



MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Monday 26 November 2012

Sanctuary Buildings, Westminster

Present

Claire Tyler, Chair of the Performance Committee & Cafcass Board Chair
 John Lakin, Cafcass Board Member
 Kam Singh, Cafcass Board Member
 Stuart Smith, Cafcass Board Member

In Attendance

Anthony Douglas, Chief Executive
 Bruce Clark, Director of Policy
 Annabel Burns, DfE Observer
 Mary Berwick-Sayers, Executive Assistant (Minutes)

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed Annabel Burns to the meeting.. Apologies had been received from Christine Banim due to her needing to chair a meeting with the Cafcass trade unions.

2. Draft Minutes of 3rd September Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the 3rd September 2012 meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

The Director of Policy informed the Committee that London was now one of the fastest improving areas in the country in terms of care case durations, in spite of its size and the challenges it faces.

The Chair of the Performance Committee confirmed that she had met the Chairs of the other two Board Committees (the Quality Committee and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee) to clarify the remits of the respective committees. The outcome is set out in the Committee Responsibilities paper, which is on the agenda of this meeting.

The Committee had a brief discussion about the key issues on which to focus in order to reduce care case durations and other key performance targets over the next two years. Whilst it was noted that the Transformation Programme has identified some 'breakthrough' issues, this Committee has not yet had an opportunity to feed into this discussion. It was agreed to keep this topic under review.



3. October 2012 Performance Report

The Director of Policy presented the highlights of the October 2012 Performance Report as follows:

- The number of public law care cases not allocated to a Guardian is at its lowest level ever, despite an 8% rise in care case applications in 2012/13. Cases are also being concluded sooner.
- The number of active care cases is reducing, due to reduced case durations. The Director of Policy undertook to provide the Committee with some metrics at the February meeting to demonstrate that difficult cases are lasting longer as our stock of cases continues to decline.
- The comparison of new applications and closure figures demonstrates that, for the first time in 5 years, closures are running ahead of applications. It was agreed that in future these figures, for the most recent month or two, will be shown as a projection in the report.

The Committee raised concern at the increased number of private law applications in October 2012 which, at 4.425, is the highest figure recorded for an individual month.

It is not clear if the current 8% increase in care case applications will continue into 2013/14, or if the rise will revert to the more usual 4% level. The Committee recognised that application increases represent a significant operational delivery issue. Whilst more proportionate working practices have thus far accommodated rising demand levels, the scope for further efficiencies is unclear. A fuller understanding of the work of children's guardians is being obtained through a current research project into 100 recently completed care cases, overseen by Professor June Thoburn.

The Committee raised the issue that if Cafcass is to be able to continue to allocate an increasingly high volume of cases we will need to match the extent of our involvement with the level of available resources, while at the same time improving the quality of our work. It was agreed that the Chair will report this discussion back to the Board on 7 December.

4. HR Report

The HR Report was formally received by the Committee.

5. Family Justice System Performance Report

The Chief Executive updated the Committee on issues raised at the recent meeting of the Family Justice Board (FJB) and the work being done by the Performance Improvement Sub Group (PISG) with LFJBs. Annabel Burns agreed to share her more up to date version of the FJB Governance Chart with members of the Committee. The



Chief Executive informed the Committee that the FJB Chair and the Judge in charge of the Modernisation Programme had attended the National Managers Conference in November and that their presentations had been very well received by staff.

The Chief Executive confirmed that following discussions at the recent Quality Committee, a KPI on quality for 2013/2014 is being worked on for the February 2013 Board meeting, informed by our health check methodology.

6. Performance Initiatives

The Chief Executive presented an overview of the main performance and quality initiatives designed to drive up performance and quality across the organisation. The Committee discussed ways in which this document could be developed and improved. The Committee agreed that as this is a “live” document, it will be reviewed at each Performance Committee meeting.

7. Committee Lead Responsibilities

The Chair confirmed that the Committee Lead Responsibilities paper reflects the discussion of the three Board Committee Chairs with the Chief Executive and that it helps each Committee to plan its business. It was agreed that the Commissioning and Partnerships team will be invited to present annually to the Performance Committee and that its first presentation will be to the March 2013 meeting.

The Committee returned to the earlier discussion about the key issues on which the Committee should be focusing. In addition to London, the following issues were identified:

- Complaints – for discussion at the January 2013 meeting
- Case duration and fast tracking
- Capacity in both public and private law
- Self representation – for discussion at the January 2013 meeting (preparation for implementation in April)
- Individual scorecards

It was agreed that the Performance Committee will receive a regular report on the progress of the five elements of the Transformation Programme

8. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

9. Date of next Meeting

Monday, 28 January, 11am to 1.00pm at Sanctuary Buildings



Action Summary

1. It was agreed that the most recent applications and closure comparison figures will in future be shown as a projection in the Performance report.
2. Annabel Burns agreed to share her more up to date version of the FJB Governance Chart with members of the Committee.
3. The Committee agreed that the Performance Initiatives document will be reviewed at each Performance Committee meeting.
4. It was agreed that the Commissioning and Partnerships team will be invited to present annually to the Performance Committee and that its first presentation will be to the March 2013 meeting.
5. It was agreed that Complaints and Self Representation will be on the January Performance Committee agenda for discussion. The Self Representation discussion will focus on preparation for implementation in April.
6. It was agreed that the Performance Committee will receive a regular report on the progress of the five elements of the Transformation Programme