

Performance summary from the Chair

1. **High volume of contacts** in April and May but low % becoming Children in Need. Does this raise questions about partners safeguarding thresholds or processes?

We aim to see a reduction in the volume of contacts, this would then indicate that Early Help and targeted resource services are being used initially & before the MASH advice service is being relied upon. We have not yet achieved this balance, though we expect to see this slowly change as the new targeted services increase activity over the next 3 months.

2. **Timescales** – Concerns relating to the timeliness of key activity:

- M8 QL (MASH referrals dealt with in 24 hrs) down to 63% in May from 83% a year ago.
- EH4 QL (Single Assessments in 45 working days) 67% in May. It was 91% in Sept 2017.
- CP8 QL (% children with Child Protection Plans seen in last 14 working days) 80% in May, 91% in Jan 2018.

All should be (in ideal world) at 100%. Is this performance a reflection of workforce issues or are other factors impacting on performance here?

Demand remains high and we are likely to see slight variations in performance due to available staffing resources and the reality that the front door of children's service is heavily relied upon for safeguarding advice and support. The development of locality hubs will assist families and agencies to signpost and access help and advice in more flexible ways going forward – this relies on increased confidence by agencies across the city to hold safeguarding in the community more robustly. This is being addressed through the development of our integrated 0-19 resources.

3. **Escalation** – Positive reduction in number of children in need between April and May (EH2) but subsequent increase in number of children subject to a child protection plan (CP6B) and children subject to initial child protection conferences (CP2). Are the two linked and if so does this reflect some concerns relating to prevention of escalation?

Yes they are linked as the same cohort of children can be supported by either planning mechanisms. There is likely to be a reduction of CIN cases as the 0-19 offer is increased, however the CP plan cohort will reduce more slowly and relies on the robust step down support arrangements.

4. **Looked After Children** - Numbers have plateaued. Been at same level for a year. Targets for 18/19 and 19/20 look difficult to hit. Impact of Edge of Care service and new services? – Too early or showing positive signs?

The impact of Edge of care is being felt on a case by case basis and we can evidence several examples where children have not come into care due to the fast pace of intervention from this new service. The cases that have become LAC have occurred due to the very high levels of child protection concerns and as such we are yet to capture opportunity to rehabilitate those children. We continue to evaluate the edge of care offer and also work to reduce the numbers of LAC.

5. **Child Sexual Exploitation** – Higher than usual figures in April and May (M4). Welcome an explanation behind this.

More children have been identified due to partner notification – and where the threshold has been met. This is not a concern for the service as it means that we are robustly intervening where concerns arise from a multi-agency perspective.

6. Positives –

- Consistently good performance relating to the number of looked after children with an authorised Pathway Plan (LAC11) – 99% in May
- Significant rise in the % of initial child protection conferences held within timescales from April to May – up to 83.7% from 58.3%

Supplementary Questions

Recruitment and retention of Social Workers and foster carers – Progress?

We have reduced the vacancy level from 22 to 11 since the recruitment event. Although we had a lot of interest not all the applicants were suitable. We continue to run our recruitment project work and will be targeting universities over the coming weeks. We also aim to hold another recruitment event in September.