
CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

REASON FOR THE REPORT

1. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the performance of Children's (social) Services. This report sets out performance data outlining progress against the objectives aligned to the social theme for the quarter ending 30th June 2015 and the annual outturn for 2014-15.

BACKGROUND

2. The ongoing development of the Cardiff Performance Management Framework has brought into line the monitoring and evaluation of progress against the key objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and the performance indicators set to assist in the understanding of the overall performance position of the Council. This range of performance data relating to Children's Services is contained in **Appendix B** to this report.
3. The Cabinet have identified that the delivery of their key priorities and the Council's performance against key indicators should be the focus of future quarterly reports. Quarterly reports are prepared on that basis, allowing for trend analysis to be undertaken on an appropriate basket of indicators and the effective delivery of the Administration's key priorities as attached at **Appendix A**.
4. The performance report attached at **Appendix B** has been constructed to highlight the progress made in delivering the key objectives, associated performance indicators, and commentaries that help to identify progress, issues and actions planned where the trend in performance is falling. To make the information in the performance report clearer, each indicator is accompanied by an arrow, and in some cases, a happy, indifferent or sad face.
5. For your information, these symbols represent the following:
 - The face symbol shows whether performance is likely, unlikely to, or may meet the target set for the year.
 - The arrow direction shows whether performance has declined, has been sustained or improved when compared with an appropriate previous period.
6. At the meeting officers will be present to explain the performance information to the Committee, to highlight performance issues, and to answer questions that Members might have.

7. In total Children's Services have 47 national performance indicators, of which the Welsh Government have identified 11 as either National Strategic Indicators (NSIs) or Performance Accountability Measures (PAMs). Where relevant, the narrative in the report that follows indicates the status of an NSI or PAM indicator.

PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 1: APRIL TO JUNE 2015 AND ANNUAL OUTTURN 2014-15

8. Performance is being reported against the following corporate outcomes:

People in Cardiff are safe and feel safe
People achieve their full potential
People in Cardiff are healthy
Cardiff is fair, just and inclusive.

9. The Service has three main functions:

- a. Promoting the welfare of children in need
- b. Safeguarding children
- c. Improving outcomes for looked after children.

OVERVIEW OF QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE

10. Committee will be aware that during 2014-15 the Directorate focussed on improving performance in relation to indicators that have the greatest significance for safe and effective practice concerning children. Those selected for this focus are based on guidance agreed between the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS), the Care & Social Services Inspectorate, Wales (CSSIW) and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The annual outturn demonstrated overall improvement against these PIs, with some exceptions, and the overall trend is positive. By contrast, performance against a number of national PIs that are designated as National Strategic Indicators and Performance Accountability Measures was less encouraging in 2014-15. It is the Directorate's intention to focus more fully on these PIs when further improvement in relation to those agreed by the ADSS, CSSIW and WLGA is more secure. The stronger strategic focus that has characterised the Directorate's work in 2014-15 will provide a basis for improving performance against NSIs and PAMs in the current and future years. Feedback provided by CSSIW's Regional Director on 19th August, acknowledged that although there is a mixed picture in terms of overall improvement, performance indicators evidence good direction of travel. The inspectorate recognise that the realignment of operational responsibilities has brought about change and improvement in the delivery of services, balancing the pace of change against risk to children and young people.
11. During Quarter 1, improvement was achieved in relation to a number of key indicators. For example, recording of decisions on referrals continued to increase from 85% in Quarter 4 to 90% in Quarter 1. This is an overall improving trend from a low of 68% in Quarter 4 2013-14. It is acknowledged that further improvement is required and work to achieve the target of 100% will be ongoing in 2015-16.
12. Timely completion of initial assessments improved from 57% in Quarter 4 to 67% in Quarter 1. Improvement was evident throughout the quarter with results of 45% in

April, 62% in May and 96% in June. The Directorate is confident that the 80% target will be met in Quarter 2. Further detail is included in paragraph 26.

13. There was also an improvement in the percentage of children who were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment (PAM) – from 62% in Quarter 4 to 64% in Quarter 1. This is in the context of a significant drive in empowering social workers and managers to undertake the most appropriate assessment at the point of referral. This has led to a range of outcomes including initial assessments:
 - Proceeding straight to child protection investigations / core assessment / specialist assessments.
 - Being closed with no further action after receiving managers have re-evaluated the decision to proceed to initial assessment.

This is commensurate with the new Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 wherein a proportionate assessment will be undertaken following all referrals. The target set by the ADSS, WLGA and CSSIW pre-dates this new approach which is consistent with the direction of travel across the country.

14. Timeliness of core assessments also improved during the quarter – to 71% (from 69% in Quarter 4). Performance in June was 82% which is in excess of the 80% target.
15. Timeliness of initial child protection conferences and initial core groups increased to 96% and 95% in Quarter 1, from 92% and 85% respectively in Quarter 4.
16. There was, however, a decline in performance against the recording of initial care plans for looked after children – performance decreased to 67% from 87% in Quarter 4. This is in the context of a 28% increase in the number of children starting to be looked after during the quarter (88 compared with 69 in Quarter 4 2014-15).
17. Performance in relation to timeliness of statutory reviews for looked after children was 93.2% (426 / 457) in Quarter 1, compared with 95.7% (465 / 486) in Quarter 4 2014-15.
18. The Directorate is conscious that performance in relation to child in need reviews remains weak based on the 2014-15 outturn (see paragraph 31). A group of key individuals has been set up to establish a more effective and reliable process for monitoring performance in order to secure significant improvement.
19. Work to progress the Directorate's improvement plan has continued and key areas of progress include:
 - a. LAC Strategy finalised - to be considered at the next Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee in September.
 - b. LAC Traineeship Scheme re-launched – 5 young people in placements.
 - c. Enhanced Fostering Scheme operational.
 - d. Regional adoption service launched and operational.
 - e. Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy subject to final revision and consideration and sign off by September Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
 - f. Emergency Lodgings Scheme developed for commencement in Q2.

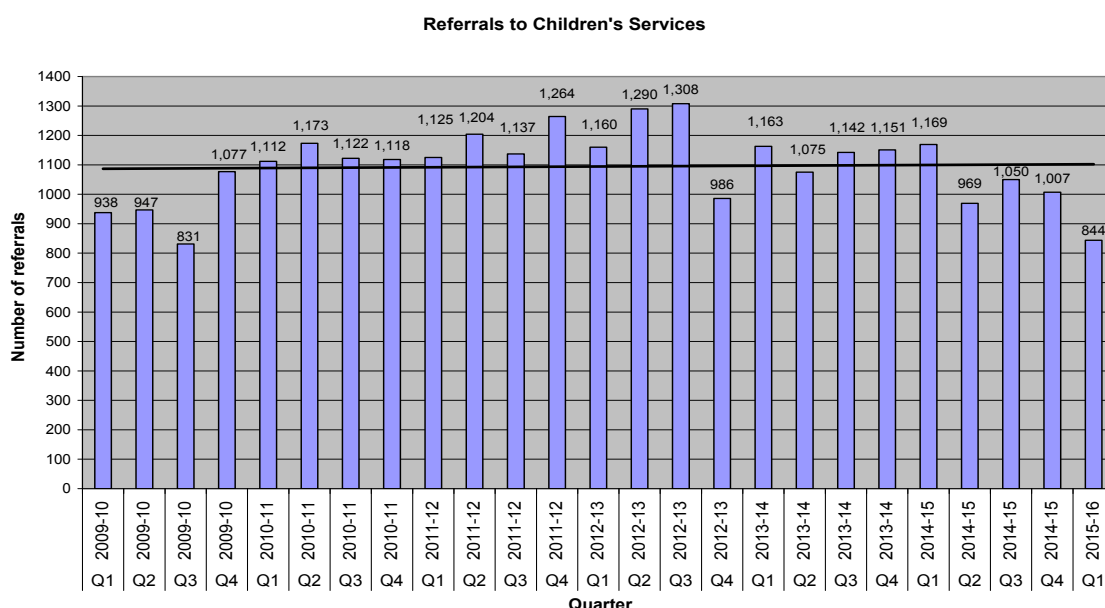
- g. MASH – Project Manager post advertised and appointment made early in Quarter 2.
- h. Mobile working – work completed to enable a mobile working pilot to commence in Quarter 2.

20. There has been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Directorate Plan relating to the effectiveness of transitional support for both disabled children and care leavers, and Pathway Planning for care leavers. Work has been undertaken to ensure that appropriate young people with disabilities who will need to make the transition to Adult Services are identified at an early stage. Whilst work has been undertaken to identify and establish current practice and processes in relation to care leavers, and a much improved transitional process is currently in operation, this needs to be captured as part of the development of a formal protocol. The transition processes for disabled children and care leavers have the potential to be smoother as both services are now within the same Directorate. Some work on milestones relating to the implementation of recommendations from the Scrutiny Report on Transition into Adulthood was delayed due to a period of short term absence by the lead manager and will be addressed in Quarter 2, however the care leavers grant was increased from £1,100 to £2,000 from 1st April 2015.

DETAILED COMMENTARY

A) PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN IN NEED

21. Children’s Services received 844 referrals in Quarter 1 (Referrals 1) compared with 1,007 in Quarter 4. A detailed breakdown of contacts and referrals is provided at **Appendix C** for the Committee’s information. This report shows the source of the 7,531 contacts received by Children’s Services during Quarter 1, along with the outcome and a summary of the trend over the last 2 years. Similar information is provided for the 844 referrals received during Quarter 1. The number of referrals to the service continues to be closely monitored (see graph below). The proportion of referrals received that were re-referrals within a year (SCC/010) was 25.6% from 25.4% in Quarter 4.



22. In relation to the recording of decisions on referrals (SCC/006), performance continued to improve in Quarter 1 to 89.8% (758 / 844) from 85.2% (858 / 1,007) in Quarter 4. It is acknowledged that further improvement is required and work to achieve this will be ongoing in 2015-16. The performance report is based on electronic records, but there is evidence that the electronic capture of the information is delayed. However, management oversight confirms all referrals are subject to manager decision and prioritisation on the day of receipt.
23. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Project Manager post was advertised in Quarter 1 and an appointment was made early in Quarter 2. A start date is yet to be agreed at the time of writing. A Project Executive has been identified and the project plan has been signed off by partner agencies. The Project Manager will lead on the development of the operating model – the target delivery date is April 2016.
24. Source of referrals – a table summarising the source of referrals to Children’s Services during Quarter 1 is included below:

Source of Referrals	Q1
Ambulance Service	0
Central Government Agency	0
Family, Friend or Neighbour	34
Housing	0
Independent Provider Agency	4
LA Housing Dept. or Housing Association	17
Local Authority’s own Social Services Department	120
Other Agency	86
Other Departments of Own or Other LA	52
Other Individual	7
Other Social Services Department	0
Other Type	0
Police	184
Primary Health / Community Health	141
Probation Service	25
School	132
Secondary Health	34
Self Referral	7
UK Border Agency	1
Total	844

25. Outcome of referrals – 94.1% (794 / 844) of referrals were allocated to a social worker for initial assessment in Quarter 1 compared with 85.9% (865 / 1,007) in Quarter 4 (SCC/007a). 0.8% (7 / 844) of referrals were allocated to other grades of worker for initial assessment compared with 7.7% (78 / 1,007) in Quarter 4. 7.3% (62 / 844) of referrals did not proceed to assessment during the quarter. In these cases, referrers were signposted to other agencies, given advice or information, or the referrals were closed with no further action. As noted in previous reports, while we have improved the management of the front door and determining what contacts should become referrals, we are also seeing an increase in the complexity of the cases that stay open to Children’s Services.
26. Performance in relation to the timeliness of initial assessments improved in Quarter 1 to 67.1% (563 / 839) from 56.8% (497 / 875) in Quarter 4 (SCC/042a). This was a

result of concerted efforts, including daily monitoring reports, that led to considerable improvement throughout Quarter 1. Performance in April was 44.7%; May was 62.4% and June was 95.7%. The Directorate is confident that the 80% target will be met in Quarter 2 and is aiming to achieve performance in excess of the Welsh average in 2015-16 (the Welsh average in 2013-14 was 71.9%).

27. The Children's Services Improvement Plan continues to be supported by external audit capacity provided through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). Further independent audit work has been undertaken and reports received – action plans to address recommendations are in place and being monitored via the Service Improvement Board.
28. 64.4% (540 / 839) of children were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment compared with 61.6% (539 / 875) in Quarter 4 (SCC/011a – PAM). Inclusion of children seen by a Children's Services worker other than a social worker increases the percentage of children seen to 66.6% (559 / 839). 28.5% (239 / 839) children were seen alone by a social worker during their initial assessment (SCC/011b – NSI), compared with 26.5% (232 / 875) in Quarter 4. There has been a significant drive in empowering social workers and managers to undertake the most appropriate assessment at the point of referral. This has led to a range of outcomes including initial assessments:
- Proceeding straight to child protection investigations / core assessment / specialist assessments.
 - Being closed with no further action after receiving managers have re-evaluated the decision to proceed to initial assessment.

In these circumstances a full initial assessment would not have been completed - a more appropriate assessment would have been undertaken and the child seen as part of that assessment. This is commensurate with the new Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 wherein a proportionate assessment will be undertaken following all referrals. The 80% target set by the ADSS, WLGA and CSSIW pre-dates this new approach which is consistent with the direction of travel across the country.

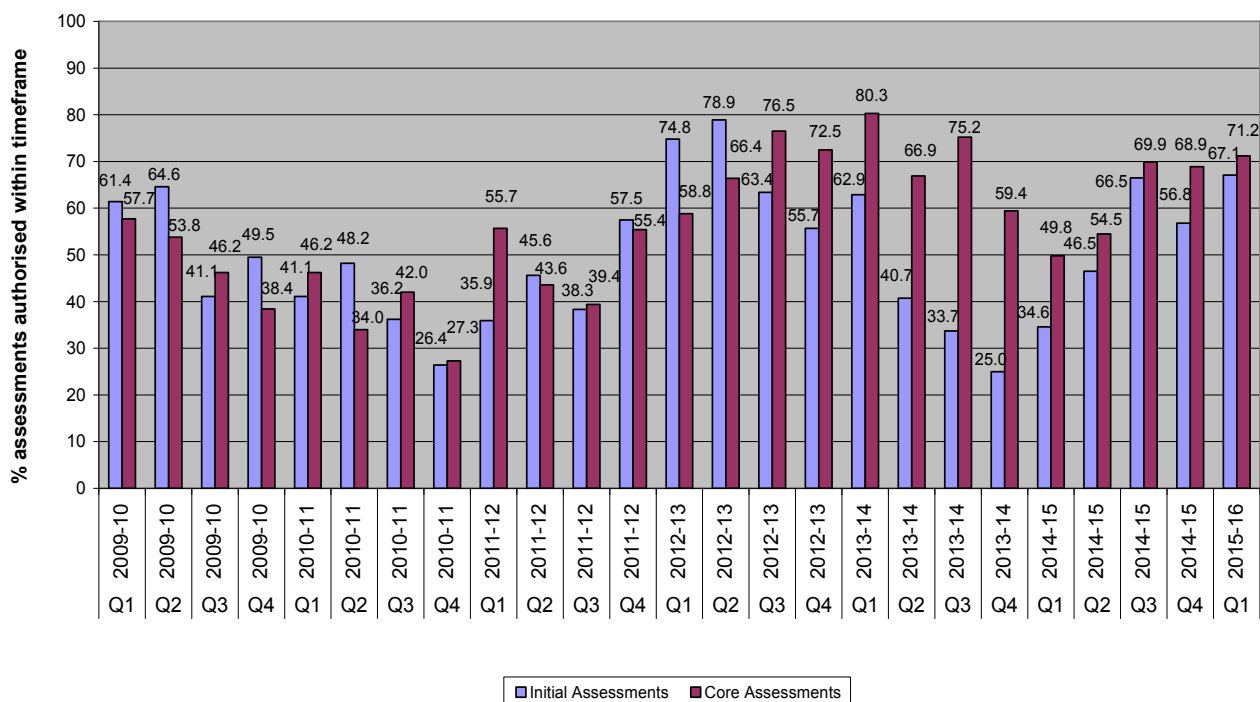
29. The percentage of initial assessments where information regarding ethnicity, religion and first language were recorded during Quarter 1 is as follows:
- a. Ethnicity – 69.1% (580 / 839)
 - b. Religion – 36.9% (310 / 839)
 - c. First language – 57.4% (482 / 839)

A detailed breakdown of the ethnicities, religions and first languages of children and young people who were subject to an initial assessment during Quarter 1 is available on request.

30. Performance in relation to timely completion of core assessments was 71.2% (354 / 497) in Quarter 1 compared with 68.9% (365 / 530) in Quarter 4 (SCC/043a). Performance against this indicator improved during the quarter with results of 66.3% in April and May increasing to 82.4% in June. The result for June is in excess of the 80% target and the Welsh average in 2013-14 (81.2%). A graph displaying timely

completion of (initial and) core assessments is included below.

Timely Initial and Core Assessments

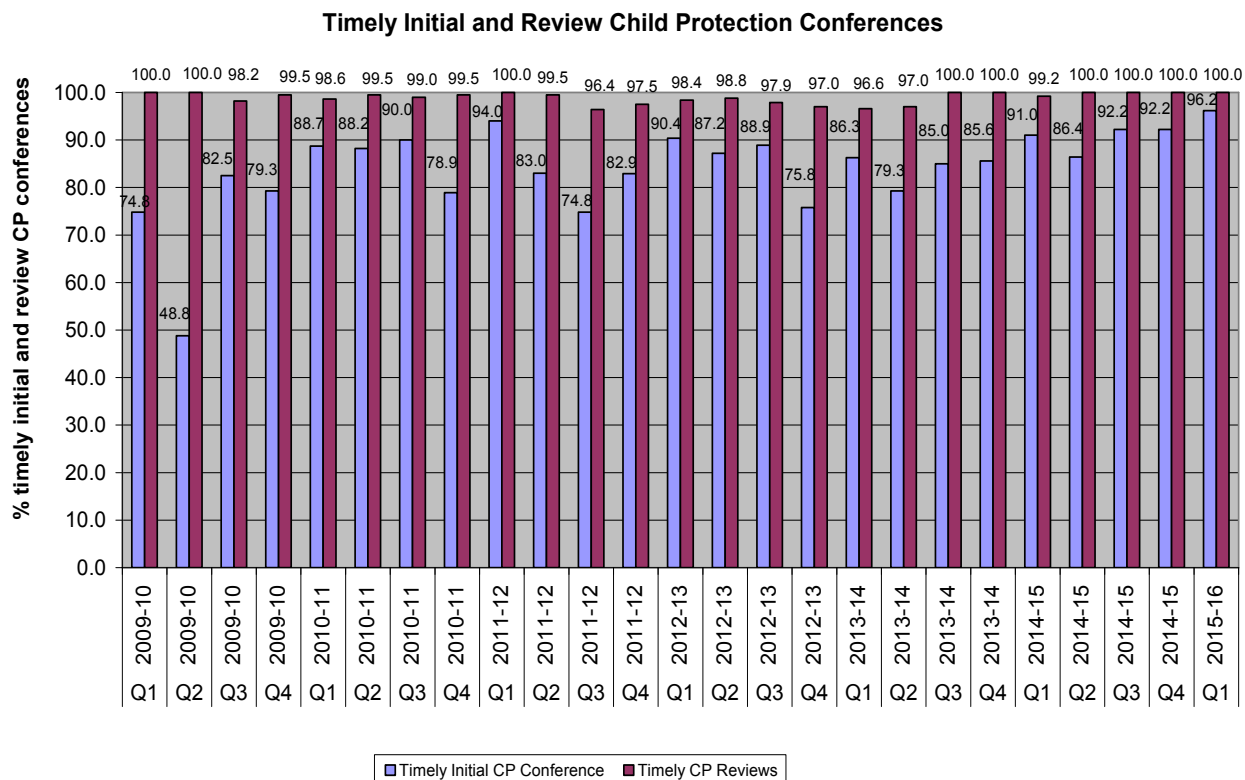


31. Performance regarding timeliness of child in need reviews is reported annually. 48.2% of child in need reviews were carried out in accordance with statutory requirements in 2014-15, compared with 55.1% in 2013-14 (SCC/016). Team Managers report that reviews are held which suggests that there are issues around how they are recorded and difficulties with reporting. We are aware that Cardiff is an outlier in terms of the all Wales position so a group of key individuals has been set up to establish a more effective and reliable process for monitoring performance in order to secure significant improvement. Performance against this PI adversely effects the otherwise good performance in relation to case reviews (SCC/045 – PAM) – 70.8% in 2014-15 compared with 79.2% in 2013-14.
32. Performance in relation to young carers known to the service who were assessed during the year remained consistent at 100% (SCC/030a). This percentage is based on young carers who became known to Children's Services during the year. 83.3% of young carers known to Children's Services received a service during the year, compared with 68.4% in 2013-14 (SCC/030b).

B) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

33. The number of children on the child protection register at the end of Quarter 1 was 300 (from 255 at the end of Quarter 4) (CS CPR 4).
34. 96.4% (132 / 137) of initial child protection conferences took place within the 15 working day timescale in Quarter 1 – up from 92.2% (119 / 129) in Quarter 4 (SCC/014). Performance in 2015-16 is currently on course to meet the 92% target.

35. Timeliness of review child protection conferences remained at 100.0% (251 / 251) in Quarter 1. Performance against initial and review child protection conferences is displayed in the graph below:

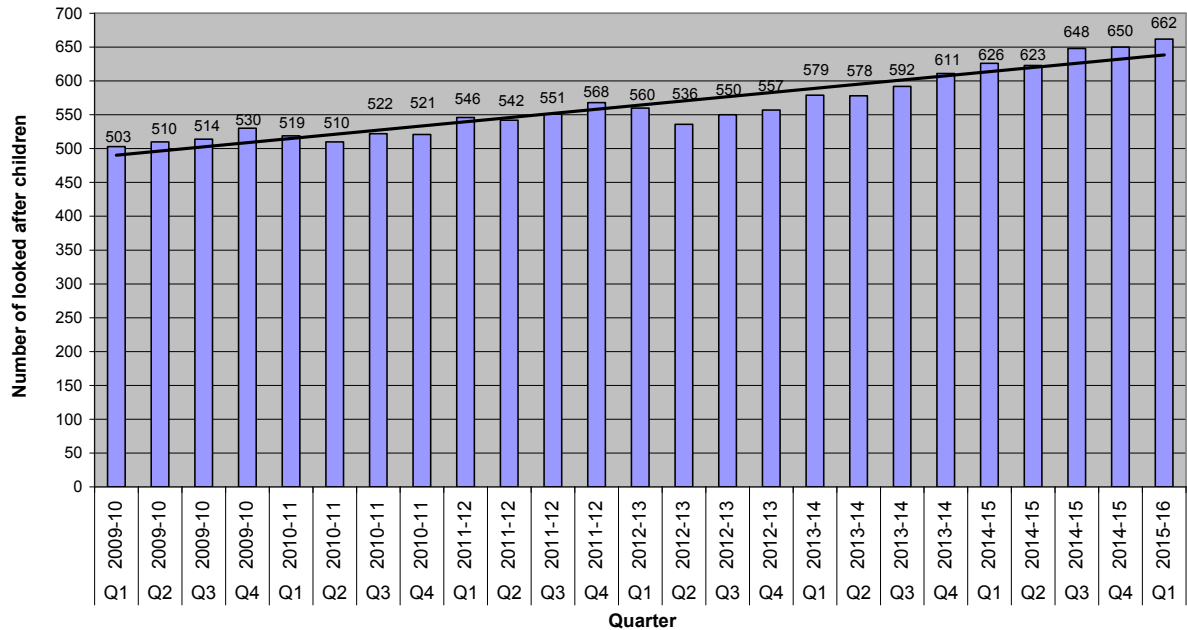


36. Initial core groups took place within the 10 working day timescale in 95.2% (119 / 125) of cases in Quarter 1 compared with 84.6% (121 / 143) in Quarter 4 (SCC/015).
37. 100% (300 / 300) of children on the child protection register had an allocated social worker at 30th June 2015.
38. The 2015-17 Multi Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy was submitted to the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB) during the quarter. It has since been updated in response to feedback and will be submitted for ratification in Quarter 2.

C) IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

39. The number of children who were looked after at 30th June 2015 (not including those children being looked after as part of a respite care arrangement) was 662 compared with 650 at 31st March 2015(CS LAC 3e). This represents a rate of 9.1 children per 1,000 in Cardiff, which is the same as the all Wales rate as at 31st March 2014. The recent increase in the number of looked after children is displayed in the graph below.

Number of Looked After Children



40. Initial care plans were in place prior to children becoming looked after in 67.0% (59 / 88) of cases during Quarter 1, compared with 87.0% (60 / 69) in Quarter 4 (SCC/001a). Performance against this indicator has declined in the context of a 28% increase in the number of children starting to be looked after during the quarter (88 compared with 69 in Quarter 4 2014-15).
41. 85.7% (48 / 56) of permanence plans were in place by second looked after review in Quarter 1, compared with 86.8% (66 / 76) in Quarter 4 (SCC/001b).
42. 70.3% (389 / 553) of looked after children were placed with independent sector providers at the end of Quarter 1 (CS LAC 44), down from 71.8% (380 / 529) in Quarter 4. The number of children placed in independent sector residential placements increased from 59 to 60.
43. 60.4% (334 / 553) of children in regulated placements were placed in Cardiff at the end of Quarter 1 compared with 60.7% (321 / 529) at the end of Quarter 4 (CS LAC 58). A further 100 children placed outside Cardiff were within 20 miles of their home address. 13 of the children not placed in Cardiff are placed with relative carers. For some children placement outside the authority is in their best interests, examples include children placed with family members who live outside Cardiff, children placed in specialist placements and some children who are placed in areas that are closer to their home address than some parts of the city.
44. 93.2% (426 / 457) of statutory reviews for looked after children were held within prescribed timescales in Quarter 1 compared with 95.7% (465 / 486) in Quarter 4 (SCC/021). 85.1% (389 / 457) of statutory visits were held in accordance with regulations in Quarter 1 compared with 89.1% (433 / 486) in Quarter 4 (SCC/025 – PAM).

45. 98.8% (640 / 648) looked after children were allocated to a social worker at 30th June 2015. 8 children were allocated to a worker who has recently qualified as a social worker and was registered with the Care Council for Wales in early July.
46. In 2014-15 performance regarding health assessments for looked after children remained stable with 73.3% of the health assessments due in the year being undertaken, compared with 73.3% in 2013-14 (SCC/039). Performance regarding dental checks improved slightly to 73.2% from 71.1% in 2013-14 (SCC/020). The number of looked after children registered with a GP within 10 working days of the start of a new placement decreased to 41.6% compared with 51.8% in 2013-14 (SCC/040). Performance in relation to GP registration is based on electronic records. It is thought that the level of performance is impacted by under-recording and is not a true reflection of actual performance against this indicator.
47. New mechanisms for recording this information were implemented during the year as part of the launch of CareFirst exemplars for looked after children. It is anticipated that this, along with the implementation of a specialised service for looked after children and care leavers will lead to improvement against these indicators.
48. In relation to the education of looked after children, the overall picture is one of stability / improvement during the year. This has resulted from focussed work over several years to improve outcomes for looked after children, including an increased focus on joint working with the Education Service. It is acknowledged that further work is required to build upon these improvements and joint work across Children's Services and Education is ongoing. Indicators which showed some improvement are detailed below:
 - a. Primary school attendance for children looked after in Cardiff schools was 96.9%, compared with 94.7% in 2013-14 (SCC/022a).
 - b. Secondary school attendance for children looked after in Cardiff schools was 93.6%, compared with 91.5% in 2013-14 (SCC/022b).
 - c. Achievement of the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3 (reaching Level 5 in Science, Mathematics and English or Welsh) increased to 37.0% from 35.9% in 2013-14 (SCC/036).
 - d. The average number of fixed term exclusion days for looked after children was 4.9 compared with 6.6 in 2013-14 (SCC/044b). This equates to 185 days for 38 children (compared with 224 days for 34 children in 2013-14). No looked after children were permanently excluded during the year, maintaining the position achieved in 2011-12 (SCC/044a) for the fourth consecutive year.
49. Indicators where performance remained stable are summarised below:
 - a. Achievement of the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2 (reaching Level 4 in Science, Mathematics and English or Welsh) was 65.2% compared with 65.0% in 2013-14 (SCC/035).
50. The average external qualifications points score for looked after children decreased to 191 from 216 in 2013-14 (SCC/037 - NSI), although the target of 180 was met.
51. 20.4% of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) were in place compared with 23.9% in 2013-14 (SCC/024). The process for completing timely PEPs was reviewed and adjusted in order to simplify and speed up the process to enable social workers to

have a more realistic chance of completing the process within required timescales. Briefings were provided to social workers, teachers and foster carers jointly, in readiness for implementation on 1st May 2015. Of the 183 children without a timely PEP, 35 have a completed PEP and another 105 have a PEP that is in the process of being completed.

52. During the last financial year the Directorate made good progress to stabilise plans for each looked after child to secure permanent alternative long term placements including the following options:
- a. Adoption
 - b. Long term foster placements
 - c. Moves to best value placements
 - d. Returning children placed out of area back to Cardiff

A significant consequence of securing better permanent placements for individual looked after children is a rise in the number of children experiencing a non-transitional school move and 3 or more placements during the year. 17.8% (68 / 382) of compulsory school age children who were looked after at 31 March 2015 experienced a non-transitional school move during the year, compared with 13.3% (44 / 331) in 2013-14 (SCC/002 - NSI). 10.5% (68 / 650) of children who were looked after at 31st March 2015 had 3 or more placements during the year, compared with 8.3% (51 / 611) in 2013-14 (SCC/004 – NSI/PAM). This approach is in the best interest of the children and is reflected in the overall positive findings of the LAC inspection which took place in 2014, and by the findings identified by the Independent Support Team around services for looked after children. This is also consistent with the outcome focussed ethos within the new Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. Although this strategy has led to positive outcomes for children, the Directorate did not reflect the likely impact of these moves when undertaking its target setting exercise.

53. In respect of young people entitled to leaving care services, 60.5% (263 / 435) had a Pathway Plan as required in 2014-15 compared with 63.2% (254 / 402) in 2013-14 (SCC/041a - NSI). An additional 57 young people have Pathway Plans that are in the process of being completed. Performance in relation to pathway planning for care leavers has been reviewed and it has been determined that the primary factors affecting performance are plans being started but not completed and young people choosing not to engage. Remedial work is being undertaken to meet the statutory requirement for provision of a pathway plan for all care leavers, including those that do not wish to have them. The work being undertaken includes a review of processes and documents that will be implemented later this year supported by best practice training in September 2015.
54. 39.8% of care leavers had a Personal Adviser compared with 40.0% in 2013-14. The Directorate established additional Personal Adviser posts to secure significant improvement in the completion of pathway plans. The full benefits of this were not realised in year, but we expect significantly improved performance in 2015-16.
55. Children's Services was in touch with 90.5% (57 / 63) of care leavers at the age of 19 during the year, compared with 94.0% (47 / 50) (SCC/033d - NSI). The service attempts to keep in touch with all care leavers as required, however the young people determine for themselves whether they wish to respond and remain in contact. The

creation of the Personal Adviser posts referred to above will enable us to improve performance in 2015/16 where young people are content to respond and remain in contact with the service.

56. 91.2% (52 / 57) of care leavers we were in touch with were in suitable non-emergency accommodation (SCC/033e - NSI) compared with 91.5% (43 / 47) in 2013-14. As part of the Council's Organisational Development Programme, additional cross-Directorate resources have been dedicated to improve access to non-emergency accommodation for care leavers. We now have clear lines of communication with colleagues in Housing and a fundamental agreement that all care leavers will have access to appropriate housing and will not be placed in unsuitable accommodation (e.g. bed and breakfast).
57. 56.1% (32 / 57) of care leavers at 19 were in education, training or employment (SCC/033f - NSI) compared with 53.2% (25 / 47) in 2013-14. This exceeded the 55% target. The Council Traineeship Scheme for Looked After Children was launched on 25th April 2014 and has started to have a positive impact on this indicator.

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

58. The numbers of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) has increased during Quarter 1 to 29 (from 21 in Quarter 4). However this is a decrease on Quarter 1 2014-15 when there were 24 FTEs.
59. During Quarter 1, the Youth Offending Services (YOS) Manager has become a member of the Preventative and Early Intervention Multi-Agency Resource Panel and work towards increasing cohesion between the two services is ongoing.
60. The Crime Prevention Fund Business Plan for Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan YOS has been agreed by Welsh Government. This will enable collaboration on a number of jointly funded projects to continue.
61. A training programme on Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation has been arranged for Quarter 2 for all relevant YOS staff.
62. In collaboration with a number of YOS in South East Wales, a district approach to working with girls has been developed for Cardiff YOS.

STAFFING

63. The percentage of social worker vacancies in Quarter 1 was 23.5% compared with 24.8% in Quarter 4 (Staff 1). The vacancy position continues to improve gradually as appointed social workers take up post. The apparent high percentage of vacancies must be treated with caution because the percentage continues to be inflated by the creation of new posts as part of the realignment of Children's Services in 2014. Recruitment is ongoing - the recruitment campaign has been very successful and has directly contributed to the service's ability to retain social workers. We are now attracting numbers of applications from agency staff who have been working within the service, and social workers from other local authorities. The number of agency social workers has reduced from 55 in June 2014 to 34 in June 2015. At the time of writing the figure has reduced to 28. The ambitious 15% target remains our

aspiration for 31st March 2016.

64. The average number of days of sickness absence for staff in Children's Services in Quarter 1 was 3.5, compared with 3.9 in Quarter 1 2014-15. Sickness levels continue to be closely monitored to ensure that appropriate action is taken to manage sickness absence across the service area.
65. 74% compliance with PPDR completion for 2014-15 and 91% compliance with finalisation of objective sheets for 2015-16 had been achieved at the time of writing. A small percentage cannot be initiated / reviewed due to staff absence (e.g. maternity leave and long term sick leave), and a high level of recruitment activity and new intake accounts for a proportion of the outstanding PPDRs. Work to initiate and review the remaining PPDRs continues.

WAY FORWARD

66. Members are invited to consider the information set out in the report and to identify any issues which require more detailed scrutiny.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

67. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend, but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Executive / Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

68. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend, but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Executive / Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:
Consider the contents of the report and report any comments to the Cabinet Member.

Tony Young
Director of Social Services
4th September 2015