



16th December 2019

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE & IMPROVEMENT

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CORE DATA SET - PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE FOR QUARTER 2

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with a summary of the performance and finance of the Council's services for children and young people for quarter 2 of 2019/20 (1st July to 30th September 2019).

Information

2. The Council's Planning and Performance Framework establishes the approach that the Council takes to planning and managing its performance to deliver effective and responsive services.
3. The Council has agreed that the key measures of its performance will be defined through a number of core data sets which are detailed in its Council Plan and each of its Departmental Strategies.
4. Performance against these core data sets is reported to Committee every three months (quarterly) to support the performance management of the delivery of services.

Performance Reporting for 2019/20

5. This report provides a summary of the quarter 2 position for the Children's Social Care and Education Core Data Set performance measures that fall within the responsibility of the Children and Young People's Committee. The full Core Data Set is included in **Appendices 1 and 2**. **Appendix 1** shows those measures which have received updates since the previous quarter. **Appendix 2** shows those measures which have not changed.
6. For each measure, the following information is provided:
 - Current performance and whether a high or low value is regarded as 'good'.
 - The period this current value relates to.

- An indication of whether performance has improved (+), declined (-), or remained the same (=) over the current reporting period. The most recently available annual performance and which year this relates to.
- The underlying numbers used to calculate the % for some measures is provided within the measure description.
- If a measure is cumulative, this is stated in the measure description.
- Comparator data of the national average for England, and that of the Council's children's services statistical neighbours, where this data is available.

Child and Family Assessments

7. Performance in this area remains consistent and within timescales with 97.4% of assessments completed within timescale this quarter. The Assessment Service continue to complete timely and proportionate Child and Family Assessments with this quarters figure in line with what we have achieved over the previous year.

Child protection

8. A further increase in the number of children subject to a child protection plan has been noted. However, operational and strategic managers remain confident that child protection plans are only being made where appropriate, and as previously reported QA work to date has supported this view. There have been previous concerns about the time children were remaining on plans which would inflate this figure. However, this quarter has seen a reduction in that measure. If that progress is maintained (and entries remain stable) we would expect to see this measure reduce.
9. A very marked improvement in CPPs lasting 2 years or more has been noted this quarter, which is welcomed. This can be subject to monthly fluctuation, so we will need to see this improvement maintained before being confident that progress is sustained. Close management attention is given to all plans over 15mths in duration.
10. The percentage of children becoming the subject of a CPP for a second or subsequent time has shown an increase on the last quarter which is of concern (though the current live figure remains in line with the last quarter). If one looks at the repeat plan figure for a previous plan in the last two years, the figure drops to 11.2%. None the less, as previously reported this is an area receiving ongoing management attention. Given the lack of improvement a piece of work will be commissioned through the NSCP to explore this in more detail.
11. Although below our locally set target, the percentage of CPPs reviewed within timescale has seen an increase on the last quarter. This positive figure remains above both national and statistical neighbour performance.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing

12. Reports to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of CSE concerns have risen closer to expected levels; this is positive and shows a continued vigilance by partners and the public. Consequent activity has also risen. This area of work continues to receive close management attention and a more detailed analysis of this work will be provided in specific committee reports in December 2019.

13. It is positive to see that the number of individual missing children is down this quarter with a marked decline in overall missing occurrences. Likewise the percentage of LAC missing has had a marked decline this quarter and is well below available figures for England and stat neighbour levels. The level of completed return interviews has shown a further decrease. As reported last quarter, we are targeting work in this area so hope to report an improvement later in the year as a result.

Looked After Children

14. This measure considers children in care (CiC) who have had more than three placements during the previous 12 months as a proportion of all CiC, and the data show an improvement in performance from the previous two quarters. Additionally, whilst the general rule of fewer placement moves resulting in better outcomes prevails for the majority of cases, the computation of this specific performance indicator works against the otherwise excellent work done within children's social care to transition 16/17 year old LAC into a number of discrete supported placements that provide this group of elder young people with the necessary life skills to equip them for independence into adulthood. Almost 40% of the young people who experience multiple placement moves are over 16 years of age.
15. Please note, some level of caution should be exercised when benchmarking against national data because there is a difference between how the current Nottinghamshire figure is calculated and the way in which the national average data was computed in 2017/18. It effectively over-inflates the Nottinghamshire figure, which is accounted for in how the target of 12% has been derived.
16. The Council continues to show strong performance in relation to this performance indicator, indicating that the majority of children in care (CiC) experience vary stable placements over the longer term. The recent marginal decrease in absolute performance may be attributable in part to the planned placement moves into semi-independent accommodation for older young people, though the data serves to confirm that these do not compromise the overall objective of achieving placement stability over the longer term. Equally, it is worth noting that the national data against which Nottinghamshire's current performance is benchmarked is over 2 years old (albeit it remains the most recently published national data on this matter). Given the national challenges around sufficiency of care placements, it is anticipated that the like-for-like current national figure will be lower than Nottinghamshire's.

Adoption

17. The average length of time between a child's admission into care and placement has increased this quarter to 323 days. This is an increase from 304 in Q1 but is still below the Councils target of 426 days; this is the second quarter to be performing better than the set target.
18. The average number of days between placement order and deciding on an appropriate family for a child or children has decreased for the third quarter in a row, now standing at 118 days. This measure is now performing better than the Councils target of 121 days and is below the averages for England and our statistical neighbours.

Care leavers

19. The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 years currently classed as in education, employment and training, has dropped to 49.1% this quarter, and remains above the target of 49%. Nottinghamshire remains above statistical neighbours but below the national average.
20. The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 years living in suitable accommodation has increased from 85.6% to 86.9% in quarter 2. This measure remains above the Councils target, the national average, and our statistical neighbour average.

Educational standards

Ofsted inspections

21. The following paragraphs on Ofsted inspections are based on the current inspections of schools and do not take into account the former judgement of schools which have closed and re-opened as a sponsored academy (current Ofsted reporting arrangements include former judgements of closed schools until they are re-inspected). Numbers on roll are as at May 2019 (last academic year).
22. The number of primary schools in an Ofsted category (Inadequate) remains unchanged at two schools from last quarter. These are Hillocks Primary (Ashfield district, LA maintained school; 332 pupils on roll) which was re-inspected in May and remains Inadequate. It is proposed to close at the end of 2019 for academy conversion. Also Haggonfields Primary (Bassetlaw district, LA maintained school with 107 pupils on roll) which became Inadequate in January (previously judged as Good).
23. The number of secondary schools in an Ofsted category also remains unchanged at two schools from last quarter. Sutton Community Academy (Ashfield district, a sponsor led academy which converted January 2013 under the leadership of Academy Transformation Trust; 692 pupils on roll) became Inadequate in March (previously judged as Good). Kirkby College (Ashfield district; a convertor academy which converted August 2012 with 434 pupils on roll) became Inadequate in January 2018 (previously judged as Good).

Two-year-old take up

24. The number of 2-year olds taking up their free entitlement in the summer 2019 term shows an increase from the same period last year. 74.3% of eligible 2 year olds are attending providers, a 1.5 percentage point increase (from 72.8%) from the same term last year. Rushcliffe district continues to have the highest proportion of eligible 2 year olds accessing their entitlement whereas Ashfield district has the lowest at 64.4%. Comparisons with the same term last year show Broxtowe district witnessed a fall (down 6.0 percentage points from summer 2018 to 75.6%) followed by Ashfield district with a fall of 5.0 percentage points to 64.4%. All other districts witnessed increases in take up. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2019 identified that there are areas in Bassetlaw with poor take up linked to reduced access to provision across large geographical areas, as well as insufficient childcare places for eligible 2 year olds.

Youth Offending & Early Help Support

25. The rate (per 100,000 population) of First Time Entrants (FTE) to the Youth Justice System (YJS) saw a 22% drop for the full year to March 2019 (251 Vs 322). This downward trend has continued with Q1 coming in at 35, Vs 65 for the same quarter last year. The focus on reducing FTE's within the YJS is believed to be significant and it seems we are now seeing the impact of changes with frontline Police and YJS staff.

Summary Financial Position

26. The Children and Families Department Revenue Budget is forecast to overspend by £8.905m (6.98%) at Period 6 as summarised in the Table below.

Summary Revenue Position

Previous Variance £000	Change in Variance £000	Division	Annual Budget £000	Actual to Period 6 £000	Year-End Forecast £000	Latest Forecast Variance £000	Variance as % of Budget %
		Children & Young People's Committee					
934	(17)	Youth, Families & Social Work	58,854	27,329	59,771	917	1.56
0	118	Education Learning & Skills	6,000	3,245	6,118	118	1.97
7,396	474	Commissioning & Resources	48,712	21,222	56,582	7,870	16.16
0	0	Capital & Central Charges	13,973	14,011	13,973	0	0.00
8,330	575	Net Committee Overspend	127,539	65,807	136,444	8,905	6.98

27. The Youth, Families and Social Work Division is forecasting an overspend of £0.9m. The major contributing factor is a £1.2m overspend on social work staffing with £1.0m relating to the Hard to Retain teams. This has been offset by net underspends in other areas. The overspend has arisen due to a combination of staffing changes including permanent recruitment to vacancies, additional capacity staff to respond to continuing increased workload and maintain manageable caseloads; and agency workers. All agency posts continue to require the explicit approval of the Service Director Youth, Families and Social Work and are subject to scrutiny by the quarterly Agency Challenge Panel.
28. The forecast agency spend for the Hard to Retain teams is £5.1m (2018-19 £5.0m) and at the end of September there were 74 fte (72 period 5) agency Social Workers and Team Managers in these and the LAC team. The assumptions in the forecast are for agency numbers to reduce to 69 fte (68 Period 5) by March 2020 which takes into account a number of newly qualified social workers, the continuation of additional capacity to maintain sustainable caseloads and to cover vacancies etc. It also includes a reduction to reflect the annual leave, sickness and bank holidays to be taken by agency workers.
29. The Commissioning and Resources Division is forecasting an overspend of £7.9m. The major contributing factor is an £8.0m overspend on external residential placements for LAC of which £1.8m is attributable to growth in number of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements, £3.9m residential and £2.3m on semi-independent placements. External placements increased by a net of 19 during September, which is 6 more than predicted

(although overall numbers to date are still tracking the trend that is built into the forecasts). Residential placements alone increased by 4 more than expected in the month. Complex requirements also resulted in these individual placement costs ranging from £4,500 to £10,700 per week (compared with an average cost of £3,400). Similarly, there was also a £3,500 increase in the weekly cost of one existing semi-independent spot placement due to increased staffing requirements. These costlier placements account for the increased forecast overspend of £0.5m compared to period 5 and demonstrate how sensitive the forecast is to changes in numbers, weekly costs and placement mix due to the high cost of placements.

The assumptions within the forecast are:

- the actual number of children in placement at 30 September 2019 which is 426 (398 March 2019)
 - projected net growth for October 2019 to March 2020 of 10 children
 - projected number of external placements at March 2020 436 (398 March 2019) based on past trend data from January 2017 and current and planned initiatives to reduce spend
 - 421 average number of external placements at March 2020 (371 March 2019).
30. There are risks associated with the forecast in relation to external residential placements and social work staffing due to the volatile nature of the demand on these budgets. In view of the high cost of external residential placements the forecast is highly sensitive to changes in e.g. numbers, weekly costs and placement mix. There is a robust monthly monitoring process to track trend data, average costs and actual numbers of children in placement to highlight potential issues as soon as possible.
31. Clayfields is currently forecasting a shortfall against its income target of £0.9m. This is due to a decision by the Children & Families senior leadership team to limit the number of beds available for occupancy because of staffing issues. These issues are currently being addressed and the income forecast assumes that all beds will be fully occupied by February 2020 dependent on recruitment to vacancies. The shortfall will be met from Clayfields trading reserve which is £1.056m.

Other Options Considered

32. This report is provided as part of the Committee's constitutional requirement to consider performance of all areas within its terms of reference on a quarterly basis. The departmental strategy was agreed on 24 January 2018 and the format and frequency of performance reporting were agreed by the Improvement and Change Sub-Committee on 12 March 2018. Due to the nature of the report no other options were considered appropriate.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

33. This report is provided as part of the Committee's constitutional requirement to consider performance of areas within its terms of reference on a quarterly basis.

Statutory and Policy Implications

34. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

35. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

36. Reporting on the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers will better enable the Council to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That Committee considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the performance information on the Council's services for children and young people for the period 1st July to 30th September 2019.

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Constitutional Comments (LW 21/11/19)

37. Children & Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (SAS 20/11/19)

38. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Performance reporting (Quarter 4 2018/19) – services for children and young people – report to Children and Young People’s Committee on 17th June 2019.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1322