Recommendation(s)

The Children’s Services Select Committee is recommended to note the latest key performance data in relation to statutory social care and education standards, as set out in the report and the appendices to the report.
1. **Introduction and Background**

1.1 This report provides the CSSC with an overview and analysis of the latest performance trends in children’s social care, education and post 16.

1.2 The performance report aims to bring to the CSSC’s attention to those indicators that have been flagged as areas for improvement and risk i.e. indicators RAG rated Amber and Red (middle and lower quartile position) to support the development of the Committee’s work programme for 2017/18.

1.3 The performance indicators reported on in this report represent the headline performance metrics across statutory social care as at the end January 2018 and education attainment for the 2017 academic year.

2. **Performance Overview**

2.1 For each indicator, where data is available, a performance status has been applied and takes the form of a R/A/G assessment. In each case, the assessment has been made based upon performance in relation to a quartile analysis on latest available benchmark position (National), as well as progress to target. For each indicator, a direction of travel arrow is provided to note improvement or decline in performance.

2.2 There are many areas of good performance (RAG rated Green) apparent in the Children’s Care and Support and Education performance datasets. However, this performance report is not focusing on areas which are performing well (RAG rated Green) but on key performance indicators currently RAG rated Amber and Red.

2.3 This exception reporting approach has been taken for the CSSC to inform the development of a scrutiny work programme that is focused on priority areas in need of consideration or detailed scrutiny.

**Performance Commentary**

**Social Care**

2.4 The following indicators are currently RAG rated Amber (middle quartile position) based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be a cause for close monitoring. However, it is important to note the direction of travel as many of those indicators are improving.

- **Number and rate of social care referrals.** In 2017/18, social care contacts are remaining steady and consistent with previous years – around 9,000 annually. The number of social care referrals is higher in this financial year with 2,990 as at end of January 2018 compared to 2277 as at end of January 2017. Despite this increase, the borough’s current referral rate (484 per 10,000), is lower than London, national and statistical neighbour rates.

- **Repeat social care referrals:** Despite the increase in referrals, performance in relation to repeat referrals is stable at 16% and is in line with London average but below the national and similar area averages of 22% and 20%. Performance is RAG rated amber as levels are 1% above the local target.
- **Percentage of 4 weekly Child Protection Visits in timescale:** As at the end of January 2018, 95% of children on child protection plans were visited within 4 weeks: a good improvement on end of year outturn of 86% in 2016/17 but 2% below target and RAG rated amber.

- **Percentage of ceased child protection plans lasting 2 years or more:** This performance indicator measures children ceasing to be the subject of child protection plan during the year who had been the subject of the plan for two years or more. 31 children (12.5%) were de-planned in the year to date who had been on a plan for 2 years or more. This is an increase on the year-end performance of 6.5% mostly caused by three large sibling groups being de-planned in April 2018.

- **Percentage of children looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years during the year:** 61% of looked after children had been in the same placement for at least 2 years as at the end of January 2018 - 7% off target and 7% below national, London and statistical neighbours. Placement changes occur for various reasons for example, positive moves for some children including planned rehabilitation to parents or moves from residential care to fostering in recognition of progress made, but these moves impact on the overall performance. Placement moves are also made due to challenging behaviour, issues with the placement or older children returning to family as they do not want to be ‘in care’.

- **Looked after children cases that were reviewed within required timescales:** 86.4% of looked after children reviews have been completed in timescale comparable with year end 2016/17. Performance is RAG rated amber as the proportion is below benchmarks and target. The year-end prediction is 95% plus.

- **Percentage of school age looked after children (LAC) with an up to date PEP (last 6 months):** As at end of January 2018, 95.3% of school aged LAC children had an up to date PEP, the highest performance this year and above the 2016/17 outturn of 91%. Current performance is RAG rated amber as just below target of 97%.

- **% of care leavers in employment, education or training (aged 17-21 from 2015):** As at the end of July 2017/18, performance has remained comparable with June at 53% (41/77) but is lower than end of year performance of 58%. Performance remains in line with similar areas and the national average, but is below the London average of 54%. The 2017/18 target has been increased to 57% to provide challenge and ambition.

- **% of care leavers in suitable accommodation:** January 2017/18 performance has improved to 82% (173/212) compared to 81% in December and overall slightly higher than year-end performance. Performance is below the local target of 84%, although we are in line with the national and statistical neighbour averages. It is important to note that of the 39 care leavers that are not classed as being in suitable accommodation, 7 are in prison and 32 we are not in contact with. (Accommodation is regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure and affordable provision for young people. It would generally include short-term accommodation designed to move young people on to stable long-term accommodation but would exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis.)
2.5 The following indicators are currently RAG rated Red (lower quartile position) based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be a cause for concern.

- **Number and rate of children on child protection plans:** This is an activity measure monitored weekly and monthly to ensure demand and pressure are reported on. In 2017/18, the number of children subject to a child protection plan has increased to 347 (Q3) compared with 294 at end of year 2016/17. The rate per 10,000 is 56, which is higher than the London (39), national (43) and similar areas (47) rates. The measure is RAG rated Red against the local target set at 38 to be in line with London.

- **Percentage of Core Groups within timescale:** 81% of child protection core groups were completed in timescale as at end of January 2018, a decline on previous month and quarter and end of year figure of 88% 2016/17. Performance is RAG rated Red against the local target set at over 95% and requires improvement.

- **Looked after Children with up to date Health Checks:** At the end of January 2017/18, the percentage of looked after children in care for a year or more with an up to date health check dropped to 78%. This is below our 2016/17 end of year performance of 90.9% and we remain below our target of 92%. It is important to note that performance fluctuates throughout the year and performance is better than this time last year. The annual performance is also very good increasing to above 90% for the last years exceeding all benchmarks.

**Education**

2.6 As reported in the Education Strategy 2014 - 2017 and Schools’ Annual Performance Review 2016/17 Cabinet report, 2017, attainment levels showed significant improvement and achievement in 2017. Primary results in national tests and assessments were strong and GCSE saw solid improvement given the changes to English and mathematics examinations and grading. Performance on the headline Progress 8 measure was particularly strong at 20th best in the country out of 151 local authorities. Performance at A Level remains the most challenging area. Despite significant changes to content, results remained relatively stable but the gap to national and London is not closing. The proportion of good or outstanding schools has risen by 6% to 91% - 2% above national and in line with Outer London.

2.7 The key education headline measures in the appended dataset demonstrate this good performance as no key indicators are RAG rated Red. The headline education measures banded as quartile C (RAG rated Amber) are set out below and are areas for improvement. However, it is important to note the direction of travel as many of those indicators are improving and in quartile A (RAG rated green) for progress.

- **KS2 Expected Standard or Above Reading:** In 2017, 72% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above in Reading, 7 percentage points higher than 2016 and 1 percentage point above national. Attainment for Reading is 2 percentage points below London but above statistical neighbours (68%).

- **KS2 Expected Standard or Above Writing:** 77% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above in Writing, a decline on 2016 performance and 4 percentage points off the local target for this measure. Attainment, however, remains 1 percentage point above national and similar areas but 2 percentage points below London.
% Pupils achieving Eng Bacc (inc 9-5 pass in E&M) (new): Overall EBacc performance has also been impacted by the changes in English and mathematics with 18.9% of our pupils achieving this measure. Nationally 21.4% of pupils achieved the EBacc while in London the figure was 28.8%, although both also fell between 2016 and 2017. The LA is in Quartile C (Amber) and ranked 92nd out of 151 LAs.

Average point score per entry A Level Cohort (New): Performance at A Level remains the most challenging area. Average Points Score per entry in A-Level has improved to 29.3 but remains below national, London and similar areas. 2017 performance was just off target set at 30.0. The LA is in Quartile C and ranked 103rd out of 151 LAs.

Performance also improved on the average point score per entry - Best 3 A Levels rising to a revised figure of 32.7 compared to 32.0 last year. The LA is ranked 105th and in Quartile C for this measure with performance below national, London and similar areas.

Overall Absence - State-Funded Primary: Provisionally, overall absence at primary has remained at 4% in 2017, in line with national and London averages. Performance is in Quartile C (Amber).

List of appendices:

i) Appendix 1 – The Children’s Care and Support Performance Dashboard; and
ii) Appendix 2 – The Education Performance Dataset