

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 28 March 2019 at 4.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

| Item | Business | | | | |
|----------|--|------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Apologies | | | | |
| 2 | Minutes (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 January 2019 | | | | |
| 3 | Young People's Presentation | | | | |
| 4 | Care Leavers Offer - Quality and Impact (Pages 9 - 40) Report of the Strategic Director of Care, Wellbeing and Learning. | | | | |
| 5 | Looked After Children Performance Overview (Pages 41 - 52) Report of the Strategic Director of Care, Wellbeing and Learning. | | | | |
| 6 | Work Programme (Pages 53 - 56) Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services and Governance. | | | | |
| 7 | Exclusion of Press and Public The Committee may wish to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds indicated: | | | | |
| | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Item</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Item | Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 | 8 | 1 |
| Item | Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 | | | | |
| 8 | 1 | | | | |
| 8 | Regulation 44 Report (Pages 57 - 62) Report of the Strategic Director of Care, Wellbeing and Learning. | | | | |

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 17 January 2019

PRESENT: Councillor B Oliphant (Chair)

Councillor(s): M Hall, S Craig, E McMaster, D Bradford,
C Davison, P Craig, L Kirton, K McCartney, C McHugh,
M Ord, R Oxberry and S Ronchetti

CO-OPTED MEMBERS Malcolm Hedley and Jeremy Cripps

CP48 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clelland, Haley and Weatherley.

CP49 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 October 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

CP50 MISSING FROM CARE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the report providing an updated summary of missing from care episodes from December 2017 to November 2018 and an update regarding protection and monitoring of child sexual exploitation.

It was noted from the report that Gateshead Council has clear procedures regarding missing children and young people which incorporate a joint protocol between Northumbria Police and Children's Social Care. The procedures and data systems form part of the Local Safeguarding Children's oversight of arrangements. It was also highlighted that a designated officer is a legal requirement for each Local Authority and that this remit is delegated to the Service Manager for Looked After Children.

From the report the Committee were advised that an Initial THRIVE Assessment is carried out upon receipt of an incoming missing report. The Committee were also advised of the differences between a child classified as 'missing' or 'absent'.

It was highlighted from the report the different categories of risk that will apply to a missing case from high risk to low risk. It was also noted that there were 948 missing episodes in total between December 2017 and November 2018 of which 65% were

looked after children.

Within the report the Committee were provided with a summary of data to illustrate the number and frequency of missing and absent instances. The data provided also demonstrated that from May 2018 to October 2018 there was a significant amount of missing episodes from in house residential provision.

The Committee were advised that when a child is reported missing from home or care for the second or subsequent time in a six-month period or for a single episode lasting longer than 24 hours they are offered an Independent Return Interview. Within the report a breakdown of reasons a child has chosen to be absent or go missing was provided, reasons ranged from domestic violence to bullying.

It was asked what 'THRIVE' stood for in terms of the initial assessments that are carried out. It was advised that THRIVE stood for Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Evidence.

A question was asked as to whether foster carers receive any support when a child in their care who has gone missing. It was noted that foster cares do receive emotional support as it is required in addition to the ongoing support they will receive from their social worker. It was further noted that foster carers are involved with the child's plan and will attend TAF meetings.

It was suggested that children could be tracked via GPS devices to ensure that they were safe. It was noted that this would not be possible as it is seen as a deprivation of liberty. It was further noted that children need to be encouraged to be responsible for their own safety and that trust with carers needed to be maintained to develop this; officers commented that GPS tracking may hinder that trusting relationship.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee accepted the report and agreed to receive a further annual report in the next municipal year.

CP51 EDUCATION OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - REALAC VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report to provide an update on the work of the Virtual School.

From the report it was noted that as of November 2018 there were 415 Looked After Children (LAC) in Gateshead between the ages of 0-18 years old. It was highlighted that this total has greatly increased in the last year. It was noted that the largest number of LAC within the secondary sector in in Year 11, it was also noted that of all the LAC year groups those at Key Stage 4 were the most challenging in terms of behaviour and risk of permanent exclusion.

The report provided the Committee with a breakdown of the numbers of LAC within Gateshead schools; it was highlighted that the overall number of Gateshead LAC and LAC from other Local Authorities attending Gateshead secondary schools has

decreased from the previous academic year.

It was noted that there is a significant number of Gateshead LAC being educated out of the borough, it was further noted that some pupils are placed beyond the local region with children being placed in London, Cumbria, Scotland and other areas.

The Committee were advised that school attendance by LAC is good; it was highlighted that 27 LAC have achieved 100% attendance for 2017/18.

An overview of exclusions was provided from the report, the Committee were advised that in Gateshead REALAC has an agreement of no permanent exclusions with our schools with alternatives solutions being explored where necessary such as managed moves.

The Committee were provided with additional information in relation to teaching and learning from the report including information on the Letterbox Club, private tuition and learning mentor support. An overview of education psychology was also provided noting that a trainee Educational Psychologist has some time allocated to the REALAC team.

A breakdown of pupil outcomes from also provided from the report from Key Stages 1 – 4 in addition to a snapshot of post-16 progression routes. It was highlighted that a number of LAC have gone on to further education and work experience placements.

It was asked whether the Virtual School have a governing body as with traditional schools; it was noted that there is no formal governing body in place but that regular internal evaluations are carried out in addition to reports to OSC.

A question was asked with regard to Gateshead's performance against national standards; it was stated that this information would be available from March 2019.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee agreed the recommendations and noted the contents of the report.

CP52 GATESHEAD LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S HEALTH TEAM - ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

The Committee received the report providing a summary of the work and outcomes for Looked After Children (LAC) and Young People Health Team in Gateshead 2017-18.

From the report an overview of the work and achievements of the Looked After Children's Health Team for Gateshead 2017-18 was provided. It was noted that the team received a total of 154 notifications of children and young people becoming looked after in 2017-18 of which 148 had IHA's completed.

Information relation to Review Health Assessments was provided within the report

highlighting that 94.3% of these were completed within 28 days of their due date which is an improvement of 85% for the previous year.

A summary of LAC Leaving Care was provided from the report. It was noted that the LAC Health Team are commissioned to provide services for Looked After Children up to their 18th birthday. It was further noted that Leaving Care Health Passports had been provided to 42 of the 42 young people recorded a leaving care; an improvement on the previous two years.

The Committee were provided with an overview of statistical returns from the report; it was noted that the team have achieved good returns as reported by the Local Authority in their SSDA 903 returns to Central Government. The report also detailed the figures with regard to Health Assessments, Dental Appointments and Immunisations.

The report provided the Committee with additional information in relation to:

- Children and Young Peoples Services
- Safeguarding
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Drug & Alcohol Services
- Sexual Health Services
- Adoption & Fostering

Within the report, the Committee were advised of the service priorities for 2018/19 as follows:

- The program of audit will be ongoing and improvements made from the recommendations made.
- To continue to develop work supporting the care leavers.
- The regional pathway for the diagnosis and management of children with FASD will be further developed. Review of the work that has already happened in Gateshead will feed into this process.
- To continue to work closely with the Local Authority to improve the overall timeframes for Initial Health Assessments.
- Support to Designated Doctor LAC who will be new in post.
- To monitor the updated process for SDQs and to use the score as part of the health assessment.
- Obtain feedback from young people regarding the leaving care health passport.

It was asked what support is in place to help LAC who are suffering from mental health problems; it was noted that a holistic approach is taken covering all health and wellbeing matters including lifestyle and sexual health.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to receive further updates at a future meeting.

CP53 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the report setting out the provisional work programme for the Corporate Parenting OSC for the municipal year 2018/2019.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee endorsed the OSC provisional work programme.

CP54 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

CP55 REGULATION 44 REPORT

The Committee received a report outlining Ofsted regulation 44 independent visits and inspection outcomes carried out in the Council's children's homes between October 2018 and December 2018.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report.

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TITLE OF REPORT: Local Care Leavers Offer

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director Care, Wellbeing and Learning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Care Leavers Offer, highlighting what has been achieved, what else we need to do and how this is supporting care leavers

Background

1. Every local authority has a statutory duty under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000 to offer care leavers support, advice and guidance. The Council publishes its current offer on its website, which outlines the services and support offered to care leavers. The Local Offer was published in April 2018
2. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Government introduced the requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Local Care Leaver Offer', which outlines the services for care leavers available within the local authority area. This offer is a combination of statutory entitlements as well as how the Council and its partners can support care leavers over and above their statutory duty.

Progress

3. Progress has been made since the introduction of the Care Leavers Offer and we now have:
 - Council tax exemption for care leavers up to the age of 25. This has not been without its problems and it has taken longer than anticipated for this to be embedded across the Council, which has caused some anxiety to a number of our Care Leavers
 - An end to end housing pathway with a range of options for young people which commenced July 2018. There were issues with one of the providers not being ready for the implementation date and transitional arrangements had to be agreed. Whilst these were in place the service was still provided but not as smoothly as it should have been. Accommodation and support

was still provided to our Care Leavers, however a small number of them found the temporary arrangements and an additional move difficult. We addressed the issues as they arose with the provider to ensure our Care Leavers received the support required

- Free leisure passes for all Care Leavers. This is being monitored by the service and within Pathway Plan reviews. Not all of our Care Leavers are utilising the free leisure passes and workers are encouraging young people to use them as they know this helps with their emotional wellbeing, social networks and general health.
- Improved employment, education and training offer from both within the Council and from partners. This is being monitored by the Corporate Parenting Workstream and the monthly Education, Employment and Training group.
- A commitment from a range of Council departments to offer shadowing days and mentoring. Uptake on this has not been as good as we had anticipated and continues to be an area that needs developing
- Practical support in helping young people move home. This has been positive for a few Care Leavers. The response from departments that can help has been excellent and they have worked with us within the required timescale.
- A greater understanding from partners about their role as corporate parents. This is something we will continue to promote on a regular basis to improve understanding, and also develop new opportunities and experiences for our care leavers which will enhance the local offer

Next Steps

4. In order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our care leavers we need to:
 - Work more closely with our partners and local businesses to get greater support from them to include not only employment or training but to broaden the offer to include free tickets to activities and events such as football matches, concerts, cinema and meals out. We have identified a lead within the service to take this forward. This will involve several of our Care Leavers to ensure we work with partners on what the Care Leavers aspire to
 - Launch the Care Leavers app which allows all Care Leavers access to the Local Offer on their phone. This will also enable them to get automatic updates and invitations to events being offered by the service. It is hoped the launch will take place in April 2019 as the app has now been developed and is ready to go live
 - To seek the views of our Care Leavers on the Local Offer and develop it accordingly. This is being done at the monthly drop-in as well as in Pathway Plan reviews and we will be able to utilise the app to get a greater response and understanding of who we need to target to get a better offer for our Care Leavers

Impact

5. The Care Leaver Offer has now been in place for 11 months and as already identified within the report it has taken time to embed and achieve the desired outcomes for our Care Leavers. There has been a positive impact in several areas, however we acknowledge that further work needs to be done and that the Care Leavers Offer will always be evolving.
6. It is important to get this right for our Care Leavers and having the right care leavers offer should offer our young people
 - A smooth, planned transition when leaving care
 - An understanding of their entitlements
 - A choice of appropriate accommodation when leaving care
 - A range of supported opportunities into employment and training
 - An understanding of how and where to seek support
 - Support up to the age of 25 by the Leaving Care Team
 - Support to gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Overview Scrutiny Committee

- (i) agrees to receive a further report regarding the Local Offer

For the following reasons:

- (i) To ensure the Council meets its statutory requirements.
- (ii) To ensure that Care Leavers are supported by both the Council and partners in their transition to independence.

Contact: Jill Little

Extension 3420

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Gateshead's Local Offer for Care Leavers

Gateshead has your back



What's inside this Offer to Care Leavers booklet?

| | | |
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1. What is the Local Offer to Care Leavers?

Local authorities have a legal duty to support young people making the transition from care to adulthood. It is our responsibility to make sure you know what services are available to you, and what you can expect to receive when you are in care.

If you are leaving care, or have already left care, this doesn't mean that we don't care about you and don't want to continue to support you. We want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where to go for advice and help. This document will tell you about the support that Gateshead has in place for you as a care leaver. It will help you make the most of the services available to you so that you can make the most of your independence.

To be able to get the support set out in this document, you must have been in care for at least 13 weeks or periods totalling 13 weeks which began after you turned 14 years old, and also included some time on or after your 16th birthday. If you are not sure whether you qualify for support, you can ask your social worker or personal advisor.

This document will cover the following areas:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Finances
3. Accommodation
4. Education, employment and training
5. Relationships
6. Participation in society

At the back of this document there is a list of useful contact numbers that you should find helpful. Below is some important information you will need to know about the support we must give you by law, the Leaving Care Team, Personal Advisors, Pathway Planning and more.

2. The support we must give you by law

Through the Children (Leaving Care) Act (2000) Gateshead must provide you with the following:

- A Personal Advisor (PA), who will offer you advice and support
- Suitable accommodation and financial support if you leave care before your 18th birthday
- A Pathway Plan which must be regularly reviewed with you.

Following changes introduced via the Children and Social Work Act 2017, you can ask for support from your PA up to the age of 25, regardless of whether you are in education or training or not.

There are also times when you may need extra support and this may be due to:

- Being a young parent
- You have a disability or special educational need
- You are an unaccompanied asylum seeking child and you have an ongoing asylum claim
- You are in custody or in contact with Probation or youth offending services
- You are going through a difficult time.

3. What does the Gateshead Leaving Care Team do?

We are your 'Corporate Parents', which means that it our responsibility to be good parents to all young people in our care. A good corporate parent should have the same aspirations for a child in care, or a care leaver, that any good parent would have for their own child. This means providing you with the stability and support that you need to make progress; helping you to access new opportunities and experiences that inspire you to set ambitious goals for yourself. It means celebrating your successes, but also recognising that you will sometimes make mistakes and need our help to get back on track. It also means supporting you to gain the skills and confidence to live an independent life whilst letting you know that you have someone to call on for help if the going gets tough.

The Leaving Care Team is based in the Civic Centre, Gateshead. It is part of the Corporate Parenting Service and works with young people who are aged 18+ (care leavers). Our team is made up of PAs who will support you with your journey to independence. We have a legal duty to support and assist you until you are 25.

4. What you can expect from your Corporate Parents

A corporate parent is an organisation or person who has special responsibilities to care for looked after children and young people, including:

- those in residential care
- those in foster care
- those in kinship care, who live with a family member other than a parent
- those who are looked after at home

Our Care Pledge says that we will:

- Look after you
- Treat you right
- Find the right place for you
- Involve you
- Keep you happy and healthy
- Help you get a good education
- Help you get on in life

5. What is the role of the Personal Advisor (PA)?

Once you turn 18, you will no longer have a social worker and your PA will become your main worker and continue working with you until the age of 25, regardless of whether you are in education or training or not. A PA will be identified for you after you become 16, so you can build a relationship before they become your allocated worker.

Your PA is there to help you to prepare to live independently and be successful at this. They can offer you advice, guidance and support after you leave care. PAs will talk with you about the support that you may need and will write this support and how it will be offered to you in your Pathway Plan. The amount of support that you receive from them will depend on your needs and what you want from them.

We will try and keep the same PA allocated to you, however this can sometimes be difficult and you may wish to request a change in your worker. The relationship between you and your PA is important; make the most of them, treat them with respect and keep in touch.

6. What is a Pathway Plan?

Every young person between the ages of 16-25 in care or a care leaver has a Pathway Plan. Your Pathway Plan is a document that is written by your social worker and handed over to your PA after speaking to you and the other significant people in your life. It sets out what support and help you need, your views and what your future goals are. It will also outline exactly what support you will receive from Gateshead Council.

Your Pathway Plan will be reviewed with you every 6 months, or if there are any significant changes in your situation.

SECTION A: Health and wellbeing

Your health matters to us. Being healthy doesn't just mean eating fruit, exercising regularly and keeping your teeth clean. It also means feeling strong and well emotionally and being sexually healthy and safe. Your PA can offer you support to achieve and maintain positive health and wellbeing and we recognise that this is different for each individual. In Gateshead we will support you to recognise your own health needs and signpost you to services to meet these needs.

We also recognise that it can be very difficult leaving care and living independently and that this can often be lonely and isolating. This can have a negative impact on how you feel and cope on a day to day basis. There are lots of services and support out there. Read this section to find out some of the services available to you.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>Emotional problems Your PA can offer you emotional support to talk through any feelings and problems you have and can put in strategies with you to help you cope. If you need more specialist support your PA can refer and support you to access adult mental/emotional health services.</p> <p>Streetwise offers free and confidential information, advice, support and counselling to young people aged 11-25: counselling@streetwisenorth.co.uk /Tel: 0191 2305400</p> <p>North East Counselling Service This is a free service for all children and young people aged 9-25 years old. You can contact them at: info@necounselling.org.uk /Tel: 0191 440 8127</p> <p>ChildLine offers 24-hours support: Tel: 0800 1111</p> | <p>Remember: if you are struggling with anything, speak to someone about it – don't bottle it up!</p> <p>Evidence suggests that a small improvement in wellbeing can help to decrease some mental health problems and also help people to flourish. There are five actions to improve personal wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect • be active • take notice • keep learning • give |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|---|
| <p>Access to free leisure facilities If you want to access free leisure care within Gateshead, speak to your PA who will arrange for you to be issued with a Leisure Pass which can be used at any leisure centre within the Gateshead area.</p> | <p>Remember: Your PA can arrange free access to leisure services for you.</p> |
| <p>Sexual health If you need help and support with sexual health and family planning issues you will be signposted by your PA to the right local services for you that can offer you additional support and advice.</p> <p>Free contraception, pregnancy checks and check-ups are available. Contact: www.gatesheadsexualhealth.co.uk /Tel: 0191 283 1577</p> | <p>Remember: Keep yourself safe. If you do not use a condom you will be at risk of becoming a young parent and catching infections.</p> |
| <p>Drug and alcohol support Platform Gateshead offers a range of specialist substance misuse services to under 18's: www.platformgateshead.org.uk /Tel: 0191 4601354</p> <p>Gateshead substance misuse service (Change, Grow, Live) is a single, integrated drug and alcohol recovery service for all adults in Gateshead. https://www.changegrowlive.org/get-help/advice-information/drugs-alcohol /Tel: 0191 5947821</p> <p>FRANK (friendly, confidential drugs advice): www.talktofrank.com /Tel: 0300 123 6600 / SMS to 82111</p> | <p>Remember: At Change, Grow, Live we believe that everyone has the right to lead the best life they can. Our accessible services empower people to improve their health and wellbeing and take control of the direction of their lives.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>Dentist and opticians If you are receiving benefits then you will have access to free dental health care and opticians.</p> <p>Opticians and dentists are free if you are under 18 years old, on benefits or in full time education.</p> | <p>Remember: You should visit the dentist twice a year for cleaning and a check-up.</p> <p>Even if you do not have any eye problems you should have your eyes tested every 2 years.</p> |
| <p>GP/doctor Your PA will support you to register with a GP and will help you to attend health appointments. A GP treats preventative illnesses and will be able to refer you to other services.</p> <p>Your PA can also give you information on financial assistance for prescriptions which the GP may issue.</p> | <p>Remember: If you move it will be your responsibility to inform your GP and sign up with a different, more local GP.</p> |
| <p>Health passports When you become a care leaver you will be given a health passport by the LAC Nurse at your last statutory health check. This will contain all your available health information, like the name of your GP and dentist and any ongoing health conditions. This will be useful for you to use when you access health services and adult services.</p> <p>You will also be offered a monthly drop-in session which the LAC Nurse will attend giving the opportunity to discuss any health issues that you may have.</p> | <p>Remember: If you lose your health passport speak to your LAC nurse.</p> |

SECTION B: Finance and money

We understand that one of the biggest concerns for care leavers is money. We can offer you financial support to make living independently that little bit less difficult. The amount of money you will get depends on your age and what type of accommodation you're in. There is a lot of information available online for care leavers and you will be able to ask your PA for more information if you need it.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>Budgeting</p> <p>We will give you support with budgeting your money and help you learn how to budget and live independently. We can also offer you a finance education course to give you a bit more support.</p> | <p>Remember: If you don't know how to budget and spend your money wisely, you will really struggle when you live on your own.</p> <p>Not being able to budget properly may affect you in the long term.</p> <p>If you need more budgeting support, then speak to your PA.</p> |
| <p>Welfare benefits</p> <p>When you are old enough to apply for benefits, we will help you do this. Four weeks before your 18th birthday your PA will help you with this. We have an arrangement with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) that your application will be processed on the day of your birthday, and given priority. If you have applied for benefits and are waiting to be paid, we will pay you a weekly living allowance to help you live while your claim is processed.</p> | <p>Remember: You must attend your appointments.</p> <p>It is a criminal offence to lie to the benefits office. You will also need to show your PA that you have applied for benefits.</p> <p>If you don't attend appointments with the Job Centre and don't keep to your agreement to look for work without a good reason, your benefits may be stopped.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>Benefit options</p> <p>Universal Credit – this is a monthly payment to encourage you to get into paid work.</p> <p>Job Seekers Allowance – this is a twice weekly payment to help you when you look for paid work.</p> <p>Income Support – if you are in college full time or other education (Level 3 or below) you can claim Income Support (but not Universal Credit or Job Seekers Allowance). This is a right for all care leavers until you turn 21.</p> <p>Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – if you are ill or have other problems that stop you being available to work you may be able to claim ESA.</p> <p>Council Tax Exemption – all care leavers will be given 100% exemption from Council Tax until they turn 25.</p> | <p>Your PA will advise and support you with applying for benefits and attending appointments.</p> |
| <p>Living allowance payments</p> <p>If you are unable to claim benefits or are waiting for your application to be processed, you will be offered a weekly payment until you are in receipt of money. This payment will be the equivalent of state benefits. You will be expected to use this for all of your living costs.</p> <p>We will provide you with a financial gift on your birthday, at Christmas and other celebratory events.</p> <p>If you are in your own tenancy we will provide you with a winter fuel allowance to help with the extra costs of heating your home over winter.</p> <p>How will I be paid?</p> <p>You will be encouraged to set up a bank account. The best way to get paid is through BACS – which is a bank transfer. The money will be paid into your account each week.</p> | <p>Remember: You will need to spend your Weekly Living Allowance on day to day essentials. You should budget this money and pay for your essentials first (food and bills).</p> <p>Your PA will support you to open your own bank account if you haven't done this before.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>Savings If you have been in care for a while you will have a savings account which you can access when you turn 18.</p> <p>Your PA will provide you with information on how to access your Junior ISA or Child Trust Fund.</p> | <p>Remember: Depending on how long you have been in care, your savings may be quite a lot. Use this chunk of money to help you with your future and don't waste it.</p> |
| <p>Leaving care grant We will provide you with a leaving care grant, up to the value of £2,000, to decorate and furnish your home.</p> <p>At times you may need items of furniture before you move onto independent living. Your PA will help you decide which items you will need, such as white goods, crockery, beds, curtains etc. from a list of recommended items.</p> | <p>Remember: To choose items that you really need from the recommended items list.</p> <p>The grant is a contribution to help you buy everything you might need when moving into your first home.</p> |
| <p>Education incentive payment If you are in full time education we will provide you with bursaries or money for your education, employment or training.</p> | <p>See the education, employment and training section for more information.</p> |
| <p>Emergencies We understand that emergencies do happen. We will pay emergency payments or offer food packages to care leavers for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as part of an education package • if you are unable to claim benefits • if you are waiting for your benefits to start • in an emergency | <p>Remember: Speak to your PA if you think you are entitled to food packages or you are facing an emergency.</p> <p>You may be asked for proof of your situation.</p> |

Credit Union

A Credit Union is a “not for profit” financial organisation that provides savings and loans accounts for its members.

In many ways a Credit Union is just like any other bank. The big difference between a Credit Union and a bank is that a Credit Union is owned and run by its members. A Credit Union does not make huge profits or reward its directors with enormous salaries.

NEFirst Credit Union covers the whole of the North East, including County Durham, Northumberland and all of the boroughs that make up Tyne and Wear (Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, North Tyneside and South Tyneside). Anyone who lives or works in this area is also eligible to join.

The benefits of being a member of NEFirst include:

- Access to straightforward and secure savings accounts;
- The availability to members of loans at interest rates that are much lower than many loan providers (especially door stop lenders, pay-day loan companies and pawn brokers);
- Free life insurance on savings and loans.*

We have offices in Gateshead, Durham, North Shields and Birtley and a number of regular service / collection points.

N.B. Loan interest rates depend on personal circumstances.

*Life Insurance subject to terms and conditions.

For more information Tel : 03 3005 53666 or Email : info@nefirstcu.co.uk

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>Other sources of funding Some organisations help care leavers by awarding grants (which do not need to be repaid). Some grants help with university, moving into independent accommodation, financial support to help you train etc.</p> <p>Contact the Care Advice Line at: www.thecareadvice.org /Tel: 0161 413 7860</p> | <p>Remember: Speak to your PA about what other funds you may be entitled to.</p> <p>You may apply to charities and organisations for additional grant funding if you meet their criteria.</p> |

SECTION C: Your Important Documents

We all need important documents to do simple things like book on a course, claim benefits or open a bank account. We will make sure that you have the important documents that you need in adulthood, such as a passport and birth certificate. We will keep copies of your important documents safely on file and you will be responsible for keeping the original documents safe. If you lose any of these documents you should inform the relevant authority or discuss this with your PA immediately. Lost documents can be used for identity theft – this is where someone may use your name and personal information in order to obtain credit, loans, etc.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>National Insurance number At 15 years and 9 months we will apply for your national insurance number (NI Number)</p> | <p>Remember: Remind your social worker if you do not receive this.</p> <p>Your PA will support you to find this out when you turn 18.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Passport We will support you with an application for a passport and pay the fee for your first one. Your passport is your main source of ID.</p> | <p>Remember: Do not lose your passport or you will have to apply and pay for a new one which will cost you over £70. If you lose it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you will not be allowed to leave the country to travel • you may be at risk of identity theft |
| <p>Provisional Driving Licence We will support you with an application for a provisional driving licence and pay the fee for your first one.</p> | <p>Remember: You cannot drive without a provisional licence.</p> <p>If you lose your licence you will have to pay for a new one.</p> |
| <p>Birth Certificate If you do not already have a birth certificate, we will apply for you to get one.</p> | <p>Remember: If you lose your documents you will have to pay for new copies.</p> <p>Your birth certificate is an important document.</p> |
| <p>British citizenship If you are entitled to apply for British Citizenship before the age of 18 then we will support you to do this.</p> | <p>Remember: To tell us if you want to apply. We will help you with the application.</p> |
| <p>Access to your file You have a right to see the information we keep about you. If you apply, we will provide you with a copy of your social services records.</p> <p>If you would like to see a copy of your file, please make a request in writing and give this to your PA.</p> | <p>Remember: Think about the decision very carefully. Files can be very difficult to read.</p> <p>It can take some time to get a copy of your files, so please be patient.</p> |

SECTION D: Accommodation

If you are aged over 18 your PA will help you find suitable accommodation. This might involve working with Gateshead Housing Company, supported housing and supported lodgings to support you to get the best accommodation suitable for you. We might also recommend a taster flat to you, in case you prefer to experience living independently with some support from the Leaving Care Team.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|---|
| <p>Staying Put If your foster carer and you decide that you would like to remain living with them, then we will support you to do that under a Staying Put arrangement. This can last until you are 21.</p> <p>Staying Put allows you to stay with your foster carers so that you can get further help and support with independent living skills. You will have responsibilities such as paying board and other independent living skills. All of this is to prepare you for when you move on.</p> | <p>Remember: Staying Put will help you maintain a supportive relationship with your foster carers.</p> <p>Your social worker, foster carer and PA will be able to discuss this option with you.</p> <p>If you decide to stay, we will help you apply for independent accommodation after you are 21.</p> |
| <p>Taster flat This is a flat that will be your own but will give you the opportunity to experience living independently without the added pressure of a tenancy agreement as it is managed by the Leaving Care Team. If, after a period of time, you have been successful at managing this tenancy then we will sign it over to you completely.</p> | |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|--|
| <p>Independent housing</p> <p>When you are in independent accommodation you are responsible for yourself and for paying your bills. We will support you to make an application so you can access registered social landlords. You will get a tenancy of your own.</p> <p>Your PA will make a referral for floating support for you – this is so you can have more support with managing your tenancy and help you avoid arrears in your rent and bills. We know it can be very hard having your own place for the first time and we will support you the best we can to make that easier for you and ease some of the pressures.</p> <p>Your PA or Floating Support Worker will help you make a claim for housing benefit.</p> <p>You will be entitled to a setting up home allowance if you are living in your own tenancy. This will be £2,000 to furnish and decorate your home. See the Finance section of this offer for more information.</p> | <p>Remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep on top of your bills • To keep to your tenancy agreement <p>Work with your PA who will help you with all of these things.</p> <p>If you do not keep to your tenancy agreement, you may be at risk of losing it.</p> <p>Your bills (water, gas and electricity) can all be paid for monthly through your bank. This is often a much better option than running up bills.</p> <p>Make sure you know how your rent is being paid. It is your responsibility whether you are working or on benefits to ensure that your rent is paid to avoid eviction.</p> |
| <p>Supported Accommodation/Semi-Independent</p> <p>You may not be ready for your own tenancy when you decide to leave care and may prefer more supported options. Your PA will discuss these with you and help you identify one that will be suitable for you.</p> | <p>Remember: Make good use of your PA and Support Worker – they will help you access local services and help you connect with your local community. They are there for you.</p> <p>If you do not use your accommodation, then you may be at risk of losing it.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---------------------|
| <p>University accommodation (holiday periods) We will provide you with accommodation during university holidays (or fund this if you make your own arrangements) if you cannot stay within your term time accommodation or return to your home area.</p> | |

SECTION E: Employment, Education and Training

We want to make sure that every young person leaving care is able to achieve the goals that they set in life. We want you to succeed in your education, training and employment. When we meet with you we will find out how you are doing and will celebrate achievements with you.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|---|
| <p>Careers advice and information on training and courses We also recognise that personal circumstances can impact on a person's ability to engage full time in a course or job. We can offer support to look at courses that can be tailored to your needs, explore with you what you want to achieve and help you make a realistic plan to get there.</p> | <p>Remember: Education, training and finding a job is your responsibility. The Leaving Care Team will support and help you but you must be willing and give your best.</p> |
| <p>Job search We will support you with finding employment, including help to write your CV, apply for jobs and prepare for interviews. We will provide you with funding for interview clothing and transport costs.</p> | <p>Remember: Interview clothing should be WORK APPROPRIATE clothing and not new trainers! Speak to your PA or Support Worker for help to apply for jobs and get ready for an interview.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>The Job Centre Plus will support you to look and apply for work if you are not in education or employment.</p> <p>Your PA can refer you to Building Better Opportunities – Wise Steps, where you will receive one to one support from a job coach for up to 18 months. This will include help with a job search and will focus on removing any barriers to work through social inclusion activities, life skills, confidence building and skills development. Activities will also include ICT training and personal money management.</p> <p>You can also be referred to our in-house Learning & Skills provider who offers career information sessions, CV design, mock interview skills. You could also be offered a place on a Study Programme, Traineeship or Apprenticeship.</p> | |
| <p>Apprenticeships As your corporate parent we take our role seriously, we are therefore making efforts to offer opportunities for apprenticeships within Gateshead Local Authority. We have already secured apprenticeships in Business Administration and the Highways department, and we are working towards increasing the number of care leavers within the council. There will be further opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and employment within the council.</p> <p>Year 11 guarantee We will give you access to a careers guidance and information meeting which lets you know what progression pathways are available into apprenticeships, which includes CV and interview preparation workshop.</p> | <p>Remember: You may still be get Housing Benefit and other support (talk to your PA to ensure that you are getting all the financial help available to you)</p> <p>Remember: If you didn't do as well as you had expected at school, we will still get you a job with training.</p> <p>Remember: You will have a dedicated advisor and personal tutor.</p> <p>Remember: You will be given pastoral care, to support you with personal issues.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|---|
| <p>Apprenticeship guarantee</p> <p>We will give you an apprenticeship guarantee, you will have a guaranteed apprenticeship offer through learningSkills, this guarantee consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone interview with specialist information, advice and guidance to identify your vocational areas of interest, including access to live vacancies and for you to make an informed choice on whether apprenticeships are the right choice for you. • An invite to the weekly learningSkills Assessment Centre and an interview with our dedicated advisors who will help you to identify your skills, experience and prior attainment and support you to progress into an apprenticeship. This will give you access to the opportunities below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programme of Study – a full time programme (16-18 years, 16hrs a week for up to a year) in a range of vocational subjects, maths and English support at an accessible venue in Gateshead, including financial support with travel and lunch. This route will give you the skills employers demand. ○ Employability programmes – intensive support for 19+ unemployed into sustainable employment. Including job search, maths and English support, help with job applications, digital skills and CV writing. ○ Traineeship – this programme provides a direct route into apprenticeships, you will have access to maths and English support if you need it, will be provided with a work placement in your chosen vocational area and will be supported to develop your employability skills to enable you to be apprenticeship ready. You will be provided with financial support for travel, lunch and interview clothes. | <p>Remember: We expect you to have good attendance and punctuality.</p> <p>Remember: We expect you to attend all interviews.</p> <p>Remember: We expect you to sign up to our learner charter.</p> <p>Remember: We have a zero tolerance to bullying and harassment.</p> <p>Remember: We make decisions together, everyone is valued, all cultures celebrated and we share and respect the opinions of others.</p> <p>Remember: If you get an apprenticeship or traineeship we will provide you with support for transport costs. We will also provide you with support to buy any tools, equipment or essential clothing that you need as part of your apprenticeship.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apprenticeship – Gateshead Council is one of the largest local authority providers of apprenticeships in the country. Last year we had over 1000 people on apprenticeship programmes. We will guarantee you an apprenticeship in the vocational areas that learningSkills deliver inside and outside of the Council. This will include specialised one to one support with job search, interview skills and drafting your CV. ○ We will work with you to progress you onto the next level apprenticeship and into sustainable employment. <p>Do you have a learning difficulty/disability? We will guarantee a priority application to our internship programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The internship offer is 4 days a week working with an employer and 1 day a week classroom based. You will be provided with financial support for travel, lunch and interview clothes. ● You will progress into employment, volunteering or further learning. <p>New this year! We would like to give you the opportunity to come and work for us! Gateshead Council has pledged to ring fence apprenticeship vacancies within the Local Authority for Looked after Children and Care Leavers. We will offer at least one employer event which will give you the opportunity to speak to employers who have pledged to support Looked After Children and Care Leavers into employment through work placements/apprenticeship opportunities. We will progress people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into apprenticeships.</p> | <p>Remember: For further information, advice and guidance please contact us direct on Tel: 0191 4338727/07825552087. Email apprenticeships@gateshead.gov.uk or register online at www.gateshead.gov.uk/applynow</p> <p>Alternatively, contact your PA to arrange an appointment with us or like/message us on Facebook to access all of our apprenticeship opportunities by searching “learningskillsapprenticeships”</p> <p>Or text JOBS to 80818.</p> <p>Remember: If you have a learning difficulty and/or disability and would like further information, advice and guidance contact Supported Learning Development Officer on Tel: 0191 4338528/07887488305.</p> <p>Remember: For a wide range of other learning opportunities visit Gateshead.gov.uk/learningSkills to access our course directory.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>University If you decide to go to university, we will assist you with your housing during holiday periods and provide you with extra financial support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will give you a higher education bursary of at least £6,000 • We will help you obtain tuition fees • We will assist you with the initial costs of moving to and from university • You will be eligible to apply for a student loan <p>You may also be entitled to additional support from the university who often have additional funds and grants for care leavers.</p> | <p>Remember: There is additional support available to you if you go on to attend university- this can be from a designated person within the university who your PA will help you to identify.</p> |

SECTION F: Relationships

Having relationships, both personal and professional, is important for emotional health as well as support. One of the biggest issues raised by care leavers is that of isolation – without a strong and stable social network it can be extremely hard to navigate life after care.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|--|
| <p>Peer mentoring We feel that it would be helpful for you to be in touch with other care leavers. We can link you with a peer mentor who can support you through the journey of preparing to leave care, and help you when you have left.</p> <p>There are also opportunities for young people to train to become a peer mentor themselves, offering support to other young people leaving care.</p> | <p>Remember: Your peer mentor has also been in care and gone through similar challenges to you.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|--|---------------------|
| <p>Family and friends We will support you to reconnect with your family when this will be in your best interests.</p> <p>We will also help you to maintain contact with the significant people in your life – your family, friends and previous carers.</p> | |
| <p>Support networks We will support you to make contact with social support in your area which will build on the relationships within your life.</p> <p>We will also invite you along to our monthly participation meetings where you can link in with other care leavers and professionals that can support you.</p> | |

SECTION 6: You as an active member of society and your local community

You have a right to be involved in all the decisions about your plans for leaving care. In Gateshead we value the participation of our care leavers within the development of services. We also want care leavers to be active members of society and the local community and to have all the chances that other young adults have.

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>Personal Advisor When you turn 18 a PA will be allocated to you. Your PA will keep in contact and arrange meetings with you, they will visit you at home but can also arrange to see you in the community. Your PA is there to give you advice, information and guidance to help you make the best decisions.</p> | <p>Remember: Make the most of your PA and stay in contact with them.</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|--|
| <p>If you are unhappy about the plans or support you get, you can speak to your PA about it. You also have a right to an advocacy service to help you say what you are not happy with and challenge any decisions.</p> <p>Gateshead’s Children’s Rights Officer can help you with this or you can access an independent advocate. Children’s Rights Officer: Tel: 0191 4332647 or 07795 021819/ email: rights@gateshead.gov.uk</p> <p>National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) https://www.nyas.net/ / 0808 808 1001</p> | <p>If you don’t engage or speak up, decisions will be made without you. This may mean that things will happen that you do not want.</p> <p>Make sure you are clear about what you want – it’s your life after all.</p> |
| <p>Changing your worker In certain, exceptional circumstances you can request to change your social worker or Personal Advisor. You can speak to the Children’s Rights Officer to help you with this.</p> <p>Email: rights@gateshead.gov.uk or call 0191 433 2647.</p> | |
| <p>Participation We want to offer you the opportunity to have your say on service improvement and delivery. You can do this by speaking with your PA, completing a MOMO app or attending one of the events that we hold to consult with young people. We also ask you to complete an annual survey.</p> <p>We will also provide you with information on groups and clubs that you may wish to join, along with informing you about relevant awards, schemes and activities you can engage in that are in line with your interests.</p> | <p>Remember: Your views are important to us You need to speak up and tell us how we can improve the services for you now and others in the future</p> |

| What we offer 2 U | What U Need to Know |
|---|---|
| <p>Your right to vote Once you turn 18 you are entitled to vote in local and national elections. We will encourage you and help you to enrol on the electoral roll so that you can vote in these, if you wish to.</p> | <p>Remember: You can make sure that your voice is heard and your vote will play an important role in shaping the government and your future.</p> |
| <p>Citizens advice The Citizens Advice Bureau aims to provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities as a member of society.</p> <p>www.citizensadvice.org.uk / 0344 2451288</p> | |
| <p>How to complain You have the right to complain to Gateshead if you can't solve a problem with your social worker, Personal Advisor or their manager. You can contact the Social Care complaints team on 0191 4332692 / email: enquiries.cbs@gateshead.gov.uk / text "Complaint Call Back" to 07736 287376 (make sure you include your contact details within the text).</p> | |

7. Where to get further information

As a Care Leaver there are a range of support services available to you. We have put together a list of useful contact details. If there is anything you do not understand or further information you need then please speak to your PA or social worker.

GATESHEAD LEAVING CARE TEAM CONTACT INFORMATION

| | |
|---|--|
| Where to find the Leaving Care Team? | Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH |
| When are we open? | Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 5.00pm / Friday from 9.00am to 4.30pm |
| How to contact us? | 0191 4332750 / email: childrenservicesbusinesssupport@gateshead.gov.uk |
| | Out of Hours emergency number: 0191 4770844 |

Children's Rights Officer: Tel: 0191 4332647 or 07795 021819/email: rights@gateshead.gov.uk

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) <https://www.nyas.net/> /Tel: 0808 808 1001

Complaints Team: Tel: 0191 4332692 / email: enquiries.cbs@gateshead.gov.uk /
text "Complaint Call Back" to 07736 287376 (include your contact details within the text).



TITLE OF REPORT: Looked After Children Performance Overview

REPORT OF: Elaine Devaney, Service Director for Children and Families

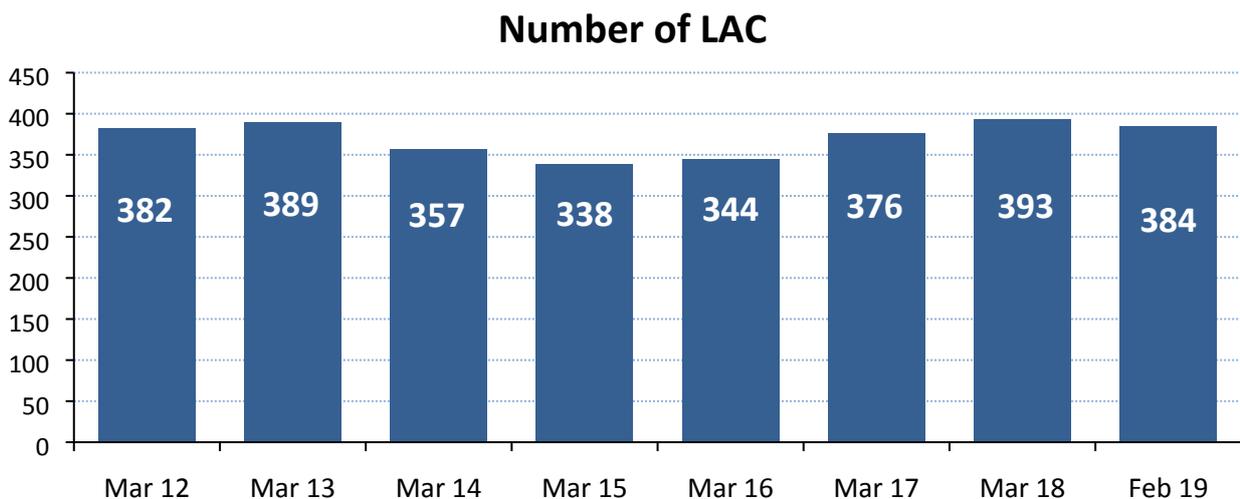
Section 1: Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides statistics relating to looked after children in Gateshead and covers the period up to the end of February 2019. The report focusses on providing key characteristic data linked to those children who are currently looked after, and those who started and ceased to be looked after over the previous 12 months.
- 1.2 The report also includes a performance scorecard in appendix 1 which provides the latest position for key looked after children performance measures, with performance data up to the end of 31st January 2019 (the latest available at the time of writing the report). A summary of the performance measures is described in section 3.
- 1.3 Corporate Parenting Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members are asked to receive this report for information, and to identify any areas they feel they require more information about or require further scrutiny.

Section 2: Looked after children statistics

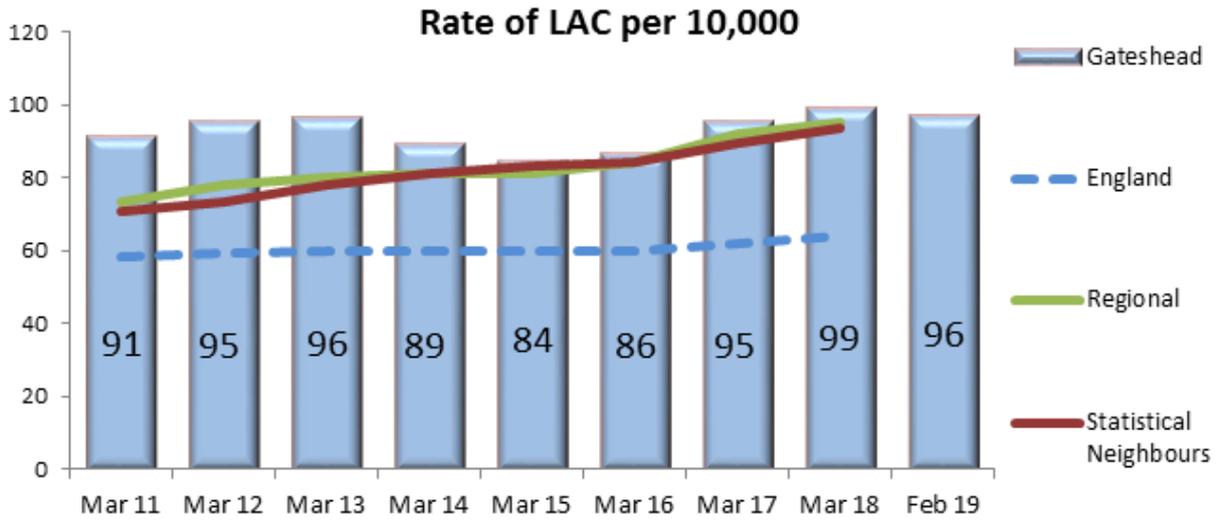
How many looked after children do we have, and how does that compare to other areas?

Chart 1: number of LAC



- 2.1 Chart 1 shows at the end of February 2019, 384 children and young people were classed as being Looked After. The 384 LAC children come from 263 different families. Since the end of the March 2018, when the figure was 393, we have experienced a decrease of 2.3% in the number of looked after children. However, more recently this reduction has been more significant. In November 2018 the number of LAC was as high as 416 (13/11/2018) meaning the end of February 2019 figure is 6.9% lower.

Chart 2: Rate of LAC per 10,000 population

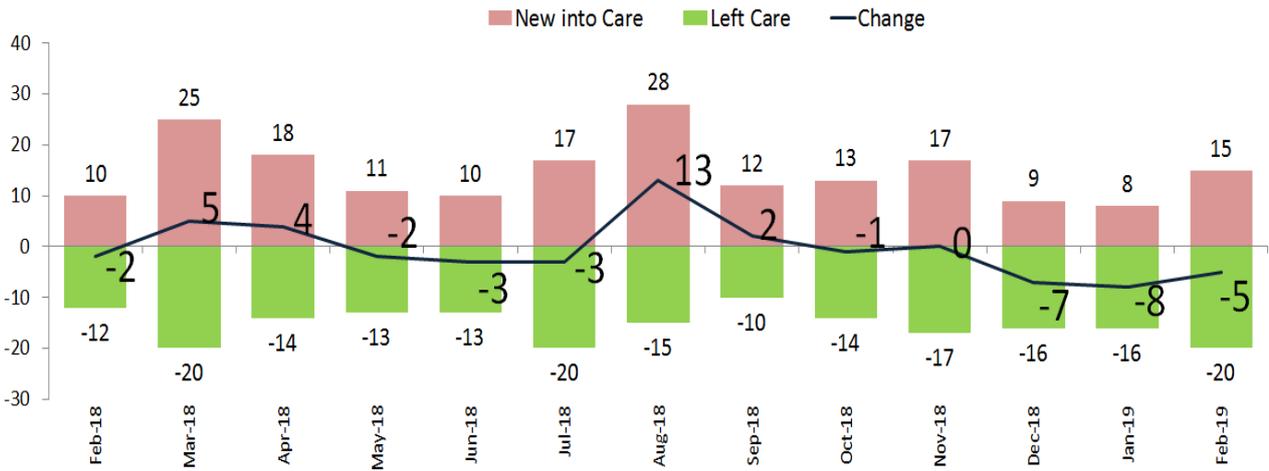


2.2 384 looked after children equals a rate per 10,000 of 96. Chart 2 shows our current rate of LAC compared with the latest statistical neighbour, regional and England averages. At 96 we are now only slightly higher than the latest published Statistical Neighbour rate of 94 and regional rate of 95. Recent quarterly monitoring by the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) suggest the regional average has increased however to nearly 100 per 10,000. We remain significantly higher than the England average of 64.

How many children entered care and how many children and young people left care

Figure 1: Number of children entering and leaving care

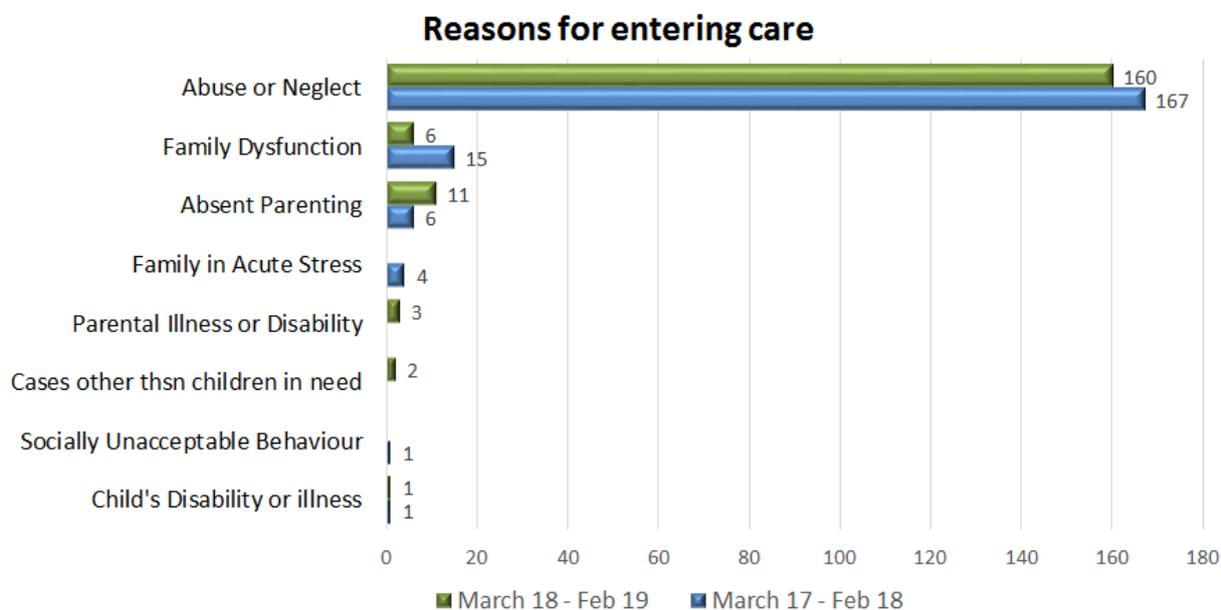
| | Aug-17 | Sep-17 | Oct-17 | Nov-17 | Dec-17 | Jan-18 | Feb-18 | Mar-18 | Apr-18 | May-18 | Jun-18 | Jul-18 | Aug-18 | Sep-18 | Oct-18 | Nov-18 | Dec-18 | Jan-19 | Feb-19 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| New into Care | 16 | 17 | 18 | 13 | 8 | 14 | 10 | 25 | 18 | 11 | 10 | 17 | 28 | 12 | 13 | 17 | 9 | 8 | 15 |
| Left Care | -19 | -12 | -16 | -13 | -8 | -17 | -12 | -20 | -14 | -13 | -13 | -20 | -15 | -10 | -14 | -17 | -16 | -16 | -20 |
| Change | -3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | -3 | -2 | 5 | 4 | -2 | -3 | -3 | 13 | 2 | -1 | 0 | -7 | -8 | -5 |



2.3 The figure above provides the numbers of children in each month over the last 12 months who have started to be looked after (New into care) and those who ceased to be looked after (Left Care). The chart is intended to demonstrate the constant flow of children who enter and leave the LAC system and show how the LAC cohort is constantly changing.

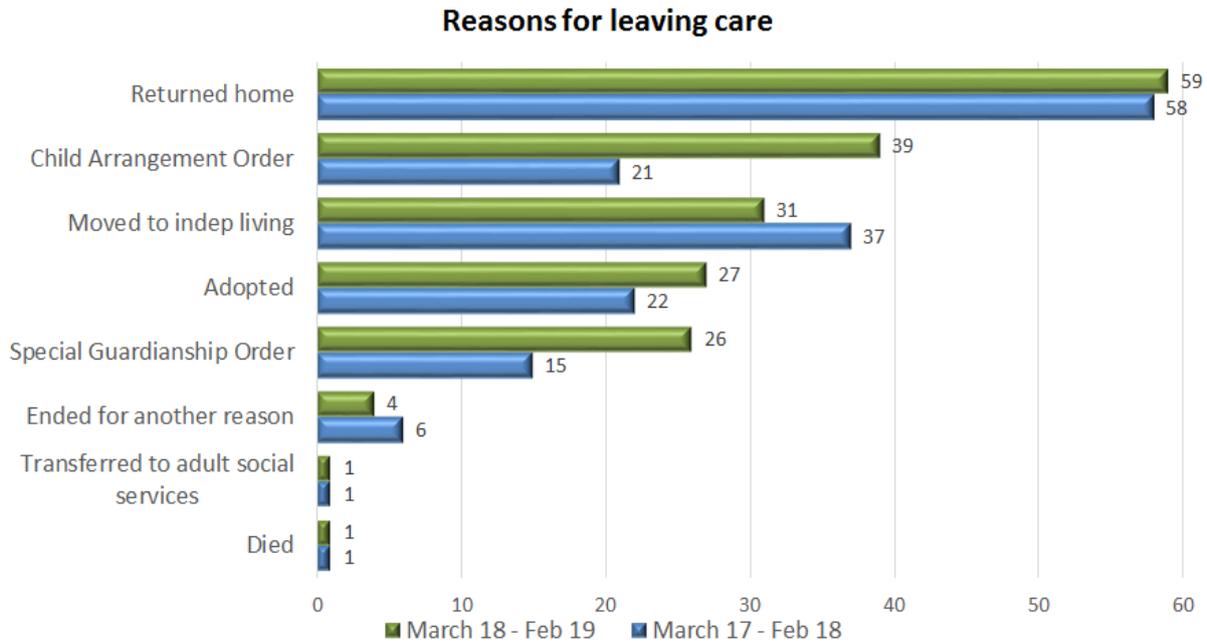
- 2.4 The black line shows the difference between the two figures in the month, and where the black line is above 0 it means more children entered care than left, and where below 0 more children left care than entered. Over the course of the last 12 months reflected in the chart (while individual monthly figures vary) on average 15.2 children entered care each month and 15.7 have left each month.
- 2.5 Activity has been higher in the 12 months ending February 2019 with 183 children starting to be looked after and 188 children leaving care, a total of 371. This compared with 194 starting and 161 children leaving, a total of 355 in the same period in the previous year. However different to the previous year we have seen fewer children starting to be looked after and significantly more ceasing their care period.
- 2.6 In the last 12 months ending February 2019 the lowest number of admissions in a month was 8 and the highest 28. While for children leaving care, the lowest number was 10 and the largest 20.

Chart 3: Primary need category for those entering care



- 2.7 Chart 3 above provides an indication of primary need categories for children who entered care. Primary need codes do not provide the exact reason for admission, which will vary by case however help in identifying the broad circumstances for why a child may need to come into care. The definitions for each of the categories in the chart is included in appendix 3 of this report.
- 2.8 The chart shows the largest category in each year by far was Abuse or Neglect, which accounted for 86% of children who entered care in 2018/19 and 87% in 2017/18. The definition for the category is “Children in need as a result of, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; also includes children at risk because of domestic violence” (note this does not mean Domestic Violence has to be a factor in the case). The number of children admitted into care under family dysfunction reduced to 6 in 2018/19 from 15 in 2017/18. Conversely, the number of children who were admitted due to absent parenting increased from 6 in 2017/18 to 11 in 2018/19.

Chart 4: Reason why the child or young person left care



2.9 Chart 4 above provides the recorded end reason for those who left care in each of the last two years. 161 left care during 2017/18 compared to 188 in 2018/19. In 2018/19, 31% of children and young people left care because of returning home, (59 actual young people) which is lower than the previous year which stood at 36% (58 actual children). Following returning home, the next largest group of young people ceased care because of the granting of a Child Arrangement Order, with 39 children (20%) ceasing for this reason in the latest period, compared with 21 (13%) in the same period last year. The next largest category was as the result of a move to independent living, 16% (31) of young people left care and moved into independent living in 2018/19 a reduction from 23% (37) in 2017/18. Along with the use of Child Arrangement Orders we have seen a notable increase in the number of children who have been adopted or have had a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) granted from a total of 37 (22% of all cases) to 53 (28% of all cases).

What are the characteristics of our current looked after population

Chart 5a: Age of LAC population

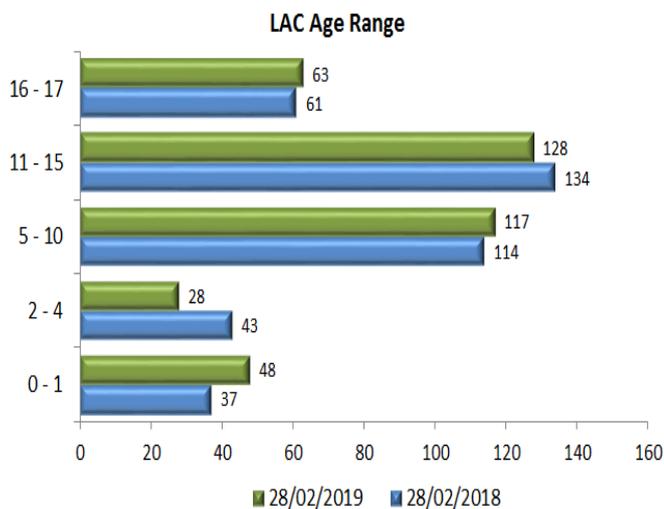
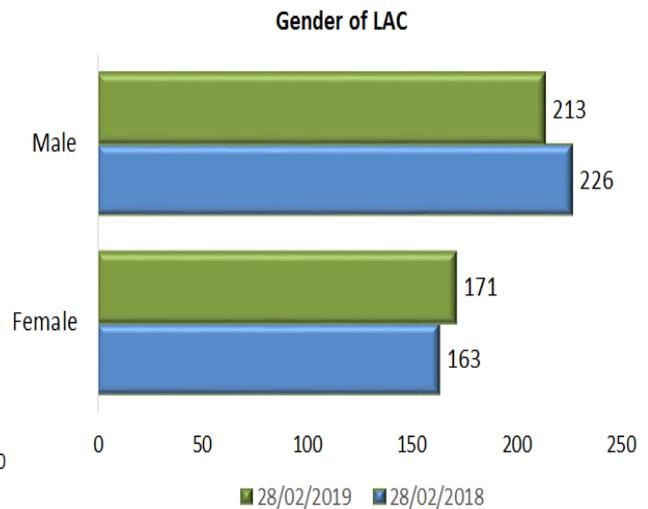
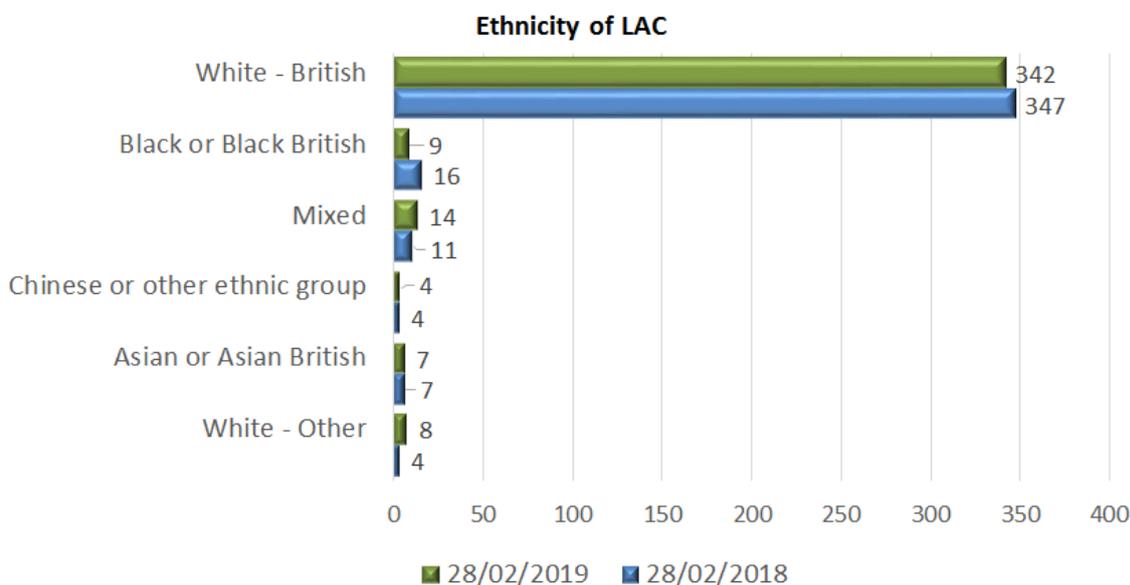


Chart 5b: Gender of LAC population



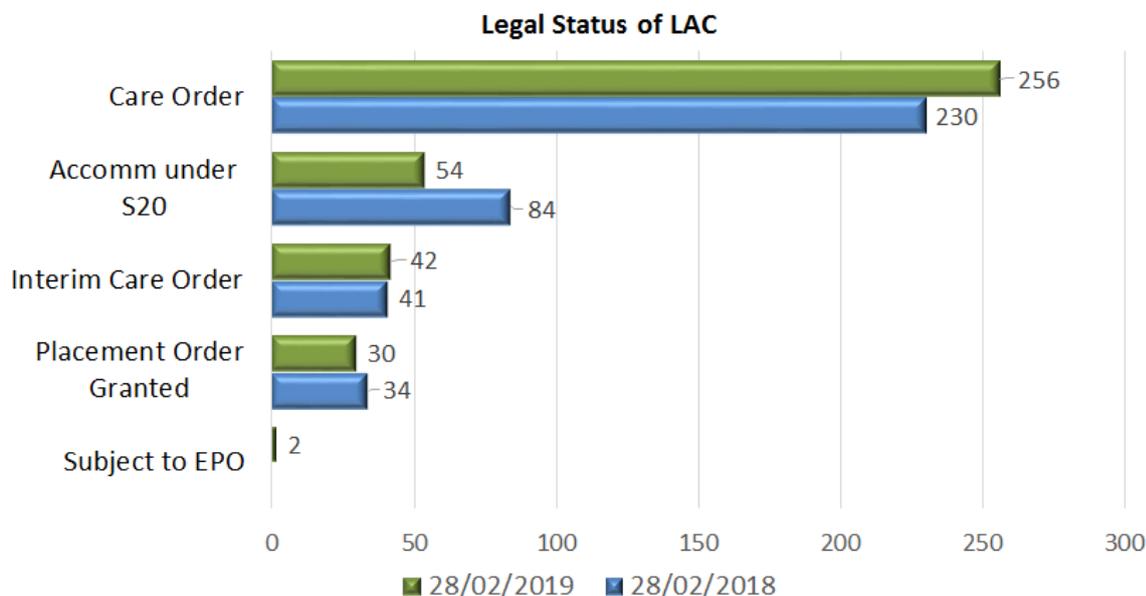
2.10 The age and gender of looked after children are shown in charts 5a and 5b above. Males account for the largest proportion of LAC with 213 children or 55.5% at the end of February 2019. Typically, those aged 11-15 account for the largest proportion of the LAC population, accounting for just over a third LAC at the end of February in each of the last two years.

Chart 6: Ethnicity of LAC population



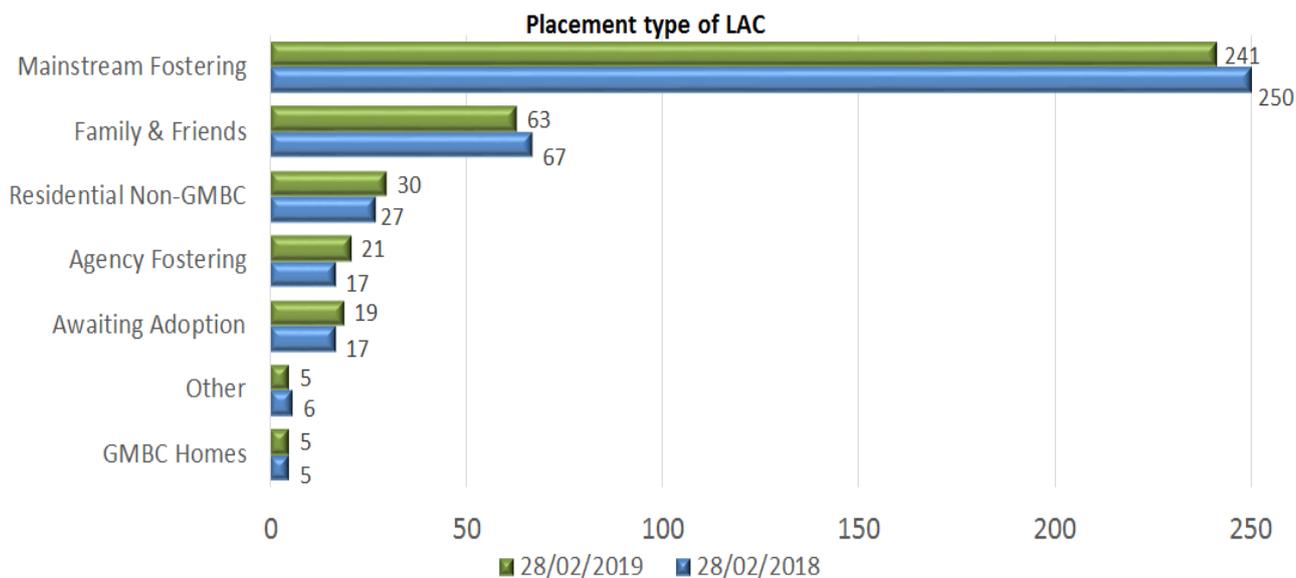
2.11 Chart 6 shows the ethnic breakdown for LAC at the end of February in each of the last two years. At the end of February 2018 there were 38 children from a non-white ethnic background (i.e. not White British or White Other) who were looked after, 9.7% of the total LAC population. At the end of February 2019, the number of children from a non-white ethnic background had decreased slightly to 8.8% of the total population or to 34 in actual numbers. Estimates from the latest school census in January 2019 suggests around 11% of children are from a non-white ethnic background in Gateshead meaning LAC from a non-white ethnic background are currently slightly under-represented compared to the general Gateshead population.

Chart 8: Legal status of LAC population



2.12 Chart 8 shows the majority of our children and young people (256 or 67%) are accommodated under a Full Care Order, with a further 42 (11%) on an Interim Care Order. It was highlighted in October 2017 by Ofsted that we had a high rate of children on Section 20 legal status (s20). We have reviewed all our s20 arrangements over the past 12 months to ensure their appropriateness which has resulted in a steady reduction in children on this legal status, from 84 in February 2018 (21% of all LAC at the time) to 54 in February 2019 (14% of current LAC). There has also been a slight decrease in those who have had a placement order granted, 34 in February 2018 to 30 in February 2019.

Chart 9: Placement Type of LAC population



2.13 Chart 9 shows the placement type of looked after children at the end of February 2019 and the same point in 2018. The chart shows that the majority of our looked after children, 241 or 62.8% at the end of February 2019 were placed in mainstream fostering. We continue to use only a small proportion of Agency Fostering placements, at the end of February 2019, 21 children were in this type of placement, which is slightly higher than the same time last year when the figure stood at 17. There has been an increase in non-Gateshead residential placements, increasing from 27 to 30. Family and friends placements now account for 63 placements or 16% at the end of February 2019, similar to the figure of 67 or 17% at the same time last year. Family and Friends placements include kinship fostering arrangements and children placed at home with parents.

2.14 Figure 2 (below) shows the overall numbers of children who are placed out of borough. By out of borough we mean physically outside of the Gateshead Local Authority boundary area, this will include both Gateshead owned provision and independent. Figure 2 shows the local authority area the child is placed, which is grouped by region along with the number of those placed out of borough are in non-Gateshead Local Authority owned provision.

2.15 At the end of February 2019, 173 children and young people (which is 45% of the total number of LAC) were placed physically outside of the borough, of those 151 (87%) were within the North East region. Of the 173 placed geographically outside of Gateshead 126 (73%) were in Gateshead Local Authority own provision. We had 47 LAC who were placed physically outside the Gateshead authority boundary in independent provision, again the majority of which were within the North East.

2.16 Figure 2 shows that we have a small number of LAC children who are placed a distance outside the North East region and around the country, in authorities such Wakefield and Bradford (2), Peterborough and Lincolnshire (2), Birmingham and Staffordshire (2), The Wirral (1), Barnet (3) and Neath and Port-Talbot (1). The 3 children in Barnet at Gateshead owned provision.

Figure 2: Number of children placed physically out of borough (OOB)

| Region | Local Authority | Feb 18 | Of which were Gateshead own provision | Feb 19 | Of which were Gateshead own provision |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| North East | Durham | 51 | 42 | 56 | 44 |
| | Sunderland | 33 | 29 | 30 | 26 |
| | Newcastle Upon Tyne | 27 | 20 | 31 | 26 |
| | Northumberland | 13 | 10 | 15 | 9 |
| | South Tyneside | 12 | 12 | 7 | 7 |
| | Darlington | 1 | | 1 | |
| | North Tyneside | 1 | | 1 | |
| | Hartlepool | | | 1 | |
| | Stockton | 1 | | 2 | |
| | Cumbria / Carlisle | 8 | | 7 | |
| East of England | Lincolnshire | | | 1 | |
| | Peterborough | | | 1 | |
| Yorkshire and Humber | Bradford | 1 | | 1 | |
| | Doncaster | 1 | | | |
| | Wakefield | | | 1 | |
| West Midlands | Birmingham | | | 1 | |
| | Staffordshire | | | 1 | |
| North West | Wirral | | | 1 | |
| Outer London | Barnet | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Wales | Neath Port Talbot | 1 | | 1 | |
| Other | Adoptive placement | 14 | 14 | 11 | 11 |
| Total Number | | 168 | 131 | 173 | 126 |
| Total % | | | 78.0% | | 72.8% |

Section 3: Performance overview – Key LAC performance indicators

- 3.1 Appendix 1 at the end of this report provides a performance scorecard for 7 key looked after children performance indicators. The scorecard indicates if in year targets are currently being met, and a direction of travel compared to the same time last year.
- 3.2 In summary the scorecard shows the following, with additional detail for all the indicators is provided below:
- **3 indicator targets are currently being met** (stability of LAC – 3 or more placements, stability of LAC – long-term stability and proportion of children ceasing LAC under SGO or adoption)

- **2 indicators are currently not meeting their targets** (LAC reviews within timescales and timeliness of children being placed for adoption)
- **2 indicators have been revised** and so subsequently have not had targets set under the current monitoring framework (care leavers in EET and suitable accommodation), however both are showing improvements from last year

LAC reviews

- 3.3 **LAC reviews** - Ensuring a child's care plans is being reviewed and implemented in timely manner is a key priority of the Safeguarding Children Unit. Close monitoring processes ensure nearly all reviews happen within statutory timescales. A total of 677 LAC reviews for 342 eligible LAC have been completed during April-January 2019. Of the 342, 339 (99.1%) have been reviewed within the statutory timescales. The 3 reviews that went out of timescales were the result of human error in predicting the next required date. The process for scheduling reviews within timescales has been re-iterated with all IROs to prevent any future occurrences. Each out of timescale review was only a few days outside of required timescales.

Placement Stability

- 3.4 Research shows the importance of the stability of young people's placements as important in ensuring they have positive outcomes. Overall performance in relation to affording young people stability remains good and has been for some time.
- 3.5 **Three or more placements** - at the end of January 2019, there were 26 out of 391 children looked after who had experienced 3 or more placement moves in the previous 12 months (6.6%). At the same time last year there were 25 out of a total of 389 Looked after children (6.4%). Our performance compares favourably with the national picture where around 10% of children have experienced 3 or more placement moves on average.
- 3.6 **Long-term stability** - A further measure of stability looks at the stability of those children who have been in long-term placements. There were 105 out of 132 children who have been looked after for over 2 and half years who had been living in the same placement for at least 2 years (79.5%). At the same time last year there were 100 out of 122 children in the same placement (82%). While this is a reduction from last year the current figures continue to compare extremely favourable to the National average which stands at 70%.

Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)

- 3.7 **Adoptions of Looked After Children and SGO** - The 2018 England average for children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted was 13%, and for children who left care on an SGO was 12%, a combined total of 25%. Our local target of 26% has been calculated based on this national comparison for 2017 when the combined figure was 26%. During the period April to January 2019 there were 19 children who had been looked after for over 6 months and had been adopted and 21 children have left care on a SGO. During the period there were a total of 144 children who have left care giving an overall performance of 28%. At the same time last year there were 31 (20 adoptions/11 SGOs) out of 135 (22.96%).

3.8 **Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption** - During April to January 2019, 19 adoptions took place, of which 8 were within the best interest date timescale (42.1%). At the same point last year there were 20 adoptions, of which 13 were within time (65%). Whilst our timeliness of adoptions figure is below our target, there have been several factors which have impacted on this. Factors that attributed to cases going out of timescale include:

- Delays in Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks that affected a sibling group of 3.
- Delays in family finding when trying to place siblings together.
- Challenges around potential links not progressing due to adopters withdrawing.
- External family finding undertaken to reflect the child's cultural background.
- Family finding was delayed until professionals were clearer about possible development delays. When the child was matched, biological parents lodged an appeal and introductions were delayed.
- Delay in twins being placed and adopted together following concerns of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).
- Demonstrating development delay which resulted in genetic testing and further assessments. Potential adopters withdrew from process and child was adopted by foster carers.

Care Leavers

3.9 Nationally, young people leaving care have significantly poorer outcomes than their peers in relation to education, training and employment (EET). When young people enter care, some as late as 13 to 17 years of age, their educational attainment levels are often well behind those of same age young people in the general population and therefore when they leave care they need additional support from the service. There are currently 117 care leavers aged 17-21 in touch with our leaving care team

3.10 **Education Employment or Training** – of the 117 care leavers in touch with the our leaving care team, 72 (61.5%) of them are in some form of education, employment and training. This is an improvement on the 57.1% that we reported at the same time last year.

3.11 Without young people leaving care having somewhere appropriate to live, it is unlikely that care leavers would be able to sustain education, employment or training. Improving the quality and choice of housing is crucial to improving the stability and engagement of care leavers in education, employment and training.

3.12 **Suitable accommodation** – At the end of January 97% of care leavers were deemed to be in suitable accommodation. We have identified 4 young people as being in unsuitable accommodation (3 in custody, 1 in hospital, under section 3 of the Mental Health Act). At the same time last year, there were 3 in unsuitable accommodation.

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Appendix 1: Performance Scorecard

| Ref | Theme | Indicator Description | Previous Year End 2017/18 | Current Month Previous Year (2017/18) | Performance Latest in the current year (2018/19) | Target for 2018/19 | RAG rating against current target. | Trend (Compared to same time last year) | Comments |
|-----|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | LAC reviews | NI 066 Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales | 99.47% | 99.45% | 99.12% | 100% | Not Met Target | ↓ | <p>A total of 677 LAC reviews for 342 eligible LAC have been completed during April-January 2019. Of the 342, 339 (99.1%) have been reviewed within the statutory timescales.</p> <p>At the same time last year there were 364 out of 366 completed within time (99.45%).</p> |
| 2 | Placement Stability | NI 062 Percentage of looked after children with three or more placement during the year | 6.11% | 6.40% | 6.60% | 10.0% | Met Target | ↓ | <p>During the period of April to January 2019 there were 26 Looked after children (LAC) who have had 3 or more placements. The total number of LAC at the end of the period was 391 (6.6%).</p> <p>At the same time last year there were 25 out of 389 LAC who had 3 or more placements (6.4%).</p> <p>Our performance compares favourably with the national picture where around 10% of children have experienced 3 or more placement moves on average.</p> |
| 3 | Placement Stability | NI 063 Percentage of looked after children living continuously in the same placement for 2 years | 82.54% | 82.00% | 79.50% | 78.0% | Met Target | ↓ | <p>During the period of April to January 2019, 105 children have been in their placement for at least 2 years out of the 132 children who have been looked after for 2 and a half years or more (79.5%).</p> <p>At the same time last year there were 100 out of 122 (82%).</p> <p>Current figures continue to compare extremely favourable to the National average which stands at 70%.</p> |
| 4 | Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders | LCH-CFYO-002 Adoptions of Looked After Children and SGO | 23.46% | 22.96% | 28.00% | 26.0% | Met Target | ↑ | <p>Adoptions of Looked After Children and SGO - The 2017 England average for children who ceased to be looked after who were adopted was 14%, and for children who left care on an SGO was 12%, a combined total of 26%. Our local target of 26% has been calculated based on this national figure.</p> <p>During the period April to January 2019, there were 19 children who had been looked after for over 6 months and had been adopted and 21 children have left care on a SGO. During the period there were a total of 144 children who have left care giving an overall performance of 28%. At the same time last year there were 31 (20 adoptions/11 SGOs) out of 135 (22.96%).</p> |

| Ref | Theme | Indicator Description | Previous Year End 2017/18 | Current Month Previous Year (2017/18) | Performance Latest in the current year (2018/19) | Target for 2018/19 | RAG rating against current target. | Trend (Compared to same time last year) | Comments |
|---------|--|---|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 5 | Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders | NI 061 Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption | 72.00% | 65.00% | 42.10% | 80.0% | Not Met Target | ↓ | <p>During April to January 2019, 19 adoptions took place, of which 8 were within the best interest date timescale (42.1%). At the same point last year there were 20 adoptions, of which 13 were within time (65%). Whilst our timeliness of adoptions figure is below our target, there have been several factors which have impacted on this. Factors that attributed to cases going out of timescale include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in DBS checks that affected a sibling group of 3. • Delays in family finding when trying to place siblings together. • Challenges around potential links not progressing due to adopters withdrawing. • External family finding undertaken to reflect the child's cultural background. • Family finding was delayed until professionals were clearer about possible development delays. <p>When the child was matched, the birth mother lodged an appeal and introductions were delayed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in twins being placed and adopted together following concerns of FASD. • Demonstrating development delay which resulted in genetic testing and further assessments. <p>Potential adopters withdrew from process and child was adopted by foster carers.</p> |
| Page 51 | Care leavers | LW09 - (NI 148) Ensure Young Care Leavers are Supported to be in Education, Employment, Apprenticeships or Training | 50% | 57% | 62% | New indicator for 2017/18 - no target set | N/A | ↑ | Of our 117 care leavers, 72 (61.5%) of them are in some form of education, employment and training. This is an improvement on the 57.1% that we reported at the same time last year. |
| | Care Leavers | LW08 - (NI 147) Ensure Young Care Leavers & Homeless are Supported to have a Safe Place to Live | 92% | 97% | 97% | New indicator for 2017/18 - no target set | N/A | → | Of the 117 care leavers that were allocated to the leaving care team at the end of January we identified 4 young people as being in unsuitable accommodation (3 in custody, 1 in hospital, under section 3 of the Mental Health Act). At the same time last year, there were 3 in unsuitable accommodation. |

Appendix 2: Primary need codes definitions

- **Abuse or neglect** - Children in need as a result of, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; also includes children at risk because of domestic violence.
- **Family Dysfunction** - Children whose needs primarily arise from living in a family where the parenting capacity is chronically inadequate.
- **Absent parenting** - Children whose needs for services arise mainly from having no parents available to provide for them.
- **Parental illness or disability** - Children whose main need for services arises because the capacity of their parent(s) (or carer(s)) to care for them is impaired by the parent(s) (or carer(s)) disability, physical or mental illness, or addictions.
- **Family in acute stress** - Children whose needs arise from living in a family that is going through a temporary crisis that diminishes the parental capacity to adequately meet some of the children's needs.
- **Childs disability or illness** - Children and families whose main need for services arises because of their child's disability, illness or intrinsic condition.

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services
and Governance

Summary

This report sets out the provisional work programme for the Corporate Parenting OSC for the municipal year 2019/20.

Background

1. Every year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee draws up a work programme based on the Council's policy framework which is then agreed by the Council as part of the policy planning process
2. The Committee's work programme is a rolling programme which sets the agenda for its quarterly meetings. It is the means by which it can address the interests of the local community, focus on improving services and seek to reduce inequalities in service provision and access to services.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Endorse the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's provisional work programme for 2019/20 attached at Appendix 1 and refer it to Council for agreement.
 - b) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

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APPENDIX 1

| Draft Corporate Parenting OSC 2019/20 | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 4 July 19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation 44 Report • Adoption Annual Report • Fostering Service Annual Report • Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers (including a focus on sufficiency of local placements / reduction in use of IFAs / the quality of foster carers looking after Gateshead children) • Early Permanence (what it means/accelerated plans/placement stability) • Work Programme |
| 17 October 19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People's Presentation • Performance Overview • Child Protection (How families are supported through the process and family links maintained) • Monitor Progress in relation to reducing high numbers of LAC and children subject to Child Protection Plans (focus on how the Council is delivering on its strategy / look at how other LAs e.g. South and North Tyneside are reducing LAC numbers at time when ours are increasing) • Residential Capacity (proposed way forward in relation to out of borough placements) • Regulation 44 Report • Work Programme |
| 16 January 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing from Care Annual Report • Education Annual Report (incl focus on employment/training/apprenticeships) • Health of LAC Annual report • How we assess Young People in Crisis - (Changing Live Project) • Regulation 44 Report • Work Programme |
| 2 April 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young People's presentation • Performance Overview • Care Leavers Offer – Quality and Impact – Annual Report / incl session with care leavers • Social Work Practice and the Voice of the Child – Case Study (work with the Safeguarding Board to develop core model /systemic working practices) • Regulation 44 Report • Work Programme |

Issues to slot in:

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