

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 4 November 2014

Agenda item: 9

Wards: All wards

Subject: Performance monitoring

Lead officer: Paul Ballatt, Assistant Director of Commissioning, Strategy and Performance, Children Schools and Families

Lead member(s): Councillor Maxi Martin; Councillor Martin Whelton.

Forward Plan reference number: n/a

Contact officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Service Manager Policy, Planning and Performance.

Recommendations: That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel

A. Note the current level of performance as at September 2014 for the reporting year 2014/15

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To provide the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel (CYP panel) with a regular update on the performance of the Children, Schools and Families Department and key partners. Data provided is as at the end of September 2014, at the point of publishing this report the October 2014 data had not yet been validated (report due to be published 28 October 2014).

2. DETAILS

- 2.1. At the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel meeting on 5 June 2007 it was agreed that the Children Schools and Families department would submit a regular performance report on a range of key performance indicators. This performance monitoring report would act as a 'health check' for the Panel and would be over and above the more detailed performance reports scheduled to the Panel which relate to specific areas of activities such as the annual Schools Standards report, MSCB annual report etc.
- 2.2. A CYPP scrutiny performance workshop was held earlier this month on 20 October 2014, in which Members received guidance and information about the Children Schools and Families departmental Performance Management Framework and associated performance governance. AD CSP and the Service Manager for Policy, Planning and Performance presented information about how officers benchmark performance and identify areas for improvement. Members were provided with a much larger range of performance indicators which are monitored internally and externally by partners and Government. Following the workshop it was agreed that a smaller group would meet to review and possibly refresh the CYP Scrutiny dataset and approach to performance reporting to the panel.
- 2.3. Appendix one presents the current performance dataset for 2014/15. Comments are provided below on exception only for those indicators reporting as Red or Amber.

- 2.4. **Line 6 Percentage of children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time (NI 65) – Amber.**
- 2.5. 13% of children subject to a child protection plan were the subject to a plan for the second or subsequent time. This indicator relates to 11 children or young people with previous plans. A second plan is agreed for those children where concerns which led to the original plan re-occur or where new concerns arise. It should be noted that this indicator is significantly impacted by sibling groups being subject to a second or subsequent plan, 7 of the 11 children are accounted for in three sibling groups. There is a range of acceptable performance for this indicator and Merton remains in line with national average of 14.9%, London (13%) and Outer London (12.8%) (CIN 2012/13).
- 2.6. **Line 12 Stability of placements of Children in Care (length of placement) – Red.**
- 2.7. This length of placement indicator refers to a small cohort of children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and a half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more.
- 2.8. Of the total number of children in care only 34 children meet these criteria, 56% of these relevant children had been in a single stable placement lasting two years or more years - this equates to 15 of 34 children. Nineteen children have not been in their placements for longer than 2 years. This is a small cohort of children and can be skewed by sibling groups. We place siblings together where possible and appropriate, where not we ensure that suitable contact arrangements are in place.
- 2.9. We are determined to find the most appropriate care for our looked after children, using family and friends; in-house foster carers; carers from the South West London consortium or a number of Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs). In some circumstances, where appropriate, we use residential placements. When we are required to use independent settings we do so only in those rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. Where we have children placed in IFA placements and the placement is identified as meeting their long term needs and in the best interests of the child, we commit to funding this placement long term. A monthly tracking meeting is held by senior management to oversee the stability and suitability of each looked after child's placement, this enables management oversight of risk on a case by case level. There were various reasons for the placement disruptions including planned placement changes to better meet the needs of the children. This indicator remains broadly in line with the national benchmark of 67% (LAC 903 2012/13).
- 2.10. **Line 14 Percentage of children in care participating in their reviews – Amber.**
- 2.11. 70% of children in care participated in their reviews in the year to date through a variety of methods - this indicator excludes children under the age of 4 and therefore refers to 95 of 136 children. Where children and young people feel they need support to represent their views we provide that support through an independent advocacy service (Jigsaw4U provides our commissioned advocacy and independent visitor service for looked after children and those subject to a child protection plan or Family Group Conference).
- 2.12. Our looked after children continue to be represented by the Children in Care Council (CICC) which is regularly consulted on how to improve the support they receive. CICC continues to meet monthly and agenda items this year have included – developing the new website for children in care and care leavers; buddy scheme; housing; gym membership; Jigsaw 4U advocacy service and discussions on 'What makes a good [social work] visit'.

3. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

3.1. The Panel's scrutiny work programme is determined by the members of the Panel.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. The Panel have agreed to consider the performance report on an annual basis.

5. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

Appendix 1: CYPP performance dataset 2014/15 (September 2014)

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1. None.

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