



Making Social Care
Better for People

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Ms. J Ross
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17th September 2004

Dear Ms Ross

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Thank you for your comments on the draft report, all of which I have noted. Some have led to amendments which have been incorporated into the enclosed final report. This letter and report set out the Commission for Social Care Inspection's (CSCI) view of the performance of social services in your area during the last year, and comment on improvements for the year ahead.

The report is intended to help the Council improve outcomes and the quality of service to service-users and carers. It is also intended to improve the prospects for improved performance ratings in the future.

In assessing performance, CSCI reaches judgements about performance against a set of standards and criteria, drawing on evidence from a number of standard sources. These include:

- the published PAF performance indicators and other statistical data up to 2003/04, plus data supporting planned targets for 2004/05;
- evidence agreed in the course of our monitoring meetings that have been formally recorded; and
- monitoring information from the Delivery and Improvement Statements completed in October 2003 and May 2004.

Details of the standards and criteria have been published, and are available from CSCI, or may be seen on CSCI's performance website. A summary of the evidence used has also been sent to you separately.

The report is in two parts. The first is a summary of improvement recommendations that highlights the strategic issues for the Council. The

second part summarises the strengths of performance over the last year, and the priorities for improvement in the year ahead. These are organised around six standards against which the Council is assessed. The annual review does not attempt to review all aspects of performance, but focuses on the main performance issues for which CSCI has current information.

The report will form part of the performance record for the Council, and will be published on the CSCI website in November. You are asked:

- to present it to an open meeting of the relevant executive committee of the Council, within two months of the date of this letter, and to inform me of the date on which this will take place;
- to make the report available to members of the public at the same time; and
- to copy this letter and report to the Council's appointed auditor, and to NHS and education partners.

Progress will continue to be monitored during the year through our usual processes, and a further annual review meeting will take place during 2005/06.

Performance (Star) Ratings will be confirmed in November, based on an assessment of overall performance using all admissible evidence. The evidence summarised in this letter will be used to help arrive at the rating, but may be updated where further evidence becomes available.

Yours sincerely

Sue Toole
Business Relationship Manager
Copy: Graham Farrant Chief Executive

Performance Review Report for

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM Social Services: 2004

Summary of improvement recommendations

The review of social services in Barking and Dagenham has highlighted the following performance issues that need to be addressed over the next 12 months. Further information about the standards against which social services are assessed is contained in the detailed report.

Child and family services

- educational achievement of looked after children has declined and performance is now below the Key Threshold. We note that additional resources and a variety of strategies to address this are in place and improved performance is anticipated;
- the Children's Commissioning Strategy should be updated
- action is needed to improve the health of looked after children;
- all reviews of children on the child protection register and of children looked after need to be done within timescales. The authority has taken action and improvement is anticipated;
- the number of repeated referrals needs to reduce. It is anticipated that new IT systems will help improve reporting of performance in this area;
- improvements are needed to ensure that assessments of need, both initial and core, are done within the timescales. It is anticipated that new IT systems will improve reporting of performance.
- all children looked after should have an allocated social worker;
- further work is needed to develop services which meet the specific needs of black and minority ethnic children; and

- initiatives to promote better recruitment and retention of staff should continue.

Services for adults and older people

- the Council should continue to implement and monitor the Action plan formulated in response to the inspection of Social Care for Older People's Services (SCOPS), completed in January 2004;
- the Council should continue monitoring delayed transfers of care from hospital discharges to ensure current performance is maintained;
- development work with providers of residential and domiciliary care should be promoted to ensure quality assurance of care services. We note the development of a new residential forum;
- the use of Direct Payments should be promoted and extended across all service user groups. We note that plans are in place for rapid increase in take up. The Council anticipates significant improvement;
- further development of mental health services is needed by the Council, especially those that address the needs of black and minority ethnic communities;
- improvement is needed in the number of service users who receive a review of services provided and their circumstances. More carer assessments also need to be completed;
- waiting times for assessments and care packages need to be reduced. We note the full implementation of the SWIFT system planned to address this; and
- continued development of specific services is needed to meet the needs of growing black and minority ethnic communities.

Performance Review Report 2004

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Children's Services Strategy works in partnership with health, education and the voluntary sector to develop children's services. Plans for a children's Trust are in development.

There is a strong management team in place with good corporate and member support. This is backed by clear performance management systems.

Significant improvements in performance have been made in stability of long-term care for looked after children, with greater use of fostering and adoption. Since last year more young people leaving care are in employment, training or education. More children looked after have participated actively in their care.

Reviews of some children on the child protection register and some children looked after did not take place within the required timescales. Assessments of need, both core and initial, were not always completed within timescales and re-referrals are high. **Of particular concern is the low educational performance of children looked after and performance is below the Key threshold.**

National priorities and strategic objectives

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- establishment of Children's Services Strategy, in partnership with health, education and the voluntary sector;
- plans are in place to implement the Children Bill, which will lay foundations for a Children's Trust in the future;
- fewer children are being re-registered on the Child Protection Register;
- support for care leavers has improved with figures for care leavers in employment, education or training more than doubled from 29% to 62.5%. Performance is very effective,

indicating improvement in opportunities for a larger number of care leavers; and

- there is an effective performance management system and quality assurance strategy in place.

Area for improvement

- The educational achievement of looked after children has declined and **current performance is now below the Key Threshold**. The authority has developed extensive action plans, jointly with education and fully supported at member level, to improve performance. There has been a large additional investment of resources and action to complete personal education plans for every looked after child has started. It is anticipated that performance will improve, as these measures become effective.

Cost and efficiency

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- more children are being looked after in foster care or placed for adoption;
- better commissioning arrangements have resulted in a reduction in the use of residential placements, and a reduction in unit costs. Plans are in place to develop this strategy over the coming year; and
- the cost of services for looked after children have reduced substantially and performance in this area is effective.

Areas for improvement

- the children's commissioning strategy needs to be brought up to date and the use of out of borough placements continues to require review; and
- the Council should promote the use of Direct Payments to a wider group of children and their families or carers. We note mechanisms to improve take up are in place and improvement is anticipated.

Effectiveness of service delivery and service outcomes

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- the length of time children remain on the Child Protection Register has been reduced substantially;
- more looked after children are being adopted, 15 being achieved this year, although there is scope for further improvement; and
- the number of foster and adoptive carers has been increased, some from minority ethnic communities. A kinship worker has been appointed to develop arrangements for looked after children to be fostered with relatives and friends.

Areas for improvement

- the number of health checks of looked after children (67.8%) were less than planned (89%) and lower than the outer London average (79.8%). Joint work with health is planned to improve health outcomes for looked after children and improved performance is anticipated;
- the timeliness of Reviews of children looked after has declined, as did reviews of children on the Child Protection Register. All such reviews should be completed on time;
- repeated referrals have increased significantly, which suggests the need for more effective response at the point of first contact. Whilst it is accepted that this is in part due to more effective recording systems, this needs to be addressed;
- the number of initial assessments completed within 7 days has improved on last year's performance, but is still the lowest in outer London. Monitoring arrangements are now in place, as is support for staff in effectively using the IT system;
- performance on completing core assessments within timescales is worse than the previous year, when it was identified as an area for improvement. Plans are in place to address this and improved performance is needed; and
- only 92.1% of children looked after have an allocated social worker. This is less than the figure for last year, which was 99.5%.

Quality of services for users and carers

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- more children looked after communicated their views to a statutory review last year (66%), although performance is still below the outer London average (78.9%);
- the long term stability of children looked after has improved and is well above the outer London average;
- there has been extensive consultation and participation of young people in developing services, such as the children's complaints leaflet, which was designed by children and the guide to being looked after; and
- all recommendations arising from the Victoria Climbié audit have been implemented.

Area for improvement

- the Council should implement the Quality Assurance Strategy. We note this is already developed as a priority for the coming year.

Fair access

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- arrangements are in place for out of hours legal services, emergency duty Service, approved social workers and home care services;
- advocacy and interpreting services are available as necessary; and
- the number of children assessed as in need from black minority ethnic communities is growing.

Areas for improvement

- further work is needed to develop residential services to meet the specific needs of black and minority ethnic children; and
- complete Equality Impact Assessments and further work to disseminate Equality and Diversity strategy across the workforce. We note the Children's Services Improvement Plan gives September 2004 as the timescale for completing equality assessments.

Capacity for improvement

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- new appointments to management team, now fully staffed, and active support of members;
- there has been a strong investment of resources and commitment to service development;
- financial planning is now based on a 3 year programme, which promotes stability. There is also extensive capital investment in buildings for new services and improved office accommodation and access arrangements;
- effective joint partnerships with colleagues in health and education;
- robust systems are in place for performance monitoring and strategic development, which involve all staff;
- there has been considerable workforce development including a staff awards scheme, pre and post qualifying training, leadership development programme, as well as additional recruitment and retention initiatives;
- proportion of black and minority ethnic staff in workforce has increased (19-22%), higher than the percentage of black and minority ethnic groups in the local community (15%); and
- the Authority has published the results of monitoring required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act Part 3 – the Employment duties.

Area for improvement

- recruitment and retention strategy to continue, involving local initiatives.

SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND OLDER PEOPLE

A positive inspection of Social Care for Older People's Services (SCOPS) in January 2004 judged the service as serving some people well with promising prospects. A detailed action plan is in place to implement all recommendations.

A comprehensive strategy to modernise residential and day care services is in place; this is funded and being implemented. There are good working relationships and increasing integration with health.

There have been a number of improvements this year, notably in helping service users across all user groups to maintain their independence. The number of older people moving into residential care has been reduced. There has been a programme of carer and user involvement and services for black and minority ethnic communities are starting to develop.

However, there are a number of areas for improvement, notably the take up of Direct Payments, more timely assessments and further development of specific diversity initiatives.

National priorities and strategic objectives

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- a modernisation programme for day and residential services for adults and older people is in place;
- greater use is being made of community options to maximise independence, including extra care sheltered housing;
- there has been a dramatic increase in the number of adults participating in drug treatment programmes;
- delayed transfers are low, indicating effective management of hospital discharges;
- integrated health and social care teams and a joint commissioning structure are in place, with plans for joint locality teams from September;
- a comprehensive programme of user and carer participation has been developed with the voluntary sector; and
- strong partnerships are evident with health, education and housing. Independent research is being commissioned to evaluate the partnership with the PCT.

Areas for improvement

- continue to monitor and implement the Action Plan formulated in response to the SCOPS report; and
- continued monitoring of delayed transfers of care from hospital discharges to ensure current performance is maintained.

Cost and efficiency

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- provision of intensive home care has continued to increase, whilst unit costs of home care have reduced; and
- SCOPS report indicated clear budget responsibilities and focused management.

Area for improvement

- develop work with providers of residential and domiciliary care to promote quality assurance of care services. We note the development of a new residential forum.

Effectiveness of service delivery and service outcomes

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- there has been a reduction in the number of older people admitted to residential care and the numbers helped to live at home has also improved;
- more adults with disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health issues have been helped to live at home;
- programme to promote take up of Direct Payments has started and improvement anticipated;
- mental health services have been further developed, with both crisis resolution and assertive outreach teams operational; and
- development of a black and minority ethnic strategy for older people's services, including funding a South Asian elders Officer.

Areas for improvement

- there is a need to extend and promote the use of Direct Payments across all service user groups. We note the plans for rapid improvement in take up and significant improvement is anticipated;
- further development of mental health services is needed, especially those that address the needs of people from black and minority ethnic communities.

Quality of services for users and carers

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- continued improvement in the availability of single rooms for those moving to residential care;
- acceptable performance has been achieved in delivery of equipment within 3 weeks. Very effective performance has been achieved for delivery of equipment within 7 days; and
- users and carers have been involved in the modernisation of residential and day care for people with learning disabilities.

Areas for improvement

- there has been a small (5%) decline in people receiving a review of service since last year, this needs to improve;
- the number of carer assessments has declined and is below the Outer London Average;
- waiting times for assessments, whilst above the outer London average, are still in need improvement. We note the full implementation of the SWIFT system is anticipated as a way of improvement; and
- waiting times for care packages are below the outer London average. We note improved performance is anticipated, partly by the introduction of Community Matrons.

Fair access

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- there has been an increase in the number of older people from black and minority ethnic communities who received a service;
- more information is available in relevant community languages, for example, signposting leaflet
- acceptable performance in assessment of new clients aged over 65; and
- availability of a range of services (emergency duty, approved social workers, home care and legal services) on a 24 hour basis.

Area for improvement

- the Council needs to continue the development of specific services to meet the needs of service users within the growing black and minority ethnic communities.

Capacity for improvement

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- the Council has improved the capacity of management team and support of members;
- there has been a strong investment of resources and commitment to service development;
- 3 year financial planning programme, including extensive capital investment in buildings;
- effective joint partnerships have been established ;
- there are robust systems of performance monitoring and strategic development, involving staff teams;
- workforce development including staff awards scheme, pre and post qualifying training, leadership development programme, recruitment and retention of staff initiatives have been implemented;
- the proportion of black and minority ethnic staff in the workforce (19-22%) is greater than local community (15%);
- development of Equalities work and impact assessments; and

- the Authority has published the results of monitoring required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act Part 3 – the Employment duties.

Area for improvement

- issues of continued recruitment and retention of staff, as mentioned in the section on children's services apply equally to adult services and need to be addressed.

Sue Toole
Business Relationship Manager
17 September, 2004