

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET
MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2004 AT 2 P.M.**

Agenda Item No.

3

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN 2003/04 BY THE COMMISSION
FOR SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION**

*Joint report of the Director of Adult Care Services and the Director of Children,
Schools and Families*

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1. Purpose of the report

To present the findings of the Annual Review of Social Services Performance by the Commission for Social Care Inspection and to seek acceptance of their letter and report by Cabinet.

2. Summary

2.1 This report presents the findings of the CSCI Annual Review Report and Letter, a copy of which is attached at Appendix A of this report.

2.2 CSCI recognised the sustained progress and improvement both CSF and ACS have made over the last year.

2.3 CSF is noted as having particular strengths and demonstrating improvement in:

- Responding positively and thoroughly to the inspection of Child Protection Services. The corrective action has resulted in better policies and practice improvements
- Significant improvement in the numbers of young people leaving care & achieving 5 GCSE's grade A-C

- Significant increase in the percentage of children looked after for more than 6 months who were adopted (cited as a key area for improvement in last year's report)
- Continued investment in good partnership arrangements especially with health bodies (cited as a key area for improvement in last year's report)
- CSF has adopted a positive leadership role in taking forward preparations for the new framework for children's services

2.4 For ACS, improvements particularly noted in the report are:

- The range of care options for older people which have been developed over the last year.
- Considerable improvement in the number of delayed discharges and a commensurate investment in intermediate care provision.
- With Mental health services integrated, most staff have now transferred to the Hertfordshire Partnership Trust.
- High level of integration in learning disability services.
- Continued investment in IT and information systems is good
- The revenue budget was not overspent.

2.5 Whilst both departments have made improvements in many areas and are performing well CSCI identified the following key areas for improvement over the next 12 months:

2.6 For CSF:

- The Council has a shortage of qualified social workers, which is affecting the allocation of child protection cases, looked after children and restricted the number of adoption orders made. The investment package introduced to the service in April has yet to impact on the levels of staffing. This situation is a critical one and will have to be carefully monitored.
- The review of policy and procedures following the SSI inspection is beginning to change practice, this process needs to be continued.
- Looked after children should have an allocated social worker and their reviews conducted on time.

- The current leaving care arrangements should be reviewed to ensure better consistency of practice and an improvement of the number of pathway plans in place.

2.6 For ACS:

- The need to improve the response to assessments, frequency of reviews and the number of people who have a statement of their needs and how their needs are to be met.
- Carer's assessments in the mental health services need to improve.
- The current service for supported living for people with a learning disability needs to be registered as a domiciliary care service.

3. Standards and Criteria

3.1 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
- Monitoring information from the Delivery & Improvement Statements completed in October 2003 and May 2004
- The report of an inspection of Child Protection Services published in April 2004

3.2 Following the Annual Review the inspectors formally write to authorities setting out their view of performance, identifying strengths and areas for development in the coming year.

3.3 The evidence summarised in the letter is used, in conjunction with the processed outlined above to determine the council's performance rating

3.4 ACS and CSF will receive their performance rating in November.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The CSCI Annual review report recognises continuing developments and improvement being made by the County Council's CSF and ACS departments to services in Hertfordshire.

4.2 Both Departments are aware of the areas for development noted in the report and all the issues are covered in the service plans of the two departments.

4.3 Cabinet is invited to accept the letter and report of the CSCI.

5. Financial Implications

There are no immediate financial implications, however the report highlights many of the pressures within the social care field; addressing these may have future financial implications.