Mid-Year Performance Report
Children's Social Services (Community Services Directorate)

REPORT AUTHOR: **CAROL SALMON**
REPORT DATE: **OCTOBER 2013**
REPORT PERIOD: **APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2013**

Introduction

The Head of Service report is produced on a half yearly basis and provided to Executive Members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The approach is based on exception reporting to summarise key information that the Head of Service feels Members should be aware of, including both good and poor performance. Emerging issues / operational risks should also be highlighted. The report is split into 3 distinct sections: -

1. Improvement Priorities & Service Plan Monitoring – this section is used to discuss the progress being made towards the Improvement Priorities which do not have an in year focus and therefore are not included within the quarterly progress report on the Improvement Plan. It is also used to highlight good news and key issues (including operational risks and the actions necessary to control them) arising from monitoring the progress being made towards delivering the service plan.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports – this section summarises regulatory work reported in the half year and its outcomes and intended actions arising from recommendations.

3. Corporate Reporting – this section summaries the performance in relation to corporate issues e.g. sickness absence, appraisals, complaints, data protection training

Appendix 1- NSI & Improvement Target Performance Indicators – summary table of the performance for the NSI and Improvement Targets. Graphs and commentary are included in section 1 for those indicators shown with a red RAG status. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement* target.

1. Improvement Priorities & Service Plan Monitoring

Report highlights for the half year are as follows: -

Living Well / Improving People's Quality of Life
1. Use a whole family approach by launching the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS)
Protocols and polices, including recording and reviewing mechanisms have been agreed and the Integrated Family Support Service became operational on 1st August. It was formally launched in September 2013.

2. Carry out a major review of the Transition Service and implement findings.
An independent review of the Transition Service has taken place and an action plan developed which will be taken forward into 2014 / 2015. An event to gather the views of young people who have received a service over the last year is being planned for November 2013 and findings will be incorporated into the Action Plan.

Living Well / Giving Children and young people the best start in life
1. Out of county placements
A new Regional lead for Children's Commissioning has been agreed and contract monitoring will take place via the Regional Hub.
A Regional Framework is being developed for Children's and Young Peoples Service, with the residential element completed and fostering element in progress. Outcome focussed services will be a key component of the Regional Framework.

We are working with the regional Commissioning Hub to obtain residential placements that are appropriate for the individuals' need where a low volume, high cost placement is required. Our documentation has been adopted by the Commissioning Hub for use on a wider basis.

2. Looked after children and care leavers
The Systems Thinking report on the Fostering Service has been presented and recommendations made to the Modernizing Social Services Board. An Action Plan has been developed and progress will be reviewed in the first quarter of 2014.

An Action Plan has been written following a Blue Sky Thinking Day to focus on the new court proceedings timeframe arrangements of 26 weeks. A Members workshop is scheduled for 25th October and 20 staff attended training facilitated by Robert Hornby (Barrister) in July.

3. Children and vulnerable families
Care leavers' housing support needs is a key area - the impact of the Welfare Reforms heightens the need to ensure appropriate accommodation given the increased restrictions placed upon the payment of benefits to this group. The Night Stop initiative has been launched and we are looking to build on the Shared Care Housing provision already in place. We are also working jointly with Housing to provide support to young people aged 18 - 24 who have legal child status.

The Parenting Strategy / Action Plan has been finalised and provides the overarching document for the implementation of services to parents in Flintshire.
* The Taith Y Teulu Team is fully operational and meeting the targets set by the Families First monitoring officer.
* The Quest Project was re-launched at the beginning of September, delivering a

service to parents furthest away from the labour market.
- The Sure Start Creche Service continues to deliver services to enable parents to attend courses. In the long term the aim is to develop this into a social enterprise.
- The bid to extend the delivery of family focused services at the Gronant Centre is in draft and will be submitted by 21st December. If successful service delivery will commence in the new financial year.

Flying Start - Multiagency teams are delivering the four entitlements of the Flying Start Programme and the improvement objective has been fully achieved.

Safe Communities / Keeping people and communities safe
1. Safeguarding vulnerable children
Members of the Safeguarding Unit attend the Performance Development Forum and are involved in a number of subgroups to contribute to topics in the Head of Service Forward Work Plan. They continue to develop their internal consultancy role by attending team meetings.

Obtaining and recording feedback from children, young people and their families will be taken forward through Survey Monkey in the second half of the year. We are aware we need to extend opportunities for local children and young people to be able to give feedback on their own experiences so that learning is considered as regional safeguarding services continue to be developed.

Managers ensure staff access training on the new assessment and screening tools known as the Risk Model in order to routinely assess and analyse risk of significant harm.

A part time Therapist has been employed through a Service Level Agreement with Action for Children and this resource is focussing on preventing placement breakdown for looked after children. Arrangements will be reviewed in March 2014

The NHS secure file sharing portal does not meet the needs of the council and the Safeguarding Unit will be included in a new project EGRESS from October 2013.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports

Internal Audit Reports
The following reports have been finalised in Periods 1-6. Action plans are in place to address the weaknesses identified.

Levels of Assurance – standard reports.

Project Reference	Project Description	Level of Assurance	Recommendations		
			High	Med	Low
CS0020S1	Care Homes	Amber +	0	0	8

Annual Review and evaluation of performance 2012/13
Our Annual Performance Report for Social Services (ACRF) received a very positive response from CSSIW when the Inspectors visited in September. The Council has received the draft letter setting out the key areas of progress in the year. The final version will be published at the end of October and reported separately to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Corporate Reporting

Complaints / Compliments
During this period:

- 40 complaints resolved at Stage 1 (Local Resolution)
- 83% of complaints responded to within 10 day timescale
- 7 complaints responded to at Stage 2 (Independent Investigation)
- 0 (zero) complaints involved Stage 3 (Independent Panel Hearing)
- 0 (zero) complaints referred to or responded to by the Public Services Ombudsman
- 103 compliments received about the work of staff

The number of complaints has risen compared to last year, though this small increase is consistent year upon year and is a pattern that appears to be replicated across Children's Social Services Departments in Wales. The number of compliments is lower than average and staff are to be reminded to share positive feedback they receive with the Complaints Team

Sickness Absence
Information was not available at the time of writing this report.

Staff Turnover
Information was not available at the time of writing this report.

Staff Appraisals

Service Area	No. of staff on iTrent	No. of staff for whom appraisals have been recorded	No. of staff for whom appraisals are up to date	% of staff with up to date appraisals
Adults	965	230	230	24%
Childrens	318	95	95	30%
Development and Resources	62	35	35	56%

These figures have been provided from iTrent. We currently have about 25% of staff with appraisals recorded on iTrent, and in the next six months we will be contacting those managers not yet using the system, to ensure that a more accurate count of completed appraisals can be provided in the future.

Equality Monitoring

The EIA Screening Tool is completed to ascertain if a full EIA is required for changes to key policy / service delivery.

The DEG is beginning to review systems that enable accurate data to be recorded and collected and will continue this work through its ongoing work programme.

We will consider the standardized questionnaire including the equality monitoring data template adopted in Adult Services and reflect on its use in Children's Services. Currently a number of different questionnaires exist across Children's Services including a range of mechanisms to capture equality data.

Welsh Language Monitoring

The Authority is committed to implementing the More Than Just Words Framework and ensuring the needs of our Welsh speakers are met. The Community Services Directorate is currently focused on achieving the key expectations for year one progress outlined by the Welsh Government (as highlighted below):

We have strengthened our leadership; by appointing Welsh Language Champions within the Directorate to lead our action plan and promote the WL agenda.

We are mapping the skills our workforce; HR are currently collating data via staff WL self assessments, this data will enable us to develop our plans to actively offer WL services and up-skill our workforce through targeted training. Flintshire is also linking with Bangor University in relation to our Social Work recruitment process.

We are Accepting the 'Active Offer' principle and mainstreaming WL Services into key systems; A new Paris specification has been developed, which will ensure staff actively offer welsh language services and are recording more in depth detail in relation to our service users language needs. New staff/service user conversational groups have been established to improve staff confidence levels. Training has been promoted by the Directorate, HR report the majority of attendees on WL training are Social Services staff. More than just Words has been highlighted as a priority in the Directors ACRF and the Heads of Service Plans and will be consistently highlighted as an objective for improvement.

We believe this is more than just a Strategy. It is an opportunity to revitalise the Welsh language within our communities, to raise staff confidence and abilities and to come out and say "rydym yn Gymraeg ac yn falch", "we are Welsh and proud."

Data Protection Training

410 have received training in Community Services to date. Training is not mandatory for all staff however, and we are in the process of identifying the core group of staff who will require training. Once this is done we will be able to present this in terms of percentage compliance with the data protection policy.

Appendix 1 - NSI & Improvement Target Performance Indicators

Key

R	**Target missed**
A	**Target missed but within an acceptable level**
G	**Target achieved or exceeded**

The RAG status of the indicators for the half year position are summarised as follows:

R 0   **A** 3   **G** 4

Graphs and commentary are included in section 1 for those indicators shown with a red RAG status.

Note 1 – NSI = National Statutory Indicator   Imp T = Improvement Target

Note 2 – Change (Improved / Downturned) is based on comparison with the previous quarter. Where it is more appropriate to compare performance with the same period in the previous year this should be stated in the commentary.

Indicator	NSI / Imp T (Note 1)	Annual Target 2013/14	2012/13 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q1 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Target	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
SCC/004 The percentage of children looked after on the last day of the period who have had three or more placements during the year.	NSI Imp T	Below 7.5%	21 186 **11.3%**	24 126 **11.1%**	40 209 **19.1%**	Below 7.5%	**A**	Downturned	Our increasing LAC population includes several large sibling groups, who have moved in the last 12 months. Each child is counted individually, and that has had the effect of raising the percentage. We are of the view that most of these moves were planned in the interest of the child; a review of the reasons for the moves has been done and the moves were in the following categories; Placement with parents Moved to permanent placement Adoption

Indicator	NSI / Imp T (Note 1)	Annual Target 2013/14	2012/13 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q1 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Target	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
									For those that aren't in the above category i.e. placement breakdown, disruption meetings are held to examine the reasons (12).
SCC/021 The percentage of looked after children reviews to be carried out within statutory timescales.	Imp T	93%	104 108 96.3%	98 129 **76%**	91 91 **100%**	93%	G	Improved	
SCC/033d The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19.	NSI	90%	1 2 **50%**	2 3 **66.7%**	2 4 **50%**	90%	A	Downturned	This is a small cohort of 4 young people. In Quarter 2, two young people returned home and declined further involvement with Children's Social Services despite having it being offered.
SCC/033e The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19, and known to be in suitable accommodation.	NSI	95%	1 1 **100%**	1 2 **50%**	2 2 **100%**	95%	G	Improved	This is a small cohort of 2 young people. In Quarter 2, one young person was living at a domestic violence centre.
SCC/033f The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact	NSI Imp	75%	1 1 **100%**	0 2 **0%**	0 2 **0%**	75%	A	Downturned	This is a small cohort of 2 young people. 1 young person has recently given birth and therefore their ability to engage in education/training is temporary limited and the other young person

Indicator	NSI / Imp T (Note 1)	Annual Target 2013/14	2012/13 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q1 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Outturn	2013/14 Q2 Target	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
at the age of 19, and known to be engaged in education, training or employment.									is currently suffering from illnesses which prevent them engaging in education/training and employment.
SCC/041a The percentage of 'eligible', relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required.	NSI	98%	67 67 **100%**	61 61 **100%**	63 63 **100%**	98%	G	Maintained	
PSR/009a The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.	Imp T	300 days	1254 4 **314**	588 2 **294**	439 2 **220**	300 days	G	Improved	