

<b>CREATING OPPORTUNITIES &amp; TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 6</b>
<b>23 JULY 2012</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services**

**Contact Officer(s) – Malcolm Newsam**  
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### **CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Improvement programme.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To note the progress made on the core strategy

#### **3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

3.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy identifies "Improving Health" and "Supporting Vulnerable People" as priorities. Improvement in Children's Social Care is key to the delivery of these priorities.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

4.1 Following an Ofsted Inspection in August 2011, the Council has engaged in a programme to secure rapid improvement. This improvement will be driven by three key elements:

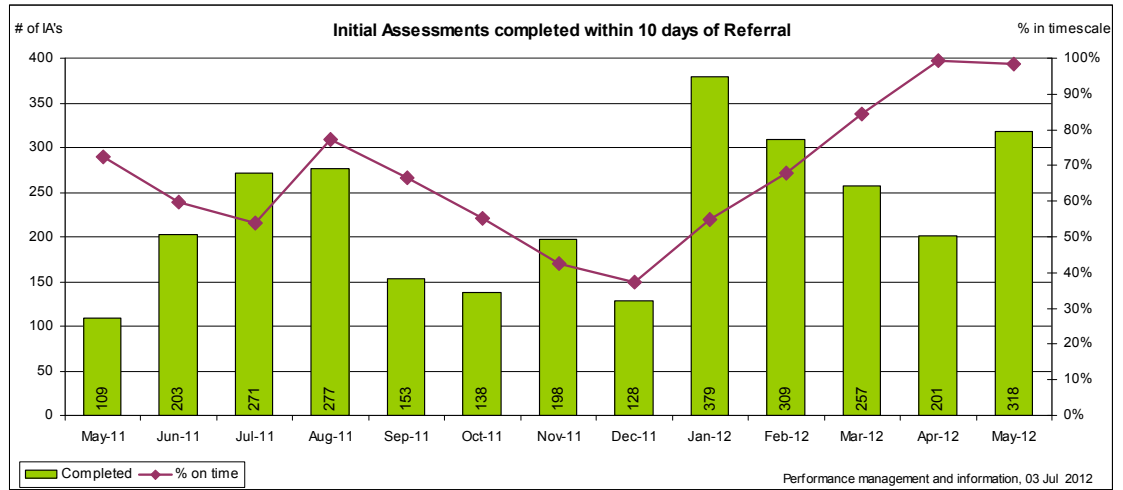
- The Children's Services Improvement Programme
- The Core Strategy which focuses effort on what we must prioritise
- The leadership of Members and officers in delivering the required changes

4.2 The Council's progress is closely monitored both internally and externally by this Committee, the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group and the External Improvement Board.

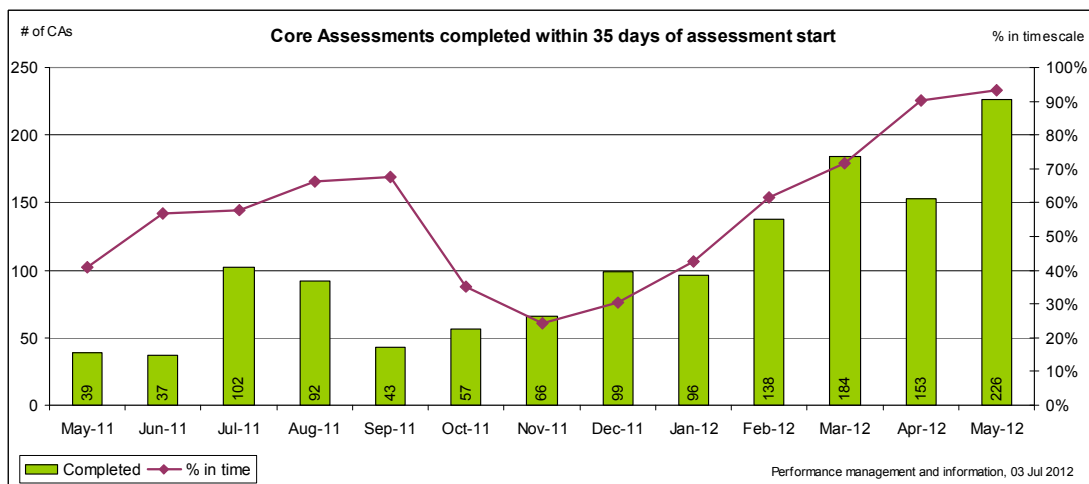
#### **5. KEY ISSUES**

5.1 As highlighted in the Cabinet Member's report we have continued to make good progress on Phase Two of the programme:

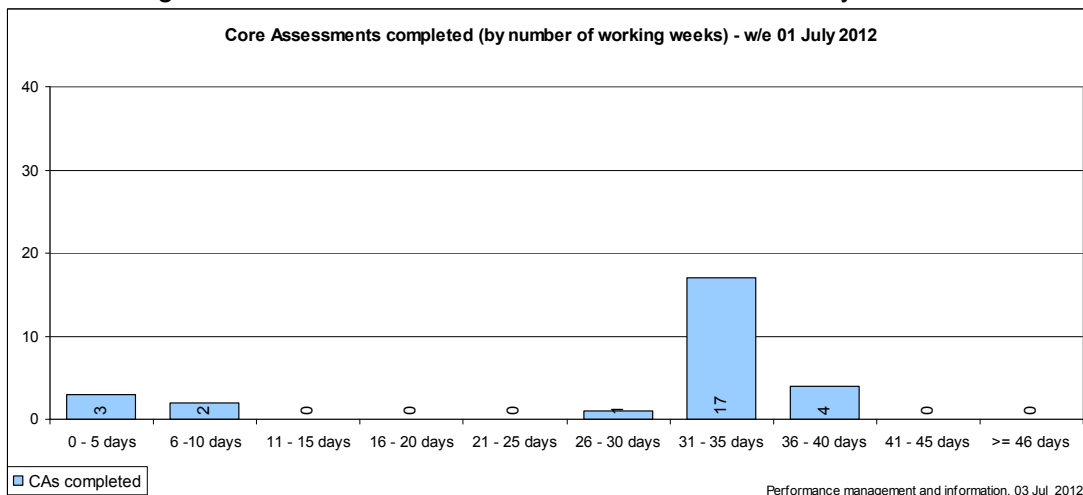
- In April and May we completed 99% of initial assessments within the 10 day statutory timescale. The target set within the Improvement Notice is 75.2%.



We also completed 92% of core assessments within 35 days. The target set within the Improvement Notice is 85.5%.



The following chart shows the distribution of core assessments by the time taken to complete them.



5.2 The service has been pleased to host a review visit from Jane Held, the Independent Chair of the External Improvement Board and she has provided a progress report to the Minister, Tim Loughton. Jane Held concludes in her report back to the Minister:

*“The Council has continued to progress its improvement activity robustly and swiftly. This is demonstrated, not only by the data, but by what social workers are saying ‘on the ground’. There is a clear understanding politically of the tasks ahead and the determination to sustain the trajectory.”*

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The cost of the improvement programme can be met from within existing budgets. Resources are available to secure improvement in the immediate and longer term.
- 6.2 The Secretary of State has the power to issue a statutory notice if he is not satisfied that sufficient progress is being made.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Partner agencies, parents and children will be involved in the improvement activity.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 This Committee will continue to receive a regular update on progress and the Task and Finish Group will meet monthly to support the improvement.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1
- Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding: Peterborough 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011
  - Ofsted Unannounced Inspection of contact referral and assessment arrangements 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011
  - Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked after Children Inspection: Peterborough 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010

## **10. APPENDICES**

- 10.1 None

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