

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

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE – TRUST UPDATE REPORT

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nuala Fennelly Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and Lead Member for Children's Services	All	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update on the Contract performance monitoring arrangements, along with a summary of the latest Quarterly monitoring performance meeting.

The Trust is showing improvement or stability across the majority of contract measures. More measures are within tolerance or at/above target, and trends are largely positive. Declining trends have been arrested. The transformation programme is critical to the delivery of long term sustainable change that will enhance future performance above and beyond the current operational levels.

Where performance is outside tolerance, a deeper analysis is beginning to differentiate between temporary spikes in performance and those with underlying trends.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. There are no exemptions

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That Panel gives consideration to the Quarterly Performance Trust Update report.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Doncaster Children's Services Trust was established on 1 October 2014 at the direction of the Secretary of State with the mandate to deliver improvements to children's social care. This report provides an update of progress achieved to date by the Trust

BACKGROUND

5. Monitoring of the Service Delivery Contract – Governance Assurance

Summary of meetings / activities since last Scrutiny report

Quarterly Monitoring Performance Meeting

- 5.1 The Quarterly Monitoring Performance meeting is attended by Chief Executives from both organisations, along with representation from Trust Board, and Officers with Performance Management responsibility. The most recent meeting was 4th November 2015,

Monthly Operational Progress Group

- 5.2 The Trust Contract Performance Monitoring Report presented at the Monthly Operational Progress Group details key performance indicators and is accompanied by explanatory narrative. Meetings are attended by Assistant Director: Commissioning and Opportunities (DMBC), Director of Operations (Trust) and Heads of Performance from both organisations. The most recent meeting was 23rd October 2015.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Group

- 5.3 The Monthly Financial Monitoring group principally reviews the financial position of the Trust as it relates to the contract with the Council, the delivery of savings, and considers options to address budget pressures. Meetings attended by finance leads were held on 13th November and 14th October to discuss current progress and projected out-turn.

Annual Review

- 5.4 The Annual Review process of the Contract and monitoring arrangements commenced on 19th and 23rd November, with the purpose to review progress of the Trust over the period 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015. Specifically, the Annual Review will assess:

- whether the Agreement is operating in the most satisfactory manner;
- whether the Services are being delivered to the Agreement Standard; and
- the Contract Sum payable by the Council to the Trust for the next Contract Year.

The output of the review includes a report to the Secretary of State for Education, which will be prepared by the Local Authority, with agreement from the Trust.

- 5.5 The recent Ofsted inspection of services to children in need of help and protection reported that *“formal systems for the Council to monitor and challenge performance by the Trust exceed the requirements set out in the contract between the organisations.”* The report also goes on to recognise the levels of engagement, and commitment by Mayor and elected members; and that they *“understand the successes and challenges faced by the Trust and Council.”* Further information on this inspection is reported

later in this report.

- 5.6 The Trust produces a number of internal performance management reports on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. This includes a monthly Corporate Scorecard, shared with Trust Board. A copy of the scorecard is provided in Appendix B.

5.7 Quarter 2 2015/16 Performance Summary – Performance Assurance

Progress on indicators, projects and other related matters

- 5.7.1 The latest full dataset is for Quarter 2 of 2015/16, July to September 2015. This was shared in the quarterly performance meeting, attended by Lead Member for Children's Services, Director of Children's Services, C/Exec of the Trust and senior leaders representing both organisations. Minutes of this meeting and the preceding monthly performance monitoring meeting are held within the Council and will provide evidence of challenge provided by the Council when considering the Trust's performance.

- 5.7.2 The dataset contains 23 key performance measures and a further 37 operational measures. These are supplied each month, with the exception of financial measures that are delivered quarterly. The measures cover:

- 1) social care pathway for children in need,
- 2) outcomes for children in care and care leavers,
- 3) the workforce, and
- 4) finance.

These measures are listed in appendix A, along with performance position against target at the end of Quarter 2 2015/16.

- 5.7.3 As at Quarter 2 Doncaster Children's Trust showed an improving picture in relation to overall performance; with demonstrable improvement across the majority of measures. This is due to the Trust's integrated approach to performance management and management oversight.

- 5.7.4 The end of Quarter 2 marked the first 12 months of the Trust's operation and therefore an opportunity to reflect on longer term performance trends. During the first quarter of Trust performance (Quarter 3 2014/15) reported 6 measures outside tolerance and three at or above target. At the end of the latest quarter there were 4 outside tolerance and 11 at or above target. Taking into account some fluctuation in specific measures, the overall trend is for performance improvement across the 4 areas of the contract measures.

- 5.7.5 At the end of Quarter 2 there were 11 measures at or exceeding target performance. These measures covered all 4 areas of the indicator set. Headline performance figures for these measures were:

- The percentage of children that were being re-referred as a child in need has dropped from 33% in September 2014 to 23% in the latest quarter. This is despite the overall number of referrals increasing in the same period.
- Children are visited within expected timescales
- Fewer children are becoming subject to a child protection plan
- Children are spending less time on a child protection plan
- Fewer children in care are experiencing 3 or more placement moves within a year
- More care leavers are in suitable accommodation.
- For staff that have joined in the last 2 years, turnover rates are low.

5.7.6 Performance remains within contract performance tolerance for a further 4 measures, and are showing an improving trend in most cases, suggesting that performance will meet targets. These include an increase in the proportion of children in care remaining in long-term placements, a reduction in the length of time to complete care proceedings, and the Trust's reliance on agency front-line staff.

Actions to address performance measures outside tolerance

5.7.7 Four measures lay outside tolerance in quarter 2, although they had previously demonstrated performance within tolerance.

5.7.8 Two of these measures are operational and have triggered a "deeper dive" to investigate the root cause. They are:

- The time taken to complete assessments when children are referred as a child in need. Whilst performance has previously been within target, it has temporarily dipped in quarter 2. This has triggered a deeper dive of the data. Analysis has demonstrated that a combination of increased referral rates and a small number of short term vacancies temporarily increased demand on services and the speed at which workers could complete assessments. At the same time the Trust were not willing to accept a drop in assessment quality. It can be reported that assessment performance has now increased back towards previous levels.
- The Trust has increased rigour and challenge to its case file auditing activity, with managers receiving additional training and deployment of a new audit tool. This has increased confidence in the audit activity, justified during the recent Ofsted inspection who confirmed our ability to grade files accurately. Both the training and recent Inspection have provided external calibration and assurance of the Trust's audit standards. Practice standards manuals and associated materials have been cascaded with staff, which should also improve file quality over time. An additional 90 cases were audited during the recent Inspection, providing further intelligence on case file quality and necessary steps for improvement. The Ofsted inspection recommended further work to improve quality and consistency of casework. This has been accepted

and is already part of the Joint Inspection Action Plan, shared between the Trust and Council.

5.7.9 The two other measures currently outside target tolerance relate to financial monitoring and forecasted projected spend against budget. Increased budgetary demands to the Trust are largely due to the cost of increased demands for placement costs, in particular costs of residential and independent foster placements for children with complex or challenging needs. Although it is the Trust's plan to place more children within Doncaster with its own Foster carers or homes, it would not be children's best interests to end long term and stable placements for this purpose alone.

5.7.10 These budgetary demands and forecasted out-turn are reviewed through the monthly finance meetings, as well as quarterly performance meetings.

5.7.11 Negotiations on the Council's contribution to Trust's budget are taking place through the Annual Review. This will consider the projected demands for services placed upon the Trust, including placement of children in care.

5.8 Ofsted Inspection

5.8.1 The Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers took place in September and October. Services delivered by the Trust and DMBC were scrutinised within the scope of the inspection.

5.8.2 The outcome of this report is embargoed to 27th November 2015, when it will be published by Ofsted. A verbal update will be given on the day. However, the draft report indicates progress across several judgement areas and recognises the improvements made and maturing relationship between Trust and Council. The report identifies 20 recommendations that both organisations accept and are already working towards.

5.8.3 The Authority is expected to provide an action plan to Ofsted within 70 working days of the report publication. It will set out the actions required to address the recommendations, clearly stating timescales and how progress will be evidenced.

5.8.4 In order to both meet Ofsted's requirement for a plan and to meet our own continuous improvement objectives, a joint action plan has already been prepared by Trust and DMBC, aligned to the 20 recommendations identified within the Inspection Report. The Trust has further action plans that cover other inspections of services they manage: Youth Offending Services, Regulated Children's Homes, Independent Fostering Agency and Voluntary Adoption Agency.

5.8.5 A separate presentation on the outcome of the inspection is attached as appendix C.

5.8.6 The joint action plan clearly identifies ownership for each action both at organisational level and to a named officer. Whilst organisations will take

ownership of actions allocated to them, a Joint Strategic Intelligence Group made up of senior managers from Trust and DMBC will meet monthly to monitor progress and escalate exception.

5.9 Any other assurance activity since last report

5.9.1 Since the last Scrutiny meeting all four children’s homes have been inspected by the Trust. Two have been rated as *Good*, one as *Outstanding*. The remaining home has been inspected but the report has not been published, however the Trust anticipates a positive outcome from this inspection.

5.9.2 The Trust has also been inspected as an Independent Fostering Agency and as a Voluntary Adoption Agency by Ofsted. Both were rated as *Good*, and recognised the progress made by the Trust to achieve these results.

5.10 Forward plan

5.10.1 Key areas of activity over the next quarter are:

- Completion of Annual review activities, contract sum agreed, report to Secretary of State submitted by DMBC.
- Action plan shared with Ofsted.
- It is likely that a number of our children’s homes are inspected as part of the routine inspection programme.
- Chair of Trust Board’s letter to Secretary of State on Trust progress will be submitted in January, alongside a progress update from the DfE’s Improvement Advisor, *Achieving for Children*.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6. Not applicable

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

7. Not applicable

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY PRIORITIES

8.

	Priority	Implications
	<p>We will support a strong economy where businesses can locate, grow and employ local people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster’s vital services</i> 	<p>The Trust has been established with a mandate to continue delivering improvements in children’s social care. The formal contract with DMBC details a requirement for future Ofsted inspection judgements to be:</p> <p>- ‘Requires improvement’ or better by April 2016</p>

		- Good or better by October 2017 - And that overall the service should be Outstanding by October 2019
	<p>We will help people to live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>The Contract with the Trust relates to the delivery of services to children in need of help and protection, and therefore has an implication for the priorities relating to safeguarding our communities.</p> <p>The Trust is also a key strategic partner in delivering children's services, and therefore an effective partnership is critical to improving outcomes for the Children and Young People of Doncaster.</p>
	<p>We will make Doncaster a better place to live, with cleaner, more sustainable communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>The Contract includes a budget for delivering services and therefore an expectation that the Trust will deliver value for money.</p>
	<p>We will support all families to thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	
	<p>We will deliver modern value for money services.</p>	
	<p>We will provide strong leadership and governance, working in partnership.</p>	

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

9. There are no specific risks associated with this report

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. In September 2014, the Secretary of State for Education issued a Direction transferring various children's services to Doncaster Children's Trust Limited ("the Trust"). Although the Trust performs Services on behalf of the Council, the legal powers and duties in relation to safeguarding children remain with the Council and court proceedings continue to be brought in the name of the Council.
11. On 30th September 2014, the Council entered into a contract with the Trust governing the provision of services by the Trust. The contract with the Trust contains various monitoring powers so that that the Council can assure itself that Services are being delivered correctly.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. See items 5.3 and 5.7.9

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

13. Not applicable

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS (*Insert where applicable – see guidance*)

14. Not applicable

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

15. Not applicable

CONSULTATION

16. The Doncaster Children's Services Trust has been consulted in the development of this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17. None.

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For

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Appendix A

List of current key performance indicators for the Contract with Doncaster Children's Services Trust, along with position against contract target

Measures relating to the social care pathway for Children in Need

A1 – percentage of re-referrals in last 12 months, ON TARGET

A2 – timeliness of single assessment, OFF TARGET

A3 - Monthly case file audits rated as “requires improvement” or better, OFF TARGET

A4 - Percentage of young people with CP Plans where 2 weekly visits have not taken place, ON TARGET

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

A6 - Child Protection Plans ended lasting 2 years or more, ON TARGET

A7 – Children with Child Protection Plan or Looked After with an allocated qualified social worker, ON TARGET

Measures relating to Children in Care and Care Leavers

B8 – Average length of care proceedings, IN TOLERANCE

B9 - Stability of Placement of Children in Care: percentage of children living in the same placement for 2 or more years, IN TOLERANCE

B10 – Stability of Placement of Children in Care – percentage of children with 3 or more moves in 12 months, ON TARGET

B11 – Percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation, ON TARGET

B12 – Percentage of Care Leavers in Employment, Education or Training, IN TOLERANCE

Measures relating to workforce

C14 - Percentage of frontline FTE posts covered by Agency Staff, IN TOLERANCE

C15 - Of the Permanent Staff that left, how many left within 2 years of starting, ON TARGET

C16 - Percentage of staff with up-to-date 6 weekly supervisions, NO TARGET SET

Measures relating to finance

D17a – Gross Expenditure vs Plan, OFF TARGET

D17b – Forecast Plan vs Budgeted Income, ON TARGET

D17c – Forecast Operational Expenditure, OFF TARGET

D17d – Trust Liquidity, ON TARGET

D17e – Current Assets cover compared to current liabilities, ON TARGET

D19 – Capital Expenditure/Income vs. Plan, NO TARGET SET

D21 – Progress against savings in plan, NO TARGET SET

Key:

ON TARGET: performance is equal to or better than the target set within the contract.

IN TOLERANCE: performance is not at target but is within the tolerance range specified within the contract.

OFF TARGET: performance is outside the target and tolerance set within the contract.

NO TARGET SET: No target was set within the contract, so position cannot be described.