

Council Report

Improving Lives Select Commission – 3rd February 2016

Title

Safeguarding Children and Families Performance 2015/16 3rd Quarter Report
(December 2015)

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Thomas, Children and Young People's Services

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

The report provides members with data and associated commentary against performance of key areas of Safeguarding Children and Families Services as at the end of the 3rd quarter of 2015/16 (December 2015). This takes into account direction of travel on the previous month, comparison against national benchmarking data and, where applicable, analysis against locally set targets.

Recommendations

- That members review the Performance Report and consider issues arising
- That members endorse the proposal to continue to receive these reports on a quarterly basis

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Safeguarding Children and Families Monthly Performance Report
(December 2015)

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Title: Safeguarding Children and Families Performance 2015/16 3rd Quarter Report (December 2015)

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members review the Performance Report and consider issues arising
- 1.2 That members endorse the proposal to continue to receive these reports on a quarterly basis

2. Background

- 2.1 This is the first specific performance indicator monitoring report presented to committee members regarding children's social care since the outcome of the Ofsted inspections 2014.
- 2.2 Since the inspection performance management arrangements within the service have undergone significant improvement and will continue to develop over time.

These improvements include;

- 2.2.1 Further development of the suite of daily and weekly child level performance information available to all social care staff
- 2.2.2 The introduction and embedding of weekly performance challenge meetings attended by the Commissioner, Director of Children's Services, Directors and holding all social care managers and team managers to account.
- 2.2.3 The development of the accompanying performance report based on best practice and successful models within other local authorities

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Within Appendix A members are provided with data and detailed commentary against performance of key areas of Safeguarding Children and Families Services as at the end of the 3rd quarter of 2015/16 (December 2015). This takes into account direction of travel on the previous month, comparison against national benchmarking data and, where applicable, analysis against locally set targets.
- 3.2 In summary a number of performance improvements have been achieved in the last 12 months including;
 - 3.2.1 A more robust and responsive multi-agency front door service (the MASH) with the proportion of referrals with timely decision making consistently in the high 90%'s. 98.6% in December against a low of 36.7% at the end of 2014.
 - 3.2.2 A reduction in the number of children on a child protection plan for excessive periods of time. At the end of December only one child was subject to a CPP for over 2 years compared to 18 in April.

- 3.2.3 Almost all our vulnerable children now have up-to-date intervention plans in place and recorded. With 100% Children subject to a Child Protection Plan, 96.9% of Looked after Children and 90.3% of Children in Need with up-to-date plans compared to performance at the end of 2014 of 80%, 82% and 32% respectively.
 - 3.2.4 Children are now being seen by their social workers more regularly 96.2% of looked after children are receiving statutory visits on time with national standards and 95.0% of children with a Child Protection Plan had been visited in the last 2 weeks (local standard). (We were unable to accurately monitor these measures 12 months ago.)
 - 3.2.5 Caseloads for social workers have been reduced and averages across all teams are now consistently within agreed limits of 18-22 cases.
- 3.3 There is however still much to do and we cannot be complacent if we are to fully address weaknesses. Current key improvement areas are;
- 3.3.1 Further understanding the issues behind our high re-referral rate which is 29.3% compared to a statistical neighbour average of 23.6%. (This is where a case is closed but new concerns are raised for the child within 12 months of the previous referral.) Investigation is being undertaken through case level audits to ensure we can take appropriate action both internally and in partnership with other children's safeguarding board members.
 - 3.3.2 Early in 2015 we successfully addressed the significant backlog in incomplete assessments and improved our timeliness within 45 working days to 96% in August '15 compared to a low of 70% at the end of 2014/15. However audits and the recent improvement visits by Ofsted reinforced known issues in terms of quality and the need for additional short term work prior to closure. Managers have been asked not to sign off assessments unless they are satisfied that they are of the requisite standard even if this means that the deadline for completion will be missed this has resulted in a drop in timeliness (85.2% in December). There is further work to be done to ensure that we are consistently achieving both timeliness and quality.
 - 3.3.3 The available number of in-house adopters is lower than we need which makes identification of suitable families for our children with a 'should be placed for adoption' (SHOBPA) decision more difficult. This impacts and creates low performance on national adoption timeliness indicators. This is creating a need to purchase placements from external adoption providers. To help prevent this our adoption recruitment campaign is being redesigned and shared arrangements with other South Yorkshire authorities are being progressed.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 The full service performance report attached at Appendix A represents an

accurate summary of performance across a range of key national and local indicators with detailed commentary provided by the service. Members are therefore recommended to consider and review this information.

- 4.2 Members are recommended to agree for regular updates on this report and associated improvement actions on a quarterly basis, (every three months based on the financial year schedule April-March).

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Not applicable

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 Not applicable

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Budget Holder will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and members will be consulted where appropriate.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications to this report.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 There are no direct human resource implications to this report. The relevant Service Director and Managers will identify any implications arising from associated improvement actions and members will be consulted where appropriate.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 The performance report relates to safeguarding services for children and young people.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 There are no direct implications within this report

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 Partners and other directorates are engaged in improving the performance and quality of our services to children, young people and their families via the Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board (RLSCB). The RLSCB also receive this performance report on a regular basis.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Inability and lack of engagement in performance management arrangements by managers and staff could lead to poor and deteriorating services for

children and young people. Strong management oversight by Directorship Leadership Team and the ongoing weekly performance meetings mitigate this risk by holding managers and workers to account for any dips in performance both at a team and at an individual child level.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

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Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:-

Director of Legal Services:-

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):-

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