

Report No.
CEF 19019

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE – PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Children, Education and Families Policy, Development and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 30 January 2020

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: Performance Reporting – Children’s Scrutiny Dataset

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Ward: All

1. Reason for report

1. To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children. The performance index provided in appendix one is as at the end of October 2019.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. The Committee note and comment on the October 2019 outturn of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: N/A
 5. Source of funding:
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional):N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 In January 2018, the Performance and Budget Sub-Committee received a draft of a new performance management framework document in respect of children's services. This document described the roles and responsibilities of elected members and officers in managing the performance of the council's services for children and families. The specific responsibilities of the Education, Children and Families Select Committee and its Budget and Performance Sub-Committee were identified as '*receiving reports on performance, asking challenging questions about areas of underperformance, and making recommendations accordingly to the Executive*'.
- 3.2 The accompanying report recommended that Sub-Committee should, on behalf of the Select Committee, receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. This would be over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – eg Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards reports – already received by the Sub-Committee. The suite would be selected from the much wider set of data collected and reported both internally and externally in respect of children's services and would act as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery to enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members.
- 3.3 The Sub-Committee agreed a proposed suite of indicators in March 2018 and agreed to receive four performance reports a year. Where appropriate, Directors have attributed either a target or a range of acceptable performance/outturns alongside trend and benchmarking data, these allow Members to be alerted to issues where they need further exploration only. It was agreed that the quarterly reports would provide management commentary against those indicators that were performing below expectation. Directors would also report on any other indicators not in the index, by exception, should they have particular concerns or if they wished to report particularly good performance.
- 3.4 Directors have provided number and percentage outturns in order to allow the Scrutiny Committee to gain a sense of scale and relativity. It was agreed that the suite of indicators would be reviewed annually and changed only on a periodic basis. It is worth noting that the committee will also be in receipt of the regular Finance, Contracts Register and Risk Register updates, these will provide some reassurance under the broader performance management framework.
- 3.5 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**

As at the end of October 2019, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicators were performing below expectation.

Please refer to the Part two report for management commentary on indicators 5, 22, 23. This data has been suppressed in order to minimise the risk of sensitive personal information being identified and to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation. The publication of data should not result in the identification of a person when it is reviewed with other publicly available data or when combined with information provided through FOI requests. Performance for this reason is presented in the part two report.

3.5.1 **Indicator 25: Stability of placements of Children Looked After - length of placement (RED)**

The length of placement indicator refers to children under the age of 16 who have been in care for 2 and half years or more and have been in their current placement for 2 years or more. As at the end of October, 55% of our children (50 out of 91) had been in their placement for two years or more.

Whilst there have been significant improvements in this area, such as the introduction of a family finder for long term fostering, the step down project from residential, stronger permanency planning, better referrals and more robust challenge to providers, this work will by definition take longer to show results in ensuring long term stability. Children may well have experienced placement change but this has been as a result of disrupting arrangements that were not meeting a child's needs and being more ambitious about family finding for permanence. With the current strong focus on the review of permanence planning, improved practice around stability meetings, more strength based referrals and better matching, it is anticipated there will be improvements going forward.

3.5.2 Indicator 29: Average Caseloads (Children's Social Care) (AMBER)

As at the end of October 2019, the average caseload across the children's social care division per social worker stood at 16.8 cases. This is higher than Bromley's Caseload promise of 12 to 15 cases. The caseload promise associated specifically to the RAS has been adjusted to 18 to reflect the level of need whilst maintaining suitable workload levels. There were also 6 vacant posts within the RAS contributing to the increased average for this month. New qualified social workers on the ASYE programme also impact across the teams as they have a reduced caseload. Caseloads are monitored weekly and there are contingencies in place should caseloads continue to rise.

3.5.3 Indicator 35.1: % Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued within statutory 20 week timescale (RED)

The data for July to September 2019 shows that 53 out of 104 new EHCPs (excluding exception cases) were completed within the 20 week timescale (51%). The reporting of this measure has now been extended to include performance including and excluding exceptions in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

The timeliness measure is calculated on an annual basis, according to statutory reporting, and the calendar year to September 2019 shows 52% of plans (excluding exceptions) have been issued during the year within the 20 week timescale.

Following a full review of the Statutory Assessment Process, performance management has been improved with weekly data reports provided to managers, with oversight by the Director of Education, which has strengthened accountability.

Within the weekly data reports, there is now a more detailed focus on the timeliness of additional stages of the Statutory Assessment Process, helping unblock challenges at a much earlier stage.

The number of statutory assessments both requested and agreed continues to increase at an exponential rate, a picture that is mirrored on a national level. The number of requests for assessment received in the 2019 calendar year to date is 590 (Oct'19 figures), with 85% of these being agreed. Requests come from across education settings (37%), professionals (19%), with the largest number being requested directly by parents (44%).

The SEN Service has been realigned to create a distinct EHC Needs Assessment Team to focus on this critical part of the process. The new team will be responsible for the EHC needs assessment process and, where an EHC Plan has been agreed to issue, will complete the consultation for education placement before handing it over to the teams that manage case work, including annual reviews.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

4.1 Examination of performance by elected members holding scrutiny roles is part of a broader performance management framework which supports improvement of services delivered to children, including those vulnerable to poorer outcomes.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The monitoring of key performance measures is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising from this report.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific procurement implications arising from this report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Children's Scrutiny Dataset, agreement of regular performance monitoring (March 2018) http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&MId=6166&Ver=4 Children's Performance Management Framework (January 2018) http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=593&MId=6069&Ver=4

Appendix One: Children's Scrutiny Dataset, October 2019