12 March 2012

To: All Members of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Dear Member,

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee - Monday, 19th March, 2012

I attach a copy of the following reports for the above-mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of the publication of the agenda:

6. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (PAGES 1 - 4)

To consider key performance data concerning looked after children as at the end of February 2012.

8. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER SECOND CHECKLIST AUDIT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2011 (PAGES 5 - 10)

To consider the findings of a basic checklist audit into looked after children reviews undertaken by the Independent Review Officers.

11. REGULATION 33 VISITS (PAGES 11 - 14)

This report discusses the recommendations made as a result of Regulation 33 visits to Haringey Children's Homes in January and February 2012.

Yours sincerely

Ayshe Simsek
Principal Committee Co-ordinator
0208 489 2929

This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee

Headline performance information relating to Looked After Children. More detailed analysis provided through exception reporting.

Audience - Elected Members, Snr Managers, readers seeking high level summary information

Organisational effectiveness and finance information.

	Description	2010/11	Eng. - Average 2010/11	SN - Average 2010/11	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	2011/12			Comments
		Value			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	
HY34	% Social Work posts permanently filled – annual indicator	77.0%	-	-				-	**82.0%**	-	Remaining non management vacancies will be filled by returning trainee social workers.
OP 200	Cost of service per looked after child	£911	-	-	£875	£880		**£880**	**£838**		
OP 409	Foster carer recruitment	22	-	-	5	0	0	**46**	-	-	

Volume, activity, timeliness and outcome -Children Looked After

	Description	2010/11	Eng. - Average 2010/11	SN - Average 2010/11	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	2011/12			Comments
		Value			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	
OP414	Percentage of Children becoming looked after previously subject to CP plan	-	-	-	30.8%	15.8%	22.2%	**23.5%**	-	-	
OP389	Children in care including unaccompanied asylum seeking children	618	431	430	608	600	584	**584**	-	-	The number of children in care excluding 28 unaccompanied minors for the month of February 2012 is 556. 4 children are young people aged 16-17 presenting as homeless. 9 children became looked after and 20 children ceased to be looked after.

	Description	2010/11	Eng. - Average 2010/11	SN - Average 2010/11	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	2011/12			Comments
		Value			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	
OP389a	The rate of Children in care per 10,000 pop	125.86	59	80	123.82	122.19	118.93	**118.93**	-	-	The rate of children in care is considerably higher than comparator authorities.
Op415	Children becoming looked after	311	180	189	13	19	9	**235**	-	-	Considerably less children have started to be looked after in 2011/12 than in 2010/11
Op416	Children ceasing to be looked after	304	177	229	20	28	20	**246**	-	-	
OP457	Number of LAC who ceased to be looked after who had been looked after for less than a month	-	-	-	0	8	3	**78**	-	-	
OP458	Total No. days children have been in care (Excluding placed at home)	217,488	-	-	18,101	17,548	16,268	**195,862**	-	-	
HY32	Percentage of children placed in Haringey Provision	33.0%	-	-	34.4%	34.8%	35.4%	**35.4%**	**38.0%**		
Op382	Children in Care visits	86.1%	-	-	92.6%	86.8%	88.4%	**88.4%**	**95%**		
Op417	Care Proceedings Initiated– (No. of children)	243	-	-	8	6	7	**134**	-	-	The number of care proceedings being initiated has reduced significantly when compared with 2010/11
Op 419	Number of children missing/absconded from care at any point in the month	-	-	-	17	20	11	-	-	-	
HY62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of moves	15.3%	10.9%	11.6%	12.2%	11.7%	10.8%	**10.8%**	**13%**		Good progress has been made in this area
Op63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	72%	68%	69.8%	67%	70.3%	69.1%	**69.1%**	**72%**		
OP386 (NI 66)	Children in care cases which were reviewed within required timescales	87.8%	90.5%	91.0%	68.1%	67.8%	68.6%	**68.6%**	**92.0%**		Staff difficulties and vacancies within the IRO team have impacted on performance in the first half of the year and continues to be reflected in the year to date position. However, all permanent vacancies have now been filled and progress over the second half of the year is being closely tracked and monitored.

Description		2010/11	Eng. - Average 2010/11	SN - Average 2010/11	Dec 2011	Jan 2012	Feb 2012	2011/12			Comments
		Value			Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	
Op391 (NI61)	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	62.5%	72.4%	68%	0%	100%	n/a	**75%**	**78%**		Monthly percentages should be interpreted with caution due to small numbers – the percentages relate to the number of adoptions in the month where the child was placed within 12 months of the best interest decision. In December 1 adoption order was granted (not within 12 months), in January 1 adoption order was granted (within 12 months) and in February there were none. A permanency tracking meeting has been set up to review progress and timescales those: • Placed for adoption • Where panel has agreed the plan for adoption • Where services are considering the plan for adoption • Babies coming into care Work is also being done to review case by case those children where adoption is the plan and where we are struggling to find appropriate adoptive placements.
Op 418	Number of adoptions/special guardianship orders	27	-	-	1	3	2	**25**	**-**	**-**	A Permanency Strategy is in place and includes a focus on capacity, external spend on adoption and internal recruitment.
Op 418a	Number of adoptions	16	20	16	1	1	0	**12**	**-**		
Op 418b	Number of special guardianship orders	11	-	-	0	2	2	**13**	**-**	**-**	
Op148	Care leavers in education, employment or training	72.9%	61%	63.4%	60%	25%	80%	**57.9%**	**76%**		Monthly percentages for this indicator are based on small numbers and should be interpreted with care. 56 young people have turned 19 so far and 4 young people are due to turn 19 in the rest of the year.
Op147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation	91.5%	90%	92.1%	80%	75%	60%	**86%**	**93%**		Monthly percentages for this indicator are based on small numbers and should be interpreted with care. 56 young people have turned 19 so far and 4 young people are due to turn 19 in the rest of the year.

This page is intentionally left blank

Haringey Council

Independent Review Officer
Second Checklist Audit
October - December 2011

Method

During October to December 2011 The Independent Review Officers (IROs) repeated an audit undertaken in the first quarter of 2011-12 using the basic checklist to carry out a random sample analysis of 100 (out of approx 350 conducted in this period) Looked After Children Reviews. The audit was designed and is intended as a quick process that can provide some immediate data and identify trends and topics for futher investigation. The information presented should not be taken as definitive, but rather as an indication of areas, which require exploration. Where the audit questions relate to specific regulations or guidance, they have been referenced in the following report. The report presents general data gathered across the whole of Children and Families service, individual teams have been provided with the information which relates to them.

In the previous report a number of areas for improvement were identified, the following actions have taken place

1. This issues identified in the audit reports are on the agenda of the next LAC multi-agency meeting in March 2012. Improvements to Health Assessments and Plans form part of the action plan and have had a particular focus for the cross agency group through out 2011-12.

2. Meetings have been set up with the Management Teams to facilitate effective on going communication and develop an understanding of respective roles and responsibilities held by the IRO's and the social work teams and managers

3. The new "children in care workflow" was introduced in February 2012. As part of the design, best practice from other Local Authorities was identified and extensive consultation undertaken with social workers and managers locally. The workflow fully implements The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 and Associated Guidance (Including the IRO Handbook). The changes incorporate the minutes and decisions into one document to avoid duplication and create a more streamlined process; supporting the IRO's to meet the required timescales for completing the decisions within 5 days and the minutes within 15 days of the Review. The decisions are easily exported using FWi, for circulation to managers for endorsement. A reporting and tracking system is being developed to put in systems for management of the Reviewing process. For social workers the changes include more compressed documentation that focuses on care planning from the start of the child becoming LAC.

A decision has been taken to accept the court care plan where the case is in proceedings, to reflect the actual work undertaken instead of duplicating paper work.

The new system supports the IRO's in addressing problems with social workers and their immediate managers in the first instance and reporting cases upwards where satisfactory resolution has not been achieved.

4. Re launch of VIEWPOINT. Viewpoint provides age specific (there are 4 age categories – 4 to 6, 7 to 9, 10 to 15 and 16 plus) on line questionnaires to consult children and young people on any topic. Viewpoint was re-launched in Haringey as pilot for the cohort of looked after children and young people with reviews in January – March 2012.

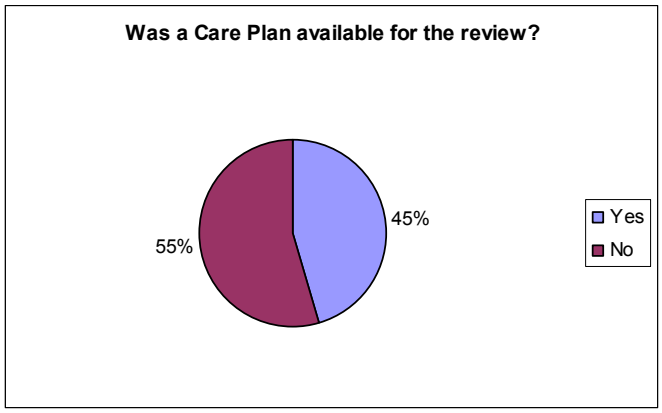
The questions ask about their care experience and aspirations, and facilitates participation in the reviewing process. All questionnaires address health and

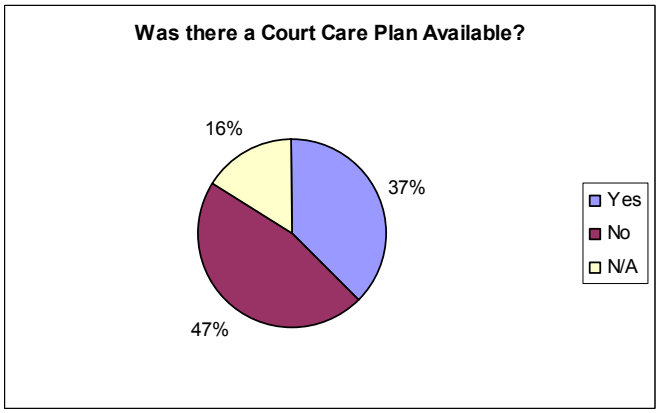
education issues, for older young people the questionnaires take account of the development of Pathway Plans. Responses are tick box with the opportunity to provide dialogue. Immediately the information provided will assist decision-making and care planning at an individual level. Once two or more Viewpoint consultations are completed, it will be possible to compare whether things have improved or deteriorated for that child. Over time with consistent use, management reports will be generated which will be useful for identifying trends, analysing equalities issues and will assist in the commissioning process by collating information by provider.

The pilot identified a number of issues, these have now been addressed and from April 2012 Viewpoint will replace the paper consultation system, which was previously used for Looked after Children. A series of workshops have been arranged for the end of March to explain the rational and process involved. When review invitations are sent out they will explain the system and provide a password to access the website. Children are visited at least 20 days before their Review by their social worker who will encourage them to complete the questionnaire. When children or young people feel unable to complete the on-line questionnaire they will be enable to use an alternative means of communication.

General Analysis

1. "A Care Plan must be prepared prior to a child's first placement, or, if it is not practical to do so, within 10 working days of the child's first placement." The audit showed that 45% of all cases had a care plan available, this was a slight increase from the 41% figure in the April to June 2012 audit.





The previous audit had shown that the Court Care Plan was used as a substitute for the LAC Care Plan when cases were in care proceedings. The new system allows the social worker to interchange the court care plan, for children in proceedings, with the LAC Care Plan to avoid duplication. Both the LAC Care Plan and the Court Care

Plan are determined by legislation and whilst all efforts have been made to make it more user friendly it is still a formal document. In order for both plans to be more accessible to children and young people the IRO and social worker will need to communicate the plan in a format age appropriate through meaningful consultation, this could be through other tools such as drawing etc.

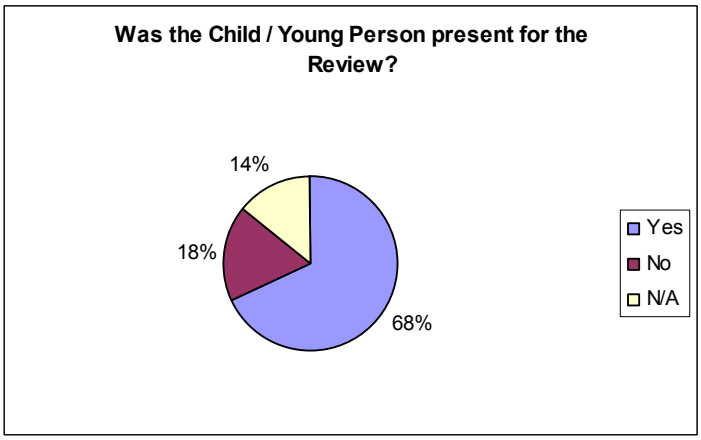
With the new arrangements in place an up-to-date care plan (either a LAC or Court Care Plan) was available at the time of the review for 74% of cases in care proceedings. For children not involved in proceedings: 56% on a Care Order; 100% on a Placement Order and 58% on Section 20 had an up to date Care Plan. This is an area for further work.

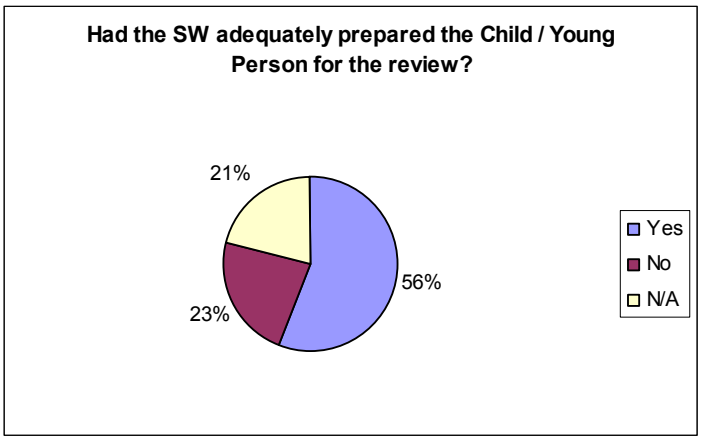
The number of cases where there was a Social Work report available increased from 10% at the time of the previous audit to 27%. Social Workers in the Safeguarding and Support Service provided report on the most regular basis. In 86% of reviews, the IRO and Social Worker had a discussion prior to the Review meeting. There seems to be no significant difference between IRO's in the frequency with which they communicate with the social worker in advance of the review meeting. In situations where there was neither a report nor the opportunity for a discussion this was raised with the Team Manager. Particularly emphasis will be given to this aspect of the review process, social workers will be consulted on whether there are ways to stream line the process of getting their written contribution to the review process.

2. "The Local Authority should obtain and take account of the wishes and feelings of the child (subject to age and understanding) about the plan and the progress made since the last review."

The percentage of children attending reviews dropped from 85% in the first sample to 68%. However, the number of instances were the child was deemed to have been adequately prepared by the social worker for the review increased from 49% to 56%, with 21% of the total group being considered too young to make a considered contribution. In some instances foster carers and residential workers are delegated the task of preparing the child for the review, when this happens it is important that the child is given the opportunity to talk freely about their experiences in placement and the care that they are given.

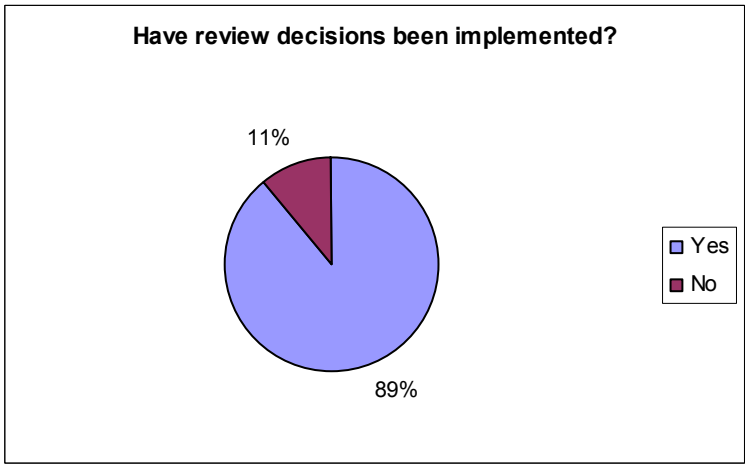
With the increased focus on children's participation and the re-launch of view point partipation and involvement should increase. A check will be made on the time that reviews are being held to ensure that reviews for school-aged child are being conducted at times when they are available and able to participate





3. "Were decisions taken at the last review successfully implemented?"

In 90% of cases that were not an initial review, a discussion of previous decisions took place during the social worker's supervision at some point; this is no change from before. Following on from these supervision discussions, 89% of the decisions made at the review were followed up. In this sample, there is no correlation between the supervision discussion not taking place and the decisions not being implemented.



The first audit showed that in 60% of cases, the child had a PEP and Health Plan available. This audit looked at the plans separately, with 62% of over 4's having a PEP and 62% of all children having a Health Plan, this finding is in line with the monitoring under taken by the Children in Care in Care Specialist Nursing Team. The LAC Multi Agency group has a detailed action plan to improve the health planning, IRO's have been asked to pay particular attention to ensuring health assessments have taken place and plans are being actively implemented

4. "As part of the monitoring function, the IRO also has a duty to identify any areas of poor practice, including general concerns around service delivery (not just around individual children). The IRO should immediately alert senior managers."

In both audits, issues of concern that could not be addressed by the social workers or Team Manager were presented to senior manager in 17% of cases.

In the latest audit these included:

- A range of factors contributing to continued delays in family finding for children with permanency plans and or Placement Orders
- Legal status of babies in “Mother and Baby” placements – need for greater clarity about who is responsible for the babies day to day care and safety – a working group is being established to incorporate this with the pre-birth assessment process which has recently been introduced.
- Lack of policy about “Staying Put” arrangements for young people who are about to become 18 and want to stay in their placement whilst completing their schooling – a draft policy is currently being consulted on.
- Delays in preparation for transition to adulthood and absence of Pathway Plans
- Funding issues relating to children living at home during care proceedings

Areas of good practice identified:

- Quality of direct work with children and young people
- Refocus of planning decisions on permanency
- Relocation of the CiC teams has positively impacted on facilitating communication between the professional network

Future work identified from the audit

1. Embedding the new workflow process ensuring that every children has an up to date care plan, which outlines the local authorities plans for their future care

2. Improving the number of social work reports completed as part of the review process.

3. Ensuring that young people are given every opportunity and encouragement to attend and participate in their review. Exploration of any factors contributing to reduced attendance.

4. Roll out of Viewpoint to all children over 4 years old and monitoring progress.

Rachel Oakley – Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Practice Development
James Holland – Child Protection and Review Support Officer

Document is exempt

This page is intentionally left blank