

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

8 OCTOBER 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 1 (30 June 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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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 1 (30 June 2015), 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 reduced slightly during the quarter, although remain 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 remains 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.

Performance Management Arrangements

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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).

Common Assessment Framework

9. The previous report to Cabinet highlighted the lack of progress in relation to Common Assessment Framework (CAF) performance, particularly within North Tees and Hartlepool Foundation Trust (NTHFT) and Children's Centres during 2014/15.
10. Following the subsequent discussions at Cabinet, the Chief Executive of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has written to the Chief Executive of NTHFT to express concerns regarding the decline in CAF completion by NTHFT staff. The Chief Executive of NTHFT has since responded, acknowledging these concerns and setting out the measures being taken in order to address this.
11. The Chair of Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) has also written to the Chief Executive of NTHFT expressing concerns about the decline in performance and requesting that this be given priority attention.
12. There has been an encouraging increase in CAF completion during Q1 by the Stockton-on-Tees run Children's Centres, although performance within the externally commissioned Children's Centres remains a significant concern. As a result of this, the Corporate Director, Children, Education and Social Care (CESC) has met with the Chief Executives of The Big Life Group and 4Children in order to raise these concerns and seek assurances that this issue will be addressed as a matter of urgency.
13. It is hoped that taken together, these actions will bring about the necessary improvement in performance but progress will continue to be closely monitored by the CAF Board and SLSCB and updates will be included in future reports to Cabinet.

Child Sexual Exploitation

14. 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.
15. Between January and March 2015, there were 25 children considered under VEMT arrangements in Stockton-on-Tees. Of those, 23 were female and 2 were male and all were considered to be at risk of CSE. Of these, 9 were assessed as high risk and 16 medium risk.
16. There were no disclosures of CSE made by a child during the quarter.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. These pressures have continued to have an impact on the Children, Education and Social Care budget in a number of key areas as follows.
18. Firstly the independent fostering agency budget, which is set at £5.51m for 2015/16. The current projected outturn is £4.69m ie a saving of £820k. However, this budget now includes a provision for growth which was previously held centrally but is currently not expected to be spent. The projected outturn also includes discounts totalling approximately £113k received from independent fostering agencies under the terms of the contract arrangements.
19. Secondly the children's homes agency placements budget, which is set at £5.018m for 2015/16. The current projected outturn is £5.425m ie an overspend of £407k. This budget also now includes a provision for growth which was previously held centrally.
20. Thirdly the social work staffing budget, which is set at £3.722m for 2015/16. There is currently no significant variance projected at year end.

21. These issues continue to be considered through the medium term financial plan (MTFP).

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. 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

23. 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)
24. 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

25. 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.
26. The effective safeguarding of children and young people will also have a significant impact on the community safety agenda.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

27. 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

28. For those children who are looked after, the Council has a responsibility as Corporate Parent to ensure that their needs are appropriately met.
29. 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

30. 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 Q1 2015-16

Inputs: headline data

- The overall volume of contacts / referrals has shown a reduction from previous quarters.
- During the quarter there were 1592 contacts made to Children's Social Care First Contact with 378 (24%) progressing to a referral for assessment. For 2014/15 this ratio was over 33%
- 244 CAF's were initiated during the Q1 period, an increase on the previous year's Q1 performance of 147.

Processes: headline data

- Timeliness of Single Assessments (completed within 45 days) at 98.4% has remained in line with the previous year's Q1 performance of 99.4% and continues to remain above target of 95%
- Maximum performance of 100% achieved for Timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC within 15 days of the Section 47 Enquiry) and a significant improvement on the previous year's Q1 performance of 89.7%.
- Timeliness of CP reviews at 95.6% is slightly below the previous year's Q1 performance of 100%, but within the tolerance for target.
- The proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries (where a child is at risk of significant harm) at 33.0% has increased significantly on the previous year's Q1 performance of 22.9%.

Outputs: headline data

- The number of new CIN cases during the quarter has shown a decrease to 1269 compared to 1415 for the previous year's Q1 performance.
- There has been an increase in the number of new CP plans during the quarter to 325 compared to 276 for the previous year's Q1 performance.
- Number of CIC during the period has remained relatively static at 377 compared to 379 for Q1 2014/15.
- The proportion of second or subsequent child protection plans has shown a slight reduction, but at 15.6% remains below target expectations of 8% or less.
- The proportion of CP plans lasting 2 years or more at 14.2% remains some way off the target of 2%.
- The proportion of children having 3 placements or more at 0.5% is in line with the previous year's performance and is within target.
- There has been an improvement in the proportion of Children in Care who have lived in the same placement for at least 2 years to 66%, meeting target expectations..

Inputs: Commentary

1. Overall levels of activity impacting on social care remain high, although below the levels of the previous year.
2. There has been a continued improvement in the proportion CAFs during the period.
3. Some indication of a possible lack of understanding of thresholds. High proportion from Police, Individuals, other Agency either Closed and Logged or NFA'd. This pattern is repeated across the previous year.

Processes: Commentary

1. Performance for the Timeliness of processes continues to indicate that, in the large majority of cases, prompt action is taken to identify and respond to needs, reducing the risk of delays impacting on support for children most at risk.
2. Current performance shows there has been an increase in S47 enquires indicating a greater proportion of children are being identified by agencies as at risk of significant harm.

Outputs: Commentary

1. The rate of children in need has shown a reduction during the period. Whilst the rate of children looked after has remained relatively static during the period, there has been an increase in the proportion of children subject to a CP plan compared to the previous year's quarter 1 performance.
2. Although there has been a slight improvement in the proportion of children subject to a second or subsequent child protection plan, there remain significant challenges in improving performance for child protection plans lasting 2 years or more.
3. 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 Q1 2015-16

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	2014-15		2015-16		
	Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr - June)		
	Number	%	Number	%	
Number of contacts made to children's social care	6619	\	1592	\	↓
Number /proportion of Closed and Logged Contacts	3805	57.5%	1017	63.9%	↑
Number /proportion of Closed & Logged Contacts with an active CAF	449	11.8%	177	17.4%	↑
Number /proportion of Referrals which were NFAs	550	19.5%	84	14.6%	↓
Number of contacts that become referrals for assessment (ie Assessment has commenced)	2187	\	378	\	↓
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 CAF's commenced, by Agency:-	877		244		↑
CESC - Children Centre Services	32		44		
CESC - Schools	242		64		
CESC - IYSS	29		0		

CESC - Social Care	306		66		
CESC - Other	9		0		
Other Education Support/Settings (including academies)	122		34		
Health - Foundation Trust - Health Visitor Service	67		25		
Health - Foundation Trust - Midwives	11		2		
Health - Foundation Trust - School Health Service	6		1		
Health - Family Nurse Partnership	0		0		
Health - Foundation trust - Other	0		1		
Health - Other	23		4		
Drug and Alcohol Agencies	0		0		
Housing	8		1		
Other Agencies 3rd/Vol Sector	22		2		

Processes

Activity / Performance Measures		2014-15		2015-16		
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr- Jun)		
		Number	%	Number	%	
Number and timeliness of Single Assessments (45 working days)	Numerator	2759	99.4%	537	98.9%	↔
	Denominator	2775		543		
Number and timeliness of Initial CP conferences (ICPC within 15 working days of the Sect 47 Enquiry)	Numerator	344	88.4%	83	100.0%	↑
	Denominator	389		83		
Timeliness of Child Protection Reviews (Rolling Year)	Numerator	271	95.4%	239	95.6%	↓
	Denominator	284		250		

Number and proportion of referrals that result in S47 enquiries.	Numerator	804	35.5%	162	33.0%	↓
	Denominator	2264		491		
Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Services (Cafcass) care applications per 10,000 child population (Source: Cafcass website)		14.6	\			

Outputs

Activity / Performance Measures		2014-15		2015-16		
		Whole Year (Provisional)		Q1 (Apr - Jun)		
		Number	%	Number	%	
Number of CIN (excluding CP & LAC) at end of period		1190	\	1269		↓
Number of CP at end of period		356	\	325		↑
Number of CIC at end of period		380	\	377		↔
Re-referral rates	Numerator	623	22.1%	96	16.7%	↑
	Denominator	2814		575		
2nd or subsequent CP Plans	Numerator	35	9.9%	12	15.6%	↑
	Denominator	355		77		
CP Plans 2 yrs+	Numerator	19	6.4%	15	14.2%	↓
	Denominator	295		106		
Stability of Children in Care placements : No. of Placements	Numerator	37	9.7%	2	0.5%	↔
	Denominator	380		377		
Stability of Children in Care placements : Length of Placement	Numerator	88	59.9%	103	66.0%	↑
	Denominator	147		156		
Care leavers in suitable accommodation (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	112	93.3%	28	87.5%	↓
	Denominator	120		32		
Care Leavers in EET (16 - 21 Year Olds)	Numerator	59	49.2%	18	56.3%	↑
	Denominator	120		32		

Permanency when care has ceased -
numbers / proportion:

Adoption	30	26.5%	2	9.1%	
Residence Order	13	11.5%	1	4.5%	
Special Guardianship	17	15.0%	1	4.5%	
Returned home (planned or unplanned)	53	46.9%	15	68.2%	
Left care to live with parent or other with NO parental responsibility			3	13.6%	

Cases started during 1st April 2015 to 30th June 2015

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

Referred By	Case Resulted in:									
	Contacts		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	6	0.6%	1	1.2%	17	4.5%	0	0.0%	24	1.5%
CESC Others	4	0.4%	1	1.2%	5	1.3%	0	0.0%	10	0.6%
Courts	71	7.0%	0	0.0%	6	1.6%	1	0.9%	78	4.9%
Education - Head Teacher	61	6.0%	6	7.1%	28	7.4%	12	10.6%	107	6.7%
Education - Other	56	5.5%	2	2.4%	45	11.9%	15	13.3%	118	7.4%
Education - Special Educational Needs Department	6	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	0.4%
Education - Teacher	28	2.8%	0	0.0%	13	3.4%	1	0.9%	42	2.6%
Emergency Duty Team	48	4.7%	6	7.1%	16	4.2%	8	7.1%	78	4.9%
Family Support Teams	0	0.0%	2	2.4%	13	3.4%	2	1.8%	17	1.1%
Field Work	13	1.3%	11	13.1%	8	2.1%	6	5.3%	38	2.4%
Health - A & E	30	2.9%	1	1.2%	7	1.9%	1	0.9%	39	2.4%
Health - CAMHS	7	0.7%	0	0.0%	3	0.8%	1	0.9%	11	0.7%
Health - Child Protection Nurse	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Health - Community / District Nurse	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Health - Community Mental Health	10	1.0%	0	0.0%	5	1.3%	0	0.0%	15	0.9%
Health - General Practitioner	11	1.1%	1	1.2%	1	0.3%	5	4.4%	18	1.1%
Health - Health Visitor	12	1.2%	0	0.0%	5	1.3%	0	0.0%	17	1.1%
Health - Midwife	10	1.0%	0	0.0%	18	4.8%	0	0.0%	28	1.8%
Health - Other	40	3.9%	0	0.0%	11	2.9%	7	6.2%	58	3.6%
Health - School Nurse	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Housing	50	4.9%	3	3.6%	4	1.1%	4	3.5%	61	3.8%
Individuals	184	18.1%	17	20.2%	52	13.8%	12	10.6%	265	16.6%
LAC Services	0	0.0%	6	7.1%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	7	0.4%
Other (see note)	11	1.1%	1	1.2%	9	2.4%	1	0.9%	22	1.4%
Other Agency	146	14.4%	15	17.9%	27	7.1%	11	9.7%	199	12.5%
Police	203	20.0%	11	13.1%	78	20.6%	26	23.0%	318	20.0%
Probation	9	0.9%	0	0.0%	5	1.3%	0	0.0%	14	0.9%
Total	1017	100.0%	84	100.0%	378	100.0%	113	100.0%	1592	100.0%

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

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