

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

4 DECEMBER 2014

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 2014).

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 quarterly basis in order to continue to monitor children's social care activity and performance.

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:

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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
 - 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
 - **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+
 - 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 3 (31 December 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 – 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.
6. Following discussion at Cabinet on 9 October 2014, further analysis has been carried out in relation to the correlation between referrals and actual children/families. This analysis has been based on the year to date ie 1 April to 30 September 2014. During this period, there were 1082 referrals which progressed to a single assessment. This cohort can 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.

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. The improvement plan arising from the Northumberland 'critical friend' review and the Local Government Association (LGA) safeguarding practice continues to be overseen by Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. These pressures have continued to have an impact on the Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) budget in a number of key areas as follows.
11. Firstly the independent fostering agency budget, which is set at £4.835m for 2014/15. The current projected outturn at year end is £5.169m ie an overspend of £334k. 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.
12. Secondly the children's homes agency placements budget, which is set at £5.232m for 2014/15. The current projected outturn at year end is £5.131m ie a saving of £101k. It should be noted that an additional 1 or 2 placements would move this budget into a projected overspend.
13. Thirdly the social work staffing budget, which is currently set at £3.634m for 2014/15. The current projected outturn at year end is £3.579m ie an underspend of £55k. This includes the effect of the Referral and Assessment Team review which was implemented from November 2013 and additional agreed Social Worker appointments. Funding for these posts totalling £556k (included in the budget figure of £3.634m) has been made available in the current year from CESC Managed Surplus.
14. These issues continue to be considered through the medium term financial plan (MTFP).
15. As part of the work undertaken by the Children's Programme Board, the Joint Venture Partnership with Spark of Genius continues to progress. The first of the proposed four children's homes (Thorpe Thewles) is now open and occupied. Work is now complete on the second home (Hartburn) which is still awaiting Ofsted registration. Work has yet to be completed on the third home (Stillington). A range of options are still being considered for the fourth home.
16. The Children's Programme Board continues to explore ways of reducing the need for independent fostering agency placements and to further improve recruitment of in house foster carers and adopters.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. 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

18. 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.
 - Death or serious injury of service user (Current score:15)
 - Early help (Current score:12)
 - Inspection outcomes (Current score:12)
 - Outcomes for Looked After Children & Care Leavers (Current score:16)
19. 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

20. 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.
21. The effective safeguarding of children and young people will also have a significant impact on the community safety agenda.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

22. 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

23. For those children who are looked after, the Council has a responsibility as Corporate Parent to ensure that their needs are appropriately met.
24. 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

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

Name of Contact Officer: Shaun McLurg
Post Title: Head of Children and Young People's Services
Telephone No. 01642 527049
Email Address: shaun.mclurg@stockton.gov.uk

Background Papers

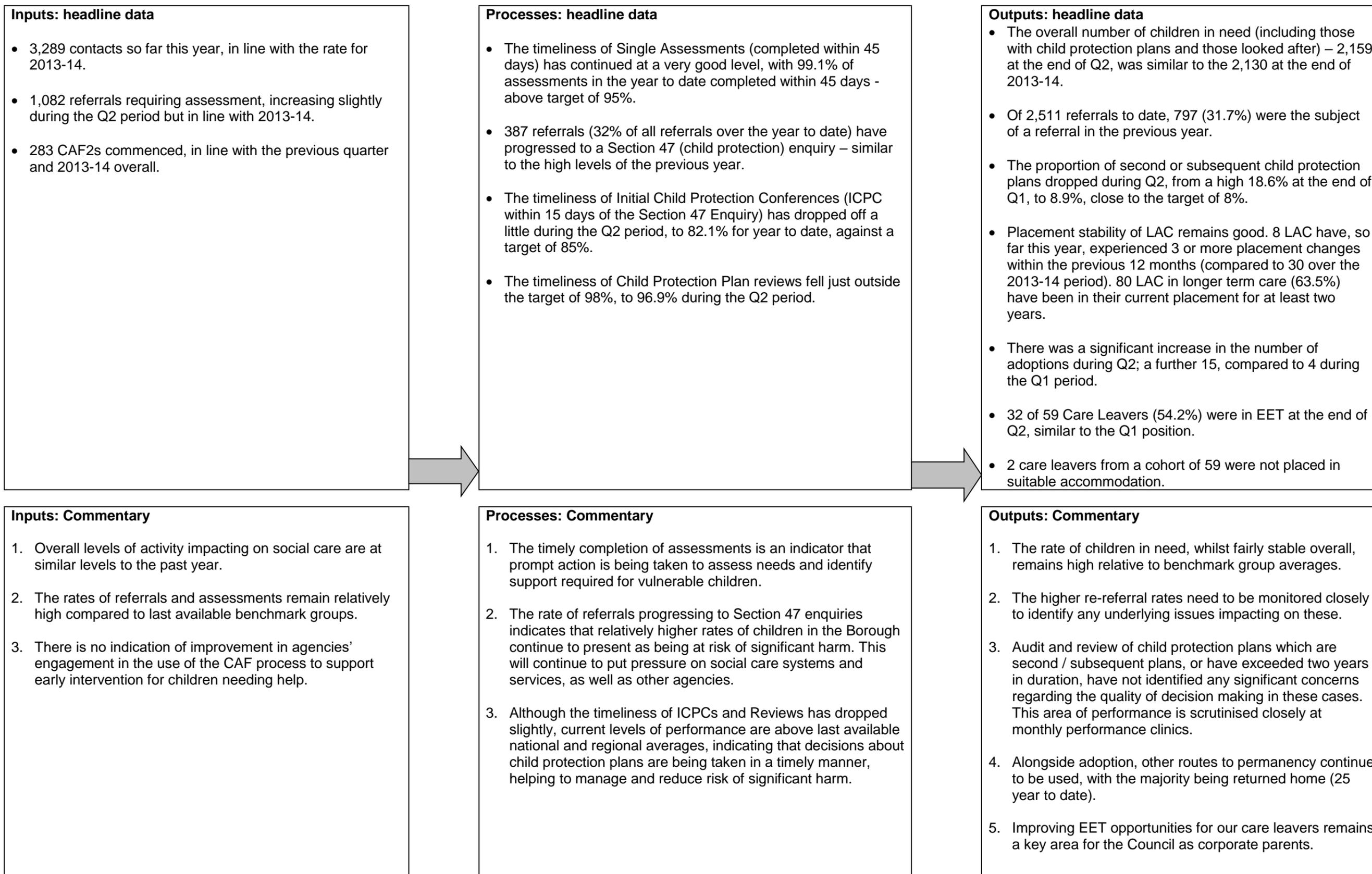
Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for the Protection of Children in Stockton-on-Tees
Ofsted 2013

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

Not applicable.

Property

There are no implications for Council property.



Appendix 2
Children's Social Care Activity and Performance Q2 2014-15

Key

CAFs - Common Assessment Framework ICPC - Initial Child Protection Conference RCPC - Review Child Protection Conference CYP - Children and Young People	S47 - Section 47 Enquiry CiN - Children in Need CiC - Children in Care LAC - Looked After Child	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 shows the cumulative position from 1st April

Inputs

Activity / Performance Measures	2013/14		2014/15						
	Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr - June)			Q2 (Apr- Sep)			
	Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		
Number of contacts made to children's social care	6391	\	1675	\	↓	3289	\	↔	
Number /proportion of Closed and Logged Contacts	3385	53.0%	421	25.1%	↔	778	23.7%	↑	
Number /proportion of Closed & Logged Contacts with an active CAF	194	5.7%	21	5.0%	↓	46	5.9%	↑	
Number /proportion of Referrals which were NFAs	640	21.3%	686	54.7%	↔	1301	51.8%	↑	
Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment (ie Assessment has commenced)	2079	\	475	\	↔	1082	\	↓	
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								
Number of CAF2's commenced, by Agency:-	575		147		↓	283		↔	
CECSC - Children Centre Services	15		9			12			
CECSC - Schools	138		29			50			
CECSC - IYSS	34		10			23			
CECSC - Social Care	206		49			121			
CECSC - Other	10		3			5			
Other Education Support/Settings (including academies)	40		12			16			
NEPACS	0		0			0			
Health - Foundation Trust - Health Visitor Service	83		24			39			
Health - Foundation Trust - Midwives	19		6			6			
Health - Foundation Trust - School Nurse Service	4		0			2			
Health - Other	5		3			5			
Drug and Alcohol Agencies	4		0			0			
Housing	6		0			0			
Other Agencies 3rd/Vol Sector	11		2			4			

Processes

Activity / Performance Measures		2013/14		2014/15					
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr- Jun)		*	Q2 (Apr - Sep)		*
		Number	%	Number	%		Number	%	
Number and timeliness of Single Assessments (45 working days)	Numerator			717	98.4%	↑	1420	99.1%	↔
	Denominator			729			1433		
Number and timeliness of Initial CP conferences (ICPC within 15 working days of the Sect 47 Enquiry)	Numerator	224	57.6%	70	89.7%	↑	160	82.1%	↓
	Denominator	389		78			195		
Timeliness of Child Protection Reviews (Rolling Year)	Numerator	226	100.0%	209	100.0%	↔	190	96.9%	↓
	Denominator	226		209			196		
Number and proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries.	Numerator	746	32.1%	130	22.9%	↑	387	32.0%	↓
	Denominator	2327		568			1210		
Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Services (Cafcass) care applications per 10,000 child population		\							

Outputs

Activity / Performance Measures		2013/14		2014/15					
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr - Jun)		*	Q2 (Apr - Sep)		*
		Number	%	Number	%		Number	%	
Number of CIN (excluding CP & LAC) at end of period		1453	\	1415	\	↔	1471	\	↔
Number of CP at end of period		296	\	276	\	↑	304	\	↓
Number of CIC at end of period		381	\	379	\	↔	384	\	↔
Re-referral rates	Numerator	683	22.7%	366	29.2%	↓	797	31.7%	↓
	Denominator	3006		1254			2511		
2nd or subsequent CP Plans	Numerator	15	4.4%	13	18.6%	↓	16	8.9%	↑
	Denominator	339		70			179		
CP Plans 2 yrs+	Numerator	4	2.9%	6	7%	↓	12	7.0%	↔
	Denominator	413		90			171		
Stability of Children in Care placements : No. of Placements	Numerator	30	7.9%	2	0.5%	↑	8	2.1%	↔
	Denominator	381		379			384		
Stability of Children in Care placements : Length of Placement	Numerator	58	51.8%	67	54.0%	↑	80	63.5%	↑
	Denominator	112		124			126		
Care leavers in suitable accommodation (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	112	95.7%	43	95.6%	↑	57	96.6%	↔
	Denominator	117		45			59		
Care Leavers in EET (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	56	47.9%	24	53.3%	↑	32	54.2%	↔
	Denominator	117		45			59		
Permanency when care has ceased - numbers / proportion:	Adoption	28	18.7%	4	13.8%		19	30.2%	
	Residence Order	19	12.7%	4	13.8%		5	7.9%	
	Special Guardianship	25	16.7%	5	17.2%		14	22.2%	
	Returned Home	78	52.0%	16	55.2%		25	39.7%	