



CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, 21 March 2016 at 4.30 pm at the Former Springboard Fostering Office, The Old Library, Lobely Hill Road, NE11 0AL

From the Chief Executive, Jane Robinson

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 11 January 2016.

3. E-Safety - Young People's Presentation

Presentation to be provided

4. Looked After Children Performance Overview (Pages 9 - 18)

Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

5. Annual Work Programme 2016/17 (Pages 19 - 22)

Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

6. 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:

Item	Paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972
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8	1
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EXEMPT AGENDA

7. Case Study - Out of Borough Placements (Pages 23 - 30)

Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

Continued....

8. **Inspections by OFSTED of Gateshead Children's Homes and Regulation 44 Visits** (Pages 31 - 36)

Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning

Contact: Rosalyn White - email: rosalynwhite@gateshead.gov.uk, Tel: 0191 433 2088,
Date: Friday, 11 March 2016

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 11 January 2016

PRESENT:	Councillor M Brain (Chair)
	Councillors: B Oliphant, B Clelland, D Robson, C Simcox, Sasha Ban and Jeremy Cripps

CP16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Craig, Cllr McNally and co-opted member Julie McCartney.

CP17 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2015 were approved as a correct record.

It was requested that future minutes explicitly reference 'Foster Carers', rather than 'Carers', when referencing that particular group.

CP18 EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the annual report on the work of the Virtual School over the last year. It was noted that the REALAC team contributed to the recent Ofsted inspection and also completed the data dashboard, which compiled the key data information around educational outcomes. There has also been focus on the PEP process and in particular around the roll out of the new Key Stage 5 PEPs.

An Educational Psychologist was appointed from April 2015 for 0.2 of the week and is skilled in providing training. In addition a new teacher has been appointed with effect from April 2015 to work on the team four days per week. It was noted that the team is still missing a mentor to support young people in terms of behaviour and emotional problems.

A new governance committee has been set up for the Virtual School, with the first meeting being held in October. This group is made up of local authority professionals who provide challenge to the Virtual School. Work is ongoing around how to get the messages back to schools and increasing challenge and dialogue with schools.

There is tighter monitoring of the use of Pupil Premium, funding will only be released once evidence of PEPs has been received from the school.

Work continues to monitor pupil progress, this is through weekly meetings and Ofsted recognised there was robust tracking in place. There is an increase in the number of LAC accessing work experience through the Pathways2work programme. It was noted that this continues to be a high priority for the team because working with pupils from year 10 can help steer them, this has resulted in an increase in the number of LAC going on to college and university.

It was reported that Ofsted recognised the improved quality of PEPs, in particular the strategic way of evaluating Pupil Premium, and stated that it was evident the team was prepared to challenge schools. Challenge continues around ensuring planned progression routes for 16-21 (or 25) year olds to tackle the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

It was noted that the number of permanent exclusions for LAC continues to be low, however work is ongoing to tackle the number of fixed term exclusions. For LAC, if there is a risk of permanent exclusion, there is the power to move that young person outside of the Fair Access procedures. However, schools are also encouraged to refer cases to the Fair Access Panel so that other schools can challenge them before referring them to the Virtual School Head, this ensures a level of accountability.

It was reported that, at the end of reception year, only 42% of LAC made a good level of development. However, improvements begin to be seen in Key Stage 1, with 83% of the cohort in 2015 meeting the correct level at reading, 86% for reading. Therefore it was acknowledged that there is currently a strong position for LAC at primary school. In terms of secondary schools there was a dip in performance since 2013, this is due to the high percentage of SEN pupils in the cohort. The provisional 2015 figures have improved in terms of 5 A*-C for LAC, however it was acknowledged that further improvement is required in order to narrow the attainment gap.

It was recognised that more support is needed to support young people to overcome problems in years 10 and 11.

It was confirmed that work is underway to look at a restructure of the team to ensure more teaching time than administration time and guarantee the service is more responsive. It was acknowledged that the biggest issue is disruptive young people, which is due to difficulties in coping emotionally. It was noted that this needs to be addressed in the secondary sector in particular.

The point was made that the numbers of permanent exclusions and fixed term exclusions has increased and is not specific to LAC. Behaviour Support Team has been working with those pupils displaying low level disruption, however it was noted that LAC should be given further consideration and that is why the Virtual Head continues to challenge schools that wish to permanently exclude LAC.

It was queried what was meant by 'alternative education'. It was confirmed that this includes planned programmes in the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or alternative programmes elsewhere. This is aimed at young people who have disengaged through their attendance or behaviour so alternative provision attempts to get them

re-engaging. It was confirmed that there is no home education in relation to the current cohort of LAC.

The figures in the report relating to GCSE results for LAC in Gateshead were questioned. It was confirmed that there has been a 5% improvement in achievement in LAC since 2014 and it was acknowledged that the text in the report would be corrected accordingly.

It was questioned whether there continues to be transition work for LAC moving from primary to secondary school. It was noted that a lot of schools currently address this creatively, Foster Carers are trained by REALAC on this issue and this is also looked at through PEP reviews.

Committee was advised that there are currently 8 young people at difference stages throughout University, which is the most that Gateshead has seen. Progress has been made in terms of contact with universities, university and college representatives are invited to speak at the Foster Carers Workshop which is held annually. The point was made that there is also a responsibility on universities as there are new targets for LAC which allows them to create UCAS points prior to application. It was suggested however that this could result in young people not being able to last the course and it would be more important to ensure constant support is in place for these young people throughout their time at university. It was confirmed that there is a named support worker at universities which has worked effectively, evidenced through the very small drop out rate.

It was queried whether there are any incentives for Foster Carers to attend training. It was confirmed that Foster Carers are required to undertake a set amount of training within a three year period and there are no problems with this happening at present.

Concerns were raised around the increase in permanent exclusions. It was noted that additional resources, for example the Education Psychologist, are put in place, however there is not always a match between the child's needs and what the service has available. Work continues on a case by case basis with schools to identify needs of the young people and establish what is the need perceived by the school and what needs to be done.

The point was made that there are examples of designated transition workers in other areas and it was questioned whether there are examples of such workers within Gateshead. It was confirmed that there is transition funding and BIP funding available and some schools resource transition work themselves.

It was queried whether all LAC are successful in securing places at their first choice of school. It was agreed that this information would be sought and brought back to a future meeting, however, it was noted that a lot of work is carried out with the School Admission Team and there had so far been no challenge to a LAC not receiving their first choice school place.

RESOLVED - (i) That the comments of the Corporate Parenting OSC on the annual report be noted.

- (ii) That the Committee was satisfied with the areas identified for further development.

CP19 MISSING FROM CARE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the annual update report on the missing from care episodes between April 2014 and November 2015.

It was reported that the risk assessment tool has changed over the last year and is based on the Phoenix model that was developed in Manchester. Depending on the number of missing episodes this can trigger a referral to the Multi agency Sexual Exploitation Trafficking (MSET) meeting. When a young person is missing their care plan and vulnerability factors will be assessed and categorised as high, medium or low risk.

There has been a decrease in the total number of missing episodes compared to the same period last year, however there has been an increase in the number of missing from care episodes. It was noted that there has been three 17 year olds with a high number of missing episodes, one of whom is now in secure accommodation, and this has impacted on the figures.

Northumbria Police also previously did not record 'unauthorised absences' and instead all episodes were recorded as 'missing'. However from early 2016 an 'absent' category will be introduced which will now reflect those episodes where a person is 'not at a place where they are expected or required to be'.

It was reported that between April and October there were 444 missing from care episodes, 139 of which were from Eden View. This was significant because it was where the three 17 year olds were placed.

During the year there were 54 young people discussed at the MSET. Each case was looked at in detail, including diversion plans and there was a focus on return interviews as well as the development of a monitoring framework. In terms of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) 14 young people were assessed as at risk; three males and 11 females all aged over 14 years.

It was queried, in terms of the data breakdown, why there was a peak in missing episodes in November. It was noted that this is a regular pattern, however the reasons for this are not known.

It was questioned whether there are any CSE hotspots in Gateshead. It was noted that if there is anti social behaviour or inappropriate, illicit drinking hot spots these could pose risks, even if not within Gateshead they could still impact on Gateshead children and young people.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the information presented and agreed to continue receiving an annual report on missing from care issues.

CP20 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

CP21 CASE STUDY - FOSTER TO ADOPT

The Committee received a case study on the Adoption Service, in relation to 'fostering to adopt' and in particular the personal experiences of adoptive families.

RESOLVED - That the Committee considered the case study and issues it presents.

CP22 INSPECTIONS BY OFSTED OF GATESHEAD CHILDREN'S HOMES AND REGULATION 44 VISITS

The Committee received a report on the Ofsted inspection outcomes and regulation 44 independent visits carried out in the Council's children's homes. The reports written as a result of the visits are circulated to the Service Director, Social Work, Care Wellbeing and Learning, Service Manager for Looked After Children and the Registered Manager of each Home.

RESOLVED - That the information be noted.

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**CORPORATE PARENTING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
21 March 2016**

TITLE OF REPORT: Looked After Children Performance Overview

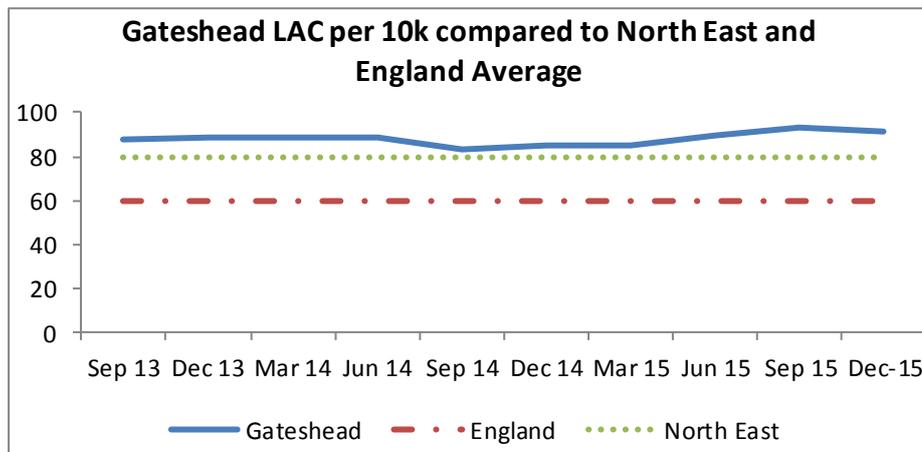
REPORT OF: Alison Elliot, Interim Strategic Director Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose

This report provides a summary update in relation to performance for looked after children’s services showing comparative data and analysis for current performance for 2015/16 and additionally provides a snapshot of some of the activities and achievements that our young people have been involved in.

Background

At 29th February 2016 there were 358 children and young people classed as being Looked After. Since September 2015, when the figure was 373, we have experienced a decrease of 4% in the number of looked after children. However the rate per 10,000 still remains high, higher than the regional rate of 82 and significantly higher than the national rate of 60 per 10,000. The graph below provides a representation of the numbers of looked after children since 2013.



Performance Indicator: Number of children who are Looked after								
Responsible Officer: Debra Patterson								
Previous year's performance		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16			
					1 st qtr Jun-15	2 nd qtr Sep-15	3 rd qtr Dec-15	4 th qtr Mar-16
Gateshead	Per 10,000 pop	96.0	88.6	84.8	89.5	92.3	91.5	-
	Actual	388.0	358.0	340.0	359	370	367	-
Comparative	National	59.7	60.0	60.0	-	-	-	-
	Statistical/regional	80.4	81.0	82.0	-	-	-	-

The age and gender of looked after children are shown below. The numbers of males aged 0-2 has seen the largest change in numbers, reducing from 34 in September to 21 in February (38% decrease). Females aged 0-2 saw a 18.5% increase (27 to 32).

The number of males aged 3-5 have remained the same, the number of females in this group has reduced by 40% (from 20 to 12)

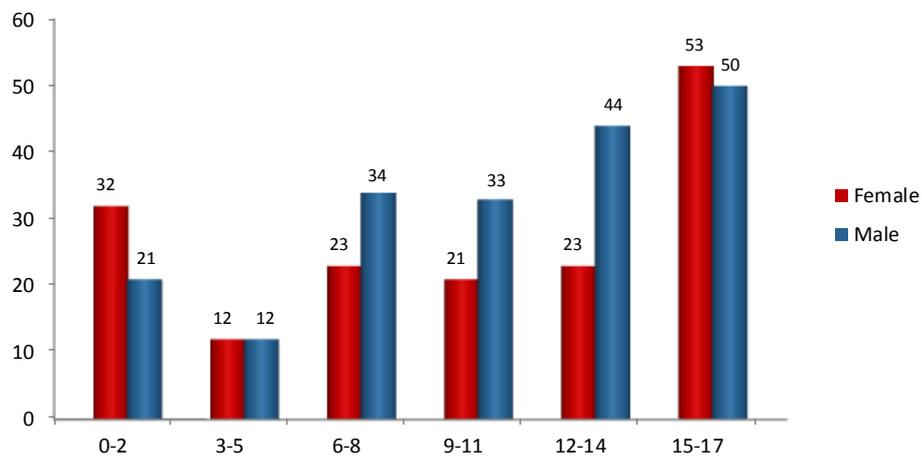
There has been a 10% increase in the number of 6-8 year olds (52 to 57), the number of males has decreased slightly (from 36 to 34), however, the number of females increased from 16 to 23 (44%).

For those aged 9-11, there has been a slight increase in the number of females (19 to 21, the number of males has also increased, 28 to 33).

Within the 12-14 age group, the number of females has decreased from 27 to 23 and the number of males have increased from 41 to 44.

The numbers aged 15-17 has decreased from 112 to 103, the numbers of females has decreased from 56 to 53 and the numbers of males has decreased from 56 to 50.

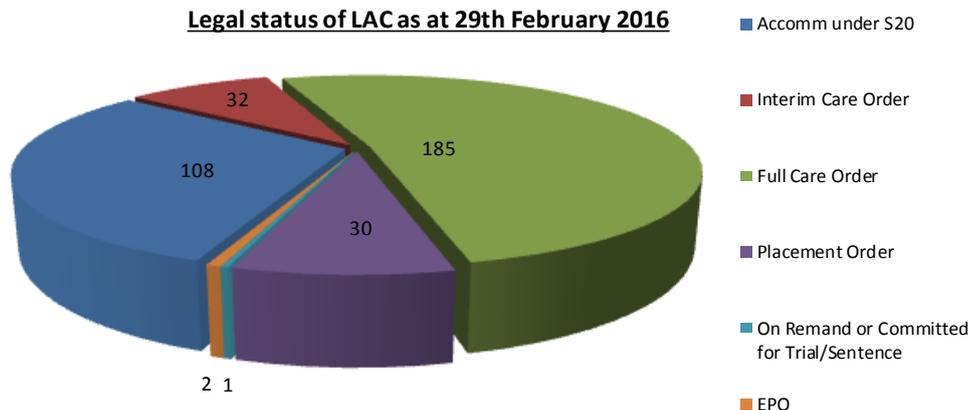
Age of LACs at 29th February 2016

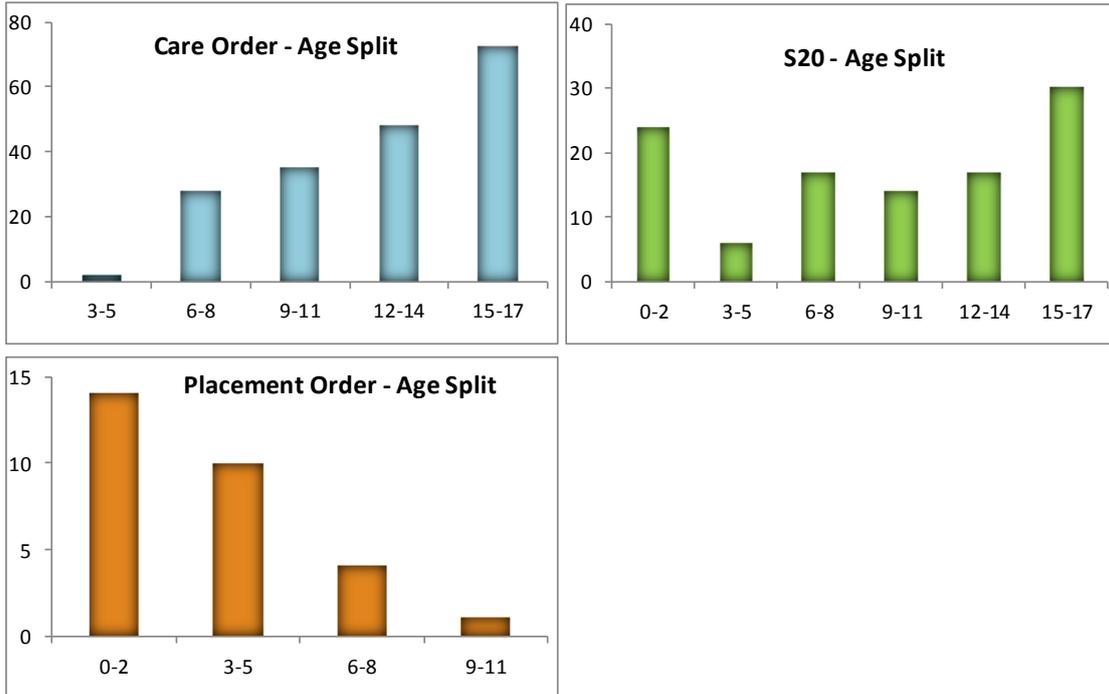


The legal status of children and young people is shown below. The majority of young people are accommodated under a care order (52%).

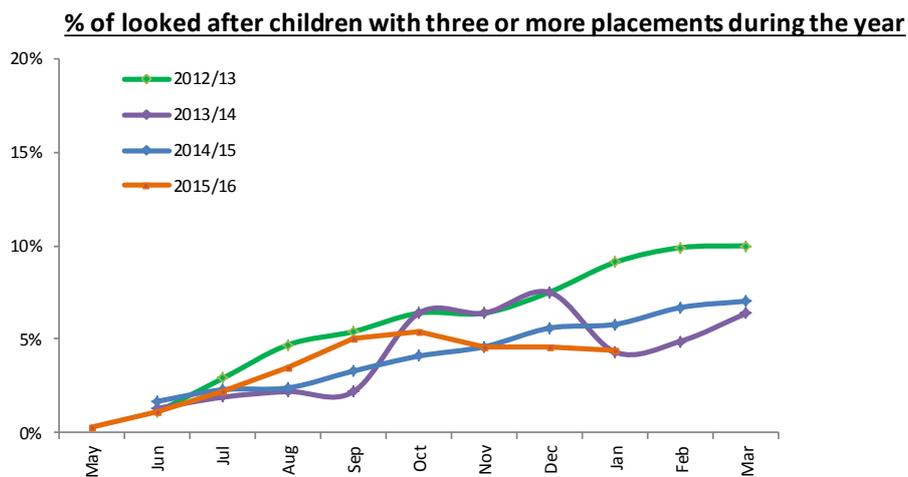
There has been a decrease in the number of looked after children accommodated under a S20 (135 to 108) and an increase in the number of LAC with interim care orders (20 to 32).

Legal status of LACs at 29th February 2016





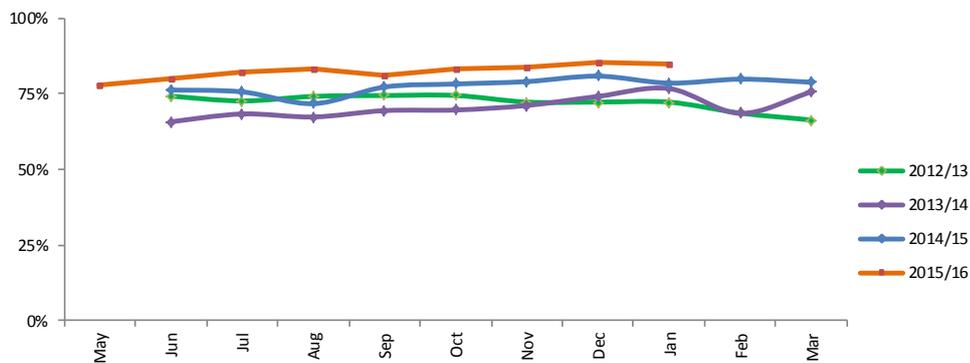
We know that the stability of young people’s placements is important in ensuring they have positive outcomes. In Gateshead whilst there remain a number of children for whom stability is difficult due to the additional needs they have, however the overall performance in relation to affording young people stability is good. At the end of January there were 16 out of 365 children looked after who had 3 or more placement moves (4.4%). At the same time last year there were 20 out of a total of 343 Looked after children (5.8%). This compares extremely favourably with the national picture where 11% of children have experienced 3 or more placement moves.



Performance Indicator: % of looked after children with three or more placements during the year								
Responsible Officer: Debra Patterson								
Previous years performance		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16			
					1 st qtr Jun-15	2 nd qtr Sep-15	3 rd qtr Dec-15	4 th qtr Mar-16
Gateshead	Actual	10.0%	6.4%	7.0%	1.1%	5.0%	4.6%	
	Target	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Comparative	National	11%*	11.0%		-	-	-	-
	Statistical/regional	11.0%			-	-	-	-

In addition to this measure of stability we also look at the stability of those children who have been in long term placements. There were 105 children out of 124 children who have been looked after for over 2 and a half years who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years and remain in the same placement (84.7%). At this point last year there were 102 out of 130 children in the same placement (78.5%). The national average is 67%.

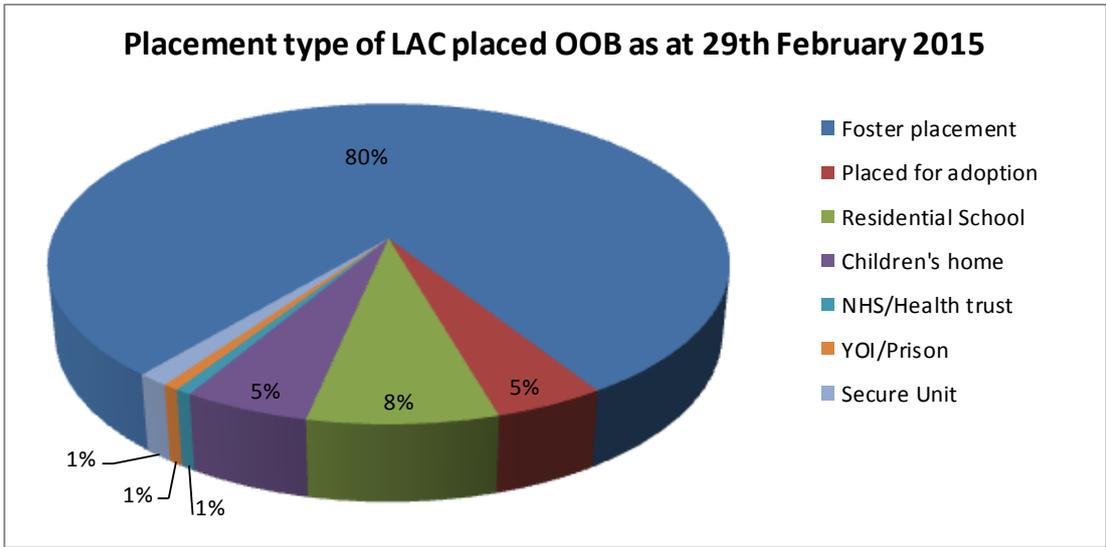
% of looked after children living continuously in the same placement for 2 years



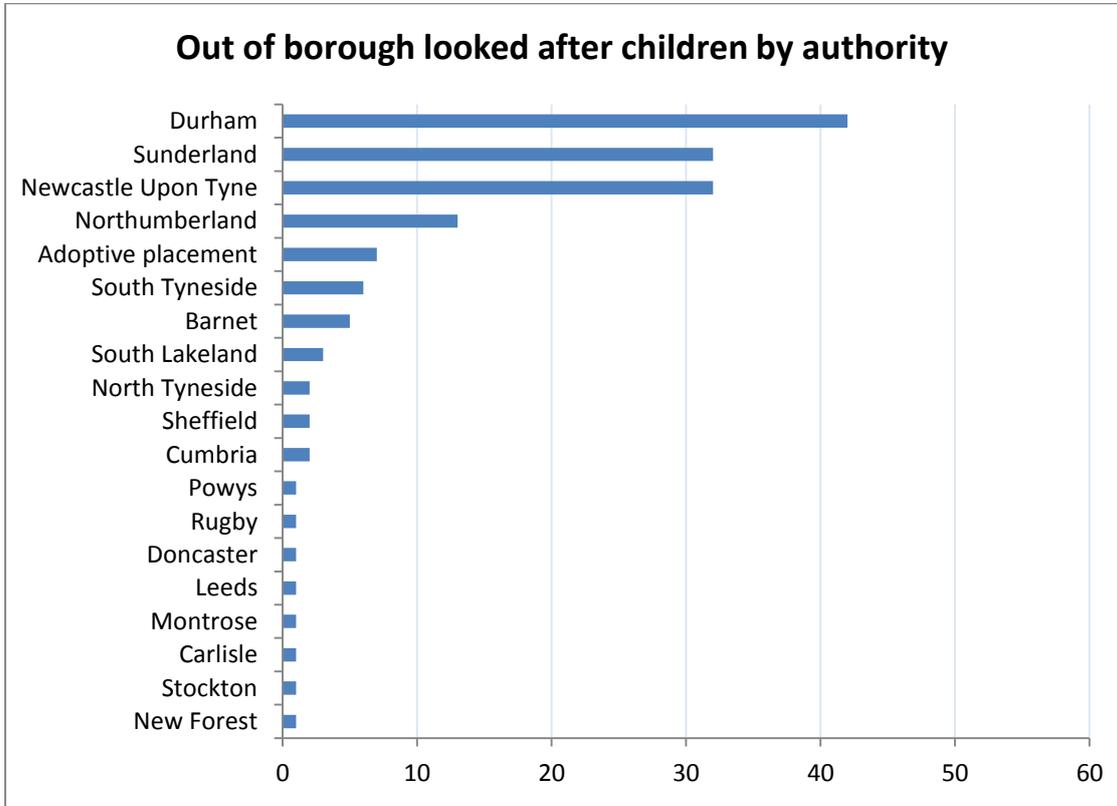
Performance Indicator: % of looked after children living continuously in the same placement for 2 yrs								
Responsible Officer: Debra Patterson								
Previous years performance		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16			
					1 st qtr Jun-15	2 nd qtr Sep-15	3 rd qtr Dec-15	4 th qtr Mar-16
Gateshead	Actual	66.3%	75.6%	75.6%	80.0%	81.1%	85.3%	
	Target	71.0%	71.0%	71.0%	71.0%	71.0%	71.0%	71.0%
Comparative	National	67.0%			-	-	-	-
	Statistical/regional	67.0%			-	-	-	-

154 children and young people, 43% of the total number of LAC, are placed Out of Borough, this has increased from 40% (140/373) in September 2015. Of those the majority, 123, are placed in foster care, of those young people 20 are in Independent Foster Care placements. Most of the placements remain within the region with only 19 young people placed further afield, 5 of whom are in placements in Barnet in order to support their Jewish identity.

Placement type of LAC placed OOB as at 29th February 2015



Out of borough looked after children by authority



There are 20 children placed in Independent Fostering placements 19 are outside the Borough; of those 9 are in Sunderland, 5 in Durham, 1 in Northumberland, 2 in North Tyneside, 2 in Sheffield and 1 in Newcastle.

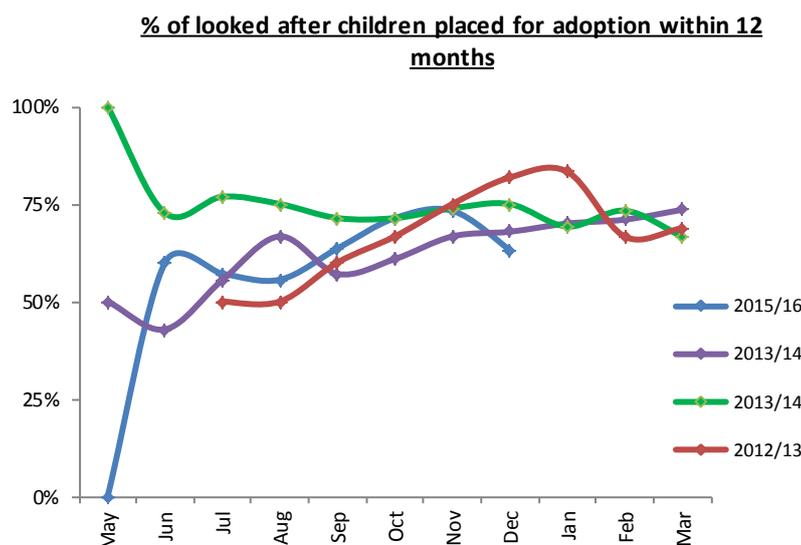
The number of children in residential placements including secure placements is 24. 4 placed in Durham, 3 in South Lakeland, 3 in Sunderland, 3 in Newcastle, 2 in Cumbria, 2 In Northumberland. There are also children placed in residential settings in Rugby, Stockton, Doncaster, Montrose, Carlisle, Leeds and Powys.

There are three looked after young people who have missed their LAC review (99.1%), two of these cases relate to two siblings. The quality and degree of their engagement in reviews is mixed with many children and young people seen outside the meeting just prior to their review. IROs are increasingly trying to meet with

children and young people prior to their review. The use of MOMO has also provided a useful tool in order to improve children and young people’s engagement with their review.

Adoption

Between April and January 2016 20 adoptions took place, of which 13 were within the best interest date timescale (65%). At the same point last year there were 30 adoptions, of which 21 were within time (70%).



Performance Indicator: Adopted Children whose placements started within 12 months of the Best Interest Date								
Responsible Officer: Debra Patterson								
Previous years performance		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16			
					1 st qtr Jun-15	2 nd qtr Sep-15	3 rd qtr Dec-15	4 th qtr Mar-16
Gateshead	Actual	68.8%	66.7%	73.5%	60.0%	63.6%	63.2%	
	Target	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Comparative	National	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Statistical/regional	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Our performance measure for timeliness within adoption is challenging. The most recent figures to be published from The Government’s adoption scorecard shows an increase in the time it takes to match a child to an adoptive family once the court has granted a placement order. Calculated on a three year rolling average, the published figure for 2012-15 is 214 days, whilst this is an increase from the previous 3 year figure of 210 days, it is lower than the England 3 year average of 223 days

Whilst the average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family has decreased from 712 (2011-14) to 659 (2012-15), it remains higher than the England average of 593.

Within the group of 20 children that have been adopted so far this year, 12 were females aged 1 to 9. There were 8 males who had a lower age range of 1 to 3. Two children who were in foster to adopt placements.

The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family for this group of children is 501 days. There were 2 cases where the average number of days was significantly higher. In one case it was a 9 year old child who had significant additional needs and numerous assessments were undertaken in terms of assessing her needs and assessing if she should be placed with other siblings. In another case the child was adopted by a family member but the application was only submitted when the family felt able to proceed. There were also delays in legal proceedings which added to our increased timescales.

If we were to exclude these cases, our average number of days would reduce to 413.

The average time between placement order being granted and child being matched for this group of children is currently 182 days.

We are expecting a significantly lower number of adoptions compared to 2014-2015 when there were 34.

Care Leavers

An increasing focus is being placed on care leavers and the responsibility of Local Authorities to ensure they transition well into adulthood. As a result we are now responsible for monitoring young people's accommodation and work or education status for young people aged 17,18,19, 20 and 21 years.

Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation

There are 145 young people who will turn 17, 18, 19, 20 or 21 during 2015-16, of which 125 have already had their birthday, we can confirm that of those 3 who are in unsuitable accommodation (97.3% in suitable accommodation). There are 2 YP not in suitable accommodation who are in custody and 1 who is in hospital sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

Care leavers in Education Employment or Training

There are 145 young people who will turn 17, 18, 19, 20 or 21 during 2015-16, of which 125 have already had their birthday, we can confirm there are 59 who are in some form of employment, education or training (47.2%).

The breakdown of those in some form of EET is:

Age 17-1/2 (50%)

Age 18- 16/24 (67%)

Age 19- 13/34 (38%)

Age 20 -20/40 (50%)

Age 21- 9/25 (36%)

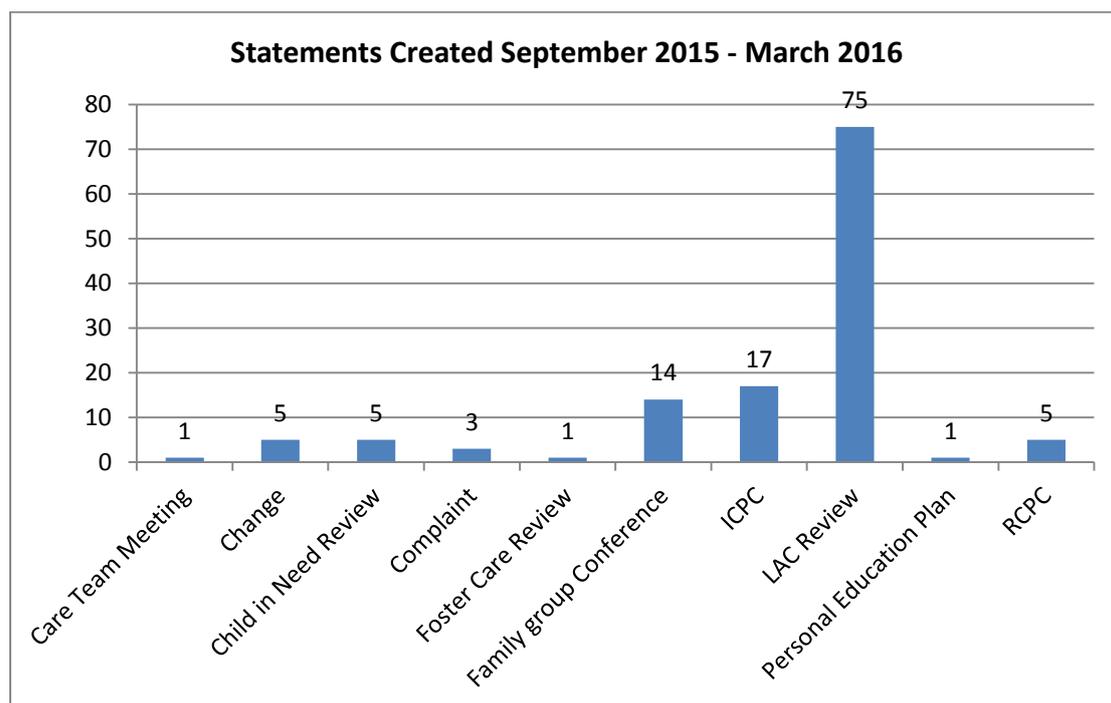
Participation

At the beginning of September a new service was launched to provide a simple and accessible way for looked after children to give their views. The service is called - **MOMO (Mind of My Own)**, and is an award winning APP that helps children and young people express their opinions more clearly by making it easy for them to send social workers their "MOMO statement". They can use it to prepare for meetings, request a change to their care or to ask for a problem to be sorted out.

It works by prompting them to enter their views, structuring what they say into a statement and delivering that statement to their social worker or other member of their care team electronically. It gives children confidence to express their views, communicate a problem if they don't feel safe and forces their views into the heart of the decision making processes. **MOMO** can be used on a normal computer, as well as iPhones and Android devices.

112 Children and Young People have created a MOMO account registered with Gateshead. Our youngest user is 8 years old.

The app has been used by young people to prepare for various meeting, to suggest a change and to make complaints.



Advocacy

Gateshead provides support to children and young people to ensure they have every opportunity to express their views and have them heard. This can be through independent advocacy commissioned by the local authority or through our own children's rights officer who provides advice and support to young people in a more informal way.

Child A

Child A was placed in an Independent Residential Placement. During an incident in the home, she had to be restrained. Chris visited to gather her views about this and to find out if the young woman wanted to involve the police, as she had previously indicated that she felt that she had been injured as a result of the restraint. The young woman talked about the incident and decided that she did not want to take this further. She indicated that she knew that the restraint had been carried out to keep her and staff members safe.

Child B

Child B had completed a consultation document for their foster carers review. The document had been altered and negative comments written over. There was concern that she may have been influenced to change her comments by parents as she had written some very worrying comments about living away from home. Gillian visited the young woman to gather her views. She instantly knew why she was being visited and told Gillian that she had completed the form and then had an argument and was in a bad mood, so changed her feedback. She commented that she was actually happy in her placement and did not want to move.

Additionally there are 8 children/young people accessing our commissioned independent advocacy service.

RECOMMENDATION

The views of the OSC are sought on the performance outlined above

CONTACT: Ann Day

ext: 3484

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TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Jane Robinson, 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 2016/17.

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 2016/17 attached at Appendix 1, and refer it to Council on 26 May 2016 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.

Contact: Rosalyn White

Ext: 2088

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Corporate Parenting OSC Work Programme 2016-17 (DRAFT)	
4 July 2016 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health of LAC Annual Report • Adoption Annual Report • Regulation 33 Report • Ofsted - Specific LAC Improvement Plan • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) for LAC (<i>deferred from 2015/16 work programme</i>)
10 October 2016 4.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Peoples Presentation • Fostering Service Annual Report • Performance Overview • Regulation 33 Report
16 January 2017 1.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing from Care Annual Report • Education Annual Report • Regulation 33 Report • Children in External Placements
20 March 2017 4.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Peoples Presentation • Performance Overview • Regulation 33 Report • Ofsted - Specific LAC Improvement Plan - Progress Update

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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