

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

16 JULY 2015

**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.

This report is based on the available data at the end of quarter 4 (31 March 2015).

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:

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.

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
 - **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 2014), 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 have continued at broadly the same rate, remaining at relatively high levels compared to benchmark groups. The number of CAFs completed has increased but is short of the agreed 'stretched' target.
 - Processes - good performance is being sustained with regard to the timeliness of assessments, initial child protection conferences and reviews which continues to indicate there is an efficient response to children in need of protection. The relatively high level of children at risk of significant harm continues to put pressure on support systems and services.
 - Outputs - the number of children subject to a child protection plan and looked after has remained stable although still relatively high. The number of child protection plans lasting over two years remains adrift of the target and higher than the previous year so continues to be subject to close monitoring and scrutiny.
6. The NSPCC has recently published a report 'How Safe Are Our Children' regarding child abuse within the UK. The key findings are as follows:
- All four countries in the UK have seen the number of recorded sexual offences against children increase over the last year.
 - There has been an increase in contacts to the NSPCC helpline and ChildLine about sexual abuse.
 - Neglect remains the most common form of child abuse in the UK.
 - The number of children dying as a result of homicide or assault remains in long term decline.

The full report can be found at: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/how-safe-are-our-children-2015/>

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 diagnostic continues to be overseen by Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB).

Child Sexual Exploitation

10. Following the Task and Finish Review of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), it has been agreed to provide an update on activity within the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing and Trafficked (VEMT) arrangements.
11. Between January and March 2015, there were 29 children considered under VEMT arrangements in Stockton-on-Tees. Of those, 27 were female and 2 were male and 28 were considered to be at risk of CSE. Of these, 10 were assessed as high risk and 18 medium risk.
12. There was one disclosure of CSE made by a child during the quarter.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. These pressures have continued to have an impact on the Children, Education and Social Care budget in a number of key areas.
14. Firstly the independent fostering agency budget, which was set at £4.835m for 2014/15. The final outturn for 2014/15 was £5.09m which is an overspend of £255k. This was a direct result of the increase in the number of placements during 2014/15. There was an average of 116 throughout 2014/15, with 111 in place as of 31 March 2015.
15. Secondly the children's homes agency placements budget, which was set at £5.232m for 2014/15. The final outturn was £5.125m which is a saving of £107k. There was an average of 39 placements throughout 2014/15, with 39 in place as of 31 March 2015.
16. Thirdly the social work staffing outturn budget, which was set at £3.657m for 2014/15. The final outturn was £3.532m which is a saving of £125k. This was mainly a result of vacancies and using less agency staff than anticipated. This includes the effect of the Referral and Assessment Team review which was implemented from November 2013 and additional agreed Social Worker appointments. Provision was made from CESC Managed Surplus brought forward from 2013/14 in respect of these additional costs and Managed Surplus carried forward from 2014/15 will be used to fund these posts in 2015/16.
17. These issues continue to be considered through the medium term financial plan (MTFP).
18. 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 two of the proposed children's homes (Thorpe Thewles and Hartburn) are now open and occupied. The third home (Stillington) is due to open later in the year. A range of options are still being considered for the fourth home.
19. 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

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.
- 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)
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.

Appendix 1

Children's Social Care Performance & Activity Report Q4 2014-15

Inputs: headline data

- The overall volume of contacts / referrals has continued at broadly the same rate as previous quarters.
- On average, there are approx. 1,600 contacts made to Social Care First Contact per quarter, with 500 to 600 of these progressing to a referral for assessment per quarter.
- 356 CAF's were initiated during the Q4 period. There has been a sustained increase in CAF activity for each quarter of the year.

Processes: headline data

- Timeliness of Single Assessments (completed within 45 days) has remained in line with the previous quarter at 99.4% and continues to remain above target of 95%.
- Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC within 15 days of the Section 47 Enquiry) improved to 88.4% remaining above the target of 85%.
- Timeliness of CP reviews at 95.4% is in line with previous quarters, but below the target of 98%.
- The proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries (i.e. where a child is at significant risk of harm) enquiries has continued to remain at approx. one third during the quarter.

Outputs: headline data

- The number of child protection plans during the period of 356 has remained in line with the previous quarter.
- The proportion of second or subsequent plans child protection plans has shown a slight decrease during the quarter and is within tolerance for target.
- The proportion of child protection plans lasting 2 years or more at 6.4% remains some way below the target of 2%.
- There has been an increase in the number of looked after children having 3 placements or more (9 during the Q4 period) to 9.7%, meeting target expectations.

Inputs: Commentary

- Overall levels of activity impacting on social care remain high, although below the levels of the previous year.
- There has been a good improvement in the proportion CAFs during the period although remaining below the target of 1163.

Processes: Commentary

- Performance for the Timeliness of processes continues to indicate that, in the large majority of cases, prompt action continues to be taken to identify and respond to needs, reducing the risk of delays impacting on the support for children most at risk.
- The continuing high rate of S47 enquiries indicates that a greater proportion of children are being identified by agencies as at risk of significant harm.

Outputs: Commentary

- There has been a reduction in the rate of children in need during the period. However, the rate of children looked after and those who are subject to a child protection plan have remained in line with the previous quarter.
- Although there has been slight improvement in the proportion of children subject to a second or subsequent child protection plan, there remain challenges in improving performance for child protection plans lasting 2 years or more.
- Proportion of children achieving permanency through routes other than adoption continues to reflect effective consideration of options with returning home remaining a key focus.

APPENDIX 2

Children's Social Care Activity & Performance Report Q4 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	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)			Q3 (Apr - Dec)			Q4 (Apr - Mar)		
	Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		Number	%		Number	%	
Number of contacts made to children's social care	6391	\	1675	\	↓	3289	\	↔	4963	\	↔	6619	\	↔
Number /proportion of Closed and Logged Contacts	3385	53.0%	421	25.1%	↔	778	23.7%	↑	1299	26.2%	↔	3805	57.5%	↓
Number /proportion of Closed & Logged Contacts with an active CAF	194	5.7%	21	5.0%	↓	46	5.9%	↑	96	7.4%	↑	449	11.8%	↑
Number /proportion of Referrals which were NFAs	640	21.3%	686	54.7%	↔	1301	51.8%	↑	1861	50.8%	↔	550	19.5%	↓
Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment (ie Assessment has commenced)	2079	\	475	\	↔	1082	\	↓	1654	\	↔	2187	\	
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		↔	521		↑	877		
CESC - Children Centre Services	15		9			12			14			32		
CESC - Schools	138		29			50			120			242		
CESC - IYSS	34		10			23			26			29		

CESC - Social Care	206		49			121			213			306		
CESC - Other	10		3			5			6			9		
Other Education Support/Settings (including academies)	40		12			16			60			122		
NEPACS	0		0			0			0			0		
Health - Foundation Trust - Health Visitor Service	83		24			39			46			67		
Health - Foundation Trust - Midwives	19		6			6			8			11		
Health - Foundation Trust - School Nurse Service	4		0			2			3			6		
Health - Other	5		3			5			11			23		
Drug and Alcohol Agencies	4		0			0			0			0		
Housing	6		0			0			2			8		
Other Agencies 3rd/Vol Sector	11		2			4			12			22		

Processes

Activity / Performance Measures		2013/14		2014/15											
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr- Jun)			Q2 (Apr - Sep)			Q3 (Apr - Dec)			Q4 (Apr - Mar)		
		Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		Number	%		Number	%	*
Number and timeliness of Single Assessments (45 working days)	Numerator			717	98.4%	↑	1420	99.1%	↔	2094	99.2%	↔	2759	99.4%	↔
	Denominator			729			1433			2110			2775		
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%	↓	258	86.6%	↑	344	88.4%	↑
	Denominator	389		78			195			298			389		
Timeliness of Child Protection Reviews (Rolling Year)	Numerator	226	100.0%	209	100.0%	↔	190	96.9%	↓	245	96.5%	↔	271	95.4%	↓
	Denominator	226		209			196			254			284		
Number and proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries.	Numerator	746	32.1%	130	22.9%	↑	387	32.0%	↓	580	32.2%	↔	804	35.5%	↓
	Denominator	2327		568			1210			1803			2264		
Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Services (Cafcass) care applications per 10,000 child population (Source: Cafcass website)		12.5	\										14.6	\	

Outputs

Activity / Performance Measures		2013/14		2014/15											
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr - Jun)			Q2 (Apr - Sep)			Q3 (Apr - Dec)			Q4 (Apr - Mar)		
		Number	%	Number	%		Number	%		Number	%	*	Number	%	*
Number of CIN (excluding CP & LAC) at end of period		1453	\	1415	\	↔	1471	\	↔	1423	\	↔	1190	\	↔
Number of CP at end of period		296	\	276	\	↑	304	\	↓	355	\	↓	356	\	↔
Number of CIC at end of period		381	\	379	\	↔	384	\	↔	388	\	↔	380	\	↔
Re-referral rates	Numerator	683	22.7%	366	29.2%	↓	797	31.7%	↓	1241	33.9%	↓	623	22.1%	↑
	Denominator	3006		1254			2511			3664			2814		
2nd or subsequent CP Plans	Numerator	15	4.4%	13	18.6%	↓	16	8.9%	↑	30	10.6%	↓	35	9.9%	↑
	Denominator	339		70			179			283			355		
CP Plans 2 yrs+	Numerator	4	2.9%	6	7%	↓	12	7.0%	↔	18	8.0%	↓	19	6.4%	↑
	Denominator	413		90			171			224			295		
Stability of Children in Care placements : No. of Placements	Numerator	30	7.9%	2	0.5%	↑	8	2.1%	↔	28	7.2%	↓	37	9.7%	↓
	Denominator	381		379			384			388			380		
Stability of Children in Care placements : Length of Placement	Numerator	58	51.8%	67	54.0%	↑	80	63.5%	↑	86	63.7%	↔	88	59.9%	↓
	Denominator	112		124			126			135			147		
Care leavers in suitable accommodation (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	112	95.7%	43	95.6%	↑	57	96.6%	↔	88	96.7%	↔	112	93.3%	↓
	Denominator	117		45			59			91			120		
Care Leavers in EET (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	56	47.9%	24	53.3%	↑	32	54.2%	↔	46	50.5%	↓	59	49.2%	↔
	Denominator	117		45			59			91			120		

Permanency when care has ceased - numbers / proportion:	Adoption	28	18.7%	4	13.8%		19	30.2%		28	34.1%		30	26.5%
	Residence Order	19	12.7%	4	13.8%		5	7.9%		6	7.3%		13	11.5%
	Special Guardianship	25	16.7%	5	17.2%		14	22.2%		14	17.1%		17	15.0%
	Returned Home	78	52.0%	16	55.2%		25	39.7%		34	41.5%		53	46.9%

Cases started during 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015

Referred By

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

Referred By	Case Resulted in:									
	Contact (Closed & Logged as Enquiry)		No Further Action (NFA)		Proceeded to Single Assessment		Yet to Proceed to Single 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 SA)	Number	Proportion (% of Total Yet to Proceeded)	Number	Proportion (% of Total Cases)
Assessment Teams	7	0.2%	13	2.4%	68	3.1%	0	0.0%	88	1.3%
CESC Others	22	0.6%	7	1.3%	20	0.9%	1	1.3%	50	0.8%
Courts	314	8.3%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%	0	0.0%	319	4.8%
Education - Head Teacher	146	3.8%	36	6.5%	175	8.0%	12	15.6%	369	5.6%
Education - Other	141	3.7%	47	8.5%	155	7.1%	5	6.5%	348	5.3%
Education - Special Educational Needs Department	95	2.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	95	1.4%
Education - Teacher	67	1.8%	14	2.5%	59	2.7%	1	1.3%	141	2.1%
Emergency Duty Team	136	3.6%	21	3.8%	123	5.6%	0	0.0%	280	4.2%
Family Support Teams	12	0.3%	7	1.3%	102	4.7%	3	3.9%	124	1.9%
Field Work	22	0.6%	17	3.1%	88	4.0%	3	3.9%	130	2.0%
Health - A & E	140	3.7%	6	1.1%	43	2.0%	0	0.0%	189	2.9%
Health - CAMHS	25	0.7%	0	0.0%	10	0.5%	2	2.6%	37	0.6%
Health - Child Protection Nurse	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	0.4%	2	2.6%	11	0.2%
Health - Community/ District Nurse	10	0.3%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	0	0.0%	13	0.2%
Health - Community Mental Health	20	0.5%	3	0.5%	6	0.3%	0	0.0%	29	0.4%
Health - General Practitioner	57	1.5%	4	0.7%	32	1.5%	4	5.2%	97	1.5%
Health - Health Visitor	32	0.8%	7	1.3%	73	3.3%	0	0.0%	112	1.7%
Health - Midwife	39	1.0%	13	2.4%	83	3.8%	1	1.3%	136	2.1%
Health - Other	151	4.0%	7	1.3%	76	3.5%	6	7.8%	240	3.6%
Health - School Nurse	10	0.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	0.2%
Housing	124	3.3%	10	1.8%	39	1.8%	2	2.6%	175	2.6%
Individuals	573	15.1%	72	13.1%	261	11.9%	10	13.0%	916	13.8%
LAC Services	17	0.4%	8	1.5%	8	0.4%	0	0.0%	33	0.5%
Other (see note)	21	0.6%	16	2.9%	40	1.8%	1	1.3%	78	1.2%

Other Agency	670	17.6%	118	21.5%	259	11.8%	11	14.3%	1058	16.0%
Police	895	23.5%	112	20.4%	383	17.5%	10	13.0%	1400	21.2%
Probation	59	1.6%	11	2.0%	68	3.1%	3	3.9%	141	2.1%
Total	3805	100.0%	550	100.0%	2187	100.0%	77	100.0%	6619	100.0%

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