

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – June 2018

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of performance for key performance indicators across Looked After Children services. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report at Appendix A which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages where possible.

Recommendations

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix A – Corporate Parenting Performance Report (May 2018)

Background Papers

Ofsted Improvement Letter
Children’s Social Care Monthly Performance Reports

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required No

Exempt from the Press and Public No

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to receive the report and accompanying dataset (Appendix A) and consider issues arising.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report provides evidence to the council's commitment to improvement and providing performance information to enable scrutiny of the improvements and the impact on the outcomes for children and young people in care. It should be read in conjunction with the accompanying performance data report which provides trend data, graphical analysis and benchmarking data against national and statistical neighbour averages.
- 2.2 Targets, including associated 'RAG' (red, amber, green rating) tolerances, are included. These have been set in consideration of available national and statistical neighbour benchmarking data, recent performance levels and, importantly, Rotherham's improvement journey.
- 2.4 Please note that all benchmarking data is as at the latest data release by the DfE and relates to 2016/17 outturn
- 2.5 The narrative supplied within the report has been informed by the Head of Looked After Children Services.

3. Key Issues

3.1 Service Overview and Context

- 3.1.1 There continues to be an increasing Looked After Children (LAC) profile. Between March 2017 and March 2018 the number of LAC increased by 29% from 488 to 628. As at the end of June this had increased further to 648.
- 3.1.2 This increase in LAC numbers and the consequential shortage in available placements has resulted in an increase in young people being placed outside of the local area; this in turn has negative impact on social work capacity. However despite the additional capacity pressures, in general, performance remains sustained across a number of areas.

3.2 Looked After Children Profile

- 3.2.1 Rotherham continues to have an increasing Looked After Children (LAC) profile. The 648 children at the end of June equates to a rate of 114.5 per 10,000 population this is significantly high when compared to the statistical neighbour average of 81.3.
- 3.2.2 Table 1 provides a breakdown by age of the LAC population at the month end by age group against the latest national comparator data. This shows that overall Rotherham's LAC age profile follows a similar distribution to the National. The most notable differences being the higher rate of children aged 5.9 years (23% compared to 19%) and a lower proportion aged over sixteen (18% compared to 24%).

Table 1 – Age distribution of Looked After Children at the end of the month

Age Band	Number	% of total	Latest National comparative data (Mar-17)
Under 1	46	7%	5%
1 – 4	104	16%	13%
5 - 9	146	23%	19%
10 - 15	237	37%	39%
16+	115	18%	24%
Total	648		

- 3.2.3 The percentage distribution by legal status remains a consistent picture with 53% of children subject to full care orders, 31% on an Interim Care Order, 10% are on Placement Orders with Care Order, 6% are under Section 20. Unfortunately there is no clear national data to benchmark this distribution against.

3.3 LAC Plans

- 3.3.1 Compliance on plans at the end of June dropped increased to 90.1%. This area still remains under close management scrutiny in the performance meetings and at the time of this report (15/08/18) had increased further to 91%.

3.4 Reviews

- 3.4.1 In recent months there has been a decline in the timeliness of LAC Statutory Reviews from 96.1% (Mar 18) to 80.3% (May 18). However timeliness has significantly improved by more than 11% in June 18. This can be attributed to a number of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) returning from sick leave.

3.5 Visits

- 3.5.1 Performance in respect of Statutory Visits has declined slightly with long-term sick leave continuing to be an issue. Due to this and the continuing high demand, workers have been directed to prioritise visits to meet the national minimum standard over the local standard, (although this is a generalisation and visiting patterns are

still influenced by any current risk factors for each child or young person).

3.5.2 There is a correlation between the number of cases held by the team and performance (higher cases lower performance). Performance against National Minimum visiting standards has dipped from 97.5% (Mar 18) to 94.9%.

3.5.3 A review at operational performance meetings has shown that for the majority, children on the system as 'visit overdue' have been seen, but workers had not yet updated their electronic record. This has been shown with the May 18 data which was 93.2%, following a data refresh in June this increased to 95.1%.

3.6 Placements

3.6.1 Despite the overall increase in numbers the proportion of children placed in a family based setting remains relatively stable at 81.1%, (Family based settings include internal fostering, independent fostering, pre-adoption placements and those placed with parent/family/friends).

3.6.2 Although some placement moves are in the best interests of the child the provision of a good stable home is known to be essential for children to achieve good outcomes. Placement performance statistics demonstrate that we need to improve our preventative work to reduce placement disruption.

3.6.3 The increase towards the end of 2017/18 in the number and proportion of children experiencing multiple placement moves continued into the new financial (14% - 89 children - May 18) but has seen a decrease in June 18 to 12.9% (83 children had three or more placements in 12 months).

3.6.4 June 2018 saw an improvement in the proportion of long term LAC who has lived in the same placement which stood at 63.3% (95 out of 150 children) following a low in May (61.3% - 92 out of 150 children). This measure has been impacted by the increasing number of long term LAC and our desire to bring children closer to home and into family placements. Due to the timeframes within the definition this is an area of performance which cannot be improved quickly. However after each child has 'moved' it takes at least 2 years to improve this outcome measure therefore our improvement plan will take time to see full fruition.

3.6.5 The first impact analysis of the Intensive Intervention Programme (IIP) has been completed. This evidences that whilst 14 of the LAC had 2 or more placement moves prior to them accessing the IIP this has reduced to 4 young people since their IIP intervention. Similarly the numbers in the group who were going missing from care has reduced from 7 to 3.

3.7 Looked After Children Health and Dental

- 3.7.1 Please note there are known delays in the data input for both Health and Dental information therefore we know that performance will change when statistics are rerun in future reports as figures reported by the LAC Health Team are higher than those recorded in local systems.
- 3.7.2 The number of Initial Health Assessments (IHA) complete each month increased to 27 in June with timeliness also increasing to 44.4% (12 out of 27) from 27.3% (6 out of 22) in May. This shows a current 2018/19 year to date position of 40.3% (29 out of 72 IHAs in time).
- 3.7.3 With regards to Health reviews performance has dipped to 83.3% compared to 83.7% at the end of March. Similarly Dental performance has declined from 72.5% to 57.8%.

3.8 LAC Education

- 3.8.1 At the end of June 93.3% of eligible LAC population had a Personal Education Plan (33 LAC with no PEP).
- 3.8.2 Rotherham has a local standard to ensure that each PEP is of good quality and refreshed every term (rather than the annual minimum standard). Data shows that at the end of the Spring Term 95% had a PEP from within the term. Although this performance is high and an improvement on the Autumn term it is slightly lower than usual due to a combination of the adverse weather which meant that several PEPs had to be rescheduled, and the fact that it was a very short term. At the time of this report (15/08/18) provisional data for the Summer Term showed an increase to 97.4%.

3.9 Care Leavers

- 3.9.1 The number of young people receiving a Care Leavers service at month end was 247 which is a decline on the 2017/18 year end position of 256.
- 3.9.2 A number of indicators have shown a decline in performance over the course of the month but remains strong and varies according to the circumstances for individual young people. There is, however, a potential risk to future performance in that as from April the Leaving Care Services now have the statutory duty, as set down in the Children and Social Work act 2017, to offer support to care leavers up to the age of 25. This is likely to have an impact on capacity within the team although plans are being formulated in order to mitigate this impact.
- 3.9.3 The proportion of care leavers who have a pathway plan has fallen but is still above target at 95.6%, with 93.1% of young people having plan less than 6 months old. Both represent a significant improvement on the year-end positions of 93.9% and 70.3% respectively. The service continues to focus on improving the quality of the plans so that they are meaningful for young people.

The introduction of a new plan template will significantly improve the quality of the plans and will assist in addressing the variability issues identified in the Ofsted Monitoring Visit.

- 3.9.4 The proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation remains strong at 92.3%, and represents top quartile performance nationally.
- 3.9.5 Performance in respect of care leavers who are in Education, Employment or Training Remains strong at 62.3% and once again places Rotherham back in the top quartile.

3.10 Fostering

- 3.10.1 The recruitment of foster carers is demonstrating improved performance. In 2017/18, 17 new foster families were approved providing 27 new foster placements. Conversion rate from expression of interest to approval has increased from 11% to 16%.
- 3.10.2 By the end of July 2018 there will have been 6 new foster families approved (9 placements) with a further 11 foster families in the process of being assessed and two more undertaking the Skills to Foster training and likely to be assessed by the end of the year. As a result the Fostering Service will surpass last year's performance.
- 3.10.3 There were a further 21 enquiries over the course of June. In recent months the recruitment of foster carers is demonstrating improved performance.
- 3.10.4 The launch of Challenge 63 proved to be disappointing but it will be re-launched in September.
- 3.10.5 The Muslim Foster Care Project is about to commence with the first meeting being convened in August, and this should support recruitment of more foster carers from the Muslim community.
- 3.10.6 In total there were 24 resignations and de-registrations of foster carers in 2017/18 with a further 8 in 2018/19 to date. Whilst some of these resignations can be attributed to unforeseeable circumstances including illness and bereavement the Fostering Service will review all of these cases to ascertain if there are any lessons to be learned

3.11 Adoptions

- 3.11.1 In total seven children have been adopted in the first three months of 2018/19. Performance remains vulnerable to significant swings given the cohort is so small. The seven adoptions to date show A1 performance as 369 days (325.3 Mar 18) and A2 as 201.9 days (124.8 Mar 18).
- 3.11.2 Rotherham's policy is to persevere in seeking adoptive placements for these and all children for as long as it is reasonable to do so. Whilst this can impact on performance figures, this practice does give the necessary reassurance that the adoption service is 'doing

the right thing' by its children by doing everything it can to secure permanent family placements for its children.

3.11.3 Potential performance in respect of adoptions looks strong with at least 39 adoptions likely to be achieved over the course of the financial year as compared to 27 last year. In addition to the 7 adoptions achieved there are currently;

- 22 children already living in their adoptive placement (4 of whom have a date set for the Adoption Hearing, 6 with their application lodged with Court but no date yet set. A further 9 eligible for lodging having been in placement for more than the required 10 weeks and 3 placed for less than 10 weeks),
- 10 children with a match identified,
- 10 with a potential match,
- 8 further visits organised for the initial meeting with adopters who have expressed an interest.

3.12 Caseloads

3.12.1 Taking into account the reduced caseloads of 'Assessed and Supported Year in Employment' (ASYE) social workers and 'Advanced Practitioner' (APs) average caseloads for LAC teams 1-3 remain at 12.9.

3.12.2 In addition, the audit undertaken in April 18 evidenced that on average across the 5 teams 20% of social worker capacity is 'lost' by virtue of them having to supervise contact or due to the time spent driving to and from out of authority placements. This means that in real terms the average caseload for LAC 1-3 is the equivalent of 18. More concerning the average caseload for teams 4-5 is 13 (with a similar 20% uplift for contact and travelling) and this is being impacted by the increasing delays in adoptions being progressed due to the court more readily agreeing to final appeals by birth parents meaning that the throughput of cases is delayed.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 The full corporate parenting performance report attached at Appendix A represents a summary of performance across a range of key national and local indicators with detailed commentary provided by the service director. Commissioners are therefore recommended to consider and review this information.

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 and Commissioners 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 and Commissioners will be consulted where appropriate.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 The performance report relates to services and outcomes for children in care.

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 services to children, young people and their families via the Rotherham Local Children's Safeguarding Board (RLSCB). The RLSCB Performance and Quality Assurance Sub Group receive this performance report within the wider social care 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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