

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet
2.	Date:	8th September 2010
3.	Title:	Children and Young People's Services Notice to Improve - Progress Update
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress made since the Notice to Improve was received in December, identifies a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, some areas of good performance and key risks and issues to meeting the stretching targets set for the council and its strategic partners.

6. Recommendations

That Cabinet notes the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve.

7. Proposals and Details

This report, to be read in conjunction with the Notice to Improve Action Plan (Appendix A) highlights the RAG status of the actions, any areas for concern, what the barriers are and what is being done about them.

This report provides an overview of the progress made since the update to Improvement Panel Meeting on 13th July 2010.

The action plan identifies a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, and key risks and issues to meeting the stretching targets set for the council and its strategic partners. Following the OFSTED Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection and the DfE meeting on the 3rd August some changes have been made to the Action Plan.

A clear message from the OFSTED inspectors was that we needed to focus now on driving up the quality of practice to underpin the work we had done in improving the quantitative figures.

There are now 29 individual actions (instead of 44) covering the key performance measures (3 social care indicators) in addition to the operational targets around Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Leadership and Management and Capacity Building, Performance Management, and Recruitment and Retention.

Based on a RAG rating the following is the current position as at 20th August 2010.

Red: 5 (including 4 new actions) - 17%

Amber : 19 - 66%

Green: 5 – 17%

Two new areas have been included in relation to the action plans following the recommendations from both the Fostering and the Safeguarding and LAC inspections, work has already commenced on these and action plans are in place.

Social care indicators

The commentary on the social care indicators now includes the performance of statistical neighbours and national as a comparator.

	Baseline Performance (Nov 09)	Current Performance	Targets	Statistical Neighbour	National
NI 68 (Referrals to initial)	59.8%	79.74% 09/10 outturn 73.4%	Oct 10 – 68% Mar 11- 70%	69.2%	63.8%
NI 59 (initial assessment)	73%	80.11% 09/10 outturn 75.2%	Oct 10 – 85% Mar 11- 87%	71.6%	71.8%
NI 60 (core assessment)	68%	87.67% 09/10 outturn 80%	Oct 10 – 84% Mar 11- 87%	80.4%	78.2%

High Risk areas (red risks)

There is an additional section around the training programme and CPD for social care staff around Quality Assurance and the developments in relation to embedding and sustaining the changed practice following the work of the Practice Improvement Partners and how this will remain in place when they are no longer working in the Authority. All of this has been currently rated as Red.

The expenditure on agency staff continues to increase with currently £435,922 having been spent on social workers and team managers and £31,357 on admin staff since the 1st April 2010.

Areas of Concern

The NI59 indicator (initial assessments in 7 days) is the most important part of the process and trends over the last 7 months are showing the following:

January: 72%
February: 76%
March: 77%
April: 80.17%
May: 76.01%
June 83.78%
July 76.92%

Since the 1st April 80.11% of initial assessments have been completed in timescale.

The milestone target for October 2010 is 85%, however as at the end of March 2010 the statistical neighbour comparison is 71.6% and national is 71.8%. The 2009/10 outturn for Rotherham was 75.2%

However, if the indicator is measured against the 10 day measurement from the 1st April it shows that 83.57% of initial assessments were carried out within 10 days, as opposed to 80.11%

Areas of Improvement

NI 68 – referrals which go onto an initial assessment is now 79.74% which is higher than the March 2011 target of 70%, the statistical neighbour comparison is 69.2% and 63.8% for national, the 2009/10 outturn for Rotherham was 73.4%

The safeguarding and Looked After children inspection outcome was adequate and identified improvements in the service and recognised areas of good practice. 68 case file audits

Audit work continues to increase with 52 case file audits carried out in July and 300 additional NFA cases independently audited during August. A report of the findings will be submitted to a future meeting.

8. Finance

The DfE has agreed up to £150,000 financial support to assist with recovery, a further £125,000 has been secured from the RIEP to fund the work around implementation of Common Assessment Framework. The DfE funding is being used

to supplement social work staffing resources and to employ independent staff to assist in the review and further improvement of and service quality activities
A review has been conducted of Children and Young People's placements; both Rotherham based and in out of authority facilities. This has focussed on whether the placements can end, in line with the care plan review, whether the council is getting the best value for money and that the placements are of the required quality.
In order to strengthen financial management arrangements all managers with budget holder responsibility attended specific training. The moratorium which has been in place since December 2009 continues into 2010/11 to ensure that resources are directed to priority areas. In addition, a savings work programme is in place to identify efficiencies and enable re-investment into priority areas.
Further work is now taking place in relation to the overall budget position and the recent government announcements.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The key performance risks (red) are identified in the report and there are service delivery risks associated with the Notice to Improve action plan. Where these are significant they are being fed into the CYPS risk register.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Annual Performance Assessment 2008 result was the trigger for the CYPS Review, which was commissioned jointly by the Council and NHS Rotherham. A number of recommendations arose from this review which were included in an Improvement action plan.

On 4th and 5th August 2009, CYPS received an unannounced inspection of its Contact, Referral and Assessment service. The inspection confirmed many issues related to performance, caseload and capacity, quality assurance. Ofsted's recommendation was that we should take immediate action to address the issues raised in order to prevent further decline in service performance, quality and capacity. A notice to improve was issued in December 2009.

The Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection took place between the 19th and 30th July, the outcome of this was adequate..

The annual Fostering Inspection was concluded and the letter indicated that significant improvements were visible and that the service had moved from just adequate to almost good, action plans are in place to monitor the implementation of both sets of recommendations.

Failure to address these issues would impact further on the CYPS and the council and could lead to external intervention.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Notice To Improve

Ofsted Inspection - Contact, Referral and Assessment, 4th and 5th August 2009

Children First Review and Resource Benchmarking – Jan to June 2009

CYP Directorate Performance reports

Appendix A – Notice to Improve action plan

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