

Children Social Care – Annual Performance Report 2016/17

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Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson

Division and Local Member: All Members

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report provides members with a summary of information contained within the Children’s Social Care Annual Performance Report 2016/17. The report is intended to highlight to members any areas of potential concern identified within the Annual Report together with actions underway to address these issues.
- 1.2. The report has clear links to the County Plan Target “Keeping children safe – We will improve our Ofsted rating at next inspection of child protection services and continue to make year-on-year service improvements”
- 1.3. There are also direct links to the Children and Young Peoples Plan [CYPP] programme 6 - Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children’s social work service

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are asked to review the performance information contained within the Annual Report recognising areas of strong and improving performance and for those areas of deteriorating performance identified, additionally members are asked to review associated actions being undertaken to address these areas as set out in section 3.6 below.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Children’s Social Care Annual Report is produced by the Children’s Business Intelligence Team once a year and forms part of the wide range of performance reports available to Children’s Social Care.
- 3.2. The report looks at performance across a range of service areas and specifically compares performance in the year 2016/17 with the previous year, identifying trends and areas of improving and deteriorating performance.
- 3.3. Additionally the Report also compares the Council’s performance with the statistical neighbour group of similar authorities as well as average performance across England as a whole. Each service area section of the report contains tables and graphs of information as well as a narrative commentary on performance.
- 3.4. There are 38 indicators included within the report. Assessments of comparative performance can be made against 23 of these indicators, of these 19 [83%] have shown an improvement when compared to previous performance whilst

performance has deteriorated against 4 indicators.

- 3.5. This improvement mirrors improvement seen across Children's Social Care driven by the Improvement Programme supporting delivery of the CYPP and specifically Programme 6 - Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children's social work service
- 3.6. The report identifies 4 specific indicators where performance has deteriorated compared to the previous year. These areas are set out below along with commentary and actions currently being undertaken to address performance.

Child Protection Conferences

The proportion of Initial Child Protection Conferences [ICPCs] completed on time fell slightly, from 97.0% (2015/16) to 94.9% (2016/17).

- This represents a small drop in timeliness, but needs to be seen in the context of steadily increasing CP numbers throughout the period (from 280 in 2015/16 to 413 2016/17 – 48% increase), This remains under weekly review through senior management performance meetings.
- When we consider benchmarking figures (in the same period, figures for statistical neighbours were 76.1% on time, and England figures 79.1% on time), Somerset's performance in this area remains very positive.

The percentage of Review Child Protection Conferences [RCPCs] on time has reduced marginally, from 99.0% (2015/16) to 98.5% (2016/17).

- Though this is a drop in performance, it is marginal. As indicated above, positive performance in this area has been maintained despite steadily increasing CP numbers within the county, and performance remains better than statistical neighbours (93.7%) and England as a whole (93.7%)

Children Looked After

The percentage of children placed more than 20 miles from the home address has risen from 28.7% to 32.1%.

- Under recent national changes to this indicator, the definition has been revised to 'The percentage of children placed more than 20 miles from home and not within Somerset'
- Performance issues relate back to availability of suitable placements
- The fostering recruitment campaign is ongoing
- A Placements summit was held in October 2017 to explore issues and an action plan developed to focus upon placement sufficiency and creating capacity; with a focus upon developing clear commissioning arrangements with local providers to increase placement choice; improving placement stability and support; diverting children from care; focusing on reunification of young people where safe and appropriate.
- A sufficiency plan has been developed and implemented, with engagement and scrutiny enhanced reflecting a full system approach and linked to the work of the CYPP plan.
- Distant placements are reviewed through the children looked after tracking and permanence panel to regularly review whether better local options are available for young people. With the Independent Reviewing Officers

presenting greater challenge and scrutiny of care plans through the statutory review process.

The percentage of children looked after for more than a year, that have had their Dental Assessment has reduced, from 88.5% to 72.9%.

- This indicator remains a priority, reflecting greater scrutiny and process requirements to be strengthened. A wider service response has been developed to encompass foster carers, social workers and IROs.
- The children looked after service has been tasked to review all cases where dental checks have not been recorded as complete, and take remedial action to ensure that all children looked after are receiving appropriate dental oversight. This work will inform future planning and operational activity.

4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1. This report has been shared with The Children's Social Care Senior Management Team and will be presented to Corporate Parents Board in January 2018.

5. Implications

- 5.1. There are no specific implications resulting from this report. Information regarding age, ethnicity and disability of child is considered routinely as part of service development and delivery

6. Background papers

- 6.1. Children's Social Care Annual Report 2016/17 – attached as an appendix

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author