

Notice of Meeting

Social Care Services Board



Date & time
Thursday, 16 March
2017 at 10.00 am

Place
Ashcombe Suite,
County Hall, Kingston
upon Thames, KT1
2DN

Contact
Andy Spragg or Richard
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Room 122, County Hall
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Chief Executive
David McNulty

We're on Twitter:
@SCCdemocracy



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This meeting will be held in public. If you would like to attend and you have any special requirements, please contact Andy Spragg or Richard Plummer on 020 8213 2673 or 020 8213 2782.

Elected Members

Mr Keith Witham (Chairman), Mrs Margaret Hicks (Vice-Chairman), Mr Ramon Gray, Mr Ken Gulati, Miss Marisa Heath, Mr Saj Hussain, Mrs Yvonna Lay, Mr Ernest Mallett MBE, Mr Adrian Page, Dorothy Ross-Tomlin, Mrs Pauline Searle, Ms Barbara Thomson, Mr Chris Townsend, Mrs Fiona White and Mrs Helena Windsor

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Social Care Services Board is responsible for overseeing and scrutinising services for adults and children in Surrey, including services for:

- Performance, finance and risk monitoring for social care services
- Services for people with:
 - Special Educational Needs
 - Mental health needs, including those with problems with memory, language or other mental functions
 - Learning disabilities
 - Physical impairments
 - Long-term health conditions, such as HIV or AIDS
 - Sensory impairments

- Multiple impairments and complex needs
- Services for Carers
- Social care services for prisoners
- Safeguarding
- Care Act 2014 implementation
- Children's Services, including
 - Looked After Children
 - Corporate Parenting
 - Fostering
 - Adoption
 - Child Protection
 - Children with disabilities
- Transition
- Youth Crime reduction and restorative approaches

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 20 JANUARY 2017

(Pages 1
- 14)

To agree the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter

- (i) Any disclosable pecuniary interests and / or
- (ii) Other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at this meeting

NOTES:

- Members are reminded that they must not participate in any item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest
- As well as an interest of the Member, this includes any interest, of which the Member is aware, that relates to the Member's spouse or civil partner (or any person with whom the Member is living as a spouse or civil partner)
- Members with a significant personal interest may participate in the discussion and vote on that matter unless that interest could be reasonably regarded as prejudicial.

4 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

To receive any questions or petitions.

Notes:

1. The deadline for Member's questions is 12.00pm four working days before the meeting (Monday 13 March).
2. The deadline for public questions is seven days before the meeting (Friday 10 March)
3. The deadline for petitions was 14 days before the meeting, and no petitions have been received.

5 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD

(Pages
15 - 16)

There was a response from Cabinet dated 31 January 2017 in response to recommendation made 9 December 2016.

This is attached as Annex A.

6 BETTER CARE FUND

(Pages
17 - 26)

Purpose of report:

To update the Board on the current position of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and on future BCF allocations.

- 7 CORPORATE PARENTING: LEAD MEMBER'S REPORT** (Pages 27 - 54)
- Purpose of the report:** Scrutiny of Services
- The Lead Member's annual report provides an overview of the Corporate Parenting Board and its work through the previous year.
- 8 FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES** (Pages 55 - 108)
- Purpose of the report:** Scrutiny of Services
- To scrutinise Adoption Agency and Fostering Service activity as presented in the Adoption Agency Report and Statements of Purpose for both services
- 9 SURREY CHILDRENS SERVICES MONTHLY PERFORMANCE COMPENDIUM** (Pages 109 - 150)
- Purpose of report:** Scrutiny of service
- To provide a summary of the performance information used to monitor work and progress in Children's Services, including work with partners.
- 10 CHILDRENS, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES COMMISSIONING PLAN 2017 - 2022** (Pages 151 - 156)
- Purpose of report:** To engage, inform and seek endorsement from the Social Care Services Board on the Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22.
- 11 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 157 - 198)
- The Board is asked to review its Recommendation Tracker and provide comment as necessary. This meeting is the last Social Care Services meeting of the council year. Following the election, the Board will agree a Forward Work Programme for 2017/18.

David McNulty
Chief Executive

Published: Wednesday, 8 March 2017

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MINUTES of the meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE SERVICES BOARD** held at 10.00 am on 20 January 2017 at G30, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 16 March 2017.

(*present)

Elected Members:

- * Mr Keith Witham (Chairman)
- * Mrs Margaret Hicks (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr Ramon Gray
- * Mr Ken Gulati
- * Miss Marisa Heath
- * Mr Saj Hussain
- Mrs Yvonna Lay
- * Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- Mr Adrian Page
- * Dorothy Ross-Tomlin
- * Mrs Pauline Searle
- Ms Barbara Thomson
- * Mr Chris Townsend
- * Mrs Fiona White
- * Mrs Helena Windsor

Members in attendance:

- * Mr Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence
- * Mrs Clare Curran, Member for Children and Families Wellbeing

1/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Barbara Thomson.

2/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 9 DECEMBER 2016 [Item 2]

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

Pauline Searle declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of a charity that was a provider of play and leisure Short Breaks.

4/17 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions received.

5/17 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD [Item 5]

The Board made a referral to Cabinet at its last meeting. The Cabinet considered this referral in its next meeting of 31 January 2017.

6/17 HOME BASED CARE REPORT [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Kirsty Malak, Senior Commissioning Manager
Ian Lyall, Senior Category Specialist
Erica Lockheart, Chief Executive, Surrey Care Association
Richard Williams, Director, Carers at Home Ltd.
Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing
Nick Markwick, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers provided a short update to the Board on the state of the market conditions and the planned commissioning of service.
2. It was explained by officers that the Home Based Care (HBC) market was facing significant local and national pressures. A key challenge was highlighted with regard to capacity to meet increasing demands, particularly in rural areas, and the recruitment and retention of care staff.
3. Officers noted that there was a planned shift in strategy with regard to contract procurement, noting that strategic, large care providers had not adapted to the changing conditions in the market as well as was anticipated. It was explained that the new system of procurement was aimed to be more flexible in its approach to adapt to market changes. It was explained that an e-brokerage system was being introduced to improve care outcomes and provide value for money.
4. Witnesses noted that there were difficulties in staff recruitment for HBC workers on a local and national level. It was suggested that a possible cause for this were the low rates of unemployment within Surrey. The Board was informed that, as a result of the provision of the Care Act 2014, new skills were required in the role, making recruitment more challenging. Witnesses noted that, in an effort to alleviate this issue, the Surrey Care Association had employed a Partnership Workforce Project Manager.

5. It was noted by the Director of Carers at Home Ltd. that there was a significant challenge with regard to HBC staff turnover, noting an average rate of 20% - 25%.
6. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence noted that there was a requirement for funding high needs groups and that there was a funding shortfall as a result. It was noted that strategies that encouraged best practice and value for money were a key element to reducing this, in conjunction with other strategies, but that there was still a challenge posed by this shortfall.
7. The Board questioned whether HBC workers had the capacity to be flexible and provide care across a community effectively. The Director of Carers at Home Ltd. noted that there was a need to deploy HBC workers in close proximity to the community they serve to effectively deliver urgent care in a timely manner. It was noted that this was a challenge in rural communities where there was less commercial profitability for a private enterprise to operate. Officers noted that they work with providers to provide care in these areas.
8. It was highlighted by the Director of Carers at Home Ltd. that there was a challenge involved with the provision of the National Living Wage, particularly in smaller HBC companies.
9. Members queried whether there were any safeguarding risks linked to lower levels of staff. Officers stressed that no-one would be left without provision and that there were several other options of delivering care; including, reablement teams, provision from external providers or, in some circumstances, respite care. It was also noted that the e-brokerage system was in place to better provide provisions for a person in care and avoid potential safeguarding issues.
10. The Board questioned the number of failed HBC providers over the last financial year, but stressed that these providers had not been terminated, but had received assistance to improve their service. It was noted that the service maintained a provider log to keep track of issues and had taken a pro-active approach to improvement
11. Officers informed the Board that there had been some instances of closures as a result of financial pressure, noting that nine providers had gone through this process.
12. Members questioned whether there was paid provision for HBC workers during their travel times and whether this pay was monitored. The Director of Carers at Home Ltd. stressed that it was a requirement that providers pay their workers inclusive of travel time. Officers also noted that this provision was part of the procurement contracts and

that quality assurance teams monitored adherence.

13. Members questioned whether there was any available support and training for HBC workers. Officers highlighted that the training and support of HBC staff was part of the Terms and Conditions of the contracts offered. The Surrey Care Association also helped provide training to HBC workers. It was also noted that the service was encouraging the implementation of a peer support network to support HBC workers. Members suggested that there were further opportunities for improving training for staff, highlighting the need to provide support for to meet the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act.
14. Members questioned the concept of strategic providers for HBC, asking whether there were benefits maintaining such a system in comparison to opening the provision of HBC to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The representative of the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People noted that SMEs had proven mostly effective at providing local care, particularly in rural areas. Officers also highlighted the key disadvantage in procurement, noting that large strategic providers slowed down the procurement process and were not always best value for money.

Recommendations:

The Board notes the considerable pressures facing the home based care market, and commends partners and ASC officers for working collaboratively to find solutions to these.

It notes and supports the directorate's plans to re-commission the HBC service in 2017.

It recommends:

1. That a further report is brought on the outcome of the re-commissioning of the HBC in the autumn, with evidence included of the impact of the e-brokerage system in developing flexibility in the market; and
2. That officers explore what additional opportunities exist to support providers with the delivery of Mental Capacity Act training

7/17 SHORT BREAKS RECOMMISSIONING [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Frank Offer, Head of Market Strategy
Chris Tisdall, Senior Commissioning Manager Early Help
David Izatt, Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, Family Voice Surrey
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

Pauline Searle declared a non-pecuniary interest as a trustee of a charity that was a provider of play and leisure Short Breaks.

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers highlighted that the service had opened up live engagement with the market on 9 January 2017. It was noted that the service was seeking input from the Board regarding its direction of travel before it formalised its approach with the Cabinet. It was also pointed out that the service was keen to work in collaboration, noting that it had worked closely with Family Voice, Surrey and had adopted a creative approach to feedback. It was highlighted that this co-designed approach had involved several workshops, and engagement with families, family groups and focus groups to gather information.
2. It was explained by officers that the service was timetabled to deliver the recommissioning of the Short Breaks service on the 1 December 2017.
3. Officers explained that there was a rising demand for Short Breaks in conjunction with more complex need requirements. It was noted that the service was aiming to use currently available resources for delivery.
4. Officers highlighted that they were aiming to provide a better SEND outcome and that the aim was to create a more inclusive provision for children and the parents of children with SEND.
5. The Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, Family Voice Surrey highlighted that this project was the culmination of 15 months of co-design work, noting that the project was, from the perspective of Family Voice, Surrey, the most successful co-designed project that they had worked with.
6. The Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, Family Voice Surrey noted that this work was supported by the families of children with SEND. It was expressed that there was more support required for the family of a child with SEND and that parents valued the inclusive approach that this strategy takes.
7. It was suggested by the Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, Family Voice Surrey that the service could utilise under-used resources to provide short breaks services and improve outcomes. Members

questioned whether youth services and other underutilised facilities, such as school halls, could be deployed in the provision of short breaks. It was particularly stressed that more work could be undertaken to improve links with youth centres, to improve provision for short breaks locally. Officers noted that the service was seeking to use youth services facilities more and that this was a good opportunity for partnership work with youth centres and that better links were being forged as part of this.

8. The Board questioned whether the service could establish closer links with Districts and Borough authorities to provide an improved local service and improve partnership links. Members also questioned whether the service took into consideration the social value aspect to provide everyday inclusive opportunities for children with SEND.
9. The Board questioned the frequency of the short breaks for children with SEND. Officers noted that the frequency was dependent on the requirements of the individual child. Officers also explained that many families appreciated a structured approach to short breaks and that they were also popular during school holidays.
10. Officers highlighted that the next stage for the service was the procurement bidding process, which concluded on the 10 February 2017.
11. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing stressed that many children take such activities similar to short breaks for granted. It was emphasised that children with SEND should be able to access similar inclusive opportunities, which this offer could provide.
12. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing highlighted that the Ofsted/CQC report of SEND services in 2016 noted the collaborative nature of the short breaks initiative as a positive development.
13. The Board questioned the directorates spending for recommissioning short breaks and which aspects of provision were a statutory requirement. Officers explained that the provision of short breaks was a statutory requirement. It was explained that this provision was approximately £3.1 million and that all funding allocated was for individual statutory needs. However, it was noted that the service was looking to expand provision to less utilised resources in order to reduce overall costs.
14. Members questioned the market conditions regarding the recommissioning of short breaks and what opportunities there were available. It was explained by officers that the service was seeking to attract new providers to provide short breaks and continue to work with

existing providers to improve service. It was highlighted that the directorate was asking that providers work closely with the community in order to provide inclusive provision.

15. The Board questioned whether there was consistent delivery of short breaks across the county. Officers highlighted that there was at least one play and youth scheme per district and borough and that most providers expand provision during peak times to meet with demand across Surrey.
16. Officers highlighted that there was a charge to parents for short breaks services, but that schemes were priced at a heavily subsidised average rate of £20. It was noted that the service offered bursaries or reduced charges for families who could not afford this charge to ensure that no child was excluded.
17. Officers explained that the tendering process for short breaks recommissioning was outside of the £3.1 million budget, and was included in the overall directorate budget. However, it was highlighted that the service was keen to ensure best value for money and best outcome in its tendering process, noting that services were commissioned for three years.

Recommendations:

The Board strongly supports the approach taken to commissioning short breaks, and notes the endorsement of Ofsted in its approach to co-design with families.

The Board endorses and recommends:

1. That the link of local need to locally available opportunities is emphasised during the commissioning process, where possible and appropriate;
2. That officers explore working with district and borough Members to help realise local opportunities;
3. That the Council Overview Board consider an item on how the social value charter has been applied to other commissioning and procurement processes across the council; and
4. That officers meet with representatives of the Board during the consultation process to hear how schools have been engaged about identifying ways in which they can support and expand the short breaks offer.

Witnesses:

Sonya Sellar, Area Director, Adult Social Care;
Penny Mackinnon, Area Head of Children's Services
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing
Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

Helena Windsor declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Improvement Board

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers outlined the current position of the adults and children's workforce. It was highlighted that the updated vacancy rate for the Adults Services as of November 2016 was 11%. It was also noted that the Children's workforce had an improved vacancy rate of 21% and an improved turnover rate of 14.04% as of December 2016.
2. The Board questioned why the directorates experienced relatively high levels of staff vacancy rates and what was being done to attempt to alleviate this issue. It was highlighted that the services experienced high turnover rates at experienced qualified staff levels, rather than those at a newly qualified level. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing highlighted that this type of staff turnover would not be alleviated by the provision of key worker housing, but it was stressed that the service was looking into options for delivering this in future to maintain an attractive employment offer. Officers also noted that the service was providing re-location expenses for new employees, as part of the improved Surrey offer.
3. Members questioned the Adult Social Care directorate's three year recruitment and retention strategy and whether it was the most effective method available, or whether a more flexible approach would have been more suitable. Officers noted that the three year strategy had been constantly under review to ensure that it maintained flexibility to deal with unexpected issues and new opportunities.
4. It was highlighted by officers that an issue limiting effective recruitment into vacant positions was pay, highlighting that Surrey's proximity to London and the high cost of living in Surrey could be barriers to recruitment. Officers noted that these issues were being resolved as part of the Pay and Reward review 2016.
5. Officers noted that the services had used exit interviews with departing staff as a means of assessing issues and identifying how we can learn from and improve recruitment and retention. It was also noted that the service was using data collected in the staff survey in order to improve

the wellbeing of workers. It was suggested that feedback from surveys had been implemented and incorporated into recruitment and retention strategies.

6. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence stressed that the three Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) consider workforce as key to their plans. It was noted that the future plans may include the idea of integrating social work into an NHS care worker model, creating a defined career path and resolving some issues regarding recruitment. Members questioned whether this idea could be scrutinised by the Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Board in future.

Recommendations:

The Board notes the report and commends the officers for the work around addressing the challenges around workforce. The Board recommends:

1. That proposals to align and join up initiatives across the services are progressed, and a further report is brought to the Board in 9 months;
2. That a short briefing on the key themes from the staff survey for both directorates is circulated to the Board; and
3. That the Chairman ask the Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Board to raise a question regarding workforce when it receives its update on the Surrey Heartlands STP on 17 February.

9/17 SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULT'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Simon Turpitt, Independent Chair, Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board
Amanda Boodhoo, Surrey Wide CCG Deputy Director Safeguarding
Sonya Sellar, Area Director
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing
Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. The Independent Chair of the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) gave an overview of the annual report to the Board, explaining to the Board that the report was historic for the year 2015/16, rather than a state of current affairs. He highlighted in this overview that there was a smooth implementation of the Care Act 2014 over the time period highlighted in the report and that there had been significant

improvements to the SSAB's multi-agency links.

2. The Independent Chair highlighted several key areas of risk, noting that neglect was listed as the most frequent risk category. It was also noted that self-neglect and financial abuse had been highlighted as areas of concern for the SSAB, but that they were working closely with partners to help resolve these issues. The Independent Chair also highlighted that evidence of physical abuse had reduced by 2%, and that the SSAB were finding new ways of working with partners to further reduce this.
3. The Independent Chair assured the Board that there had been no Serious Case Reviews undertaken since January 2016.
4. The Independent Chair highlighted that the SSAB had implemented new processes in order to improve outcomes, pointing out that there was multi-agency training in place. However, it was noted that the benefit of this was difficult to quantify as a result of its preventative nature.
5. The Independent Chair highlighted several key projects undertaken by the SSAB which had improved safeguarding awareness; citing examples of advertisements for the SSAB in Surrey and a greater representation on local groups. It was also noted that the SSAB had improved its ways of working, highlighting that there was a new and improved systems database in place to improve performance monitoring, which included an improved data model. It was also noted that the SSAB was fully staffed.
6. The Independent Chair specified three key priorities for the SSAB to maintain quality of service and achieve improvements:
 - a. Improved training methods
 - b. Improving visibility with partners and residents
 - c. Increasing and strengthening ties with partner organisations
7. The Independent Chair expressed the need to improve links with General Practitioners (GPs) as a means of improving the safeguarding process. Members questioned why links with GPs were poor and what could be undertaken by the SSAB and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to rectify this issue. The Surrey Wide CCG Deputy Director Safeguarding highlighted that CCGs were working to improve these links, noting that an appointed safeguarding GP was being introduced and that training for GPs regarding safeguarding would be implemented. Members asked if progress regarding this and possible scrutiny of implementation could be brought to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

8. The Surrey Wide CCG Deputy Director of Safeguarding noted that the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) had moved into an integrated adults and children's safeguarding team, highlighting that they were in a good position to provide support to the SSAB.
9. The Board and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence noted that they would prefer to receive a version of the SSAB Annual Report earlier in the year, so as to provide more effective input. The Independent Chair gave assurance that, while datasets were unavailable any earlier, the SSAB could provide an interim report to Members for analysis in future.
10. The Independent Chair and officers gave assurances to questions raised by Members that all of those at risks as a result of mental health issues would be fully assessed according to individual need.

Marisa Heath left the meeting at 12.30pm

11. Members questioned the possibility of closer bonds and improved ways of working with the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) and the SSAB. The Independent Chair noted that the two organisations shared information and expertise and were looking into new ways of implementing joined up working in future.

Marisa Heath re-joined the meeting at 12.45pm

12. The Board questioned the transition period between children and adults, and whether there were good links between the two boards and partners to minimise risk during this transition. The Independent Chair stressed that there was scope for improvement, particularly with relation to improving dialogue links with partners.
13. Members expressed appreciation for the clarity of the annual report and recommended that future reports deliver a similar clear message.

Recommendations:

The Board thanks the independent Chair and partner agencies for the report. It recommends:

1. That a short briefing covering how agencies have worked to respond to the rising instances of self-neglect being reported is circulated to the Board;
2. That, in the new council year, the scrutiny Board looks to support ASC through adopting a similar performance scorecard monitoring arrangement to that it currently has in place for Children Services;

3. That officers work with the Safeguarding Board to explore how a more timely update is brought to the Scrutiny Board; and
4. That the Health and Wellbeing Board explore options to identify a named GP for Safeguarding Adults.

**10/17 SURREY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT
[Item 10]**

Witnesses:

Elaine Coleridge-Smith, Independent Chair, Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board

Amanda Boodhoo, Surrey Wide CCG Deputy Director Safeguarding

Kerry Randle, Area Education Officer – NE, Schools and Learning

Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding, Children's Services

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. The Independent Chair of the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) highlighted that the SSCB was working closely with the SSAB, noting improving work and links with regard to the transitions period. It was noted that the SSCB had produced, as part of the statutory requirement to produce an annual report, an "End of an Era" report which detailed a strategic rethink of Children's Services in the transition period.
2. The Independent Chair noted that the report was linked to the Ofsted report of Children's Services published June 2015, the Safeguarding Children's Board Inspection of August 2015 and the inspection Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) of Police Effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) in December 2015. It was noted that the report reflected the situation that was present at that time, rather than the current one.
3. It was highlighted by the Independent Chair that an Improvement Board was established to improve the issues that were highlighted in the Ofsted report, and that the Independent Chair considered that there had been some improvement registered overall. However, the Independent Chair noted that there was still work to be undertaken to improve. Officers noted that they were positive about evidence of improvement.
4. The Board noted that they would like to receive a version of the SSCB Annual Report earlier in the year.

5. Members highlighted the need to include the voice of the child into the strategic thinking of the SSCB. The Independent Chair noted that this was included in the SSCB's thought processes and that appropriate language is used to reflect this. It was explained that the SSCB had undertaken seminars to highlight specific safeguarding issues, for example Child Sexual Exploitation and the utilisation of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Recommendations:

The Board thanks the independent Chair and partner agencies for the report. It recommends:

1. That officers work with the Safeguarding Board to explore how a more timely update is brought to the Scrutiny Board.

11/17 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 11]

Witnesses:

None

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. The recommendations tracker and forward work programme were noted and approved by the Board.
2. The Board received a short update regarding the work of the Performance and Finance Sub Group of the Board, which is attached as an annex to this document.
3. The Board were informed of a letter delivered from the Chairman of the Board to the Strategic Director of Children's, Schools and Families and the appropriate Cabinet Members highlighting concerns with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). A full update regarding the discussion relating to the MASH at its Performance and Finance Sub Group was appended to the next meeting of the Board.

Recommendations

None

12/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 12]

The next public meeting of the Board will be held on the 16 March 2017 at 10.00am.

Meeting ended at: 1.05 pm

Chairman

Annex A

CABINET RESPONSE TO SOCIAL CARE SERVICES BOARD**REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION WITH CARE AND SUPPORT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND OLDER PEOPLE'S HOMES PROJECT RECOMMENDATION****(Considered by Social Care Services Board on 9 December 2016.)****COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Cabinet ensure that the strategy is prioritised by Property Services and appropriate resource allocated to its delivery.

That the Cabinet Member and service explore internal or external opportunities around invest to save funding to support the strategy, including when the Council is intending to dispose of land.

RESPONSE:

Property Services is an active member of the Accommodation with Care and Support team, at both a Board and project level, ensuring the Council takes a one team approach to delivering the programme and supporting the initial work to recommend the business case for Extra Care to the Cabinet in particular.

This approach has worked positively and given the pressures and conflicting demands on time, it has been recognised that the ongoing requirements of the programme need to be clear to help corporates services (such as finance, legal, property and procurement) plan ahead and allocate resources accordingly.

To support this and address the specific pressures in property, the project team has been actively working across all the workstreams within the Accommodation with Care and Support Programme (as well as any wider Adult Social Care work) to identify the priority work areas going forward. This is enabling Property Services to prioritise this work and allocate resource in line with the recommendation of the Social Care Services Board.

In terms of identifying investment opportunities, asset management mechanisms are already in place to ensure that the strategic needs for Accommodation with Care & Support are considered and analysed first in respect of appropriate property opportunities before they are considered for general disposal (this includes the former in-house homes for older people).

External opportunities will also be explored to support the work of the Accommodation with Care & Support Programme with boroughs, districts and other public sector organisations. Property Services will continue to work closely with the Board in this respect as part of the phased approach to delivery.

Mr Mel Few**Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence****31 January 2017**

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Social Care Services Board

16 March 2017

Better Care Fund (BCF)

Purpose of report:

To update the Board on the current position of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and on future BCF allocations.

Introduction

1. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a programme spanning both the NHS and local government. It creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services.
2. The first BCF funding stream was announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending round, to ensure a transformation in integrated health and social care. 2016/17 is the second year of the BCF.
3. As with 2015/16, the legal framework for the Better Care Fund requires that in each area the Fund is transferred into one or more pooled budgets (established under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006) and that plans are approved by NHS England in consultation with the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government.
4. A second BCF funding stream was announced in the 2017/18 provisional settlement. This funding stream is called the Improved BCF and is in addition to the existing BCF funding stream.
5. Over the last 2 years, relationships between the County Council and the Health Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) has improved, with a greater understanding of partner roles and responsibilities, service commissioning and delivery complexities, and operational and financial risk.

Better Care Fund 2016/17 (existing funding stream)

6. The total 2016/17 BCF budget for Surrey is £73m (£66m revenue plus £7m capital). A summary of the BCF is presented in Annex 1.
7. An agreed contribution of £25m protects the delivery of Adult Social Care services including non-statutory activities and demographic pressures. A further contribution of £2.6m funds the additional revenue costs arising from the implementation of the Care Act and £2.5m funds the continuance of existing carers support. In total, £30.1m (46% of the total BCF revenue) is funding the protection of Adult Social Care and Carers.

8. £18.6m of Surrey's BCF revenue (28%) is used by the Health Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to part fund the contracts they have with Community Health Providers for services such as the provision of district nurses or rapid response teams to assess and treat people in the community and avoid hospital admissions.
9. The remainder of Surrey's BCF revenue (£17.5m) funds the continuing investment in Health and Social Care. This is split £9.3m for Adult Social Care managed services and £8.2m for CCG managed services.
10. The 2016/17 BCF capital budget is £6.9m and is passed directly to Surrey's District and Borough Councils in the form of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG).
11. Annex 2 provides a more detailed breakdown of the 2016/17 BCF budget. The table shows the total amount of BCF allocated to fund each service split across the main section 75 pooled fund expenditure categories listed in Annex 1.
12. The Council receives £39.4m of the total £66.2m of BCF revenue funding towards the cost of delivering a range of services managed by Adult Social Care and Public Health.

Better Care Fund 2017/18 (existing funding stream)

13. The BCF planning guidance and policy framework for the 2017/18 BCF has not yet been published. However, NHS England have indicated the same level of funding to protect adult social care services and our overall assumption is that the total funding will at least remain the same as this year. The existing BCF is moving from one year funding to two year funding (2017/18 to 2018/19).
14. Local Joint Commissioning Groups (LJCGs) have started planning on this basis and NHS England have indicated the potential to review and update plans during the two year funding period as long as the plans continue to meet the national conditions, which will be set out in the guidance and policy framework.

Improved Better Care Fund (new and additional funding stream)
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15. The provisional settlement confirmed the continuation of the existing BCF and additional BCF funding worth £1.5 billion nationally by 2019/20.
16. Using the current Core Spending power methodology to distribute government funding, Surrey County Council will receive nothing until 2019/20, and then only £1.5 million (0.1% of the national total).
17. If this additional BCF funding were to be distributed on the Government's previous Relative Needs Formula, Surrey would receive £25m, significantly more than the Council will actually receive.

Conclusions:

18. Surrey's 2016/17 BCF is £73m. Surrey County Council receives £30.1m for the protection of Adult Social Care and Carers and a further £9.3m for Adult Social Care managed services.
19. Although NHS England have not published the guidance and policy framework for 2017/18 BCF yet, our overall assumption is that the total funding will at least remain the same as this year and that the same level of funding will be received to protect adult social care services.
20. Surrey will only receive £1.5m in 2019/20 from the additional improved BCF national fund. This would have been £25m if the relative needs formula had been used to allocate the fund.

Recommendations:

21. That the Board continue to monitor the financial position of the Better Care Fund as part of regular service budget updates to the Performance and Finance sub group.

Next steps:

22. The Board is invited to consider how it will scrutinise the implementation of the BCF in 2017/18 and the delivery of the local action plans.

Report contact: Sian Ferrison, Transformation and Development Manager, Finance

Contact details: 020 8541 9868

Sources/background papers:

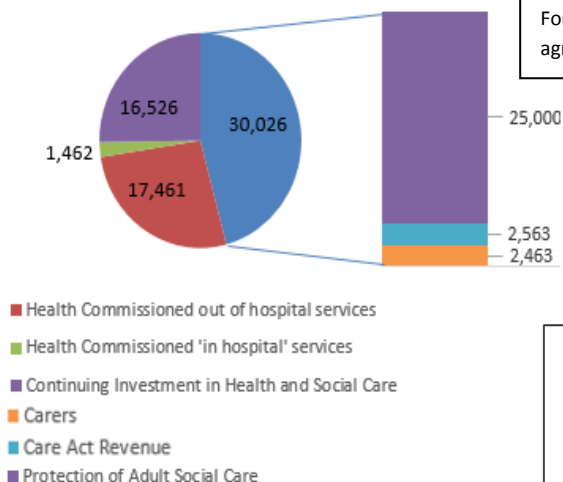
- Surrey's 2016/17 Better Care Fund Plan and Financial Monitoring Report
- NHS England, Local Government Association (LGA) and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) websites

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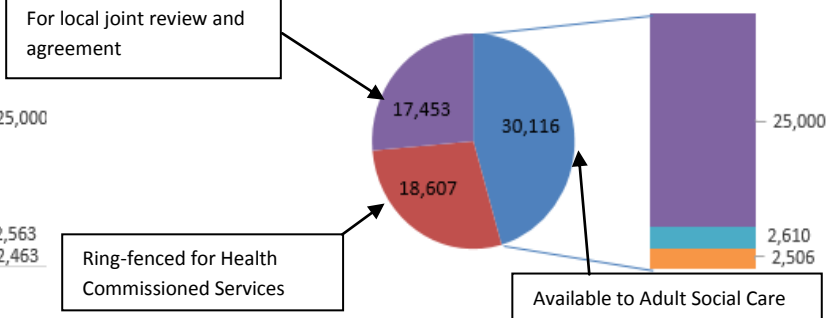
2016-17 Agreed distribution of the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Board base Better Care Fund allocation

	Surrey HWB Total 15-16	Surrey HWB Total 16-17	
	£'000	£'000	
Data for BCF Return			
Protection of Adult Social Care	25,000	25,000	Agreed contribution to protecting Adult Social Care including non-statutory activities and demographic pressures
Care Act Revenue	2,563	2,610	Contribution to the additional revenue costing arising from the implementation of the Care Act
Carers	2,463	2,506	Existing Carers funding ringfenced for continuance of existing support
Subtotal - Adult Social Care and Carers	30,026	30,116	
Health Commissioned out of hospital services	17,461	18,607	Ringfenced to Health Commissioned Out of Hospital Services
Health Commissioned 'in hospital' services	1,462		16/17 In-hospital services £1,407 now reported in Continuing Investment in Health and Social Care
Subtotal - Health Commissioned Service	18,923	18,607	
Continuing Investment in Health and Social Care	16,526	17,453	A range of services, including existing Whole System Partnership funding, CCG reablement services, telecare and local prevention schemes
Total Revenue	65,475	66,176	
Disabled Facilities Grant	3,723	6,931	Disabled Facilities Grant, managed by the Districts and Boroughs. 16/17 all capital amalgamated into DFG
Care Act Capital	946		
ASC Capital	1,278		
Total Capital	5,947	6,931	
Total BCF	71,422	73,107	

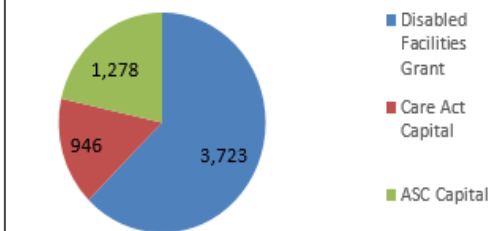
Better Care Fund - Revenue 2015-16



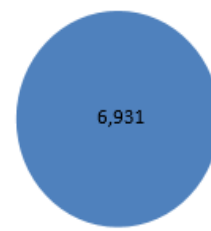
Better Care Fund - Revenue 2016-17



Capital 2015-16



Capital 2016-17



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2016/17 Surrey Better Care Fund Planned Expenditure

Service	Comments	Better Care Fund Expenditure Category							
		Adult Social Care Protection £m	Care Act £m	Carers £m	Out of Hospital Services £m	Joint Investment in Health & Social Care £m	Total Revenue Funding £m	Disabled Facilities Grant £m	Total Better Care Fund £m

Services managed by Surrey County Council

ASC staffing support to Surrey hospitals	Cost of 8am to 8pm working for social care assessment teams 7 days a week in Surrey's 5 acute hospitals plus additional support provided to community hospitals. The cost of social care development care coordinators to source care packages for individuals discharged is also funded here.	1.9				2.4	4.3		4.3
ASC reablement service	Total cost of ASC reablement service including staff to help facilitate discharge from hospitals	5.9				0.8	6.7		6.7
Carers services	Strategic contracts and grants programme jointly agreed with Surrey's CCGs, carers direct payments and respite / short breaks care packages for individuals to give carers a break from caring	8.3		2.5			10.8		10.8
Housing related support and social exclusion services	Day to day housing related support services for residents of supported housing schemes delivered externally and in-house and social exclusion services for homelessness and floating support	5.1					5.1		5.1
Other voluntary sector grants	Voluntary sector grants that do not relate to carers or social exclusion services. The most significant area of other grants is the Mental Health Community Connections service.	1.7				0.6	2.3		2.3

2016/17 Surrey Better Care Fund Planned Expenditure

Service	Comments	Better Care Fund Expenditure Category							
		Adult Social Care Protection £m	Care Act £m	Carers £m	Out of Hospital Services £m	Joint Investment in Health & Social Care £m	Total Revenue Funding £m	Disabled Facilities Grant £m	Total Better Care Fund £m
Community Equipment Store	Surrey's community equipment store is jointly funded 50/50 by health and social care. Surrey's base contribution of £2.1m is part of the BCF protection funding and CCGs separately contribute £2.1m. An additional £1.8m of BCF joint investment funding has been agreed. Any costs above the total £6m budget envelope are split 50/50 between health and social care	2.1				1.8	3.9		3.9
Occupational therapy	Additional OT capacity to support expansion of reablement service, increased locality based OT service provision and telecare services					0.5	0.5		0.5
Mental Health - Dementia	Creation of ASC staffing structure to provide comprehensive intermediate teams supporting each acute hospital and responsive reablement services.					0.4	0.4		0.4
Home from Hospital scheme	Promoting a speedy return home from A&E and supporting discharge from the ward via a home from hospital, befriending and outreach service					0.4	0.4		0.4
Stroke Support	Community support post stroke and following hospital discharge combined with prevention awareness.					0.1	0.1		0.1
Telecare	Funding of telecare services across Surrey currently delivered by District and Borough councils					0.8	0.8		0.8
Universal Benefits Service	Provision of information and advice, including welfare benefits advice, services available to all Surrey residents					0.4	0.4		0.4

2016/17 Surrey Better Care Fund Planned Expenditure

Service	Comments	Better Care Fund Expenditure Category							
		Adult Social Care Protection £m	Care Act £m	Carers £m	Out of Hospital Services £m	Joint Investment in Health & Social Care £m	Total Revenue Funding £m	Disabled Facilities Grant £m	Total Better Care Fund £m
Prevention through Partnership Programme	Part funding for a range of local preventative schemes delivered through District & Borough Councils. The remaining costs of the schemes is funded directly out of ASC's budget. PPP is a 5 year programme, 2016/17 is the final year.					0.7	0.7		0.7
HIV support	Support to people diagnosed with HIV					0.2	0.2		0.2
BCF administration	Funding for a post to support SCC's role as the pooled fund manager for all of Surrey's 7 BCF pooled budgets. This facilitates monthly budget monitoring and production of year end section 75 accounts					0.05	0.05		0.05
Information Governance & Data Sharing	Posts supporting information governance and data sharing across health and social care in Surrey					0.1	0.1		0.1
Care Act funded services	The BCF Care Act allocation is currently being spent on the implementation of the new ASC case management system and the costs of additional demand for care services		2.6				2.6		2.6
Total services managed by Surrey County Council		25.0	2.6	2.5	0.0	9.3	39.4	0.0	39.4

2016/17 Surrey Better Care Fund Planned Expenditure

Service	Comments	Better Care Fund Expenditure Category							
		Adult Social Care Protection £m	Care Act £m	Carers £m	Out of Hospital Services £m	Joint Investment in Health & Social Care £m	Total Revenue Funding £m	Disabled Facilities Grant £m	Total Better Care Fund £m
Services managed by Surrey's Clinical Commissioning Groups									
Community Health Providers	A proportion of Surrey's BCF is used by CCGs to part fund the contracts they have with Community Health Providers for services such as the provision of district nurses or rapid response teams to assess and treat people in the community and avoid hospital admissions				18.6		18.6		18.6
Local health managed initiatives	A range of schemes commissioned locally by CCGs in consultation and partnership with social care. Services include areas such as creation of community hubs, end of life care, psychiatric liaison services and virtual wards					8.2	8.2		8.2
Total services managed by Surrey's Clinical Commissioning Groups		0.0	0.0	0.0	18.6	8.2	26.8	0.0	26.8
Services managed by Surrey's District & Borough Councils									
DFG funded services	Funding to adapt people with disabilities' homes to enable them to maintain their independence and remain living in the community						0.0	6.9	6.9
Total services managed by Surrey's District & Borough Councils		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.9	6.9
Grand Total Surrey Better Care Fund		25.0	2.6	2.5	18.6	17.5	66.2	6.9	73.1



Social Care Services Board
16 March 2017

Lead Member's Annual Report for Corporate Parenting

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services

The Lead Member's annual report provides an overview of the Corporate Parenting Board and its work through the previous year.

Corporate Parenting and Lead Member

1. Corporate Parenting is the collective responsibility across services and local authorities to safeguard and promote the life chances of children who are looked after. Every elected member of Surrey County Council has legal responsibilities under the Children Act 2004, as a corporate parent to the children in the care of our council. It is the responsibility of all councillors to be satisfied that there is:
 - Effective policy in place
 - Mechanisms to support the participation of looked after children
 - Good scrutiny to inform improvement
2. The Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) has a statutory role that was established in the Children Act 2004. The Lead Member has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Children's Services.
3. The LMCS is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers are addressed. In doing so the LMCS will work closely with local multi-agency partners through various strategic boards to improve the well-being and outcomes of children and young people. The LMCS is not drawn into day-to-day operational management of Children's Services and education but has to provide strategic leadership, support and challenge to both the Director of Children's Services and the senior management team, as appropriate.

Children and care leavers in Surrey

4. One of the primary responsibilities Members have is to ensure that those children who are growing up in the care of Surrey County Council, as our looked after children and care leavers, are provided with the best possible opportunities and support to achieve to their full potential.
5. Growing up in care can be a positive experience for children and young people, provided we make sure that our services work effectively to improve outcomes. It is one of the most significant responsibilities we have as Members to make sure that we continue to do the best we can, in line with national and local expectations, to ensure that their care is provided to a high standard, as if they were our own children.
6. This annual report (**Annex 1**) is the report of the Lead Member for Children's Services, on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Board, to outline the progress we have made during the 2016 calendar year and to highlight specific areas of work and development.
7. As of December 2016 there were 903 looked after children and 479 care leavers in our care.

Summary of key points from the Lead Member's report 2016 (Annex 1)

8. Overall there has been some positive progress in 2016, with evidence of improvements in the priority areas for action identified for the year including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and missing children, and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). More children have remained with their carer for at least two years, more care leavers are living in suitable accommodation, and more young people over 18 are being supported to "stay put" with their foster carers in stable, supportive homes.
9. For the year covered by this report, a total of 153 looked after children had been reported missing to the police. An independent return home interview service is in place for these children, supporting work to understand the reasons why children go missing and to reduce the number of episodes.
10. Work to improve placement stability has been a significant focus for our Corporate Parenting strategy for the last five years. Although we have made significant improvements in this area of our care as measured through reducing the numbers of children who have three or more placements a year, our outcome for this indicator for 2015/16 increased to 11% (from 8% in 2014/15). This reflected the numbers of teenagers who are assessed to be at risk of CSE or who have challenging behaviour, where specialist placements out of the Surrey area have been made.

11. A key area of concern continues to be the high percentage of our children (22%) who are placed outside of Surrey's borders and more than 20 miles from where they used to live.
12. There have been improvements in the number of health assessments completed (78% of children with a health assessment) and 95% who have visited the dentist, although our numbers with health assessments are still below the England average.
13. Changes in the measures for monitoring education outcomes mean that direct comparison with previous years is not possible. However, the introduction of the e-Pep has led to improvements in our tracking and monitoring of children's progress through the Virtual School. It is pleasing that there have again been no permanent exclusions this year.
14. Our restorative approach has continued to be successful and for the seventh year in a row there has been a reduction in the number of looked after children coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. In May 2016 Lord Laming completed a review into keeping children in care out of trouble and cited Surrey's work as an example of best practice.
15. Pathway planning is an important part of the support we provide to our care leavers and 2016 has seen the development of a new format, designed with our care leavers to improve the quality of these plans. The new design was viewed by Ofsted inspectors as part of their monitoring visit in January 2017 and we received positive feedback about the new forms and the engagement and involvement of young people in their own plans.
16. **Overall there are some positive trends in 2016 which are encouraging. However, there is much more to do.** We can't lose sight of the fact that we are still not supporting children in care to do as well as their peers on a range of measures. There can be no complacency about the further improvements needed for children.
17. Priorities for 2017 include tackling inconsistencies in the quality and impact of care plans and pathway plans and widening the use of life story work with children, to help them to understand the events of their lives as they grow up.
18. We will be maintaining a strong focus on specific improvements such as ensuring accessible health histories for care leavers and improved arrangements for overseeing work with children who are at risk of sexual exploitation and children who go missing.
19. Placement stability will remain a priority and we will be looking at further ways to reduce the number of our children placed outside of the Surrey area. We will also be developing our Early Help offer alongside targeted support for adolescents and families to impact on the number of teenagers who are coming into our care.

20. As Lead Member I have been relentless in pursuing improvements for looked after children. I would like to put on the record my appreciation for the commitment that is shown by the staff, colleagues in partner agencies, and all those who work day-in day-out to support children in care and care leavers. I am confident that colleagues will continue to build on improvements and address the areas for development I have identified, so all our looked after children and care leavers are provided with the best possible opportunities and support to achieve to their full potential.

Conclusions:

21. The Committee is asked to receive and scrutinise the Lead Member's report on Corporate Parenting for Surrey.

Recommendations:

22. That the Committee note the progress and challenges as outlined in the Lead Member's report.
23. The Committee is asked to consider what further opportunities they have to support good outcomes for our children and young people in care.

Next steps:

24. The priorities and actions set out in the report will be progressed through the Corporate Parenting Board's ongoing work in 2017. Any additional actions identified by the Committee will be implemented as agreed.
25. The next Lead Member Annual Report will be produced in March 2018. Meanwhile, there will be further reporting and scrutiny of progress throughout the year. There will also be specific sessions on Corporate Parenting as part of the May 2017 Member induction programme.

Report contacts:

Linda Kemeny, Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement, linda.kemeny@surreycc.gov.uk

Daniel Shurlock, Senior Manager – Strategy and Performance, 0208 5417681, daniel.shurlock@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Children's Act 2004

Annex 1

Lead Member Report

Corporate Parenting in 2016



SURREY

INTRODUCTION

1. As Members, one of the primary responsibilities we have is to ensure that those children who are growing up in the care of Surrey County Council, as our looked after children and care leavers, are provided with the best possible opportunities and support to achieve to their full potential.
2. All Members of Surrey County Council have responsibility as corporate parents to ensure the wellbeing of our children in care, with additional responsibilities for those who are members of the Social Care Services Board to be informed through understanding and scrutiny of services.
3. This annual report is my report on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Board to outline the progress we have made this year and to highlight specific areas of work and development. It includes:
 - Summary position statement (p1)
 - Background (p2)
 - Updates on key areas of work (p5)
 - Looking forward to 2017 (p9)
 - Appendices (p12)
 - Appendix 1 - Corporate Parenting Board membership
 - Appendix 2 - Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-18
 - Appendix 3 - Performance data 2015/16

SUMMARY POSITION STATEMENT

4. Overall there has been some **positive progress in 2016**, with evidence of improvements in the priority areas for action identified for the year including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and missing children, and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). More children have remained with their carer for at least two years, more care leavers are living in suitable accommodation, and more young people over 18 are being supported to “stay put” with their foster carers in stable, supportive homes.
5. There has also been excellent evidence of **practitioners knowing the children they support well** and using the [Safer Surrey](#) practice tools to ensure their voice is heard. Safer Surrey is our overarching framework for ensuring child-focused and strength-based practice is developed across the whole Children’s, Schools and Families directorate and with partners.
6. Meanwhile, key strengths such as our **good residential homes** and **effective engagement through the Care Council** and other groups have been consolidated.
7. However, **there is much more to do**. For example, despite efforts to date there remain too many children placed out of the county. There have been some improvements in health care services but further actions are required, including ensuring care leavers have easier access to their full health histories.
8. Audit and quality assurance activities, including Ofsted monitoring visits, show there are still **inconsistencies in practice quality that need to be addressed**. In particular, we need recording to always reflect good practice that is taking place and bring the child’s experience to life, and we need supervision that consistently ensures the actions in a child’s plan have been carried out and have had a positive impact for them.

9. More generally, we can't lose sight of the fact that despite some positive trends **we are still not supporting children in care to do as well as their peers** on a range of measures.
10. Importantly, the wider improvement made in Children's Services and across the partnership arena through our Children's Improvement Plan mean **we are now better equipped to drive the improvements required next for children**. There is stronger leadership in place in Children's Schools and Families, improved partnership working, increased staff morale, reducing case-loads, and better retention of staff. We also have the Safer Surrey approach in place and improved quality assurance and performance management arrangements, underpinned by a stronger understanding of what "good" looks like.
11. The increasingly **challenging context in which we provide services** can't be ignored. Demands for services continue to increase and at the same time financial constraints tighten. The Council will face some difficult budget and policy decisions over coming months. It is critical we find ways to ensure we can provide sustainable services that continue to fulfil our duties to children effectively.
12. As Lead Member I have been relentless in pursuing improvements for looked after children. I would like to put on the record **my appreciation for the commitment that is shown by the staff, colleagues in partner agencies, and all those who work day-in day-out to support children in care and care leavers**. I am confident that colleagues will continue to build on improvements and address the areas for development I have identified, so all our looked after children and care leavers are provided with the best possible opportunities and support to achieve to their full potential.

BACKGROUND

Lead Member of Children's Services (LMCS) Role

13. The Lead Member has a statutory role that was established in the Children Act 2004. The Lead Member has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Children's Services. The LMCS is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed.
14. The LMCS is not drawn into day-to-day operational management of Children's Services and Education but has to provide strategic leadership, support and challenge to both the Director of Children's Services and the senior management team, as appropriate. It is a requirement for the Lead Member to provide an annual update to Members on how we are meeting our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

Corporate Parenting Board

15. Growing up in care can be a positive experience for children and young people, provided we make sure that our services work effectively to improve outcomes. It is one of the most significant responsibilities we have as Members to make sure that we continue to do the best we can, in line with national and local expectations, to ensure that their care is provided to a high standard, as if they were our own children.
16. In order to achieve this, we have a Corporate Parenting Framework in place, headed by the Corporate Parenting Board, to oversee our services for our looked after children and care leavers and to monitor their impact. The Board is a multi-agency partnership, with representatives from Members, council officers and partner agencies, who meet bi-monthly to progress this work (see Appendix 1 for full membership list).

17. This annual report is my report on behalf of the Corporate Parenting Board to outline the progress we have made during the past year and to highlight specific areas of work and development.

Corporate Parenting Strategy

18. The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-18 continued to guide our work in 2016. The strategy sets out the key priorities to ensure that work to improve outcomes for our children is co-ordinated and effective. The Strategy was developed in consultation with children and young people, carers and staff from both the County Council and from partner agencies (see Appendix 2 for the summary Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015-18).

Our Pledge

19. As corporate parents we have a duty to ensure that **all the children in our care and those leaving care have the same life chances and outcomes that all good parents want for their own children**. An important part of our responsibilities is our pledge which outlines our promises and is based on consultation with children and young people. It is part of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and can be found in full in Appendix 2.

Participation and engagement

20. I am pleased at the efforts made to ensure our **looked after children and care leavers have a voice** and opportunity to tell us what they think of our services.
21. The **2016 BIG Report** collated the views of 168 children and young people, both in care and care leavers. The majority of the children and young people who responded to the survey said they were happy in their placement. It is also encouraging to see that the work invested in improving healthy living outcomes for children in care is having a positive impact as the majority of children and young people surveyed said that they are confident about their health. This is an improvement to the 2013/14 survey where health was a real concern.
22. One key follow up from this year's survey was **further research into emotional wellbeing and appropriate support**. This was prompted by the fact that over half of those surveyed reported experiencing bullying.
23. There are a range of ways that looked after children and care leavers can share their views and have an impact on changing practice and services. **Care Council is a group of care experienced young people aged 13-24** who meet monthly to talk about what is important to looked after children and care leavers. They come up with ideas about what they would like to stop, start or change about the care system in Surrey. Care Council members and our Children's Rights Apprentices attend Corporate Parenting Board for alternate meetings, providing a welcome space to hear directly from each other and to feedback from all about progress in making changes and improvements.
24. Representation from the Care Council, Care Council Juniors and "CCXtra" **spans across the age ranges, gender and includes unaccompanied asylum seeking young people**. There are plans in place to work more closely with the CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and Special Educational Needs team to engage more young people in care, or leaving care, with disabilities.
25. We continue to receive very positive feedback regarding our participation team and engagement activities. This work is critical because **it tells us what children think of their care and how we are doing as corporate parents – what is working and what could be better**. Over the last year they have shared some very important feedback with us about what we should improve. For example:

- Stop changing my social worker all the time
- Needing to see my social worker more often
- Knowing and understanding my plans
- Give me support to deal with bullying

26. This important feedback will continue to guide our work over the next year.

Key numbers

As of December 2016 there were:

- 903 looked after children, up from 779 in 2015 and 793 in 2014
- 479 care leavers who were entitled to ongoing support until the age of 21, or 25 when in higher education.

Of the 903 children looked after, there were:

- 153 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, up from 124 in 2015 and 113 in 2014
- 122 with a Special Educational Need or Disability (13.5% of the total)

Of the 479 care leavers there were:

- 159 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

UPDATES ON KEY AREAS OF WORK

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and children who go missing

27. We, with our partners, have been on a long journey to improve our response to CSE since the 2014 Ofsted inspection. Through 2016 this response gained much needed momentum. The leadership across the partnership has changed significantly over the last 12 months and strong governance is now in place with a clear strategy and plan. There is a much greater sense of cohesion and integration across the partnership and this has been recognised by HMIC and Ofsted in recent inspection visits to the county.
28. Most importantly these changes are starting to translate into improvements in practice to safeguard children. This has been aided by a better analysis of CSE in Surrey, improved procedures for responding to CSE cases, training and support for staff in front line teams, improved multiagency arrangements for overseeing CSE planning, and more disruption activity against perpetrators.
29. Looked after Children are one of the key vulnerable groups who are likely to be affected by CSE and the further examination of our understanding and approach to managing CSE has been a priority area of focus. Two key issues identified were how to address the under-representation of both asylum seeking children and boys in our list of children at risk. This work on vulnerable groups feeds into ongoing activity to match data from MAECCs (Missing and Exploited Children Conferences) with that for missing children, and those missing from education to better understand who the most vulnerable children are.
30. For the year covered by this report a total of 153 looked after children had been reported missing to the police. Many children are missing for less than 24 hours, though there were 130 (18%) episodes where children have been missing for longer periods of time from a day to many months for several unaccompanied asylum seeking children. For all children there

are set processes with the police to consider the risks and the efforts to locate them following a missing incident.

31. An independent Return Home Interview service is in place for those children who go missing and are reported to the police, whether they are living in or out of county. All return interview outcomes are collated to look for themes. Indications from interviews completed are that the majority of the young people say they decided, usually on the spur of the moment, that they wanted to be back in their home area and to spend time with their friends.
32. A common theme that arises from the interviews is that once they have taken the decision to go out without telling their carer, then feelings of fear, or embarrassment, or worry mean that children report that they don't know how to end the episode. The episode therefore extends to longer than perhaps they originally intended.
33. A small number ran away from school. This links to the wider theme of young people who run away from care testing boundaries that had not applied when they had been at home. Of particular concern is the fact that very few of the young people describe being afraid of the consequences of being missing and tend to think they were safe and nothing could happen to them.
34. Work will be ongoing to address all these issues and to reduce the numbers of incidents where children go missing and to ensure that risks of CSE are appropriately identified and addressed. There will also be specific actions taken to ensure the timeliness and quality of the Return Home Interviews.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

35. Surrey's services to unaccompanied asylum seeking children have always been well-regarded but increasing scrutiny and expectations of practice - particularly in respect of trafficking / modern slavery, health provision, and CSE - mean our services need to continue to improve. With the third highest caseload in the country it is reasonable to expect a high standard and level of expertise in responding to the needs of unaccompanied children.
36. Over the last year the Corporate Parenting Board has continued to champion a clearer focus upon the particular needs of these children and young people. We have developed a Welcome Centre at Guildford YMCA to ensure safe and appropriate support to children who spontaneously arrive in Surrey and plans are well advanced for a reception centre (for one or two night maximum stay) as a safety net in the event that large numbers of children arrive in one go and cannot be appropriately placed
37. Developing the Welcome Centre and associated plans to ensure appropriate moving on within Surrey will be important to ensuring we can continue to meet the needs of these children. Looking ahead, changes in legislation and ongoing financial pressures mean that we will need to make some important decisions about what type of support we provide when and for how long to UASC. This will need careful consideration over the next year.

Placements and Placement Stability

38. One of our key pledges to children in our care is that "we will do the best we can to make sure where you live is right for you". Our focus has been to reduce the number of placement moves that children have to make, to support them to become securely attached to their carers, and to achieve to the best of their ability.
39. It is encouraging that there has been an increasing number of children remaining with their carers long-term with 70% of children in the same placement for at least two years, up from 67.1% in 2015. However, the proportion of children with three or more placements

increased from 8% in 2015 to 11% in 2016. This partly reflects the numbers of teenagers who were assessed to be at risk of CSE or who have challenging behaviour, where specialist placements out of the Surrey area have been made.

40. Overall there are still too many of our children (around 22%) placed outside of the Surrey area, either because of specialist need or because we do not have enough foster carers locally. This will remain a priority for 2017.
41. The number of adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs) fell in the year, in line with the national trend, to a total of 92 (down from 102 in 2014/15). There was a corresponding fall in the percentages of children leaving care due a permanency order, with adoption at 12.7% (down from 13.4% in 2014/15) and SGO at 10.2% (down from 14% in 2014/15) of the total of children leaving care in the year.
42. As Lead Member I continue to be very concerned that we are not able to provide sufficient foster placements within Surrey and am continuing work through our Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that all necessary steps are being taken to address and improve this area of our care. This includes continuing to recruit more foster carers and using communications campaigns to explain the rewards of [fostering in Surrey](#).

Health Care

43. Over the last year there has been positive partnership working, with co-location of looked after children health teams in council offices and an improved information sharing pathway. There have been some positive trends - Health Development Checks completed increased for the fourth year and reached 100%, and Dental Checks completed improved from 90% to 95%. However, there are a number of areas that require close ongoing attention.
44. Action is required to ensure easy access to full and good quality health histories. The need for a stronger response to this was flagged by Ofsted in their January 2017 monitoring visit. Also, looking at data trends in 2016, Health Assessments completed fell from 80% to 78%, and the percentage of children with substance misuse rose from 4.9% to 6%. Drilling down into these numbers shows that we are still not sufficiently meeting the health needs of all children that are placed out of county.
45. I am pleased that health partners have committed to drive continued improvements and the relatively newly commissioned Looked after Children Health Service should improve performance across all these areas over the next year. The Corporate Parenting Board will continue to monitor these areas closely.
46. Another significant area of work with health partners in 2016 was responding to the significant increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). To meet their particular health care needs the Council and health partners developed some targeted provision. For example:
 - Established stronger arrangements for completing Initial Health Assessments for children placed out of county
 - Recruited two senior staff nurses to work specifically with children and young people placed out of county, particularly UASC
 - Funded a mental health practitioner for UASC

Educational achievements

47. In my report last year I described the introduction of the e-Pep. An electronic format is now in place to support timely completion and progress and all pupils are incorporated on to the portal. This has ensured the PEP (Personal Education Plan) has now become a fully live

document making it a much more powerful tool in ensuring the best possible outcomes for each child. This development has also supported efforts to integrate the work of the Virtual School – which oversees the educational arrangements for all our looked after children - with social care and school settings. As at January 2016/17, 81.2% of looked after children had an up to date PEP.

48. I am pleased to report there have been no permanent exclusions since 2009/10. There have been 69 pupils who received 139 fixed term exclusions and the Virtual School provides close support in tracking the progress and plans for these children to improve this number.
49. The change to national threshold measures for performance are in place following significant changes to the curriculum, assessments and examinations and this means we are not able to make direct comparisons with measures from previous years. This year's key stage 1 tests in Maths and English are the first to reflect the new primary curriculum. 61% of our looked after pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, 52% achieved the expected standard in writing and 56% achieved the expected standard in mathematics.
50. Provisional data for key stage 2 shows 27% of our pupils achieved the new expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics compared with 53% nationally for all children. Provisional results for key stage 4 show 15.5% of pupils achieved the A*-C in English and mathematics measures.
51. Whilst children in care do not as a whole cohort achieve in line with their peers, research has shown that those who are in care for longer periods of time have the highest achievement levels and this would appear to be the case with our own children. The challenge we have is to improve results across the board for all vulnerable children, including those who enter care in their teenage years. We also need to be mindful that 27% of this cohort had statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN).
52. In comparison to the previous three years, there has been an increase in absence, this includes a significant number of days lost to 'not on roll'. Illness is a key factor here and is significant for our looked after children with SEN.
53. We must continue to strive to close the gaps in educational outcomes for looked after children compared to their peers. This will remain a key priority for 2017.

Offending

54. Our restorative approach has continued to be successful and for the seventh year in a row there has been a reduction in the number of looked after children coming to the attention of the criminal justice system. In 2016, 3.2% of all looked after children offended, down from 5.4% in 2015 and 9.7% in 2011. It is notable that looked after children placed out of county are more likely to offend (4.2%) compared to those in county (2%).
55. The ongoing improvements in this area reflects the strong partnership between the council and Surrey Police and a range of activities across services and the partnership to address youth offending. In May 2016 [Lord Laming completed a review](#) into keeping children in care out of trouble and cited Surrey's work as an example of best practice.

Bursary Fund

56. As corporate parents we know the importance of encouraging and supporting our children to achieve and Members have continued to donate generously to our bursary award scheme to acknowledge and reward achievements by our children. In 2016 it was used to support budding sports, drama and music stars growing up in our care. It also funded celebration parties and events such as SkillsFest.

Care Leavers

57. It has long been recognised that young people who have grown up in care have significant problems to overcome as they grow into adulthood. Statistics show that care leavers can have poor educational attainment and experience high levels of unemployment. They are also over represented in the prison population, amongst those who are homeless, and amongst those with both physical and mental health problems, including substance misuse¹.
58. The council has continued responsibilities for care leavers, helping to promote their independence and stability and keeping in contact until they are 21 (or up to 25 if they are in full-time education). Support for any young adult during these particular years is crucial in enabling self-confidence and independence.
59. As corporate parents it is essential we hold the same aspirations as a good parent would have for their own child as they grow into adulthood. We strive to provide stability and support to our care leavers to help them access new opportunities and experiences to inspire them to set their own goals.
60. It is crucially important that care leavers have a stable and safe place to live. Over the last year there have been some positive improvements in the numbers of care-leavers who are living in suitable accommodation (up from 81.8% for 19-21 year olds in 2015 to 93.1% for 18-21 year olds in 2016) and we will continue to work closely with district and borough council colleagues to improve this further. Another positive is that through the “staying put” initiative we have enabled 80 young people to stay in stable, supportive homes after their 18th birthday.
61. The proportion of care leavers who are in Education, Employment and Training has improved again this year at 60.1% (up from 54.9% in 2015) and 32 young people are currently at university. There is more to do to bring achievements in line with peer groups but these are encouraging trends.
62. Pathway planning is an important part of the support we provide and following a recent pilot of a new format designed with young people, we will be rolling out an improved pathway plan in 2017.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2017

63. The progress made in 2016 sets a **strong platform for further improvement in 2017**. Through the Corporate Parenting Board I have identified a number of specific issues from within the overall work programme that will require focused attention in 2017.
64. Firstly, raising the quality of all practice with children will remain a top priority, specifically tackling inconsistencies in the **quality and impact of care plans and pathway plans**. This work forms part of the overall Children’s Improvement Plan and in 2017 we will be **building on our overall Safer Surrey approach to develop consistently child-focused and strength-based practice**. To fully embed the Safer Surrey principles into all our day-to-day safeguarding work we will be implementing a training programme and set of tools known as “Signs of Safety” - this will further develop the voice of the child, with the child and family being at the centre of care and safety planning.
65. Linked to this, over the next year we will be taking forward the excellent “life story” work that has been developed by colleagues. **Life story work is a process of direct work with**

¹ Couldn’t Care less (2007) – The Centre for Social Justice

children and young people which can help them reflect on and gain a more balanced picture of their lives. It can help them to make sense of their past, gain a clearer understanding of their present and, as an ongoing process, plan for a healthy and stable future. It is a valuable process in enabling children and young people to develop a healthy self-image and to feel connected with significant people and places, their family of origin and their heritage. I'm delighted that **more of our social workers will be trained and equipped to use this kind of practice** in our work with children in care.

66. There are some **specific improvements needed in relation to health care** and I am pleased that health partners have committed to drive continued improvements in health assessments and to work together to make it easier for care leavers to access their health histories.
67. Schools have a crucial role, particularly in relation to **looked after children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**. We will work across the system and in partnership with schools to ensure looked after children with SEND have appropriate Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) in place.
68. The Virtual School will continue to play a pivotal role in **driving further improvements in education and skills outcomes**, co-ordinating and supporting different agencies and colleagues to achieve this – for example, by delivering training for Designated Teachers and Social Workers on the importance of Personal Education Plans (PEPs). We will also need to continue to identify and monitor the workforce needed for the Virtual School to manage additional responsibilities for post-16 and early years.
69. Children who are at **risk of sexual exploitation and children who go missing will continue to be at the forefront of our work programme**. We will be working with the police and other partners to translate stronger strategic arrangements and better awareness of risks into consistently improved safeguarding practices on the ground – this will include continuing to increase disruption activity against CSE perpetrators.
70. Global events mean we will continue to focus on the **increasing number of young unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)** who are in our care and who may have additional barriers of language and culture in accessing the right support. In 2017 we will need to carefully consider what resources Surrey has available to meet these particular needs effectively, and the evolving national legislation which underpins our work with these children.
71. Nationally there is a concern around the **number of teenagers coming into care** and this is particularly pronounced in Surrey where children aged 12+ made up 49% of our entrants to care in 2015/16. We will be **developing our Early Help offer alongside targeted support for adolescents and families** to address this. We know the importance of immediate response at times of crisis and services like Extended Hope (initially funded through national social innovation grant) are able to make a difference at times of emotional wellbeing / mental health crisis. Where children do need to come in to care we will be looking at further ways to **enable them to remain in the county where appropriate**.
72. There can be **no complacency about the further improvements needed for children**. And we must recognise the significant added challenge of increased demands and constrained resources. But, as I stated in my opening position statement, I believe the changes made over the last year across Children's, Schools and Families, within Children's Services, and across our wider partnership mean **we are now better equipped to drive the improvements required next**.
73. The **Corporate Parenting Board itself will need to continue to strengthen its effectiveness and impact for children in 2017**. The County Council elections in May 2017

will result in some changes to membership and this will provide a natural opportunity to refresh the workings of the Board and ensure all Members are fully trained and briefed to fulfil what is a critical corporate parenting role. This will include making sure all Members of the new Council complete our excellent Total Respect training.

74. Finally, throughout all of the challenges ahead we must continue to ensure that we **celebrate our children's successes** and make sure they continue to grow in confidence and security in our care.

*Linda Kemeny
Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement
March 2017*

Appendix 1 - Corporate Parenting Board Membership

Councillor Linda Kemeny (Chair)	Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement, SCC (Surrey County Council)
Councillor Clare Curran	Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing, SCC
Councillor Mary Lewis	Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Families, SCC
Councillor Peter Hickman	SCC
Councillor John Orrick	SCC
Cheryl Kimber	Chair, Fostering Executive
David McNulty	Chief Executive, SCC
Julie Fisher	Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families
Sarah Parker	Director of Children's Commissioning (Surreywide), NHS Guildford & Waverley CCG
Vicky Stobbart	Executive Nurse, Director of Quality & Safeguarding, NHS Guildford & Waverley CCG
Helen Collins	Chief Constable, Surrey Police
Sam Bushby	Assistant Director, Children's Services, SCC
Garath Symonds	Assistant Director, Commissioning and Prevention, SCC
Liz Mills	Assistant Director, Schools and Learning, SCC
Belinda Newth	Head of Quality and Experience, SCC
Ben Byrne	Head of Early Help, SCC
Sheila Jones	Head of Countywide Services, Children's Services, SCC
Dr Christine Arnold	Designated Doctor for Looked After Children
Sue Barham	Districts and Boroughs Representative, Woking Borough Council
Maria O'Shaughnessy	Head of Virtual School, Schools and Learning, SCC
Abid Dar	Senior Equality, Inclusion and Wellbeing Manager, SCC
Steve Owen-Hughes	Assistant Chief Fire Officer Operations Support

SURREY'S CHILDREN

Our care. Your future

Our pledge, to our children and young people.

1. Placements

We will do the best we can to make sure where you live is right for you.



2. Contact

We will help you keep in touch safely with the important people in your life.

3. Choices

We will tell you about options and involve you fully in making plans about your life.

4. Skills for life

We will support you with your education and help you grow up with good skills for life.

5. Safe

To keep you safe and ensure that you feel safe.

If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on tape or in another language please contact us on:

Email: csfcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk
 Tel: 03456 009 009
 Minicom: 0208 541 9698
 SMS: 07527 182861



SURREY'S CHILDREN

Our care. Your future

Confident in care. Confident in my future.

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2015 - 2018

Purpose

We are the corporate parents to our children and young people in care. We seek to ensure that the young people we look after grow up with the same opportunities as other young people and go on to live successful and fulfilling lives.

Vision

As corporate parents we want every child to feel safe and confident about their future.

Values

We are committed to:

- Listening to our young people and involving them fully in plans about their lives.
- Being responsible for looking after our young people and doing what we promise in our pledge.
- Building trust in our young people and our staff.
- Respecting the needs and wishes of our young people.

Context

In Surrey, there are around 750-780 children and young people who are living in our care at any one time, and 420 careleavers who are moving to become more independent. There are around 120 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in care (UASC) who have often had a traumatic journey into care.

The majority of our young people are placed in foster care and the remaining children are in residential homes, or placed for adoption or in independent living.

Where we live, who we live with and how safe and happy we feel are important factors which contribute to everyone's wellbeing. We agree with young people who tell us that if you can't live in the home you'd choose, it is especially important to get the next best option right.

We know we don't have enough placement choice, not enough foster carers who live in Surrey and that too many children have to live elsewhere.

Therefore our focus in 2015/2016 is placement choice and stability: Young people know who they will live with and experience stable placements. They will have good relationships with those involved in their care. See our summary Being in Care (2015) for more information.

Our goal is that Surrey children and young people...

are happy where they live

Young people know who they will live with and experience stable placements. They have good relationships with those involved in their care.

↓ Fewer children have to move places three or more times a year.

We know that:

We have made good improvements in placement stability but a small number of young people have to move places three or more times a year. Too many changes make it hard for young people to feel they belong. We don't have enough foster carers who live in Surrey and too many young people have to live elsewhere.

In 2015/16 we will:

- reduce the impact of change between placements, ensuring children are informed and involved in any changes to their placement
- train carers and staff in social pedagogy to offer children emotional support with practical hands-on action
- recruit more foster carers, particularly for teenagers or for children with disabilities appropriate.

are healthy and aware of their choices

Young people are supported to have improved health and wellbeing.

↑ More children in care will have up to date health checks that include a wellbeing health check.

We know that:

Young people would like more choice about where and when to have their health assessments. Some young people would like more support with their healthcare if English is not their first language. Others have said they would like more advice and guidance about healthy eating and keeping active.

In 2015/16 we will:

- ensure we deliver an effective health check service that includes health promotion and emotional wellbeing
- ensure there are opportunities for young people to participate in fun activities including: the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, clubs, music lessons, sport and leisure, and physical activity
- help young people understand events and feelings through life story work.

are and feel safe

Young people are safe and feel safe. If they go missing they are listened to, trusted and given a say when they return.

↓ Fewer children in care go missing

We know that:

Sometimes children go missing from their placement because they're not happy with their plans or because they're missing friends and family. Being missing means that they're at risk and not safe. It is really important that young people living independently feel safe at home.

In 2015/16 we will:

- actively work with young people to understand why they go missing, including having return interviews, and to support prevention
- offer a restorative approach to children in care who offend
- ensure children feel safe from bullying.

are making progress

Young people have the confidence and skills to live successful and fulfilling lives.

↑ Children in care achieve more, especially at Key Stages 1 and 2 results.

We know that:

Young people feel supported in education by those around them such as their carers, social workers and school staff. It is important that young people have the right support, including financial support, to do the best they can. We need to make sure young people and their carers are aware of opportunities available to them.

In 2015/16 we will:

- manage change between school settings and make timely decisions on personal education plans
- provide extra support for children in Key Stage 2
- ensure that our youngest children have access to early years opportunities
- increase the number of apprenticeships available for young people who are not in education, training or employment.

feel confident about becoming an adult

Young people are equipped for a successful and fulfilling future.

↓ Fewer care leavers are living in unsuitable accommodation

We know that:

Only a small number of young people live in unsuitable accommodation. Some young people require more support to live independently. Having a job, somewhere good to live and strong relationships are key to confidence.

In 2015/16 we will:

- strengthen the choices of accommodation we have for young people as they move into independence at 18
- offer every young person aged 14-21 a work sponsor to help them get ready for work
- work to improve young people's experiences when moving into independent living, including providing good information about the choices they have and their support network.



Appendix 3 – Performance data

This Appendix is based on the **annual national DfE SSSA 903 Statutory Return for Looked After Children by Surrey for the year 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016**.

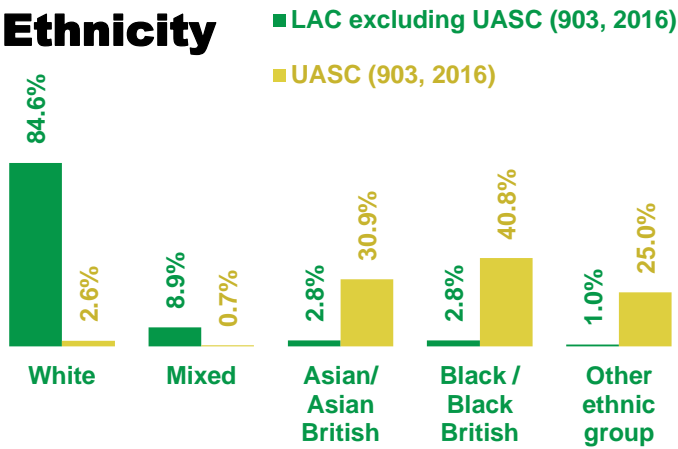
In the charts the majority of figures for 2015/16 are provisional, due to delays in the DfE providing their annual performance summaries (and hence in some instances the latest information available from the DfE relates to 2014/15).

Note that more recent monthly reporting figures are regularly reported internally and to scrutiny, but for this particular annual report the yearly position from the statutory “903” return is presented to **show the year-on-year trend against nationally published benchmarks**.

872 Looked After Children

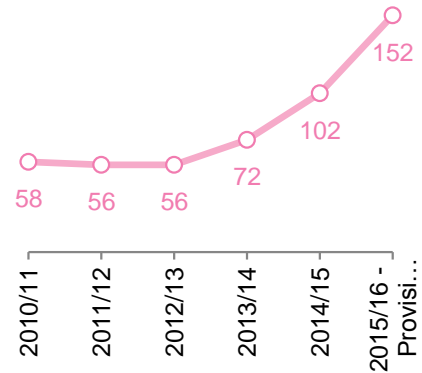
(as at 31 March 2016)

Ethnicity

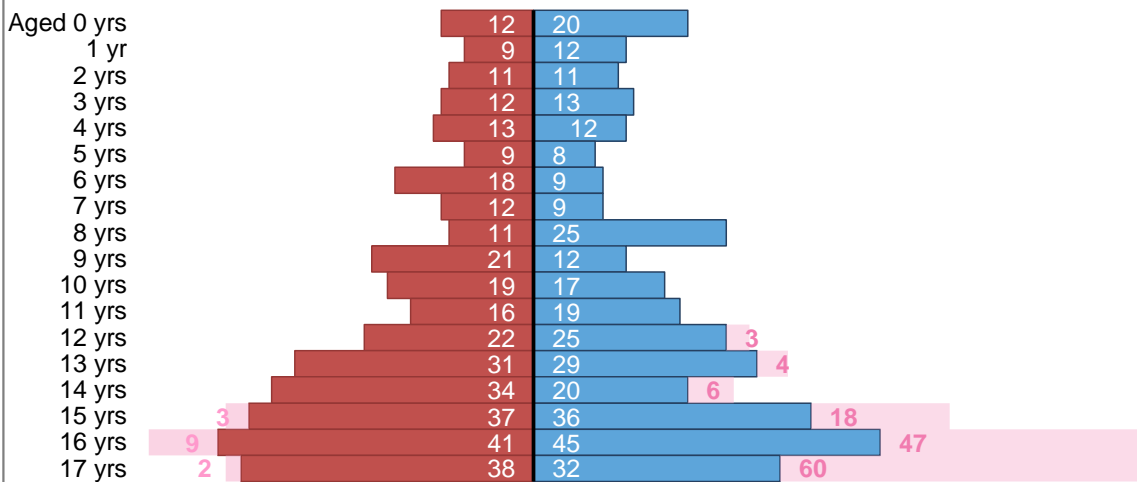


UASC

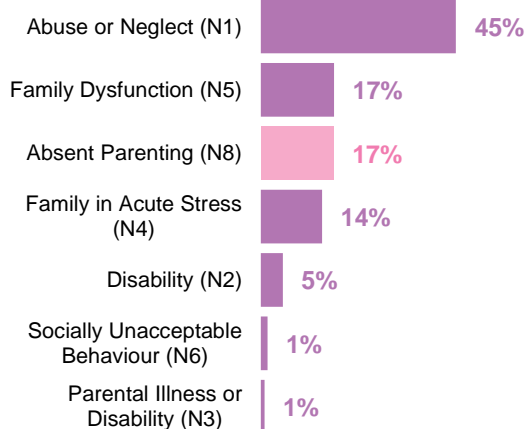
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children



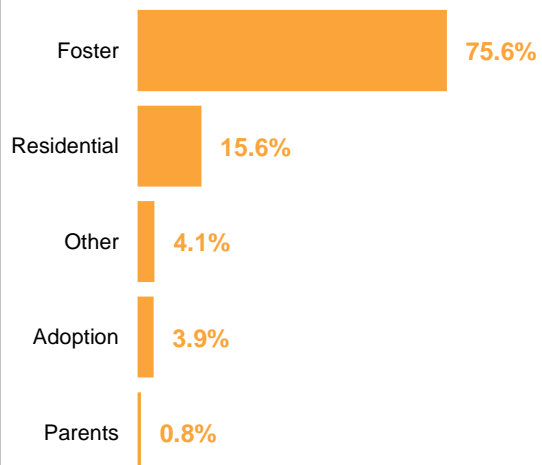
Age and gender



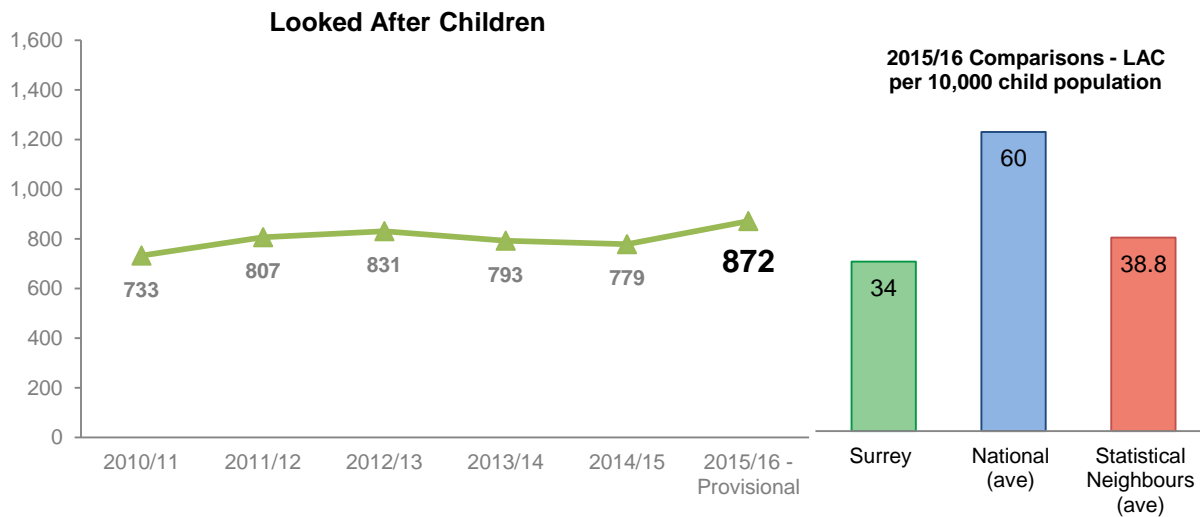
Category of Need at Entry



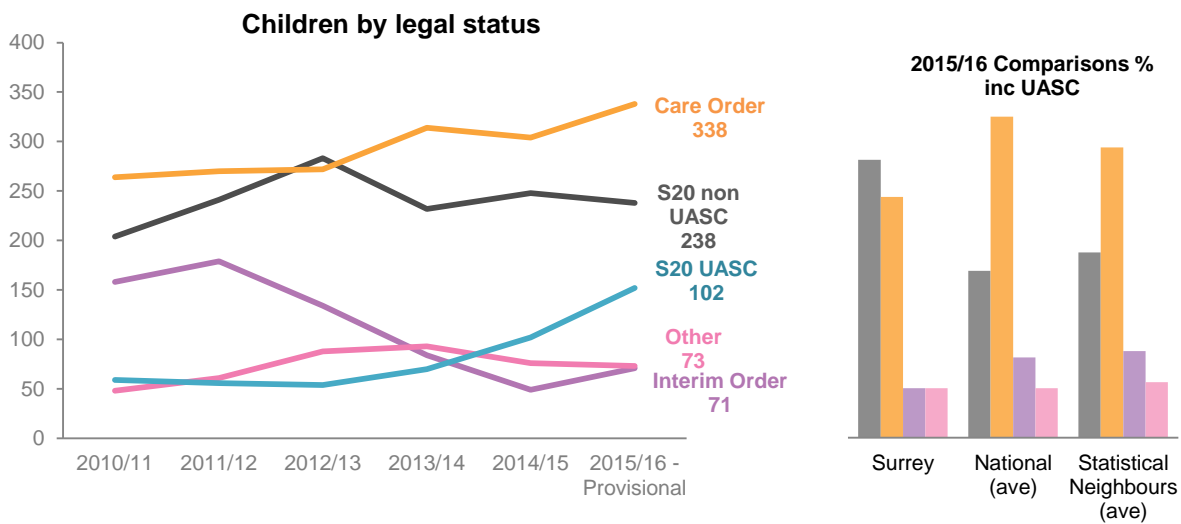
Placement Type



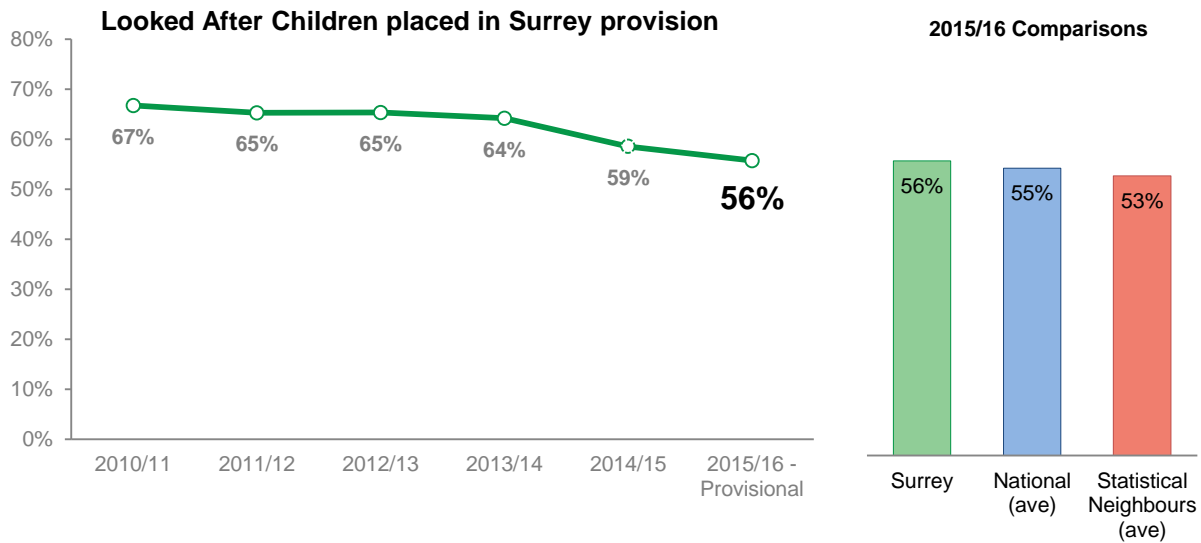
Number of Looked After Children at 31 March



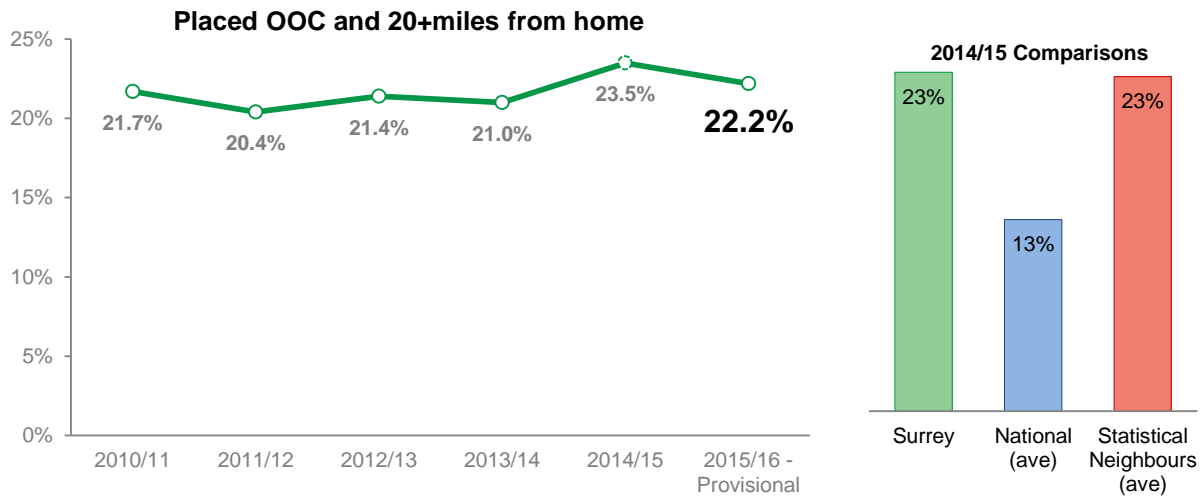
Number of Looked After Children by legal status



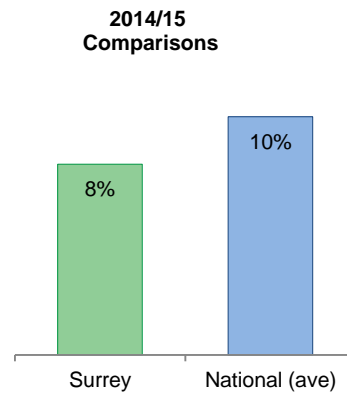
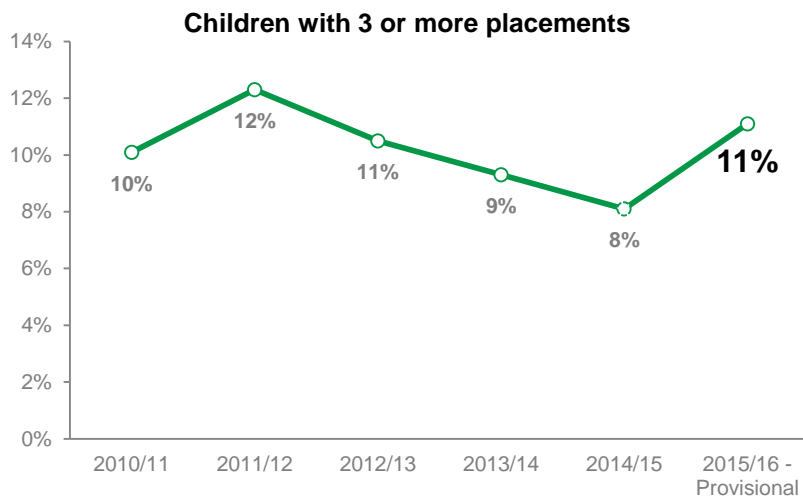
Percentage of Children placed in a Surrey in-house provision



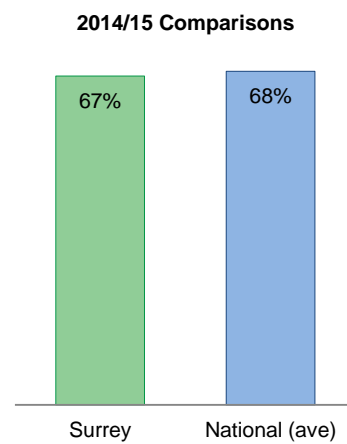
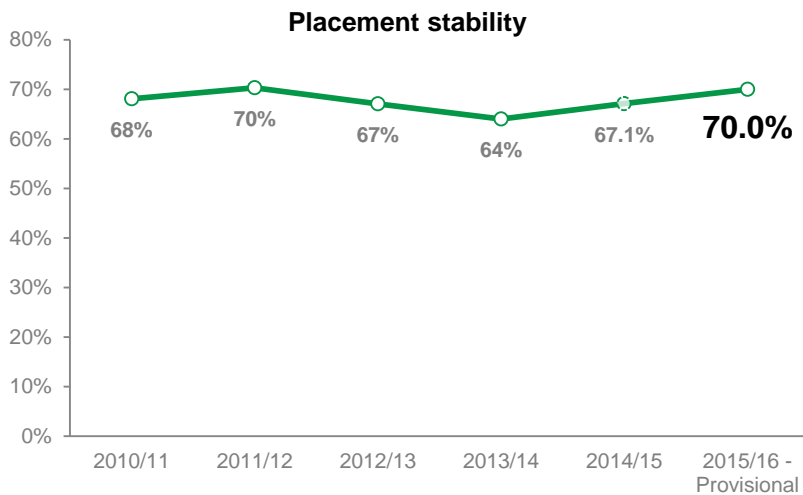
Percentage of Looked After Children who are placed out of county and 20 or more miles from home



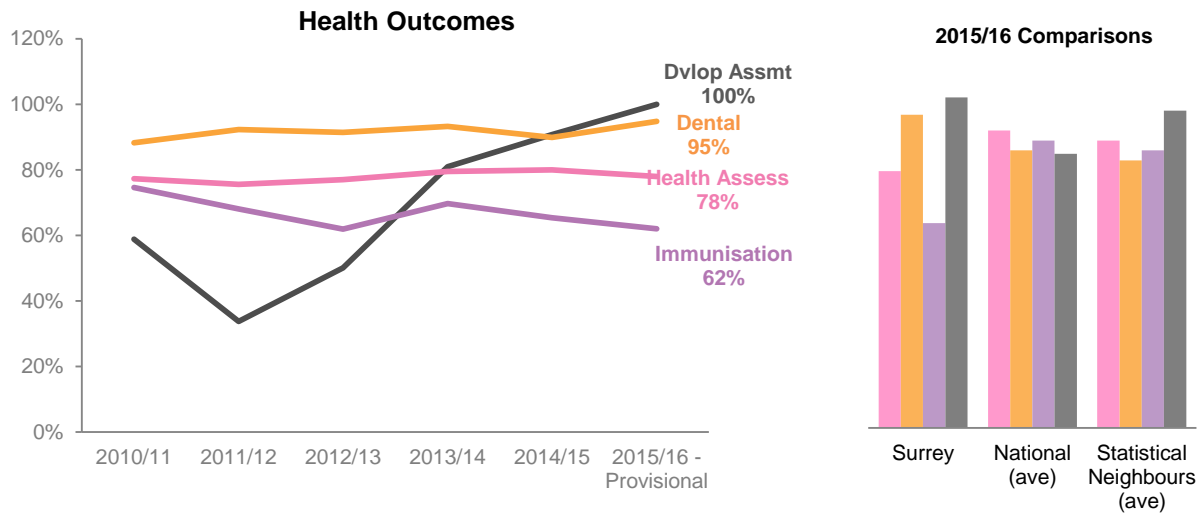
Percentage of Looked After Children with 3 or more placements



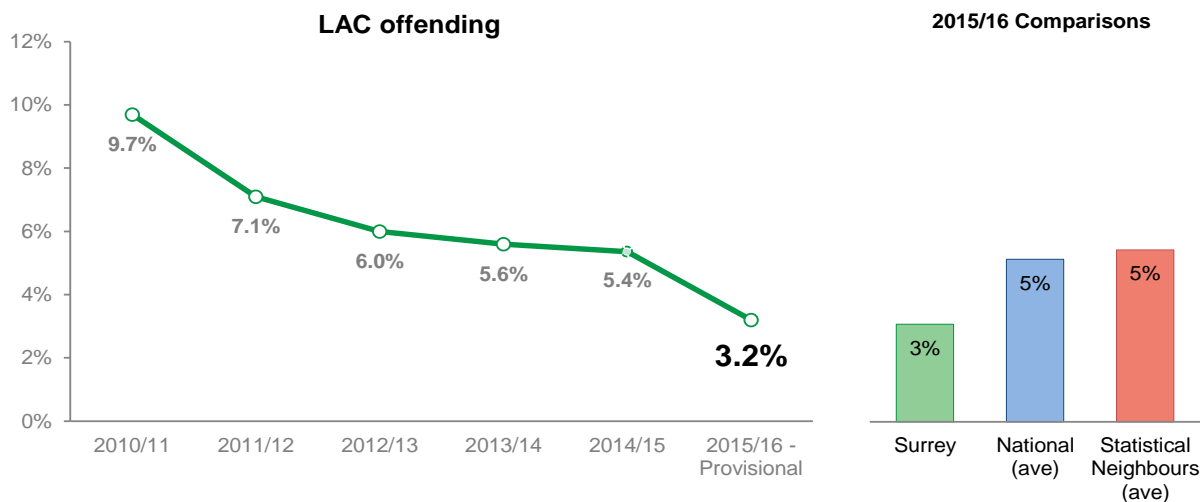
Percentage of children who have been looked after for 2 ½ years who have been in the same placement for at least 2 years



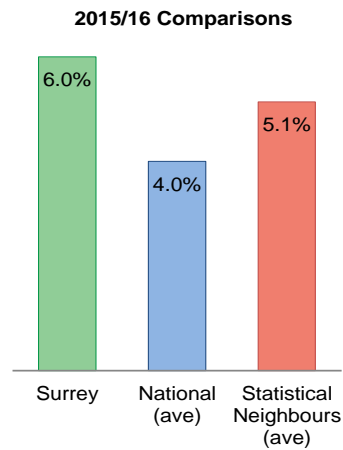
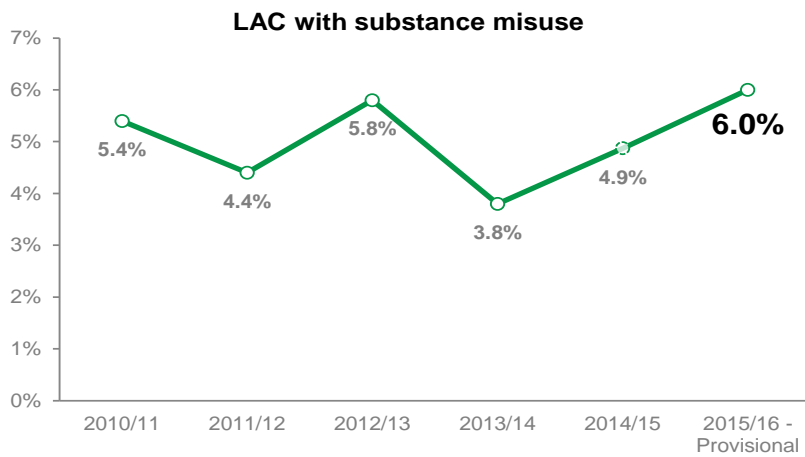
Percentage of children who have had a health developmental check, health assessment, dental check, and immunisations



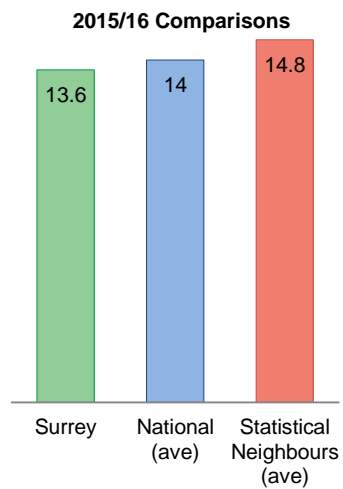
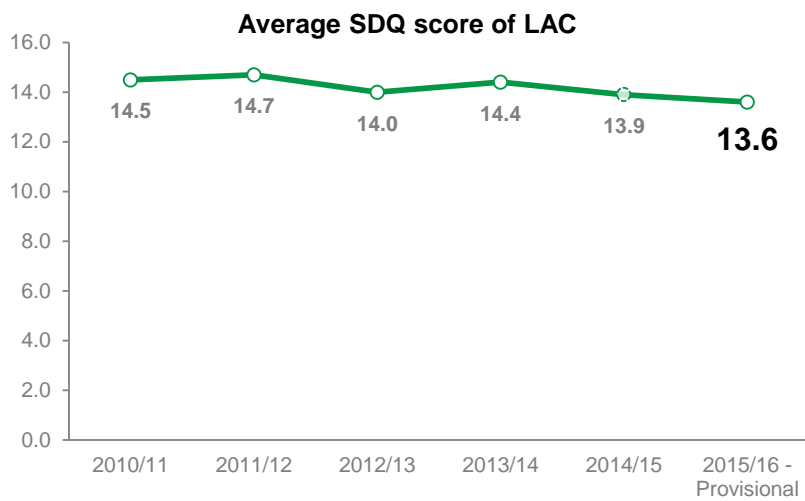
Percentage of Looked After Children (aged 10+) who have been subject to a conviction, final warning or reprimand in the year



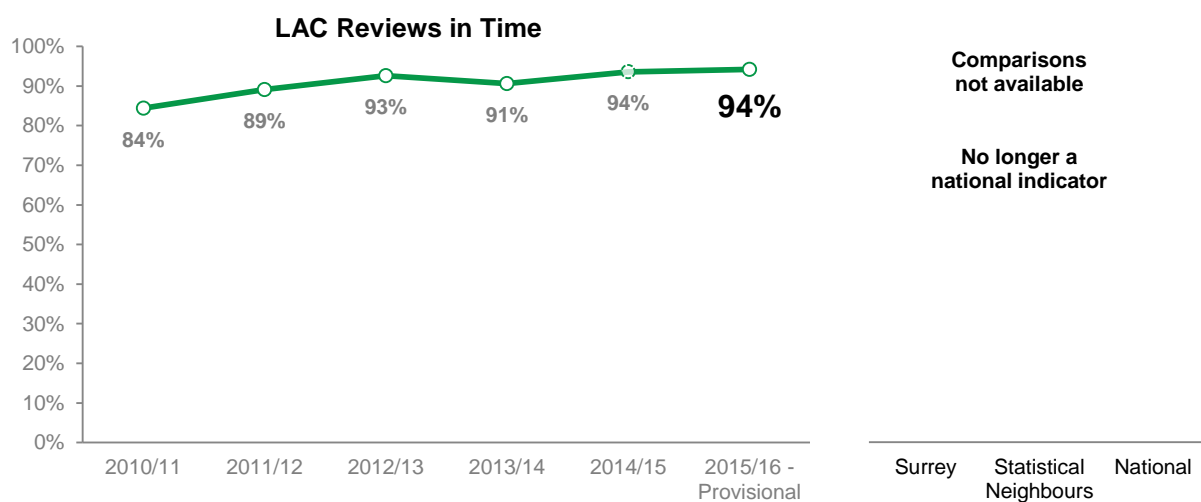
Percentage of Looked After Children with substance misuse



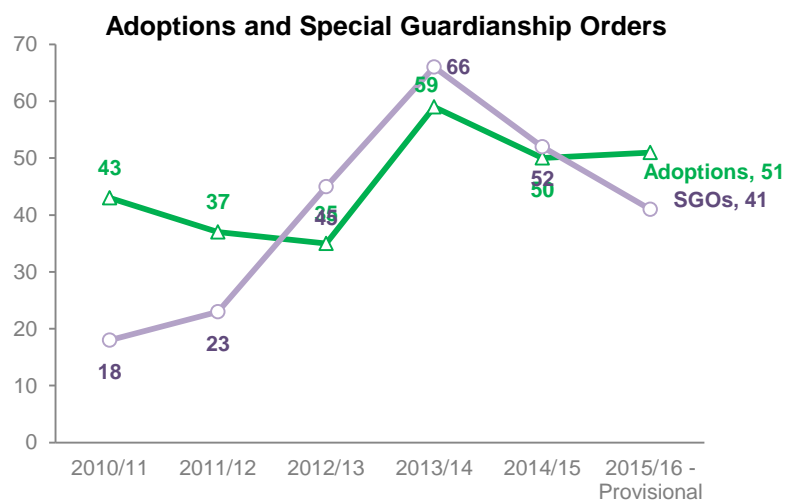
Average Strengths and Difficulties (SDQ) Questionnaire score of Looked After Children



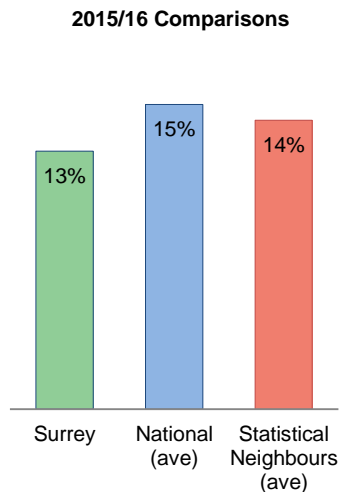
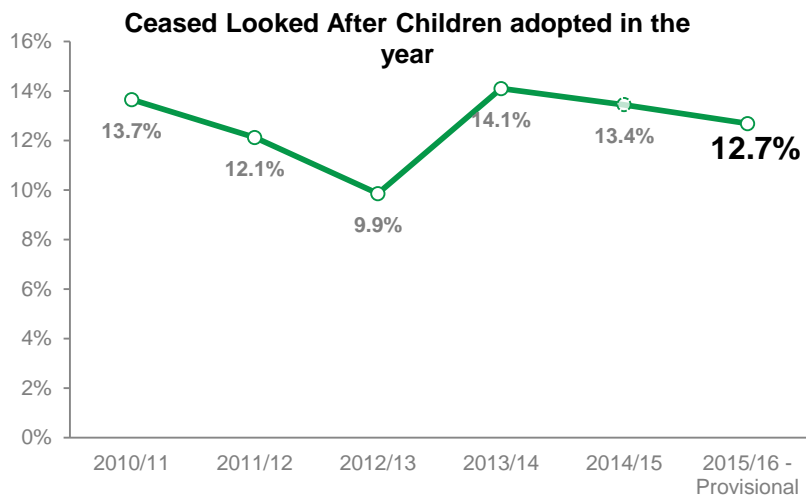
Percentage of Looked After Children who had their reviews in time



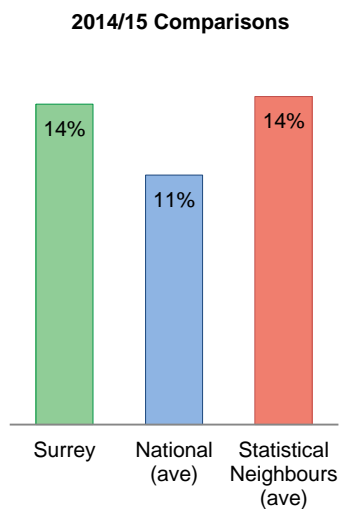
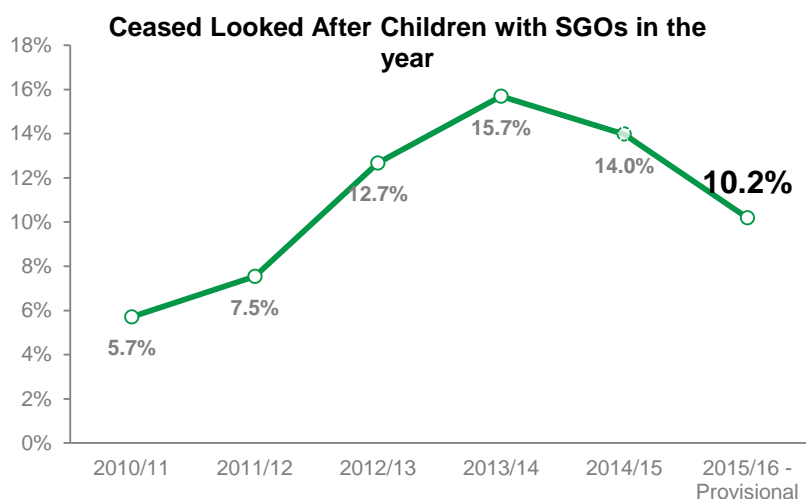
Number of Adoptions and Special Guardianship Orders



Adoptions in year compared to number of children leaving care

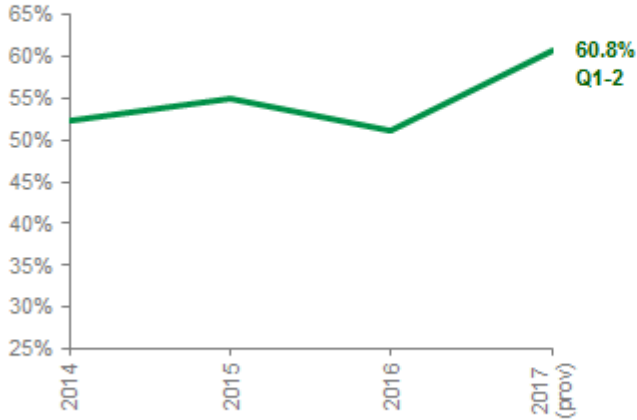


Special Guardianship Orders in year compared to the number of children leaving care

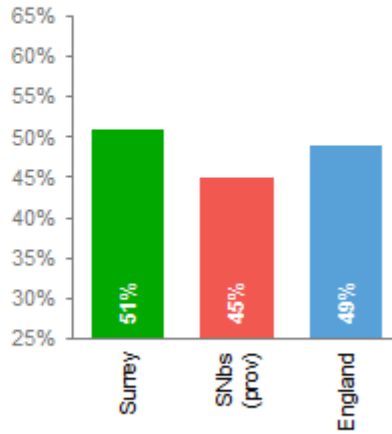


Percentage of careleavers in education, training or employment around their birthday (19-21 yo only, 903 return)

Percentage of careleavers who are PETE

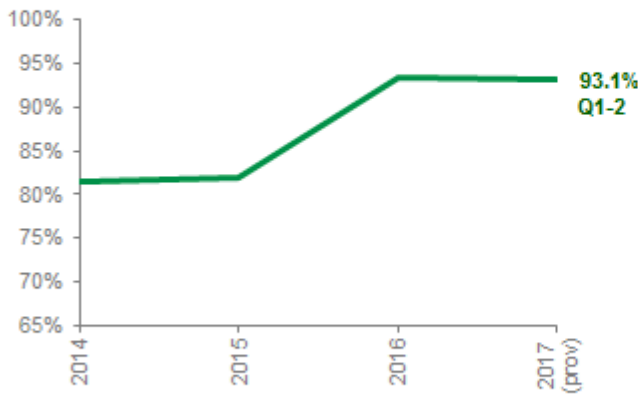


Benchmarking (31 March 2016)

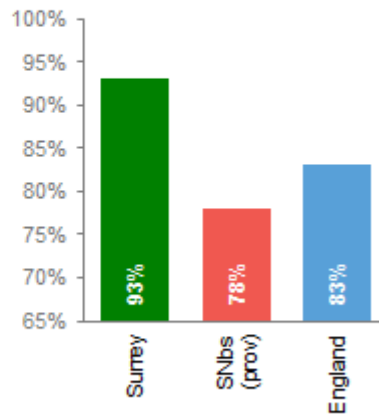


Percentage of careleavers in suitable accommodation around their birthday (19-21 yo only, 903 return)

Percentage of careleavers in suitable accommodation



Benchmarking (31 March 2016)





Social Care Services Board
16 March 2017

Fostering and Adoption Services

Purpose of the report: Scrutiny of Services

To scrutinise Adoption Agency and Fostering Service activity as presented in the Adoption Agency Report and Statements of Purpose for both services

Introduction:

1. For both Adoption and Fostering services, the Statements of Purpose and the Adoption Agency annual report highlight the breadth of activity which the services undertake serving the needs of looked after children who require care when they cannot live with their birth family, including services when a permanent alternative family is needed, whether through adoption, special guardianship or long-term fostering.
2. Both descriptive and performance data is provided to support the committee in performing its scrutiny role

Adoption Agency Annual Report

3. The Adoption Agency Annual report is a statutory report that provides information on the services provided through our Adoption service. The Adoption and Children Act 2002 requires that Local Authority Adoption Agencies present regular reports of agency activity to Elected Members.
4. The Adoption Agency was inspected as part of the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services that took place in October 2014. Adoption is a sub-category of the main inspection and as such receives its own grading. Surrey's Adoption service was rated as Good.
5. Adoption performance of local authorities is monitored by the Department of Education and a National Adoption Leadership Board through an annual scorecard and performance table (including rankings for the 152 authorities).

6. 37 looked after children were matched with adopters. 27 of these children were placed with adopters approved by Surrey and 10 with adopters approved by another adoption agency (to ensure the best match for the child).
7. 51 adoption orders were made through 2015 / 16 (some of these children would have been placed with their adoptive families during the previous year, with the formal order sought following an appropriate settling in period).
8. Most children were placed following legal action on the part of the local authority, which is a reflection of modern day adoption, with very few birth parents requesting adoption for their children. In 2015-16 no children were adopted as a result of parental request.
9. 33 applications were approved as prospective adopters, including heterosexual couples, single adopters and same sex couples.
10. 6 children were adopted where they had initially been placed through Foster2adopt, an approach whereby approved adopters assume care of a child under fostering regulations, with the intention that if care proceedings confirm the plan for adoption then the placement will change to an adoptive placement without the need for the child to move. This approach carries more uncertainty for the prospective adopters as the outcome of care proceedings is not set at the start, but it does allow for significant improvements in stability for the child if confirmed.
11. The Adoption Panel meets regularly to ensure that matches of children with adopters are heard in a timely way, and adopters approved. The demands on the panel members are high given that each case requires reading several hundred pages of background reports on the children and prospective adopters as well as attendance at a half day meeting when the cases are considered. An independent chair, professional and lay members, the agency adviser and panel administrators all work together to ensure that panel operates smoothly and effectively and that recommendations are reached.
12. A significant element of work within the Adoption service is focused on how we support families post-adoption, knowing that as children grow up support and help may be needed at different times. Since the creation of the national Adoption Support Fund in May 2015, we have made 67 successful applications to the fund between May 2015 and March 2016, providing access to funding for timely and accessible therapeutic support for families.

Adoption and Fostering Statements of Purpose

13. The Statements of Purpose for both Fostering and Adoption services are produced to meet statutory requirements.
14. For the Adoption service, the Statement of Purpose is produced in line with the requirements of the Adoption and Children's Act 2002, Adoption Agency regulations (2003, 2011), Adoption Support Regulations 2005 and National Minimum Adoption Standards 2011.

15. For the Fostering service the Statement of Purpose is completed to meet the requirements of Standard 16 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and Regulations 3 and 4 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.
16. Both Statements of Purpose incorporate a statement of principles which underpin the work of the services, outlines of activity, management and staffing and accountability
17. The Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose outlines the process for prospective adopters and the various stages of information, training and assessment they will work through as well as providing performance information.
18. The Statement of Purpose can be read in conjunction with the Annual report to provide a comprehensive overview of the service.
19. The Fostering Service Statement of Purpose provides a clear statement of the aims and objectives of our Fostering Service and sets out our strategy for meeting those aims and objectives.
20. It outlines the services provided and the staff who work within the service.
21. At the end of March 2016 the Fostering Service had 357 approved foster care households caring for a total of 403 children. There were also 108 young people over the age of 18 years, continuing to live with their foster carers under Staying Put arrangements.
22. Staying Put is a national initiative to support young people to remain with their foster carers post-18, recognising that children who are looked after are all too frequently required to move to independence many years before their peers, with poor impact on their future achievements and progress. Young people who can remain with their carers will receive good support as they complete their education and move on to higher or further education or employment.
23. We continue to need more foster carers and the service is currently developing a refreshed Recruitment and Retention strategy for foster carers, building on the strengths of our offer for Surrey carers whilst recognising the need to review our allowances and support to ensure they are keeping pace with other agencies and authorities.
24. In March 2016 an internal audit of the administrative and financial elements of the foster care service had been completed by Corporate Audit. The audit's finding was of Unsatisfactory with 27 recommendations (including 12 of high priority) needed to be addressed. The service has addressed these findings and a follow up audit in January 2017 has moved to a finding of 'Some Improvement Needed' with three medium priority recommendations to be completed. Two of the recommendations relate to ensuring the up to date maintenance of a spreadsheet pending the implementation of an electronic system of

record keeping for the Fostering Service and one is related to confirming the wording of the insurance policy guidance for foster carers. These are being actioned.

25. It is a top priority for our Corporate Parenting Strategy to support more children to be able to be placed in Surrey, close to their communities, and the service works to support the recruitment and retention of a range of carers to provide the placements our children need. As part of this work, Surrey County Council has become a Fostering Friendly employer and was successful in September 2016 in receiving the award of Fostering Friendly employer of the year from The Fostering Network.

Conclusions:

26. Both Adoption and Fostering Services are working to ensure they provide a high-quality service that is tailored to the needs of our looked after children in Surrey.
27. Both services are meeting their regulation requirements and standards.

Recommendations:

28. The Board is asked to receive and scrutinise the Adoption Agency annual report and the Statements of Purpose for the Adoption and Fostering Services and consider what recommendations it would wish to make.

Next steps:

To implement any recommendations as required.

Report contact:

Sheila Jones
Head of Countywide Services
Children's Services and Safeguarding

Contact details:

Tel No: 01483518691

Sources/background papers:

Annex A - Adoption Agency Report 2015 – 2016
Annex B - Mid-Year Report of the Adoption Agency April –Sept 2016
Annex C - Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose
Annex D - Fostering Service Statement of Purpose

Surrey County Council

Adoption Agency

Report

2016

Introduction:

The Adoption & Children Act 2002 requires that Local Authority Adoption Agencies present regular reports of agency activity to Elected Members. Since April 2011, reports are provided twice yearly. This report and the statistics contained within this report capture the period April 1 2015 to March 31 2016.

A further midyear report will be provided to the Lead Member in a further 6 months, capturing activity for the first half of 2016-17.

Context:

The Adoption Agency operates as part of the Countywide Services (Children's Social Care.) As such, we are sited within the Directorate of Children's Schools and Families, Children's Services and Safeguarding.

As an Adoption Agency we are required to comply with a comprehensive range of legislation, statutory guidance and national minimum standards and are subject to inspection by OFSTED

Our most recent inspection took place in 2014 as part of a comprehensive inspection of social care and safeguarding services, when a 'good' rating was made with regards to adoption.

Service Overview:

Surrey provides a full adoption service covering the following areas of business:

- **Family Finding** for children in the care of Surrey County Council with an adoption care plan.
- **Recruiting adopters** who can offer placements to Surrey's looked after children, or children placed from other local authorities.
- **Adoption support services** for all whose lives have been touched by adoption, including adopted children and their adoptive families, birth relatives of children who have been or are likely to be adopted, and adopted adults.
- **Non-agency adoption.** Assessment and preparation of welfare reports for the Courts in respect of proposed adoption arrangements which were not made by an adoption agency-typically step parents, connected persons and inter country adoptions.

Special Guardianship

Mindful that adoption is not the only means by which permanency can be secured it is important to highlight the increasing use of special guardianship orders (SGO). This order confers parental responsibility until the child reaches majority age, but unlike adoption the legal relationship between child and birth parent is maintained, albeit that the birth parent is limited in the extent to which they can intervene in decision making or care arrangements.

Two cases heard in the Court of Appeal courts: Re B and Re BS are attributed as triggering a rise in special guardianship and a corresponding drop in adoption. These cases prompted a statement by the President of the Family Division with regards to the need to improve analysis of options presented to courts in care cases, setting this against a presumption that adoption is appropriate only when 'nothing else will do.'

Special guardianship work transferred from the adoption service to a newly created friends and family team in Surrey from 2014, in recognition of the growth in this area.

National context: the Adoption Action Plan

March 2012 saw the publication of the Adoption Action Plan by the Department of Education. This was preceded by the Family Justice Review in 2011. Jointly they inform the current policy context with regard to reform of the family courts and the adoption process. The main aims being to reduce the time taken to determine children's futures, and to provide greater impetus for children to be adopted from care. Ironically however, the result has been a tension between this policy and judicial approaches following the statement of the President of the Family Division referred to previously.

The Adoption Action Plan also included a commitment from Central Government to speed up the adult adoption process, with the result that from 2013 a 'national adoption gateway' was created with Department of Education funding, to provide initial information for would be adoption applicants. At the same time adoption reform grants were provided to adoption agencies to support recruitment of additional adopters, and from 2013, a revised pathway was implemented for those wishing to adopt. This introduced a 2 stage application process.

The result is that significant numbers of adopters were recruited between 2013 and 2015, and that from a position of there being an 'adopter gap' there is now a national surplus of adopters. This has had some positive effects in that it has increased placement choice for children, meaning that social workers can ensure a good 'fit' between children's needs and what a family can offer.

However, many of the current cohort of approved adopters are only willing to consider a narrow range of children, with the implication that these adopters face longer waiting times for matching, and the possibility for some that they may not be matched at all. This has resulted in frustration and disappointment, and created an additional challenge for agencies to manage adopter's expectations.

Inter agency placements

Temporary financial support was provided by the Department of Education in 2015-16 to incentive local authorities to make placements with adopters approved elsewhere ie by voluntary adoption agencies or by other local authorities. This was achieved by refunding the interagency fee (currently set at £27,000 for a single child, and paid to the approving agency following placement.) The refund occurs where the child to be placed meets certain criteria and is intended to improve outcomes for these 'harder to place' children, deemed at risk of delay in being adopted.

This, combined with so called 'adopter lead matching' has resulted in higher numbers of inter agency placements than before, given that use of electronic registers such as Link maker now enable adopters to search independently for children in need of a family, rather than waiting to be matched by agencies.

The result of this is that of 37 Surrey children placed for adoption last year, 10 were placed with adopters approved by other agencies, and 16 children from other local authorities joined Surrey approved adopters.

Although these placements provide challenge for placing agencies in terms of monitoring and supporting children from a distance, it has increased the likelihood for some children of placement with a family within a reasonable timescale. As age at adoption is known to be a factor in future placement stability, use of interagency placements should therefore generally be regarded as a positive initiative.

Local activity

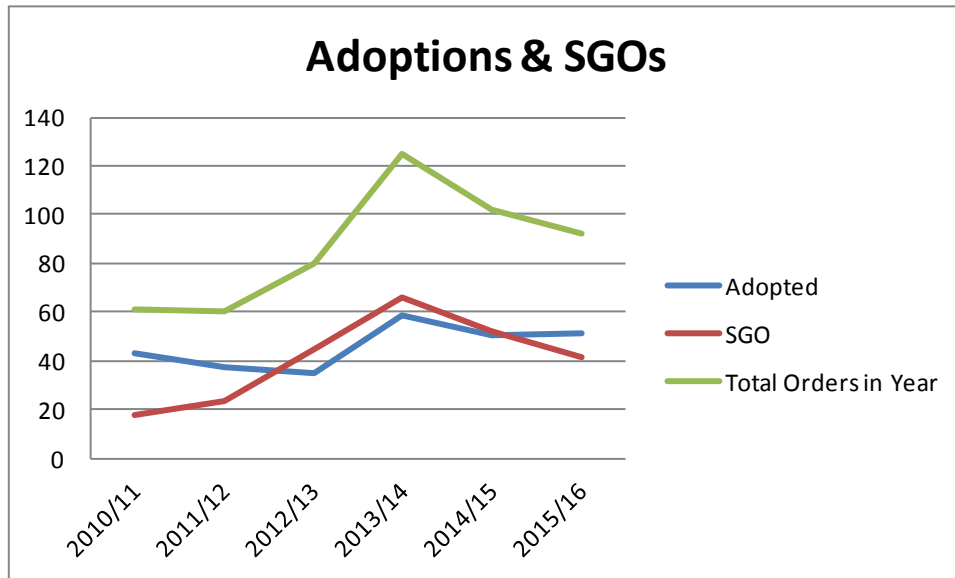
After a number of years of increasing levels of adoption, activity now seems set to revert to earlier levels. This local trend is broadly in line with national activity, as measured by the Adoption Leadership Board which promotes best practice and sector improvement.

Paradoxically, numbers of adoption orders in Surrey made remained high in 2015-16 at 51. However this figure largely reflects care cases concluded in the previous year where the outcome was that the court agreed an adoption plan. There is always a delay whilst final contacts take place (with the birth family,) and before the child is placed with adopters, followed by a 'settling in period.' Only then can the child be legally adopted by their new family. This explains why the number of adoption orders made is not directly linked to numbers of children with an adoption plan or children placed in the year.

Based on current cases in care proceedings we therefore expect to see a drop in the number of adoption orders made in 2016-17.

In considering future trends a further factor is the number of under 7s within the looked after population. When this is high the likelihood is that there will be a high number of adoptions the following year.

At the current time there is a high number of teenagers looked after in Surrey, and relatively fewer young children-again pointing to the likelihood of a drop in adoption activity in 2016-17.



The table below gives the actual numbers of orders granted in Surrey in the last 7 years, with special guardianship included also.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Adopted	47	43	37	35	59	50	51
SGO	24	18	23	45	66	52	41
Total Orders in Year	71	61	60	80	125	102	92
% of LAC cohort at year end	12.3%	10.8%	9.8%	12.4%	19.4%	18.0%	15.4%

National performance indicators:

There are currently two main measures: Children in Care & Adoption Performance (League Table) Indicators, and the Adoption Scorecard.

Some indicators are repeated across the sets, and they are reported by the DfE as three-year averages, rather than giving figures for individual years.

League Table Indicators

League Table Indicators	Average 3 years to 2012		Average 3 years to 2013		Average 3 years to 2014		Average 3 years to 2015		Actual 2016
	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC
Adoption 1 – the percentage of children who ceased to be looked after that were adopted (high figures are preferable)	13%	12%	12%	13%	12%	14%	13%	16%	13%
Adoption 2 – the percentage of children who ceased to be looked after because of a special guardianship order (high figures are preferable)	7%	7%	9%	8%	12%	10%	14%	11%	10%

The figures indicate Special Guardianship in Surrey is used more than most other authorities, and adoption less, reflecting a tendency wherever possible to place children with connected people.

In most instances this is a relative or family friend with whom the child has had a meaningful relationship, and who has been assessed as able to meet the child's needs throughout childhood.

In other instances the foster care who is caring for the child during proceedings expresses an interest in offering a permanent home to the child, and following a successful assessment they are awarded a special guardianship order.

When adoption and special guardianship are taken together however, permanency orders are currently higher than the national average.

Adoption Scorecard There are several measures relating to children in the Adoption Scorecard (AS):

Adoption Scorecard Measures	Average 3 years to 2012		Average 3 years to 2013		Average 3 years to 2014		Average 3 years to 2015		Actual 2016
	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC	England	SCC
Children 1 – For those adopted, the average time from entering care to being placed for adoption (days)	567	636	551	647	568	628	550	593	470
Children 2 – Average time from court authority to place child and LA matching to an adoptive family (days).	173	195	180	210	175	217	179	223	205
Children 3 – children who wait less than 16* months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. *20 months up to 2013 & 18 months for 2014	55%	47%	56%	49%	56%	51%	47%	47%	65%
Related information 1 – adoptions from care (number adopted and % of all care leavers)	130 (13%)	9,740 (12%)	115 (12%)	10,540 (13%)	130 (12%)	12,530 (14%)	145 (13%)	14,390 (16%)	13%
Related Information 2 – children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption.	11%	7%	14%	9%	18%	12%	19%	14%	10%
Related Information 3 – average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (or foster carers that go on to adopt), in days.	474	546	479	545	492	525	460	490	439
Related Information 4 – adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds compared to BME care leavers (ie any non-white ethnicity)	8%	6%	8%	7%	7%	8%	6%	9%	5%
Related Information 5 – adoptions of children aged 5+, compared to all care leavers aged 5+ years	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%
Related Information 6 – average length of care proceeding (weeks).	58	53	57	51	54	48	47	39	N/A
Related Information 7 – number of children waiting adoption (as at 31 st March).	55	5,750	40	6,890	35	4,680	35	4,600	40

Local performance with regards to timeliness of child placement is above the national average (related information 1) particularly when figures are adjusted for cases where the child is adopted by their foster carer (related information 3.)

Performance with regards to related information 1 is influenced by the time a case is held in care proceedings, prior to obtaining court authority to place for adoption. For much of the reporting period the average time for a case to progress through court has been above the national average, although current indicators suggest that this is improving (related information 6.)

Of note is the high percentage of changes of plan away from adoption (related information 2) This is influenced by a number of factors including the court failing to agree with the local authority care plan for adoption and making a different determination, there were 4 such cases in 2015-16

In other cases there was a change of care plan initiated by the local authority, because the child's foster carer wished to offer a permanent home but under a different legal arrangement, or relatives emerged late in the process and were assessed as able to offer a home.

Also of note is the number of children awaiting adoption figure (related information 7) This was 40 at the end of the reporting period. This statistic can be confusing as it implies that 40 children are still in need of a new family. The reality is that 40 children had not yet received their final adoption order-in practice many will either be already placed with a family and this is a transitional period prior to the adopters applying to court for an adoption order, or there is a family who have been identified and wish to adopt them but the placement has not yet commenced.

Children placed in 2015-16

37 Children were placed for adoption within the reporting period. As noted earlier, adoption orders are typically made 6-12 months following placement, so the number of children placed in a year does not directly reflect the number of adoption orders (51)

Most children were placed following legal action on the part of the local authority, which is a reflection of modern day adoption, with very few birth parents requesting adoption for their children. In 2015-16 no children were adopted as a result of parental request.

The range of ages at which children were placed for adoption was broad, with the youngest placed at 3 months of age and the oldest 7 years.

1 child was adopted by their foster carers and a further 6 placements involved a foster2adopt arrangement ie by adopters who were given temporary approval to foster the child ahead of court agreeing an adoption plan.

20 single children moved into new families, and 17 as part of a sibling group of 2 or 3 children.

Whilst generally it is considered best to seek placements of siblings together, in some instances the children's care plans are for separate placements. The reasons for this can be wide ranging, some children have never shared a home with their siblings or half siblings and there may not be any capacity on the part of the adopters/carers to care for additional children. Some siblings have very difficult relationships, borne out of a shared history of trauma and need to be parented apart to enable them to flourish.

Occasionally it may not be considered likely that a placement can be made within the children's timescales, that will meet all their needs

Case example

Seven children were removed from their family of origin, of whom the 2 oldest children had strong and positive relationships with their foster cares who wished to offer them a permanent home. The court agreed adoption plans for the remaining 5 children, accepting evidence that it was not likely that one family could be identified for all 5 together, but agreeing that the children should be placed in 2 families with provision for contact.

The adoption service identified a local family for the 2 younger children and through family finding a second family was identified within an hours travel time for the remaining 3 children. All children were matched and placed within 5 months of the court decision.

Whilst we recognise the value of adopters reflecting the ethnicity and cultural, spiritual and linguistic backgrounds of a child-in the interests of promoting these aspects of a child's sense of identity, we also appreciate that it can in some instances be difficult to achieve exact matching, and that to delay placing a child in a permanent family is itself detrimental.

The percentage of BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) children exiting care through adoption, (related information 4) in Surrey this is below the national average, reflecting a higher age for most young people who are looked after, and of non white ethnicity.

Early Permanence

With the aim of reducing numbers of moves for children, and enabling them to join what might become a permanent family sooner, the Children and Families Act (2014) introduced a requirement to consider placing children with dual approved (fostering and adoption) families, and this is now routinely considered for any child who may require adoption.

This can be a very positive thing for children given that they do not need to move again if the outcome of court proceedings is a decision in favour of adoption. However it involves a high level of uncertainty for the prospective adopters who must care for the child in the knowledge that they may be returned to live with their birth parents, or placed with a relative at the end of the court process.

We therefore give Surrey applicants the option to be considered for foster2adopt placements, or to restrict themselves to being considered only for children where the court has already agreed an adoption plan, and where the pathway to adoption will be more predictable.

6 foster2adopt placements were made over the reporting period, of which one child was later moved to relatives within the court process under a special guardianship arrangement.

Case example

At the time that Josh was born his sister (then aged 1) had recently been placed with Surrey adopters. The court decided that Josh and his birth mother should be assessed in a residential unit to see if she could successfully parent him, however Josh's mother suddenly left the unit, leaving Josh behind. As the court process had not been concluded and Josh's mother was not at that time in agreement that he should be adopted, he could not be matched and placed under adoption regulations meaning that a foster placement was needed.

The adopters for Josh's sister were approached and agreed to care for Josh as his foster carers until a decision about his long term future could be made. Josh continued to have contact with his birth parents until the final hearing and the written exchanges (via the contact book) served to develop a relationship between adopters and birth parents. The birth parents were delighted that he was able to be cared for alongside his sister, and in the end did not contest the plan for adoption at the final hearing. The placement is now proceeding to adoption.

Placement challenges:

Our greatest challenges continue to be placing children over 4, those with health and developmental uncertainty or complex emotional and behavioural needs. Children from BME backgrounds and large sibling groups also risk waiting longer for a family.

We therefore designate these as 'priority children' and this is reflected in our recruitment strategy, as set out in our public facing website and communications with all enquirers. We also work closely with our adoptive families to enable those with potential to parent priority children to access additional training and support, to build confidence that they can successfully meet the needs of these children.

Family Finding

For a small number of children there is no immediate match available from the local pool of adopters, and so a family finder is allocated to work alongside the child's social worker and extend the search beyond our own pool.

Regular family finding meetings are held to ensure that the search is effective. These are chaired by an assistant team manager from the adoption service, and attended by the child's current carer alongside the child's social worker and an assigned family finder.

The meetings review efforts to identify a family, and a record of the meeting is made and shared with the independent reviewing officer for the child (whose role is to ensure the child's care plan is implemented.)

Alongside sending out profiles to other adoption agencies, children are also referred to the National Adoption Register, which seeks to identify possible matches between waiting children and approved adopters. We also subscribe to a further register (Link maker) which enables adopters to conduct their own search for children across the UK, and has been a major contributor to so the growth in so called 'adopter lead matching'.

Case example

Luke is a toddler of complex heritage, whose father is unknown. Although delightful to care for, Luke's health needs and developmental delay deterred many potential adopters, meaning that a nationwide search for a family was launched. A family finding social worker circulated Luke's profile to all adoption agencies, attended a series of adopter events to share information about Luke and profiled Luke on a national adopter database.

Eventually, an adoptive family was secured for Luke some 300 miles away, following Luke his foster carer and social workers attending an adoption activity day where prospective adopters meet children informally.

Although the Department of Education target for securing a family (4 months from the court authority to place for adoption) was not met in this case, this represented a very good outcome for Luke who joined his new family just before his second birthday. The placement is going well and it is expected that an adoption order will soon be made securing Luke's place in his new family.

Disruption

Sadly the placement of 2 siblings placed for adoption disrupted prior to the adoption order being made, and these children's care plan are currently under review whilst they are cared for by short term foster carers.

In the event of any placement disrupting before an adoption order has been made, the service commissions an independent chair to conduct a disruption meeting to try to identify learning for the agency, and invites the participation of the adoptive family in whatever form works for them.

The report that results from the meeting is shared with all the participants and relevant parts of the service. In this case the adopters were approved by another agency, and the disruption meeting process was convened to enable both agencies to take part and share learning.

Recruitment of adopters: Adult adoption pathway

We offer bi monthly information sessions for anyone interested in adopting with us, and have seen up to 30 potential applicants a month since the revised process commenced. We call these sessions 'learn2adopt'. The sessions are a response to a requirement for adoption agencies to provide detailed information within 10 working days to anyone seeking this.

Our objective in the sessions is to enable enquirers to decide if adoption is for them, whether this is the right time to register interest and finally whether Surrey is the right agency for them (mindful that they can are not restricted to working with us as their local authority service.)

Checks and references are taken up and a medical performed following a 'registration of interest' which starts off the 2 stage process. Stage 1 lasts 2 months, and applicants attend an informal meeting with experienced adopters and complete e learning and a number of self assessment tasks, before the agency makes a formal decision about whether or not to progress them to a second more intense stage (lasting 4 months)

Stage 2 is lead by an allocated social worker, and results in preparation of a report by the social worker with recommendations and any comments that the applicants wish to add for the panel's consideration.

Applicants are given the option to attend panel, which most chose to do. The role of panel is to make a recommendation as to whether the applicants are suitable to adopt and they may also provide advice e.g. as to the range of issues that applicants are best suited to manage, however the final decision concerning approval is taken by a senior manager in the agency (agency decision maker) in line with adoption regulations.

The agency must then inform the applicants of the outcome verbally within 2 working days, and in writing within 5 working days.

Applications

The majority of applicants continue to be childless couples, although we also receive significant numbers of enquiries from families with one or more children already. Most enquiries we receive are from applicants hoping to adopt one or two children, typically applicants say their ideal would be to adopt a child 'as young as possible'.

Given the range of ages and needs that children with adoption plans bring, we have to help develop understanding of this and the potential rewards of parenting children who might not match the image the applicants has of adoption.

We achieve this over a period of time, through training and involving experienced adopters in the process.

Case example

Jeff and Liz were approved in November following a 6 month process. In their early 40s, they are childless and given fertility issues on both sides recognised that they have limited options with regards to pursuing their goal of a family.

Although like many applicants they hoped that adoption might enable them to adopt a very young child, the agency was happy to accept an application given that they brought a good deal of experience with young children, including Liz acting as an independent person for a young person who is looked after.

Having undertaken additional training following approval they are currently hoping to have a child placed under foster2adopt process, and accept that this may or may not result in their being able to adopt the child, depending on the outcome of the court process.

Some families seek approval for a second child (having adopted previously), and in such instances the assessment process is generally shorter given that much information about the family is already known.

Of the successful applicants from 2015-16, the majority were heterosexual couples; however we have been pleased to welcome a rising number of same sex couples as well as single adopters.

Several applicants were born overseas (or have relatives living in other countries) and given the increasingly complex backgrounds of children referred for adoption and the need to value their heritages, this is welcome.

Approvals in any year might include a number of foster families seeking approval for specific children placed with them as foster placements. As with 'second time' adopters the assessment of foster carers is generally shorter.

The average age of an adopter in Surrey is 45; this is in line with the national average, and the reality that there is no upper age limit for adoption so much as a need to focus on the health and wellbeing of applicants.

Approvals and recruitment strategy

We approved a record number of adopters in 2014-15 at 68, the high numbers representing a response to high numbers of children with new adoption plans at the time, and the context of central government directing adoption agencies to approve more families. By contrast numbers were considerably lower in 2015-16 at 33, and we expect to achieve broadly similar numbers in 2016-17.

Determining a 'target' number of adopters is a dynamic process, which needs to take account of many variables including children with adoption plans, the needs of those children, and the existing cohort of adopters either approved already or currently undergoing assessment.

Therefore having set a target of 50 at the beginning of 2015, we revised this downwards during the year in light of changing need. We expect moving forwards that our target figure will be 40 families, but this will remain subject of regular review.

As noted previously, increasingly Surrey adopters may chose to pursue a match with children from other authorities, meaning that we must expect to factor in the loss of these families as a resource for our own children.

Increasingly we work collaboratively with other agencies to agree regional priorities and ensure that the pool of adopters is sufficient for our collective needs.

Currently we review our recruitment strategy on a three monthly basis, and this informs our approach to enquirers meaning that at times when we have a healthy number of adopters willing to consider a range of children we are less likely to accept a registration of interest than at times when adopter numbers are low or range limited.

Appeals

If adopters are not approved, the applicants are entitled to appeal via Surrey's own internal appeals system or via the Independent Review Mechanism (known as the IRM) an appeals system set up by central government in 2003 and currently operated by the British Agency for Fostering and Adoption.

In the period covered by this report there was one appeal was considered under the Surrey process resulting in a decision to uphold the original determination (not to approve.) No appeals were made to the IRM.

Adoption support

A requirement to inform adopters of the right to an adoption support needs assessment following adoption was introduced in the Children and Family Act, and therefore we are proactive in publicising this locally through our public facing website, a secure portal for adopters, newsletters and information packs.

A support planning meeting is convened for each child adopted from Surrey prior to the match being considered by the adoption panel and a plan is presented as part of the matching information.

However, the sector has been influenced at both local and national level by the first national study of adoption breakdowns and adoption support, published in 2014 by Professor Julie Selwyn of Bristol University which reported that although overall breakdown rates following adoption were low, (between 2 and 9%), significant numbers of families experienced considerable challenge and require targeted and specialist support.

Accessing therapeutic support was cited as especially difficult, with few Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services providing interventions that were suited to the needs presented by adopted children.

Adoption Support Fund

Subsequently in May 2015, the Department of Education established an Adoption Support Fund of £19 million pounds, administrated by a private consultancy: Mott McDonald. The aim of the fund is to enable children adopted in England to access timely and specialist therapeutic support.

Funding is applied for on a case by case basis by local authority adoption services, following assessment of a child's specific support needs and identification of an appropriate service provider.

To enable us to respond to the opportunity that the fund presented, we have created a project officer within the service to act as the interface with the fund, and to develop a list of independent providers to complement existing provision. We are grateful to our colleagues within the commissioning service who have helped us to develop effective commissioning processes.

Pleasingly, we have made 67 successful applications to the fund on behalf of Surrey children between May 2015 and the end of the reporting period. This has enabled families to access services in a timely manner, and increased provider choice.

Recently a commitment has been made by central government to increase funding to ASF on a year on year basis for the next 4 years.

Case example

Kelvin was adopted aged 5 following a history of neglect. At this time Kelvin found it very painful to think about his family of origin and although a life story book which outlined his story was provided, Kelvin was resistant to talking about this with his adopters or social works.

An assessment of need was requested by Kelvin's parents some years later, and indicated that Kelvin now was wishing to understand his story in greater detail. An application was made to the support fund which enabled a therapist to be commissioned to work with Kelvin and his adoptive parents and will build on the work done earlier when Kelvin was much younger and his level of understanding more limited.

As well as direct interventions with young people, the fund is able to support therapeutic parenting courses for adoptive families on a regular basis. These are run by Adoption UK on our behalf, and we are now able to offer these on a quarterly basis. We have also been successful in securing funding for groups for adopted children of different ages, with the aim of reducing their feelings of isolation, integrating adoption as part of their story and identity, thus increasing self esteem.

Child and adolescent mental health Services (CAMHS)

Following a local needs analysis, which consulted extensively with adoptive families and professionals, a tendering process was initiated by Surrey County Council and the 6 local clinical commissioning groups who committed to jointly fund a new specialist service for adopted young people and those subject of a special guardianship order. The contract for the new service has been awarded to the Surrey and Borders Partnership.

The new service came into being from 1st April 2016, with the aim of enabling these young people to access mental health services in line with existing commissioned services provided to looked after children by Surrey and Borders Partnership service.

The new service is currently recruiting to 6 practitioner posts and developing care pathways with support from the Adoption Service, and we look forward to the service becoming fully operational by September 2016.

In house support

We support significant numbers of families as they manage the realities of parenting their adopted children; many of whom still exhibit complex needs. The adoption social worker for the family continues to provide support at least until the point of adoption but can remain involved beyond this on a case by case basis, depending on needs at the time.

In practice, we often end our formal involvement with families following the adoption order, but stay in touch informally through regular family events, training and support groups for adopters and adopted children, as reflected by the 600 and more families currently on our mailing list.

Managing contact with birth relatives following adoption

Some families continue to receive support if there is a plan for direct contact between the birth and adoptive families which requires our involvement. Contact is most often supported with birth parents, grandparents, siblings or any combination of the above. Currently we support 39 families with regard to one or more face to face meetings a year.

In other instances it may be possible for families to manage a contact without our direct support, this is most likely to be the case where children from the same birth family have been adopted into more than one adoptive family and following introductions of the adults they are able to take the children's contact forwards together.

We also have a post box service which provides a service to over 800 young people, enabling annual or twice yearly exchange of information between adoptive and birth families. This service is provided until the young person is 18 years old.

Assessment for targeted adoption support

We have a statutory duty to conduct an assessment of post order need where this is requested. Adopters can request re-assessment of their needs, their child's needs or a siblings needs at any time during the child's growing years. In 2015-16 we conducted 79 such assessments, and taking account of support plans agreed over this period and support packages carrying over from the previous year 141 families received a targeted service during the year-some provided directly by our own staff, in other cases from services from whom we contracted a service.

Examples of work that results from post order assessments includes identity/ life story work, managing relationships, adoptive parenting support, and advice and support with regards to education. This often involves multi-agency working given that frequently young people referred struggle in different areas of their lives. As such, we frequently work alongside other services including the Youth Service, Early Help, CAMHS, Education, and colleagues from the Referral Assessment and Intervention Service (RAIS.)

Finance

Under adoption regulations (Adoption and Children Act 2002,) adoption allowances can be paid if children meet the threshold criteria for an allowance (e.g. children who have exceptional needs such as a disability, significant emotional needs, large sibling groups, or to enable a person known to the child to offer them permanency) The adopters undergo a means test, in order to determine whether they qualify for payments on the basis of need. All allowances are reviewed annually.

Currently Surrey is paying adoption allowances in respect of 152 children, to the tune of £1.1 million pounds. These encompass children who might have been placed for adoption at any time over the past 18 years.

Some allowances are paid for a time limited period, perhaps to enable a parent to remain 'at home' during the child's early years, in other instances the allowance might continue up to the child leaving full time education.

Case example

Stella is a single adopter whose daughter was aged 4 at the time of placement. Carinna has significant emotional needs as a result of her earlier history, and a therapist provides fortnightly support.

Stella has delayed returning to work for the present time in order to be available to Carinna, who find it difficult to cope without her Mum. She is slowly being introduced to a child minder and out of school activities, with the plan that eventually Stella will return to work on a part time basis. Payment of a weekly adoption allowance and support and guidance about entitlement to benefit has enabled Stella to plan and remain available to her daughter.

Adult Adoptees

We continue to receive a high volume of enquiries and service requests in respect of historical adoptions-mainly from adoptees wishing to learn more about their past, or perhaps to initiate contact with relatives from the family of origin (intermediary work.) Activity is always high throughout the year, peaking at times when adoption reunions are featured in the media. In 2015-16 we provided a service to 182 individuals.

This is sensitive work which provides us with a reminder that adoption is a lifelong issue for many adoptees, even when their adoption experience has been a positive one.

The work in this area is managed mainly by a full time specialist worker and a part time colleague, with assistance from family support workers and the referral and information officer.

Adult adoptees can access the following services:

- Birth records counselling
- Support and advice in relation to their adoption records.
- Intermediary services for adoptees who have received support and counselling from our service
- Access to independent counselling
- Access to a monthly support group.

Case study

Andrew, a professional man in his 50s grew up knowing that he'd been adopted as a baby. He believed his birth parents died in a car accident so never previously requested access to birth and adoption records. Encouraged by his younger adopted sister, he applied to the General Registrar's Office for a copy of his original birth certificate and was referred for statutory birth records counselling (required for anyone adopted prior to 1976.)

We discovered that a voluntary adoption agency had arranged the adoption, and records were accessed. Andrew learnt not only that his birth parents were alive when he was placed for adoption, but also that his birth mother had kept in touch with the adoption agency for many years.

Assisted by a professional researcher his birth mother was traced to America. Andrew requested and received an intermediary service from Surrey Adoption Service to open up contact, with the outcome that Andrew and his birth mother went on to meet and establish a meaningful relationship. Further research sadly revealed that Andrew's birth father died some years ago, but further work with respect of 4 half sisters again resulted in a happy, accepting outcome.

Birth Relatives

We have a duty to provide a service to relatives who are or have previously lost children to adoption, with many referrals coming during the course of care proceedings in relation to parents who are in need of support, but would not chose to seek this via their child's worker.

In addition, we support relatives who come forwards seeking support, often many years following adoption of their children. This might be through direct provision or signposting to counsellors, or offering more practical assistance - such as helping them to write a letter to the family adopted the child and enabling contact through this means.

This work is mainly undertaken by a further specialist social worker, with support from family support worker colleagues. In 2015-16 we received 47 new requests for birth relative support relatives.

Case example

Student Elspeth relinquished her daughter Grace at birth. Grace was placed with Surrey adopters shortly afterwards. As is the norm, a voluntary agreement was made between Elspeth and the adopters to keep in touch via the adoption service, through an annual exchange of letters. This enables birth relatives to receive news of the child they are no longer able to see and conveys a powerful message to the adopted child that although their birth parent was not able to parent, that they not forgotten.

After the initial exchange, the arrangement broke down owing to the reticence of the adopters to provide updates. This was devastating to Elspeth. Over a period of many months, the birth relative worker supported Elspeth and mediated with the adopters, with the outcome that recently the adopters provided a very full letter for Elspeth with news of Grace and her progress.

Non agency adoption

We provide a service to applicants wishing to adopt a named child, who was not placed for adoption by an adoption agency. Most of these cases involve a step parent who wishes to assume legal responsibility for their partner's child. This is a significant legal step which severs the child's legal relationship with the other birth parent in most instances.

Accordingly the court requires a comprehensive welfare report and balanced analysis of the case for and against adoption in order to reach a decision that takes account of all available options and acts in the child's best interests.

In other cases the service may involve reporting to court on the merit of adoption for a child who has been adopted overseas, whose jurisdiction is not recognised in the UK.

This work is complex and challenging, and requires consideration of the impact of adoption for all the parties and most importantly the child. Where the child's age and level of understanding is such that they can be consulted and their views represented this is an important element of the work.

Service user involvement:

We continue to have an effective and vocal service users group, who meet with us quarterly and take an increasingly active part in service delivery-participating in the production of a newsletter, information, training and social events. We were very pleased to continue to support an adopter lead initiative 'meet the adopter' sessions during stage one of the application process, enabling first hand experiences of adoption to be shared with new applicants. This has gone from strength to strength and is much appreciated by applicants.

As a result of consultation with our families and in particular the young people themselves, we have developed 2 very successful adopted children's groups XXplorers for 8-12 year olds, and #amazing for 12-14s. The groups meet in school holidays and undertake activities supported by staff with funding secured from the Adoption Support Fund. The groups are much valued by the young people and their families and provide a supportive space for the young people to have fun alongside others who have adoption as part of their personal identity.

We are also developing a further group for 14-19 year olds adopted young people, offered in conjunction with the youth service.

Staffing:

At the close of 2015-16 the team is fully staffed as follows:

1 Team Manager (the responsible individual) and 1 Agency adviser

3.5 full time equivalent Assistant Team Managers

15 full time equivalent registered Social Workers,

1 post adoption support worker (who is trained in counselling but not a qualified social worker)

3 Assistant Social Workers

1 Referral and Information Officer

Many of our staff hold post qualifying awards and higher degrees. Specialist courses/training undertaken includes Child Protection, Management, Practice Teaching, Child Care Award, Diploma in Adoption and Attachment, Counselling, Play Therapy, and Theraplay.

Adoption Panel:

Panel currently operates on Tuesdays, offering half day sessions, with additional sessions added where volume of business requires this to avoid unnecessary delay.

Since April 2011 we have maintained a 'central list' of panel members in line with Adoption National Minimum Standards. Under adoption regulations the panel must be chaired by an independent, the current chair is David Goosey following appointment in 2014.

The non-voting agency adviser role is filled by Jill Nancolas, one of the managers within the adoption service. A medical adviser also sits as a full member. Legal advice is provided to the panel by the corporate legal team, but advisers do not routinely attend panel.

We have been fortunate to have committed participation throughout the reporting year from our elected member representative and we believe their participation creates a helpful link between the service and elected members.

Social workers from each of the 4 areas also sit as panel members as it is a requirement for there to be social worker representation at each panel, as well as independent members.

Independent members all have a personal interest in adoption, and include adoptees, and adopters. In selecting independent members we seek to achieve a diverse representation of people with different backgrounds and life experience. All our panel members display considerable commitment to Panels, not least given that each panel meeting they attend requires several hours of reading before the meeting.

The role of the Adoption Panels is as follows:

- To make recommendations with respect of children with adoption care plans where a parent (rather than the court) has authorised the agency to place for adoption.
- Recommendations with respect of approval of prospective adopters
- Scrutinising proposed matches between individual children and prospective adopters
- Consideration of disruption reports identifying learning (in the event of placement breakdown.)

Any general themes or trends in relation to quality assurance of work presented to panel are discussed with the Agency through the Quality Adoption Forum of which the independent chair is a standing member. This ensures that there is satisfactory communication between panel and agency.

It is panel policy to ensure praise is given when appropriate and to give any criticism as constructively as possible.

There is an expectation that there is a regular dialogue between the panel and agency with regards to day-to-day business, quality assurance and development. Consequently regular business meetings between the panel chair and the adoption team manager ensure that the panel process operates effectively. In addition, a Quality Adoption Forum is attended by senior managers in Children's Services, agency decision makers and panel's chair to look at issues from a more strategic perspective.

All applicants and social workers that attend panel have an opportunity to complete a questionnaire to feed back on their experience of the panel process which is shared with panel and informs the annual appraisals of panel members.

Service development:

From 2014 we developed a number of practice 'hubs' within the service whereby staff can take forwards a special interest in an area of service delivery and development, under the leadership of our assistant team managers.

- Stage 1: initial adopter recruitment and the first stage of the adoption application process.
- Training: providing preparation for becoming an adoptive parent, and post approval training.
- Family finding: identifying families for children at greatest risk of waiting for an adoptive placement
- Adults affected by adoption (adult adoptees and birth relatives)
- Post order support for adoptive families.

Feedback and learning:

The service endeavours to be a listening and learning service. We therefore seek feedback at key points in the service users journey with us, notably at information events, following adopter preparation and attendance at panel, and we have introduced a further feedback loop following the making of adoption orders to gather feedback from both the adults and where possible the child too.

As discussed previously, we have an active service users group which meets quarterly and this provides helpful insights into the user experience as well as suggestions and help with service development. We aim to ensure that different perspectives are represented within the group by inviting participation from those who have been adopted as well as those who are or have, adopted.

Complaints

The adoption service received 5 new complaints, on a range of matters. All resolved at stage 1 with the need for better communication being the underlying theme in 3 of the 5.

One complaint lodged in a previous year (by applicants who were unhappy about how a decision not to progress to stage 2 of the adoption application process was made) was finally concluded this year at stage 3, with a determination that the complaint was not upheld.

Although the complaint was not upheld, the service endeavours to reflect and consider if there is learning-in this instance we will review the way we communicated that we are not able to progress the application, recognising that this signals the end of the adoption journey and in all likelihood extinguishes hope of achieving a family.

Compliments:

We also are pleased to receive compliments with respect of individuals who have delivered exceptional service, as well as comments on the service generally.

Regionalisation

From November 2014 to April 2016 we were part of a large consortium of adoption agencies (Adoption South Central) which included 10 local authorities and 2 voluntary agencies, which sought to share best practice and develop working relationships across agencies.

The recent Children and Social Work Bill (2015) introduced an expectation that by 2020 adoption services will be provided by larger regional agencies, rather than the current 150 plus local authorities, and a smaller number of voluntary adoption agencies. Accordingly, there has been a regrouping within the sector with agencies entering into talks to establish new partnerships.

At the current time we are working closely with local authority adoption agencies: Brighton and Hove, and East and West Sussex under the banner Adoption South East (ASE)

ASE has established both an Executive Board and a Project Board, to examine ways of collaborating as a tentative first step to the creation of a regional adoption agency.

Conclusions:

The adoption service continues to provide a range of services, despite the loss of special guardianship work from January 2014. In practice an increase in post adoption support requests has more than filled the capacity vacated by special guardianship.

Placing children in a timely manner continues to be our highest priority, not least because research indicates that age at placement is one of the most significant factors in placement stability and that delay can be a risk factor for placement breakdown.

We are pleased to see so many of our children being placed very soon following courts granting authority for them to join a new family, and acknowledge the efforts of the team in ensuring that we have a healthy pool of adopters ready to receive children, as well providing proactive family finding for the minority of children who are not matched with a local family.

With the drive to see children placed and placed quickly, we endeavour to ensure that adopters are well prepared and have received good quality information about the children to prepare them for the task ahead. Ensuring this continues and that we can continue to develop appropriate support services making best use of internal providers, our new CAMHS service and a range of other providers will be key to our efforts moving forwards.

Suzanne Chambers
Team Manager

Mid year report of the Adoption Agency

Introduction. This update report covers the period from 1st April to 30th September 2016, and captures services developments and performance

What is going well?

Children placed

Children with adoption plans are placed in a timely way: the average number of days from receiving authority to place to matching was 208 days for this period, a very similar figure to 2015 and lower than the national average. 73% of children adopted within the period were placed within 18 months of first becoming looked after.

We place most of our children with families assessed and approved by Surrey-which is indicative that we are able to recruit and approve the right families for our children.

A further factor that underpins performance has been the increased use of foster2adopt placements where the child remains with the same carer. We provide additional training on this for our adopters with the outcome that in the first 6 months of 2016-17 4 new foster2adopt placements were made.

Adoptions completed:

26 children were adopted from care in the past 6 months, meaning that they are no longer designated 'looked after children', and the adoptive parents can exercise full parental responsibility. This is a positive outcome for both children and prospective adopters.

Projected figures for adoption orders over the whole year are currently in the region of 43 children, slightly fewer than last year reflecting fewer new adoption plans.

Increased range of Adoption support

We stay in touch with significant numbers of adoptive families through newsletters, a secure website, and events. This helps us to promote support with regards to adoption issues.

There has been sustained and rising demand for assessment of adoption support needs meaning that 45 assessments were provided within the first 6 months of the year and support agreed (or continued to existing cases) for to 281 young people and their families.

Support offered includes help with regards to contact with birth relatives, support and with regards to the additional challenges of adoptive parenting, life story work and therapeutic support for the child.

We have continued to build upon adoption support providers and to agree packages of support using funding from the Adoption support Fund. As well as individual packages of therapeutic work, we have commissioned 4 specialist parenting courses for adoptive families.

We also offer a fortnightly Parent and Toddler group for adoptive families and 3 children's and Youth groups for adopted young people, enabling them to meet others who were adopted.

Adoption South East Regional Partnership:

In response to the government directive to regionalise adoption provision, we have created a partnership with East and West Sussex County Councils and Brighton and Hove City Council. The new partnership (Adoption South East) will develop a shared recruitment strategy, and share information and training sessions to make better use of resources.

What are we worried about?

Fewer children were referred to us for adoption than in previous years

11 new cases in the past 6 months, compared with 31 in 2015-6. We have therefore looked at reasons for this. We know that locally our sharpest rise in looked after children involves older children and young people, whose needs would not be likely to be met through adoption.

However, taking account of this we are also aware that Surrey has had a lower rate of adoptions than its statistical neighbours for children under 7, which is the cohort from which most adoptions arise. This seems to be because of a local tendency to place children with relatives or connected persons, rather than with adoptive families. We are currently looking at our permanency planning processes to ensure that we do consider adoption where it is an appropriate option within care proceedings.

Delay in decision making.

Delay can occur at various points in the child's journey, including before, during and after care proceedings, and although we perform well in national performance data for timeliness we are aware that delays in deciding to initiate care proceedings can impact on the age at which a child who is subject of an adoption plan can be placed in a permanent home.

The number of children who wait for a family following the court process is relatively low, individual cases can impact on performance figures (which deal in average timescales.) For example, children who need to be placed in sibling groups of 3 or more or who have significant health issues are often only placed following a nationwide search and in a small number of cases each year the search may be unsuccessful resulting in a change of plan. It is important that there is a clear narrative in each case where timescales are longer to facilitate understanding of efforts made to secure a family.

Adoption breakdowns.

One recent adoptive placement failed very shortly after the child joined her new family in an out of area placement. The adopters who were identified following a nationwide search for a family requested the child's removal within days, seemingly in response to a realisation on their part that they had made an error in seeking to adopt this child.

Although rare, adoption breakdowns are always a cause for reflection as we try to identify learning and plan once more for the child's future.

Older children who return to care following adoption.

Although most adoptions have a very positive outcome, a small number of adolescents with complex needs are accommodated annually following the breakdown of relationships with their adoptive families. Typically this happens in adolescence.

Many (but not all) of these young people were not known previously to us, having moved into the area following adoption. Engaging with these families sooner and creating effective networks of support for them across agencies remains a priority.

What needs to happen?

Permanence planning /permanence policy

A permanency policy is currently being developed to take account of all routes to permanency including adoption, and the processes which underpin this. A more consistent approach to care planning and thinking about outcomes such as adoption to be promoted.

Role of the Quarterly Adoption Forum

Strategically, The Quarterly Adoption Forum will continue to monitor numbers of children with adoption plans and the timeliness with which adoption is achieved (or plans changed) and benchmark this against performance of statistical neighbours.

The Forum can and does commission investigation of issues such as decision making in care cases, and disseminate learning. Currently there is ongoing investigation as to the relative use of SGO and adoption.

Preventing Adoption breakdowns.

A post order commissioning group has been established to bring together leaders from across the services to clarify support pathways, identify gaps in provision and cement partnerships.

Specifically within the adoption service, additional effort is being made to encourage adoptive families to 'stay in contact' with the aim that families refer themselves early for targeted support, mindful that early intervention is likely to be the most successful.

For children placed within our borders by other local authorities we are aiming to develop a relationship with those families through improved notifications processes and providing n access to our mailing list and secure website for adopters.

We are also planning a 'checking in' process with families following adoption to remind them of their entitlement to seek an assessment of need throughout the young person's childhood.

Suzanne Chambers
Adoption Service Manager

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Surrey Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose

2016-17

INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Purpose reflects the role of the Surrey Adoption Service, in compliance with the Adoption and Children's Act 2002, Adoption Agency regulations (2003, 2011) Adoption Support Regulations 2005, and National Minimum Adoption Standards.

Adoption regulations require adoption agencies to provide a clear statement of the aims and objectives of our Adoption Agency and the strategy for meeting those aims and objectives on an annual basis.

The Statement provides details of:

- The quality standards and principles which underpin the service
- An overview of services provided by the Agency, including support services
- Activity
- Management structure, numbers, qualifications and experience of the staff
- Quality assurance and external monitoring mechanisms
- Complaints
- Quality Assurance
- Arrangements for revision and circulation

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Surrey's Adoption Service aims to secure adoption in a timely manner for children unable to live within their family of origin. We also provide support to all those affected by adoption, in recognition that adoption confers life long challenges, for adoptees, adoptive and birth families.

OUR QUALITY STANDARDS

- 'The Child is the central focus of our work'. To this end the wishes, feelings and views of the child are explicit, recorded and respected in all the work we undertake.
- We work with children, young people, parents and carers to consistently promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion whilst respecting their culture and background.
- Children are safeguarded whilst allowing for risk and challenge as appropriate to the capabilities of the child. Particular attention is paid to safeguarding children with a disability

- Corporate parenting responsibilities are fulfilled to ensure safety, security and stability of care where possible within their family network and community. Particular attention will be given to good quality care planning and achieving permanency for a child
- We promote effective partnership working, within the community network and with partner agencies to achieve optimum outcomes for children
- Children's Service staff are supported, trained, managed and supervised to provide the best possible outcome to children and young people within the legislative framework and available resources
- The Children's Service is led and managed by managers who strive for quality and excellence, demonstrate integrity, a detailed understanding of processes and resources and provide a clear direction to constantly improve service delivery

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

- Adoption is one of a range of permanency arrangements.
- In matching children with prospective families, the child's welfare is paramount.
- Practice with regards to issues such as matching and contact is informed by the best available evidence.
- We promote early permanence, whether this is with a Surrey family or a family approved by another agency.
- Support is available throughout the child's growing years and beyond.
- The recruitment needs of the Agency are continually reviewed to ensure that we recruit the right adopters for our children.
- Enquiries are welcomed from a diverse range of families, reflecting the varied and individual needs of our children.
- Enquirers receive a professional, timely and respectful response
- Matching is undertaken in a holistic manner, considering the ability of the prospective adopters to promote the child's needs throughout their childhood.
- Surrey adopters represent a valued resource for our own children and children from other placing authorities

SERVICE OVERVIEW

Services provided are :

- A family finding for children in need of adoption.
- A range of post order services -for families who have adopted.
- An adoption service-for adults wishing to adopt a child from care
- A non agency adoption service –for adults wishing to adopt a named child, not in the care system
- A Counselling and support services - for adopted adults
- Support services for birth relatives- of adopted children

Family Finding:

Children in need of adoption are referred to the adoption service. This could result from a request from the birth parent(s) for the child to be adopted, or more typically because the Family Court has given agreement to place the child for adoption.

Timeliness

Our aim is to secure a placement for a child as quickly as possible, given research indicating that timeliness in achieving permanency is linked to positive outcomes for adopted children. Timeliness is actively monitored both in terms of the average time taken for a looked after child to be placed in an adoptive family, and on a case by case basis.

Holistic matching

We know that children from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds often wait longer to be placed in a family, so we adhere to current adoption guidance, enabling children to be placed within a family that can support their cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious needs, without the requirement that the family must match the child in every respect.

Siblings

Children are placed with their siblings unless there are clear indications that this would not be in their best interests, mindful that for most children this is a life long relationship which confers considerable benefit.

Whilst finding a family for a larger sibling group is challenging, family size and limited placement options should in themselves not be a reason to move quickly to a plan of separation. Where there is a belief that placement together is in the children's best interests it is important to make every effort to find a family

For some however siblings early neglect, and abuse can result in developmental trauma and have long term implications for their care. This means that careful consideration is needed looking at both the risks and benefits of placing such children together.

Where it is considered to be in the best interests of children to grow up in separate households from their siblings, contact between siblings placed separately is actively promoted.

Interagency placements

Given the need to ensure that children do not wait longer than absolutely necessary, we will look beyond Surrey where necessary-making use of placements provided by other local authority adoption teams and voluntary adoption agencies. In the event that a match is secured with adopters from a different agency by any of these methods, a fee is paid to the agency.

Family finding process

To assist searching, the child is assigned to a specialist worker from the adoption service to work alongside the child's own social worker to identify a family. The family finder meets the child and their carer and together they create a profile of the child and their placement needs. Where the child is of an age to express the wishes and feelings these are incorporated into the work.

The child's profile is also circulated to other agencies and made available at events such as regional adoption exchanges-designed to bring the children to the attention of potential adopters. In recent years children and potential adopters have also attended adoption activity days with their foster carers with the aim of encouraging 'adopter lead matching' .

Use of a national adoption register and a second commercial register (Link maker) also provide opportunities for children to be matched with adopters beyond their own local authority.

Foster carers who wish to adopt a child in their care

Where foster carers express interest in adopting a child in their care this is carefully considered as we know that research indicates that these placements based on an existing relationship often are amongst the most successful.

Post Order Support Services :

We are of the view that adoption is a life long issue. This is reflected in Adoption Support Regulations, which considers the needs of various groups of people whose lives have been affected by adoption (See appendix 2.)

Adoptive families

Following the making of an adoption order there may or may not be need for an ongoing social work service, this is always discussed and agreed with the adoptive family as part of their a support plan which is reviewed regularly pending the finalisation of the adoption order.

Many families choose to remain in contact informally with the agency following adoption through attending regular training or family events, and adopted children may attend one of a number of groups we run.

We also provide a monthly drop-in for our adopters, with the facility to book a one to one slot for confidential advice. This type of support is available to anyone caring for a child adopted from care and living in Surrey and does not require an assessment of need.

Many adopted children and their families receive targeted help following an assessment, examples include help to manage direct or indirect contact on behalf of their child with members of the child's birth family, or financial support on a one off or regular basis where this has been agreed as needed to enable them to meet the exceptional needs of the child.

Other targeted support could include support for a young person with regards accessing and managing their adoption story, or help and support to manage relationships at home or in school.

We welcomed the provision contained within The Children and Adoption Act 2014 requiring local authorities to ensure that adoptive families were aware of their entitlement to request an assessment of support needs following adoption, and we currently publicise this through our public facing website, regular newsletters sent out to over 600 adoptive families on our mailing list and also the secure adoption website-to which access is given for approved adopters and those undergoing assessment.

An Adoption Support Services Adviser (ASSA), currently Debra Hale who is assisted by our Referral and Information Officer, acts as a point of contact for those affected by adoption, and seeking advice about support services. The ASSA accordingly provides information, advice and signposting to relevant support services including partner agencies such as health, education and voluntary sector services.

Eligibility for support where another agency acted as the placing agency:

Adopters caring for children placed by other agencies or who move into Surrey remain the responsibility of those agencies for the first 3 years following the adoption Order.

A placing agency may however seek advice from the ASSA as regards accessing local support services on the child's behalf. Following three years from the date the order was made, responsibility for assessing support needs passes to Surrey if the family continues to live here.

Adoption Support Fund

From May 2015 a government funded Adoption Support Fund has been created to enable local authorities to seek funding for therapeutic services where a child is assessed as in need. This has enabled the service to increase access to support following the making of an adoption order.

Any child adopted from care may be eligible for ASF funding following completion of an assessment of need by their local post adoption service.

Support provided to Adopted adults:

- Birth records counselling.

- Support and advice to adoptees in relation to adoption records held in the Surrey archive, or with regard to accessing alternative registered intermediary services
- Access to independent counsellors
- Access to a monthly support group
- Signposting for Intermediary services for adopted adults

Birth relatives affected by adoption can access:

- A specialist Birth Relative Parents worker,
- Counselling via a service level agreement with an independent adoption support agency
- Assistance with maintaining contact through facilitated meetings or through the Surrey post box with their child's adoptive family, including assistance with letter writing if this is needed.

ADOPTION ACTIVITY 2015-16

Children

37 looked after children from Surrey were matched with adopters and placed in new families, and 51 adoption orders made in this period. (There is always a delay between a child being placed in an adoptive family and formally adopted because of the need for a settling in period, hence some of the adoption orders reflect placements made the previous year when more placements were made.)

27 of the above children were placed with adopters approved by Surrey and 10 with adopters approved by another adoption agency. (A further 16 children from other local authorities were placed with adopters approved by Surrey, meaning that a total of 43 children were placed with our adopters.)

4 children with disabilities, special educational needs or significant developmental delay were placed with new families considered as in need of adoption, and 2 were matched with a family within the period

2 BME (Black or minority Ethnic) children were matched and placed.

17 children were placed with siblings, and 20 as a single child.

2 child (siblings) experienced placement disruption

6 child were adopted by adopters who agreed to care initially under fostering regulations enabling the children to join what might become a permanent families earlier than normal.

Agency Adoption Service for adults wishing to adopt a child from care

The Service aims to recruit a flexible and diverse pool of adopters to meet the needs of looked after children with adoption care plans. We review our recruitment needs every 3 months, mindful that these can change

In communicating with the general public we are transparent about the needs of our children whilst encouraging enquirers to think about how adoption could enrich both their own and a child's life.

We endeavour therefore to ensure that our recruitment needs are clearly expressed in our public facing website, however generally speaking our greatest needs are for applicants willing to consider children holistically, and open to managing the complexities that adoption brings.

Typically adoption agencies such as ours are likely to prioritise applicants who would be able to address the needs of the following:

- Children over 4
- Siblings with a least one child of school age

- Children with health issues, developmental delay or uncertainty
- Children with complex emotional needs
- Children from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds

Initial enquiries

Up to 30 new enquiries are received a month via the our web page or telephone. All enquirers are responded to within 2 working days, and the enquirer offered an opportunity to attend a Learn2adopt session-held bi weekly at our offices involving a brief presentation, followed by an interview with a social worker.

The purpose of the sessions is to inform the enquirer about the needs and characteristics of adopted children. We hope that this will enable the enquirer to make informed decisions as regards the following:

- Is adoption for them?
- Is Surrey the right agency for them to seek to register interest?
- Is this the right time for them to register interest?

We also apply some general eligibility criteria

- Surrey residence: we will consider non Surrey residents in exceptional circumstances, particularly if they are wishing to consider a child from any of the priority groups highlighted on page 4.
- Applicants can be single, married, in a civil partnership or be an unmarried couple (same or opposite sex)
- There is no upper age limit, but applicant(s) must be aged 21 or over,
- They should be domiciled or habitually resident in the UK
- Have no declared specified offences against children or convictions which might indicate unsuitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. (Formal checks are made later if the Agency accepts an application.)
- The applicants should not still be undergoing fertility treatment or investigations of fertility. (We generally consider that a minimum of 6 months should have elapsed since the last treatment.)
- We consider applicants who have children living as part of their household on a case-by-case basis.
- The applicant(s) need to be able to commit to having a parent at home full time for a minimum of 6 months following placement of a child for adoption.
- Is their health and fitness level such that they could meet the physical and emotional needs of a child placed for adoption now and through their growing years (this would need to be further evidenced following formal application by a medical assessment)
- We follow current evidence based guidance from BAAF on the detrimental effects of passive smoking for children under 5 and children with respiratory problems and refer any enquirers wishing to be considered for these children to their general practitioner with a view to working to the goal of cessation for a minimum period of 12 months before they seek to register interest.
- We are currently considering the emerging evidence base as regards the impact of e cigarettes.

- Enquiries are welcomed from single applicants and those applying as a couple (irrespective of whether the relationship is one that is legally recognised or whether it involves a same sex or different sex partnership).
- The applicant(s) should be settled in their accommodation, with suitable and sufficient accommodation for a child to be placed
- They must show willingness to engage with the process and to facilitate statutory and agency checks.
- Already have good levels of childcare experience or be able and willing to extend this.

Following the Learn2adopt session enquirers receive a brief report from the meeting, for comment and amendment. They can then request to register interest in pursuing an application with us.

We are not obliged to accept a registration of interest, but if declining to take things further we will provide reasons, and this may result in further dialogue and possibly review of our decision.

Typical reasons for declining a registration might be that we do not have need of adopters for the age range or characteristics that the enquirer is most interested in and we have decided to give priority to those open to adopting children likely to wait for a family. This can vary over time but typically our priority groups are as set out above.

If we think that enquirers are unlikely to be a resource for the children currently most in need of adoption in Surrey we may suggest an approach to other adoption agencies whose needs may be different. (Since 2013 a national adoption gateway named First4adoption has existed to provide advice and sign post potential applicants to agencies accepting expressions of interest.)

In other instances we may decline to register interest where there are ongoing life events or commitments that mean we do not think this is the right time for the applicant to start the adoption journey.

Assessment

Those accepted progress to a 2 stage process. The initial stage lasting 2 months is adopter lead, and consists of the adopter furthering their knowledge about adoption, providing further information about themselves-through a series of self assessment tasks and undergoing background checks including a DBS check.

Whilst in the main a case by case approach is taken with regards to any offences, our eligibility criteria does preclude offences involving children and we have an expectation that applicants are open and forthcoming with us as regards this, and indeed all other aspects of their application.

A medical is also undertaken by the applicants' own GP and reviewed by our medical adviser.

On completion of stage one the agency reviews all the information held and determines whether or not to progress the applicant to stage 2-which is adopter lead and results in presentation of a completed assessment to the adoption panel.

Stage 2 should be completed within 4 months, and includes attendance at preparation groups.

We agree a plan at the outset of both stages, to enable applicants to know what is expected and how we will work with them.

Bringing adoption to life

Applicants attend a 4 day training course at our Woking offices delivered by members of the adoption service. The learning style is informal, involving a high degree of applicant participation, and days are themed as follows;

- The adopter journey
- The child's Journey
- The joining of the ways

- The lifelong challenges of adoption

The facilitators provide feedback on the applicant's participation which is used to inform assessment, and applicants also complete their own reflections on the experience and what they feel they have learnt.

As part of any assessment process visits are arranged to foster carers and experienced adopters in their homes to hear real life stories. We also facilitate a monthly 'meet the adopters' session for applicants.

Applicants are also invited to visit our fortnightly adoptive Parent and Toddler group, providing additional opportunity to meet adoptive families and hear about the role that peer support between families plays in adoption.

Applicants and the assessing social worker work together during stage 2, with some meetings taking place in the applicants home, others in the office. Adoption stories are used throughout to enable the applicants to consider the needs of children we place for adoption and to think about what life after adoption might entail.

The result is a comprehensive prospective adopter's report. The report is seen and commented upon by the applicants, and any amendments agreed. In practice, applicants contribute significantly to their reports.

The assessment is overseen by a manager and a manager's oversight report is also provided to the panel. Where there is need of a second opinion to lend weight to the social worker's recommendation or to provide an independent view on any issue this is arranged in order to assist the panel..

In the few cases where the agency is unable to support an application it has the option to present either a full or a brief report to the panel, detailing its enquiries and the reasons for its concerns. The applicants are always invited to attend panel and present their own views.

Adoption panel

Surrey has an adoption panel which draws on a central list of members, as required under National Minimum Standards. Panels must be quorate when they meet with a minimum of 5 members present including the Chair. Panels make recommendations as follows:

- Whether to approve applicants as prospective adopters
- To review approval where there has been a significant change of circumstances
- To consider whether a child should be placed for adoption in the event that there is a request from the child's birth parent(s) for the child to be adopted
- To consider proposed matches
- To hear cases of placement disruption and consider learning
- To hold regular reviews of agency activity, including updates on cases presented previously.

In accordance with National Minimum Standards and Statutory Adoption Guidance we have appointed an Independent Chair and Vice Chair. We also appoint a non voting Panel Adviser to provide advice and support to the Chair and Panel.

Additional voting members include:

- Medical Advisor
- County Councillor
- Independent Members
- Children's Services Representatives

The independent members include a number of adoptive parents, with lived experience of the adoption process and members who were themselves adopted as children.

All panel members undergo an application process including the taking up of references and DBS checks. In accordance with National Minimum Standards they are required to have annual appraisals and the agency must maintain files for each panel member which can be made available for inspection by Ofsted. Annual training is provided.

Legal and medical advice is made available to the panel, and the panel can make use of additional advice as required from additional disciplines such as education. The panel are assisted by a part time administrator who provides detailed minutes from each panel meeting.

The panel meets most weeks in order to ensure that there is no delay in cases being heard.

Applicants are given the choice whether to attend panel. In recent years it has been the case that all applicants have elected to attend and this has been considered very helpful by panels, enabling them to gain a fuller sense of the applicants and what they have to offer our children.

The panel has three options available: to recommend that the agency accepts the application, that it rejects the application or to defer the case for additional information. In all instances the practice of panel is to provide the applicants with verbal confirmation of the recommendations following its deliberations on the day, with the proviso that formal ratification of the recommendation is required.

The Agency Decision Maker

The agency decision maker, a senior member of Surrey Children's Services, then decides whether to ratify the panel's recommendation, taking account of all the available information including the minutes of the adoption panel meeting before taking a final decision. The decision is then confirmed in writing within 7 working days.

In the event that the Agency does not approve an application or decides not to complete a partially assessed case the applicants have the choice of seeking a further determination, by a review panel (see IRM) or Surrey's own adoption panel.

IRM

The Independent Review Mechanism was launched on 30th April 2004. It is being operated by BAAF on behalf of the Department of Education. The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) is a review process, conducted by a Panel, which prospective adopters can use when they have been told that their adoption Agency does not propose to approve them as suitable to adopt a child. No cases were referred to the IRM last year.

Review of approval

All approved adopters who have not had a child placed with them within 12 months of their date of approval are required to have an annual review of their approval.

This is completed internally within the adoption service, unless there has been a significant change of circumstance or the approval is of 3 years duration in which case a fuller review is required and must be presented to panel.

Following approval

The adoption worker remains in contact with the family following approval, and a matching plan is agreed to look at the help and support that is available to assist with the matching process.

If there has been no match with a Surrey child within 3 months of approval, or if the background and heritage of the family is such that we agree a match is more likely to result from placing a child from another part of the UK, the family are entered on the National Adoption Register, with their consent.

Many families also chose to register with a second register (Link maker) in order to maximise their chances of a match.

We provide 'approved and waiting' sessions alternate months for those who have not yet been matched.

Post approval training

There is a regular training programme provided, and adopters are expected to continue in their learning and development pending matching and following placement of children, in recognition of the additional challenges that adoptive parenting brings.

As such, we try to ensure that adoption remains a 'live' issue following the end of the application process. Sessions typically run most monthly and are held in the evenings as part of a rolling programme.

The subjects are selected to build on the earlier 4 day training, with sessions such as: Introductions, Attachment, Information for friends and family of adopters, Matching, Social networks and adoption, Use of the post box, Contact and Life story books.

Matching with a child

We are notified of any child in Surrey where there is consent given for adoption (this might be provided by the birth parents or more typically the court following care proceedings.) The Agency Adviser maintains a list of all families currently approved by the agency to adopt and meets with the child's social worker to identify a family best able to meet the child's needs.

As such, there is no waiting list whereby adopters are matched on the basis of time spent waiting and in practice waiting times vary considerably, influenced by the numbers and needs of children available for adoption and the range of acceptance of the waiting adopters.

The adoption worker discusses any potential match with the family, thus starting a process of information sharing, designed to help all involved to think about the merits and possible risks of the proposed match. As part of this information sharing, the prospective adopters meet the current carer, our medical adviser and any other professionals involved with the child. We also organise an opportunity to see the child-typically at a distance to check that they wish to commit to the next stage.

Only when both the family and the professional network are satisfied about the match and a support plan has been agreed, is the match then formally considered by the agency-which seeks a recommendation from the adoption panel and ratification by the agency decision maker.

Matching with a child from another local authority

Adopters are not restricted to adopting from their home authority, and with fewer children available for adoption over the past 2 years, so called 'adopter lead matches' have become increasingly common given that adopters can not be guaranteed a local match.

Accordingly, adopters can express interest in children from other local authorities that they become aware of through attendance at adoption events and registers such as the National Adoption Register and Link maker. As with local matches, the priority when managing inter agency enquires will be to ensure that the adopter under consideration is able to meet the child's needs throughout childhood

Moving into the new family

The child's social worker and foster carer carefully prepare the child to move onto their new family, using story books and a welcome book which has been made by the adoptive family.

A planning meeting agrees a plan for introductions of the child to its new family, typically over 10-14 days with a review midway to check that things are on course and that everyone remains committed to the plan.

Regular visits are required under adoption regulations following an adoption placement, weekly for the first 4 weeks of a placement, with a looked after child review held within the first 28 days of placement. Visits to the family are usually shared between the adoption worker and the child's own social worker during this period.

Working with the local authority

When placed in the new family the child is still formally a looked after child and as such prospective adopters share parental responsibility with the local authority and the birth parents. (Although the birth parent still holds parental responsibility, in practice they are only able to

exercise this to a very limited extent for example they must be consulted on a small number of issues such as the child spending a period of time overseas prior to adoption, and the making of an adoption order.)

In most areas the local authority delegates authority for day to day decision making to the prospective adopters under an agreement made prior to the child moving in. This enables the prospective adopters to act in the role of a parent pending the finalising of the adoption, typically some months later.

The child's progress within the placement is monitored by their social worker who continues to visit the child regularly. This continues until the adoption order has been made.

In some instances additional support may be provided, dependent on individual circumstances such as provision of financial support, visits from a family support worker, or therapeutic help.

Role of the Court

At such time that the family and the agency are of the shared view that the child no longer needs to remain a looked after child the family are encouraged to make an application for an adoption order. The timing of this is discussed at the child's looked after child reviews - which happens at prescribed intervals-within 28 days of placement, thereafter 3 months later and then 6 months after that.

The court cannot consider an application for an adoption order before the child has been in its new home for at least 10 weeks, and in practice the timing of each application varies. When the time is right however, applicants are assisted to submit their application, and briefed as regards the court process.

Birth parent's views as regards the adoption application are sought, and some exercise a right to seek leave to oppose the making of an adoption order, perhaps hoping that the child can be returned to their care. The court applies a 2 stage test to any such application-considering whether there has been a significant change of circumstances for the birth parent and also the welfare of the child.

Adoption applications

We approved 33 applications, including heterosexual couples, single adopters and same sex couples.

We are pleased to see an increasingly diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds reflected in our approvals, which is helpful given the needs of our children.

Non Agency Adoption:

Non agency adoption is a service to families applying to adopt a child who was not placed by an adoption agency. Applications are generally driven by the wish of somebody who already is caring for a child to formalise the relationship through adoption.

This service is mainly accessed by step parents, and relatives wishing to adopt a child of their family following placement under a private arrangement. However we also work with inter country adopters who have adopted a child overseas where the adoption is not recognised in the UK.

With children to be adopted from abroad there are additional visiting and reviewing requirements as specified under Adoptions with Foreign Elements Regulations.

All Non Agency Adoption applicants are required to give the local authority 3 months notice of their intention to make an application for an adoption order, and this provides a window for counselling and information gathering, ahead of the need to respond to a request for a report from the court.

Enquirers complete an initial questionnaire and are invited to attend an office appointment to discuss their plan to adopt, the process, and are appraised of alternative options (such as a parental responsibility order). As with agency adoption extensive checks are made, with other agencies and personal referees. Applicants undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks, and for most a medical examination is also required.

The service then provides a comprehensive report to the Court. This must include consideration of the welfare checklist as set out in primary legislation, ie the social worker is required to consider how the making of the order will impact for the child in the present and in future years. They must also consider whether there are alternative legal arrangements which could better meet the child's needs and the impact of the order for the applicant, the birth parents, and the wider family network.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

A number of mechanisms exist to monitor the work of the Agency, and to ensure that service delivery is consistently of a high quality and takes account of national and local performance standards.

- The Adoption Panel, including elected members provides feedback to the operational teams on the quality of work submitted
- A Quarterly Adoption Forum provides a strategic interface between the Agency and the Panel.
- Twice yearly Annual Adoption Agency Reports and updates are provided to elected members, copied to the Corporate Parenting Board and also to Ofsted.
- Performance data information (in relation to key performance indicators is collected) and reported within an internal monthly 'Report Card '
- We submit quarterly data to the Adoption Leadership Board-a body set up by the Department of Education to monitor performance and drive improvement in the field of adoption. We consequently receive an annual ' Scorecard' from the Department of Health based on this data.
- We provide an annual data set to Ofsted, who also inspect the Agency three yearly.

Feedback from service users

Feedback mechanisms for service users are built in to all key stages of the adoption process and have recently been revised to improve opportunities for young people to be give feedback on the service

In addition, there is an active focus group for service users which meets quarterly and provides feedback on service delivery and development.

Service users are routinely involved in information events and meet applicants during their assessments to bring the experience of adoption to life for applicants.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

(See appendix 1) The Service is managed within the Care Services part of Countywide Services, which forms one arm of Surrey Children's Services

Ian Forbes, Care Services Manager was appointed in 2015. Ian holds a BA (Hons) in social work awarded in 1991, and a Post Graduate Management Qualification. Ian currently manages all regulated care services in Surrey including: adoption, fostering and residential services.

Suzanne Chambers,Team Manager is the operational and policy lead for Adoption and registered manager following appointment in 2010. Suzanne holds a

B.A. (Hons) Psychology: awarded by the University of Durham in 1981 and a MSc Social Policy and social work studies and Certificate of Qualification in Social Work from London University (L.S.E.) awarded in 1987 as well as a Diploma in health and social care management level 5 (2013)

4 Full Time Equivalent Assistant Team Managers (5 posts given that some are part time) complete the management team, each holds functional leads as well as providing regular supervision to staff.

Casework and group work functions are provided by 15 full-time equivalent Social workers, assisted by 3 Assistant social workers and a Referral and Information officer. The team is also supported by a dedicated team of business support staff

In addition the following are commissioned by the adoption Service:

- Independent Chair of the Adoption Panel-David Goosey
- Adult psychotherapist -1 day per week provides consultation for adopters and carers
- 3 educational psychologists-all seconded to the team for half a day per week.

All social workers are appropriately qualified for their posts and registered with the Health and Care Professionals Council. A high percentage hold post qualifying awards such as the Child care Award, or higher degrees and many have additionally undertaken specialist courses/training including Practice Teaching, Diploma in Adoption and Attachment, Counselling, Play Therapy, and Theraplay.

Most of our staff have held positions across the range of Children's Services prior to joining the team and therefore are knowledgeable as regards the roles of colleagues in the following areas:

- Key working children in child care / child protection / Court cases
- Key working Looked After Children in residential settings
- Fostering and Adoption Work.
- Child and Adult Mental Health.

A satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS, previously known as CRB) check is required for all staff including business support workers employed within the service.

COMPLAINTS

The adoption service adheres to the Council's corporate complaints procedure. All service users as a matter of routine are given a copy of Surrey's complaints leaflet.

A children's guide appropriate for the age and needs of the children we work with is provided, either directly to the young person or their carer.

Complaints relating to children are handled under the provisions of the Children's Act S.26 (1989), further defined in the Representation Procedure (Children and Young Persons) Regulations (1991). With the introduction of the Children and Adoption Act 2002 and the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) 2003 came an extension of the previous provisions. In addition complaints can be made to:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

REVISION AND CIRCULATION

This statement has been produced by managers of the service in consultation with staff and users of the service, in compliance with National Adoption Standards and the relevant Adoption legislation. Members of the Social Services Executive will be asked to formally approve the Statement, (the revised Statement is presented to Members annually for their approval).

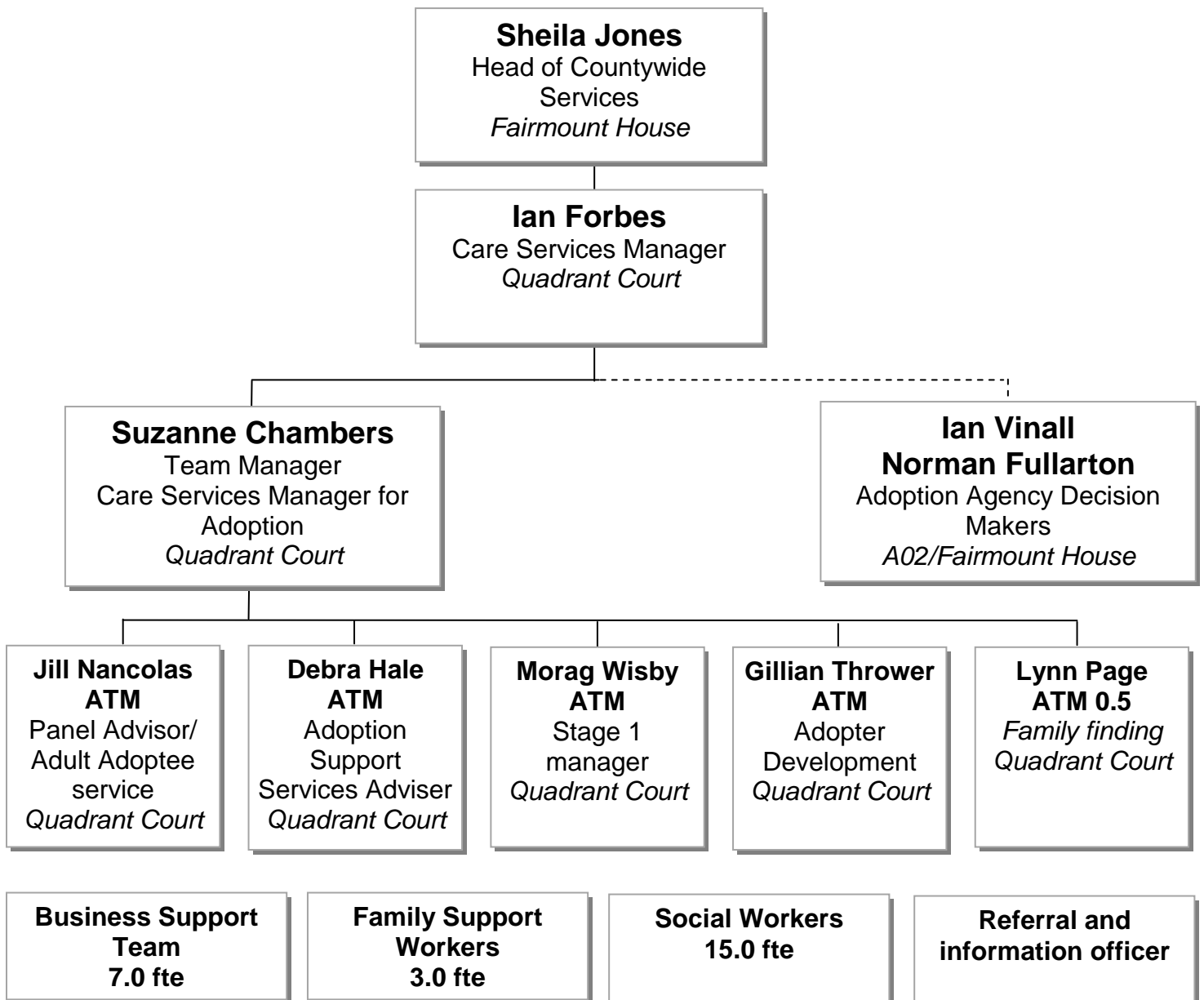
The Care Services Manager and Team Manager are responsible for ensuring that the Statement is updated or modified when necessary, but at least annually

The Statement is provided to OFSTED. Amended Statements will be provided to the Commission within twenty-eight days of approval by Members.

The Statement will be provided to:

- All staff including independent specialists engaged in the adoption process.
- All current and prospective adopters and permanency carers.
- A copy of the statement of purpose is posted on the Adoption pages of the Surrey County Council website

Management Structure



Adoption Assessment Services

Person being assessed	Services for which they are entitled to be assessed						
	Services to enable discussion of matters relating to adoption	Assistance in relation to arrangements for contact	Therapeutic services	Services to ensure the continuation of adoption relationship	Services to assist in cases of disruption	Counselling, advice and information	Financial support
Agency adoptive child	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
Adoptive parent of an agency adoptive child	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
Child of adoptive parents				◆	◆	◆	
Natural parents or guardians of an agency adoptive child	◆	◆				◆	
A relative (or someone with whom the Local Authority consider the child to have a beneficial relationship) of agency adoptive child		◆				◆	
Intercountry adoptive child			◆	◆	◆	◆	
Intercountry adoptive parent				◆	◆	◆	
Natural sibling of an adoptive child		◆				◆	
Non-agency adoptive children, their parents and guardians						◆	
Prospective adopters						◆	
Adopted adults, their parents, natural parents and former guardians						◆	
A relative (or someone with whom the Local Authority consider the child to have a beneficial relationship) of a non-agency adoptive child						◆	

SURREY FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2016/2017

INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Purpose has been produced to meet the obligations of Surrey Fostering Service under:

- Standard 16 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011
- Regulations 3 and 4 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011

It provides a clear statement of the aims and objectives of our Fostering Service and sets out our strategy for meeting those aims and objectives.

The Statement also provides details of:

- Our principles and standards of care
- The services we provide
- The support we provide
- Complaints against the Fostering Service
- The management structure of the Service
- The numbers, relevant qualifications and experience of our staff
- The numbers and types of foster carers provided by the Service
- The number of children using our service
- The procedures and processes for recruiting, approving, training, supervising and reviewing foster carers
- Links with other policies and procedures
- Arrangements for revision and circulation

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Surrey Children's Service has designated services for children in need and in care to promote their health and development.
- 2.2 For some children remaining at home is not always possible so an alternative placement is required to meet their needs.
- 2.3 The first option for children that cannot remain with their birth parents is within the child's extended family or friendship network and if that is not possible, with Local Authority foster carers.
- 2.4 The objective of our Fostering Service is to recruit, assess, train and supervise a sufficiently large and diverse pool of foster carers able to provide placements to meet the assessed needs of every child appropriately referred to us, ensuring that achieving permanency is the focus from the time that the child becomes looked after.

3 PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS OF CARE

- 3.1 Fostering is primarily a service for children, and no adult has a right to become a foster carer.
- 3.2 Applicants and approved foster carers have the right to respect in all our dealings with them and, providing it does not conflict with safeguarding the welfare of children, our full support at all times.
- 3.3 Children have the right to be protected from harm and abuse.
- 3.4 Local Authority foster carers are key stakeholders in the service. They are volunteers not employees.
- 3.5 When matching children with foster carers we will seek to ensure the following, unless any of these are inconsistent with promoting the welfare of the child:
 - Siblings are placed together
 - Contact with birth family and friends is facilitated
 - Children are placed as close to home as possible
 - Children are placed with foster carers that meet their racial, cultural, religious and linguistic needs
 - Whenever possible there will be a period of introduction before the placement commences
 - The views of the child are sought prior to and on a regular basis, during the placement

- The educational and health care needs, including any needs arising from a child's disability, are met by the foster placement.

4. SERVICES PROVIDED

- 4.1 Short-Term Foster Care: placements that assist in the assessment of the child's needs and prepare the child for moving on to permanency or return to home in line with their agreed care plan.
- 4.2 Permanent/Long Term Foster Care: placements, which will continue into adulthood.
- 4.3 Short Breaks Fostering
- Short-stay care for disabled children provided by a series of overnight or weekend breaks.
 - Fee Paid Carers Scheme: short break foster carers who give a commitment to provide a minimum of 200 nights a year for severely disabled children one at a time, as part of the short breaks fostering scheme.
- 4.4 Connected Persons (Family and Friends): carers who were known to the child/young person or their family prior to the placement starting. This includes Special Guardianship and Private Fostering arrangements
- 4.5 Enhanced Fostering – experienced foster carers who are able to take young people with complex and challenging behaviour.
- 4.6 Parent / Child Scheme: providing placements to enable parenting assessments to be completed in the community
- 4.7 Supported Lodgings: providing supported accommodation for 16-18 year olds and care leavers
- 4.8 EDT Carers: foster carers who are available to the Emergency Duty Team to take children for up to 5 days

5. SUPPORT PROVIDED TO FOSTER CARERS

Each foster carer will have access to:

- A supervising social worker
- Regular home visits and telephone support
- Support groups for newly approved and existing foster carers.
- Support group for Family and Friends carers
- Support Group for Special Guardians

- Fostering allowances and skills payment in line with Fostering Network's recommended rates.
- A support group and activities for foster carers' own children
- Activities for foster carers, birth children, foster children and social workers through the social pedagogy programme
- Comprehensive pre and post-approval Learning and Development programme
- Support to complete the DfE Standards for foster carers including support groups and where needed mentoring
- Out of hours support via EDT.
- Independent support services if an allegation is made against them.
- Activities / events for foster carers, their birth children and Looked After Children
- A scheme which enables loans to foster carers for adaptations or extensions to their property, to assist in the costs of moving house, or to purchase a vehicle (where criteria are met).
- An insurance scheme that covers damage or loss to the contents of the foster carer's home or car (arising as a result of damage caused by a looked after child)
- Regular updates on developments and useful information through the Fostering OK magazine and the Foster Carer website
- Specialist nurses based in the CCGs to assist with health care issues
- A secure web-site providing information and advice for foster carers
- A Resource Library for foster carers offering DVDs and books on loan
- Membership of FosterTalk, an independent organisation offering specialist information, discounts, advice, and help to foster carers, and on-line educational support for children

The following additional support services will be available as appropriate:

- Support from a fostering support worker to work on a one-to-one basis with the foster carers and/or foster children
- Support from a social pedagogue
- Access to a CAMHS Children in Care service

- Support for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children through a mentoring scheme
- DfE Standards mentoring –assisting in completion of Standards
- The Buddy Scheme for prospective and new foster carers
- The Head / Deputy Head Teacher of the Virtual School for Children in Care advocating for children to ensure that they have sufficient educational support and access to appropriate schools
- Assessment, Treatment and Consultation (ACT): a team which offers specialist consultation regarding children who sexually harm
- Computers and laptops for Looked After Children in their foster homes via the Home Access project
- Consultation with the Ethnic, Language Minority Achievement Team (ELMA) on educational attainment for children from an ethnic minority.
- Care Leaving Service supporting care leavers with issues around their independence.

6. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE FOSTERING SERVICE

Complaints are dealt with in line with Surrey County Council policy. All foster carers have access to information on how to make a complaint

7. STAFFING OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE

7.1 Please refer to the end of the Statement for the management structure.

7.2 Staffing in the Fostering Service:

- 1 Care Service Manager
- 2 FTE Care Services Team Managers
- 8.58 FTE Assistant Team Managers
- 45.2 FTE Qualified Social Workers in the fostering teams.
- 2.7 FTE Qualified Social Workers: Short Breaks Scheme
- 2.0 FTE Social Pedagogues
- 16.4 FTE unqualified social work staff

In addition the Fostering Service commissions the following resources on a part-time basis:

- Independent Chair of the Fostering Panel.

7.3 All social work staff hold a professional social work qualification (DipSW, CQSW or equivalent).

7.4 The experience of our social work staff includes:

- Children's social work in a range of different settings
- Fostering and Adoption Work.
- Child and Adult Mental Health
- Specialist Attachment Work
- MIM and Theraplay

- Story Stem Work

- Working with Disabled Children
- Counselling
- Social Pedagogy

8. FOSTER CARERS

In April 2015 the Fostering Service had 325 approved foster care households (excluding Short Break carers) caring for a total of 387 children. There were also 73 young people over the age of 18 years, continuing to live with their foster carers. At the end of March 2016 the Fostering Service had 357 approved foster care households (excluding Short Breaks carers) caring for a total of 403 children. There were also 108 young people over the age of 18 years, continuing to live with their foster carers under Staying Put arrangements

MATCHING

- 8.1 The fostering service matches the needs of children with the abilities of foster carers and make-up of foster families when making decisions about the best placement for each child.
- 8.2 The fostering service has a dedicated family finding function for children, which identifies permanent placements.

9. RECRUITMENT, APPROVAL, TRAINING AND REVIEW OF FOSTER CARES.

RECRUITMENT

- 9.1.1 The service aims to recruit a flexible and diverse pool of foster carers who are able to meet the needs of all children appropriately referred for a foster placement.
- 9.1.2 To help achieve this aim, the Recruitment Manager has been working with iMPower to recruit foster carers in a more targeted way to increase the pool of foster carers that can meet the needs of the children and young people referred to the service. The Recruitment Officer works closely with the county Communications

Team and takes a lead with fostering recruitment activity across the county.

- 9.1.3 General fostering applicants are assessed and a report using the BAAF Form F is written. A form, specific to Surrey, has been devised for assessment of Family & Friends carers and Special Guardianship Orders, and this continues to be well received by Surrey's courts.
- 9.1.4 The objective of the assessment process is to ensure that we recruit a competent, committed and safe pool of foster carers who are able to respond to the complex needs of children referred to the service.

APPROVAL

- 9.2.1 Completed assessment reports are presented to one of Surrey's Foster Panels, along with the prospective foster carers attending. The panel considers the application and then refers the applicants' assessment, with their recommendation to the Agency Decision-Maker.
- 9.2.2 The Agency Decision Maker makes the final decision on approval. The decision is confirmed to the foster carer in a letter. Any conditions attached to the decision will be given in writing.
- 9.2.3 Should the Agency Decision Maker be mindful not to approve, the applicant have twenty-eight days in which to make further representations or to apply to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) for review of this decision which is known as a Qualifying Determination.
- 9.2.4 Following the IRM the Agency Decision Maker takes into account the Review Panel's recommendation as well as that of the foster panel when making a decision on a foster carers' suitability to foster a child. There is no appeal against the decision of the Agency Decision Maker at this stage, although applicants may use the complaints procedure if they feel they have been treated unfairly during the process of decision-making.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

- 9.3.1 The fostering service places a high value on the training of foster carers and believes that training and skills development are an integral part of the fostering task from the point of application, lasting throughout the fostering career. The emphasis therefore is on on-going learning and development.
- 9.3.2 A comprehensive Learning and Development programme is on offer to build the core knowledge and skills of all foster carers.
- 9.3.3 All applicants are required to attend preparation groups through the Skills to Foster training course, in addition to a basic Safeguarding course and Recording training before they are approved as foster carers. A preparation session is also available for prospective carers' own children
- 9.3.4 Following ratification of their approval by the Agency Decision Maker, foster carers are given access to the foster carers' secure website, access to of the Fostering Handbook (on the website) and briefed on the Learning and

Development Programme and Support Groups, which they will be expected to attend.

- 9.3.5 For new foster carers there is an expectation they will complete core topics within the Learning and Development Programme, relevant to their role, within a specified timescale and in line with the National Minimum Standards
- 9.3.6 Newly approved general foster carers have 12 months in which to complete the DfE Standards. Family and Friends carers have 18 months to complete the Standards
- 9.3.7 Each foster carer has a Personal Development Plan, which is regularly reviewed outlining their specific learning and development needs, and they are encouraged to build up a training portfolio. This helps to determine the Skills Level for carers and an additional weekly payment is made linked with this
- 9.3.8 All new foster carers will be offered a group or mentor to support them in completing the DfE Standards. Existing foster carers may also receive support from a mentor as identified by the supervising social worker.
- 9.3.9 Each foster carer has a workbook to enable them to evidence their progress in meeting the DfE Standards, which starts with the Skills to Foster training
- 9.3.10 The Personal Development Plan and progress regarding the DfE Standards will be monitored and signed off by the supervising social worker during supervision visits
- 9.3.11 All training and development is linked to the Standards and is reviewed prior to and within the foster carers' first Annual Review, and annually thereafter.
- 9.3.12 The fostering service ensures that the required learning and development opportunities are accessible to all foster carers. This will be achieved through learning and development being delivered in a variety of formats at different venues and at different times of the days, including on-line training, books and DVDs.
- 9.3.13 Regular meetings between the Learning and Development team, the fostering service and representatives of foster carers take place in order to ensure that the Learning and Development programme is tailored to the needs of foster carers.
- 9.3.14 Access to a Diploma qualification is available for all experienced foster carers
- 9.3.15 Practical support will be made available to facilitate learning and development.

REVIEWS

- 9.4.1 The Fostering Service will review the approval of all foster carers not more than a year after approval and thereafter whenever the service considers necessary, but at intervals of no more than a year.

- 9.4.2 The Foster Panel considers the first Annual Review and makes a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker.
- 9.4.3 Supervising social workers will complete subsequent Household Reviews and a Care Services Team Manager will sign them off.

Foster panel will also consider reviews in the following circumstances:

- 9.4.4 Where there is a proposed change of the terms of foster carers' approval, which increases the age range or number of children they wish to be approved for
- 9.4.5 When a foster carer resigns
- 9.4.6 Where there is a proposal by the fostering service to terminate a foster carer's approval
- 9.4.7 Where the outcome of a safeguarding investigation involving the foster carer or a member of their household is substantiated or where there are significant concerns about the foster carers' standards of care
- 9.4.8 Any changes to the approval of the foster carer on the suitability to care for a child or changes in the terms of approval are considered a 'qualifying determination'. A foster carer may, if they disagree, make representation to the Foster Panel or apply to the IRM for a review of the decision within 28 days. The Agency Decision Maker will take into account the views of the members of Foster Panel and/or the IRM when making a final decision. There is no right of appeal but foster carers may access the complaint's procedure if they feel unfairly treated
- 9.4.9.1 In carrying out Household Reviews, the service will always seek to obtain the views of the following:
- The foster carers and members of their household, including their own children
 - Foster children who are living in the foster home
 - Social workers who have had children in placement during the preceding twelve months
- 9.4.10 All Household Reviews will consider the training and development needs of the foster carers. The foster carers' progress in meeting targets outlined within their Personal Development Plan, linked to the DfE Standards, is also reviewed at Reviews.
- 9.4.14 The support needs of the foster carers' own children will also be considered at Reviews.
- 9.4.15 Checks are updated in line with statutory guidance and the fostering service policy are updated as required.

10. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 10.1 At all times, the fostering service in Surrey will operate in a manner that is consistent with the aims and objectives of this Statement.
- 10.2 All policies, procedures and guidance provided to staff and foster carers will accurately reflect this Statement.
- 10.3 The fostering service will work with other parts of the Council and external agencies, including other fostering service providers to ensure that as far as practicable, the services are consistent with this Statement.

11. REVISION AND CIRCULATION

- 11.1.1 This Statement has been produced by managers of the fostering service in consultation with staff and foster carers.
- 11.1.2 The Care Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Statement is updated or modified when necessary, but at least annually.
- 11.1.3 The revised Statement will be presented to Members annually for their approval.
- 11.1.4 The Statement will be provided to:
- Ofsted
 - All staff
 - All relevant and prospective foster carers
 - All stakeholders to the Fostering Agency's business
- 11.2.1 A full copy will be provided on request to children or parents using the Service.

ORGANISATIONISATION CHART (Fostering)

Ian Forbes
CARE SERVICES MANAGER

ALISON BENJAMIN

West Fostering Team

Assistant Team Manager	2.0 fte
Social Worker	11.87 fte
Social Pedagogue	2.0 fte
Family Support Worker	4.0 fte

Family & Friends Team

Assistant Team Manager	2.0 fte
Social Worker	10.2 fte
Family Support Worker	3.8 fte

CEA FRANCIS

Fast Fostering Team

Assistant Team Manager	1.889 fte
Social Worker	14.61 fte
Family Support Worker	3.0 fte

Enhanced Fostering Scheme/Parent & Child

Assistant Team Manager	1.0 fte
Social Worker	4.4 fte
Family Support Worker	1.7 fte

Supported Lodgings/CWD Fostering & Short Breaks

Assistant Team Manager	1.7 fte
Social Worker	4.28fte
Family Support Worker	3.0 fte

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Social Care Services Board

16 March 2017

Surrey Children's Services Monthly Performance Compendium

Purpose of report:

To provide a summary of the performance information used to monitor work and progress in Children's Services, including work with partners.

Introduction:

1. The Performance Compendium was published for the meeting of the Improvement Board on 23 February 2017. It details the main areas of success that have been identified within Children's Services, while also noting key development areas and actions required to resolve these.

Overview of the Surrey Children's Services Performance Compendium

2. The compendium details statistics relating to performance in the service, including Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub performance, Contact, Referral and Assessment and Referral, Child Protection, Looked After Children and Child Sexual Exploitation risk statistics.
3. The Performance Compendium highlights several areas of focus within the service:
 - 3.1 What is working well within the service
 - 3.2 What is the service concerned about; and
 - 3.3 What needs to happen to improve the service offer.
4. It also provides a short summary of actions undertaken during January in response to the data gathered and areas of focus for the service.

Recommendations:

5. That the Board notes the Performance Compendium and provides comment as required.
6. That the Performance and Finance Sub Group of the Board continue to receive updates relating to performance of Children's Services for the foreseeable future.

Report contact: Sam Bushby, Assistant Director Children's Services

Contact details: sam.bushby@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers:

Annex A - Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium

ITEM 4 (Appendix C) – Improvement Board 23 February 2017

Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium

Performance to January 2017

Confidential

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Head of Insight & Innovation

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Document ID: COM-PKM-SM-HS-00010-0103

Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

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Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction and purpose of this report

This document provides a monthly summary of the performance information used to monitor our work and progress in Children's Services, including our work with partners.

The document highlights areas of improvement and concern, and should be used to review 'Key Focus' areas. The document also contains the quantitative information that will be used to prepare our comprehensive quarterly performance and progress report.

1.2 What's working well?

- The recently published letter regarding the January monitoring visit indicates that Ofsted have increasing confidence in our ability to understand our own performance and to take steps to address it
- Safer Surrey continues to embed, providing increasing clarity and consistency of approach
- LAC placement stability measures continue to show improvement
- MASH call handling statistics have improved substantially

1.3 What are we worried about?

- The rate of re-referral has increased and is now above our comparators
- Whilst average caseloads are mostly within our target range, there does appear to be quite high variability
- Whilst the timeliness of Child Protection Visits has improved, we still need to ensure that the improvement is consistently embedded and that we understand whether children have been seen alone where appropriate

1.4 What needs to happen?

- We need to investigate the causes of our high re-referral rate. An audit is currently being completed and the findings will be presented to the next Board in March
- We need to continue to implement the changes recommended as a result of our inquiry into Child Protection Visits. This includes making system changes to LCS, as well as improving practice and recording in each of the 4 locality areas. A designated lead has been identified in each area to drive this.

Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

- We need to make sure that all Social Workers have manageable caseloads. The Heads of Service are regularly and routinely reviewing all caseloads over 30 so that we understand the reasons for the peaks. A primary reason is social workers who have students placed with them, who have the students caseload in their name

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1.5 Summary of actions during January

In December we said that we would focus on:

Ensuring that we are completing CP Statutory Visits in a timely way by

- Completing our deep dive audit and putting in place a plan for improving performance on CP visits accompanied by clear recording guidance (by **February 2017**)

In January:

- We completed a thorough investigation into the reasons for the reduction in performance. This identified a system change that had resulted in a significant number of recorded visits remaining incomplete as well as recording errors which meant the visit were not captured in the performance report. There were also some delays in recording and on in some instances visits. A number of recommendations were made for practice and technical updates to support improvement and these are currently being implemented. The Practice Improvement Group are overseeing this.

In December we said that we would focus on:

Ensure that, where appropriate, children are seen alone on CP statutory visits by

- Completing an investigation of recording issues with "child seen alone" measures and will re-confirm and communicate practice expectations (by **February 2017**)

In January:

- This investigation has been completed and action is now being taken to enable more accurate reporting of this. There is a plan agreed, and actions assigned. This includes updating LCS to enable improved recording. These are the subject of a change request to be submitted by the end of February.

Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
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In December we said that we would focus on:

Ensuring that more ICPCs are completed in a timely way by

Reviewing and redesigning the ICPC booking process so that conferences are booked on time (by **February 2017**)

In January:

- The Head of Safeguarding has investigated the performance challenges around ICPCs. This identified an issue with late bookings for conferences by social workers. In order to address this practice has been changed so that ICPCs are booked at the point of the Strategy Discussion that makes the decision to progress to a Section 47 Enquiry. It will take several months before the impact of this is reflected in our timeliness statistics and we will therefore review the impact of this again in April.

In December we said that we would focus on:

Continue the improvement of our front door by

- Continuing to develop Early Help arrangements and processes so they are clear, consistent and joined-up (by **March 2017**)

In January:

- As a result of a high volume of cases transferred from the MASH, we are experiencing continued pressure on our Early Help Hubs, leading to a backlog of referrals. We are working on a plan to alleviate this backlog which will include additional personnel to fill current vacancies as well as more efficient processes.

Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
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1.6 Key to measure markers

Performance Markers

- - Performance is at or above target (or target trajectory)
- - Performance is below target but within tolerance/this is an area to note but without target
- - Performance is significantly below target

Direction of Travel markers

Arrow direction shows direction of change since last month. Colour indicates with this represents improvement (Green: Improvement, Amber: Neutral, Red: Decline)

e.g. ↓ - Reduction, representing an improvement in performance ('Smaller is better')

Information markers

- ★ - This measure is part of the Improvement Board Key Indicator set (see Appendix 1)
- ! - This measure is part of our current Key Focus Indicator set. Team managers receive detailed weekly performance information and data on this measure.
- ! - This measure is reported at child level as part of the 'Annex A' dataset for inspection.

Text coloured blue describes a time-limited action that we are taking to address a performance issue.

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Section 2 – Contact, Referral and Intervention

2.1 MASH – Completed contacts by source and method

- There was a slight increase of 96 contacts compared with January. This directly correlates to the increase in Education referrals which were lower in December due to school holidays.
- Police contacts remain consistent, accounting for around half of all contacts.

Contact Method	Family	Health	Legal	Other	Police	School / Education	Self	Voluntary Organisation	Grand Total
CASREV				12					12
CO			10	2	4				16
Email (In)	15	124	167	322	516	60	6	37	1247
Email (Out)	2								2
Home Visit						2			2
Letter (In)	3	28	5	5	6	2		2	51
MARF		288	7	96	29	175		6	601
Meeting				5		2			7
OTFO	3	39	68	22	5	8		14	159
POLNOT		2	18	6	1736	2			1764
Telephone Call (In)	61	112	8	249	57	303	47	10	847
Telephone Call (Out)				9	4	1			14
Grand Total	84	593	283	728	2357	555	53	69	4722

2.2 MASH – Completed contacts by source and outcome

- Contacts from Education consistently result in the highest ratio of cases progressing to Children's Social Care
- There was an increase of 54 referrals to Children's Social Care (6% increase)
- There was a decrease of 108 new cases referred to Early Help (14% decrease)
- There was an increase of 165 contacts that were already open to Early Help and the decision was to continue with the Early Help offer (48% increase)

Contact Outcome	Family	Health	Legal	Other	Police	School / Education	Self	Voluntary Organisation	Grand Total
Continue with Early Help Episode	13	69	14	57	300	46	1	6	506
Information and Advice	39	260	243	333	1307	210	35	13	2440
MASH Enquiry	2	3		25	12	3		8	53
Progress to Childrens Social Care	17	124	19	192	381	169	13	30	945
Progress to Early Help	13	137	7	121	357	127	4	12	778
Grand Total	84	593	283	728	2357	555	53	69	4722

Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

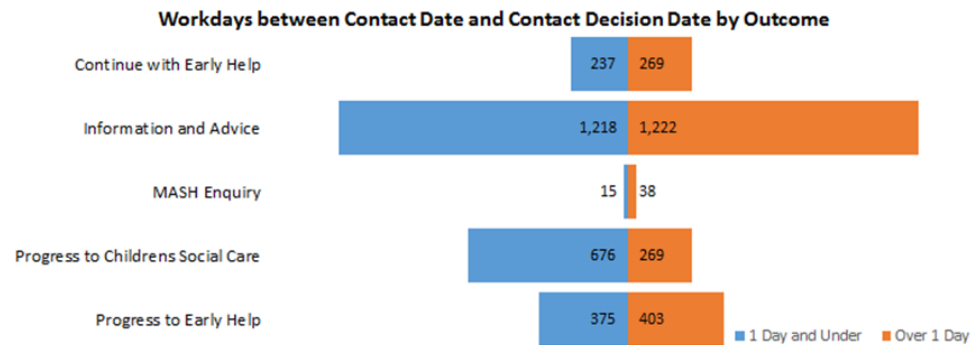
2.3 MASH – Management oversight of contacts

- 612 management decisions differed from the Social Worker’s recommendation. This is an increase from the 478 in December from 10% to 16%. This continues to illustrate management oversight. *NB cases recorded as ‘Blank’ do not have a recommended outcome recorded – only an actual contact outcome recorded by a Manager.*



2.4 MASH – Completed contacts by source and method

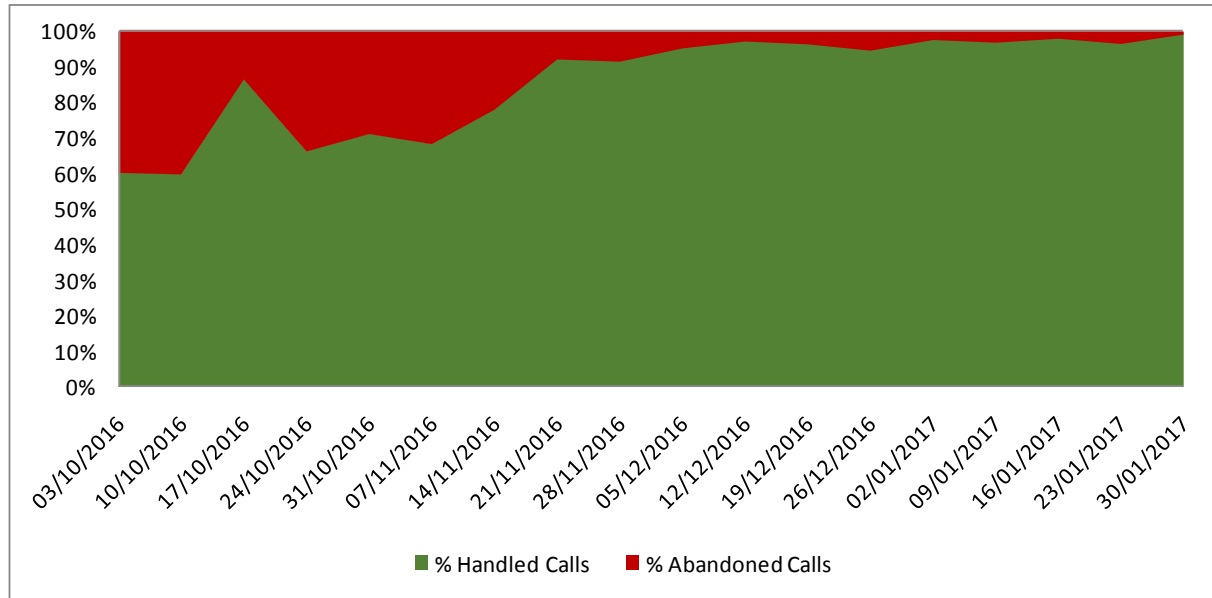
- The timeliness of contacts progressed to Children’s Social Care reduced from 74% in December to 72% in January.
- The timeliness of contacts referred to Early Help reduced from 54% in December to 48% in January.
- The timeliness of the completion of contacts where Information and advice was provided increased from 46% to 49%.



Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
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2.5 MASH Call handling statistics

- Action taken to improve call handling has been effective.
- Abandoned call rates have been lower than 5% for 8 consecutive weeks. In the final week of January our call handling rate was above 99%.



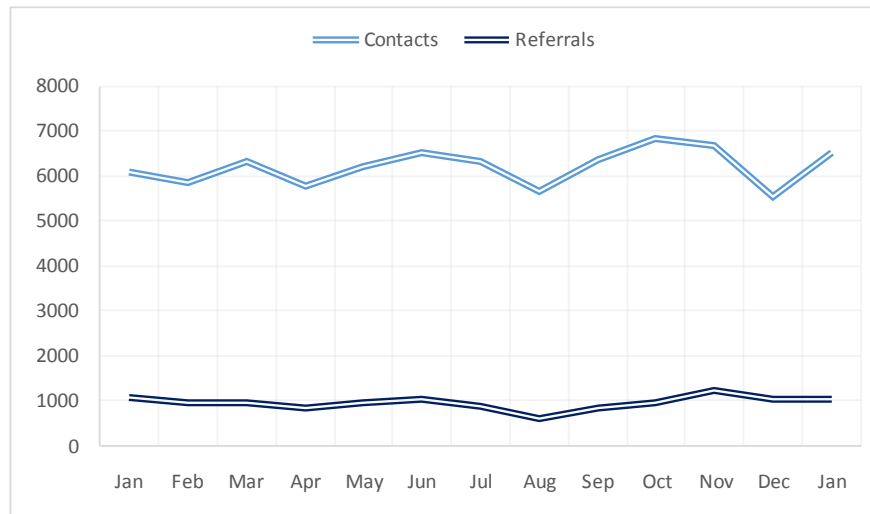
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
% Abandoned Calls	40%	40%	14%	34%	29%	32%	22%	8%	9%	5%	3%	4%	5%	2%	3%	2%	4%	1%
% Handled Calls	60%	60%	86%	66%	71%	68%	78%	92%	91%	95%	97%	96%	95%	98%	97%	98%	96%	99%

Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

2.6 Contact, referral and assessment – Volumes

- Contacts to Children’s Services increased month-on-month and are higher than at the same point last year
- Contacts are lower than in October and November. The higher number of contacts compared to this point last year is likely to be related to the introduction of the MASH (for example, increased publicity and clarity around contact routes)

Contacts and Referrals to Children’s Services



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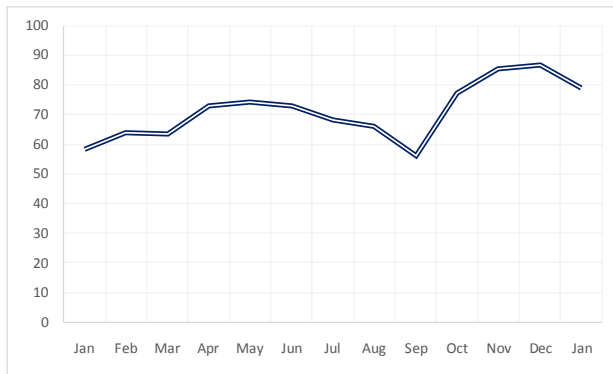
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)
!↓ Total number of contacts received	6084	5855	6339	5787	6185	6515	6333	5670	6375	6844	6686	5525	6527	5858
!●↓ Number of children referred for assessment	1075	969	964	826	968	1042	886	601	848	957	1240	1034	1018	1006
Referrals as % of 0-17 year-old population														-
!↑ Assessments in process	1931	1962	1679	1455	1474	1519	1578	1311	1138	1175	1537	1758	1660	1723

Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

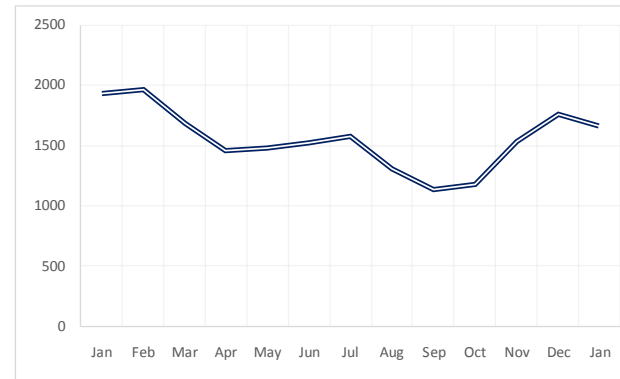
2.7 Contact, referral and assessment – Timeliness

- The percentage of Child and Family Assessments completed within 45 days decreased in January after several month of improving performance.
- This is likely to be due to the increase in volume of assessments completed following the increase in contacts to and referrals from the MASH during its opening period. Performance remains over 20 percentage points higher than during the same period last year.

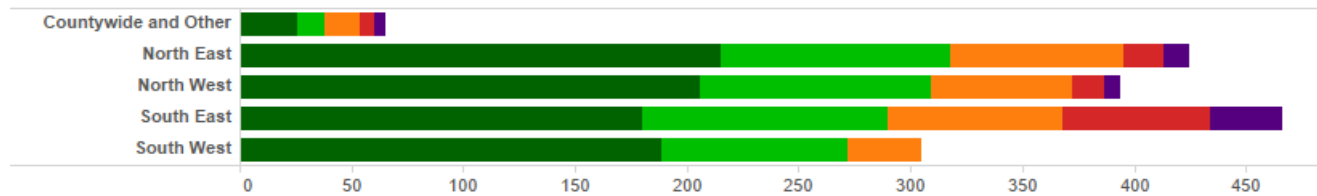
% Child and Family Assessments Completed within 45 days



Number of open Child and Family Assessments



Number of open Child and Family Assessments by area and timescale PRAG rating (Red and Purple are over 45 days)



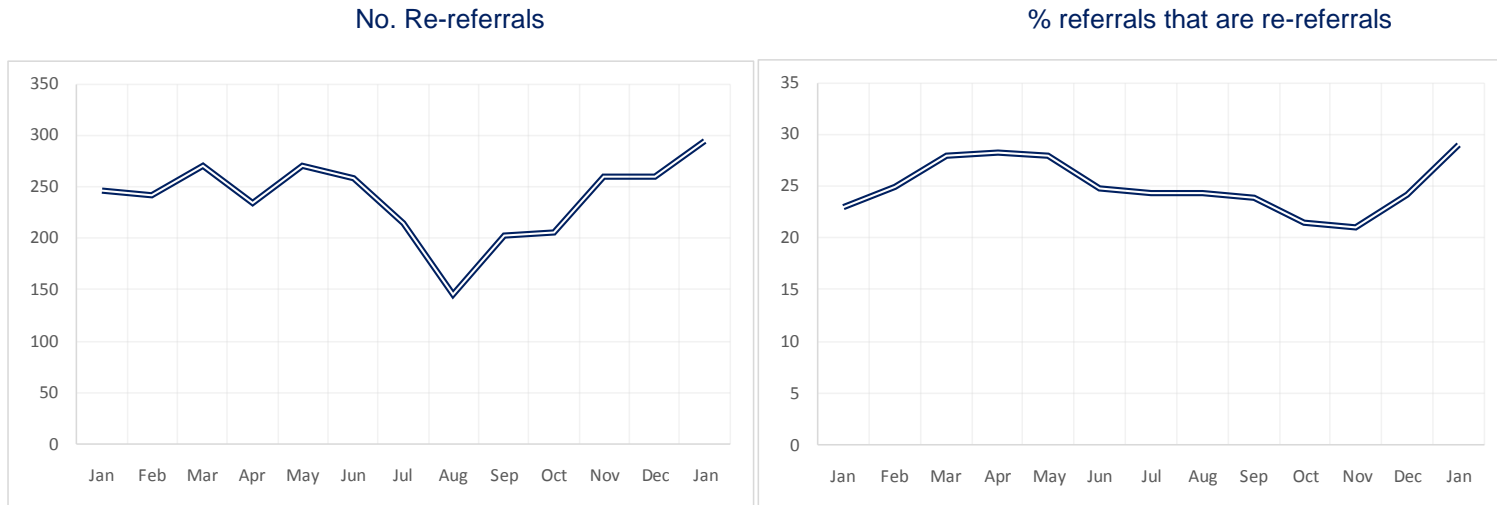
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
!!★●↓ % assessments within 45 days	58.1	64.0	63.3	73.1	74.2	72.8	68.3	66.1	56.3	77.4	85.5	86.9	78.9	66.6	80.0

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2.8 Contact, referral and assessment – Re-referrals

- The re-referral rate increased by 4.9 percentage points in January following a 3.2 percentage point increase in December. We are concerned about this figure which is the highest rate for over a year and higher than most comparable authorities.
- We are conducting an in-depth audit of a representative sample of cases that are re-referrals. This will help us understand whether there are any common reasons for re-referral. (By the end of March 2017)

Re-referrals to Children’s Services



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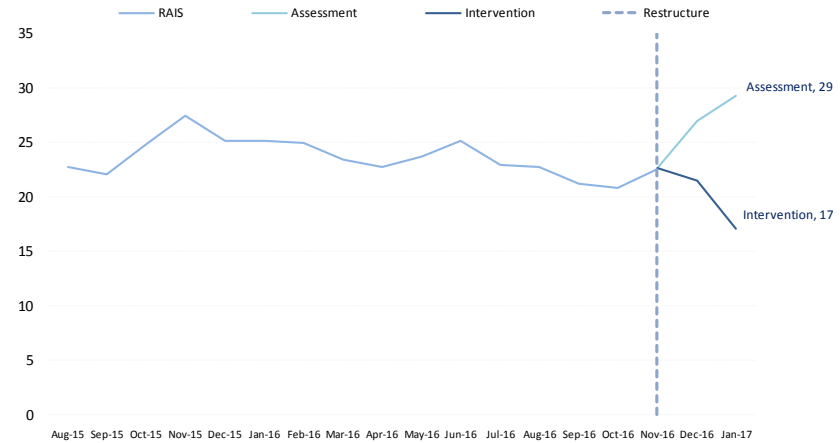
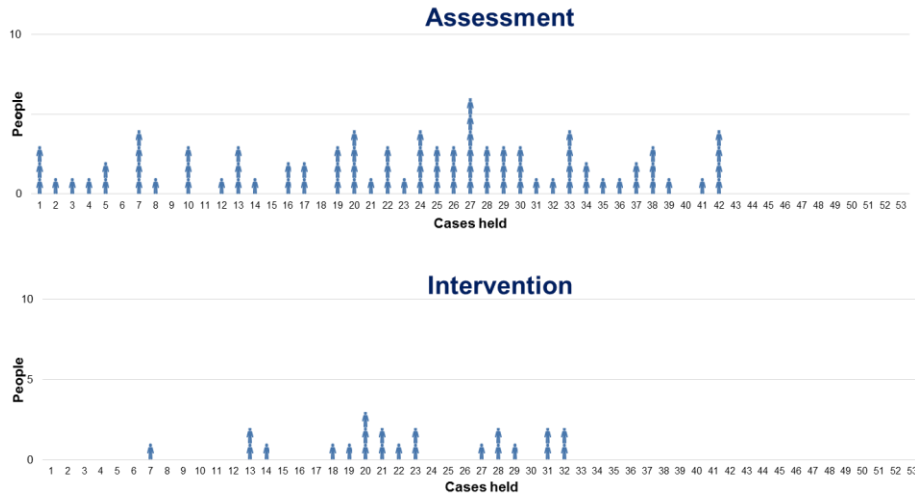
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
! Referrals for assessment that are re-referrals	247	242	270	234	270	258	215	146	202	206	260	260	295	238	-
!★●↑ Re-referrals as a % of all referrals	23.0	25.0	28.0	28.3	27.9	24.8	24.3	24.3	23.8	21.5	21.0	24.1	29.0	24.3	22.3

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2.9 Contact, referral and assessment – Workforce

- Average caseloads for Social Workers working in assessment teams remain broadly comparable, year-on-year, and appear broadly stable
- There is wide variation in the number of cases held per worker
- The variation in number of cases is partly explained by part-time working, however the variation in assigned caseload between some workers requires further exploration. *Area Heads will continue to investigate this variability to ensure that all caseloads are appropriate. (By March 2017)*
- Changes to the organisation of referral and assessment teams took effect in December are still embedding

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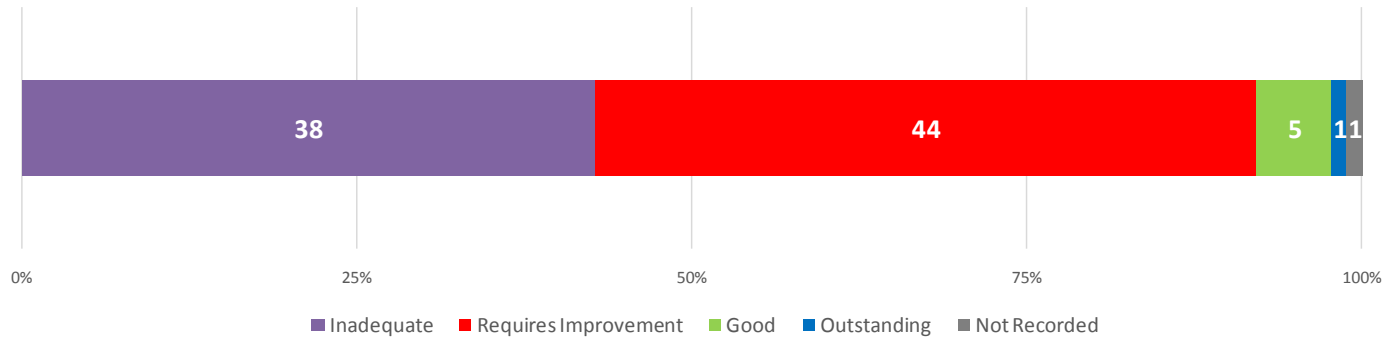


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year	National (Mar 16)
Caseloads - total cases held (assessment)	2823	2858	2690	2590	2571	2657	2729	2439	2394	2273	2350	1947	1908	-	-
★ ● Caseloads - cases per FTE (assessment)												26.9	29.3	-	-
★ ● Caseloads – cases per FTE (intervention)	25.1	25	23.4	22.7	23.7	25.2	23.0	22.8	21.2	20.8	22.6	21.4	17.1	-	-

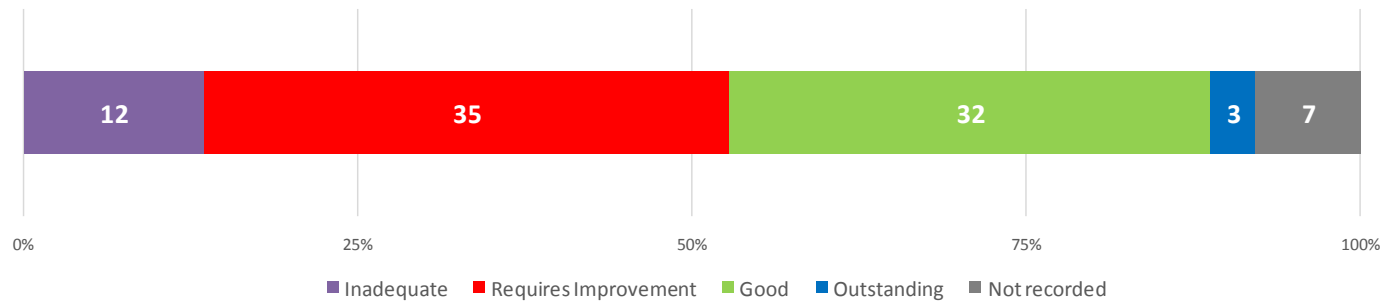
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2.11 Contact, referral and assessment – Audit

Child and Family in Assessment - Audit Results - July 2016 - January 2017 (89 Audits)



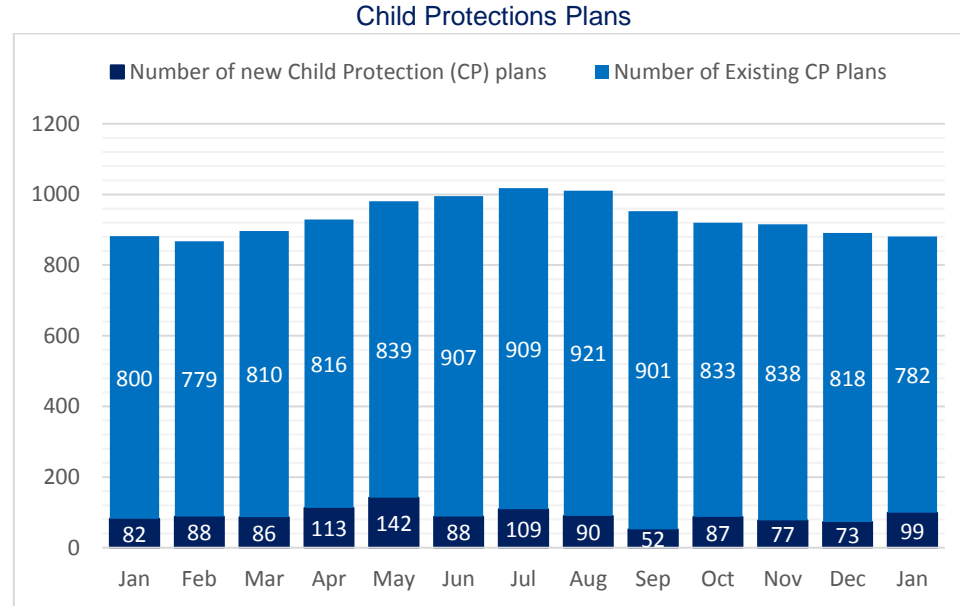
Management Oversight of Child and Family in Assessment - Audit Results - July 16 - Jan 17 (89 Audits)



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2.10 Child Protection - Volumes

- The proportion of children with a Child Protection plan remains broadly stable.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-yr (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
!⬆ Number of new Child Protection (CP) plans	82	88	86	113	142	88	109	90	52	87	77	73	99	83	-
!⇄ Number of children with CP plans	882	867	896	929	981	995	1018	1011	953	920	915	891	881	935	-
⬆ Number of CP as % of 0-17 population														-	-

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2.12 Child Protection - Timeliness

- The timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) remains a concern
- Performance decreased in December 2016 following several months of improvement. This resulted in a Performance Inquiry led by the Interim Head of Safeguarding, which identified ongoing issues of conferences not being booked in a timely way.
- The Head of Safeguarding is working with Area Heads to improve the efficiency of the conference booking process. Initial Conferences are now being booked at the time of the strategy discussion. It will take several months to assess the impact of this change.
- ICPC timeliness did improve by 7 percentage points in January
- In general, timeliness of Child Protection (CP) reviews has been an area of strength, with consistently high performance. Performance in December decreased, partly due to the administrative challenge of arranging reviews over the Christmas period, and may also be due to a small amount of late recording following leave over Christmas. Early data for January suggests that performance has decreased again. Surrey’s overall performance remains above national averages.
- Performance against our challenging local target of 18 months for the closure of CP cases decreased slightly for the third month running
- Our performance against the 2-year national measure decreased again slightly but remains better than the national and Surrey 3-year averages.

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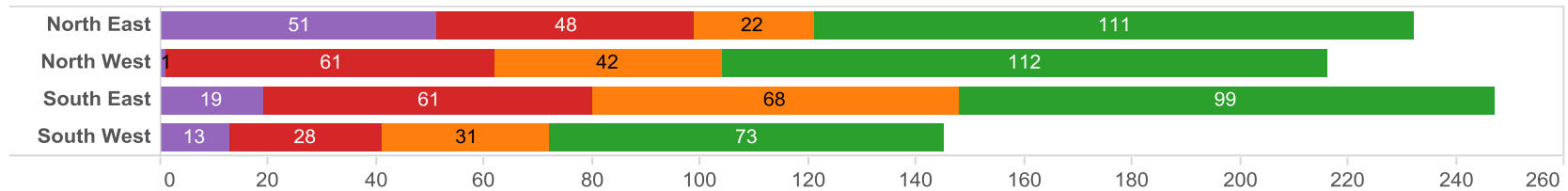
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
★ ! ● ↑ % Initial CP Conferences within timescale	56.4	81.1	80.8	54.8	66.4	80.3	53.5	72.4	46.7	67.8	80.5	65.4	72.4	54.1	74.7
↓ % CP reviews on time	100	97.4	100	100	94.9	99.1	98.6	99.5	100	99.5	99.5	96.3	94.9	94.9	94.2
★ !! ● ↑ % CP Cases open for longer than 18 months	-	-	-	7.8	6.7	6.3	7.5	9.1	9.0	7.8	7.2	7.9	8.0	-	-
★ ! ● ↑ % CP Cases open for longer than 2 years	3.1	2.4	3.1	3.9	3.1	3.0	2.6	2.7	3.4	2.2	1.9	2.5	2.7	4.0	3.7

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2.13 Child Protection - Visits

- We remain concerned about the number of overdue visits to children
- A number of Statutory Child Protection visits were being reported as taking place at greater than 10 – and 15 – day intervals. Initial investigations showed that a high proportion of these visits are likely to have taken place but have been recorded incorrectly or not completed on the recording system. A detailed performance inquiry has taken place to uncover the reasons for this. A combination of practice and system improvements are required, which are detailed in the inquiry report.
- Weekly lists of overdue cases are now circulated to Area Heads.
- Live data regarding visit timeliness has also been made available via our new interactive dashboard reporting
- Some improvement has already taken place. We need to make sure that actions recommended from our Performance Inquiry are completed to support further improvement. (by March 2017)

Chart: Children on Child Protection Plans with no Child Protection visit recorded for over 10 days (Red) and 14 days (Purple), by Area of allocated worker

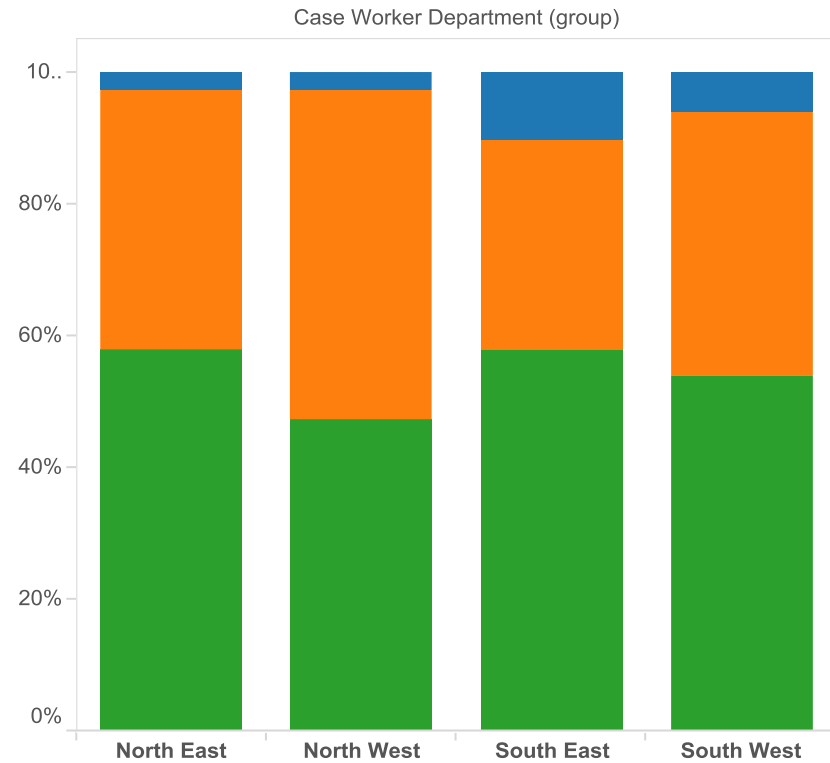
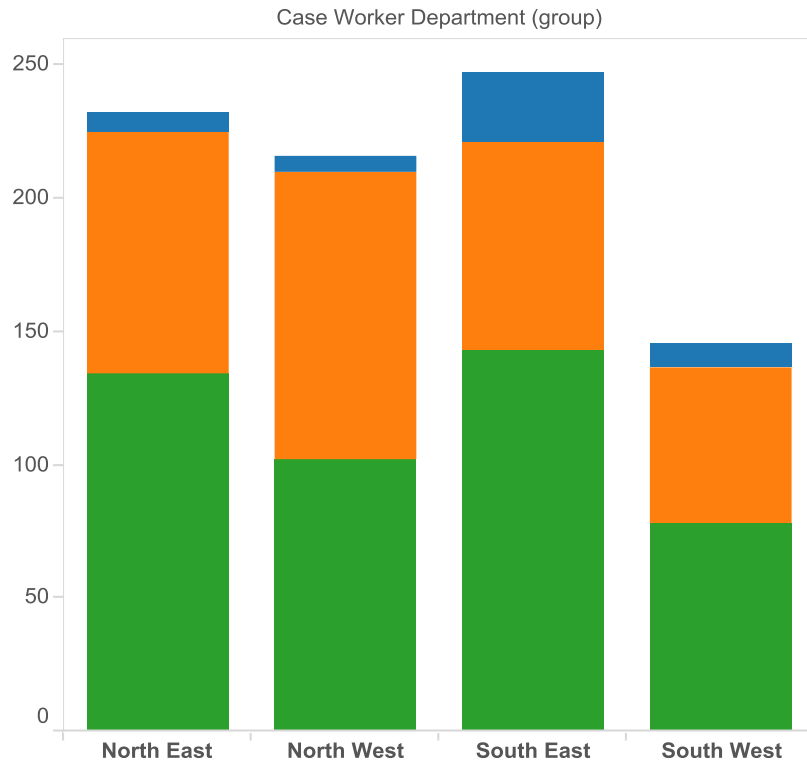


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2.14 Child Protection Visits – Children Seen Alone

- We believe that the proportion of children recorded as being seen alone on statutory child protection visits is currently too low, however we also know that recording does not enable accurate reporting as it does not capture whether it was appropriate to see the child alone, or the reason for not seeing them alone.
- A plan has been agreed to progress this, which includes update practice guidance and system changes to support accurate recording.

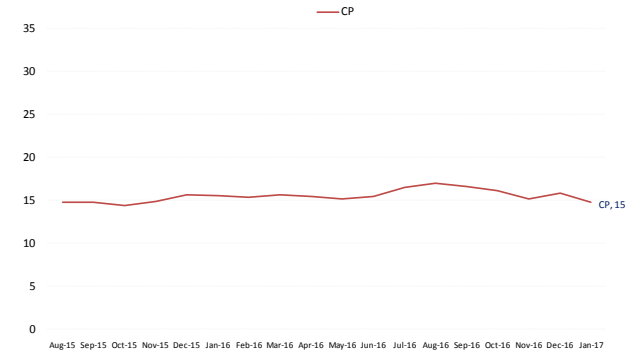
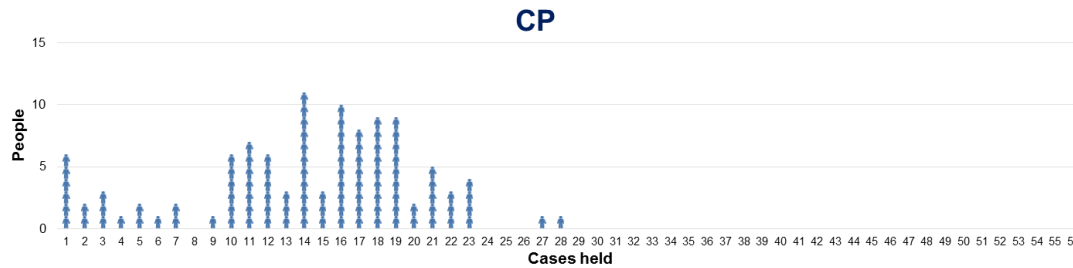
Chart: Child Seen Alone on Statutory CP Visit (Number and %, by team) (Green = seen alone, Orange = not seen alone)



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2.15 Child Protection – workforce

- Average caseloads for Social Workers in Child Protection teams appear relatively stable and have recently been, on average, comfortably within the target range (of 15-20 cases per worker). In January caseloads were, on average, very slightly below our target range.
- A small number of workers have caseloads in excess of our target maximum caseload of 20 cases



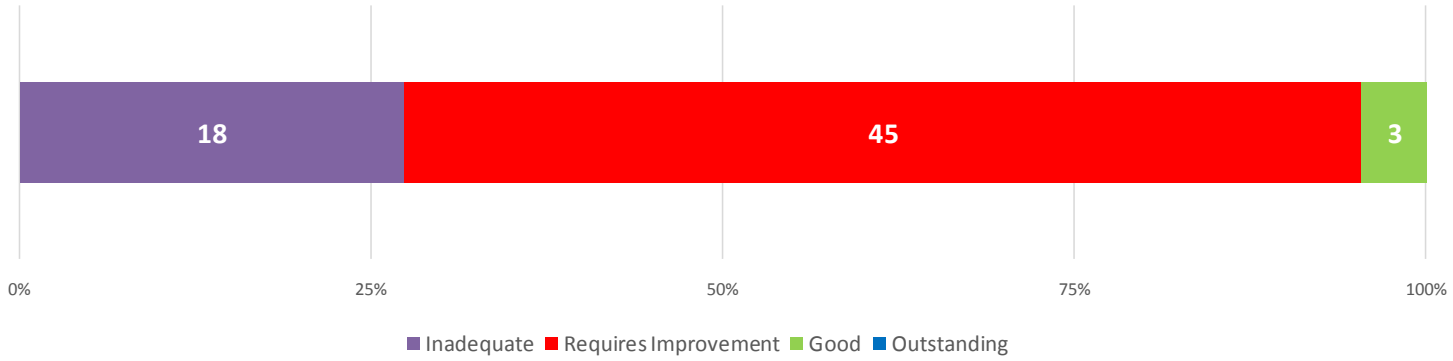
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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
Caseloads - total cases held (Child Protection)	1506	1472	1461	1444	1492	1503	1541	1548	1588	1585	1537	1555	1496	-	-
★ ● ↓ Caseloads - cases per FTE (Child Protection)	15.6	15.4	22.2	15.5	15.1	15.4	16.5	16.9	16.6	16.1	15.1	15.8	14.8	-	-

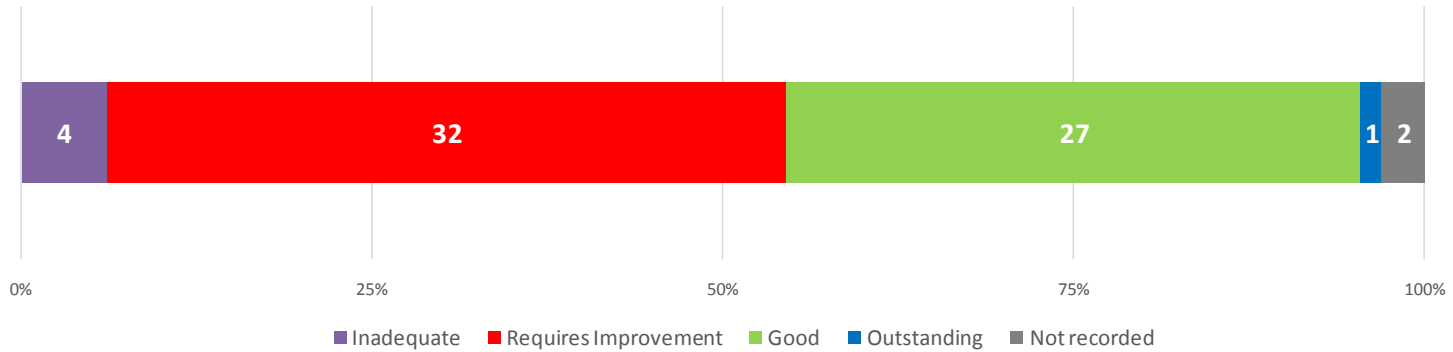
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2.16 Child Protection – Audit

Child Protection - Audit Results - July 2016 - January 2017 (66 Audits)



Management Oversight of Child Protection Cases - Audit Results - July 16 - January 17 (66 Audits)

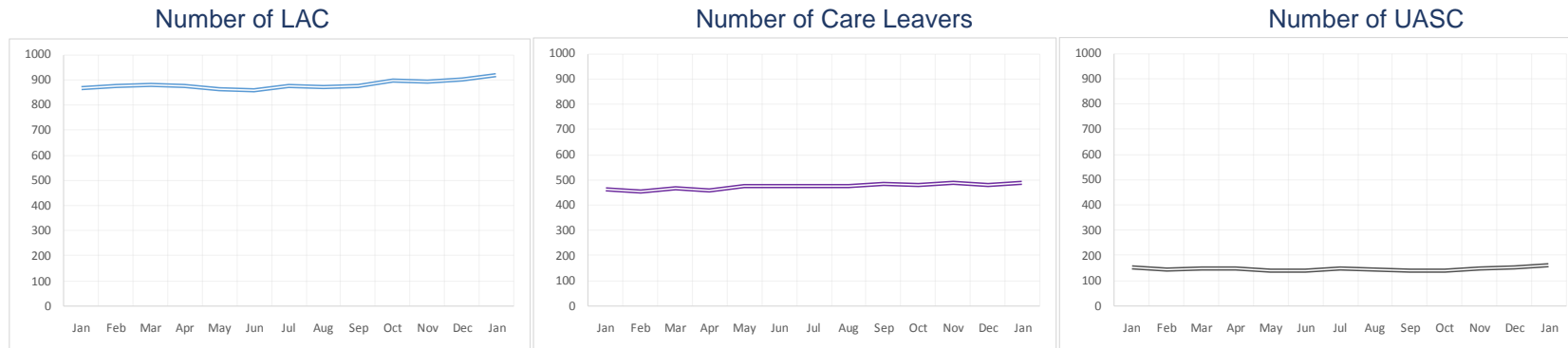


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Section 3 – Care planning and review

3.1 Looked After Children and Care Leavers – volumes

- The number and proportion of children looked after by Surrey County Council has remained fairly stable, however is currently at a high point and is 5.5% higher than this point last year
- The number of care leavers supported has also slightly increased
- The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Young People (UASC) has increased over the past 3 years
- The number of UASC appears to have begun to increase following a slight decrease through 2016
- We now support 169 UASC as Care Leavers, over one third of our Care Leaver population.



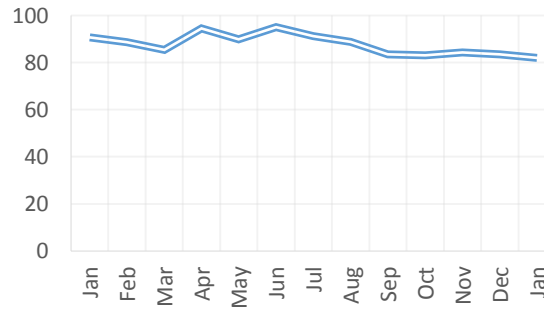
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-yr (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
!↑ Number of Looked After Children (LAC)	869	874	880	876	861	860	877	872	876	898	891	903	917	855	-
➡ Number of LAC as % of 0-17 population														-	-
!↑ Number of Care Leavers supported	461	455	468	456	475	476	477	477	485	480	487	479	488	463	-
!↑ Number of UASC	151	145	150	149	139	139	149	145	138	139	150	153	159	134	-

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3.2 Looked After Children and Care Leavers – timeliness and completion of plans and reviews

- The proportion of LAC reviews completed within timescale reduced again slightly in January
- LAC Review timeliness has been affected by the availability of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)
- We have recently recruited two new IROs
- Our introduction of the E-PEP system, to electronically collect and manage PEP information. This has increased the Virtual School’s ability to actively manage the quality of our PEPs.

% LAC Reviews within timescale



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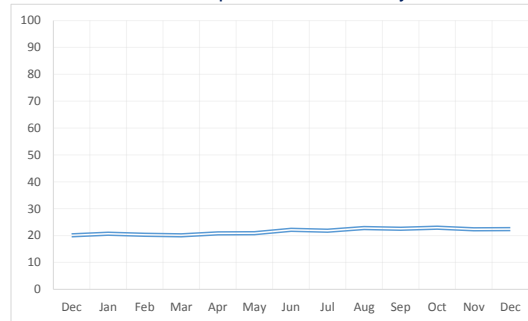
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-yr (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
! ● ↓ LAC reviews within timescale	90.7	88.7	85.4	94.6	89.9	95.1	91.3	88.8	83.5	83.1	84.3	83.5	82.0	-	-
!! ★ ● ↓ LAC with a PEP in place	-	-	-	-	78.8	77.3	80.9	81.3	80.6	79.5	74.5	86.4	85.0	-	-
!! ★ ● ↓ % Care Leavers with a Pathway Plan	85.0	84.8	85.7	86.0	87.8	88.5	88.5	88.1	86.2	87.8	87.8	88.9	88.1	86.9	-

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3.3 Looked After Children – Placement stability and distance

- We have focussed on action to improve the stability of placements, including improving our training for carers and staff, and recruitment of carers
- Overall, stability of placements for Looked After Children (LAC) is improving
- Last year proved a difficult year, with a high proportion of children and young people who were particularly difficult to place
- This year, our improvement against the ‘3 or more placements’ measure appears to be back on track
- The proportion of LAC placed out of county remains slightly above our target (20%). This is a priority area for improvement and will be addressed via the corporate parenting strategy.

% LAC placed out of county





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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
!★●↓ % LAC with 3 or more placements during the year (cumulative)	8.0	8.4	9.5	0.0	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.6	2.4	3.3	4.5	4.7	5.1	6.4	-
!★●↓ % LAC placed out of county and 20 miles or more from where they used to live	20.7	20.3	20.1	20.8	20.9	22.1	21.8	22.8	22.5	22.9	22.3	22.4	22.2	21.0	-

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3.4 Looked After Children and Care Leavers – Outcome indicators

- Timeliness of health and dental checks is broadly comparable to this point last year.
- In addition to timeliness we have focussed on addressing the quality of health checks and includes health promotion and support for emotional wellbeing. The number of dental checks remains high.
- We have acted to improve educational outcomes and participation for young people in and leaving care by improving our support during changes of setting, introducing the use of post-16 E-PEP, and better Information, Advice and Guidance post-16.
- The percentage of LAC and Care Leavers in education, employment or training improved slightly over the last quarter and remains within target.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year year (Jan)	National (Mar 16)
 % Looked After Children with up to date health and dental assessments (cumulative)	60.4	71.6	87.0	1.0	2.9	7.1	9.9	15.6	21.7	27.6	34.0	42.2	54.3	55.6	-
 % LAC and Care leavers aged 17-21 who are in education, employment or training (quarterly cumulative)			60.1			65.6			65.8			Av. Feb		-	-

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3.6 Looked After Children and Care Leavers – Workforce

- Caseloads for LAC teams are broadly stable and we are well within our target range of 15-20 cases per worker. In January caseloads were, on average, very slightly below our target range.
- Three Social Workers have a caseload slightly over our target maximum of 20 cases



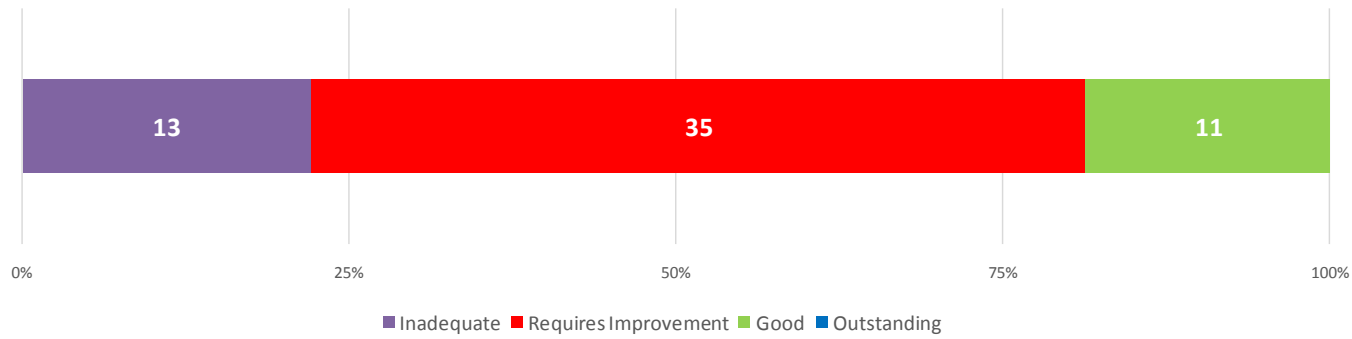
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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Sep)	National (Mar 16)
Caseloads - total cases held (LAC teams)	684	680	666	649	653	651	660	649	645	676	655	647	635	-	-
★ ● ↓ Caseloads - cases per FTE (LAC)	16.7	16.9	15.6	15.2	16	15.4	15.9	16.6	16.8	16.3	16.0	15.8	14.8	-	-

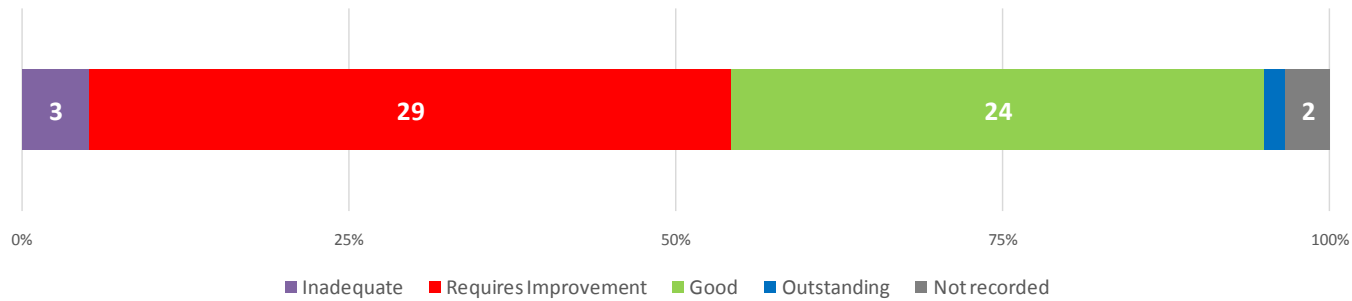
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3.6 Looked After Children – Audit

Children who are Looked After - Audit Results - July 2016 - January 2017 (59 Audits)



Management Oversight of Children who are Looked After - Audit Results - July 16 - Jan 18 (59 Audits)

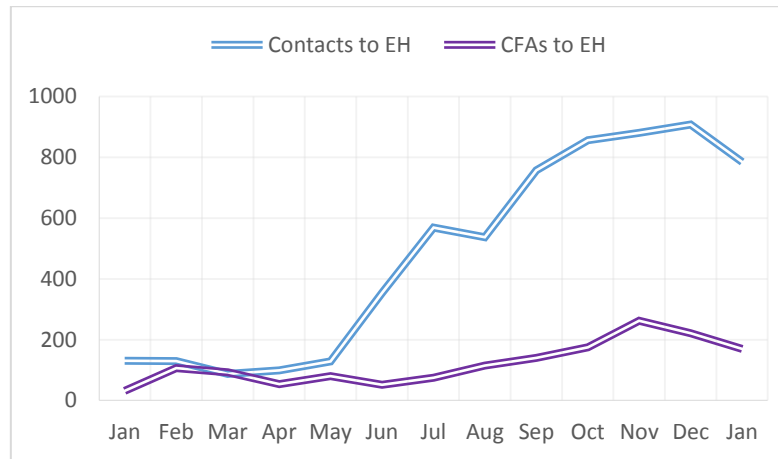


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Section 4 – Working Together

4.1 Early Help

- Developing effective Early Help is an important part of making sure that children and families get the right support at the earliest opportunity
- We have already drawn together Surrey County Council’s (SCC) Early Help services into a coherent single programme of support
- January has seen a slight decrease in the number of Early Help cases started. Overall, the number of contacts resulting in Early Help has steadily increased over the year.
- We will continue to develop Early Help arrangements and processes so they are clear, consistent and joined-up (by March 2017)



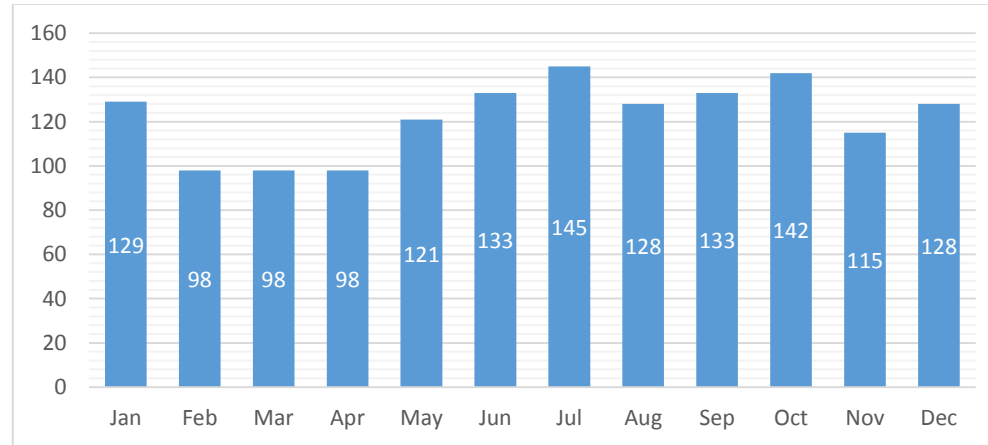
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	3-year (Jan)	National
↓ Number of contacts resulting in Early Help	131	130	87	99	128	354	569	537	757	856	881	908	785	-	-
↓ Number of Child and Family Assessments stepped down to Early Help	32	106	93	54	80	52	75	115	140	175	262	221	170	-	-

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4.2 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing Children

- Our recent focus on improving our work with partners on identifying and providing support for children at risk of CSE is beginning to have an impact
- A range of partners do now work together routinely to ensure that children are safe and supported

Children identified as at risk of CSE



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	3-yr (Jan)	National
★ ⬆ Number of children identified as at risk of CSE	129	98	98	98	121	133	145	128	133	142	115	128	-	-
★ ⬆ Number of children starting a missing episode within the calendar month	-	-	-	57	73	68	88	71	83	88	101	146	-	-
★ ⬆ Number of children offered a return home interview within the calendar month	-	-	-	-	-	36	89	60	86	94	86	65	-	-
★ ⬆ Number of children accepting a return home interview within the calendar month	-	-	-	-	-	44	59	35	37	48	69	46	-	-

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Section 5 – Next Steps

5.1 Summary of actions

The following actions have been identified to address performance issues raised in this report, and those from previous reports with a completion date in the future. Progress against these actions will be reviewed in next month's performance compendium:

Ensure that we understand the increased rate of re-referral by

- Undertaking a detailed audit of cases re-referred to Children's Services (by **April 2017**)

Ensure that no worker has an inappropriately high caseload by

- Investigating instances where a worker appears to have a particularly high number of cases (by **March 2017**)

Ensure that our progress on improving the timeliness of recorded Child Protection Visits is sustained by

- Sharing and implementing the results of our inquiry into performance and ensuring that good practice is shared across areas (by **March 2017**)

Continuing improvements to our Early Help system by

- Ensuring that all Early Help vacancies are recruited to, and that more efficient processes are introduced. (by **March 2017**)

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5.2 Improvements to Performance Management arrangements

We are aware that we need to improve our grip on performance and quality. This version of our monthly report is the first of a range of actions that we are taking to increase our understanding of our performance, and our ability to use this understanding to assure and improve services.

In October, we committed to the following improvements:

- [Include more geographical information, including performance breakdowns by area team and point mapping for key indicators. This will allow us to identify discrepancies in performance and support Area Team Managers to allocate and distribute resource](#)

Starting from the November report we included a quarterly Appendix giving area and locality breakdowns and mapping for key performance areas. This geographic data mirrors our new interactive reporting for Area Heads, allowing them to access live geographic management information and performance data linked to case lists.

- [Strengthen the reporting links between performance measures, actions and their impact](#)

We have developed a new reporting process and timetable which should ensure that performance information and action are better linked, by explicitly including feedback to and from frontline teams in our reporting process. Actions, and progress towards achieving them, have been highlighted more clearly in this report.

- [Add a section on Equality and Diversity, to ensure that we are providing the same assurance of service quality to all of our children and families](#)

We have added a quarterly Equality appendix, which includes Gender, Age and Ethnicity breakdowns for key measures. This will require further development (details below).

- [Include definitions and targets for a broader range of the measures identified in the Improvement Board Key Indicator list](#)

We can report on a broader range of measure than was the case in September. We are developing plans to address recording and reporting for the remaining indicators, as part of our 'Data Development' approach which aims to ensure the targeted improvement of recording and reporting for key areas.

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- [Include more comparative data](#)

Some additional comparative data has been included, particularly updated measures from the Statistical First Release data regarding Children in Need and Looked After Children. However, this remains an area for development as we need to ensure that our performance and our targets are benchmarked against comparable authorities.

In addition to improving this Monthly report we committed to:

- [Developing a Quarterly Narrative report which will link performance and quality in a rich, holistic way, using a full range of information sources](#)

A first draft of this is being developed and will be presented at the next quarterly review in March 2017

- [Revisiting our approach to our weekly Key Focus Indicator reporting, so that managers receive sufficient detail regarding 'live' performance issues](#)

The measures for Key Focus reporting will now be confirmed by management teams, as part of the new reporting process. Live data regarding Key Focus indicators is now available to Area Heads via our new interactive performance dashboards

- [Revising our data management and technical reporting arrangements so that we can be more responsive to ad-hoc questions about performance and build a more efficient and future-proof way of working with our data](#)

We have made substantial improvements to our reporting systems to provide analysts direct access to more flexible reporting so that we can answer ad-hoc questions about performance. These developments also allow analysts to deliver interactive, live reporting to frontline colleagues to directly access performance information.

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**Appendix I
 Improvement Board Key Measures Summary**

RAG	Direction of travel	Measure	Baseline	Target	Aug	Sep	Q2 ave.	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3 ave.
RED	↑		Assessment							26.9	29.3
GREEN	↓		Intervention							21.4	17.1
		Average number of cases per FTE social worker (locums are counted as 1 FTE each)	RAIS 23 (July 2016)	Between 15-20 (from Oct 2016 onwards) *lower protected caseloads for ASYE*	22.8	21.2	22.3	20.8	22.6	-	-
AMBER	↓		CP 16.5 (July 2016)		16.9	16.6	16.7	16.1	15.1	15.8	15.7
AMBER	↓		LAC 15.9 (July 2016)		16.6	16.8	16.4	16.3	16.0	15.8	16.0

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Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

RAG	Direction of travel	Measure	Baseline	Target	Aug	Sep	Q2 ave.	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3 ave.	Jan
RED	↓	MASH - timeliness of decision making on contacts – all decisions (social care outcome in brackets)	76.2% (Jul, Aug & Sept 2016)	95% of contacts with decision made within 24 hours (From Oct 2016)	-	-	-	-	-	54.6% (74.1% Social Care)	-	54.5% (71.5% SC)
-	-	MASH - proportion of repeat contacts within 12 month period	47% (year ending 31 Aug 2016)	Under 20% and over 10% (from Oct 2016)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	% contacts arriving in MASH with parental consent already obtained	To be established		-	-	-	-	-	24.8%	-	-
AMBER	↑	% Child in Need re-referrals	24.3% (Aug 2016)	20-25%	24.3%	23.8%	24.3%	21.5%	21.0%	24.1%	22.2%	29.0%
-	-	Number of children receiving Early Help	To be established	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
AMBER	↓	% Children and Family Assessments completed within 45 days	66.1% (Aug 2016)	90% (by March 2017)	66.1%	56.3%	67.2%	77.4%	85.5%	86.9%	83.3%	78.9%
AMBER	↑	% of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) within required timescales	72.4% (Aug 2016)	80% (by March 2017)	72.4%	46.7%	63.0%	67.8%	80.5%	65.4%	71.2%	72.4%
AMBER	↑	% of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for more than 18 months	6.7% (Aug 2016)	3.7% (by Aug 2017)	9.0%	9.1%	8.5%	7.8%	7.2%	7.9%	7.6%	8.0%
-	-	Attendance at ICPC by Police	91% (Jan-Jun 2016)	To be reviewed at SSCB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	Attendance at ICPC by Education	84% (Jan-Jun 2016)	To be reviewed at SSCB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

RAG	Direction of travel	Measure	Baseline	Target	Aug	Sep	Q2 ave.	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan
-	-	Attendance at ICPC by the appropriate health professional	To be established	To be reviewed at SSCB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	Appropriate contribution from GP at ICPC	To be established	To be reviewed at SSCB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	'Child seen' and 'seen alone' (where appropriate)	To be established	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	Child voice: involvement in case decision making (% cases with good or outstanding child involvement)	To be established		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	↑	Number of children starting a missing episode in the month	88 (July 2016)		83	72	81	88	101	146	-	Av. Feb
-	-	Number of children with repeat missing episodes in the last rolling quarter	To be established		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	% of return home interviews taken up (in brackets –as a % of all young people with a missing episode)	66.3% (July 2016)		-	-	-	-	57.8% (31.4)	-	-	-
-	↓	Number of children at risk of CSE	145 (July 2016)		128	133	139	142	115	128	-	Av. Feb
-	-	The number of children where risk has been downgraded	To be established		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GREEN	↓	% of Looked After Children with three or more placements in the financial year (cumulative)	8.6% (2015/16)	7.8% (by March 2017)	1.6%	2.2%	-	3.3%	4.5%	4.7%	-	5.1%
AMBER	↓	% Looked After Children placed out of county and 20 miles or more from where they used to live	22.8% (Aug 2016)		22.8%	22.5%	22.5%	22.9%	22.3%	22.4%	22.5%	22.2%
GREEN	↑	% LAC and Care leavers aged 17-21 who are in education, employment or training (quarterly cumulative)	48% (Q4 15/16)	55% (by March 2017)	-	65.8%	-	-	-	tbc	-	-
AMBER	↓	% Care Leavers with completed Pathway Plans (whether or not it was completed in time)	88.1% (Aug 2016)	90% (from Oct 2016)	88.1%	86.2%	88.3%	87.8%	87.8%	88.9%	88.2%	88.1%

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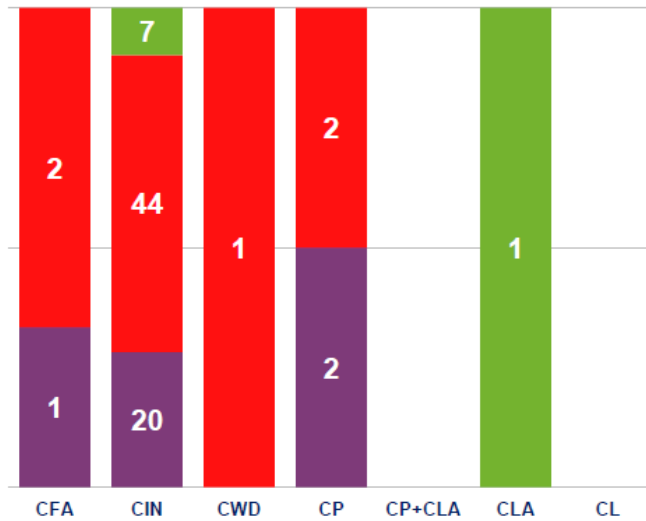
Surrey Children’s Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
 January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

RAG	Direction of travel	Measure	Baseline	Target	Aug	Sep	Q2 ave.	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3 Ave	Jan
-	-	Timely completion of Personalised Education Plans (PEPs)	32 outside timescale (Aug 2016)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GREEN	↓	Social worker and senior social worker vacancy rate (% vacant or locum covered posts against budgeted headcount)	27% (July 2016)	20% (by Aug 2017)	28.7%	24.9%	27.0%	22.0%	19.1%	21.0%	20.7%	19.0%
-	↑	Social worker and senior social worker starters			4	6	13	7	6	2	5	8
-	↓	Social worker and senior social worker leavers			7	2	9	2	2	2	2	1
-	↑	Number of Starters minus number of leavers	3 (July 2016)		-3	4	4	5	4	0	3	7
-		Turnover	23% (July 2016)	20% (by Aug 2017)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

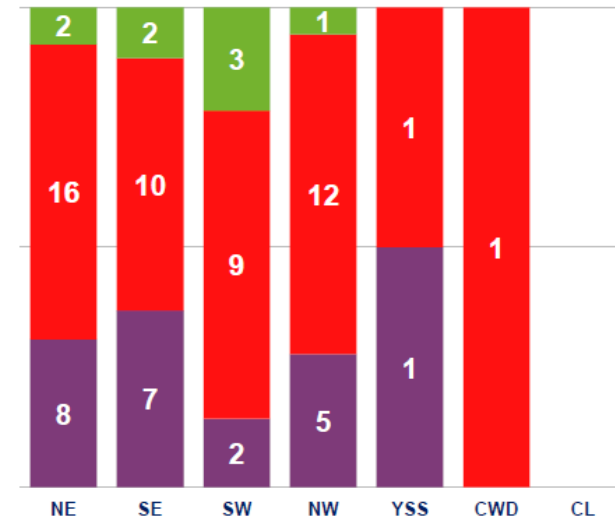
Appendix II

Audit results by type and area – January only (80 audits)

Lowest Grade
 (per audit by Case Type)



Lowest Grade
 (per audit by Area)

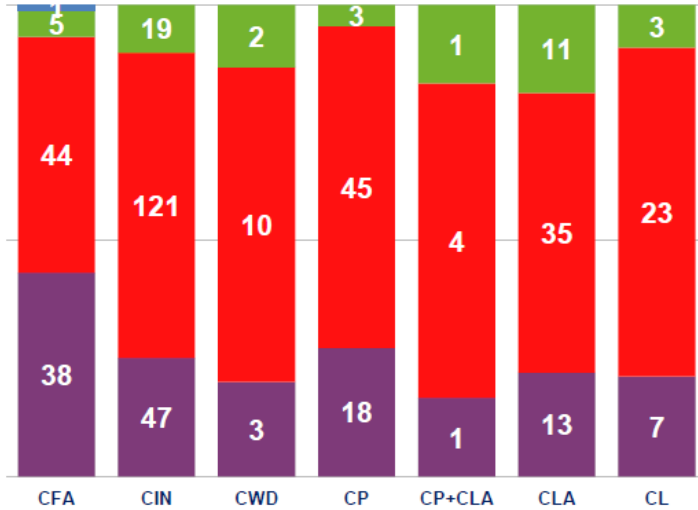


■ Inadequate ■ Requires Improvement ■ Good ■ Outstanding

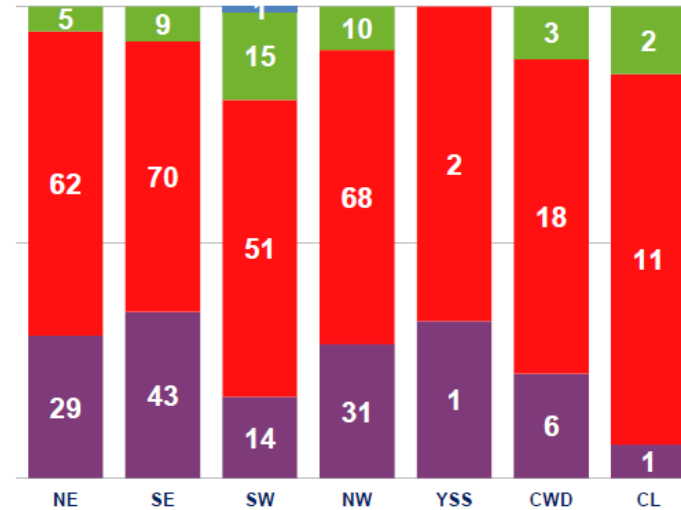
CFA = Child and Family In Assessment CIN = Children In Need CWD=Children With Disabilities CP=Child Protection CLA = Children Who are Looked After YSS = Youth Support Services CL= Care Leavers

Audit results by type and area – cumulative July 2016-January 2017 (457 audits)

Lowest Grade
 (per audit by Case Type)



Lowest Grade
 (per audit by Area)



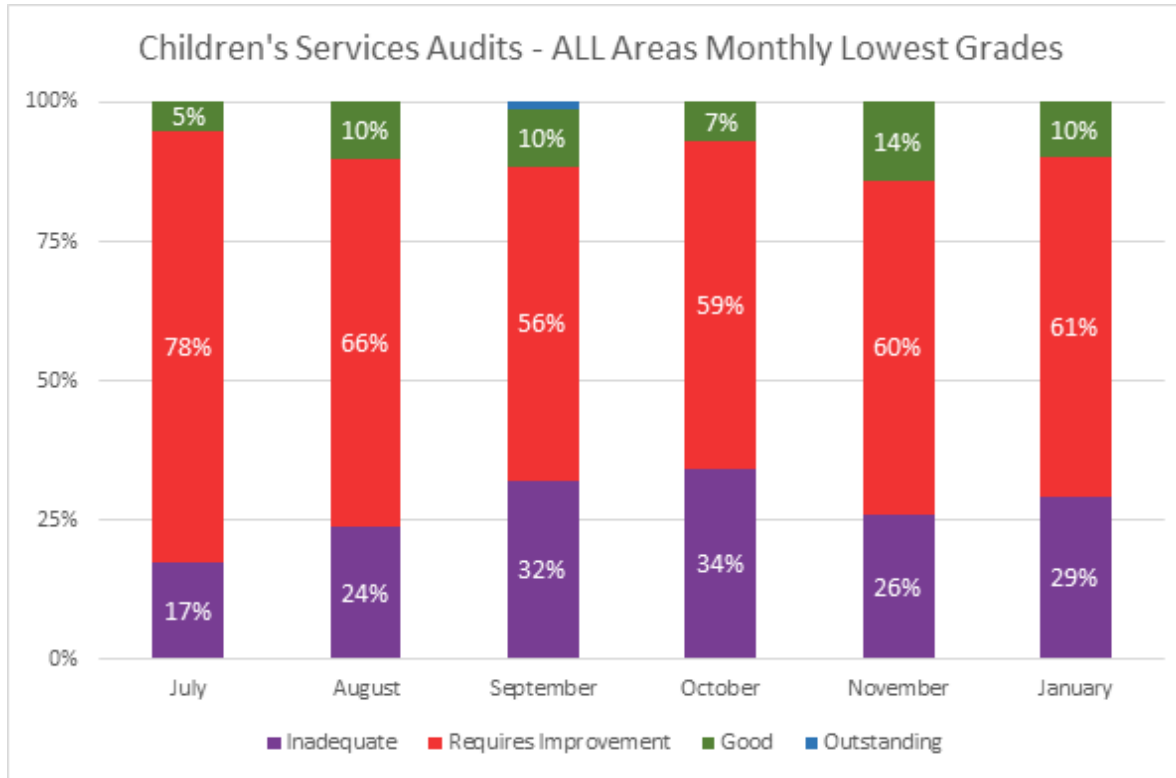
■ Inadequate ■ Requires Improvement ■ Good ■ Outstanding

CFA = Child and Family In Assessment CIN = Children In Need CWD=Children With Disabilities CP=Child Protection CLA = Children Who are Looked After YSS = Youth Support Services CL= Care Leavers

Surrey Children's Services Improvement Board - Monthly Performance Compendium
January 2017 **CONFIDENTIAL**

Audit results – trend July 2016-January 2017 (457 audits)

Note – different audit focus each month so not a direct like-for-like comparison on month-by-month basis



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Social Care Services Board

16 March 2017

The Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22

Purpose of report: To engage, inform and seek endorsement from the Social Care Services Board on the Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22.

Introduction:

1. This draft commissioning plan sets out how the Children Schools and Families (CSF) Directorate will seek to improve outcomes for children and deliver key savings from the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) around market management and demand reduction.
2. Vulnerable children in Surrey do less well than their peers in Surrey and some vulnerable children do less well than those living in other local authority areas.
3. We believe that we will achieve good outcomes for all children by focusing our resources on those who are most vulnerable. We will look to prevent the negative experiences that lead to poor outcomes and close the gap in positive outcomes experienced by our most vulnerable children.
4. We have developed specific commissioning intentions to achieve better outcomes for children and deliver key savings.
5. The draft plan follows a typical commissioning method; there is an analysis of need, demand and expenditure; outcomes for children and young people are described and specific commissioning intentions developed. The commissioning intentions reflect the areas of focus that will contribute to improved outcomes for children and deliver savings.

Need and Demand:

6. Most children in Surrey achieve good outcomes and make a successful transition to adulthood; for children with disadvantages such as poverty, discrimination or disability this is not the case. Specific groups with poorer outcomes include children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); looked after children and care leavers; Children in Need (CiN); children living in poverty; young carers; teenage parents and their children; Gypsy, Roma and Travellers (GRT) children and young people; children affected by domestic abuse, and; the children of prisoners.
7. Outcomes for these children tend to be poor when compared to the Surrey average and, in some instances, even with the national average; in fact

disadvantaged children in Surrey do less well than children from similar backgrounds in other local authority areas. Where children are impacted by multiple disadvantages, the differences in outcomes may be even more marked.

The need in Surrey

8. Of Surrey's 287,600 children and young people aged 0-19, 10% on average live in poverty. In 2015/16, 20,500 were in receipt of free school meals (FSM) and the council supported:
 - 4,547 Children in Need¹ in 16/17, potentially rising to 5,731 by 2020/21
 - 714 looked after children², rising to 754 by 20/21
 - 330 care leavers³
 - 5,751 Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), rising to 6,300 by 2020 and 6,650 by 2025, an increase of around 900 (16%).
9. Additionally in Surrey:
 - 340 children were deemed to be at risk of CSE in 2015/16
 - around 100 children reported missing from home or care, totalling nearly 1,400 episodes
 - 11,000 extra schools places are required by 2021
 - contacts to social care are increasing; 66,537 contacts were made in 2015/16, rising from 60,915 in 2011/12.

Financial pressures

10. The current financial situation means that plans are being drawn up to find £70m of savings within CSF by 2020. This includes substantial savings through the High Needs Block of DSG.
11. Projected increase in population growth and resulting increase in demand is expected to cause significant financial challenges, for example:
 - a. The projected increase in numbers of looked after children is expected to cost an additional £2.1m by 2020/21.
 - b. The projected increase in numbers of children in need is expected to cost an additional £5.9m by 2020/21.

Outcomes and Commissioning intentions

12. The CSF Commissioning Plan 2017-22 sets out the high level outcomes we want all children and young people to achieve:
 - 1) **Children and young people have good wellbeing**
Children and young are empowered and supported to have good social, emotional and physical wellbeing

¹ The main reason why children in Surrey become a Child in Need is 'abuse and neglect'.

² Not including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

³ Not including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

2) **Children and young people are safe from harm and danger**
Children and young people are empowered to keep safe and professionals work together to identify and address safeguarding concerns at the earliest point possible.

3) **Children and young people achieve their potential**
Children and young people are empowered and supported to reach their potential in everything they do.

13. Based on analysis of need, demand, experience and expenditure we have prioritised seven main commissioning intentions to help us achieve the desired outcomes for children:

- 1) Prevent and reduce the impact of abuse and neglect
- 2) Increase the educational achievement, progress and engagement of vulnerable children and young people throughout their life course (Children looked after, children in need, free school meals, SEND, 'vulnerable groups')
- 3) Prevent problems escalating by ensuring children, young people and families needing extra help receive timely support
- 4) Provide placements or accommodation for looked after children, care leavers, unaccompanied asylum seeking children that are appropriate, local and value for money
- 5) Prevent and reduce the impact of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and children who go missing from home and care
- 6) Provide educational opportunities for children and young people with SEND in local schools or colleges that offer the best value for money
- 7) Provide a positive experience of SEND services and support for children, young people and families

Early Help and Family Service Model

14. Our analysis of need, demand and what works tells us that some families are likely to have better outcomes if we intervene earlier and better target our Early Help resources to meet local needs. This will also help prevent the need for high cost statutory services.

15. In order to balance the rising budget and increasing demand, the Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22 states the strategic case for the introduction of a Family Service Model that will offer integrated service delivery and improved market management.

16. The new model will operate through a network of integrated local support. The early help offer will provide a universal and consistent offer to 0-19 (25) year olds and their families across Surrey providing holistic and community based whole family support to people in Surrey.

17. There is growing evidence, including from the Children's Commissioner that a Family Service model works in improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families.
18. Our projections indicate that this model would result in the savings of £480,000 in 2017/18 and £920,000 yearly to 2020/21. This is based on preventing the projected rise in numbers of looked after children and children in need and reducing numbers annually in line with what has been achieved through early help elsewhere in the country.

Our programmes of work and market management

19. Additionally many markets providing support for children, schools and families are under-developed and the volume of local provision does not meet current or forecast future demand. Key gaps in provision include, but are not limited to:
 - Looked after children placements within Surrey's borders
 - Suitable placements for care leavers
 - Block Supported Accommodation placements for UASC care leavers
 - Provision and prevention to support emotional wellbeing and mental health
 - Placements for children with special educational needs and disabilities that are within the county
20. The CSF Commissioning Plan 2017-22 sets out key thematic commissioning plans to improve outcomes and deliver the commissioning intentions:
 - Social care and wellbeing
 - Education and skills
 - SEND
 - Early help
21. In order to meet these gaps in provision and reach the necessary savings, CSF will manage the market through a range of activities including co-design of new commissions with key stakeholders, managing inflationary uplifts, developing purchasing frameworks to reduce spot purchases, developing regional networks to increase purchasing power, joint commissioning arrangements and de-commissioning services with relatively less impact. The projected savings through these methods are £3,200,000 yearly from 2017/18 to 2020/21.
22. The CSF Commissioning Plan 2017-22 also sets out the key change programmes that the directorate is undertaking to improve outcomes and deliver savings. These are:
 - Children's Improvement Plan (safeguarding)
 - Early Help Transformation Programme
 - Education in Partnership
 - SEND 2020
 - Information Management

- Safer Surrey

Conclusions:

23. The CSF directorate is facing unprecedented financial and demand pressures. We know that some children and families experience challenges in their lives and will require extra support to help them achieve good outcomes that are right for them. We must do more to prevent their needs from escalating, supporting them at an earlier stage. If we fail to do this, the outcomes gap and growing demand for high cost statutory services will continue.
24. The CSF Commissioning Plan 2017-22 sets out how the directorate will address these pressures whilst improving outcomes for our vulnerable children.
25. Reconfiguring early help services into an integrated Family Services Model will play a central role in managing demand.
26. A thematic commissioning programme for social care and wellbeing, education and skills, SEND and early help; and key change programmes will set out and drive work across the directorate.

Recommendations:

27. It is recommended that the Board:
 - a. recognises the needs, increase in demand and financial pressures
 - b. supports the approach developed through the Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22, particularly the commissioning intentions.
 - c. supports the Family Service model to deliver an improved and better targeted early help offer
 - d. receives an update of progress in managing demand and the market at subsequent meetings.

Next steps:

28. The Children, Schools and Families Commissioning Plan 2017-22 will be taken to Cabinet on 30 May 2017 for approval.
29. The design and delivery of the Family Services Model will continue to be engaged on and further developed with stakeholders in local areas, for implementation during 2017-18.

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Social Care Services Board 16 March 2017

Recommendation Tracker and Forward Work Programme

1. The Board is asked to review its Recommendation Tracker and provide comment as necessary.
2. This meeting is the last Social Care Services meeting of the council year. Following the election, the Board will agree a Forward Work Programme for 2017/18.

Report contact:

Andrew Spragg, Scrutiny Officer, Democratic Services

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Email: andrew.spragg@surreycc.gov.uk

Annexes

- Briefing on Self Neglect – Annex 1
- Letter to Cabinet Members and CSF regarding MASH concerns – Annex 2
- Response from Cabinet Members regarding MASH concerns – Annex 3
- Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Task Group update report – Annex 4
- Prevent Action Plan Update – Annex 5

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**SOCIAL CARE SERVICES SCRUTINY BOARD
ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER – UPDATED March 2017**

The recommendations tracker allows Board Members to monitor responses, actions and outcomes against their recommendations or requests for further actions. The tracker is updated following each Board. Once an action has been completed, it will be shaded out to indicate that it will be removed from the tracker at the next meeting. The next progress check will highlight to members where actions have not been dealt with.

Scrutiny Board and Officer Actions

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
9 July 2015	ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S UPDATE [Item 5]	That the 0-25 pathway being co-designed by Adult Social Care and Children, Schools and Families is scrutinised by this Board.	Strategic Director Scrutiny Officer	An update on the progress of the SEND Task Group was circulated to the Board	<i>Complete</i>
30 October 2015	MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS CARE CONCORDAT AND MENTAL HEALTH CODE OF PRACTICE: AN UPDATE [Item 9]	<p>That the Scrutiny Board reviews the roll out of the Safe Havens across the remaining five Clinical Commissioning Group areas in Surrey including the financial sustainability of these projects.</p> <p>That an update is provided on the implementation of the Single Point of Access Project.</p> <p>That there is liaison between Surrey Police and Hampshire Police on good practice usage of the Aldershot Safe Haven for people in mental health crisis</p>	Senior Commissioning Manager Scrutiny Board Chairman and Police and Crime Panel Chairman	<p>An interim evaluation of safe havens is being reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 12 January 2016. An executive summary of this evaluation is attached.</p> <p>Work has been taking place in the CCGs to sustain the Safe Havens</p>	<i>June 2017</i>

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				<p>post the project fund ceasing at the end of March 2017, assuming the full evaluation continues to show outcomes being achieved.</p> <p>The single point of access for mental health crisis care is in development- a substantial amount of work has been done by Surrey and Borders Partnership Trust in preparation for go live which is anticipated to be June 2017.</p>	
25 January 2016	ADULT SOCIAL CARE QUALITY ASSURANCE TASK & FINISH GROUP OUTCOMES [Item 7]	<p>The Board:</p> <p>Supports the proposals as outlined in the report, concluding the task and finish group work</p> <p>Supports the first phase of implementation and areas of further</p>	Head of Quality Assurance and Strategic Safeguarding	A meeting will be scheduled for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to meet with the Head of Quality Assurance in the new council year.	<i>May 2017</i>

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
		<p>work, as outlined in the report, to be set up and managed as a new multi-agency project</p> <p>Recommends that Officers return to the Board when they have an implementation plan for the Board to review</p>			
12 May 2016	2015-20 YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW [Item 7]	Surrey's Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) undertake further evaluation with the police and probation service to understand what impact youth justice intervention has on offending in young adulthood.	Head of Youth Support Services	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18	<i>May 2017</i>
12 May 2016	2015-20 YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW [Item 7]	That officers provide a further update in 12-months on the progress of the Reducing Reoffending Plan 2014-17 with particular reference to how the new CAMHS integrated model, including the YSS subcontracted element, has impacted on mental health and emotional and behavioural issues as a known factor in relation to re-offending.	Head of Youth Support Services	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18ay 2017	<i>May 2017</i>
12 May 2016	2015-20 YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW [Item 7]	That officers provide an update in 12-months in relation to progress made against the Youth Justice Strategic Plan in Year 2.	Head of Youth Support Services	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18	<i>May 2017</i>
12 May 2016	INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: REVIEW OF	The Board notes with concern the Internal Audit recommendations and will	Chief Internal Auditor	The follow-up audit on Foster Carers	Complete

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
	FOSTER CARE SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS [Item 8]	review the outcome of the service's actions to improve in the follow-up audit.		and Management Action Plan has been circulated to the Board for information.	
26 October 2016	ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGET MONITORING [ITEM 9]	That officers bring a future report on Surrey Choices to the Board, as the Board is concerned about increased costs;	Strategic Director for Adult Social Care and Public Health	The Chairman has worked with the Chairmen of Council Overview Board and Audit and Governance to take forward this recommendation.	Complete
26 October 2016	ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGET MONITORING [ITEM 9]	That the Chairman write to the Surrey Choices shareholder board requesting non-executive representation for Adult Social Care.	Chairman/Scrutiny officer	The Chairman has worked with the Chairmen of Council Overview Board and Audit and Governance to take forward this recommendation.	Complete
26 October 2016	SURREY MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB AND EARLY HELP UPDATE [ITEM 10/11]	That officers report progress of Early Help and the MASH in six months, including how benefits are being realised and how emerging key issues have been addressed	Assistant Director Commissioning & Prevention	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18	May 2017
26 October	SURREY MULTI	Update to the Performance and Finance	Assistant Director	An update was	Complete

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
2016	AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB AND EARLY HELP UPDATE	Sub-group efforts to reduce the number of contacts to the MASH where a child's case is already open to Children's Services.	Commissioning & Prevention	provided to the Performance and Finance Sub-Group on 12 January 2017, and a letter was sent to the Cabinet Member following this. A response is attached.	
26 October 2016	SURREY MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB AND EARLY HELP UPDATE	Updated to the Performance and Finance Sub-group issues that have arisen as a result of the new IMT modules and what is being undertaken to improve the system.	Assistant Director Commissioning & Prevention	An update was provided to the Performance and Finance Sub-Group on 12 January 2017, and a letter was sent to the Cabinet Member following this. A response is attached.	Complete
26 October 2016	DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTIES SAFEGUARDS [Item 11]	That a quarterly update is reported through to the Performance and Finance sub-group, with matters being escalated to the Board if required.	Principal Social Worker and Senior Practice Development Manager	The Performance and Finance sub-group will receive its first quarterly update in early 2017.	March 2017
26 October 2016	ADULT SOCIAL CARE DEBT [Item 13]	That officers explore the business case for the additional temporary resource referred to in paragraph 14 to be made	Head of Resources	The impact and long-term benefits of this on-going	March 2017

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
		permanent, as a means for ensuring early and regular contact with debtors and their representatives.		work are in the process of being assessed, and would form part of any business case. The Board will receive a further update at a future meeting.	
9 December 2016	REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION WITH CARE AND SUPPORT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND OLDER PEOPLE'S HOMES PROJECT [Item 7]	That the Cabinet ensure that the strategy is prioritised by Property Services and appropriate resource allocated to its delivery	Cabinet	A response from Cabinet is attached to this agenda.	Complete
9 December 2016	REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION WITH CARE AND SUPPORT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND OLDER PEOPLE'S HOMES PROJECT [Item 7]	That the Cabinet Member and service explore internal or external opportunities around invest to save funding to support the strategy, including when the council is intending to dispose of land	Cabinet	A response from Cabinet is attached to this agenda.	Complete
9 December 2016	REVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION WITH CARE AND SUPPORT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION	That the outputs from the programme of engagement is shared with the Board at a future date	Strategic Director ASC & Public Health	This recommendation has been shared with officers and an update will be	March 2017

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
	AND OLDER PEOPLE'S HOMES PROJECT [Item 7]			brought to a future meeting.	
9 December 2016	PREVENT STRATEGY [Item 8]	That the Prevent action plan for Children's Services is shared with the Board when available.	Assistant Director of Children's Services/ Community Safety Manager	The action plan will be available for the next meeting of the Board.	March 2017
9 December 2016	REPORT FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES [Item 9]	That the Framework includes additional responsibilities for Members as independent visitors to children's homes	Head of Quality & Experience	Following the Board meeting in December, it was agreed that Members will carry out observations of Regulation 44 visits to children's homes, playing a key scrutiny role and feeding back to officers in CSF and their fellow Members. Officers in Children's Services will be working with Members to develop this programme of observations, including how to collate and circulate	Complete

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				information from the observations.	
9 December 2016	REPORT FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES [Item 9]	That the Framework articulates which KPIs are reported to which Board/responsible officer/team, and a principle of reporting consistently on the same, relevant KPIs is included.	Head of Quality & Experience	The Scrutiny Board will continue to monitor the service KPIs during the course of 2017/18 and the Board has been provided an update in this agenda.	March 2017
9 December 2016	REPORT FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES [Item 9]	That a trend analysis report for the key performance data and case audits over the last financial year is prepared for the Social Care Services Board (or equivalent) of the new Council	Scrutiny Officer/Assistant Director for Children's Services	Following the elections and the new Council post May 2017, officers will compile a trend analysis report for the Social Care Services Board (or equivalent).	May 2017
20 January 2017	HOME BASED CARE REPORT [Item 6]	That a further report is brought on the outcome of the re-commissioning of the HBC in the autumn, with evidence included of the impact of the e-brokerage system in developing flexibility in the market	Senior Commissioning Manager	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18	September 2017
20 January 2017	HOME BASED CARE REPORT [Item 6]	That officers explore what additional opportunities exist to support providers with the delivery of Mental Capacity Act	Senior Commissioning Manager	An update will be provided to the Board at its next	May 2017

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
		training		meeting	
20 January 2017	SHORT BREAKS RECOMMISSIONING [Item 7]	That the link of local need to locally available opportunities is emphasised during the commissioning process, where possible and appropriate	Head of Market Strategy/ Senior Commissioning Manager Early Help	An update will be provided to the Board at its next meeting in the new Council year.	May 2017
20 January 2017	SHORT BREAKS RECOMMISSIONING [Item 7]	That officers explore working with district and borough Members to help realise local opportunities	Head of Market Strategy/ Senior Commissioning Manager Early Help	An update will be provided to the Board at its next meeting in the new Council year.	May 2017
20 January 2017	SHORT BREAKS RECOMMISSIONING [Item 7]	That the Council Overview Board consider an item on how the social value charter has been applied to other commissioning and procurement processes across the council	Chairman/Scrutiny Officer of the Council Overview Board	This has been referred to the Council Overview Board and will be considered for inclusion in the 2017/18 forward work programme.	Complete
20 January 2017	SHORT BREAKS RECOMMISSIONING [Item 7]	That officers meet with representatives of the Board during the consultation process to hear how schools have been engaged about identifying ways in which they can support and expand the short breaks offer	Head of Market Strategy/ Senior Commissioning Manager Early Help	A meeting will be scheduled with the Chairman and Vice Chairman in the new Council.	May 2017
20 January 2017	REPORT ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE [Item 8]	That proposals to align and join up initiatives across the services are progressed, and a further report is brought to the Board in 9 months	Area Director, Adult Social Care/ Area Head of Children's Services	This will be added to the list of proposed items for 2017/18	November 2017

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
20 January 2017	REPORT ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE [Item 8]	That a short briefing on the key themes from the staff survey for both directorates is circulated to the Board	Area Director, Adult Social Care/ Area Head of Children's Services	An update will be provided to the Board at its next meeting in the new Council year.	May 2017
20 January 2017	REPORT ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE [Item 8]	That the Chairman ask the Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Board to raise a question regarding workforce when it receives its update on the Surrey Heartlands STP on 17 February 2017	Area Director, Adult Social Care/ Area Head of Children's Services	This question was raised by the Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Board on 17 February 2017. The minutes note: "Members were informed that a number of housing and workforce opportunities were linked to the Three Southern Counties (3SC) devolution proposal, particularly in relation to affordable key worker housing, and that it was expected that the health devolution opportunity would adopt some of the	Complete

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				thinking of the 3SC proposal.”	
20 January 2017	SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULT'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [ITEM 9]	That a short briefing covering how agencies have worked to respond to the rising instances of self-neglect being reported is circulated to the Board	Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board Manager	An update was circulated to the Board regarding responses to instances of Self-Neglect.	<i>Complete</i>
20 January 2017	SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULT'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [ITEM 9]	That, in the new council year, the scrutiny Board looks to support ASC through adopting a similar performance scorecard monitoring arrangement to that it currently has in place for Children Services	Scrutiny Officer	This recommendation will be taken forward with officers, and a proposal considered by the relevant Board in the new council year.	May 2017
20 January 2017	SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULT'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [ITEM 9]	That officers work with the Safeguarding Board to explore how a more timely update is brought to the Scrutiny Board	Scrutiny Officer	This recommendation will be taken forward for the work programme in 17/18	Complete
20 January 2017	SURREY SAFEGUARDING ADULT'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [ITEM 9]	That the Health and Wellbeing Board explore options to identify a named GP for Safeguarding Adults	Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board	This recommendation has been passed onto the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Board will	May 2017

Date of meeting and reference	Item	Recommendations/ Actions	To	Response	Progress Check On
				be informed of the response.	
20 January 2017	SURREY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT [Item 10]	That officers work with the Safeguarding Board to explore how a more timely update is brought to the Scrutiny Board.	Scrutiny Officer	This recommendation will be taken forward for the work programme in 17/18	Complete

Briefing on Self Neglect for Social Services Board

1. Background

- 1.1. The Independent Chair of the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB), Simon Turpitt, attended an earlier meeting of the Social Services Board to present the SSAB Annual Report. At that meeting, members of the Board requested a further update on issues of self-neglect and partners response to this. This briefing fulfils that request.
- 1.2. The duty to safeguarding adults applies to adults who are aged 18 or over, who have care and support needs, and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect (or the risk of it). The Care Act came into effect in April 2015 and this made self-neglect a type of neglect that requires a safeguarding response, led by the Local Authority. Since that time, the following activity has taken place in Surrey.

2. Data

- 2.1. SSAB has been gathering data on self neglect since the Care Act came in. The data is obtained annually and shared with all members of the Board.
- 2.2. Adult Social Care have recently implemented a new IT system and it is anticipated this will enable data on self neglect to be available quarterly.
- 2.3. It should be noted that all agencies are encouraged to report self neglect therefore an increasing number of reported cases is not necessarily an issue, it is likely to indicate professionals heightened awareness.
- 2.4. For the first year that data was available, 2015 – 2016, 2% of the case of the safeguarding enquiries undertaken in Surrey, related to self neglect. This figure is likely to increase as awareness of this abuse, is raised.

3. Multi Agency self neglect Protocol

- 3.1. To assist partners work together to respond to cases of self neglect, in January 2016 all agencies on SSAB agreed a Protocol on identifying and responding to self neglect. This supports all workers, including volunteers, to identify, respond and co-operate in suspected cases of self-neglect. This policy is publically available on the website at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/SSAB-Policy-and-Procedures-on-self-neglect.pdf

4. Snapshot Briefing

4.1. SSAB members have agreed a briefing sheet that contains the essential information on self neglect in an easy to read form. This is particularly useful for agencies that may come into contact with people who self neglect but who are not safeguarding professionals, for example, people who work in the voluntary sector. This briefing is publically available on the website at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/Self-neglect-snapshot-briefing.pdf

5. Learning lessons from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (previously called Serious Case Reviews)

5.1. Partner agencies on the SSAB are keen to learn lessons on how to respond effectively to cases of self neglect. To achieve this, agencies have been looking at the circumstances and recommendations in Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SAR) from other areas. In particular, the Board and the 5 local Safeguarding Adults Groups have studied the SAR undertaken in Camden that identified important learning.

6. Training

6.1. SSAB runs a multi agency training programme. This includes a course on self neglect. All agencies are able to book on the course. 6 courses have been offered this financial year with a capacity to take 20 people at each session. In addition, individual major agencies such as Health and Social Care run their own training in this area.

7. Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

7.1. In October last year, Surrey launched the MASH. This involves co-locating staff from ASC, Childrens Services, Police, Health, Surrey Fire & Rescue Services so they can work together to safeguard all residents in Surrey. An important part of this service is early identification of concerns, including in relation to self-neglect. To support this, agencies are working together on an 'Early Help Module' for the IT system that will enable ASC to collate information on lower level concerns more easily. This will support agencies work together on cases of self neglect that have been identified but do not yet require the full response under Section 42 of the Care Act.

8. SSAB Newsletter

8.1. SSAB has published items in the newsletter to support agencies identify and respond to self neglect. SSAB publishes a newsletter quarterly to over 800 recipients. In addition it is publically available on the website: www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board-newsletters

From: Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board, March 2017



COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN'S
ROOM

C/O Andrew Spragg
Democratic Services
Surrey County Council
Room 122
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston Upon Thames
KT1 2DN

13 January 2017

Dear Linda, Clare and Julie

Social Care Services Board – MASH Update to the Performance and Finance Sub-Group

I am writing following an update the sub-group received regarding the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 12 January 2017.

The sub-group notes several key areas of concern since the MASH went live on 5 October 2016:

- That the MASH was initially resourced with 34 social workers, despite advice consultants gave suggesting a MASH of equivalent size would require in the region of 150. The sub-group was informed the MASH is now resourced with approximately 80 social workers;
- That IMT issues related to the Liquidlogic Children's Social Care System (LCS) resulted in low productivity and created unnecessary delays in the referral process;
- That a backlog of contacts awaiting assessment was created as result of these issues, and that children were exposed to an unacceptable level of risk during that time.

Further to this, the sub-group was also informed that the management of these issues has created a number of cases awaiting allocation in the Early Help Co-ordination Hubs (EHCH).

In light of the above, the sub-group would like to request the following:

- Data demonstrating the trends in contacts, referrals and unallocated cases, both for the MASH and EHCH, since the MASH was operational;
- A briefing note outlining how risk is managed in unallocated cases for all aspects of the referral and assessment process;

The sub-group notes the overspend within the Children, Schools and Families budget brought about by the MASH requiring additional resource.

It acknowledges that this was reported in the budget report to Cabinet on 13 December 2016. The sub-group was informed by officers that this additional resource had contributed to the council overspend by approximately £1 million. The evidence above would suggest that this will be a continued pressure for the foreseeable future.

The sub-group strongly supports the allocation of appropriate resource to the MASH, and would ask that this is built into the directorate budget.

It also asks that the service and IMT look to engage with other local authorities using LCS and Liquidlogic to ensure that issues are escalated and addressed by the software provider as a matter of priority.

I would be grateful if you could confirm the anticipated timescales for improvement in the performance for the MASH, and that a further update is brought to the scrutiny board in three months.

I thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Keith Witham
Chairman, Social Care Services Board

Cc. David Hodge, Leader of the Council
David McNulty, Chief Executive of the Council
Tim Hall, County Councillor, Leatherhead and Fetcham East



CABINET MEMBER

Linda Kemeny
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
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KT1 2DN

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Email: Linda.Kemeny@surreycc.gov.uk

Cllr Keith Witham
Chairman, Social Care Services Board
Surrey County Council
County Hall

20 February 2017

Dear Cllr Witham

Thank you for your letter dated Friday 13 January 2017.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is always a key area of focus for the Improvement Board, and its progress is reviewed at every meeting.

We are grateful for your support in the resourcing of the MASH and we agree that this should be done within the overall financial constraints of the directorate.

We can confirm that the anticipated timescale for improvement is by March and we will report to the Social Care Services Board as planned.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Linda Kemeny

Cabinet Member for
Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement
Surrey County Councillor - Woking South West

Clare Curran

Cabinet Member for Children
and Families Wellbeing
County Councillor - Bookham
and Fetcham West

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Social Care Services Board

16 March 2017

Early Help and the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Task Group

Interim Report on Activity

Summary of activity

The terms of reference for the task group are attached as **annex 1**. From autumn 2016/17, representatives from the task group met with the following witnesses:

- Garath Symonds, Assistant Director for Commissioning & Prevention, Children, Schools and Families
- Ben Byrne, Head of Early Help, Children, Schools and Families
- Emily Pentland, Partnership & Programme Manager, Children, Schools and Families
- Jackie Lodge, Chief Executive, Walton on Thames Charity
- Rebecca Brooker, Prevention and Communities Lead, Adult Social Care

In addition to the work of the Task Group, the Board has received a report on Early Help at its meeting on 26 October 2016. A further report regarding the Children, Schools and Families commissioning plan, which includes additional detail related to Family Hubs, is being considered at the Board's meeting today (16 March 2017).

The Task Group is grateful to witnesses for their time and input. It presents a summary of its discussions to date, and makes some interim conclusions.

The role of Early Help in reducing demand on statutory services

The Task Group was given a briefing on Early Help, and its role in reducing demand on statutory child protection services.

It was outlined that any Early Help strategy would have to work in conjunction with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which had become the primary front-door for any safeguarding referral in October 2016.

Officers outlined three points of failure within the current referral system:

- **Demand** – Children's Service had received approximately 66,000 contacts seeking to make a referral in the previous year. The Task Group was informed that a quarter of these were repeat referrals. It was also noted that a high

number of these contacts were related to children already known to Children's Services.

- **Thresholds** – Officers highlighted that in the previous year (2014/15) the number of Child and Family Assessments that led to a Child Protection Plan was one in four. This was compared to Kent, where the ratio was one in two. Officers expressed the view that this suggested that the thresholds for a social care intervention were not consistently understood or applied by those making referrals.
- **Follow up/step down** – The Task Group was informed that a high percentage of cases being referred did not meet the thresholds for a statutory intervention.

The Task Group was informed that the development of previous Early Help offers had not proved successful, and that this had an adverse impact on the council's relationship with partners such as schools.

The new Early Help offer would see an investment from the council of £2.4 million in order to realise potential savings of £11.4 million.

The current role of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS)

The Task Group was informed that there were examples of good practice in how the council worked with the VCFS in delivering improved outcomes for children and their families. An example of this was the Streets Apart programme in Elmbridge. The programme overview of which is included as **annex 2**.

The Task Group met with Jackie Lodge, Chief Executive of Walton Charity, to explore the background of the Streets Apart programme. It was highlighted that the original initiative had been proposed by the voluntary sector, with the charity contacting the council in order to discuss how they could work collaboratively to address local need.

The Task Group discussed the benefits of this grassroots approach. It was supportive of a principle of VCFS groups being encouraged to build local models to improve resilience and address need, rather than a centralised county-wide model.

It was highlighted by witnesses that there was potential for the council to support local brokers in developing capacity within the voluntary sector. Witnesses felt that the most critical areas of need were related to ensuring that VCFS organisations had the right governance models, administrative training and back office support.

It was highlighted that there was significant variability in terms of what was locally available. One of the primary aims for the service is to identify and develop ways of VCFS partners in order to support the Early Help agenda.

The sub-group discussed the potential to develop community resources and utilise already existing assets as a means of providing additional space for Early Help services.

Development of Family Hubs

The Task Group explored the development of Family Hubs, a summary of which is attached as **annex 3**. This model has been given strong support by the Children's Commissioner for England¹ and was focussed on putting a team around the family in order to improve support and outcomes for children.

The Task Group explored the prioritisation of resource across the county, and how it could be effectively managed to provide the most efficient Early Help offer to the areas of most need.

Officers shared that there were continued challenge in areas where the voluntary, community and faith sector resource was limited, and appetite for community-driven initiatives was variable. This was a common feature of areas of high deprivation in Surrey, though not exclusively the case.

The Task Group queried whether there was an opportunity to engage more with schools in the Early Help offer and that there was a key point of inclusion, particularly in the Primary Sector, that needed to be addressed. Officers noted that there was a generally strong level of engagement from the Primary Sector and that work was being undertaken to build upon this.

It was highlighted that 48 out of 58 children's centres were situated within the Primary Sector and that some of these would become Family Hubs as part of the new offer.

It was suggested that there was a move within the service to shift the focus of the current offer in children's centres away from a prescriptive approach. Members suggested that there was scope to include more input from the voluntary sector. It was noted that this was a concern present in children's centre workers regarding this change.

A Programme Board, led by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing, is being initiated with a timeline of progress and monitoring. The expectation was that the new Early Help delivery model will be in place by January

¹ 'Family Hubs: A Discussion Paper', Children's Commissioner for England, October 2016
<http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Family%20Hubs%20-%20A%20Discussion%20Paper%202016.pdf>

2018.

It was suggested that there were some instances of early adopters of the initiative that would operational earlier. It was noted that this could be achieved through rebranding some existing services. It was also noted that there were some shared estate opportunities with NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs).

It was noted that the Family Hubs would provide a wide range of services, rather than just an Early Help offer, and that there was scope to improve links with partners to deliver this service.

Lessons learnt from Family, Friends and Community Support

The Task-Group discussed possible lessons that could be learnt by looking at how Family, Friends and Community Support was delivered in Adult Social Care.

It was commonly recognised that the voluntary sector delivered a wide range of impactful, positive support. The challenge, however, remains how this could be targeted to best meet the need of local communities. Officers expressed the view that the County Council was able to provide an oversight of these needs, in respect to social care, and a shaping role in how it supported partners.

It was highlighted that time was required to develop a common vision and understanding amongst partners about what respective roles the County Council and VCFS were to play. Officers outlined how lessons were being shared with respect to developing an Early Help offer, and the Task Group was assured there is a common dialogue between Adult Social Care and Children, Schools and Families in this respect.

The Task Group raised questions as to whether there were opportunities to embed the sign-posting of VCFS in how social care practitioners operated in Children's Services. It was highlighted that there were some critical distinctions in how social care support operated in respect to adults and children, particularly in reference to the statutory framework in which this support was delivered. It was noted, however, that there were opportunities to develop this thinking in reference to family support, and that Family Hubs would support this sign-posting.

Conclusions

The Task Group feels that ongoing development of the Early Help offer is essential in delivering the transformational changes required to improve outcomes for families and manage demand on statutory services.

On the basis of the evidence heard, there is clearly a commitment to work with the VCFS in this respect, though a number of significant challenges in the year ahead. These include:

- Ensuring that VCFS partners are enabled by the work, and given a mandate to deliver, without taking a prescriptive centralised approach;
- Negotiating partner engagement at a time that resource is being reduced and delivery models redesigned;
- Involving all aspects of the VCFS, including faith partners, in order to maximise their contribution to improved outcomes for families; and
- Addressing regional variance in the VCFS infrastructure through resource, support and investment, in order to improve resilience in more deprived communities.

The Board's successor might wish to consider how it maintains oversight in this area, and how it can continue to scrutinise and support the development of the Early Help offer in Children, Schools and Families. The Task Group recommends:

- That the Task Group terms of reference is reviewed by the relevant scrutiny board in the new Council year, and a decision made as whether to continue.

Report contact:

Andrew Spragg, Scrutiny Officer, Democratic Services

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Annexes

Annex 1 – Early Help and VCFS Terms of Reference

Annex 2 – Streets Apart Programme Overview

Annex 3 – Developing Family Hubs Paper

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Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

The process for establishing a task and finish group is:

1. The Scrutiny Board identifies a potential topic for a task and finish group
2. The Scrutiny Board Chairman and the Scrutiny Officer complete the scoping template.
3. The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews the scoping document
4. The Scrutiny Board agrees membership of the task and finish group.

<p>Review Topic: The role of the voluntary, community and faith sector in early help for children, young people and their families</p>
<p>Scrutiny Board(s) Social Care Services Board</p>
<p>Relevant background</p> <p><u>Early Help</u></p> <p>Early help plays a vital role in reducing demand on statutory services and improving outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>As Impower’s April 2015 report <i>Breaking the Lock</i> notes: “[The national] shift to a preventative model as being driven by two critical factors; the need to improve outcomes and life chances for vulnerable children and need to make services more sustainable.”</p> <p>It goes onto comment: “Early help must be seen as a component part of a wider whole system that is focused on responding to the needs of children earlier, ensuring that we provide the right help at the right time and that early identification and early help are firmly within the scope of child protection services. To have the greatest impact we need to ensure that all of our universal, voluntary and targeted support services work together to improve the lives of our children and reduce to a minimum the need for direct intervention by social care professionals.”¹</p> <p><u>Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS)</u></p> <p>A report to the Resident Experience Board on 21 July 2015 outlines that: “There are over 5,700 voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) groups in Surrey. Most of these are front line organisations, delivering services directly to our communities. They range in their size and purpose and can be large organisations like the Red Cross that cover the whole county, to much smaller organisations like neighbourhood watches or locally based befriending schemes. The voluntary, community (VCFS) and faith sector is hugely important to Surrey County Council supporting us to deliver key services meeting the needs of the residents of Surrey and often reaching those parts of the community that are the most vulnerable.”²</p>

¹ <http://www.impower.co.uk/insights/new-report-breaking-the-lock-released-today>

² <http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s23529/FINAL%20REB%2021%20July%202015.pdf>

In Surrey the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector (VCFS) supports the early help offer in a variety of ways:

- by being commissioned to deliver services on behalf of the council
- by providing early help services that improve outcomes for children and young people, therefore reducing the need for statutory intervention
- by coordinating community efforts to improve resilience in children, young people and their families

Why this is a scrutiny item

Services across the directorate are being faced with significant budgetary and demand pressures.

In order to continue to meet its statutory responsibilities and realise improvements, the Council will be required undertake work to transform how services are delivered.

The Early Help agenda is central to achieving this transformation, and the role of key partners, such as VCFS, is a key component in this regard.

Adult Social Care has undertaken a number of initiatives under its Family, Friends and Community Support programme to bolster the role of the VCFS and improve how these services are signposted.

This has worked in conjunction with other strands of the programme in order to support the Directorate's strategic aims. The overall programme is expected to achieve £14.5million savings over the life of the council's current Medium Term Financial Plan (2016-21).

The Board would like to develop an understanding of how Children, Schools and Families could utilise the lessons from this initiative, and also support the Directorate in identifying opportunities that exist for the VCFS and council to collectively support the Early Help agenda.

What question is the task group aiming to answer?

How does the Council currently work with the VCFS to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families, and reduce the need for statutory services?

What are the current examples of success, and what barriers exist in relation to the above?

What could the Council do differently to bolster the role of the VCFS in supporting the early help agenda?

What savings can be delivered and evidenced by developing work with the VCFS?

What lessons can be learnt from the Council's work on Family, Friends and Community Support in order to ensure the benefits of working with the VCFS are realised?

What gaps exist in the VCFS offer across Surrey?

What are the risks and opportunities associated with developing an early help offer in conjunction with the VCFS?

Aim

To identify potential policy developments and opportunities to work with the VCFS, and support the improvement work being undertaken by the council in regard to children, young people and their families.

Objectives

- Establish a current picture of how the VCFS and council work together to improve outcomes for children
- Seek the views of key stakeholders and partner agencies as to what opportunities exist to improve collaborative working
- Consider what can be learnt from the work undertaken with the VCFS in regard to Family, Friends and Community Support
- Make recommendations to inform future commissioning decisions, and support the VCFS and council working jointly to deliver an early help agenda

Scope (within / out of)

Given the short period of time to conduct preliminary witness sessions, the task group will need to take a focussed, strategic approach to its work.

It will, however, note possible future avenues for scrutiny to assist future work.

In scope

- Partnership arrangements with the VCFS and the council in regard to children and young people
- The Early Help strategy

Out of scope

- Support arrangements for individual children and young people
- Delivery of VCFS arrangements in Adult Social Care
- Grant giving and commissioning processes
- Targeted and statutory services
- Children who are Looked After
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities Programme

Outcomes for Surrey / Benefits

Through the work it proposes to undertake, the Task Group will support the following of the Council's strategic priorities for 2016-21:

Wellbeing:

"Everyone in Surrey has a great start to life and can live and age well"

- Improve outcomes for children in need of support and protection
- Support 750 families through the Surrey Family Support Programme

Resident experience

"Residents in Surrey experience public services that are easy to use, responsive and value for money"

- Enhance opportunities for residents to influence and shape council services
- Deliver the savings set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan

It will do so by producing recommendations that support future policy development aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people, while also ensuring best value for public resources.

Proposed work plan

It is important to clearly allocate who is responsible for the work, to ensure that Members and officers can plan the resources needed to support the task group.

Timescale	Task	Responsible
August 2016	Terms of reference drafted	Scrutiny officer/Chairman
21 September 2016	Terms of reference approved by Council Overview Board	COB/Chairman
September – October 2016	First set of witness sessions	Scrutiny officer/Task Group
November 2016	Verbal update to Board	Task Group
November 2016	Second set of witness sessions	Scrutiny officer/Task Group
December 2016	Report back and consideration of final recommendations by the Board, prior to referral to Cabinet in January 2017.	Task Group

Witnesses

Officers

Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention
Senior Strategy & Policy Development Manager, Children, Schools and Families
Head of Youth Support Services
Head of Early Years & Childcare Service
Strategic Partnership Manager. Children, Schools and Families
Lead officers for Family, Friends and Community Support

External witnesses

Church Diocese representatives
Phase Council representatives
Homestart
Oasis
Wellcare
Surrey Care Trust
YMCA
Busy Bees

Useful Documents

<http://www.impower.co.uk/insights/new-report-breaking-the-lock-released-today>
¹<http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s23529/FINAL%20REB%2021%20July%202015.pdf>

Potential barriers to success (Risks / Dependencies)

Equalities implications

The voluntary, community and faith sector represents a broad range of different communities and ethnic groups. The Task Group will work to ensure that it takes this into account when identifying witnesses.

The Task Group will monitor the equalities implications emerging from its recommendations with officers, and will work to identify mitigation measures for those with a potentially negative impact.

Task Group Members	
Co-opted Members	
Spokesman for the Group	
Scrutiny Officer/s	Andrew Spragg

Streets Apart: Working Together in Elmbridge Programme Overview

Vision

'Elmbridge is a great place to grow up where all children, young people and their families have the best chance of being healthy, happy, safe and confident in their future.'

Outcomes

In Elmbridge, we will **work together** in order to improve the life experiences of children, young people and their families, in particular those who face disadvantage. This may include, but is not limited to; the co-design of initiatives and projects, joint commissioning and integrated services. In particular, we aim to;

- Further develop the local **housing** pathways for young people, ensuring they can live in and contribute to the area in suitable accommodation that supports a successful transition to adulthood
- Positively influence the **health and well being** of particular communities by better understanding their experiences and through fully joined up services
- Ensure that children and young people are accessing good information and guidance about their futures and are able to progress their **education, employment and skills** supported by local agencies and businesses
- Work together to ensure that young people experience **healthy relationships** with their school, friends, family and partners and have the resilience to manage difficulties when they arise
- Build on national research and best practice to better understand the experiences of **families living in poverty**. To work together innovatively and with expert guidance to improve the experiences of children and families who face economic disadvantage
- Increase **community capital** by focussing on assets not deficits

Approach:

- Break down barriers to working together
- Be inclusive, resident centred & focussed on local area
- Seek to better understand resident experience – grass roots
 - Be responsive to empirical evidence
 - Pilot model, develop & share learning
 - Build on existing assets

Summary

Elmbridge is a desirable place to live for many; it also has many hidden challenges. A number of interested parties have set out to establish a deeper understanding of the unique situation in the borough. The 2014 '**Streets Apart**', youth focused report and the more recent New Economic Foundation report on '**Inequality in Elmbridge**' has uncovered a number of local challenges and opportunities. A range of stakeholders have committed to coalescing around a set of agreed priorities in order to improve outcomes for local people, the programme places a particular focus on children, young people and their families who experience disadvantage, inequality and social isolation. Our objectives will be achieved by working together as a 'whole system', aligning resources, knowledge and expertise. Streets Apart is the vehicle for bringing together members of the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sectors, local government at Borough and County level and the private sector to work in collaboration at a local level in ways which are new and innovative. We are drawing on national research and building our own body of local research with residents that will shape the project as it develops

Projects

Elmbridge Bike Project

Lead: John Thurlow, Kier Schiltz
An opportunity for all ages to develop new skills, enhance physical activity, increase employability & social networks

**Elmbridge Young
Person's Lodgings, Pilot Scheme**
Lead: Julie Cook, Colin Waters
Co-designed, co-commissioned and co-funded pilot to increase housing options through development of local resource

Elmbridge Child Well Being Audit
Lead: Emily Pentland
Sponsor: Jackie Lodge
Listening to the voice of the child & responding as a whole system in order to improve life experiences

Working Together in Lower Green

Lead: Ian Burrows & Emily Pentland
Asset based community project to improve experiences of residents in an area of deprivation.

**Elmbridge Joint
Youth Strategy**
Lead: Chris Beck
Sets out priorities as defined by young people. Joint responsibility held by all

**Elmbridge Protected Work
Placements**
Lead: Chris Beck
Supportive work experience placements for young people in conjunction with local business

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Developing Family Hubs in Surrey

Aim and Scope

Family Hubs will serve families within their local communities providing a wide and diverse resource within every district and borough. The role of Family Hubs will be to provide and/or co-ordinate access to universal and targeted family related support and specialist services within a welcoming and accessible environment. The intention will be to support families to be resilient, self-reliant and independent whilst having the help when they need it in a timely and appropriate way.

Family Hubs will house integrated early help practitioners with a range of expertise and skills who work together to coordinate the delivery of interventions within the area. Each district and borough is likely to require between 3-6 family hubs. Venues for hubs could be provided by any partner agency, examples could be schools, children's centres, health centres, GPs or youth centres. It is anticipated that through integration and co-location of services the total size of the public estate can be reduced. A local families' partnership manager for each district and borough will help to build effective multi-agency integrated working within the Family Hubs' reach areas.

Family Hubs have recently been recommended in reports by the Children's Commissioner for England and the All Party Parliamentary Group on children's centres. Early evaluations of Family Hubs indicate that they:

- Bring about greater integration and synergy between statutory and voluntary agencies enabling them to prevent and protect more effectively and efficiently
- Encourage significantly more families to have contact with services leading to better family outcomes.
- Reduce the likelihood of children and young people entering care with families receiving whole family help and support at an earlier stage of intervention.

A vision for locality Family Hubs

Surrey Family Hubs will serve families 0-19 (up to 25 years of age for young people with special educational needs or disabilities) from birth through the primary and secondary school years. They are settings where families are supported to access the help they need for their whole family with trusted and well trained staff who listen and know how to help. It is a place where families feel confident, respected and enabled to ask for advice and information. They know that the help offered will make a difference to both themselves and in the lives of their children and young people.

The Family Hub will use a restorative, strength-based approach doing things "with" families rather than "to" them and building relationship and rapport that will last across many years of family life. Family Hubs will be key to embedding the Safer Surrey practice model with all partners working with children and families. The impact of the Family Hub can be far-reaching in generating positive outcomes for children and young people, including investing in the parents they will one day become and the parenting they will offer in the next generation.

Education, health, community policing and all local voluntary organisations will know about and refer families to services offered in the Family Hub as well as complementing these services with their own. Family Hubs will work together with the District and Borough locality partnership of early help services to understand what families need and co-ordinate an offer of support for families needing additional or specialist help.

Families who experience multiple and/or complex difficulties in their lives can feel confident that a well-trained practitioner will come alongside them to build positive relationship creating an appropriate Team around the Family that is able to support, enable and empower the family towards self-reliance and independence. Specialist social work, SEND and health input will also be available to support the work done in Family Hubs. Once the initial concerns they have are improving, families can continue to have ongoing support through the Family Hub into the future. There will be no automatic cessation of service and families can be known and held through the years if this is what they need to stabilise and gain resilience. There is no “cliff edge” according to age and stage.

Key outcomes for Early Help Family Hubs

Health and wellbeing: Children, young people and families are empowered to achieve positive mental and physical health and feel supported when health problems arise.

Healthy relationships: Families develop healthy relationships and feel able to cope when challenges arise

Feeling and being safe: Children, young people and families are empowered to keep safe and professionals work together to identify and address safeguarding concerns at the earliest point possible.

Fulfil potential: Children, young people and families are supported to fulfil their potential and have the skills to make a successful transition at each stage in the life course..

Example Family Hub Offer

- Information and advice - acts as a portal to locality statutory and voluntary resources
- Parenting groups
- Parent workshops e.g. health; nutrition; cooking; budgeting; children and young people’s behaviour; work readiness; the teenage brain
- Parent 1:1 counselling
- ASD and ADHD support
- Employment and training advice for parents and young people
- Money management and budgeting
- Family learning
- Couple relationship and co-parenting support
- Sex and relationship guidance
- Youth work and youth mentoring/counselling
- Portal for supporting children, young people and their families needing additional help and specialist support around the following issues: domestic abuse, offending and anti-social behaviour, financial difficulties, homelessness, substance misuse, physical and mental health and disability, bereavement and trauma, ASD and ADHD, services to promote sexual health and reduce the risk of sexual exploitation

Additional 0 – 5 Offer (already in place within Children’s Centre’s)

- Supporting every new parent
- Childcare and early education
- Supporting child and family health
- Healthy life style and healthy weight
- Parent and Infant mental health
- Learning and mentoring

Making it Happen

The county council is committed to having a new early help delivery model in place by January 2018. It is recognised that realising the full Family Hub model and supporting early help offer will take longer than this but it is nonetheless critical that SCC services are sufficiently changed in the course of 2017 to deliver a new early help offer, the improved outcomes and financial savings which it will provide.

Each district and borough held an early help partnership event at the end of 2016 and a further set of events are taking place in February and March in all eleven D&B's. These events have been co-facilitated by SCC and D&B leads and are bringing together partners from across the sectors in each locality. Outputs of these events will include defining how partners will work together at a local level, identifying where potential hubs will be located and forming early advisory groups. This work is supported by the comprehensive needs assessment and demand modelling which has been undertaken across Surrey to determine the places where Family Hubs are most needed.

A key component of the local arrangements will be the formation of Family Services in Surrey bringing together responsibilities for Services for Young People, Early Help Co-ordination Hubs, the Family Information Service, the Family Support Programme (delivered by D&B staff) and children's centres (delivered by schools and voluntary sector partners). Locally Young People and Families Teams, led by a partnership families manager, will operate in each D&B from May 2017.

A number of district and boroughs (thus far Woking, Elmbridge and Tandridge) have indicated that they would like to be early adopters of the Family Hub model and meetings are planned at a strategic level between key partners to accelerate progress towards identifying hubs and putting in place local arrangements to deliver the new early help offer. This work will complement the developments through the wider early help partnership events and be supported by the county level Early Help Transformation Programme, which has been established to ensure delivery of the new early help offer and Family Hubs.

Key activities to deliver Family Hubs:

- Identify a lead site for co-location of early help / families staff in each D&B
- Agree key communities in each D&B that require a Family Hub
- Map existing property to identify potential Family Hubs
- Agree deployment of staff. In the first instance this will always include SCC staff and SCC commissioned services but will need to have the flexibility to incorporate partner staff according to local arrangements and partner timelines
- It is recommended that the strategic leads in each district and borough (SCC, D&B, health and key voluntary sector partners) form a working group to drive forward the work locally

Work towards delivering Family Hubs should be reported to each borough and district chief executive from their own working group and progress will be reviewed by the county CEO group meeting and overseen by the Early Help Transformation Programme Board.

Ben Byrne – SCC Head of Early Help
06/02/17

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CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES

Surrey Children, Schools & Families Prevent Action Plan

Version: March 2017			
Action	Owner	Update/Actions	Status
1. Partnership			
Identify and maintain a Prevent lead to act as a single point of contact on Prevent matters	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	Overall Lead for the Directorate is the Head of Safeguarding (including Lead for Children's Services). Service Lead for Youth Justice and YSS Area Manager is the Lead in Commissioning & Prevention, and the Education Safeguarding Advisor is the Lead in Schools & Learning.	Complete
Representation on the Prevent Executive and Management Boards.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	The Leads are represented on the Boards.	Complete
Support Channel Panels by ensuring relevant professional representation at Channel Panels.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	Commitment given to the Prevent Executive Board that relevant representation will be made at convened Channel Panels.	Complete
Review how Channel Panels operate and consider regular Panels with consistent membership.	Gordon Faulkner, Community Safety, Senior Manager	There have been preliminary discussions. <i>Action: Gordon and the Police plan to visit different County Councils who are named as 'good practice' with a view to replicating the set up in Surrey. This will be presented at a future Prevent Executive Board.</i>	Ongoing
2. Risk assessment			
Incorporate Prevent duty into local authority led safeguarding policies such as those identifying children at risk.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	Prevent was incorporated into the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board policies with links to Children's Service Procedure Manual. The referral pathway and processes were updated in March 2016.	Complete
To ensure that information relating to Prevent/Channel Panels is linked to relevant children and young people on the LCS recording system.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	<i>Action: Further work needs to be done to clarify this.</i>	Outstanding

3. Staff Training & Awareness			
Ensure front line staff have a good understanding of Prevent and are able to recognise vulnerabilities, including the referral process into Channel.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	<p>The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board delivered several sessions covering Prevent/Online/Safety/CSE at the launch of the strategy (March 2016).</p> <p>The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board reviewed the training offer in relation to radicalisation and it is covered in their online and CSE training.</p> <p>All YSS practitioners have received Prevent Awareness Training via Area Prevent Co-ordinators, Surrey Police.</p> <p>A number of staff from Children Services have also received training but it is not possible to audit to numbers. All staff in Surrey children's residential establishments have undertaken mandatory e-learning.</p> <p><i>Action: 1) To remind practitioners and managers via the staff bulletin of Prevent. 2) To ensure all frontline practitioners have undertaken Prevent e-learning (approx. 45 mins). 3) Further work to be done by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and Community Safety to ensure that relevant staff are training on Prevent within a clear training pathway.</i></p>	Ongoing
4. Use of Local authority premises			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure publicly used premises are not used by extremist organisations 	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	<p>Sarah Gooding is the Senior Manager responsible for health & safety in relation to the LA youth estate (youth centres) and this action is complete in relation to the LA youth estate.</p> <p><i>Action: An audit needs to be undertaken of publically used premises within the Directorate and a check of relevant measures in place.</i></p>	Ongoing
5. Safety Online			
The SSCB online Safety Strategy to be reviewed and will include actions to address Radicalisation.	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding		Completed
IT equipment available to children should use filtering solutions to limit access to extremist material (eg Children Centres, looked after children, Surrey online school)	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	<p>Some work has been undertaken in this area eg 'Surrey Online School' though there is more to be done.</p> <p><i>Action: Analysis to be undertaken of action taken and vulnerabilities.</i></p>	Ongoing

Local authority to host Prevent related material on its public facing website	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding/Gordon Faulkner, Community Safety, Senior Manager	There is Prevent information on the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board website (resources for professionals). The main Surrey website information on Prevent is on the Community Safety site - http://www.surreycommunitysafety.org.uk/prevent/ <i>Action: Link to the Community Safety website to be put on the Surrey Safeguarding Board website.</i>	Complete
6. Supporting children			
Private and voluntary organisations providing children's services are included and aware of local authority safeguarding policies	Mark Jowett, Head of Safeguarding	<i>Action: Audit of groups to ensure a targeted response.</i>	Outstanding
Gain understanding of out of school settings including supplementary schools, youth groups and tuition centres, ensuring these locations have appropriate safeguarding measures in place	Mike Blower, Sarah Gooding & Jan Smith, Head of Community Youth Work Service	<i>Action: Audit of groups to ensure a targeted response.</i>	Outstanding