

Directorate: Social Services - Children's

Director: Tony Young

Councillor: Sue Lent

Q2 2015/16

Budget	Projected Outturn	Variance	Variance (%)
£46,617,000	£47,817,000	£1,200,000	2.57%

Number of Employees (FTE)	350
Sickness Absence YTD (Days Per Person)	8.0
PPDR Compliance Stage (Permanent Staff)	78.7%

Target Savings 15/16	Projected Savings	Variance	Variance (%)
£2,781,000	£1,828,000	£953,000	34.2%

Q2 Progress against Corporate Plan Commitment Actions 2015/16 (7)

Green 71% (5)

Amber 29% (2)

Q2 Progress against Directorate Plan actions (Core Business Priorities) 2015/16 (19)

Green 84% (16)

Amber 16% (3)

Progress on Challenges Identified Q1 (previous quarter)

The need to establish a single, integrated Social Services Directorate and align performance management arrangements coherently:

Single Directorate Management Team established.

Senior management structure prepared for consultation via Trade Unions early in Quarter 3.

Advert for permanent Assistant Director, Adult Services post imminent.

Q2 Service Delivery

Budget

The month 6 position for Childrens Services shows an overspend of £1.2m (2.5%) against a budget of £46.6m. As in previous years, there is ongoing pressure on external commissioning budgets, notably in relation to fostering placements. The position also reflects current projections in relation to the savings targets set for the service in 2015/16. The latest position shows an anticipated shortfall of £0.99m in relation to the savings target, although work is ongoing to reduce the number of high cost out of area placements.

Directorate Delivery Plan

Of the 7 actions in the Corporate Plan, 2 are rated amber at 30.09.15:

- Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy
The Cardiff & Vale Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was delayed at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Director to intervene and seek urgent acceleration.
- Work with Education to improve educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers
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 receiving:
 - Weekly updates on PEP performance
 - Information on children accommodated in the past week in order to proactively monitor PEPs
 - Progress in relation to timely completion of PEPs

3 further actions from the Directorate Plan have been rated as amber. These relate to:

- Enhanced Fostering Scheme
The first meeting of the Enhanced Fostering Scheme Governance Board was held, the Multi-Agency Steering Decision-Making Group became operational and the first young person was placed within the scheme. 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Good progress has been made in relation to:

- Corporate Parenting Strategy

The Strategy was prepared for consultation and targeted for Cabinet endorsement and launch in Quarter 3. The anticipated impact of the Strategy includes strengthened inter-agency support for looked after children, and enhancing the voice of the child in improving services for looked after children.

- **Early Help and Preventative Strategy**
Agreed by Cabinet and public launch prepared with partners for early in Quarter 3. The anticipated impact of the Strategy is to transform the relationship between targeted and preventative services and to reduce the demand for costly interventions.
- **Business Case for Over Recruitment of Social Workers**
Approved by Investment Review Board - 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.
- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**
The 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.
- **Services for children with disabilities**
Appointment made to Change Manager post. This additional capacity will enable accelerate the development of services for disabled children and reduce the number of high cost complex care packages.
- **Reduction in average social worker caseloads**
Close monitoring of caseloads on a monthly basis was introduced in June 2014 when caseload averages in case management teams were at 24.5. Caseloads steadily reduced to 18.9 in June 2015 which is within safe limits. Caseloads were at 17.5 at the end of September 2015. It is understood that an average is not sufficiently sensitive so distribution of cases is considered quarterly. Where necessary, an examination of individual social worker caseloads has enabled adjustment as appropriate. The Family Intervention and Support Service has taken case responsibility for some Child in Need cases as appropriate. The safeguarding and qualitative risks associated with high caseloads have been significantly reduced. First and second quarter performance results have demonstrated sustained significant improvement as a result of social workers being more able to prioritise key areas of work.
- **Partnership working**
The Vulnerable Children and Families Partnership Board (now in its third quarter) has made significant strides in securing strong partnership engagement around:
 - Remodelling services for disabled children
 - Early Help and Preventative Strategy
 - Development of Adolescent Resource Centre
- **Fostering Recruitment Strategy**
The high impact strategy was launched with direct carer involvement and has stimulated significant response from across the city.
- **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
- **Single Gateway for accommodation for vulnerable young adults**
The Gateway has been developed with Communities and is ready for implementation in Quarter 3. This will standardise arrangements for young people to access accommodation and will also enable data gathering in relation to need and resources.

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.

Management

At the time of writing, the Directorate had achieved 78.7% compliance with finalisation of objectives. A small percentage cannot be initiated 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. The underachievement of PPDR compliance will be investigated along with emergent pressures in relation to sickness absence.

Directorate: Social Services Children's

Key Performance Indicator Data – Q2 2015/16

Q2 Progress against Performance Indicators (Corporate & Delivery Plans) 2015/16 (36)

Green 29% (2)

Amber 71% (5)

Of the total number of indicators above 31% (11) are annual and 50% (18) have no or limited results as yet.

During 2014/15 Social Services focussed on improving performance in relation to indicators that have the greatest significance for safe and effective practice concerning children – these are represented in the second table below*. 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.

National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures

Performance Indicator	Result 14/15	Position Q1	Position Q2	Position Q3	Position Q4	Target 15/16	15-16	Year End	R.A.G.
SCC/002 - Percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March	17.80%	Annual Result				11%			
SCC/004 - The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year	10.50%	Annual Result				8%			
SCC/011b - The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker	26.40%	28.5	29.5			appropriate	Not		
Non cumulative. It is not appropriate for RAG rating as there is no target or threshold for intervention.									
SCC/025 - The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations	88.90%	85.1	85.3			95%			A
Non cumulative									
SCC/033d - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19	90.50%	Annual Result				96%			
SCC/033e - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19	91.20%	Annual Result				96%			
SCC/033f - The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19	56.10%	Annual Result				58%			
SCC/037 - The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting	191	Annual Result				220			
SCC/041a - The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required	60.50%	Annual Result				90%			
SCC/045 - The percentage of reviews of looked after children, children on the Child Protection Register and children in need carried out in line with the statutory timetable	70.80%	Annual Result				90%			

*Performance Indicator	Result 14/15	Q1 Position	Q2 Position	Q3 Position	Q4 Position	Target 15/16	Year End 15-16	R.A.G.
% of referrals with decision made within 1 working day	83.1	89.8	94.1			100		A
	Performance has continued to improve slightly in Quarter 1 in the context of an 11% increase in the number of referrals (844 to 936). 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.							
% of referrals that are re-referrals within a year of previous referral	25.4	25.6	25.2			24		A
	There has been a marginal decrease over the quarter – regular monitoring will continue. In order to ensure that referrals are appropriate and of high quality, the Multi Agency Referral Form is being reviewed. Once this review is complete, the Safeguarding Officer for Education and Children’s Access Point (CAP) Manager will resume work to engage with schools in respect of the quality and appropriateness of referrals made to Children’s Services. It is also envisaged that the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), once implemented, will lead to a reduction in inappropriate referrals and re-referrals. There has also been a renewed focus on achieving better outcomes for children at the point of case closure thereby reducing re-referrals to the Directorate.							
% of initial assessments carried out within 7 working days	50.6	67.1	91.7			80		G
	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.							
% of children seen by a social worker during their initial assessment	60.9	64.4	66.6			80		A
	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>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 target set by the ADSS, WLGA and CSSIW pre-dates this new approach which is consistent with the direction of travel across the country.</p>							
% of core assessments carried out within 35 working days	61.0	71.2	75.1			80		A
	Performance against this indicator continued to improve in Quarter 2. July = 68.9%; August = 71.9%; September = 83.6%							
% of child protection reviews carried out within statutory timescales	99.8	100	99.6			100		A
% of social work vacancies in all teams	27.2	23.5	21.4			15		A
	The vacancy position has continued to improve very slightly during the quarter as appointed social workers take up post. 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. The ambitious 15% target remains our aspiration for 31 st March 2016.							

Q2 Challenges Identified

Q2 Actions being taken

Cost of meeting demand pressures in relation to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and asylum seekers with no recourse to public funds.

Corporate leadership group established to prepare a plan to respond.

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Q2 Risk Update

Corporate Risk				
Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Mitigating Actions	Risk Owner
Failure to implement the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.	Red	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governance arrangements in place to ensure effective monitoring of progress across the region. • Senior lead officers identified with responsibility for each work stream. • Regional task and finish groups established for each work stream and action plans being delivered. • Updated Social Care Development and Workforce Plan submitted to Welsh Government in September 2015. • Successful partnership workshop held to ensure full engagement in process. • Officers contributing to national work groups as required. • Regular reports to Scrutiny Committee with references to Cabinet in place. 	Tony Young
Failure to reduce the cost of delivering social services.	Red	Red	<p>Strategic service improvement governance arrangements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Development Programme. • Children's Services Improvement Board. • Vulnerable Families Partnership Board. • Social Services Reshaping Programme. 	Tony Young

Emerging Risks Identified this Quarter				
Risk Description	Inherent Risk	Residual Risk	Mitigating Actions	Risk Owner
Ability of Enhanced Fostering Scheme provider to deliver commitments.	Red	Red/Amber	<p>Intervention by Director.</p> <p>Subsequent face to face meeting between Council and provider.</p>	Angela Bourge