



CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE
Information Paper for the Board Meeting on 19 February 2016
STRATEGIC PLAN DASHBOARD - QUARTER TWO/THREE UPDATE

KEY POINTS

- The Strategic Plan Dashboard identifies the progress of each of the five Cafcass strategic priorities (2015-20).
- All five strategic priorities are judged to have made good progress despite increasing risk in relation to uncertainty around the current spending review and the future budget, and increasing demand on services.

1. AIM AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the Board with a summary overview of progress towards its strategic priorities.

2. ACTION FOR THE BOARD

- 2.1 To review the progress presented in the Strategic Plan Dashboard and to provide any comments or amendments.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Strategic Plan Dashboard identifies the progress of each of the five strategic priorities for the quarter. The measurement key provides a guide to the RAG scoring which is used in conjunction with the Corporate Management Team's best judgement to show progress. The dashboard is augmented with a further layer presenting progress against each programme which supports the strategic priority.
- 3.2 The Strategic Plan is aligned with the organisation's corporate work programme in order to draw out the specific improvement initiatives/activities to inform progress against the strategic priorities.
- 3.3 Where performance against particular areas is, or is at risk of, falling below the expected level then the Board have the opportunity to consider options to bring delivery of the strategic priority back on line.

4. KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR THE BOARD TO CONSIDER

- 4.1 The dashboard shows that good progress has been made against all five strategic priorities and activities contained in the Work Programme are assessed as green (on target to deliver against plan). This progress is despite a background of increasing risk in relation to uncertainty around the current spending review and the future budget, and

increasing demand on services, which if not managed could affect our ability to progress priorities.

- 4.2 All possible mitigation activities are in place to respond to the risks and to reduce the impact on services to children and families. Risks and their mitigation are addressed in the Strategic Risk Register. The 2016/17 work programme which supports delivery of the Strategic Priorities will be available in Q4.
- 4.3 The achievements over the last two years include external validation of our work with children as good and solid performance against the key measures agreed with government. In addition our contribution to family justice reform is both broad and embedded.
- 4.2 Highlights from quarter two/three:

Quality:

- Development of a new Quality Assurance and Impact framework which will replace all other Quality Assurance tools and provide a new electronic recording tool to replace the need to record in iTrent has been completed and will be launched in February.
- Work is now being taken forward to follow the FCA time recording exercise to understand environmental factors that are impacting productivity.
- A programme of Area Quality Reviews (AQR) is being implemented. The initial pilots in this area have identified improvement in the quality of work. Any learning or recommendations arising from the AQR will be incorporated into local area action plans. The AQR report is reviewed the Chief Executive, National Service Director and Area Assistant Director/Head of Service.

Family Justice Innovation:

- Performance against key indicators remains a continuing area of strength.
- The DNA scheme in disputed Child Arrangements Order cases came into effect w/c 23 November. The service arose out of concern that too many finding of fact hearings were being convened because courts could not order a DNA test to determine paternity. The new service is intended only for those cases where the case turns on the need for a DNA test to establish paternity.
- Work has commenced with the MOJ to design a joint project which will create the future operating model for an out of court service which efficiently meets the needs of a reformed family justice system, provides high quality safeguarding controls and benefits children, and their parents.

Diversity:

- A survey has been completed to assess the impact of diversity training on practices, along with an audit of diversity in case work. The results indicated that 83% of the work audited was of a met or above standard, and the children in this sample were safeguarded.

Efficiency and Effectiveness:

- CafcassPlanning, a strategic workforce planning tool that has been created to support effective decision making by defining current and future staffing requirements at a national and individual service area level, has been launched. The tool is now being regularly used within Service areas and OMT to analyse business issues within the area and provide forecasting data relating to demand and resource. The tool is also being used by CMT to support discussions with MOJ regarding future demand and resource risks.
- The new finance system went live in January 2016.

Influence:

- Representation (Assistant Director of Policy) at the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) Research Group to feedback on research we are supporting and to share priorities with wider sector colleagues.
- The Chief Executive is involved with various accountability, challenge and reviews including the future remit of Ofsted and the future of the triennial review process within Government.
- Relationships have been established with the Children's Commissioner for England and the Youth Justice Board. The Director of Strategy recently spoke at the Association of Independent Chairs LSCBs Conference and will be developing a memo of understanding between the Association and Cafcass.

5. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN

- 5.1 The delivery of safe, high quality and timely services remains a priority for service delivery. Timely and appropriate monitoring of strategic priorities will ensure opportunities to deliver and improve our work in this area are maximized.

6. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

- 6.1 Delivery of the Strategic Plan is supported through the annual budget setting cycle.

7. RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 Risks to delivery of strategic and operational priorities are kept under careful review by the Board and its Committees through the monitoring and reporting of the Strategic Risk Register.

8. DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

- 8.1 Ensuring that Equality and Diversity are central to all our work remains a key strategic and operational priority. Timely and appropriate monitoring of strategic objectives will ensure opportunities to deliver and improve our work in this area are maximized.

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