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## CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

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### 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 commitments for the quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

### BACKGROUND

2. The ongoing development of the Cardiff Performance Management Framework has brought into line the monitoring and evaluation of progress against commitments 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**. This appendix is for the whole directorate and therefore includes a number of performance measures that relate to Adult services.
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.

## PERFORMANCE DURING QUARTER 1: APRIL TO JUNE 2017

7. Performance is being reported against the following corporate improvement objectives:

Looked after children in Cardiff achieve their potential  
People at risk in Cardiff are safeguarded  
People in Cardiff are supported to live independently

8. The Service has three main functions:
  - a. Promoting the welfare of children in need of care and support
  - b. Safeguarding children
  - c. Improving outcomes for looked after children

## OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

9. 2016/17 was a unique, transitional year in terms of performance management and measurement due to the introduction of new performance reporting requirements and the National Outcomes Framework following implementation of the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Although the new reporting requirements created a number of completely new performance indicators (PIs), some of the PIs from the previous performance regime were retained. This makes year on year comparison more complex and it is difficult to reach firm conclusions about whether performance has improved or declined.
10. Within Quarter 1 performance was good, however there are some areas for improvement. Performance in relation to timeliness of wellbeing assessments improved to 83% in Quarter 1, which is in excess of the 80% target despite an increase in the complexity of cases. Performance in respect of statutory visits to looked after children increased to 96% from 95% in Quarter 4. This is despite the increase in both the overall population of looked after children and in the number of children placed at home with their parents who require a higher level of statutory visiting.
11. However, performance in relation to initial and review child protection conferences reduced to 93% and 99% respectively from 100% for both in Quarter 4. Although this is a decline, in view of the volume of work the current performance is considered to be good.
12. Performance in relation to allocation of children on the Child Protection Register to social workers remained at 100%.
13. Work to progress the Directorate's commitments in the Corporate Plan has continued and key areas of progress include:
  - a. **Safeguarding Vision and Strategy** – The development of a Vision and Strategy for Safeguarding in Cardiff will commence following recruitment to vacancies in the Safeguarding Unit in Quarter 2.

- b. **Improve engagement with faith communities** - The Muslim Council of Wales have been identified as a key stakeholder and successful engagement has occurred to develop effective partnerships with mosques across Cardiff. A draft 'Safeguarding Children in Mosques and Madrassas' policy was shared with Muslim Council of Wales for discussion and comment. A Steering Group will be established to agree and ratify the policy.
  - c. **Young carers** - The regional young carers' action plan that was agreed in Quarter 4 is now being implemented and will facilitate better awareness raising during the year. Young carers who request an assessment from Children's Services currently receive social work input and a wellbeing assessment is undertaken. We are not currently able to disaggregate these assessments to identify young carers who have had a wellbeing assessment. The purpose of the change is to provide young carers with a specific assessment that will be more proportionate and applicable to their needs.
  - d. **Signs of Safety** - Implementation of the Signs of Safety approach within Children's Services is ongoing and is on target to meet the milestones set out in the Directorate Plan. Advanced training has been identified and has commenced for six Practice Leaders - further training scheduled to take place in Quarter 3. We have engaged with Swansea Council to learn lessons and share best practice on implementation of Signs of Safety approaches. A Signs of Safety project milestone has been successfully achieved with the development of an electronic Resource Hub for staff to access. Dedicated Signs of Safety posts are currently being evaluated in preparation for the recruitment process to commence in Quarter 2.
14. There has been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Corporate Plan relating to:
- a. **Direct Payments** – A total of 173 children were in receipt of Direct Payments at some point during Quarter 1. The recent recommissioning of this service from a third party provider has been completed and the new contract commences on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017; an interim contract has been secured with the incumbent. This provides a solid platform for improving performance in keeping with the target. The transition to the successful provider is being undertaken; full plans and actions are being implemented. Service users in receipt of direct payments have received letters and questionnaires relating to the new provider and the new Direct Payment options. Training for Social Services and Communities staff has been completed.
  - b. **Disability Futures** - Although there has been some slippage against the milestones set out in the Directorate Plan, work in this area is ongoing and progress is being made. Of particular note in the allocation of £104,000 additional funding for 2017/18 through the Integrated Care Fund, to support the development of regionalised service delivery in relation to transitions. This will be used to support additional transition workers in the Adult Learning Disabilities transition team in Cardiff and the development of transition services across the ages and the region. An appointment to the Operational Manager for Learning Disability Services post was made on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017. In light of the additional services being developed and the advent of a new Integrated Autism Service, as required by Welsh

Government, project and change capacity within the programme is stretched which could lead to delays within project throughout the year. The Officer Decision Report (ODR) in relation to Integrated Respite for Children is due to be finalised and signed off in Quarter 2.

- c. **Corporate Parenting Strategy** – The Corporate Parenting Strategy implementation plan has been delivered and operational during the past 12 months with the majority of the actions having been met in full. The new Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee will be considering how best to consolidate and extend the implementation of the Strategy during the course of the administration. New members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee (CPAC) have been identified following the recent elections and a new Chair appointed. Training for new members is planned for early Quarter 2. Re-evaluation of membership roles will be undertaken following the Strategy launch. Two young people remain as advisors to the Committee.

During Quarter 1 2017/18, there were 34 referrals to the **Looked After Children Traineeship scheme**. Of the 34, 20 have engaged and 15 have started in a Traineeship Placement with 5 completing taster days. 1 young person was offered and accepted an Apprenticeship. At the end of the quarter there were a total of 5 Trainees and 6 Apprentices (as some of these arrangements commenced in previous years). During the quarter, 1 Apprenticeship was completed successfully in ICT and 1 Apprenticeship in Communities was converted to a Trainee placement due to non-attendance at college by the young person.

A **Participation and Consultation Steering Group** for looked after children is to be established within Specialist Services (Looked After Children, Personal Advisers and Advocacy) that will give some governance and meaningfulness where young people are involved in participation and consultation exercises.

- d. **Recruitment and retention of children's social workers** - The rise in vacancies during the quarter was the equivalent of 4 posts. The Assistant Director has analysed the increase in vacancies and has found that 2 vacancies have arisen as a result of proactively managing long term sickness absence and 2 from workers leaving the authority for personal reasons. Nevertheless, the underlying factors affecting recruitment and retention in children's social work remain a challenge across the UK. We also understand that an authority in some difficulty has appointed an agency to recruit a significant number of social workers at enhanced salary and this has destabilised the market for permanent and agency staff. An analysis of anticipated growth across the service has been completed and new posts from growth bid allocated in response. The Human Resources process and Trade Union consultation are expected to be concluded in Quarter 2, at which time recruitment will commence.

15. In relation to the Directorate Plan, there has been progress in relation to:

- a. **Emerging areas of risk** - Work to establish a dedicated Think Safe service in relation to trafficked children, children subject to Deprivation of Liberty

considerations and children vulnerable to exploitation.

b. **Further embed First Point of Contact / Information, Advice and Assistance functions –**

- Work to develop an **Early Help Front Door** with the Team Around the Family (TAF) has commenced. The purpose will be to enable referrers to have greater understanding of current services and their accessibility prior to contacting statutory services. The first phase of the plan will be to extend the current TAF service to give the team additional capacity to provide Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) in the context of early help, using the Freephone number as the main contact point. The team will also have additional capacity to provide key working support for families who are being stepped down from Intake & Assessment.
- **Regional arrangements for pilot front door delivery for disabled children** within the Integrated Care Fund have continued during the quarter with the service specification having been agreed with the Vale of Glamorgan.
- There is evidence of improved communication between the **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** and referrers, particularly in light of the Signs of Safety model being introduced.

c. **Youth Offending Service (YOS) –** The numbers of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) has decreased slightly during Quarter 1 to 14 (from 15 in Quarter 4). The 14 young people committed 42 offences, averaging 3 offences per young person, however 3 of the 14 young people committed 40% of the offences.

Restructuring proposals have been presented to Trade Unions and staff and newly created posts are currently going through the Job Evaluation process prior to advertisement. The outcome from consultation and Job Evaluation will inform the Implementation Plan for the restructuring of YOS services.

Work with stakeholder agencies to further improve partnership working is currently being developed through:

- Outreach work around anti-social behaviour being jointly delivered with Youth Services.
- YOS staff member attending the weekly Child Sexual Exploitation meetings.
- Joint delivery of preventative programmes with the newly opened Adolescent Resource Centre.
- Ongoing discussions with Health regarding appropriate mental health provision for young people in the YOS system.

d. **Promoting Family Stability –** The Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC) team is now operational with referrals being received from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. Work is currently being delivered from a number of premises whilst building work on the ARC base is completed. Research on Step-Down services was completed and published and key messages were incorporated into service specifications. A step down service is now in development.

e. **Support Services to Care Leavers**

- **Pathway Plan** updated to be compliant with the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Signs of Safety.
- Plans to develop a procedure for the **transition of vulnerable care leavers** from Children's to Adult Services were revisited during the quarter. This work is to be undertaken as part of a strategic piece of work that will encompass all issues related to transitions across Social Services. A project group is being established.
- Work in partnership with Housing in relation to the **Preparation Programme** is close to completion with the potential for the programme to be launched in Quarter 2. This is a programme in which young people can engage to improve and develop their skills. It will support the development of a model of assessing young people's life skills in partnership with Housing so that a coordinated approach can be implemented across all providers.
- **Personal Education Plans (PEPs)** – redesigned and updated by task and finish partnership group that included Looked After Children Education Team, Independent Reviewing Officer and Specialist Services.

f. **Effectiveness of the current partnership arrangements for the delivery of Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services** – Initial engagement commenced. Funding identified (in Quarter 4 2016/17) to match the funding offer from University Health Board will enable a dedicated psychologist to be available full time for looked after children from Quarter 2.

- a. **Recommission Families First Services** – Stakeholder workshops that consisted of current Families First providers and other providers who have an interest in Families First were held at range of different community venues (e.g. community centres, hubs) across Cardiff. These were well attended with representation from a good range of organisations that provide services to children and families. The Cardiff 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Council (C3SC) Children and Young People's Network consultation was a separate engagement event that consisted of key stakeholders from organisations that deliver services to children and young people across the city. Consultation has also been undertaken with parents in a specific event that was co-hosted by Barnardo's.

16. There has also been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Directorate Plan relating to:

- a. **Integrated Finance and Service Strategy** – A further review of progress and reconsideration of the challenges associated with identifying the 2018/19 Directorate savings, has concluded that the longer term Integrated Financial Strategy (and as part of that 2018/19 proposals) will require substantial additional capacity and a further period of time if it is to provide a reliable platform for cost reduction over time. The new Cabinet also wishes to better understand the direction of travel and the underlying pressures at work. Key in this will be the Adult Services element of the strategy and the need to ensure that it is effectively underpinned by greater certainty at a granular level. This means that a revised target for the production of the Integrated Financial

Strategy is now end of Quarter 3 or earlier if achievable. The Director of Social Services has commissioned the Institute of Public Care and Professor John Bolton to assist with the development of a financial strategy for the delivery of sustainable adult social services. It is anticipated that the strategy will be completed in readiness for consultation with Cabinet during the third quarter.

## DETAILED COMMENTARY

### A) PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN WITH CARE & SUPPORT NEEDS

17. Performance indicators relating to referrals (prior to April 2016), and initial and core assessments are no longer available as these have been replaced with Wellbeing Contacts / Referrals and Wellbeing Assessments.
18. Children's Services received 7,476 Wellbeing Contacts / Referrals in Quarter 1 (Contacts 1) an 8% increase from 6,954 in Quarter 4, although consistent with the 7,558 received in Quarter 1 2016/17. This figure illustrates the level of demand on the service requiring social worker oversight and decision making within 24 hours. A detailed breakdown of Wellbeing Contacts / Referrals is provided at **Appendix C** for the Committee's information. This report shows the source and outcome of the 7,476 Wellbeing Contacts / Referrals received by Children's Services during Quarter 1.
19. Performance in relation to the timeliness of assessments (SSWB 24) was 83.0% (523 / 630) compared with 77.3% (614 / 794) in Quarter 4. **Appendix C** details the source and outcome of the 412 Wellbeing Assessments that were completed during the quarter. Please note that the figures for numbers of assessments does not match because the PI requires us to include provision of Advice and Assistance.
20. In addition to the above Wellbeing Assessments, the following assessments were completed during the quarter:
  - a. Child Protection enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 = 379.
  - b. Connected Persons assessments of people with a prior connection to a child or young person to determine whether it is appropriate for them to become a foster carer for the child= 29.
  - c. Age Assessments for Asylum Seeking children = 3.
21. The percentage of children supported to remain living within their family (SSWB 25) was 53.0% (854 / 1,610) compared with 55.2% (894 / 1,619) in Quarter 4. Of the 1,610 children with a Care and Support Plan at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017, 854 were being supported to live at home (i.e. were not being looked after).
22. The percentage of looked after children returned home from care during the year (SSWB 26) was 3.1% compared with 3.2% in Quarter 1 2016/17. Of the 812 children who have been looked after during the year, 25 have returned home. This PI is cumulative, and performance will improve as we progress throughout the year. In addition to the 25 children who were returned home from care, 93 children were in the care of their parents, but remain subject to a Care Order, and 51 children were placed with relative carers.

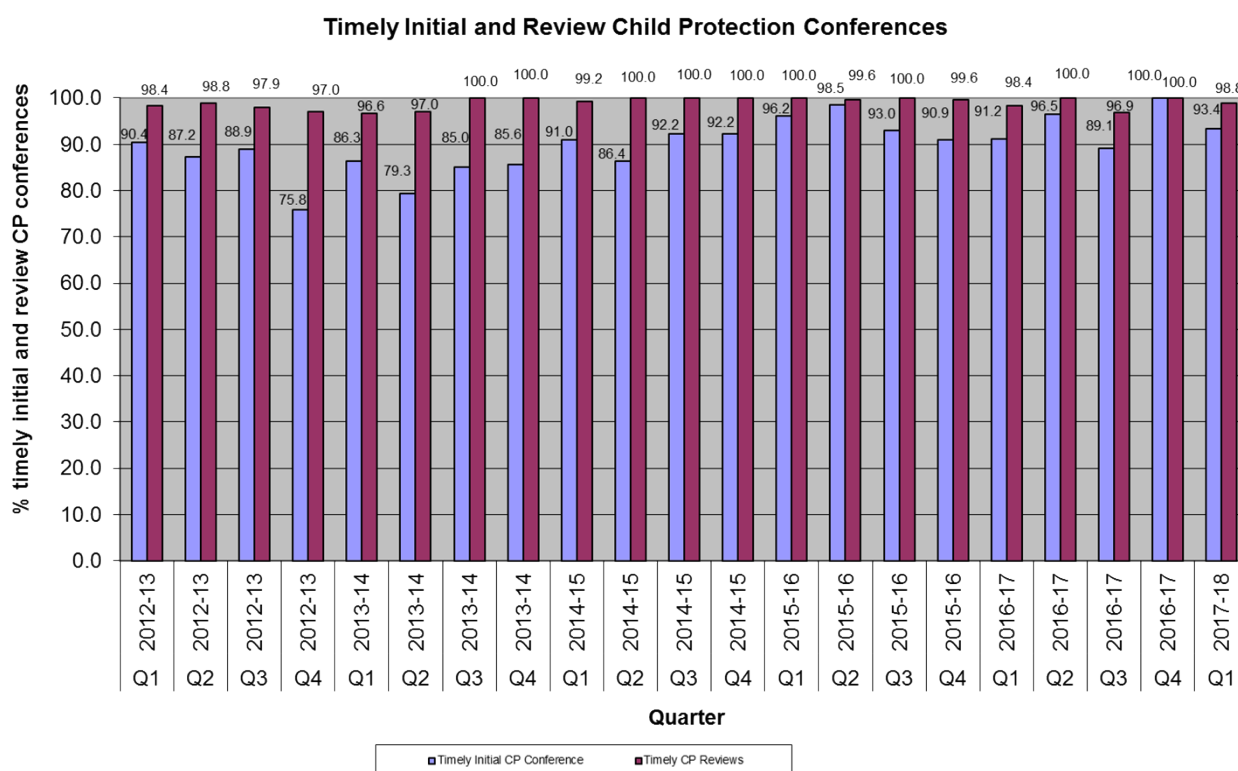
23. The latter two PIs are a welcome measure of the effectiveness of the service in supporting children and young people within their families and are in line with our Corporate Parenting Strategy which seeks to promote family placements.

## B) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

24. The number of children on the child protection register at the end of Quarter 1 was 202 (from 191 at the end of Quarter 4) (CS CPR 4).

25. 93.4% (113 / 121) of initial child protection conferences took place within the 15 working day timescale in Quarter 1 – reducing from 100% (82 / 82) in Quarter 4 (SCC/014) in the context of a 48% increase in the number of initial conferences due.

26. Timeliness of review child protection conferences was 98.8% (163 / 165) in Quarter 1 compared with 100% (186 / 186) in Quarter 4. 1 conference for 2 siblings was late during the quarter. The conference has since been held and the children were de-registered as they became looked after during the quarter.



27. 100% (202 / 202) of children on the child protection register had an allocated social worker at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

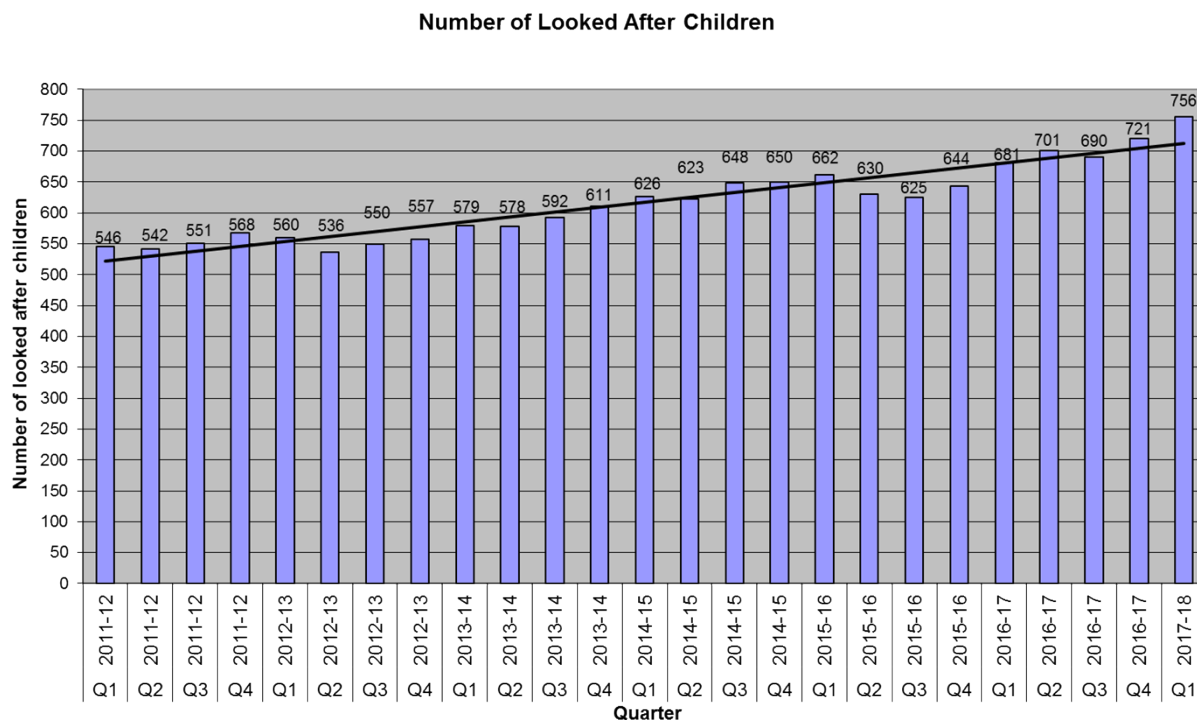
28. The percentage of re-registrations of children on the child protection register (SSWB 27) remained stable at 4.1% (4 / 97) compared with 3.9% (3 / 76) in Quarter 4.

29. The average length of time for children who were on the CPR during the quarter (SSWB 28) was 289 days compared with 259 days in Quarter 4. This is based on children who were de-registered during Quarter 1.

## C) IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN



30. The number of children who were looked after at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (not including those children being looked after as part of a respite care arrangement) was 756 compared with 721 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 (CS LAC 3e). This represents a rate of 10.2 children per 1,000 in Cardiff. Whilst this is above the all Wales rate of 9.0 per 1,000 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016, the rise is consistent with national trends across Wales and the UK. Fluctuation in the number of looked after children is displayed in the graph below.



31. 73.7% (431 / 585) of looked after children were placed with agency providers at the end of Quarter 1 (CS LAC 44), increasing from 75.3% (414 / 550) in Quarter 4. The number of children placed in agency residential placements has decreased to 50 from 52 at the end of Quarter 4.
32. 62.9% (368 / 585) of children in regulated placements were placed in Cardiff at the end of Quarter 1 compared with 63.5% (349 / 550) at the end of Quarter 4 (CS LAC 58). A further 100 children placed outside Cardiff were within 20 miles of their home address. 14 of the children not placed in Cardiff are placed with a relative carer. 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 children who are placed in areas that are closer to their home address than some parts of the city.
33. 95.8% (544 / 568) of statutory reviews for looked after children were held within prescribed timescales in Quarter 1, stable from 94.9% (483 / 509) in Quarter 4 (SCC/021). Of the 24 reviews that were not held on time, 13 were held within a week, 2 within 2 weeks, 2 within 3 weeks, 1 within 4 weeks, 1 within 5 weeks, 1 within 6 weeks and 2 within 8 weeks. 2 were not held as they ceased to be looked after, prior to their review being held. 96.0% (545 / 568) of statutory visits were held in accordance with regulations in Quarter 1 showing an increase from 94.7% (482 / 509) in Quarter 4 (SCC/025).

34. 100.0% (747 / 747) looked after children were allocated to a social worker at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

## **YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE**

35. The numbers of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) has decreased slightly during Quarter 1 to 14 (from 15 in Quarter 4). The 14 young people committed 42 offences, averaging 3 offences per young person, however 3 of the 14 young people committed 40% of the offences.
36. Please see paragraph 15c for more information on the Youth Offending Service.

## **STAFFING**

37. The percentage of social worker vacancies in Quarter 1 increased to 26.0% (Staff 1) and recruitment initiatives are ongoing. Please see paragraph 14d for further information.
38. The average number of days of sickness absence for staff in Children's Services in Quarter 1 2017/18 was 3.6, compared with 2.7 in Quarter 1 2016/17.
39. Children's Services had achieved 91% compliance with initiation objectives for 2017/18 at the time of writing.

## **WAY FORWARD**

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

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

41. 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**

42. 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 and Director of Social Services.

**Tony Young**

**Director of Social Services**

**6<sup>th</sup> September 2017**