

NOTICE OF MEETING

CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday, 6th February, 2017, 7.15 PM or on the rise of the informal meeting with Aspire - Civic Centre, High Road, Wood Green, N22 8LE

Members: Councillors Patrick Berryman, Bob Hare, Jennifer Mann, Liz Morris, Felicia Opoku, Anne Stennett and Elin Weston (Chair)

Quorum: 3

1. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual, or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

To receive any Apologies for Absence.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of late items of urgent business. Late items will be considered under the agenda item they appear. New items will be dealt with at item 12 below.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the

existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the consideration becomes apparent.

A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.

5. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 10)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October 2016.

6. MATTERS ARISING (PAGES 11 - 14)

Discussion on follow up actions following the earlier meeting with Aspire.

7. PERFORMANCE REPORT (PAGES 15 - 20)

8. HOUSING AND CARE LEAVERS (PAGES 21 - 24)

To consider specified performance data for Children in Care.

9. IRO ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16 (PAGES 25 - 42)

10. VERBAL UPDATE ON PAN LONDON ADOPTION BID

11. VERBAL UPDATE ON FOSTER CARER RECRUITMENT

12. PROFILE OF CHILDREN IN CARE (PAGES 43 - 58)

13. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

As per item 3

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date of next meeting: April 3rd 2017

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Bernie Ryan
Assistant Director – Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer
River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8HQ

Friday, 27 January 2017

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**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

Councillors Cllr Weston [Chair], Cllr Berryman, Cllr Mann, Cllr Stennett, Cllr Hare & Cllr Opoku

Apologies Cllr Morris

Also attending Neelam Bhardwaja (Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Social Care), Dominic Porter-Moore (Head of Children in Care & Placements), Fiona Smith (Virtual School Head), Margaret Gallagher (Corporate Performance Manager), Philip Slawther (Clerk), Lyn Carrington (Nurse - Whittington Health NHS), Kim Holt (Designated Doctor Children in Care - Whittington Health NHS), Anneke Fraser.

CPAC337. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Morris.

Apologies were also received from Jon Abbey, Lesley Kettles and Annie Walker.

CPAC338. ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING WITH ASPIRE

NOTED: The actions listed in the notes of the meeting with Aspire.

CPAC339. URGENT BUSINESS

NONE

CPAC340. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

CPAC341. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2016 were AGREED.

The Corporate Performance Manager agreed to circulate the list of statistical neighbouring boroughs to the Committee.

Action: Margaret Gallagher.

CPAC342. MATTERS ARISING

The Committee NOTED the Corporate Parenting Agenda Plan 2016/17

CPAC343. PERFORMANCE

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

The Chair advised that she recently attended a London Councils meeting with other Lead Members for Children's Services from across London. Colleagues advised that during recent inspection visits Ofsted were keen to speak to members of corporate parenting committees to ensure that the arrangements around corporate parenting were robust and that members were engaged. The Chair emphasised that she wanted the Committee to be able to demonstrate its engagement if asked by Ofsted and so would be maintaining performance as a standing item on future agendas.

RECEIVED the report on Performance for the Year to the end of August 2016. Report included in the agenda pack (pages 13 to 18).

NOTED in response to discussion:

- An overall improving trajectory in relation to the majority of performance indicators.
- 430 children were in care on the last day of August 2016 or 72 per 10,000 population including 32 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. There had been a gradual increase in the level of children in care in comparison to the position at the end of March 2016 - 23 more children in care. However reduction in Haringey's rate of looked after children in 2015/16 placed LBH within the inter-quartile range of our statistical neighbours (a rate of 69 per 10,000 population), although the current rate remained above the London (52) and national average (60) rates.
- At the end of August, 91% of looked after children had an up to date Care Plan. Performance in this area consistently remained above target since February 2016 as a result of activity tracking in weekly meetings held by the Head of Service for Children in Care.
- At the end of August, 82% of looked after children aged 16-17 had up to date Pathway Plans. Performance in this area dipped slightly since June 2016 where 96% of pathway plans were up to date however completion of pathway plans was much higher than that reported at the same period last year. Although performance remained short of the 90% target, it was hoped that with further effort from the 16+ children in care team, the 90% target would be achieved.
- Performance of PEPs was slightly short of the target (87% up to date at the end of August). This area continued to be a priority of performance tracking.
- 40% of LAC achieved 5 A*-C grades at GSCE including English Literature and Maths. The Committee was informed that no local authority had ever achieved over 38% in previous years. The Committee passed on their congratulations to the Virtual Schools and all of the others involved.
- Indicators around stability of placements for looked after children remained in line with statistical neighbours and targets. In the year to August 2016, 9% of children had three or more placement moves, below the statistical neighbour

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

average (10%). 76% of children under 16 who had been in care for at least 2.5 years had been in the same placement for at least 2 years, slightly above our statistical neighbour average (67%).

- 91% of Children in Care had an up to date review at the end of August, above the 90% target.
- At the end of August, 94% of children in care for over a month had an up to date health assessment, which was above target and continued the positive trend.
- Timeliness of children placed for adoption continued to be positive. In the year to August 2016, children waited an average of 298 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption. This compares favourably with the national threshold (426 day average for 2013-16). The Chair asked the Committee to note that Haringey had received a letter from Edward Timpson MP acknowledging Haringey's positive performance in this area.
- The 2015/16 trend towards the reduction in the number of care proceeding applications had shifted towards an increasing trend in Q1 2016/17. It was unclear what had lead to this increase, however it reflected the national trend. There had also been a significant increase in applications regarding children under 1, from 35% in 2015/16 to 44% in Q1 2016/17. The period April to June 2016 saw an average duration of care proceedings for concluded cases was 37 weeks, slightly higher than that recorded for 2015/16 (34 weeks). Q1 data for 2016-17 shows 10% were concluded under the 26 week statutory timescale.
- 84% of children in care visits were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in August. Performance in this area has remained below target since October 2014 mainly due to recording issues. This was being tracked at performance meetings held by the Head of Service for Children in Care.
- 20% of looked after children at 31st August were placed 20 miles or more from Haringey. Performance was worse than the 16% target however slightly improved since March 2016 end of year position (23%). Although higher than national levels this proportion was only slightly above the average for London and Statistical Neighbours (18%).
- 83% of the current LAC cohort had an up to date dental visit as at August 2016.
- In the year to August 2016, only 7 permanency orders had been achieved (5 adoptions and 2 special guardianship orders— 10 fewer than the same period last year and the lowest recorded for many years. There were a further 10 adoption orders in the pipeline. Special guardianship referrals continued to be low and it was likely that no more than 15 would be achieved by the end of the financial year.

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

- Performance on care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training for 2015-16 data showed that 45% of *all* former relevant care leavers aged 17-21 were in EET (57% of those who were *in touch* with the local authority) 69% of *all* care leavers were in suitable accommodation or 87% of those who were *in touch*.

AGREED to note the report.

The Committee sought clarification on the reasons behind the low number of permanency orders. In response officers clarified that it was due to the judgements handed down in a couple of a recent court cases, which concluded that family members needed to be considered in cases where the child was to be sent outside of the family, and this had significant implications with local authorities increasingly looking to place children within the family. The Head of Service for Children in Care & Placements advised that this had resulted in a sharp increase in Special Guardianship Orders and a dramatic reduction in adoptions. This often led to the child being looked after within the family, often by grandparents, and as a result concerns existed about the ability of older family members to look after the child in the long term. The Committee was advised that Special Guardianship Orders were originally envisaged for babies and young children but were increasingly being used for older children.

CPAC343. DISCUSSION AROUND FUTURE MEETING SET UP/AREAS OF FOCUS

The Committee NOTED the CFPS document entitled “10 questions to ask if you’re scrutinising services for looked after children” which was included in the agenda pack at pages 19-54.

The AD Safeguarding advised the Committee that Members automatically took on responsibility for being corporate parents of looked after children at the point of being elected. It was noted that looked after children included those looked after under voluntary arrangement with carers (Section 20) and those under Care Orders made by the courts (Section 31). Councils’ exercised their corporate parenting responsibilities through the committee but individual members also retained a duty as corporate parents. The Committee was advised that the CFPS document, along with other guidance produced, was developed with the aim of providing relevant information to help members provide the same basic standard for children in care as would be expected for any other child.

The Chair advised there were two more meetings of the Committee in the current municipal year and her intention was that each agenda would include a focused thematic discussion item. The Chair suggested that this could require having an additional informal meeting between meetings. The Chair put forward that one of these discussion items should be around housing.

Dr Holt suggested that one area could be around a discussion of an up to date profile of the children who were coming in care. The Committee requested that the Corporate Performance Manager develop a brief presentation which showed a

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

breakdown of the LAC population and any trends that had developed. The Chair requested that this was sent round to the Committee outside of the meeting and potentially included as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Margaret Gallagher/Clerk

The Committee also requested that a report be produced for the next meeting which set out the increasingly challenging cohort of children referred with serious issues, including substance misuse problems or involved in gangs etc. Dr Holt suggested that from a health perspective a number of these individuals were likely to have significant mental health issues and would be putting themselves at risk repeatedly.

Action: Dominic Porter-Moore

The Committee considered what activities were undertaken to celebrate the success of looked after children. Virtual Schools put on a celebration event for Year 11 pupils but the Committee considered that some form of celebratory event should be undertaken at later stages, such as graduation from university. The AD Safeguarding advised that care leavers had recently received impressive university results. The Committee also suggested that the Council could offer mentoring to recent graduates to help their transition into the jobs market. The Chair suggested that there was a wider piece of work required around leaving care support; with one area around what the Council did as the young person was approaching 18, and another around what was done after in terms of longer term support.

Lynn Carrington, Designated Nurse Children in Care advised that there was a national paper being developed around the health of care leavers and agreed to send a copy of the report to the Clerk when it was published to distribute to the Committee.

Action Lynn Carrington

In response to a question from the Committee, Aspire acknowledged that they had regular interaction with the Who Cares Trust and that one of the Aspire leaders worked for the organisation. The Young People's Involvement Officer acknowledged that Aspire group also supported each other and had means of communication with the wider group, through a number of fora, such as Whats App.

The Young People's Involvement Officer provided SOG with an overview of a meeting with Natasha from a youth engagement company called Silver Lined Horizons. Natasha had significant experience in the field and had established a number of Children in Care Councils across the country, and recently met up with Aspire to undertake a consultation exercise to explore some of the problems faced by those young people. The Committee was advised that 6 sessions would be undertaken in the run up to the end of the year and that Aspire would be encouraged to lead on participation and what those sessions would involve. The Chair commented that there were some clear overlaps between the responses provided by Aspire, around say addiction and lack of guidance, and health outcomes and how to ensure continuing support into adulthood.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Young People's Involvement Officer commented that in her experience some of the most common issues facing LAC were around housing, their future careers including apprenticeship placements,

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

and the stigma involved with being in care. The AD Safeguarding cautioned that the LAC tended to be a very diverse group and the only thing that united them was the fact that they were looked after, some were happy to be engaged with and to be identified as looked after, while some did not. The Committee was advised that the key issue was ensuring that mechanisms existed to ensure that they were being looked after properly and in way that reflected their wishes and individual circumstances. Every looked after young person underwent a statutory review at which point the independent review officer should be assuring themselves about the Care Plan, their health, their placement and any other concerns that they may have. The Committee requested sight of the Independent Reviewing Officers reports as per one of the recommendations in the CPFS document. The Chair agreed that these should be brought to a future meeting.

Action: Dominic Porter-Moore

The Committee commented that there had been a previous request for a social worker and/or a foster carer to attend a meeting and discuss their experiences with the committee. The Chair expressed caution that the Committee needed to be mindful that it did not assume the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as such it might be more appropriate to invite social work professionals, for instance, to one of the proposed informal discussion sessions on a related topic. The AD Safeguarding advised that meeting and interacting with social workers might be best suited to inviting both them and the Committee Members to a specific event. The Young People's Involvement Officer suggested that the Foster Carer's Forum might be a suitable event for Committee Members to attend and that they met twice a month. The Head of Service to send the details to the Chair who would circulate dates to the Committee and agree to arrange a visit.

Action: Dominic Porter-Moore/Chair

The Chair requested that that annual report of The IROs be brought to a future meeting of the Committee. The AD Safeguarding agreed to ascertain when the annual report was published and to liaise with the Clerk to include it on the relevant upcoming agenda.

Action: Neelam Bhardwaja

The Committee AGREED the substantive discussion items for upcoming meetings. The Chair suggested that clearly setting this out would help the Committee make recommendations to the Cabinet Member and to Cabinet as per the Committee's terms of reference.

- January 2017 – Housing Support
- April 2017 – Voice of the Child including placements and what IRO's do.
- June 2017 – Leaving care support (and the transition to independent living)

CPAC344. LAC NUMBERS & DEMAND LEVELS

NOTED the presentation by the AD Safeguarding on LAC numbers and demand levels which was included in the agenda pack at pages 55-69. The Committee was advised that Children's Services had seen a 30% increase in the number of proceedings, which comprised of two main groups of babies and young children, and troublesome teenagers whose parents were unable to look after them. The AD

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

Safeguarding elaborated that a judgement in a case brought by Southwark Council had resulted in local authorities being responsible for taking into care older teenagers who did not want to live in the family home.

The Committee was also advised that there were around 520 LAC around two years ago and there were currently 430 LAC which was about on trend with statistical neighbours. Haringey continued to receive its quota of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children as per the arrangements for London boroughs, with placements allocated by Croydon via a rota. The AD Safeguarding advised that Haringey's allocation was likely to total 40 UASC.

The Chair requested that a Member training even be set up to go through some of the key background information in relation to current performance in Children's Services and the additional pressures that the service had experienced.

Action: Neelam Bhardwaja/Jon Abbey

CPAC345. FOSTER CARER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

NOTED the verbal update given by the Head of Service, Children in Care and Placements on progress around the recruitment of a provider to undertake training and recruitment of in-house foster carers.

The Committee noted that an interim contract was being developed with NRS for the continued provision of foster care recruitment until March 2017. The Committee was also advised that a full procurement exercise was being undertaken alongside the NRS interim contract to go out to tender to the market. Some initial work undertaken by the Commissioning service suggested that there were 3 or 4 agencies that were interested in the contract. The procurement timetable was that a preferred bidder would be selected by February and the contract would be in place by March 2017. The Head of Service, Children in Care and Placements advised that the new contractor would focus on marketing, assessment and recruitment of foster carers.

The Committee was advised that the interim contract was still being finalised but that NRS had begun assessments for new foster carers. The Chair acknowledged that nobody was happy with the previous arrangements around the NRS contract and that going forward she would like the Committee to look at a range of options around what should be done around foster carer recruitment in the medium to long term.

In response to a question around the alternative options available, the Committee was advised that the going out to tender was considered the most effective option in the short term and there were significant risks involved in rebuilding and recruiting an in-house service. The Chair commented that the case for bringing the service back in-house would be examined further as part of the medium to long term options.

CPAC345. PAN-LONDON ADOPTION BID

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

NOTED the verbal update given by the AD Safeguarding on the Pan-London Adoption bid. The Committee was advised that the original rationale for regionalising adoption services was set out in a Department for Education (DfE) paper and the government's aims were; to speed up matching, improve adopter recruitment and adoption support, reduce cost and improve the life chances of vulnerable children. The AD Safeguarding advised that the government was including provision of regionalised adoption services in its Education and Adoption Bill. The DfE had stated that its aim was for all local authorities to be part of a regionalised adoption service by 2020; the Committee was advised that the Secretary of State had powers to force local authorities to join a regionalised body, and therefore it was better for authorities to come together voluntarily.

AD Safeguarding reiterated that the preferred option for the Pan-London adoption was a local authority trading company delivery model with a strategic VAA partnership operating in a hub and spoke model. Further development of the preferred option was being undertaken to better understand what the arrangements would mean in practice. The AD Safeguarding advised that further literature on the proposals had just been released and that this would be considered in detail. The likely next step was for each of the 33 London local authorities to progress an agreement in principle through their respective cabinets.

In response to a question, the AD Safeguarding advised that there would be one single hub for the whole of London but that there were existing sub-regional consortia arrangements; however it was not clear if these would be maintained. The Chair commented that it was likely if there was a particular child with particular needs then they could be adopted out of the geographic spoke area.

CPAC 348. UPDATE ON IMMIGRATION ISSUES FOR LAC

RECEIVED a report by exception which updated the Committee on recent government developments in caring for and supporting unaccompanied and refugee children and their families. The report also set out the assessment pathway for LAC with and uncertain immigration status. The report was included in the agenda pack (pages 65 to 70).

CPAC 348. UPCOMING SCRUTINY REVIEW ON CORPORATE PARENTING

RECEIVED and NOTED a report which set out the proposed work planned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in relation to Haringey's corporate parenting responsibilities across the Council. The report was included in the agenda pack (pages 71 to 73).

The Chair advised that she had begun discussing suitable topics/areas to review with the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny but also advised that it would be looking into areas that CPAC did not have the capacity to. The Chair also cautioned that scrutiny would not be supplanting the work of this Committee or altering its remit. Part of the reason behind the review was that following the report from Rotherham, the scrutiny

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2016**

functions were found to be non-existent in questioning how the council carried out its corporate parenting arrangements.

**CPAC 348. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MINUTES FROM THE HARINGEY
CHILDREN IN CARE OPERATIONAL GROUP**

RECEIVED and NOTED the draft terms of reference, the minutes from the Haringey Children in Care Operational Group meeting of 22nd July 2016 and the 2015/2016 Annual Report of Haringey's Children In Care Services.

CPAC348. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CPAC348. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

None.

CPAC 349. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT EXEMPT BUSINESS

None.

CPAC350. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Future meetings

NOTED the following dates:

12th January 2017

3rd April 2017

Meetings are scheduled to start at 6.30pm.

The meeting ended at 21:00 hours.

**Cllr Elin Weston
Chair**

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Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2016/17

Corporate Parenting meeting Date	Agenda Items	Lead Officer
4 th July 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance 2. CPAC and Aspire notes with update on actions 3. Pan-London Adoption Bid 4. Update on foster carer recruitment and future models of provision 5. Immigration issues for LAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous Minutes from 4th April 2016 <p><u>Verbal Updates</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Plans for future CPAC meeting set up 7. Virtual Schools Executive Summary 8. Update on Drive Forward and potential for providing support at earlier stage in care leavers' university placement. <p>*Training requirements</p> <p>Draft Reports will be due with Jon Abbey on 20th June and due for publication on 24th June</p>	<p>Margaret Gallagher</p> <p>Jon Abbey</p> <p>Neelam Bhardwaja</p> <p>Dominic Porter-Moore</p> <p>Dominic Porter-Moore / Neelam Bhardwaja</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Fiona Smith</p> <p>Neelam Bhardwaja</p>
3rd October 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance 2. CPAC and Aspire notes 3. Pan-London Adoption Bid 4. CPAC – Discussion around Future meeting set 	<p>Margaret Gallagher</p> <p>Jon Abbey</p> <p>Neelam Bhardwaja</p> <p>Chair</p>

Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2016/17

	<p>up/Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p><u>Main Presentation item</u></p> <p>5. Demand levels and pressures on back-end of the system</p> <p><u>Action Updates</u></p> <p>6. Foster Care Recruitment (update on bidding process).</p> <p>7. Update on Immigration Issues for the LAC</p> <p>Draft Reports will be due with Jon Abbey on 16th September and due for publication on the 23rd September.</p>	<p>Jon Abbey</p> <p>Dominic Porter Moore</p> <p>Dominic Porter Moore</p>
12 Jan 2017	<p>1. Performance</p> <p>2. CPAC and Aspire notes</p> <p>3. Profile of CIC &Challenging cohort of CIC</p> <p>4. Pan-London Adoption bid</p> <p>5. Foster Carer recruitment update</p> <p><u>Substantive discussion item</u></p> <p>6. Housing Support</p> <p><u>Action Updates</u></p> <p>7. Members attending Foster Carer's forum / interaction with social workers</p>	<p>Margaret Gallagher</p> <p>Jon Abbey</p> <p>Margaret Gallagher/ Dominic Porter-Moore</p> <p>Jon Abbey</p> <p>Dominic Porter-Moore</p> <p>Denise Gandy</p>

Corporate Parenting Agenda Planning 2016/17

	Draft Reports will be due with Jon Abbey on 21st December and due for publication on the 4th January 2017	
3rd April 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance 2. CPAC and Aspire notes <p><u>Substantive discussion item</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Voice of the Child including placements and what IRO's do. 4. Care Leavers Strategy <p>Draft Reports will be due with Jon Abbey on the 17th March and due for publication on the 24th March.</p>	

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Report for: Corporate Parent Advisory Committee: 12 January 2017

Item number:

Title: Performance for the year to November 2016

Report

Authorised by: Jon Abbey, Director, Children's Services

Lead Officer: Margaret Gallagher, Corporate Performance Manager
margaret.gallagher@haringey.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non key

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an analysis of the performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.
- 1.2. Section 2 and 3 contain performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and areas for focus.
- 1.3. Section 4 provides an overall assessment relating to Children in Care so that Members can assess progress in key areas within the context of the Local Authority's role as Corporate Parent.

2. Positive or Improving Performance

- 2.1. **438 children were in care** on the last day of November 2016 or 74 per 10,000 population including 39 unaccompanied asylum seeker children. There has been a gradual increase in the level of children in care in comparison to the position at the end of March 2016 - 31 more children in care. However reduction in Haringey's rate of looked after children in 2015/16 places us within the inter-quartile range of our statistical neighbours (a rate of 69 per 10,000 population), although the current rate remains above the London (51) and national average (60) rates.
- 2.2. At the end of November, 91% of looked after children had an **up to date Care Plan**. Performance in this area has consistently remained above target since February 2016 as a result of activity tracking in weekly meetings held by the Head of Service for Children in Care.

- 2.3. At the end of November, 84% of looked after children aged 16-17 had **up to date Pathway Plans**. Performance in this area improved slightly since the reported position in August 2016 (82%) and is closing the gap with the 90% target. The longer term trend is a positive one and we have seen a step change in performance. This can be illustrated by a comparison of pathway plans as at April 2015 when only 22% of plans were up to date, this increased to 58% by October 2015 and by April 2016 we had achieved 77%. The improvement trend has continued this year and it is hoped that with continued focus we can achieve the 90% target.
- 2.4. A similar improvement trend on **Personal Education Plans** can be observed although current performance has declined since the August school holidays. 81% of school age looked after children have an up to date PEP as at the end of November. There is a current requirement to ensure PEPs are reviewed and updated termly as opposed to every six months so the next update will report the proportion of PEPs reviewed since the last term. This area continues to be a priority for performance tracking.
- 2.5. At the end of March 2016, there were 35 pupils in Year 11 who were looked after continuously for 12 months or more. Of these, 13 (37%) attained 5 **GCSEs A*-C incl.English & Maths** – a significant increase compared to 28% in 2015.
- 2.6. Indicators around **stability of placements** for looked after children remain in line with statistical neighbours and targets. In the year to November 2016, 9% of **children had three or more placement moves**, below the statistical neighbour average (10%). 75% of children under 16 who had been in care for at least 2.5 years had been in the same placement for at least 2 years, slightly above our statistical neighbour average (67%).
- 2.7. 95% of Children in Care had an **up to date review** at the end of November, above the 90% target. This relates to 3 children with late LAC reviews.
- 2.8. At the end of November, 95% of children in care for over a month had an **up to date health assessment**, above target and continuing the positive trend.
- 2.9. Data for the period July to September 2016 confirms that the **average duration of care proceedings for concluded cases** was 32.5 weeks, an improvement from the 37 weeks in Q1 and better than the 2015/16 average (34 weeks). Q2 data for 2016-17 shows 44% were concluded under the 26 week statutory timescale.
- 2.10. The outcomes for 36% of **care proceeding cases** issued between July and September 2016 was for children to remain with or reunify with their parents compared to 54% of children in 2015/16. In a further 27% of cases issued, children remained in their family of origin under SGOs and in 36% of cases children were placed on care/placement orders, an increasing trend compared to 2015/16.

3. Areas for Focus

- 3.1. In the year to November 2016, only 15 permanency orders have been achieved (8 **adoptions** and 7 **special guardianship orders (SGOs)** – 11 fewer than the same period last year and the lowest recorded for many years. There have been a few unborn babies and 1 relinquished case recently but there seems to be a trend towards placement with families- kinship or connected persons as opposed to adoption or SGOs. National quarterly data suggest that this is a trend being observed elsewhere with reduction noted in new decisions, placement orders, adoptions and adopter registrations.
- 3.2. **Of the children that have ceased to be looked after** this year 8.5% have **been adopted** which compares with 15% nationally and 8% in London but this is lower than the 11% achieved in 2015/16. Special guardianship referrals continue to be low and it is likely that no more than 12 will be achieved by the end of the financial year. If SGOs are included, almost 16% of those who ceased to be looked after achieved legal permanency this year.
- 3.3. Timeliness of children placed for adoption this year is higher than the national threshold (426 day average for 2013-16). In the year to November 2016, **children waited an average of 604 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption**. This relates to a relatively small number of adoptions (8) and includes 1 adoption in September where the person was adopted after more than 4 years in care. Although this may be a positive outcome for the young person, it does skew the average on this key indicator of timeliness.
- 3.4. Haringey's latest 3 year rolling average position as published in our Adoption Scorecard in March 2016 was 691 days for the period 2012-15, higher than the national threshold and England position of 593 days but close to our statistical neighbour average of 696 days. Adoption scorecards are used to track national progress on adoptions and adopter related data.
- 3.5. The 2015/16 trend towards the reduction in the number of **care proceeding applications** has shifted towards an increasing trend in Q1 2016/17. This trend has continued in Q2 and reveals a significant increase in applications in respect of children under 1.
- 3.6. 85% of **Children in Care visits** were recorded as completed in the relevant timescales in November. Performance in this area has remained below target since October 2014 mainly due to recording issues. Performance on visits continues to be tracked at performance meetings held by the Head of Service for Children in Care but is starting to show improvement from this additional regular focus.
- 3.7. 83 or 19% of Looked After Children at 30th November were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey**. Performance is worse than the 16% target however fewer children are being placed 20 miles+ and there are good reasons for these placements outside the borough many linked to complex care requirements or long term foster care arrangements. Although higher than national levels this proportion is only slightly above the average for London and

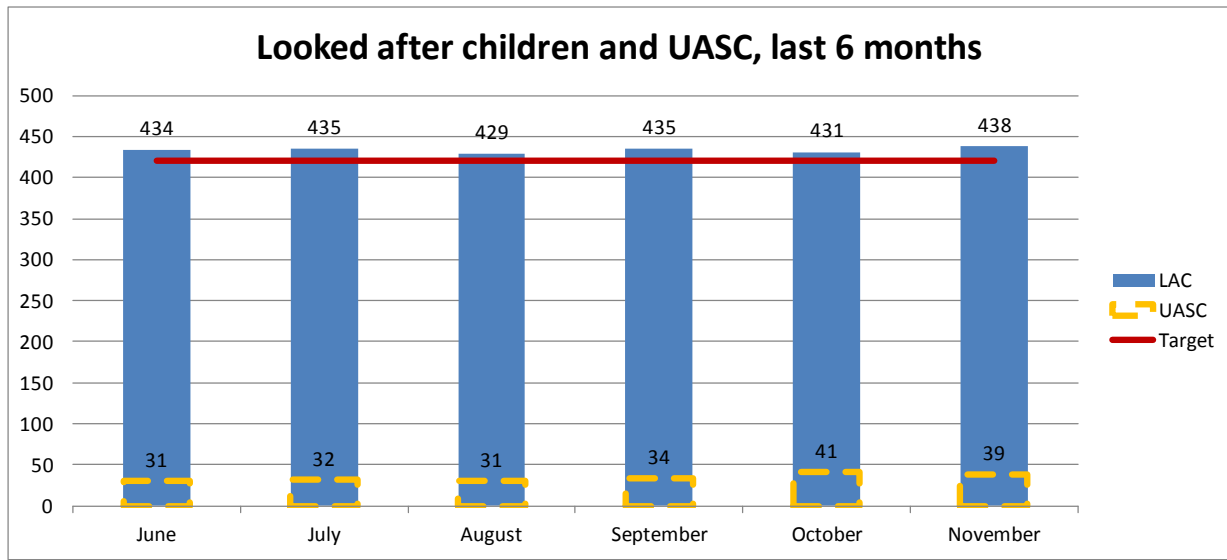
our Statistical Neighbours (18%) and is an improvement from the position at the end of March 2016 (23%).

- 3.8. 83% of the current LAC cohort had an **up to date dental visit** as at November 2016. There were 65 children without a recorded up to date dental check of which 37 have not had a visit since entering care. Detail of the children without a dental check and due a medical visit has been provided to target those with outstanding visits. The service is also liaising with the designated nurse to ensure timely notification of all children who become looked after.
- 3.9. Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training (EET)** for 2016-17 is comparatively poor and below average levels reported for England and London. Approximately 30% of *all* former relevant care leavers aged 17-21 are recorded as in EET down from 47% of 19-21 year olds and 57% of 17-18 year olds in 2015/16. This is lower than the national and London average comparator data (49% & 54% for 19-21 yr olds and 61% and 62% for 17-18 year olds). Haringey also reported a higher proportion where **the local authority did not have information about the care leavers activity** (19% compared to 12% average for London and 11% nationally) in 2015/16.
- 3.10. In 2016/17 around 50% of **care leavers are in suitable accommodation** down from 74% (for 19-21 year olds) and 71% (of 17-18 year olds) last year. Again this performance is comparatively low as nationally 83% of care leavers aged 19-21 are in suitable accommodation and 88% of 17-18 year olds.
- 3.11. The 2015/16 published data shows Haringey has a lower proportion of **care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21** who were ***in touch with the Local Authority*** at 81% compared with 87% nationally and in London. The data also reveals that we have a higher proportion (13%) where the young person no longer requires services compared to 3% nationally and in London. It is a similar picture for the 17 & 18 year olds although this data is experimental.
- 3.12. Regular meetings are held between the performance team and Young Adult Service to review and address the low position of care leavers in EET and suitable accommodation. A returning service manager has been allocated responsibility for updating the information on the system relating to the current care leaving cohort.

Overall Assessment of Children in Care

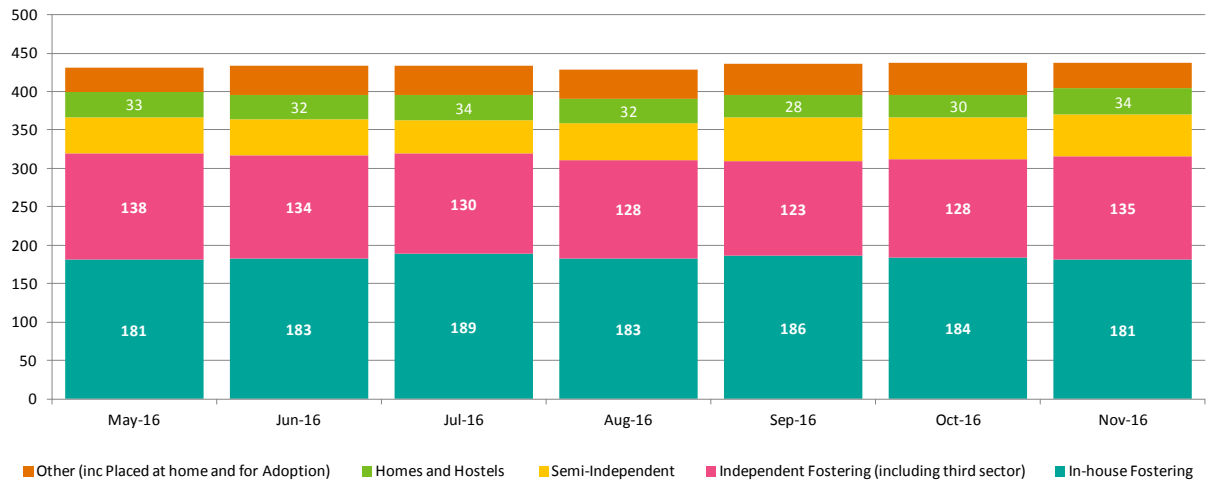
Looked After Children

- 4.1. There has been a 30% reduction in Haringey's rate of looked after children since 2012 compared with a 3.9% reduction in London and a 5% increase nationally. Over the last 6 months, the number of Looked After Children has increased slightly however our current rate of 74 per 10,000 population although higher than the national (60) and London average rate (51) is in line with the average rate for our statistical neighbours and relative to deprivation.



- 4.2. In the year to November 148 children have become looked after and 107 have ceased to be looked after, a net change of 41 children or 8% increase. Abuse and neglect remains the biggest category of need for children starting to be looked after, in 2015/16 this accounted for 51% of children coming into care in Haringey. We have also seen an increase in the category of Absent Parenting (19% up from 11% in 2014/15) largely due to increases seen in the numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and in family dysfunction (11%).
- 4.3. The profile of children starting to be looked after and in care is covered in a separate presentation provided for the Committee. The legal status of children coming into care is tracked. We are seeing increasing proportions coming into care and accommodated under section 20. In the year to November 68 or 45% of children becoming looked after, came into care on a legal status of Section 20 and 27% came into care via a Police Protection Order. 110 or 23% of our current LAC cohort at the end of November were accommodated under section 20 most of these in the older age group between 15 and 17 years old.

LAC placements by type



- 4.4. The graph above shows the breakdown of looked after children by placement type. The majority of children in care are in foster placements – 41% were placed with in house carers whilst 31% were placed with independent fostering agencies. Overall, the number of in-house placements is on an upward trend whilst the number of IFA placements is gradually reducing.

5. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 5.1. Priority 1: Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education.



Report for:	Corporate Parent Advisory Committee
Title:	Housing and care leavers
Lead Officer:	Denise Gandy, Director of Housing Demand

1. Introduction

Haringey Council set the strategic and policy direction for housing while Homes for Haringey deliver a range of operational services, including:

- Housing management service and repairs for Council tenants
- Maintenance of the Councils housing register and allocations of social lets
- Advice and support to households who are facing homelessness
- Access to supported housing

Both the Council and Homes for Haringey, therefore, have an important role to play as housing corporate parents.

2. Housing options for young people leaving care

2.1 Social housing quota for care leavers

We have an established agreement between Housing Services and Children's Services that a quota of social housing lets will be set aside each year for care leavers. The quota level is based on a projection of the number of people who are due to leave care that year and a consideration of the range of needs. The current quota is 60 one bedroom properties and 6 two bed properties.

The Young Adults Service nominate to the quota and band A status is allocated. For one bedroom properties, care leavers bid through the Council's choice based lettings scheme and choose a property from the Council or Housing Association properties that are advertised. For two bedroom properties, a direct let is made as it would take too long for a care

leaver to bid successfully for a 2 bedroom property as demand is so high for those properties.

2.2 Training flats (Hermitage Road and Fireman's Cottage)

In 2012 the Housing Service and YAS jointly developed our first supported living scheme, which provides training flats for young people who are due to leave care but are assessed as needing to develop some additional skills or experience before they are likely to be able to manage a tenancy. The first property, Hermitage Road was for young women and we then developed another scheme, Fireman's Cottage, for young men in 2014.

These schemes allow young people to live as part of a small group with a volunteer lead tenant to offer them additional support to get ready to live independently in a tenancy in the future.

We are looking to add some satellite studio bed flats to this provision where young people will receive floating support from the volunteer involved with the other schemes. .

2.3 Homelessness and temporary accommodation

If something happens that means that a young person is not able to remain in their placement and move straight into their permanent accommodation, they will be referred to the Housing Service to make a homeless application.

The Homelessness Priority Needs Order 2001 ensures that homelessness legislation supports the Leaving Care Act by stating that 18 – 21 year olds who are former relevant children have an automatic priority need and so the Council will owe them a homelessness duty if they are in housing need.

Since the introduction of the social housing quota, most care leavers move on to their settled accommodation without the need for temporary accommodation,. However, this was not the case historically and so we are currently reviewing all single households in temporary accommodation, including care leavers, with the aim of developing a move on plan with them to enable them to move to more settled accommodation.

2.4 Private rented accommodation

If a care leaver would prefer to move into private rented accommodation, they can be supported to do this through an incentive payment to a private landlord. Care leavers are exempt from the shared room rate in the private sector until they are 22 and so would be able to rent a one bedroom flat



rather than just a room (shared room rate applies to most other single people until they are 35)

3. Homes for Haringey offer

Since the last discussion at the Aspire meeting, the Homes for Haringey Directors have discussed whether there is more we can do to enhance our offer as corporate parents. Options discussed include:

- Working with one of our contractors to offer a day course on painting and decorating plus basic home maintenance for care leavers who are being awarded band A.
- An enhanced housing management offer.
- Offering an apprenticeship to a care leaver.

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Haringey Council – Children’s Services IRO Annual Report 2015/16

The Contribution of Independent Reviewing Officers to Quality Assuring and Improving Services for Children in Care

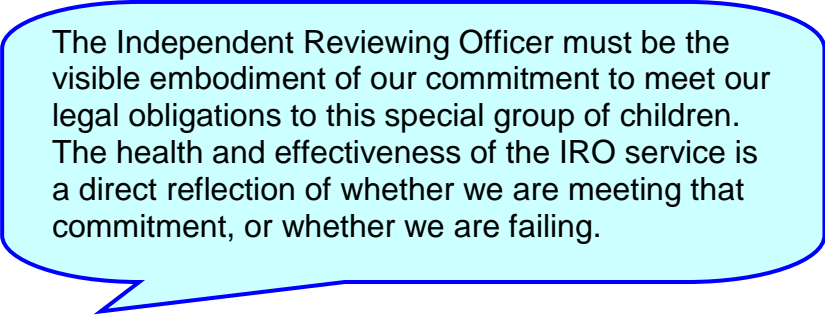
This Annual IRO report provides quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO Services in Haringey as required by statutory guidance.

The IRO Annual Report should be presented to the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Purpose of service and legal context

The Independent Review Officer (IRO) Service is set within the framework of the updated IRO Handbook and linked to revised Care Planning Regulations and Guidance which were first introduced in April 2011. The responsibility of the IRO has changed from the management of the looked after planning and review process to a wider overview of the case including regular monitoring and follow-up between Reviews. The IRO has a key role in relation to the improvement of care planning for Looked After Children (LAC) and for challenging drift and delay in case decisions and actioning plans.

The National Children’s Bureau (NCB) research ‘The Role of the Independent Reviewing Officers in England’ (March 2014) provides a wealth of information about the IRO role and function and findings regarding the efficacy of IRO Services more broadly. The foreword written by Mr Justice Peter Jackson makes the following comment:



The Independent Reviewing Officer must be the visible embodiment of our commitment to meet our legal obligations to this special group of children. The health and effectiveness of the IRO service is a direct reflection of whether we are meeting that commitment, or whether we are failing.

The NCB research outlines a number of important recommendations with the following three having a particular resonance for IRO work plan priorities:

1. Where IROs identify barriers to their ability to fulfil their role, or systemic failures in the service to looked after children, they must raise this formally with senior managers. These challenges and the response should be included in the Annual Report.
2. The IRO method for monitoring cases and how this activity is recorded should be clarified.
3. A review of IRO core activities and additional tasks should be undertaken. There is a need to establish whether IROs additional activities compromise independence or capacity.

Key messages – learning and improvement

This Annual IRO report provides quantitative and qualitative evidence relating to the IRO services in Haringey, as required by statutory guidance.

The IRO Service was subject to the Ofsted single inspection process which took place between 20th May 2014 and 11th June 2014. The Ofsted inspection report was published on 18th July 2014. The Ofsted (2014) inspection concluded that the IRO Service needed to add rigour and challenge and included the following recommendation to:

"Ensure that the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) is enhanced so that they properly challenge drift and delay in plans and escalate concerns about the quality of service provision, so that risks posed to specific groups of children and young people are known and understood and action is taken."

Appendix A includes a summary of the Ofsted (2014) inspection recommendations.

In addition to the Ofsted (2014) inspection process and recommendations, the IRO Service has been engaged in a range of improvement activity throughout the 2015- 2016 year. This activity is summarised below:

- Embedding a culture of supportive challenge and support within and in-between LAC Reviews through ongoing monitoring of children's care planning processes
- Improved quality assurance reporting, as follows;
 - Completing monthly monitoring forms on quality of practice
- Attendance at the Resource Panel and Permanency Tracking Meeting to contribute to quality assurance
- Visiting children prior to the 1st LAC Review
- Embedding the practice of endorsing care plans based on achievable, realistic outcomes with specific outcome focussed decisions through the use of the Signs of Safety model
- Visible challenging of practice which is contrary to the IRO guidance in relation to the movement of children to different placements, returning children home or other decisions not in the child's interest. The Dispute Resolution Process has been used in these instances.

IROs work plan priorities:

Work plan priorities were reviewed following the Ofsted (2014) inspection and included in the service plan. Work plan priorities included:

- Embedding Signs of Safety model into chairing and minuting LAC Reviews
- Increase engagement of children and young people in care planning and decision making
- Reflective team and individual supervision to enhance Impact and outcome focussed practice in reviews
- Ongoing monitoring by the IRO role acting as a critical friend to challenge and support practice. Improve mid way reviews in between LAC Review Meetings.
- IRO to see all children and young people prior to the 1st Review and consult with each young person within the spirit of the IRO guidance
- To improve children's feedback via Viewpoint

Professional Profile of the IRO Service

The IRO Team are part of the Conference and Review Service which sits within the Safeguarding Quality, Impact and Practice Service. The core function includes reviewing Care Plans for looked after children and young people and monitoring the local authority in respect of its corporate parenting duties and safeguarding responsibilities.

IROs are based at River Park House, co located with the social work staff..

The IRO Team has been through a period of significant changes. In October 2015 the post of Service Manager (managing IROs and CPAs) was permanently appointed to. In December 2015 the interim Head of Service left the department and a permanent Head of Service started in May 2016. In April 2015, a review of all children's service posts recommended that 2 IRO posts could be deleted, the review of foster carers was moved to the responsibility of the fostering and adoption service.

The IRO service has the following staff:

- 1 permanent Service manager for IROs and CPAs from October 2015
- 7.5 IROs (6.5 permanent, 1 interim)

Inevitably, the staffing changes outlined above have impacted on the continuity that some looked after children and young people have experienced.

The service also operates a multi functional administration service which responds to the administration needs of IROs. This includes sending out invitations and consultation documents and the distribution of LAC Review meeting minutes.

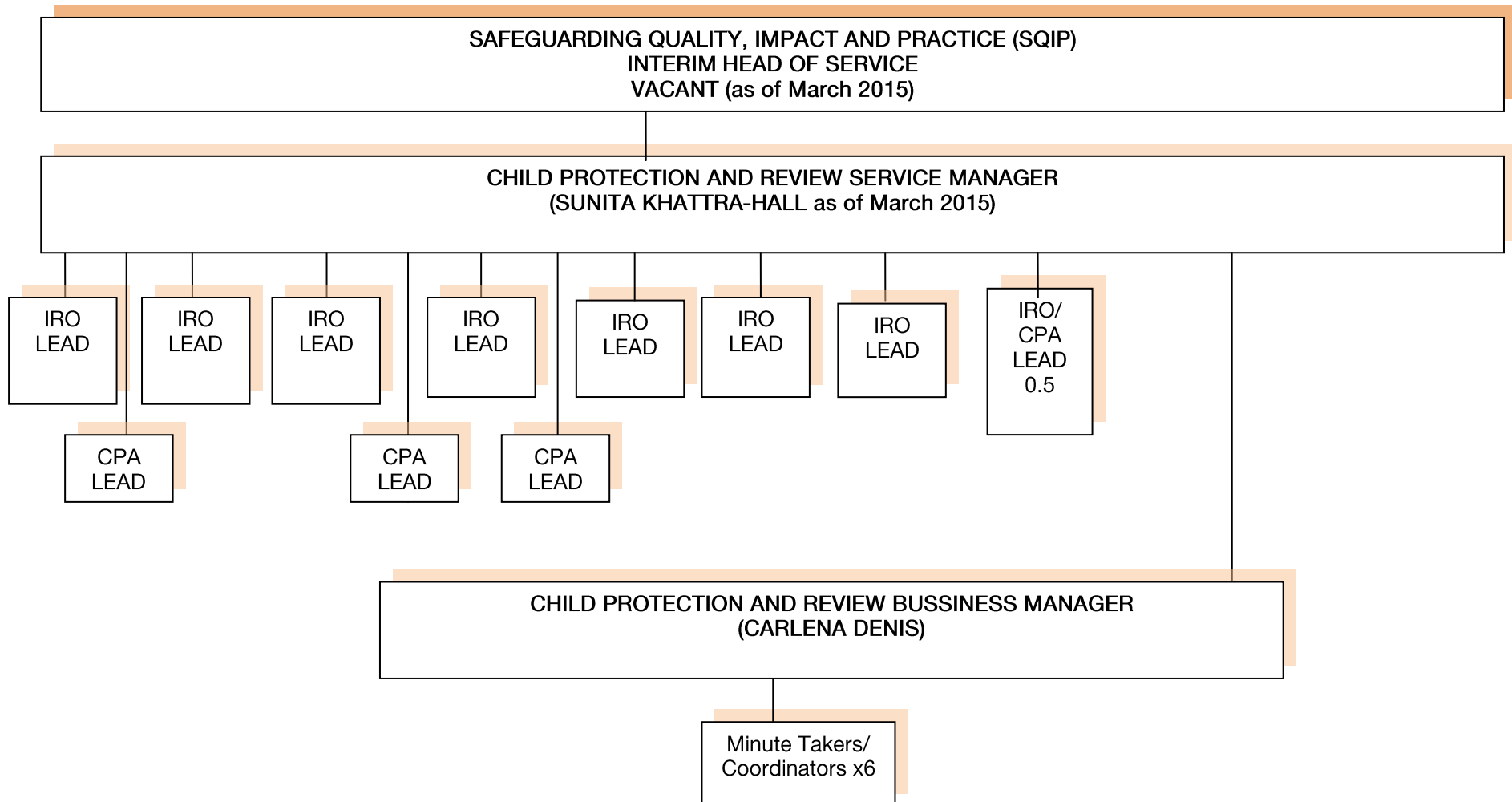
Ethnicity and Gender of IRO Staff:

IROs are at an equivalent grade to Team Managers and are all qualified and registered Social Workers. All 8 IROs work full time. The IRO Service has a diverse ethnic and gender profile as follows;

- 2 white males
- 1 white female
- 1 Asian male (part time post)
- 1 African Caribbean female
- 1 African female
- 1 white European male
- 1 white European female

This is broadly representative of Haringey Looked after population (Black British, White, European and Asian) in respect of ethnicity and cultural backgrounds. However, it is not representative in respect of the gender as Haringey have more looked after males than females.

IRO Service 2015/2016 Structure:



Quantitative information

Key Messages

The Looked After Child (LAC) population for 2015 – 2016 has reduced from 458 to 407 and the overall trend has shown an reduction in LAC children and young people. IRO caseloads have been between 60 – 70 per IRO. This compares with the recommended case load of 50-70 as set out in the IRO Handbook. A total of 1067 Reviews were Chaired by IROs in the year ending 31st March 2015.

Half (50%) of children and young people who started to become looked after during 2015 – 2016 were aged 13-17 years old. This means that 50% of children who became looked after were aged 0-12 years old.

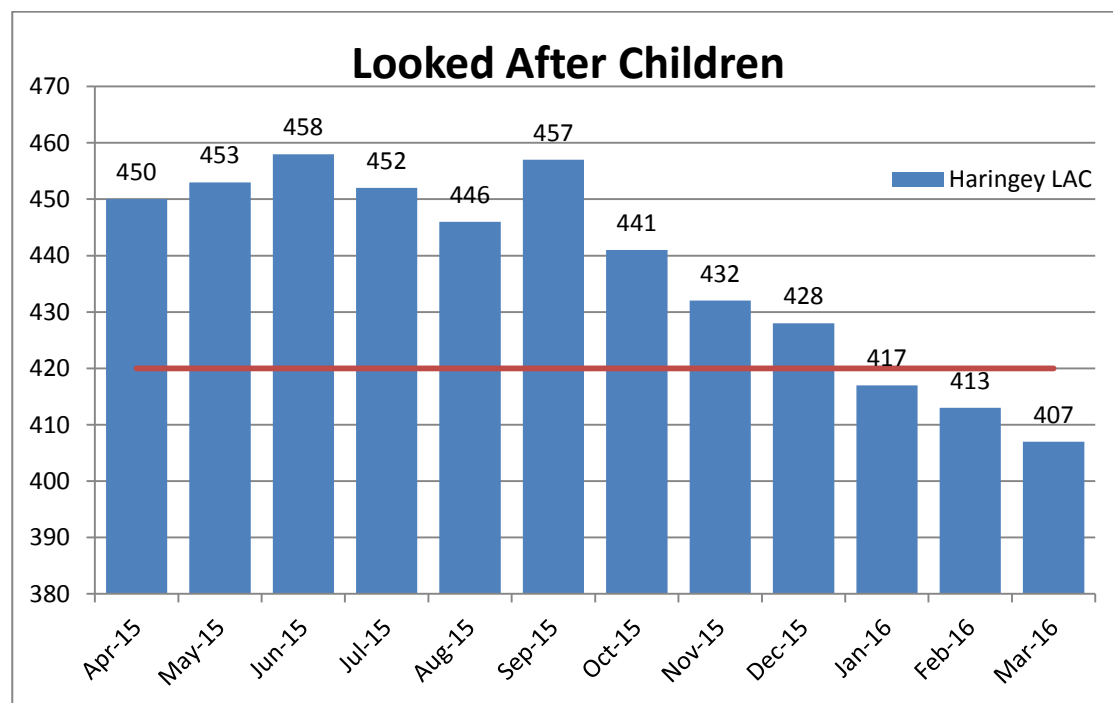
3 children with disabilities had looked after reviews in 2015/16. In these circumstances increased time and skill is required to ascertain the wishes and feelings of a child

In 2015/16 the majority of Reviews (92%) were held within timescale, this has improved from previous years, with last year LAC reviews held in timescales at 84.4%. Clear expectations are in place from the Service Manager that no LAC Reviews can be postponed or re-arranged once booked without the agreement of the Head of Service and that this will only be agree in exceptional circumstances. Clear guidance to manage review timescales, in line with the IRO guidance and best practice, has been provided to the all IROs by the Interim Head of Service and Interim Service Manager. The service plan requires that 100% of reviews in 2017/18 take place within timescale.

In terms of permanency outcomes during 2015/16:

- 8 children / young people were placed with a relative or friend
- 24 children were placed with adoptive parents
- 73 children / young people were rehabilitated home to the care of birth parents

Looked After Child population during 2015/16:



The bar chart above shows that between April 2014 to March 2015, the overall trend has been that LAC numbers have fallen from 458 to 407, with numbers peaking in June 2015 to 458. As of March 2015 Haringey LAC numbers were below that of statistical neighbours

The age profile of children and young people entering care during 2014 – 2015 is as follows::

- 13% of children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31st March 2015 were aged less than 1 year old
- 12% of children who started to be looked after were 1 to 4 years old
- 15% of children who started to be looked after were aged 5 to 9 years old
- 29% of young people who started to be looked after were aged 10 to 15 years old
- 30% of young people who started to be looked after were aged 16 years +

From last year's data the proportion of children becoming looked after over the age of 16+ has risen by 4%

This data for 2015/16 cannot be compared with statistical neighbours as comparative data is not as yet available.

The national benchmarking survey (December 2013) identified that the national average caseload for IROs ranged between 50 and 95. Within Haringey, IROs have had caseloads of between 60 - 70 in 2015 - 2016. The IRO caseloads included looked after children and young people who were;

- Children with disabilities
- Young adults
- Young people remanded into care
- Children and young people placed in foster care placements and residential care, including with in-house and independent fostering agency foster carers and with private and voluntary residential providers
- Children and young people made subject to a Special Guardianship Order
- Children who were adopted
- Young people subject to Secure Accommodation Reviews placed under s25 of the CA 1989

291 looked after children and young people were placed in placements outside of the local authority area (71% of the LAC population) this resulted in IROs spending a significant period of their working week travelling away from the borough / office. This impacted on their capacity to complete other IRO duties including, ongoing monitoring and visits to looked after children and young people in line with the IRO guidance.

There is an expectation that IROs do not only fulfil their role as part of the LAC Reviewing process but also add value to the care planning process in the following ways;

- Visit child / young person prior to the 1st review and continue to consult in between reviews
- Monitor the ongoing care and placement planning which includes the completion of mid way reviews
- Scrutinise the Local Authority's care planning process and be mindful about how the Local Authority meets its corporate parenting responsibilities. Initially any concerns are raised informally but in the event that no response, or an insufficient response, is received these issues are raised formally through the DRP.
- Challenge LAC care standards issues in a manner that will achieve the best outcomes for children and young people which is outlined in "Managing LAC Standards" guidance.

Therefore, it is important to note that the size of caseload alone does not indicate the workload of an IRO.

Permanency Outcomes

During 2014 - 2015, the majority of children have achieved permanency through reaching young adult hood or by returning home.

The permanency profile for children and young people leaving care in the year 31st March 2015 includes:

- 36% returned home to live with parents/relatives.
- 45% ceased to be looked after as a result of reaching adulthood
- 9% were adopted
- 8% became subject of a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
- 1% went into custody
- 1% accommodated via a court ordered remand, ended

IROs have identified a number of practice issues in relation to permanency planning and these are outline below:

- Children / young people are not being formally matched in long standing private and voluntary (P&V) foster placements
- Delay and drift in SGO packages being agreed
- The revocation of Care Orders not happening in a timely manner

Timeliness of reviews

92% of Looked After Reviews took place within the statutory timescales. IROs completed some reviews in a series of meetings to ensure that relevant people were involved and so that the meeting remained child-focused and friendly. Clear guidance is in place to ensure that convening a series of meetings is not used as a vehicle to keep reviews in timescale. Although the timeliness of LAC reviews has not reached our target of 100%, this is an improving performance on previous years which as 82% in 2012-13, 86% in 2103-14 and 84.4% 2014-15.

Entitlements and Advocacy

As part of their pathway plan review process all care leavers in Haringey are provided with information regarding their entitlements in order to help and assist young people stay in education, employment and training up until the age of 21 years. The level of support provided is dependent on the level of assessed need.

All care leavers in Haringey who are in receipt of / or claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) are provided with support via DWP and a work coach to assist them in negotiating the transition into employment and a chosen career. This is explained to each care leaver initially when making a JSA claim.

CYPS policy is to provide each young person with a copy of their needs assessment and subsequent pathway plan.

The IRO continues to chair a final Pathway Plan Review and at this review entitlements are considered and confirmed

At the present time however, there is no established IRO mechanism for capturing if children / young people are receiving the appropriate entitlements or advice about their entitlements. Going forward a formal mechanism will be established so that IROs will be able to report any concerning cases where young people have not received these entitlements and the outcome for how these matters were resolved.

Qualitative information - achievements and impact of IRO service

Children and young people's participation, feedback and views in and outside of the reviews:

Out of 1067, 113 children were under 4 so they could not convey their views. Out of the 954 LAC reviews for children above the age of 4 (97%) of children and young people participated in their Reviews for the year ending 31st March 2015. Participation includes attending and / or contributing to their Review.

IROs have supported and encouraged older young people in chairing their own review or setting their own agendas wherever appropriate.

Since March 2015 through observation and file review, the IRO Service Manager IROs has noted the following good practice;

- The child / young person remains the focus of the review record and his or her views are represented.
- The child is spoken to alone if appropriate and if he / she attends
- The IRO explained the care plan in a sensitive and appropriate manner dependent on the Child's age and understanding.

The child's voice

As well as chairing their LAC Review Meetings, IROs stay in contact with their allocated looked after children and young people by have contact via telephone, text or letters and undertake visits. Contact is made by the IRO both prior LAC Review Meetings and in between LAC Reviews at the midway point. The IRO Service Manager has completed observed the majority of IROs chairing of LAC Reviews Meetings and has seen evidence of good direct work with looked after children and young people. Within LAC Review records the child and young person's journey is well presented which helps to maintain an accurate account of developments and keeps their life story alive.

One of the key areas for development concerns the consultation process for looked after children to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are ascertained and taken into account through the whole journey through care, including their experience of their social worker. Weaknesses outside the review meeting itself have been noted in the existing method for consulting looked after children and young people and feedback has not been ascertained consistently or robustly enough.

The process is currently dependent on posting a consultation document to looked after children and young people so that they can complete this for consideration by the IRO ahead of the LAC Review Meeting. It has been accepted that the consultation method does not engage looked after children and young people consistently well, is not particularly child friendly and needs to be improves.

Viewpoint is an online software that will capture the views of looked after children. Training for social workers and administrators has been delivered in March 2016 and viewpoint was launched in April 2016.

Quality of Care Planning

IROs continued to monitor Care and Pathway Plans and during the reporting year 2014 to 2015 with 90% (up from 67% in 2014 – 2015) of children having an up to date care plan and 81% (up from 47% in 2014-2015) of young people having an up to date Pathway Plan. The practice standard sets out a clear expectation that all looked after children and young people will have an up to date Care, and where appropriate a Pathway Plans and this has been a significant and persistent performance priority which has the subject of a targeted improvement action plan.

The IRO Team has however been concerned about the low number of children having up to date Care and Plan. Many strategies have been attempted to both support performance improvement and challenge any drift and delay as a result of written Care and Pathway Plans not being up to date or inappropriate decisions being made. The statutory review process is based on having up to date plans and care planning. Analysis of this performance issue has identified staff turnover, workforce instability and high caseloads as underlying workforce factors.

To counter the potential risks associated with this practice issue for individual looked after children and young people, IROs have made sure that clear care planning discussions have occurred prior to and within reviews meetings. IROs have also made a record on Mosaic case notes and escalated issues to the Team and Service Managers. This action aims to acknowledge the efforts that are being made to stabilise and strengthen the workforce within the Children in Care Teams whilst working to establish a clear understanding about relevant Care and Pathway Planning issues. This action doesn't indicate an acceptance of sub-standard practice and it is anticipated that performance will continue to improve as workforce stability and permanency are addressed.

Personal Education Plans and Health Assessments

IROs have reviewed education and health planning processes as part of the LAC Review process. Personal Education Plans (PEP) and Health Assessments (HA) feed into the review process and are routinely completed and considered to ensure that needs are identified, plans for intervention and support are put in place so that they can be monitored and reviewed over time. As at 31st March 2016 performance was as follows:

- 89% of looked after children / young people had an up to date PEP
- 97% of looked after children / young people had an up to date HA

This is an improvement from previous years performance which was 62% and 94% respectively.

The Service Manager has attended Health operational Meetings and continues to work closely both at an operational and strategic level to ensure that LAC health needs are identified and addressed.

Management oversight

The revised statutory guidance states that operational social work managers must consider the recommendations from the LAC Review before they are finalised as decisions. This is due in part to the need to ensure that any resource implications have been fully considered and addressed as well as wanting to ensure management agreement. Once the recommendations are completed the Manager has 5 days to raise any queries or objections before they are endorsed and agreed as the LAC Review decisions.

IROs have routinely produced LAC Review recommendations within 5 working days for consideration by social work managers. More recently, this process has been developed and formalised within guidance endorsed by the Heads of Service and Service Managers whereby IROs send their recommendations in an email to Team Managers while copying in the relevant Service Manager. Team managers respond within a further 5 working days, after 10 working days these recommendations become confirmed decisions. It is anticipated that any disputes are resolved within the initial 10 working days.

Quality Assurance

Identifying good practice, problem resolution and escalation

IROs have routinely given verbal feedback and confirmed via emails both good case work practice and practice that has not met appropriate practice standards. There is a culture of celebrating good practice and learning through critical challenge and reflective practice.

As part of this developing strong practice based culture, the CYPS Dispute Resolution Procedure (DRP) was refreshed and re launched in February 2015.

Refreshed Dispute Resolution Procedure:

The revised Dispute Resolution Procedure (DRP) was launched by CYPS on the 9th February 2015. Since this time the IROs and CPAs have raised both **informal** concerns and **formal** disputes.

These have been raised under the following categories:

- Management decision making
- Care / protection assessment and planning
- Provision of services / resources
- Practice standards
- Working together with multi-agency/disciplinary partners (nb: unresolved safeguarding issues raised by CYPS with partners should also be raised formally via the LSCB)

- Child / Parent /Carer's views, wishes and feelings

The expectation is that the DRP should be activated by the IRO in their role as a champion of LAC (and by CPAs for children subject to a Child Protection Plan) and as part of their role as a critical friend to the service. A summary of DRP activity is as follows:

DRP Analysis

There were 5 formal DRP's that were initiated in 2015 – 2016. All 5 related to young people that were between 16 and 18 and the issues were primarily around the entitlement to a package of support for the young person

The IROs have many informal discussions with team managers regarding practice issues in terms of care planning for children and young people and this activity can be seen on the case file. Out of the 458 looked after children the IROs had generated activity on 330 children. This ranged from issues around permanency, quality assurance of care and adoption packages and contact issues but did not reach the DRP criteria.

Supervision and training

IROs have scheduled one to one reflective supervision at least every four weeks (on a monthly basis) as per the CYPS supervision policy and can obtain management advice, guidance and support on an ad hoc basis when required. There are fortnightly IRO & CPA Meetings and a bi-monthly Service Meeting.

IROs have met with CAFCASS to discuss ongoing practice standards and developments including implementation of the Public Law Outline and relevant case law.

IROs also attended group reflective supervision sessions which concentrated on the following issues;

- Case presentations
- Implementing SOS
- Endorsement / non endorsement of care plans
- Chairing meetings and the use of appropriate authority

All individual case discussions are placed on the relevant child and young person's electronic (Mosaic) file under either 'IRO reflective supervisions' or 'IRO management decisions' which evidences decision making within the IRO service and strengthens IRO practice.

Overview and Summary

The Ofsted (2014) inspection highlighted the need to strengthen and improve the IRO services for looked after children and young people which would enable CYPS to achieve a “good” judgement. As a response to this feedback the IRO Service has started an improvement journey in order to strengthen its own practice as well as developing its ability to provide challenge and support to CYPS in relation to care planning and corporate parenting responsibilities. Whilst the role of the IRO can be uncomfortable, especially when challenging practice within the department, it is important that CYPS embraces this aspect of the service as a valuable contribution to ensuring that the needs of looked after children and young people are championed and promoted.

The IRO Service has brought rigour and challenge to care planning practice for looked after children and young people in the following ways:

- Challenging placement moves which are not in the best interest of the child / young person
- Challenging drift and delay through use of informal and formal DRP
- Working with both Social Workers and Virtual School staff to improve PEP compliance and quality
- Supporting and critically challenging the quality and compliance of individual Care Plans
- Monitoring LAC activity to ensure that the right children are recorded as ‘in care’ at the right time through monthly reports
- Monitoring children who cease to be looked after to ensure that the decision is made in their best interest as part of the LAC Review process or is at least decided in consultation with the IRO
- Using the LAC Review process for placements that are at risk of breaking down
- Learning from shared practice through reflective group supervision
- Ensuring that IRO case specific reflective supervision and management decisions are placed on the child’s file
- Inviting the IRO Service Manager to sit on the Permanency Tracking Panel meeting and the Resource Panel to add rigour and challenge

Although there has been significant progress at pace within the IRO Service where the IRO has increasingly provided more rigour and challenge during the course of 2015/16, the following areas of development remain a priority to improve outcomes for looked after children and young people:

1. Consulting with children / young people to improve ways in which their views, wishes and feelings are ascertained and acted upon
2. Adding further rigour and challenge to care planning issues in respect of the following:
 - Ensuring permanency plans are in place at the second LAC Review to avoid unnecessary drift and delay
 - Ensuring appropriate Special Guardianship support plans are approved and in place in a timely manner
 - Ensuring the process for agreeing matches for looked after children and young people living in established long term independent fostering agency placements is clarified and acted upon in a timely manner
 - Ensuring the timely revocation of Placement Orders when necessary and appropriate
 - Ensuring the timely revocation of Care Orders where necessary and appropriate
- Implementing a robust system for recording entitlements and advocacy and pursuing advocacy where required
- Embedding the IROs use of authority to record whether proposed Care Plans are endorsed, or not
- To provide quarterly reports for children and young people in respect of resolution of DRP activity, impact and outcomes

Annual work programme for April 2015 – March 2016

The IRO work plan is outlined as follows:

- Applying and embedding Signs of Safety model to chairing and recording LAC Reviews that are understood by children, young people and their families
- Increase engagement of children and young people in care planning decision making and feedback on service delivery
- Reflective team and individual supervision and observation of practice, to develop the IRO skills of analysis and quality assurance role.
- IROs acting as a critical friend to challenge and support practice and improve mid way reviews in between LAC Review Meetings.
- IRO to see all children and young people prior to the 1st Review and consult with each young person within the spirit of the IRO guidance
- To improve children's feedback via Viewpoint

Appendix A



IRO - Annex A.docx

Looked After Children Analysis

Produced by the Performance Team

October 2016

LAC Position as at 30th September 2016

There were **436** children looked after at the end of September; **7% increase** since March 2016.

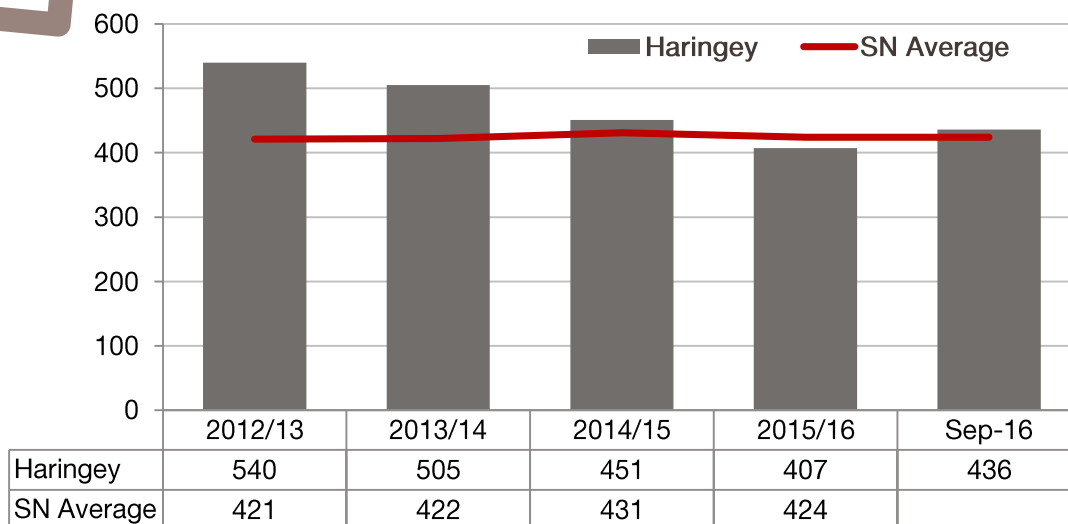
LAC Rate:

Haringey's rate of LAC per 10,000 population was **67** at year ending 2015-16 – in line with our statistical neighbour average (67).

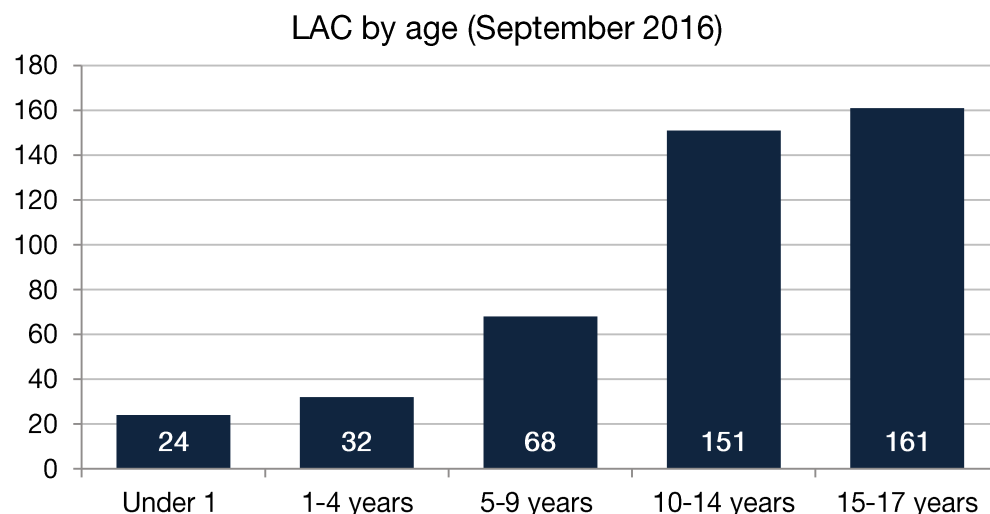
Haringey's position at the end of September was **72**.

At the end of 2015/16, the number of looked after children in Haringey was below the statistical neighbour average although the rate per 10,000 was in line. There has since been an increase positioning the current LAC number slightly above our comparative boroughs (424) and local target (420).

Number of Looked After Children



LAC by age, September 2016



The largest proportion (**37%**) of LAC at the end of September were aged between 15 and 17 years.

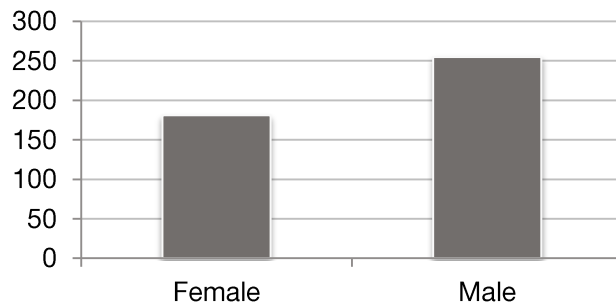
Since April 2016, **83** of those who became looked after, remained in care at the end of September. Of these (**35%**) were 15-17 years old.

Of all those aged 15-17 years, **41%** have been looked after for more than 4 years. **29%** have been in care for less than a year.

12 of 161 looked after 15-17 years olds were in care due to socially unacceptable behaviour; 9 of which have been in care less than a year.

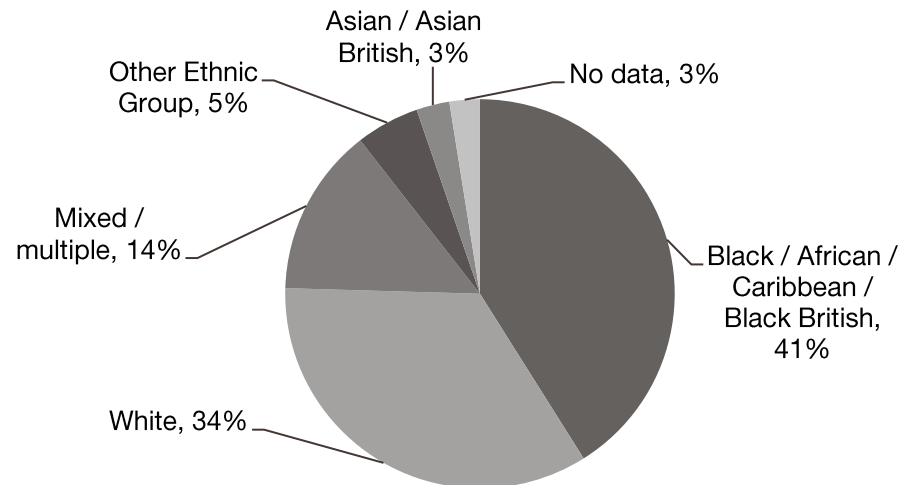
LAC by gender and ethnicity, September 2016

Majority of LAC were male (58%) whilst 42% were female



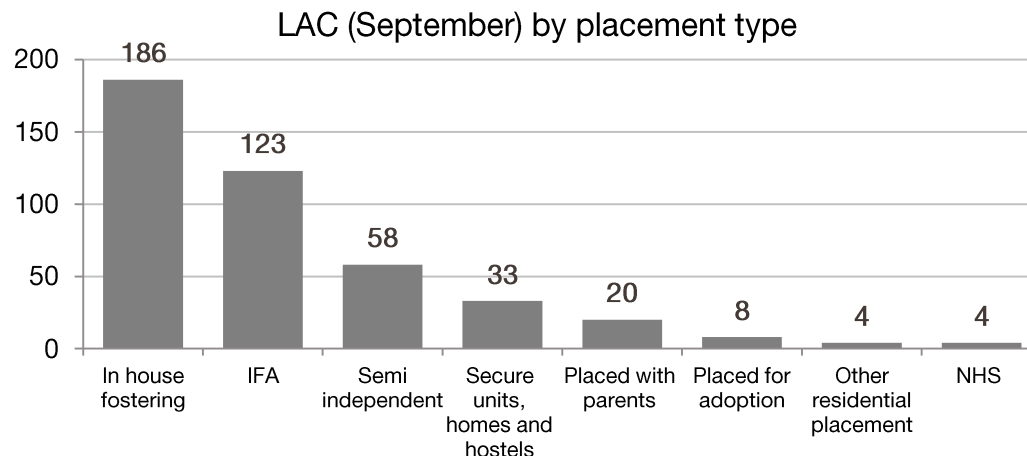
Of the males looked after, the most common category of need was abuse/neglect or *absent parenting* whereas females were mainly looked after due to abuse/neglect or *family dysfunction*.

Highest proportion of LAC at the end of September were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British.

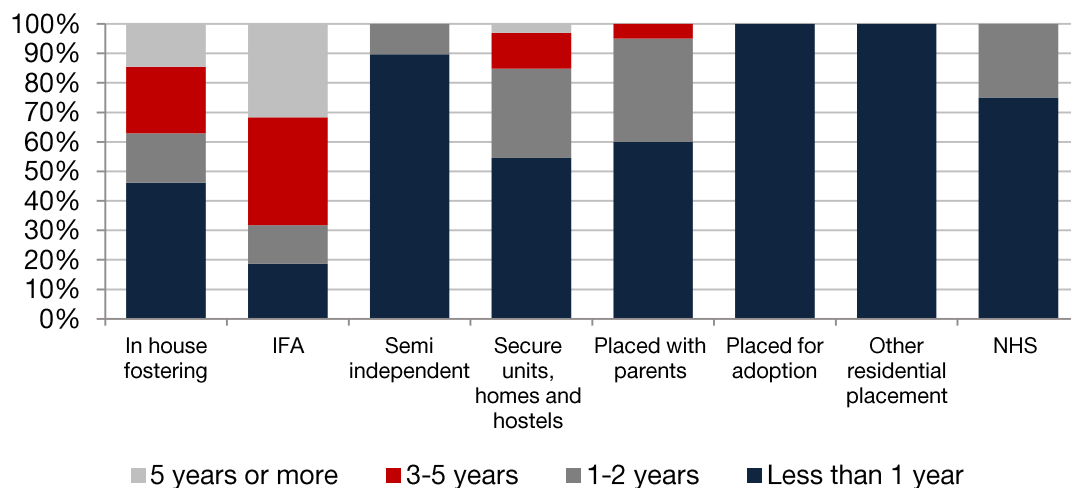


LAC by placement type, September 2016

Highest proportion of LAC were placed with in-house foster carers



LAC (September) by current placement type and length of time in placement

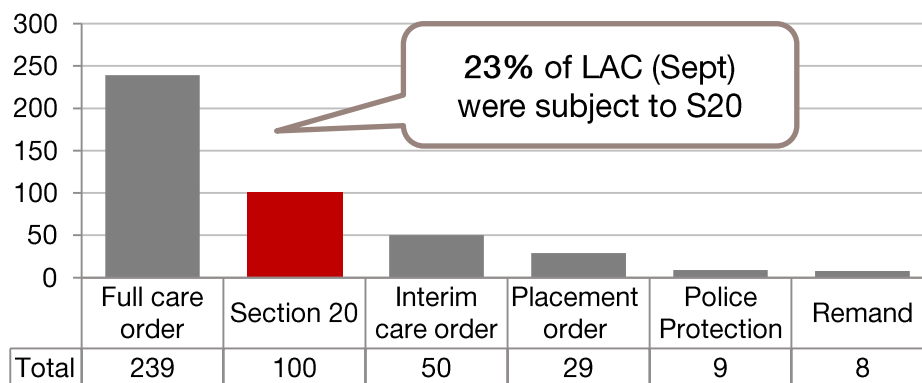


Majority of LAC in the same placement for 5 years or more were placed with foster carers.

Of these, 59% were IFA and 41% were in-house.

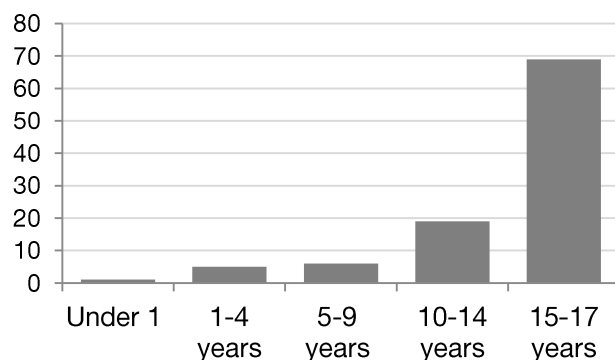
Children looked after under Section 20 (V2), September 2016

LAC by legal status



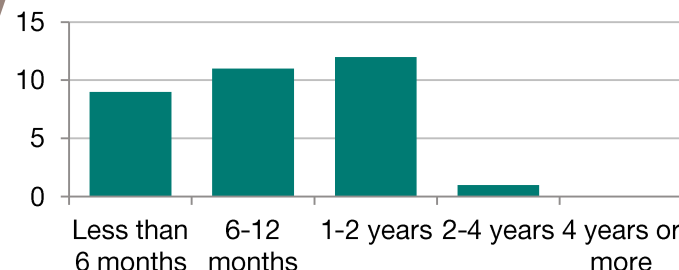
33 of 100 LAC subject to S20 were **Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers**; all above the age of 10 and majority (30) aged 15-17.

LAC subject to S20, by age

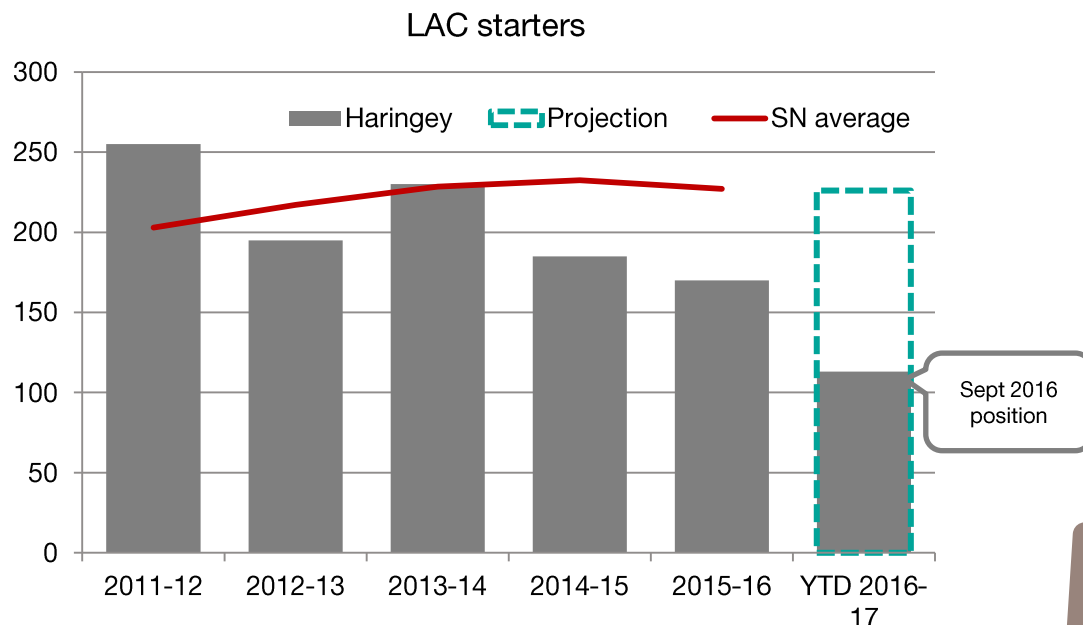


The largest proportion (**69%**) of LAC subject to S20 were aged 15-17 years old

UASC, by length of time in care



Children becoming looked after



Of the 113 children who became LAC in the YTD 2016-17, the largest proportion were subject to Section 20 (41%; 46 children). Of these, 10 children were UASC.

Over the years, there has been a national decline in the number of children under 1 becoming looked after; Haringey also saw this decline (13% in 2015-16 from 21% from 2012-13).

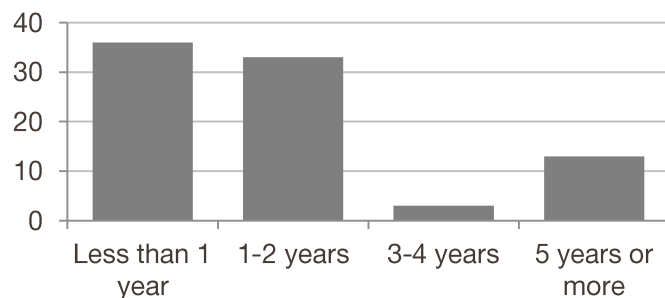
However, in the YTD 2016-17, 15% of children starting to be LAC were under 1.

The rate per 10,000 population for children becoming looked after in Haringey was 28 in 2015-16. Our SN average was 36.

Based on our current number of LAC starters between April and September 2016, the projection for 2016-17 is 37 LAC starters per 10,000 population (in line with our SN average).

Children ceasing to be looked after

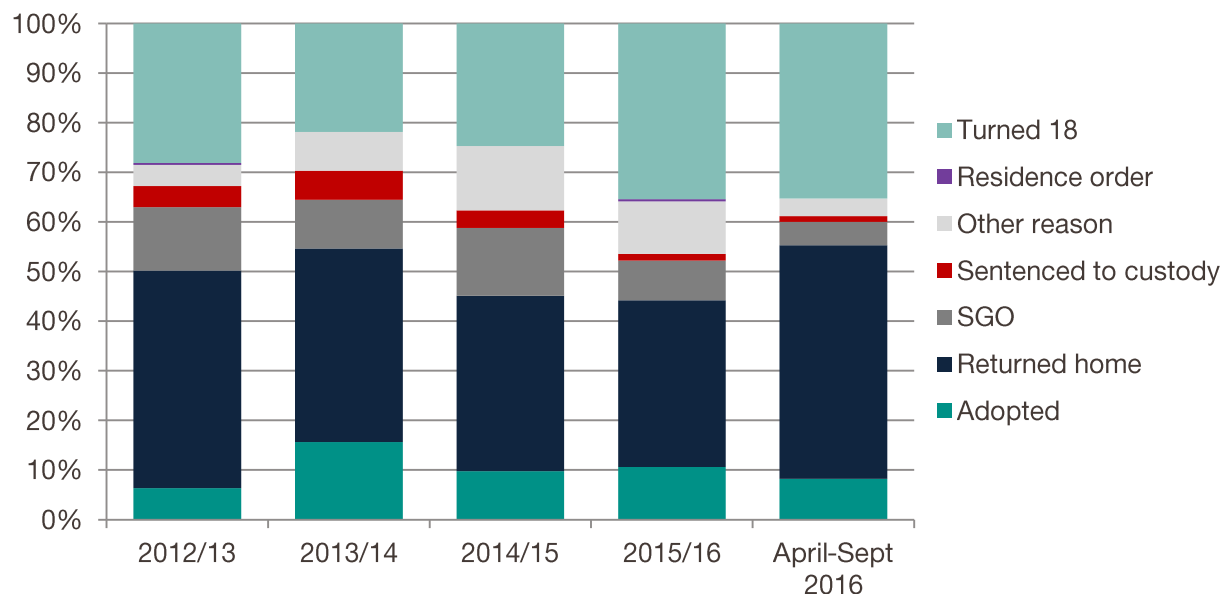
LAC ceased, April to Sept 2016, by length of time in care



In the year to September 2016, **85** children/ young people ceased to be looked after – 11 fewer than the same period last year.

Of those, that ceased, 42% were in care for less than 1 year; 15% were LAC for more than 5 years.

Ceased LAC by reason



There has been an increase in the percentage of LAC who returned home to their parents and those who ceased due to turning 18 over the last few years.

Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee : 12 January 2017

Report title: Looked-after Children

Report

authorised by : Neelam Bhardwaja
Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Social Care

Lead Officer: Annie Walker, Deputy Head of Service Children in Care.
0208 489 1803.

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

The issues and reasons behind the challenging cohort of Looked-After Children (LAC).

2. Background

2.1 Haringey covers 11 square miles and has an estimated population of 282,000 (2015 data). However there is an upward trajectory which is thought to be linked to an increase in migration from other countries coupled with a high birth rate.

2.2. Haringey is rich in its diversity being the 5th most ethnically diverse borough with 100 different languages being spoken. It is estimated that by 2020 there will be 286,900 people resident here.

2.3 In line with an increase of the general population it is also predicted that those aged 0-17 (which is currently one third of the population as a whole) will also rise thus potentially increasing our client group.

2.4 Haringey has residents who are experiencing serious levels of deprivation. Haringey is 30th in England in terms of the number of residents who are economically disadvantaged and sixth out of the 33 London Boroughs. The wards where deprivation and poverty is at its highest are situated in the east of the borough which is also where a significant proportion of the total population is concentrated. Poverty impacts on parenting capacity as do life events which have caused trauma. Linked with this, Haringey's Edge of Care Provision reports the prevalence of parental drug and alcohol misuse in those parents with whom they work.

2.5 The Looked-after Population

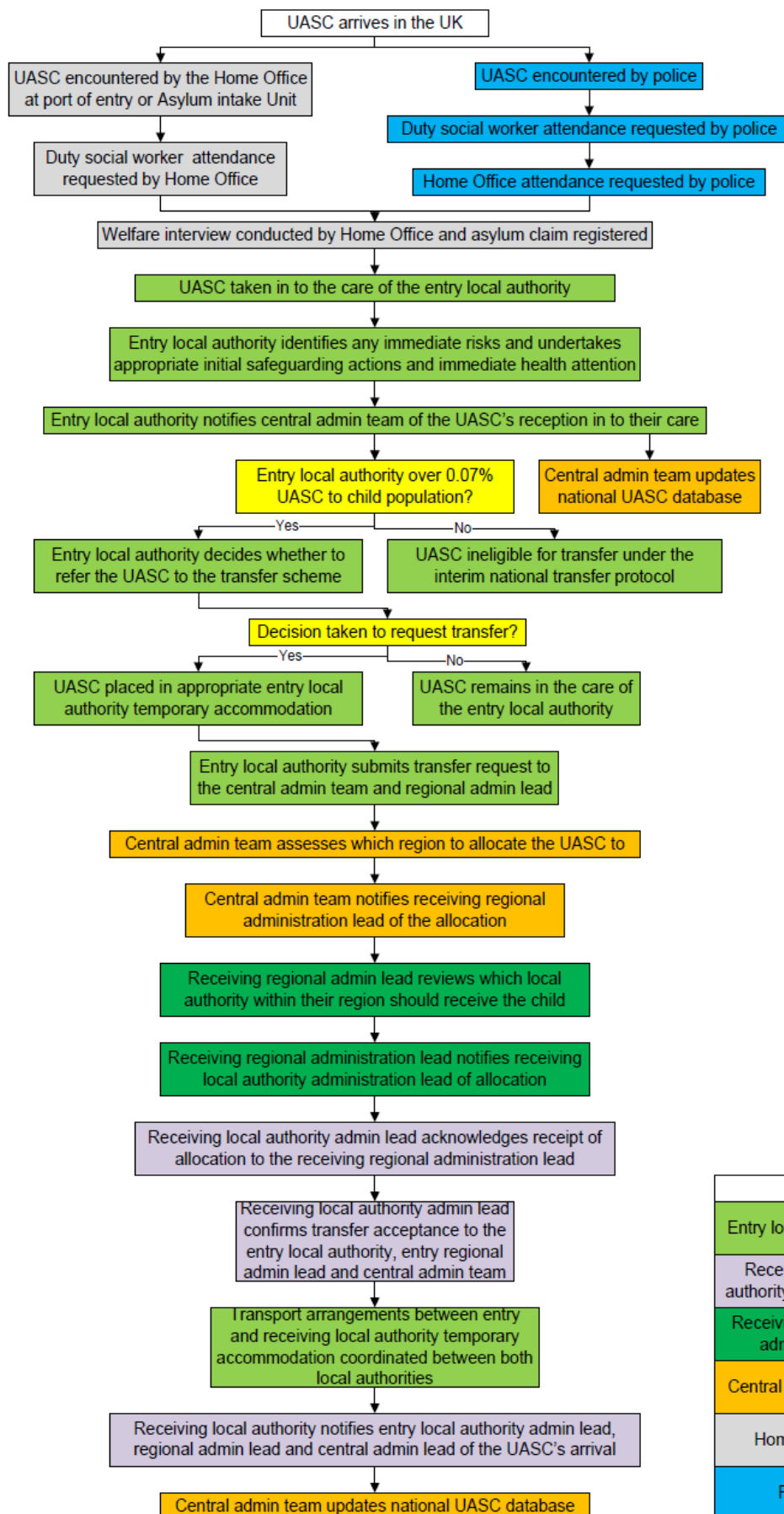
- 2.6 A snap shot of our Looked After population was produced by the Performance Team based on data for the month of September 2016 and at that point there were 436 young people in the care of the local authority. This is a 7% increase on March 2016 and slightly above those of our statistical neighbours (Hackney, Waltham Forest, Lambeth, Islington, Hammersmith and Fulham, and Croydon).
- 2.7 The largest group of Looked After Children (322) were in the older age group of 12 to 17 years. There were also a significant number of children (124) aged 0-9. also children aged 0-9. Whilst there had been a decrease in the number of children under the age of 1 year becoming Looked After, in line with the national trend, there has been an increase within the past year. It is unclear as to why this spike has occurred as the prevailing external factors remain largely constant and it is possible whether it is connected to a change in threshold criteria.
- 2.8 In terms of gender, most Looked After Children are male (58%) and their ethnicity is recorded as being Black/African/Caribbean/Black British. The most common causal factor in them becoming looked after is abuse/neglect or absent parenting. Of the 42% who are female the most common reason recorded related to abuse/neglect or family dysfunction.
- 2.9 There is abundant research detailing the catastrophic affect on children and young people who experience abuse and neglect which can cause cognitive impairment. Disordered attachments are another feature of abuse and neglect. This has a wide ranging effect which limits the sufferer's ability to form healthy relationships with others.
- 2.10 The majority of our looked-after children reside in foster care. 186 are placed with in-house carers and a further 123 are placed with carers provided by independent agencies. The majority of LAC who have remained in the same placement for five years or longer have been placed in foster care and this has contributed to the positive data in regard to the stability of placements . External providers fill a gap that we cannot be covered through in-house fostering but there is a financial pressure linked to outsourcing as the average cost of an Independent Foster Agency placement is double that of in-house provision. Increasing the number of in house fostering households will reduce pressure on the placements budget and it is therefore business critical that we increase the number of in house fostering households and a re-tendering process is underway with regard to recruitment.

We are experiencing difficulty in locating specialist placements that meet the needs of children and young people who have been damaged by their life experiences and whose needs cannot be met by foster care. The lack of provision for those relatively young children who have mental health problems has recently been put into sharp focus. Our colleagues in First Step Plus have undertaken a pilot project working with children who have experienced multiple placement breakdowns and provide a helpful link with NHS England. These difficulties in locating provision for difficult to place children and young people

extend to those who need the provision of secure accommodation , either because of welfare issues or because of their criminality.

- 2.11 The October snap shot revealed that those subject to S20 numbered 100 with the majority being in the 10-17 age-group, 33 of whom were Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers and another eight were young people who had been remanded into local authority care. S20 has its place particularly with older young people where acquiring parental responsibility through the courts would serve no purpose.
- 2.12 Regularising the immigration status of our LAC presents a continuing challenge, not solely in regard to Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers. A number of LAC do not have status in the UK because their parents were here illegally, and the remedy for this is either acquiring Citizenship or Naturalisation (see. para. 22.2 below)
- 2.13 There has been an increase in the percentage of Looked After Children who return to their family and number of factors feed into this. For example, the process of care proceedings and the resultant parenting assessments are often a dynamic for change to occur and a rehabilitated home to take place. In addition, over time the causal factors for a child to become Looked After have been ameliorated and a rehabilitation home takes place under the Placement with Parents procedure.
- 2.14 There is also an increase in young people 'leaving care' when they attain the age of 18 years. However our role as corporate parent continues beyond that in terms of financial and practical help. There is also the provision of a safety net for those whose rehabilitation home is not successful and in cases where Special Guardianship arrangements breakdown.

Transfer Flow Chart



Key
Entry local authority
Receiving local authority admin lead
Receiving regional admin lead
Central admin team
Home Office
Police

- 2.15 Guidance received from the Association of London Directors of Children's Services will apply until the ALDCS review the London arrangements. The following arrangements will remain in place for Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) until further notice.
- (a) For 16-17 year-olds presenting in the Asylum Intake Unit in Croydon: The London protocol continues to be operational for this group, but that further placements are not made in authorities which are over the 0.07% threshold of UASC to total child population.
 - (b) For UASCs under 16 presenting in Croydon: these children will feed into the national transfer protocol once Croydon has assurance that these arrangements are ready to take the volume of children (around 22 per month).
 - (c) For spontaneous presentations in other boroughs of UASCs of any age: where the authority is under the 0.07% threshold these will become looked after to that borough; where the authority is over 0.07%, these children will feed into the national transfer arrangements.
- 2.16 In the first instance UASC will be dispersed within the local region (such as London region) in which the child first presents if there are local authority partners who are under the ceiling of 0.07%.
- 2.17 The only exception to these arrangements is if it is assessed as not in the UASC best interest to be referred to the transfer protocol, for example if a sibling or close relative is also looked after by the receiving local authority.
- 2.18. On 8th September 2016, the Immigration Minister Robert , Goodwill MP wrote to all Council Leaders in the UK requesting that all local authorities:
- i) who have not registered for the National Transfer Protocol do so by the 21st September 2016. The Immigration Act 2016 gives the government the power to make the scheme mandatory if required
 - ii) Local Authorities are also requested to confirm how many more UASC they could accept using the 0.07% threshold.
 - iii) That local authorities under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) consider taking children and their families as part of the UK government's commitment to receive 20,000 Syrian refugees over the next five years.
- 2.19 In regard to the VPRS it remains unclear what the dispersal and allocation mechanism will be although in a London Councils briefing document dated 13th September up to the end of Q2 2016/17 nine London authorities had taken a total of 144 Syrian refugees.

- 2.20 London local authorities face challenges such as identifying sufficient private rented accommodation that is both available and affordable for refugee families receiving local housing allowances and the cap on levels of housing allowances and income maintenance benefits especially for larger refugee families.
- 2.21 The Greater London Authority calculate that London will take 2500 refugees as part of the national commitment to take 20,000 refugees.
- 2.22 Looked after Children with uncertain immigration status**
- 2.23 Expert legal advice has been sought regarding LAC & care leavers in regard to LAC without a settled immigration status. There is no statutory requirement which says the local authority (LA) must seek to achieve settled immigration status for its looked after children. However the duties under S23(c) are broad. The local authority duties rest on two tests:
- i) how a reasonable parent would act in respect of their child and
 - ii) the 'welfare of the child test'.
- 2.24 The analysis and outcome of the assessment would inform care planning and decision making on resolving a looked after child's immigration status.
- 2.25 Children and young people who become looked after by a local authority**
- 2.26 At the earliest opportunity the assessing Social Worker must identify what the citizen status of the LaC is, whether they are UK citizens, European Union or the European Economic Area (EEA) citizens or from other countries outside the EU and EEA.
- 2.27 The allocated social worker will need to get a clear picture from the parents or carers as to their immigration status and the child's immigration status, what applications the family has made or plan to make and confirms that the parents will be including their child in any applications they intend to make whilst the child is in care.
- 2.28 If a LAC remains in care and there is little likelihood of rehabilitation to the parents or becomes LaC through the provisions of a S31 care order or the parents abandon their child or refuse to co operate then the local authority will need to undertake the two tests of a reasonable parent and the welfare of the child test to determine whether the LA takes steps to secure the LAC with indefinite leave to remain in the UK. The exception to this would be if the permanency plan is for adoption as once a child is adopted the child assumes the citizen status of their parent(s).
- 2.29 The decision to support and fund a LAC seeking indefinite leave to remain will depend on the needs assessment of the LAC. Once the decision has been taken that it is in the child's welfare for their immigration status to be regularised then this needs to be done as quickly as possible as the threshold test for granting indefinite leave to remain is lower for children than for care leavers over the age of 18.

- 2.30 However part of the assessment must be an analysis of whether the LaC can be returned to the Children's Social Care Services or friends & family in their home country.
- 2.31 Whether or not a child can return to their home country depends on the country, the reasons why the child is in care, the social work assessment and facts of the child's case. There may well be cases where the LA takes the view that it would not fund the application but decisions will need to be based on assessments.

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