

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 15 June 2021

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

Title: PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY DATASET

Contact Officer: Georgina Sanger, Head of Strategy and Performance (Children & Education)
Tel: 020 8461 7839 E-mail: Georgina.Sanger@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation
Tel: 020 8461 7554 E-mail: naheed.chaudhry@bromley.gov.uk

Ward:

1. Reason for report

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 March 2021.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Committee note and comment on the March 2021 outturns of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council Safe Bromley Healthy Bromley
-

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: N/A
-

Personnel

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

Legal

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

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

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

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
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 – e.g. 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 Data within this part 1 report may have 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 information for these indicators for this reason is presented in the Part 2 report.

3.6 MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY

This report covers the end of the reporting year for the majority of indicators monitored by the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee. The outturns are provisional at this point in time.

Of the 23 RAG rated indicators, 18 are green, 4 amber and only 1 rated red. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic inevitably impacted on services, resulting in changes and adaptations to work practices, performance against these key indicators has remained strong.

EXCEPTION REPORTING – Index indicators performing below expectation.

As at the end of March 2021, 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 as per the data suppression outlined in the paragraph above.

3.6.1 Indicator 21: % of Children Looked After cases which were reviewed within the required timescales (Amber)

The target for the percentage of children looked after with reviews in held in timescale is set between 95% and 100%, and the Reviewing Officer group is committed to the principle that no review should happen outside of timescales. At the outset of the year in April, 88% were reported as in timescale and whilst this increased over the following months, this has dropped slightly as at the end of March 2021 to 93%. Whilst below the target set for this reporting year, the end of year figure is higher than in 2020.

As previously reported, constraints within the current case management system increase the chance of elements of the review process being incorrectly recorded, sometimes leading to reviews not being captured correctly, or occurring out of timescale. The Quality Improvement Service keeps a full record of all reviews that are flagged as out of timescale, but due to the nature of the review timescales, if one review is out of timescale, subsequent reviews will also continue to be out of timescale.

Additional factors which may result in reviews out of timescale are late notifications to the QI Service at the point at which a child becomes looked after, resulting in a delay to the scheduling of a first review; rarely Reviewing Officers and Social Workers are unavailable within the timeframe; and on very rare occasions a review has been deferred owing to lack of a required report being available. Reviewing Officers will also use the dispute resolution process to work with individual managers and social workers where delays are apparent to prevent future occurrences.

3.6.2 Indicator 26: % of Care leavers who are in Education, Training or Employment (ETE) (RED)

This cohort for this DfE defined indicator is those care leavers who have had their 19th, 20th or 21st birthday in the year to date, and their Education, Training or Employment (ETE) status as at their birthday. The local target for this indicator is set between 47% and 52%.

The percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 who are ETE has risen from 39% in December 2020 to 41% in March 2021, which is in line with the previous year's outturn. Currently, 52% of 17-18 years are in ETE. Given the predictions that youth unemployment would rise as a direct result of the pandemic we created a new strategy to be able to respond proactively to offer ETE options and support to our care leavers.

Out of 225 open cases of young people aged 18-25 currently we have:

- 50 in full time education
- One in FT apprenticeship (TL)
- 19 NETE due to illness and disability
- 90 NETE due to other circumstances
- 9 NETE due to pregnancy or childcare
- 25 in part time education or work

52% of these young people aged 18-25 with an open case are NETE, however, it is also likely that the cohort of young people seeking additional support over the age of 21 are more likely to have additional needs and therefore be NETE due to a range of issues including substance misuse, offending history, mental health needs or a lack of formal qualifications. A recent job loss or exit from custody often initiates a return to the service for support. We have multiple

interventions outlined below to offer additional support for care leavers in Bromley around ETE as well as tackle the barriers to ETE.

New Beginnings group work started again in April face to face, running out of the children's centres. The project is aimed at long term ETE young people to offer confidence building, goal setting and employment readiness. We have 5 young people who are consistently attending supported by the ETE specialist and youth worker in Active Involvement. We have worked with Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP) in supporting us with setting up interview practice and are also setting up work experience placements for each participant based on their interests. They have sourced placements in hair and beauty/ finance/ animal management and retail which will begin in week 6 of the programme. This is the second time we have run the programme and last year out of 7 participants 5 left with a firm forward destination.

The NETE panel continues fortnightly and we received good feedback from the Practice Assurance Stocktake in January 2021 about the holistic approach offered. The panel has representatives from BEBP, Targeted Youth Support, Virtual School and DWP. The Panel offers information about a range of training and learning opportunities as well as recent job posts and apprenticeships but also refers on to other services such as CGL or counselling if the young person is facing other barriers to ETE. We have been continuing to offer advice and support around online training throughout the pandemic. Now the lockdown has eased we have noticed an upturn in young people getting back into work and it hoped we can continue to build on this success.

The Kickstarter government scheme offering 25 hours a week 6 month posts in various industries offer good opportunities for young people lacking in qualifications and we have put a number of young people forward for kick starter roles in retail and hospitality. The Leaving Care Team are working with HR Bromley to create some Kickstarter opportunities within the council and have asked that 2 are ring fenced for care leavers. One role will be within the Active Involvement team where the post holder will support on updating the website, supporting with practical arrangements for the corporate fun day and celebration events. Democratic services are also offering another administrative post. It is hoped these will become available in the next three months.

We continue to partner with I Aspire who offer 1:1 mentoring for young people who are NETE. They have had a number of staff changes which has meant the project at times lacked consistent leadership and staffing. We had 62 people start with the programme with a further 28 joining over time so the cohort in total has been 90. Of these 14 entered FT education and 11 entered full time work. These numbers are relatively low and does show the complex nature of the work to support people facing multiple disadvantages into ETE.

As the I Aspire programme is now in its final phase and not taking on new referrals hence we have entered into a relationship with new provider Maximus. Maximus is a free service who offer support and guidance around education and training. We have also referred into a local Downham based charity that offer 1:1 tutoring for Maths and English - also for free.

We also working with the education and employment subgroup of the corporate parenting board to create a mentoring programme for young people either in higher education. It is hoped this will enable us to raise ambition within our care leaver cohort and offer positive encouragement for young people to aim high.

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

As at the end of March 2021, the average caseload across the children's social care division per qualified social worker stood at 19. The averages within each service range from 11 in Children Looked After to 20 in Safeguarding, with each service's caseload promise reflecting the nature

and complexity of cases. As previously reported, alongside the continued increased volumes within social care, the pandemic continues to impact on services. Caseloads are monitored on a weekly basis.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

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

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

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific personnel implications arising from this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific procurement implications arising from this report.

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

Appendix One: Children’s Scrutiny Dataset, March 2021