

**PERFORMANCE DIGEST – QUARTER 3 – 2007/2008****Report By: Director of Children's Services****Wards Affected**

County-wide

**Purpose**

1. To present the Quarter 3 Performance Digest for Children's Service (October to December 2007) and to highlight key areas arising from the performance for the second quarter.

**Financial Implications**

2. Remedial action in respect of the directorate's performance may require reallocation of resources within existing budgets.

**Background**

3. The Performance Digest is produced quarterly and is the mechanism for monitoring key performance indicators, both for the Children and Young People's Directorate and the wider Children's Trust.

**Considerations**

4. The Performance Digest for Quarter 3 of 2007/2008 is included with this agenda, for Members' consideration (copies are available from the below contact). The Digest is set out under the five outcomes of *Every Child Matters*, and service management, and includes a headline page for each outcome. Data, including comparative data, is set out in a graphical form for the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators and Best Value Performance Indicators. The final Performance Digest for 2007/2008 is being compiled and will include all the year end outturns, including statutory returns which are due to be submitted to the Government in May 2008.
5. In summary, key areas in each of the outcome areas, to which the Committee's attention should be drawn, are set out below:

**Be Healthy**

The *number of schools achieving the Healthy Schools Standard* (page 11 of 66) remains on target to be achieved. The target in this financial year is 78 and at the end of the third quarter, 71 schools had achieved the standard. Quarter 2 data confirmed that 100% of young offenders received appropriate substance misuse assessments and interventions and Quarter 3 data is expected to maintain this position.

**Staying Safe**

The rate of *referrals of children in need per 10,000 population aged under 18* (page 19 of 66) has continued to decrease over the year and shows signs of stabilising. The rate continues to be monitored closely by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board and

the Directorate Management Team. The number of referrals has had an impact on the *percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days* (page 20 of 66). There continues to be pressure on performance in this area because of the increased workload and insufficient numbers of suitably qualified and experienced social workers. Overseas recruitment has taken place, as part of the overall recruitment and retention strategy, to increase the social worker establishment. The *percentage of repeat referrals* (page 20 of 63) increased slightly in Quarter 3. There continues to be sustained good performance in relation to looked after children, specifically those looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption, timeliness of reviews, stability of placements and allocation of a named social worker.

### **Enjoy and Achieve**

The majority of the 2007 exam results have now been nationally validated and show improvement on previous year's outturns (pages 35-40 of 66). Absenteeism amongst looked after children, particularly in secondary schools, remains an issue (pages 35 and 42 of 66), although the numbers involved are small. An action plan is being implemented to address the causes. There is sustained good performance in relation to the *provision of statements of Special Educational Needs* (page 39 of 63) with performance remaining at 100%.

### **Make a Positive Contribution**

The *percentage of looked after children who communicated their views in reviews* (page 47 of 66) continues to show good performance with Herefordshire ahead of its statistical neighbours and in the top performance band.

### **Achieve Economic Wellbeing**

The *percentage of positive Year 11 destinations* has increased over 2006, although within that, there appears to be a decrease in the numbers continuing in education (page 53 of 66). However, in terms of vulnerable groups, the *percentage of 16-19 year olds with learning disabilities and difficulties* and the *percentage of teenage mothers in Education, Employment & Training* has decreased compared with 2006 by around 4% in both cases (pages 53-54 of 66). The *percentage of 16 -18 year olds not in education, employment or training* shows sustained good performance (page 54 of 66). The year end target for the *number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation* will not be met. However, the outturn for Quarter 3 (5 families) is lower than the Quarter 2 outturn (9 families).

### **Service Management**

Expenditure on *family support services* (page 58 of 66) has increased in the last quarter owing to an increase in the number of approved direct payments. Conversely, there has been a reduction in the *expenditure on looked after children* (page 59 of 66) owing to a fall in the overall number of children. Sickness absence rates have decreased slightly from 4.37% to 4.16% (page 61 of 66).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Committee assess the levels of performance achieved in Quarter 2 of 2007/2008 and consider if further reports and/or action is judged to be necessary.**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None identified