

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

27 NOVEMBER 2013

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs McCoy

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE

1. Summary

In light of the Ofsted inspection of child protection in January 2013, it has been decided to review the content and format of future children's social care reports to Cabinet.

In addition to a range of measures to illustrate the pressures experienced by the service, a number of performance indicators will also now be included so that Cabinet can more closely monitor the impact of these pressures on performance and outcomes for children.

As a way of achieving this, the use of a 'process model' was approved by Cabinet on 13 June 2013.

Given the importance and profile of these issues it has been agreed that the new activity and performance reports are brought to Cabinet on a bimonthly basis ie every alternate Cabinet.

This report is based on the available data at the end of quarter 2 (30 September 2013).

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Note the continued workload pressures and associated activity in the children's social care system and the consequent impact this is having on both performance and budget.
2. Receive further update reports on a bi monthly basis in order to continue to monitor children's social care activity and performance.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

There are significant and continuing pressures in the children's social care system which could potentially impact on the Council's ability to effectively safeguard children, fulfil statutory duties and remain within allocated budget.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of paragraphs 12 - 17 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in paragraph 16 of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

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SUMMARY

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Note the continued workload pressures and associated activity in the children's social care system and the consequent impact this is having on both performance and budget.
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Background

1. This revised format for reporting to Cabinet attempts to show the range of key factors that impact on the levels of activity, workload pressures and performance in children's social care.
2. The attached template data is designed to illustrate the following key elements:
 - **Inputs**

These measures record the flow of business into the social care system, the level/complexity of activity and the extent to which other agencies are impacting on this activity. The key measures are as follows:

 - Number of contacts made with children's social care
 - Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment
 - Number of referrals by agency/number that do not meet social care threshold
 - Referral reasons eg domestic violence, substance misuse
 - Number of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) 2s by agency
 - Number/proportion of contacts with an active CAF
 - Number/proportion of contacts which are closed and logged
 - Number/proportion of referrals resulting in no further action (NFA)
 - **Processes**

These measures relate to the efficiency and effectiveness of services in managing the business ie the way in which business is conducted to assess needs, make decisions about support required and keep cases under review. The key measures are as follows:

 - Number and timeliness of assessments
 - Number and proportion of referrals that result in Section 47 (Child Protection) enquiries
 - Number and timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs)
 - Timeliness of Child Protection (CP) CP Reviews
 - Attendance of children and young people at ICPCs and CP Reviews
 - Attendance of children and young people at Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews
 - Number/proportion of Care Applications to Court
 - Number/proportion of LAC on Section 20 (voluntary accommodation) or Legal Orders
 - Workforce composition
 - **Outputs**

These indicators are proxies for how effective processes have been in delivering results, which in turn should lead to positive outcomes for the children and young people concerned. The key measures are as follows:

 - Numbers of children in need (CiN)/CP/LAC
 - Re-referral rates
 - Second or subsequent CP Plans
 - CP plans 2 years+
 - Number/proportion of those stepping down from CP Plan to CAF
 - LAC Placement stability (number of placement moves both short and long term)
 - Care leavers in Education Employment and Training (EET)
 - Care leavers in suitable accommodation
 - Numbers/proportion of children adopted or made subject to Special Guardianship Order (SGO)/Residence Order or returned home
3. Appendix 1 gives a summary of the currently available data at the end of quarter 2 (30 June 2013), along with a brief commentary highlighting the main issues raised from analysis of the information.
4. Appendix 2 gives the data which informs this report.

5. In summary, the overall picture reflected in the attached analysis is as follows:
 - Inputs – ongoing high levels of demand on services which continues the pattern of levelling off in terms of contacts to social care, and numbers of child protection cases which was evident during quarter 2. It is too early to say whether this will amount to a sustained trend.
 - Processes - continuing pressures on timeliness and adverse impact on performance levels.
 - Outputs - overall sound results, suggesting that support provided for children requiring social care intervention continues to be largely effective, despite high caseloads.
6. It should be noted that as this some of this data has not been collected on a regular basis previously, there are still some gaps in the template currently. These gaps will be populated for future reports as soon as this data is readily available.

Current Performance Management Arrangements

7. Performance continues to be monitored very closely via the monthly Children's Social Care Performance Clinic chaired by the Corporate Director and attended by the Head of Service and all senior managers with responsibility for children's social care. This meeting analyses a range of performance and activity data and agrees and monitors actions in response to any identified issues. This is underpinned by a range of performance clinics with operational managers across the service.
8. In addition there is a fortnightly Workload Pressures meeting chaired by the Corporate Director and attended by the Head of Service and key senior managers in children's social care. This meeting closely monitors staffing and allocation issues and any associated pressures across the service.
9. Due to continuing concerns about inappropriate referrals to children's social care and the low take up of the common assessment framework (CAF) by partner agencies, a revised referral protocol was approved by Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB). Under this protocol, no referrals are accepted by children's social care without prior evidence of CAF activity, unless there are immediate child protection concerns. This was implemented on 4 November 2013.
10. Cordis Bright consultants have undertaken a review of referral and assessment activity. This confirmed our existing view that the low rates of CAF completion by partner agencies is having a direct impact on the number of cases referred to children's social care. Developing and implementing a successful Early Help Strategy was also considered crucial in order to bring about sustained change in relation to this issue. The resulting report has now been considered by Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) and actions agreed in response to the recommendations arising from the review..
11. The Institute of Local Governance (ILG) have been commissioned to undertake a research study in an effort to obtain a deeper understanding of some of the underlying reasons behind the increase in children's social care workload in recent years. Following consideration of the bids received by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in partnership with ILG, Teesside University have now been appointed to undertake this research and an initial scoping meeting has taken place. Updates on the progress of this research will be included in a future reports to Cabinet.
12. As a result of issues arising from our own internal performance management and quality assurance mechanisms, it has now been agreed that a team of experienced colleagues from Northumberland Council will undertake a 'critical friend' review of decision making and processes in relation to the child protection system. This is now scheduled for 10 - 12 December 2013 and any key findings arising from this will be included in future reports to Cabinet.

13. In order to test out the impact and progress of actions implemented in response to the Ofsted inspection of child protection, it has also been agreed that a peer review of safeguarding will take place in the week commencing 24 March 2014. This three day diagnostic will be undertaken by a team of experienced peer reviewers from other Local Authorities and will be focused on social work practice and decision making in the newly formed Assessment Teams.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. These pressures have continued to have an impact on the Children, Education and Social Care budget in a number of key areas as follows.
15. Firstly the independent fostering agency budget, which is set at £3.646m for 2013/14. The current projected outturn at year end is £4.681m ie an overspend of £1.035m. Given that the number of placements has already exceeded the estimated number for the purposes of budgetary projections, there are no additional placements built into this figure.
16. Secondly the children's homes agency placements budget, which is set at £3.868m for 2013/14. The current projected outturn at year end is £5.110m ie an overspend of £1.24m. Given that the number of placements has already exceeded the estimated number for the purposes of budgetary projections, there are no additional placements built into this figure.
17. Thirdly the social work staffing budget, which is currently set at £3.136m for 2013/14. The current projected outturn at year end is £3.710m ie an overspend of £574k. This includes the projected effect of the Referral and Assessment Team review (to be implemented from November 2013) and additional agreed Social Worker appointments. However, provision has been made from CESC Managed Surplus brought forward from 2012/13 in respect of these additional costs.
18. These issues continue to be considered through the medium term financial plan (MFTP).
19. As part of the work undertaken by the Children's Programme Board, the Joint Venture Partnership with Spark of Genius is progressing. The refurbished King Edwin School is now open and it is currently planned that the first of the proposed four children's homes will be open by March 2014. This will enable children to be returned from expensive external provision so that they can live and be educated within the Borough.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

20. As outlined in previous reports to Cabinet, these workload pressures have resulted in a corresponding increase in the numbers of children subject to care proceedings. This in turn has placed a significant additional burden on Legal Services. Additional resources have been agreed previously in order to respond to this, although this continues to be monitored closely.

RISK ASSESSMENT

21. There are three risks relating to this area of activity which have been already been identified and included in the service group risk register. These are listed below with their current risk score.
 - Demographic changes and demand for services (CESC02)
Current score: 16
 - Finance & resource availability in all CESC Services (CESC07)
Current score: 12
 - Serious injury or death leading to a Serious Case Review (CESC14)
Current score: 15

22. These risks will continue to be monitored at Children and Young People's Management Team (CYPMT) and the risk scores amended as appropriate. Any resulting changes will be fed into the corporate risk register and highlighted to Cabinet.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

23. The safeguarding of children is a key component of the children and young people theme in the Sustainable Community Strategy. Improving outcomes for children by effective service delivery will also impact on their potential quality of life in adulthood.
24. The effective safeguarding of children and young people will also have a significant impact on the community safety agenda.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

25. This report has not been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment because it is not seeking approval for a new policy, strategy or fundamental change in the delivery of a service.

CORPORATE PARENTING

26. For those children who are looked after, the Council has a responsibility as Corporate Parent to ensure that their needs are appropriately met.
27. As service pressures and workload increases, this could potentially impact on the Council's ability to effectively fulfil its responsibilities as Corporate Parent.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

28. No consultation has taken place in relation to this issue at this stage.

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Background Papers

Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for the Protection of Children in Stockton-on-Tees Ofsted 2013

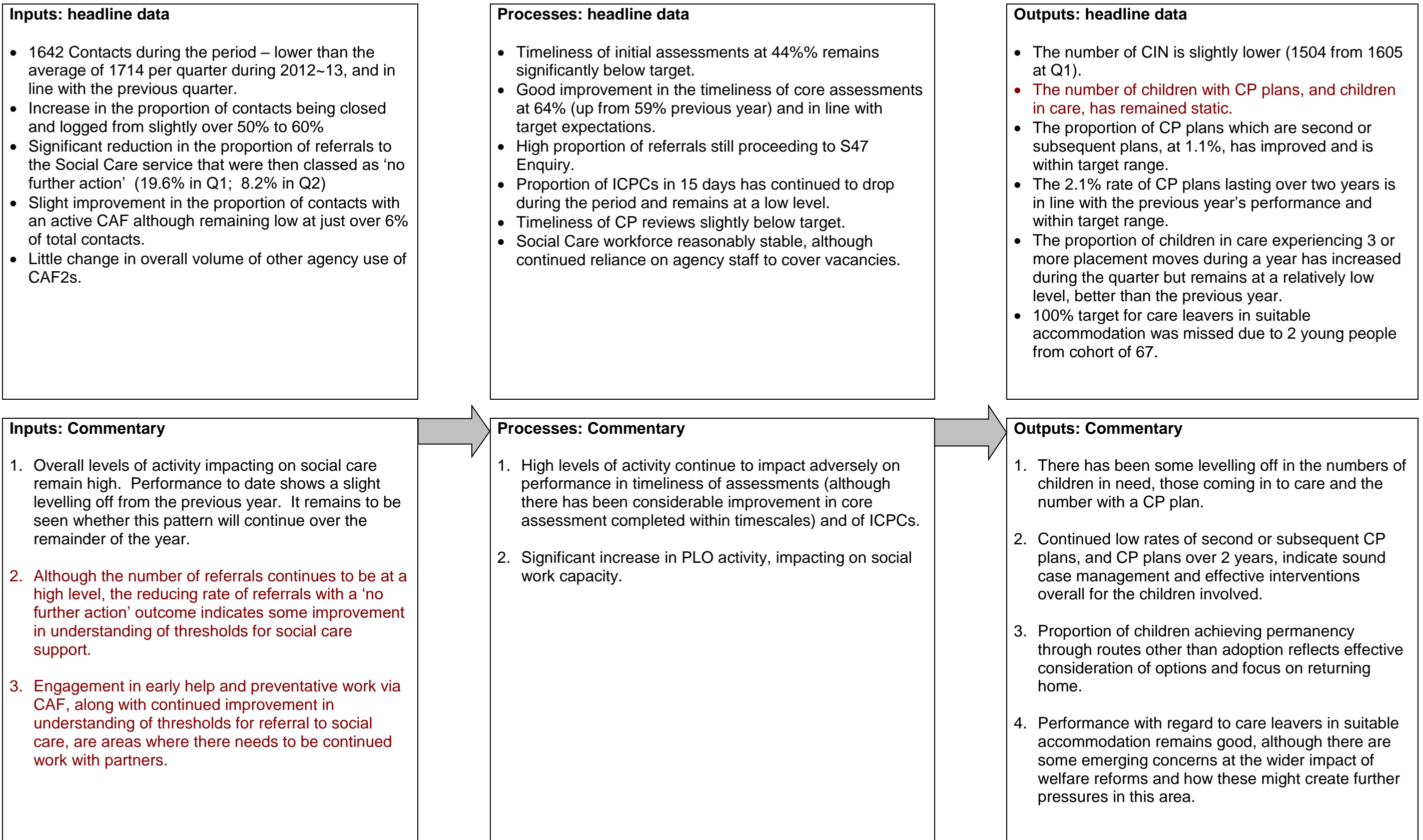
Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

Not applicable.

Property

There are no implications for Council property.

Children's Social Care Performance & Activity Report Q2 2013-14



Appendix 2 Children's Social Care Activity & Performance Quarter 2 2013-14

Key

CAFs - Common Assessment Framework S47 - Section 47 Enquiry CiN - Children in Need	CYP - Children and Young People ICPC - Initial Child Protection Conference RCPC - Review Child Protection Conference	CiC - Children in Care CP - Children subject of a Child Protection Plan EET - Education, Employment, Training
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The arrows relate to the direction of travel from previous quarter based on polarity of performance

* Data relates to Quarter Period only

Inputs

Activity / Performance Measures	2012/13		2013/1						Source
	Whole Year		Q1 (Apr - June)			Q2 (Apr- Sep)			
	Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		
Number of contacts made to children's social care *	6859	\	1642	\	↑	1642	\	↔	QEC - Referral Workflow
Number /proportion of Closed and Logged Contacts *	3651	53.2%	856	52.1%	↓	999	60.8%	↓	QEC - Referral Workflow
Number /proportion of Closed & Logged Contacts with an active CAF *	181	5.0%	46	5.5%	↑	64	6.4%	↑	QEC - Referral Workflow
Number /proportion of Referrals which were NFAs *	805	25.1%	154	19.6%	↑	53	8.2%	↑	QEC - Referral Workflow
Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment (ie Assessment has commenced) *	2336	\	523	\	↑	529	\		QEC - Referral Workflow
Number of total contacts from the various agencies and the number of these that do not meet the threshold for Social Care Intervention *	See Table 1								Table 1 from SLCSB Q2 dataset - IN3 Analysis
Number of CAF2's commenced, by Agency:-	450		141			272			Breakdown of CAF2s by Agency from SLCSB Q2 dataset - IN1 - CAF2s by Agency and Reason
CEC - Children Centre Services	13		0			0			
CEC - Schools	81		34			61			
CEC - IYSS	32		12			22			
CEC - Social Care	117		56			120			
CEC - Other	73		2			3			
Other Education Support/Settings	48		11			14			
NEPACS	1		0			0			
Health - Foundation Trust - Health Visitor Service	59		14			31			
Health - Foundation Trust - Midwives	1		2			4			
Health - Foundation Trust - School Nurse Service	9		3			3			
Health - Other	1		0			2			
Drug and Alcohol Agencies	12		0			0			
Housing	3		3			3			
Other Agencies 3rd/Vol Sector	0		4			9			

Appendix 2 Children's Social Care Activity & Performance Quarter 2 2013-14

Processes

Activity / Performance Measures		2012/13		2013/14						Source
		Whole Year		Q1 (Apr- Jun)			Q2 (Apr - Sep)			
		Number	%	Number	%	*	Number	%	*	
Number and timeliness of initial assessments (10 working days)	Numerator	1082	47.4%	267	41.8%	↑	567	44.0%	↑	Census - Annual Figure / QEC
	Denominator	2285		638			1288			
Number and timeliness of core assessments	Numerator	694	55.2%	224	56.0%	↑	558	63.7%	↑	Census - Annual Figure / QEC
	Denominator	1258		400			876			
Number and timeliness of Initial CP conferences (ICPC within 15 working days of the Sect 47 Enquiry)	Numerator	133	32.8%	53	56.4%		89	44.7%	↓	Census - Annual Figure / QEC
	Denominator	406		94			199			
Timeliness of Child Protection Reviews (Rolling Year)	Numerator	268	97.8%	273	96.8%	↓	251	96.9%	↔	Census - Annual Figure / QEC
	Denominator	274		282			259			
Number and proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries.	Numerator	950	40.1%	183	29.0%		418	34.8%	↓	Census - Annual Figure CRAM - Section 47s that proceeded or did not proceed to ICPC workbook (Num) & Cases started Apr - Sept (Den) - Referrals (excluding Closed & logged and NFAs)
	Denominator	2372		632			1202			
Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Services (Cafcass) care applications per 10,000 child population		24.8	\							Cafcass

Appendix 2 Children's Social Care Activity & Performance Quarter 2 2013-14

Outputs

Activity / Performance Measures		2012/13		2013/14					Source	
		Whole Year		Q1 (Apr - Jun)			Q2 (Apr - Sep)			
		Number	%	Number	%	*	Number	%		*
Number of CIN (excluding CP & LAC) at end of period		1573	\	1605	\	↓	1504	\	↑	Census - Annual Figure \ Profile of Needs QEC
Number of CP at end of period		369	\	356	\	↑	356	\	↔	Census - Annual Figure \ QEC
Number of CIC at end of period		362	\	380	\	↓	379	\	↔	SSDA903 - Annual Figure \ QEC
Re-referral rates *	Numerator	676	21.3%	157	20.0%		180	28.0%	↓	QEC Referral Workflow
	Denominator	3178		786			643			
2nd or subsequent CP Plans	Numerator	24	6.0%	2	2.7%	↑	2	1.1%	↑	QEC
	Denominator	402		75			174			
CP Plans 2 yrs+	Numerator	9	2.9%	0	0%	↑	4	2.1%	↓	Census - Annual Figure \ QEC
	Denominator	306		89			188			
Stability of Children in Care placements : No. of Placements	Numerator	40	11.0%	2	0.5%	↑	11	2.9%	↓	SSDA903 - Annual Figure \ QEC - NI62
	Denominator	362		380			379			
Stability of Children in Care placements : Length of Placement	Numerator	58	57.4%	55	56.7%	↓	54	55.1%	↓	SSDA903 - Annual Figure \ QEC - NI63
	Denominator	101		97			98			
Care leavers in suitable accommodation (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	N/A		32	94.1%		65	97.0%	↑	QEC
	Denominator	N/A		34			67			
Care Leavers in EET (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	N/A		20	58.8%		36	53.7%	↓	QEC
	Denominator	N/A		34			67			
Permanency when care has ceased - numbers / proportion:	Adoption	16	12.4%	5	11.9%		11	13%		QEC
	Residence Order	28	21.7%	5	11.9%		14	17.1%		
	Special Guardianship	21	16.3%	10	23.8%		17	20.7%		
	Returned Home	64	49.6%	22	52.4%		40	48.8%		

Appendix 2 Children's Social Care Activity & Performance Quarter 2 2013-14

Cases started during 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013

Table 1 - Breakdown of cases and referrers (% of total at each stage)

Referred By	Case									
	Contact (Closed & Logged as Enquiry)		No Further Action (NFA)		Proceeded to Initial Assessment		Yet to Proceed to Initial Assessment or be Closed Down as a NFA Referral		Total	
	Number	Proportion (% of Total Contacts)	Number	Proportion (% of Total NFA)	Number	Proportion (% of Total Proceeded to IA)	Number	Proportion (% of Total Yet to Proceeded)	Number	Proportion (% of Total Cases)
CESC Others	10	1.0%	4	7.5%	6	1.1%	0	0.0%	20	1.2%
Courts	158	15.8%	1	1.9%	10	1.9%	1	1.7%	170	10.4%
Education - Head Teacher	11	1.1%	4	7.5%	39	7.4%	6	10.0%	60	3.7%
Education - Other	11	1.1%	5	9.4%	19	3.6%	3	5.0%	38	2.3%
Education - Special Educational Needs Department	63	6.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	63	3.8%
Education - Teacher	11	1.1%	0	0.0%	9	1.7%	1	1.7%	21	1.3%
Emergency Duty Team	62	6.2%	0	0.0%	5	0.9%	0	0.0%	67	4.1%
Family Support	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	17	3.2%	4	6.7%	21	1.3%
Field Work	7	0.7%	0	0.0%	32	6.0%	5	8.3%	44	2.7%
Health - A & E	60	6.0%	1	1.9%	8	1.5%	2	3.3%	71	4.3%
Health - CAMHS	4	0.4%	0	0.0%	7	1.3%	0	0.0%	11	0.7%
Health - Child Protection Nurse	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	0.9%	2	3.3%	7	0.4%
Health - Community / District Nurse	2	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.6%	0	0.0%	5	0.3%
Health - Community Mental Health	4	0.4%	0	0.0%	6	1.1%	1	1.7%	11	0.7%
Health - General Practitioner	10	1.0%	0	0.0%	6	1.1%	0	0.0%	16	1.0%
Health - Health Visitor	4	0.4%	6	11.3%	15	2.8%	2	3.3%	27	1.6%
Health - Midwife	5	0.5%	0	0.0%	11	2.1%	2	3.3%	18	1.1%
Health - Other	39	3.9%	1	1.9%	26	4.9%	2	3.3%	68	4.1%
Health - School Nurse	2	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.6%	0	0.0%	5	0.3%
Housing	20	2.0%	1	1.9%	20	3.8%	3	5.0%	44	2.7%
Individuals	145	14.5%	10	18.9%	83	15.7%	6	10.0%	244	14.9%
LAC Services	10	1.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.8%	0	0.0%	14	0.9%
Other (see note)	4	0.4%	2	3.8%	10	1.9%	0	0.0%	16	1.0%
Other Agency	115	11.5%	10	18.9%	78	14.7%	7	11.7%	210	12.8%
Police	236	23.6%	8	15.1%	84	15.9%	13	21.7%	342	20.8%
Probation	6	0.6%	0	0.0%	17	3.2%	0	0.0%	23	1.4%
Referral and Assessment	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	1.1%	0	0.0%	6	0.4%
Total	999	100.0%	53	100.0%	529	100.0%	60	100.0%	1642	100.0%

Please note the total counts for the four sections above do not add up to 1642 as one referral was closed during the period with inaccurate / missing data and therefore does not appear in the breakdown above

Other - this includes First Contact Team, Prevention, Prison Service, LADO and Schools and Complex Needs Service.