

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

**Date:** **10 March 2020**

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

**Title:** **Performance Reporting – Children’s Scrutiny Dataset**

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**Ward:** All

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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 December 2019.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. The Committee note and comment on the December 2019 outturns 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):
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### 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 The following management commentary includes detail of those items suppressed in the part 1 report. 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 this Part 2 report.
- 3.6 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**

As at the end of December 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 22 and 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.

### **3.6.1 Indicator 5: Number of Secondary Permanent Exclusions (RED)**

Reducing secondary permanent exclusions is a key priority for Education and a number of actions are in place to work with schools to provide suitable alternatives to exclusion and earlier support and intervention.

There have been 14 permanent exclusions from Bromley secondary schools in the autumn term 2019. There were 21 permanent exclusions in the comparable period in 2018, representing a 33% decrease for the year to date. Nevertheless, sustained improvement to this indicator will require cultural change and commissioned service redesign, which will take place in time for the 2020/21 academic year.

An external review was commissioned from a specialist adviser, concluding in December 2019. The findings of the Review and work streams for primary, secondary and emotional wellbeing/school refusal are now being taken forward by officers and school leaders. These include a focus on earlier intervention and increased alternatives to permanent exclusion, whilst ensuring a sustainable funding position for the next five years.

Secondary Headteachers have signed up to a set of values and principles and agreed to fully engage with the Review implementation, which is a positive first step in achieving the cultural change being sought.

### **3.6.2 Indicator 17: Average number of weeks taken to complete care proceedings (Cafcass definition and publication) (RED)**

Data is published by Cafcass on a quarterly basis identifying the average number weeks for completion of care proceedings with that quarter. The latest figures for Bromley show 41 weeks for Quarter 2 relating to 12 families (20 children). The reported cases also include children completing Family, Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) proceedings, which will by nature generally take longer than the 26 week target.

The national target is an average of 26 weeks, the national outturn for quarter 2 was 33 weeks. The outturn for the East London Designated Family Judge, under whom Bromley falls, was 40 weeks, with no concerns raised by the Judge concerning Bromley's outcome.

A common denominator in the longer running cases is around family members coming forward late in the proceedings, resulting in final hearings being adjourned. There is a drive within Bromley to identify family members at an earlier stage of intervention to avoid this situation occurring, however this continues to be a significant cause for delay. Bromley also has a high proportion of cases with parental mental health issues as a key factor within the case, resulting in proceedings being delayed and adjourned. Court listing capacity also continues to be a feature when considering delay in the conclusion of proceedings

Particular initiatives within Bromley include the work of the Staying Together Team, set up in November 2018, which provides short term bespoke support to families where a young person is at risk of coming in to care. Since the team's inception, out of a possible 40 families, only 2 cases escalated to care proceedings.

Bromley also continues to be part of a consortium of 9 London Boroughs who uses the Family Drug and Alcohol Court which helps and assesses families where children are put at risk by parental substance misuse. Bromley has signed up to 10 places this year and has agreed to an additional 10 places next year commencing in January 2020. The outcomes for the children that are subject to FDAC are on the whole very positive.

Bromley is part of the BeST trial, alongside 3 other London Boroughs, this is a research study supported by the East London Family Court Judiciary. The study is a randomised controlled trial to determine whether a parenting invention (delivered by the London Infant Family Team (LIFT) is more beneficial long-term for children and offers a more cost effective service than the usual social care services.

### **3.6.3 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 December, 57% of our children (55 out of 96) had been in their placement for two years or more. The reasons behind changes in placements vary between individual children and can include change into a long term placement, moving out of a residential placement into foster care, a move due to concerns of the standard of care, challenging behaviour.

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.

### **3.6.4 Indicator 29: Average Caseloads (Children's Social Care) (AMBER)**

As at the end of December 2019, the average caseload across the children's social care division per qualified social worker stood at 17.9 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. New qualified social workers on the ASYE programme also impact across the teams as they have a reduced caseload. Caseloads are monitored on a weekly basis.

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

The data for October to December 2019 showed an increase to 58% of new EHCPs (excluding exception cases) completed within the 20 week timescale (50 out of 86 plans). The reporting of this measure has now been extended to include performance both including and excluding exceptions in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

This indicator is calculated on an annual basis, according to statutory reporting, and the full calendar year 2019 figure shows that 54% of new plans (excluding exceptions) have been issued during the year within the 20 week timescale. National and London comparative data is awaited.

There has been a significant improvement in the timeliness of assessments following the introduction of more robust process and direct scrutiny by the Director of Education. This improvement is in the context of a significant increase in the number of statutory assessments both requested and agreed compared with previous years, a picture that is mirrored on a national level. The number of requests for assessment received in the 2019 calendar year is 722, compared with 467 in 2018. 507 requests for assessment were agreed during 2019, compared with 337 in 2018. Requests come from across education settings (39%), professionals (17%), with the largest number being requested directly by parents (44%).

#### **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.

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