

**To the Chair and Members of the  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Performance Challenge of Doncaster Children's Services Trust: Quarter 3, 2016/17**

<b>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</b>	<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
Councillor Nuala Fennelly Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools	All	None

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides a review and analysis of the performance challenge carried out by the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills of the Doncaster Children's Services Trust (the 'Trust') in Quarter 3 of 2016/17 arising from the challenge meetings held between both parties.

**EXEMPT INFORMATION**

2. Not exempt.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. The Panel is asked to:
  - i) Note and evaluate the headline performance information and the resultant analysis;
  - ii) Question the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills as to the challenge which he has made of this performance and the implications this has, or may have, for the children and young people of Doncaster;
  - iii) Use the information in this report, the evidence of the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills and the response of the Chief Executive of the Trust to the questions posed by the Scrutiny Panel in order to draw conclusions as to the potential impact arising from performance by the Trust in its improvement journey;
  - iv) Make requests for follow up evidence in order to provide further assurance.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

4. The Overview and Scrutiny function has the potential to impact upon all of the Council's key objectives by holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance and developing policy. This is achieved through making robust recommendations, monitoring performance of the Council and external partners and reviewing issues outside the remit of the Council that have an impact on the residents of the borough.

## BACKGROUND AND CURRENT POSITION

5. The current arrangements for holding the Trust to account are set out in the service delivery contract between the Council and the Trust, which states: -

*... 'The Council's Director for Children's Services (DCS) will report to the Council's Scrutiny Committee four times per annum each contract year in respect of the Trust's performance of its obligations under this agreement (including the provision of services) .... Where required by the DCS the Trust's Chief Executive (or his nominee) shall attend such Scrutiny Committee to respond to any requests for additional information made by the Scrutiny Committee in respect of the Trust's performance of its obligations under this agreement (including the provision of the services).'*

6. The Trust is contracted to deliver services as specified within the contract with the Council. The current arrangements by which the Trust is held to account are extensive and far reaching, and were described in some detail in the report to the panel of 11 July 2016, and in essence take place through monthly, quarterly and annual reviews at operational, middle and senior management and at senior non – executive/senior political levels of both organisations.
7. At the July meeting, the panel agreed that a 'split screen' approach be adopted – by this arrangement there is a two phased approach. In the first phase, the Council is held to account for its monitoring of the Trust against the service delivery contract. Specifically, this means that the Council submits a report (this report) for the panel to review and question the DCS or his representatives. The second stage of this split screen is that the Trust responds to the Council's report and the specific performance issues which this has raised.
8. The overall aim of this refined approach is that:-
  - The panel achieves a much more rounded, but focused perspective of Trust performance;
  - The obligations within the contract will be properly discharged;
  - The Scrutiny Panel is able to 'add value' to the accountability process, which will no longer not duplicate or overlap with existing accountability arrangements;
  - The panel is more clearly able to identify areas of good performance and underperformance, the reasons for any under performance and request 'exception' or 'deep dive' reports, so as to become better appraised of the performance issues facing the Trust and thereby make recommendations to drive forward improvement.
9. In line with this approach, and following the approval of the report to the Children's Scrutiny Panel of 11 July 2016, the arrangements for the Scrutiny Panel's monitoring of the Trust were sharpened and revised to avoid duplication with the monitoring arrangements which are already in place and referenced above.
10. The first report of the revised arrangements was considered at the Children's Scrutiny Panel at the 27 September 2016 meeting.

## EXTERNAL SCRUTINY AND MONITORING ACTIVITY

11. At the 6 December 2016 meeting of this panel, the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills reported that the second monitoring visit, which focused on the quality of

practice; the quality of pre – proceedings work, the application of ‘voice’ of children and the effective use of performance and Quality Assurance work had found ‘significant progress ‘in improving the quality of work since the 2015 inspection.

12. On 17 January 2017, the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills received a notification from Ofsted that a third monitoring visit would take place on 28 February and 1 March 2017, which would focus on the quality of assessment and care planning for looked after children. There is a specific reference to the Ofsted inspection report recommendation 9 to consider the currency of assessments and the focus of care plans, and recommendation 12 which will monitor placement commissioning, sufficiency and stability, in particular the ability to meet the complex needs of older looked after children.

## **PERFORMANCE CHALLENGE OF THE DONCASTER CHILDREN’S SERVICES TRUST**

13. At the quarterly and monthly challenge meetings the Council holds the Trust to account for its performance during the relevant period. The review of that performance highlights areas of good performance, as well as those which represent areas of concern, or potential concern.

There are 18 performance indicators which form part of the contractual measures within the service delivery contract.

There is a further suite of 46 ‘volumetric’ measures which are not identified contractual measures, or measures of performance and which do not form part of the contractual assessment of the Trust, but which nonetheless provide important context.

14. The table below summarises the number of contract measures on target, within tolerance and outside tolerance as at the end of Quarter 3 2016/17.

<b>Quarter 3 2016/17</b>				
	<b>Outside tolerance</b>	<b>Inside tolerance</b>	<b>On or better than target</b>	<b>No target specified</b>
<b>Social Care Pathway</b>	2	2	3	
<b>Children in Care</b>	1		4	
<b>Youth Offending Services</b>		1	2	
<b>Workforce</b>		2		1

The basket of performance measures is jointly reviewed by the Council and the Trust as part of the annual contract review in order to ensure currency and relevance against important stages within the child’s journey and where it is known that there are current pressures within that system.

## **PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS**

15. The format of presentation of performance information consists of a summary of the Council’s headline assessment of Trust performance by exception and is shown below in paragraphs 16.1 and 16.2 with indicators selected by the Council where there are

areas of good and improving performance and areas of concern and potential concern, respectively.

The format adopted is similar to that of the Council's corporate report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and is shown at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Each appendix consists of two elements:-

- An Infographic overview which provides an immediately accessible illustration of the areas of performance which are good (illustrated in green), those which are of concern or potential concern (illustrated in red) and which cross reference by the index number to those itemised in paragraphs 16.1 and 16.2 and the tables in Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.
- Tables which depict how the challenge takes place for each selected performance measure in a two stage process and provides the content of that challenge which is summarised for the assistance of panel members

The first appendix depicts performance indicators where the Council has identified that the Trust is performing above target and/or where performance has improved and the Trust's response.

The second appendix illustrates where the Council has identified specific performance indicators which are below target/outside tolerance or expectations, and as such are of concern or potential concern because of the impact or potential impact of below - target performance and the explanation provided by the Trust.

#### **16.1 Areas of Good and Improving Performance – Headline conclusions drawn by the Council**

- **A4: Child protection visits in timescale** - an important barometer for safeguarding. Performance is good and has remained so, which is notable given that the Trust timescale threshold for this measure is two weeks, which is a higher expectation than most Authorities employ
- **A8: Children in need open & current plan** - This was a measure established after concerns identified in the Ofsted inspection – there is an overall expectation that all CIN should have a plan. Performance has demonstrated positive improvement and is now within tolerance, although, again the caveat is that this is one quarter's figures and therefore caution should be exercised.

The Trust have previously reported that this is a recording categorisation issue with reassessment and cleansing of files and that performance will improve when cases have been properly classified – a number have been in the assessment phase where a plan is still being developed and are draft plans which are not counted until the Trust is satisfied that these can be counted as proper plans, there have also been a number which had not been closed correctly.

The Annual Contract Review has agreed an amendment to the PI definition to include draft plans, in order to capture the reality of CIN status and a more realistic assurance as to oversight. Challenge has revealed assurance that all CIN have a plan and figures and challenge support the Trust's response that there is no drift and delay. Commendably, the Trust has set a high expectation that all open cases are

reassessed every six months, which means that CIN plans are subject to regular review and there will, therefore, be a significant number with 'draft' status.

The Trust responded that there will always be some cases in draft which are not captured. We either needed to capture these or reduce the target to reflect the true measure and it was noted that the jointly agreed redrafted measure will capture draft plans. The Council accepts that classification is the issue and the Trust assurance that no CIN are improperly omitted from plans and acknowledges the inherent lag wrought by draft plans and plans in transition.

- **A06: Child Subject CP Plan (2yrs or more)** – An important measure of drift and delay in the system where children may not be receiving proper oversight. However, there can be a valid reason why a child remains on a plan. The Trust has provided welcome reassurance to the Council that it is carefully monitoring these cases and performance is within acceptable parameters.

Doncaster's (2016) outturn performance was better than the national average but worse than regional and statistical neighbour averages, but has since fallen, albeit, this is still better than the current target.

- **A09: Child Subject CP Plan (second subsequent time)** - This measure was redefined within the contract from the national performance indicator (PI) (second or subsequent time ever) to a local measure which is more sensitive and more reflective of its fundamental objective.

Despite a fall in quarter 3, performance over the most recent four quarters is better than target. Sibling groups can and have inflated this figure. Analysis needs to be satisfied that children are not being 'de-planned' prematurely. There may otherwise be valid reasons for becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) but less so within a short period. This measure is easily skewed by small cohorts. It should be said though, that notwithstanding those caveats, performance is good.

- **B8: Average length of care proceedings** – Performance remained better than target for the second consecutive quarter.
- **B9: Long term stability of Children in Care (CiC) placements (2 yrs or more)** – Another important indicator of stability, which is essential for this vulnerable cohort. Placement policy is an important feature of stability; need to review across the range for best results in care and financial terms. The refresh of the Placement and Sufficiency Strategy is awaited and is an important strategic document for this measure and other CiC measures. 2015 annual outturn performance (56%) was bottom quartile national and bottom in regional rankings.

The improved performance since the 2015 outturn shows that this measure is above target for the third consecutive quarter. Performance in the preceding 3 quarters has been at the national average and is now above the national average (68%) which represents a very good recover. The Trust's longer term ambition is to rely less upon 'Out of Area' placements which will bring some long term placements to a close, providing of course that this is in the child's best interests.

- **B10: Short term placement stability of CiC (children with 3 or more placements in the year)** - This is an important measure of disruption and performance remains pleasing, being at, or above target, for four of the last seven quarters and within tolerance for the remaining three quarters, which the Trust

attributes to triggers and improved monitoring. National outturn performance (2015) shows Doncaster to be in the second highest quartile and average across the region.

- **B13: Care leavers in suitable accommodation** – Despite a fall in Q3 performance, this is still a pleasing quarterly reported figure. Best practice suggests that custody and ‘sofa surfing’ should be excluded for this figure, but there is inconsistency of reporting between LA’s and commendably, the Trust adopts best practice.

At the last annual outturn (2016) Doncaster performance (76%) had fallen, noting the lack of a commonly agreed definition for this measure. Nonetheless this is a continued and welcome improvement in performance which remains above target for the third consecutive quarter.

- **F01: Youth offending services (% cohort in EET) & F03 Youth Offending Custody Rates** – These are new measures which are susceptible to being skewed by the small cohorts from what is a large national cohort. Early indications are positive but as the Trust has commented, it is too early to draw significant conclusions at this stage. The employment rate is above target for the third out of four quarters.

Custody rates have been at or around target and despite a slight fall in Q3 are well within tolerance.

## 16.2 Areas of concern / potential concern – headline conclusions drawn by the Council:

- **A1: Re-referrals in the last 12 months** - An important PI to demonstrate robustness of process. There can be genuine requirements for a re-referral and the Trust analyses this information, but the Council needs to be assured against the risk areas, as to impact of demand pressures and that there has been no premature ‘stepping down’ and premature de – planning on which the Council has been assured. A slight dip in performance since Q2 but still within tolerance, acknowledging that one quarter’s performance doesn’t constitute a ‘trend’; this is nonetheless an unusual, albeit, small spike.

Current performance (26%), is slightly worse than 2016 annual outturns Doncaster (23%) national average (22%), the Statistical Neighbour average (24.2%) but remains better than the regional average (30%). The Trust response is that the effectiveness of the front door has impacted on this figure – with more referrals going into Early Help, which is creating demand via raised awareness and raised expectations in the community. The Trust is also trying to ensure much more effective recording of step up / step down work which has had an impact on re-referrals. Whilst high levels of Demand impact on this measure, improved management of cases which are ‘NFA’ will assist.

- **A2: Timeliness of single assessments** - Assessment timeliness is indicative of demand pressures / caseloads and the numbers of Children within the system will have an obvious impact, the numbers of ‘assessments open and referrals had been showing increasing numbers, although not in Q3.

The Trust has to balance efficiency of its process with assurance as to safety and is mindful of this. The Trust states that timeliness reports are shared between teams on

a weekly basis which target work to improve performance. Caseload increase is a factor, but concentration is with closing 'No further Action' (NFA) cases which should have been closed earlier and is therefore skewing the figures. That said, it should be noted that 2016 outturn performance is better than all benchmark comparators, being better than national, regional and statistical neighbour averages.

The Council has received assurance that the Trust is addressing the issue and Q3 has shown some positive improvement albeit performance remains below target and threshold. The Council is maintaining a monitoring brief and whilst performance generally remains above the 83.4% national, regional and statistical neighbour averages, the Council will nonetheless continue to challenge this performance, should it fail to show sustained improvement. The Trust has been requested to provide the analysis of complexity impacts on timescale and the proportion of assessments which could be resolved around 20 days and which are being achieved at, or around, 55 days. The time taken to define NFA has been an issue.

The Trust acknowledged that performance is still falling short of what is an ambitious 'stretch target' and is aware of the need to focus energy to show that this is improving. The Trust is taking action to ensure that case work is undertaken earlier within the timescale and is monitoring progress against a 20-day timescale but this has not yet had an impact.

The Trust emphasised that significantly more assessments are being undertaken, this has been the case for some months during 2016, although more recent months have shown a slight fall, but performance may reflect the time lag effect of that demand feeding into the system. The Trust is confident that timeliness will improve when caseloads reduce with the full effect of new 'front door measures', 'MASH' and Triage, but that this will not be seen for some time when this feeds through to improved figures. The Trust provided reassurance that loss of Agency staff would not militate against timeliness.

- **A3 Percentage of Case File audits rated 'Requires Improvement or Better' –**  
Performance has dipped this quarter with an increase in 'inadequate' cases and is now outside of tolerance:
  - 13% Inadequate
  - 60% Requires Improvement
  - 24% Good
  - 4% Outstanding

A Trust Action Plan is in place to review and address areas of poor performance. This measure is being carefully monitored as the Q2 improvement has not been sustained, that said, the recent general trajectory has been good - noting again, that one quarter's figure does not constitute a 'trend'. The Council has challenged whether these monthly and quarterly fluctuations are revealing the effect of the small sample size and the Trust has acknowledged that the sample size heavily skews the data because the Trust quite properly, targets specific case types which have potential casework deficiencies, which is part of the rationale behind effective audit. The Trust has started work internally with audit to reassess the case level thresholds.

Ofsted have stated that Trust case file grading measures are challenging. In addition, historical case file issues are affecting current gradings even when current work is effective. The Council acknowledged that the breakthrough in recent months in that some case files continue to be graded 'outstanding', which hitherto was not the case. The Trust recognised that there will always be one or two case files graded as

'requires improvement'. However, when current work is 'good' the grading should not be effected by historic errors, providing the these have been addressed and mitigated. Ofsted had rated some cases higher than the Trust's own internal audit and the Trust has planned to review thresholds.

- **B14: Care leavers in Employment, Education or Training (EET)** - This indicator is acknowledged to be a challenging one which is reflected in performance figures across the region. In order to be compliant, 'Meaningful contact' must be maintained which can be a challenge. There is a recognised need to progress employment opportunities and qualifications locally and it is an Ofsted improvement action to strengthen pathways for vulnerable children.

This is an important indicator in meeting Ofsted improvement requirements and for the Council in its role as 'corporate parent'. Performance has dipped this quarter and is now outside of tolerance. 38% is below comparator figures: - 2016 outturn Doncaster = 36% National average = 49% Statistical Neighbours = 58%. Even allowing for seasonal variations, this performance is a surprise given the degree of optimism previously expressed by the Trust. The Trust response is that this is felt to be a data issue, in that some children had been incorrectly recorded as 'looked after' and subsequently, therefore incorrectly reported as 'care leavers' and work is currently underway to correct this. The Trust has been asked to further clarify this point.

The Trust affirmed that if the 'Keys to your Future' programme becomes validated this cohort of children will automatically go onto this programme which would count as 'training'. This would put this figure to nearer 100%. Nationally, care leavers as a vulnerable cohort struggle to achieve compared with the general cohort and therefore need greater support mechanisms into further education training and employment. Opportunities are being explored by DCST and strategies implemented which have demonstrated some local improvement which will be taken forward by the newly established care leavers steering group. A series of actions have been agreed, which include emboldening existing links with employers and training agencies; innovative links via Social Enterprise and Collaboratives establishing a partnership steering group; development of a charter for Care Leavers and a Care Leavers strategy. In addition, the Council and the Trust have worked to develop the 'Talent accelerator programme' which will work with year 11 children in care to secure work experience opportunities with employers with a view to extension into potential apprenticeships.

- **C16: Frontline staff receiving supervisions** - Performance is showing improvement, remains within tolerance, but is still adrift of target. The Trust has identified recording issues and actions to address, improvements expected in the next quarter.

#### **'Volumetric' measures**

- **E1: Contacts to Social Care** – There has been a slight reduction in contacts each month since Q2. Most contacts are understood to be requests for IAG and NFAs up to 50% - demand in the community remains an issue. A high figure is not necessarily indicative of poor performance – 'appropriateness' is the key, high numbers of children on a child protection plan in Doncaster, would tend to support this hypothesis. The problem here is that there are a number of referrals which are known to be 'inappropriate'. High demand pressures are unhealthy for the work of social work teams in 'clogging up' the machinery. Contacts below threshold and those which could have gone to the Early Help Hub are deemed

'inappropriate'. Inappropriate referrals which should have gone to Early Help remain at, or around 10%.

The impending combined Early Help / Social Care and MASH front door arrangements from 1 April 2017 are expected to impact positively on this measure and efficiency and cost effectiveness. Cross reference to the volume of early help contacts shows a welcome improvement in contacts to the Hub which suggests the impact of improved awareness of thresholds among Agency partners especially from the Police which has been a drag on performance against this measure. The Council noted that this quarter shows a welcome improvement in access to the Early Help offer and systems are looking more effective. The Police appear to be beginning to use the system.

The Trust response is that this is a complex area, as more referrals go into Early Help – statutory contacts will come down but there are area increases in demand across the board. People are more aware of the service and more confident to refer. Additionally, the Trust is seeing very high level need in referrals, especially families where intervention should have occurred years ago but which have remained hidden.

As identified, the Trust is confident that the new Triage and MASH initiatives will demonstrate impact. As the foregoing identifies overall contacts may not necessarily reduce, because causal links are more complex than a straightforward binary effect, but the demand on social care is key and the Trust is confident that this will improve. Further analysis of NFAs would enhance understanding.

- **E20-22: Up to date Children in Care assessments (Health assessments/ dental checks / Personal Education Plans)** – There is an acknowledged problem with Dental Checks which is not unique to Doncaster but there needs to be earlier tracking. There is a national problem with older children registering with dentists, but nevertheless, performance remains disappointing. Most recent figures show a return to a more established performance for health assessments and this measure is affected by seasonal factors, 2015 average was 90%.

With regard to Health Assessments, the Trust reports that the challenge has been in accessing timely paediatric support so as to refer children more quickly. In addition, Children placed Out of Area is a challenge as the Trust has less influence and control. There is a need to tighten the referral process and this has been discussed with RDaSH. The Trust response is valid, but performance does need to improve and the Trust was asked to feedback on RDaSH action. The Trust reported that CCG has decommissioned Doncaster and Bassetlaw Trust for health assessments as they weren't able to get the paediatric time. The CCG has commissioned a GP Practice in Balby which has 4 paediatric GP's to delivery all initial and review health assessments and have built-in 250 initial health assessments a year into the contract and have retained an element of the commissioned service whereby a consultant will provide supervision and advice. There is also ongoing training with GP's to develop their expertise. Dental practice availability is being raised with CCG and the CPB, but the Trust reported that this is more of a practice issue. There will be children who are refusing to see dentists and the Trust undertook to respond further when it had discussed with the CCG.

Up to date Personal Education Plans – this is a interdependent measure jointly owned by the Council and the Trust. Currency of PEPs continues to improve with better processes in place and quality standards in that PEP sign off only where quality standard achieved. There is a disconnect between paper and electronic

systems and an ICT solution has been identified. An ICT Portal which will address the systemic weakness is being developed, trialled in December 2016, implemented in January 2017 and which should address the interface problems within the tripartite system between social workers, teachers and the virtual head within the system and thereby the problem of return rates, timeliness and quality.

- **E26-E32, SGO: Children in Care and Other Placements** – IFA numbers remain high and steadily rising. DCST foster care numbers are showing moderate increases, SGO numbers are fairly high and continue to increase. The Council challenged fostering initiatives and whether more could be achieved via regional collaboration. The Trust responded that there are 40 more children in foster care in-house placements than we had 6 months ago. There are also 16 families in the stages of being approved. The Trust is hoping to see ongoing increases in-house fostering. There is further work regarding the assessment and review of these placements, this is currently a DMBC function.

The Council checked progress with access to additional residential establishments coming on stream. The Trust reported that it was on target for children to move in 1st April. There is currently a higher demand than available places – will pick up Out of Area placements.

There were noticeable patterns of stable numbers of children in care around the average of statistical neighbours but above all other benchmark comparators. OOA residential placements have the biggest bearing on costs. There is now a better quality in-house foster care resource but it is smaller. The Trust advised that OOA placements are unlikely to reduce further because of stability considerations. The Trust is positive, in part, because a significant number of expensive placements will reduce as children transition to adulthood and leave care, although that in itself will import other cost pressures.

Consideration of plans and strategies was identified for further work to be undertaken, including the LAC Commissioning strategy and input to the White Rose Framework in pursuit of low cost volume discounts from IFAs, there was a suggested piece of joint working by the Council and Trust to improve contract monitoring and gain control of the IFA market and there is some 'soft targeting' of IFA providers underway.

## 17. IMPACT ON COUNCIL'S KEY OBJECTIVES

Outcomes	Implications
<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayoral priority – creating jobs and Housing</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: protecting Doncaster's vital services</li> </ul>	<p>The Council and the Trust as major partners in the Children and Families Partnership Board share the Children's plan outcome that all children should achieve their potential – in removing barriers and developing good quality service delivery children will be able to access the benefits of a thriving economy and will themselves be participants in creating and sustaining the strength of the economy.</p>

<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our Communities</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Bringing down the cost of living</li> </ul>	<p>Ensuring children and young people are free and feel from harm are key ambitions of both the Council and the Trust.</p>
<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayoral priority: creating jobs and Housing</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: Safeguarding our communities</li> <li>• Mayoral priority: bringing down the cost of living</li> </ul>	<p>Delivering against the service delivery contract between the Council and the Trust has clear implications for safeguarding communities, in reducing risk and exposure of risk to children; improved early help and thus better outcomes for families.</p>
<p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance</p>	<p>Ofsted, in its inspection report commented favourably on the relationship and governance arrangements between the Council and the Trust, recognising that formal arrangements for monitoring and challenge exceed the requirements set out in the contract between the two organisations.</p>

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

18. Adoption of the split screen approach should further reduce the risk of underperformance leading to a material detriment for children young people and families in the Borough.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

19. Adoption of the split screen approach enables the Council and the Trust to discharge their respective obligations under the terms of the service delivery contract between the two parties.

Adoption of the split screen enables the scrutiny panel to more effectively meet its remit to consider matters in the public interest.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

20. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

21. There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

22. The Chief Executive of the Trust has been consulted on the content of this report.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

23. 'Infographic' depiction and summary record of performance challenge of highlighted performance indicators – Appendices 1 and 2  
Doncaster Children's Services Trust – Quarter 3 report – Appendix 3

## **CONTACT OFFICER AND REPORT AUTHOR**

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## **Background Papers**

Service delivery contract between Doncaster Council and Doncaster Children's Services Trust  
Report to the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2016

**Damian Allen, Director  
Learning Opportunities and Skills (DCS)**

## APPENDIX 1

### Areas of Good and Improving Performance

#### AREAS PERFORMING WELL

**A4**

#### Child Protection Visits within Timescale



**89%**

Target 80%  
Tolerance 75%

**A09**

#### Children Become Subject of Child Protection Plan

For the Second or Subsequent Time

**12%**

Target 16%  
Tolerance 20%



**A06**

#### Children on a Child Protection Plan 2 Years or More

**2.7%**

Target 3%  
Tolerance 5%



**B13**

#### Care Leavers (19-21 yrs) in Suitable Accommodation



**95%**

Target 85%  
Tolerance 80%

#### Long Term Stability: Children in Care

**B9**

Percentage length of placement 2 years +



**72%**

Target 70%  
Tolerance 60%

#### Short Term Placement Stability

**B10**

% 3 or more placements in the year

**8%**

Target 9%  
Tolerance 12%



**F01**

#### Youth Offending: % in EET



**78%**

Target 75%  
Tolerance 65%

Measure	DMBC Comment	Trust Response
<b>A4</b> <b>Child Protection Visits in Timescale, Child seen by Social Worker</b>  <b>Q3 = 89%</b> <b>Target: 80%</b> <b>Tolerance: 75%</b>	<p>Performance has remained above target since March. This measure is an important barometer for safeguarding and requires careful monitoring. Performance is good and has remained so over the past year.</p> <p>The annual contract review has agreed the reach of this measure will extend to include CIN, CPP and CIC which is required for a more complete and rounded view.</p>	<p>Remains well above target, with a sustained stability, due to daily monitoring and a focused effort by team managers to keep on top of key casework timescales. A proportion of the cases without a visit have recording issues on Liquid Logic where a visit has been either recorded without being finalised or as a non-statutory visit. Performance are identifying these visits and including them in data quality packs for teams to update on Liquid Logic. Visits for CIC and CIN are also monitored in a similar way.</p>
<b>A06</b> <b>Children on CP Plan for 2 Years or More</b>  <b>Q3 = 2.7%</b> <b>Target: 3%</b> <b>Tolerance: 5%</b>	<p>Performance remains better than target for the fourth consecutive quarter.</p> <p>An important measure of sterility (drift and delay) in the system where children may not be receiving proper oversight. However, there can be valid reason why a child remains on a plan.</p>	<p>Remains within target with a stable trend with very little variability. The re-assessment of all cases open for greater than 6 months is providing some immediate scrutiny and management oversight to current casework and addressing any previous issues of drift and delay.</p>
<b>A8</b> <b>Children in Need with Open &amp; Current Plan</b>  <b>Q3= 90%</b>  <b>Target: 95%</b> <b>Tolerance:90%</b>	<p>Performance has demonstrated positive improvement and is now within tolerance.</p> <p>The annual contract review has agreed an amendment to the PI definition to include draft plans, in order to capture the reality of CIN status and a more realistic assurance as to oversight. Q3 figures show welcome improvement, challenge has revealed assurance that all CIN have a plan and figures and challenge support the Trusts' response that there is no drift and delay.</p> <p>Showing below target but within tolerance. This PI is changing following ACR to include draft plans. There are no CIN without a plan.</p>	<p>Performance has moved within tolerance as managers ensure on a weekly basis that plans are in place. Monthly Self Evaluation Activity and dip sampling is testing for the presence of plans, to provide assurance that all cases that require a plan have one.</p> <p>There will always be some cases in draft which are not captured. We either need to capture these or reduce the target to reflect the true measure.</p>
<b>A09</b> <b>Children Subject CP Plan Second or Subsequent Time within a 2 year period</b>  <b>Q3 = 12%</b> <b>Target: 16%</b> <b>Tolerance: 20%</b>	<p>This measure has been redefined within the contract from the national PI (second or subsequent time ever) to a local measure which is more sensitive and more reflective of its fundamental objective.</p> <p>Despite an increase in Q3, performance remains better than target for the fourth consecutive</p>	<p>Performance remains above target with a stable picture. The number of children subject to a CPP shows low levels of variability month by month but all within target. Half of the children are part of sibling groups and this contributes towards the rise in the latest month.</p>

	<p>quarter. Sibling groups can inflate this figure. Analysis needs to be satisfied that children are not being 'de-planned' prematurely. There may otherwise be valid reasons for being subject to a Child Protection Plan but less so within a short period.</p>	
<p><b>B8</b>  <b>Average length of care proceedings (weeks)</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 24%</b>  <b>Target: 26%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 30%</b></p>	<p>Performance remains better than target and this figure will be skewed by the relatively small number of cases involved. Ofsted cited this as an area of work for attention.</p>	<p>For this quarter we are above target with 25 cases reaching completion. There is some variability month by month, however for the last six months we were better than target. Casework is being tracked using a legal gateway/PLO tracker that provides a granular view of each case, including timeliness of reviews/meetings. Development continues in this area with further improvements to the tracker being made to ensure accurate information is available to managers.</p>
<p><b>B9</b>  <b>Long Term Stability of CiC: Placements 2 Years or More</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 72%</b>  <b>Target: 70%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 60%</b></p>	<p>An important indicator of stability, which is essential for this vulnerable cohort, performance remains above target and the Trust is closely monitoring. Placement policy is an important ingredient of stability. There is a need to review across the range for best results in care and financial terms. Placement and Sufficiency strategy refresh is awaited and is an important strategic document for this measure and other CiC measures.</p> <p>2015 outturn figures showed Doncaster at 56%, National average at 68%, Regional average at 68% and Statistical Neighbour average at 70%. The 2016 outturn figures will be more instructive as to long term trends.</p>	<p>This measure has remained above target level for the last two quarters. The Trust's longer term ambition to rely less upon out of Borough placements will bring some long term placements to a close, providing it is in the child's best interests. To assist this teams are reviewing placements on a case by case basis.</p>
<p><b>B10</b>  <b>Stability of Placement of CiC: percentage of 3+ moves</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 8%</b>  <b>Target: 9%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 12%</b></p>	<p>Performance has been maintained and continues to be better than target. The Trust has proactive strategies and early triggers in place to monitor. 2015 outturn performance was equal to national and regional average and only slightly above Statistical Neighbour average.</p>	<p>Performance is better than target for the last three quarters, with sustained on target performance over the last few months. The strategies in place, including early triggers after the second or unplanned moved, placements team accurate recording on Liquid Logic and IRO's having taken an increased role in monitoring placement stability has assisted this improved performance.</p>
<p><b>B13</b>  <b>Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation (aged 19 – 21)</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 87%</b>  <b>Target: 85%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 80%</b></p>	<p>Progress has been maintained and performance remains better than target for the third consecutive quarter. Best practice suggests that those which do not meet the criteria such as custody and 'sofa surfing' should be excluded from the figures.</p> <p>Current performance is above the</p>	<p>Performance has returned this quarter to Q1 levels. The term "suitable" relies on local interpretation (for example some LA's will determine Custody as suitable, whilst we do not), making comparison challenging. At the end of Quarter 3, six young people were recorded as being in custody which</p>

	<p>2015-2016 national average outturn of 83% and regional average of 85%. (Doncaster's outturn was 76%)</p> <p>The 2016 outturn figures will be more instructive as to long term trends.</p>	<p>will have contributed to this figure. Focussed work between Targeted Youth Support and Performance is contributing to accurate measurement of performance, through regular tracking of activity to remain in touch with this cohort. Re-profiling of the service to a 16+ Team to support young people from aged 16 aims to improve outcomes for this vulnerable group, as it will ensure a smoother and earlier transition to a service specialising in supporting young people's transition to adulthood.</p>
<p><b>F01</b>  <b>Youth Offending Services - % cohort currently EET</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 78%</b>  <b>Target: 75%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 65%</b></p>	<p>New measure susceptible to being skewed by the small cohorts from what is a large national cohort. Early indications are positive, with three out of four quarters above target.</p>	<p>Data now available from the YJMIS system, which is the national youth justice database. This measure fluctuates in performance due to small numbers in the cohort, as is shown over the last three quarters. At the end of the quarter performance was above target for the second consecutive month in the quarter.</p>
<p><b>F03</b>  <b>Youth Offending Services: custody rates</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 0.44</b>  <b>Target: 0.42</b>  <b>Tolerance: 0.75</b></p>	<p>There was a slight fall in Q3; however custody rates remain at or around target.</p>	<p>Data now available from the YJMIS System, which is the national youth justice database. Performance remains better than target for a sustained period. Available every 3 months reporting on the next 12-month period, ie in Feb 2017 will report on Jan 2016-Dec 2016. Quarterly performance data has shown an improving trend since 2014, with the current rate now comparable with Doncaster's comparator group. These rates, reported in this format, are the lowest in the Borough's history.</p>

## APPENDIX 2

### Areas of concern / potential Concern

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

##### **A1** Repeat Referrals into Social Care within 12 months

**26%**

Target 24%

Tolerance 28%



##### **A2** Timeliness of Single Assessments

Increased Case loads



**88%**

Target 92%

Tolerance 90%

**A3**

##### Case File Audits – Requires Improvement or Better



**87%**

Target 95%

Tolerance 90%



**B14**

##### Care Leavers in Employment, Education & Training

**38%**

Target 45%

Tolerance 40%



Ofsted Improvement Plan Action

##### Contacts into Social Care

**E1**

Demand Pressures



1284  
October 2015

##### Children in Care: With Up-to-date Assessments

**E20-22**



Health Assessments



Dental Checks



Personal Education Plans

Measure & performance	DMBC Comment	DCST Response
<p><b>A1</b>  <b>Re-referrals in the last 12 months</b>  <b>Q3 = 26%</b>  <b>Target: 24%</b>  <b>Tolerance: 28%</b></p>	<p>A slight dip in performance since Q2 and but still within tolerance. Monitoring will continue to check the impact of high demand levels on this measure.</p> <p>Current performance (26%), is worse than the 2015-2016 national average (22%), and slightly above the Statistical Neighbour average (24.2%) but better than the regional average (30%) ( based on outturns)</p> <p>The number of referrals has increased this quarter. This goes against the trend since transfer</p>	<p>Re-referral rates remain within tolerance for the quarter, but have been better than target for the previous six quarters. This demonstrates that there has been sustained performance in this area. The re-referral rate rose in October and November, but recovered in December. Greater rigour has been applied to contact and referrals, and application of thresholds, with an emerging reducing trend in referrals and assessments being initiated. This means that the profile of referrals has changed with fewer inappropriate referrals being recorded. This is likely to deliver a short to mid-term increase in re-referral rates as referring agencies respond to threshold application. The increase in re-referral rate has been compounded by a number of large sibling groups being re-referred. The HOS for Front Door continues to dip sample re-referrals that originally went to No Further Action to improve understanding of any themes. Locality Heads are also sampling recent re-referrals to identify any emerging issues, one of which is to ensure that step down to IFST workers is managed appropriately. The Trust has commissioned an external auditor to review referrals that either lead to No Further Action or Case closure, this work will take place during late January and early February.</p> <p>Effectiveness of front door has impacted this figure. More referrals are going into EH. Additionally, there are issues with the way that re-referrals are measured. Also trying to be more rigorous with step down work, this has had an impact on re-referrals. This PI recovered marginally in December.</p>
<p><b>A2</b>  <b>Timeliness of Single Assessments</b>  <b>Q3 = 88%</b>  <b>Target: 92%</b>  <b>Tolerance:90%</b></p>	<p>Assessment timeliness is indicative of demand pressures / caseloads. The Trust has to balance efficiency of its process with assurance as to safety and is mindful of this. The Council has received assurance that the Trust is addressing the issue and Q3 has shown some positive improvement. The Council is maintaining a monitoring brief and whilst performance generally remains above the 83.4% national average; the Council will nonetheless continue to challenge this performance, should it fail to show sustained improvement.</p>	<p>This measure has been out of tolerance for the last four quarters, although performance improved in the latest quarter and is showing an improving trend over the last 6 months. Performance in November was within tolerance. Performance for quarter 3 would place the Trust above national, regional and statistical neighbour averages. Of those completed outside timescale, all were within 55 working days, with the majority being 3 or less days overdue. There is an improving trend of an increasing proportion of cases being completed within 20 working days, rather than the full 45. The Trust continues to reassess each case every 6 months, with 95% of CIN cases reassessed in this timescale.</p> <p>It is a habit of Social Workers to use the full 45 days rather than shorten the timescale where appropriate. DCST are putting internal</p>

	<p>The trust has been requested to provide the analysis of complexity impacts on timescale and the proportion of access which could be resolved around 20 days and which are being achieved at, or around 55 days. Time taken to define NFA has been an issue.</p> <p>This PI is still below tolerance and thresholds. At the last joint meeting DCST was undertaking some analysis about potential issues with the system. Discussions found that many NFA's were taking too long.</p> <p>Confirm there is going to be a new performance report which will have local and national comparative data.</p>	<p>systems in place to monitor a 20 day timescale but this has not had any impact yet. This is being monitored going forward.</p> <p>The figure has recovered from Q2 and is going in the right direction. Still falling short of the stretch target and DCST is aware need to focus energy so we know this is improving. Would like to see national comparative data on this within the report.</p> <p>We are undertaking significantly more assessments because of service standard – every case reviewed 6 monthly – lots more activity and still a stretch target.</p>
<p><b>A3</b> <b>Case File Audits – Requires Improvement or Better</b></p> <p><b>Q3 = 87%</b></p> <p><b>Target: 95%</b> <b>Tolerance: 90%</b></p>	<p>Performance has dipped this quarter with an increase in 'inadequate' cases and is now outside of tolerance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13% Inadequate</li> <li>• 60% Requires Improvement</li> <li>• 24% Good</li> <li>• 7% Outstanding</li> </ul> <p>A Trust Action Plan is in place to review and address areas of poor performance, progress to be monitored. This measure is being carefully monitored as the Q2 improvement has not been sustained, that said the general trajectory has been good. Noting that one quarter's figure does not constitute a 'trend'</p> <p>Q3 figures show a slip which is disappointing. Is this affected by a small sample size?</p> <p>Agreed with response and noted some case files are now graded outstanding.</p>	<p>Whilst the rate of cases graded as Good or Outstanding has improved, a number of inadequate cases were identified in quarter 3, thus bringing performance down. Any case graded as inadequate is re-audited within 6 months, with any actions being addressed immediately by the case worker. Learning from audit is disseminated across the Trust through a monthly report, and practice advisors are tasked with communicating key practice messages. In recent audits, immediate remedial work was possible as deficits were due to recording rather than practice. Further information on audit themes will be provided through the quarterly audit report submitted to the Quality Performance Meeting.</p> <p>A couple of things are affecting the figure. 1. The sample size heavily affects the data. 2. We have started work internally with audit to reassess the case level thresholds. Ofsted have stated that our case file grading measures are too strict. Historical case file issues are affecting current gradings even when current work is effective.</p> <p>We will always have 1 or 2 case files graded as requires improvement. However, when current work is good the grading should not be effected by historic errors. Ofsted rated some cases higher than our own internal audit.</p>
<p><b>B14</b> <b>Care Leavers in Employment, Education and</b></p>	<p>Performance has dipped this quarter and is now outside of tolerance. 38% is below comparator figures. 2016</p>	<p>Performance has fallen just below tolerance in the quarter, but this is due to performance in December only, as October and November's performance was within tolerance. The drop in</p>

<p><b>Training ( age 19-21)</b></p> <p><b>Q3= 38%</b></p> <p><b>Target: 45%</b> <b>Tolerance:40%</b></p>	<p>outturn Doncaster = 36%, National Average = 49% Statistical Neighbour = 58%</p> <p>Opportunities are being explored by DCST and strategies implemented which have demonstrated improvement in this measure which is being taken forward by the newly established care leavers steering group. Doncaster has been among worst performers in region ( albeit small cohorts which is reflected in seasonal variations)</p> <p>Outturn performance is disappointing, but the prognosis from improved engagement with partners is good. Could the Trust please update?</p> <p>Performance is below tolerance. Has performance been effected by the season variants?</p> <p>Is this a data issue?</p>	<p>December is due to a number of young people ending temporary Christmas contracts, or ending training opportunities. The 18+ service continues to work with these young people to secure new opportunities going into the New Year. It is worth noting that 15% of care leavers are NEET due to illness/disability or pregnancy/early parenthood.</p> <p>Ther Trust reports that there could be an issue with the reporting of data for the annual return which may have incorrectly captured cohorts who were not 'Care Leavers' and will report back on this point.</p> <p>This figure is different to the Head of service for this area of work which puts the percentage in low to mid 60's – it appears to eb a data issue.</p> <p>Some children were captured that weren't care leavers. Work is currently underway to correct this.</p> <p>If we get the Keys to your Future programme validated these children (CL) will automatically go to this programme which would count as training. This would put this figure to near 100%.</p>
<p><b>C16</b></p> <p><b>% Frontline staff receiving supervisions in timescale in accordance with policy (4wks)</b></p> <p><b>Q3= 82%</b> <b>Target: 90%</b> <b>Tolerance: 80%</b></p>	<p>Performance although has shown slight improvement, continues to be within tolerance.</p> <p>Identified by the Trust as a recording issue, Trust identified action with managers in December 2016 which should feed through in early 2017?</p>	<p>Performance remains in tolerance for the quarter, with some volatility from month to month and team to team, which is being addressed. Sickness to one team manager for 2 months of the quarter presented challenges to complete all supervisions within timescale.</p> <p>This PI refers to frontline personnel supervision not case supervision.</p> <p>This is largely a recording issue as supervisions are taking place.</p> <p>One team has had a manager off for 2 months which has severely impacted figures this quarter.</p>
<p><b>E1</b></p> <p><b>Number of contacts into social care (volumetric measure)</b></p> <p><b>Q3 average = 1607</b> <b>Q2 average =1669</b> <b>Q1 average = 1843</b></p>	<p>There has been a slight reduction in contacts each month since Q2.</p> <p>Most understood to be requests for IAG and NFAs up to 50%; demand in the community is an issue. Contacts are now correctly counted. Inappropriate referrals which should have gone to early remain around 10%</p> <p>The impending combined Early Help/ social care and MAH front door</p>	<p>Impact of new triage and MASH to be seen in Q3/Q4 2016/17 – process is underway to challenge number of NFA's in system.</p> <p><i>This is a complex area as we received more referrals into EH – statutory contacts will come down but right now there are area increases across the board. People are more aware of the service and more confident to refer. Additionally we are seeing very high level needs coming in. Families where intervention should have been years ago but have remained hidden.</i></p> <p><i>Confirmed 1<sup>st</sup> April is target date for integrated</i></p>

	<p>arrangements are expected to impact positively on this measure and efficiency and cost effectiveness.</p> <p>Cross reference to early help contacts shows a welcome improvement in contacts to the Hub which suggests impact of improved awareness of thresholds among some Agency partners which has been a drag on performance against this measure.</p> <p>This quarter shows a welcome improvement and systems are looking more effective. All Agencies now engaging with the Early help Hub.</p>	front door.
<p><b>E20-22</b> (Volumetric measures)</p> <p><b>Children in Care with up to date:</b></p> <p><b>Health assessment Q3 =81%</b></p> <p><b>Dental checks Q3 =71%</b></p> <p><b>Up to date Personal Education Plans Q3 = 82% ( joint DMBC / DCST)</b></p>	<p>December's outturn demonstrated further decline in up to date health assessments and dental checks but up to date PEPs continues to improve with better processes in place and quality standards in that PEP sign off only where quality standard achieved.</p> <p>The Trust was meeting with RDash and undertook to raise these issues and feedback on health and dental performance, some of which is due to availability of paediatric support. Dental practice availability being raised with CCG and CPB.</p> <p>Request Trust feedback after meeting with RDASH regarding issues to be raised at CPB.</p> <p>Requested an update regarding dental checks?</p>	<p>CCG has decommissioned Doncaster and Bassetlaw Trust for health assessments as they weren't able to get the paediatric time. They have commissioned a GP Practice in Balby which has four paediatric GP's to deliver all initial and review health assessments. Have built in 250 initial health assessments a year into the contract and have retained an element of the commissioned service whereby a consultant will provide supervision and advice. There is also on-going training with further GP's.</p> <p>There is more of a practice issue. There will be children who are refusing to see dentists.</p> <p>The Trust has been requested to provide further feedback regarding dental checks.</p>
<p><b>E26/29/30/32/SGO</b> (Volumetric measures)</p> <p><b>CiC Placements</b></p>	<p>IFA numbers remain high and steadily rising. DCST foster care numbers are fairly static. SGO numbers are fairly high and increasing.</p> <p>What is the timeline for access to residential establishments coming on stream?</p>	<p>We have 40 more children in foster care in house placements than we did 6 months ago. There are also 16 families in the latter stages of being approved. We are hoping to see on-going increases in in-house fostering.</p> <p>There is further work regarding the assessment and review of these placements, this is currently a DMBC function.</p>

	<p>Can we pursue fostering recruitment regionally – impact of new rates /</p> <p>Are the new children's homes on target to open in March?</p> <p>Finance raised a concern whether we have judicial review SGO/changed rates. This should be monitored as a potential risk.</p>	<p>On target for children to move in 1<sup>st</sup> April. There is currently a higher demand than available places.</p>
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## **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – Quarter 3 2016/17**

Reporting Period 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2016

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. To provide an overview of Doncaster Children's Services Trust's performance position for Quarter 3, 2016/17

### **2. SUMMARY POSITION**

- 2.1. The contract indicator set was revised during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, as agreed through the first annual contract review.
- 2.2. The second annual contract review was completed during quarter 3. Revisions to the indicator set have been agreed through this process with changes to both the indicator set, and associated targets/tolerances for year 3. Now that they have been agreed, these will be introduced in time for the quarter 4 report.
- 2.3. The table below summarises the number of contract measures on target, within tolerance and outside tolerance as at the end of Quarter 3 2016/17.

<b>Quarter 3 2016/17</b>				
	<b>Outside Tolerance</b>	<b>Inside tolerance</b>	<b>On or better than target</b>	<b>No target specified</b>
<b>Social Care Pathway</b>	2	2	3	
<b>Children in Care</b>	1		4	
<b>Youth Offending Services</b>		1	2	
<b>Workforce</b>		2		1

- 2.4. There are currently three measures that lie outside tolerance. These are discussed later within the report. One measure (staff turnover) is without a target, but demonstrates good and improving performance.
- 2.5. There is currently one "hard to shift" measure – those which have been outside tolerance for 2 or more consecutive quarters; compared to two in the last quarter. It is:

A2 - Timeliness of Single Assessment.

However, it should be noted that the current target for this measure is a challenging one, and current performance places the Trust above national, regional and statistical neighbour comparators. The measure has also shown an improving trend for the last 6 months, and is currently outside tolerance by just 2 percentage points.

## 2.6. **Measures at or better than Target as at end of Quarter 3 2016/17**

New - Percentage of Child Protection visits in timescale where child was seen by their Social Worker

A5 - Percentage of children becoming the subject of Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.

New – Percentage of children in child protection plan for 2 years or more

B8 - Average length of care proceedings (weeks)

B9 – Long term placement stability of looked after children

B10 - Stability of Placement of CiC: percentage of 3+ moves

New – Care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation

New - Youth Offending Services – %cohort currently EET

## 2.7. **Measures within Contract Tolerance as at end of Quarter 3 2016/17**

A1 – percentage of re-referrals in last 12 months

New – Percentage of children in need with an open and current plan

C14 - Percentage of frontline FTE posts covered by Agency Staff

NEW – Frontline staff receiving supervisions in timescale

New – Youth Offending Services – Custody Rate

New – Youth Offending Services – reoffending rate after 12 months

## 2.8. **Measures outside Contract Tolerance as at end of Quarter 3 2016/17**

A2 – timeliness of single assessment

A3 - Percentage of monthly case file audits rated as 'requires improvement' or better

New - Percentage of Care Leavers in Employment, Training and Education (age 19-21yrs)

## 2.9. **Measures with no target currently set**

New – Staff turnover. This measure is showing an improving trend over the last two quarters.

2.10. Further detail on each measure, along with trends and narrative can be found in appendix A

## 3. **OPERATIONAL MEASURES AND CONTEXT**

3.1. In addition to the contract performance measures, 37 operational volumetric measures are also provided. These are supplied within appendix A. A summary of the key themes emerging from this dataset is listed below

- **Contacts:** have shown a declining trend since the first quarter of 2016/17, although monthly trends need to take into account the seasonal impact of school term time. However. December's contacts are down approximately 10% on the same month in 2015. Changes to front door pathways and management have begun to reduce the conversion of contacts to referrals, as thresholds are more rigorously applied and enquiries are directed more effectively. Further improvements to early help and referral pathways are dependent upon system changes to the Early Help Module (EHM) and LiquidLogic case management systems, which has required the reconciliation of c20,000 records. This work is underway with improvement work targeted to be completed by April 2017.

Police remain the highest source of contacts (40%). Approximately 30% of contacts are converted to referrals, which continues the challenge of the service to respond to the volume of contacts coming in, when 70% lead to no statutory service.

- **Referral** rates are showing a downward trend since June 2016, but remain higher than those reported in the same quarter 2015/16. Eighty-seven percent of referrals are leading to the initiation of an assessment, which is a reduction on a previous figure of 94%.
- **Early Help:** The total number of Early Help enquiries continues to show a steady increase in the latest quarter, taking into account the anticipated drop in December when schools take a 2 week holiday. Almost one quarter come from schools, with 15% coming from MASH/R&R thus diverting statutory intervention. Over half of enquiries lead to a continuation of the Early Help pathway, with 15% leading to no further action and a similar proportion leading to a single agency response. A decreasing proportion are leading to step up to social care, supporting evidence from contacts and referrals that Front door services are beginning to direct requests for support to the most appropriate point. IFST (26%), Family Support Teams (27%) and Education settings (38%) account for 91% of lead professional roles for open early help cases. Of the 624 EH cases closed in quarter 3, 57% ended with the “action plan complete” or “all needs being met.” For the year to date, 18% of early help cases end with a step up to social care, and 15% due to the family disengaging.
- **Children in Need:** numbers remained relatively static at the end of quarter 3, compared to the second quarter, although case “turnover” remains fluid with 1084 joiners and 998 leavers to the CIN cohort in this period. Locality ACPS teams are focussing on quickly progressing cases to closure or step down; however the current referral rate means that, for the quarter, new cases outnumbered cases closed. This means that, despite an improving rate of early help enquiries and early help episodes, this is not translating into a reduction in the CIN population.
- There are 23 fewer children on a **child protection plan** at the end of the quarter than the previous one, a reduction for the second successive quarter. The rate of children on a plan for more than 2 years remains low, as do re-registration rates. Combined, this suggests that the Trust is effectively using CP procedures to safeguard children, and set plans to address risk and escalate or step down cases in an appropriate way.
- The number of **children in care** has increased in the quarter by 5, to 517. This gives a higher rate than the national and regional rates, but is comparable to the statistical neighbour rate (79 vs 76 per 10,000 children). Three of our 10 statistical neighbours have rates higher than those reported for Doncaster. Therefore, although rates are high, we do not remain an outlier.
- Sickness rates have remained around 5% for the quarter apart from December when it rose to 7%, due to an increase in infections. This is an anticipated seasonal trend, with comparable figures for the same period last year.

#### 4. KEY EXCEPTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

- 4.1. Fourteen operational measures currently remain within tolerance or are performing at or above target level, and three were outside tolerance in quarter one. Outlying measures are detailed below:

A2 - Timeliness of Single Assessment

A3 – Case files audited as requires improvement or better

A8 – Care leavers in Education, Employment or Training

- 4.2. **Timeliness of Single Assessments.** Performance for quarter 3 was 88%, compared to a tolerance figure of 90%. Performance was above tolerance for one of the months within this quarter. Performance has also recovered from a lower rate of 82% in the previous quarter. As previously reported, although current performance is stated as outside tolerance, it would actually place the authority above national, regional and statistical neighbour rates and close to top quartile for all local authority areas. It is therefore arguable that this target is a challenging one that doesn't reflect available benchmarking information. A proposal to revise this target has been agreed through the annual contract review process, although it still sets an expectation to maintain a high level of performance. Weekly tracking of assessments means that any that fall outside the 45 day statutory timeframe, with all assessments completed within 55 days and the majority being less than 3 days overdue. There is an improving trend of an increasing proportion of cases being completed within 20 working days, rather than the full 45. The Trust continues to reassess each case every 6 months, with 95% of all CIN cases being reassessed in this timescale.
- 4.3. **Percentage of monthly case file audits graded as 'requires improvement' or better:** Whilst the rate of cases graded as Good or Outstanding has improved, a number of inadequate cases were identified in quarter 3, thus bringing performance down. Any case graded as inadequate is re-audited within 6 months, with any actions being addressed immediately by the case worker. Learning from audit is disseminated across the Trust through a monthly report, and practice advisors are tasked with communicating key practice messages. In recent audits, immediate remedial work was possible as deficits were due to recording rather than practice. Such issues can be easily resolved through management direction. Emerging themes from these cases reflect findings through external scrutiny by Ofsted and therefore support the approach being taken through our practice improvement work and "stop the clock" training days. Further detail on the quarterly audit activity, findings and resulting actions will be provided through the separate audit report to be tabled at the Quarterly Performance Meeting.
- 4.4. **The Proportion of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET).** Performance has fallen just below tolerance in the quarter, but this is due to performance in December only, as October and November's performance was within tolerance. The 18+ service understands the reason for this drop in December, which is due to a number of young people ending temporary Christmas contracts, or ending training opportunities at the end of the Term. However, since the end of the quarter, six young people have returned to an EET status, which would bring performance back into tolerance.
- 4.5. The 18+ service continues to work with these young people to secure new opportunities going into the New Year. It is worth noting that 15% of care leavers are NEET due to illness/disability or pregnancy/early parenthood. In March, the profiling of the 18+ service to a 16+ Team to support young people from aged 16 aims to improve outcomes for this vulnerable group, as it will ensure a smoother and earlier transition to a service specialising in supporting young people's transition to adulthood.
- 4.6. Two additional strategies at early launch stage will provide care leavers with the skills, experience and confidence to access EET opportunities.
1. An internal training programme focussed on basic skills training and interview preparation, facilitated by IAG professionals, focussing on young people with low confidence in an interview setting.

2. The “Talent Accelerator programme, in partnership with DMBC, is set to launch with a trial in February. This will initially focus on the young people accessing the interview skills programme, and will then focus on the 16 year old care leavers (due to leave school this year) and will be the first cohort within the 16+ Service. The programme will facilitate training and work opportunities; initially with Debenhams and Network Rail, and with Next and other large chains to follow.

## **5. CHANGES TO THE CONTRACT INDICATOR SET FOR YEAR 3**

5.1. The annual contract review process provided an opportunity to review performance for the entire second year, and revise the indicator set for the third year of the contract. These are attached in appendix 2 of this report.

5.2. In summary:

- 16 Measures have been retained. However, reporting methodology has been revised for 4 to ensure that measures are more focussed, targets and tolerances have been revised for 4 measures, based on analysis of year 2 trends and benchmarking against latest comparator data.
- 2 measures have been replaced with alternatives to extend their reach.
- 2 new measures are proposed to take into account the transfer of family support services. Definitions have not yet been finalised, as the service specification has not yet been signed off.

5.3. These measures will be reported within the quarter 4 report.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

6.1. This report reflects performance against the revised contract indicator set for the third quarter of 2015/16. Although some of the initial challenges in recording and reporting have been resolved to ensure stability of measurement, further work needs to be done to improve recording of casework to ensure indicators are as accurate as possible.

6.2. The majority of measures are within tolerance or at/above target. Three social care measures currently lie outside tolerance. Reasons for this are set out in the report, as are strategies for their recovery. Assessment timeliness, although outside tolerance, still demonstrates good performance when compared to other authorities. Casefile audit is being effective in terms of identifying cases that do not meet the Trust's high standards, and putting in place measures to address any shortfalls. Care Leaver EET status will continue to be monitored closely to ensure that recovery takes place in January, as well as the impact of the reorganisation to a service that supports those leaving care from the age of 16 onwards.

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