



CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE
Paper for the Board Meeting on 19 June 2015

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

1. We have completed all work programmes and audits specific to the 2014/15 year. No major issues have emerged during the end year closure of accounts process, nor during the production of the Annual Report. Both of these are tabled for final scrutiny by the Cafcass Board today, before onward consideration by the Ministerial team at the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). The agenda for today's Board meeting contains some papers related to 14/15 not previously seen by the Board, such as the q4 Risk Register update, and the start of 2015/16 reporting.
2. The significant issues and developments so far in q1 (15/16) are as follows:
3. A fortnight after the new Government was formed on 8 May, all Government Departments were asked to identify an additional 5% in-year savings for 2015/16. We were able to identify £2 million we could relinquish as a result of what of necessity had to be an instant review of commitments in-year. The detail of this is set out in the report by the Director of Resources to the Cafcass Board today. I can assure the Board that relinquishing the £2 million will not bring with it any service detriment.
4. We also settled on a grant of £5.8 million for commissioned services, not the £6.5 million in the original MOJ budget for 15/16. This was in consultation with the MOJ and represents a 10.8% reduction based on current assumptions of full year spending during the year.
5. The next step in this ongoing process will be the q1 budget review we carry out with the MOJ in July – and then the q2 and q3 reviews throughout the year, in the run-up to setting our 2016/17 budget. As a result of the requirement to maximise the amount of savings we can identify this year – and in future years - CMT have further reviewed the Cafcass budget with this in mind. The outcome of this review is also on today's Board agenda, along with the time study into how Cafcass practitioners are dividing their time between different stages of public and private law cases.
6. As notified to Board members at the time, both the MOJ and the Cabinet Office approved our business case to extend the current contract for the core services we have with Fujitsu until mid 2018, in order to continue delivering the level of improvement in IT functionality we have been seeing in recent years (apart from a recent serious deterioration in the process by which users are given access by the network to SharePoint based applications, including ECMS, followed by a restricted service through April and early, which is now fully resolved). The extension also brings our contract

period in to line with that of the MOJ at which point the opportunity for closer integration of our combined technology can be reviewed.

7. We have made progress on other IT-related fronts, such as the programme to replace the current Blackberry service with customised smartphones, making efficiency savings in the process. This will help all Cafcass staff to access their work on the move, e.g., by being able to open attachments and files on their new handsets, which is difficult on a Blackberry.
8. I am a member of the Steering Group for the Special Guardianship Review which has been convened by Government due to concerns about the continued decline in adoption plans for children subject to care proceedings, and a linked concern that some special guardianship assessments are late, rushed, and being driven by expediency.
9. [Item withheld under section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as it was intended to stimulate the free and frank exchange of views on confidential issues for the purposes of internal deliberation. This exemption is set out below.*]
10. Plans to roll out DNA testing nationally are progressing well. We expect the tender process to take place in July and the national service to start in September. We are exploring a testing methodology which reduces the contract price to circa £120 per test, compared to the current Government contract price of circa £275 per test. This will clearly mean a significantly reduced financial commitment going forward. However, we do need to make sure that the methodology we are intending to use is compliant with the relevant Family Court Rules.
11. We are extending the private law pre-court pilots until September, having just completed an interim evaluation, and we are moving towards the exit phase of our management of Birmingham City Council's IRO service. We will be returning the service to their direct management having made considerable improvements with them.
12. We are delighted that the Cafcass National Service Director, Christine Banim, was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List published on 13 May. A previous Cafcass Board member, Gillian Baranski, now Chief Executive of Cafcass Cymru, was also awarded an OBE in the same list.
13. Senior management capacity will increase over the next few years as a result of two new appointments which are in line with Board expectations. Helen Watson, the current Corporate Director responsible for all children and families services and services to adults at South Tyneside Council, becomes our Director of Strategy. She takes up her role on 1 September. Helen Johnston, former head of Children and Young Peoples Programmes at the Local Government Association (LGA), becomes Assistant Director (Policy). She starts on 1 July. I am scoping their main accountabilities with them.
14. We have been involved in most the high profile cases reported in the media over the past few months. The heightened level of reporting shows a greater press interest in family court cases which will in turn inevitably influence levels of public and political interest. I was interviewed on the PM programme last Saturday about shared parenting,

and we are receiving more media enquiries overall, including for potential documentaries about family court issues.

15. I have attached my schedule of external meetings for Board interest and scrutiny.
16. Also attached is a list of submissions for trade and industry awards since 2013. These have been progressively successful, partly due to our higher profile and partly due to us producing better submissions. According to the leading award companies, we have probably won more awards than any organisation over the last twelve months. I say probably as reliable data on this is not kept.

Anthony Douglas, CBE, Chief Executive
15 June 2015

Appendices

Appendix 1: Submissions for Awards and Outcomes 2013 - present

Appendix 2: Table of Chief Executive External Meetings

* [Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act](#) relates to the prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs:

Information to which this section applies is exempt information if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information under this Act—

(b) would, or would be likely to, inhibit—

(i) the free and frank provision of advice, or

(ii) the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or

(c) would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.

Some sections of the Chief Executive's report are intended to stimulate free discussion at the Board meeting about current issues within the organisation. These relate to confidential or live issues which are not yet public or finalised. In these cases it has been decided that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Compromising the safe space for developing ideas and debating issues would damage the effective working of Cafcass which is a public body necessary to the effective working of the family justice system. This outweighs the public interest in transparency and accountability of the activities and topics discussed, which are disclosed where possible.

Appendix 1 - Submissions for awards and outcomes: 2013 to date

Year	Number Submitted	Number Shortlisted	Awards Won	Win % Success Rate	Runner Up	% Runner Up or Win
2013/14	7	7	1	14%	3	57%
2014/15	20	20	11	55%	1	60%
2015/16 YTD where ceremony taken place	4	4	3	75%	0	75%

The table below highlights each award we submitted and the outcome and we are confident that we will win a few more this year. We have been shortlisted for 6 more this year with a further 6 for consideration – so a total of 15 submissions this year.

2013/14		
GO Excellence in Public Procurement	Best Public Sector Procurement Team	Shortlisted
Midland HR Technology Impact Awards	Most Innovative Use of Technology	Won
Social Worker of the Year Awards	Employer of the Year	Runner Up
	Team of the Year (Triborough Pilot)	Runner Up
	Children's Social Worker of the Year (David Abrahams)	Shortlisted
Personnel Today Awards	HR Director of the Year (Jabbar Sardar)	Shortlisted
Guardian Public Services Awards	HR Excellence Awards	Runner Up
2014/15		
HR Magazine Awards	Young HR Talent of the Year (Greg Styger)	Won

	HR Director of the Year (Jabbar Sardar)	Shortlisted
Employee Benefits Awards	Best Healthcare and Wellbeing Benefits	Won
Midland HR Technology Impact Awards	Most Innovative HR Director (Jabbar Sardar)	Won
	Best Use of Management Information	Won
	Greatest Organisation Impact from HR Technology in the Public Sector	Won
CIPD People Management Awards	Best Recruitment and Talent Management Strategy	Shortlisted
	Best HR Supplier (in conjunction with MidlandHR)	Shortlisted
HR Most Influential	6th Most Influential Practitioner (Jabbar Sardar)	Won
	4th Most Influential Practitioner (Readers Poll)	Won
Payroll World Awards	Technology Award	Shortlisted
UK & IT Industry Awards 2014	Best Not for Profit IT Project	Shortlisted
Children and Young People Awards	Best Recruitment and Development Award	Won 'Special High Commendation'
Personnel Today Awards	Excellence in Public Sector HR	Won
GO Excellence in Public Procurement	Best Public Sector Procurement Team	Shortlisted
Training Journal Awards	Best Public Sector Initiative	Shortlisted
Social Worker of the Year	Employer of the Year	Runner Up
	Team Leader of the Year - Children's Services	Won
	Children's Social Worker of the Year	Won
	Team of the Year	Shortlisted
2015/16		
Ceremony Taken Place		
Very Important Benefits	Employee Wellbeing Strategy	Won
ABP Award	Excellence in Coaching	Shortlisted
Strengths Partnership Award Conference	Best Organisational Development Initiative	Won

Working Families Awards	Best Approach to Flexible Working	Won
Ceremony Yet to Take Place		
HR Magazine Awards	Young HR Talent of the Year (Kathryn Grant)	Shortlisted
	HR Practitioner of the Year (Kessar Kalim)	Shortlisted
Midland HR Technology Impact Awards	Best Talent Management Initiative	Shortlisted
ENEI Awards	Excellence in E&D Training	Shortlisted
	Employee Wellbeing Award	Shortlisted
Submissions Currently Being Drafted		
Social Worker of the Year Award	Team of the Year (London Private Law)	To Enter
	Team Leader of the Year (Michelle Evans, A9)	To Enter
	Student Social Worker of the Year (Tonia Dubidat)	To Enter
	Employer of the Year	To Enter
	Social Worker of the Year (Joy Manley, A12)	To Enter
Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Awards	Employee Network Excellence Awards	To Enter
Personnel Today Awards 2015	Excellence in Health and Wellbeing	To Enter