
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 September 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 wither 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 2: JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2015

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 2 PERFORMANCE

10. Quarter 2 has consolidated the positive improvements achieved in Quarter 1, with particularly strong performance in relation to key performance indicators. For example, recording of decisions on referrals continued to increase from 90% in Quarter 1 to 94% in Quarter 2. This is an overall improving trend from a low of 68% in Quarter 4 2013-14.
11. Timely completion of initial assessments improved from 67% in Quarter 1 to 92% in Quarter 2. The 80% target was met for the quarter for the first time since Quarter 3 2007-08. Further detail is included in paragraph 26.
12. There was also an improvement in the percentage of children who were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment (PAM) – from 64% in Quarter 1 to 67% in Quarter 2.
13. Timeliness of core assessments also improved during the quarter – to 75% (from 71% in Quarter 1). Performance in September was 84% which is in excess of the 80% target.
14. Timeliness of initial child protection conferences and initial core groups increased to 99% and 97% in Quarter 2, from 96% and 95 respectively in Quarter 1.
15. There was also improvement in relation to:
 - a. Recording of initial care plans for looked after children – increased to 81% from 67% in Quarter 1.
 - b. Timeliness of permanence plans for looked after children – increased from 86% to 97%.
 - c. Timeliness of statutory reviews for looked after children – increased from 93% to 96%.

16. There was, however, a decline in performance against child protection review conferences – 99.6% from 100% in Quarter 1. This was attributable to one conference being 6 days late due to confusion over the required timeframe for the first review following a pre-birth conference. This matter has since been resolved to prevent recurrence.
17. Work to progress the Directorate's improvement plan has continued and key areas of progress include:
 - a. Corporate Parenting Strategy - prepared for consultation and targeted for Cabinet endorsement and launch in Quarter 3.
 - b. Early Help and Preventative Strategy - agreed by Cabinet and public launch prepared with partners for early in Quarter 3.
 - c. Business Case for Over Recruitment of Social Workers - approved by Investment Review Board – this is a good example of management responding to concerns expressed by teams about vacancies and capacity. Significant financial benefit is anticipated when staff are in post.
 - d. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - Project Manager in post.
 - e. Services for children with disabilities - appointment made to Change Manager post.
 - f. Continued reduction in average social worker caseloads - from 18.9 in June 2015 to 17.5 at the end of September 2015.
 - g. Partnership working - Vulnerable Children and Families Partnership Board has made significant strides in securing strong partnership engagement around remodelling services for disabled children, Early Help and Preventative Strategy and development of Adolescent Resource Centre.
 - h. Fostering Recruitment Strategy - launched with direct carer involvement and has stimulated significant response from across the city.
 - i. New model of delivery for children's social services - work is progressing to plan and will implement best practice methodology, i.e. signs of safety; redistribute capacity to support more effective direct work with families; enhance opportunities to prevent admissions to care.
 - j. Single Gateway for accommodation for vulnerable young adults - Gateway developed with Communities and is ready for implementation in Quarter 3.
18. There has been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Corporate Plan relating to the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and work with Education to improve educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. The Cardiff & Vale Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was delayed at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The Director is to intervene and seek urgent acceleration. In relation to work with Education, early indications are that the new Personal Education Plan (PEP) process launched in Quarter 1 has not improved the timely completion and quality of PEPs. Actions to address this involve the OM now receiving weekly updates on children accommodated to proactively monitor PEPs.
19. There has also been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Directorate Plan relating to:
 - a. Enhanced Fostering Scheme - the first young person was placed within the scheme during the quarter. However, from the middle of the quarter concerns about the capacity of the provider to deliver on its commitments

prompted the Director to intervene. The provider's initial reaction was positive and signalled an intention to address issues.

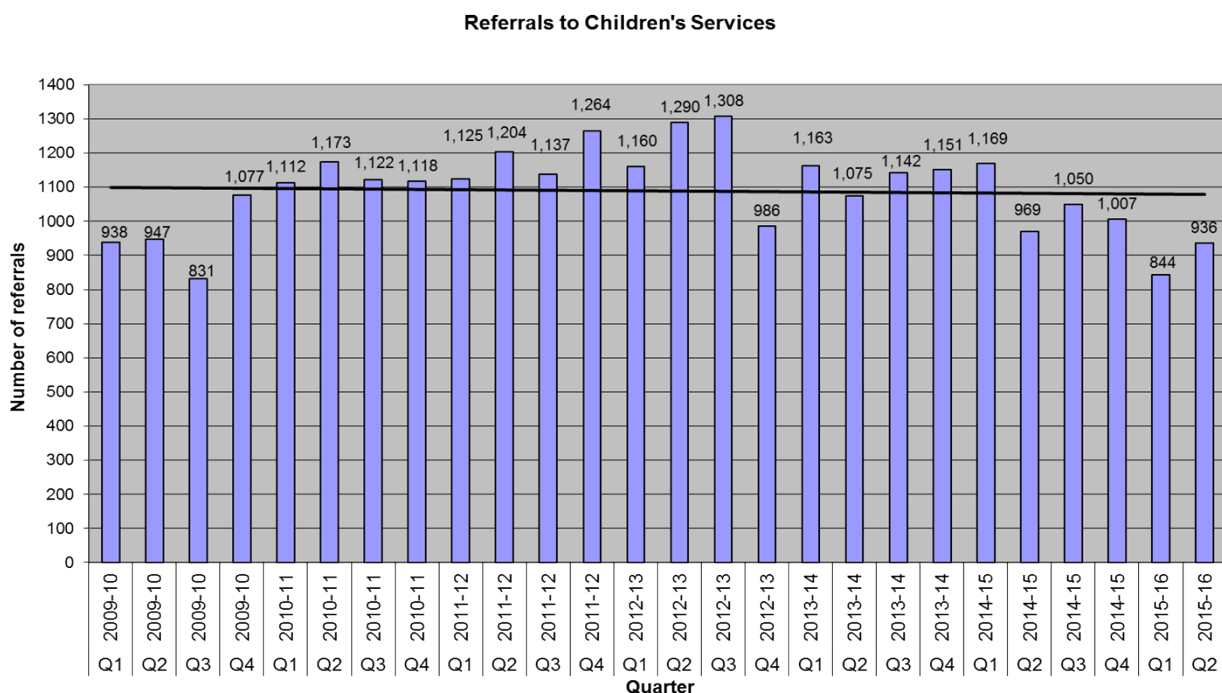
- b. Re-commissioning of the Supervised Contact Service - delay in the invitation to tender will result in later than anticipated implementation. The project plan has been revised and implementation planned for April 2016.
- c. Improving the quality of referrals - the review of the Multi-Agency Referral Form planned for Quarter 2 will now be completed in Quarter 3; work on developing the form and identifying training needs will follow.

20. The Children's Services Improvement Board will be refocused on a Council wide and multi-agency preventative agenda with representatives from Education, Health, the Police and the voluntary sector to have a strategic overview of key developments, including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, remodelling Children's Services and services for disabled children. The purpose of the Board is to ensure that services to children are effective and to consider where resources can be maximised.

DETAILED COMMENTARY

A) PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN IN NEED

21. Children's Services received 936 referrals in Quarter 2 (Referrals 1) compared with 844 in Quarter 1. A detailed breakdown of contacts and referrals is provided at **Appendix C** for the Committee's information. This report shows the source of the 7,280 contacts received by Children's Services during Quarter 2, along with the outcome and a summary of the trend over the last 2 years. Similar information is provided for the 936 referrals received during Quarter 2. 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 25.2% from 25.6% in Quarter 1.



22. In relation to the recording of decisions on referrals (SCC/006), performance continued to improve in Quarter 2 to 94.1% (881 / 936) from 89.8% (758 / 844) in Quarter 1. 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 is now in post and this has led to greater confidence that the target implementation date can be achieved. The next steps are to establish governance arrangements and implement the project plan.
24. Source of referrals – a table summarising the source of referrals to Children’s Services during Quarter 2 is included below:

Source of Referrals	Q2
Ambulance Service	0
Central Government Agency	4
Family, Friend or Neighbour	66
Housing	0
Independent Provider Agency	8
LA Housing Dept. or Housing Association	34
Local Authority's own Social Services Department	98
Other Agency	108
Other Departments of Own or Other LA	67
Other Individual	13
Other Social Services Department	0
Other Type	0
Police	254
Primary Health / Community Health	144
Probation Service	23
School	85
Secondary Health	25
Self Referral	6
UK Border Agency	1
Total	936

25. Outcome of referrals – 92.0% (881 / 936) of referrals were allocated to a social worker for initial assessment in Quarter 2 compared with 94.1% (794 / 844) in Quarter 1 (SCC/007a). 0.2% (2 / 936) of referrals were allocated to other grades of worker for initial assessment compared with 0.8% (7 / 844) in Quarter 1. 6.4% (60 / 936) 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 2 to 91.7% (771 / 841) from 67.1% (563 / 839) in Quarter 1 (SCC/042a). Improving results seen from end of year 2014-15 through to Quarters 1 and 2 evidences that the actions that are being taken by Children’s Services in this area are obtaining the required improvements. The 80% target was met for the quarter for the first time since Quarter 3 2007-08.

27. 66.6% (560 / 841) of children were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment compared with 64.4% (540 / 839) in Quarter 1 (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 66.7% (561 / 841). 29.5% (248 / 841) children were seen alone by a social worker during their initial assessment (SCC/011b – NSI), compared with 28.5% (239 / 839) in Quarter 1. 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.

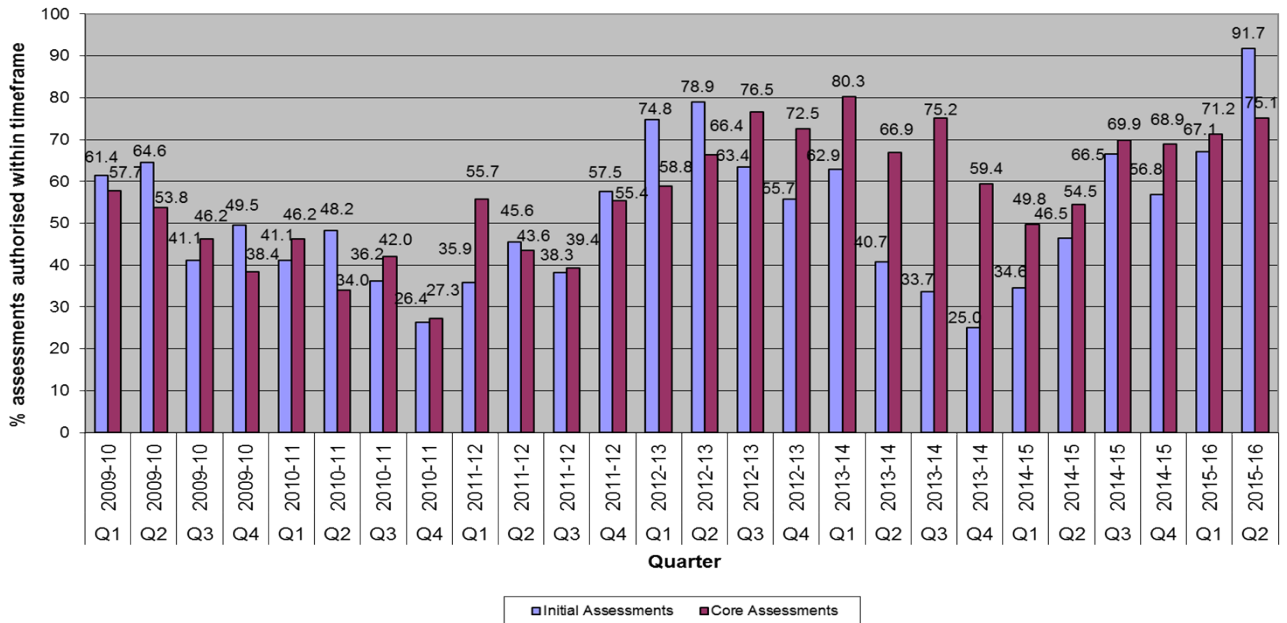
28. The percentage of initial assessments where information regarding ethnicity, religion and first language were recorded during Quarter 1 is as follows:

- a. Ethnicity – 62.9% (529 / 841)
- b. Religion – 28.4% (239 / 841)
- c. First language – 50.8% (427 / 841)

A detailed breakdown of the ethnicities, religions and first languages of children and young people who were subject to an initial assessment during Quarter 2 is available on request.

29. Performance in relation to timely completion of core assessments was 75.1% (417 / 555) in Quarter 2 compared with 71.2% (354 / 497) in Quarter 1 (SCC/043a). Performance against this indicator continued to improve in Quarter 2 with results improving from 68.9% in July to 71.9% in August and 83.6% in September. A graph displaying timely completion of (initial and) core assessments is included below.

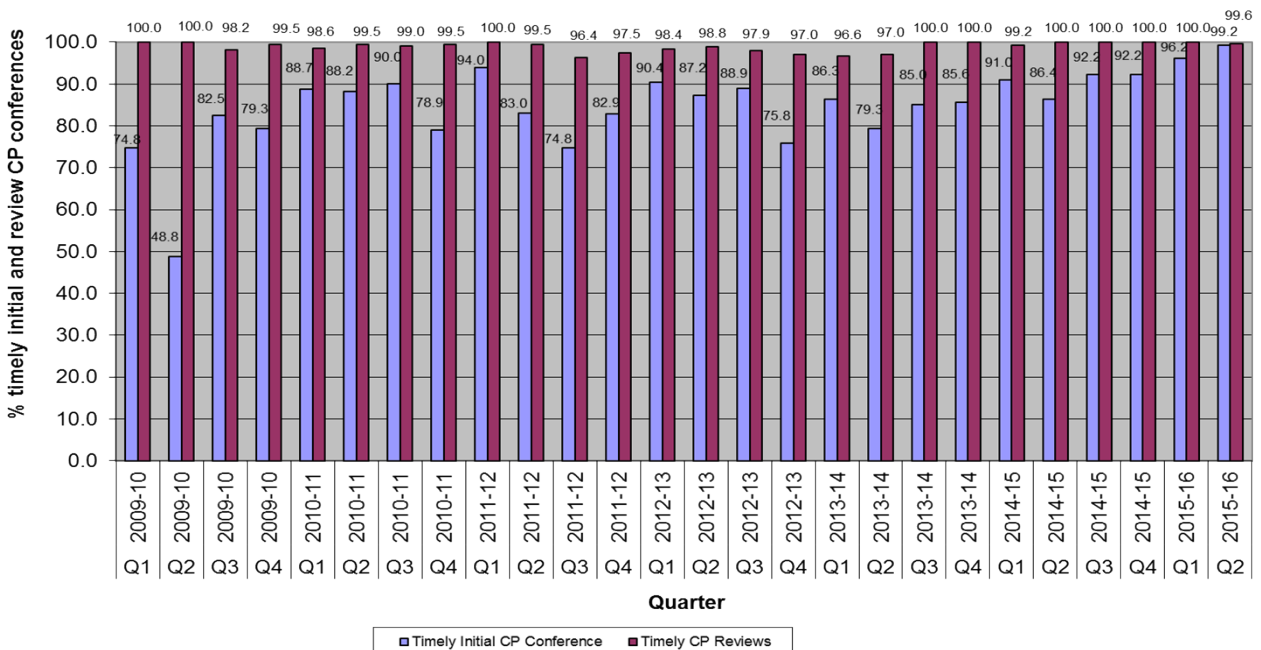
Timely Initial and Core Assessments



B) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

30. The number of children on the child protection register at the end of Quarter 2 was 322 (from 300 at the end of Quarter 1) (CS CPR 4).
31. 99.2% (129 / 130) of initial child protection conferences took place within the 15 working day timescale in Quarter 2 – up from 96.4% (132 / 137) in Quarter 1 (SCC/014). Performance continued to improve in Quarter 2 and is currently on course to meet the 92% target.
32. Timeliness of review child protection conferences was 99.6% (230 / 231) in Quarter 2 compared with 100.0% (253 / 253) in Quarter 1. Performance against initial and review child protection conferences is displayed in the graph below:

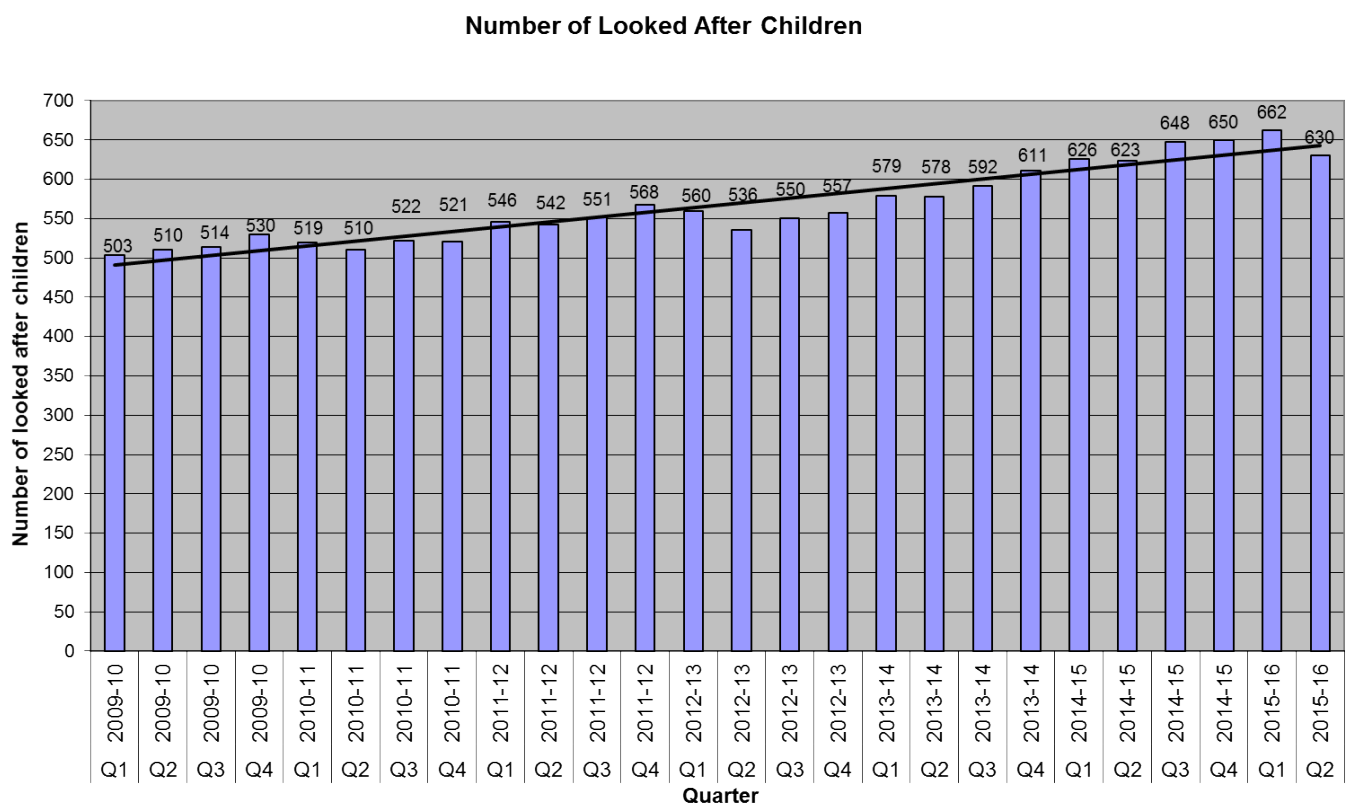
Timely Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences



- 33. Initial core groups took place within the 10 working day timescale in 97.4% (114 / 117) of cases in Quarter 2 compared with 95.2% (119 / 125) in Quarter 1 (SCC/015). Performance continued to improve in Quarter 2 and is currently on track to meet the 93% target.
- 34. 100% (322 / 322) of children on the child protection register had an allocated social worker at 30th September 2015.
- 35. The Cardiff & Vale Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was delayed at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Director to intervene and seek urgent acceleration.

C) IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- 36. The number of children who were looked after at 30th September 2015 (not including those children being looked after as part of a respite care arrangement) was 630 compared with 662 at 30th June 2015 (CS LAC 3e). This represents a rate of 8.6 children per 1,000 in Cardiff, which is lower than the all Wales rate of 9.1 per 1,000 as at 31st March 2014. The recent fluctuation in the number of looked after children is displayed in the graph below.



- 37. Initial care plans were in place prior to children becoming looked after in 81.3% (52 / 64) of cases during Quarter 2, compared with 67.0% (59 / 88) in Quarter 1 (SCC/001a). Performance against this indicator has improved in the context of a 38% decrease in the number of children starting to be looked after during the quarter (64 compared with 88 in Quarter 1).

38. 96.6% (57 / 59) of permanence plans were in place by second looked after review in Quarter 2, compared with 85.7% (48 / 56) in Quarter 1 (SCC/001b).
39. 70.3% (359 / 511) of looked after children were placed with independent sector providers at the end of Quarter 2 (CS LAC 44), showing no change from 70.3% (389 / 553) in Quarter 1. The number of children placed in independent sector residential placements decreased from 60 to 55.
40. 61.6% (315 / 511) of children in regulated placements were placed in Cardiff at the end of Quarter 2 compared with 60.4% (334 / 553) at the end of Quarter 1 (CS LAC 58). A further 80 children placed outside Cardiff were within 20 miles of their home address. 9 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.
41. 96.0% (458 / 477) of statutory reviews for looked after children were held within prescribed timescales in Quarter 2 compared with 93.2% (426 / 457) in Quarter 1 (SCC/021). 85.3% (407 / 477) of statutory visits were held in accordance with regulations in Quarter 2 compared with 85.1% (389 / 457) in Quarter 1 (SCC/025 – PAM).
42. All looked after children were allocated to a social worker at 30th September 2015.

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

43. The numbers of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) has increased during Quarter 2 to 34 (from 29 in Quarter 1). However this is a decrease on Quarter 2 2014-15 when there were 37 FTEs.
44. During Quarter 2 a temporary Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Case Manager post was advertised to work with young people issued with warnings under ASB legislation as a result of their behaviour within the community. The post will offer comprehensive assessments to young people and their families that inform individually tailored intervention packages.
45. The YOS Health Worker attended a Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Child Sexual Exploitation 'Training the Trainer' session during Quarter 3. Training for all relevant staff will be completed by the end of Quarter 3. In addition to this, a third of YOS staff members have attended Social Services training on Human Trafficking to date.
46. In collaboration with a number of YOS in South East Wales, The implementation of a district approach to working with girls that was developed in collaboration with a number of YOS in South East Wales has not gone ahead as planned due to funding issues and the amalgamation of surrounding Youth Offending Services. It is expected that progress will be made in Quarter 3.

STAFFING

47. The percentage of social worker vacancies in Quarter 2 was 21.4% compared with 23.5% in Quarter 1 (Staff 1). The vacancy position has continued to improve very slightly during the quarter as appointed social workers take up post. Recruitment is ongoing - the recruitment campaign has been very successful and has directly contributed to the service's ability to retain social workers. During the quarter a business case for the over-recruitment of social workers was approved by the Investment Review Board and is being implemented. The ambitious 15% target remains our aspiration for 31st March 2016.
48. The average number of days of sickness absence for staff in Children's Services in Quarter 1 was 8.0, compared with 7.14 in Quarter 2 2014-15. Sickness levels continue to be closely monitored to ensure that appropriate action is taken to manage sickness absence across the service area.
49. 78.7% 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

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

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

51. 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 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 of 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

52. 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
16th November 2015