

<b>Report for:</b>	Corporate Parenting Committee <b>19 December 2013</b>	<b>Item Number:</b>	
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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Senior Leadership Team – Performance for the year to October 2013</b>
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<b>Report Authorised by:</b>	<b>Marion Wheeler Assistant Director CYPS</b>
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>  All	<b>Report for Non Key Decision:</b>  NA
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## 1. Introduction

1.1. This report sets out performance data and trends for an agreed set of measures relating to looked after children. Section 2 provides an overall assessment of performance in the service and performance highlights. Appendix 1 provides a series of tables and graphs for each of these measures, grouped by topic, showing monthly data, performance against target, long term trends and benchmarking where applicable. It also contains performance and service comments for each area to provide context.

## 2. Performance Highlights/ Key Messages

### Performance Highlights

#### Positive Performance

- **502 children** were **in care** on the last day of October 2013 or 87 per 10,000 population This represents a 7.5% reduction since the end of March 2013 and a 14.5% reduction since end of March 2012 to now. This progress and steady downward trajectory over the last 3 years means we are moving towards alignment with the level in similar boroughs (2012/13 data recently published) of 72 per 10,000.
- As at 31 March 2013 and amongst our statistical neighbours Haringey's **rate of Looked After Children** at **94 per 10,000 population** is the second highest.
- 96% of **Children in Care visits** were completed in time at the end of October exceeding the 95% target.
- 94% of **Children in Care cases were reviewed** in timescale, above the 92% target.
- 12 children were **missing from care** during the month of October and numbers for missing from care cases where whereabouts completely unknown remain low.

- Indicators around **stability of placements for looked after children** remain in line with statistical neighbours and targets.
- There have been 42 **adoptions and special guardianship orders in the year to October 2013** putting us on track to exceed our targets for 2013/14 the adoption target having been surpassed with 25 adoptions in the year to October already exceeding the full year target of 20. There have been 17 SGOs in the period April to October 2013. As a proportion of children who ceased to be looked after in the year (149) this is 28% (17% adopted) with a legal permanency arrangement compared to 5% adopted in 2011/12 and 6% in 2012/13. This performance has closed the gap with the overall England position of 9.6% (2012/13) adopted.
- **Children living with foster carers** before being placed for adoption means that there was no change to the placement and for the small number of adoptions where this applies; if these days (living with foster carers) are **excluded the average days from LAC to adoption** is below the threshold and an improvement over previous periods at 542 days.

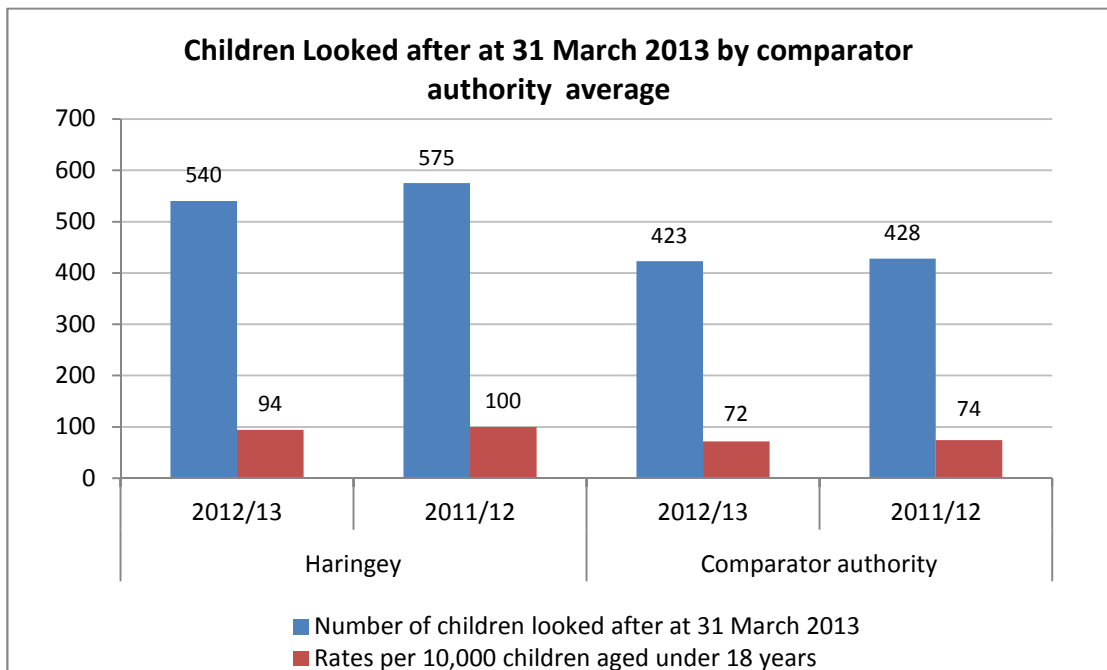
### Areas for Focus

- Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training** is below target. Although numbers are relatively small and in some cases there are justifiable reasons or we are not in touch, performance in 2013/14 indicates a downward trend and is below target.
- In the year to October 13/14, **children waited an average of 872 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption**. This is higher than the 639 day national threshold but is skewed by 2 children placed for adoption in June well outside the threshold, (1 child placed in 3,912 days) and 10 of the 25 children placed in more than 639 days.
- The percentage of **children placed 20 miles or more from Haringey** is 19.5%, the target is to reduce this to 16% in 2013/14.

## 3. Children Looked After

- 3.1. In the year to October, 107 children have **become looked after** and 149 have **ceased to be looked after** a decrease in the cohort of 42 children in the year to date. In 2012/13 Haringey had 195 children who started to be looked after, a 31% (60 fewer children) reduction compared with the previous year and fewer than the statistical neighbour average of 211. Children brought into care as an interim protective strategy have been rehabilitated home through work to manage risk factors and improve and support parenting. We have been able to improve the progress for other children, towards adoption or Special Guardianship where no return to family is safely achievable.
- 3.2. There has been an increase in the number of young people **becoming looked after on remand**, including a further six at the end of October bringing the total to 14 in the year so far up from 12 at this point last year.
- 3.3. The recently published LAC data shows that the number of children looked after by our statistical neighbours has decreased slightly by 1.2%. Haringey's numbers have shown a reduction of 6.5% when comparing March 2013 to March 2012. Amongst our comparators Croydon continues to have the highest number of looked after children (735) followed by Greenwich (575) and Southwark (565) both of whom saw increases in their numbers of children looked after. Based on data at 31<sup>st</sup> March

2013 Haringey had the fourth highest number of children looked after amongst our 10 comparator authorities but the second highest rate per 10,000 population (only Southwark's rate at 95 was higher). Overall Haringey's rate per 10,000 population reduced from 100 to 94 whilst the statistical neighbour rate reduction was less evident from 74 to 72. Haringey's current **rate of looked after children per 10,000** population at the end of October is showing further reduction at 87. The graphs below illustrate the rate per 10,000 children looked after compared to that of our statistical neighbours over the last two years.



3.4. Of the children becoming looked after in the year to date 38% or 38 children out of 99 were **previously subject to a child protection plan**. This is similar to last year, 39% and higher than the level in 2011/12 23%. This figure indicates that a well managed risk assessment and child protection response coupled with a solid support package avoids some admissions into care.

3.5. The proportion of children placed within 20 miles of Haringey as at the end of October was 80.5%. Some 94 out of 482 children (19.5%) were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey**. The service has made a commitment to only placing children in outstanding or good placements and whilst staff are clear that the optimum placement choice is almost always in or near borough, choice is underdeveloped locally. The development of a commissioning function within Children's Services will enable better development of provision and will stimulate a higher proportion of placements in borough from independent providers, both for foster care and residential placements.

3.6. Occasionally young people, because of specific needs, are placed in therapeutic or other specialist residential units which are outside the 20 mile radius.

- 3.7. The Children in Care teams are working with the Corporate Delivery Unit and taking action to review permanency plans for 300 children; young people looked after (Children Act 1989, section 20) and those who have gone through legal proceedings on care orders, ensuring that children have the right care plan and a secure placement. The review will look at longer term out of borough placements of young people who do not have settled and secure homes and would benefit from being given an opportunity to live more locally to Haringey.
- 3.8. Twelve children were **missing from care** during the month of October and numbers missing have been at or around that level for the past six months or so. Six were missing for over 24 hours and one child remained missing from a foster placement at the end of the month. Missing from care numbers are stable and the numbers of children who are actually missing i.e. whereabouts completely unknown are low. We are now working to make sure there is a proper distinction between those who are missing and those who are staying elsewhere (i.e. a young person in semi independent who is staying over at a friend's but did not let anyone known in advance or provide an address).
- 3.9. Some discussion is taking place about the possibility of return home for a number of young people who do not appear to receive any added value from being in care and would prefer a family arrangement with support in place. Management oversight of cases where young people are missing has improved with clear follow up when young people return to their placements and an opportunity for them to speak to someone independently about the reasons their placement is not working for them. The Lead Member and DCS are briefed on all cases of missing LAC at their weekly meeting to indicate the priority to be given to this vulnerable group.
- 3.10. There were 72 children (48 families) where **care proceedings** were **initiated** in the year to October; care proceedings were initiated for 16 children in October. These numbers remain slightly below numbers reported for the same period last year and are closely monitored. The majority of care proceedings are still initiated in an emergency situation and in our 'frontline' teams. The introduction of the new court manager role as part of the North London Tri Borough Care Proceedings Pilot will increasingly have impact and ensure that proceedings are only issued in circumstances where the child is likely to need a permanence plan and that pre-proceedings work to engage parents is done beforehand.
- 3.11. The introduction of the 'linking' meetings has led to permanent placements being identified for children at an earlier stage. This, coupled with dedicated posts for family finding, will drive further performance improvements. We have an overall target to reduce the length of care proceedings which, in turn, will impact on reducing the number of days children are in care before being placed for adoption. Court authority to place for adoption will be acquired more speedily and finding a family will therefore be more timely.
- 3.12. At the end of October 94% of **children in care cases** were **reviewed within required timescales** exceeding the 92% target and a significant improvement on levels achieved in 2011/12 and 2012/13. Visits to looked after children continue to be made within the set monthly timescale. LAC visits are being used proactively to

review young people's progress in placement and to further specific actions that arise from these visits.

- 3.13. 74% of **children** under 16 who have been **in care for 2.5 years** have been **in the same placement for at least two years**, similar to statistical neighbour average and above the 72% target. Figures remain positive and include a number of moves being made into permanent placements. This is indicative of the attention being paid to young people's individual placement needs providing the stability which allows for the development of supportive relationships, improving young people's resilience. Continuity in placement improves chances for good educational outcomes and allows improved access to positive leisure activities. Our indicators around stability of placements continue to be in line with statistical neighbours and targets. The proportion with three or more placements is at 6% (29 out of 502 children).
- 3.14. Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation** is below the target of 90% but monthly numbers are small and should be interpreted with caution. 73% (27 out of 37) of the 19 year old cohort in the year so far were in suitable accommodation. 74% of the 20 year old cohort and 68% of 21 year old cohort were in suitable accommodation.
- 3.15. **Care leavers in Education, Training and Employment (ETE)** is also below target. 63% (41 out of 65) were in ETE in 2012/13 and in the year to October 43% (16 out of 37) of the 19 year old cohort were in ETE, 53% of the 20 year old cohort (18 out of 34) and 36% (9 out of 25) of the 21 year old cohort were in ETE. There has been a slight increase in the numbers of care leavers who we are in touch with around their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday and are in ETE but it is unlikely that the 75% target will be achieved. The current level of performance for 19 year olds is below that of our statistical neighbours. It should be noted the status of these young people must be established within four months of leaving care or they cannot be counted as in EET or suitable accommodation.
- 3.16. The background in relation to this cohort of care leavers and the reasons for them not being in suitable accommodation or ETE include the following: One 19 year old is in prison long term and another has chosen to cease contact with us completely. Three young people who are aged 20 are working at the moment, one because he has been refused indefinite leave to remain, one because he has been on a community service order and another young person returned from care to live with her mother. One of our 21 year olds has also ceased contact with us after being refused indefinite leave to remain. A second young man is living away from London with his partner and looking for work in his local area.
- 3.17. There have been 26 **adoptions** and 19 **Special Guardianship Orders** in the year to November. We have exceeded our adoption target of 20 and this is higher than our statistical neighbour average (2012/13) of 20 recently published. We are maintaining a good rate of orders which indicates that we are on track to meet the SGO target by the end of the year.
- 3.18. We anticipate at least four further adoption orders and seven special guardianship orders will be obtained; targets for both orders will be exceeded. The

average number of days continues to be higher than 639 day threshold target and results from the previous absence of a performance management approach to placements for adoption. Children placed for adoption in year are placed in a considerably lower average number of days. We have identified adoption placements for a number of children who have been subject to protracted care proceedings and others who have been challenging to place. Adoption is a good outcome for these children. However, it will distort the overall average number of days indicator.

3.19. Good progress has been made on the timeliness of placements but the average days from becoming LAC to being placed for adoption at 872 remains above the 639 day national threshold and the number of days for October were 960 (two adoptions). Adoption is a good outcome for these children, a small number were placed for adoption outside the threshold in days that far exceeded 639 and this has impacted on the overall average. A small number of children were adopted outside the threshold but having lived with foster carers for a significant amount of time before being placed for adoption. A separate indicator has been introduced on the government adoption scorecard which excludes time spent in foster care and will give a more accurate account of the average number of days from a child becoming looked after to being placed for adoption.

3.20. Based on the 25 children who were adopted (this is what is reported in the adoption scorecard) and excluding the days where children were with foster carers, the average days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption reduces to 542 days, a significant improvement and below the national threshold.

3.21. 52% (13 out of 25 children) of adopted were placed for adoption within 12 months of an agency decision that the child should be adopted. Ten of the children adopted to date were placed in under the 639 threshold number of days of becoming looked after.

#### **4. Appendices**

- **Appendix 1: Performance Analysis and Benchmarking** for:
  - Children Looked After including reviews, visits, missing children, stability of placements, care leavers, adoption and special guardianship orders