

## **Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement**

Meeting to be held on 11th December 2014

Electoral Division affected: All
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### **Health Assessments Recovery Plan – Children Looked After**

Contact for further information:

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#### **Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on the Recovery Plan around Health Assessments completed for Children Looked After (CLA).

#### **Recommendation**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the report and comment as appropriate
- (ii) note that a further update report will be presented to the Cabinet Committee on progress around this measure.

#### **Background and Advice**

This report provides an update on Lancashire performance against the Department for Education indicator for children looked after (CLA) with an up to date health assessment. This is one of the key performance indicators that the Local Authority is measured against. There is a statutory requirement for each child coming into care having an Initial Health assessment and review assessment thereafter. The performance is determined by each child accessing both a health assessment and dental check.

As reported at the Cabinet Committees meeting on 1 October, a full recovery plan has been implemented to address this poor area of performance.

The 2012/13 average for Lancashire was 85.1% and it is of concern that the figure for this indicator had declined to 52.5% in June 2014. This figure is a county average.

Audits of the health assessment status for Lancashire children looked after are subject to an ongoing recovery plan. It has been identified that Lancashire's new IT system, Lancashire's children's system (LCS) had not provided the necessary alerts required for notification of the review health assessments. In addition, large amounts of data had been recorded and stored incorrectly. Other processes across health and children's social care have been identified in this period that have continued to impact upon improvement.

The previous report identified limited confidence in our IT system to support the recovery plan. However, we have overcome these barriers and are now confident that our data is correct. This recent improvement allows us to pin point recovery down to team level and put corrective measures in place to improve performance.

Current in year Health Assessment performance is 68.6% (achieved on 09/11/2014.)

Whilst recovery measures have been identified and put into place, we have from the data available to us determined that to remedy the decline in CLA health assessment performance, recovery will not be immediate. It will take time to recover due to the backlog of medicals that are currently outstanding, which were not requested in time from our health colleagues.

Over time, those CLA who currently have an overdue health assessment will participate in such and in combination with the new procedures and monitoring introduced, strong performance should ensue for all new CLA requiring initial health assessments and those existing CLA requiring a review.

This next period will focus upon health capacity to catch up with the backlog of reviews outstanding in the context of resources available, whilst maintaining timeliness of initial health assessments.

There continues to be an increase in the numbers of children becoming looked after, which has meant a greater number of health assessments need to be undertaken within the same resource envelope.

Children's Social Care and Health Service continue to progress a joint recovery plan that is monitored on a monthly basis by senior members of both agencies under the scrutiny of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board.

## **Consultations**

N/A

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

## **Risk management**

Health Assessments are a key performance indicator that Ofsted will use in its assessment of the Local Authority. Failure to address the decline in the reported number of Health Assessments on the LCS system is an Ofsted inspection risk.

The report outlines the Recovery Actions that are being taken to address this.

## List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Report to the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement	1 October 2014	Dave Gorman, Office of the Chief Executive, (01772) 534261
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		