

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

**QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS AGAINST OFSTED ACTION  
PLAN – 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. Since the last quarter there has been a further increase in the number of measures within tolerance or at/above target. Trends are largely positive, and strategies are in place to address declining performance trends. Only one operational measure is outside tolerance; the Trust is clear about the reasons for this and the steps being taken to address this.

The Trust and Council have now completed their first annual contract review, which provided an opportunity to review and revise the performance indicator set. The new indicator set has now been agreed and will be reported from quarter 4 onwards.

Since the last report, there has been significant progress made against the Council/Trust shared Ofsted Action Plan, as preparations are made in anticipation of future progress checks and external review.

**EXEMPT REPORT**

2. There are no exemptions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. That Panel gives consideration to the Quarterly Performance Trust Update report.
4. That Panel gives consideration to the Ofsted Action Plan and progress made against it, to provide assurance that both Council and Trust will be in a position to satisfy, through external scrutiny, that outcomes are improving for

Children and Young People.

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

5. 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.
6. An external, public and independent measure of the progress made by Children's Services is through Ofsted Inspections. The recent inspection judgements, document and recommendations have now been published. Therefore, both Council and Trust are required to work in partnership to deliver the recommendations and make the progress required in anticipation for next inspection.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **7. Monitoring of the Service Delivery Contract – Governance Assurance**

Summary of meetings / activities since last Scrutiny report

#### **Quarterly Monitoring Performance Meeting**

- 7.1 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 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.

#### **Monthly Operational Progress Group**

- 7.2 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 of this group was 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016, the focus of which was a review of the current contract performance framework and revisions for year 2 of contract delivery.

#### **Monthly Financial Monitoring Group**

- 7.3 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. The most recent meetings of this group were 26<sup>th</sup> November, 16<sup>th</sup> December and 19<sup>th</sup> January.

## **Annual Review**

- 7.4 The Annual Review process of the Contract and monitoring arrangements commenced on 19<sup>th</sup> November and ended on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 with a submission to the Secretary of State for Education that included progress made during year 1 budget and priorities for year 2 and two notifiable changes to the contract. The review process has included a number of meetings in addition to the routine monthly monitoring activity. The two notifiable changes were:
- 1) The transfer of the Children with Disabilities social work team, and Oaklands Short Break Unit from Council to Trust.
  - 2) Revisions to the contract performance indicator set to better reflect Trust activity. These are covered later in the report.
- 7.5 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 latest scorecard is provided in Appendix A.

## **7.6 Quarter 3 2015/16 Performance Summary – Performance Assurance**

### **Progress on indicators, projects and other related matters**

- 7.6.1 The latest full dataset is for Quarter 3 of 2015/16, October to December 2015. This was shared in the quarterly performance meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016, attended by Lead Member for Children's Services, Director of Childrens 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.
- 7.6.2 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. Performance narrative is supplied for each of the performance measures to provide further detail of the Trust's understanding of the current position. 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 B, along with performance position against target at the end of Quarter 3 2016/17.

7.6.3 As at Quarter 3 Doncaster Children's Trust showed sustained performance; with the majority of measures within contract tolerance or at/exceeding target performance. Three measures were reported as being outside contract tolerance. These are covered in more detail later in the report. The Trust has enhanced its integrated approach to performance management and management oversight. This, coupled with restructure of operational services, is giving a sharper focus and accountability for performance.

7.6.4 At the end of Quarter 3 there were nine 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 continues to remain low, and has been better than target for three successive quarters. This is despite the revised Early Help Offer not being fully established or embedded during this period. As the Early Help Offer is established, recognised and adopted across the Borough, it is anticipated that referrals will reduce, and therefore re-referrals, as children and families access help before a need for statutory services.
- Children are allocated to a social worker that is qualified to meet their needs
- Children are spending less time on a child protection plan
- The time taken to complete care proceedings is reducing
- More care leavers are in suitable accommodation.
- Turnover rates remain low, leading to a more stable workforce.

7.6.5 Performance remains within contract performance tolerance for a further seven measures. These include an increase in the proportion of children in care remaining in long-term placements, timeliness of single assessments following a referral. The proportion of children in care experiencing three or more moves in a year remains within tolerance, as do the proportion of care leavers in education, employment and training.

### **Actions to address performance measures outside tolerance**

7.6.6 Three measures lay outside tolerance in quarter 3, although they had previously demonstrated performance within tolerance.

7.6.7 The one operational measure that sits outside contract tolerance in quarter 3 is the qualitative measure of case file quality: A3 - Monthly casefile audits rated as "requires improvement" or better. Performance improved from quarter 2 (81%) to quarter 3 (87%). Performance for the last month of the quarter was 97% case files rated as "requires improvement" or better. This actually constitutes a month on month increase since August 2015. Activity over the summer of 2015 effectively changed the thresholds of each grading and also the rigour of how they were applied. This means that audits became more consistent from September onwards. The Trust begins a 6 month Practice Improvement Programme from January 2016, designed to improve practice through skills analysis, training and mentoring of delivery

staff and managers. The impact of this programme will be measured through the regular and thematic audit activity undertaken by the Trust.

7.6.8 The Trust's thematic audit calendar sets out additional focussed audit work undertaken throughout the year to complement the routine quality work undertaken by operational managers. This activity, learning and subsequent practice changes will be reported back through the quarterly performance review meetings.

7.6.9 Two inter-related financial measures remain outside tolerance, both relate to forecast expenditure against budget. The overspend forecast is still predominantly made up of an overspend on placement costs offset by an underspend on staffing. The pressures within Placements continue to be within Out of Authority (OOA) and Independent Fostering (IFA) placements, where numbers have increased since last reported, however two placements were court directed. There is also an increase in the number of allowances payable in respect of Special Guardianship Orders, which is a national trend. Although the Trust has been successful in reducing reliance on agency staff, there are still a number of vacancies filled through this route, with the associated additional costs. Financial risk is currently shared between Trust and Council, in accordance with the Contract.

7.6.11 The contract review has provided an opportunity to consider historic budget/spend against placement costs and the first year of activity for the Trust. This has included a review of previous year's budget and actual spend, which has indicated that budgets at the point of transfer to Trust did not accurately reflect the profile of placements at the time and therefore underestimated the total spend.

7.6.12 Within the contract discussions a model of describing and quantifying the costs of placements for children in care was agreed. This has been expressed as a "care ladder," which summarises numbers of children by placement type and associated costs. Projections for future years have been used to predict demand for placements and form strategies for managing this, including increased use of the Trust's children's homes. Both DMBC and the Trust have agreed to develop this model further in order to have a shared reliable view of future demand and how it can be met through a Placement Sufficiency Strategy. Continued effort and innovation will be applied to recruit and maintain foster carers in what is a challenging market place.

7.6.13 The service is currently projecting to receive more income than anticipated, predominantly from Health as contributions to OOA placements and within adoption.

## **7.7 Ofsted Action Plan**

7.7.1 Ofsted published their report on the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers on 27th November. The report contained 20 recommendations based on findings from the inspection.

- 7.7.2 The published report, clearly differentiates between services delivered by the Trust, by the Council and those shared by both organisations. Each recommendation within the report clearly states responsibility. Of the 20 recommendations, 13 are specifically directed at the Trust, one is directed at the Council with the remaining 6 recommendations are directed at both organisations. However, as the Council currently retains management of statutory services to Children with Disabilities, many of the Trust-directed recommendations are in reality shared with the Council as they relate to improving practice for all children in need.
- 7.7.3 A summary of the recommendations is attached as Appendix C.
- 7.7.4 There is a requirement for the Local Authority to respond to the Inspection report with an action plan within 70 working days of its publication. The Trust's action plan will form the basis of this response, and we will work with our council colleagues to deliver a plan that to assure Ofsted of our continuous improvement. We intend to submit our action plan, and progress against it earlier than required, during the first week of February.
- 7.7.5 The Trust left no time in drawing up a draft action plan after the inspection period, in light of the verbal feedback given by inspectors. This plan was then refined and mapped to the 20 Ofsted recommendations once the draft report was published. The action plan is shared with DMBC and also contains actions for partner agencies such as South Yorkshire Police, DSCB and RDaSH. To ensure that there is progress against each action, a lead for the Trust has been identified for these actions, in order to maintain the pace and hold partners to account.
- 7.7.6 As the inspection ran alongside an inspection of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Board, which also produced recommendations, the LSCB action plan has been shared with the Trust so that common/shared themes are progressed, and progress can be reported and evidenced consistently.
- 7.7.7 As the majority of the recommendations relate to children in need and child protection case work, specific locality action plans have been prepared providing finer detail of the practice improvements required to meet each recommendation. A locality action plan is held by each of the four locality Heads of Service. These are updated with a progress summary and RAG rating against each action, and submitted each fortnight.
- 7.7.8 As of 4<sup>th</sup> February there are 183 specific actions recorded against the Main Action Plan, 151 of which are owned in full or in part by the Trust. There are 38 actions within each of the Locality Action Plans.
- 7.7.9 A Practice Improvement Programme (PIP) has been developed, scoped and secured. It will run from January to July 2016 with the aim of bringing additional pace to the improvements required. It is anticipated that the successful implementation of the PIP will meet the majority of the recommendations made in the inspection report. The PIP forms a key foundation of the post inspection action plan. The anticipated improvement will enhance the Trust's capacity to improve inspection outcomes and therefore its reputation nationally. It will contain four elements

- A. An intensive teaching and learning programme for practitioners and managers
- B. Skills Gap Analysis – An organisational and individual assessment of strength, development areas, behaviours and performance.
- C. Coaching and Mentoring – Development support for recipients targeted on the outcomes from the Skills Gap Analysis and triangulated with Inspection findings, the Improvement Plan and DCST service objectives.
- D. Practice Advisors – To provide peer to peer Social Work practice, advice, support and mentoring. This will also include additional capacity support in terms of case work.

7.7.10 The teaching elements have been agreed with Research in Practice and the remaining elements have been procured through an independent provider, iPeople. The Council has provided additional funding to support the PIP.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.7.11 A Joint Strategic Inspection Group meets each month, attended by Trust and DMBC to ensure that shared recommendations are being progressed and to provide assurance that both organisations are progressing their actions. The most recent meeting was held on 11th January, where the action plan will be signed off and governance arrangements for the Action Plan were agreed.

7.7.12 Within the Trust, the monthly Continuous Improvement Board will be the responsible group for ensuring progress against actions and recommendations owned by the Trust. The last meeting was 5<sup>th</sup> February, where the majority of actions were agreed in terms ownership, timescales and dependencies.

7.7.13 Weekly Getting to Good meetings have taken place since December 2015, chaired by the Chief Executive of the Trust. These regular meetings are in place to maintain the pace of improvement, through the Ofsted Action Plan and Locality Action Plans. Head of Service attend each meeting to provide an update on progress against their plans/actions. The Council's CWD service attends these meetings to ensure that actions relating to practice are being consistently applied across all social work teams.

7.7.13 The multi-agency Performance Accountability Board meets for the first time on 18th January 2016. This Board is chaired by the Chair of the LSCB and attended at Chief Executive level by representatives of DMBC, the Trust, South Yorkshire Police, Doncaster CCG, RDaSH, and NHS foundation trust. The purpose of the Board is to oversee improvement in children's services, focusing on cross-cutting issues that require effective interdependent working from partner agencies. The Board will meet quarterly and will provide an additional forum to consider recent inspections of services and ensure that shared recommendations are progressed.

7.7.14 Locality Heads of Service have been given a template Locality SEF to complete and maintain. These SEFs have a specific focus on Management oversight and practice quality – two key areas for improvement if the Trust is to achieve a grade of Requires Improvement or better. Locality Heads are expected to submit their version each month to provide assurance that

management oversight of practice is secure and improving. These documents will also be of value for any subsequent re-inspection as evidence of increased grip of performance in the locality teams.

## 7.8 Any other assurance activity since last report

- 7.8.1 Since the last Scrutiny meeting a children’s home has received an interim inspection, in line with the 6 monthly inspection framework. The home is currently rated as “Good,” and the interim inspection Ofsted reported “improved effectiveness.”
- 7.8.2 The Trust also contributed to the recent review of Early Help Services, conducted by the Council’s improvement partner, Achieving for Children. The summary report has not yet been published.

## 7.9 Forward plan

7.9.1 Key areas of activity over the next quarter are:

- Provision of the new contract performance indicator (Appendix D) set from January onwards
- Preparation for the transfer of services to Children with Disabilities into the Trust.
- 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

8. Not applicable

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

9. Not applicable

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

10.

Outcomes	Implications
<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting</i></li> </ul>	<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>



<i>Doncaster's vital services</i>	- 'Requires improvement' or better by April 2016
People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.	- Good or better by October 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i></li> </ul>	- And that overall the service should be Outstanding by October 2019
People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.	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.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i></li> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i></li> </ul>	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.
All families thrive.	The Contract includes a budget for delivering services and therefore an expectation that the Trust will deliver value for money.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i></li> </ul>	
Council services are modern and value for money.	
Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

11. There are no specific risks associated with this report

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. 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.
13. 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**

14. See items 7.6.9 to 7.6.13

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS** (*Insert where applicable – see guidance*)

15. Not applicable

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

16. Not applicable

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

17. Not applicable

## **CONSULTATION**

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

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19. None.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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For

**Paul Moffatt**

**Chief Executive, Doncaster Children's Services Trust**

## **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, IN TOLERANCE

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, IN TOLERANCE

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

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, ON TARGET

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, IN TOLERANCE

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.