

APPENDIX 3

Ms Linda Warren
Director
Dudley Social Services
Ednam House
St James Road
Dudley
West Midlands
DY1 3JJ

4 September 2004

Dear Ms Warren

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Thank you for arranging our recent annual review meeting. 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.
- ◆ Monitoring information from the Delivery and Improvement Statements completed in October 2003 and May 2004.
- ◆ The evidence from the Children Services inspection in 2004.
- ◆ Annual Review Letter 2002/3

Details of the standards and criteria have been published, and are available from CSCI, or may be seen on the 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 6 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.

This 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.
- ◆ 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

LOUISE LAWTON
Business Relationship Manager

CC: Mr Andrew Sparke - Chief Executive

Attachment 2: Performance Review Report for Dudley

Social Services: 2004

Summary of improvement recommendations

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

Child and family services

- The council and its members need to develop further their corporate parenting role
- The council needs to ensure that its placement strategy is meeting the needs of looked after children
- The council needs to demonstrate improved performance arising from the partnership work with education
- The council needs to demonstrate that long term planning for children meets the needs of individual children (further improvement in Adoption services)

Services for adults and older people

- The council must demonstrate that the needs of carers are identified when planning and designing service delivery
- The council must ensure that monitoring mechanisms for care management and assessment processes capture positive outcomes
- The council should ensure that local indicators are developed that capture the extent to which older people are supported at home

Att 3

Performance Review Report 2004

Dudley Social Services

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Engagement with the corporate centre has been a priority for the social services directorate and the creation of a children's champion group should help facilitate this in regards to children's services. Improvements have been noted in some outcomes and processes for children but the council must continue to focus on improving the educational achievements of children looked after. It must also ensure that further work is undertaken in improving the performance of the adoption service.

National priorities and strategic objectives

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- The council has established a corporate strategic body with an aim to ensure children are a key focus for the council and to assist interagency planning
- The council has established a business planning process that is aligned to that of the corporate centre
- The council has established a permanent senior management team
- It is evident that positive outcomes for children are being achieved in some areas as there has been good sustained performance on stability of placements of children looked after (PAF A1), together with the number of young children looked after in foster care or placed for adoption (PAF C22). There is also continued good performance in the health of children looked after (PAF C19) and a further reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies
- Joint investment has been identified for the next two years to implement the CAMHS strategy

Areas for improvement

- The creation of a children's champion group and the continued closer engagement with the corporate centre are acknowledged however the council should ensure that corporate parenting responsibilities are developed further.
- The council has clearly failed to achieve the national target on education for care leavers that stipulate 75 per cent of care leavers should be in appropriate education, training or employment by 2003/04. It is acknowledged that nationally only a small minority of councils have achieved this target. There has been a considerable shortfall of performance this year against both the local and national targets. This performance combined with the number of children looked after missing school for at least 25 days (PAF C24) increasing

by over 100% indicates that the council needs to review the effectiveness of its current strategy for working in partnership with education

Cost and efficiency

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There has been a significant investment in children and families services
- Unit cost indicators suggest that the council's services are providing good value when compared with other similar councils. This is evidenced with the improved performance on relative spend on family support (PAF E44) together with continued very good performance on costs for foster care (PAF E10)

Area for improvement

- The information submitted by council indicates that the unit cost for children's residential care have increased this year. The council should continue to ensure that resources for residential care are utilised as effectively and efficiently as possible

Effectiveness of service delivery and service outcomes

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There have been continued strengthening of child protection arrangements, which are reflected in the PAF indicators. Re-registration rates (PAF A3) and reviews of children on the child protection register (PAF C20) have improved and duration on child protection register (PAF C21) has maintained very good performance
- The council has maintained good performance on the number of looked after children receiving final warning, reprimands and convictions (PAF C18)
- The council provides opportunities for looked after children by providing good access to information computing technology equipment

Areas for improvement

The allocation of social workers for looked after children needs to improve in light of the exclusion of young people's advisors from the

definition. The council has identified the need to appoint an additional 10 social workers to improve performance in this area

- Concern was raised last year regarding performance of the number of children adopted (PAF C23). Over the last 12 months the Adoption Task Force has been working with the council to improve performance in this area. However, the indicator shows that there has been no real improvement this year and the council continues to perform poorly in comparison with similar authorities. It is also noted that the number of adopters has also fallen over the last twelve months and plans to increase these numbers appear conservative

Quality of services for users and carers

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There are robust quality assurance and audit systems in place

Areas for improvement

- There has been a reduction in the number of initial and core assessments completed within the set timescales. This needs to be considered a priority
- Less than half of the council's looked after children communicated their views to their statutory review process. Targets should be set in order that the council can ensure that looked after children are more actively encouraged to have their views considered
- For the past two years less than 44 per cent of the children looked after for more than 4 years have been in their current placement for more than 2 years. This suggests that longer term planning needs improving. It is accepted that the number of children on care orders placed with parents are included in this indicator (PAF D35). It is also acknowledged that the council has established a policy to review care orders as efficiently as possible

Fair access

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There continues to be good access to both advocacy and interpreting services
- There is effective 24 hour 7 days a week access to services and advice, for children and family requiring assistance

- The council has recently opened a Sure Start centre in an area of high black and minority ethnic population

Area for improvement

- None identified this year

Capacity for improvement

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There has been corporate recognition of the centrality and crosscutting nature of services for children
- Acknowledgement is given to the continued effectiveness of the senior management team within the children's division
- Active promotion of the need for performance management and quality assurance processes at practice level
- The council continues to safeguard children in an effective way

Areas for improvement

- Whilst it is acknowledged that the council uses creative recruitment strategies as it is vital that capacity at practice level is enhanced further to realise the improvements planned for 2004/5
- Although the relationship with education is good this needs to be strengthened further particularly in their responsibility for children looked after

SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND OLDER PEOPLE

The council has responded well to the Government's priorities to promote independence for older people. The council works effectively within a complex system of health service organisations. The council should ensure that evidence is provided that demonstrates the support provided to older people at home.

National priorities and strategic objectives

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- The council has established a business planning process that is aligned to that of the corporate centre

- The council has now established a permanent senior management team that is service group focused and that is well placed to drive through further modernisation of services
- It is evident that robust partnership working continues to provide positive outcomes for vulnerable adults. Examples of this include the successful management of delayed transfers, integrated work in mental health, the continued development of resablement and intermediate care initiatives and investment in preventative services
- The council has made progress with its partners on the implementation of the National Service Framework for older people, which is overseen by the Joint Older People's Board
- An appropriate balance of service continues to be provided for the people of Dudley
- The council has taken a robust lead on the provision of single assessment processes and community equipment services

Areas for improvement

- The number of people helped to live at home continues to show good performance in all service groups apart from older people (PAF C32). There appears to be no expectation of improving performance against this indicator as reflected by the conservative target set for next year. The council should encourage the development of local indicators that capture the full extent to which older people are supported at home. It is acknowledged that very good performance has been sustained for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems helped to live at home

Cost and efficiency

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- There has been a growth in expenditure across all adult service groups
- Continued efficient resource management processes with opportunities for use of Health Act Flexibilities either being considered or already in use for all service groups
- Overall the balance of unit costs for service groups appears very good. The rebalancing of internal and external provision of

homecare has led to considerable improvement being made on the performance of unit costs for homecare (PAF B17)

- The council has been proactive in securing funding from external sources

Area for improvement

- Continued robust project management and partnership working will be required to ensure the delivery of the reprovision of the Ridge Hill site by target date of December 2005 alongside the on-going modernisation of services for people with learning disabilities

Effectiveness of service delivery and service outcomes

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- The council demonstrates improved performance in provision of intensive homecare (PAF C28) and admissions of supported residents to residential care (PAF C26), which is particularly good against similar councils
- Levels of uptake for Direct Payments have increased with the council being proactive both locally and regionally. The council has secured additional funding to target Direct Payments at service users from black and minority ethnic populations
- Progress has been made this year in implementing the 'NO Secrets' guidance on the protection of vulnerable adults

Areas for improvement

- The number of carers receiving an assessment has been reduced this year (PAF D42). The council must ensure that the needs of carers are being taken into account when planning services

Quality of services for users and carers

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- Improvement has been made on the number of clients receiving a review (PAF D40) together with an increase in the number of clients receiving a statement of their needs and how they will be met (PAF D39)
- We note that the council reports that all Caldicott requirements are in place (to protect the privacy of personal information)

- A review of the Carers' Strategy has taken place with corporate partners that has led to the identification of a number of improvements planned for next year
- The council performed well in comparison with similar councils nationally, in the provision of care packages following assessment (PAF D56), which is a key indicator of performance
- Good progress has been made on the implementation of the single assessment process

Areas for improvement

- The Delivery and Improvement Statement shows that only 23% of older peoples assessments begin within 48 hours of initial contact. The council performs poorly nationally against this indicator. It is acknowledged that once an assessment is complete, care packages are provided efficiently. The council needs to explore whether this represents a data collection problem and/or deterioration in the assessment process

Fair access

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- The council has successfully published the results of its analysis of the ethnic background monitoring on job applicants, current staff, applicants for training and promotion, those who receive training, benefit or suffer from performance appraisal, are involved in grievances, disciplinary action or leave the authority. Dudley is one of the few councils nationally who have met the initial deadline for completion of this work. The quality of this information was very good
- Access to services has been identified as a corporate priority for the council and a council-wide strategy is to be implemented aiming at delivering a one stop shop for access to all council services
- Further investment is planned to ensure that the needs of people from black and minority ethnic population are met. Currently the ethnicity of people receiving assessments (PAF E47) and the ethnicity of people receiving services following assessments (PAF E48) indicate that access of services to the black ethnic minority population is good

Areas for improvement

- None identified this year

Capacity for improvement

Improvements observed since the previous annual review

- Clear progress by the directorate in ensuring the corporate links are enhanced and developed further
- Business planning process aligned with the corporate centre
- The council continues to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure efficient delivery of the government's modernisation agenda
- Permanent senior management team in place
- Creative methods for meeting the challenges of recruitment and retention

Area for improvement

- While the council continues to invest in the workforce, it reports that challenges remain in recruiting sufficient field social work staff, in both adult and children's services

Business Relationship Manager

24 September 2004