

Report on DBS application processing times as at Sep 2016

Preface: Readers may wish to note that, until recently, the Council did not formally monitor trends in DBS application turnaround times. This document is an adaptation of an internal report that had been commissioned by the Head of HR & OD and completed in October 2016. The report does not contain confidential or commercially-sensitive information.

Surrey County Council DBS applications in progress

Surrey County Council is currently experiencing very long delays with the DBS process, due to a backlog with some Police Forces.

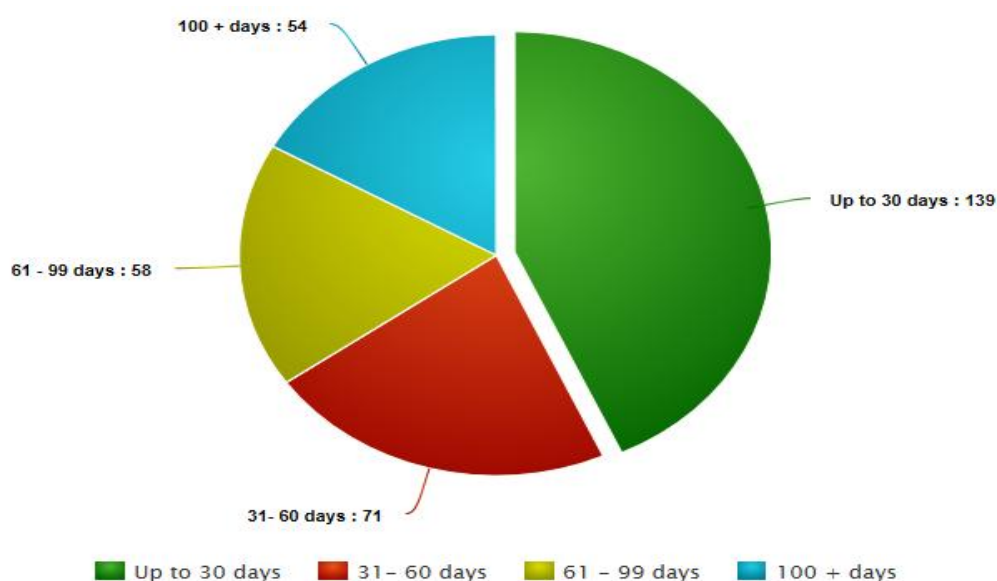
Many of our applications have to go through Thames Valley, Surrey and the Met Police. The aforementioned three forces have been responsible for pronounced delays in application turnaround, and at present some have a backlog of 18 weeks (136 days).

The charts below reflect the timescales of our applications and the services that are being affected by the delays.

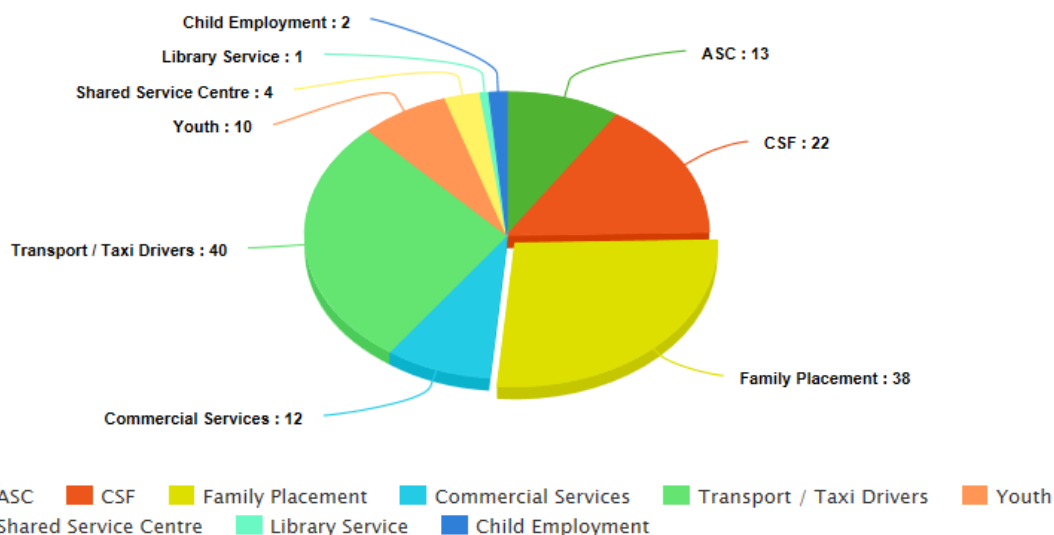
We currently have 322 applications in progress with Police.

This chart shows the breakdown of Surrey County Council applications currently being processed by police forces. The majority of applications are taking over 30 days to process.

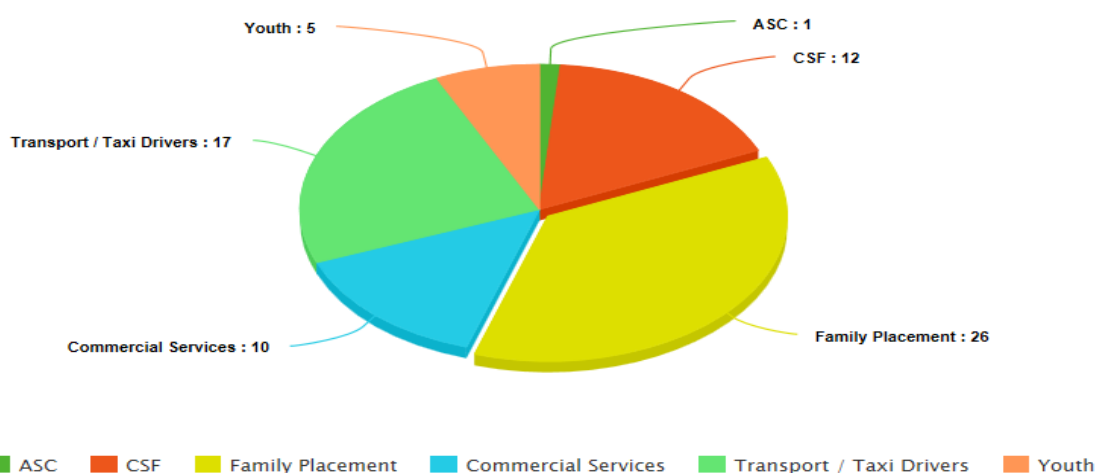
We previously had an average turnaround time of 3 days. In the last year, that average has increased sevenfold to 21 days.



Current applications in process from 0-30 days by Service (139 applications). 84 of the 139 applications have already taken more than 10 days to process.

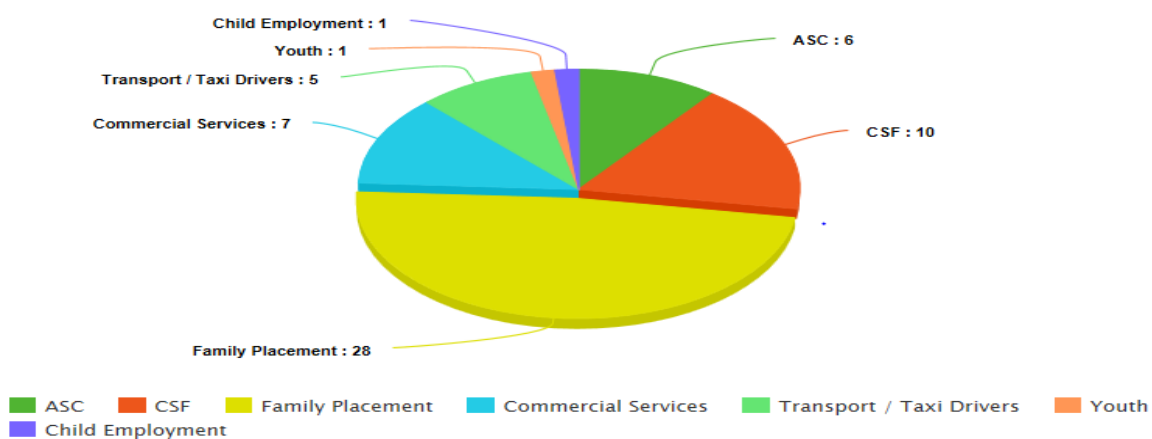


The below chart shows a breakdown of applications that have been in process for 31- 60 days. (71 applications)

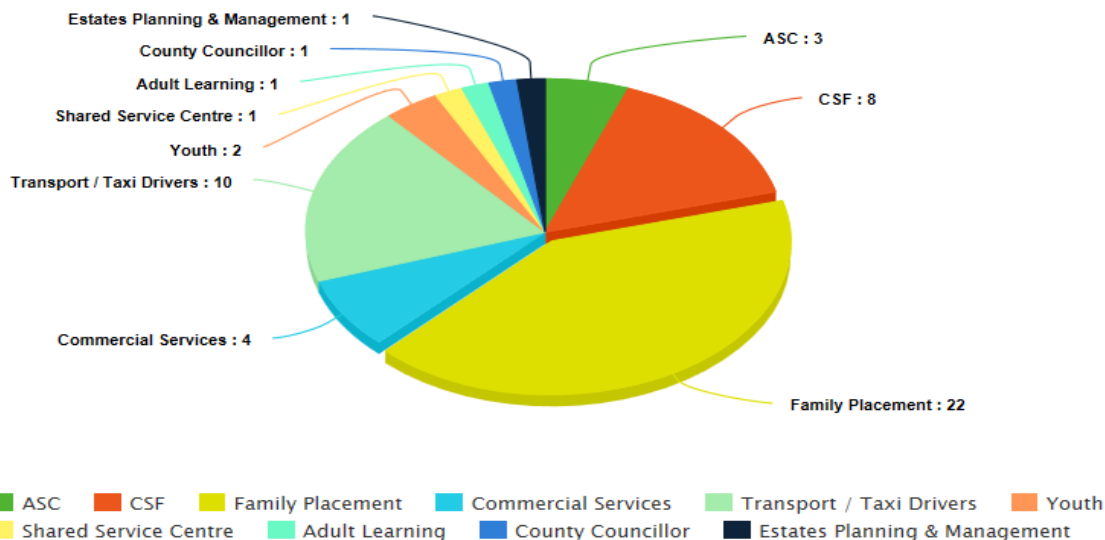


After a delay of 60 days we can “put a chaser” on the DBS application. However, in practice this does not normally speed the process up.

The below chart shows the breakdown of applications that have been in processing for 61 – 99 days (58 applications)



The below chart shows the breakdown of applications that have been in processing for 100 or more days (54 applications)



These applications (100+ days) fall well outside the requirements of the SLA set by the DBS and have all had many chasers put on them by countersignatories as well as the applicants.

On some cases we have made official complaints.

The DBS have informed us that they are sending alerts daily for all application over 60 days.

Family Placement applications do take longer as these are mainly foster carers and as they work from home back ground checks are carried out on all people living at the same address but they do not normally take this long. These used to take on average two weeks.

Summary: In some instances the delay in DBS check means a corresponding delay in a new employee joining Surrey County Council. This can mean we lose this applicant. In other cases the delay means the employee starts under a Risk Assessment. The nature of the risk assessment means the new employee must work under supervision or be office based – and cannot fulfil the full role for which they have been recruited.

The backlogs at these Police Forces have existed for approx. 14 months now. Unfortunately the situation seems to be getting worse rather than better – despite the Police forces suggesting they are committing more resource to clear the backlogs.

