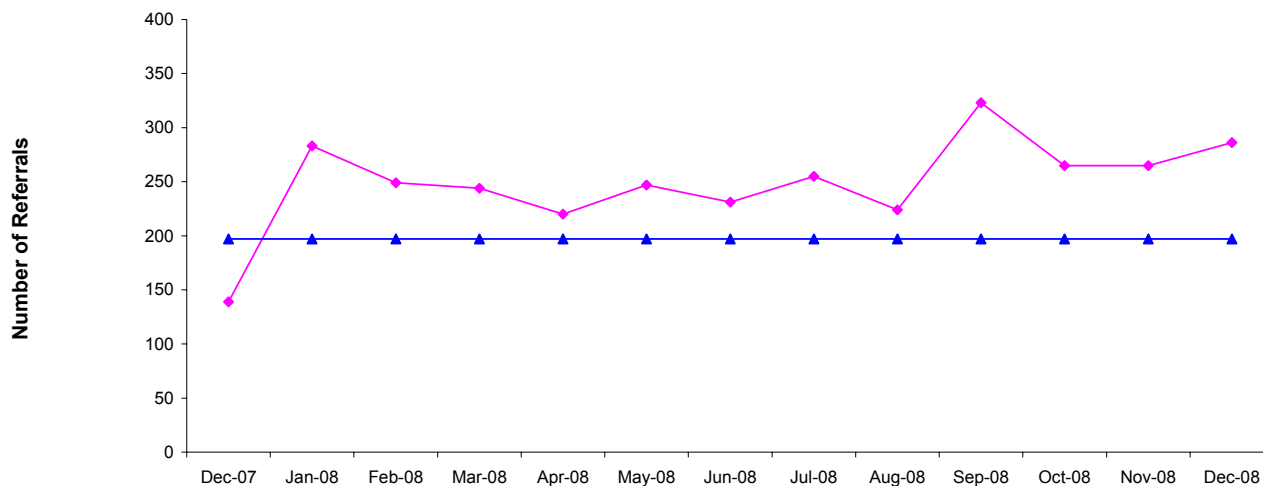
Priority: Increase the number of referrals

Performance Measure:

Number Of Referrals

Data Source: CareFirst

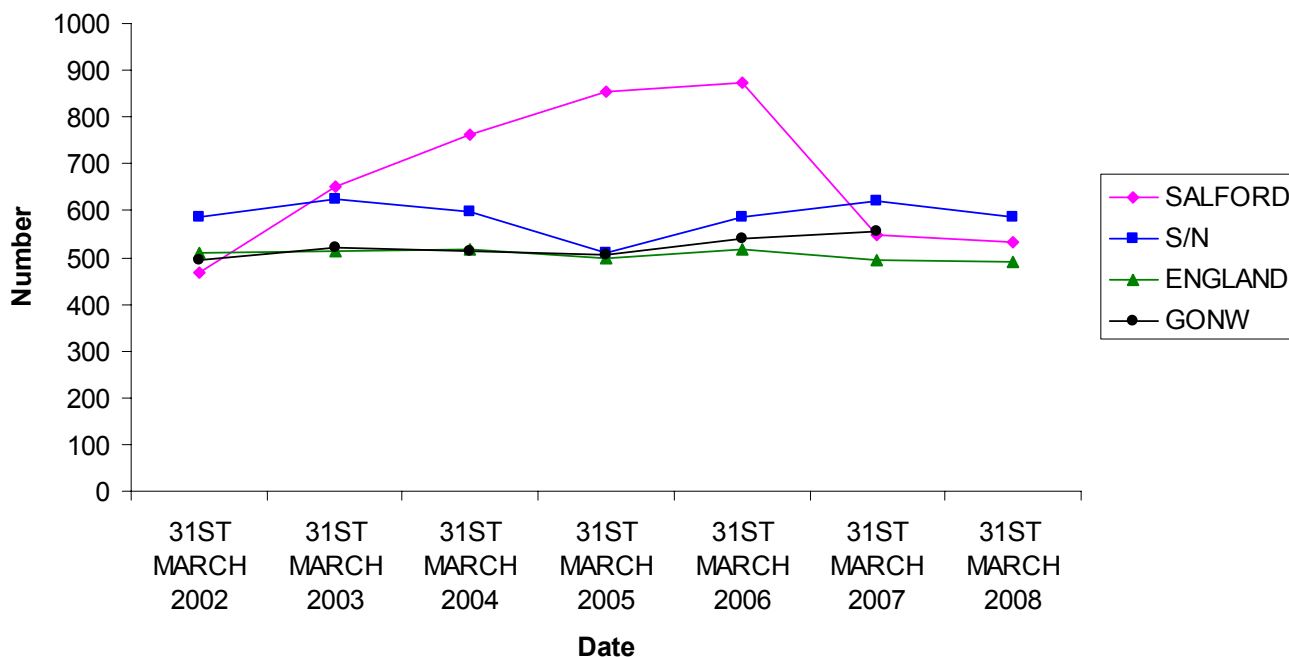
Excluded Reasons: Not A Referral, Transfer of Work, Transfer to Other Agency, Transfer to Other LA, RAP Abandon Assessment, Assessment Abandoned, Case Conference Not Rqd, Duty Screening, Entered in Error, ReAllo/ReAssgnd



	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08
Number Of Referrals	139	283	249	244	220	247	231	255	224	323	265	265	286
December 08 Target	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197	197
Monthly Average YTD					220	233.5	233	238	235	250	252	254	257

Month and Year

Number of Referrals as Rate per 10000



The Story Behind The Curve:

December saw the second highest number of referrals so far this year. It is not clear to what extent this reflects the impact of the very high profile of child protection following the recent media interest

The year to date average of 257 is well above the December target.

Michael Kemp

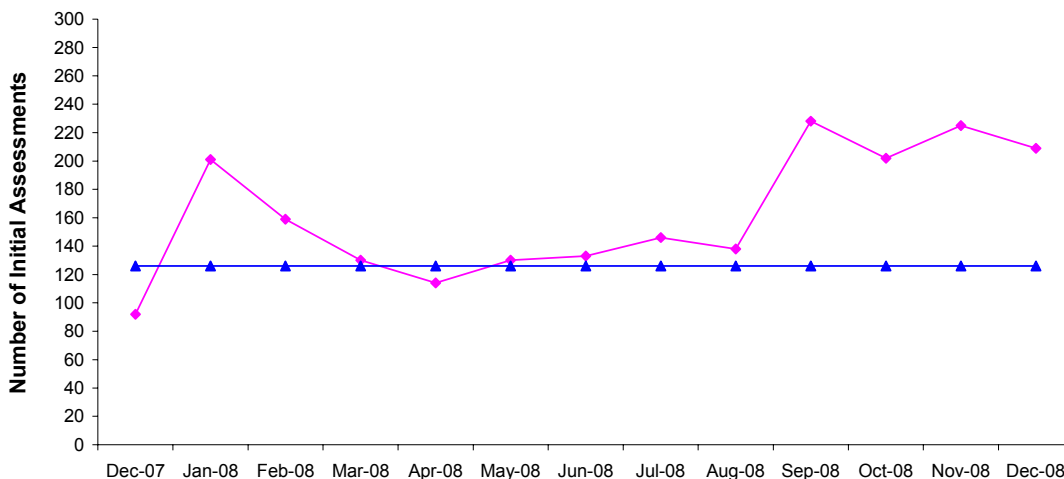
Outcome: Staying Safe

Priority: Increase the number of Initial Assessments

Performance Measure:

Number Of Initial Assessments

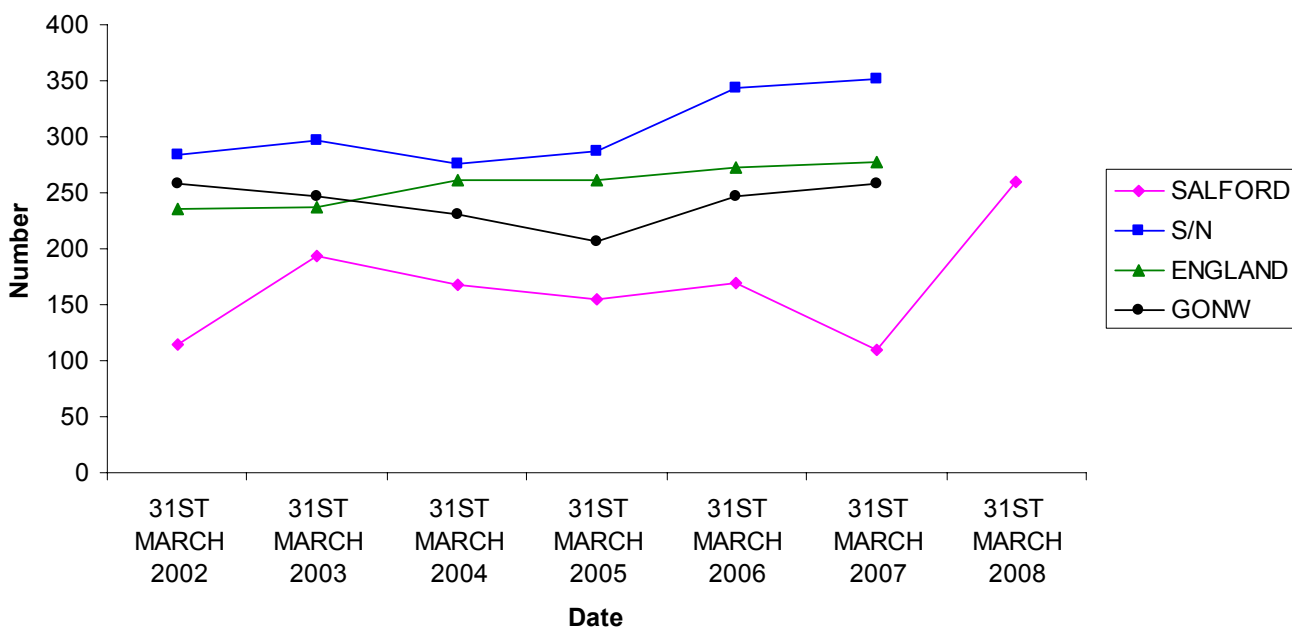
Data Source: CareFirst



	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08
◆ Number Of Initial Assessments	92	201	159	130	114	130	133	146	138	228	202	225	209
▲ December 08 Target	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
Monthly Average YTD					114	122	126	131	132	148	156	165	169

Month and Year

Number of Initial Assessments as Rate



The Story Behind The Curve:

The December figure of 209 shows a dip of 16 initial assessments compared to the figure for November. However, although the issue of late data entry has now largely been resolved, the impact of the holiday period may well have contributed to some under-reporting and this figure is likely to improve when the report is re-run next month. Nevertheless, the year to date average remains well above our December target

The professional judgement of the team suggests that the increase in the number of referrals may be associated with the publicity surrounding the Haringey case. A high proportion of these required advice rather than assessment.

The Duty and Investigation Team continue to use a manual logging system to monitor activity on a day to day basis and ensure the early identification of issues

An audit of the work carried out by the Emergency Duty Team took place in November and December to help ensure that initial assessments were affectively identified and actioned.

Michael Kemp

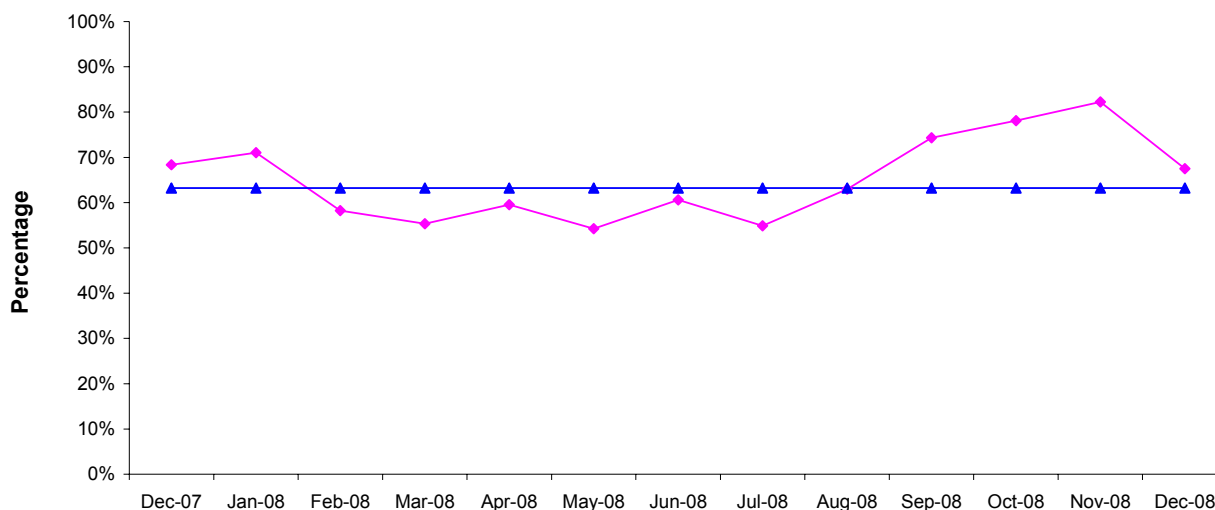
Outcome: Staying Safe

Salford 7 Priority: Increase the percentage of referrals that lead to an Initial Assessment

Performance Measure:

Initial Assessments As A Proportion Of Referrals

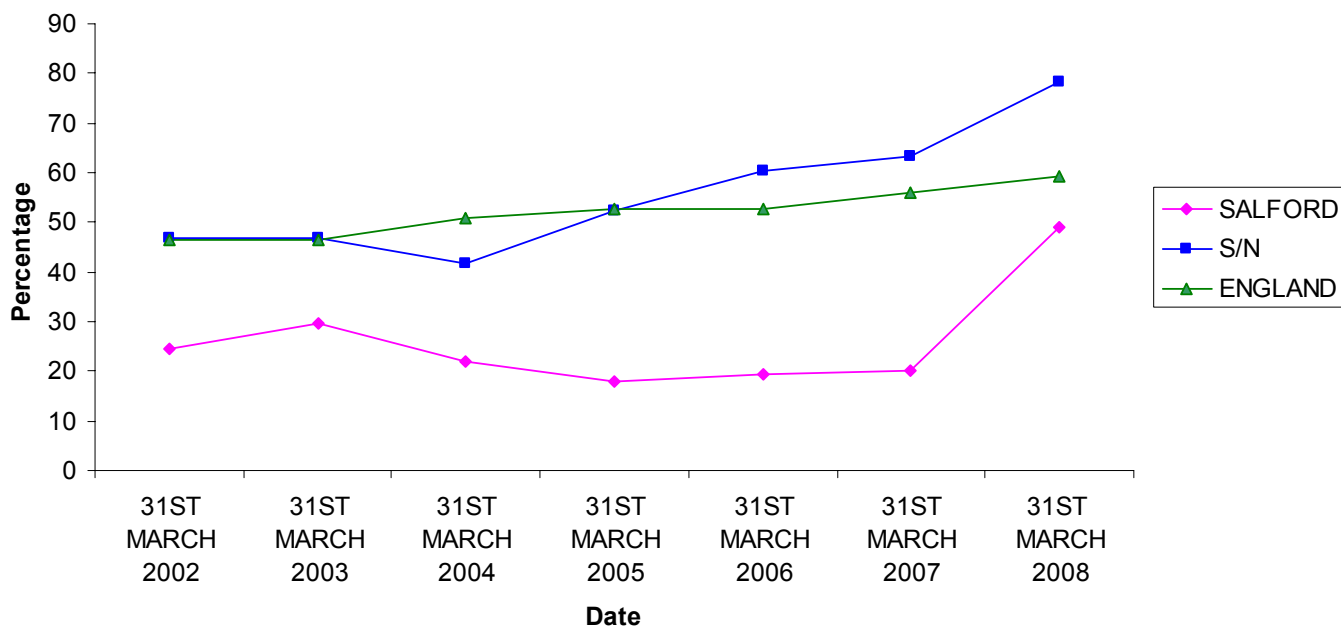
Data Source: CareFirst



	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08
Percentage	68.3%	71.0%	58.2%	55.3%	59.5%	54.3%	60.6%	54.9%	62.9%	74.3%	78.1%	82.3%	67.5%
December 08 Target	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%	63.2%
Financial YTD					59.5%	56.7%	58.0%	57.2%	58.3%	61.7%	64.2%	66.6%	66.7%

Month and Year

Percentage Referrals to Initial Assessments



The Story Behind The Curve:

The figure of 67.5% represents a significant reduction from the November peak of 82.3%. This is partly a function of the fact that the November figure was unusually high and also, as previously indicated, (page 7), a reflection of the high level of referrals for advice that did not require any further action. Performance is above target.

Team Managers on the Duty & Investigation Team continue to review practitioners' CareFirst clipboards in order to ensure that activities are recorded and moved on appropriately through the system.

Michael Kemp and Andy Gill

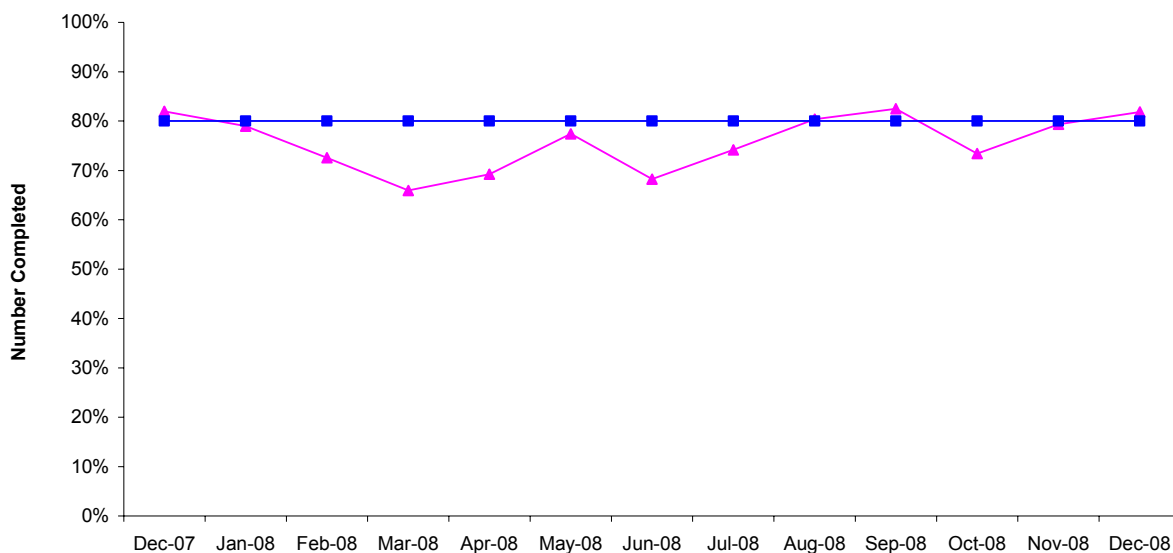
Outcome: Staying Safe

Priority: Increase the number of Initial Assessments completed within 7 days

Performance Measure:

Initial Assessments Completed Within 7 Days

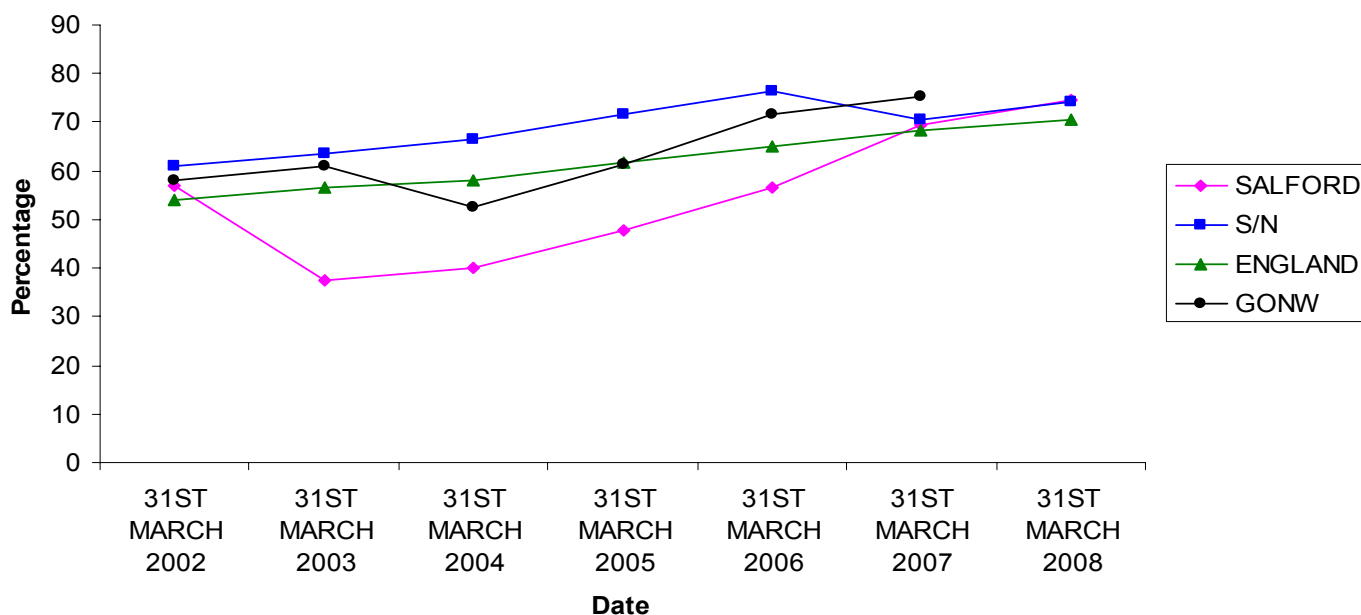
Data Source: CareFirst



	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08
Percentage Complete	82.0%	79.0%	72.5%	65.9%	69.2%	77.4%	68.2%	74.1%	80.4%	82.5%	73.4%	79.3%	81.8%
December 08 Target	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Financial YTD					69.2%	72.9%	71.3%	72.1%	74.0%	75.8%	75.3%	76.0%	76.6%

Month and Year

Percentage of Initial Assessments Completed Within 7 Days



The Story Behind The Curve:

Performance against this indicator continues to improve and the December figure is particularly encouraging given the impact of Christmas leave arrangements.

Compliance with timescales across all areas of activity continues to be given a high priority.

Michael Kemp

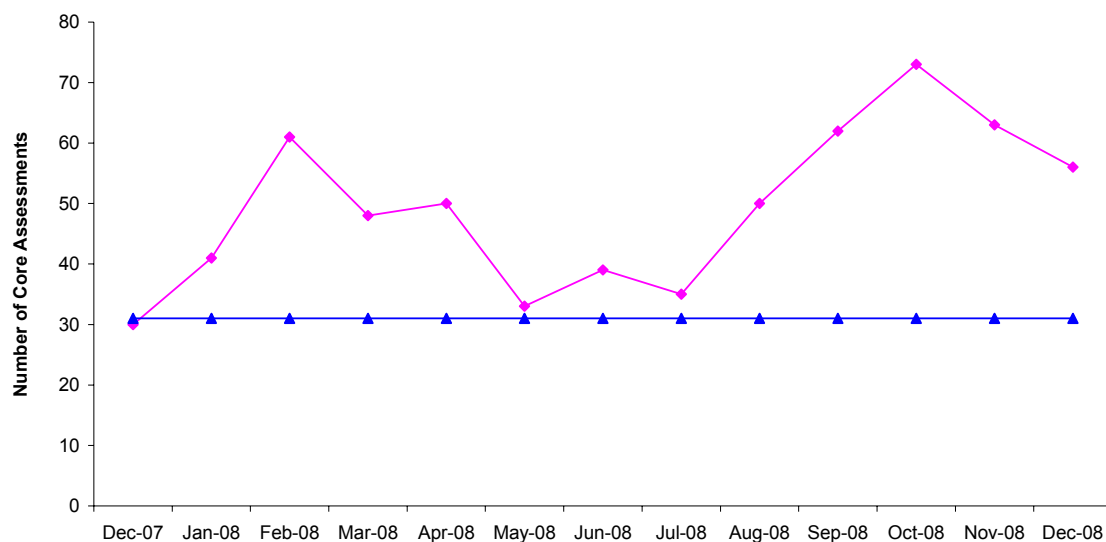
Outcome: Staying Safe

Salford 7 Priority: Increase the number of Core Assessments

Performance Measure:

Number Of Core Assessments

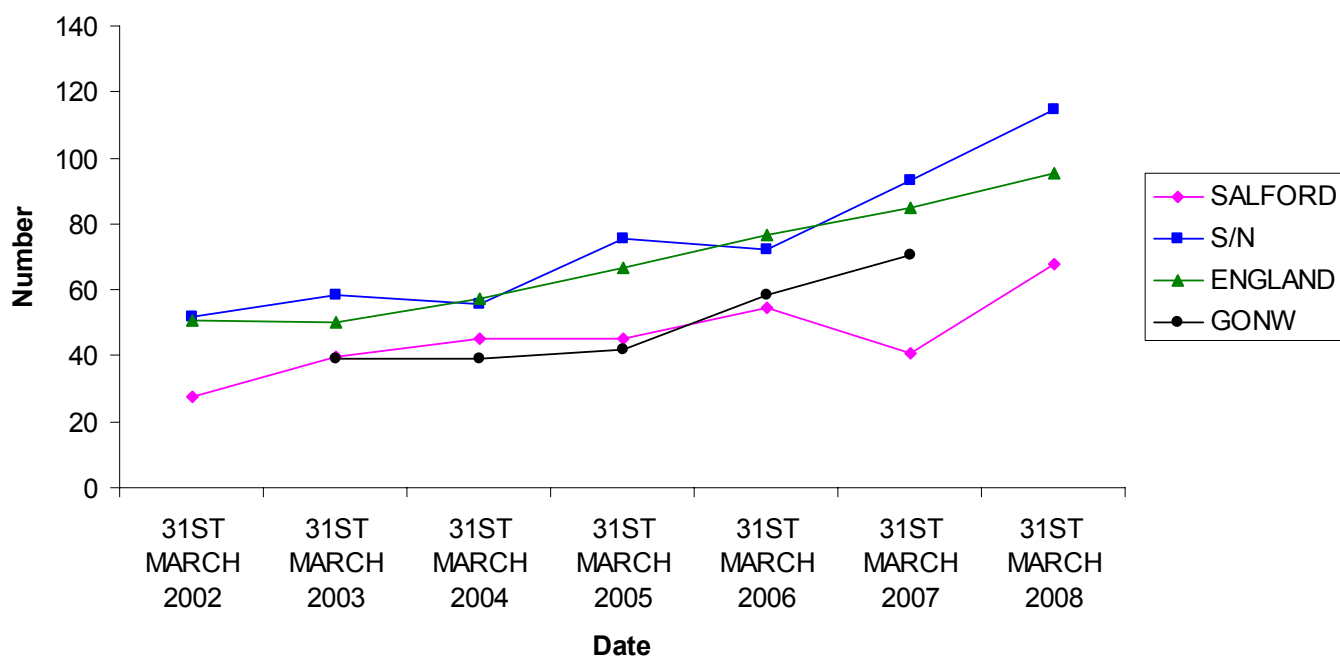
Data Source: CareFirst



	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08
Number of Core Assessments	30	41	61	48	50	33	39	35	50	62	73	63	56
December 08 Target	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31
Monthly Average YTD					50	42	41	39	41	45	49	51	51

Month and Year

Number of Core Assessments as Rate



The Story Behind The Curve:

The number of core assessments undertaken has fallen for the second month in a row and this is a concern. Arrangements are in hand to undertake some further turning the curve work around this indicator with the Duty & Investigation Team. The September and October figures are particularly high and the year-to-date average at 51 continues to be well above the December target.

Arrangements are in hand to undertake some further turning the curve work around this indicator with the Duty & Investigation Team.

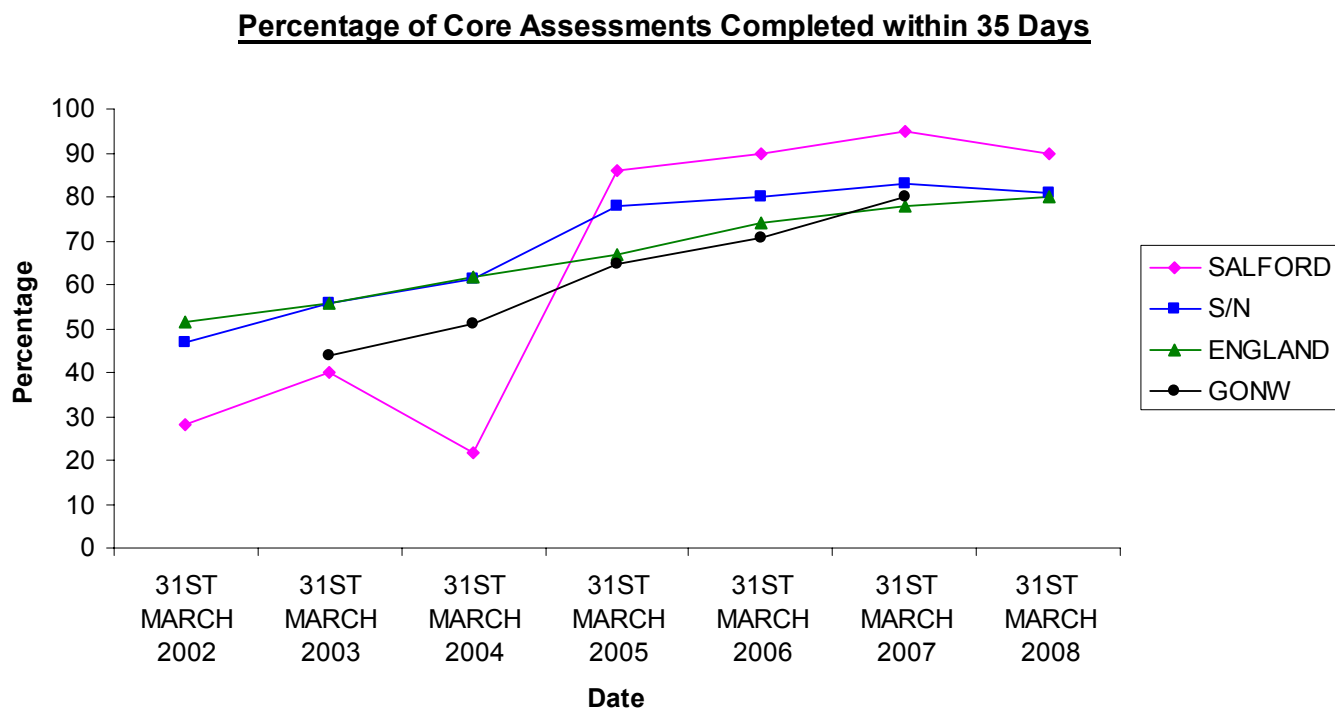
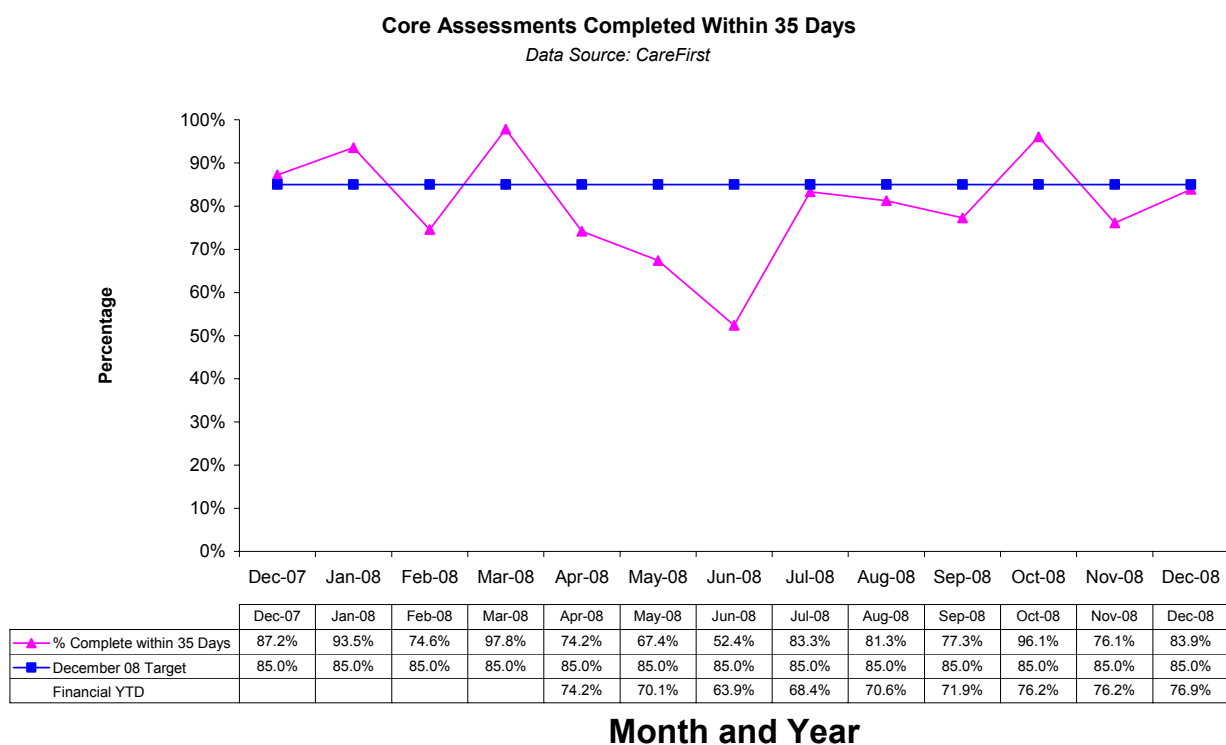
The total number of assessments done so far extrapolated to a full year would give a total of approximately 612 and a rate per 10,000 of 139. This compares very favourably with the statistical neighbour average for 2007/2008 of 114 and Salford's previous rates of 41 in 2007 and 68 in 2008.

Andy Hampson

Outcome: Staying Safe

Priority: Increase the number of Core Assessments completed within 35 days

Performance Measure:



The Story Behind The Curve:

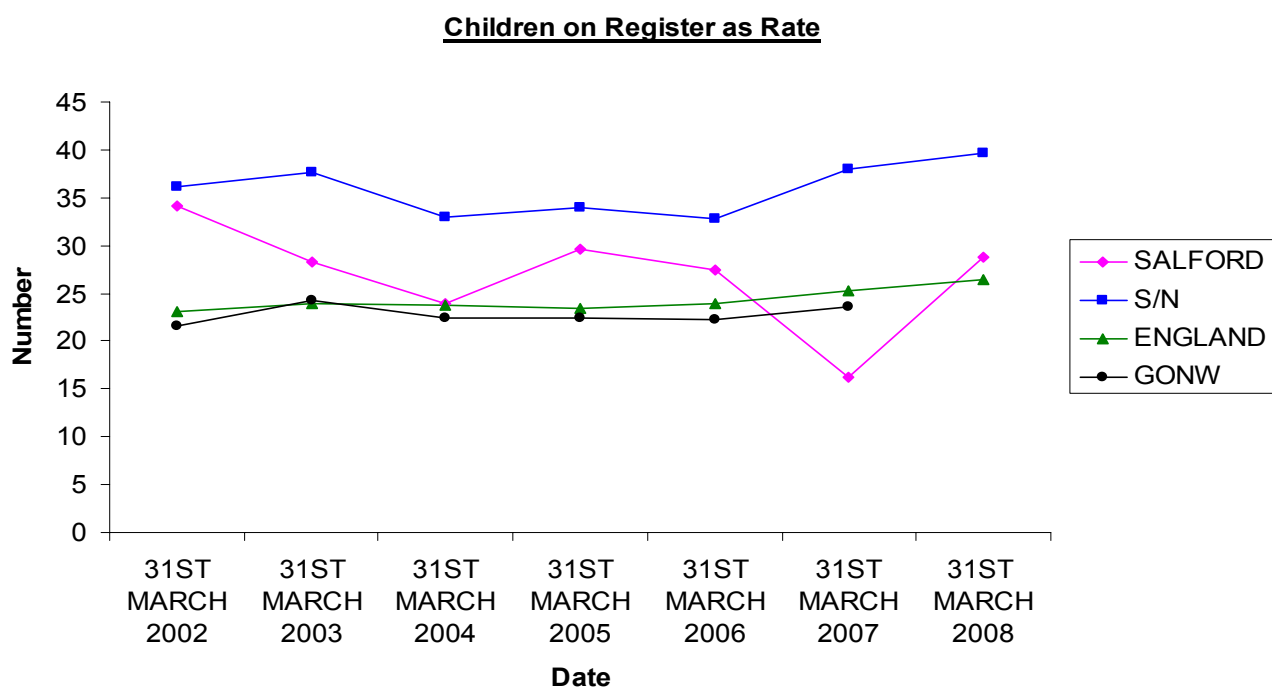
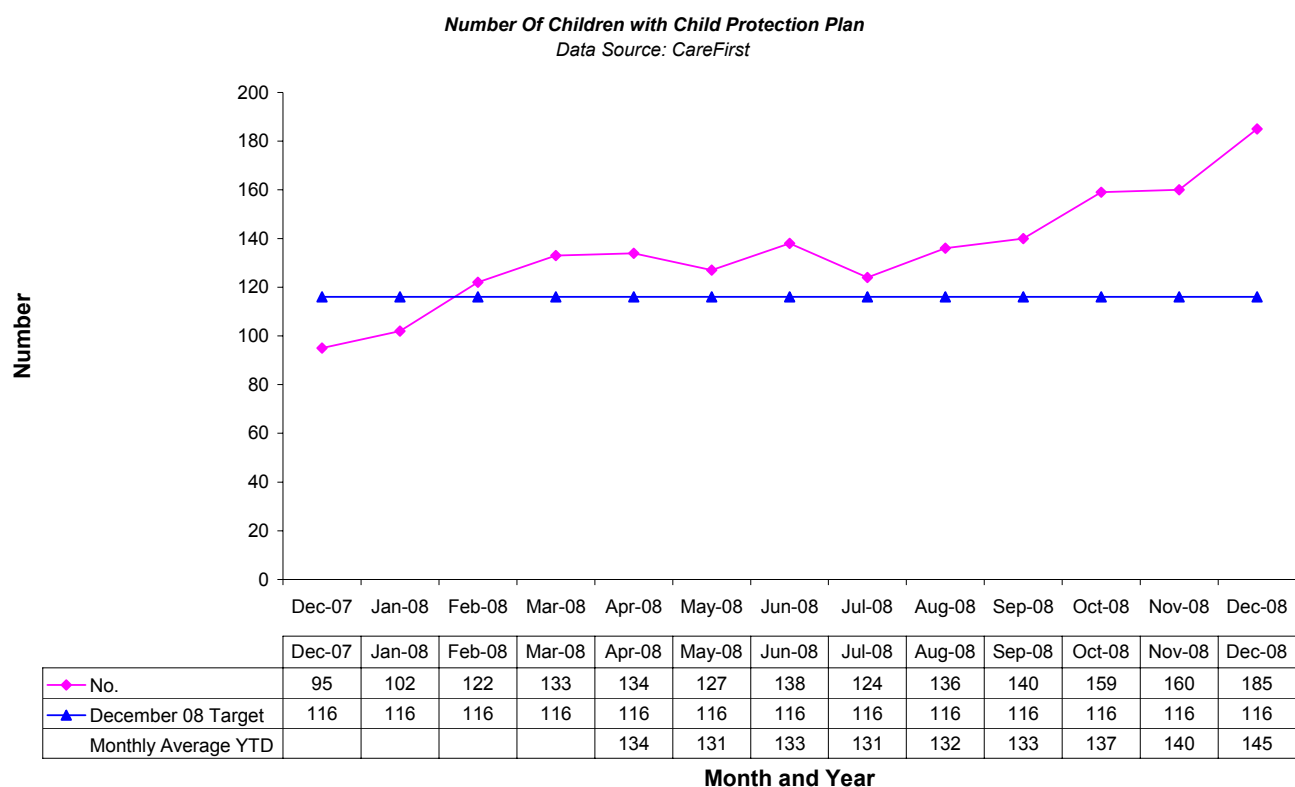
Compliance with the 35 day timescale for the completion of core assessments has improved this month as a result on the work undertaken with the team on improving the timeliness of all assessment work. The monthly figure of 83.9% and the year to date average fall just short of the December target.

Michael Kemp

Outcome: Staying Safe

Salford 7 Priority: Increase the number of children with a child protection plan

Performance Measure:



The Story Behind The Curve:

The table shows that the increase in children subject of a plan has continued its upward trajectory on a month by month basis for the last 8 months. The December figure of 185 gives a rate of 39.8 per 10,000, the median for our statistical neighbours is 35.8. The increase is generally positive but it is equally important to ensure that the threshold applied at conference is neither too high nor too low. It is likely that there are a number of external influences to this, not least the national coverage of safeguarding following the information in respect of Baby 'P' and the heightened sensitivity of all agencies. Monitoring of the rate of registration occurs at SSCB and there have been no significant changes in the application of the threshold for children coming to conference, so there is no evidence that children are being brought into the child protection system where they should more appropriately be managed through family support. It will be helpful to have an updated statistical neighbour comparator at the end of the year in order to ascertain if this median figure had also increased.

The ongoing monitoring process will ensure that the position continues to be reviewed and performance remains on target in the longer term. This will be supported through the structural changes that are in the process of discussion.

All Children who are the subject of a plan are allocated to a qualified social worker, and this remains one of the key APA requirements.

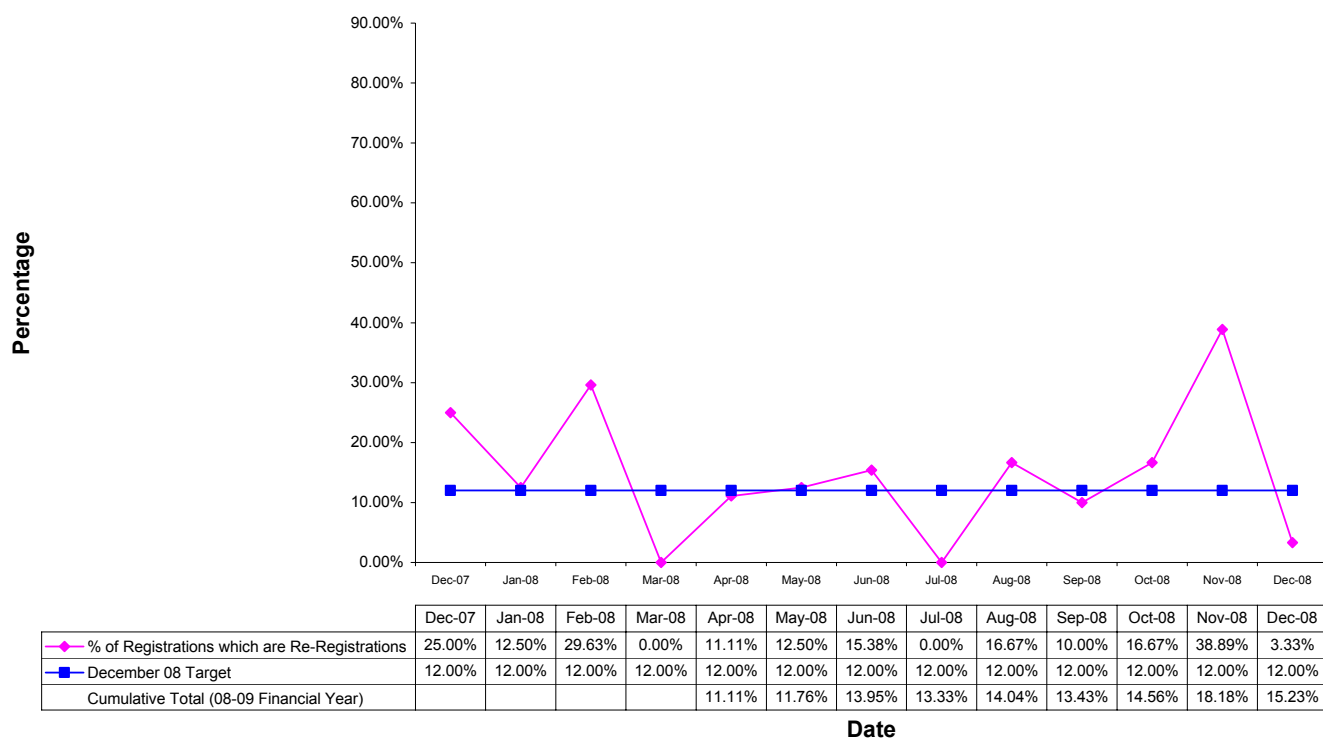
Kate Rose

Outcome: Staying Safe

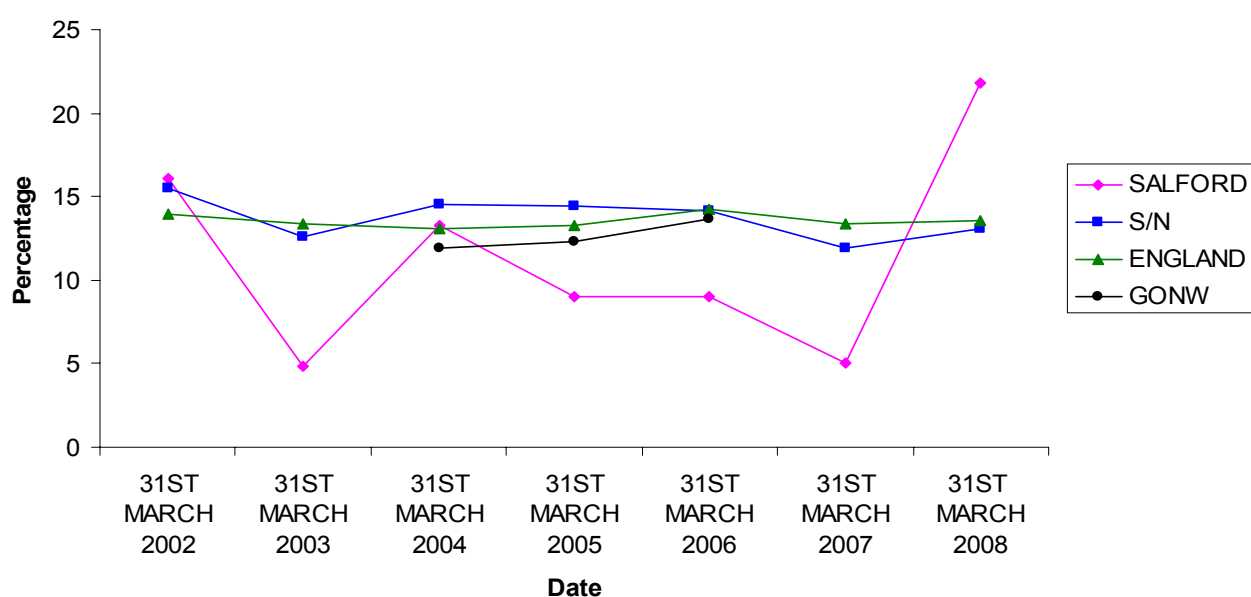
Salford 7 Priority: Decrease the percentage of children who are subject to a repeat child protection plan or re-registration

Performance Measure:

Re-Registrations of Children with a Child Protection Plan



Re-Registrations (Percentage)



The Story Behind The Curve:

Our target for this indicator is 12%, with optimum performance falling between 10 and 15%.

The span of monthly figures show a degree of variation which until the last two months was within normal expectations. The performance for this month is lower than in the previous 6 months and brings the cumulative total for the year to just above the optimum range at 15.23%.

As stated in previous report cards this figure is less 'controllable' and there has been an examination on a case by case basis of the data which has presented challenges for the future both in relation to how we manage long term neglect and the understanding, management and treatment of parents who misuse substances. The low figure for this month is within a context of a month that had the highest number of children made subject of a plan in the last 13 months.

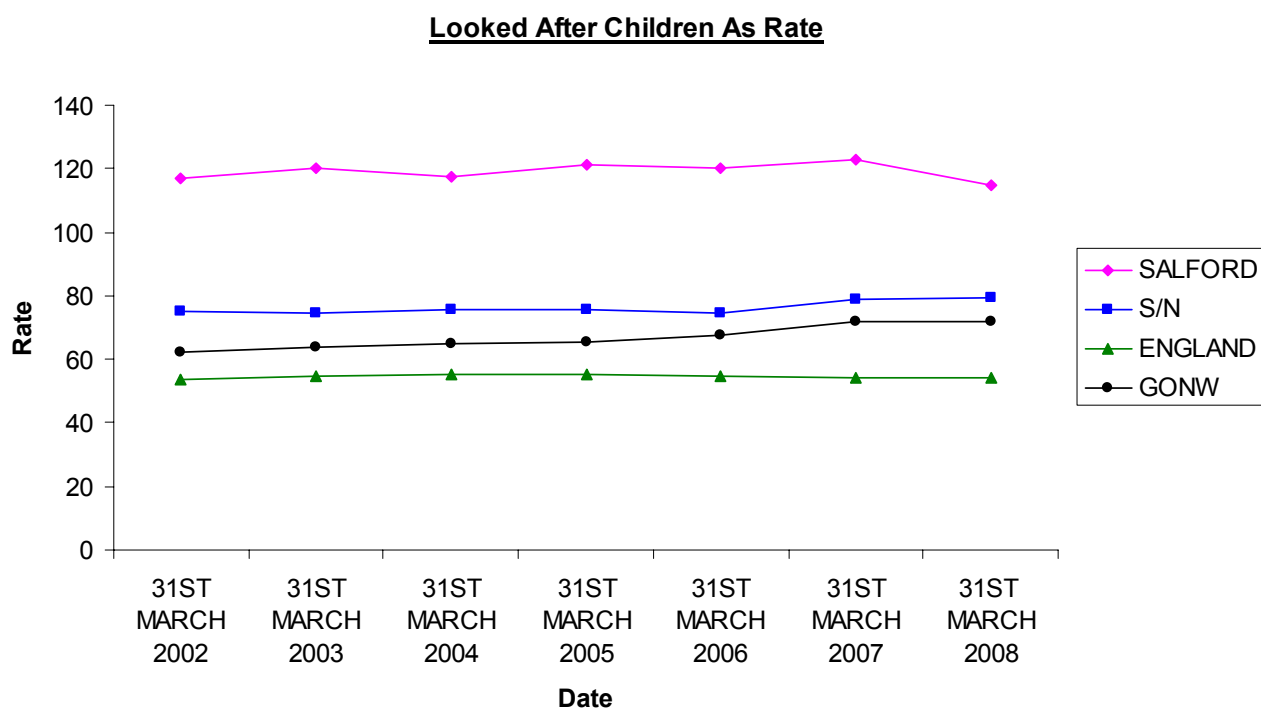
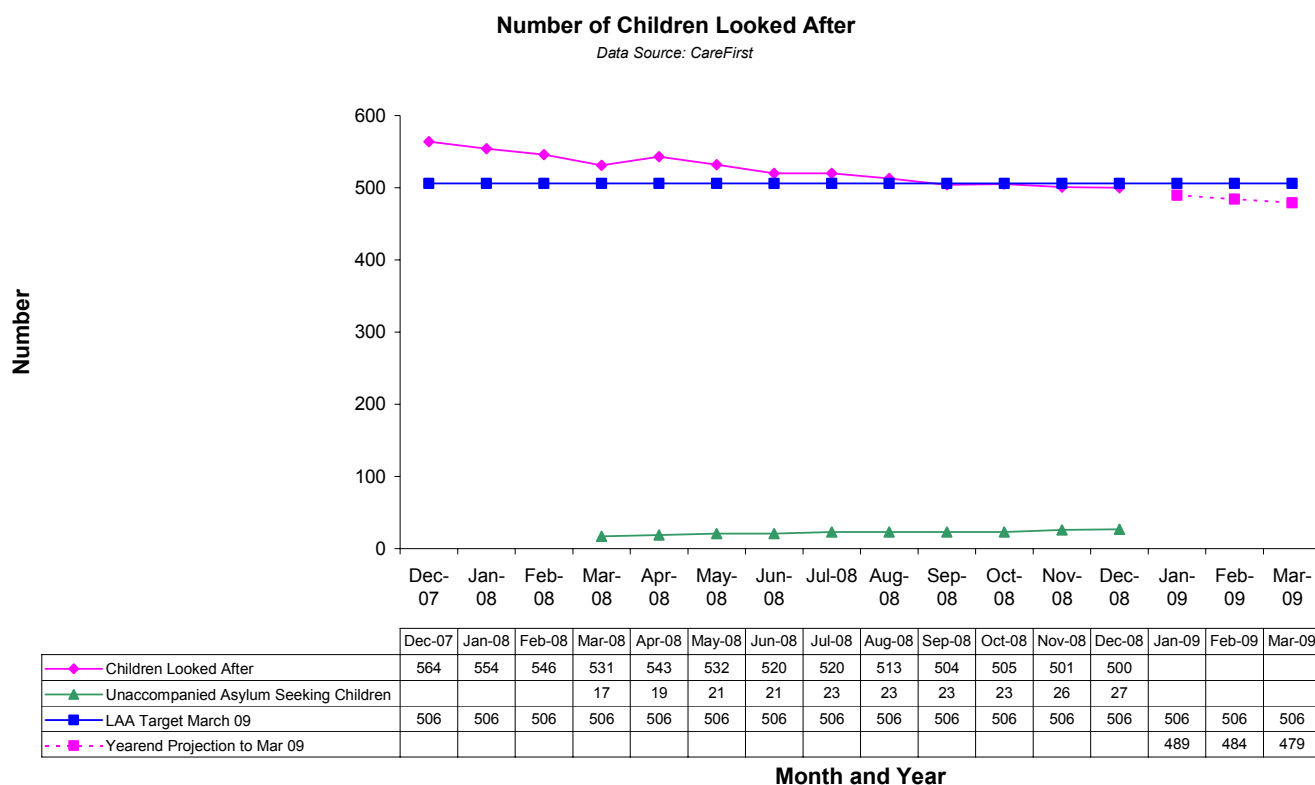
The December figure represents 1 child from a family where on both occasions the category was likelihood of emotional abuse. There was almost 2 years between the periods of the child being made subject of a plan and during that time the family were supported on the Locality team through the FAM. Whilst at the time of the conference in December the child had not experienced significant emotional harm it was recognised at the FAM that the support and plan provided was not being effective in ensuring sustained changes and that the new demands and changing emotional needs of the child were being met less and less by the parents. It is good practice that this has been recognised and the family brought into the formal child protection process so that assessments about the parents' capacity can be done to assist in making longer term decisions about the child's future, as well as considering what changes to the support provided might be required. This case represents positive safeguarding action.

Kate Rose

Outcome: Staying Safe

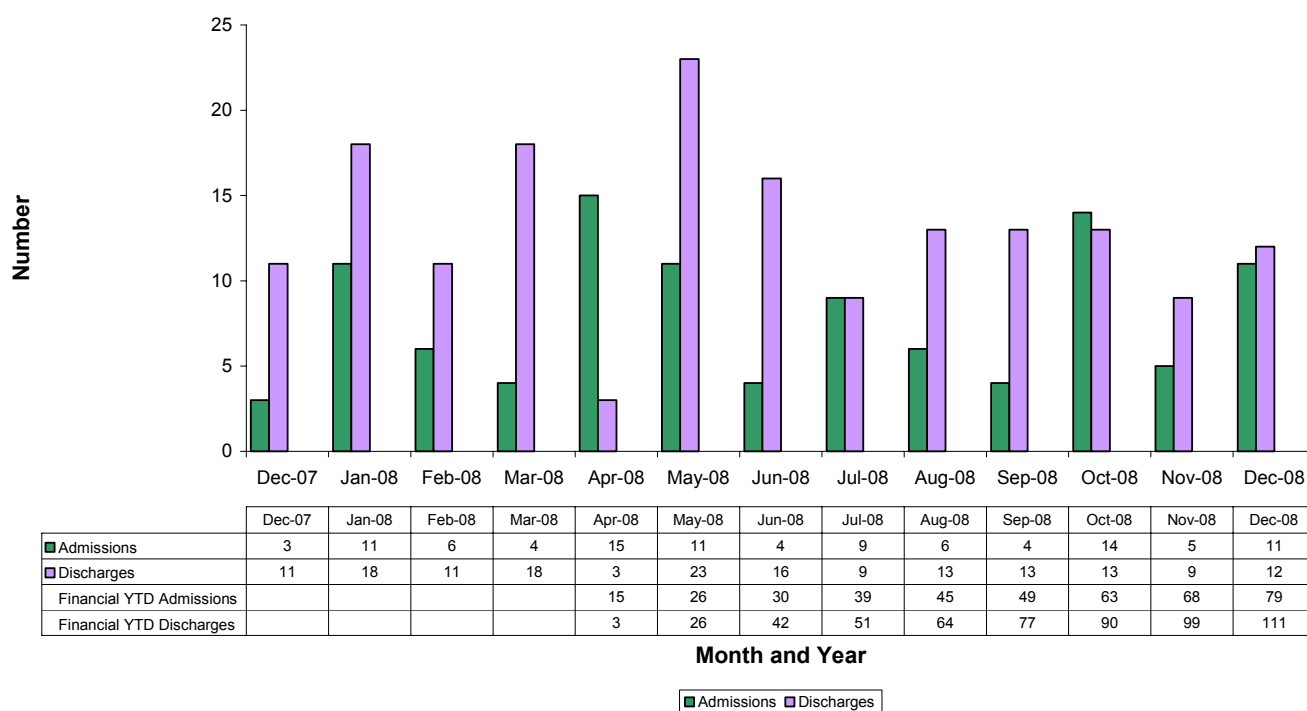
Salford 7 Priority: Reduce the number of children looked after

Performance Measure:



Numbers of Admissions and Discharges

Source Data: CareFirst

**The Story Behind The Curve:**

The number of children looked after has once again fallen slightly. The discharges have again slightly exceeded admissions despite an increase in the numbers of new entrants to the LAC system primarily stemming from cases ending the Public Law Outline process.

The figure of 500 remains under the APA target of 506 for March 2009 and the safe reduction of LAC numbers is set to continue steadily and in line with projections..

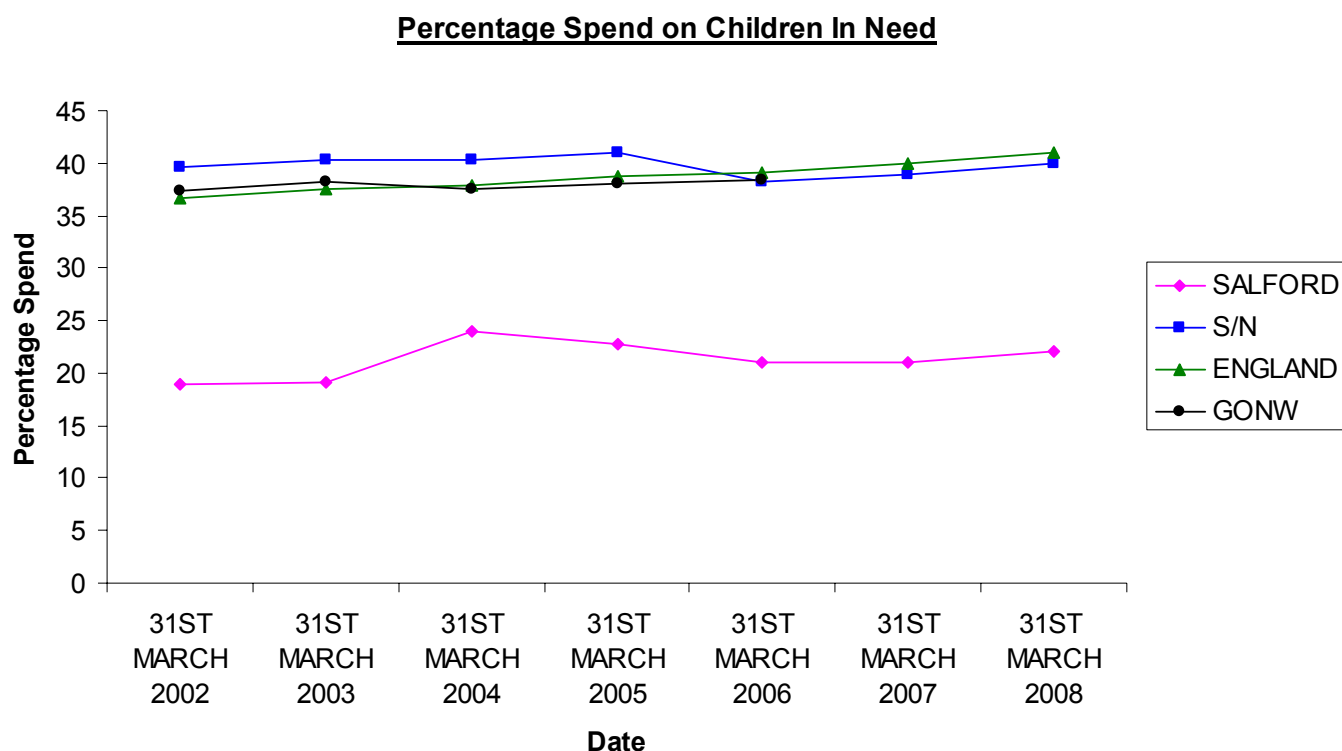
Numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are set to fall by 5 on 1st January as they reach the age of 18.

Clive Rushworth

Outcome: Staying Safe

Salford 7 Priority: Increase the percentage spend on children in need

Performance Measure:

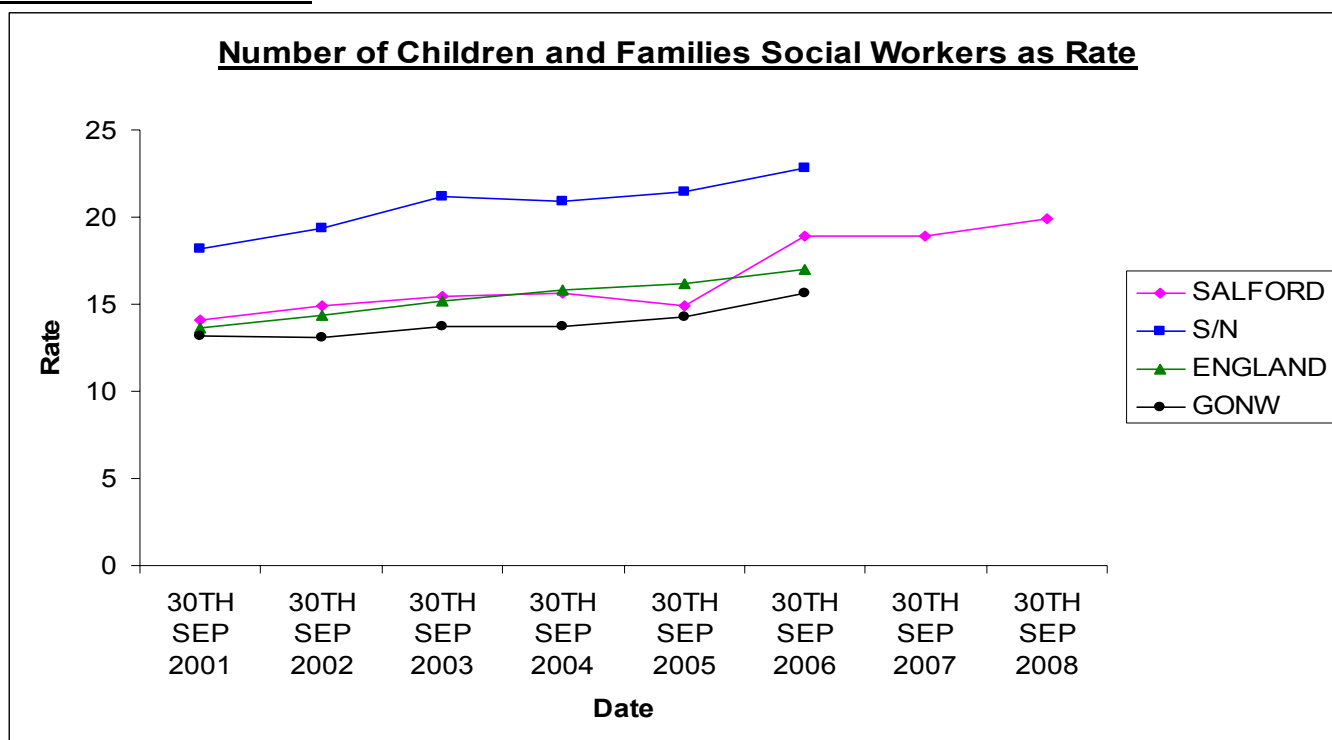


The Story Behind The Curve:

The City Council has agreed proposals for additional expenditure on early intervention which will lead to a safe reduction in the numbers of looked after children and the associated costs. These proposals will result in the percentage spend on “children in need but not looked after” increasing by 6% between 2009 and 2013.

In addition, an analysis of the calculation of this indicator reveals that the PSSEX 1 is calculated on gross costs including the Barton Moss secure unit. The inclusion of Barton Moss in the calculation has the effect of artificially reducing this percentage by 2%. A recalculation of the indicator would increase the percentage from 22% to 24% and this will then increase to at least 30% by 2013.

Bob McIntyre

Outcome: Staying Safe**Salford 7 Priority:** Increase the number of children and families Social Workers**Performance Measure:****The Story Behind The Curve:**

The establishment of social work staff at March 2008 was 17 posts in Duty and Investigation and 24 in Courts and Child Protection. As a result of an early release of funding from the 'Invest to Save Bid', an additional 6 posts have been added to the establishment of the Courts and Child Protection Team. This has enabled the Duty and Investigation Team to transfer cases and released capacity to undertake initial and core assessments. The extra capacity in Courts and Child Protection has enabled them to deal with the substantial increase in the number of children who are the subject of a child protection plan, ensuring compliance with the policy that all have an allocated social worker.

Of the 6 new social workers, 4 have been appointed and we have recently arranged to interview another experienced Social Worker. The picture in March 2007 was very different when we had around a third of the posts unfilled. While we have had significant gaps in staff our retention and sickness rates has remained good

Our progress in recruitment has been as a result of a range of initiatives from induction, releasing management capacity to be more involved in the recruitment process, moving to focus on Salford as an employer etc. Within PFA 1-3 an outline document has been produced that looks at the various recruitment initiatives that we have employed.

We will need to review the impact of job evaluation through benchmarking and reviewing our induction and support plans.

The increase in the establishment brings the total number of children and family social work posts as a rate per 10,000 to 20.3. The December target is a rate of 20:10,000.

Michael Kemp