

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 9 JANUARY 2014

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 2013-14

Report by Head of Policy, Maggie Scott

Introduction

1. This paper provides details of performance for quarter two for the Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider. Performance dashboards are included at **Annex 1** for information and discussion.
2. The Performance Scrutiny Committee is able to explore the performance of all Council services, including commissioned services. To distinguish indicators that relate to a commissioned service, they are presented in italics.

Summary of Performance

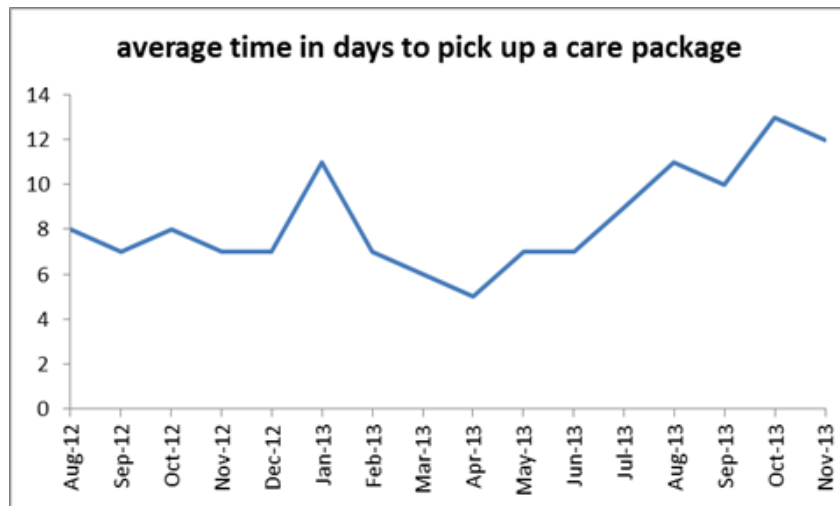
3. Overall, Oxfordshire County Council is achieving well against the full suite of performance measures. Performance rated green indicates that the target is being achieved or exceeded. A target is rated red if the level of performance is not achieved and significantly below that expected and amber if performance is within an acceptable range. There are many indicators where performance is rated red or amber, but the direction of travel shows an improving trend. This offers an encouraging sign that performance can be expected to move into the green rating over subsequent quarters.
4. Whilst we acknowledge performance achievements, it is important to focus effort to improve those areas where performance does not meet expectations. To this end, several issues are escalated for consideration. These issues reflect areas of performance that are below the expected level or significantly worsening and are of most significance to effective service delivery.

Exploring Escalated Issues

Adult Social Care

5. Whilst these areas are not new to Performance Scrutiny, there are some considerable concerns around current performance levels in the reablement service, growing waiting lists, delayed transfers of care and increasing numbers of care home places. These issues are interdependent and appear to centre around two key principles:
 - the demand for services is growing more than expected;
and
 - the supply of care is not able to meet the growth in demand.

The overall impact of this is that it is harder to provide clients with an appropriate care package and the average time taken for a provider to pick up a care package has increased (*see Table 1*).

Table 1: Average time in days to pick up a care package

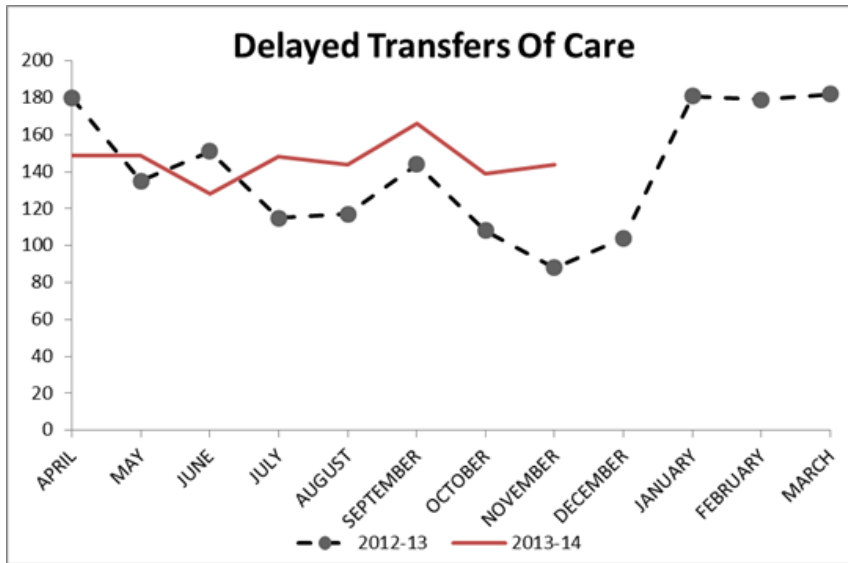
The capacity issues of suppliers mean that more agencies have to be contacted before a provider will pick up a case and more expensive providers are being used in order to provide the required level of care. This creates both a service delivery and financial risk (See Annex 2). The current hot spots where care is difficult to source include Bicester, West Oxfordshire, Kidlington and Yarnton. It appears that the capacity issues of suppliers are largely caused by difficulty recruiting staff and low rates of pay, in an area of relatively high employment.

Currently the **reablement** service provider is unable to pick up new reablement cases. This is partly because they are continuing to care for clients who are awaiting the start of longer term home care, as a result of the capacity issues already described. The reablement service's ability to pick up cases is also compromised by their inability to provide the required staffing levels, as more clients require a greater level of care than the provider modelled for when they bid for the contract. This leads to some concerns about the effectiveness of the reablement contract. Director level meetings are being held to review and improve the future arrangements of the contract.

Currently there is a **waiting list for assessments**, which grew in the quarter. Occupational therapy staff are being recruited to alleviate the immediate assessment delays and a process redesign is being carried out to create a medium term solution.

The difficulties in sourcing either reablement or long term care is further impacting on our performance in relation to **delayed transfers of care** (see Table 2), which have remained stable in the quarter. Actions taken to address delayed transfers of care are managed by the multi-agency Chief Operating Officers Group. On Thursday 5 December the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) led a detailed review of local Delayed Transfers of Care; challenging social care and health services commissioners and providers over their plans to improve performance. The committee focused particularly on understanding the data and impact of delays on outcomes. It should be noted that since the end of quarter 2 the numbers of delayed transfers have improved. Numbers for the week of 17 November were reported to HOSC as 129 which represents a noticeable improvement.

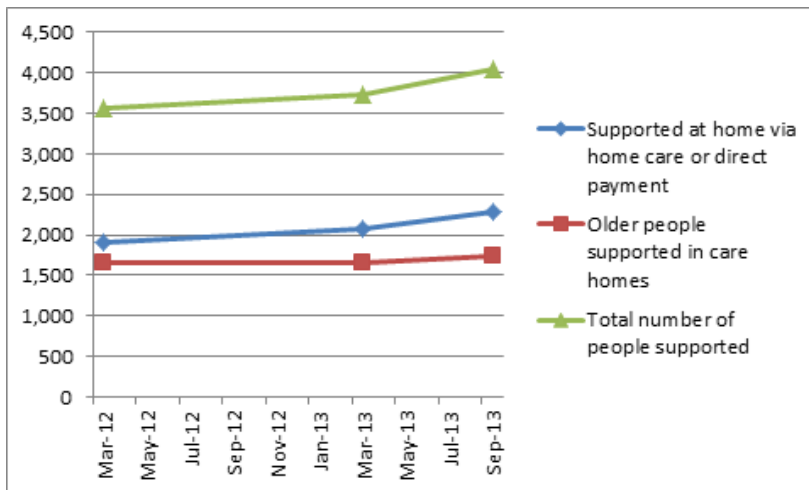
Table 2: Delayed Transfers of Care



Most people who are admitted to a care home, come from hospital. We are concerned that the longer people are delayed the more likely they are to require more support. We want all people where possible to have the chance to return home and have rehabilitation services including reablement. At the midway point of the year there have already been 311 admissions against a target of no more than 400. The work to reduce delayed transfers of care will take into account this impact on care home placements.

The increase in demand for care home placements and the general increase in demand for social care (illustrated in Table 3) creates a significant financial pressure for the Council, which has been reported through the financial monitoring process.

Table 3: Number of Older People Receiving Care



2.2.8 The impact of the additional activity to the end of September is estimated to be in the region of £2.5m for 2013-14 and £5m (Item 4 in Table 4) for 2014-15. It is important to note that we would anticipate having to meet costs for this group up to 2017/18 based on estimated attrition rates.

Table 4: Older People: £10m in 2014/15 reducing to £4.9m by 2017/18

Pressure	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
1) Non delivery of existing savings – due to increased demand	5.6	-0.7	0.5		5.4
2) Estimated underspends	-3.1				-3.1
3) Discharge to Assess and appropriate discharge pathways	1.6				1.6
4) Continuing cost of additional placements in 2013/14	5.0	-1.7	-1.6	-1.6	0.1
5) Equipment	0.9				0.9
TOTAL	10.0	-2.4	-1.1	-1.6	4.9

2.2.9 The council is producing a market position statement to help realign the demand and supply of care and ensure that the right care is available. The statement will begin to shape the market, by signalling our commissioning intentions for social care. The home support element is due for publication in December 2013 and the care home element in March 2014.

Children, Education & Families

6. Activity Levels

This quarter the key performance issues continue to be around the high level of activity within children's social care (see Table 5 & 6). There is also a continued high number of referrals, especially those which result in no further social care action (see Annex 1 – Auxiliary Table : Referrals to Children's Social Care).

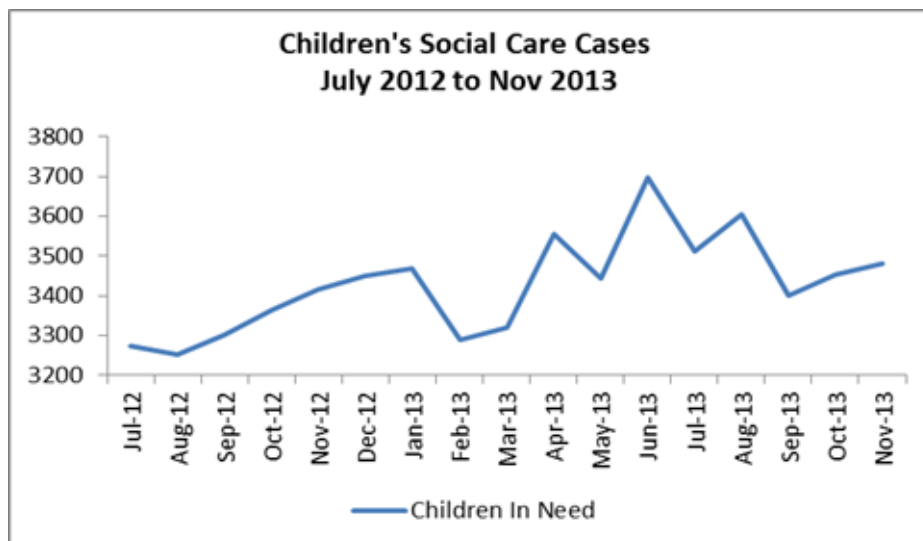
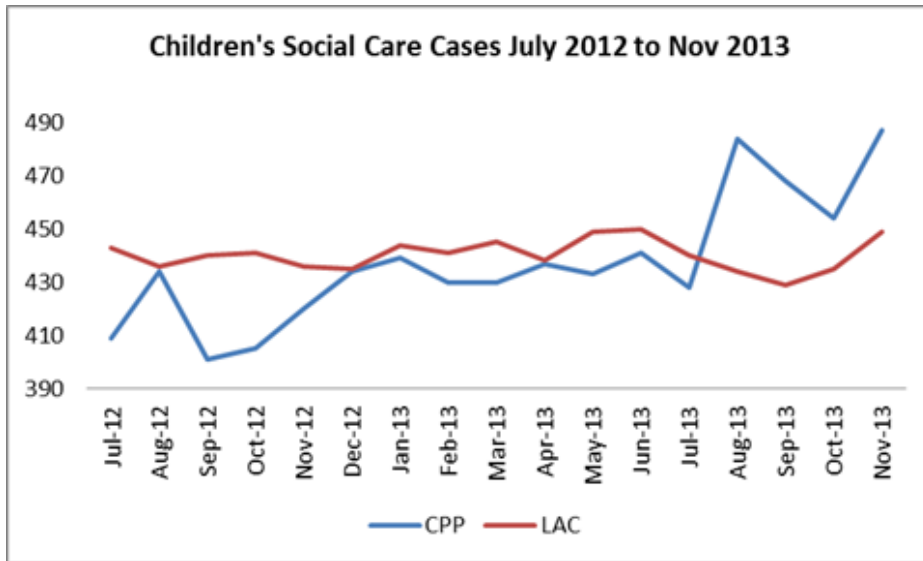
Table 5: Number of Open Cases

Table 6: Numbers of Looked After Children and Children on a Child Protection Plan

The high level of activity is having an impact on the timeliness of some of our work, such as the proportion of child protection reviews completed on time. The number of social work visits to children on plans completed on time has continued to improve but is still below the target level. The directorate has initiated a policy to escalate late visits to the directorate leadership team. Increased activity levels and appropriate case management are being actively managed within the directorate with additional recruitment, including a principal social worker to enable an independent challenge process to be put in place. The development of the integrated pathway between social care and early intervention also continues to provide an improving step up and step down service.

7. *Keeping Children Safe*

The number of children placed out of county presents a challenge to the way in which we keep children safe. Placement issues are managed by service teams through improved monitoring of risky behaviours by out of county children (e.g. reporting when they go missing) and development of a placement strategy to ensure more children can be placed within the county in appropriate settings.

8. *Raising Attainment*

There are some areas of educational attainment which are highlighted as performance issues, particularly around the number of primary schools below the floor standard, the achievement of vulnerable learners, such as those that are in care and the level of permanent exclusions. The service is working more closely with schools, through the attendance and behaviour strategies, to ensure that schools are more effective in challenging absence, including exclusions. These issues are subject to exploration by the Education Scrutiny Committee who have set up a working party specifically to examine issues with educational attainment.

Economy and Environment

9. *Highways Defects*

The improvement in performance against highway defect repair targets has continued and programme delivery has remained good. Defects reported in the quarter are 16% higher than the same period last year. There have been 1648 more defects reported yet we continue to achieve over and above the target requirements for repairs.

10. *Strategy and Infrastructure Planning*

Pressure on the Infrastructure Development team continues to be high due to the increase in number of strategic planning applications where detailed negotiations are required. The implication of these applications not being responded to effectively is that the county council's infrastructure requirements cannot be met. Barton, West Witney and Grove Airfield development are strategic sites with major infrastructure needs; all of which require investment and present pressures from the developer in terms of affordability. This has created a high level of demand on staff resources to progress. Our performance responding to major planning applications from District Council's has been affected by staffing pressures and an increase in planning applications received. The directorate are reviewing the need for additional resources to help resolve the issue.

11. *Customer Service Centre*

Last quarter actions were put in place to improve the performance of processing blue badge applications. These have proved effective and are being continued to allow target performance levels to be achieved in quarter three.

RECOMMENDATION

12. **The Performance Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to note and discuss the performance reported in the dashboards and to make any comments necessary for escalation to Cabinet.**

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20th December 2013