

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 7
26 JULY 2011	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer(s) – John Richards,
Contact Details – john.richards@peterborough.gov.uk

Safeguarding Notice to Improve Update

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 For the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise Children's Services performance in respect of work to deliver against the DfE Notice to Improve for Safeguarding Services.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to scrutinise the appendix to this report and to make recommendations to assist continuing improvement.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 3.1 This report links directly to the Sustainable Community Strategy in which safeguarding is a critical component.

The National Indicators contained in the appendix are those being monitored by The Department for Education.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Members receive a regular update at each Scrutiny Committee. This consists of the report which has been provided to the Improvement Board.

5. Progress in meeting DfE Notice to Improve

- 5.1 The annexed report presented to the Safeguarding and Children in Care Project Management Board, dated 22 February 2011 sets out the full picture. Key highlights include:

- The three key targets for December (completing 70% of Initial Assessments within timescale; completing 75% of Core Assessments within timescale; and, ensuring no social worker within Referral and Assessment has more than 30 cases allocated to them) have all been met.
- Monthly performance in delivering Initial and Core Assessments within timescale remains strong and on course to meet the key Notice to Improve targets for end March 2011.
- Work to ensure a maximum caseload of 25 for Referral and Assessment social workers remains challenging. Work to ensure effective case transfer; close down of cases and recruitment to fill remaining vacancies should ensure a continued reduction of case loads towards targets.
- Whilst the overall social worker vacancy rate stands at 19%, including agency staff, this figure is only 9%, just above the March 2011 target. However, a number of permanent positions have been filled and, once these new staff take up their positions, this figure will drop to 2%. Significant recruitment and retention activity is underway to ensure

- vacancy rates continue to reduce.
- Significant progress is being made in the procurement of a new Integrated Case Management System. This is of key importance in supporting staff to improve the recording and efficiency of their work. It is expected that roll-out of the new system should start in June/July 2011.
 - New approaches to evaluating the impact of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) are being rolled out. A key focus is now on ensuring that these evaluative processes are fully embedded into the work of professionals who use the CAF.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is specifically about key indicators relative to the notice to improve.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 No consultation is required for this item

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 Following consideration of this report by Members, Officers will act on any recommendations made.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 9.1 None

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Key Metrics Report June 2011