

REPORT FOR: PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:

11 July 2013

Subject:

Children and Families Performance

Responsible Officer:

Catherine Doran, Corporate Director of Children and Families

Scrutiny Lead

Member area:

Councillor Christine Bednell, Policy Lead Member for Children & Families

Councillor Victoria Silver, Performance Lead Member for Children & Families

Exempt:

No

Enclosures:

Appendix 1 – Education Scorecard

Appendix 2 – Children’s Services Scorecard

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested a report on Children and Families performance at the meeting in March 2013. It was agreed with the chair of O&S that the report should be considered by Performance and Finance Sub Committee.

1.2. Scrutiny members have also asked for information on school place planning. A brief update is provided in the schools’ section of this report. A more detailed members’ briefing session is scheduled for 2nd July and a report on school place planning goes to Cabinet on 18th July.

Recommendations:

1.3. This report is presented for the Committee’s consideration and comment

Section 2 – Report

Introduction

2.1. The Children and Families Directorate is continuing with its work to improve the service quality and outcomes for children and families. We have closed down the post-Ofsted improvement plan and embarked on the next stage of our improvement journey. Our new improvement plan arises from our self-evaluation, our quality assurance activity (including external evaluation, staff and user feedback) and service improvement priorities. It is a high-level systemic plan focusing on what we want to achieve in relation to our arrangements for the protection of children. Our improvement plan has five over-arching improvement themes which sit across child protection services in the directorate, including early help services:

- ⌘ Culture that changes things for children
- ⌘ Working together for children
- ⌘ Quality of casework and managing risk to children
- ⌘ Holding the perspective of the child (ie not just 'voice')
- ⌘ Good systems

2.2. The improvement plan is being supported by strengthened commissioning of local services. The strategic commissioning approach in C&F involves work to identify efficiencies, transform services and to be the engine of change for the whole children and families system. Re-commissioning is taking place across internal and externally-provided services, including short breaks and capital funding for children with disabilities, speech and language therapies, substance misuse services, sexual health and child & adolescent mental health services. The aim is to both meet financial challenges and improve outcomes for children and their families.

Quality Assurance Work 2012-13

2.3. The Child's Journey improvements have been informed by the strengthened Quality Assurance function in C&F. The following reviews took place over the last year:

Children with Disabilities (CwD) Team Audit	Children with Disabilities cases	April 2012
Social Work Supervision Audit	Supervision across Children in Need (CiN), CLA, Access & CwD services	April 2012
CiN1 Team Audit 1	CiN & Child Protection (CP) cases managed by CiN1	April 2012
CLA Audit	Children in Care, almost all in CLA1 or CLA2 Teams	May 2012
CiN1 Team Audit 2	CiN & CP cases managed by	June 2012

	CiN1	
LSCB Early CP Cases Audit	Early stages of child protection cases (multi-agency)	Sept 2012
LSCB Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Evaluation	MASH Service/Team	Sept 2012
CLA1 Team Deep Dive	Children Looked After	October 2012
Early Intervention Service Managers QA Away Day	Early Intervention Service	November 2012
Safeguarding Peer Challenge	Contact, Referral and Access Service; CiN 1 & 2; Documents	December 2012
Independent Reviewing Officer Inspection	Independent Reviewing Officers work with Looked After Children cases	December 2012
LSCB & C&F Action Plans	Response to a 'near miss' case	November 2012
Sixteen Cases as Potential Examples of Good Practice Interim Report	Factors enabling and restraining 16 high-potential cases to become 'good'	February 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Five child protection cases re young children § Multi agency review of supervision and management oversight § Multi agency observation of CP Conferences § Parents' experience of child protection planning § Child's safeguarding journey 	Multi stranded review resulting in a single summary report	March 2013

2.4. The themes emerging from these reviews are all captured in our overarching Child's Journey improvement plan, 2013-14. Resulting changes include the revised multi-agency threshold document, daily MASH meetings, child protection panels and reduction in longer term child protection plans. Training is being provided for staff and managers in systemic thinking – with a focus on systemic input and making a difference to the lives of vulnerable children.

2.5. Work on thresholds has already resulted in more cases going to court and an increase in numbers of looked after children. The service is continuing to increase its use of in-house foster carers to meet this increasing demand.

2.6. The Children and Families Management Team invited the Local Government Association in to do a peer review of our safeguarding arrangements. We wanted an external assessment of improvements at the end of the six-month period following the Ofsted Inspection in

May. The LGA's team undertook the safeguarding peer review in December 2012. The team identified the following improvements:

- *Harrow has shown demonstrable commitment to rapid service improvement and this was apparent at all levels of the organisation. There are some very innovative approaches to service improvement including direct work with children, consultation and direct work by Morning Lane Associates, and the approach being taken to deliver rapid improvement in the Contact Referral and Assessment service.*
- *We found good political and corporate support for the safeguarding agenda and the work of the LSCB.*
- *There is a strong focus on quality assurance led by an experienced and able team who have been able to deliver direct 'hands on' support to services and to work collaboratively with operational teams on developing a more comprehensive approach to evaluating practice. This new approach includes practice observations and interviews as well as case audit and gives a much more in depth view of the quality of work.*
- *The department and its partners work well together at strategic and operational levels. We noted the recent work on strengthening the LSCB as well as the very good evidence of inter-agency working in the case file audits and the practice observations.*
- *People that we met demonstrated a real passion and commitment to Harrow and wanting to do the best possible job for the benefit of its children and families. We saw a workforce that is resilient and keen to progress.*
- *There was some evidence on files of drift and inappropriate case closures in the past although there has been significant improvement and much more pro-activity in recent months.*

(Extract from peer review report)

- 2.7. We are not complacent about the level of the challenge or the distance to travel in terms of improving the quality of practice and securing good outcomes for children. We believe our new approach to service improvement, which focuses relentlessly on the child's journey will enable us to make rapid improvement.

Inspection Results

- 2.8. Children's services are the most inspected area of public services with tough regimes in place for schools, social care and all major areas of provision.
- 2.9. Harrow's rates of good and outstanding schools are amongst the best in England. Since the revised school inspection framework was introduced in September 2012, the number of schools nationally judged 'Outstanding' has fallen significantly.
- 2.10. Harrow schools' Ofsted Inspection judgments of their 'Overall Effectiveness' **as at May 2013** were as follows:

Overall effectiveness	Total number of providers	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate/Special Measures
Harrow schools	62	56% (34 schools)	39% (24 schools)	5% (3 schools)	2% (1 school)
London	2,455	28%	52%	17%	2%
England	21,548	21%	53%	23%	3%

Source: HSIP records for Harrow, Ofsted Dataview for comparators as at 31.12.12

2.11. Recent school inspections:

- ⊗ Pinner Park Junior School - Good
- ⊗ Whitchurch Junior School - Outstanding
- ⊗ Kenmore Park Junior School – Good
- ⊗ Camrose – Good
- ⊗ Alexandra – Outstanding
- ⊗ Stanburn – Good
- ⊗ Aylward – Inadequate, Special Measures
- ⊗ Park High - Outstanding
- ⊗ Woodlands – Outstanding
- ⊗ St John’s CofE – awaiting judgement
- ⊗ Grange Primary – awaiting judgement
- ⊗ Weald Junior – awaiting judgement

2.12. Other judgements (most recent):

- ⊗ Safeguarding and Looked After Children’s Services - Adequate
- ⊗ Fostering Services – Good
- ⊗ Adoptions Services – Good
- ⊗ Private Fostering Services – Good
- ⊗ Honeypot Lane – Good
- ⊗ The Firs - Outstanding
- ⊗ Children’s Centres – Pinner Wood Adequate, Grange Adequate, Cedars Good, Hillview Hub awaiting judgement
- ⊗ Youth Offending (HMIP led inspection) – no grading, substantial improvement required
- ⊗ Childminders – 67% good or outstanding, no inadequate providers
- ⊗ Childcare in PVI settings – 75% good or outstanding, 2 inadequate providers

Performance Challenges in Targeted Services

2.13. The focus on improving the quality of social care has involved review of thresholds to ensure that vulnerability is being identified and appropriate intervention takes place. As a result more children and families are being assessed and more child protection investigations are being carried out. The ‘front door’ is identifying a greater level of need in the local community leading to greater levels of early intervention or targeted services.

2.14. From 2011-12 to 2012-13 there was an increase of 56% in number of core assessments carried out by social workers, a 51% increase in

Section 47 investigations. The activity has been seen to increase further in the early months of 2013-14 – there were 23 and 17 new child protection plans put in place in April and May respectively compared with an average of 12 per month in 2012-13. There have also been 34 new children looked after in the first 2 months of the year compared with an average of 8 per month in 2012-13.

2.15. Comparison of monthly activity for April 2013 with the previous April highlights the increase in Harrow's activity:

Contacts			
Description	Apr-12	Apr-13	% increase
Number of contacts started (month on month)	606	809	33%

Referrals

Description	Apr-12	Apr-13	% increase
Number of referrals started (month on month)	91	231	154%

Assessments

Description	Apr-12	Apr-13	% increase
Number of Initial Assessments completed (month on month)	43	96	123%

Safeguarding workflow

Description	Apr-12	Apr-13	% increase
Number of strategy discussions held (month on month)	34	116	241%
Number of s47 enquires started (month on month)	22	82	273%

2.16. Comparison of 'front door' activity with statistical neighbours shows that Harrow's assessment activity was comparatively low in previous years. While referral rates in 2012 were similar to authorities such as Kingston and Merton, a far lower number of assessments were completed. In the context of the introduction of single assessment, it is reasonable to compare total assessment numbers. The recent increase brings Harrow close to levels in similar authorities.

Statistical Neighbours	No. of Referrals	No. of Initial Assessments	No. of Core Assessments	Total Assessments
Barnet	3,315	3,096	653	3,749
Croydon	4,177	3,414	1,725	5,139
Ealing	3,864	2,672	1,661	4,333
Enfield	2,660	2,387	1,450	3,837
Harrow (2011-12)	1,536	749	601	1,350
Harrow (2012-13 Prov)	1,460	824	937	1,761
Hillingdon	3,625	3,024	1,162	4,186

Hounslow	2,221	1,728	897	2,625
Kingston Upon Thames	1,232	1,169	746	1,915
Merton	1,527	1,143	657	1,800
Redbridge	3,691	3,435	1,608	5,043
Slough	1,871	1,736	822	2,558

2.17. The activity is resulting in increased care proceedings for the most vulnerable children, as the data below shows:

Harrow Care Proceedings			
	% increase	2012/13	2011/12
Legal Planning Meeting	17%	91	78
Pre Proceedings Meeting	18%	20	17
Stage 1: On Issue And At First Appointment	114%	45	21
Stage 2: Advocate's Meeting/Discussions & Cm Conference	100%	28	14
Stage 3: Advocates Meeting And Issues Resolution Hearing	50%	18	12
Stage 4: Hearing	50%	15	10
	43%	217	152

2.18. The rate of repeat child protection plans is down on the previous year. Focused work, early intervention and preventative work is reducing the need for repeat plans for all children in need. This, combined with the very large increase in activity levels described above, demonstrates our commitment to lowering the threshold for social care intervention over the past year. It is likely that we will continue to see sustained higher levels of assessments, child protection plans and children in care.

2.19. A weekly safeguarding meeting is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and monitors caseloads, activity and compliance levels across social care. This session focuses on improving social care, which has recently seen a number of management changes and faces significant workforce issues.

2.20. **Stability of social care workforce** – there is a high number of agency workers currently in the service. Our recruitment and retention strategy was finalised during May. We have recruited an external HR specialist who is project managing this. Our recent recruitment campaign from Feb 2013 resulted in over 70 applications for social work posts and we have appointed 12 social workers, 4 senior practitioners and one service manager. We continue to offer placements for step up to social work students and are offering 6 for

autumn 2013 with a view to those becoming members of staff in due course. We have also expressed interest in the new national graduate programme for social work – 'Frontline' - and are hoping to form a partnership approach to this with our West London Alliance colleagues. Our change proposals are being implemented to realign work flow, to reduce numbers of changes of social worker that children experience, and to enable better quality and more timely work at the front line. We are launching a further recruitment campaign shortly to address posts that were not filled - some senior practitioners and team manager posts - and to ensure ongoing recruitment of social workers. Currently all social workers in the Children Looked After Service are permanent. However, due to the levels of increased activity, and number of open cases including child protection plans we are currently operating with 12 social workers above establishment.

- 2.21. **Social Care Assessments** - Our thresholds for social care intervention were reviewed in early 2013-14 in order to ensure that all vulnerable children receive an appropriate intervention either through Targeted Services or Early Intervention. Oversight and timely completion of assessments has improved significantly for Q4 since the Service Manager Quality Assurance was seconded into this area. 78% of Initial & 81% of Core assessments were completed on time in March 2013. For 2013-14, a single assessment has been introduced in line with the Munro recommendations and the focus on quality of social work practice is being supported with simplified systems and processes. We have appointed a permanent service manager for our front line service who starts in August 2013.
- 2.22. **Stability of placements for CLA** – Both short and long term stability of placements need further focused work to be in line with our statistical neighbours. We have scrutinised reasons for this through forensic examination of individual children. The Divisional Director Targeted Services Division (DD TSD) has set up an Access to Resources Panel which scrutinises all placement moves for authorisation before they are implemented. This panel sits weekly and although it is too early to see impact yet we are confident that the required change in approach to placement moves and entry to care in a planned and purposeful way will improve.
- 2.23. **Outcomes for care leavers** - Rates of care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training (EET) are both below expected levels. A workshop has already been held with the team and managers to develop ownership and action planning to improve our outcomes for care leavers. Care leavers EET is being supported by additional resource to track cases and support young people through the Virtual School.
- 2.24. **Educational outcomes for CLA** - Harrow School Improvement Partnership has been commissioned to support improvements in the CLA virtual school. This project, involving a range of Council and school staff began during Q4 2012-13 and aims to improve attendance, achievement and educational experience for CLA. As we

near the end of the academic year, attendance of CLA shows significant improvement on the previous year. 7 CLA have had a fixed term exclusion compared to 9 last year; these young people are a priority for the Virtual School. There have been no permanent exclusions. Two workshops so far have been held to promote and prioritise the work of the Virtual School and a robust action plan has been developed.

Youth Offending

2.25. The implementation of the improvement plan for the Youth Offending Service continues. The most recent monitoring has shown significant improvement, particularly for assessments. There is work to do to ensure that the quality of plans is good and that timely visits are carried out. The team continues to focus on improving practice and is receiving internal and external support to drive this. Most recent outcomes data shows that first time offending has dropped for Harrow. Reoffending and custody rates remain stable. Education, employment and training rates for offenders are below average – this is a priority for improvement given the high levels of EET in the general population.

Schools and SEN

2.26. Harrow sets challenging targets for education indicators and continues to perform well in comparison with similar authorities. Challenges remain on exclusions and narrowing the achievement gap. In 2013, absence rates in primary schools improved slightly during the spring term; secondary dropped slightly. One academy high school received a judgement of 'requires improvement' around behavioural standards. One primary school and one academy high school are currently below 2012 floor standards. The authority is working with both schools to improve this position.

Targeted Basic Need

2.27. The Government launched the Targeted Basic Need Programme (TBNP) on 1 March to support local authorities with the greatest pressure on school places. There is £982m funding for the two year period 2013-2015. The funding is for new schools (academies and free schools), and to permanently expand good and outstanding schools with high levels of demand in areas of pressure. The funding is in addition to the Government's Basic Need Allocation of which Harrow received £14.69million over the two years 2013/14 – 2014/15.

2.28. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has also made £80m available to address 16-19 demographic growth in schools and colleges. Both funding streams can be used to increase provision for pupils with special education needs. 16 bids in total were submitted on 30 April. DfE announcements are expected in June.

School Place Planning in Harrow

2.29. The school population has been increasing in Harrow and there is current pressure on primary school places (which will impact on secondary schools in future) and on special school places. To address the pressure on school places:

- § Cabinet agreed the Phase 1 Primary Expansion Programme in June 2012, and as a result, 9 schools on 7 sites will be permanently expanded. In November 2012 a proposal to bring forward a second phase of expansions was agreed. This will be taken to Cabinet in July 2013
- § A consultation was undertaken on special schools and SEN placement planning framework in Autumn 2012 including options to increase capacity in Harrow.
- § For September 2013, an additional 17 reception classes will open including the 8 permanent expansions (the above plus Krishna Avanti).

Development of Phase 2 Primary Expansion Programme

2.30. The pupil population in Harrow has been increasing and is projected to continue to do so. The availability of places is also changing. For example:

- § Avanti House primary phase will not be in Harrow from September 2014 and therefore a further two forms of entry are now required.
- § It is increasingly difficult to secure agreement from schools to open bulge classes for a variety of reasons. There is a preference for permanent expansion; spaces that would have been available from the change in age of transfer have either been used for bulge classes to date or accommodation has been reconfigured to improve the learning environment, and therefore there are capital requirements to reinstate spaces.
- § Some schools that have potential for expansion are not in the right location to meet demand.
- § There may be some issues that arise in relation to expectations about school size arising from the need for schools in Harrow to become larger than has historically been the case.

2.31. In the light of the current position and the potential for funding through TBNP, it is proposed that a larger number of permanent expansions are brought forward across Harrow. A target for the second phase of 13 additional permanent reception classes, 10 community schools and 3 voluntary aided schools is being considered to be delivered by September 2015 or earlier. If these are implemented, when the Kodak primary school is opened (a further 3 forms of entry), expected to be in September 2015 or 2016, there will be 24 additional reception classes from the September 2009 baseline.

2.32. It is proposed, subject to agreement by schools, that the statutory process to permanently expand schools will commence in Autumn 2013 with an implementation date of September 2014. This will include those schools that have been included in the Priority Schools

Building Programme and those that will be funded from DfE Basic Need allocations as well as those included in the TBNP bid.

Secondary

2.33. The demand for secondary school places peaks in September 2021 with a small shortfall of places starting in September 2016. The demand for secondary school places falls outside the timescale for the TBN funding. However, 2 bids were included - one around a proposal for the Teachers Centre site, to be developed in partnership with Whitefriars and high schools.

Special Schools and Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

2.34. A consultation was undertaken in autumn 2012 on the Special School and SEN Placement Planning Framework which included options to increase provision in Harrow for pupils with special educational needs. Applications will be included in line with the options in the Framework.

2.35. Options to increase capacity within Kingsley and Shaftesbury Schools are being considered. These schools are also working with Harrow and Stanmore Colleges to explore options for increasing provision for 16-25 year olds. TBNP bids were submitted to increase capacity at Kingsley, Shaftesbury and Woodlands. A bid for 16-24 provision was submitted to the Demographic Growth Fund.

2.36. The Special School and SEN Placement Planning Framework also includes options to increase resourced provision on mainstream school sites and three bids were submitted for the TBNP.

2.37. The report on the next phase of the transformation of the special needs transport service was considered by Cabinet on 11 April. The decision of Cabinet was subject to call-in. A call-in committee on 29 April upheld one of the three grounds that were presented to the committee, relating to consultation with the trades unions, the workforce and service users. A further report is due to go to Cabinet recognising the need to consult more fully.

Early Intervention

2.38. The Early Intervention Service is continuing lead on implementation of the Families First project. The service has worked with 120 high need families under this programme (which is known nationally as 'Troubled Families') during 2012-13. Measurement of outcomes against the baseline is currently taking place and the first report to DCLG is due in July 2013. Additional families are being identified for intervention during 2013-14, with a further 200 families expected to be involved.

2.39. To support improving school attendance and reducing persistent absence, EIS has piloted an Attendance Intervention Model and the use of Education Penalty Notices with a number of Harrow schools during this academic year. The project is currently being reviewed and streamlined ready for a September roll-out across the borough. Whilst

prosecution of parents is seen by EIS and schools as a last resort, pilot schools have been encouraged that this has become a genuine option, as previously legal action rarely took place.

2.40. Children's Centres continue to deliver services to Harrow's youngest children through the hub and spoke model, which sees 16 settings continue to operate to maximise the reach to Harrow's communities. Nearly 15,000 families have registered with our Children's Centres. 3,908 different Harrow families accessed Children's centre services from January - March 2013 . 45% of these families live in the most deprived areas of Harrow. 75% of children attending during Q4 were from BME groups.

2.41. From Jan - March 2013 1,475 families accessed Early learning & Play groups, 1,343 families accessed Health Visitors, 609 families accessed Midwives, 130 families accessed ESOL courses and 149 families accessed Healthy Eating courses. These are just some of the activities - many more activities are held at centres.

Additional Issues and Highlights from Performance Scorecard

2.42. Note that all social care indicators are currently provisional, submission to DfE is due before end July:

- § Year end positions on timeliness of contacts, referrals and assessments reflect the significant drop in performance earlier in the year – see above
- § Only 6 Child Protection Plans (CPP) have been in place for more than 2 years. This is a major improvement from the peak of 30 cases in 2011 and robust monitoring and action on CPP is now being demonstrated
- § Although incidences of repeat CPP are above target, the rate is significantly down on the previous year
- § Timeliness of adoptions is 100% which is an excellent result. We currently have 9 children in adoptive placements who should be formally adopted in the next year. We are also likely to place more children for adoption this year and increase our numbers of children being placed permanently with family members under a Special Guardianship Order.
- § The result on CLA reviews within timescale is disappointing compared with prior years and is a priority for improvement
- § A process for initial health assessments of CLA has been agreed with health partners but timescales are not yet being met
- § Absence of CLA – major reduction on previous year, but continued reduction in absence is a priority for the virtual school
- § 7 CLA have had a fixed term exclusion, significantly lower than this time last year but also a priority for the virtual school. There have been no permanent exclusions
- § Our numbers of children looked after who are placed more than 20 miles away has significantly reduced on previous years which is also a very positive change. We are now performing well above our statistical neighbours on this indicator. Placing children closer

to their home borough means it is easier to ensure robust care planning for their health and education arrangements, and being closer to home means they are likely to have better arrangements for contact with family.

- § From the public health scorecard, 12 week booking for maternity is below target – this has been raised with the CCG
- § Immunisations continue to be a challenge for local GP practices – work is focusing on new arrivals and hard to reach families

2.43. See attached scorecards for full details of C&F performance indicators.

Implications of the Recommendation

Financial Implications

2.44. The Children's social care budgets currently face pressure due to the 12 social workers above establishment. The service is looking to manage this pressure within the overall budget.

2.45. The school place planning financial implications are covered by grant i.e. DSG and bulge classes funding form part of the expansion programme and are supported from capital funding. The local authority is currently waiting to hear from the DfE on outcomes of some bids.

Performance Issues

2.46. Integral to the report

Environmental Impact

2.47. None

Risk Management Implications

2.48. No new implications. Risks relating to poor performance and inspections are already included in the C&F risk register and are reviewed and updated each quarter.

Equalities Implications

2.49. None

Corporate Priorities

2.50. Supporting and protecting people who are most in need

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Patricia Harvey



on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 28 June 2013

Name: Sarah Wilson



on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer

Date: 28 June 2013

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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Background Papers: Performance Scorecard 2012-13