



Report of the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement

Meeting: Children's Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 8th November 2007

Subject: Performance Report Quarter 2 2007/08

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1 Executive Summary

1.1 This report discusses the key performance issues considered to be of corporate significance identified for the Children's Services Scrutiny Board as at end September 2007. In addition, the report also includes a predicted CPA score for 2007/08 and a performance table detailing all PI's for this Board.

2 Purpose of the Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the key areas of under performance at the end of Quarter 2 (1st July to 30th Sept 2007).

3 Background Information

3.1 This 'highlight report' has been prepared in readiness for the Accountability process, which includes the CLT meeting on 30th October 2007, Leader Management Team on 1st November 2007 and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th November; separate reports will be prepared for each of the scrutiny boards in readiness for the November cycle of meetings.

3.2 The issues discussed in this report have been identified because performance in these areas impacts upon one or more of the following; the delivery of effective services, the delivery of our corporate priorities; our CPA score; or our ability to deliver efficiency savings. This report is supported by detailed PI information.

3.3 Any improvement in assessment scores should potentially have a positive impact on the council's Direction of Travel assessment and overall CPA Star Rating.

4 CPA Performance issues

4.1 The table below summarises our predicted CPA scores for February 2008.

	Direction of Travel	Star Category	Corporate Assessment	Level 1 Services			Level 2 Services			
				Use of Resources	Children & Young People	Social Care (Adults)	Benefits	Culture Service Assessment	Environment Service Assessment	Housing Service Assessment
CPA 2006	Improving Adequately	3 star	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
CPA 2007 (provisional)		3 star	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3

- 4.2 The CPA 2007 provisional score is based on, the category scores allocated in 2006, and our best informed judgement of our performance over the last year. This information will be updated as and when assessment scores are confirmed during 2007/08. Scores highlighted in grey have been confirmed.
- 4.3 The provisional CPA 2007 Service Assessment scores for Culture, Environment and Housing are included in each Accountability report. These are mainly based on 2006/07 year-end performance indicator returns, however there are a number of instances where other methods are used.
- 4.4 The Audit Commission have confirmed the PIs which are to be included in the 2007 CPA Service Assessments and the thresholds to be used to calculate the scores. The above scores have been updated to reflect this. The Culture score is still giving us some concern as we hover between a 2/3 score. The eventual outcome on this will depend on the results of specific PIs, for which we are still waiting.
- 4.5 At this stage we are unable to make an informed judgement as to our predicted Direction of Travel score.
- 4.6 For a more detailed breakdown of the CPA service assessment scores please see Appendix 1.

5 Scrutiny Board Performance Issues

5.3 Children's Services

5.3.1 Update on issues from Quarter 1 – Data Quality and updating performance measures

In quarter 1, data quality for key indicators was raised a key issue, alongside the need to integrate reporting of the wider CYPP dataset. Work has continued on these tasks over the past three months.

Data quality concerns centred on Youth Service indicators. The service is currently implementing its new management information system, which will be central to addressing these problems. Further work will be undertaken over the next few months to ensure this is making an impact and to address wider business processes. The Director of Children's Services Unit has secured additional resources to support this work and will work closely with the service to resolve this issue.

Wider performance measures have now been included in this quarter's performance reports, as can be seen below. At present managing this task across organisational boundaries within the partnership can be challenging so further work needs to be undertaken to ensure effective systems and support are in place to continue these developments to allow effective information management across children's services.

5.5.2 Be Healthy – Reducing teenage conceptions

Reducing teenage conceptions is an important local and national target. Research shows poor outcomes are likely for both the young parents and their children, reinforcing intergenerational deprivation and diminished life chances. Furthermore recent work by UNICEF suggests that teenage conception is a good proxy for the overall well-being of young people with high levels associated with wider poor outcomes and caused by a lack of support and low aspirations.

Despite earlier encouraging signs, Leeds has made considerably less progress in reducing the number of teenage conceptions in the city than has been seen either nationally or in similar areas. Due to delays in the figures becoming available the latest figures reflect various problems such as weaknesses in local Contraceptive And Sexual Health services seen several years ago.

In response to this priority the Director of Children's Services Unit has worked with key local partners such as the PCT and Education Leeds to reorganise leadership and commissioning for sexual health services. Improvements are being made to the collection of use of key data, which will inform more targeted work with communities where needs are highest. Early signs for these changes are encouraging.

5.5.3 Stay Safe – the number of Looked After Children and Young People

This is a very significant issue for children and young people as those Looked After generally have poor outcomes whilst they are young and have diminished life chances throughout their adult life. This is also a significant issue for local services as the high cost of supporting children in care poses heavy burdens on staff and resources.

The number of Looked After Children and Young People in Leeds is significantly higher than either the average for England or benchmark authorities. This higher level has continued since at least the turn of the century but has seen marked rises over the past two years. The recent rise is largely attributed to an increase in safeguarding issues and in the marked rise in unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people. Local research has confirmed that domestic violence, parental mental health and parental drug misuse are common features in families where the children become looked after.

The short-term response has been to invest in additional social workers and social work assistants in 2007 in order to ensure that additional demands placed upon services by increasing numbers of looked after children are being met appropriately. In total an additional 35 posts have been established. In the longer-term the Authority has established a target to reduce the number of looked after children in Leeds to the levels of its statistical neighbours within 5 years. It intends to achieve this by improving the effectiveness of its support for families of children under 5 years old; developing specific programmed support for drug misusing parents and for families with 10-15 year old young people through its family resource centres. It also intends to review its early rehabilitation processes.

5.5.4 Stay Safe – the timeliness of reviews of Looked After Children and Young People

The timeliness of reviews for Looked After Children and Young People is a key measure of the effectiveness of local care management, and as such is a proxy for how well local children's services are supporting this most vulnerable group.

Local performance against this indicator is poor. In March 2007 only 34% of reviews in Leeds were completed to timescale, compared to benchmark averages of 85% or more. As such. OfSTED placed Leeds into the lowest category 'Investigate Urgently'. Since April focused effort within Social Care and the additional resources mentioned above have produced improvements, with 63% of reviews currently completed to time. However, because of the way this measures works the indicator will decline over time, with an expected full year result of 40%, still well within the lowest category. This is due to the need to complete all six monthly reviews on time within the year to achieve this measure fully, and as such only sustained improvement will see performance rise.

To address this problem Children and Young People's Social Care and wider partners have agreed to commit additional resources and restructure the Independent Reviewing Officer and support teams, audit business processes and agree new arrangements, produce revised guidance and support for care management and review teams and finally to implement new ICT and information management processes to improve recording, management information and data quality.

5.5.5 Enjoy and Achieve – the proportion of schools below the Key Stage 3 Floor Target

Achievement of minimum standards in those secondary schools with lowest attainment is a key issue because education is vital to improving young people's life chances and because we need to narrow the gap for those young people and communities that at present have the lowest outcomes. This

measure is important as a mandatory target in the Local Area Agreement and a key focus for the government as a proxy for successful support and intervention in those schools facing the most serious challenges.

Over recent years learners, schools and Education Leeds have made a big impact on reducing the number of secondary schools attaining below national minimum 'floor targets' for both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4/GCSE. However this year has seen a decline in performance against the Key Stage 3 indicator, with provisional results for 2007 suggesting twelve schools have not met the floor target of at least 50% of learners achieving Level 5 in English, maths and science. This is well below the citywide target of five schools, and means that attaining future years' targets will be even more challenging.

To address this, selected schools have been targeted for intensive support in 2007/08. The allocation of support through the National Strategies consultants programme is being reorganised to boost achievement at Key Stage 3, with the development of intensive 'residencies' of consultant provided sustained support within the schools.

5.5.6 Enjoy and Achieve – secondary school attendance

Secondary school attendance is a priority for central and local government and key target in the Leeds Local Area Agreement. Attendance at school is important not just for learning but also as a good indicator for young people being engaged, happy and safe. Conversely, low attendance is linked with risky behaviours such as crime, drug and alcohol misuse and teenage conceptions.

Unlike in primary schools, attendance in Leeds secondary schools is below national and comparative authorities. In recent years learners, schools, Education Leeds and wider partners have been very successful in raising attendance in secondary schools. However, attendance fell in 2005/06, and then rose slightly in 2006/07. However, the rise was not as much as achieved nationally and in statistical neighbours, therefore the gap in performance has widened. Authorised absence fell in 2006/07 and is now lower than in any of the last five years but unauthorised absence has increased. An important element of improving attendance will be in reducing the number of persistent absentees (those pupils with attendance below 80%). Leeds has a higher rate of these pupils than seen nationally, and these young people contribute significantly to attendance rates overall. The 4055 pupils that were persistent absentees in 2006/07 contributed 30% of authorised absence and 72% of unauthorised absence in the city. Leeds now has 18 secondary schools targeted by DCSF for high levels of persistent absence.

In response to this Education Leeds and partners have agreed improvements with the DCSF. This will include: focused work with the all targeted schools; increased joint working within Education Leeds between the Attendance Strategy Team, National Strategies, School Improvement, supported by the School Improvement Partners who will target interventions for these schools. In addition there will be a new 'RAG' escalation process has been developed to flag up issues on a half termly basis to ensure quick collective responses to emerging issues. In the longer term research is underway to identify good practice in multi-agency approaches to raising attendance, which will inform a Children's Services Attendance Strategy for joint working in the future.

5.4 Health and Adult Social Care

5.4.1 Direct Payments

The number of people using direct payments in Leeds is relatively low. This has a number of consequences, the most important of which is the probability that there are people in Leeds who could be benefiting from using direct payments but are not doing so. The low take up of direct payments also results in the department performing badly in respect of key performance indicators which contribute to the Council's overall star rating

Leeds performance for Direct Payments for 2006/07 was 40. This performance was rated in the third of five bands by the Department of Health and classed as "Acceptable but room for improvement". 40 per 100,000 population amounts to 225 people. The national average for this indicator for 2005/06 was 84 with a plan to achieve 104 by 2006/07.

The service has set a target for 2007/08 of 95 per 100,000. This will realign Leeds performance with that of other authorities and maintain the authority's performance rating for the indicator which has been upwardly revised by CSCI. In 2007/08 a performance of 60 is required to meet the key threshold and 90 needed to be 'acceptable'. 536 people will need to be in receipt of Direct Payments by 31st March 2008 to meet the Leeds target. To meet the Key Threshold, the Council need to have more than 335 people in receipt of Direct Payments. By 31st September 2007 Leeds had 344 people receiving direct payments. This equates to 61.58 per 100,000 population. Current forecasts suggest that around 540 people will be receiving support via this means by March 2008.

Leeds has been achieving this transformation in performance through the implementation of a Direct Payments Improvement Plan which includes the following elements:

1. Review and update the department's written direct payments procedures.
2. Review the direct payments pay rates.
3. Promote and publicise direct payments in Leeds
4. Revisit training on direct payments for assessors/ care managers to raise awareness and improve understanding of direct payments
5. Improve involvement of Direct payments service users
6. Improve Direct Payments performance management systems.
7. Improve arrangements for the support of Direct Payments Service Users
8. Increase the use of direct payments to purchase items of equipment
9. To revisit promotion of direct payments to people from black and ethnic minority communities
10. To introduce service user involvement in the Direct Payments Project Operational Group
11. Ensure that the option of direct payments is considered at every review

6 Recommendations

- 6.3** It is recommended that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee considers the Quarter 2 performance information and highlight any areas for further scrutiny.