

Council Report

Corporate Parenting Performance

Title

Corporate Parenting Performance Report – August 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 Monthly Performance Report (August 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

Title: Corporate Parenting Performance Report – August 2018

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 Deputy Director for Children's Services and 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 August this had increased further to 651.
- 3.1.2 Despite these significant pressures it is gratifying to note that performance has, on the whole, continued its improving trend. However, whilst there are plans in place to alleviate some of this pressure this will continue to present a risk to future performance for some months to come.

3.2 Looked After Children Profile

- 3.2.1 Rotherham continues to have an increasing Looked After Children (LAC) profile. The 651 children at the end of August equates to a rate of 115 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 (17% 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	45	7%	5%
1 – 4	104	16%	13%
5 - 9	147	23%	19%
10 - 15	246	38	39%
16+	111	17%	24%
Total	651		

3.2.3 The percentage distribution by legal status remains a consistent picture with 53% of children subject to full care orders, 32% on an Interim Care Order, 10% are on Placement Orders with Care Order, 5% are under Section 20. There is no clear national data to benchmark this distribution against.

3.3 LAC Plans

3.3.1 Despite ongoing high demand, a high proportion of LAC have up to date plans. Compliance has increased to 91.4% at the end of August compared to 89.5% at the end of March 2018.

3.4 Reviews

3.4.1 In recent months there has been a decline in the timeliness of LAC Statutory Reviews from 96.1% in March to 85.6% in August. It is anticipated that this is reflective of the summer holiday period when many IRO's, Social Workers, and more relevantly, Foster Carers, were not available. This will be closely monitored in September to ensure this is not part of an on-going trend.

3.5 Visits

3.5.1 Performance in respect of Statutory Visits remains strong, above target and has seen a further improvement to 96.6% and is therefore equal to that of April when there were 30 less looked after children.

3.6 Placements

- 3.6.1 The proportion of children placed in a family based setting remains relatively stable at 82.6% at the end of August (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 August saw a further improvement in the proportion of long term LAC who have lived in the same placement for at least 2 years (66.9% - 101 out of 150 children), which is an improvement of 5.7% compared to the end of March 2018, and reduces the gap with the statistical neighbour average to 1.3%. Not only is this the best performance of the year so far, it also betters the performance achieved in 2016/17 and 2017/18. 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.
- 3.6.4 Similarly, there has been a positive reduction in the number of LAC experiencing multiple placement moves in the last 12 months from the highest point this year of 14.8% at the end of May to 11.9% at the end of August. In real terms, this is a reduction from 94 to 77 children. Once again, this represents the best performance of the year so far and is equal to or better than the year end performance of the past 3 years.

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 and that figures reported by the LAC Health Team are higher than those recorded in local systems. Therefore we know that recent performance will change when statistics are rerun in future reports.
- 3.7.2 Initial health assessments in August improved to 66%, however the year to date figure is only at 47%, which is below last year's performance of 55%. In order to address this, a joint agency process review was held on the 10th September where a number of actions were agreed with the objective of improving engagement and timeliness. We are in a trial period and will reconvene to assess the impact in 3 month's time.
- 3.7.3 Health reviews performance at the end of August increased to 90.4% compared to 83.7% at the end of March 2018, with 5% of the shortfall being due to young people declining their assessment. Dental performance remains close to the end of March 2018 figure

of 72.5%, with 71.6% of dental assessments up to date at the end of August.

3.8 LAC Education

3.8.1 Rotherham has a local standard to ensure that each PEP is of good quality and refreshed every term (rather than the annual minimum standard). 514 (97.4%) of the 532 eligible LAC had a PEP in the summer term. This is an improvement on the spring term of 95% due to this term being longer, giving more time for PEP meetings to take place and more opportunity to re-schedule cancelled PEP meetings.

3.8.2 At the end of August, 93.6% of eligible LAC population had a Personal Education Plan (32 LAC had no PEP).

3.9 Care Leavers

3.9.1 The number of young people receiving a Care Leavers service at the end of August was 243, which is a decline on the 2017/18 year end position of 256.

3.9.2 Performance in all of the indicators remains strong and varies according to the circumstances for individual young people some of whom can experience periods of crisis that impact on their ability to sustain their accommodation or access to EET.

3.9.3 The proportion of care leavers who have a pathway plan is at its highest so far this calendar year at 97% at the end of August with 89% 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.

3.9.4 The proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation remains strong at 94.7% and represents top quartile performance nationally.

3.9.5 Care leavers who are in Education, Employment or Training also remains strong at 61.3% and once again places Rotherham in the top quartile.

3.10 Fostering

3.10.1 There were only 5 enquiries for foster carer interest in August, but 3 of these look likely to progress to assessment, which is positive in terms of potential conversion rates.

3.10.2 We have 9 new foster families approved so far since April 2018. We have a further 13 assessments ongoing and 2 more new foster families undertaking the Skills to Foster training, which means there could be a further 15 new foster families in place by December. Two of these assessments are experienced foster carers transferring from an IFA.

3.10.3 The launch of Challenge 63 to recruit more foster carers proved to have disappointing outcomes, but is about to be re-launched with the full support of the Deputy Lead Member.

3.10.4 There have been 10 foster families deregistered so far this year, with a further 7 being de-registered due to safeguarding concerns. However, the impact of the de-registrations is not as stark as it initially appears as many of the 'lost' foster families had actually not provided any placements for many months prior to their resignation/deregistration. Many of these resignations are wholly expected and reasonable including bereavement and illness.

3.11 Adoptions

3.11.1 Rotherham's policy is to persevere in seeking adoptive placements for 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.

3.11.2 So far this financial year, 12 children have been adopted. Timeliness performance remains vulnerable to significant swings given the cohort is so small. The 12 adoptions to date show A1 performance as 354 days (325.3 Mar 18) and A2 as 196.6 days (124.8 Mar 18).

3.11.3 In addition to the 12 adoptions achieved there are currently 24 children already living in their adoptive placement (7 with court dates set for the adoption hearing). As a result, it looks likely that we will significantly surpass last year's performance of 27 adoptions.

3.11.4 There are 10 children in Early Permanence placements, 2 in the adoption phase and 8 in the fostering phase which re-enforces RMBC's position as a regional lead in EPP.

3.11.5 In terms of recruitment of adoptive families, 8 sets of adoptive parents have been fully approved so far this year, with a further 9 at stage 1 and 6 at stage 2 of the recruitment process. Once again, it looks likely that we will surpass last year's performance of 14 approvals with a forecast of 21/22 by year end.

3.12 Caseloads

3.12.1 The increase in LAC numbers has impacted on caseloads within the LAC Service. Average caseloads for LAC teams 1-3 are at the highest this year at 13.8 and the average caseload for LAC Teams 4-5 is 14.1.

3.12.2 Additional pressures caused by the ongoing need to supervise high levels of contact and driving to OoA placements continue to be a significant factor that impacts on social work capacity. This drain on capacity continues to increase, for example, LAC team 3 are diverting 44 hours of social work time every week to supervising contact (this does not include travelling time with some of these contacts taking place in Halifax, Wakefield and Lincolnshire). This means that, including travelling time, almost 25% of the total social work capacity in that team is 'lost' to undertaking non-social work tasks.

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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