



CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN DASHBOARD 2016-17 QUARTER THREE (OCTOBER– DECEMBER 2016)

The dashboard identifies the progress of each of the five Strategic Priorities for the quarter and indicates how we are ‘trending’ from the previous quarter. The measurement key provides a guide to the RAG scoring which is used to show progress. The assessment of progress is made by the Corporate Management Team in conjunction with review of the organisations’ Corporate Work Programme and Strategic Risk Register.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY		RAG STATUS
QUALITY	Continue with further improvements to the quality of our work.	
FAMILY JUSTICE INNOVATION	Implement our part of the family justice reform programme and bring innovation to our services.	
DIVERSITY	Build further on our understanding of diversity in casework, always seeing the uniqueness of each child we have responsibilities towards.	
EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS	Continue to pursue efficiency and effectiveness in all services, looking to make further savings in our budget.	
INFLUENCE	Use our influence positively as the voice of the child and the eyes and ears of family courts.	

Key organisation issues during the quarter

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand in both private and public law continues to be at high levels and absorption of rising demand and maintaining improvements to quality are near the point of becoming conflicting priorities. • The impact of rising demand is higher workloads for staff and we are also seeing an increase in absence levels. There has also been a slight decrease in the consistent performance of KPI 4. • The ability to recruit social workers with the required skills and experience on either a permanent or temporary basis is challenging in some areas however the workforce strategy is in place to mitigate these issues. • Political leadership of the MOJ and change of Ministers following the referendum on membership of the EU and change of Prime Minister. Time will inevitably be needed for them to familiarise themselves with the department, its ALB’s and the challenging decisions that arise from the current and future financial position. • Work towards enabling family justice reforms are progressing slowly. There are no new developments to report at this stage and no date as yet for the publication of any Green Paper. • The next quarter is expected to be largely a continuation of the current with demand and capacity pressures becoming increasingly pronounced.
--

Key organisational achievements during the quarter

QUALITY

- Towards Outstanding: The new Quality Assurance & Impact site was launched to all service areas in April 2016. In the latest three month period of October to December 2016 a total of 2,274 QAIs have been recorded for 993 current eligible staff – an average of 2.3 QAIs per staff.
- Grading continues to be positive with 73% of QAIs being graded as Good (56%) or Outstanding (17% - exceeding 10% national target), and in contrast 7% of QAIs were graded as Requires Improvement – meeting the 7% national target. The rates of Outstanding and Requires Improvement have remained unchanged compared to September-November 2016.
- There are now 12 phases of Emerging Talent with a total of 272 staff members involved. Of these there are 185 staff currently active on Emerging Talent, 47 completed the programme and 40 leavers. Of those currently active 139 (14% of total) are social work staff and 46 (15%) non-social work staff. Analysis of myWork data continues to indicate that staff on Emerging Talent are performing above organisation averages across a range of measures including cost of output, cases finished, learning hours, PLR scores and sickness absence levels. Since inception, 88 staff members have been promoted while on the Programme, equating to 32% of all participants.
- A total of 58 internal courses with 438 participants were delivered in Q3, indicating a reduction in attendance rates at workshops which reflects the on-going pressure of increasing workloads. The move to more flexible learning continues with 184 people accessing learning via webinars, 757 people accessing our eLearning portal MySkills at least once during period and 903 eLearning modules completed.
- We have been involved in three Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAs) of multi-agency responses to domestic abuse referrals (in Lincolnshire, Salford and Wiltshire). Cafcass' work has been seen as strong with minor learning points from one area.
- The Domestic Abuse Practice Pathway was formally launched in November 2016 following a period of consultation with practitioners. The Pathway has been formulated to provide the practitioner with a structured, focussed and stepped framework for assessing cases where domestic abuse is a predominant feature. Cafcass presented the pathway to the MOJ (including other ALBs and Judicial College) in November as a potential model to be replicated across agencies. Local Authorities have been briefed on the model.
- National Thematic audits commissioned through the Operational Management Team (OMT) continue to demonstrate that quality is being maintained.
- As part of the internal audit programme the adequacy two audits were completed during quarter 3: (1) Re-audit of partnerships audit undertaken in 2015-16; (2) A review of the arrangements for the recording, management and monitoring of customer complaints, compliments and associated responses.
- The Outcomes for Children pilot programme undertaken in three service areas to evaluate the immediate and intermediate outcomes of our work has completed and results reported to the Operational Management Team (OMT) and to the Board. A number of recommendations were made. The processes are being built in to the Area Quality Review framework.

FAMILY JUSTICE INNOVATION

- All Cafcass Service Areas are achieving KPI 1, 2 and 3 requirements for the year to date. There has been a slight decline in KPI4 which measures the proportion of section 7 reports that meet their agreed filing times, this has fallen to 96.6% year to date against a target of 97%.

- Pilots to trial different methodologies to produce 'faster section 7 reports' that are more focused and use fewer resources is continuing. A report is being compiled to go the OMT in March which brings together time study data, NIS audit of time studied cases and qualitative interviews from pilot teams. Efficiency and best practice factors around s.7 casework and training will be analysed in the report and practice recommendations may be made depending on the results of the analysis. Recommendations won't be limited to one approach however, they will draw from learning from all aspects of the pilot.
- The new ECMS Case Plan tool is in the final stages of development and due to be implemented in early March 2017. The new tool moves the case plan from a Word document into a digital format on ECMS. The benefits of the tool are reduction in duplication of case recording for FCAs by pre-populating information; ensuring consistency and one standard approach; assist in ensuring quality and impact by using the case plan as a tool to effectively plan at the start of a case, rather than as a retrospective recording requirement.
- Final evaluation of the Private Law Pathway Pilot has been reported to the Corporate Management Team (CMT), OMT and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). MoJ are progressing with pre-court private law pathway developments. Currently they have drafted a paper to the Minister recommending Cafcass as the key delivery partner for a pre-court assessment service. If the minister agrees, preparation will need to commence to arrange a minimum viable service to meet MOJ's requirements by the start of April.
- A bid was submitted for social work innovation funding with Cafcass leading a national pre proceedings model in partnership with local authorities in Merseyside and Cheshire, Medway, and third sector partners Family Action and Coram, with ADCS support and involvement of two Partners in Practice, Leeds and North Yorkshire. The outcome has not yet been received.
- A small scale project to pilot Video Enhanced Observation technology is due to start. The project will be run through the Model Office and will report findings and recommendations to the OMT in March 2017.
- The implementation plan for the Court Skills training app is in the final stages of development. The app is now due to be rolled out in early 2017. The app can be used by Cafcass staff and will be available externally to local authority social workers, children and service users. The app guides the user through various aspects of court.

DIVERSITY

- Board member lead for Diversity and Equality work has been confirmed. Work is progressing on developing the Equality and Diversity Strategy, to be available by 1 April 2017.
- Diversity data continues to be collated within ECMS and data reviewed by the OMT to consider compliance together with an analysis of the diversity of users within their areas to identify any gaps in commissioning or training.
- The 'Partner in Practice' improvement programme has commenced with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCWO) to provide child safeguarding training to public sector staff in the British Overseas Territories. Cafcass is working with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Barnardos in this regard.
- Guidance for working with interpreters including the e-learning module on MySkills has been reviewed and updated.
- A communicating with deaf parents e-learning module has been launched on MySkills.
- A number of initiatives which provide the workforce with the resources, tools and eLearning to help them to enhance their emotional wellbeing, as well as further empowering them to be able to discuss mental health openly and without stigma with colleagues ,have been launched. These initiatives have included: Mental Health Awareness Week and Beating Stress in Men's Health Week.

- Health and Wellbeing activity for the period has included wellbeing sessions delivered in Norwich, Newcastle, Durham, Blackburn and Stafford covering Stress, Nutrition and Mindfulness and Medicash. 20 people also completed H&W related eLearning over the period
- Monthly health and wellbeing newsletters were re-designed and re-launched during the Q3 period and were disseminated to all staff with an intranet article to increase readership. Each newsletter now includes a monthly focus on mental health, a learning recommendation and a healthy recipe. Topics covered included Smarter Working, Box Breathing and Practising Gratitude.
- As part of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Cafcass have signed both the Time to Change Pledge and Mindful Employer Charter and are actively promoting learning around mental health via our Health and Wellbeing Champions and a Yammer social network group.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- The Chief Executive worked with the FJYPB to develop ten top tips for working with children with disabilities for inclusion in the updated Operating Framework which is due to go to OMT in Q4 2016-17.
- Contracts in relation to the hosting of ECMS/SharePoint and the Digitisation Service have now been awarded. Work is now progressing to implement the new services. New broadband lines are being installed in offices as part of the programme to procure new communication services.
- ECMS Mobile, a version of ECMS to be usable via the new smartphones, was launched in November 2016.
- A further upgrade to ECMS has been rolled out to staff in October 2016.
- The contract in respect of print services has been renegotiated and all multi-functional devices and laser jet printers were replaced by new devices in September 2016. The new contract is based on 'pay as you print' charges, rather than a one-off charge.
- Migration to cloud based Office 2013, which includes provision of upgraded versions of Microsoft Office applications and access to Skype for Business, has been completed and rolled out to all users. The introduction of Skype for Business provides staff with more options for communicating both with colleague and service users.
- Following a brief pilot the automation of ECMS template letters (case closure letters) has been rolled out nationally. Work is ongoing to automate all ECMS template letters.
- Work is progressing to scope the business requirements and a solution for more proactive electronic communication with services users following relevant changes to their cases (i.e. SMS/Email).
- Work is progressing to develop a new Performance Learning Review module in Sharepoint which is anticipated to go live in Q1 2017-18.
- The Workforce Strategy is in development and will be based upon the principle of enabling staff to achieve their potential, which in turn will lead to outstanding organisation performance. Plans are in place to:
 - re-brand the self-employed contractor (SEC) unit, so as to raise its profile externally and aid recruitment of independent social workers to build on the pool of flexible workforce;
 - continue to recruit to the Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQS) programme to contribute to the sector social work development;
 - revise our recruitment process to use continuous forward recruiting, taking account of known planned departures through retirement or other reasons for leaving, so that new

staff can take up post immediately – rather than start recruitment when someone hands in their notice; and

- revise the online recruitment process to make it easier to use.
- The new structure of Business Service Managers, Team Leaders and Business Services Officers was implemented in Q2 as part of the Business Services Review. Standard Operating Procedures have been developed and these are being implemented across all business service teams. As part of the review a centralised national EIT business support service has been established.
- The pilot for a centralised business support public law intake team has concluded and national rollout has started.
- New bespoke online 'Protecting Information' training has been launched. The training addresses common data protection issues faced by staff, taken from data breaches and near miss incidents in local teams. The training is mandatory for all staff to complete by March 2017.

INFLUENCE

- The Chief Executive met with Ofsted on 18 January to discuss the 2017/18 inspection methodology.
- Cafcass are now a Partner in Practice with (Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA), the equivalent agency to ourselves dealing with public law cases in Northern Ireland. Cafcass have supported NIGALA over the years but new arrangements put this on a firmer footing. The Director of Strategy is leading on this.
- ADCS and Cafcass have launched Care Proceedings and Pre-Proceedings Agreement which aims to strengthen the way in which social workers, IROs and children's guardians work together in the best interests of children who are the subject of proposed or issued public law proceedings.
- The national DfE contract to develop a national CPD programme for achieving permanence was awarded to a consortium led by Mott Macdonald. The consortium includes Adoption UK, Fostering Network, Family Rights Group, North Yorkshire County Council, Universities of York and Strathclyde, In Trac and Cafcass. The Director of Strategy sits on the Advisory Board and is contributing to this work. The programme should be ready by August 2017.
- Cafcass and Nuffield will host a joint seminar on 23 February to discuss *Disrupting the 'Care Cases Crisis'*. Key researchers and innovators from the sector will present the latest evidence and discuss the policy implications to an invited audience of senior stakeholders. The Chief Executive and Chair of the Board will be speaking at the event.
- The Open Board was held on 27 January. The meeting considered children affected by domestic abuse in the family courts and saw presentations from a Cafcass Family Court Adviser, a manager, and the Chief Executive brought to life how Cafcass approaches cases where domestic abuse features. An open discussion was facilitated by the Chair of the Board.
- As part of the Access Accountancy programme to support young people's development through provision of work experience opportunities, the Finance team hosted a work experience placement.
- Cafcass have agreed to handle the processing of Police National Computer (PNC) checks for Cafcass Cymru.
- The National Managers' conference was held in Manchester (1 November 2016) with the option for some staff to join a satellite location and follow a live webstream. Over 150 operational and corporate managers attended to consider the strategic issues facing the organisation and to hear from external speakers. Over 90% of managers rated all presenters

as 'Good' or 'Excellent'. 80% of managers joining from London cited watching via video link as outweighing the costs of travelling further.

- Representatives of Cafcass facilitated a workshop entitled 'Piggy in the Middle' at the National Children and Adults Conference (3 November). The workshop showcased the quality improvement programmes with reflections from Ofsted on what inspection shows about quality assurance and how inspection might support best practice. It also included an example of where Cafcass have worked in partnership (Knowsley Council) to develop a QA system with an authority in intervention.
- The Chief Executive is a member of and attended the national Family Justice Board meeting (7 November) co-chaired by Dr Philip Lee, (the outgoing Minister MoJ), and Edward Timpson, the Children's Minister in DfE.
- Following discussions with DfE, Cafcass practitioners will be categorised as practice supervisors for the purpose of the future assessment and accreditation of social workers. Our assessment and accreditation programme will start in 2018/19.
- The Chief Executive and Chair of the Board are both members of a small working group concerning the implementation of the National Audit Office report on the oversight of arms-length bodies across Government.
- Cafcass won two awards at the the Social Worker of the Year Awards: Gold for Practice Educator of the Year award and Silver for Children's Team Leader of the Year.
- Cafcass responded to Family Justice Observatory consultation in Q2 on the scope of the new family justice research centre. The consultation was a scoping study to better understand how stakeholders currently use research in policy and practice, and what stakeholders would want or need from the new research centre.
- Cafcass responded to the Law Commission consultation in Q2 on whether surrogacy law should be reviewed in order to keep pace with social change. The consultation set out some specific issues to be reviewed, including the fact that the surrogate (and her partner) are the legal parents at birth, rather than the intended parents; the need for the intended parents to go through court after birth to obtain a parental order; and the conditions for parental orders which may be too restrictive.
- Cafcass responded to the Ofsted consultation in Q2 on the future of social care inspection.
- Regular communication with key national voluntary organisations is in place (covering the National Children's Bureau, Barnardo's, NCH Action for Children and the NSPCC). Partnership opportunities with national child care organisations are in development.
- Liaison with key interest groups (Men's Aid, Families Need Fathers, Grandparents Plus, Family Law Society, Real Fathers for Justice, Mankind Initiative, Family Rights Group and Mumsnet) continues with meetings having taken place each quarter and with regular contact with specific groups to respond to specific issues.
- The Cafcass 2016/17 internal research programme includes: –
 - a study of cases featuring domestic abuse (in partnership with Women's Aid);
 - a survey of interim outcomes for private law service users looking at how court-ordered arrangements have worked out and current communication ability for out of court solutions; this will aim to include the voice of the child;
 - a study of professionals' views on best practice in high conflict private law and care cases, to identify common views on what 'works' for effective and timely case resolution; and
 - a study of cases featuring child trafficking concerns.

(The study of recurrence of private law cases has been deferred as it will be completed in partnership with the MoJ.)

- There are ten ongoing external research projects which include studies of the experiences and outcomes of parents and children involved in various types of cases, with potential policy and practice implications for how Cafcass practitioners work with them to achieve the best outcomes.

Measurement Key

	Inadequate Progress (not being met; remedial action required)
	Satisfactory Progress (Issues occurring but action in place)
	Good Progress (on target)