

Child & Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel Update

1. Remit of the Panel

The overarching purpose of the panel is to:

Receive and request relevant performance reports to monitor and challenge assessments on service performance and quality in respect of children's social services

On behalf of the Panel, the convener will write to the relevant Cabinet Member raising issues of concern, comments and recommendations as appropriate following Panel meetings.

2. Introduction

The reformed Child & Family Services panel (Convener, Councillor Paxton Hood Williams) has been meeting since September last year. It has a detailed work plan up until April 2015.

3. Key Activities

November Panel Meeting

The panel received the Child & Family Services Performance Report and highlighted the following areas as concerns:

1. Nine cases of looked after children were not allocated to a qualified social worker
2. Impact of the regional Integrated Family Support Service (IFFS)
3. Increase in the number of children on the CPR that were re-registrations

The panel remained supportive of the Safe LAC Reduction Strategy and the Signs of Safety framework which have both been successful in delivering continued reductions in the numbers of looked after children and as a result, budget reductions.

December Panel Meeting

The panel discussed the draft 3 year proposed Financial Plan for Children's Services.

The panel broadly supported the proposed savings and financial plan for Children's Services on the basis that the safety and safeguarding of all children known to social services was assured and that social work practice continued to improve.

The panel had a number of concerns:

- The proposal to reduce the in-house emergency residential care to a 2 bed short term facility.
- Western Bay Regional and Local Commissioning of residential care placements - the panel was concerned that given the numbers of local authorities involved, it could put pressure on services and placement numbers.
- Impact that the Domestic Abuse MASH could have on LAC numbers

4. Achievements / Impact

November Panel Meeting

The convener's letter (November meeting) to the Cabinet Member raised the points highlighted in section 3 above and the following have been agreed.

1. The panel requested that officers look at the 9 cases that were unallocated; officer agreed to report back to the panel on the status of the cases.
2. The Cabinet Member agreed to share the findings of the IFFS review with the panel
3. The panel requested, and the Cabinet Member agreed, that all future performance reports include a re-referral trend analysis graph and reasons for re-registrations of children on the CPR.

December Panel Meeting

The convener's letter for the December meeting raised the points in section 3 above and will be reported back to the committee when the Cabinet Member's response is received.

5. Future Work Programme

The panel's work plan for the remainder of the year is detailed below.

19 th January 2015 2.00pm	Rotherham Child Abuse: the local situation	To consider how agencies react and deal with allegations of abuse from children & young people
16 th February 2015 2.00pm	Child & Family Services Performance Monitoring	Quarterly performance monitoring to challenge performance and make recommendations for improvement
16 th March 2015 2.00pm	Permanence Service Report & Implementation Plan	Quarterly performance monitoring to challenge performance and make recommendations for improvement
13 th April 2015 2.00pm	TBC	TBC

6. Action required by the Scrutiny Programme Committee

None