

London Borough of Bromley
Performance Management Framework
Children's Services

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bromley Council is ambitious to improve the quality of services it delivers directly or commissions from external suppliers and to increase the value for money achieved for local residents and taxpayers through better use of the public funds the council receives. These ambitions require a clarity of purpose for the council and a relentless focus on performance, continuous improvement and innovation.
- 1.2 This document provides a framework for managing performance of the council's services for children, in particular for those children vulnerable to poorer outcomes than their peers. It is in line with the development of a similar framework for adults' services and of performance management arrangements more broadly across the council's services.

2. Corporate Context

- 2.1 Since 2010, with measures such as the abolition of the Audit Commission, the ending of the Comprehensive Area Assessment regime and the Localism Act, significant external drivers of performance management in local authorities have been removed. Councils now have greater autonomy in the ways in which they manage their own performance and demonstrate accountability to local residents, although some council services, particularly those provided to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, remain closely scrutinised and regulated by central government.
- 2.2 At the same time, councils face major challenges including significant reduction in central government funding and the increasing demand for services as a result of population growth and the impact of other demographic factors such as an ageing population and an increase in the numbers of vulnerable individuals and families. Public expectations of services provided by local authorities also continue to increase.
- 2.3 At a local level, in the face of these challenges, Bromley Council needs to plan effectively and increase the efficiency and impact of the services it delivers and commissions. Robust performance management is essential if the council is to succeed in meeting its challenges.

3. Children's Services

- 3.1 The council has a wide range of statutory responsibilities to deliver or commission universal, targeted and specialist services for children, young people and their families. Services need to be focused on improving outcomes and life chances for young people to meet the ambitions which are articulated in the current 'Building a Better Bromley' strategy as:

'we will ensure the best possible future for the children and young people of Bromley, with a clear focus on supporting the most vulnerable...'

- 3.2 These ambitions require the input of a number of different services working together towards common aims and objectives. Outside the council, partner agencies include the police service, NHS Trusts and the community and voluntary sectors. Within the council, the key services with responsibilities for children are found within the ECHS department's Children's Social Care, Education, Housing and Public Health Divisions. Young people with continuing social care needs into adulthood receive transitions services from the Adults Social Care Division.

- 3.3 In 2016, Bromley's Children's Social Care Services were rated as inadequate by Ofsted. Within its broader judgements, Ofsted identified that senior leaders and managers did not have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the services provided to vulnerable children and their families and lacked sufficient understanding of the issues to take appropriate action to improve performance and practice. Performance management information that existed was not being used effectively and quality assurance arrangements were inadequate.
- 3.4 Following the inspection, an external commissioner was appointed to support the rapid improvement needed to improve services. An independently chaired multi-agency 'Children's Services Improvement Governance Board' was established and a 'Children's Services Improvement Plan' is being implemented. A core element of the plan is encapsulated in the 'Journey to Excellence' strategy, through which the new management team has sought to provide vision, a clear direction for service improvement, a culture of shared ambition and leadership at all levels and strengthened partnerships across key agencies.
- 3.5 There is a clear focus on improving both the quality of practice and also the tools to judge improvement woven throughout the supporting 'Roadmap to Excellence' documentation. Key performance improvement tools identified include the Director's 'Line of Sight', connecting the most senior management to frontline practice; more effective use of performance monitoring and quality assurance information at all levels; and stronger engagement with staff and service user views and perspectives.
- 3.6 Bromley has committed to ensuring that performance management and quality assurance processes are made more rigorous, robust and analytical and that senior leaders and elected members provide critical challenge based on accurate, analytical performance reports. Performance monitoring and scrutiny at all management levels is being tightened to ensure it is used effectively to drive improvements. This Performance Management Framework is designed to more comprehensively support the stronger focus on the performance of children's services the council has committed to adopt.
- 3.7 Since Ofsted's inspection and as part of the post inspection service improvement implementation, children's services partner agencies agreed the need to strengthen the governance and delivery of partnership practice in the borough. In addition to strengthening the governance role of the existing LSCB, a new Children's Executive Board has been established which will put in place and implement a new Children and Young People Plan for Bromley. This plan will define priorities for children's services for the coming years, measurable objectives and a suite of key performance indicators 'owned' by partner agencies.
- 3.8 The introduction of formal business planning in the EHCS department is a further important step in defining the priorities, objectives and targets against which the performance of services will be judged going forward. Each division will have its own business plan, not only capturing the service improvement priorities identified through the Ofsted inspection process but also the other local priorities for children's services, including those within the current 'Building a Better Bromley' strategy, as defined by the Executive, Portfolio holders, partnership governance bodies and those emerging from continuing needs analysis.
- 3.9 Strengthened performance management arrangements need bespoke capacity to service and sustain the processes and tools required. In early 2018, a review of the

department's Strategy, Performance and Business Support Division will be completed to ensure its fitness for purpose to support improved strategic and operational planning and performance management.

4. What is Performance Management?

4.1 In simple terms, performance management is defined as:

“taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes for users and the public better than they would otherwise be” (IDeA 2006)

4.2 This definition clearly indicates that performance management is an active pursuit designed to make a difference rather than simply the passive monitoring of performance, important though the monitoring process is in the overall performance system.

4.3 Effective performance management is characterised by:

- A clear understanding of needs achieved through rigorous needs analysis
- Explicit aims, objectives, priorities and targets for services
- Clear plans, strategic and operational in nature, informing service delivery
- Relevant performance measures enabling judgements to be made on whether services are achieving what is required
- Performance reporting at the right levels to enable appropriate decisions and actions to be taken in a timely manner

4.4 These characteristics can be summarised thus:

Understand.....Plan.....Do.....Review.....Revise



4.5 Effective performance management is predicated on achieving clarity of the differing roles and responsibilities of individuals in the performance management system and on the development of a performance culture across council and partner agencies through which individuals share improvement ambitions, are motivated to achieve

excellence, are supported and resourced accordingly and are thereby held to account for their performance.

5. Performance Management Responsibilities

5.1 Performance is everyone's business in Bromley. The council's elected members, managers and staff share responsibility for the governance, management and delivery of services and for striving for continuous improvement and excellence. Users of services and residents rightly expect high levels of performance and accountability from the council.

5.2 The differing but complementary roles and responsibilities of the council's elected members and officers in respect of performance management are summarised below:

5.3 **Elected Members** act in the public interest, working for the benefit of the borough as a whole. The Executive and Portfolio Holders are responsible for the administration of the council's affairs and set the policy context for council services. The Leader of the Council directs the Chief Executive who is accountable, with the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), to the Leader and respective Portfolio Holders for the effective delivery of council services.

5.4 Portfolio Holders have responsibility for:

- Agreeing with senior officers the strategic direction of services and performance improvement priorities
- Developing and overseeing relevant Portfolio Plans
- Providing strategic oversight of the effectiveness of performance management arrangements in council services
- Holding senior managers – The Executive Directors and Departmental Leadership Teams (DLT) – to account for the performance of services for which they are responsible

5.5 The Policy Development and Scrutiny Committees (PDS) provide support and challenge to the Executive and Portfolio Holders through:

- Contributing to the development of council plans for services
- Examining whether plans are being implemented effectively
- Receiving reports on performance, asking challenging questions about areas of underperformance, and making recommendations accordingly to the Executive

5.6 In Bromley the core children's services fall within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families and the Education Children and Families Select Committee and its Budget and Performance Sub-Committee. The housing, public health and adults social care services relevant to children fall within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services and the Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee.

5.7 **The Corporate Leadership Team (Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors)** is responsible for ensuring council services perform effectively and achieve objectives set by central government, relevant regulators and the council's Executive through:

- Advising Elected Members on the setting of the strategic direction and performance improvement priorities for council services
 - Setting appropriate outcome based targets and performance standards
 - Receiving strategic level performance reports and acting on areas of underperformance
 - Ensuring that there is robust performance management and a strong performance culture embedded across all council services
- 5.8 In Bromley, the relevant services for children fall within the remit of the Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services and the Directors of Children’s Social Care; Education; Adults Social Care, Housing and Public Health.
- 5.9 **Departmental Management Teams and Divisional Directors** are responsible for the day to day performance management of operational and strategic services through:
- Promoting and embedding a strong performance management culture across individual council departments
 - Holding Heads of Service to account for the performance of their areas of responsibility
 - Monitoring service performance and standards across all service areas
 - Ensuring performance management is integrated into business and service planning and into the appraisal and supervision processes for individual staff
- 5.10 In Bromley, all relevant children’s services fall within the remit of the Education, Care and Health Services Department.
- 5.11 **Heads of Service and Team Managers** are responsible for managing and improving performance effectively within their particular service areas by:
- Promoting the performance management culture within specific service areas
 - Regularly receiving and analysing data and intelligence in respect of the performance of specific services and staff
 - Identifying performance improvement requirements of services and staff and planning accordingly
 - Implementing service improvement plans
- 5.12 **All Staff** have their own responsibilities in respect of performance management and service improvement through:
- Maintaining awareness of relevant council and departmental priorities
 - Being aware of their own performance against relevant objectives and targets, and occupational or professional standards where they exist
 - Being committed to meeting personal and service improvement needs
 - Adhering to data quality principles and complying with data entry requirements of their individual roles

6. Performance Management Arrangements for Children's Services

- 6.1 **Needs Analysis** enables the understanding of current levels of performance and the need for performance improvement and development. It provides managers with information on demand for services, the efficiency of services currently delivered and their effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes. In undertaking needs analysis, service gaps and resourcing issues may also be identified. Needs analysis should be used, therefore, as a key tool in informing service commissioning.
- 6.2 Needs analysis is undertaken by a number of sources – eg by the Strategy, Performance and Business Support Division or as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) led by the Public Health Division. Needs analysis is also undertaken by ECHS commissioning staff as part of the routine commissioning cycle.
- 6.3 **Planning** enables needs analysis to be translated into specific aims, objectives, targets and actions. Plans exist at a number of different levels:
- 6.4 Strategic level plans include:
- Building a Better Bromley
 - Portfolio Holder Plans
 - Bromley Children and Young People Plan
 - Bromley Safeguarding Children Board Plan
- 6.5 Operational level plans include:
- ECHS Department Business Plan
 - Divisional Business Plans
 - Heads of Service/Thematic Plans
- 6.6 All levels of plans contain SMART targets and relevant performance indicators.
- 6.7 **Performance reporting and review** takes place routinely by different levels of management and governance of children's services. Performance reports contain datasets of quantitative, qualitative and outcome performance indicators and measures relevant to the audience receiving the reports.
- 6.8 Examples of quantitative indicators include numbers of children referred to CSC services; numbers of requests for EHC plans for children with SEN and disabilities; numbers of assessments undertaken; numbers of children looked after; numbers of homeless families – essentially measures of demand for services.
- 6.9 Qualitative indicators include the proportion of assessments, care proceedings, adoptions, EHC Plans completed within nationally prescribed timescales; proportion of homeless decisions made within 30 days; number of days families spend in temporary accommodation – essentially measures of the efficiency of services.
- 6.10 Outcome measures may include numbers of children who remain at home following the receipt of early help services; numbers of young offenders who avoid custody following YOS interventions; numbers of adoption breakdowns; numbers of children on second or subsequent child protection plans, numbers of care leavers in education or training – these indicate the effectiveness of services.
- 6.11 Performance reports are designed to be useful and user-friendly with trajectory, trend, polarity and benchmarking information provided. Increasingly, data items are linked and triangulated to support practice e.g. linking data on children missing from

home, missing education and those vulnerable to sexual exploitation. There is a commitment to further develop reporting on inter-connections between datasets and the level of analysis of data provided.

- 6.12 Performance indicators are, however, only indicators of performance and to be used appropriately need to be supported by additional performance information and intelligence which may include benchmarking against other authorities; results of external inspection or peer review; findings of internal audit and quality assurance processes; staff feedback and, importantly, feedback from service users. Performance reports are, therefore, increasingly analytic in nature, designed to readily focus the attention of operational services, managers and governance bodies.
- 6.13 It is worth repeating that performance information is not simply presented to ‘tell the story’ and be monitored but, more importantly, to enable appropriate support and challenge and decisions to be made which ‘make a difference’ to performance and outcomes for service users.
- 6.14 Scheme for performance reporting and review is as follows:

Governance and Corporate Management

- CLT and the Executive will receive a monthly top level performance report which focusses on the Building a Better Bromley themes. Specific priorities have been identified in respect of children and young people including safeguarding children in schools and the community and ensuring the health and wellbeing of those children vulnerable to poorer outcomes than their peers.
- The Executive Director provides a routine update on children’s services improvement and strategic issues arising at each meeting of the Executive.
- The Executive Director currently commissions an annual independent ‘Assurance’ report on the performance of children’s services against the council’s statutory responsibilities.
- The Portfolio Holders for Education Children and Families and for Care Services will receive monthly reports on a larger set of indicators in respect of services for or affecting children. The Portfolio Holders will also receive monthly Accountability Reports from Divisional Directors. Together, these reports support the executive role of the Portfolio Holders.
- The Education Children and Families Select Committee (via the Budget and Performance sub-committee) will receive quarterly reports on an agreed suite of key performance indicators in respect of children’s services. These reports will act as a ‘health check’ on performance of these services to enable elected members to be appropriately sighted on performance issues.
- The Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families provides a regular update report to the Select Committee on the performance of children’s services.
- The Portfolio holder is a member of Bromley’s Children’s Services Improvement Governance Board and Safeguarding Children Board
- The Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families with the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services meet quarterly with the Independent Chair of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board. This meeting enables the Chair to

hold the council to account for its leadership of the local safeguarding children 'system' and raise performance issues with the council's leaders.

- The council has an annual programme of internal audit which routinely includes elements of children's services. Audits examine compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and the council's own policies and procedures, providing further information in respect of performance and, in particular, the value for money, of council services.

Partnership Governance

- There are a number of key governance structures which oversee partnerships of agencies working with children and families. Performance reports will routinely be provided to each meeting of the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board; Children's Executive Board; Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Bromley Board. These reports will reflect the partnership nature of much of the work with vulnerable children and their families and promote the shared accountability across agencies for the improvement of services and outcomes.
- Chairs of these partnership groups meet on a quarterly basis to identify cross cutting issues, opportunities and challenges.
- Partner agencies in the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board undertake annual Sec 11 self assessments in respect of their contributions to local safeguarding practice and outcomes. These form the basis of challenge meetings held by the Independent Chair.
- The Independent Chair currently provides central government (DfE) with a quarterly report on the functioning and effectiveness of the Safeguarding Children Board.
- There are annual thematic reports provided to a range of governance bodies which provide 'snapshots' on performance of key services. These reports include the annual Safeguarding Children and School Standards reports. Specific reports on Bromley's children looked after and care leavers are also provided to the council's Corporate Parenting Board.

Departmental Management

- The ECHS Departmental Leadership Team will receive more detailed monthly reports on performance from Divisional Directors. These reports will focus on the Divisional Business Plan priorities and targets for the ECHS Divisions. The reports enable the department's most senior managers to determine the progress in implementing Business Plans and to take decisions needed to ensure these plans are 'on track' for delivery. They will also assist the identification of any cross cutting issues in respect of services to children and their families.

Children's Social Care Services

- A comprehensive monthly 'Performance Digest' is provided to the Director of Children's Social Care Services and the Divisional Senior Leadership Team. This digest is key in terms of the effective operational management of children's social care services. It enables performance issues to be highlighted and dealt with in timely manner. Cross cutting issues across the division's services can also be readily identified.

- The Performance Digest is used to inform monthly 'Performance Surgeries' held by the Director of Children's Social Care Services with individual Heads of Services. This process promotes the accountability of lead officers for individual services and the formal communication of key performance issues to the Director.
- The digest is used by Heads of Service and team managers with their staff groups to support the effective day to day management of these services.
- Weekly 'data days' are also held with team level reports provided to individual team managers. Detailed information is reviewed with team members enabling performance and data quality issues to be identified and resolved in a timely way. This process promotes the ownership of, and accountability for, performance at team manager and individual practitioner levels.
- Since the Ofsted inspection of 2016, 'Risk Matrix' reports on a smaller number of key performance indicators have been provided to senior managers and, onwards, to the Children's Services Improvement Governance Board. These reports provide information on critical areas of practice and include data on volumes and caseload; referral and assessment; plans for children; social worker visits and escalations of concerns of Independent Reviewing Officers and CP Conference Chairs. While primarily designed to provide re-assurance to the regulator and to central government that service improvement is robust, these reports also support the discipline needed to ensure that improvement is sustained.
- The Division's quality assurance measures include regular case auditing which provides managers and practitioners with information on the quality of casework and the application of professional standards in social work practice in Bromley. Audit findings are fed back to those involved in individual cases and thematic issues can inform practice development and training programmes. The division also leads the multi-agency audit programme commissioned by the Bromley Safeguarding Children Board.

Education Services for Children

- The majority of the early years and school provision in Bromley is delivered by the private and independent sectors and by Academies. Nevertheless, the council retains duties and powers to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for the borough's children and young people.
- The council must also seek to ensure that early years settings and schools engage within the partnership approach required in respect of early help, children in need and safeguarding services for children vulnerable to poorer outcomes.
- Demographic information is routinely analysed in respect of the demand for childcare, early education and school places in the borough. This information is used by early years managers to inform their influencing and management of the local childcare market and by pupil place planners to enable the council to meet its sufficiency duty for school places.
- Formal educational attainment, attendance and exclusion data on Bromley's children and young people is available on an annual basis and is analysed and reported in the annual School Standards Report. This high level report provides a 'snapshot' of the performance of Bromley's early years settings and schools.

- A monthly Performance Digest provides more timely data and information to the Education Division's Senior Leadership Team. The Digest provides year to date information on a range of key indicators including early years Ofsted ratings, access of 2+yr olds to free early education, safeguarding training in the early years sector; schools Ofsted ratings, admissions and school attendance, absence and exclusion data; information on children home educated and missing education; penalty notices for non-attendance; and data on the EHC assessment and planning process for children with SEN.
- Information from these reports, along with the more detailed intelligence held by teams within the Education Division, is used by managers in the Education Division to deploy and manage performance of their staff.
- There is routine liaison across the Education and Children's Social Care Divisions in respect of practice and performance issues affecting vulnerable children, for example in the implementation of the SEND reforms, the operation of the Virtual School for Looked After Children or in respect of specific safeguarding issues in schools. Operational managers and Heads of Service are empowered to resolve such issues wherever possible, with escalation to Directors when necessary.
- The Education Director and representatives of the borough's primary, secondary and special schools sit on the key multi-agency governance bodies for children's services including the Safeguarding and Children's Executive Boards.

Housing and Children's Services

- The Housing Division has a key role in supporting the council's work with vulnerable children including fulfilling duties towards homeless families and homeless young people aged 16+ and in providing appropriate housing options for Bromley's care leavers.
- High level performance data including homelessness applications, acceptances, use of temporary accommodation, families and young people in priority need categories is provided to the Division's Senior Leadership Team on a monthly basis.
- A wider range of more detailed performance indicators eg numbers of young people in floating support accommodation; numbers of care leavers provided with starter or other tenancies, is available to Heads of Service and operational managers to inform day to day practice.
- There is routine liaison between housing caseworkers and colleagues in children's social care services in respect of specific concerns around vulnerable children. Escalation procedures are in place to ensure Heads of Service and the Divisional Directors are sighted on practice and performance issues and can intervene appropriately.
- A social worker is embedded in the Housing Division's Young People's Team to promote integrated child in need/housing need assessment of 16+yr old young people presenting as homeless. Appropriate professional supervision of this officer is provided by the Children's Social Care Division.
- The Division has a number of contracts with providers of temporary accommodation and floating support provision which clearly specify the borough's expectations in respect of vulnerable families and children's safeguarding. A local provider forum is in place which enables thematic issues eg impact of evictions without notification; support for younger tenants,

to be raised. Providers are encouraged to make use of safeguarding training commissioned by the BSCB.

- Senior Housing Division managers sit on key governance bodies in respect of vulnerable children including the BSCB and the council's Corporate Parenting Board.

Adults Social Care

- For young people with specific continuing care needs and eligibility for services as adults eg young people with learning difficulties; physical disabilities; mental health needs, transitional protocols and arrangements between children's and adults' services are in place.
- Information on numbers of young people who may require transitional and adults services is routinely shared between children's and adults services to inform planning assumptions including demand for services, commissioning and budgetary implications.
- Adults' services teams seek early involvement in assessment and planning for individual young people with children's services colleagues. This process addresses the more limited eligibility criteria for adults' services which exist, and is designed to manage expectations of young people and families.
- Individual Transitions Plans are monitored by operational managers and Heads of Service. Escalation procedures are in place for the Directors of Children's Social Care and Adults' services to resolve issues arising in individual casework.
- The director and adults' services SLT receive performance information routinely through a monthly performance digest. Operational managers and Heads of service make use of more detailed data to inform day to day management of the services. Complaints findings contribute to the understanding of performance issues at this level.
- Adults services are represented at senior management level in key governance bodies for children's services including the Safeguarding Children Board, the Children's Executive Board, and the SEND/SEN reforms Governance Boards.

Public Health Services for Children

- Improving the health and wellbeing of children forms a core element of Bromley's overall Health and Wellbeing strategy. The Public Health Division commissions universal, targeted and specialist services for children and young people including community health services; sexual health services; substance misuse services; and services in respect of domestic violence and violence against women and girls. Many of these services play a key role in working with vulnerable children and young people.
- As, predominantly, commissioners of services from NHS Trusts and other providers, public health staff are responsible for specifying the outcomes required from services, contracting effectively with providers and for ensuring compliance with the council's contracts. Performance management information and reporting on KPIs is undertaken at regular contract meetings with providers.

- The Public Health Division leads on Bromley's approach to Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, engaging with children's services across the statutory and voluntary sectors in respect of work designed to inform and support strategic and operational commissioning of children's services, including those for vulnerable children.
- In addition to providing professional leadership of the borough's Health and Wellbeing Board, the Director of Public Health sits on key governance bodies including the Safeguarding Children and the Children's Executive Boards.

7. Performance Management of Commissioned Children's Services

- 7.1 In addition to the children's services delivered directly by council staff, Bromley commissions a range of other services from external suppliers via contracts and spot purchasing arrangements.
- 7.2 As articulated in the 'Direction of Travel for Bromley as a Commissioning Organisation', while the process of commissioning transfers responsibility for the delivery of services to a third party, the council continues to be accountable for achieving the desired outcomes of those services and for ensuring value for money from the council's funding. It follows that outcomes need to be specified in detail within contracts and funding agreements, that appropriate performance measures are identified and that robust performance management/contract compliance arrangements are in place.
- 7.3 In Bromley, the main responsibility for contracting and contract management of specific services for children lies with relevant operational Heads of Service.
- 7.4 Staff in the ECHS department's Programmes Division provide professional and technical support to operational Heads of Service for options appraisal, contract specification, procurement, tender evaluation and council decision-making processes.
- 7.5 Operational Heads of Service are expected to undertake appropriate contract monitoring to ensure specifications are met by providers and to report on contract performance as required. By exception, staff in the Programmes Division may support operational Heads of Service in respect of specific compliance issues.
- 7.6 Detailed guidance on procurement and contract management has been produced and is available on Bromley's intranet and operational managers are also supported by a specific training offer.

8. Appraisal and Supervision

- 8.1 Appraisal and supervision arrangements are key elements in the overall performance management framework. On at least an annual basis, managers complete appraisals with individual members of staff in which their performance is reviewed and forward objectives and targets set. Additionally, learning and development needs of staff members are identified which inform an annual staff training programme. Staff then receive regular ongoing 1-1 supervision in line with the council's staff supervision policies in which performance issues are routinely considered.