

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee

Agenda

Monday 30 January 2017

7.00 pm

Courtyard Room - Hammersmith Town Hall

MEMBERSHIP

| Administration | Opposition |
|--|---|
| Councillor Caroline Needham (Chair) Councillor Alan De'Ath Councillor Elaine Chumnerly | Councillor Caroline Ffiske (Vice-Chair) Councillor Marcus Ginn |
| Co-optees | |
| Eleanor Allen, London Diocesan Board for Schools Representative Nandini Ganesh, Parentsactive Representative Philippa O'Driscoll, Westminster Diocesan Education Service Representative Nadia Taylor, Parent Governor Representative Vic Daniels, Parent Governor Representative Matt Jenkins, Teacher Representative | |

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Date Issued: 20 January 2017

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

30 January 2017

| <u>Item</u> | | <u>Pages</u> |
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| 1. MINUTES | | 1 - 9 |
| | To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2016. | |
| 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | | |
| 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | | |
| | More information on declarations can be found on the next page. | |
| 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION | | |
| | To invite questions from members of the public. | |
| | Anyone is welcome to ask questions without giving notice but if you have complex questions you can submit them in advance to ensure a more detailed answer. Contact: david.abbott@lbhf.gov.uk | |
| 5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE | | 10 - 16 |
| | This report provides a brief overview of recent developments in the Children's Services department. | |
| 6. CABINET MEMBER'S UPDATE | | |
| | The (Acting) Cabinet Member for Children and Education will give a short verbal update on their activities since the previous meeting. | |
| 7. YOUTH COUNCIL MANIFESTO UPDATE | | |
| | Youth Council members will give a verbal update on their manifesto and last year's Youth Takeover Day. | |
| 8. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS ANNUAL REPORT | | 17 - 40 |
| | This report highlights the responsibilities of the Looked After Children service, recent achievements, and developments for the future. | |
| 9. CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUDGET REPORT 2017 | | 41 - 58 |
| | This report sets out the budget proposals for Children's Services. | |

- 10. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS REPORT 2015-16** 59 - 77
- This report provides information about complaints made between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016. It highlights how the department has performed against statutory timescales and the improvements that have been made.
- 11. WORK PROGRAMME** 78 - 80
- The Committee is asked to review its work programme.
- 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- The next meeting will be held on 27 February 2017 at 7pm in the Town Hall.

More information on declarations of interest

If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.

At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.

Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.

Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Audit, Pensions and Standards Committee.

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes



Monday 21 November 2016

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Caroline Needham (Chair), Alan De'Ath, Elaine Chumnerly, Caroline Ffiske (Vice-Chair) and Donald Johnson

Co-opted members: Eleanor Allen (London Diocesan Board for Schools), Nandini Ganesh (Parentsactive Representative), Nadia Taylor (Parent Governor Representative), Vic Daniels (Parent Governor Representative), and Matt Jenkins (Teacher Representative)

Other Councillors: Councillor Sue Fennimore (Acting Cabinet Member for Children and Education)

Officers: Clare Chamberlain, Rachael Wright-Turner, Jody Nason, John Francis, Mandy Lawson, Steve Miley, and David Abbott

1. MINUTES

Corrections

Nandini Ganesh noted some errors in Item 7 of the minutes. The following paragraph:

“Nandini Ganesh raised a specific concern regarding gaps in the provision of plans for 19-24 year olds. There was a lack of clarity as to whether provision would be made, to illustrate, if a student sought a level 2 plan, an EHCP was required. She continued, referring to the use of parent advocacy at panels and enquired when this would happen.

Should be replaced with:

“Nandini Ganesh noted that students in the middle years of college, e.g. in their second year or studying for a Level 2 course, were often not aware that they could apply for an EHC Plan. She then asked when parent advisors would start attending EHC panels.”

RESOLVED

With the corrections noted above, the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2016 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marcus Ginn and Philippa O'Driscoll.

Nandini Ganesh noted that she had to leave after the Travel Care and Support Service item.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public questions.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Clare Chamberlain, Executive Director of Children's Services, presented the report and took questions from the Committee.

GCSE Results

Councillor Caroline Ffiske noted that she knew some of the West London Free School results were incorrect and asked if they were provisional results. Clare Chamberlain responded that the data came directly from schools but not all of the results had been submitted yet. Once they were submitted they would be verified by the Department for Education (DfE) and final results would be published in January 2017.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly asked if there was a reason for the relatively low EBACs scores for Phoenix High School, Fulham College Boys' School, and Hurlingham Academy. Dennis Charman commented that the EBACs performance measure was not compulsory for schools yet – while many schools had already begun using it internally and had seen good results, others were further behind. Clare Chamberlain said Ian Heggs could provide a written explanation to the committee.

Ark Swift Redevelopment

Matt Jenkins, in reference to 3.3 of the report, asked if the redevelopment of the Ark Swift site was being funded by the Council. Rachael Wright-Turner responded that the redevelopment was being funded by Ark.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees

Councillor Alan De'Ath, with reference to 4.1 of the report, noted that three of the children were described as 'long term missing' and asked officers to clarify what that meant. Steve Miley responded that it meant they had gone 'underground' – they would be officially categorised as missing by the police and the local authority. If social services thought they were in immediate danger there would be a publicity campaign. Councillor De'Ath asked what percentage of those who go missing came back. Steve Miley said it was a low percentage – young people fearing deportation were unlikely to return to the authorities.

Administrative support to social workers

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly noted that the Munroe Review of Child Protection from 2011 made recommendations to help alleviate the administrative burden on social workers but it seemed that had been lost. Clare Chamberlain responded that Partners in Practice (later in the agenda) put a focus on removing bureaucratic barriers for social workers. Children's Services had also recently embarked on a project with FutureGov to look at improving the case management system to free up social worker time.

School Meals Contract Monitoring and Mobilisation Update

Rachael Wright Turner highlighted the school meals update following discussion at the previous meeting. She noted that the update set out data from the robust monitoring and engagement process for the contract. Jody Nason reported that following concerns raised at the previous meeting, officers had visited the schools mentioned and had resolved the issues.

Councillor Caroline Ffiske asked how parents choosing to send their children with pack lunches would affect pricing and ultimately, the viability of the contract. Rachael Wright-Turner responded that the contract cost was based on expected volumes. The price was set per meal and schools only paid for meals served. If fewer people chose to have the meals it would result in reduced profit for provider. She noted that officers were in daily contact with the provider and they were not seeing any significant change in expected volumes.

Nadia Taylor commented that she still had the same concerns raised at the previous meeting (portion size, overall quality etc.). Councillor Sue Fennimore noted that she asked for the update report and the headteacher at the school in question didn't raise any concerns. She asked to meet with Rachael Wright-Turner and the headteacher to discuss.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly suggested that officers carried out a survey of parents to find out if there were any outstanding issues. Officers said they would explore this.

Integrated Family Support Service

Nandini Ganesh asked if the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) tied in to the Youth Partnership Board. Rachael Wright-Turner said they were different initiatives – the Youth Partnership was a structure that allowed providers to shape bids for youth services contracts. However, provision from

the youth sector would be connected with IFSS. She assured the committee that the Board were fully aware of IFSS developments and last month they were involved in workshops and discussions.

National Fair Funding Formula (Schools Funding)

Matt Jenkins noted the update on the fair funding formula, which determined the level of funding schools received from the Government, and welcomed the Council's proactive approach to lobbying for a better deal for its schools. He informed the committee that the NUT and ATL had produced an interactive website - www.schoolcuts.org.uk - that illustrated the impact of the funding reductions. He asked that the committee be circulated an update following the Autumn Statement and discuss further at the following meeting.

6. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Chair noted that Councillor Sue Fennimore had been assuming the duties of the Cabinet Member for Children and Education while Councillor Sue Macmillan was on maternity leave, and congratulated Councillor Macmillan on the birth of her son.

Councillor Sue Fennimore gave the following updates:

- She attended the Shared Services Lead Members meeting where SEN services, the youth offending service, and the Integrated Family Support Service were discussed.
- She visited Fulham Cross Girls' School and met the Executive Headteacher – she noted the wonderful work going on at the school.
- She attended a market engagement day for the new Travel Care and Support contract.
- She attended an event for OnSide Youth Zones – a dynamic new approach for youth services.
- And finally she attended a planning meeting for running a pilot of the 'Show Racism the Red Card' campaign in local schools.

Eleanor Allen also offered her congratulations to Councillor Macmillan and asked whether schools had been informed of the interim Cabinet Member arrangements. Councillor Fennimore noted that a number of schools had been in contact with her already but said she would follow up after the meeting.

7. TRAVEL CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Jody Nason presented the report that gave an overview of the Travel Care and Support Service project including the service specification and the process through which it was developed. Officers had looked at the lessons learned from the previous procurement and at what went well with the more recent Jack Tizard contract. Through the development process, including detailed consultations, engagement, and co-development the following areas were identified:

- Passenger & Travel Care - caring for, and understanding the travel and mobility needs of children.
- Communication & Relationships – better information sharing between providers, young people, parents, carers, schools and after school provision.
- Quality – a person centred service with the unique needs of each child or young person well known and understood by providers and staff.
- Transport & Safety - children and young people should be collected and returned on time at agreed points and never left unsupervised.
- Staffing & Recruitment - staff should be well trained to support and care children and young people’s individual and often complex needs.
- Timing & Logistics – children’s comfort should be paramount when route planning.

Rachael Wright-Turner added that they had just held a market engagement day, which was an opportunity to present the Council’s vision for the service to potential providers and get a sense of the response from them. 45 transport provider staff attended, including representatives from six social enterprises, and feedback on the new specification was very positive. Providers had an additional four weeks prior to the tender going live to speak with officers and learn more about the Council’s requirements for the service.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly commended officers and the Cabinet Members for their work on the new service. She highlighted the importance of having parents and school representatives involved in co-developing the specification and the clear community benefits it offered.

The Chair noted that a working group had been set up two years ago when the issues with the previous service had been uncovered and she was pleased to see how far it had progressed. It was also affirming to know there were providers that shared the Council’s vision for a better kind of transport service.

Nandini Ganesh commented that the Council did a brilliant job with the development of the specification - she was very involved as a representative of Parentsactive and she knew of many other parents who were also involved, either through the working group or those who were called for their views. She asked if the existing providers came to the market engagement day. Rachael Wright-Turner said they did, though there was a marked difference between the way the Council saw the new transport service and the way the traditional passenger transport sector operated. Problems in the past had stemmed from providers winning bids with very low cost contracts that fell-down on quality. The new contract specification was weighted to favour quality over price, ensuring that the successful provider would be guaranteed to deliver a high quality service.

Vic Daniels asked what level of due diligence was carried out on providers. Jody Nason responded that they would all go through a very thorough process. Providers had to pass a financial evaluation and risk assessment, prove they had the right quality of staff and training, and show they had robust safeguarding processes. Then they progressed to the quality assessment

where officers would assess whether they understood travel care and they would set out their service arrangements. That would be scored by commissioners and school representatives – then the final evaluation judged them on price, competitiveness, and took into account references from their previous contracts.

RESOLVED

The Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

8. PARTNERS IN PRACTICE

Clare Chamberlain presented the report that gave an update on Focus on Practice, a programme within Family Services funded by the Department for Education Innovation in Social Care programme, and the plans for the service's work as Partners in Practice with the DfE over the next four years.

The core objective of Focus on Practice was for social workers and other practitioners to use their professional expertise to help create positive change for families and better outcomes for children and young people. To that end the three councils were developing a Centre for Social Work, similar to a hospital trust teaching authority where staff from other authorities would come for placements. The DfE had also given licence for the Focus on Practice partners to think about the bureaucratic and regulatory barriers that could be loosened or removed to increase the time social workers had to spend working with families directly.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly asked what the feedback from social workers had been. Steve Miley responded that he was delighted with the enthusiasm that social workers have shown towards the programme. They particularly like that they get significant training that is practice based. They also get access to clinical therapists to augment their work. Ultimately these programmes freed-up social workers to spend more time with families and help people.

The Chair noted that, from speaking to social workers at Adoption and Fostering panels, the additional training and resources had given staff confidence in preparing for Ofsted inspections and generally improved staff morale. She asked if staff turnover had reduced because of the initiatives. Steve Miley responded that a number of staff members had stayed to complete the training, and even joined because of the training offer.

Vic Daniels asked how officers knew how much of social workers time was spent working with families as compared to the time spent on paperwork. Clare Chamberlain said they had done time logging exercises in the past and there were a number of studies that all gave a similar ratio. She said it would be useful to carry out similar exercises in future to see if the programmes had the desired impact.

Steve Miley commented that there were two specific bids – one was to reduce the number of children going into care by 20 percent, and the second was to reduce the re-referral rate. Those were the key measures for success and to

achieve them Family Services had to engender permanent change in families. Councillor Elaine Chumney asked if the Council had the right services in place to make sure that happened. Steve Miley said they had made progress by putting domestic violence specialists in social work teams. Feedback from social workers was that support for victimised women was far greater than support for men to change their behaviour. Unless male perpetrators changed their behaviour there was a significant danger of re-offending.

Councillor Alan De'Ath asked if, with staff from other authorities coming to the Centre for Social Work to train, there were commercial revenue opportunities. Clare Chamberlain responded that in year one the programme would be funded entirely by the DfE and in years two and three the goal is for the centre to be self-financing, but beyond that there may be revenue generating opportunities.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the report.

9. CHILD PROTECTION ANNUAL REPORT

The committee agreed to take the Child Protection Annual Report together with the Local Safeguarding Children Board annual report.

RESOLVED

The Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

10. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

Steve Miley presented the Child Protection Annual Report. He noted the broader context - that child protection was the primary focus for Ofsted and that H&F had recently achieved a 'good' grade, putting it amongst the very best local authorities in the Country. However, there was always room to improve. Since the inspection, referrals had risen by around ten to twenty percent but all of the work was allocated and statutory timescales were still being met. Family support and child protection services were stretched though and officers were looking to improve that through Focus on Practice and Family Assist.

Jean Daintith, Chair of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), introduced the Local Safeguarding Children Board annual report. She noted that the LSCB was a multi-disciplinary group involved professionals from health, police, social care, community safety, housing, probation, prisons etc. that met quarterly and held special meetings for serious case reviews if a child was seriously harmed or died. The Board was looking at better ways of working – having less time in meetings and thinking more about making the work relevant to both the public and professionals.

Councillor Alan De'Ath asked if the increase in the number child protection plans was a national trend. Steve Miley said the cohort was very small so

numbers fluctuated but officers were investigating and could report back once analysis was complete.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly asked if officers considered the cumulative impact of agencies working with families – if a number of different professionals were interacting with families it could become overwhelming. Steve Miley agreed there was a danger, particularly when dealing with siblings. Family Assist involved only one person from that team and they developed close links with the family. Family Services tried to think which person was the most likely to create change.

Councillor Elaine Chumnerly, noting the recommendation from Ofsted about partnership attendance, asked if there was anything the committee, or the Council, could do to improve attendance. Jean Daintith responded that attendance was generally good, and noted that often what happened outside of meeting was just as important. Meaningful engagement and good communication was key.

Councillor Caroline Ffiske asked for an update on the Troubled Families initiative. Clare Chamberlain responded that it was ongoing, the work was fully integrated into the Early Help service.

Vic Daniels asked if the increase in referrals was good news, in that problems were being better identified, or bad in that there was generally greater need. Steve Miley said it wasn't clear. The LSCB's function was to make sure other agencies were thinking about these issues so the increase could be reflective of that good work to raise awareness. On the other hand, it could also be indicative of increases in deprivation, mental ill health, and other things that negatively affected a child's environment. It was likely to be a mixture of both.

Dennis Charman, in reference to page 47 of the report, noted that there had been a large reduction in the turnover rate. In previous years the turnover rate had been comparable to schools but the improvement was significant – he suggested that perhaps there were lessons that the Education department could learn from Family Services. Steve Miley agreed that the turnover figure was good but noted that recruitment in general remained hard – and it was particularly difficult to recruit experienced social workers.

Councillor Alan De'Ath asked if there was anything the Council could do to retain social workers – helping with travel costs, housing etc. Steve Miley said it had been raised before - travel costs did not seem to be a significant driver but Councillor Sue Fennimore had asked officers to look at allocating some key worker housing. Cost of living was undoubtedly an issue, as staff got older and started families they tended to move to where they could afford to buy houses. Claire Chamberlain added that she was always surprised by the distance people would travel to work in London. She felt manageable caseloads and good managers were the key to retaining staff.

The Chair noted that she had asked the child protection report to look specifically at alcohol abuse and the impact on families. She commented that in her ward some pubs were organising child and toddler groups – she asked

if that was a wider trend and if it was an issue for safeguarding. Jean Daintith said she would follow up outside the meeting and speak to the Licensing team.

The Chair thanked everyone in child protection across the borough who worked every day to keep children safe.

RESOLVED

The Committee reviewed and commented on the report.

11. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee asked that the childcare sufficiency item on the work programme include case studies and a breakdown of childcare costs across the borough. They asked that this information be provided at the January meeting. Councillor Sue Fennimore noted that the Poverty and Worklessness Strategy included recommendations related to childcare as a barrier to work and they could be included in the report.

The Chair asked for a regular update of national items that had a local impact, to be included within the Executive Directors report.

The Committee also requested an update on upcoming changes school funding.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was schedule for 30 January 2017.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 9.20 pm

Chair

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Minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting as a correct record of the proceedings and any amendments arising will be recorded in the minutes of that subsequent meeting.

Agenda Item 5

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| <p>London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham</p> <p>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</p> <p>30 January 2017</p> |  |
| EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE | |
| Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services – Clare Chamberlain | |
| Open Report | |
| Classification: For Information Key Decision: No | |
| Wards Affected: All | |
| Accountable Director: Clare Chamberlain - Executive Director of Children's Services | |
| Report Author: Clare Chamberlain, Executive Director of Children's Services | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8753 3601 E-mail: clare.chamberlain@lbhf.gov.uk |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report provides a brief overview of recent developments of relevance to the Children's Services department for members of the Policy and Accountability Committee to consider.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the report.

3. EDUCATION

School building developments

- 3.1. Holy Cross/ Bilingual Programme- The third and final phase of building works at the Clancarty Road site is planned to be completed in the summer of 2017 and the major remodelling works at Holy Cross, which began in May of 2016 and include new classrooms and a new hall and dining facility, are also on programme for a summer 2017 completion. The classrooms themselves are complete, the steel structure of the hall is in place and landscaping will begin at Easter 2017.
- 3.2. Tri-Borough Alternative Provision (TBAP) The planned 16-19 Academic Free School operated by TBAP opened on time with 18 students in its temporary home at the refurbished Greswell Centre and is reported to be operating well. Designs for

the permanent building and for the remodelling of the current Bridge 11-16 buildings were the subject of a further community consultation in December and opening of the two facilities is anticipated in 2018. Some decanting during the works will be required, and this is currently being negotiated.

The Annual NEET Scorecard

- 3.3. In October 2016, the Department of Education published the annual NEET Scorecard. This provides an overview of how well local authorities have performed in terms of identifying and reducing the number of 16 and 17 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). In Hammersmith and Fulham 1.3% of 16 and 17 year olds are NEET compared to a national average of 2.7%. It places the local authority in the top 20% of councils nationally for the lowest percentage of young people who are NEET and effective tracking.
- 3.4. Hammersmith and Fulham is also within the top 20% for:
- 19 year olds achieving Level 3 qualifications. 65% in the borough against a national average of 57%
 - 16 and 17 year olds participating in education and training. 95.6% in the borough compared to a national average of 91.5%
 - 16 and 17 year olds made an offer of an education place under the September Guarantee. 98.5% compared to a national average of 94.6%.
- 3.5. Areas for improvement identified by the scorecard are:
- The percentage of 16-17 year olds NEET re-engaging in EET. 2.3% of young people in Hammersmith and Fulham re-engage compared to a national average of 7.9%
 - The percentage of 19 year olds achieving GCSE A*-C English and maths (or equivalent) between ages 16 and 19, for those who had not achieved this level by 16. 20.6% of young people in Hammersmith and Fulham compared to a national average of 22.3%.
- 3.6. Over the next 12 months we will continue to:
- reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET by working with partners to ensure there are sufficient and suitable opportunities to progress to vocational study, an apprenticeship, or a traineeship
 - improve the way we identify young people who do not participate and how we refer these NEET young people to services that offer support to reengage. Support, includes Early Help, the NEET Panel that links young people to opportunities, and the European Social Fund Youth Programme.

4. Family Services

National Evaluation of the first Troubled Families Programme and local impact

- 4.1. In January 2013, Ecorys was commissioned by The Department of Communities and Local Government to lead a consortium providing an independent evaluation of phase one of the troubled families programme. The evaluation included several strands of work, and seven reports for the final evaluation, including a synthesis report. The reports were published in October 2016.
- 4.2. The evaluation found evidence of some achievements in the programme, for example in local services and systems transformation as well as boosting local capacity for family intervention. However, the evaluation found no evidence that the programme had any significant or systematic impact on key outcomes. This does not mean that there were no changes in the relevant outcomes for families; but it does mean that any changes (positive or negative) cannot be attributed to participation in the programme.
- 4.3. It is noted that timing could have been an issue given that data collection and analysis came at a relatively early stage in the intervention timeline. The survey was conducted at an interval of around nine months after families officially started on the programme, when the intervention was still ongoing for around 70 per cent of the survey respondents.

Local impacts of the programme

- 4.4 The delivery of phase 1 of the local programme in Hammersmith and Fulham consisted of three tiers of service and built on a number of existing services. Tier 1 was through business as usual with the support of the Family and Community Employment Services (FACES). Tier 2 for more complex cases involved delivery through Family Coaches. Tier 3 was through Family Recovery and Multi-Systemic Therapy and was for the most complex cases. The success rates across all three tiers were consistently and considerably better in Hammersmith and Fulham than that of other neighbouring boroughs. The table below indicates the breakdown.

| Tier | % Success rate at level worked with (Total cohort size 540) |
|---|--|
| Tier 1 “Business as usual” services plus 2014/15 FACES Employment Service | 86% |
| Tier 2 Family Coaches | 80% |
| Tier 3 Family Recovery Programme (FRP) and Multi-Systemic Therapy | 77% |

- 4.5 The Ecorys evaluation found significant evidence that the confidence and attitudes of families participating in the programme had improved. These themes are echoed in the evaluation that was undertaken for phase 1 of the local programme for Hammersmith and Fulham.
- 4.6 In September 2016, the Troubled Families Team reviewed the progress of the 540 Hammersmith and Fulham cases that were part of phase 1 of the programme to measure the impact of phase 1 of the programme. 72% of cases maintained their

“turned around” status against the criteria for phase 1 whilst 58% showed evidence of significant and sustained progress against the more challenging phase 2 criteria. This would indicate that there has been a longer lasting positive impact on families in Hammersmith and Fulham who were part of phase 1 of the local programme.

- 4.7 Delivery of phase 2 of the Troubled Families programme in Hammersmith and Fulham is mainly through informing the practice of business as usual and working closely with strategic partners to encourage whole family working. There is a focus on a more joined up approach and eliminating duplication of services through a transparent whole family plan with an assigned lead practitioner who coordinates the support provided to the family. Worklessness and risk of financial exclusion affects 69% of the Hammersmith and Fulham Troubled Families cohort for phase 2. The focus of the local programme is to encourage practitioners and partners to refer families experiencing multiple and complex needs to ‘OnePlace’. There is also an opportunity to map and develop a broader coordinated employment support offer with partners in Economic regeneration, Adult Education, Housing, Children Services, Commissioned Services, and the Voluntary Sector to support families back to work.

5. Safeguarding

An update on the LSCB work with local football clubs (QPR, Chelsea and Fulham) as part of the wider football abuse inquiry

- 5.1. In November 2016 the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) wrote to all professional football clubs based in the borough (Chelsea, Fulham, and Queens Park Rangers) following the news stories featuring former professional players disclosing historical abuse. The LSCB letter highlighted the role of the Local Authority and Safeguarding Services in assisting and supporting organisations in managing allegations against adults working, or volunteering, with children and young people. The clubs were reminded that all organisations working with children and young people have a statutory duty to inform the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) of such matters.
- 5.2. Following press announcements that the club was due to commission an external review following historical concerns and allegations there have been subsequent communications between the Independent Chair of the LSCB and Chelsea FC. These communications were in relation to the terms of reference of the enquiry and a request to review the report when completed.
- 5.3. In December 2016, the Chairman of Chelsea FC wrote to the LSCB and confirmed their contact with the Hammersmith and Fulham LADO and the Director of Family Services. The letter confirmed that the club would disclose any allegations to the LADO and that it was working with the Football Association, the Premier League and the Metropolitan Police.
- 5.4. The LADO and Safeguarding Service are working closely with Chelsea FC to ensure that current safeguarding practices are effective, robust and promote the well being of all the children and young people they provide activities and services to. The Club is also seeking to commission an independent review of their current

safeguarding practice, policies, procedures and guidance, and the Safeguarding Service are providing support and advice on this matter. Chelsea FC have been explicit in their wish to working alongside Children's Services to improve their safeguarding practice.

Metropolitan Police Service - National child protection inspection

- 5.5. An inspection report¹ by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published in November has identified fundamental deficiencies in the way that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) understands and responds to child abuse and sexual exploitation.
- 5.6. The HMIC inspectors considered 277 of 384 cases investigated to have been poorly handled. Of those, 38 were referred back to the MPS because inspectors believed the children involved may still be at risk.
- 5.7. The HMIC has made recommendations to the MPS, some of which should be implemented immediately and others over the next three to six months. HMIC will return to the MPS next year to determine whether improvements in the leadership, practice and training of officers and staff have resulted in better protection for children.
- 5.8. Locally the Council's working relationship with the Borough Police and the Child Abuse Investigation Team has been positive. Whilst there continues to be challenges in respect to the Police's capacity to meet demand, we are open to a solution focused approach to understanding priorities and promoting a flexibility to our joint responses to child protection matters. Our joint approach to children vulnerable to child sexual exploitation has been effective, and this was recognised by Ofsted in the 2016 Ofsted Inspection. Both Agencies are keen to nurture the positive working relationships, and work in partnership to ensure the children, families and communities of the Borough are protected and safeguarded. The LSCB will be considering the report's findings and recommendations at its meeting on 31st January 2017.

6. COMMISSIONING

The school meals contract

- 6.1 Following feedback at the previous CEPAC (November 2016), a meeting was arranged for Rachael Wright Turner accompanied by the School Meals Contract Team (SMCT) to attend the Avonmore school site to meet with the Deputy Head Teacher, Sonia Mallick, Senior Admin Officer, Kerry Wilson and the Parent Governor Nadia Taylor. Feedback on the current provider, Eden was given by the school representatives concerning quality, quantity, choice and flexibility of the

¹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/metropolitan-police-service-national-child-protection-inspection/>

menu. The School Meals Contract Team is working with both the school and provider to address these issues through a detailed action plan. The main areas of focus concern the training of staff on the sales mix and portion sizes, quality and quantity of portions available to ensure sufficient for the entire service and finally the flexibility of the menu choices through closer engagement with Norman Croft School (Avonmore's production kitchen.)

- 6.2 Aligned to the work undertaken in Avonmore, the SMCT continue to contract manage the providers (Eden and Caterlink) and have begun the development of a survey for schools, parents and children and young people to gain feedback on the offer provided through these contracts. Alongside this continued engagement with all schools is planned as outlined in the service level agreements.

Collaborative commissioning

- 6.3. Following Members' approval to test collaborative ways of working between Children's Services and Public Health Commissioning, a collaborative commissioning pilot commenced in September 2016. The pilot covers three projects: 5-19 school nursing mobilisation; Integrated Family Support Service in Hammersmith & Fulham, and development of a comprehensive 0-19 commissioning strategy including a review of Health Visiting in advance of contract end in October 2017.
- 6.4. The principal benefits of this collaborative commissioning approach are to make the best use of public health resources to ensure the best outcomes for children, young people, and their families.
- 6.5. Each project has a dedicated project team comprising of key officers from both departments alongside operational leads. These teams are accountable to an Oversight Group co-chaired by the Director of Children's Commissioning and the Director of Public Health.
- 6.6. Weekly mobilisation meetings for the school nursing service have commenced and officers from Public Health and the Children's Commissioning Team are working closely with Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) to mobilise for the contract to achieve a seamless and safe transfer of services and continuity of care, minimising impact on service users and staff. The contract is due to start in April 2017.
- 6.7. The 0-19 strategy will include a mapping of early years services in order to clearly identify interdependencies and pathways of care and establish strategic joint commissioning outcomes and design principles for an integrated service. A full business case will be completed by June 2017.
- 6.8. Review and shared learning during the collaborative commissioning pilot will be undertaken to support continuous development and improvement. Key issues will be:
 - What is and is not working;
 - The measurable service impact;

- Any unforeseen perverse incentives and system blockages; and
- Examples of good practice.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate equality implications. However, any equality issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS


- 8.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate legal implications. However, any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate financial and resource implications. However, any financial and resource issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE 30 January 2017 | |  hammersmith & fulham |
| LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16 | | |
| Report of the Assistant Director for Looked After Children and Care Leavers | | |
| Open Report | | |
| Classification: For Information Key Decision: No | | |
| Wards Affected: None | | |
| Accountable Executive Director: Clare Chamberlain, Executive Director of Family Services | | |
| Report Author: Helen Farrell, Assistant Director for Looked after Children and Care Leavers | | Contact Details: Tel: 020 7641 5341 E-mail: hfarrell@westminster.gov.uk |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report highlights the significant responsibilities the local authority has in relation to Looked After Children, and how it discharges these.
- 1.2 Nationally there has been a small 2% increase in Looked After Children numbers per 10,000 population since 2012 and nationally Looked After Children numbers are at their highest since the 1980s. In contrast, regionally London rates have decreased by 12%. At 31st March 2016 there were 70,440 Looked After Children nationally. The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham was ranked 63rd lowest of 152 local authorities nationally at 31st March 2016.
- 1.3 Achievements this year include:
 - The Ofsted Inspection which judged Looked After and Care Leaver Services to be Good and Adoption Services to be Outstanding
 - Continued improved performance in school attendance and fixed term exclusions for Looked After Children
 - A significant re-organisation in the Care Leavers service which extended the qualified social worker role to all posts in the service.
 - The use of the Focus on Practice Clinical team to add to the support offered to the service

- Permanent recruitment to the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Head of Service post which gives leadership and focus to the Hammersmith and Fulham looked after children and care leavers service.
- The use of Action for Change to support mother's whose children have been removed through care proceedings to prevent repeat removals in the future.

1.4 Future developments include:

- Further work is being carried out to address issues and barriers around sustaining education, training and employment for post 16 Looked After Children and Care Leavers and reducing the number not in education, employment or training (NEET)s
- There are on-going challenges to improve the educational outcomes of Looked After Children and Care leavers with more complex learning difficulties/disabilities/mental health needs
- Developing the LAC Assist team and model to focus on developing additional strategies to work with some of the most challenging children and young people who are at greatest risk of experiencing placement breakdowns and being placed in the most high cost residential units. This includes plans to provide intensive support mirroring that already provided by the Family Assist model which was highly praised by Ofsted inspectors. It is envisaged that this will support a reduction in increased placement costs and more opportunities to return children to their families when it is safe to do so.
- Addressing the dip in performance regarding placement stability of looked after children through providing intensive interventions and strategies for carers as part of the LAC Assist model.
- The creation of a Shared Services Education, Employment and Training Co-ordinator post that will develop and implement specific programmes and policies for post 16 looked after children and care leavers aimed at improving employability skills. This role will also involve developing and sustaining partnerships with Council Services and external partners to increase choice and availability of apprenticeships and employment opportunities which was a specific Ofsted recommendation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 In this report, the term Looked After Children refers to those children for whom the Borough has assumed Parental Responsibility through a care order, by an agreement with their parent(s) or Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

2.2 The Borough also has a duty and responsibility to those young people who leave care after the age of 16 years until they reach the age of 21 years, or 25 if they are in higher education.

2.3 The majority of Looked After Children need alternative care and accommodation due to the inability of their primary care giver to offer safe and effective care within the family home. Despite this a significant number of Looked After Children are able to return to their parent(s) speedily and do not require long term services or interventions. Many who remain in care are likely to have suffered neglect or abuse,

prior to coming into our care, and are likely to require support from a range of services including therapeutic and educational support.

3. CORPORATE PARENTING

- 3.1 Corporate Parenting is the term used to refer to the collective responsibility of the Council to provide the best care and protection for children and young people who are 'Looked After', that is, who are in public care. Effective corporate parenting will need the commitment from all Council employees and elected Members and an authority wide approach. These responsibilities for Local Authorities were first laid out in the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and reinforced in the Children and Young People's Act 2008.
- 3.2 Councillors in the Borough have a responsibility to act as a good 'corporate parent' for the children it looks after. Once a child becomes Looked After all Members and officers of the Council, as their corporate parents, need to be concerned about that child as if they were their own. This concern should encompass the child's education, health and welfare, what they do in their leisure time and holidays, how they celebrate their culture or religion and how they receive praise and encouragement for their achievements.
- 3.3 The Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) has a key role in monitoring how the Council discharges its corporate parenting responsibilities. Over the past year, the Board has continued to meet with Looked After Children to listen to their views and consultation feedback on a quarterly basis. During the past year the Board has followed a thematic approach, which is aligned with the consultation activities with Looked After Children and Care Leavers to the key objectives in the three year strategy. This enables a robust forward planning process and enables key officers and relevant elected members to attend the Board when topics are relevant to their responsibilities and portfolios. Section 11 provides an overview of topics consulted upon during 2015-16.

4. NUMBERS OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- 4.1 Nationally, there were 70,440 children and young people in care on 31 March 2016, a slight increase on the previous year of less than 1%. Whilst the numbers are relatively steady this national figure is the highest figure of children in care since the implementation of the 1989 Children Act.
- 4.2 The Borough's Looked After Children population has reduced from 260 in 2008 to 198 in 2016, although there was a small increase during 2015-16 (see Table 2). The number of Looked After Children as a proportion of the population in Hammersmith & Fulham is 58 per 10,000 population as at March 2016. The Borough is becoming increasingly adept at securing alternative solutions outside the care system for Looked After Children, with the number of children leaving care varying from 115 in 2011-12 to 155 in 2013-14, and 108 in 2015-16.

Table 1: Total Looked After Children ceasing care

| Year April to March | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of children ceasing care | 100 | 115 | 95 | 155 | 120 | 108 |

4.3 The overall downward trajectory of Looked After Children numbers since 2010 is attributed to a number of factors. More effective early intervention strategies which endeavours to maintain children within the community by addressing the complex needs of children at risk of becoming looked after is a key factor, including in the number of children that return to live at home. The Focus on Practice training has equipped practitioners across the service to work more effectively when families are at risk of family breakdown and to assess and address harm and neglect. Additionally, the range of services provided to support families and avoid adolescent care entry, robust rehabilitation home support packages when it is assessed that it is safe for children to return to live at home, robust age assessments of UASC young people to prevent those assessed to be over 18 years of age entering care, alternatives to remand being implemented by the Youth Courts and significantly improved timescales for care proceedings resulting in timely permanency plans or children being placed with extended family members are all considered to have influenced this overall reduction. In contrast there has been an increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs) entering care. During 2015-16, 20 new UASCs became looked after by the Borough. This represented 37% of the new 14-17 year old care entrants in this year and contributes to the number of Looked After Children being aged 10 and over. Section 5 considers the UASC population in greater detail.

Table 2: Total Looked After Children at 31 March: 2010-2016

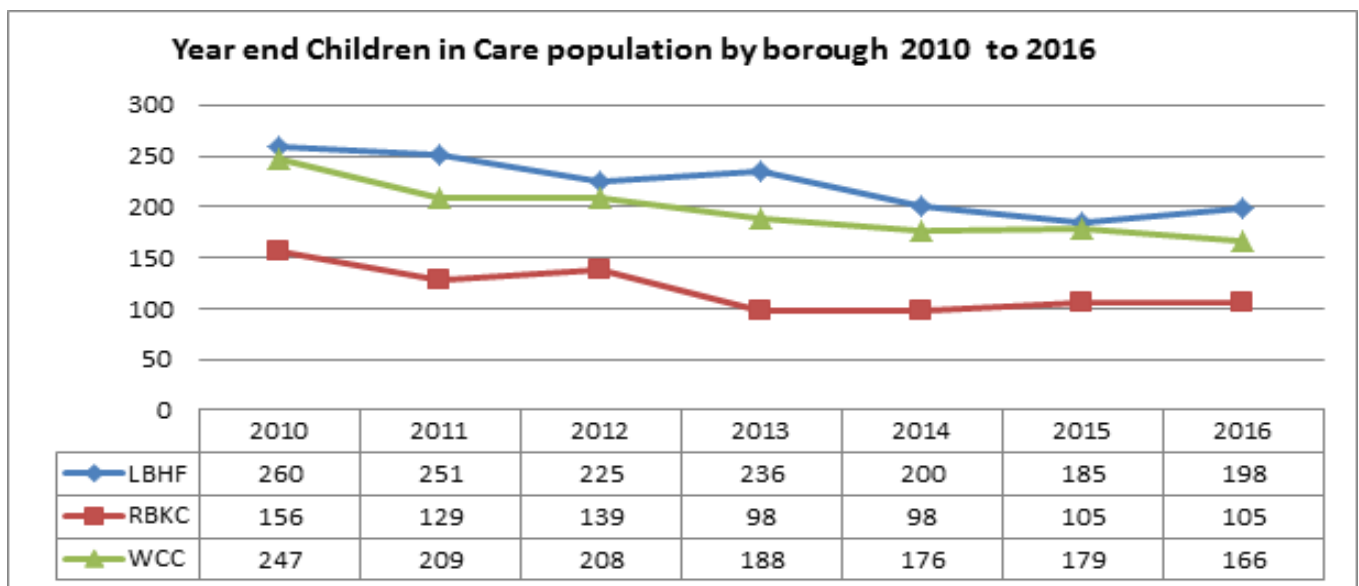
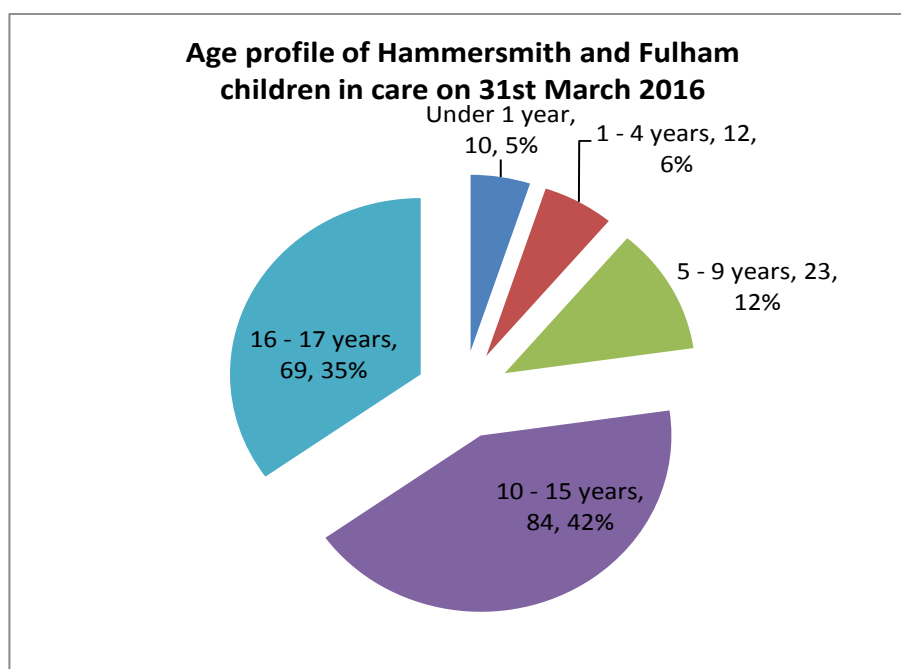


Table 3: Total Looked After Children at 31 March: 2010-2016

| Year Ending March | Citizen | UASC | Total |
|-------------------|---------|------|-------|
| 2010 | 234 | 26 | 260 |
| 2011 | 227 | 21 | 248 |
| 2012 | 204 | 20 | 224 |
| 2013 | 220 | 18 | 238 |
| 2014 | 195 | 9 | 204 |
| 2015 | 163 | 22 | 185 |
| 2016 | 172 | 26 | 198 |

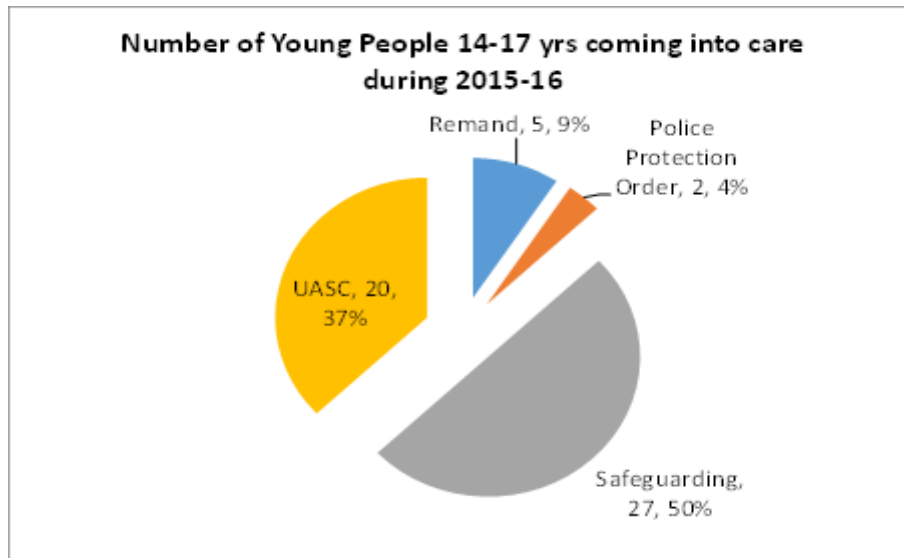
4.4 The age profile of Looked After Children is significant in that the proportion aged over 16 for 2015-16 was 35%, which is higher than the national rate of 22% and London rate of 33%. The Borough's UASC entrants contributes to the more significant difference in the national rate given most UASC are placed in London and the South East.

Table 4: Age Profile of Children in Care at 31st March 2016



4.5 Only 11% of children were aged under 5 years. Local analysis has identified a number of influencing factors including more younger children achieving permanence more quickly given improved court timescales, the “ageing out” of older cohorts as they progress through the care system, the volume of UASC that enter care over 16 years and the impact of Southwark Judgement and remand cases entering care at much older ages.

Table 5: Profile of 14-17 years olds entering care during 2015-16

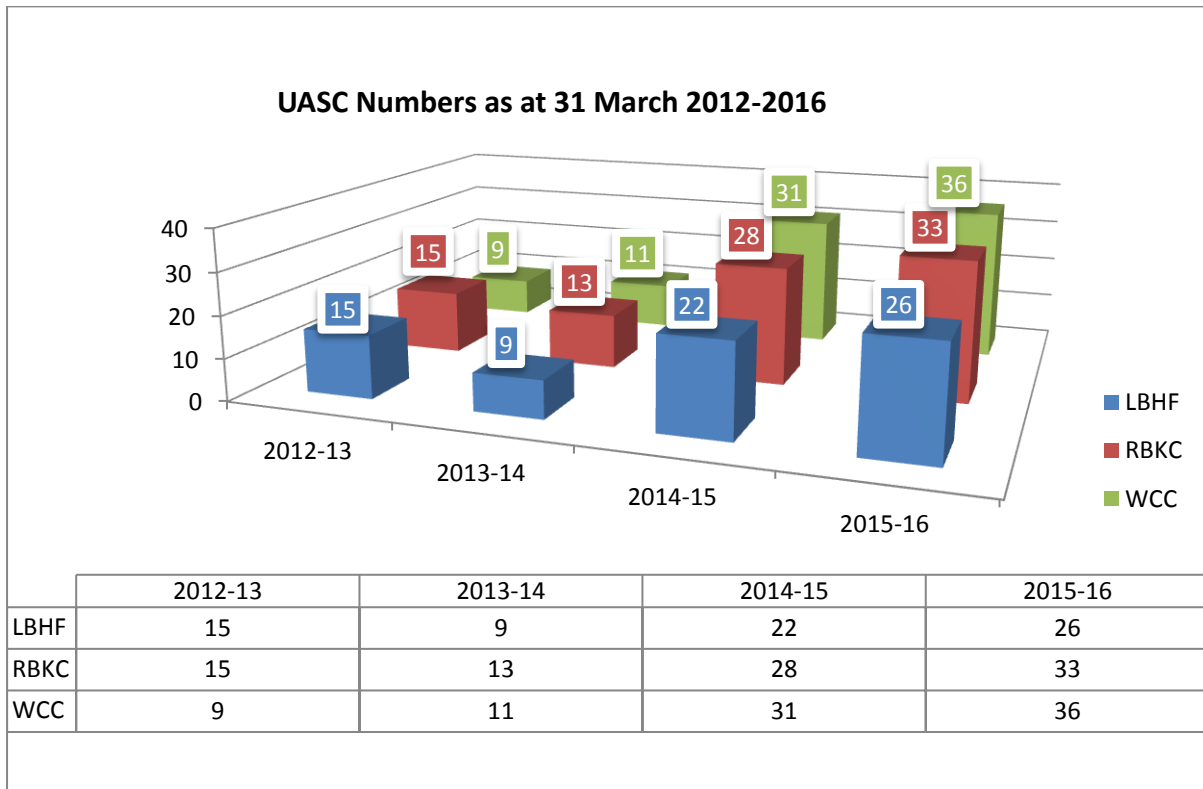


4.6 The Borough's Looked After Children population is particularly diverse. Rates for Black or Black British ethnicity were 33% in 2015-16 which is higher than the most recently published (2015-16) national average at 25%. The Borough continues to respond by seeking to recruit a diverse range of foster carers which reflect the diversity of the local population and through placing children with kinship carers when appropriate.

5. UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN

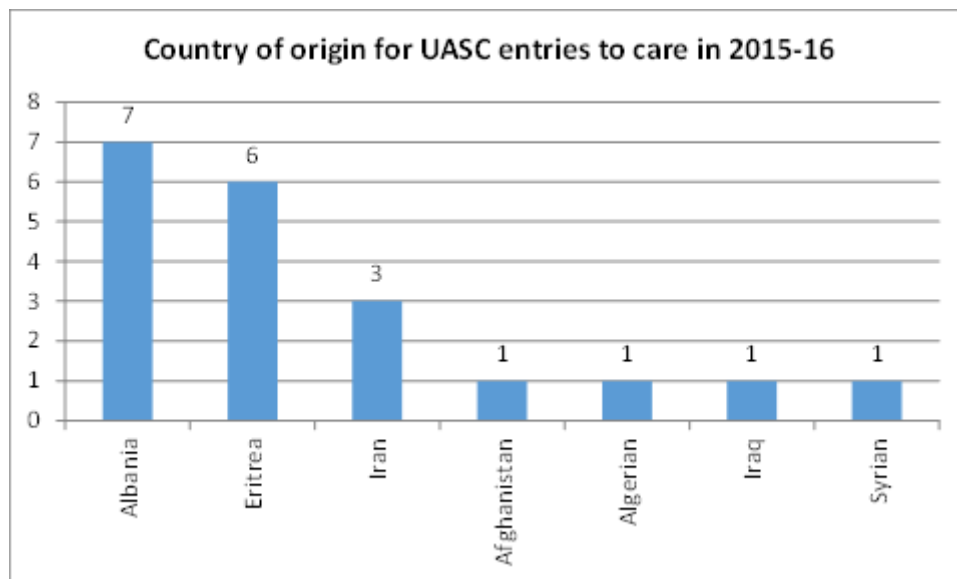
5.1 Within Hammersmith and Fulham there has been a significant increase in the number of new UASC LAC entries during 2014-15 (19 young people) and 2015-16 (20 young people) in comparison with previous years. Nearly half of the current UASC and former UASC care leaver population have arrived within the last two years. The majority (77%) of the referrals over the last two years have come via the rota referral scheme that the LB Croydon and Home Office manages, whereby UASCs making asylum claims at the Home Office based in Croydon are distributed amongst London local authorities. However, given Hammersmith and Fulham's central location 10% have also come to notice via police referrals and a further 10% self-referred.

Table 6: UASC Numbers as at 31 March 2012-16



5.2 Unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Hammersmith and Fulham have been mainly from Albania (58% in 2014-15, 36% in 2015-16). Albanian Care Leavers are the majority ethnic group representing 53% of the former UASC cohort. The second highest ethnic group is Eritrean. In comparison, nationally the highest ethnic UASC cohort are from Iran at 23%, Afghanistan at 19% and Albanians at 15%.

Table 7: Number of UASC entering care in 2015-16 by country of origin



5.3 There is notable consistency in the age of UASC on arrival with the vast majority of the total UASC population (25 of 26, 96%) aged between 15-17 years at 31st March 2016, although we do occasionally experience much younger children arriving. Given

these age trends, the UASC population have a significant bearing on the Borough's care leaver numbers. At 31st March 2016, 52 of 170 (31%) of the Borough's Care Leavers were former UASCs. Legal outcomes are characterised by lengthy processes including several Home Office interviews and legal hearings. A significant number of UASCs are ultimately unsuccessful in their claims for asylum into adulthood and this can have some bearing on UASCs going missing as a means of avoiding deportation (there are currently 3 missing). Negative asylum claims relate to the majority of UASCs originating from Albania and the Home Office concluding that they have not proven genuine persecution. The largest number exit care by receiving their permanent or long term leave to remain and exiting the service in the same way as indigenous children. Former UASC care leavers continue to be supported by the Leaving Care Service whilst they await a decision by the Home Office in line with our statutory obligations.

- 5.4 UASCs experience a range of physical and emotional difficulties as a result of prolonged journeys in insanitary conditions with inadequate supplies of food and water and/or what they might have been subjected to in their home countries prior to leaving. The effects of separation, bereavement and uncertainty about their families' wellbeing and own immigration status can have a negative emotional impact on UASCs. There is extensive use of agents and smugglers to assist UASC in making their journeys and in a minority of cases there are disclosures of ill-treatment during their journey. These range of needs are addressed through their LAC Health Assessments and involving LAC CAMHS and our in-house clinicians.
- 5.5 On 1st July 2016 the Home Office launched the National Transfer Scheme, a new voluntary transfer arrangement between local authorities for the care of unaccompanied children who arrive in the UK and claim asylum. The scheme has identified that local authorities will be expected to take up to 0.07% of their child population. This introduction means that any new UASCs entering England and Wales will be distributed more evenly amongst local authorities rather than primarily concentrating within London and the South East (66%) by virtue of where they enter the country and seek asylum. As such Hammersmith and Fulham is expected to be responsible for 24 UASCs and only when we fall below that threshold will any new UASCs be referred via the London rota referral or national transfer scheme. This does not include the additional 15 UASCs that we have accepted responsibility for as part of the recent Lord Dubs Amendment. Across Shared Services work is underway to create a new post which will seek to maximise funding streams and Home Office claims for UASCs.

6. OFSTED INSPECTION

- 6.1 Children's Services in Hammersmith and Fulham were subject to an inspection under the Ofsted Single Inspection Framework between 11th January and 4th February 2016. Simultaneous inspections took place in RBKC and Westminster, and Shared Services between the three boroughs were also inspected. Ofsted have raised the bar with their expectations and judgements in this round of inspections with the result that most Local Authorities to date have been judged as "Requires Improvement".
- 6.2 Ofsted's overall conclusion was that Children's Services in Hammersmith and Fulham were judged to be "Good". A number of sub-judgements were made. The outcome judgement gives Hammersmith and Fulham the third best result in the country out of the 121 inspections to date. The report highlights that significant and sustained improvements have been made since the last inspection in July 2011, when services were judged to be 'Good'.

6.3 Relevant to this report Ofsted made a number of sub-judgements as follows:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Children looked after and achieving permanence: | Good |
| Adoption Performance: | Outstanding |
| Experiences and progress of care leavers: | Good |
| Leadership, management and governance: | Outstanding |

- 6.4 With specific reference to services for Looked after Children and Care Leavers, there has been a substantial re-organisation of our specialist social work teams for this vulnerable group. This has seen the development of two 16 plus teams that have qualified Social Workers allocated to Care Leavers as opposed to Personal Advisers. Ofsted acknowledged the positive trajectory of this service, which was implemented in July 2015. They recognised that this restructure has *“led to tangible improvements in outcomes”*; however, ultimately it will mean that children and young people can benefit from sustained working relationships as they will no longer have to transfer to another team and can remain with their allocated Social Worker up until 21 or 25 years of age if in higher education.
- 6.5 The report found that social workers working with Looked After Children know the *“children well, regularly visit them and give sensitive and thoughtful consideration to their needs”*. The inspectors commented that *“the quality of pathway planning and reviews for care leavers has improved markedly over the last few years...actions show good insight into the young person, are decisive and are in their best interests”*. Furthermore care leavers themselves told inspectors that the *“care leaving service has improved and they have greater faith and trust in the skills and empathy of their social workers and their abilities to help them”*. Adoption services in particular were found to be outstanding, demonstrating highly effective planning and vigorous family finding which ensures that children are quickly found suitable alternative families to care for them.
- 6.6 Furthermore, the report outlined that Hammersmith and Fulham’s Corporate Parenting Board *“has a knowledgeable and committed approach with appropriate levels of scrutiny and positive engagement with young people, who have effectively raised their awareness of important issues”*. Further, *“an effective Children in Care Council has a real focus on informing and influencing the discussions and decisions at the Corporate Parenting Board”* which care leavers reported has greater effectiveness than in previous years.
- 6.7 Leadership and governance was assessed as being outstanding with the report highlighting that the authority *“has clear plans and political and managerial commitment to continue its journey to provide consistently high quality services”* within a culture of *“respectful challenge”*. The report further highlighted that the lead member *“demonstrates passion and commitment...undertakes extensive activity...to offer challenge and to influence service provision”*.
- 6.8 One of our identified strengths was our ability to undertake rigorous self-assessment leading to continuous improvements without complacency. Therefore, whilst this is an excellent result that we are proud of, plans are being implemented to address the areas for improvement to achieve continuous progress in respect of the recommendations arising from the inspection.
- 6.9 **Recommendation 1:** Collate information drawn from return home interviews of children who go missing from home to identify patterns and trends and assist disruption activity.

Missing children has been a particular focus of the current Ofsted inspection framework. Ofsted noted that in Hammersmith & Fulham, the children at risk from going missing were known and well supported including follow up from social workers when they returned home. However it was felt that better use could be made of information emerging from return home interviews to identify patterns of behaviour, support proactive planning and reduce risk. In response to this, an audit has taken place of cases where children frequently go missing and where interventions have been effective. A Missing Action Plan is in place and this will be updated to include and implement learning from the audit work. Section 8 of this report provides data in respect of Looked After Children who went missing for more than 24 hours during 2015-16.

- 6.10 **Recommendation 2:** Ensure that assessments and care plans for children looked after are updated following significant events.

This followed an Ofsted comment that this was not always evident for “a minority of assessments and care plans”. A detailed looked after children and care leavers service improvement plan has been developed and is being implemented for Hammersmith and Fulham children and young people to address required service developments identified by the service as well as Ofsted. This includes an expectation that risk assessments and plans will be routinely updated to ensure that these respond to changes in circumstances of children, with clear evidence that strategies are put in place to reduce risks. The plan is being overseen by a multi-agency Service Improvement Group who will monitor and support progress. The form which social workers use for reviews of looked after children is being redesigned to incorporate social worker assessments for the review, and to more clearly identify decisions and changes to the care plan that need to be considered and agreed. To ensure these developments are consistently responded to, Independent Reviewing Officers are to identify plans that do not reflect the current direction of the child’s journey and take robust action where required, as part of mid-point reviews that they routinely carry out.

- 6.11 **Recommendation 3:** Improve the quality of the minority of pathway plans that are not yet good, so that outcomes are improved and the results of actions can be assessed more effectively.

The inspection report noted that the quality of pathway planning and reviews for care leavers has improved markedly. However a small number of plans were seen to be “*insufficiently clear regarding plans for the future, targets were not clear enough and target dates are not tightly linked to actions*”. Ofsted also observed that managers are fully aware of this and where improvements are needed there are “*plans in place to address this area of improvement*”. This recommendation is also addressed through the previously mentioned Looked After Children and Care Leavers service improvement plan and training has been delivered to the teams. Plans are currently reviewed every 6 months and this is noted on the case management system. In addition, quality audits of pathway plans are undertaken at regular intervals and reported to the Service Improvement Group for additional action where required. As the majority of pathway plans are already of good quality, these will be used as examples to inform good practice guides.

- 6.12 **Recommendation 4:** Increase the range and number of apprenticeship opportunities for care leavers to reduce further the proportion who are not engaged in education, employment or training.

- 6.13 Inspectors reported that the borough's Care Leavers enter a range of full-time vocational training, employment and higher education institutions but that staff recognised *"the need to improve the options and progression pathways for care leavers"* including the *"insufficient range of apprenticeship opportunities"*.
- 6.14 Using the smarter budgeting programme to address and improve this situation, a review took place to identify and implement common financial support opportunities for Care Leavers, not only for those in apprenticeships but also for those in work, those aged 21 or older, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and those in Higher Education. The Virtual School provides advice and guidance to the Borough's Leaving Care teams on good practice in Education, Employment and Training (EET) planning. A range of employability and work experience programmes are being implemented, linked into internal and external partnerships. A more robust system has been developed for tracking and monitoring the education, employment and training of Care Leavers and an EET adviser in the Virtual School supports in accessing and sustaining apprenticeships, employment, education or training. Further, as highlighted in Section 1 a post is currently being recruited to that will specifically address this area of development.

7. STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 7.1 A strategy for Looked After Children is in place which sets out the vision and intended outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in the period 2014 to 2017.
- 7.2 The strategy has six strategic objectives:
- Children on the edge of care are better supported to remain within their families and community
 - Looked After Children and Care Leavers are provided with security, stability and are cared for
 - Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe from harm and neglect
 - Looked After Children and Care Leavers are supported in reaching a good standard of education
 - Looked After Children and Care Leavers health needs are promoted and supported
 - All Looked After Children and Care Leavers have a voice in decisions which affect their lives
- 7.3 To support the delivery of the strategic priorities, and progress towards shared outcomes, an annual borough specific Looked After Children and Care Leavers Improvement Plan has been developed and delivered with partners. The plan is being monitored by a multi-agency Service Development Group, which links directly with the Children in Care Council and responds to the thematic consultations undertaken. This helps to reinforce how we actively listen and respond to the voices of children within the local authority's care.
- 7.4 The Shared Services Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has a significant role in ensuring effective multi-agency work and safeguarding for Looked After Children. The last annual LSCB report was produced in October 2016 which outlines progress made in addressing safeguarding issues for this vulnerable group of children.
- 7.5 The CEPAC Scrutiny Committee also contributes to monitoring the quality and effectiveness of services, via the scrutiny of this annual report on services and

outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. A report on the work of the Fostering and Adoption Team is also presented annually.

7.6 Other relevant performance indicators are reported regularly to the Lead Member at Policy Board.

8. SAFEGUARDING OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS

8.1 Children who are subject to frequent placement moves are less able to form positive attachments with carers which make them more vulnerable to unsafe relationships from other adults or their peer group. The Borough has a commitment to ensure that children and young people will only be placed in resources with an Ofsted inspection judgement of “Good” or “Outstanding”. As at 31st March 2016, 93% of children placed from within Shared Services were in provisions that were judged as Outstanding or Good. The number of placement moves that children have is carefully monitored to ensure plans are adapted to make placements more resilient where required. In Hammersmith & Fulham, 14% of Looked After Children experienced three or more placement moves in 2015-16, which is higher than the Borough’s 2014-15 rate of 9.2% and England rate of 10% for 2015-16. This is a matter that requires our continued scrutiny and steps to reduce placement breakdown. The aforementioned LAC Assist team will be a service that focuses on this to provide additional support to help stabilise vulnerable placements.

Table 8: Percentage of children with three or more placements during 2011-16

| | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| England | 11.0% | 11.0% | 12.0% | 10% | 10% |
| LBHF | 8.0% | 5.9% | 19.5% | 9.2% | 14.1% |

Table 9: Percentage Looked After for 2.5 years and in the same placement for at least 2 years

| | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| England | 68.0% | 67.0% | 67% | 68% | Not yet available |
| LBHF | 74.6% | 66.2% | 61.3% | 59.7% | 78.2% |

8.2 As a relatively geographically small borough, not all Looked After Children are able to live within Hammersmith and Fulham when they are in care. However, there are significant efforts at both the local and national level to reduce the distance at which Looked After Children are placed from their borough of origin. While there are a small minority of children who are more effectively safeguarded by being placed at a distance such as those young people identified to be at risk due to gang affiliation or child sexual exploitation, the consistent lack of foster placements in Inner London means that many children need to be placed in other local authority areas, although

usually these are within London. The cohort living outside of London includes children who are placed in special educational boarding schools or specialist residential care or placed with extended family members or adopters. Of the children and young people Looked After in foster placements at 31st March 2016, 74% were placed in London boroughs, including within Hammersmith and Fulham, and 82% were placed with Shared Services in-house foster carers. As at 31st March 2016 59% of the Borough's Looked After Children were living inside Hammersmith and Fulham, which compares with 45% living inside their authority of origin on average across other London. There are currently 162 in-house fostering households offering placements across Shared Services. Additionally, there are currently 12 Hammersmith and Fulham Care Leavers who continue to live with foster carers under a "Staying Put" arrangement, an initiative which enables care leavers to continue to live in their foster placement when they become young adults to support them in achieving successful transitions into adulthood.

- 8.3 For some young people foster care is not currently suitable and as of 31st March 2016 12% of Looked After Children were placed in residential care or special educational boarding schools. We also have 22 Looked After Children placed with relatives who have been assessed as kinship carers, thus enabling these children to reside with extended family. A proportion of these children will become subject to Special Guardianship Orders within these placements rather than remain Looked After by the local authority in the coming months. The number of Special Guardianship Orders increased from 9 in 2014-15 to 16 in 2015-16. In contrast, the number of adoptions in Hammersmith and Fulham has fallen from 12 in 2014-15 to 6 in 2015-16, although this mirrors a national reduction (18% reduction in 2015-16) in children being placed for adoption outside the extended family linked to the impact of two relevant court judgements.

Table 10: Percentage of children placed in foster placements at 31st March 2016

| | % of children placed in foster placements |
|------------------------|--|
| England | 75% |
| London | 75% |
| Hammersmith and Fulham | 74% |

- 8.4 Looked After Children are significantly more likely to go missing than their peers, and therefore can be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation or gang involvement. Children with frequent placement changes are more likely to go missing and this behaviour also impacts upon the stability of their current placement. In Hammersmith and Fulham, there were 47 Looked After Children who went missing/absent with a total of 144 episodes in 2015-16. Whilst there was an increase in the number of children when compared with 2014-15 (40 children) there was a reduction in the number of episodes from 150 in 2014-15. The majority of cases are of a high frequency but short duration e.g. missing overnight and then returning. There specific monitoring and tracking of this potentially vulnerable group which ensures that children are independently interviewed and thorough exploration of the reasons as to why they went missing is pursued. Practice has specifically developed in this area, which has been enhanced by the appointment of a Missing Person's Co-ordinator who offers advice, assistance and the development of strategies to reduce risks with front line practitioners.
- 8.5 With specific reference to children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) there have been a number of developments to identify those assessed to be at risk and to provide a comprehensive support package to ensure that risks are reduced. Local

developments have been informed by the publication of London Child Sexual Exploitation Operation Protocols. These include:

- Agreement of a CSE Strategy by the LSCB
- The implementation of a monthly Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation meeting chaired by the Police and Children's Services
- A shared risk assessment tool
- A common pathway to services coordinated through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Development of data sets and problem profiles
- A range of training and awareness-raising initiatives
- Focuses upon CSE within routine practice weeks and auditing activities

8.6 During 2015-16 Hammersmith and Fulham had 52 young people that were identified at risk of CSE and these children were categorised from the assessment on how serious the risk was and what evidence there was. The majority of children in Hammersmith and Fulham were within the Blue category, which following an assessment has identified them as potentially vulnerable to CSE but with no actual evidence of CSE taking place. Category 1 is defined as there being concerns that a child is being targeted and where there are CSE warning signs but no evidence so far of any offences. Category 2 is defined as there being evidence that a child is being targeted for opportunistic abuse through the exchange of sex or indecent images for money, drugs, goods, perceived affection etc. Category 3 is defined as a child whose sexual exploitation is habitual self-denied and where coercion/control is implicit. With regards to Looked After Children specifically during 2015-16 there were 9 young people assessed to be in Categories Blue, 1 and 2 compared with 7 young people during 2014-15. Of those 9 young people 7 are not living within the Shared Services geographical boundary, which partly demonstrates actively removing them from risk factors that escalate concerns but also that this cohort can also be at greater risk of placement breakdown and escalation into higher cost placements outside London. Improved identification of risks, assessment and clearer CSE mapping supports this area of practice and safeguarding responses.

Table 11: CSE Categories Data for Looked After Children 2015-16

| Category of Risk | LAC – living in 3B | LAC – living outside 3B | Grand Total |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| BLUE | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Cat 1 (concern CSE but no evidence of offences) | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Cat 2 (evidence of being targeted for | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Grand Total | 2 | 7 | 9 |

9. HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- 9.1 Looked After Children and young people who are looked after have the same core health needs as other young people, but their backgrounds and experiences including neglect are likely to make them particularly vulnerable to poorer health outcomes and psychological needs. In addition, these children are more like to be exposed to the consequences of greater social deprivation and disadvantage.
- 9.2 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that health assessments are carried out for every Looked After Child in their care. Of the 114 eligible children (who have been in care for a year) 90% were carried out on time. This performance is due in part to the implementation of a reminder system for social workers to refer for health assessment, and increased outreach work by the specialist nurses for children and young people placed out of borough. Some older Looked After Children are unwilling to have their medicals despite best efforts for these to take place.
- 9.3 A multi-disciplinary borough-based Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) team offers an extensive range of support services for all levels of mental health needs in a variety of settings. The CAMHS team have the shared aims of maintaining placement stability in order to avoid placement breakdown and supporting Looked After Children and their carers to manage transitions between placements. Hammersmith and Fulham’s Focus on Practice clinicians also work with Looked After Children, social workers and foster carers to address emotional distress.
- 9.4 The Local Authority should act as a ‘good parent’ in relation to the health of Looked After Children. Within this role it can approve the immunisation of children within its care against vaccine preventable diseases as per the national immunisation schedule. 89% of children and young people Looked After were up to date with immunisations on 31st March 2016.

Table 12: Percentage of children with up to date health checks and immunisations

| | % of children whose immunisations were up to date | Percentage of children who had their teeth checked by a dentist | % of children who had their annual health assessment | % of children who had been looked after for at least 12 months, and aged 5 or younger at 31 March 2016, whose development assessments were up to date |
|------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| England | 88% | 86% | 90% | 89% |
| London | 85% | 89% | 90% | 92% |
| Hammersmith and Fulham | 89% | 96% | 89% | 75% |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

- 9.5 Dental health is an integral part of the annual Health Assessment. The Local Authority and NHS Trust are required to ensure that children in care receive regular check-ups with a dentist. There has been a positive improvement in the number of Looked After Children aged 16 and under who are up to date with their dental checks, from 79% during 2014-15 to 96% during 2015-16.
- 9.6 The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a self-report measure completed by the children’s carer and is aimed at assessing a child’s behaviour,

emotions and relationships. In 2015-2016 the number of SDQs completed for Looked After Children was 84% which represents a small reduction from 90% in 2014-15. A child or young person who reports a high score on their SDQ should be referred for further assessment and, where appropriate, intervention or treatment by the specialist CAMHS Team.

- 9.7 Due to the nature of their experiences prior to and whilst looked after, many will have poor mental health. This may be in the form of significant emotional, psychological or behavioural difficulties. Challenges faced for this cohort are that local CAMHS provisions end their involvement and do not follow the young person experiencing multiple placement breakdowns caused by behavioural issues and yet who are often the most emotionally vulnerable requiring therapeutic services. Additionally, a number of Care Leavers do not meet the higher thresholds for Adult Mental Health Services but continue to have unresolved emotional difficulties requiring input.
- 9.8 During 2015-16, 7% of Looked After Children were reported to be known to have a substance misuse issue and where this is identified young people are referred for specialist input to address this.

10. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- 10.1 The Virtual School maintains accurate and up to date information about how Looked After Children and Care Leavers are progressing in education and takes urgent and individual action when they are not achieving well. There were a number of changes in the assessment, marking and reporting procedures used by schools and Local Authorities in 2015-16 which should be noted:
- 10.2 Pupils sitting Key Stage 2 tests this year were the first to be taught and assessed under the new national curriculum. The expected standard has been raised and the accountability framework for schools has also changed. These changes mean that the expected standard this year is higher and not comparable with the expected standard used in previous years' statistics.
- 10.3 Changes in the way GCSEs are marked and recorded. Schools are no longer required to report on the % of pupils achieving 5 A* to C grades. Schools are now required to report on Attainment 8 and Progress 8. This poses particular challenges for Local Authorities when reporting outcomes for Looked After Children. Local Authorities, such as the Hammersmith and Fulham have small cohorts of pupils in each key stage, which often change over time. Many Looked After Children in these cohorts come into care without prior attainment data, including UASCs, making it difficult to make judgements about the progress of pupils from one Key Stage to the next.
- 10.4 As yet the DfE has not issued clear guidance to Local Authorities as to the way educational outcomes for 2016 and beyond should be reported. Virtual School Heads are currently in discussions with the DfE as to the most appropriate way to report outcomes for Looked After Children. The DfE has advised schools and Local Authorities that it would be incorrect and misleading to make direct comparisons with previous years' data given these revisions.
- 10.5 In the last three years Looked After Children and Care Leavers have made good progress. This was highlighted in the 2016 Ofsted inspection report.
- 2015's GCSE results were well above national averages for LAC and the best the council had ever achieved.

- KS2 results were above national averages for LAC
- LAC made good progress from particular starting points, e.g. from the point they entered the care system
- The number of 16 and 17 year olds engaged in education or training is high
- The number of care leavers in Higher Education is high

10.6 Detailed analysis of each cohort of pupils in 2015-16 indicates that Looked After Children and Care Leavers continue to make good progress in most areas. In light of the above context, attention should be paid to individual story and progress of each child/young person rather looking at the headline outcomes.

10.7 Progress and attainment at Key Stage 1

There were no pupils in this reporting cohort.

10.8 Progress and attainment at Key Stage 2

There were 13 pupils in the reporting cohort.

| | New expected standard Reading | New expected standard Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling | New expected standard Maths | New expected standard in all areas |
|------------|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| LAC | 78% | 38% | 39% | 39% |
| All pupils | 66% | 72% | 70% | 53% |

10.9 Initial analysis of this year's results would appear to show a slight widening of the gap between Looked After Children and all pupils achieving the expected standard in all areas. However, it is important to note the likely impact of the new assessment arrangements on results data. Analysis of prior attainment for these pupils at KS1 indicates that the majority would have achieved higher results; 70% of this cohort achieved at least a level 2 in all areas as KS1. Despite not achieving the expected standard in some areas many pupils achieved a scaled score in grammar, punctuation and spelling and Maths only a few marks below the expected standard scaled score of 100. Attainment in reading was particularly positive. Another highlight was that a young person had her poetry published in a young writer's poetry anthology.

10.10 The personal context of each pupil needs to be taken into consideration when analysing results. The majority of pupils experienced some form of disruption or difficulty over the previous 2 years; 7 of the 13 have had 1 or more placement move in the last 2 years, indicating the significant impact of placement instability on education outcomes. 3 pupils were assessed as having significant Special Education Needs and now attend either day or a residential special school with one pupil being well supported in a mainstream setting. 10 of the pupils are educated in an out of authority primary school. All pupils received the support of the Virtual School and had an up to date Personal Education Plan. Close collaboration between professionals ensured that the majority of pupils are now in more stable care and school placements. There is evidence that the Pupil Premium was used to good effect to improve progress. There remains work to be done with schools to ensure they are equipped with effective strategies to support these pupils effectively in KS3 and KS4.

10.11 Progress and attainment at Key Stage 4

It is difficult to compare this year's grades to previous years due to the introduction of Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures to replace the five A* to C grades including English and Maths.

10.12 There were 20 pupils in the reporting cohort.

| | 5 A-C including English and Maths | 5 A-C | 5 A-G | 1 A-G |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| LAC | 15% | 15% | 55% | 75% |

10.13 Initial analysis indicates a decrease in the percentage who achieved 5 GCSE grades A* to C including English and Maths compared to 2015. However, changes in the nature of GCSE's means any comparison with previous years should be treated with caution.

10.14 2016's year 11 cohort included a range of pupils. It included a small number of highly motivated and able pupils, who achieved excellent results. 2 pupils gained outstanding results, achieving A's and B's in all subjects. However, the cohort also included 5 pupils with Statements/EHCP who were not expected to achieve highly or it was deemed inappropriate for them to sit GCSEs. In addition, 1 pupil was remanded into custody and therefore wasn't entered for any qualifications and 1 pupil was missing during the GCSE exam season.

10.15 Nevertheless, it is very positive to note that all pupils who were entered for examinations achieved at least two qualifications. Attendance was a concern with this cohort, with 45% having an attendance below 85%. For these individuals, 78% of them have had at least one placement move in the last twelve months, with almost half having more than 3 placement moves. This contributed greatly to their ability to engage with education and consequently to their results. The cohort was supported by a series of interventions to improve attainment and progress. This included the creative use of Pupil Premium to support the training of school staff, which enabled them to have a better understanding of the required interventions to support pupils, the use of 1-1 tuition and the provision of in-class support.

10.16 **Post-16 and Care Leavers: End of Academic Year Performance**

| | LBHF |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| % of 16 and 17 year olds who are EET | 92% |
| % of 18-25 year olds who are EET | 71% |
| % attending university | 17% (25) |
| % completed apprenticeships | 3% (7) |
| % in training or employment | 6% (15) |

10.17 Outcomes for 16 and 17 year olds is an area of strength in Hammersmith and Fulham. All 16 and 17 year olds continue to have an allocated Virtual School advisory teacher, which ensures these pupils continue to receive the support of the Virtual School until they finish statutory education or training at 18. Since the Virtual School began supporting post 16 Looked After Children, numbers of young people in education, employment or training has steadily risen; and effectively planned education pathways through Years 12 and 13 have resulted in greater achievement of qualifications and a year by year increased in the number of British Care Leavers going to university. EET figures for 16-18 year olds are generally good and effectively planned educational pathways through Years 12 and 13 have resulted in number achieving entry to Higher Education, 24 this academic year.

- 10.18 While some progress has been made in addressing the issues and barriers around sustaining education, training and employment for care leavers, we consider that the number of care leavers who are NEET remains too high and this remains a key area for improvement. Prior to January 2016 the Virtual School did not have the capacity to support to NEET Care Leavers however the recruitment of an EET Personal Adviser in to the Virtual School in January 2016 was a positive development to address this issue. This role ensures that Care Leavers receive a targeted Information Advice and Guidance service. There have been a number of very successful cases where long term NEET young people have been successfully re-engaged in training or employment as a result.
- 10.19 The numbers of Care Leavers in Higher Education continues to be strength in Hammersmith. There are currently 25 care leavers in Higher Education. Care Leavers at university continue to progress well and many continue to receive positive support from the Virtual School and Leaving Care Service.
- 10.20 The Virtual School has also initiated a number of projects and initiatives to improve the employability of care leavers. These include:
- A monthly EET panel to track and monitor EET performance
 - A very successful careers event attended by a many high profile companies
 - The setting up of Tri borough Work Experience Programme with the Education Business Partnership
 - The setting up of bi-weekly advice drop in sessions for care leavers
 - The development of wider links with the Leaving Care team and other services to ensure a continued focus on care leavers across the wider council.
- 10.21 There remains a major challenge in reducing NEET levels for care leavers. There are a high number of care leavers in custody, a high number of care leavers with complex needs, particularly late entrants into care, and an increase in the number of UASCs with no previous or recent formal education. The Virtual School and the LAC and Leaving Care Service is working together to tackle these issues and to improve our understanding of the needs of specific groups of care leavers. The government’s Care Leavers Strategy, “Keep on Caring” will provide further impetus for this work.

10.22 Attendance and Exclusions

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Average attendance R-11 | 91% | 90% | 93% |
| Number with one or more fixed term exclusion | 21% | 16% | 11% |
| Number with permanent exclusion | 0% | 0% | 0% |

- 10.23 The attendance figures for 2015-16 shows a continued increase in performance over the past year. This reflects the work of all professionals in ensuring regular attendance at school for all pupils. There has been a decline in the number of pupils classed as Persistently Absent or missing school through not having a school place. A particular challenge going forward however, is the number of UASCs coming into care in year 11 without a school place, (these are not reflected in this reporting cohort).
- 10.24 There were no permanent exclusions in 2015-16. This reflects the work the Virtual School does directly with schools, social workers and carers in developing strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. There were 11 pupils with one or more

fixed term exclusion in 2015-16, this is a significant reduction on previous years and shows a continuing downward trend. The Virtual School, social care professionals and schools work closely to identify pupils who are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded for a short period. Where the Virtual School has concerns that a fixed term exclusion is an indication that a particular school is not able to meet the needs of a pupil, the Virtual School's Educational Psychologist will work with the school to identify strategies to improve behaviour, or alternatively carry out an assessment, which may indicate that an another education provision would be more better suited.

10.25 **Key Priorities**

- Work with schools to improve their understanding of the role of schools in supporting LAC through the Virtual Schools Attachment Aware Schools Programme
- Continue to focus on ensuring children and young people are placed in the right school, with the right carer and stability is placed at the centre of care planning
- Improve the effectiveness of Personal Education Plans as tools to drive up attainment by sharing good practice and training
- Develop a toolkit of strategies and interventions that demonstrate the effectiveness of Pupil Premium and other funding sources, particularly specific groups, such as UASCs and those with Statements/EHCP
- Develop and implement an effective range of enrichment activities.
- Improve the support for care leavers in gaining employment and apprenticeships.

11 **ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

- 11.1 Hammersmith and Fulham offers an extensive programme of participation for both Looked After Children and Care Leavers, providing them with opportunities to participate and engage within the service. This programme includes a variety of groups, consultation events, projects as well as recreational and enrichment activities. In doing so, it is recognised that the children and young people we work with want to participate in different ways and in varying degrees. Some young people want direct involvement in consultation and decision making whilst others might want to attend a group or activity. This means that we have a core group of Looked After Children and Care Leavers that frequently participate within all aspects of the programme and more specific opportunities that attract many of the wider population.
- 11.2 The Children in Care Council continues to develop. Numbers attending both the Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Board have increased. Participation has also increased for the range of enrichment activities provided for Looked After Children. Future activities to be offered in the year ahead include the London Dungeon, Laser Tag, a theatre trip, and trampolining. These activity sessions are designed to increase participation, confidence, enable children to try new activities and develop group identity and cohesion.
- 11.3 The Participation and Engagement Team have organised a variety of engagement activities over the past year, including:

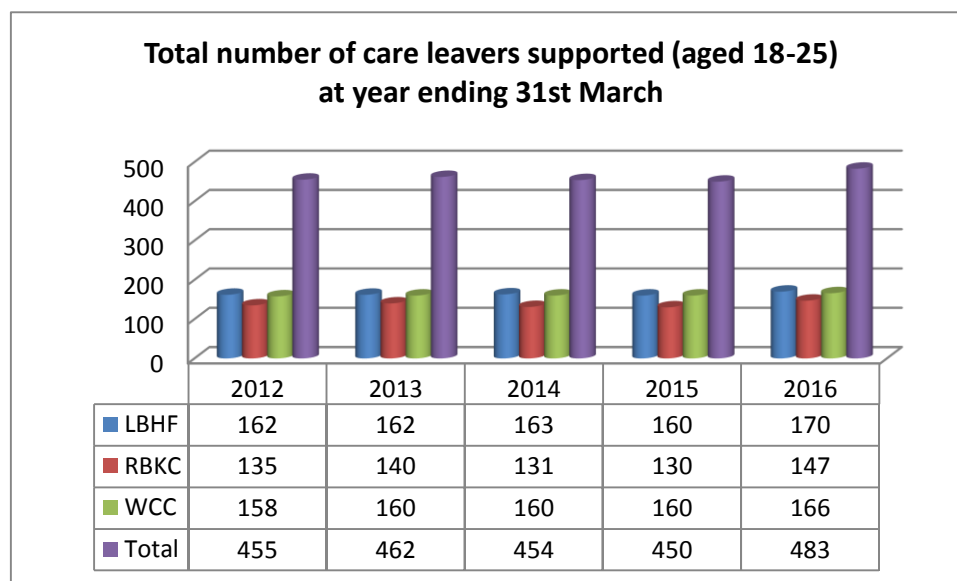
- **Youth Takeover Day** – On the 20th November 2015 Hammersmith and Fulham hosted its fifth Take Over Day. In total, 121 young people were involved from schools throughout the Borough and there were 35 different job shadowing, work experience roles and challenges available to young people that had been set by Council Departments and for the first time partners and local business including Amey, Fulham Palace and Wyndam Hotel Group. Shadowing and work experience roles included the Director of Family Services, Uniformed Enforcement Teams, Parks Police, Library and Children Centre Workers and Apprenticeship Development Officers.
- **Thematic Consultations** - Four quarterly thematic consultations have been conducted with children and young people during 2015-16 based on the 6 strands of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy, in the following topics: Education; Staying Safe, Placement Options and Stability, and the Voice of the Child. The results from the consultations influence the development of various work streams within the Service Improvement Plan and progress is reviewed within the Corporate Parenting Board.
- **Looked After Children and Care Leaver's Activities** – The Children in Care Council (CICC) continues to develop its identity. Numbers attending both the Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Board meetings are increasing. The Children's Rights Service (CRS) have been supporting a group that meet regularly every month and numbers fluctuate between 5-10 persons. The CRS also supports a virtual group running alongside the group able to attend meetings and that group consists of around another 15 persons too. The CICC offers an opportunity to meet with other children and young people in care and Care Leavers to raise service delivery issues and gain their views to feedback to the CPB on issues that will affect this cohort. The group exists to promote the active participation of Looked After Children and Care Leavers to have a voice in how decisions are made, what type of services exist and are being developed and just as importantly participate in those activities that affect them. The Corporate Parenting Board meetings have been transformed so that the CICC facilitate the first hour and feedback the findings and recommendations from the consultation that has been completed with Looked After Children during the last quarter. The CICC is active in reaching out to children and young people not only resident within the Borough but more widely throughout the UK through consultation exercises, collaborations with the Youth Council and enrichment activities.
- **Involvement in recruitment / training** – Looked After young people continue to be a part of recruitment and training for Family Services staff and are members of interview panels with Officers. During 2015-16 young people have participated in the recruitment for the Looked After Children and Care Leaver Head of Service, Team Managers and Social Worker roles. Young People have also featured in social work recruitment via the Step Up Programme.
- **Future activities** - during the year ahead it is planned that the CICC will continue to raise their visibility via participation in the development of both the Children's Rights Service and the Independent Visitors Scheme. It is envisaged that children and young people will be offered opportunities to participate in training for foster carers, continue to contribute to interview panels and the Step Up to Social Work programme recruitment, presentations with social work students within Universities as well as a variety of targeted consultations which will be developed during the year. These activities are designed to develop group

identity and cohesion and promote important skills such as public speaking, analytical thinking and report writing.

12 OUTCOMES FOR CARE LEAVERS

- 12.1 The Local Authority has a duty towards young adults who have spent at least 13 weeks in care after the age of 14 years. The level of duty is determined by whether or not they were in care when aged 16 or 17 years. The Leaving Care Act has two main aims:
- To ensure that young people do not leave care until they are ready.
 - To ensure that they receive more effective support once they have left.
- 12.2 The report of the National Audit Office to the Government in July 2015 on Care Leavers transition to adulthood identified that Care Leavers life experiences can include social exclusion, unemployment, health problems or ending up in custody. They recommended the need for a targeted approach, integrated working and the evaluation of data in respect of impact.
- 12.3 The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham recognises that Care Leavers (aged 18-25) may require continued support from both Children's and Adult Services to promote their wellbeing, they should also be supported to maximise their educational and employment potential through transition arrangements/offer under the Children and Family Act 2014 across Local Authority services.
- 12.4 Care Leavers are safeguarded through the application of child care legislation and post 18 through the Pan London Safeguarding Adults procedures; from 1st April 2015 in line with the legal framework of the Care Act 2014. Joint work also takes place across Family and Children's and Adult Services with the aim to continue to improve support and transition for those young people with complex needs who do not meet current eligibility criteria for adult services.
- 12.5 The Leaving Care service went through a systematic reorganisation in 2015 that resulting in Social Workers being recruited to replace the role of Personal Advisors, resulting in a service with a greater skill-base and experience and which enables continuity of worker. Due to the late entry to care of many children the new service has prevented a change in Social Worker and it is envisaged will be able to provide continuity of professional relations that support the transition to independence.
- 12.6 A central role of a Social Worker allocated to Care Leavers aged 16+ is to work in partnership with them to assess their needs and to develop and implement a Pathway Plan for their on-going support. The Pathway Plan sets out the support available for all aspects of their life, with a particular emphasis on securing settled accommodation and appropriate education, training and employment (EET). The Plan is reviewed every six months until the young person is 21, or later if they are completing an agreed course of education, training and employment.
- 12.7 The Leaving Care Service supported up to 170 young people during 2015-16. There has been a steady increase in the volume of Care Leavers in recent years linked to late entrants into care. We have seen a developing trend in relation to older young people with complex needs entering care along with an increase in the overall numbers of UASCs aged 16 and above.

Table 13: Total number of Care Leavers supported (aged 18-25) at year ending 31st March 2016



- 12.8 From April 2011 a former Care Leaver over the age of 21, but under 25, will be able to return to ask for their case to be reopened in order to complete a course of EET up to the level of a first degree. The leaving Care Team is currently supporting 28 young people at University. Care Leaver's education, training and employment outcomes continue to improve steadily, with more Care Leavers in education, training or employment than in previous few years. The number of Care Leavers in Higher Education remains high and reflects the work of professionals in raising the attainment and aspirations of pupils. During 2015-16 we had 25 Care Leavers attending university, and a further 23 attending training, employment or apprenticeships. In Autumn 2016 a further 9 commenced university, including one who is studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge University having gained 4 A*s at A-level.
- 12.9 Steady progress has been made in the Borough addressing the issues and barriers around sustaining education, training and employment for post 16 LAC and Care Leavers. Analysis of EET performance at the end of the academic year 2015-16 shows 92% of 16-17 year olds and 71% of 18-25 Care Leavers are EET. This is a strong improvement from 2014-15 when 52% of 18-25 year olds were EET.
- 12.10 A key priority is improving the availability, choice and promotion of apprenticeships and employment for Care Leavers. The Borough's Virtual School has recently developed a partnership with Reed Employment Agency which co-locates their staff within the Virtual School to work directly with Care Leavers to support with obtaining and sustaining employment and apprenticeships, including supporting the completion of application forms and CVs, interview preparation, and financing travel costs to interviews and work clothes. The Virtual School head teacher is also involved in a Council wide initiative to promote and develop apprenticeships and work closely with employers outside the Council to access apprenticeships for care leavers. Examples of apprenticeships for Care Leavers during 2015-16 include working within horticulture, Network Rail, business administration and hairdressing. A key target for the newly created Employment and Education Co-ordinator post will be to work with employers to develop a wider array of apprenticeships for Care Leavers.

12.11 The Virtual School has initiated a number of projects and initiatives to improve the employability of care leavers. These include:


- A monthly EET panel to track and monitor EET performance
- A very successful careers event attended by a many high profile companies
- Setting up the Shared Services Work Experience Programme with the Education Business Partnership
- The development of specific Shared Services EET programmes in to order to support young people who are NEET or at risk of NEET.
- The development of work related learning, work experience opportunities and apprenticeship opportunities for young people.
- Developing and strengthening links with post 16 EET providers and other Council services to ensure that the needs of Care Leavers are prioritised and there is effective support for Care Leavers to sustain EET opportunities.
- The development of an Employment Coaching Scheme for care leavers, including recruiting employment coaches from local businesses.

12.12 87% of Care Leavers were living in suitable accommodation in at 31st March 2016 (this excludes those care leavers that are in custody or missing UASCs), a small improvement from 83% at 31st March 2015. No care leavers were evicted from their final stage accommodation during 2015-16. The Care Leaving service continues to undertake individual work with Care Leavers to help prepare them for living independently and when ready to be nominated for social housing via the Care Leavers Housing Panel.

12.13 In June 2016 the government introduced a new strategy, “Keep on Caring”, as part of the Children and Social Work Bill. This sets out their plans and aspirations for improvements in the support provided to care leavers. These plans are ambitious and wide ranging and encompass legislative changes, innovation in the way leaving care services are delivered and a vision for a Care Leaver Covenant which encourages private sector and voluntary organisations to make commitments to supporting Care Leavers in the same way local authorities and central government do now. Included in the strategy is the government’s intention to legislate that all care leavers will be supported by a Personal Adviser up to the age of 25 (currently this is 21 for all Care Leavers and 25 for those who continue in higher education) which will require Leaving Care Services, including within Hammersmith and Fulham, to extend their offer to a wider cohort. It is anticipated that these changes will commence from October 2017 and work is underway in the Leaving Care service to calculate caseload increases and related staffing requirements.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE 30 JANUARY 2017 | |  h&f hammersmith & fulham |
| 2017 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) | | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Finance – Councillor Max Schmid | | |
| Open Report | | |
| Classification: For review and comment. Key Decision: No | | |
| Wards Affected: All | | |
| Accountable Director: Clare Chamberlain – Executive Director Children’s Services | | |
| Report Authors: <u>Corporate Overview</u> Andrew Lord – Head of Strategic Planning and Monitoring. Hitesh Jolapara – Strategic Finance Director <u>Children’s Services</u> Dave McNamara - Director of Finance & Resources | | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8753 2501 E-mail: hitesh.jolapara@lbhf.gov.uk Tel: 020 8753 2523 E-mail: dave.mcnamara@lbhf.gov.uk |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cabinet will present their revenue budget and council tax proposals to Budget Council on 22nd February 2017. A balanced budget will be set in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 1.2 This report sets out the budget proposals for the services covered by this Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC). An update is also provided on any changes in fees and charges.
- 1.3 Government resource assumptions, that are used to calculate LBHF’s Government grant, model the council increasing council tax by 4% per year. However, in line with the administration’s policy of lowering the cost of the council to residents, this increase has not been proposed. Instead, the budget proposes to freeze council tax for the year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC) considers the budget proposals and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.
- 2.2. That the PAC considers non-standard changes in fees and charges and makes recommendations as appropriate.

3. SMARTER BUDGETING

- 3.1 Since January 2016 the Council has adopted a new way of looking at how it spends money providing services for residents. The 'Smarter Budgeting' programme has focussed on developing service and cost improvement ideas to bridge the budget gap created by a reducing Government grant, new unfunded pressures from Government, inflation, and demographic changes.
- 3.2 Eight outcomes have been agreed with a team focussed on service improvements and efficiency opportunities for each outcome. The outcomes are:
 - Economic Growth
 - The best start in life for children
 - Resident involvement
 - Decent homes
 - Reducing homelessness
 - Supporting vulnerable adults
 - Safer and healthier place
 - Cleaner, greener, sustainable borough

A similar approach has been adopted for reviewing support services (enabling activities).

- 3.3 Budgets and spend has been mapped against each of the outcomes. The teams have worked together to: analyse their cost base and activities; identify new and innovative ideas; and, develop the ideas into business cases to help meet our financial challenges and improve services for residents.
- 3.4 Since Smarter Budgeting began brainstorming sessions have been held to generate new ideas for initiatives and money-saving exercises across the business involving staff as well as our partners. We've held workshops to investigate those ideas and ensure they were joined up across the council, eliminating duplication, increasing commercial acumen and putting collaboration at the forefront of our thinking.
- 3.5 For each outcome, a number of business cases have been developed. These include identifying new sources of income, service improvement and savings. Work is on-going to further develop and analyse proposals and the savings identified are included in this report. A case study from the Smarter Budgeting programme is set out below.

Case Study - The Best start in Life (Children's outcome)

The Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS)

- 3.6 In June 2016, as part of the Smarter Budgeting Programme the Council committed to exploring the redesign of the service offer for children, young people, and families across universal to complex (tiers 1, 2, 3) services.
- 3.7 The resulting Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) will involve an integration of practice and workforces across a range of family and health services and budgets across the 0-18 age range (24 if the young person has a learning difficulty or disability) and across the different tiers of need. The IFSS will be able to more effectively provide a universal offer as well as reaching and supporting families in greatest need. The IFSS will form an integral part of a whole system service strategy to prevent needs from escalating, thus managing demand on specialist tier 4 services and reducing the associated costs of this type of support.
- 3.8 The IFSS will deliver better outcomes for children and families through an improved service model that most effectively and efficiently meets current and future need.
- 3.9 The IFSS service model will focus on identifying need early – including through assertive outreach and engaging with families displaying future risk factors; will deliver tailored, focused, and effective whole family early intervention support; and will improve targeting of resources to align with current and projected population demand and need.
- 3.10 Instead of top slicing different services, the IFSS Programme will instead focus on how required system efficiencies can be made in a way that minimises negative impact on front line service delivery. The Programme will look at how efficiencies can be made through leaner management structures, integrating practice and workforce, reducing service duplication, and more efficient delivery models.
- 3.11 In October 2016 Cabinet approved the progression of work towards the implementation of the proposed IFSS and agreed a Smarter Budgeting start-up investment of £250,000 to undertake full programme scoping and develop the detail required to support a full Business Plan.
- 3.12 The Investment required to deliver this new model will be part of the paper planned to be presented to Cabinet on 6th March 2017.
- 3.13 The cumulative savings through the IFSS have been profiled as being £500,000 in 2017/18 and £1,500,000 by 2018/19.

4. THE BUDGET GAP

- 4.1 The 2017/18 budget gap, before savings, is £14.4m, rising to £46.3m by 2020/21.

Table 1: Budget Gap Before Savings

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £'m | £'m | £'m | £'m |
| Base Budget | 160.4 | 160.4 | 160.4 | 160.4 |
| Add: | | | | |
| - Inflation (includes pay) | 2.8 | 6.3 | 9.7 | 13.1 |
| - headroom for future pressures | 0 | 3.0 | 6.0 | 9.0 |
| - Growth | 7.3 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 7.1 |
| Budgeted Expenditure | 170.5 | 176.0 | 182.4 | 188.8 |
| Less: | | | | |
| - Government Resources | (42.3) | (32.9) | (26.3) | (22.5) |
| - LBHF Resources | (111.8) | (114.8) | (116.8) | (118.0) |
| - Use of Developer Contributions | (2.0) | (2.0) | (2.0) | (2.0) |
| Budgeted Resources | (156.1) | (149.2) | (144.3) | (142.4) |
| | | | | |
| Cumulative Budget Gap Before Savings | 14.4 | 26.8 | 38.1 | 46.3 |
| | | | | |
| Risks | 22.7 | 27.4 | 29.5 | 30.9 |

Resources Assumptions

- 4.2 A cash cut in **central government funding** of £8.1m from 2016/17 to 2017/18. By 2020/21 a further reduction of £19.8m is forecast.
- 4.3 **A Council Tax freeze** is modelled with no use of the adult social care precept. Authorities can opt to levy a maximum adult social care precept of 3% in 2017/18 and up to 6% by 2019/20. A 3% precept would raise £1.65m for LBHF. Central Government grant assumptions are based on LBHF raising council tax and the precept by a combined 4% per year to 2019/20. The administration, however, has a commitment to reduce the cost of the council to residents and will be resisting this.
- 4.4 **Business rates** are modelled to increase with inflation with allowance made for the Westfield expansion. The Westfield expansion is expected to open in October 2017 with floor space increasing by 40%. An allowance of £3m per annum

(£0.75m in 2017/18) is made for the potential Hammersmith and Fulham share (30%)¹ of the extra business rates income from the Westfield expansion.

4.5 A business rates revaluation, undertaken by the Valuation Office (central government) is effective from 1 April 2017. Gross Rateable Value in Hammersmith and Fulham is expected to increase by a total of 36% - our current baseline is £428m. The Council is deeply concerned about how this will impact local businesses. In addition, the rate increase will disadvantage the council, as it has to pay extra rates on its properties and will need to set aside extra sums for appeals from businesses. The Council gets no benefit from the extra income generated as it is redistributed to other parts of the country. The implications of the revaluation continue to be worked through.

4.6 **Property developments** have placed increased pressure on council services in recent years. The budget strategy provides for use of £2m of developer contributions to support relevant expenditure arising from developments.

5 GROWTH, SAVINGS AND RISKS

5.1 The growth and savings proposals for the services covered by this PAC are set out in Appendix 1 with budget risks set out in Appendix 2.

Growth

5.2 Budget growth is summarised by Service Area in Table 2.

Table 2: 2017/18 Growth Proposals

| Service Area/ Outcome | £'m |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Adult Social Care | 4.413 |
| Children's Services | 0.739 |
| Environmental Services | 0.255 |
| Housing | 0.230 |
| Enabling/Council wide | 1.712 |
| Total Growth | 7.349 |

¹ Under the current rates retention scheme Hammersmith and Fulham retains 30% of business rates growth. 50% is payable to Government and 20% to the Greater London Authority (GLA). In 2017/18 the Hammersmith and Fulham share will remain 30%. The split between the GLA and Government will change as the Government devolves more funding streams to the GLA. The GLA share will become 37% and the Government 33%.

- 5.3 The growth proposals include use of a **new one-off Adult Social Care Support Grant** of £0.922m and an ongoing increase in support through the **Better Care Fund** of £0.831m.

Savings

- 5.4 The council faces a continuing financial challenge due to overall Central Government funding cuts, unfunded burdens, inflation, and growth pressures. The budget gap will increase in each of the next three years if no action is taken to reduce expenditure, generate more income through commercial revenue or continue to grow the number of businesses in the borough.
- 5.5 To close the budget gap for 2017/18 savings (including additional income) of £14.9m are proposed (Table 3).

Table 3: 2017/18 Savings Proposals

| Service Area | Savings £'m |
|--|------------------------|
| Enabling services (back office costs) | (7.108) |
| Increased income from Adult Learning and Skills | (0.095) |
| Children's Services | (1.870) |
| Libraries | (0.382) |
| Housing | (1.256) |
| Adult Social Care | (1.885) |
| Environmental Services | (0.290) |
| Public Health Investment | (2.000) |
| Total All savings | (14.886) |
| Less savings accounted for in the grant/resource forecast ² | 0.475 |
| Net Savings | (14.411) |

Budget Risk

- 5.6 The Council's budget requirement for 2017/18 is £156.1m. Within a budget of this magnitude there are inevitably areas of risk and uncertainty particularly within the

² The council has undertaken business intelligence projects that have generated extra grant and council tax income of £0.475m. These are shown within the resource forecast.

current challenging financial environment. The key financial risks that face the council have been identified and quantified. They total £22.7m. Those that relate to this PAC are set out in Appendix 2.

6 FEES AND CHARGES

6.1 The budget strategy assumes:

- Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Parking, Libraries and Housing charges frozen
- A standard uplift of 1.8% based on the August Retail Price index for other charges
- Case by case review for commercial services that are charged on a for-profit basis. These will be varied up and down in response to market conditions, with relevant Member approval.

2017/18 COUNCIL TAX LEVELS

- 7.1 The administration proposes to freeze the Hammersmith and Fulham's element of 2017/18 Council Tax at £727.81 this will provide a balanced budget whilst recognising the burden on local taxpayers.
- 7.2 The Mayor of London's draft budget is currently out for consultation (increase from £276.00 to £280.02) and is due to be presented to the London Assembly on 25th January, for final confirmation of precepts on 20th February.
- 7.3 As part of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement the government announced that authorities can charge a 3% adult social care precept. Council does not wish to apply this tax to residents, so it does not form part of the 2017/18 budget proposals.
- 7.4 Following last year's council tax freeze, the current Band D Council Tax charge is the 3rd lowest in England³. The Band D charge for Hammersmith and Fulham is the lowest since 1999/2000.

8 Comments of the Executive Director for Children's Services on the Budget Proposals

8.1 The department's approach to identifying potential savings has been consistent with the vision for Children's Services which is:

'To improve the lives and life chances of our children and young people; intervene early to give the best start in life and promote wellbeing; ensure children and young people are protected from harm; and that all children have access to an excellent education and achieve their potential. All of this will be done whilst reducing costs and improving service effectiveness.'

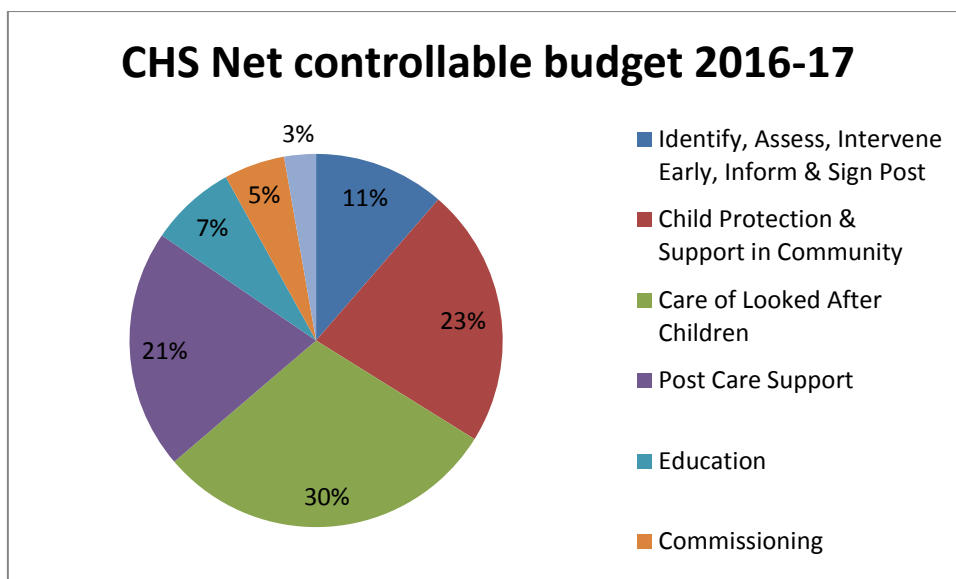
³ Excluding the Corporation of London

This has been key to developing a number of lines of enquiry that seeks to protect services to the most vulnerable members of the community within the statutory provisions required of the department.

- 8.2 The department seeks to do this through an innovative approach to service delivery that will seek to work with current service providers and groups in the community, to restructure how we deliver services, but protecting and improving services for families.
- 8.3 The Department's Net Expenditure budget for 2016/17 is £47.581m. Within this sum are a number of areas over which the department has no control, these are defined as indirect expenditure and include contributions to corporate services and capital charges. In total these add up to £11.331m. This means that the net direct expenditure that the department is in control of is £36.250m. The table below sets out how expenditure is incurred across the various activities within the department showing that the majority of expenditure is on Social Care, £30.637m of net direct expenditure.

Table 7 – Children's Services Controllable budget

| CHS Spend Categories | 2016-17 Net Direct Controllable Budget (£'000s) |
|--|--|
| Identify, Assess, Intervene Early, Inform & Sign Post (<i>receive referrals make initial assessments and interventions</i>) | 4,118 |
| Child Protection & Support in Community (<i>social worker service to children living at home with their families where high levels of concern have been identified</i>) | 8,156 |
| Care of Looked After Children | 10,833 |
| Post Care Support (<i>providing accommodation, advice and guidance for young people who have left care aged 18 – 25 and also to children who have moved to adoption and Special Guardianship Order placements</i>) | 7,529 |
| Education | 2,703 |
| Commissioning | 1,913 |
| Finance & Resources | 997 |
| Total | 36,250 |



- 8.4 The Commissioning budget of £1.913m includes £1.16m on Youth Services.
- 8.5 The Education budget of £2.703m includes £0.489m spend on School Standards and £1.953m on Special Educational Needs and Vulnerable Children, predominantly on Travel Care and Support.
- 8.6 Savings totalling £1.870m have been identified for 2017/18 and are set out in Appendix 2.
- 8.7 The scale of reduction now required is a reflection of the challenge facing the administration in setting a budget for 2017/18 and the difficulties involved in establishing expenditure priorities.
- 8.8 The savings proposals for Children's Services will seek not only to protect front-line services and to continue to offer a service appropriate to local need, but to improve our offer to residents facing difficult circumstances such as poverty and higher levels of need. The proposals will reduce spending on overhead costs, reduce spending on management and reduce duplication.
- 8.9 At the core of all savings proposals will be services that strengthen families and help parents care for their children; whilst steadfastly remaining vigilant with regards to our duty of safeguarding vulnerable children and young people; taking decisive action to protect those that need it.
- 8.10 Appendix 1 details £0.739m growth in 2017/18 for Children's Services with respect to The Resource Centre for Children with Disabilities and their families, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and the arrangements for Travel Care and Support.
- 8.11 Decisions taken by the Government will also impact on local services. The reduction in Youth Justice Board funding impacts directly on the funding of our Youth Offending Service. Provisions had been made on the balance sheet for Secure Remand pressures.

- 8.12 The Children's and Social work Bill set out proposals to introduce a new duty of care for local authorities towards young people who are 21+ and not in education. In addition, some pressures have been present for a number of years such as Southwark Judgement costs which have been appropriately identified as demand-growth and have been fully funded from corporate contingency. However, the department has sought to contain other pressures, which had not been identified as growth, within Children's Services budgets through underspends elsewhere in the department or use of specific provisions. Provisions had been made on the balance sheet for Leaving Care pressures. Housing provides support to Families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) status, on behalf of Children services, but demand for services in excess of what can be supported within existing budgets are met by Children's Services.
- 8.13 Staying Put is a relatively new pressure supporting children in care to remain with their foster family's post 18 until they are ready to leave, as is the requirement of local authorities to assess children who are released from remand presenting for Leaving Care services.

9 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) assesses the impacts on equality of the main items in the budget proposals relevant to this PAC. The draft EIA is attached (Appendix 3). A final EIA will be reported to Budget Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

None.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Savings and Growth Proposals

Appendix 2 – Risks

Appendix 3 – Draft Equality Impact Assessment

| Savings for Including In the MTFS | | Budget Change | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Service | Description | 2017-18 Budget Change (£000's) | 2018-19 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2019-20 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2020-21 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) |
| Family Services/Commissioning | Integrated Family Support Services | (500) | (1,500) | (1,500) | (1,500) |
| Family Services | Maximising Social Care Effectiveness | (797) | (1,261) | (1,365) | (1,365) |
| Family Services | Securing social housing placements for vulnerable young people | 0 | (100) | (100) | (100) |
| Family Services | Efficiencies to Legal Costs | (100) | (150) | (150) | (150) |
| Family Services | Aligning the budget to actual expenditure | (30) | (105) | (105) | (105) |
| Family Services | Family Service Savings- full year effect of savings delivered from 2016-17 staff reorganisation | (87) | (87) | (87) | (87) |
| Education | Staffing and other efficiencies as disability placements ageing out | (122) | (122) | (122) | (122) |
| Education | Schools Standards Staffing and discretionary spend | (129) | (129) | (129) | (129) |
| Education | Education Psychology – additional traded income with schools | (50) | (50) | (50) | (50) |
| Education | Move to more independent travel training for some Special Educational Need Pupils in cases where this would be better for the pupil | (25) | (25) | (25) | (25) |
| Education | Other efficiencies | (30) | (30) | (30) | (30) |
| Savings Total | | (1,870) | (3,559) | (3,663) | (3,663) |

| MTFS GROWTH HELD DEPARTMENTALLY | | Budget Change | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Service | Description | 2017-18 Budget Change (£000's) | 2018-19 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2019-20 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2020-21 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) |
| Unaccompanied asylum seeking children - additional children beyond current allocation | There is an interest for the administration to support a number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in addition to our current allocation. A range of factors will impact the actual cost including age of children, grant funding and number of vacancies within the in-house provision | 141 | 141 | 141 | 141 |

| MTFS GROWTH HELD CORPORATELY | | Budget Change | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Service | Description | 2017-18 Budget Change (£000's) | 2018-19 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2019-20 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) | 2020-21 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's) |
| Queens Manor Resource Centre | Cabinet agreed funding to build and develop a Resource Centre for disabled children and their families; to rebuild the SEN Unit at Queen's Manor School and to fund project and specialist resources to develop the service offer of the Resource Centre in co-production with partners and families. | 150 | 600 | 600 | 600 |
| Travel Care and Support Service Arrangements | A recommendation was made to change the existing delivery arrangements to improve service standards and sovereign accountability, which included approval to fund additional recurring costs totalling £228k per annum from 2016/17. | 228 | 228 | 228 | 228 |
| Travel Care and Support Reprourement | There is a requirement to reprocore certain, significant elements of the Travel Care and Support service as a result of the end of the lifetime of the West London Alliance Framework and the decision to include within the procurement one of the largest providers of home to school transport currently on the Westminster Framework. As part of this proposal the procurement will establish "sovereign" routes and to enhance the quality of the existing service. | 220 | 220 | 220 | 220 |
| Growth Total | | 739 | 1,189 | 1,189 | 1,189 |

Departmental Risk/Challenges

| Department & Division | Short Description of Risk | Risk | Risk | Risk | Risk | Mitigation |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | 2017/18 Value (£000's) | 2018/19 Value (£000's) | 2019/20 Value (£000's) | 2020/21 Value (£000's) | |
| Children's' Services | | | | | | |
| LAC and Leaving Care | Housing provides support to Families with No recourse to Public Funds - NRPF status, on behalf of Children services, but demand for services in excess of what can be supported within existing budgets. | 225 | 225 | 225 | 225 | A joint working strategy has been agreed with Housing, in order to review these cases and take appropriate action |
| LAC and Leaving Care | Queens Speech - The introduction of the children and social work bill provides all care leavers up to the age of 25 with access to a personal adviser, who will guide and support them on anything from applying for jobs to finding a first place to live. This introduces a new duty of care towards young people who are 21+ and not in education. | 216 | 313 | 403 | 403 | As the changes in the Children and Social Work Bill is new primary legislation some central government funding is anticipated. However previous grant funding to cover increased responsibilities for Care Leavers has fallen short of the full costs of implementing the service enhancements. This risk will be reviewed once the announcement on a funding formula (anticipated spring 2017) for any new grant is made by the DFE. |
| Fostering and Adoption | Tower Hamlets - Risk of backdated claims following the court of appeal ruling that connected persons carers should receive payments on the same level as those of unrelated foster carers. | 2,528 | 2,990 | 3,499 | 3,499 | This risk is currently under review by the service, and individual cases are being resolved as they arise within current budgets. However, a review of policy may be required should risk materialise to a level which is deemed unmanageable. |

| Department & Division | Short Description of Risk | Risk | Risk | Risk | Risk | Mitigation |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | 2017/18 Value (£000's) | 2018/19 Value (£000's) | 2019/20 Value (£000's) | 2020/21 Value (£000's) | |
| Special Educational Needs | Travel Care and Support - The reprocurement of the Travel Care and Support contract to increase the quality of travel provision in LBHF. Risk of increased demand & impact of expected minimum wage changes | 72 | 584 | 653 | 717 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand management – the review of the internal application of the travel assistance policy to ensure robust application and review processes in place • Establish clear process and mechanism for the identification of children and adults suitable for Independent Travel Training • The procurement of an effective Independent Travel Training contractor • Potential extension of the use of alternative travel options – e.g. personal transport budgets / mileage allowances – where more cost effective to do so. • Route optimisation |
| | | | | | | |
| Children's' Services Total | | 3,041 | 4,112 | 4,780 | 4,844 | |

Draft Equality Impact Analysis (EIA)

Children's Services

Budget Proposals 2017/18

Savings Proposals

Key Protected Characteristics: Disability, Maternity and Pregnancy, Age, Race, Religion, Gender.

There remains an aim within the Council to ensure required savings take place alongside innovative and improved service delivery wherever possible. Where individual savings relate to staffing efficiencies, re-procurements or other major programmes, appropriate procedures will ensure equality impacts are assessed and responded to. A number of the developments described have already been subject to a detailed EIA or will be carried out at a point at which these implications can be fully assessed.

Family Services. £1.514m

Key Protected Characteristics: Disability, Age, Race, Religion, Gender.

| Family Services and Cross Cutting Savings | H&F 2017/18 Savings |
|---|---------------------|
| Maximising Social Care Effectiveness (see cabinet report on 07/11/16) | £0.797m |
| Integrated Family Support Services (see cabinet report on 10/10/16) | £0.500m |
| Efficiencies to Legal Costs | £0.100m |
| Aligning the budget to actual expenditure | £0.030m |
| Full year effect of 2016/17 MTFS savings delivered in 2016/17 | £0.087m |

Family Services continue to improve services with an increasing focus on family preservation approaches which enable more children to remain with their families. This has a significant and positive impact upon overall outcomes for children and the cost of supporting them. This complements the wide ranging Focus on Practice programme which is providing the workforce with additional skills to maximise their potential to secure effective and sustainable change, reducing re-referrals and escalating children through the system where required. This will build upon a locally developed approach to intensive working with families which has demonstrated its effectiveness in diverting children from care.

In addition, there will be further exploration of opportunities to reduced spend on legal costs associated with proceedings in the Family Courts, changing the balance of which services are provided and when to avoid unnecessary costs. Because of ongoing strategies to reduce the number of children entering care, there are already robust monitoring processes in place which will track the impact upon relevant protected characteristics. It is known that 66% of the borough's current looked after children are from BME backgrounds so it will be important to monitor whether children in this cohort equally benefit from the positive impact of being supported to remain with or return to their birth families where appropriate. Baselines are available and it is anticipated that the demand management programme will have a positive impact upon older children who are also currently overrepresented.

Family Services and Children's Commissioning are in the process of redesigning universal and targeted services as part of a whole system service strategy with specialist services. This will lead to integration of practice and workforces across a range of family and health services, budgets and the different thresholds of support provided.

Alongside this a number of savings are planned to existing early help services in 2017/18 as part of the first stage of Integrated Family Support. Management savings have been identified in Children's Centres and efficiencies in the management of youth provision made through better systems and processes rather than through reducing levels of services to local children and families (and hence with no equality impacts expected). Some restructuring of early help services is being planned within the next six months and this will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Education and Schools. £0.356m

Key Protected Characteristics: Disability, Age, Race, Religion, Gender.

| Education and Disability Savings | H&F 2017/18 Savings |
|---|--------------------------------|
| staffing and other efficiencies as disability placements age out | £0.122m |
| Schools Standards Staffing and discretionary spend | £0.129m |
| Education Psychology – additional traded income with schools | £0.050m |
| Move to more independent travel training for some Special Educational Need Pupils in cases where this would be better for the pupil | £0.025m |
| Other efficiencies | £0.030m |

Actions taken have been part of the ongoing service efficiencies that have improved the quality and focus of the school improvement services. School improvement functions have secured clear leadership in early years' education advisory support

and advisory support for English as an additional language with a focus on establishing best practice networks and brokering support between schools. This has led to reduced demands and, as a consequence, a reduced budget. All requests for support continue to be met as before so a neutral equalities impact is expected. In addition, the need to make further savings has been lessened by income generation from Educational Psychology traded services. These actions have been assessed against the equality impact criteria and it has been concluded that there will be a neutral impact on equalities.

Services for children with special educational needs and disabilities are now managed within the Children's Service Education Directorate. There are plans in 2017/18 to change the balance of staffing, with social care key workers providing additional capacity following a reduction in social worker posts. This reflects the feedback of parents and carers and provides capacity appropriately within the system. A number of service improvements will compliment this change which is designed to ensure children and their families receive the support they need when they need it. The Short Breaks service available to families will be revised in the context of a more accessible range of other support services through the Local Offer which reduce reliance on specialist one to one provision where services which meet needs can be offered in other ways. The new offer is designed to be more accessible, including to those who have not previously met the criteria for services, and provides greater choice. This, along with any proposed changes to staff structures will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Development of an independent travel training programme will provide some young people who have special educational needs (some of whom will have the protected characteristic of disability) with the confidence to travel alone, enhancing their independence and access to opportunities while reducing the costs which result from specialist travel arrangements. It is therefore anticipated that the equality impact of this will be positive.

Growth Proposals. £0.739m

| Children's Services Budget Growth 2017/18 Proposed | H&F 2017/18 Growth |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Queens Manor Resource Centre - to rebuild the SEN Unit at Queen's Manor School and to fund project and specialist resources to develop the service offer of the Resource Centre in co-production with partners and families. | £0.150m |
| Unaccompanied asylum seeking children -additional children beyond current allocation | £0.141m |
| Travel Care and Support Service Arrangements - Change the existing delivery arrangements to improve service standards and sovereign accountability. | £0.228m |
| Passenger Transport – Re-procurement to establish sovereign routes and to enhance the quality of the existing service. | £0.220m |


Planned growth will impact upon two cohorts of children, young people with disabilities and those who are looked after children or care leavers. The development of a resource centre for children with disabilities will provide a new, specialist service offer including additional early intervention and targeted provision. The centre will contribute to plans to avoid unnecessarily placing children who have the protected characteristic of disability away from their families out of borough and support better transitions to adulthood and relevant local services where required.

Meanwhile there are planned developments of services for looked after children and care leavers including improvements to services for unaccompanied asylum seeking children, provision of support until the age of 25 and introduction of a council tax allowance for care leavers who are resident in the borough. All of these will contribute to an enhanced service offer for a group of young people within which the protected characteristics of race and disability are overrepresented.

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Appendix 3

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| | | |
|--|--|---|
| London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE 30 January 2017 | |  |
| Children’s Social Care Annual Complaints Report 2015-16 | | |
| Report of the Executive Director for Children’s Services – Clare Chamberlain | | |
| Open Report | | |
| Classification: For review and comment Key Decision: No | | |
| Wards Affected: All | | |
| Accountable Executive Director: Clare Chamberlain, Executive Director of Children’s Services | | |
| Report Author: Thomas Gell, Customer Relationship Manager | Contact Details: Tel: 07973 361663 E-mail: thomas.gell@lbhf.gov.uk | |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Children’s Social Care Statutory Complaints Procedure stipulates that an annual report must be produced for complaints made under the Children’s Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.
- 1.2 This report provides information about complaints made between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016. It highlights how the Department has performed against statutory timescales and key principles; learning and service improvements that have been made as a result of listening and responding to complaints and plans for further developments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to review and comment on the report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.

LIST OF APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Children’s Social Care Annual Complaints Report 2015-16

Children's Social Care Annual Complaints Report

1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Children's Social Care Statutory Complaints Procedure stipulates that an annual report must be produced for complaints made under the Children's Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006. The procedure further requires that the report should provide a mechanism by which the local authority can be kept informed about the operation of its complaints and representations procedure; should be presented to staff, the relevant management committee and be made available to the regulator and the general public.
- 1.2 This report provides information about complaints made between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016. It highlights how the Department has performed against statutory timescales and key principles; learning and service improvements that have been made as a result of listening and responding to complaints and plans for further developments.
- 1.3 From April 2015 to March 2016 the Complaints Team dealt with 51 statutory complaints, 41 of which were new complaints, received at Stage 1.
- 1.4 In total, 77% of statutory complaints were received and resolved at Stage 1 of the procedures. Seven complaints were processed at Stage 2 and five progressed to Stage 3 during this reporting period.

| Year | Stage 1 | Stage 2 | Stage 3 | Total |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 2015/16 | 41 | 7 | 4 | 51 |
| 2014/15 | 59 | 9 | 1 | 69 |
| 2013/14 | 39 | 2 | 1 | 42 |

- 1.5 Family Support & Child Protection and the Looked After Children and Care Leavers team continue to receive the highest number of new Stage 1 complaints. There have been decreases in all areas apart from Fostering and Adoption Service, which has seen an increase of 133%. The area that has achieved the biggest reduction in complaints is Children with Disabilities, with a reduction of 62.5%.
- 1.6 In the past year, the local authority has reduced the number of complaints that it has received regarding staff attitude and behaviour, eligibility and assessment. However, communication continues to be significant area for complaint, while child protection and change of worker requests have increased.
- 1.7 Since last year, the percentage of Stage 1 complaints being upheld or partly upheld has reduced from 59% to 42% and is now at its lowest figure in the past three years. Furthermore, our continued focus on local resolution means that a smaller proportion of complaints have escalated to Stage 2 than in 2014/15.

- 1.8 Although fewer complaints have been completed within statutory timescales compared with previous years, this is in the context of a period of significant change within the Customer Relationship Team. There has been considered effort to address performance through service development activities and this has resulted in improved performance throughout 2016/17, which is expected to continue.

2. STATUTORY COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 2.1. The Children's Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006, Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the Health and Social Care Acts 2003 require the local authority to have a procedure for resolving complaints and representations received by, on behalf of, or relating to children and young people.
- 2.2. To facilitate the procedure in a fair and consistent way the local authority follows guidance provided by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and contained in the publication 'Getting the Best from Complaints' which was produced by the department of Education.
- 2.3. The LGO provide practical information on how processes can be improved and the best way to deal with complaints positively and efficiently.
- 2.4. The complaints procedure has three stages and has a strong emphasis on resolving complaints at the first stage.

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

- 2.5. This is the most important stage of the complaints procedure and we aspire to resolve as many complaints as possible at this initial point. The Customer Relationship Team works in partnership with managers to ensure that quality responses are made within the stipulated timescales.
- 2.6. The timescale for responding to a complaint at this stage is 10 working days or 20 working days for complex cases or to allow time for appointing an advocate where a vulnerable person is involved.

Stage 2 – Investigation

- 2.7. This stage is usually implemented when the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of Stage 1, where they have not received a response within the timescales or because the Department has agreed that Stage 1 is not appropriate.
- 2.8. Stage 2 is an investigation conducted by an external Investigating Officer together with an Independent Person who oversees the fairness and transparency of the investigation process. Investigators are drawn from pool of consultants. These individuals are appointed according to their experience and expertise.

- 2.9. Following an investigation, the findings and any recommendations are set out in a report to the Director of Family Services who would then provide a written response on behalf of the Council. Subsequently, the response and a copy of the report are sent to the complainant and relevant individuals within the Department. The Complaints Team monitor any recommendations to ensure that they are implemented.
- 2.10. The timescale for responding to a complaint at this stage is 25 working days or up to 65 working days for complex cases.

Stage 3 - Independent Review Panel

- 2.11. Where complainants wish to proceed with complaints about statutory social services functions, the Council is required to establish a complaints Review Panel. Complaints Review Panels are made up of three independent panel members (external individuals selected from the said pool of consultants) who are appointed by the Customer Relationship Manager. The panel makes recommendations to the Executive Director of Children's Services who then reaches a decision on the matter and any actions to be taken.
- 2.12. There are various timescales relating to Stage 3 complaints. These include:
- Organising the panel within 30 working days of the complainant's request
 - Producing the panel's report within 5 working days, detailing its recommendations
 - Sending the local authority's response to the complainant within 15 working days of the Panel's report.

Local Government Ombudsman

- 2.13. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Independent Review Panel they have the right to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Complainants can refer their complaint to the LGO at any time, although the Ombudsman normally refers the complaint back to the Council if it has not been considered under the relevant procedure in the first instance.

Advocacy

- 2.14. We observe best practice, in line with 'Getting the best from complaints', and provide children and young people with information about advocacy services and offer them help to obtain an advocate. Advocacy can be provided by friends, relatives, advocacy groups or legal representatives.

3. DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

- 3.1. This section of the report provides an overview of statutory complaints activity across the Children’s Services Department.

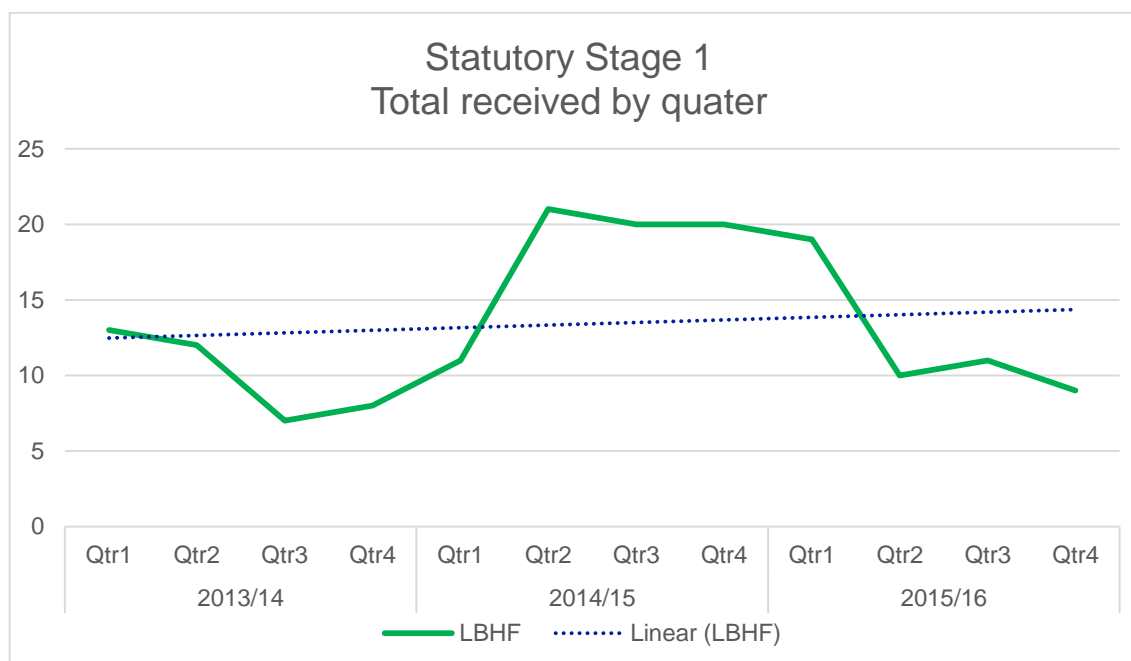
Stage 1

Number of complaints received

- 3.2. From April 2015 to March 2016 the Complaints Team recorded 41 statutory complaints at Stage 1 compared with 59 during the previous year and 39 in 2013/14.

| Year | Stage 1 |
|---------|---------|
| 2015/16 | 41 |
| 2014/15 | 59 |
| 2013/14 | 39 |

- 3.3. This reduction in the number of complaints received is reflected in the graph below, which also shows the increased number of complaints that were received during 2014/15. However, the three-year trend line indicates that the average number of cases received has consistently been between 13 and 14 per quarter.

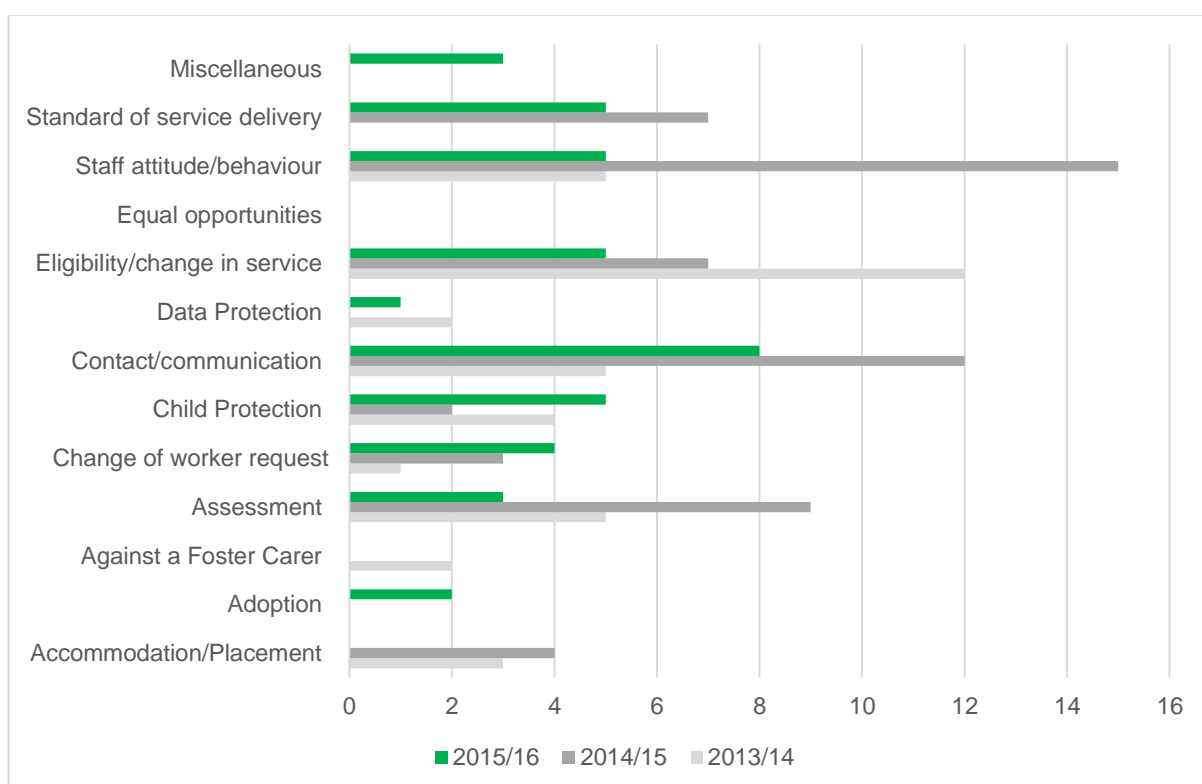


Category of complaints

- 3.4. The table below shows the number of complaints received in each category over the reporting period of April 2013 to March 2016.

| Complaint Description | 2015/16 | 2014/15 | 2013/14 |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Number | Number | Number |
| Accommodation/Placement | 0 | 4 | 3 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Adoption | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Against a Foster Carer | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Assessment | 3 | 9 | 5 |
| Change of worker request | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Child Protection | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| Contact/communication | 8 | 12 | 5 |
| Data Protection | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Eligibility/change in service | 5 | 7 | 12 |
| Equal opportunities | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Staff attitude/behaviour | 5 | 15 | 5 |
| Standard of service delivery | 5 | 7 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 41 | 59 | 39 |



3.5. We have reduced the number of complaints that we have received regarding staff attitude and behaviour, eligibility and assessment. Communication continues to be significant area for complaint, while child protection and change of worker requests have increased during the past year.

Outcome of complaints

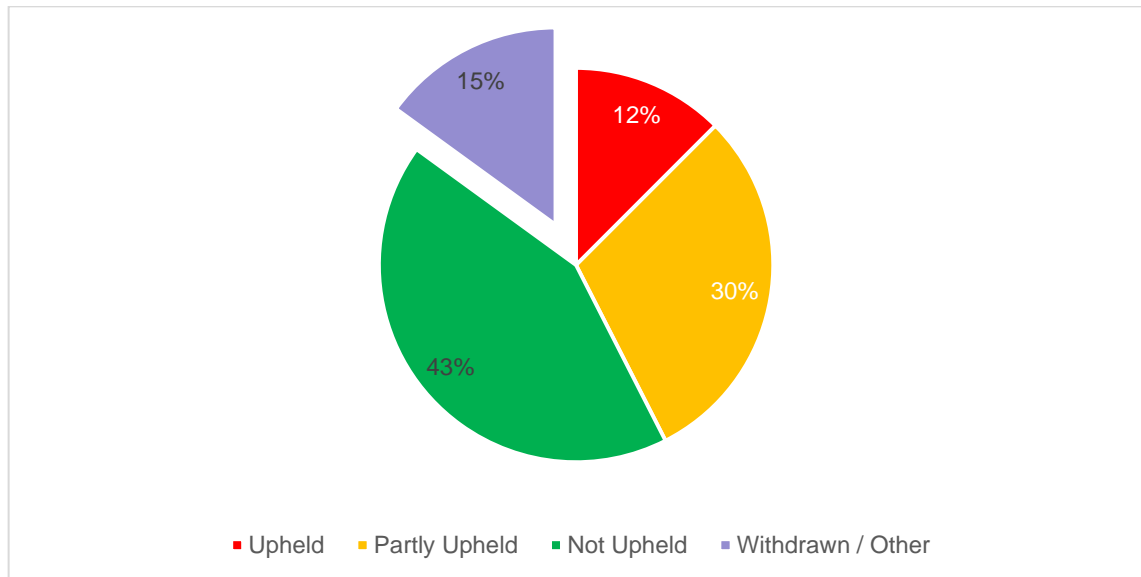
3.6. The table below compares the outcome of the complaints during the reporting period of April 2013 to March 2016.

| Year | Upheld | Partly Upheld | Not Upheld | Withdrawn / Other | Total |
|------|--------|---------------|------------|-------------------|-------|
|------|--------|---------------|------------|-------------------|-------|

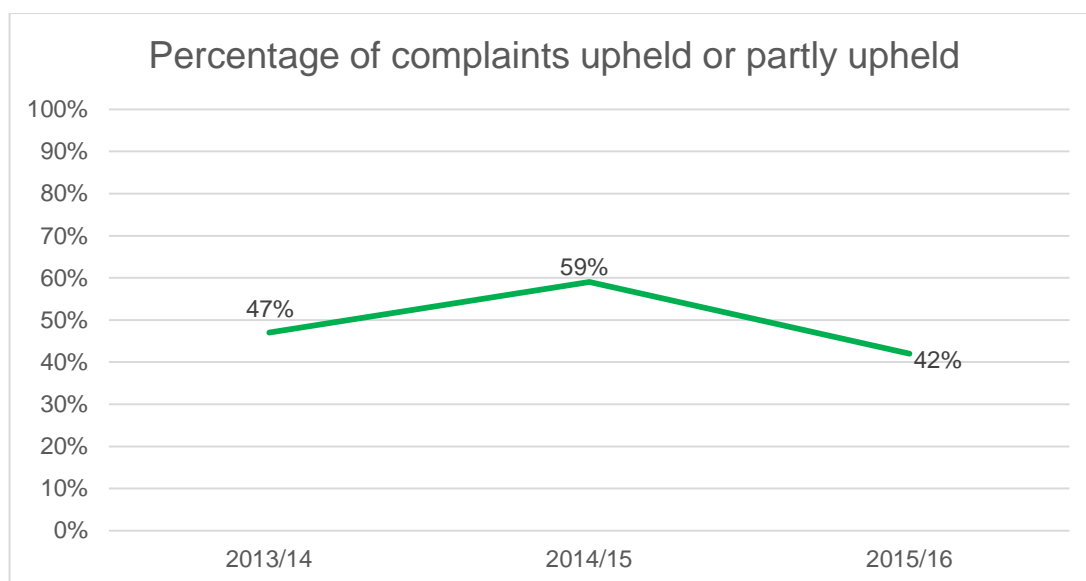
| | | | | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 2015/16 | 5 | 12 | 17 | 6 | 40 |
| 2014/15 | 9 | 26 | 21 | 3 | 59 |
| 2013/14 | 3 | 14 | 16 | 3 | 36 |

One complaint was resolved upon receipt and there was therefore no outcome required from the complaints process

- 3.7. The pie chart below shows that, when the 15% of withdrawn complaints are removed, half of all complaints considered were either upheld or partly upheld.



- 3.8. Where complaints were upheld, either fully or partly, the Department offered apologies and advised complainants of actions that would be taken to prevent the incident from recurring.
- 3.9. Further analysis shows that, since last year, the percentage of Stage 1 complaints being upheld or partly upheld has reduced from 59% to 42% and is now at its lowest figure in the past three years:



Stage 2

3.10. Of the 41 Stage 1 complaints that we received in 2015/16, five complaints (12%) were escalated to Stage 2. This represents an improvement in performance compared to 2014/15, when 19% of complaints at Stage 1 were escalated to Stage 2.

3.11. Two complaints bypassed Stage 1 and entered the process directly at Stage 2. There were therefore a total of seven cases dealt with at Stage 2 during 2015/16, the outcomes of which are outlined below:

| Year | Upheld | Partly Upheld | Not Upheld | Other | Total |
|---------|--------|---------------|------------|-------|-------|
| 2015/16 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| 2014/15 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 11 |
| 2013/14 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |

The two cases classified as 'other' consist of one that was judged to be outside of the jurisdiction of Children's Services and therefore an outcome was not possible, and another case that is still undergoing investigation at the time of writing.

3.12. While less cases were considered at Stage 2 this year, a greater percentage (57%) were partly upheld than in 2014/15 (45%). There have been no fully upheld Stage 2 complaints in the past three years.

Stage 3

3.13. A total of four cases have been considered at Stage 3 during 2015/16.

3.14. Three of these cases had escalated from Stage 2 complaints considered during the same year, representing an escalation figure of 57%. The

remaining complaint was escalated from a Stage 2 case that was considered in 2014/15.

- 3.15. The outcomes of the four cases dealt with at Stage 3 during 2015/16 are outlined below:

| Year | Upheld | Partly Upheld | Not Upheld | Other | Total |
|---------|--------|---------------|------------|-------|-------|
| 2015/16 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| 2014/15 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2013/14 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

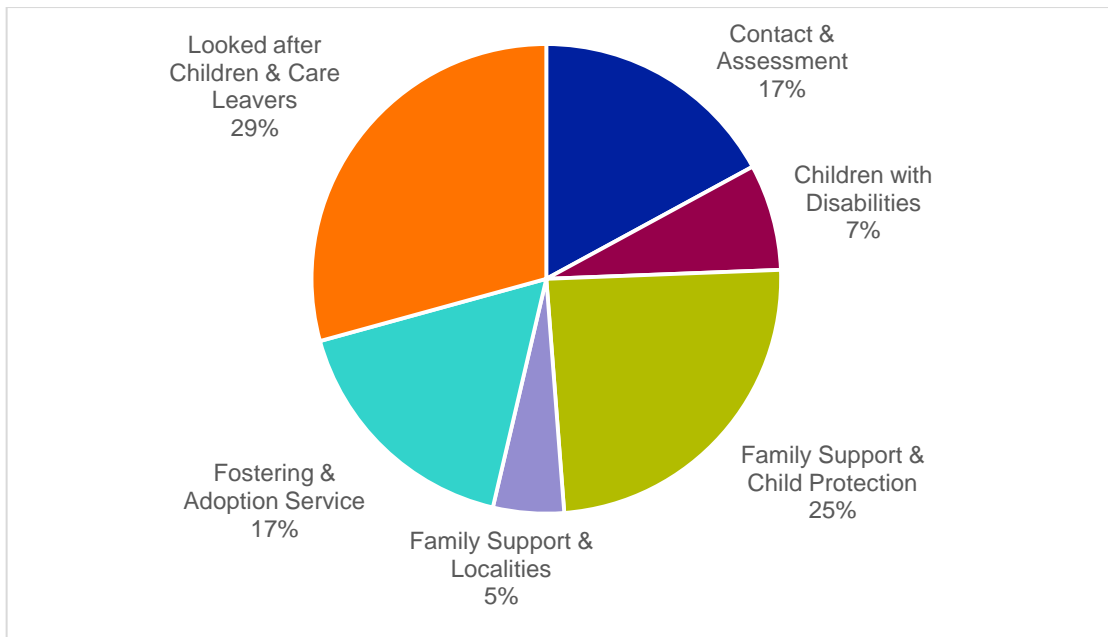
The case classified as 'other' is still undergoing investigation at the time of writing.

Local Government Ombudsman

- 3.16. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Independent Review Panel they have the right to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 3.17. During 2015/16 a total of four cases were referred to the Local Government Ombudsman. For three of these cases, the Ombudsman decided that an investigation was not necessary and closed the case. One case was investigated fully and, once this was complete, the Ombudsman was satisfied with all actions undertaken by the Local Authority.

4. SERVICE LEVEL ANALYSIS

- 4.1. This section of the report provides an overview of the number and types of statutory complaint received in each service area across the Children's Services Department.
- 4.2. The chart below demonstrates the distribution of complaints that have been received at Stage 1 across the department:



4.3. The table below provides the volume of Stage 1 complaints activity by service area:

| Service | 2015/16 | 2014/15 | 2013/14 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Number | Number | Number |
| Contact & Assessment | 7 | 11 | 7 |
| Children with Disabilities | 3 | 8 | 4 |
| Family Support & Child Protection | 10 | 16 | 14 |
| Family Support & Localities | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Fostering & Adoption Service | 7 | 3 | 5 |
| Looked after Children & Care Leavers | 12 | 16 | 7 |
| Total | 41 | 59 | 38 |

4.4. Family Support & Child Protection and the Looked After Children and Care Leavers team continue to receive the highest number of new Stage 1 complaints. There have been decreases in all areas apart from Fostering and Adoption Service, which has seen an increase of 133%. The area that has achieved the biggest reduction in complaints is Children with Disabilities, with a reduction of 62.5%.

Contact and Assessment

4.5. The Contact and Assessment Team received seven complaints during 2015/2016, of which, two were upheld or partially upheld.

4.6. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|-----------------------|--------|
|-----------------------|--------|

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Assessment | 2 |
| Child Protection | 1 |
| Contact/communication | 1 |
| Data Protection | 1 |
| Eligibility/change in service | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 1 |
| Total | 7 |

Children with Disabilities

4.7. The Children with Disabilities Service received three complaints during 2015/2016, of which, one was partially upheld.

4.8. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Change of worker request | 1 |
| Child Protection | 2 |
| Total | 3 |

Family Support & Child Protection

4.9. The Family Support and Child Protection Team received ten complaints during 2015/2016, of which, two were upheld or partially upheld.

4.10. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Change of worker request | 3 |
| Child Protection | 2 |
| Contact/communication | 1 |
| Staff attitude/behaviour | 2 |
| Standard of service delivery | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 1 |
| Total | 10 |

Family Support & Localities

4.11. The Family Support and Localities Service received two complaints during 2015/2016, neither of which were upheld.

4.12. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Contact/communication | 2 |
| Total | 2 |

Fostering & Adoption Service

4.13. The Fostering and Adoption Service received seven complaints during 2015/2016, of which, three were upheld or partially upheld.

4.14. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Adoption | 2 |
| Eligibility/change in service | 3 |
| Staff attitude/behaviour | 1 |
| Miscellaneous | 1 |
| Total | 7 |

Looked after Children & Care Leavers

4.15. The Looked after Children & Care Leavers Service received 12 complaints during 2015/2016, of which, seven were upheld or partially upheld.

4.16. Complaints were split into the following categories:

| Complaint description | Number |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Assessment | 1 |
| Contact/communication | 4 |
| Eligibility/change in service | 1 |
| Staff attitude/behaviour | 2 |
| Standard of service delivery | 4 |
| Total | 12 |

5. COMPLIMENTS

5.1. Children's Services welcomes compliments from its users. Compliments help to highlight good quality service and give staff encouragement to continue delivering service of the highest standard. During the year, **five** compliments were received and passed to the Complaints Team. Some details of these include:

- Thanks expressed to the Localities Service, who "delivered a fantastic session on child sexual exploitation to a group of 15 sixth form students".
- Compliments paid to a Social Worker "who really cares and has not made any judgements on me. [The Social Worker says they are] going to do something and gets it done straight away."

5.2. As part of the Department's twice-yearly practice week, managers speak with up to 25 families, carers and young people to understand their experience and understanding of services. While not all responses are necessarily compliments, they do represent a significant opportunity for the service to hear directly from service users.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1. In addition to formal complaints, the Department is required to collect figures on representations. Representations may not always be complaints; they might also be positive remarks or ideas that require a response from the local authority. Thus, enquiries or comments about the availability, delivery or nature of a service which are not criticisms are dealt with as representations.
- 6.2. The Customer Relationship Team recorded **10** representations that were made and successfully resolved during this reporting period. This is a considerable reduction compared with the **27** representations that were recorded in 2014/15.

7. RESPONSE TIMES

- 7.1. During this reporting year, Children's Services responded to 63% of Statutory Stage 1 complaints within the statutory timescales, compared with 64% in 2014/15. One complaint was withdrawn, one was resolved upon receipt, and one was outside of jurisdiction.
- 7.2. There were three Stage 2 complaints which were not completed within statutory timescale of 65 working days. Complaints that took longer than 65 days were kept informed on the progress of the investigation.
- 7.3. Although fewer complaints have been completed within statutory timescales compared with previous years, this is in the context of a period of significant change within the Customer Relationship Team. There has been considered effort to address performance through service development activities and this has resulted in improved performance in 2016/17, which is expected to continue.
- 7.4. The following tables gives a breakdown of the overall number of responses that met the statutory timescales at each stage. Complaints that were withdrawn, ended prematurely or still awaiting outcome are not included in these figures:

Stage 1

| Response | 2015/16 | 2014/15 | 2013/14 |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Within 10 days | 10 | 18 | 20 |
| Between 10 and 20 days | 12 | 19 | 14 |
| Outside of timescale | 13 | 21 | 5 |
| Total | 35 | 58 | 39 |
| Overall response rate | 63% | 64% | 87% |

Stage 2

| Response | 2015/16 | 2014/2015 | 2013/14 |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Within 25 days | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Between 25 and 65 days | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Outside of timescale | 3 | 6 | 1 |
| Total | 4 | 9 | 2 |
| Overall response rate | 25% | 33% | 50% |

Stage 3

- 7.5. It is more difficult to benchmark Stage 3 complaints against an overall statutory timescale, as the process is made up of two distinct phases, each of which should be completed within a set amount of time but with an unspecified and variable time between them. This is demonstrated by the table below:

| | Action | Timescale |
|-------------------|--|--|
| | Complainant requests review panel | Up to 20 working days after receipt of the Stage 2 adjudication |
| Phase 1 – 30 days | Complaints Manager acknowledges request | Within two working days |
| | Complaints Manager appoints Chair and confirms attendee and content of Panel papers with Chair | Within 10 working days of the complainant's request for Review Panel |
| | Local authority agrees the other Panellists and date for Review Panel | Within 30 working days of the complainant's request for a review panel |
| | Local authority circulates Panel papers | Within 10 working days of the date of the Review Panel |
| Phase 2 – 20 days | Review Panel produces its written report (including any recommendations) | Within 5 working days of the Review Panel |
| | Relevant Director issues his response | Within 15 working day of receiving the Review Panel's report |

- 7.6. Allowing 25 days between agreeing a panel date and the panel taking place, the Stage 3 complaints process should be complete within a total of 75 days.
- 7.7. None of the four Stage 3 complaints undertaken in 2015/16 were completed within this timescale, with the average number of days it has taken to complete a Stage 3 investigation being 127 days.

Improving response rates

- 7.8. Significant work has been undertaken with the team to clear a backlog of unresolved cases and to address the reduction in the number of cases that have been completed within statutory timescales.
- 7.9. This work has resulted in an upwards trend of improved performance in throughout the first 3 Quarters of 2016/17. In Quarter 1 of 2016/17, 76% of Stage 1 complaints were responded to within timescale. In Quarter 2, this increased to 85%, and Quarter 3 followed this trend, with 100% of Stage 1 complaints answered within timescales. We expect to be able to maintain this improved performance throughout the final Quarter of 2016/17.

8. LEARNING AND ACTION TAKEN FROM COMPLAINTS

- 8.1. Learning from complaints is an important part of the Department's philosophy and managers responding to complaints/representations are encouraged to identify any shortcomings within the service and to inform the service user of any actions which will be taken to prevent a recurrence of the event which lead to the complaint.
- 8.2. A number of processes have been put in place to ensure that the Department learns from the complaints received. The Learning from Complaints Framework enables the Department to better evidence and monitor how the outcomes of complaints have led to service improvements.
- 8.3. On completion of Stage 2 investigations, the Customer Relationship liaise with the relevant Heads of Service to ensure that recommendations resulting from the investigation are implemented, that learning is recorded and complainants are updated where necessary. The same process is followed for any recommendations that arise from Stage Three Review Panels. In addition, the Director of Family Services always offers to meet with any Stage 2/3 complainant if their complaint is upheld or partially upheld.
- 8.4. Examples of specific service level changes that have been made as a result of learning from complaints are as follows:

| Recommendation from complaint | Service level response |
|---|--|
| Further reflection in the service would be helpful to consider how we work with and engage parents of children who are in care long term and we want their stability and security to be maintained, including how parents are included in review process in an appropriate way. | When appropriate, parents are invited to attend LAC reviews, or the IRO will arrange to meet with them prior to or after the meeting. Where appropriate, parents receive copies of minutes and other relevant documents. Social workers also maintain a level of contact with parents which varies case-by-case in |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>relation to the level/frequency. This can be informed by the nature of the case, views of the child and significant events occurring. The learning is that we need to be explicit about how these decisions are arrived at and recorded and how parents are aware of the level of communication they receive to manage expectations and or anxieties.</p> |
| <p>That the level of contact is decided in the looked after children process as ordered by the court – the level of contact should be specified in the care plan which is reviewed at the statutory review.</p> | <p>This is scrutinised by the IRO. Any variations in the care plan outside of this process will require the IRO to be informed/canvased.</p> |
| <p>Managers should be reminded to check in supervision that looked after children review decisions are being implemented and the expectation that this is checked by the Independent Reviewing Officers should also be reinforced.</p> | <p>This is an area of focus in managers' meetings, managers' supervision and meetings that occur between the LAC and CLS service and the IRO's.</p> <p>Our focus is to ensure that recommendations become incorporated in to our care planning and, if we are not in agreement, we challenge these in the allotted time frame.</p> |

- 8.5. A further area that is being worked on is a recommendation from a review panel that a system is put in place to ensure that there is continuity in information provided to adoptive parents in regard to support allowance payments.
- 8.6. Furthermore, the local authority is working on service level initiatives that should result in a reduction in the number of statutory complaints that we receive:
- **Focus on Practice** was launched in September 2014 and focusses on three areas: firstly, creating time for practitioners to work with families more intensively by reducing caseloads; secondly developing expertise through the provision of comprehensive training in evidence based approaches; and thirdly by changing the system conditions that reinforce and steer practice. The core objective of Focus on Practice is for

practitioners to use their professional expertise to help create positive change for families and better outcomes for children and young people.

- In December 2015 the authority was selected to take part in the '**Partners in Practice**' programme as part of an initiative led by the Department for Education to demonstrate exemplar authorities in social work practice. This includes proposals to further develop the practice system being implemented via Focus on Practice by:
 - Maintaining current clinical staff and expanding to ensure all teams have access to systemic family therapists / psychologists.
 - Establishing practice development programmes - Years 2, 3, and 4 of systemic family therapy training with the aim of building a cadre of dual qualified expert staff who will lead practice across the authorities. Over time, this will reduce the need for separate clinical posts and will result in a more highly skilled workforce undertaking higher intensity interventions.
 - Earlier identification of children and families who will need intensive services in the future using predictive modelling
- **Action for Change** is a programme that works with parents who have had one or more children removed from their care. Removing a child is probably one of the most contentious areas of social work practice, which could result in intense feelings of dissatisfaction with service provision. This proactive service aims to address this by providing support to adults (whose children have been removed) in accessing services to address issues identified within the Court process. A core function of the service is to provide intensive and assertive outreach on an individual basis, to assist this client group to make informed choices to effect positive change to their lives; with the overall aim to prevent unplanned pregnancies and future removals. Engagement is crucial to the success of this project; the service works with clients on a one-to-one basis providing intensive therapeutic activities and practical support. The interventions are shaped by systemic practice to explore and address the reasons for removals.


9. PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2016/17

9.1. The main priorities for the Customer Relationship Team over the next twelve months are as follows:

1. to increase the capability and capacity of the team to meet increased demand and have a stronger focus on completing complaints within the statutory timescales
2. to increase the customer focus of the team
3. to continue to promote the complaints service across the department, ensuring that staff are familiar with the procedures and are fully equipped with effective complaints handling skills

4. to continue to work in partnership with advocacy services to ensure that vulnerable users are aware of their right to complain and know how to access the complaints procedure
5. to review and improve the management information and performance monitoring systems that the team uses
6. to review the information that is presented on the borough's website and the leaflets that are tailored for children and young people
7. to review the independent consultant pool for the investigating officers and independent persons.
8. increased focus on implementing recommendations from Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints with evidence

Agenda Item 11

| | |
|---|---|
| London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE 30 January 2017 |  hammersmith & fulham |
| WORK PROGRAMME | |
| Report of the Chair | |
| Open Report | |
| Classification: For review and comment Key Decision: No | |
| Wards Affected: All | |
| Accountable Executive Director: Kim Dero, Director of Delivery and Value | |
| Report Author: David Abbott, Scrutiny Manager | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8753 2063 E-mail: david.abbott@lbhf.gov.uk |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to give consideration to its work programme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the proposed work programme and suggest further items for consideration where appropriate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

None.

LIST OF APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

CEPAC Work Programme 2017

30 January 2017 | Report deadline: 16 January

- **Youth Council Manifesto Update (Brenda Whinnett)** – to include Youth Takeover Day feedback
- **Budget Report (Dave McNamara)**
- **Looked After Children and Care Leavers Annual Report (Helen Farrell, Lauren Fernback)** – including UASC element.
- **Annual Complaints Report (Justine Roberts and Thomas Gell)**

27 February 2017 | Report deadline: 13 February

- **Exec Director Update** - School Meals Contract Update
- **Child Poverty Strategy**
- **School Performance Report**
- **Primary School Curriculum** - Consideration of the introduction of the new primary school curriculum. To hear / share good practice from primary schools – ask Headteachers to share their views.

24 April 2017 | Report deadline: 10 April

- **School Organisation and Investment Strategy** - Annual Update
- **School Pupils with Medical Health Needs and Learning Disabilities** - The emphasis is to be on ensuring they are receiving a high quality education and that the move between hospital/home/school is smooth and supportive to ensuring the impact of their medical condition is not detrimental to their educational attainment. Include Mandy Lawson commissioned work on pathways and future planning for 0-5 year olds.
- **Skills for Young People** - to consider a range of initiatives aiming to provide new skills for young people. Link with the Youth Council manifesto / feedback from young people. Also link with NEETS work (Ian Heggs) – apprenticeships and other initiatives. Also include the support into work for disabled children / transition arrangements.

NEW MUNICIPAL YEAR

12 June 2017 | Report deadline: 29 May

- **Supplementary Schools** – An update on the support given to supplementary schools and the contact between them and mainstream schools. The Chair wanted officers to investigate what supplementary schools wanted in the way of support and develop our policy on this. The Chair also requested that there was a single named person for them to contact.
- **Sports in Schools** - Provision of sports in schools.

Unallocated Items

- **Childcare Sufficiency Strategy Update** - Feb or April? – To include an update on the 8-6 Extended Nurseries work and holiday provision and case studies and a breakdown of childcare costs across the borough.
- **Transitions Task Group** – April?

- **School Playground Safety** - Feb 2017?
- **Permanency and Adoption**
- **Fostering**
- **Update on the Arts Strategy (for young people)** - arts in schools, links with local arts venues, activities for young people etc.
- **DBS Delays** – The Chair suggested writing to the Mayor of London to make him aware as it remained a significant issue.
- **Troubled Families Phase 2**
- **Family Learning**

Briefing Notes

Children's Oral Health Update – coming in January 2017