

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 June 2017

Report of: Mark Palethorpe, Acting Executive Director of People

Subject/Title: Children and Families Performance Scorecard – Quarter 4, 2016-17

Portfolio Holder: Cllr George Hayes

1. Report Summary

1.1. This report and the attached performance scorecard provide an overview of performance across the Children and Families Service for quarter 4 of 2016-17.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Scrutiny is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of the report and scorecard; and
- b) Scrutinise areas where expected levels of performance are not being met.

3. Other Options Considered

3.1. Scrutiny may want to consider the performance of the Service more or less frequently.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 One of the key areas of focus for the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to highlight areas of poor performance and to scrutinise the effectiveness of plans in place to improve services. Overview and Scrutiny has an important role to play in the performance management systems of the local authority. The Children and Families performance scorecard provides essential data, along with qualitative information, to measure the effectiveness of services within children's services. This report and scorecard will be provided to Scrutiny on a quarterly basis to enable the Committee to maintain an overview of performance across the Service.

5. Background

5.1. This is the sixth performance scorecard presented to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee following Ofsted's inspection of Children's Services in July 2015. This report and scorecard sets out the performance against the agreed measures across the Children and Families Directorate for quarter 4 (1st January – 31st March 2017).

5.2. The performance scorecard details the following:

- Measure – details of each performance measure
- Polarity – whether it is good to have the measure high or low
- Statistical neighbour average – gives a comparator against local authorities with similar characteristics to Cheshire East. Cheshire East's statistical neighbours in rank order are:
 - Cheshire West and Chester
 - Warwickshire
 - Central Bedfordshire
 - Warrington
 - Hampshire
 - North Yorkshire
 - East Riding of Yorkshire
 - Solihull
 - North Somerset
 - West Berkshire
- National average – gives a national comparator figure
- Target – this is either a national target, eg, adoption timeliness, or a local one set by the service to provide a 'good/outstanding' service
- Year end 2015-16 – enables Members to compare existing performance to that in the previous year
- Quarterly performance – enables Members to compare performance from quarter to quarter
- RAG – this is a rating of red, amber, green based on current performance against the expected level of performance
- Direction of travel – this provides the direction of travel this quarter and whether this is positively or negatively in an upward/downward trajectory or static
- Comments – this provides a general commentary on the information presented
- C&YP Plan Priority – links the measure to the relevant priority within the Children and Young People's Plan
- Corporate Priority – links the measure to the relevant priority within the Council's Corporate Plan

5.3. Throughout 2016-17 considerable work has been undertaken to devise and develop comprehensive detailed scorecards for the Special Educational Needs Service, the Education and 14-19 specialist services, and the Prevention and Support services. The intention is to revise the overarching Children and Families Service scorecard for 2017-18 in line with the key indicators recorded in these for consistency. This will include changes in terms of reporting some figures half termly in line with the school year. These will be highlighted in quarter 1 of 2017-18.

5.4. The quarter 4 report includes 7 indicators where the full year outturn has not been included, but a comment has been made that the figure is being validated as part of either the CIN Census (Children In Need statutory annual return) or

the SSDA903 (Looked after Children statutory annual return). These returns have to follow a detailed set of guidelines and rules as defined by National Government which may differ slightly from the in-year figures that are published. Full details of the guidelines are publically available.

6. Performance Overview

6.1. The performance scorecard at Appendix 1 includes 69 separate measures covering all areas of the service. Some of these measures are non-performance related, eg those that relate to population cohorts. In total, 54 of these measures relate to performance and have been RAG rated. A breakdown summary is set out follows:

Performance Measures	Red	Amber	Green	n/a	Total
This quarter	7	10	37	15	69
Previous quarter	1	15	37	16	69

6.2. The above table shows that there has been some deterioration in Children and Families performance from the previous quarter with an increase in the number of red ratings. These relate to the following:-

- Repeat referrals into children's social care which has increased from quarter 3 to quarter 4. These receive regular scrutiny to ensure they are appropriate and whether previous work undertaken has been successful.
- The percentage of children who were on a child protection plan for longer than 2 years at point of closure. This is a very small increase, but the internal target is 0%. The reasons individuals were on a plan for longer than 2 years are clearly understood by the service and there are justifications in this instance.
- Two indicators relating to the short term and long term stability of children in cared for placements. This has been closely monitored for a number of months now by the service who understand the reasons for the increase. This has been reported to Corporate Parenting Committee and within service challenge sessions.
- Two indicators relating to initial health assessments and completion timescales. It is important to note that both these indicators have improved throughout the year and remain subject to detailed scrutiny and challenge through the Corporate Parenting Committee and Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- The number of fixed term exclusions in the quarter. It is important when considering this on a financial year quarterly basis that there can be wide variations as a result of where term times fall. In order to make this more

easily comparable this will be reported on a half termly basis for 2017-18. The number of individuals with repeat fixed term exclusions has reduced from the autumn term.

- 6.3. Whilst it is important to look at the current performance around particular measures, it is equally important to look at the direction of travel and to RAG rate this in relation to performance, ie, whether this is improving (green), staying broadly the same (amber) or getting worse (red). A summary of the direction of travel of performance across the service is detailed below.

Direction of Travel	Red	Amber	Green	n/a	Total
This quarter	6	17	45	1	69
Previous quarter	1	23	44	1	69

- 6.4. In terms of the direction of travel one of the indicator with a red RAG rating has an amber trajectory as the percentage of cared for children with 3 or more placements in a year is showing an improving picture. All others with a red trajectory are highlighted above.

7. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 7.1. The performance measures relate to all ward areas.

8. Implications of Recommendation

8.1. Policy Implications

- 7.1.1 There are no direct policy implications, although low or high performance in a certain area may lead to suggest changes in policy to address them.

8.2. Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 There are a no direct legal implications.

8.3. Financial Implications

- 7.3.1 Although there are no direct financial implications related to this report, performance measures may be used as an indicator of where more or less funding is needed at a service level.

7.4 Equality Implications

- 7.4.1 Members may want to use the performance scorecard to ensure that services are targeted at more vulnerable children and young people.

9. Access to Information

- 9.1. The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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