

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting4th December 2014

1. Title of Item/Report

Children's Social Care Activity and Performance

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on Children's Social Care Activity and Performance.

In light of the Ofsted inspection of child protection in January 2013, it had 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 would also be included so that Cabinet could 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 had been agreed that the new activity and performance reports be brought to Cabinet on a bimonthly basis i.e. every alternate Cabinet.

This report was based on the available data at the end of quarter 2 (30 September 2014).

In summary, the overall picture reflected in the attached analysis was as follows:-

- Inputs – contacts and referrals to social care, which reduced slightly during the previous year, have continued at broadly the same rate, remaining at relatively high levels compared to benchmark groups.
- Processes – good performance with regard to the timeliness of assessment; a slight dropping off in relation to timeliness of initial child protection conferences and reviews, although remaining at relatively good levels compared to benchmark groups. Overall, these indicate that

there is an efficient response to children in need of care and protection, although the high levels of children at risk of significant harm will continue to put pressure on support systems and services.

- Outputs – the profile of children needing social care support has continued in line with the position at the end of 2013-14. Numbers of children in need, with a protection plan and looked after remain at relatively high levels compared to benchmark groups. The number of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time, and the number of child protection plans over two years duration, have improved but remain higher than the previous year, so continue to subject to close monitoring and scrutiny.

Following discussion at Cabinet on 9 October 2014, further analysis had been carried out in relation to the correlation between referrals and actual children / families. This analysis had been based on the year to date i.e. 1 April to 30 September 2014. During this period, there were 1082 referrals which progressed to a single assessment. This cohort could be broken down as follows:-

- 1032 children (some children were referred more than once)
- 872 children with one or more siblings
- This cohort includes some large sibling groups eg 1 x 8 children, 1 x 7 children, 1 x 6 children and 4 x 5 children.

RESOLVED that:-

1. 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 be noted.
2. Further update reports on a quarterly basis in order to continue to monitor children's social care activity and performance be received.

3. Reasons for the Decision

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. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 12th December 2014

Proper Officer
08 September 2014