



Haringey Council

Report for:	Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee 16 March 2015	Item Number:	
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Title:	Performance for the year to January 2015
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Report Authorised by:	Jon Abbey Interim Director of Children's Services
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Lead Officer:	Margaret Gallagher Corporate Performance Manager
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Non Key Decision:
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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 contains performance highlights and key messages identifying areas of improvement and areas for focus.
- 1.3. Section 3 & 4 provides some additional analysis with a focus on looked after children and health checks for our children in care. This section also looks at how Haringey performs in comparison to others.
- 1.4. The monthly service scorecard is provided as Appendix 1 so that Members understand how our performance information is collected and analysed in the context of activity relevant to Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee.
- 1.5. Our Ofsted action plan was submitted in October 2014 and feedback was that the plan was fit for purpose and satisfactory. The Quality & Performance Network has brought together the 'Getting to Good' Board, which had been tasked with developing the Ofsted Action Plan, as well as the Performance Call Over meetings which were used to drive performance. This board will now bring together the critical quality and performance elements necessary to get

the authority to Good, including the delivery of the Ofsted recommendations and all other recommendations and findings from other improvement reviews. In addition, weekly performance meetings have been established and are working well to ensure that performance is systematically reviewed across each service.

2. Overall Assessment

Outcome 1 & 2: Outstanding for all and Safety and wellbeing for all

Priority 2: Enable every child and young person to thrive and achieve their potential

Priority 4: Safeguard children and adults from abuse and neglect wherever possible, and deal with it appropriately and effectively if it does occur

Performance Highlights/ Key Messages

- 460 **children were in care** on 27th February 2015, 13 fewer than at the end of January 2015. This is moving closer to alignment with our statistical neighbour average rate of 70 per 10,000 (60 in England). There has been a steady reduction in the number of LAC from a rate of 100 per 10,000 population in 2011/12 to 82. In January 8 children started to be looked after and 15 ceased, a net decrease of 36 children since the start of the financial year, continuing the downward trend seen since November.
- A programme of work around permanency continues to ensure that edge of care services are optimised to prevent children becoming looked after where appropriate. We have seen a 7% reduction in our rate of looked after children between Quarter 2 and Quarter 3. There has been a focus on reviewing children who may be suitable for a special guardianship as this is an increasingly well used legal permanency option that removes children from the looked after system and can provide better outcomes.
- There have been 21 **adoptions** and 18 **special guardianship orders (SGO)** in the year to January. Numbers are down on the previous year, however, there are a number of adoptions and special guardianship orders (SGO) that will go through prior to the end of March, and at this rate we estimate that we will achieve at least 50 legal orders in 2014/15 (25 adoptions and 26 SGOs) exceeding our target of 45.
- The landscape of adoption has changed significantly in the last year which reflects the reduced number of adoption plans, when compared to last year. This is a national trend relating to changes in case law and like other authorities, Haringey is experiencing a significant increase in parents contesting the making of the Adoption Order and appealing the Placement Order. Both of these things mean that processes are more drawn out.
- Recent high profile judgements have restated the principle that adoption is a last resort. Of eight adoption hearings scheduled in court before the end of the financial

year, we can confidently expect two to be granted as the parents are expected to ask the court for leave to contest in the other six cases. This is part of the legal framework which the authority must comply with, however the service is working within the law to ensure that wherever possible, adoptions are timely and best meet the need of the child.

- Progress continues to be made on the **timeliness of children being placed for adoption. Children adopted this year waited an average of 570 days from becoming looked after to being placed for adoption.** This is slightly above the national threshold of 487 days for 2012/15 but a considerable improvement on the 778 days in 2013/14. A programme of work around permanency is starting to show results. Work to improve systems and processes, avoiding drift in permanency planning and consideration of all legal options including special guardianship continues. Haringey's current average of 570 days compares favourably with England's three year rolling average of 628 days.
- Indicators around **stability of placements for looked after children** remain in line with statistical neighbours and targets. 8.2% of children had three or more placements and 76% of children looked after for more than 2.5 years have been in the same placement for two years or more.
- Haringey is **improving its approach to placements** and working actively with Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) foster carers. Plans for all children in long term care and placed with agency are being reviewed to encourage Special Guardianship applications. The number of looked after children placed with IFA foster carers has reduced from 221 at the end of August to 197 at the end of January. In house foster carers have increased from 157 to 162 over the same period. 21 foster carers have been recruited to date and a new contract is being defined with NRS with a focus on recruitment of carers for young people age 11+ and long term carers.
- Three children were **missing from care** during the month of January and no children were away from placement without authorisation. 11 LAC children were recorded as missing education at the end of January. Five of these are in education at the beginning of March and the number of LAC missing education has reduced to seven children. These are due to placement moves and the SEN consultation process and all are in the process of being dealt with. The Lead Member and DCS are briefed on all cases of missing LAC at a weekly meeting. Focus will be on the quality of the discussion with the young person when they have returned to care to ensure issues causing absence are being tackled, that the learning from the return interviews is captured and reflected in the young person's reviews. Haringey are represented on a group being led by the Borough Commander to consider the data on missing children and any safeguarding risks to this vulnerable group.
- 93.5% of children in care for over one month had **up to date health assessments** at the end of January 2015, a significant improvement from the 79.5% at the end of January 2014. This equates to 433 out of 463 children in care.

Areas for Focus

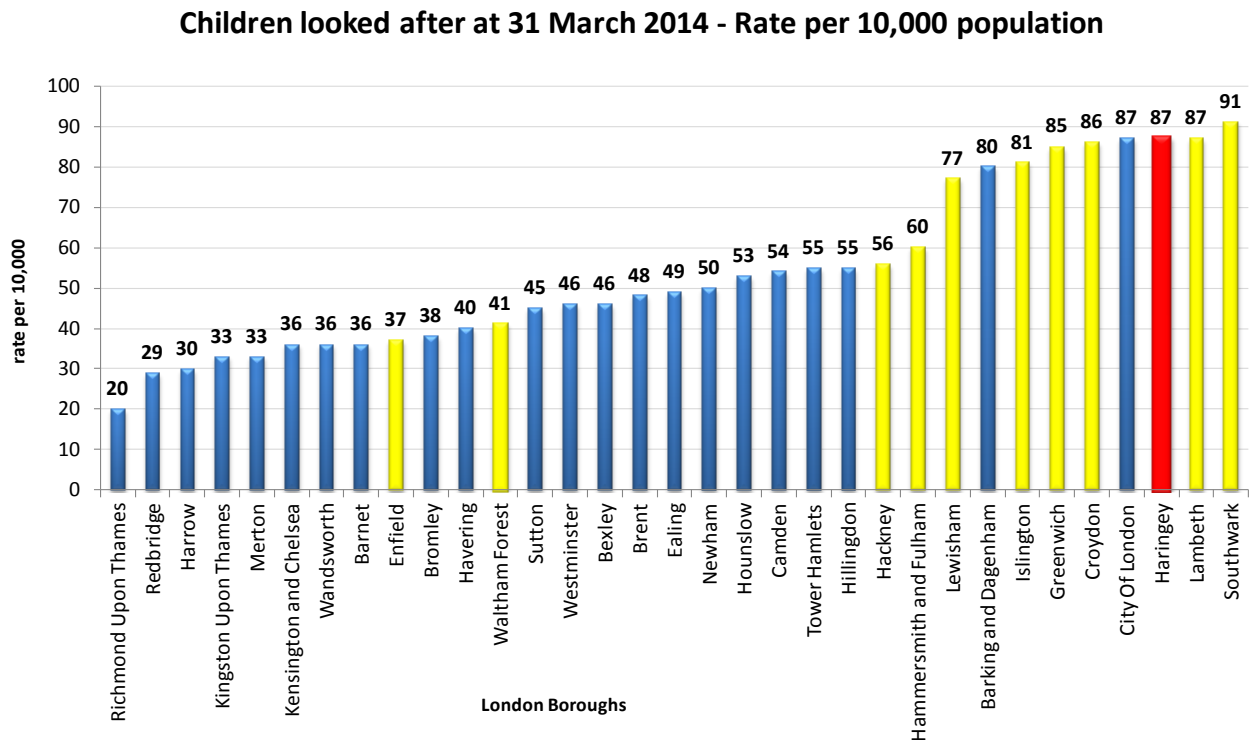
- 84 children (18.6%) were **placed 20 miles or more from Haringey** at the end of January 2015, an improvement from the 99 children at the end of Q2 but remaining above the 16% target and the 12% England average. The reduction is partly owing to an increase in foster carers in the borough and a line by line approach to all placements reviewed regularly by senior managers within the placements team. A reduction in the LAC cohort means that although numbers placed 20 miles plus are reducing, this is not necessarily reflected in the percentage.
- A review of our Looked After Children has recently been completed to look at what additional improvements can be made. The review focused on four key areas around the journey of the child: thresholds; high quality care plans; permanency; cross-cutting performance improvements; and work force training. Findings and recommendations from the review will be fed into the service delivery plans and followed up through a regular stocktake with progress reported to the Leader and Chief Executive.
- 70% of children had an **up to date dental visit** and whilst performance had improved in recent months, it is now on a declining trend and remains below the expected level. Of the 128 outstanding dental visits over half, 53% are aged 14 or over. This is understood to be a recording issue and is being addressed via Heads of Service so that it can be captured more robustly through our performance reports. We expect a purge to address all those children who have no recorded check to yield improved performance results in line with London.
- 81% of **Children in Care visits** were completed on time in this period, a decline from levels achieved in 2013/14 (95%). Some of this may be a recording issue with new social workers not correctly recording visits to Children in Care but there has been a noticeable decline since October last year. The decline in performance coincides with the reduction in the looked after children cohort and a reduction in the cases reviewed over the same period.
- 84% of **Children in Care cases were reviewed** in timescale at the end of January, below the 92% target.
- 58% of school age children have completed **Personal Education Plans (PEP)** at the end of January. This is a decline on the 66% achieved before the summer holidays and below the 90% target. Some system changes to alert social workers when the PEP is due for review and continued work with team managers to review blockages and ensure PEPs are systematically updated should see further progress in this area. This is also a significant focus within the Quality Performance Network group.
- 60% of children in care have up to date **Care Plans** and 37% **Pathway Plans**. This area remains a challenge and some staffing pressures have impacted on both the consistency and timely completion of plans. New staff have been recruited to the Children in Care team and agency staff are being recruited to the Young Adults Service which should yield improvement.
- Performance on **care leavers in suitable accommodation and in education, employment and training** is below target although **care leavers aged 19-21 in higher education (16%) compares very favourably with the national position of**

6%. The service is looking to start working with an organisation called Drive Forward to increase focused assistance with regard to increasing Education, Training and Employment. The Young Adults service offer tenancy workshops and attendance from young people is excellent with feedback from the young person taken into account by professionals to ensure the sessions meet the young person's need. The average timescale for care leavers moving into permanent accommodation is approximately 4 months of accessing the quota which they can access when ready any time between 18 and 21.

- The **duration of care proceedings** in Haringey is increasing. The average duration for cases concluded in Q3 rose from 38 weeks to 41 weeks. This quarter included 2 very long duration cases (93 and 83 weeks) which commenced before the Public Law Outline. The duration compares with the England average position of 29.7 weeks and London 33.8 weeks against a statutory 26 weeks target.
- 67% of cases concluded in more than 26 weeks in Quarter 3 which is an improvement on the 78% for the first half of the year. The Munby judgement has had a significant impact on the duration of cases with adjournments for fair hearing, assessment and to enable parental engagement. Over half of Haringey's court managed cases have been determined as 'exceptional' and thus expected to take longer than 26 weeks. It is expected that improved pre care proceedings work which is being undertaken will begin to impact on the duration of care proceedings and will evidence that all alternate placement options have been explored rigorously at the point of application.

3. Children Looked After

3.1. Based on published data at 31st March 2014, Haringey had the second highest rate of children looked after amongst our 10 comparator authorities, only Southwark's rate at 91 was higher. Haringey's current rate of looked after children per 10,000 population at the end of January is 82, a 6.7% reduction compared with the rate at the end of March 2014. This equates to 34 fewer looked after children or 47 fewer at the end of February 2015. The graph below illustrates the **rate per 10,000 children looked after** compared with London rates and highlights our statistical neighbour rates.



3.2. Much of the reduction is attributable to the increased effectiveness of the Resources Panel. The panel primarily looks at outcomes for young people but also considers the financial impact of placing these young people in care in different types of care settings. The Panel is chaired by the Assistant Director and explores all appropriate options in terms of permanency planning for the young person.

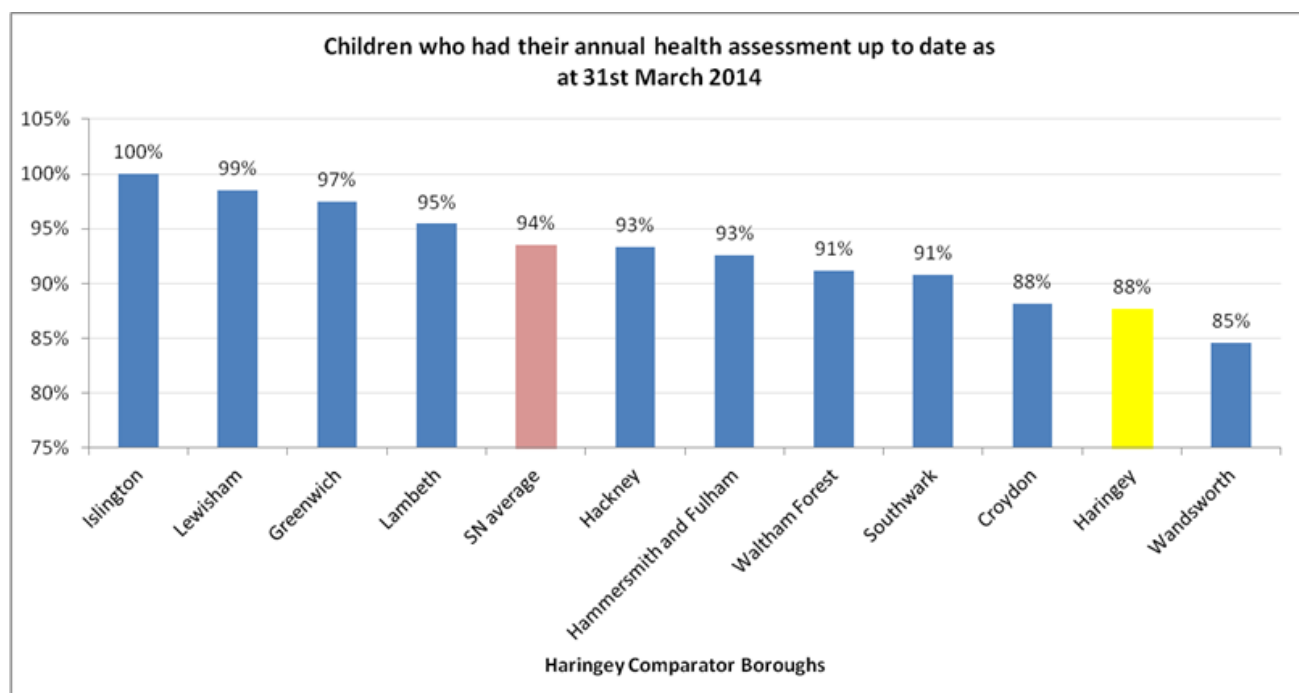
3.3. We regularly monitor placement types and legal status to analyse how the profile of our young people in care is changing. At the end of January our analysis showed:

- 225 or 48% of the total LAC cohort are over 13 years old and the majority of these are accommodated under s20. 54% are accommodated under a full care order.
- 81 children in care are under 5 years old, 20% of these are adopted and 15% are fostered by family or friends.
- There has been a 25% reduction in the number of children looked after under s20 in the last year. 102 children compared with 125 at the start of the financial year and 9 fewer children since December 2014.
- The biggest proportion and change in children who have become looked after in the last five months is for children in fostering placements.

- 56% of children aged 13 to 17 years old are in fostering placements. 9% are fostered by friends or family and 18% are in residential accommodation.
- There has been a reduction in children placed in residential accommodation, in secure units and in young offender's institutions over the last 5 months compared with the same period in the previous year.
- 75 children (36%) of those who ceased to be looked after in the year to January returned to live with their parents. This is an increase from the 21% re-unification rate in May 2014 when Ofsted were in. The increased proportion is more in line with levels achieved in 2012/13 (43%).
- 10% of children who ceased to be looked after were adopted and 8% had special guardianship orders granted.
- There has been an increase in the number of children accommodated on a Police Protection order from 5 in January 2014 to 9 in January 2015.

3.4. Haringey deals with a large throughput of work in terms of the profile of our young people and has the fifth highest rate per 10,000 children aged 0-17 years of children and young people who were the subject of an application to court in the past 6 months (including care and supervision orders). Haringey's rate of 17.3 is well above the average for London 10.9 with only two of our statistical neighbours dealing with more court applications, Islington rate 27.5 and Lambeth 18.1 in sharp contrast to Waltham Forest with a rate of 5.7.

3.5. The SSDA903 Looked after children government return looks at health care and development assessments of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months. In 2013/14 Haringey reported that of the 365 children looked after for more than 12 months at the end of March 2014, 320 or 88% had their annual health assessment, compared with 92% average for London and 94% against our statistical neighbours. The graph below shows Haringey's performance on health assessments in 2013/14 compared with that of our statistical neighbours.



- 3.6. Health assessments are included in our monthly performance tracking to ensure all children in care for over a month have an up to date health assessment. Good levels of performance have been sustained in the high nineties for the most part of the year, hitting an all time high of 96.1% of children with up to date health assessments in December 2014. This should mean that the proportion of children with up to date health assessments at 31st March 2015 will be significantly improved and in line with levels achieved by our statistical neighbours.