

CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
8 MARCH 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Elaine Redding, Executive Director Children's Services	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University Councillor Lynne Ayres	
Contact Officer(s):	Elaine Redding, Executive Director Children's Services	Tel. 01733 863655

DIRECTORS BRIEFING REPORT TARGETED SUPPORT, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND OFSTED UPDATE

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Elaine Redding Executive Director Children's Services	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that Children and Education Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the contents of the report. 2. Note the Focused Visit activity by our regulator, Ofsted. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report has been written by the Executive Director of Children's Services at the request of the committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 This report provides Members with an overview of the impending Ofsted Inspection of the service.

2.2 This report is for the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1 Functions determined by Council:

Children's Services including
a) Social Care of Children; and
b) Safeguarding

2.3 This report relates to all elements of the Children in Care Pledge.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	YES/NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

This report provides an overview of the performance of children's services in Peterborough, starting with early help, the work of the Integrated Front Door, including the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, services to children in need provided by the Family Safeguarding service, and finally considering corporate parenting services. All performance information is as at the end of January the most recent data available at the time this report was prepared.

4.1 Targeted Support Service:

4.1.1 Following consultation within the Early Help Service the name of the service was changed to Targeted Support Service as of 3 January 2023.

4.1.2 The Local Authority has a practice standard of 10 days, we are currently on 12 days. The increase is as a direct result of a number of referrals pre-Christmas as in line with the trend of schools making referrals in anticipation of their closure.

4.1.3 In the 12 months to Nov 22 there were 1246 open Early Help assessments which equates to 3.5K children. This puts us higher than the eastern region average. Just over 50 % of assessments relate to health needs. These are around neuro diversity and Mental Health and behaviour in schools.

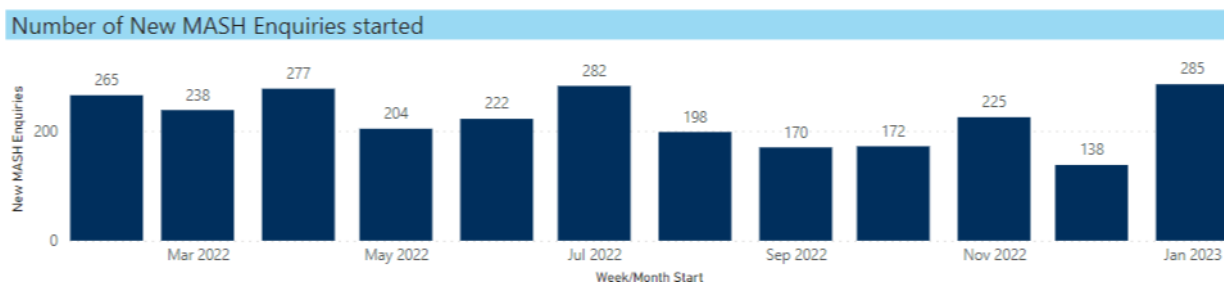
4.1.4 Over a six-month period 274 parents/carers completed evidenced based parenting programmes. More families are requesting face to face options again although a hybrid model of delivery is offered. Families reported improvement in parental confidence across all parenting courses delivered.

4.1.5 There had been some capacity issues with the in-house family work team over the last few months due to vacancies, but the team is now fully staffed and with no delays in families accessing support.

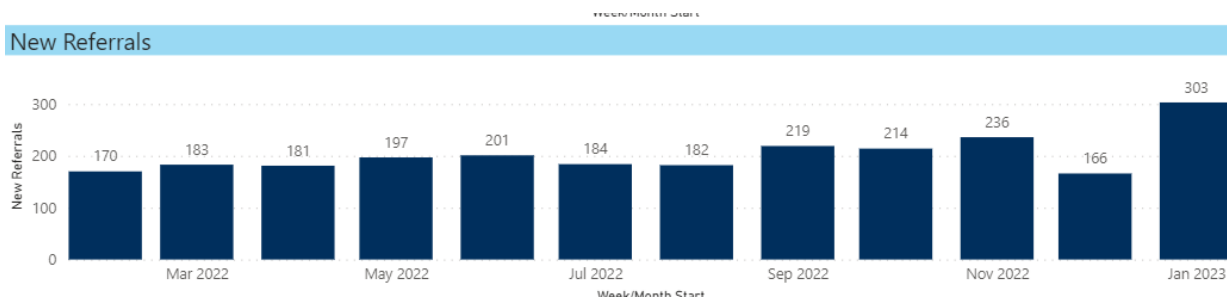
4.1.6 Supporting Families is on track to achieve the payment by results target for the number of successful family outcomes for the current financial year.

4.2 Children's Social Care:

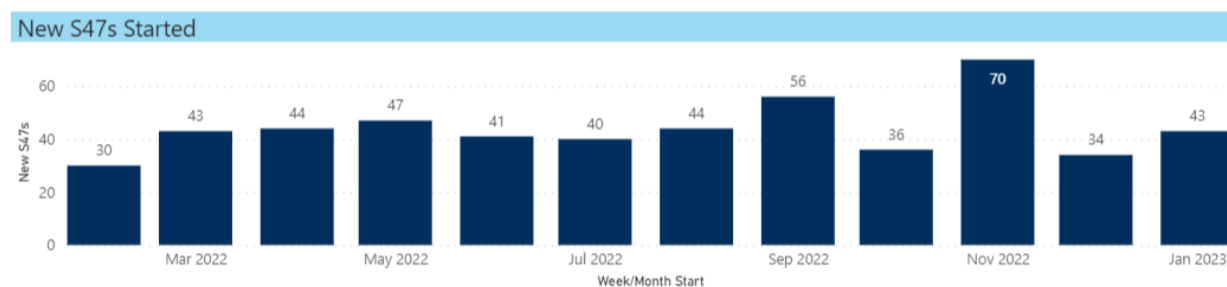
4.2.1 Below is the number of enquires made to the MASH, with 285 in January 2023, this is a sharp increase. There is a review of the way in which the workflows in the MASH and Integrated Front Door.



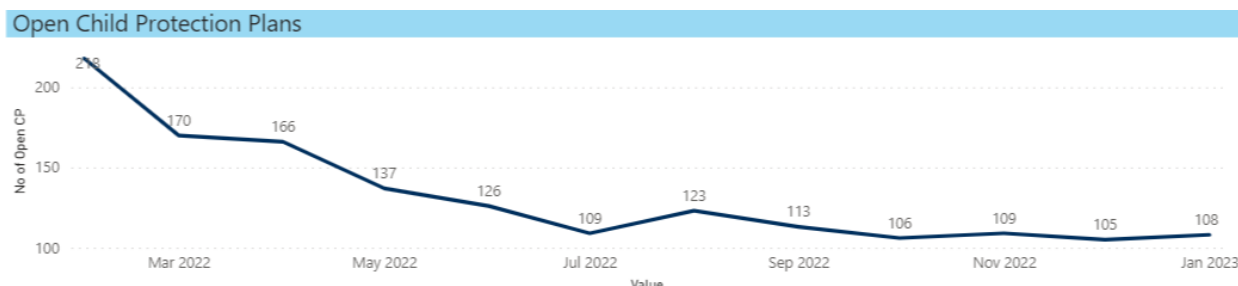
4.2.2 In January 2023 there was a significant increase in the number of new referrals opened to the assessment service. This is in part due to the work which is being undertaken on reviewing the MASH thresholds.



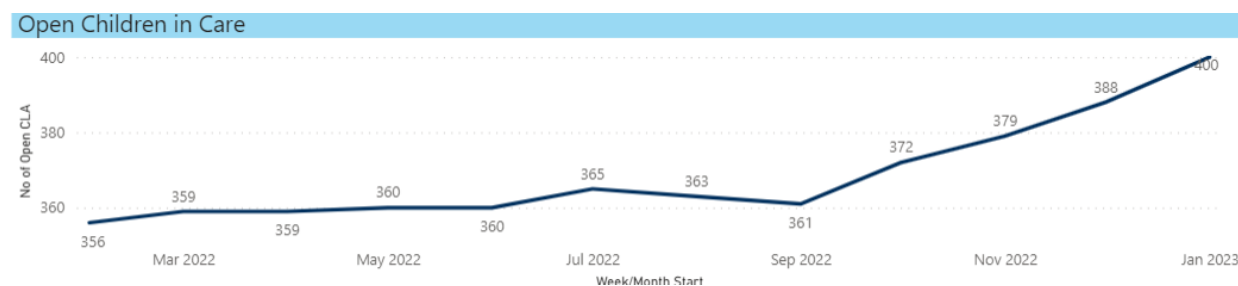
4.2.3 Section 47 Enquiries are carried out to assess if there is the risk of significant harm to a child (or children). The chart below shows the number of S47 enquires started in January 2023.



4.2.4 Child Protection: there were 108 children subject to a child protection plan, this is significantly lower than our regional and statistical authorities. However, the service is undertaking a qualitative review to understand if the numbers are in line with what we expect for Peterborough.



4.2.5 Children in Care: The continued increase in children entering care relates to a number of factors such as the increase in the number allocated of Separated Migrant Children (SMC) being transferred to Peterborough from the National Transfer Scheme. Additionally, the service is seeing more children presenting with acute, complex behaviours which require statutory intervention / accommodation as a starting point.



4.3 **Ofsted:**

- 4.3.1 There has been ongoing dialogue between Ofsted and Elaine Redding Executive Director of Children's Service and she has been very clear with them where concerns are and what the service is focussing on.
- 4.3.2 Ofsted have now confirmed that they will undertake a Focused Visit on the Integrated Front Door for Peterborough which will look at the Multi-agency Safeguarding (MASH), Missing and Exploitation (MET) and Early Help Hubs.
- 4.3.3 There is a Multi-agency Action Plan in place and has been shared with Ofsted. Inspectors will be on site for two days only, and this will be at Chord Park, Godmanchester where the service is based.
- 4.3.4 Following on from the Focused Visit and outcome the expectation will be that there will be an ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) in the summer 2023 which would look at all the services provided to children, including work with internal and external partners.

The Action Plan has been shared with all services and this is being used in team and service meetings to progress the actions.

5. **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 5.1 This report links to the following Council's Corporate Priorities:

- Our Places & Communities*
- *Health and Wellbeing*
- Prevention, Independence & Resilience*
- *Children*

Further information on the Council's Priorities can be found here - [Link to Corporate Strategy and Priorities Webpage](#)

6. **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 Consultation has taken place with key officers and key partner service areas including business information services for performance data.

7. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

- 7.1 That Committee:
- Gains an overview of how key performance information in relation to children's services in Peterborough;
 - Has an opportunity to discuss the activities of the Portfolio Holder in supporting children's services in Peterborough.

8. **REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 Children's services support and help to protect some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the city. How well the service performs is therefore properly a matter of significant importance to leaders and Members.

It is more important than ever that Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to understand, explore and scrutinise the way that we support and safeguard our vulnerable children and young people.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 There are no applicable alternative options available.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

10.2 There are no legal implications as this report is for the committee's information.

Equalities Implications

10.3 There are no direct implications for equalities issues arising from this report.

Children in Care and Care Leavers

10.4 This report relates to vulnerable children and young people, including children who are looked after and care experienced.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

11.1 None.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 None.

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