

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 13 January 2015

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 November 2014 for the reporting year 2014/15 (appendix 1)
- B. Review a revised Performance index proposed for 2015/16 (appendix 2)
- C. Agree to receive monitoring reports against the new Performance index from April 2015.

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 in appendix one is as at the end of November 2014, at the point of publishing this report the December 2014 data had not yet been validated (report due to be published 5 January 2014).
- 1.2. Following a review of the Performance index a revised dataset has been developed and is presented in appendix two for Members to review and agree. See paragraph 2.12 for details.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1. At a Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel in 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, Corporate Parenting Report, safeguarding performance report etc. This performance index is periodically reviewed and revised by Members.
- 2.2. **November 2014 Performance commentary**
- 2.3. Appendix one presents the performance dataset for 2014/15 comments are provided below on exception only for those indicators reporting as Red or Amber below.
- 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. 15% of children subject to a child protection plan were the subject of a plan for the second or subsequent time, this indicator relates to 22 of 143 CYP with previous plans (new child protection plans started). A second plan is established where concerns which led to the original plan re-occur or where new concerns arise. It should be noted in November 6 new CYP started on a CPP plan of which 4 children were from one family group and 2 children from another. Sibling groups impact this indicator greatly therefore any change in percentages are unpicked by officers to be understood. Although higher than Merton's norm, this indicator remains in line with the national average of 15.8% (CIN 2013/14). Members may like to note that the national average now published as above has also risen from last year (14.9% in 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 35 children meet these criteria, 46% of these relevant children had been in a single stable placement lasting two years or more years. This equates to 16 of 35 children.
- 2.9. Sixteen children have not been in their placements for longer than 2 years. This is a small cohort of children which can be skewed by sibling groups. There were various reasons for the placement disruptions including planned placement changes to better meet the needs of the children. The national average for this indicator is 67% (LAC 903 2012/13).
- 2.10. **Line 14 Percentage of children in care participating in their reviews – Red.**
- 2.11. 73% 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 121 of 143 children. Where children and young people feel they need support to represent their views we provide that support through an independent advocacy service Jigsaw4U. 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, 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'. In addition two representatives from the Children in Care Council made a presentation to the Merton Safeguarding Children Board in May. This is part of an initiative to strengthen links to enable looked after children's voices to inform the work and priorities of senior managers and executive leads.
- 2.12. **New Performance index 2015/16**
- 2.13. During October 2014 a CYPP scrutiny performance workshop was held 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. As a result a proposed new performance index is presented in appendix two.

- 2.14. The new performance index provides a more comprehensive view of Merton's key performance indicators and on-going areas for improvement.
- 2.15. Where indicators have been removed Members are reassured that these indicators are either presented elsewhere in annual or thematic reports during the year or are no longer top concerns for the management team. For example indicators removed about school exclusions are annually presented in the School Standards report.
- 2.16. Suggested additional indicators combined with some of the existing indicators provide a more holistic view of Children, Schools and Families services. The new performance index also focuses more on the key indicators of concern/areas for improvement for the department as requested. It is likely that Members will see more 'Reds and Ambers' on the index as a result of the new more challenging dataset, it was therefore agreed that more benchmarking information would be included in the performance index to help Members contextualise a range of acceptable performance, as such two years of Merton trend data is to be included in the index and an England and London average. With this information Members will be able to identify 'true' Red indicators, differentiating between those lagging behind Merton's ambitiously set targets and those lagging behind a national/London average and or previous performance.
- 2.17. It is recommended that the panel begin to monitoring the new Performance index from April 2015 to ensure that the current year's Performance index completes a full cycle of monitoring before a new index begins.
- 2.18. In addition to a new standard dataset for 2015/16 Members also requested that Officers submit supplementary indicators in the 'Officers Update report' as and when management were particularly concerned about performance. It was recommended that Members monitor selected indicators for a short period of time only until performance improved. These indicators will be reported separately in order to keep the integrity of the full standard Scrutiny dataset.

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 Chair has 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 index 2014/15 (November 2014)

Appendix 2: CYPP performance index proposal 2015/16

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1. CSF Performance Management Framework <http://intranet/departments/csf-index/csf-performance.htm>

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