

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 19 June 2018

Subject: Proxy Indicators and other measurements to evaluating performance

Report of: Deputy Director of Children's Services

Summary

This report proposes that Committee members receive a regular set of proxy indicators that provide an insight into the performance of Children's Services and their partners. The indicators draw on relevant data from the service's information system and where appropriate reflects data provided by our partners. Together, this will potentially enable members to have a holistic view as to the performance of services being provided to children and effectiveness of the system in responding to children who may require additional help, support or resource to be effectively safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

Recommendations

It is recommended Committee members;

1. Discuss and agree the approach in using a proxy set of measures to understand the performance of the children's partnership.
 2. Make comment on the proposed indicators and consider any additional potential additional areas.
 3. Agree both the reporting frequency and the method by which this data and analysis is presented.
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Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective Children's Social Care Services are critical to ensuring the most vulnerable citizens are able to connect and support the drive towards a thriving and sustainable City
A highly skilled city: world class	Ensuring the most vulnerable in our society are

and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	given the opportunity to access and achieve in the City is supported by the delivery of a strong and cohesive social care system
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Improving social care services helps build the resilience children and families need to achieve their potential and be integrated into their communities
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for the children and families across the City, helps build and develop whole communities and increases the livability of the City
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Successful services support successful families who are able to deliver continuing growth in the City

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Children's services and our partners are committed to improving the lives of Manchester's children by monitoring performance against our statutory responsibilities and strategic commitments, whilst simultaneously, ensuring we improve the quality of our professional engagement with children and their families.
- 1.2 This approach is informed by;
- The **Performance Management Framework** within Children's Services alone, produces monthly statistical data of 81 indicators which are compared, where possible, to our performance with statistical neighbours, core cities, north west neighbours and England. The data reports trends in our performance both over the year and by the preceding month.
 - The **Quality Assurance and Voice of Children and Young People Improvement Framework**, draws upon our workforce development strategy, activity to ensure the voice of children and young people have in influencing service developments, professional practice improvement - which is informed by our quality assurance activity.
 - **Strategic Planning Forums**; which are partnership forums that have been designed to challenge and support the partnership in its delivery of the overarching "Our Manchester Our Children" strategy and other key strategies.
 - **Management performance/assurance activity**, this aspect of service delivery is focussed on ensuring delivering of our Directorate ambitions and our statutory duties. It also includes key functions such as budget control, implementation of policy and procedure and oversight of the organisations decision making arrangements in its desire to deliver a safe, efficient, effective service.
 - **Political oversight and scrutiny**, includes Scrutiny Committee meetings and senior political and officer oversight, focussing on accountability and scrutiny of the performance of the service.
 - Our **relationship with regional, national partners and regulatory bodies** such as Ofsted, this is key to identifying 'best' practice, collaborate effectively; ensuring we understand the changing regulatory landscape in order to continually improve and comply with statutory regulation and guidance; delivering a suitable range of and good quality services.

2. The Importance of Data

- 2.1 Underpinning all of this activity is the depth, richness and integrity of our data. Children's services has since the 2014 OFSTED inspection and more specifically since 2016 developed its capacity to collate, interpret and effectively plan either process or practice improvement activity. These improvements either from a single agency perspective or a partnership perspective are driven by improved

data integrity. A focus on further developing the partnership is a long term key strategic priority for the service with a number of strategic planning forums either ongoing or recently developed to drive an improved whole system response to children.

- 2.2 The collation and reporting of data is both a statutory requirement and necessary to meet the expectations of our regulators. The Council is required to return an annual data set to the Department of Education which requires data return on specified domains for children in need of help, protection and those who are 'looked after' by the Council in any given year. In addition to these returns Ofsted request data from all Local Authorities in order for it to develop an understanding of the performance of services and schools in key areas; which collectively contribute to an 'annual conversation' which in turn informs their approach to inspection and/or monitoring of services for children.
- 2.3 The Partnership and Children's services utilisation of data serves many purposes which include but are not exclusive to; the monitoring of performance in key areas, driving improvements in the delivery of certain aspects of service, developing our understanding of performance, inform redesign of service and informing our self evaluation; it is also a 'gateway' to asking the 'right' questions. All of these aspects are crucial for service improvement and all feature in the new regulatory inspection framework the ILACS (Inspection of local authorities children's services). Reliance on the effective collation of good quality data and meaningful reflection of this to critically evaluate impact are at the heart of the ILACS framework. The framework requires local authorities to answer three questions:
1. What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice?
 2. How do you know?
 3. What are you doing about to sustain or improve practice?

3. The Proposed Indicators

- 3.1 Traditionally the Children's Scrutiny Committee has received thematic based reports linked to inspection planning, which in some cases include data to assist in the process of scrutiny. Whilst informative, it can be argued this practice does not wholly assist Committee Members to gauge the effectiveness of the partnership and ask the 'right' questions in order to challenge and support the system to work more effectively and efficiently in responding and meeting the needs of children who require help, support and protection.
- 3.2 At a previous scrutiny committee on the 30th January 2018 members agreed with the suggestion to have available to them a suite of indicators which are reflective of the performance of the children's system. The suggested indicators are noted below in paragraph 3.4.
- 3.3 From 2016 there has been a continual improvement in our data, reliable data and comparator information has enabled a good understanding of service strengths and areas for improvement (as identified in the 2017 inspection). This enables us to move to the 'next level' and in doing so, establish a SMART set of indicators/targets to ensure not only good performance from a single agency perspective but to ask questions on how well the system works collaboratively in

responding to the needs of young people; a similar approach has been adopted for the Corporate Parenting Panel in respect of our 'looked after' children. The suggested indicators represent a selection of data that provides a significant oversight into key areas for the service and its partners. Seen in the round and in conjunction with other activities outlined at section 1.2 the proposed basket of indicators is a set of proxy indicators or measures of the effectiveness of the whole system of services to support children who may require additional help, support or resource to enable their needs to be effectively met to be reach them to be effectively safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

- 3.4 As a result of increasing confidence in both our data, insight into the quality of our practice and recognition of population changes and need for service we have agreed to review our performance indicators/targets, this will be completed by the end of June 2018. It is proposed Committee members consider the merits of a report format or alternatively adopt an interactive presentation that sets out the indicator performance/target, offers a commentary and analysis on the performance and action being taken to ensure continual improvement. The proposed proxy performance indicators are:

- Number of early help assessments by referring agency
- Rates of referral per 10,000
- Rate of children in need per 10,000
- Rate of children subject to child protection planning per 10,000
- % of child protection visits in timescale
- Rate of children becoming 'looked after'
- % of looked after children with a plan for permanence at the second review ie 4 months
- Average caseload for experienced social worker
- Average caseload for assisted supported year in employment (ASYE)
- Number of missing from home incidents
- First time entrants into the youth justice system
- % of schools inspected during the reporting period judged as good or better

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is evident data drives our ongoing journey towards excellence, critical to this is not only highly effective single agency services but a partnership which is mature and effectively works well together to protect children and develop responses to children's needs. When viewed in the round, the proposed suite of indicators can act as a proxy measure of the effectiveness of the whole system approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable children in Manchester.
- 4.2 It is proposed Committee members receive a presentation of the aforementioned data in a presentational style either quarterly or bi-annually. This approach will allow Committee Members to engage in a meaningful discussion and identify trends and patterns; offering insightful challenge and support.