



**CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE
STRATEGIC PLAN DASHBOARD
2017-18 QUARTER TWO (JULY – SEPTEMBER 2017)**

The dashboard identifies the progress of each of the five Strategic Priorities for the quarter and indicates how we are ‘trending’ from the previous quarter. The measurement key provides a guide to the RAG scoring which is used to show progress. The assessment of progress is made by the Corporate Management Team in conjunction with review of the organisations’ Corporate Work Programme and Strategic Risk Register.

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | | RAG STATUS |
|------------------------------|---|------------|
| QUALITY | Continue with further improvements to the quality of our work. | Yellow |
| FAMILY JUSTICE INNOVATION | Implement our part of the family justice reform programme and bring innovation to our services. | Yellow |
| DIVERSITY | Build further on our understanding of diversity in casework, always seeing the uniqueness of each child we have responsibilities towards. | Green |
| EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS | Continue to pursue efficiency and effectiveness in all services, looking to make further savings in our budget. | Green |
| INFLUENCE | Use our influence positively as the voice of the child and the eyes and ears of family courts. | Green |

KEY ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES DURING THE QUARTER

- Demand in private law continues to increase at the same high level as in recent months. Despite this, case and system performance continues to be strong and audits of the quality of work show improvements and all Cafcass Service Areas are achieving the Cafcass KPIs.
- There is variation in demand across areas however there is no clear reason behind the variation and can only really be understood in each local area through a local process of enquiry.
- Demand in public law has seen some levelling off, however it is too soon to forecast a permanent levelling off or a long-term downward trend.
- Staff caseloads have reduced nationally as an impact of recruiting additional resources, however there are still some areas with higher caseloads. The average is 19 cases per practitioner.
- The ability to recruit social workers with the required skills and experience on either a permanent or temporary basis continues to be difficult in some local service areas. A revised and innovative recruitment strategy has been put in place, using a range of different methods of advertising and promoting the use of CVs, and LinkedIn. This has evidenced significant success in applications and appointments particularly in some of the hard to recruit to areas.
- Work towards enabling family justice reforms are progressing however the date for publication of any Green Paper has yet to be confirmed. If this does go ahead it is likely to be in the Spring of 2018.

- The Children and Social Work Bill has now passed into law. Key changes affecting Cafcass include: a new system of regulation for social workers; replacement of LSCBs; a change to the factors courts should consider for permanence options in care cases.
- The ongoing legacy costs of the growth in the workforce require the maintenance of funding in excess of the current year's forecast spending requirement. This position has been laid out to the Department as part of the ongoing budget discussions for 2018/19.
- Sickness absence levels continue to show a reduction – the overall average working days lost to sickness is 7.2 days.
- The next quarter is expected to be largely a continuation of high demand and associated pressures.

KEY ORGANISATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE QUARTER

QUALITY

- Intensive recruitment is continuing to appoint the requisite additional social work staff in line with the 2017/18 budget allocation and forward recruitment planning across service areas.
- Re-branding of the Self-Employed Contractor Unit has completed and the unit has been re-launched as 'Cafcass Associates'.
- Every service area has worked with HR and Finance to predict future leavers in 2017/18, and early recruitment to fill those posts has started.
- A different and innovative recruitment strategy has been put in place, using a range of different methods of advertising and promoting the use of CVs and LinkedIn. This has shown significant success in applications and appointments particularly in some of the hard to recruit to areas. The number of applicants has increased and the enhancements to the recruitment process is supporting applicants being confirmed into post more quickly.
- The percentage of QAIs undertaken in the period assessed as good or outstanding was 67%. AQRs are carried out on a three-year rolling programme as well as several thematic reviews.
- National training on improving productivity has been delivered and extremely well received. This training was directed towards the 103 least productive Family Court Advisors (FCAs), and was aimed at giving them tools and skills to relieve pressure on completion of work.
- National Thematic audits commissioned through the Operational Management Team (OMT) continue to demonstrate that quality is being maintained.
- The Area Quality Reviews and NIS audit programme combined with the QAI framework provides an overall auditing framework which compares well to best practice in the sector. The accuracy of QA grading has been checked through benchmarking and the learning derived informs the learning and development programme.
- The revised Operating Framework was published in August 2017. The next shorter update will be carried out in December 2017.
- Child Impact Analysis pilots commenced on 1 July 2017. Pilots are being delivered across 3 areas (Chelmsford A14; North Yorkshire and York A2) and with Cafcass Cymru. The pilots are intended to focus section 7 reports on child impact, rather than parental dispute. A user survey will be undertaken a month after each case completes. The target is to evaluate from October 2017 and to close the pilot by the end of the calendar year with the learning being applied and considering whether a national rollout would sustainably improve service quality.
- The new Performance Learning and Review system was launched in September 2017.

- Guidance has been developed with the approval and support of the President of the Family Division, regarding the use of our professional time. The guidance was issued on 1 July and sets out the best way in which children can be helped by Cafcass and Cafcass Cymru in the family courts throughout England and Wales, during a time of record levels of demand for our services. The final version incorporated comments from senior judges and magistrates and has led to more flexibility in a significant number of court areas.

FAMILY JUSTICE INNOVATION

- Funding for the Gateway Pilot (an evolved version of the private law pathway pilot) has been agreed by MOJ and the Minister responsible for Cafcass. The pilot is due to commence in mid-January 2018.
- Meetings have taken place with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and with Barnardo's to discuss the potential for joint development of Board Quality Standards for use across the public sector. A scoping exercise is underway to assess need and viability.
- The action plan arising from the recommendations of Board Effectiveness Review to provide continuous improvement in the governance of Cafcass has been fully delivered.

DIVERSITY (INCLUDING HEALTH & WELLBEING)

- The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy covering 2017-20 has been published. The first 6-month update against the Strategy action plan will be reported to the Board in January 2018.
- Diversity data continues to be collated within ECMS and data reviewed by the OMT to consider compliance together with an analysis of the diversity of users within their areas to identify any gaps in commissioning or training.
- Monthly Health and Wellbeing newsletters continue to be cascaded. Each newsletter includes a monthly focus on mental health, a learning recommendation and a healthy recipe.
- For the year to date 11 mental health and remote working sessions were delivered and attended by 468 members of staff. 56 members of staff have accessed 1 to 1 support since April 2017. 18 staff have been trained as in-house Macmillan trainers.
- Mental Health First Aid Training for Staff (using Time to Change champions) is being implemented which will provide inhouse qualified Mental Health First Aiders.
- 'Carers Commitment' was launched during National Carers' Week in June 2017. The Commitment sets out the existing help and support available to members of staff that identify themselves as a carer. The Commitment is not a new policy but is a guide for managers and staff to raise awareness of good practice around the needs of different types of carers, to help alleviate the stress and anxiety that can be linked to having caring responsibilities.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- New laptops (built with Windows 10) have been launched. Rollout is ongoing with 3 offices still to be rolled out (as of 13 November 2017).
- Work has commenced with HMCTS to digitise private law court applications (C100s). It is anticipated that this will allow casework to commence 5-8 days sooner and is also more likely to reduce the errors that come from the current paper-based applications.
- Work has been carried out with HMCTS regarding filing formats, including electronic correspondence formats. This is leading to set standards which are facilitating court standardisation.
- The new solution for digitisation services will go live in December 2017. The new provider will replace Fujitsu and process all court orders; local authority checks and level 2 police checks.

- The Allocation Tool has been rolled out to all managers and a secondary tool for EIT has been piloted in 3 areas and will be rolled out by the end of December 2017. Both provide a more rounded set of data to inform workload management including the forecasting of individual demand.
- Various 'pressure tests' around workload and capacity have been developed to see the trends related to workloads and new demands, these are presented to CMT in the form of a dashboard.
- A more sophisticated method of looking at organisational active caseloads and to proactively contact managers to inform managers of people with high levels relative to the organisational clustering has been introduced.
- The Workforce Development Strategy has been published. The first 6-month update against the Strategy action plan will be reported to the Board in January 2018.
- The business case relating to procurement of replacement IT services has been agreed and tender documents have been published.
- New technology to improve the efficiency of fulfilling temporary vacancies is being introduced in November 2017. The technology will reduce management time in shortlisting and candidate selection, and other administration in timesheet approval and invoicing/payment.
- The tender for the commissioning of SPIP, CCI and DAPP has successfully completed. Contracts are in place for 3 years and extendable to 4 years. The tender was based on Cafcass child focussed outcomes and has resulted in a more robust provider group.
- Work has commenced with Dubit to develop a prototype Voice of the Child App which will enable children and young people to communicate throughout their case.
- Practice Experts have been introduced. These are Cafcass practitioners and managers who each hold expertise across specialist practice areas that do not routinely feature in our casework. The Practice Experts are available to provide guidance in respect of casework featuring their specialist topic and signpost to relevant resources or services to help practitioners save time researching the topic.

INFLUENCE

- The 'Positive Parenting Programme' pilot has commenced. The aim of this pilot is to introduce a structured intervention that can be applied to rule 16.4 cases, to reduce conflict and reduce the time spent by Cafcass and the courts on these cases. It is being piloted from November 2017 in the first 50 Rule 16.4 appointment cases made across the country, which meet the suitability criteria. The Model Office will evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot before a national rollout is considered.
- Work on the 'High Conflict Pathway' in private law cases is progressing well. The Pathway will undergo a testing phase between November 2017 and January 2018, with some practitioners using it in their work. Once feedback and final revisions have been incorporated, staff will be trained in February and March 2018, with an anticipated launch date of April 2018.
- The joint Cafcass and ADCS 2017/18 work programme has been agreed and contact has been established with Research in Practice and the Business Case to create standardised evidence packs for neglect and emotional abuse cases has been developed.
- The business case regarding reappointment of Board Member's whose contracts will end in November 2017 and March 2018 has been agreed. Six Board Members have now been reappointed for terms of 2 to 3 years. Recruitment has commenced for the replacement Chair and 2 Board Members. A further recruitment campaign for 2 Board Members will take place in early 2018.
- Recruitment has commenced for the Director of Strategy post.
- Work is ongoing with NIGALA on their future direction. This involvement is episodic due to a slow pace of change.

- Cafcass Overseas project has been established to deliver our contribution to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) programme. A consultant Project Manager has been appointed to oversee Cafcass input into all 14 territories and work with partner agencies such as CEOP, the NCA, the CPS and Barnardo's, to ensure the Cafcass input is co-ordinated coherently with that of our partners in the project.
- The Cafcass Social Media Policy was launched in September 2017 together with an official Cafcass Facebook page and guidance for staff on using WhatsApp to communicate with service users.
- The 2017/18 research programme has been identified and commented on by OMT to ensure that the programme is closely tied to our operational needs and requirements and the programme has been discussed and endorsed by the Quality Committee. The Programme includes:
 - Recurrence of private law cases
 - Small-scale study of Special Guardianship Orders outcomes
 - Review of Cafcass and Adoption Agency practice in relinquished baby cases.
 - Trends in legal outputs from care applications.
 - Cases involving alienating behaviours by parents.
 - Congruence between court orders and Cafcass recommendations.
 - Cases featuring 'honour-based' violence
- The Cafcass legal team is represented on the Family Procedure Rule Committee and the Law Society's Children Law Sub Committee, with influence over procedure changes.
- Major reform is expected through the MOJ's Green Paper on family justice and the Cafcass Assistant Director (Policy) is embedded within MOJ policy one day a week.
- Linda Nelmes was recognised for her work in developing the Domestic Abuse Practice Pathway at the first ever first ever Ministry of Justice Group awards. Cafcass were also shortlisted in the following categories: Unsung Hero (Nyasha Gochera, BSO Bloomsbury), Diversity and Inclusion – for work across Cafcass (Margaret Obi and Bethany from the FJYPB), and Leadership (Anthony Douglas).
- Cafcass has been short-listed for three awards for the Social Worker of the Year Awards (Linda Nelmes – for Creative and Innovative Social Work Practice; Sarah Parsons – for Raising the Profile of Social Work; Shelagh Butler – in the Lifetime Achievement Award).
- The Director of Resources, Julie Brown, is widening her remit to include development of the finance functional leadership model across a small number of other Arm's Length Bodies (ALB's) sponsored by MoJ.

Measurement Key

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| | Inadequate Progress (not being met; remedial action required) |
| | Satisfactory Progress (Issues occurring but action in place) |
| | Good Progress (on target) |

2017/18 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER – NOVEMBER 2017

| Ref | Description | Risk Owner | Lead Assurance Committee | Residual Risk last Qtr | Residual Risk Update |
|-----|---|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| P1 | Grant Funding - current year 2017-18 | CEO/DOR | ARAC | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| | Grant Funding 2018 – 2020 | | | <i>Increased</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| P2 | Quality of casework (Operational Element). | NSD/ADs/HOP | Quality | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| P3a | Fluctuations in Public Law demand. | CEO/NSD | Performance | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| P3b | Fluctuations in Private Law demand. | CEO/NSD | Performance | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| P4 | Workforce – Capacity | NSD/DOR/HoHR | Performance | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| S1 | Service user and staff engagement. | CE/HoHR/NSD | Quality | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| S2 | Effective Partnership Working | NSD/CEO/DOR | Quality | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| S3 | Replacement of current ICT services and effectively navigating Government spending control processes. | DOR | ARAC | <i>Increased</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| S4 | Workforce – Engagement | NSD/DOR/HoHR | Performance | <i>No Change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |
| S5 | Failure to protect the personal/sensitive data of service users. | NSD | Performance | <i>No change</i> | <i>No Change</i> |