

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 17th November 2022

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

Title: PERFORMANCE REPORTING – CHILDREN'S
SCRUTINY DATASET PART 1 (PUBLIC) REPORT

Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and
Corporate Transformation

Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director Children's Services

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 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 September 2022.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 The Children, Education and Families PDS Committee to note and comment on the September 2022 outturns of key performance indicators and associated management commentary.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children.
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Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: 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.
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority (delete as appropriate):
 - (1) For children and young People to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive decision.
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
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Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
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Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Not Applicable
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2020, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.
- 3.2 This specific 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards reports – already received by the Committee. 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.
- 3.3 The 'Children's Scrutiny Dataset' is selected from a much wider set of data collected and reported both internally and externally in respect of children's services, it acts as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery to enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members.
- 3.4 The Committee initially agreed a proposed suite of indicators in March 2018, these indicators are reviewed and updated annually. A narrative on "why this indicator is important" has been provided to ensure that scrutiny is well informed and effective.
- 3.5 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. Quarterly reports provide management commentary against those indicators that are performing below expectation. Directors have also committed to reporting on any other indicators not in the index, by exception, should they have concerns or if they wished to report particularly good performance.
- 3.6 Directors have provided number and percentage outturns in order to allow the Scrutiny Committee to gain a sense of scale and relativity.
- 3.7 **MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY ON EXCEPTION – Index indicators performing below expectation.**
- 3.8 Some data in this Part 1 public committee report 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 2 report.
- 3.9 As at the end of September 2022, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicators were performing below expectation.

Indicator 12: % of Children that became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for the second or subsequent time – Amber

21% of children who became subject of a Child Protection Plan year to date have already at some point in their lives been subject of a CP plan. Bromley's performance benchmarks appropriately to the national average of 22%, however our September outturn is higher than our acceptable range (15%-20%) and our historical trend.

It's an important indicator to monitor closely, as it can be a reflection of the multiple risks/challenges faced by children and families. It should prompt enquiry into whether or not other statutory interventions should be/should have been considered.

Somewhat reassuringly only 23 of those 57 children were subject of a plan in the last two years (4%), this is better than last year's performance of 9%. It is a suggestion that children were deregistered appropriately and that interventions were not closed too early.

Audit findings reassure senior managers that safeguarding thresholds are being applied appropriately and that children are made subject of a plan when thresholds are met. Independent Reviewing officers review Child protection cases in a timely way (98%) and 95% of children are visited every 10 days.

Indicator 17: % of Children Looked After cases which were reviewed within required timescales - Amber

94% of children looked after were recorded as having been reviewed within time scale against a target of 95%. A significant improvement on the first part of the team. To resolve the last percentage point of performance, a plan remains in place with the Assistant Director reviewing performance weekly. 97% of Children looked after are being visited every 30 working days.

Indicator 18: Number of in-house foster carers recruited (YtD) – Red

See part two report

Indicator 21: Number of Children Looked After who were adopted – Amber

See part two report

Indicator 25/26: Average Caseloads – Amber

Average caseloads are reported as 20 cases per social worker in Safeguarding and Care Planning against our caseload promise of 12-15.

Additional cases reflect the additional demand pressures on the front door (higher levels of referrals and assessments), this has resulted in higher numbers of 'Children in need' and those subjects of a child protection plan.

Additional staffing capacity has been placed as an interim arrangement in Safeguarding and Care Planning.

Members will be reassured to note visits to children subject of a social care plan remain good despite the higher caseloads, child in need visits 83% and child protection visit 95% in time. This should be noted as proxy indicators as to the manageability of caseloads.

Indicator 32: % of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20-week timescale (excluding exception cases) - Red

Education Health and Care Plan (ECHP) timeliness is reported on a calendar year basis. Year to date performance is reported as 38%. This indicator is unlikely to recover to meet the set target of 65-75% by December.

This decline in performance relates to significant delays in the receipt of professional advice required to complete the statutory needs assessment process, including health partners. The SEN Service has continued to pursue advice rigorously and a range of mitigating actions are in place across education and health.

Additional capacity has been commissioned including additional assessments for Educational Psychology and Occupational Therapy, some improvement is expected towards October/November. The SEN Service reviews each outstanding case on an individual basis and wherever possible expedites the decision.

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. TRANSFORMATION/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 CUSTOMER IMPACT

A Children’s Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2020, stipulates that the Children’s PDS Committee should receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children’s services. Reports should enable Members to *‘ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive’*.

This specific ‘Children’s Scrutiny Dataset’ is over and above more detailed reports on specific areas of practice – e.g., Corporate Parenting reports; annual School Standards reports – already received by the Committee. 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.

7 WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS

Not applicable.

Non-Applicable Hearings:	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications
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 (updated January 2020)