

**Decision Maker:** CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY, DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 13 September 2023

**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

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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 June 2023.

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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 The Committee note and comment on the June 2023 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 2023, 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 Education Outcomes 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 June 2023, the following Children's Scrutiny Dataset key performance indicators were performing below expectation.

**Indicator 18a: Number of in-house fostering households recruited** – Amber (See part two report)

**Indicator 26: Average Caseloads** – Amber

Average caseloads are reported as 16 cases per social worker in Safeguarding and Care Planning against our caseload promise of 12-15. This is moving in the right direction compared to previous months.

Additional cases reflect the additional demand pressures on the front door (higher levels of referrals and assessments).

Additional staffing capacity has been put in place.

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 89% and child protection visit 85% in time. This should be noted as proxy indicators as to the manageability of caseloads.

### **Indicator 31: % of Education, Health and Care plans issued within statutory 20-week timescale (excluding exception cases) - Red**

Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) timeliness is reported on a calendar year basis. Performance is reported as 20% for the Q2 2023, representing a significant reduction in performance against the target of 65%. In Q2 97 EHCP's were issued, which includes 14 exceptions.

This decline in performance relates to workforce challenges and significant delays in the receipt of professional advice required to complete the statutory needs assessment process, including from health partners. Monthly performance fluctuates during the year, due to variability in the time taken for professional agencies to provide advice. The SEN Service has continued to pursue advice rigorously and a range of mitigating actions are in place across education and health. A number of strategic reviews are underway to address the increased volume and complexity of need and associated demand pressures. The publication of EHC Needs Assessment Eligibility Criteria in January has started to show a reduction in the requests for statutory assessment.

Additional capacity has been commissioned including additional assessments for Educational Psychology and Occupational Therapy, with early signs of improvement taking place. The SEN Service has recently recruited successfully to fill vacancies and increase capacity, ahead of wider service transformation. The SEN Service continues to review 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**

- 6.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, 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'*.
- 6.2 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.

<b>Non-Applicable Headings:</b>	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications and Ward Councillor Views
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 (updated January 2023)