

# Agenda Item 8.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	(All Wards);
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Children's Services performance indicators underpin the council's priorities and principles to focus on every child reaching their potential and looking after the vulnerable.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Children's Services performance indicators be noted.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee means that the information reported against in each performance indicator relates to the position at the end of April 2019.

## **Background**

Previously, the indicators provided for Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny were the same as those provided to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive on a quarterly basis. However, due to the scheduling of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny, there was often a gap of several months before the quarterly performance was provided to the committee.

The most recent performance information, included as an appendix, deviates from the quarterly indicators that will continue to go to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive. It forms a more comprehensive dashboard of performance across Children's Services, and will enable reporting to this committee in a more timely manner.

## **Analysis of Issues**

At the end of April 2019, the Children's Services Dashboard and the underlying indicators have highlighted five areas for improvement. Information on these is given below.

## **1. Timeliness of Early Help Assessments**

In Wokingham Borough we expect our Early Help Assessments to be completed within 30 working days. The target has not been met for 2018-19 with an average completion time of 40 working days. This improved in March 19 when the 30 day target was met. In April 19, however, performance deteriorated to 43 working days. There is no statutory timeframe for completion of Early help assessments the Working Together Guidance 2018 states: The Early Help Plan is a holistic approach to understanding children and families' additional needs and supports decision making about how these needs might best be addressed within a multi-agency context.

The deterioration in performance in April is linked to the Easter holidays affecting both workers' and families' availability. Early Help workers have also been under additional pressure due to the volume of Social Work support activity the service undertakes - such as supporting supervised visits for children who enter care, undertaking parenting assessments, and providing co-working support for children who are subject to Child in Need or Child Protection Plans.

## **2. Timeliness of Social Worker reports to Child Protection Conferences and Children in Care Reviews**

The expectation on Social Workers is that their reports are shared before conferences and reviews to allow families and professionals enough time to fully review them.

Timescales in April have been affected by workers' availability over the Easter holidays. Children subject to 'dual plans' – those who are subject to Child protection Plans as well as being Children in Care – require Social Workers to provide multiple reports for multiple meetings, which has also impacted on timeliness.

## **3. Timeliness of Return Home Interviews for children who have had a missing episode**

When a child is reported missing, a return interview for the child will be considered. If an interview is deemed necessary, it should be completed within 3 working days of the child returning home. Interviews are carried out by a Return Home Interview Coordinator who is based in the Early Help Service.

The percentage of interviews taking place on time deteriorated compared to 2018-19. Although a child may agree to an interview taking place initially, it is often hard to engage them in completing the interview within timescales. This is particularly the case with older children or Children in Care placed outside the Borough. However, it is also recognised that on some occasions our process flow for missing children upon their return has not been as efficient or effective as it could be which has erroneously led to reported delay.

## **4. Case Supervision**

Teams have reported that they are falling behind with their supervision recording, but that supervisions have taken place. A new Assistant Team Manager has been

recruited and supervision is now shared between three managers which is expected to improve performance.

## 5. Timeliness of Visits to Children subject to Child Protection Plans

In Wokingham Borough we expect children subject to Child Protection Plans to be visited at least every 10 working days. This is currently not being achieved for all children. The proportion of visits taking place within 15 working days has improved, indicating that most visits are within timescale, or only exceeding the expected timescale by a few days. This remains a priority for teams and performance is slowly improving week on week.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A		

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
N/A

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b> (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)
N/A

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
N/A

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
N/A

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