

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report

Date of Meeting: 26 November 2018

Report Title: Children and Families Performance Scorecard – Qtr 1, 2018-19

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jos Saunders, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Senior Officer: Mark Palethorpe, Acting Executive Director of People

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 1 of 2018-19.

2. Recommendation/s

- 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. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. 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.

4. Other Options Considered

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

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 1 of 2018-19 (1st April – 30th June 2018).
- 5.2. The scorecard presented to Committee during 2017-18 has been revised for quarter 1. This includes a number of changes and new measures and ensures that Members are considering key performance measures across all services. There are 30 more measures for 2018-19, compared to the previous year.
- 5.3. 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 2017-18 – 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

6. Performance Overview

- 6.1. The performance scorecard at Appendix 1 includes 103 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, 79 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	9	38	32	24	103

7. Red RAG rated performance

- 7.1. There continues to be some areas of performance that are RAG rated as red. Activity is underway in all these areas to address under-performance.
- 7.2. There are number of red RAG rated areas in relation to cared for children. The number and rate of cared for children continue to increase, putting increased pressure on services. Whilst an increase in cared for children is being seen across the north west, the rate of increase in Cheshire East is higher than elsewhere albeit we still remain substantially lower than the latest available Q4 north west average. A number of initiatives are under way to reduce this, including a focus on permanency planning, which was recognised in the recent Ofsted Focused Visit. We also continue to focus on long term placement stability to ensure
- 7.3. The percentage of initial health assessments completed by paediatricians within 20 days. There was a considerable dip in performance in Q1 compared to Q4 of 2017-18, which primarily relates to performance in June where a total of 24 were completed - 12 in timescale and 12 out of timescale with the additional individual leaving care before their health assessment was completed.
- 7.4. There were only 2 out of 34 children who ceased to be cared for as they achieved permanence via adoption in quarter 1. There are, however, a further 44 cared for children where the plan is for adoption. Cheshire East arrangements within the new Regional Adoption Agency are developing with a performance framework which robustly scrutinises drift and delay for children who are placed within their prospective adoptive family.

- 7.5. The percentage of initial child protection conference (ICPC) within 15 days of a Section 47 enquiry (S47) had a dip in performance in quarter 1. However, it is isolated to the month of May. Most of the late notifications were delayed by less than a week and interim safety plans ensured that there was no risk for children. Weekly reports are being provided for the operational social work teams to ensure notifications are received in a timely fashion and where delays are likely that a suitable safety plan is in place for children.
- 7.6. Significant work has taken place around ensuring that children missing from education are returned more swiftly back into education using an early help approach. New Multi Agency meetings have been established to review all cases, ensure the service is aware of all cases and that these are allocated to key workers. Additional capacity in the form of family support workers have been brought in and a new team manager with an Early Help background starts in the New Year.
- 7.7. The number of children and young people educated at home is coming under increased scrutiny nationally. Cheshire East has high numbers of children who are electively home educated (EHE). New processes and strategies are in place for identifying EHE children, monitoring their education and supporting their families. Greater rigour is being applied to ensure these children are receiving an appropriate education and additional capacity in the form of family support workers has been brought in.
- 7.8. The timeliness of completing Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continues to be a significant issue, which is compounded by the ongoing difficulties in recruiting Educational Psychologists. Improving timeliness and quality of plans is a priority in Cheshire East's written statement of action following the inspection of services in March 2018. Progress against this plan is monitored by the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England on a quarterly basis.

8. Performance Direction of Travel

- 8.1. 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 overleaf:

Direction of Travel	Red	Amber	Green	n/a	Total
This quarter	10	43	37	13	103

9. Implications of the Recommendations

9.1. Legal Implications

9.1.1. There are a no direct legal implications.

9.2. Finance Implications

9.2.1. 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.

9.3. Equality Implications

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

9.4. Human Resources Implications

9.4.1. None.

9.5. Risk Management Implications

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

9.6. Rural Communities Implications

9.6.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

9.7. Implications for Children & Young People

9.7.1. This performance scorecard sets out a range of measures that impact on services for children and young people and their families.

9.8. Public Health Implications

9.8.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

10. Ward Members Affected

10.1. The performance measures relate to all ward areas.

11.Consultation & Engagement

11.1. Not applicable.

12.Access to Information

12.1. The scorecard is attached is attached at Appendix 1.

13.Contact Information

13.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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