

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT
Mole Valley Local Committee
20 November 2002

KEY ISSUE:

This report sets out the current performance of Children's Services and provides an overview of the County picture along with some specific borough highlights.

SUMMARY:

This is an interim report highlighting performance for the year 2002 against Quality Protects and Best Value performance targets for social care. It does not provide a full borough analysis, as this is not possible at the current time. The report does not include information for education services to children with special needs and this will be provided in subsequent reports.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee should

- i. **Note the performance of the service across the County and performance for the Mole Valley Area**
- ii. **Note the changes to the children's service in Surrey.**
- iii. **Provide feed back on improvements that can be made to Local Performance reports to facilitate discussions on services for children and local needs**
- iv. **Endorse the measures to be taken to improve performance to vulnerable children.**
- v. **Recognise the resource required if improved performance is to be achieved**

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The Children & Young People's service has only recently been established following the introduction of a significantly different approach to service provision for Surrey in April 2002. The Children's Service integrates services for children and young people across the former Social Services and education departments. The service became fully operational from September 2002.

1.2 The Best Value review of children with Special Needs in November 2000 recommended the integration of Social Services Children's service and the education children's service into one new 'Surrey Children's service.'

1.3 The key aims were to:

- Ensure the safety of all Surrey Children, and the identification and protection of those who are vulnerable.
- Make our best practice and processes centred on the needs and timescales of children and young people and their families.
- Develop preventive strategies and ensure that children and young people are included into local initiatives, which reduce the needs for targeted and specialist services.
- Focus on the achievement of all children, especially those who have additional needs so that they are able to fulfil their potential for development.
- Ensure that the County Council acts as best corporate parent throughout its functions.

1.4 Key aspects of the new service are:

- Integrated service management at an area level
- Integrated planning and service development
- Clear information and processes for children and families

1.5 As the service is evolving the following benefits have already been

Noted:

- Coordinated joined up management structures in place
- Children's Service performance structures in place to meet the requirements of external inspection
- Clear Area Management links to progress multi agency work across PCTs Health, Schools and Voluntary sector

- Improved practice in residential boarding schools as a result of work of Residential Care and Support Unit
- 1.6 Education Children's service was working to four area, and Social Care to five. It was decided to continue with these existing boundaries at the inception of the service. A decision regarding alignment of boundaries will take place after the outcome of the Joint Review and OFSTED is known. Arrangements across the five Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) are still being developed.
 - 1.7 The National Assessment Framework was implemented in Surrey in November 2001. This was delayed as a result of a reconfiguration of front line teams in June 2001 in order to be able to meet the requirements as a number of concerns were raised in the 1999 SSI inspection. We set up specialist assessment and childcare teams to work alongside our Family Centres.
 - 1.8 The Assessment Teams like those in other authorities have not met the timescale for assessment. We are still in the early phase of monitoring the work of these teams. An audit has just been completed with the report due in November 2002. It is likely that an in depth action plan will be developed once the report is agreed.

2. The committee are asked to note that:

Performance

- 2.1 Performance is monitored through quarterly updates from the Quality Protects Programme, Best Value and Making Surrey a Better Place Targets. The main external scrutiny for the service takes place through the performance Assessment Framework. Spring and Autumn targets are assessed against previous performance and targets set. This has a direct effect on the services Comprehensive Performance rating and Joint Review outcomes.
- 2.2 The Social Care Service is due to have a Joint Review in February 2003 and preparations are currently taking place to prepare for this. The Education Service is also preparing for an OFSTED inspection to take place in February 2003. The Department is still awaiting formal notification of the outcome of Comprehensive Performance Assessment, which took place in June 2002.
- 2.3 The Social Service Inspectorate (SSI) has judged Surrey services 'to be serving some people well and with uncertain prospects for improvement'. The Social Care Service along with Adults has been judged as a one star authority and the Service is currently working on an action plan to improve performance to two stars.

2.4 Some of the reasons the SSI has judged the prospect for improvement as uncertain are because:

- The effectiveness of the People First changes has yet to be demonstrated
- Surrey continues to experience difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.

Child Protection

2.5 Surrey's *child protection practice* appears vigilant. All Surrey children on the child protection register have an allocated social worker despite vacancies in a number of front line teams. Also, as reported to the Audit Commission Best Value Indicators 2000/01, 89% of Surrey children on the child protection register were visited at least six weekly by their social worker, which is 12% higher than the national county average. Surrey has recently undergone an inspection by the Social Services Inspectorate on Children's Safeguards. The feedback indicates that there are effective relationships between key agencies at both strategic and operational levels. There was evidence of a commitment to the safeguarding of children by all the agencies inspected and trust and confidence has been built up over a number of years. We have just received the formal report and will be developing an action plan to take account of the issues raised.

2.6 Surrey was asked to 'investigate urgently' its performance on the completion of child protection reviews (PAF C20). Two thirds of reviews were completed on time during 2000/01. This relatively low proportion came about for two reasons firstly, because child protection staff wished to ensure that parents and all key professionals were present at each of these meetings. Often, review meetings were postponed a week or so beyond the required date in order to achieve full attendance. It is essential that parents attend these conferences if they are to become and remain committed to the agreed child protection plan. Surrey has achieved a good record in encouraging parental participation, with around 85% of reviews attended by at least one parent.

2.7 Nevertheless, in light of this performance, Surrey social workers are sharpening their practice to ensure that the review deadlines are not missed, and the full year Performance Indicator for the year to 31 March 2002 demonstrates real improvement at 81% of reviews completed within time scales. The latest available quarterly figure related to this indicator is for June 2002 and indicates that 90% of Child Protection conference reviews were held within statutory time scales. This information is provided to demonstrate that current performance is at a much better level than the full year figure indicates and will continue to improve, ensuring we are not penalised in the future.

Children Looked After

- 2.8 The numbers of children 'looked after' are proportionately lower in Surrey than for the shire average, although the 'looked after' population has increased slightly (between 2001 and 2002), reflecting a national trend. The percentage of children in family placements excluding those placed with parents stood at 93% at the end of June 2002.
- 2.9 Between March 2001 and June 2002, there has also been a 9% increase in foster / adoptive placements for all ages (from 67% to 76%) and a 14% annual increase for under tens (from 79% to 93%). With regard to placement stability only 9% of children had 3 or more moves in 2001/2. This is better than the regional and national average (13 & 12% respectively). 72% of children looked after for more than four years had lived with their current foster carers for the last two years. This is around 20% better than the regional and national average. Forty-eight children were adopted in 2001/2, two more than the year before.
- 2.10 The percentage leaving care with at least 1 GCSE / NVQ increased from 41% to 55% over this period although Surrey fared less well on the % achieving 5 GCSEs A-C (7.4% compared to a SE average of 26.5). However, Surrey has a higher proportion of children 'looked after' who have special educational needs. This may contribute to this result.
- 2.11 Performance levels have fallen in some other areas of 'looked after' measures e.g. routine health checks (5% lower), 5 or more GCSE passes (6 fewer), numbers of children with disabilities having short term breaks (12 fewer). Also the SATS results for looked after children were mixed with some improvements in certain age groups but some deterioration in others. Another area for improvement concerned the relatively higher numbers of children placed outside the authority.
- 2.12 In line with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 requirements, Surrey remains strongly committed to supporting its care leavers, 30% of whom have additional needs (e.g. learning disabilities, mental / emotional health needs). However, in 2001/2, 26 nineteen-year-old care leavers (47% of the annual cohort) were in employment, education or training. This was 20% fewer than in 2000/1 and at the end of the year 40% of care leavers were unemployed. 84% of this group are still assisted by social work staff. The new Connexions service will be fully utilised in supporting more care leavers to secure employment or training. All care leavers will also have a Pathway Plan in place by March 2003. It is planned that the proportion of 19-year-old care leavers who have suitable accommodation will increase from 71% (0.5% below target) to 80% this year, with a further increase to 92% by March 2003. A joint accommodation strategy has been agreed with local housing authorities to underpin this plan.

- 2.13 The establishment of the Multi Professional Teams within the new area model will mean that higher priority can be given to supporting children looked after. Currently senior managers across social care and education areas meet to problem solve and promote the educational needs of this group. We have also developed initiatives to support young people in a variety of placements.

These include:

- Community & Placement Support Team
- Family group Conferences
- Therapeutic support to children and carers
- Education of L.A.C. Meeting
- Residential schools support team

3. Local Issues – Mole Valley

There are four Children's Service Teams which serve the Mole Valley area:

3.1 Assessment Team – Manager – Mrs Terri Cartwright

Mid Surrey Assessment Team, Children's Services
Esher Local Office
Civic Centre
High Street
Esher KT10 9SD tel: 01372 832500

This Team covers Mole Valley, Elmbridge and Epsom & Ewell (Mid Area).
The core services provided are:

- Taking new referrals
- Initial assessments
- Child Protection Investigations
- Initial Legal Proceedings
- Initial child Protection Registration
- Initial work with Looked After Children

3.2 Children's Team – Manager – Mr Neil Kornfein

Mid Surrey Children's Team, Children's Services
Epsom Local Office (2nd Floor)
Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey KT18 5BU tel: 01372 746454

This Team covers Mole Valley, Elmbridge and Epsom & Ewell (Mid Area).
The core services provided are:

- Longer term work with children on the Child Protection Register and their families
- Case Management for Looked After Children
- Legal proceedings
- Private Fostering
- Unaccompanied minors (asylum seekers)

3.3 Family Centre – Manager – Mr Andrew Jury

Mid Surrey St Faith's Family Centre

Cleeve Road

Leatherhead

Surrey KT22 7NF

tel: 01372 363190

This Team covers Mole Valley, Elmbridge and Epsom & Ewell (Mid Area).
The core services provided are:

- Core assessments
- High risk children in need cases
- Contact arrangements
- Family Group Conferences
- Parenting Programmes/Groupwork
- Work with local schools to avoid exclusion
- Work with families where chronic neglect is the main issue
- Joint work with local health visitors
- Work with isolated single parents

3.4 Multi-Professional Team – Manager – Helen Nowicki

North East (Mid) Multi-Professional Team

Mid-Surrey Area Office

Bay Tree Avenue

Kingston Road

Leatherhead

Surrey KT22 7SY

(New Tel No to be advised)

This is a new and large team covering the Mid Children's Services Area. Unfortunately the boundaries are currently different for Education and Social Care staff. This is historic. The Education boundary includes Spelthorne but does not include Mole Valley. This is a particular difficulty for the Mid Area and a decision about boundaries will be taken after the Joint-Review in April 2003. The decision has been delayed until then because of the de-stabilising effect any further changes would have for staff and the need to ensure that we arrive at a properly considered solution. The current Social Services boundaries make good sense for Social Services and the current Education boundaries make good sense for Education, so there will have to be negotiation and compromise. The Multi-Professional Team consists of the following formerly County Services, now managed within the Area structures:

- Education Psychology
- Education Welfare
- Learning and Language Support
- Behaviour and Pupil Support
- English as Another Language
- Special Needs Administration

3.5 Children with Disabilities Team East – Manager – Jacqui Lendrim

South East Area Office

Omnibus

Lesbourne Road

Reigate RH2 7JA

Tel: 01737 737828

This Team currently provides services for Children with Disabilities and their families throughout East Surrey, including Mid Surrey. The Service is to be integrated within the Area structure in the coming year. Discussions are currently underway to join up these Teams to a much greater extent with both Education and Health. A Local Task Group in Mole Valley with health colleagues has been established and this will be looking at proposals for this integration within the Mid Area by April 2003.

3.6 Early Years Service – Head of Service – Phil Osborne

South East Area Office (AO2)

Omnibus

Lesbourne Road

Reigate RH2 7JA

Tel: 01737 737919

This Service is a Surrey-wide service, where overall purpose is defined as follows:

- To ensure that Surrey County Council meets its statutory obligations to secure free early education places for every 4 year old and increases the provision for 3 year olds.
- To ensure that early education and childcare provision is of a high quality and is accessible and affordable to all parents, particularly those in areas of identified need.
- To ensure that early education and childcare provision offers children quality play and learning experiences that promotes their physical, emotional and intellectual development.

4. Local Pressures and Issues in Social Care

- 4.1 The Social Work Teams in the area have a history of high staff turnover. The cost of housing and the close proximity to London Boroughs (which pay high salaries and an additional London Weighting Supplement) has led to difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff. The Assessment Team at Esher currently have 6 social worker vacancies from an establishment

of 12. They have one locum covering a vacancy. The Children's Team at Epsom traditionally experience similar problems and currently have 3.85 social worker vacancies from an establishment of 12.25. This picture is worse than most of the rest of the County. For example, in Guildford and Waverley in particular, Teams are usually fully staffed. However, the Family Centre in Leatherhead is almost fully staffed. This is due to the different nature of their work. They do not do the front line child protection work but try to work collaboratively with families.

- 4.2 The most significant issue in managing work in the three Teams is due to the shortage of qualified social workers. This creates difficulties in balancing the demands of long term complex cases where there are statutory responsibilities with the demand to assess new referrals and undertake preventive work with lower need situations. The Assessment Team is unable to meet its targets in relation to timescales for new assessments because of the volume of longer term work in the Teams. The Children's Team is seeking to take on more of this longer-term work in order to relieve the Assessment Team. The Family Centre in Leatherhead has helped out by taking on some of the chronic neglect cases, thus freeing up the other two Teams. The three Team Managers in Mid Area are particularly committed to helping each other out and this has enabled us to keep managing the work despite the severe staffing shortages.
- 4.3 There is a chronic shortage of foster placements in the County. Placements often have to be obtained via private fostering agencies and these may be located some distance from the originating area. This causes problems in terms of additional costs and children from Mole Valley may have to be placed in other parts of the County or indeed outside the County. This can result in a change of school, long journeys for contact with parents and a loss of links with the local community, which is not desirable. We try to prevent this whenever possible.

5. Child Protection (CP) – Mole Valley**% of population 0-17 on the Child Protection Register as at 30/06/02****Area**

	30/06/02	2000	1999	1998
Epsom & Ewell	0.22			
Elmbridge	0.11			
Guildford	0.18			
Mole Valley	0.11			
Reigate and Banstead	0.25			
Runnymede	0.03			
Spelthorne	0.24			
Surrey Heath	0.09			
Tandridge	0.10			
Waverley	0.10			
Woking	0.14			

National as at 31/03/01

0.24%

Surrey

0.143

SOURCES

Population data: 2000 mid -year estimates

Surrey CPR data: ACPC Report 30 June 2002

National CPR data: Children and Young People on Child Protection Registers - Year Ending 31 March 2001, England, Department of Health

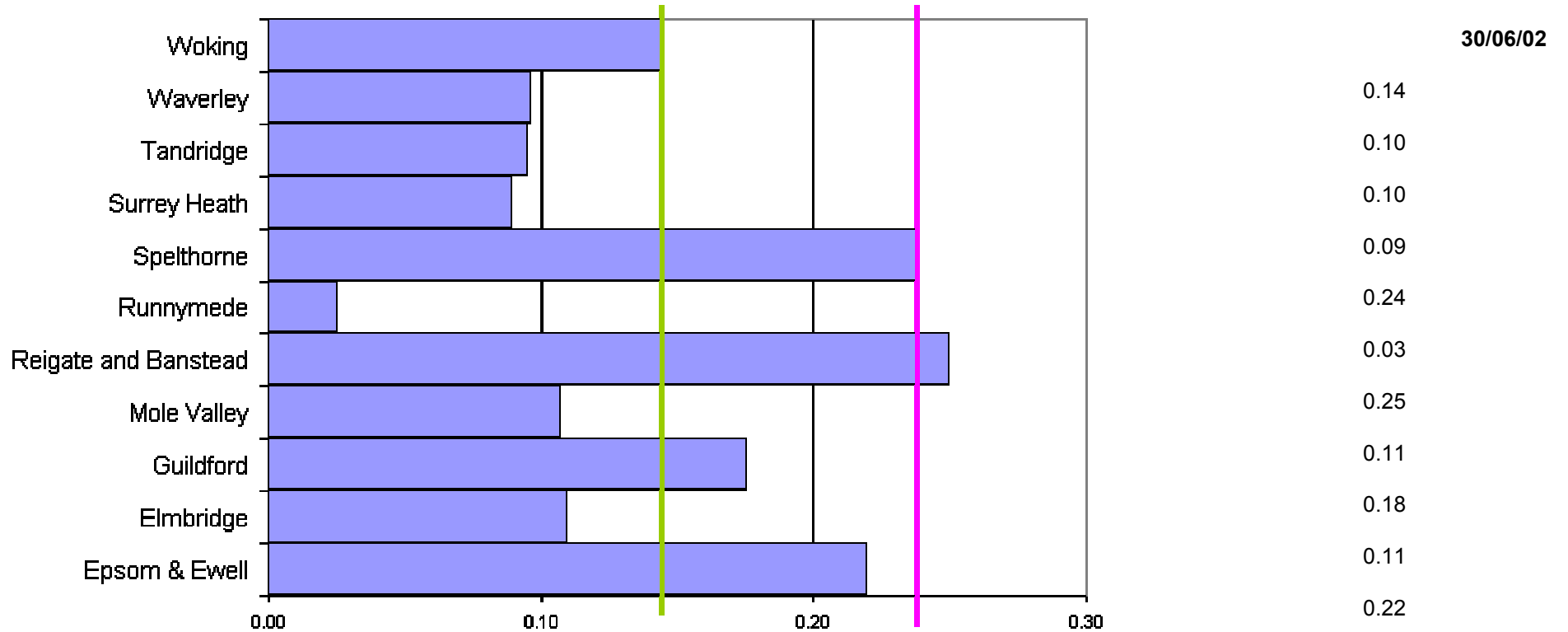
The percentage of Mole Valley children on the Child Protection Register at 30 June 2002 was 0.11%, lower than the Surrey-wide average of 0.143%. See also Appendix 1. The main registration categories were 'Risk of Neglect' and 'Risk of Physical Abuse'. This is consistent with the County-wide picture. These registration figures have been fairly stable over the last three years. Children remain on the Child Protection Register for as short a time as possible and this constant turnover represents a significant amount of work needing social worker input. The number of Children Looked After from Mole Valley is currently 46 (Appendix 2). 224 children in need are being supported by the Social Work Teams in the Mid Area. Many of these children and their families will receive services from the Family Centre in Leatherhead.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1: % of population 0 – 17 CP Register as at 30/06/02



Appendix 2:

District	Pop 0-19	Looked After	CIN Not LAC	CIN Total	% LA of Pop	% CIN (not LA)	% CIN
North							
Runnymede	18,200	48	255	303	0.26	1.40	1.66
Spelthorne	20,300	54	321	375	0.27	1.58	1.85
total	38,500	102	576	678	0.53	2.98	3.51
West							
Surrey Heath	22,100	37	340	377	0.17	1.54	1.71
Woking	23,000	103	433	536	0.45	1.88	2.33
total	45,100	140	773	913	0.62	3.42	4.04
Mid							
Elmbridge	32,200	60	388	448	0.19	1.20	1.39
Mole Valley	18,100	46	224	270	0.25	1.24	1.49
Epsom&Ewell	17,000	31	194	225	0.18	1.14	1.32
total	67,300	137	806	943	0.62	3.58	4.21
South West							
Guildford	32,100	116	561	677	0.36	1.75	2.11
Waverley	29,700	67	395	462	0.23	1.33	1.56
total	61,800	183	956	1,139	0.59	3.08	3.67
East							
Reigate&B'std	29,700	123	687	810	0.41	2.31	2.73
Tandridge	20,500	45	221	266	0.22	1.08	1.30
total	50,200	168	908	1,076	0.63	3.39	4.02
Total	262,900	730	4,019	4,749			

Source of data: CIN Census 2001/200