
Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny
Date: 17 April 2012
Subject: Quarter 3 Performance Report
Report of: Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services
Summary: The report highlights the Quarter Three performance for the Children's Services Directorate.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Head of Partnerships, Performance and Workforce Development
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

1. The Quarterly Performance Report ensures that progress on the delivery of the Council's priorities is monitored.

Financial:

2. There are a number of performance indicators within the full corporate suite that have a financial link.
3. It will be important to consider any financial implications in addressing ongoing areas of under performance.

Legal:

4. Not applicable

Risk Management:

5. Areas of ongoing underperformance are a risk to both service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

6. Not applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

7. This report highlights performance against a range of indicators which seek to measure how services impact across all communities in Central Bedfordshire, so that specific areas of underperformance can be highlighted for further analysis.

8. As such it does not include detailed performance information relating to the Council's stated intention to tackle inequalities and deliver services so that people whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not disadvantaged. The interrogation of performance data across vulnerable groups is a legal requirement and is an integral part of the Council's equalities and performance culture which seeks to ensure that, through a programme of ongoing impact assessments, underlying patterns and trends for different sections of the community identify areas where further action is required to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups.

Community Safety:

9. There are Children's Services indicators that relate to ensuring children and young people are kept safe.

Sustainability:

10. Not applicable.

Procurement:

11. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee notes and reviews Quarter Three performance.

Background

12. The Council's framework for performance management supports the delivery of the Council's priorities.
13. An overview of performance in Quarter 3 2011/12 and Director's summaries are set out below. This is supported by the detailed performance in Appendix A.

Performance Summary

14. The Council's performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people has remained good this quarter. Three of the four key indicators measuring social care assessment, timeliness and review are on track to achieve targets at the end of 2011/12.

15. Performance in relation to the children with three or more placements during the year is off target this quarter at 11.2%, however performance is good compared to average statistical neighbours' performance of 11.8% in 2010/11. Of the 197 looked after children who make up this cohort, 22 have had three or more placements during the year. This is a volatile indicator and can change markedly from quarter to quarter. These children often have complex needs and challenging behaviours and decisions to place a child in an alternative placement are always taken to improve outcomes for the child rather than to meet the target and double checked by managers. It should be noted that a move to adoption is counted as a move.
16. The demand on frontline teams continues to increase with high numbers of children subject to child protection plans. This multi-agency work is resource intensive but regular monitoring ensures that access to services and assessments for children in need and those in need of protection, is maintained, rather than solely pursuing targets.
17. Key Stage 4 2011 standards have risen substantially for the second year in a row. The gap between Central Bedfordshire and similar authorities has been halved and no schools are below the Government's Floor Standards. Central Bedfordshire achieved a 5.2% increase this year.
18. Queensbury Upper School was inspected on the 13 and 14 October and was judged to require special measures. Action is being taken to move the school towards sponsored academy status and Ministerial approval has been given to sponsorship by CfBT Education Trust. The Local Authority Statement of Action has been written and sent to Ofsted. Ashton Middle School was given a Notice to Improve on 9 February 2011. A Local Authority monitoring meeting with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors on 10 November made adjustments to the Local Authority support plan to have a particular focus on enabling the school to become self sustaining, on securing effective leadership of governance and on setting the vision and direction for the school going forward.
19. A verbal update on progress and any significant inspections since the close of quarter three will be provided at the meeting.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Performance Indicators

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Executive 27 March 2012- (Quarter 3 Performance Report)

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands