



DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 29th September 2014

21 Bloomsbury Street, London

Present

Claire Tyler, Cafcass Board Chair
John Lakin, Cafcass Board member
Stuart Smith, Cafcass Board Member
Kam Singh, Cafcass Board Member

In Attendance

Anthony Douglas, Chief Executive
Christine Banim, Assistant Director
Anji Owens, Assistant Director
Jigna Patel, MIS Operational Manager
Alison Wedge, MoJ Observer
Holly Jeapes, Corporate Support Officer (Minute- taker)
Nicola Blakebrough, Corporate Strategist (observing)

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Apologies

Welcome and introductions were made, no apologies had been received.

2. Draft Minutes of the Joint Performance and Quality Committee Meeting on 12th May 2014 & Action Log & Forward planner

The minutes of the Joint Performance and Quality meeting on 12th May 2014 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to one amendment: *'getting better to better'* should read *'getting better and better.'* It was noted that all the action points had been completed. It was agreed that action points need to be explicitly cross-referenced to the relevant item.

3. Updated Performance Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee agreed the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference. It was further agreed that a bullet point should be added to point three in the Terms of Reference, to include *'the performance of operational services.'* It was also agreed that point four should address how we contribute to the work of the wider family justice system, for example Cafcass' potential work to improve the IRO service in Birmingham. The terms of reference of the Performance Committee and the Quality Committee will set out that a joint meeting will be held annually. The Chief Executive and Chair agreed to make the amendments discussed to the Terms of Reference.

Action 1: The Chief Executive and Chair agreed to make the amendments discussed to the Terms of Reference.

4. Cafcass Performance Report (June 2014)

The Committee was advised that migration to ECMS has posed some problems in the production of data. A decision was made to defer the production of all external reports until the data is accurate. Therefore the latest report for Committee scrutiny is June 2014. The Chair noted that the 'key issues' section of the Performance Report was very helpful in providing context about the key trends.

It was noted that it is difficult to pin down the complete set of reasons behind the dramatic recent variations in public and private law demand. It is probable that the reduction in private law applications is mostly explained by the diversion of some applications into compulsory mediation information and assessment meetings (MIAM's) and the difficulty applicants are finding in understanding and negotiating their way

through the higher level of gatekeeping being applied to new applications. The MIS Operational Manager informed the Committee that the latest September figures show a slight increase in public law demand. The Chief Executive clarified how the gatekeeping process operates, specifically with reference to the stipulations of the Child Arrangements Programme (CAP), unless exemptions apply.

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that Cafcass will be involved in the Private Law Pathway project with the MoJ, focussing on promoting diversion from court and trying to establish more effective pre-court services. Our Minister, Simon Hughes, will be announcing the pilots sometime in October 2014. The Child Arrangements Programme (CAP) has generally gone well but many private law judges report they are struggling to cope with busy court lists. The impact of litigants in person, on time spent on cases, is an issue that continues to pose challenges for the whole system but not as much in our experience as is claimed in some reports. The MoJ observer agreed to provide some information to the main Board meeting in October on MoJ's current position on the issues discussed.

The discrepancies between Cafcass data and Family Justice Board (MoJ/HMCTS) data were discussed. The Committee was informed that we are working closely with the MoJ and HMCTS to align datasets into a single joint dataset as soon as possible. This project is being led the Cafcass Assistant Director for Business Development.

The MIS Operational Manager agreed to produce a heat map analysis showing the impact of the increase in case and court times in private law cases on Cafcass' overall resource. This will be circulated to the Committee outside of the meeting. The National Service Director informed the Committee that we monitor the number of agency workers we use. There has been a decrease in the number of agency workers, as more selective use is made of them. The National Service Director agreed to circulate up to date information on our use of agency workers to Committee members.

The Committee agreed to review at the Board Meeting in October the implications of the trends in demand and duration of both public and private law cases for Cafcass' future strategic direction. The Chief Executive agreed to provide an up to date analysis, to aid this discussion at the main Board, on our future remits including reference to items discussed at this meeting. Items discussed included whether agency staff expenditure is reducing in line with the reduced caseload, reduction in workload and the impact this has on our budget, the pilots to assess whether the input of a psychologist attached to a Cafcass service area has proved beneficial; other pilots we are involved in as part of the Private Law Pathway project and our part in diversion work and services pre-court.

Action 2: The MoJ observer agreed to provide some information to the main Board meeting in October on the current position on the issues discussed.

Action 3: The MIS Operational Manager agreed to produce a heat map analysis showing the impact of the increase in case and court times in private law cases on Cafcass' resource.

Action 4: The National Service Director to circulate information on our use of agency workers to Committee members.

Action 5: The Chief Executive to provide an up to date analysis of our future remits including reference to items discussed at this meeting to the October Board meeting.

5. Strategic Plan Dashboard

The Performance Committee discussed the quarter one strategic plan dashboard.

It was noted that the bullet points under influence do not fully reflect the wide range of influence that Cafcass has in the family justice system. The Chief Executive agreed to amend the 'influence' section for the next quarter, in light of current system-wide initiatives.

The Committee acknowledged the *'track my case app'* is an impressive development.

6. Developing Demand and Resource Requirement Forecasting Methods

The Assistant Director presented the paper which sets out how Cafcass is working with its partner agencies to refine its forecasting and demand management tools for internal and system-wide use. The Board members noted that they welcomed this more sophisticated forecasting model.

The Committee members questioned the extent of diversity data collected to date. The National Service Director explained that we used to collect this data but we did not have the systems in place to collect it accurately and the data was as a result not providing value. Capturing accurate diversity data using ECMS will over time enhance our understanding of the profile of service users. However it is expected to take some time to build a picture of diversity trends. We have agreed to share our diversity data with the MoJ with a view to alignment of the data. The Board Diversity Ambassador noted she particularly welcomes this work around diversity. The Chief Executive informed the Committee that at the next Cafcass Diversity Day, he will reinforce the message to staff about the importance of collecting accurate diversity data once fields have been agreed.

The Assistant Director agreed to circulate to the Committee the Terms of Reference of the new data linking project led by MoJ and chaired by the Cafcass Assistant Director for Business Development, which aims to link the relational data held by the MoJ, Department for Education (DfE), HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), Cafcass, Welsh Office and Cafcass Cymru.

Given the strategic importance of this item, the Committee agreed to refer it for discussion at a future Board Seminar. It was agreed that the Board Seminar should focus on strategic thinking and likely future scenarios for both public and private law, rather than the technical development of the forecasting models.

Action 6: The Assistant Director agreed to circulate to the Committee the Terms of Reference of the new data linking project.

Action 7: Demand and resource requirement forecasting to be referred as an item for a future Board Seminar.

7. Reviewing the Quality of Performance and Learning Reviews (PLR)

The National Service Director presented the item which provided an update following the report to the Committee in January 2014 on the steps being taken to continuously improve the quality of supervision provided to staff through their managers. These steps include:

- Management development workshops
- A MySkills e-learning page

- Enhanced PLR planning tools
- The introduction of an equality and diversity self-assessment tool
- Peer supervision sessions and targeted support for managers

The up to date statistics were presented which demonstrated that since June 2014, the number of completed PLRs for social work staff has exceeded the 80% target, with 81.4% of our social work staff having had a recorded PLR during the period June to August 2014. As at 1 September 2014, 93.3% of operational managers and 75.5% of operational Business Support staff had a PLR in the preceding 12 weeks.

It was noted that situational supervision is very effective. The Committee was informed that an innovation fund bid has been submitted for the project with the College of Social Work, on developing a national supervision framework for social workers.

The National Service Director informed the Committee that she expects the completion number of the Equality and Diversity self assessments to be higher in future and confirmed that we are aiming for a 95% completion target. A follow up audit of PLR quality will be undertaken before 31st March 2015, specifically focussing on the quality and consistency of recorded PLRs in line with the Management Development module. It was agreed that the National Service Director will report the updated PLR figures back to the Committee as and when they are available.

Action 8: Update on PLR figures to be added to the forward planner.

8. Commissioning and Partnerships Performance Update

The National Commissioning and Partnerships Development Manager presented an update on Commissioning and Partnerships performance to the Committee meeting as follows:

- The Commissioning and Partnerships (C&P) Team works with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to commission services from partner organisations that assist families and children in private law cases.
- These services support the work of Cafcass Operational Teams working on private law cases in local service areas. This relies on effective partnership working between the Commissioning and Partnerships team and operational staff.
- The services commissioned are Child Contact Interventions (CCI) (supervision and intervention in child contact), the Separated Parents Information Programme (SPIP), Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP), supervised contact and supported contact.
- An advisory service for mediators on child protection issues will be piloted.
- Cafcass practitioners will take on the 'key worker' role in some of the planned pre-court pilots and the Commissioning and Partnerships team will play a strong part in making sure the pilots are successful.

9. Any Other Business

A Board Member advised the Committee that the Children's Commissioner has published the first piece of in depth research on *'the impact of Legal Aid changes on children since April 2013.'* It was agreed that this should be circulated to Committee members for information.

Action 09: The Children's Commissioner Research on *'the impact of Legal Aid changes on children since April 2013'* to be circulated to Committee members.

Action Summary

Action 1: The Chief Executive and Chair agreed to make the amendments discussed to the Terms of Reference.

Action 2: The MoJ Observer agreed to provide some information to the main Board meeting in October on MoJ's current position on the issues discussed.

Action 3: The MIS Operational Manager agreed to produce a heat map analysis showing the impact of the increase in case and court times in private law cases on Cafcass' resource.

Action 4: The National Service Director to circulate information on our use of agency workers to Committee members.

Action 5: The Chief Executive to provide an up to date analysis on our future remits including reference to items discussed at this meeting to the October Board meeting.

Action 6: The Assistant Director agreed to circulate to the Committee the Terms of Reference of the new data linking project.

Action 7: Demand and resource requirement forecasting to be referred as an item for a future Board Seminar.

Action 8: Update on PLR figures to be added to the forward planner.

Action 9: The Children's Commissioner Research on '*the impact of Legal Aid changes on children since April 2013*' to be circulated to Committee members.