

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 27 November 2017

Report of: Mark Palethorpe, Acting Executive Director of People

Subject/Title: Children and Families Performance Scorecard – Quarter 2, 2017-18

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jos Saunders

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 2 of 2017-18.

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 quarterly report provides the Committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report and scorecard relates to quarter 2 of 2017-18 (1st July – 30th September 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 2016-17 – 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 took place 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. This overarching Children and Families Service scorecard for 2017-18 has been revised in line with the key indicators recorded in these for consistency. This includes changes in terms of reporting some figures half termly in line with the school year. As a result, quarter 2 contains a number of gaps in the Education data as the first half term only finished at the end of October.

5.4. Since the last quarter the Department for Education (DfE) has published the statistical first releases for the CIN Census and SSDA903 (looked after children return) for the 2016-17 returns period and, as such, the highlighted statistical neighbour (SN) and England averages have been updated to reflect the latest comparative data.

6. Performance Overview

6.1. The performance scorecard at Appendix 1 includes 73 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, 43 of these measures relate to performance and have been RAG rated. A breakdown summary is set out follows (it is not possible to compare to the previous quarter due to the change in measures:

Performance Measures	Red	Amber	Green	n/a	Total
This quarter	6	7	30	30	73

6.2. The measures rated red and amber in the scorecard include the numbers and rates of both child protection and cared for children, which have continued to rise. This rise is reflected locally and nationally, including our statistical neighbours, CWAC and Warrington.

6.3. Due to the substantial increase in child protection cases, there has been a dip in performance in the percentage of initial conferences taking place within 15 days of the section 47 enquiry. The delays however are very short with 94% taking place within 20 days. Throughout the time period there are interim safety plans in place for individuals, which are discussed and agreed between the conference chair and the social worker to ensure no child is at risk due to the delay.

6.4. The percentage of initial health assessments notified within 48hrs and completed by paediatricians within 20 days continue to be significantly below desired levels, which again have been compounded by the increase in numbers of individuals entering the care system. In order to address this, bi-monthly meetings and early alert systems are in place with Health. The operational process has also been revised. The new Designated Nurse for looked after children is now in place and will be instrumental in supporting improved performance.

6.5. Lastly, there is a continued dip in performance around the percentage of new education, health and care plans (EHCP) completed with 20 weeks. A continued issue of a shortage of Educational Psychologists in Cheshire East is affecting this performance. We are however on track to convert all outstanding statements of educational need to EHCP's in the timescales required.

6.6. 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	7	13	39	14	73

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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