



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ON 26 MAY 2021**

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT -CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK – PERIOD TO MARCH 2021**

BY: CHIEF OFFICER, HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To inform the Committee of the performance of the service for the period to 31 March 2021.

1.2 This report is submitted to the Education, Communities and Organisational Development Committee following a decision of Moray Council on 17 June 2020 to agree a simplified committee structure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the case of this committee the combining of the delegated responsibilities of Children and Young Peoples Services, Governance, Strategy and Performance) (para 9 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

i) scrutinises performance in the areas of Service Planning, Service Performance and other related data to the end of March 2021; and

ii) notes the actions being taken to improve performance where required.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 August 2019, the Council, approved a revised Performance Management Framework for services (para 5 of the minute refers).

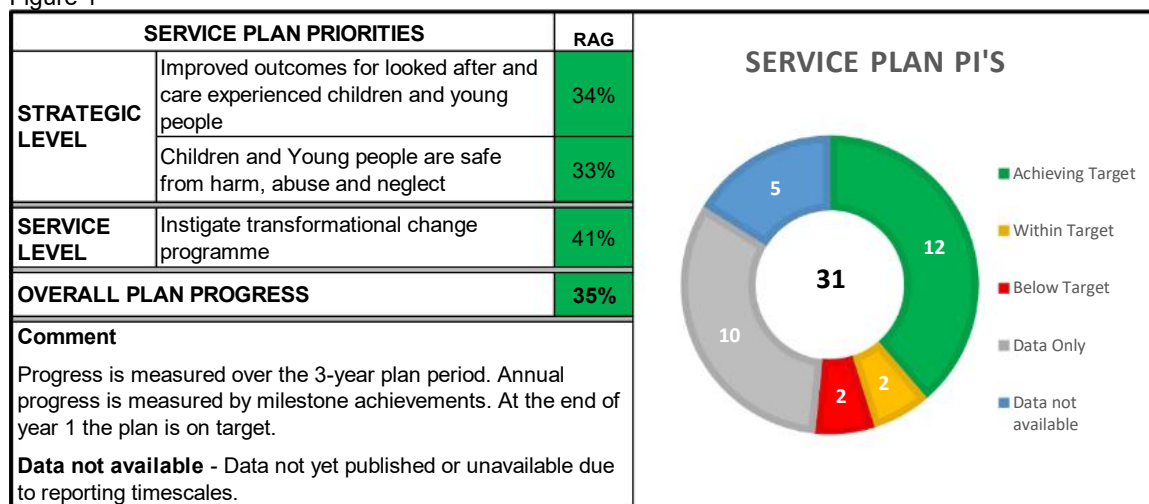
4. SERVICE PLANNING

4.1 Each service plan sets out the planned strategic and service level priorities and outcomes it intends to deliver in the coming year aligning closely with financial planning, corporate and community planning partnership strategic priorities. This report provides an interim update on progress on the service plan, key outcomes and performance indicators. Committee is invited to

review progress to secure assurance that is satisfactory and to provide scrutiny and further direction where performance requires attention.

- 4.2 The narrative included is by exception, however links to backing tables for all [Service Plan Actions](#) and [Performance Indicators](#) are provided.

Figure 1



Strategic Outcomes - successes

- 4.3 Work to improve the identification and monitoring of care leavers and care experienced young people in the youth and criminal justice systems' has completed within the target timescale. A monthly process, introduced in February 2021, uses new Business Intelligence reporting to extract Carefirst data that is circulated to social work teams who ensure the young person has a case management plan (Criminal Justice) or a Start AV assessment and plan (Youth Justice) in place to target support and referrals whilst they are open to the service. (Action STRAT 1.4)
- 4.4 All three underlying actions focused on early intervention to minimise impact of neglect, parental substance misuse and domestic abuse have met planned milestones for the reporting period. The upcoming launch of a Neglect Toolkit and staff training will assist staff to work more confidently with families. The new locality planning model commencing in April utilises the Multi-Agency Support Hub to deliver appropriate services at an early stage. 'Safe and Together training for trainers' has commenced to build on practitioner skills in supporting families experiencing domestic violence. Representation on the Violence Against Women strategic group is in place. (Action STRAT 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)

Strategic Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.5 As at 31 March 2021 there were 177 Looked after Children (LAC) in Moray. Work to increase the proportion of children and young people looked after in kinship and foster care and care at home is measured by 10 milestones, three of which have not been met. The milestone to achieve a 3% increase in Looked After Children (LAC) under home supervision showed an overall increase of 1% to 20.3% in the year to March 2021. This may be as a result of a marked increase in the number of LAC accommodated in kinship

placements returning to the family home and there not being a requirement for them to remain looked after. At the end 2020/21 1.1% of LAC were placed for adoption below the target of 2.2%, due to the small numbers involved, any change can have a significant effect on the percentage result. The remaining milestone that was not met by the end of 2020/21 was the number of new fostering households exceeding the number leaving, with three new households recruited and seven households leaving; the implementation of the fostering service plan seeks to redress that imbalance. Mindful that these aims are set in overall context of reducing requirement for residential care, improvements in other LAC care categories has contributed to the reduction from 21.3% of LAC being cared for in residential accommodation in March 2020 to 17.5% in 2021. (Action STRAT 1.1, PI's EdS606.01 & EdS606.09)

Service Level Outcomes - successes

- 4.6 Good progress in instigating the transformational change programme has been made; training in an evidence informed NSPCC Reunification Assessment is being delivered to support, where appropriate, our children's return to Moray from current Out of Area Placements. Consideration of a resource panel to look at decision making around placing children in care is in hand. Indicators support this activity with just one child placed out of area and three children returning to Moray, an improvement from the 8 to 3 ratio last year. (Action SERV 1.4 / PIs LAC004, LAC005)

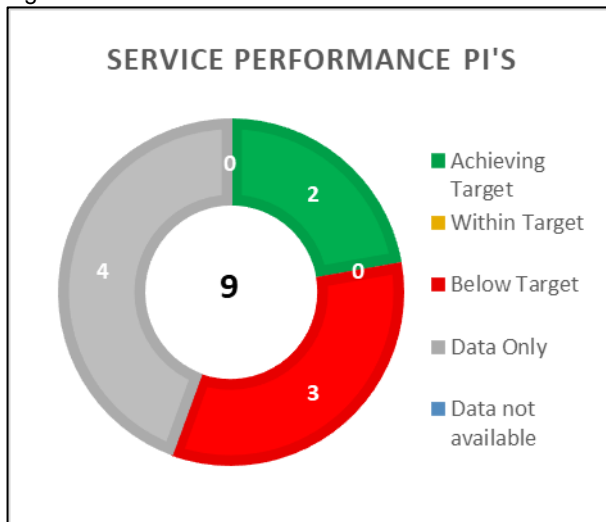
Service Level Outcomes – challenges and actions to support

- 4.7 The process of integrating Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work services into the Integrated Joint Board has not been completed by 31 March as planned, with current progress recorded at 50%. Staffing changes in quarter 4 resulted in delays. With a new project leader appointed and regular meeting opportunities with IJB in place to allow the transition, the project can now push forward at pace. (Action SERV1.1.)

5. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, operational performance is reviewed quarterly by departmental management. Areas performing well and/or areas subject to a decreasing trend or where benchmarking results show performance significantly below comparators will be reported to this committee for member scrutiny.
- 5.2 In February 2021 the initial publication of 2019/20 Local Government Benchmarking Framework Indicators were made available, Children's social work indicators are not currently available until the information is refreshed in early May. The full suite (excluding children's indicators) can be viewed using the [My Local Council](#) tool.
- 5.3 Report is by exception, however links to backing tables for all Service [Performance Indicators](#) is provided.

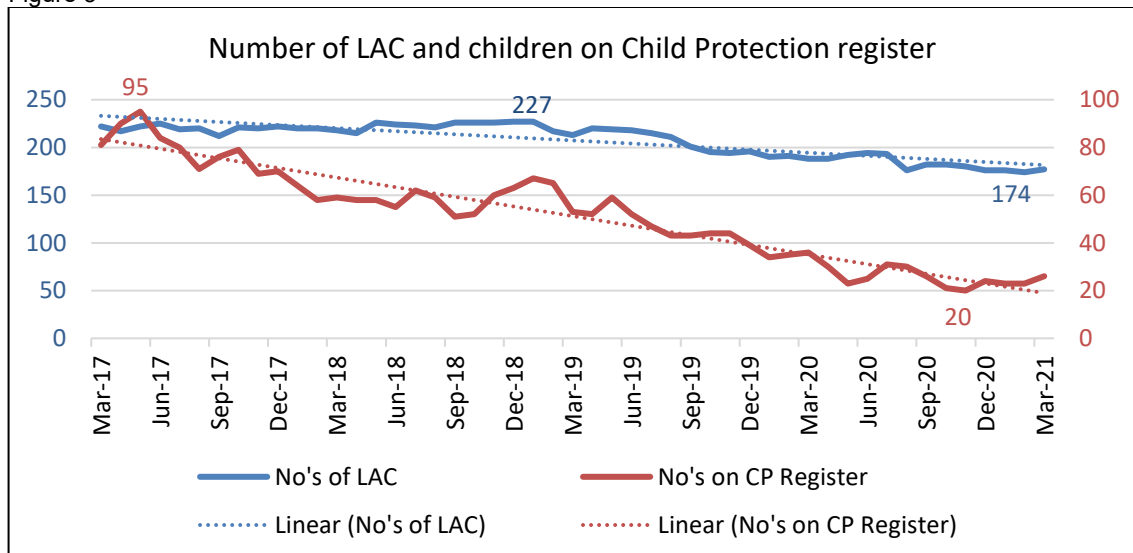
Figure 2



Operational Indicators - successes

- 5.4 As Figure 3 below shows both the number of Looked After Children (LAC) and the number of children on the Child Protection register (CPR) have declined significantly over the past four years. Rates per 1,000 for LAC and children on the CPR are both significantly below the median of comparator authorities. (PI's CSCF100, CMS013)

Figure 3



Operational Indicators - challenges and actions to support

- 5.5 Whilst the overall proportion of LAC in foster care placements has risen throughout 2020/21, as at March 2021 6.2% are within placements purchased by the council, above the current target of 4%. Many of these placements are needed for children presenting with specific needs which are not able to be met by the available council foster carers. Work is underway to recruit carers that have shown an interest and ability to provide placements to children presenting with specific needs. (PI LAC007)

- 5.6 In 2020/21, the percentage of LAC in paid placements, at 75.7% remains stubbornly high and almost 12% higher than the comparator authority median. The major influencing factor is the low percentage of LAC under home supervision (para 4.5 refers). Whilst this may show this indicator as underperforming, with less Looked After children in 2020/21 than in 2019/20, the overall placement costs will be lower. (PI LAC006)
- 5.7 The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) publishes social work workforce resource levels annually. Census data from 2 December 2019 shows that Moray has the equivalent of 379.4 whole time equivalent (WTE) children's services fieldwork social workers per 100,000 children aged 0-17, significantly above our comparator authorities median of 196 and the second highest rate in Scotland. For the majority of other local authorities' resource levels have dropped since March 2018, whereas levels in Moray have increased. (PI WRL001)

6. OTHER PERFORMANCE RELATED DATA

Complaints & MP/MSP Enquiries

- 6.1 In line with the Performance Management Framework, complaints are reviewed quarterly by departmental management in terms of time taken to respond, outcome and learning points. Links to backing tables for all [Service Complaints](#) is provided.
- 6.2 A total of 33 complaints were received during 2020/21, 10 in quarter 4. Thirty eight complaints were closed in the period, eight in quarter 4. Of those complaints closed, 17 were at frontline stage (45%), two were upheld, six were partially upheld and nine were not upheld. Due to the impact of the pandemic, the average time to resolve frontline complaints varied significantly, from 36 days in quarter 1 to 4 days in quarter 4.
- 6.3 Due to the complexity of complaints received by the service, many need further investigation. Twenty one complaints were closed at investigative stage (55%) in the period, two were upheld. 12 were partially upheld and seven were not upheld. Resolution times also varied from 31 days in quarter 1 to 18 days in quarter 4. There were no escalated complaints.
- 6.4 A total of 5 MSP enquiries were received in the period, 3 in quarter 4. Three enquiries were out with jurisdiction, one was resolved and the remaining enquiry remains ongoing.

Other Performance (not included within Service Plan)

- 6.5 There has been a significant reduction in the number of community payback orders with an unpaid work requirement made during 2020/21. With courts unable to operate for long periods during the pandemic, 79 orders were made, compared to 229 in 2019/20. Due to the social distancing restrictions in place, it has been particularly difficult to carry out the unpaid work element of these orders where supervision is required. However, innovation has been used as appropriate with a homeworking model adopted and tasks not requiring direct

supervision used to contribute to outstanding hours. Requests for court reports have more than halved during 2020/21 in comparison to 2019/20. All reports requested have been submitted to courts by the due date in 2020/21. (PIs CJ05, CJ01b, CJ01)

Case Studies

6.6 Nothing to report.

Consultation and Engagement

6.7 Nothing to report.

7. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Performance measurement is used to ensure the efficient and sustainable delivery of services to meet the Council's priorities in both the Corporate Plan and the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Council has a statutory requirement to publish a range of information that will demonstrate that it is securing best value and assist in comparing performance both over time and between authorities where appropriate.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

None.

(e) Staffing Implications

None.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this report is to inform the Committee on performance.

(h) Consultations

The Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice Social Work, Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Service Managers, Legal Services, the Equal Opportunities Officer, and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted with any comments received incorporated into this report.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 As at 31 March 2021, of the 12 service plan actions; one service level action due for completion failed to meet target timescale, the strategic action due to complete has completed. Anticipated progress for two strategic actions is behind schedule for this stage of the plan but there is sufficient time to catch up in years 2 and 3. One action is not due to commence until April 2021. The remaining actions are either performing to or above target levels at this stage of the plan.**
- 8.2 Working within the limits imposed by COVID-19 restrictions has proven challenging in the past year. Under these circumstances the service has continued to meet the needs of the children and young people in its charge. In the coming year work needs to accelerate to progress the integration of the service into the Integrated Joint Board (IJB). It is anticipated that with the appointment of a new project lead to support the transformational change programme this process will be able to move forward at pace in 2021/22.**

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Background Papers: Held by Author
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