

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8th February 2017****SEND Performance - Transfers of statements of SEN to EHC plans and timeliness of new assessments within 20 weeks.****REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER SEND AND INCLUSION****1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to consider performance against key statutory functions of the SEND team.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the report and agree any recommendations or further actions.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Two key Local Authority performance indicators following the implementation of the SEN reforms are:

- 1) To transfer all statements of SEN to an Education Health and Care plan by March 2018.
- 2) To undertake new requests for Education, Health and Care assessments within 20 weeks.

Transfers of Statements to EHC Plans:

On 1st September 2014 there were 1058 statements in place in Telford and Wrekin.
As of 26th January 2017:

- Telford and Wrekin have transferred 581 statements to EHC plans which is equivalent to 55% of the total amount required.
- As of January 2017; there are currently a further 150 statemented cases undergoing transfer to an EHC plan.
- Of the 581 finalised transfers, 295 were completed within 20 weeks which is equivalent to 51%

The team are confident that they will meet the 31st March 2018 deadline to ensure all statements are transferred. Whilst there is recognition that timeliness is an issue limited national data is provided for comparison. Informally many authorities report significant concern about both the ultimate deadline for completion in 2018 and ability to undertake transfer assessments in 20 weeks.

Timeliness of new EHC assessments:

The timeliness of completing new requests for assessments and issuing EHC plans has been poor during accounting period Jan 16- Dec 17 (see table 1). During 2016 Telford and Wrekin issued 228 new EHC plans. Of these only 53 were issued within timescale or had a valid exception to applying the timescale which equates to 23.25%. This is below the national average of 60% and target of 90%.

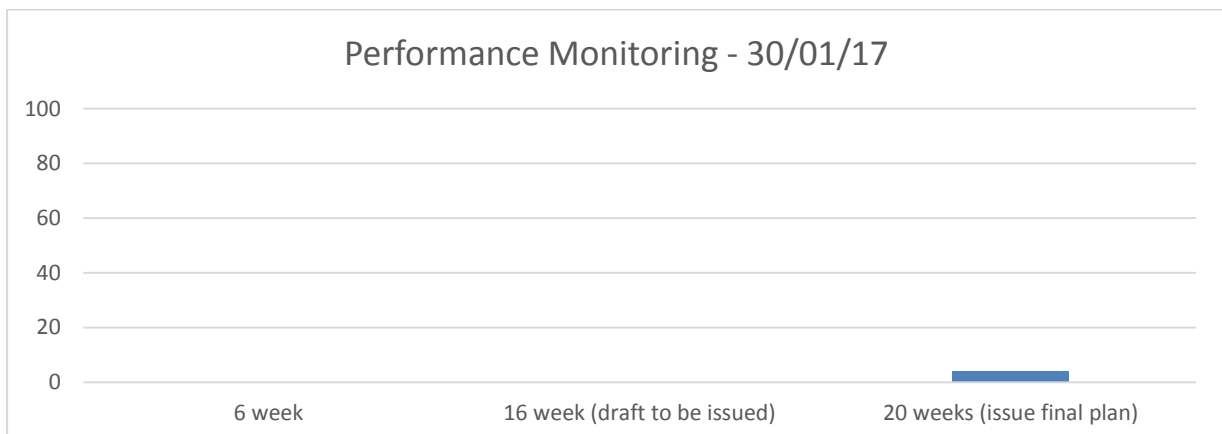
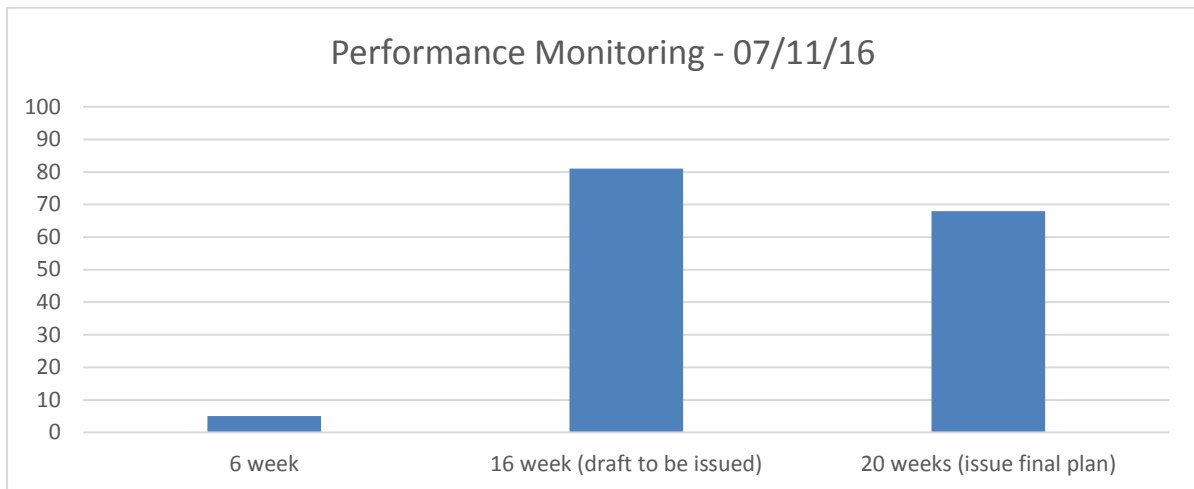
Actions taken

- Remodel of SEN team.
- Reset expectation to deliver assessments within statutory timeframes.
- Amendments to assessment process based on lean principles.
- Use of data to monitor and target performance.
- Development of weekly dashboards, performance surgeries.
- Senior manager oversight.

Impact

Data since November 2016 shows significant improvement in performance.

Charts below show the amount of plans that had overdue deadlines relating to key points in the 20 week assessment process in November 2016 and January 2017 respectively.



As can be seen in November 2016 5 decisions were over the 6 week statutory decision point, 81 were over the 16 week deadline to issue a draft plan and 68 over the 20 week deadline to finalise a plan. However in January 0 decisions are over the 6 week decision point. There has been significant improvement in the amount of draft plans overdue at week 16 (now at 0). There has also been a decrease in the amount of plans over the 20 week deadline (now at 4).

Issues with the timeliness of completing statutory advice by education, health and care providers has been an important factor to non-compliance with the 20 week timeframe. There has been significant capacity issues in both health and education sectors resulting in long delays to completion of statutory advice. This is reported to be an issue nationally. The DfE LA implementation survey (summer 2016) reported that 74% of LAs reported issues gathering information from health professionals.

Actions taken

- Identification of lead senior manager from each sector to monitor and track advice completion.
- 2 out of 4 vacancies filled in Educational Psychology team.
- Use of data to monitor and target performance.
- Development of weekly dashboards, performance surgeries.

SEND Advice Tracking Dashboard – 07/11/16

Service		Current No. Of Advice Requests	No. Of Advices over 6 week deadline (total)	Longest time Advice outstanding (weeks)
Education				
	EP	25	16	33.1
	School	10	5	8.1
Health		17	8	8.1
Care		26	17	30.2
TOTAL		78	46	

SEND Advice Tracking Dashboard – 30/01/17

Service		Current No. Of Advice Requests	No. Of Advices over 6 week deadline (total)	Longest time Advice outstanding (weeks)
Education				
	EP	27	2	0.6
	School	22	7	5.8
Health		37	12	7.9
Care		28	5	5.6
TOTAL		114	26	

Further work will consider how, and from whom, we seek advice looking at what is statutory as opposed to good practice in order to make the process as efficient as possible. A thorough review will be necessary however to ensure the process remains as holistic as possible.

A risk factor to this performance indicator common to all groups are existing /new vacancies within professional groups who provide the advice.

Financial and school placement impact of performance improvement.

As a result of the focused activity to clear the backlog in new EHC assessments there has been an impact on finance. The high need block of the Dedicated School Grant is under significant pressure partly as a result of the amount of EHC plans that have recently been issued. This includes the costs of 'TOP UP' paid to mainstream schools for those children with finalised EHC plans and additional placements in special schools – both locally and where required out of county.

While there are plans to review the sufficiency of special school places and work with mainstream schools strategically to build their resilience to meet increasing complexity of need there is a pressure in terms of current places in our special schools. The Local Authority is working closely with mainstream schools to maintain placements and monitoring those who are missing education

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