



## MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 26 March 2013

Sanctuary Buildings, Westminster

### Present

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

### In Attendance

Anthony Douglas, Chief Executive  
Bruce Clark, Director of Policy  
Julie Brown, Director of Finance  
Fiona Green, Head of Commissioning and Partnerships  
Anji Owens, Assistant Director  
Holly Jeapes (Minutes)

### Observers

Alan Krikorian, DfE  
Caroline Miller, Millar Adamson Craig Partnership

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome & Apologies

Welcome and Introductions were made. Apologies had been received from Richard Green, Annabel Burns and Christine Banim.

### 2. Draft Minutes of 28 January 2013 Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the 28 January meeting and the action log were discussed.

It was noted that the action log supports the work of the Performance Committee and that action logs are now standard across all committees.

It was confirmed that a short (one page) cover note is required for the regular Performance report that is considered at the Performance Committee every meeting and referred on to each Board meeting. This is to be applied with immediate effect.

**Action 1:** The Committee confirmed that a short cover note will be provided for the regular Performance report and that this is to be applied with immediate effect.



A Board member noted that a change needs to be made to the second point on the action log, so that developments and new initiatives since the previous version are clearly highlighted. It was agreed that the action log will be amended to reflect this.

**Action 2:** The committee agreed that the second point on the action log should be amended, so that developments and new initiatives are clearly highlighted.

The possibility of Board member attendance at the planned joint workshops with Ofsted (item 5 of 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013 minutes) was considered. It was agreed that the workshops will be most effective if numbers attending are kept small and to those managers who Ofsted are used to working with. The CEO undertook to report their results to the Performance and Quality Committees

**Action 3:** The CEO agreed to report the results from the two workshops with Ofsted being planned for April and May 2013 back to the Performance and Quality Committees.

### 3. January 2013 Performance Report

This was received.

### 4. February 2013 Performance Report

The Director of Policy presented the highlights of the February 2013 Performance Report as follows:

- All four KPIs are well above target levels for the year to date.
- Despite being faced by second highest ever application in January, our stock of open care cases has reduced by 14.3% in the last 12 months.
- KPI 2 is well ahead of 'no later than three days' target, with figures showing it taking as little as one day for a Children's Guardian to be allocated a care case.
- Application demand continues to increase, up 8% compared to the same period in 2011/12.
- There is a steady reduction in the length of care cases across the first three quarters of 2013/14, with further reductions (to 36-40 weeks) expected by the Family Justice Board in 2013/14.

A discussion took place about the extent of variations in individual Local Authority care applications and how best to draw this important information to the attention of Directors and Lead Members, including through the options of Local Family Justice Boards and direct communication to Directors – the CEO undertook to consider and act on these options.

**Action 4:** The CEO agreed to consider ways to draw to the attention of Local Authority Directors and Lead members, including through Local Family Justice Boards and direct communication to Directors, the extent of variations in individual Local Authority Care Applications.



## 5. Commissioning and Partnerships Presentation

The Head of Commissioning and Partnerships presented her report about the uptake and delivery of the range of services that Cafcass commissions, including child contact services and, on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE), contact activities. The way in which the Commissioning and Partnerships Service is supporting the implementation of Government policy on separated families was discussed.

**The highlights of the Commissioning and Partnerships presentation were as follows:**

- Progress has been made in ensuring the sector reduces its unit costs
- Data on contact activities is now available at the level of the individual court and judge
- Development work includes clearer initial screening of cases to assess risk to children
- All dispute resolution services are being brought together more coherently, though further progress is still needed.
- Work is under way to explore the future funding options for pre-court parenting interventions.
- The Commissioning and Partnerships service will continue to report to the Board (now through the Performance Committee) at least twice a year
- Information about the service is available on the Cafcass website under the Partnerships heading and includes monthly data.

## 6. Performance Reporting of Finance

The Director of Finance gave a presentation to provide Performance Committee members with an update on the reporting of Cafcass' financial performance. She emphasised Cafcass' overriding objective 'to achieve the best value for money we can to provide equality of access to our services for all children and their families.' The Director of Finance discussed different aspects of the financial environment including budgetary control, assets and liabilities, value for money, cash management and regulatory and external audit; covering who performance is reported to and how performance is measured for each aspect.

The Value for Money Graph was discussed. The Director of Finance explained that unit cost is calculated by comparing the level of spending in a service area with its share of the national workload. Workload is calculated using the weighted workload tool, which allocates differing amounts of points to cases depending on their stage of activity. The Director of Finance discussed how the graph had triggered a positive debate amongst managers about why unit costs vary across service areas. It was noted that unit costs vary considerably between service areas, with ten performance measures feeding into the graph. The Director of Finance agreed to confirm whether all measures were equally weighted.



**Action 5:** The Head of Finance agreed to check and confirm whether the ten factors feeding into the Value for Money graph are all equally weighted.

#### 7. **Cafcass KPIs for 2013/14 & Family Justice Board KPMs**

The committee acknowledged the 2013/14 budget, and expressed interest in the planned additional quality related KPI for 2013-14 which will focus on the percentage of Public Law care cases where Cafcass is cited by case managing judges as the main reason for a case being adjourned. It was agreed that the Chair of the Board will reply to the Secretary of State's remit letter thanking him for the budget and also outlining the additional measures Cafcass is taking through its proposed Quality Account to fully capture and analyse the quality of its services.

**Action 6:** The Chair of the Board agreed she would reply to the Secretary of State's remit letter thanking him for the budget and also outlining the additional measures Cafcass is taking through its proposed Quality Account to fully capture relevant data and analysis about the quality of services.

#### 8. **Forward Planner**

The Committee agreed that a presentation from IT should be added to the May agenda and a presentation from Legal should be added to September's agenda.

**Action 7:** The Committee agreed that a presentation from IT should be added to the May agenda and a presentation from Legal should be added to the September agenda.

#### 9. **Review of Performance Initiatives**

The Committee agreed to have a workshop to discuss the reporting of performance initiatives and the progress of planned activities, facilitated by a discussion paper prepared jointly by the Vic-Chair of the Committee and the Executive.

**Action 8:** The Committee agreed to have a workshop on the reporting of performance initiatives and planned activities, facilitated by a prior discussion paper.

#### 10. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 11am-1pm, Sanctuary Buildings.



## Action Summary

1. The Committee confirmed that a short cover note will be provided for the regular Performance report and that this is to be applied with immediate effect.
2. The committee agreed that the second point on the action log should be amended, so that developments and new initiatives are clearly highlighted.
3. The CEO agreed to report the results from the two workshops with Ofsted being planned for April and May 2013 back to the Performance and Quality Committees.
4. The CEO agreed to consider ways to draw to the attention of Local Authority Directors and Lead members, including through Local Family Justice Boards and direct communication to Directors, the extent of variations in individual Local Authority Care Applications.
5. The Head of Finance agreed to check and confirm whether the ten factors feeding into the Value for Money graph are all equally weighted.
6. The Chair of the Board agreed she would reply to the Secretary of State's remit letter thanking him for the budget and also outlining the additional measures Cafcass is taking through its proposed Quality Account to fully capture relevant data and analysis about the quality of services.
7. The Committee agreed that a presentation from IT should be added to the May agenda and a presentation from Legal should be added to the September agenda.
8. The Committee agreed to have a workshop on the reporting of performance initiatives and planned activities, facilitated by a prior discussion paper.