
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 31 December 2015.

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 3: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 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 3 PERFORMANCE

10. Quarter 2 was a particularly strong quarter for Children's Services and while there has been progress in Quarter 3, there has also been slippage in some areas.
11. For example, recording of decisions on referrals decreased from 94% in Quarter 2 to 88% in Quarter 3. Timely completion of initial assessments decreased from 92% in Quarter 2 to 83% in Quarter 3. Despite this decrease, the 80% target was met for only the second time since Quarter 3 2007-08. Further detail is included in paragraph 25. There was also a decrease in the percentage of children who were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment (PAM) – from 67% in Quarter 2 to 58% in Quarter 3.
12. Timeliness of initial child protection conferences decreased from 99% to 93%, but is still on course to meet the 92% target. Recording of initial care plans for looked after children decreased to 78% from 81% in Quarter 2, and timeliness of permanence plans for looked after children decreased from 97% to 74%. The reasons for the decrease in relation to permanence plans are currently being investigated.
13. There was improvement in relation to timeliness of core assessments with performance reaching 79% for Quarter 3 (from 75% in Quarter 2). Performance in both November and December was in excess of the 80% target.
14. Timeliness of initial core groups increased to 98% in Quarter 3 from 97% in Quarter 2 and timeliness of child protection reviews was 100%.
15. Work to progress the Directorate's business plan has continued and key areas of progress include:

- a. Implementation of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - there has been significant progress during Quarter 3 including:
 - Project Board / Team established and Project Brief signed off.
 - Governance arrangements agreed; project plan being implemented.
 - MASH accommodation agreed as Cardiff Bay Police Station.
 - Information Sharing Protocol development underway.
 - Operating model agreed.
 - Staff composition agreed for MASH (met with Trade Unions).
 - Vetting process for staff commenced.
 - ICT infrastructure agreed.
 - Information sharing platform / IT solution developments are in process.

 - b. Early Help Strategy - launched during Quarter 3 and is being implemented. The Prevention & Partnership Improvement Project Manager is in post and the following developments made:
 - A pilot of the Joint Assessment Family Framework (JAFF) has commenced which will shape the future JAFF and Family Plan.
 - The Rapid Response pilot was reviewed with a decision to continue the service and expand capacity.
 - Work has commenced with Strategic Estates to identify accommodation for the Adolescent Resource Centre (ARC).
 - Questionnaire has been developed for a market sounding exercise on the respite care element of the ARC.

 - c. Single gateway for young people aged 16 or above to access direct housing, advice and support - went live in Quarter 3, the impact of which will be monitored in Quarter 4.

 - d. Remodelling of Children's Services - decision taken to work with families adopting a Restorative Approach which is consistent with our partners who work within early intervention and prevention services, but to compliment this approach with the Signs of Safety Framework. Proposed structure developed and OM roles are with Hay for evaluation. In relation to services for disabled children – the Change Manager is in post and the project documentation has been developed.
16. There has been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Corporate Plan relating to the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy, work with Education to improve educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers and the Workforce Strategy. The CSE Strategy has been drafted in readiness for sign off by Cabinet in Quarter 4. An interim CSE manager and permanent CSE co-ordinator have been appointed and are in post. Once approved, the interim CSE manager will lead on the implementation of the CSE Strategy. The training needs analysis for Children's Services and partner agencies has been extended to include consideration of the volume of CSE cases, categories of risk and an analysis of perpetrators. This is to ensure that the training provision reflects the complexity of the issues. In relation to work with Education, following concerns raised in Quarter 2 regarding performance in relation to timeliness of Personal Education Plans for looked after children, information available in Quarter 3 shows no improvement to date. New arrangements have been established to provide Operational and Team Managers with information that enables them to proactively monitor PEPs. It is too early to say whether these new arrangements have resulted

in improved performance. Work on the Children's Services Workforce Strategy is ongoing and is on target to be signed off and an implementation plan agreed in Quarter 4.

17. There has also been some slippage in progress against some of the milestones in the Children's Services Plan relating to:
- a. Improving the quality of referrals - the review of the Multi-Agency Referral Form planned for Quarter 2 has been integrated with work being undertaken in relation to the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act. Consideration is being given to adopting the Cwm Taf form which takes account of the National Minimum Core Data Set.
 - b. Safeguarding monitoring requirements - work on the development of a suite of performance measures and mechanisms for reporting continues and is due for completion early in Quarter 1 2016-17.
 - c. YOS collaborative working - the absence of any certainty about the future of Local Authority boundaries until the recent publication of the Local Government (Wales) Bill has been an obstacle to progress. Added to which, the Youth Offending Service (YOS) was subject to a comprehensive external inspection during Quarter 3. The Chief Executive and Police & Crime Commissioner commissioned a review of YOS governance which has now made recommendations for improvement. A refresh of the governance arrangements is now underway with the Chief Executive as Chair of the Management Board. Progress in relation to the merger will be considered in that context.
 - d. Corporate Parenting Strategy - will be considered by Cabinet in Quarter 4 and the launch will follow shortly after.
 - e. Re-commissioning of the Supervised Contact Service - evaluation completed and tender exercise undertaken – decision to award contract expected early in Quarter 4. Currently on target for revised launch date in Quarter 1 2016-17.
 - f. Enhanced Fostering Scheme - following concerns raised in Quarter 2 regarding the capacity of the provider to deliver on its commitments, the decision was taken in Quarter 3 to end the contract due to a lack of suitable placements. The following actions are being taken as a result:
 - o Identification of alternative placements for young people to facilitate return to Cardiff.
 - o Review of future arrangements to meet the needs of this cohort.
 - o Review the financial impact arising from withdrawal of the scheme.
 - g. Welsh bilingual service - operational pressures have made the completion of the Linguistic Assessments more difficult. Managers will focus on completing them in Quarter 4.
 - h. Savings - the month 9 position for Childrens Services shows an overspend of £1.59m (3.4%) 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 £1.1m in relation to the savings target, although work is ongoing to reduce the number of high cost out of area placements.

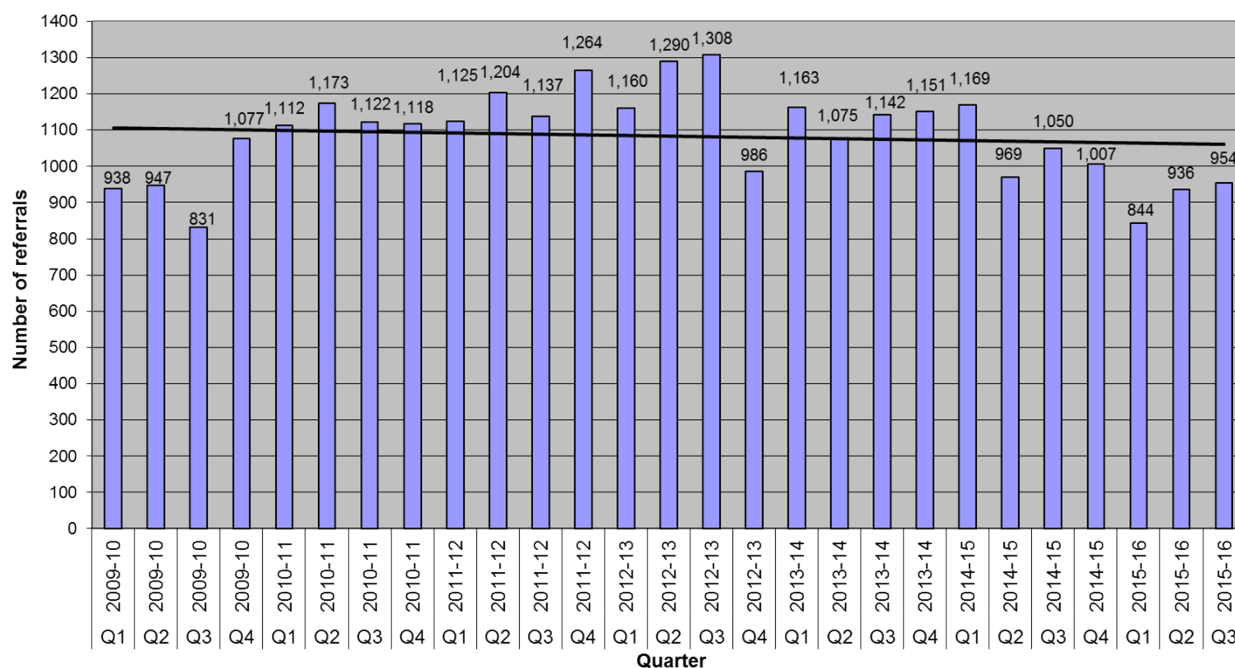
- i. Quality Assurance Framework - milestones associated with the development of the Quality Assurance Framework have been revised due to capacity issues. A Quality Assurance Officer post has been established and the recruitment process is underway. Implementation of the Framework is planned for Quarter 1 2016-17.
18. As a result of the success of the Children's Services Improvement Board in supporting accelerated improvement in response to the Director's 2013 diagnostic, it has been agreed that this can be stood down as previously constituted. This reflects the fact that ongoing improvement work is now better integrated into the corporate Organisational Develop Programme in order to draw on corporate and cross Directorate resources more effectively and will simply continue on a mainstreamed business as usual part of the Social Services Directorate.
 19. The Children's Social Services Improvement Board has been replaced by an Improvement Board for Services to Children. This reflects the greater confidence across the board that the internal change and improvement secured to date enables us to raise our focus toward a much broader and more strategic agenda with key partners. The new Board met for the first time on 8th January and is chaired by the Council's Chief Executive. The Board will also oversee the recently launched Early Help Strategy to ensure effective partner buy in at the earliest stages of the lives of all children.

DETAILED COMMENTARY

A) PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN IN NEED

20. Children's Services received 954 referrals in Quarter 3 (Referrals 1) compared with 936 in Quarter 2. A detailed breakdown of contacts and referrals is provided at **Appendix C** for the Committee's information. This report shows the source of the 7,976 contacts received by Children's Services during Quarter 3, along with the outcome and a summary of the trend over the last 2 years. Similar information is provided for the 954 referrals received during Quarter 3. 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) reduced to 24.3% from 25.2% in Quarter 2.

Referrals to Children's Services



21. In relation to the recording of decisions on referrals (SCC/006), performance declined in Quarter 3 to 88.2% (841 / 954) from 94.1% (881 / 936) in Quarter 2. This is in the context of a 10% increase in the number of contacts (7,280 to 7,976) and capacity issues at Intake & Assessment. This decrease was anticipated following an increase in turnover of both permanent and agency staff during the quarter. Agency staff have been recruited early in Quarter 4 and this will help get performance back on track by year end. The recruitment of staff to permanent Intake & Assessment posts is now being prioritised. 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.

22. There has been significant progress during Quarter 3 towards the implementation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Please see page 3 for further information. Next steps are:
 - Accommodation planning to be developed further with South Wales Police.
 - Agree work schedule for ICT infrastructure implementation.
 - Look at MHub and Guardian re: export / import functionality and performance in line with Information, Advice and Assistance core data set.
 - Children's Access Point (CAP) staff to complete vetting forms.
 - Phased approach for Emergency Duty Team (EDT) and Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) to follow process for CAP staff.

23. Source of referrals – a table summarising the source of referrals to Children's Services during Quarter 3 is included below:

Source of Referrals	Q3
Ambulance Service	0
Central Government Agency	6
Family, Friend or Neighbour	31
Housing	0
Independent Provider Agency	0
LA Housing Dept. or Housing Association	8
Local Authority's own Social Services Department	125
Other Agency	122
Other Departments of Own or Other LA	35
Other Individual	2
Other Social Services Department	0
Other Type	0
Police	227
Primary Health / Community Health	160
Probation Service	40
School	186
Secondary Health	8
Self Referral	1
UK Border Agency	3
Total	954

24. Outcome of referrals – 93.6% (893 / 954) of referrals were allocated to a social worker for initial assessment in Quarter 3 compared with 92.0% (881 / 936) in Quarter 2 (SCC/007a). 3.4% (32 / 954) of referrals were allocated to other grades of worker for initial assessment compared with 0.2% (2 / 936) in Quarter 2. 4.1% (39 / 954) 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.
25. Performance in relation to the timeliness of initial assessments declined in Quarter 3 to 83.2% (691 / 831) from 91.7% (771 / 841) in Quarter 2 (SCC/042a). Following significant improvements in recent quarters, performance has declined steadily in Quarter 3 as a result of capacity issues at Intake & Assessment. However, the 80% target was met for only the second time since Quarter 3 2007-08. Agency staff have been recruited early in Quarter 4 and this will help get performance back on track by year end. The recruitment of staff to permanent Intake & Assessment posts is now being prioritised.
26. 58.0% (482 / 831) of children were seen by a social worker during their initial assessment compared with 66.6% (560 / 841) in Quarter 2 (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 60.5% (503 / 831). 30.7% (255 / 831) children were seen alone by a social worker during their initial assessment (SCC/011b – NSI), compared with 29.5% (248 / 841) in Quarter 2. 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.

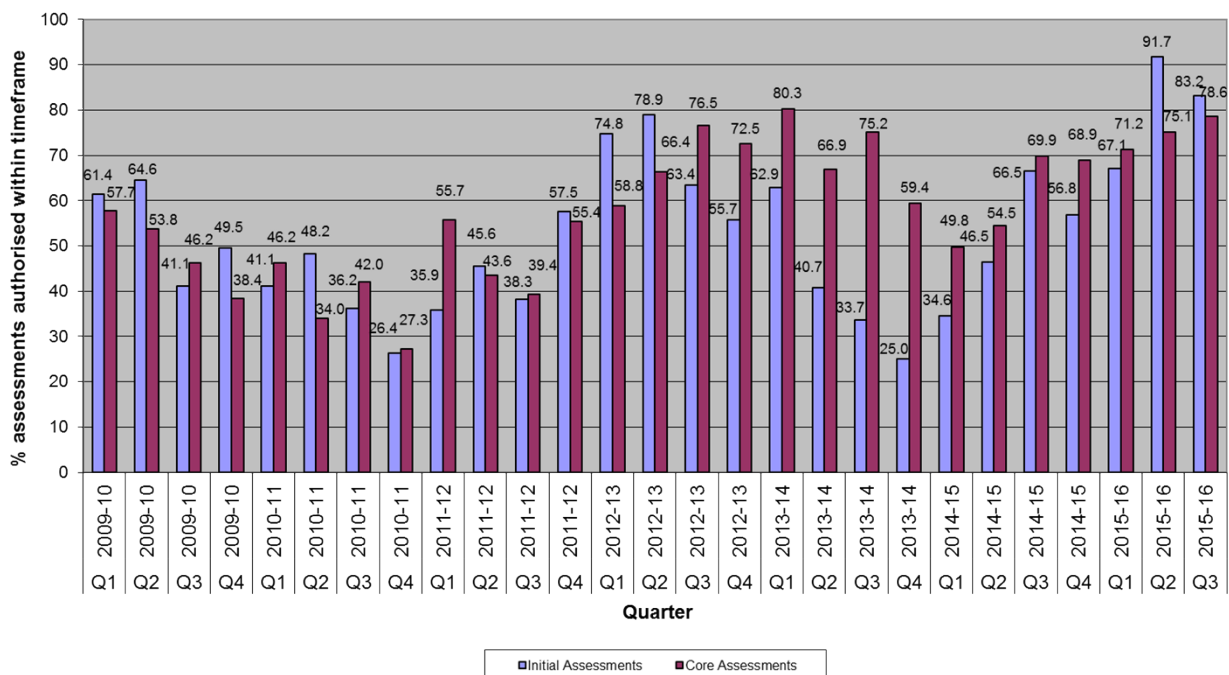
27. The percentage of initial assessments where information regarding ethnicity, religion and first language were recorded during Quarter 3 is as follows:

- Ethnicity – 65.9% (548 / 831)
- Religion – 33.7% (280 / 831)
- First language – 55.5% (461 / 831)

A detailed breakdown of the ethnicities, religions and first languages of children and young people who were subject to an initial assessment during Quarter 3 is available on request.

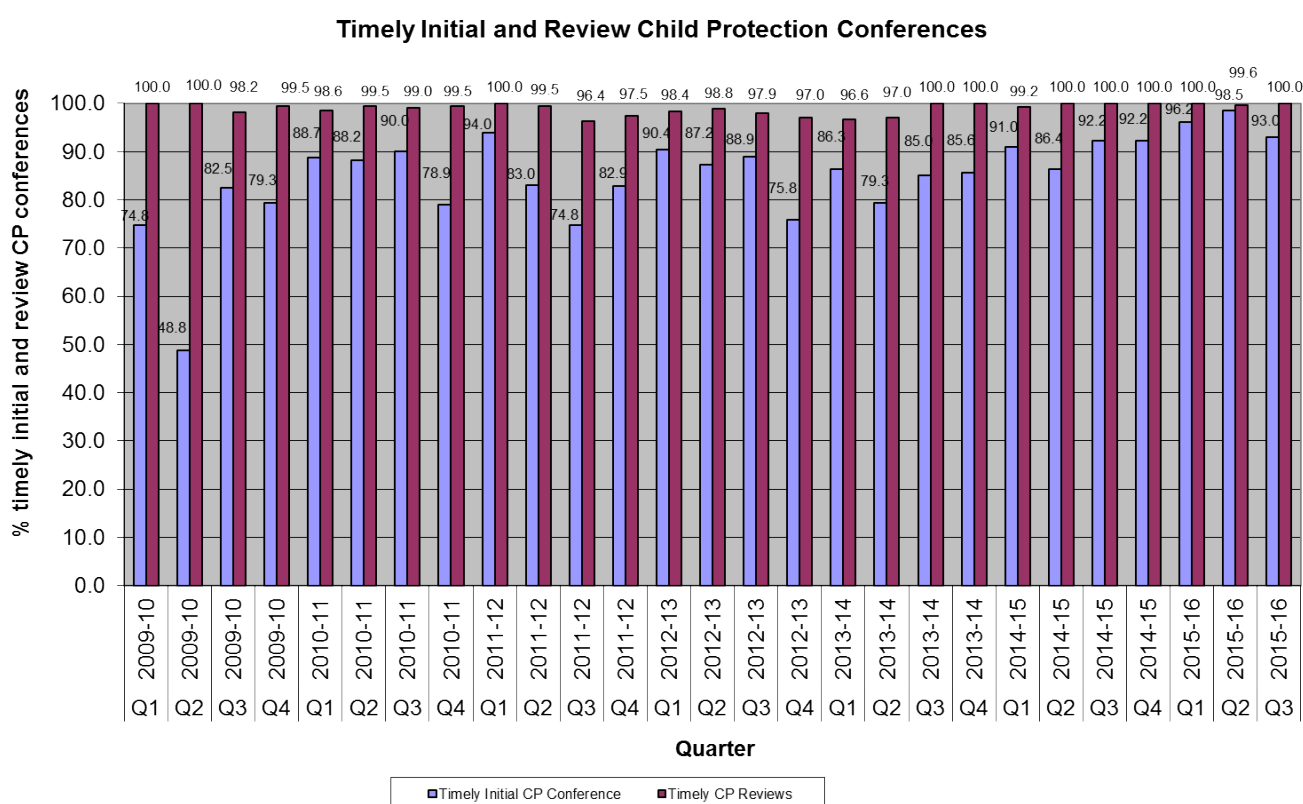
28. Performance in relation to timely completion of core assessments was 78.6% (319 / 406) in Quarter 3 compared with 75.1% (417 / 555) in Quarter 2 (SCC/043a). Performance against this indicator continued to improve in Quarter 3 with both November and December exceeding the 80% target. A graph displaying timely completion of (initial and) core assessments is included below:

Timely Initial and Core Assessments



B) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

29. The number of children on the child protection register at the end of Quarter 3 was 311 (from 322 at the end of Quarter 2) (CS CPR 4).
30. 93.0% (106 / 114) of initial child protection conferences took place within the 15 working day timescale in Quarter 3 – from 98.5% (129 / 131) in Quarter 2 (SCC/014). Performance has decreased slightly in Quarter 3 but remains above target level. The late conferences relate to 8 children from 3 sibling groups – all conferences have since been held.
31. Timeliness of review child protection conferences was 100% (282 / 282) in Quarter 3 compared with 99.6% (230 / 231) in Quarter 2. Performance against initial and review child protection conferences is displayed in the graph below:

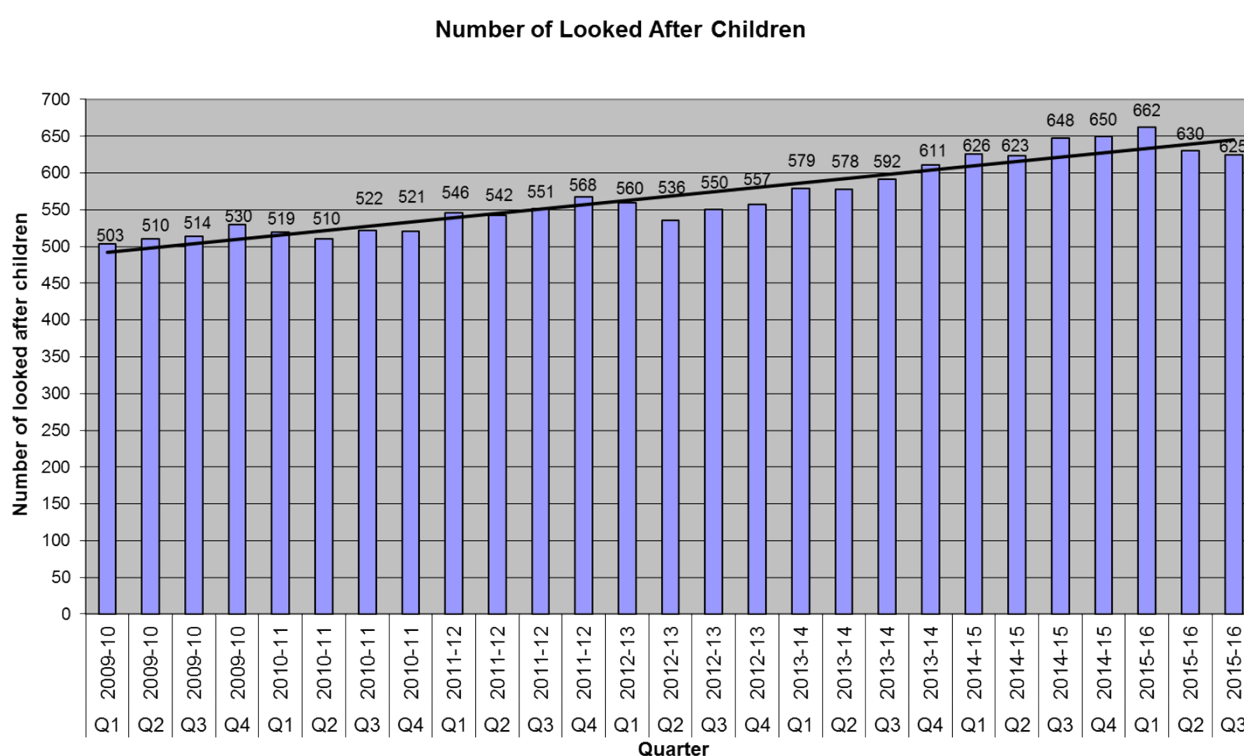


32. Initial core groups took place within the 10 working day timescale in 98.4% (127 / 129) of cases in Quarter 3 compared with 97.4% (114 / 117) in Quarter 2 (SCC/015). Performance continued to improve in Quarter 3 and is currently on track to meet the 93% target.
33. 100% (311 / 311) of children on the child protection register had an allocated social worker at 31st December 2015.
34. The Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy has been drafted in readiness for sign off by Cabinet in Quarter 4. An interim CSE manager and permanent CSE co-ordinator have been appointed and are in post. Once approved, the interim CSE manager will lead on the implementation of the CSE Strategy. The training needs analysis for Children’s Services and partner agencies has been extended to include consideration of the volume of CSE cases, categories of risk and an analysis of

perpetrators. This is to ensure that the training provision reflects the complexity of the issues.

C) IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

35. The number of children who were looked after at 31st December 2015 (not including those children being looked after as part of a respite care arrangement) was 625 compared with 630 at 30th September 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.



36. Initial care plans were in place prior to children becoming looked after in 77.8% (49 / 63) of cases during Quarter 3, compared with 81.3% (52 / 64) in Quarter 2 (SCC/001a). Performance against this indicator has reduced slightly in Quarter 3 and will be kept under close review by managers.

37. 74.1% (40 / 54) of permanence plans were in place by second looked after review in Quarter 3, compared with 96.6% (57 / 59) in Quarter 2 (SCC/001b). The reasons for this decrease are currently being investigated.

38. 70.3% (359 / 511) of looked after children were placed with independent sector providers at the end of Quarter 3 (CS LAC 44), showing no change from 70.3% (359 / 511) in Quarter 2. The number of children placed in independent sector residential placements remained stable at 55.

39. 60.9% (296 / 486) of children in regulated placements were placed in Cardiff at the end of Quarter 3 compared with 61.6% (315 / 511) at the end of Quarter 2 (CS LAC 58). A further 82 children placed outside Cardiff were within 20 miles of their home

address. 2 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.

40. 95.9% (397 / 414) of statutory reviews for looked after children were held within prescribed timescales in Quarter 3 compared with 96.0% (458 / 477) in Quarter 2 (SCC/021). 85.3% (353 / 414) of statutory visits were held in accordance with regulations in Quarter 3 showing no change from 85.3% (407 / 477) in Quarter 2 (SCC/025 – PAM).

41. All looked after children were allocated to a social worker at 31st December 2015.

YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

42. The numbers of First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the Youth Offending Service (YOS) has decreased during Quarter 3 to 29 (from 34 in Quarter 2). This is also a decrease on Quarter 3 2014-15 when there were 32 FTEs.

43. During Quarter 3 a temporary Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Case Manager was appointed and took up post. The post holder will work with young people issued with warnings under ASB legislation as a result of their behaviour within the community, offering comprehensive assessments to young people and their families that inform individually tailored intervention packages.

44. Training for all relevant staff on Child Sexual Exploitation is to be undertaken by the LSCB. To date half of YOS staff have completed the Social Services training course on Human Trafficking.

45. Cardiff Prison Forensic Psychology Department training sessions on working with girls have been completed. The development of a distinct approach to working with girls will commence in Quarter 4.

46. The absence of any certainty about the future of Local Authority boundaries until the recent publication of the Local Government (Wales) Bill has been an obstacle to progress. Added to which, the Youth Offending Service (YOS) was subject to a comprehensive external inspection during Quarter 3. The Chief Executive and Police & Crime Commissioner commissioned a review of YOS governance which has now made recommendations for improvement. A refresh of the governance arrangements is now underway with the Chief Executive as Chair of the Management Board. Progress in relation to the merger will be considered in that context.

STAFFING

47. The percentage of social worker vacancies in Quarter 3 was 21.6% compared with 21.4% in Quarter 2 (Staff 1). The vacancy position has remained stable since Quarter 2, although the position has gradually deteriorated during Quarter 3. The recruitment campaign is ongoing and agreement has been reached that when all vacancies have been filled, Children's Services will continue to recruit to a "pool" of

additional social workers. This will enable the service to maintain consistency of service provision and caseloads whilst managing healthy staff turnover without needing to rely on expensive agency social workers. The ambitious 15% target has been revised to 18% for 31st March 2017. Work on the Children's Services Workforce Strategy is ongoing and is on target to be signed off and an implementation plan agreed in Quarter 4.

48. The average number of days of sickness absence for staff in Children's Services in Quarters 1 to 3 was 11.1, compared with 9.7 in Quarters 1-3 2014-15. In order to improve compliance with the sickness process in Children's Services, the Assistant Director will send a briefing to all managers to reiterate the importance of timely application of the sickness process. Progress will be monitored on a weekly basis at the Children's Management Team and a Human Resources representative will be invited to attend on a monthly basis to assist in the monitoring of the process.
49. 86.0% compliance with finalisation of objective sheets and 81.6% completion of half yearly reviews 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. In order to improve compliance in Children's Services, the Assistant Director will send a briefing to all managers to reiterate the importance of PPDRs to support and develop staff and the impact of this on staff retention. Progress will be monitored on a weekly basis at the Children's Management Team to ensure completion of 6 monthly reviews, and to provide a more timely response to end of year reviews and finalisation of objectives for 2016-17.

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 Cabinet / 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

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 Cabinet / 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
16 February 2016