

OPEN

## **Children and Families Committee**

**10 July 2023**

### **Children and Families Q4 scorecard 2022/23**

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**Report of: Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services**

**Report Reference No: CF/02/23-24**

**Ward(s) Affected: All Wards**

### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To provide Children and Families Committee with an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the 3 directorate areas of children's services. This report covers a range of the corporate objectives under the overarching corporate priority of a fair authority

### **Executive Summary**

- 2 This report provides an overview of quarter 4 performance for children and families services for the relevant indicators for the reporting year of 2022-23. It also provides an indicative outturn position for the reporting year end
- 3 The committee will note that the format has changed in line with their request and now includes information around the acronyms used and the alignment with the Corporate Plan Aim of a Fair Council. The report now also reflects a rolling 4 quarter activity with the latest quarter reported highlighted in blue

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Children and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Scrutinise the performance of children's services for quarter 4 and the indicative performance for the full reporting year

## Background

- 4 This quarterly report provides the committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report relates to quarter 4 of 2022-23 (1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023).
- 5 The outcomes framework scorecard contains 52 indicators across the 3 directorate areas within children's services and provides a strategic overview of the core activity with the service areas that demonstrate how we support the children and young people in Cheshire East.
- 6 The following indicators have been highlighted for consideration – please note the numbers relate to the corresponding indicator in the attached appendix outcomes framework scorecard.

## Social Care

- **1.13 – rate of referrals.** This has increased from last year suggesting an increased need for support at a statutory level. We still however remain lower than the national and our statutory neighbours average so although the need in the area is increasing our children and young people in the main still enjoy happy and safe lives without the need for statutory intervention.
- **1.14 - % of repeat referrals.** Although this has increased for this quarter, one or two large families can have a significant impact on this indicator. Overall Cheshire East performance remains strong suggesting that support provided is having lasting impact and addressing needs successfully.
- **1.15 - % of assessments completed within 45 days.** Quarter 4 showed a remarked improvement in performance because of an improved staffing and caseload profile and dedicated leadership in this area. This is seen as an early indicator that when needed individuals are receiving support in a timely fashion.
- **1.24 - % of ICPC within 15 days of a S47 enquiry.** A S47 enquiry is undertaken where a child or young person is suspected to be suffering or likely to suffer serious risk or harm. Where the decision is to progress to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) ideally this should happen within 15 working days. In Q4 there was a drop in this performance. This is an isolated quarter due to an increased number of conference requests (60% increase on the previous quarter) combined with recruitment activity to a vacant Independent Reviewing Officer post. This post has now been filled. The main reasons for a slight delay in the

conferences taking place were primarily due to either late notifications or reports being available. Normally these can still be accommodated within the 15 working days but due to the increased volume it wasn't always possible. The safeguarding manager is working together with the Child in need and Child protection managers to ensure the process is as smooth as possible for all workers. Where delays occur, cases are audited to ensure that there was an appropriate support plan in place and any delay did not result in an individual being put at risk.

- **1.27-1.28 – number and rate of Children in Care.** This continues to increase and is in the main still influenced by Cheshire East's support for the National Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) scheme.
- **1.35 – Care leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET).** This has seen a positive reduction to 43% from 48% in the previous quarter. This is due to a wide range of support and activity within the care leavers service to enable our young people to feel confident to enter the workforce or recommence studies.

## Education

- **2.1 – 2.12** – The % of primary and secondary schools judged **good or outstanding** has improved throughout the year and now stands at 93% and 91% respectively. This ensures that for the vast majority of our pupils they experience a high-quality education. Work continues with those schools that haven't been judged at that level or are yet to be inspected to ensure that they have the appropriate tools and support to improve.
- **2.16 - % attendance for special school pupils.** This is being prioritised as part of our ongoing Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) improvement journey to ensure that where possibly some of our more vulnerable pupils receive a full education experience.
- **2.18 – Elective Home Education.** The team supporting this have noticed an increase in the number of parents deregistering their children to electively home educate them as a result of their child's mental health and anxiety about attending school. To mitigate this, a focused session was delivered at the schools' senior mental lead network meeting in April, with peer challenge and support around children experiencing emotionally based school non-attendance. The team continues to complete pre-

deregistration meetings with children, parents and professionals to help inform their decision.

- **2.19 – Children Missing Education.** From January, the attendance and children out of school team have been delivering webinars about children missing education and commenced termly targeted support meetings with all schools. This increased awareness and support with pupil level data has initially led an increase in reporting children missing education. There is a national process for schools to inform local authorities where young people present in their area and we work closely alongside national departments where individuals move abroad.
- **2.26 – 2.27 - New Education and Health Care plans completed within 20 weeks.** This continues on a steady improvement journey together with considerable progress with the average plan now taking around 21.7 weeks down from 24.3 weeks at the start of the year. It is important to balance timeliness with sufficient classroom observation and specialist input to ensure each individual has the best possible plan to achieve their aims and goals.

### **Strong Start, Family Help and Integration**

- **3.14 – 2-year-old offer.** We continue to promote maximum take up of the 2-year-old offer which remains consistently better than the national average.
- **3.15 – 3–4-year-old offer.** The local authority has always been outstanding in ensuring that most of those eligible access the full offer available.
- **3.16 – Supporting Families.** The local authority had a target of 297 families supported in 2022-23 which was achieved towards the end of quarter 3. The services worked hard in quarter 4 to engage new families identified in order to continue with this success for 2023-24 and we are on target to exceed over 50 families with successful outcomes in quarter 1.
- **3.18-3.19** – although the number and rate of overall **NEET** has increased slightly this is still a very low number of young people and the vast majority are actively seeking a range of options with a number with start dates agreed for employment.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

7      Not applicable

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 8 One of the key areas of focus for the Children and Families Committee is to review performance and scrutinise the effectiveness of services for children and young people. This is in alignment with the strategic aims of a Fair Council.

### **Other Options Considered**

- 9 Not applicable.

### **Implications and Comments**

#### *Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 10 There are no direct legal implications.

#### *Section 151 Officer/Finance*

- 11 Although there are no direct financial implications or changes to the MTFS as a result of this briefing paper, performance measures may be used as an indicator of budget pressures at a service level.

#### *Policy*

- 12 There are no direct policy implications.

#### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

- 13 Members may want to use the information from the performance indicators to ensure that services are targeted at more vulnerable children and young people.

#### *Human Resources*

- 14 There are no direct human resources implications .

#### *Risk Management*

There are risks associated with some performance measures, e.g. increases in demand and timeliness of services.

#### *Rural Communities*

- 15 There are no direct implications to rural.

#### *Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*

- 16 Performance reports enable members to identify areas of good performance and areas for improvement in relation to children and young people, including cared for children.

### *Public Health*

- There are no direct public health implications.

### *Climate Change*

17 This report does not impact on climate change.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	Children and Families Outcomes Framework Score Card March 2023
Background Papers:	None