

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

Author

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Date

13 May 2022

Reviewed by

Executive Leadership Team

This paper is for

Assurance and Noting

Associated Strategic Objective

SO9: We will establish robust infrastructure, systems and processes that promote trust and confidence.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Strategy - Hungry

1. Introduction

Our meeting today has a focus on the performance report at Quarter 4 to March 2022 which gives us some indication of the out turns for the year and the shape our annual report will take. In all the key areas Social Work England has performed well and I am not looking to raise any area of particular concern for me as we move now to the preparation of our annual report. The ARAC report will point to a positive internal audit report for the year and the business plan will show that other than a few areas where the external environment did not align for us, or we agreed different positions against certain objectives as the year progressed (i.e., our approach to a people strategy), the majority of the objectives have been achieved.

We have reviewed capacity and resources throughout the year and we will continue to do so into the new business year – it's important to note that while recruitment in some key areas remains a challenge it is an increasing challenge in all areas across the organisation and we are in putting place approaches that will allow for greater flexibility in securing the skills and expertise we need to deliver well against our business objectives and key targets for the year ahead.

2. Looking Back

Quarter 4 Performance Report

It is pleasing to see that our financial performance has achieved an overspend within 1% of variance with budget given the level of movement between the budget lines through the year as resources were directed towards FtP. With the increased resources the FtP process has achieved its targeted KPIs except for Triage.

As was reported throughout the year the team in this part of the FtP process was restructured to build capacity in decision making resulting in almost 73% of new cases being dealt with in Triage. This has a significant positive impact not just for the rest of the process in terms of the numbers of cases coming through the next phases but also for those who have raised a concern and those about whom a concern has been raised - it means cases can be dealt with in an appropriate, proportionate, and efficient manner at Triage. While the target of 300 cases in Triage as a steady caseload was not achieved in it reassuring to see that significant progress has been made on the case load and work is ongoing through Q1 of this year to continue the downward trajectory.

Separate monitoring of the progress of the legacy caseload against projections indicates a positive trajectory in line with expectations. Work is well under way, supported by a strong project infrastructure, on building capacity in FtP to expedite the conclusion of the legacy case load by March 23 with additional funding from DfE. To this end a significant piece of work was completed to recruit more than 60 new partners for our independent panels in

Q4. The overall delivery programme for this work remains an ambitious programme of work for the year ahead.

The performance report indicates a positive year end position for the Registration and Advice team against KPIs and that the Education and Training Quality Assurance programme of approvals is progressing as planned.

The report also indicates a positive year end position for our KPIs in our organisation pointing to a high level of compliance in key areas. Recruitment remains an active area as we continue to develop the organisation and support internal progression. As I have noted recruitment in many areas of the organisation is an increasing challenge and our processes and procedures are under review to ensure we are as flexible and responsive as possible.

Executive Director for People and Business Planning

The recruitment and selection process for a new Executive Director for People and Business Support following the retirement of Tracy Watterson in September of this year has been successfully completed. We are very pleased with the selection process which included members of our National Advisory Forum and members of staff from across the organisation. The Executive Director will be announced in due course and will take up post on the 1st September.

Also, to note in relation to the restructure at Senior Leadership level the initial three new Assistant Director posts have recently been advertised with a selection process to follow and the two new directorates will be introduced by the end of June. This will allow for a reshaping of the structure of the budget and the performance management reporting for the Q1 in the new business year.

3. Forward Look

Consultation

The current consultation on the amendments to the Rules and Regulations is due to complete on 26th May. Plans are in place to address the capacity requirements for creating and publishing the guidance that will be required to support amendments to be made following the consultation process. This process requires specialist knowledge and experience and capacity in this area will need to be kept under review. Alongside this plans are in place for the next phase of the consultation on rules and regulations which is planned to take place between 15th July and 7th October this year.

One of the areas included in the current consultation is an amendment to our powers for data sharing which will be given further consideration in the first part of this year following the outcome of the consultation.

Temporary Registration

Although the Coronavirus Act expired on 24th March the provision that allows for temporary registration of social workers will remain in place until 30th September this year. We are currently planning to remove the temporary registration of approximately 6,500 social workers at that time.

Policy

The Chair of the Policy Committee will be reporting to this meeting. However just to highlight the impending report the Independent Review of Children's Social Services, which we anticipate will have recommendations for Social Work England to implement or be part of the planning process. The immediate DfE response to the report will be of interest to us as will any indication of plans for a more detailed response and what they mean for the social work profession. While the recommendations will apply to children's services only there may be read across to the profession as a whole or present a challenge for us to consider potential for read across. Also due to be published in the coming weeks is the National review into the deaths of Arthur Labinjo Hughes and Star Hobson by the Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Work is well down the track on the development of a vision statement on our strategic approach to Education and Training in Social Work which will include a consultation on a 'Readiness for Professional Practice framework' which focuses on outcomes for students as they make their journey through initial qualification and towards the early part of their career. It's important as the specialist professional regulator for social work in England that for the first time the 'readiness' framework is presented through the lens of public protection and those delivering the programmes have a consistent framework linked to the inspection and approval process of Social Work England. The collaborative nature of this work across the organisation and with key stakeholders is a source of assurance and it will be taken forward through the establishment of expert led advisory group currently under recruitment.

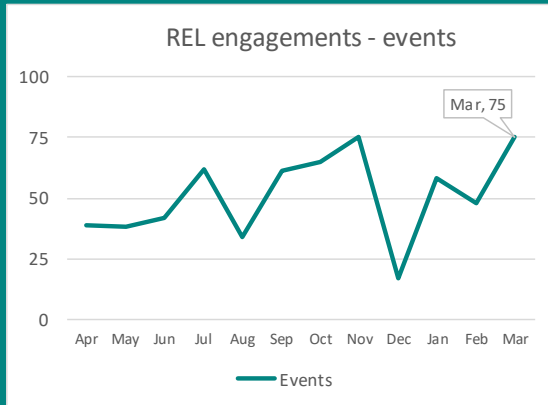
Hybrid Working update

Just to note that our approach to Hybrid working is progressing very well with each team across the organisation working together to ensure the key principles implemented, working in a flexible and collaborative manner with due regard for the right balance between needs of the business and individual so both can thrive in the right environment. This is a bottom-up approach which will be aggregated to present the overall approach of the organisation. For me it is increasingly reassuring to be attending the office on days when there is a high level of engagement and a real 'buzz' in the air with people working together in ways that

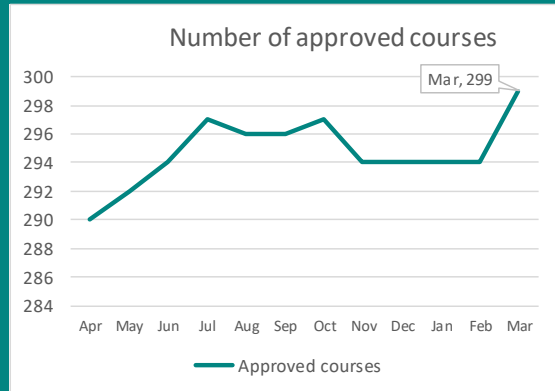
they have been unable to do in the past two years. We will continue to build and review in the coming months.

Annex 1: Dashboard overview

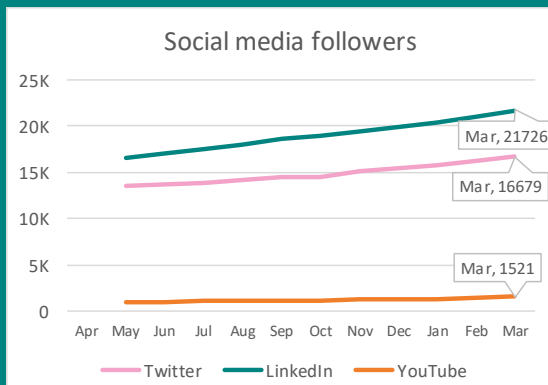
The social work profession



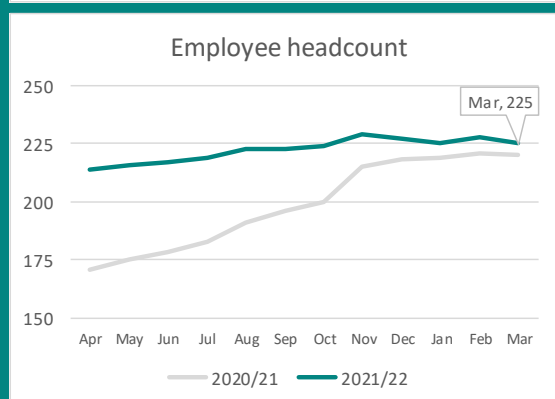
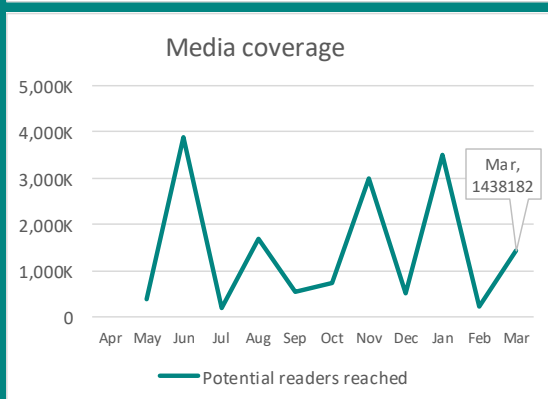
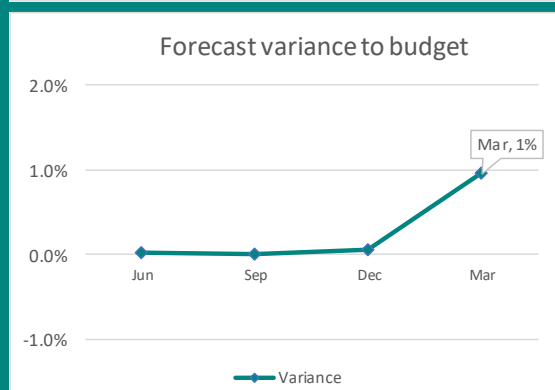
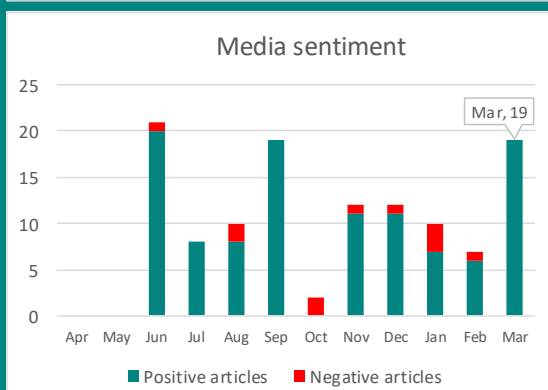
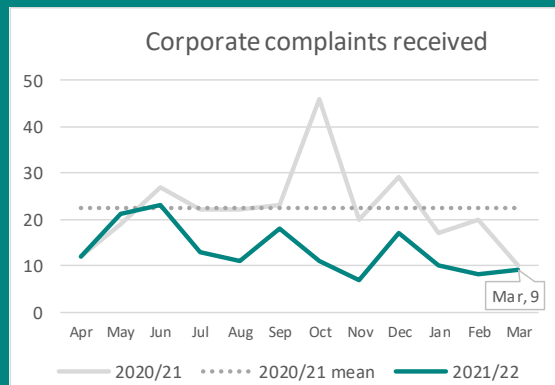
Education and training



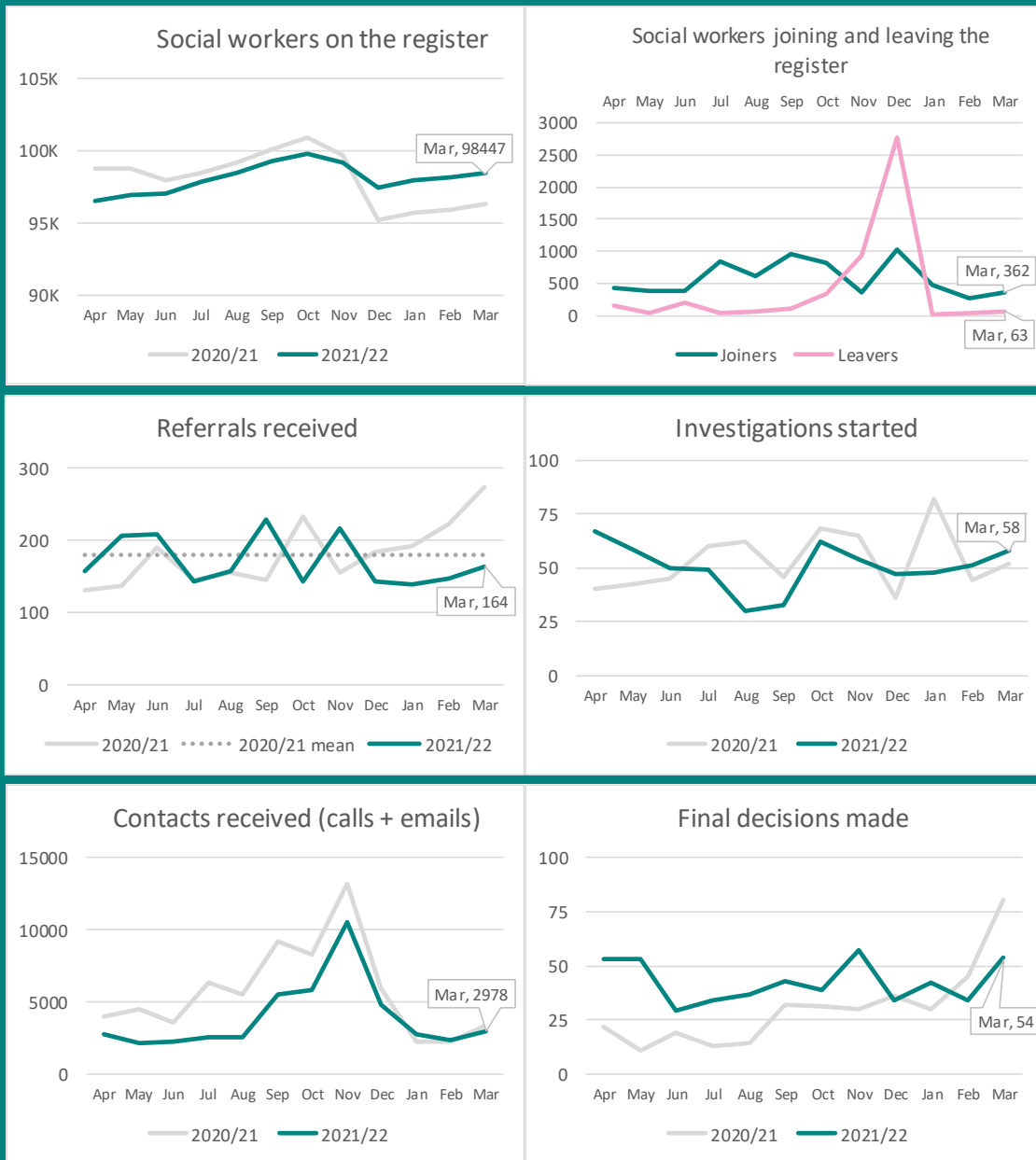
The people we work with and for



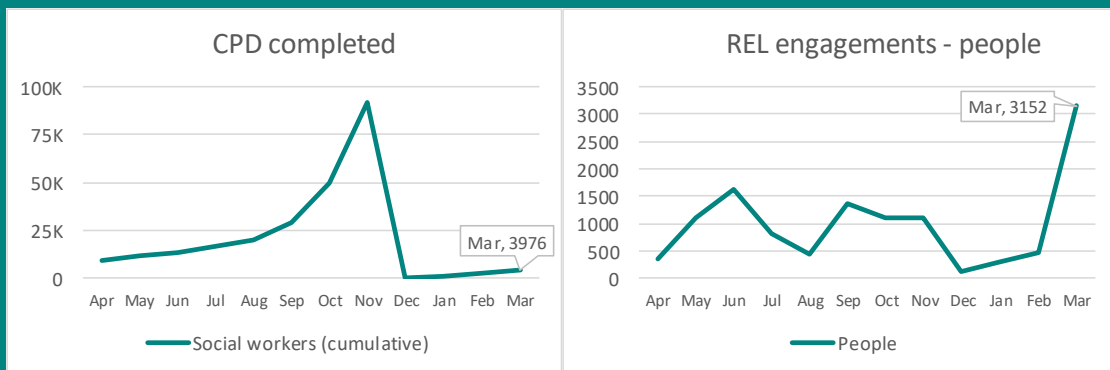
Our organisation



Our regulatory approach



The social work profession



Annex 2: Chief Executive's meetings with external organisations since the last meeting

Health Education England Long Term Strategic Framework

Chief Executive BASW

UK Social Work/Social Care Regulators – Chief Executives Group

Independent Review of Children's Social Care Team

National review into the deaths of Arthur Labinjo Hughes and Star Hobson by the
Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel round table

Health Education England Centre for Advanced Practise

Chief Social Workers for children and adults

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at DfE, Minister for Children and Families Mr. Will
Quince MP

The President of ADSC – Steve Crocker and Chair of the ADSC Workforce Committee –
Rachel Wardell

Regular meeting with the Permanent Secretary and CEOs of DfE ALBs