

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 14th June, 2013 at 2.00 pm in The Diamond Jubilee Room (Formerly Cabinet Room 'B') - County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Jennifer Mein (Chair)

County Councillors

D Borrow

T Martin

M Tomlinson

B Winlow

1. Terms of Reference and Membership

Resolved: The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement noted:

- i. the appointment of County Councillor J Mein as Chair of the Cabinet Committee for Performance Improvement for the 2013/14 municipal year.
- ii. the membership of the Cabinet Committee for Performance Improvement for the 2013/14 municipal year as follows:

County Councillor Jennifer Mein, Leader of the County Council (Chair)

County Councillor David Borrow, Deputy Leader of the County Council

Relevant Cabinet Members will be invited to attend appropriate meetings as and when required to consider matters on the agenda that fall within their portfolio. The Cabinet Members shall be regarded as members of the Cabinet Committee for those meetings that they attend.

- iii. the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet Committee for Performance Improvement for the 2013/14 municipal year.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Geoff Driver.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 April 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring and Improvement - year end - Corporate Scorecard Report & Recovery Plans

The Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring and Improvement – Corporate Scorecard was presented. It was reported that monitoring revealed that 12 indicators missed their challenging year-end 2012/13 targets. Of these, 7 indicators have been highlighted as part of quarter 4 monitoring as not having met their year-end targets. Updates were provided on the 7 indicators as follows:

Reduce the proportion of pupils on free school meals in Year 1 who are persistently absent, from 9.7% to 9.2% for the Autumn term 2012

It was reported that the current performance for this indicator is 10.2 of FSM pupils were persistently absent in the Autumn term 2012

Reasons for the apparent underperformance:

Evidence from the data collected for the whole of academic years 2010/11 and 2011/12 shows that the number of pupils indicated as persistently absent in the Autumn term is not reflective of the annual total.

This is mainly due to raised levels of seasonal illness but also reflects the fact that many pupils who are identified as being "at risk" of persistent absence are effectively targeted for support and, as a result, their attendance improves markedly taking them out of this category.

Performance across the whole year

It was reported that by using data from the complete academic years of 2010/11 and 2011/12 it can be demonstrated that the percentage of year 1 pupils who were eligible for free school meals and who were persistently absent has fallen.

- Persistent absence fell for all groups (gender groups, Free School Meal, English as an Additional Language and Special Educational Needs).
- Overall persistent absence reduced from 4.9% in 10/11 to 3.4% in 11/12.
- Persistent absence for pupils known to be eligible for FSM fell from 12.6% (299 pupils) to 8.6% (224 pupils) from 10/11 to 11/12.

Actions being taken to put the indicator back on track:

It was reported that future targets will be developed using data across the whole academic year for 2012/13.

Increase the proportion of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs grades A*-C including English and maths from 60.1% to 61%.

It was reported that the current performance for this indicator is 59.9% of pupils attained 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics (5+A*C[EM])

Reasons for the apparent underperformance were reported as follows:

- Well-publicised unannounced changes to the grading of GCSE English papers took place in the summer 2012 exam season. This specifically affected the number of marks required to achieve a grade C pass in English, making this harder to achieve. 'Borderline' pupils were most affected including FSM pupils, those with Special Educational Needs at School Action stage, and boys.
- A further consequence of the changes to English marking particularly impacted those schools serving pupils with lower prior attainment, who were more likely to have 'borderline' attainment. The number of schools performing below 40% 5+A*CEM had fallen steadily from 19 in 2009 to 5 in 2011; the dip in English in 2012 increased this to 7 schools below 40% (only 3 of which had been below 40% in one or more previous years). Depending upon grading decisions this coming summer, the number of schools expected to remain below floor in 2013 will reduce to 4.
- According to validated national assessment data:
 - the proportion of pupils gaining 5+A*C[EM] in Lancashire remained significantly above the national average in 2012;
 - the proportion of pupils gaining 5+A*C without English and maths continued to rise in 2012, remaining significantly above the national average at 85%;
 - the proportion of pupils gaining an A*C pass in mathematics shows a significant three year upward trend, rising by 9% from being significantly low in 2010 to significantly above average for the last two years (the proportion gaining A*A grades in mathematics was significantly above average for the first time in 2012 at 20%);
 - the proportion of pupils gaining A*C passes in English dipped by 4% in 2012 to 70%, remaining significantly above average for the last 2 years, having been significantly low in 2010 (at A*A, English passes remained significantly above average, despite a slight dip to 17%).
- The above data illustrate that improvement was seen in the previously relatively weaker area of maths, but this was masked by the dip in English.

Actions being taken to put the indicator back on track:

Various actions being taken were reported to the Committee including:

1. Continuation to provide support and challenge to all Secondary schools within the advisory School Service Guarantee through:
2. Provision of detailed data on progress and attainment to schools and advisers, with adviser training to ensure challenging target setting.
3. Identifying specific schools where attainment remains low and furthest from target in order to inform and direct the work of school advisers and to engage schools in appropriate support networks.
4. Advisers challenging schools to track progress towards target at least termly and to ensure appropriate intervention and support is in place,

making effective use of school resources and brokering in additional support as necessary, including from successful schools.

5. Highlighting, for senior leaders, the key messages underlying LA data and supporting the Secondary Headteachers' Association to analyse local datasets in order to facilitate school-to-school networking and support.

In addition:

1. Providing information on the attainment of KS4 pupils to District Children and Young People's Trusts where it is an area of concern so that additional support is targeted to meet pupils' needs.
2. Providing consultant support to schools with higher levels of persistent absence to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils.
3. Providing bespoke support for schools in challenging circumstances where attainment is low, including:
 - support for small group or 1/1 tuition.
 - support for mathematics revision classes.
 - "masterclasses" in mathematics.
4. Provision of subject-specific training for teachers and support in mathematics and English with a strong focus on maximising pupil progress, ensuring in-school support for teachers in schools causing concern.
5. Sharing expertise from highly effective schools through the use of local support networks in English and mathematics

Increase the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals achieving 5 GCSEs grades A*-C including English and maths from 29.9% to 32%.

It was reported that the performance of this indicator is currently 30.2% of FSM pupils attained 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics.

Reasons for the apparent underperformance were reported as follows:

- Well-publicised unannounced changes to the grading of GCSE English papers took place in the summer 2012 exam season. This specifically affected the number of marks required to achieve a grade C pass in English, making this harder to achieve. 'Borderline' pupils were therefore most affected: FSM pupils, those with Special Educational Needs at School Action stage, and boys.
- According to unvalidated RAISE online national data:
 - > 49% of FSM pupils made expected progress in English, down 4% as for non FSM,
 - > 47% of FSM pupils made expected progress in maths, up 10% compared to 6% non FSM
- The above suggests that improvement was seen in the relatively weaker area of maths, but this was masked by the dip in English.

- As highlighted by the Sept 2012 national Ofsted survey report "The Pupil Premium", some schools have not disaggregated the Pupil Premium from their main budget, and have been using the funding to maintain or enhance existing provision rather than to put in place new activity. The focus on the impact of Pupil Premium in the new OfSTED Inspection Framework has resulted in changes to schools' approach to using the funding.
- In some schools there has been insufficient focus on monitoring and evaluating interventions to improve pupil progress so the most effective interventions are used.
- It should be noted that national data is no longer provided for pupils currently eligible for FSM, moving to the 'ever 6' measure of pupils who have been eligible at any point in the last 6 years (with an associated increase in the funding from September 2012); this makes year-on-year comparison between 2011 and 2012 difficult.

Actions being taken to put the indicator back on track:

It was reported that to put the action back on track the service will continue to provide support and challenge to all Secondary schools within the advisory School Service Guarantee through:

1. Provision of detailed data on the progress and attainment of FSM pupils to schools and advisers, with adviser training to ensure challenging target setting.
2. Identifying specific schools where the greatest proportion of FSM pupils attend and where attainment and progress for these pupils remains low in order to inform and direct the work of school advisers and to engage schools in local support networks.
3. Advisers challenging schools to track FSM pupil progress at least termly and to ensure appropriate intervention and support is in place, making effective use of the Pupil Premium and brokering in additional support as necessary, including from successful schools.
4. Highlighting, for senior leaders, the key messages from national research into underlying barriers and effective support for FSM pupils and Children Looked After, sharing effective practice locally through a Pupil Premium conference

In addition:

1. Providing information on the attainment of FSM pupils to District Children and Young People's Trusts where it is an area of concern so that additional support for socially disadvantaged pupils is targeted to meet their needs.
2. Providing consultant support to schools with higher levels of persistent absence to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils.
3. Providing bespoke support for schools in challenging circumstances where the attainment of FSM is low, including:
 - support for small group or 1/1 tuition.

- support for mathematics revision classes
 - "masterclasses" in mathematics
4. Provision of subject-specific training for teachers and support in mathematics and English with a strong focus on maximising pupil progress, ensuring in-school support for teachers in schools causing concern.
 5. Sharing expertise from highly effective schools through the use of local support networks in English and mathematics.

Improve the proportion of children in care placed with adopters within 12 months of the placement order being granted from 75% to 83%.

It was reported that the current performance for this indicator is currently 76.2% for 2012/13 (it was 65% in 2011/12).

Reasons for the apparent underperformance were reported as follows:

There is a national shortfall of adopter households, this is reflected locally. There are currently in excess of 4000 children nationally waiting to be placed with adoptive families.

In the year 2011/2012 a total of 2,536 children were referred to the National Adoption Register from England and 200 from Wales – an increase of 325 on the previous year. The number of adopters referred decreased by 19% on the previous year and fell below 400 for the first time since the Register began 7 years ago.

On a regional basis there is currently a shortfall of 405 adopter families. This represents an increased shortfall on previous years. On 4 March 2013 there were 685 children available for adoption in the North West region. Of the 685 children 262 had been waiting for more than 12 months for a placement and since the Placement Order was granted.

Overall in Lancashire the Children Looked After (CLA) rate is rising and has risen from 1264 in 2009 to 1492 in May 2013. In the period of 2009 – October 2012 the adoption rate rose from 7.4% to 8.6%, meaning that more children than ever are being adopted from a rising care population. Over the course of 2011/12 a total of 78 children have been placed for adoption, an increase on 14 from 2010/11.

The level of resources available to the adoption service has remained the same and therefore family finding activity has not been able to respond to the increase level of service need and this has caused delay in executing the adoption placement process. Together with this there are delays in the court and placement order, issues have been identified and will be addressed through the Adoption Round Table meeting and indeed the Central Care Proceedings team – please see action plan below. The Adoption Reform grant of £1.96m (net), received in the Financial Year 2013/14, will assist in allowing resources to pump prime and reconfigure the service.

Together with the above Lancashire take a stance that all children, no matter what age, identified for permanence deserve a chance for adoption. Whilst morally and ethically this reflects good practice this does however mean that resources are invested searching for adoptive households for children who it will not be possible to place for adoption. In 2011/12 adoption care plans were agreed for 129 children, 30 of which (23.3%) were subsequently revoked after unsuccessful family finding activity.

Actions being taken to put the indicator back on track:

It was reported that the functions and resources in the adoption service are currently under review. Due to additional funding from the government agreements have been reached to increase capacity in the short, medium and long term. This will be informed on business planning for the next 2 years in line with the Adoption Reform Programme (ARP) and associated grant funding - Adoption Reform Grant (ARG).

Ensure recruitment is targeted effectively to reflect the needs of children in Lancashire with a proposed care plan of adoption.

A Review of the marketing strategy and funding additional activity for the recruitment of adopters, including an out of hours enquiry line, utilising the ARG is being implemented.

The service will participate in regional recruitment and marketing activity with neighbouring authorities and voluntary adoption agencies.

The service has prepared a tendering specification to secure the assessment of additional adopter households in the event that it is required in line with the enhanced level of marketing activity.

The service will ensure assessments of adopters are undertaken within the current timescale of 8 months and the anticipated revised timescale of 6 months and the 2 stage process; to be introduced on 1st July 2013.

In conjunction with the Fostering Service the service will review and further develop the concurrent placement project. The service will also consider the implications of the proposed "Fostering to Adopt" model and plan for implementation – the project is on target to recruit a total of 15 households by 2014/15.

In conjunction with colleagues from Children's Social Care a Central Care Proceedings team has been introduced to achieve effective and timely care planning for adoption and inform recruitment activity, particularly for those children it can be anticipated may be hard to place.

For the Adoption service to participate in the multi-agency Adoption Round Table Forum and work collaboratively with colleagues to ensure a multi agency approach to the care planning and adoption process; improvement is reliant upon a collective response.

The following three performance indicators, are all collected annually from the Adult Social Care Survey and were considered collectively:

Increase the number of people reporting 'a positive feeling' about their quality of life by 5%.

Increase the proportion of people who use services and carers who find it easy to find information about services by 5%.

Increase the proportion of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure by 3%.

The targets / current performance for these indicators were reported as follows:

Year end target:	Current performance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of people reporting 'a positive feeling' about their quality of life by 5%, i.e. from 19.2 to 20.2 	<p>19 (out of a possible 24)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of people who use services and carers who find it easy to find information about services by 5%, i.e. from 74.7% to 78.4% 	<p>73.1% (service users only – this was the basis of the target setting); 72.6% when carers are included.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the proportion of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure by 3%, i.e. from 70.4% to 72.5% 	<p>71.8%</p>

Reasons for the apparent underperformance were reported as follows:

The measures are collected from two surveys:

- a survey of adult social care service users which takes place in January to March each year.
- a survey of carers which takes place every two years (with the first survey being completed in November 2012).

The data from these surveys need to be compared to national data to show whether the trend in Lancashire is different to the rest of the country, or whether there is a downturn in reported outcomes across the country. National data for both surveys should be available in summer 2013.

Each measure is compiled from one or more questions in the adult social care survey or the carer survey as follows:

Quality of Life indicator

This is a composite measure using responses from the Adult Social Care Survey covering 8 domains:

- Control: Which of the following statements describes how much control you have over your daily life (range indicating total control to very little/none)
- Personal Care: Thinking about keeping clean and presentable in appearance, which of the following statements best describes your situation?
- Food and Nutrition: Thinking about the food and drink you get, which of the following statements best describes your situation?
- Accommodation: Which of the following statements best describes how clean and comfortable your home/care home is?
- Safety: Which of the following statements best describes how safe you feel?
- Social Participation: Thinking about how much contact you've had with people you like, which of the following statements best describes your social situation?
- Occupation: Which of the following statements best describes how you spend your time?
- Dignity: Which of the following statements best describes how the way you are helped and treated makes you think and feel about yourself?

Each of these questions has four possible answers, which are equated with having:

- no unmet needs in a specific life area or domain (the ideal state);
- needs adequately met;
- some needs met, and;
- no needs met.

People who use services and their carers who find it easy to find information when needed:

This measure is comprised of a combination of questions in the Adult Social Care Survey and Carers Survey.

The question from the Adult Social Care Survey is "In the past year, have you generally found it easy or difficult to find information and advice about support, services or benefits?" to which the following answers are possible:

- Very easy to find
- Fairly easy to find
- Fairly difficult to find
- Very difficult to find
- I have not tried to find information or advice in the last 12 months

This portion of the measure is defined by determining the percentage of all those responding who select the response “very easy to find” and “fairly easy to find”.

The relevant question drawn from the Carers Survey is “In the last 12 months, have you found it easy or difficult to find information and advice about support, services or benefits? Please include information and advice from different sources, such as voluntary organisations and private agencies as well as Social Services”. The following answers are possible:

- Very easy to find
- Fairly easy to find
- Fairly difficult to find
- Very difficult to find
- I have not tried to find information or advice in the last 12 months

This portion of the measure is defined by determining the percentage of all those responding who select the response “very easy to find” and “fairly easy to find”.

People who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure:

This is taken from the Adult Social Care Survey, and the question is: “Do care and support services help you in feeling safe?” to which a simple 'yes' or 'no' option is given.

A comparative data table showing Lancashire's performance compared to the England average and other North West Authorities (using data from the 2011/12 adult social care survey which is the latest available) was presented to the Committee as circulated.

Actions being taken to put the indicator back on track:

It was reported that various actions have been put in place to put the indicator back on track including:

- The re-launch of Self Directed Support which is being managed by a programme board.
- Work is being done to look at how the County Council can best provide Information and Advice about self directed support to the public and other professionals.
- The concept of 'time to think' has been introduced to prevent people being asked to make decisions about how their long term needs will be met, whilst they are experiencing or recovering from an illness or trauma.
- A network of community organisations who are able to support people to plan is being developed.
- Streamlining of systems and making information available to everyone so that those people who wish to develop their own support plans have information and guidance available.

- Re-launch of the Direct Payments work stream to increase the take up of Direct Payments, including reviewing policies, procedures and guidance.

Resolved: The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement noted the performance against the corporate scorecard for quarter 4 and endorsed the 5 Recovery Plans provided at Appendix 'A' to the report.

6. Urgent Business

None.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement will be held on 4 October 2013.

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston