

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Service Scrutiny Panel</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2011</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Services Notice to Improve - Progress and Exception Report</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Services</b>

### 5. **Summary**

This report provides an overview of the progress made since the Notice to Improve was received in December 2009, the overarching action plan used to monitor improvements 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**

- (i) **That Children and Young People’s Services Scrutiny Panel notes the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

This report provides an overview of the progress made and reported to the Improvement Panel Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

The action plan used to monitor improvements 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.

There are 29 individual actions covering the key performance measures (including the 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 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

Red: None  
Amber: 24 - 83%  
Green: 5 – 17% (of which two are completed)

### Social Care Indicators

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

	Baseline Performance (Nov 09)	Current Performance	Targets	Statistical Neighbour ( March 10)	National ( March 10)
NI 68 (Referrals to initial)	59.8%	83.43% 09/10 outturn 73.4%	Oct 10 – 68% Mar 11- 70%	67.5%	64.3%
NI 59 (initial assessment)	73%	82.67% 09/10 outturn 75.2%	Oct 10 – 85% Mar 11- 87%	69.2%	67.1%
NI 60 (core assessment)	68%	84.63% 09/10 outturn 80%	Oct 10 – 84% Mar 11- 87%	77.6%	73.4%

### NI 68 – referrals of children in need which go onto initial assessment

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 83.43% of referrals to social care go onto an initial assessment, this is from the baseline of 59.8% in November 2009.

Performance continues to exceed both the October 2010 and March 2011 targets of 68% and 70%. The March 2009/10 outturn was 73.4% which is higher than statistical neighbour and national comparators.

## **NI59 – initial assessments in 7 working days**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 82.67% of initial assessments were carried out in time, this is from the baseline of 73% in November 2009.

The targets for October 2010 and March 2011 are 85% and 87%.  
The March 2009/10 outturn was 75.2% which is higher than statistical neighbours and national comparators.

Although there have been major improvements in performance around this indicator, and given that the milestone target for October 2010 of 85% is not being met, an internal challenge session took place at DLT on 12<sup>th</sup> October to explore further the performance of this National Indicator. Additional support was provided for Rotherham Central (formerly Rotherham South) and a validation exercise took place on assessments recorded on SWIFT.

## **NI60 – Core Assessments in 35 working days**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 84.63% of core assessments were carried out in time, this is from the baseline of 68% in November 2009.

The October 2010 target of 84% has been met but is still below the March 2011 target of 87%.

The March 2009/10 outturn was 80% which is higher than statistical neighbour and national comparators,

## **Areas of Concern**

### Use of Agency staff

There are still a number of agency social workers (14) and team managers (3) in post, from a baseline of 19 agency staff in November 2008 (plus an additional 9 vacant posts at that point in time)  
However, following the changes to the structure the recruitment process continues and recent appointments have been made to ensure that a minimal number of agency staff are used and permanent staff are in post wherever possible.

All current agency staff assignments are being checked to confirm when they will cease.

## **Areas of Improvement**

Common Assessment Framework Numbers continue to increase, 496 CAFs have been registered this year to date, an average of 49 per month.. Almost 40% have been initiated by colleagues from Health, 33% by schools and 12% from the voluntary and community sector. Between January 2006 and July 2009 there had been 976 CAFs completed, an average of only 22 per month

The Annual Children's Services Assessment rating was published on the 9<sup>th</sup> December and is "Performs Adequately" the key areas for further development are:

- Improve secondary schools so that more are good or better
- Improve the outcomes for children at the end of primary school
- Increase the number of good childminders
- Maintain the momentum of improvement in social care services for children and young people, including the quality of children's homes.

Following the Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection in July and the DfE meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 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.

In addition, the letter sent to Councillor Stone on the 27<sup>th</sup> August from Tim Loughton MP he stated that "In light of Ofsted's findings if in December we can evidence continued improvement and more secure supervision and quality assurance mechanisms, I will consider lifting the improvement notice early". A Notice to Improve milestone meeting was held with DfE on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, it was not clear from the meeting if the recommendation to the minister would be to remove the intervention notice, it is anticipated that a decision on this should be communicated early in the new year.

## 8. Finance

The DfE has contributed £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 was 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 out of authority. 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, the Comprehensive Spending Review and early indications of cuts from the Early Intervention Grant.

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

There is an adoption inspection planned to take place between the 26<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January, results from this feed into the OFSTED profile.

There is also a possibility of another annual unannounced inspection of the Contact and Referral process, if there are any areas for priority action found this can have an adverse affect of future ratings. Work has taken place to plan for such an inspection with a self-assessment being completed and a mock inspection has taken place to establish risks and concerns.

#### 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 annual Fostering Inspection was concluded in June 2010 and found to be adequate. The Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection took place between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July, the outcome of this was adequate.

Action plans are in place to monitor the implementation of both sets of recommendations, most of which are now completed.

Failure to address these issues would impact further on the CYPS and the council and could still 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  
Fostering Inspection June 2010  
Safeguarding and LAC inspection July 2010  
CYP Directorate Performance reports  
Notice to Improve Action Plan

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