Membership

Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC (Chairman)

Mr. G. Hirst	Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC
Mr. J. Kaufman CC	Mr. J. Perry
Ms. K. J. Knaggs CC	Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
Mrs. C. Lewis	Mr. E. D. Snartt CC
Mr. L. J. P. O'Shea CC	Mr. G. Welsh CC
Mr. A. E. Pearson CC	

Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at **http://www.leics.gov.uk/webcast** – Notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.

AGENDA

Item		Report by
1.	Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2016.	(Pages 5 - 12)
2.	Question Time.	
3.	Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
4.	To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
5.	Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	

QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Members serving on Overview and Scrutiny have a key role in providing constructive yet robust challenge to proposals put forward by the Cabinet and Officers. One of the most important skills is the ability to extract information by means of questions so that it can help inform comments and recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

Members clearly cannot be expected to be experts in every topic under scrutiny and nor is there an expectation that they so be. Asking questions of 'experts' can be difficult and intimidating but often posing questions from a lay perspective would allow members to obtain a better perspective and understanding of the issue at hand.

Set out below are some key questions members may consider asking when considering reports on particular issues. The list of questions is not intended as a comprehensive list but as a general guide. Depending on the issue under consideration there may be specific questions members may wish to ask.

Key Questions:

- Why are we doing this?
- Why do we have to offer this service?
- How does this fit in with the Council's priorities?
- Which of our key partners are involved? Do they share the objectives and is the service to be joined up?
- Who is providing this service and why have we chosen this approach? What other options were considered and why were these discarded?
- Who has been consulted and what has the response been? How, if at all, have their views been taken into account in this proposal?

If it is a new service:

- Who are the main beneficiaries of the service? (could be a particular group or an area)
- What difference will providing this service make to them – What will be different and how will we know if we have succeeded?
- How much will it cost and how is it to be funded?
- What are the risks to the successful delivery of the service?

If it is a reduction in an existing service:

- Which groups are affected? Is the impact greater on any particular group and, if so, which group and what plans do you have to help mitigate the impact?
- When are the proposals to be implemented and do you have any transitional arrangements for those who will no longer receive the service?
- What savings do you expect to generate and what was expected in the budget? Are there any redundancies?
- What are the risks of not delivering as intended? If this happens, what contingency measures have you in place?

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 1

Leicestershire County Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 5 September 2016.

PRESENT

Mr. L. Spence CC (in the Chair)

Mr. G. Hirst	Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC
Mr. J. Kaufman CC	Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
Ms. K. J. Knaggs CC	Mr. E. D. Snartt CC
Mr. A. E. Pearson CC	Mr. G. Welsh CC

15. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2016 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

16. Question Time.

The following question was put to the Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Question by Ms Sue Whiting, resident:

As Dyslexia Awareness Week is 3rd -9th October 2016, could the Chair please advise what events are being planned for the week this year following on from the increasingly successful events held in previous years for families with identified dyslexic children?

Reply by the Chairman:

This year during Dyslexia Awareness Week, the Learning Support Service is planning to contribute to 2 events for school governors, in order to promote awareness of dyslexia and to demonstrate and showcase information, approaches and resources which can be used in schools at Quality First Teaching (classroom) level and at a targeted level for pupils who require extra support. The two events fall on the Monday (3rd October) of the week.

17. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

18. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

19. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mr D Snartt CC declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda as two members of his family were teachers.

Ms K Knaggs declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda as she worked as a teacher at a school within her division.

Mr A E Pearson CC declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda as he managed a company which provided physical activity services to schools in Leicestershire. He was also a Governor of Leicester College.

Mr L Spence CC indicated that, whilst this did not amount to an interest to be declared at this meeting, he felt it relevant to report that he sometimes worked for an academy within the County.

20. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

21. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

22. Leicestershire's Response to Child Sexual Exploitation.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services which outlined the progress of the County Council's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) team, the deployment of resources and the progress of related multi-agency developments. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

The Director highlighted the increase in referrals in relation to children at risk of CSE during 2015-16 but noted that this mirrored the national trend.

The Committee was advised that a number of additional specialists, including nurses and a forensic psychologist, had been recruited to the team and that following a growth bid it was hoped that the team would be moving to a bigger base in October.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

   i.   Performance information had highlighted that whilst there had been an overall increase in referrals during 2015-16, there had been a fall in the number received in the previous quarter. It was noted that the team continued to operate under the CEASE banner with the Police and other partners and it was thought that this work had resulted in an improved quality of referrals being received by the team which may have contributed to the decreasing number of referrals in the last quarter;

   ii. The report outlined possible risks in association with the development of an integrated sub-regional arrangement involving Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland local authority staff and partners working within the multi-agency CSE team. One such risk that concerned the Committee was that County Council

resources would be diverted away from Leicestershire residents. It was reported that the County Council's priority in terms of case allocation was and would always be children within Leicestershire and that at the time Leicestershire staff did not respond to City cases and were not in a position to do so;

iii. A query was raised in relation to how the team remained sighted of potential issues in relation to referrals which at the time had not required any action. It was explained that development of a new information sharing tool which had been tested by the police would assist in the sharing and logging of soft intelligence. Further to this weekly meetings were held with the Police to share new intelligence and to consider any developments in open cases. A new system whereby a flag could be raised on a child or young person's NHS record to signify that they had received a service in relation to CSE or were at risk of CSE was being developed. Working physically alongside colleagues from health and the police at the hub ensured that partners were able to share information quickly;

iv. A further appointment of a community faith lead to the CSE Multi-Agency team to target harder to reach and underrepresented communities such as those from a BME background was being considered;

v. The Committee queried how effective programmes such as Chelsea's Choice and Kayleigh's Love Story have been in terms of referrals received and disclosures. Whilst feedback from education colleagues about the videos had been positive and some referrals and queries had been received, it was crucial to ensure that these were used alongside other learning materials about CSE and that the videos would not prove successful in isolation;

vi. A question was raised about whether there had been any learning from Rotherham and it was reported that the team regularly researched around best practice nationally, and that the CSE hub itself was considered good practice;

RESOLVED:

a) That the report on Leicestershire's response to Child Sexual Exploitation be noted;

b) That the Committee welcomed the recruitment of further specialists to the Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation Hub.

23. Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive and Director of Children and Family Services which presented an update of the Children and Families performance at the end of quarter one of 2016/17. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

The Director advised that the report contained a number of differences from previous reports in that there were new performance indicators that were aligned with the Council's Corporate Strategy 2017/18 and associated performance management data set. Where blanks were evident in the performance dashboard, this was due to the fact that data had not been available, and that in the next quarter the indicators would be updated following analysis of data. In relation to school results, it had not been possible to provide a comparison from the previous year as examination systems had changed and a comparison would not provide a comprehensive assessment of progress.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

i. The Committee sought further clarification around the Channel programme and the referral process. Channel was linked to the National Prevent agenda, and was aimed at providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable and at risk of being drawn into terrorism. It was noted that schools were the highest referring sector, and that these referrals were received by the Police. If any safeguarding concern was identified then the referral would also be considered by social care. All key partners were trained in relation to both Channel and Prevent and all partners were capable of making a referral and responsible for informing the relevant agency of any concerns;

ii. There had been a significant improvement in relation to the number of looked after children subject to three or more placements, which the Committee was pleased to note;

iii. Over the past three quarters there had been concerns over the number of children and young people subject to second and subsequent child protection plans. In this quarter however there had been an improvement in performance and whilst it was recognised that there would be further work necessary to sustain the performance, it was promising that measures put in place had secured some improvement. Measures had included strengthening the robustness around children in need planning, and the production of practice guidance around children in need planning which had been shared on a multi-agency basis. It was felt that improvements would need to be seen over a 12 month period to be confident that the work that had taken place had embedded lasting change in practice;

iv. It was noted that Government were due to publicise reports around the measurements of success of the Troubled Families Programme. It was questioned whether the County Council had experienced any financial benefits as a result of the Supporting Leicestershire Families programme. The Director advised that it was difficult to identify cause and effect, and though it was thought that early intervention was a factor in the prevention of families being in receipt of social care services in future, caution should be taken in making such assumptions. The Committee requested that following publication, a report analysing the effectiveness of the Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme be presented.

v. The Committee asked that information around Ofsted outcomes and categorisation, and the breakdown of these between academies and maintained schools be circulated for information;

vi. The gap between the pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieving expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics, and achievement of those 'not eligible' had increased, and the Committee queried what work was underway to address this. The Director reported that work was underway with teaching schools around developing plans to mitigate the impact of changes to the national system of entitlement. Further to this a pupil premium project funded by the Leicestershire Education Excellent Partnership was looking at best practice nationally and it was hoped that it would contain some insight into how to address the issue;

vii. A concern was raised over the significant different in attainment in relation to writing and reading at key stage two (KS2). Discrepancies had been identified in school results this year and it was thought that further testing was required to

ensure that KS2 data itself was robust and in the first instance, and the concern raised would be a key line of enquiry as part of this investigation;

RESOLVED:

a) That the Quarter 1 2016/17 Performance Report be noted;

b) That following publication of reports by Government around the measurements of success of the Troubled Families Programme, a report around the successes and effectiveness of the Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme be presented to a future meeting of the Committee;

c) That information around Ofsted outcomes and categorisation and the breakdown of these between academies and maintained schools within Leicestershire be circulated to the Committee for information.

24.   Transferring in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children.

The Committee considered a report around activity in relation to the new duty concerning Transferring in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) following the recent introduction of the Interim National Transfer Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children 2016/17. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

Whilst the Committee emphasised its belief that everything possible should be done to care for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, it remained wary of the financial impact of such an arrangement, particularly given that the estimated costs were not felt to be reliable. It was felt that the Government had not given due consideration to the consequences for authorities in relation to the types and level of services that some children may require following transfer, which in cases where complex levels of support or specialist accommodation were required would significantly increase the cost of each placement. Further to this the Government costing model appeared to have been based on solely the cost of in house placements such as foster care, and had not taken into account resource costings such as social workers and support staff. Until the needs of each child was known to the authority, it remained difficult to estimate the cost of such a placement. It was expected that the impact of this would put significant strain on the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory obligations with regard to finding and funding appropriate placements for children in and out of Leicestershire.

It was highlighted that the arrangement was a voluntary one, and that only two regions within the UK had signed up to the scheme. All UASCs transferred to the County Council to date had had to be placed out of the County area, though the age assessments and looked after children duties remained the responsibility of the Council.

The Committee agreed that a letter should be written from the Chair and Spokes, and signed by the three Party Political leads, to the Minister for Immigration outlining that whilst the County Council was committed to ensuring that it accommodated a reasonable number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children that required transfer, that all associated costs be fully met by the Government.

RESOLVED:

a) That the report on Transferring in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) be noted;

b) That the Chair and Spokes write to the Minister for Immigration outlining that whilst the County Council is committed to ensuring that it accommodates a reasonable number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children that require transfer that associated costs should be met fully by the Government;

c) That a further update on Transferring in UASCs be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

25. <u>Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer 2015-16.</u>

The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) with regard to children in care which outlined the extent to which Leicestershire County Council had fulfilled its responsibilities to the children in its care for the period April 2015 – March 2016. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that the service had experience some challenges with regard to recruitment over the period covered by the report. Consequently, staff were experiencing high caseloads and some development work had had to carry over to this financial year. However, a number of developments had been progressed and it was reported that team managers had been provided with a greater level of detail on team performance so that any discrepancies could be identified and addressed promptly.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

i. The Committee was concerned that a number of challenges and areas for improvement from the 2014/15 annual report were also featured in the annual report for 2015/16, and whether there had been a significant impact on the service provided to children and young people as a result of improvements not being progressed. It was reported that the work on the ground had continued to be robust and that the service has met all of its statutory obligations, and that the impact had largely been that added value had not been met. For instance, the service had not been able to develop improved information systems. The Committee sought assurances that the service would be able to progress improvement works within this year. It was noted that recent appointments to the team had been made which had alleviated some resource concerns, however there was the intention to draw concerns to the attention of the Departmental Management Team and seek assistance in securing additional resources. Progress had also been made in relation to improving data collection around capturing contacts and visits made by IROs;

ii. It was requested that in future reports of the IRO, that associated RAG reports and action plans contain a greater level of narrative that would help inform readers of the direction of travel and progress being mad;

iii. The Scrutiny Committee received the IRO Annual Report in relation the Children in Care automatically as it was a statutory requirement, however it was felt that it would be helpful in future to present this alongside the IRO Annual Report in relation to Child Protection to analyse any common themes between the two.

RESOLVED:

a) That the Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer 2015-16 be noted;

b) That Annual Reports of the Independent Reviewing Officers in association with Children in Care also be considered by the Committee in future.

26.   Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board 2015/16.

The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board for 2015/16. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

The Independent Chair outlined the main areas of success of the Board over 2015/16, and those areas where further work was required as detailed within the report. It was noted that the Board was fully compliant with Working Together and had been successful in the past year in addressing attendance concerns over key partners. There did however remain a concern over attendance by the probation service and it was now known that their financial contribution was to be lessened in the New Year.

The Board had strong relationships with both Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council internal bodies and committees, and there was a good culture of challenge from their respective Health and Wellbeing Boards, Scrutiny bodies, and Cabinets.

A key focus for the Board in the New Year was ensuring that improvements be made around the number of repeat and subsequent child protection plans that children in Leicestershire were subject to. The County Council had a number of actions being progressed to secure improvements and the Board was confident that the issues were being addressed appropriately. A further area that the Board would need to give greater consideration to in this financial year was around safeguarding children with disabilities which had not featured within previous Business Plans.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

i.   The Committee was pleased to note the work completed around e-safety and in particular the Board's response to the prevalence of online Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). It was reported that building resilience in individuals remained a key focus for the Board contained within the business plan and strategy document as part of a proportionate approach to managing the risk of CSE. It was also emphasised as part of training with education staff. It was felt that this was not properly articulated within the annual report and it was suggested that the Chair endeavour to include information around the work of the Board and its impact in building resilience in individuals;

RESOLVED:

a) That the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board 2015/16 be noted;

b) That the comments made be submitted to the Safeguarding Children Board for consideration.

27.   Dates of Future Meetings.

It was noted that future meetings of the Committee were scheduled to take place at 1.30pm on the following dates:

7 November 2016
16 January 2017
6 March 2017
5 June 2017
11 September 2017
13 November 2017.

1.30pm – 3.55pm   CHAIRMAN
05 September 2016

Agenda Item 8

Leicestershire County Council

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 NOVEMBER 2016

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of Report

1. This report is the fifth in a series focusing on the deployment of resources to address child sexual exploitation (CSE). The report sets out progress and performance of the County Council's CSE team since 1st April 2016 (quarters 1 and 2, Q1 and Q2 2016-17) and highlights progress in relation to the development of a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland multi-agency CSE team.

Executive Summary

- The County Council's CSE team (LCC CSE team) received 162 referrals in relation to concerns about CSE by the end of Q2 2016-17 compared to 303 during the whole of 2015-16.
- Performance in relation to the completion of return interviews for missing children has significantly improved. 70% of return interviews were recorded as completed in Q2 compared to 40% in Q1.
- The Strategic Partnership Development Fund (SPDF) CSE Project led by the County Council has continued to deliver a number of initiatives and posts. The LCC CSE team has supported the local release of a film highlighting the risks of online CSE, 'Kayleigh's Love Story', developed through the SPDF CSE Project CEASE work stream.
- Progress has been made in relation to the development of a fully integrated Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) multi-agency CSE team. A single Service Manager hosted by the County Council is being recruited to oversee the local authority and health staff within the team. The post is to be funded through the SPDF CSE Project until March 2018.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In February 2015, the County Council approved growth of £560k to the budget for Children and Family Services in order to address the emerging challenge of CSE.

3. This step had been taken to begin to address local incidents of CSE and to take account of the growing national concern of the role played by councils and other public bodies following events in Rochdale, Oxfordshire and Rotherham.

Introduction

4. CSE has a national and local prominence. In March 2015 the government elevated CSE to the level of a national threat and set up an independent inquiry (IICSA) to investigate the extent to which institutions have failed to protect children from sexual abuse including CSE.

5. CSE is a local threat evidenced through high profile cases and the Leicestershire Police problem profile that highlights a number of threat and risk areas. CSE is a strategic priority of the County Council, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Strategic Partnership Board (SPB).

Background

6. In August 2014 the County Council joined forces with Leicestershire Police to initiate the development of a co-located multi-agency CSE team. The development of a specialist CSE team within the County Council was formalised following the approval of growth in February 2015. Recruitment to the County Council CSE team (LCC CSE team) was completed in July 2016. The team is currently based at Tigers Road police station in South Wigston.

7. Agencies represented in the multi-agency arrangement now include Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police, Health and Rutland County Council as a virtual partner,. Leicester City Council is scheduled to join in November 2016.

8. The aim is to develop an integrated arrangement based on the key principles of information sharing, joint decision-making and coordinated intervention. The objectives are to build local capacity and capability, and to pool resources, powers, procedures and expertise.

9. In order to further bolster the local response two additional measures have been taken. In June 2015 a LLR CSE Coordinator post was appointed, reporting to the County Council's Strategic Lead CSE and Complex Abuse. The post, initially funded by the 2 LSCBs, has responsibility for coordinating partnership activity regarding a number of key priorities in relation to CSE, trafficked and missing children. In October 2015 a joint LSCB partnership bid of £1.23 million aimed at funding CSE provision until April 2018 was endorsed by the SPB. The County Council is leading the Strategic Partnership Development Fund (SPDF) CSE Project arising from the bid on behalf of the partnership. The CSE Coordinator post is now funded through the project until June 2018; the post holder is the nominated project manager.

Current Situation

There are a number of matters arising since the last report presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5th September 2016:

10. The police are developing a single children and vulnerable adults safeguarding hub, to be based at police offices in Wigston incorporating partners including the LCC CSE team and First Response staff embedded within the Child Abuse Investigation Unit. The plan to move the multi-agency CSE team from Tigers Road to Wigston has been deferred to 21st November 2016 from early October due to logistical and technical issues arising from the significant redevelopment of the existing office space.

11. Partners have agreed to recruit a LLR Service Manager to jointly lead the multi-agency CSE team with the Detective Inspector who leads the police's CSE Investigation Team. The Service Manager will be responsible for line managing staff from the three local authorities and matrix managing the Health staff. The Service Manager will have a key role in overseeing the development of an integrated team. The post is to be funded from the SPDF CSE Project budget until 31st March 2018. The County Council is leading the recruitment process and has agreed to host the post. It is expected that the recruitment process will be completed by January 2017.

12. In advance of recruiting the Service Manager it has been agreed to progress the planned co-location of Leicester City staff into the multi-agency CSE team. Meetings are currently taking place to agree as far as possible a single operating protocol to set how partners will collaborate, building on the current successful model utilised by the LCC CSE team in partnership with Leicestershire Police. It is planned that this work will be completed by the end of October 2016.

13. The capacity and capability of the multi-agency CSE team and by extension the LCC CSE team is due to be significantly bolstered by the recruitment of posts through the SPDF CSE Project. Recruitment is planned to be completed by January 2017.

14. The following posts will be hosted by the police:

- Intelligence Analyst – will lead on the mapping and identification of victims and offenders, trends, locations and hotspots and direct the work of the CSE Outreach Workers (see 15 below) – due to start on 14th November 2016.
- Digital Media Investigators – will be utilised to speed up the investigation of offences of on-line CSE by analysing the content of electronic devices. There are interdependencies between this post and the CEASE initiative (see 17 below) that may result in an increase in referrals relating to online grooming and an escalated demand for the investigation of electronic devices – planned start date January 2017.
- MOSOVO Support Officers – will lead on the prevention and management of offenders – planned start date January 2017.

15. The following posts will be hosted by the local authorities:

- CSE Outreach Workers – will work closely with partnership staff such as Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) in suspected or identified hotspot locations, supporting the building of intelligence and delivery of awareness raising in a variety of community settings - planned date start December 2016.
- Parenting Support Coordinator – will be tasked with reviewing, evaluating and embedding within existing services consistent support for parents whose children are at risk of or victims of CSE. In addition a second post has been developed to specifically to roll out a widespread awareness raising campaign for parents about CSE. Local data highlights that a majority of children at risk of CSE reside at home - planned start date January 2017.
- Psychologist – will profile victims and offenders, and support the development of victim care and investigation strategies - planned start date January 2017.

16. A Faith and Community Champion Service, to develop a network of CSE Champions and increase referrals from BME communities, is currently being commissioned from the third sector. In addition to the recruitment of posts a number of SPDF CSE Project work streams initiatives have progressed:

17. C.E.A.S.E. (Commitment to Eradicate Abuse and Sexual Exploitation) – the second phase of CEASE has involved the production of a film about Kayleigh Haywood, together with a 'trailer', following extensive consultation with national experts and local partners. The criminal trial concluded on 28th June 2016. On 30th June 2016 a press conference was held at which the media were shown the full film and given copies of the trailer to publicise/broadcast. The trailer was also uploaded onto the force's Facebook site. The film has been shown to key affected communities, parents and schools supported by the LCC CSE team in partnership with the police resulting in 4 CSE referrals. A wider rollout is underway in schools across LLR. The film has been translated into the 5 most frequently used languages locally and has also been adapted to meet the needs of the hearing impaired. The film is currently touring Leicestershire schools as part of the wider roll out. At the time of this report 34 schools had signed up in relation to 90 screenings. 566 children have viewed the film in Leicestershire. A fact sheet in relation to the risks of online CSE has been sent to parents. The LCC CSE team are providing targeted support to local schools where current CSE concerns have been identified.

18. School Prevention - a programme of school prevention activity is planned during 2016-17 encompassing the roll out of the film, the development of a CSE toolkit for schools and the re-commissioning of Chelsea's Choice to tour in the spring term. The toolkit is aimed to provide a single teaching resource and a consistent approach which can be embedded in the curriculum through subjects such as RSE or PHSE.

19. Warning Zone - During the last two quarters 2,318 children from 64 Leicestershire schools have visited the e-safety zone at Warning Zone.

20. The first phase of the SPDF CSE Project has now been completed. All work streams are initiated or underway. During the next phase the plan is to review and monitor performance information gathered from the various work streams in order to identify benefits, outcomes and evaluate impact.

Data and Performance Information

21. CSE data

    Numbers of CSE referrals to the LCC CSE team:

2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Q1 and Q2 (half yearly total) 2016-17
85	184	303	162

    The data shows that in relation to the 162 referrals about CSE concerns (CSE referrals) by the end of Q2 2016-17:

    - 83% relate to females, 17% males (2015-16 83% relate to females, 16% males, 1% transgender).
    - 7% relate to BME children compared to 14% of BME children within the population in Leicestershire (Ofsted: 2012) – a similar figure to 2015-16.
    - The primary models of exploitation remain online CSE and party model where teenagers are lured to a party with the promise of alcohol and drugs. 49% relate to online CSE indicating improved awareness and potentially increased prevalence of this model of exploitation. There is evidence to suggest perpetrators are increasingly using technology to initiate contact with children.
    - Increased numbers related to children aged 15 and 16 (52% of the total).
    - 62% of referrals relate to children living at home.

22. The number of CSE referrals (162) received during the first two quarters of 2016-17 is higher compared to the corresponding period last year (121 CSE referrals). The quality of referrals has improved and referrals are increasingly more appropriate enabling improved identification of CSE and earlier targeting of response to reduce risk and harm. This improvement can be attributed as an outcome of awareness raising activity undertaken with managers and practitioners following the pilot Joint Targeted Area Inspection in October 2015 including roadshows undertaken by the LCC CSE team and guidance reissued to staff. The increased number and improved quality of referrals suggests that practitioners, particularly in children's social care, are more aware of the early signs of CSE, the expectations and pathway in terms of reporting CSE concerns, and the existence of the specialist CSE team. This can be demonstrated by an increase in the number and percentage of risk assessment tools completed – 31% during 2015-16 compared to 51% during Q1 and Q2 2016-17. In respect of the source of referral it is noted that there has been a reduction in the number of referrals received directly from the Police. The figures are the lowest recorded since Q1 2015-2016. This change can be attributed to an increase in awareness of what constitutes a referral to the LCC CSE team through effective training and raising awareness with the local policing teams, referral desks and PCSOs. There has also been the introduction of a 'Child Vulnerability Referral Form' that prompts officers to think about the risks of CSE for each individual referral rather than making an assumption that CSE may be a factor for that child. The duty service provided by the LCC CSE Team is now being used with greater frequency for

consultation that in turn has had an impact on the number of referrals. It is anticipated that the number will continue to steadily increase into the future.

23. The 162 CSE referrals over the last two quarters have translated into:

- 18% assigned for prevention work by the allocated early help/social worker
- 44 new allocations to the LCC CSE team (27%)
- 15 joint investigations with the police
- 1 successful trial resulting in the prosecution of 1 perpetrator

24. At the time of the report the LCC CSE team has a total caseload of 58 cases, an average caseload of 9 per practitioner. This number falls within the team's policy to allocate no more than 10 cases per practitioner enabling the team to deliver intensive and focused direct work to individual children and respond quickly to incidents.

25. Most of the work of the LCC CSE team involves direct work with individual children. The LCC CSE team is developing a 6 week prevention programme which will be delivered to groups of children, incorporating an innovative board game that highlights risk taking, relationships, grooming, sexual health and online safety; children will also learn about vulnerabilities and well as facts about CSE. The plan is to further develop the resource in conjunction with Warning Zone and pilot the prototype board game with a local school in January 2017.

26. As highlighted in the previous report 2 specialist CSE nurses joined the team in July 2016. Their priorities include increasing the low number of referrals from health professionals. The CSE nurses have already had an impact. Changes have been made to the school nurse health assessment template and school nurse sexual health template to include CSE questions when assessing the health of a child. Meetings have taken place with Emergency Department safeguarding leads and the two largest Urgent Care centres regarding flagging CSE concerns on health records, and ensuring communication of CSE concerns with CSE nurses. Since July 2016 the CSE nurses have provided 26 direct consultations resulting in 4 CSE referrals being made. Health intelligence is now directly available to the LCC CSE team. On one case this ensured the CSE Officer had up to date health information, as concerns were evidenced in the child's record regarding potential pregnancy and risk to an unborn child. Information sharing to frontline health professionals has improved and has resulted in school nurses/LAC nurses being made aware of strategy meetings and review meetings as early as possible improving attendance rates.

Missing children data

27. Performance in relation to the timeliness and completion of Return Interviews for missing children has improved, 70% were completed in Q2 compared to 40% in Q1, and in most cases within the 72-hour timespan identified in statutory guidance. There continues to be a small number of children in care who are frequently reported missing. Sometimes these children go missing on a number of occasions over a short period within the same week; often this result in the Return Interview being

completed after the second or third occasion after they have returned back to placement, impacting on performance. The quality of completed Return Interviews remains variable; there are plans to reissue guidance to staff and managers and to offer further training.

28. The majority of Return Interviews for children in care are undertaken by the allocated social worker. Although in some cases this is the most appropriate course of action, statutory guidance states that children who go missing should be offered an independent Return Interview. Plans are underway to increase the capacity within the Listening and Support Service (LSS) located in Supporting Leicestershire Families. The LSS have specially trained staff who currently undertake the majority of independent Return Interviews, mostly for children living at home. The planned increase in capacity within LSS will enable more children in care to be offered an independent Return Interview and a quicker response time ensuring more Return Interviews are completed within the 72-hour period. Performance in relation to completion rates and timeliness is monitored weekly; an auditing process is being introduced to monitor the quality of the Return Interviews. There is evidence that in some cases the information gathered from good quality Return Interviews has influenced care planning and review decision-making in addition to guiding appropriate safeguarding action.

29. Children in care placed in Leicestershire by other local authorities accounted for 34% of all children who were reported missing in Leicestershire during Q2. This is a concern as often little is known about these children; often first contact is made following a missing report. Although the responsible authority has a duty to inform the host authority, in this case Leicestershire, that a child is placed in their area this is frequently not the case. A letter has previously been sent out to all local authorities outlining the expectation that where appropriate the responsible authority complete a CSE risk assessment tool and benchmark missing risk assessment as per the local protocol and attend meetings where relevant. At present Leicestershire does not automatically offer Return Interviews for children in care placed in the area. It is the responsibility of the responsible authority to make such arrangements (this can include negotiating with the host authority to undertake the Return Interview on their behalf) and notify the host authority and police of the outcome. When a child in these circumstances is reported missing to Leicestershire Police the LCC CSE team makes contact with the responsible authority to make them aware and ask them to complete a Return Interview and send to the multi-agency CSE team for information. Where it is relevant the LCC CSE Team will chair a professionals meetings about a child placed in Leicestershire with the view to formulating a risk management plan for them. Further work needs to be undertaken with responsible authorities to ensure that all the relevant safeguarding and profiling information is available where this is appropriate.

30. Planned Next Steps

- Complete the recruitment of posts through the SPDF CSE Project - by January 2017.
- Scope out the risks of the SPDF CSE Project funding ending in March 2018 – by March 2017.

- Build capacity within the Listening and Support Service to improve the timeliness and quality of Return Interviews for missing children in care – by mid November 2016.
- Re-issue the letter to all local authorities outlining local expectations when a child in care is placed in Leicestershire - by end of October 2016.
- Agree a method and process to review and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the LLR multi-agency CSE team arrangement – by December 2016.

Resource Implications

31. The resources dedicated to tackling CSE and establish a specialist LCC CSE team are considerable and have been deployed innovatively, and thus far, successfully. However the sufficiency of the resources provided by the County Council and wider partnership will need to be reviewed in the light of the continuing increasing referrals and demand as the true scale, extent and nature of CSE becomes evident. The LLR partnership will need to begin to consider the implications of the SPDF CSE Project funding ending in March 2018 as this funding is linked to the recruitment of a significant number of posts intended to bolster the local response to CSE, including the Service Manager for the multi-agency CSE team and CSE Coordinator. The risk of redundancy costs will need to be factored in to any considerations.

32. Raising the profile of the work of the multi-agency CSE team continues to be a priority so that Leicestershire residents and bodies such as schools can continue to 'spot the signs' and make referrals if they have concerns. A longer-term and sustainable approach will need to be developed in order to manage future demand and reduce the levels of risk and harm; this will include implementing an effective prevention and early intervention strategy.

Background Papers

- Reports to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 5th September 2016 - http://ow.ly/DzqO305A19s

Circulation under local issues alert procedure

None

Officers to Contact

Paul Meredith, Interim Director of Children and Family Services,
Tel 0116 305 6340
Email: Paul.Meredith@leics.gov.uk

Sharon Cooke, Interim Assistant Director
Tel 0116 305 7441
Email: Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk

Victor Cook, Strategic Lead CSE and Complex Abuse
Tel 0116 305 7409
Email: Victor.Cook@leics.gov.uk

<u>Equal Opportunities Implications</u>

33. Children at risk of CSE come from families across the demographic profile of the County. The insidious nature of this abuse means that those children are very likely to need a timely response from the County Council and police. In addition, national and local research indicates that concerns about boys and young men are less frequently coming to light that might be expected. Similarly, children from BME communities are less frequently identified. Both of these important areas are addressed in the strategic approach guiding the work of the CSE team.

This page is intentionally left blank

Leicestershire County Council

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 NOVEMBER 2016

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE STATUTORY COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present for the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consideration the Children's Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments Annual Report for 2015/16.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 sets out the policy framework against which children's social care complaints should be considered.

3. Local Authorities must each financial year publish and Annual Report (regulation 13(3)).

Background

4. The Complaints Team sit within the Corporate Resources Department who manage and co-ordinate complaints relating to 3 separate complaints system:

   a) Adult Social Care - a statutory process
   b) Children's Social Care – a statutory process
   c) Corporate Complaints – a non-statutory process, which considers complaints relating to other services provided by the Council and where there is no other form of redress.

5. The second category is the subject of this report. The Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report for 2015-16 was considered by the Scrutiny Commission on 15 June 2016.

6. As detail is included in the Annual Report itself, the purpose of this report is to pick out some of the headline issues emerging from the analysis of complaints activity for 2015/16 along with the department's planned activity to respond to this.

Complaints received and outcomes

7. The number of complaints in 2015/16 were as follows:

   - 65 complaints considered at Stage 1 compared to 57 in 2014/15
   - 7 complaints considered at Stage 2 compared to 9 in 2014/15
   - 3 complaints considered at Stage 3 compared to 2 in 2014/15

8. Using the figures on numbers of referrals made to Childrens Social Care, in 1.6% of cases a complaint is subsequently received. This is an increase on last year (+0.4%).

9. The number of requests escalating from Stage 1 reduced by two and this represents a reduced escalation rate of just 11%. Every effort is made to prevent un-necessary escalation of complaints and these figures provide good validation of this.

10. Overall, and following positive progress in 2014-15, fewer complaints were upheld during 2015-16 with 77% not upheld compared to 63% in 2014-15.

11. Analysis of causes of complaints received shows the main areas complained about being "sensitivity / empathy of staff" and "Professional Decision making" Both of these areas did however have the lowest likelihood of being upheld at 18%.

12. During the year, six complaints were received directly by children or young people. This is a reduction on previous year and this figure remains low. The Complaints Manager does however meet quarterly with Childrens Rights Officers and has access to cases they are supporting informally. This is to ensure and validate that young persons are not blocked in any way from accessing the formal complaints procedure.

13. 91% of complaints at Stage 1 were responded to within the statutory maximum of 20 working days. This is identical performance to 2014-15. Encouragingly there was a significant improvement in responses made within the best practice 10 working day target (up by 16%).

14. The Local Government Ombudsman investigated nine complaints relating to Childrens Social Care during 2015-16 and found fault in two instances. Details of these are included within the main report.

Compliments received

15. The Complaints Manager also captures and records compliments regarding the work of the children's social care teams. This can provide a helpful balance and assist in identifying and building on what works well.

16. Twenty-five compliments were received and forwarded to the complaints manager during 2015-16 slightly down on last year (31) Fresh reminders have been issued to all services of the importance of recognising and sharing positive feedback and to bring balance to the annual report. A selection of the comments received reflecting the positive feedback we receive is included within the main report.

Recurring themes with regard to complaints

17. The following key learning points are highlighted by the Complaints team as recurring themes:

- Timeliness of providing conference papers and minutes
- Issues with being able to contact social workers

18. The above themes have been discussed with senior managers and actions have been taked to address the issues.

Specific Actions to be taken to improve performance

19. In addition to the above and in response to the complaints received, the following actions have been recommended for the department to consider:

- Improve our case recording within the social care database to ensure greater transparency around why decisions have been made
- Consider how we prepare our workers for being subject to complaints investigations particularly at the Independent stages
- Look at how we can better articulate to the public that complaints are making a difference to how we deliver services.

Resource Implications

20. The annual report outlines the costs incurred through the complaints procedure were £15,130, an increase of £2000 on 2014/15.

21. Improvement activity will be carried out within existing resources. There are no resource implications from this. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Conclusions

22. Overall, this has been a positive year for complaints management across children's social care services. The decisions made by the Local Government Ombudsman provide validation that, for the most part, where errors are made this is recognised and redressed appropriately.

23. The Complaints Manager reports quarterly to the Senior Leadership Team as well as holding monthly one to one sessions with the Assistant Director to flag and discuss any emerging themes.

Circulation under the Local Alert Issues Procedure

24. None.

Officers to contact

Paul Meredith
Interim Director, Children and Family Services
0116 305 7441
paul.meredith@leics.gov.uk

Sharon Cooke
Interim Assistant Director
0116 305 5479
sharon.cooke@leics.gov.uk

Simon Parsons
Complaints Manager, Corporate Resources
0116 305 6243
simon.parsons@leics.gov.uk

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Childrens Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments: Annual Report - April 2015-March 2016.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

25. None arising directly from this report.

Leicestershire County Council

Children's Social Care

Statutory Complaints and Compliments
Annual Report 2015/2016

CONTENTS

1. Purpose and Summary of Report

1.1   To report statistical information to Members and Officers detailing Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) Children's Social Care complaints activity from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 including any developments and planned improvements.

1.2   To meet the requirements of Regulation 18(2) of Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1681 Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 and Regulation 13(3) of Statutory Instrument 2006 No. 1738 The Children Act (1989) Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

1.3   For the current year the following Statutory guidance remains relevant

•   Getting the best from Complaints 2006

1.4   This report provides analysis and comment for Children and Family Services on all complaints managed under the statutory process. Those complainants not qualifying under the statutory process are considered under the County Council's Corporate Complaint Annual Report presented annually to the Scrutiny Commission.

1.5   The Complaints Manager role is responsible for ensuring that complaints are handled appropriately and providing support to the department in resolving complex cases. In addition, the Complaints Manager will highlight key trends that emerge each year and any recommendations that would improve how we work. The Children and Family Services department retain responsibility for actioning any such improvements.

2. Complaints and compliments received 2015-16

2.1 Foreword

This report only considers complaints identified as statutory complaints as defined by the Statutory Guidance outlined within "Getting the Best from complaints"

There are two key tests applied in making the above assessment.

1) Is the complainant eligible?
2) Is the subject matter within scope of the procedure?

Concerns that fall outside of the scope of the statutory complaints framework are responded to by the complaints unit and are then handled in line with the relevant alternative route which typically includes

- Consideration as a corporate complaint
- Referral to the LSCB appeals procedure
- Explanation that the matter cannot be considered as the subject matter has / will be adjudicated in Court

2.2 Complaint Volumes

Volumes of complaints should be considered in the light of the number of cases which the Children's Social Care service received during the year. There are a number of indicators which might impact on complaint volumes but, in general, there was a reduction in contacts to the department as shown in Table 1 below.

	2014/15	2015/16	% Change 14/15 to 15/16
Referrals to Children's Social Care	4635	3953	-15%
Single Assessments	3671	2139	-42%
Children in Care at 31st March	472	470	-0.5%
Child Protection Plans at 31st March	398	347	-13%

As illustrated below (Table 2), the total number of complaints received at stage 1 has increased slightly from last year (14% increase)

To provide context to complaint volumes, the number of referrals to Children's Social Care in Table 1 has been used and this shows that 1.6% go on to make a formal complaint (1.2% in 2014-15)

Table 2: Statutory Childrens Services Complaints Received
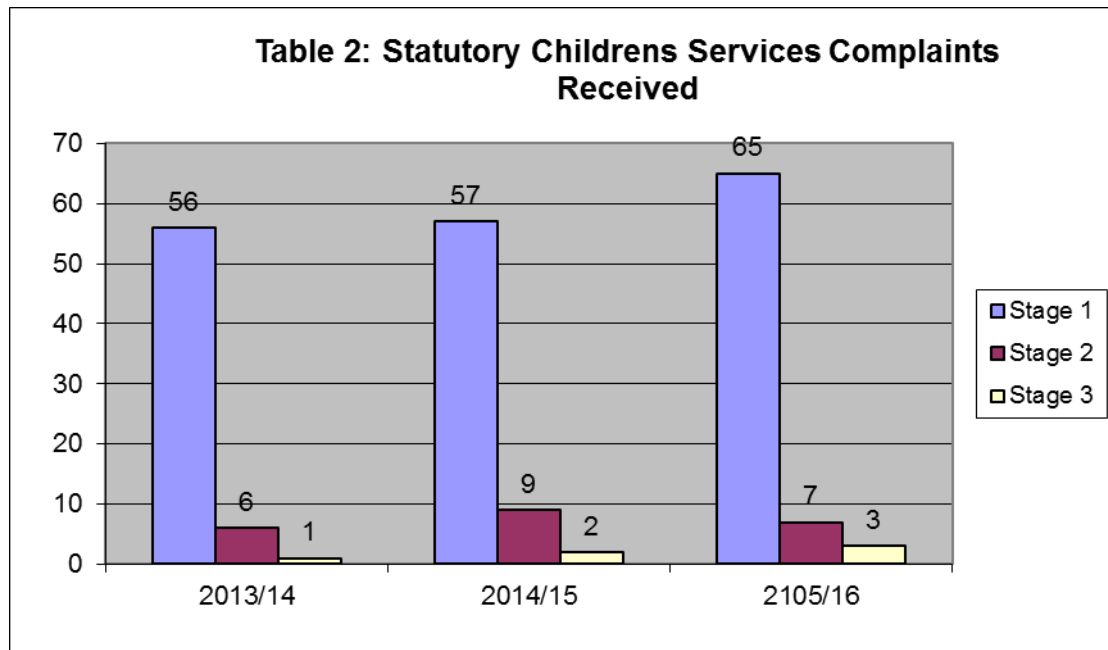
2.3   Complaints accepted at stages 2 & 3

The number of requests considered for Stage 2 of the process decreased by two compared with the previous year. As a percentage of Stage 1 complaints this marks a decrease to an 11% escalation rate.

Every effort is made to prevent Stage 1 complaints escalating through alternative dispute resolution. This includes conciliation meetings (usually involving both the Complaints Manager and a Service Manager) and on occasions externally led mediation. The increased focus on early resolution continues to pay dividends in the relatively low escalation rates.

Of the seven complaints which were considered at Stage 2 of the process, two subsequently withdrew their complaints after discussion around the process. Three are currently open.

Three Stage 3 panel hearing requests were received during the year. One of these was offered and accepted mediation which achieved closure of the complaint. The other two completed the process.

As referenced in last year's annual report, the Local Government Ombudsman is increasingly taking a firmer line on consideration of early referrals. The implications are that it is more important than ever to be clear at the outset which

complaints procedure should be used. Once the statutory procedure has been initiated, the LGO expects all stages to be completed.

This has implications for the department and highlights the need to ensure every effort is made to resolve complaints at Stage 1 of the process.

2.4   Statutory complaints by Service area

The Complaints Manager records all statutory complaints at a service level and table 2 below shows the results for 2015-16 overlaid against the closest equivalent figures for the previous year.

Table 3: Complaints received by Service Area (Stage 1 only)
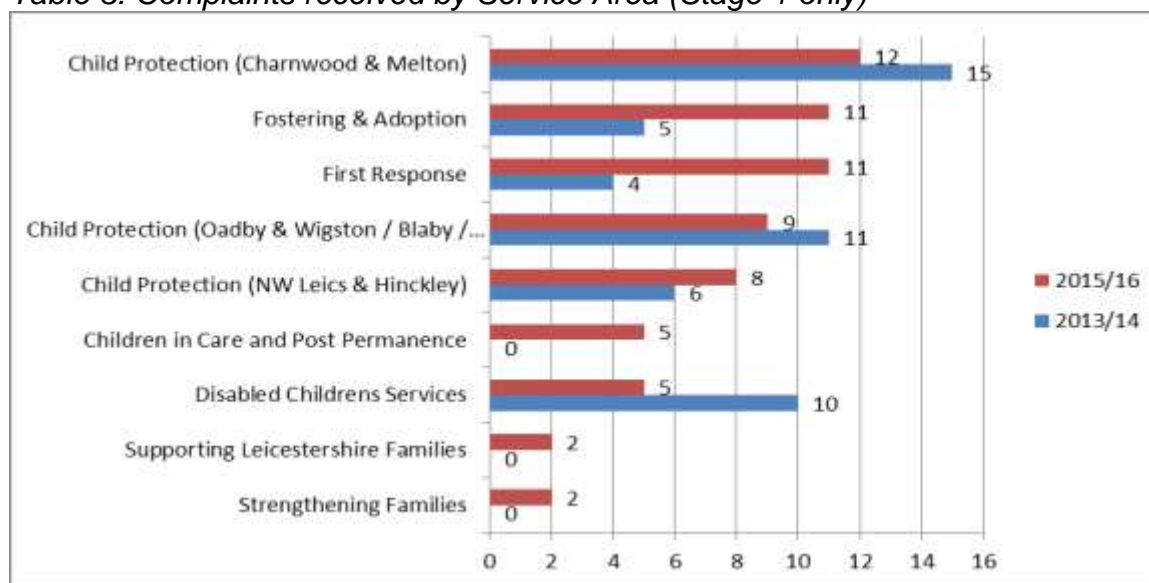
Whilst some caution needs to be exercised against year on year comparison due to structural changes, there are some noteworthy changes as follows:

- First Response complaints.

  This increase is attributed to the growth in scope of this service area which now picks up the work previously carried out by Family Assessment Services within localities. This increase was expected.

- Fostering and Adoption team complaints.

  In last year's annual report, fostering complaints were highlighted as an area of concern. Encouragingly, complaints in this area have reduced significantly following a number of procedural and structural changes.

  The volume increase for this service area has been predominantly down to post adoption support issues. The majority of these have been linked to delays in processing of applications to the Adoption Support Fund (6). A full review has been carried out and improvements have now been delivered.

- Disabled Childrens Services complaints.

  There is no obvious reason for this reduction in volumes. It may simply be that initial enquiries or concerns are being handled better without recourse to the complaints service

2.5   Compliments received

During 2015-16 there were 25 compliments recorded regarding Children's Social Care officers. This marks a slight decrease from prior year (31).

A selection of the positive comments received appears in Appendix A and provides an important balance when reviewing the performance of the department.

3. **Complaints resolved 2015-16**

3.1 Foreword

This year, to counter historical gaps in reporting on information where complaints remain open, the key performance indicators for speed of response, outcomes, causes and identified learning are now linked to complaints *resolved* rather than received during the reporting period. This change has been reflected in this annual report.

Importantly, this change will ensure that full data sets are able to be presented, both to departments on a quarterly basis, and at year end. It also closes a gap (particularly relevant to Ombudsman complaints) where outcomes did not appear in annual reports as the complaint remained open at the time of issue.

It follows from all of the above that the figures presented below will not match the data presented in section two of this report which focused on complaints received.

3.2 Responsiveness to complaints

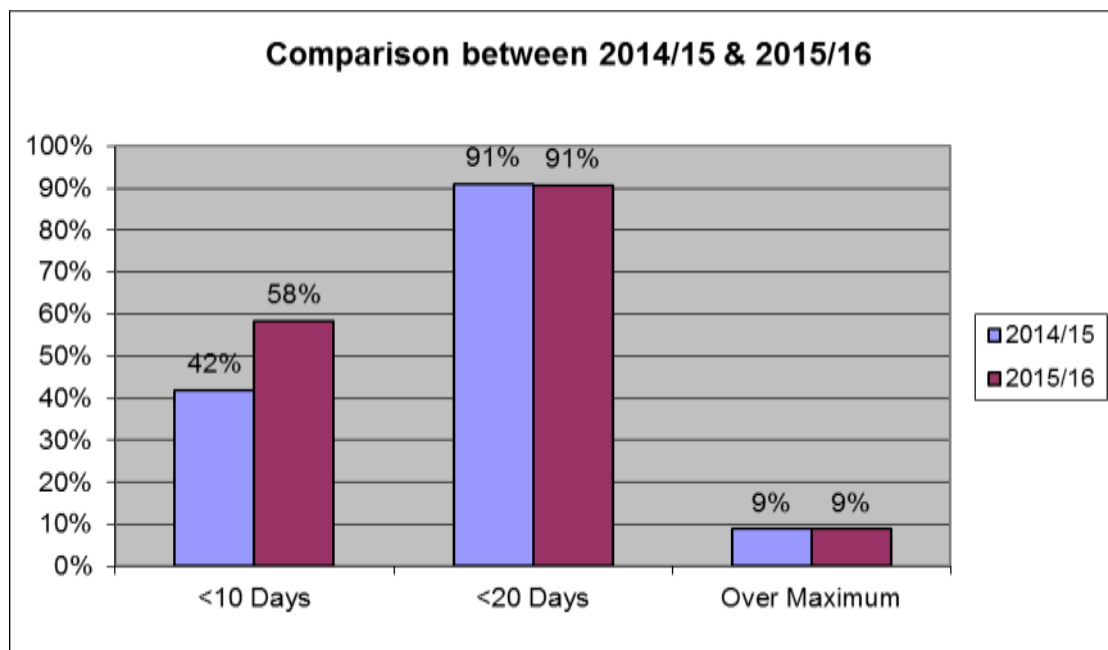Table 4: Children's Services Performance at stage 1

Table 4 above details the time taken to respond to complaints at Stage 1, providing a comparison between last year and the current reporting year. Whilst adherence to the statutory maximum timescales (20 working days) is in line with last year, there has been a significant improvement in performance at the best practice indicator (10 working days)

It is pleasing to see this improvement and evidences that managers are committed to prompt resolution of complaints

It is important to stress that, where complainants have not agreed an extension and there is no good reason for a complaint to exceed 20 working days, the Complaints Manager is duty bound to offer a Stage 2 investigation. This emphasises the importance of prompt response at Stage 1. In part due to the improved performance, there were no instances of a Stage 2 needing to be offered solely for these reasons.

Response timescales at Stage 2

Completion of Stage 2 investigations within the statutory guidelines continues to be a challenge for the Council.

Of the three stage 2 complaints which were adjudicated on during the year, just one was completed within the 65 working days required under the regulations.

It is difficult to bring about improvements in this area as, being an 'independent' stage, responsibility for finalising reports rests with commissioned investigators. The key point of delay appears to be at the outset of the Investigation with Investigators wanting to ensure they have an approved record of complaint even if there is already a formal complaint in writing. Whilst it is accepted that the initial meeting is vital in being clear on the scope, it does raise issues about meeting the statutory deadlines.

Discussions with colleagues within the Eastern Region Complaints Managers Group indicates that these are issues facing all local authorities.

The Ombudsman has indicated that providing the Local Authority is managing the expectations of a complainant and not unduly delaying resolution, there is unlikely to be criticism of not meeting this timescale.

Notwithstanding this, the Complaints Manager will continue to explore how the Council can improve performance in this area.

3.3   Complaint Causes

During 2013/14, a new approach was introduced to try to improve understanding of the main causes leading to complaints. This has been repeated this year and the results for both years are shown below in table 4.

Table 5 – What were complaints about?
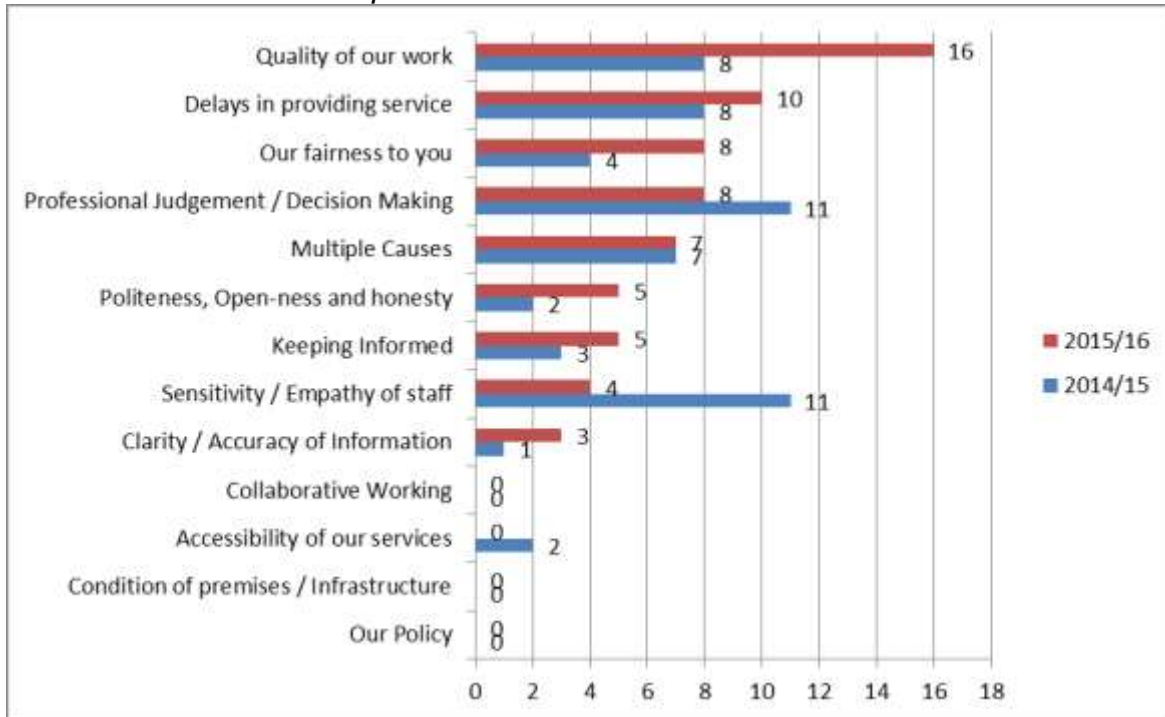
There are a number of notable changes from the previous year shown in the above graph as follows:

- Increase in complaints about "quality of work"

This was an area highlighted in last year's annual report but remains a common source of complaints. Although quite a wide-ranging category, it can be encapsulated as "doing the basics well". Common issues include:

I.   Provision of Conference reports within the scheduled timeframe. Intelligence from wider performance reports indicates this was achieved on less than 50% of occasions.

II.   Difficulties contacting allocated workers or phone calls not being returned in a timely fashion.

- Decrease in complaints regarding sensitivity / empathy of staff

- Decrease in complaints challenging professional judgement and decision making.

The full breakdown of complaint causes and respective uphold rates are shown in table 6 below.

Table 6: Complaint Causes	Resolved	Number Upheld	% Upheld (Partly or Fully)
Sensitivity / Empathy of staff	11	2	18%
Professional Judgement / Decision making	11	2	18%
Quality of our work	8	3	38%
Delays in providing services	8	6	75%
Multiple	7	3	43%
Our Fairness to you	4	1	25%
Keeping informed	3	1	33%
Politeness, Openness and Honesty	2	1	50%
Accessibility of our services	2	1	50%
Accuracy and clarity of information given	1	0	0%

3.4   Who complains?

In 2015/16, six complaints were made directly by children and young people. At 9% of the overall number, this is a slight decrease from last year (12%)

It is not unusual for numbers to be so low and indeed this mirrors the situation reported by regional colleagues.

It remains a key priority of the Complaints Manager to ensure that everything is being done to improve accessibility of the complaints process to our children and young people and the following work continues:

- Quarterly reviews of cases where Children's Rights Officers are involved
- 6 monthly attendance at Children in Care Council to hear views of looked after children
- A flexible approach to meeting young people to discuss issues and resolve concerns with the emphasis on "sorting things out"

The remaining complaints (59) were brought by parents, foster carers, adopters or anyone else identified as having sufficient interest in the child or young person's welfare.[1]

---

[1] Guidance set out in section 2.6 of Getting the Best from Complaints.

3.5   Complaint Outcomes

Table 7: Children's Services complaints recorded by outcome at Stage 1

Childrens Service Complaint Outcomes

6%	
5%	11%
	12%
66%	

Legend:
- Partly Upheld
- Totally Upheld
- Not Upheld
- No Finding
- Withdrawn
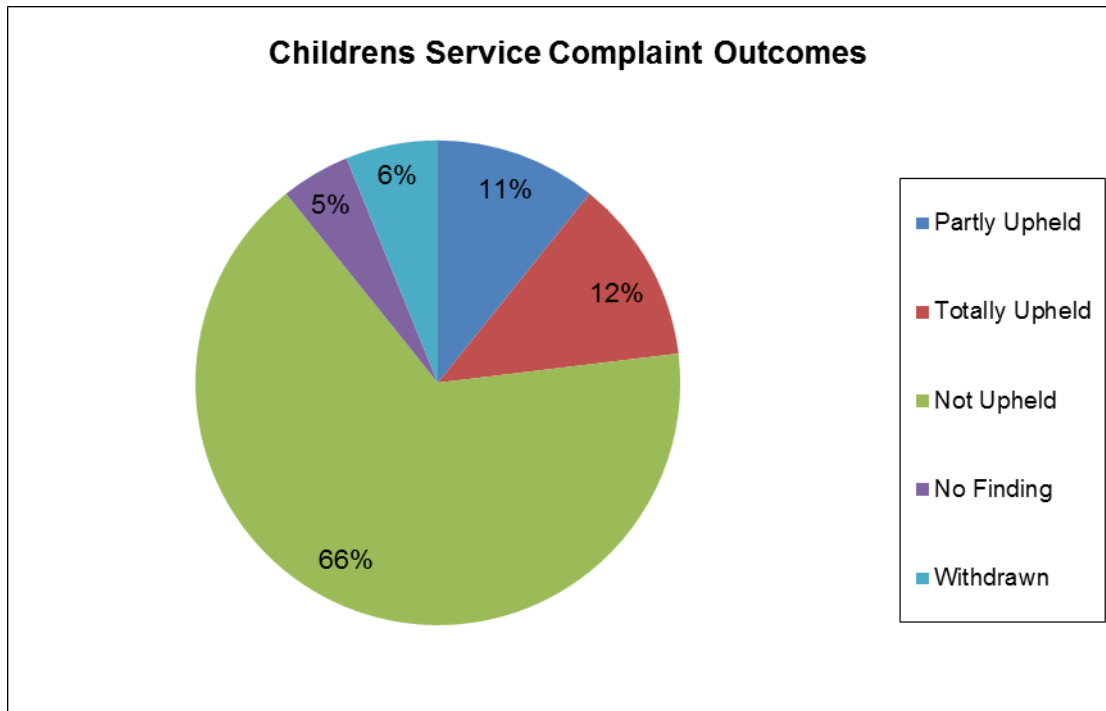
Table 7 above shows that there have been further improvement in the decreasing the number of complaints upheld. 23% were upheld this year compared to 33% in 2014-15

11% were fully upheld, with a further 12% having some element of the complaint upheld.

The fact that only 11% of complaints are recorded as "fully upheld" does not necessarily mean that complaints received are not reasonable or have no value. It is always important to listen to what we are being told about our service in order to put matters right at the earliest opportunity, and to learn and improve. Managers are also encouraged not to handle complaints defensively and this is evidenced in a number of cases whereby allocated workers have been changed despite no fault being found.

4.   Financial Implications

Children's Service Complaints expenditure

Both Stages 2 & 3 of the statutory complaints procedure require independent investigation to take place.

At Stage 2, the authority is required to appoint an Investigative Officer who must not work in the same area as the complaint being investigated and be suitably trained to carry out investigative work.

Whilst it is not mandatory that this role is appointed externally, the County Council's current policy is to do so. In addition to the Investigative Officer, the Regulations also require an Independent Person to be appointed to ensure the investigation is carried out fairly. This is a mandatory requirement no matter if the Investigating Officer is also independent.

At Stage 3, the procedure is for a panel hearing to be held to review the Stage 2 investigation. This involves the appointment of 3 external panel members.

Leicestershire County Council also offers independent mediation as an alternative form of redress through Stages 2 or 3.

There have been limited opportunities this year to utilise mediation with just 1 externally run mediation session being arranged. This prevented a Stage 2 escalation.

In addition, eight conciliation meetings chaired by the Customer Relations Manager have been held with six of these achieving resolution of the complaint. This emphasises the power of a well-planned meeting and the opportunities this offers for successful complaint resolution.

Finally, on rare occasions, financial redress is offered as part of the Complaints procedure. Usually this is by way of a Local Settlement with the Ombudsman, but can also be recommended at either Stage 2 or 3 of the procedure.

Table 8 below details the total costs incurred during the last 3 financial years. All costs are re-charged directly to the department.

Table 8 Costs incurred through complaints procedure[2]

Spend	Total 13/14	Total 14/15	Total 15/16
Independent Persons	£4,040	£2,870	£3910
Investigative Officers	£7,160	£7430	£8200
Stage 3	£0	£2410	£1790
Mediation	£900	£420	£930
Financial Redress	£0	£0	£300
Total	**£12,100**	**£13,130**	**£15,130**

Costs incurred for 2015/16 are slightly higher than previous years but this is proportionate with the increase in numbers. Costs have been controlled through a number of ways including :

> ➢ the increased diligence of the Complaints Team in offering alternative dispute resolution
>
> ➢ Ensuring that complainants are eligible to use the statutory complaints procedure
>
> ➢ Introduction of lower hourly rate of pay for Independent Persons

---

[2] Figures are rounded up to nearest £10

5. Learning from Complaints

5.1 Corrective action undertaken for complaints upheld at Stage 1

All of the fifteen complaints that were partly or fully upheld have been reviewed to ascertain what action the department has taken to learn from the complaints and avoid such issues occurring in the future.

It is worth stating that, in all cases, an apology was issued, but in six cases there was felt to be no other preventative actions that could be taken.

Table 9 below provides a breakdown of the action taken for the remaining 7 cases. Actions included 3 cases whereby financial re-imbursement was made, agreeing to amend incorrect records and commissioning independent assesments

Table 9: Actions taken in response to upheld complaints
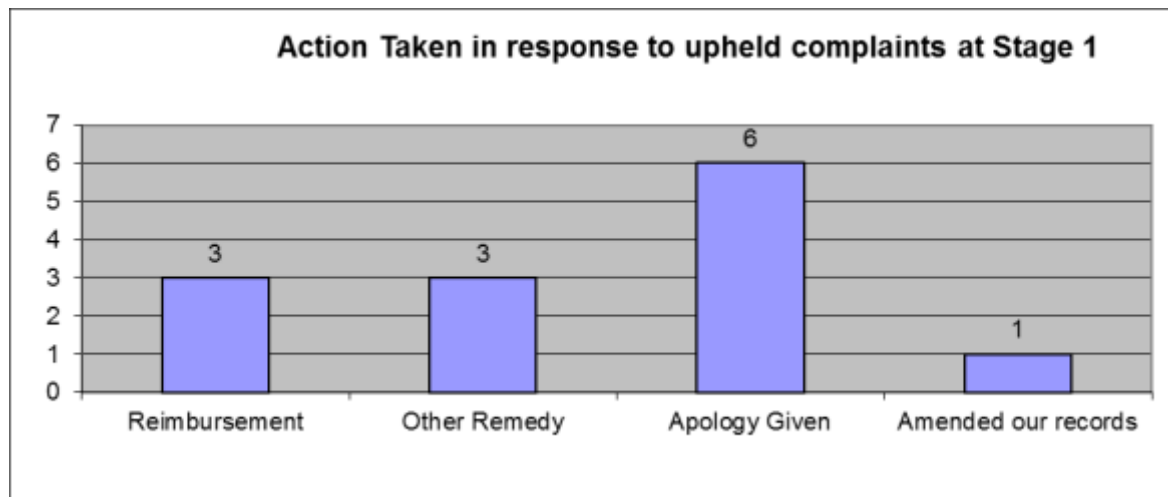
Whilst there is some good evidence of managers using complaints to pro-actively change future service provision, there is still scope to improve in this area, specifically in identifying preventative actions in all cases.

This remains a key work priority for the Complaints Manager to ensure that managers are fully equipped to effectively probe and analyse complaints. This theme is not unique to children's social care and continues to be prioritised as a corporate work priority.

5.2 Longer-term improvements realised in complaints handling

Inevitably, some improvements can take time to show benefits and as such, a storyboard has been developed this year to articulate the achievements and opportunities realised over the last three years together with any opportunities for further improvement.

Whilst prepared to support our forthcoming OfSted inspection, this provides an effective overview of some of the positive developments made since 2014

CFS – STATUTORY COMPLAINTS STORYBOARD
Development work 2014 - 2016

Why is it an issue / Where were we?

- Inconsistent understanding of statutory complaints procedure notably for new Managers
- We are good at resolving issues but less comfortable in identifying systemic learning from complaints
- The Stage 2 process was not always the right vehicle for families bringing complaints.
- Complaints made by young people were very low and there was no clear view on whether young people felt they knew how to complain
- Managers were not always equipped to respond appropriately to complaints.

What have we done?

- Presentation to all Team Managers (Jan 2016) on the statutory procedure and all were given copies of "Getting the best from Complaints"
- Significant work going on to ensure whenever complaints are upheld we complete lessons learned forms and there is a process of random spot-check by Customer Relations (
- Increased awareness and use of Alternative Dispute resolution techniques (from 2014)
- Attended Children in Care Council away day (2015) and created a new complaints leaflet. Much closer working with Corporate Parenting includes visibility of cases they are engaged with
- Commissioned the LGO to run a bespoke course for 15 of our social care managers (Nov 2015)

Getting the Best from Complaints

What else do we need to do?

- Improve our case recording within Framework I to ensure greater transparency as to why decisions were taken.
- Continue supporting managers with complaints and ensure that at the outset we are clear on the correct process.
- Improve how we articulate and promote that complaints are making a difference to how we deliver our service
- Highlight to managers the LGO approach to remedies and ensure managers consider as appropriate when responding to complaints
- Consider how we prepare non-managerial staff for their role in Independent Investigations

What difference have we made?

- Increased profile of complaints team with Team Managers
- Working model for identifying lessons learned which includes an escalation route back through the department
- C.50% of requests to escalate to Stage 2 are resolved through conciliation / mediation (2014-15 figures)
- 12% (7) complaints were made by young people in 2014-15. This was a further increase from prior year (9%)
- Positive feedback received from attendees of complaints training as to how this would influence their work. Other work also triggered such as the need to ensure we strengthen complaints awareness during the induction process

6.   **Local Government Ombudsman**

The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) made new enquires of the Council on 10 new cases during 2015-16 this included complaints around Child Protection, Disabled Childrens Services, Fostering and Adoption and First Response.

The Ombudsman made decisions on nine complaints which related to childrens' social care during the year, with fault found in two instances. A brief summary of the complaints considered and their respective outcomes appears below.

Case 1: A Complaint that the Council's actions directly led to the complainant being estranged from his daughter.
The LGO concluded that they could not achieve the outcome being sought

OUTCOME: Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)

Case 2: Complaint regarding alleged comments made at a SEN Tribunal by a Disabled Childrens' Worker
The LGO found no fault in how the Council had acted

OUTCOME: Not Upheld: No maladministration

Case 3: Complaint regarding the financial offer made by the Council in support of a Special Guardianship Order

The LGO found fault in that the Council had failed to make a clear written financial offer in line with statutory requirements. The Council agreed to do this

OUTCOME: Upheld: Maladministration with no Injustice

Case 4: Complaint regarding the conduct of child protection officers and lack of financial re-imbursement for attending meetings

The LGO concluded that they could not achieve the outcome being sought

OUTCOME: Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)

Case 5: A Complaint regarding how the Council handled a referral from Health regarding suspected Fabricated Illness

The LGO referred this back to the Council and Health as a premature complaint

OUTCOME: *Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)*

Case 6: A Complaint regarding how the Council handled an application to become a foster carer

The LGO found a number of procedural faults with how the assessment had been undertaken and delays in responding to the complaint. The Council accepted the recommendations and agreed a comprehensive action plan and a payment of £300 to the complainant in recognition of the distress caused.

OUTCOME: *Upheld: Maladministration with Injustice*

Case 7: A Complaint regarding the conduct of an officer during a scheduled child protection visit

The LGO concluded they could add nothing to the response already given by the Council

OUTCOME: Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)

Case 8: A Complaint regarding the accuracy of comments written in a social work assessment

The LGO concluded they could add nothing to the response already given by the Council

OUTCOME: Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)

Case 9: A Complaint regarding the lack of assistance from Children's Services in a private family dispute

The LGO accepted there was no role for the Council on this matter

OUTCOME: Closed After Initial Enquires (No Further Action)

7. **Monitoring the Process**

The Customer Relations team continues to support Children's Services to manage and learn from complaints. The key services offered to CFS are -

1. Complaints advice and support
2. Mediation
3. Production of Performance Reports
4. Liaison with Local Government Ombudsman
5. Quality Assurance of complaint responses
6. Complaint handling training for Operational Managers

Assistance continues to be routinely provided to Heads of Strategy in drafting adjudication responses to Stage 2 investigations. This helps ensure a consistency of response and that clear action plans are created.

Quarterly performance reports are produced and presented to the Departmental Management Team (DMT). The Customer Relations Manager also attends the Children's Social Care Services Senior Management Team meeting every 6 months to talk through complaints matters.

Quarterly meetings are held with the Corporate Parenting Team to discuss and review their caseloads and any support that is required.

During the last year an Ombudsman-led training event was hosted by the Complaints Manager and was well received.
In addition, a briefing session has been run providing clarification on the statutory regulations to all Team Managers.

8.   Customer Relations – Work Priorities for 2016-17

During 2016/17, the Customer Relations team will focus on:

➢ Continuing to ensure the complaints procedure is accessible, particularly to young people.

➢ Development of a series of model templates for responding to common complaints and to support managers ensure a consistent and appropriate style of language is used.

➢ Continue to utilise new executive role on regional complaints management group to help inform practice and ensure full compliance with the statutory complaints process.

➢ Continuing to promote alternative dispute resolution, notably to complainants seeking escalation to Stage 2 and 3.

➢ Promoting improvements to how managers are able to translate complaints into service improvements through the roll-out of root cause analysis techniques.

9.   Key Learning Points

The Customer Relations Team would specifically highlight 2 key themes which have emerged from this year's annual report process –

- **Failure to generate significant improvement in administration of conference reports**

   It cannot be ignored that this continues to be an issue central to a number of complaints and that limited progress has been made in meeting our aspirational standards to ensure social work reports are with parents 3 days in advance. A further review needs to be undertaken to understand why progress is not being made in addressing this matter.

- **Issues with contacting social care workers**

Whilst it is fully recognised that social care officers will regularly be mobile, there remain clear opportunities to improve the general ability to contact officers at all levels. Intel received from complaints continues to highlight this as a source of frustration.

Comprehensive guidance has been issued corporately on how to manage customer contact to ensure compliance with our customer service standards, but consideration needs to be given to how this can be practically be applied in the social care field.

The Customer Relations Team believes that improvements in these two areas would help further reduce the number of complaints received as well as fulfilling some of the key promises to customers within the Council's Customer Service Standards.

10. Concluding Comments

Overall, this has been a positive year for complaints management across Children's Social Care services. The Complaints team continues to receive good support from managers at all levels within the department, and despite the challenging financial backdrop, timeliness in responding to complaints at Stage 1 has improved from prior year.

The low level of fault found by the Local Government Ombudsman provides validation to the reduction in volumes of complaints upheld and assurance that where required, appropriate remedial action is being taken by the Council.

APPENDIX A – Sample of compliments received

Below are a selection of the positive recognition the social care department has received during the 2015-16 year

- Wanted to highlight how impressed he has been with the support of the Social Worker Emma. He commented that the focus is on the needs of the child and that Emma is compassionate and the best social worker he has worked with – **STRENGHTENING FAMILIES**

- The school were impressed with the support that Bronwen provides and that she responds quickly – **CHILDREN IN CARE TEAM**

- Always get really good support and advice from us. Sandie'ss support and advice was exemplary. Also commented that Demetrius has been very supportive on the advice line in the past – **FIRST RESPONSE**

- I wanted to thank you (Diane) for all the extra time/effort that you have spent in bringing this case to panel..... It was really helpful to work with accommodating and understanding professionals (including trips to LRI on days off) – **CHILD PROTECTION NWL**

- Very pleased with how quickly we (ourselves and the police)responded to the referral that she made through to us and also whilst we were talking said that she found the CDT advice line really helpful and a good resource– **FIRST RESPONSE**

- Just a quick email to say how wonderful I thought the Beacon Voices performance was on wednesday night. If being a corporate parent means feeling the same way we do about looked after children as we do about our own I couldn't have been any more proud, the enthusiasm for the performance and the thrill of performing on De Montfort Hall stage was visible on the faces of everyone in the choir. – **CORPORATE PARENTING UNIT**

- Panel were extremely positive about Michael – the depth of his knowledge of the boys, the quality of his work and the CPR's in particular…. **– FOSTERING**

- We have continued support from Angela who should be commended on her maintained level of communication and personal care that she shows towards each individual case, Angela goes above and beyond when it comes to the care of her young people and this does not go unnoticed – **CHILD PROTECTION BASSETT STREET**

- Thanks for never giving up on me and showing me the right path...you (Danielle Marsden) have done an amazing job and are brilliant at what you do – **CHILDREN IN CARE TEAM**

- I like talking to Leah because she knows what's best for me".
  So happy she is here for me – **CHILD PROTECTION PENNINE**

Leicestershire County Council

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 NOVEMBER 2016

LEICESTERSHIRE FOSTERING SERVICE STATUTORY QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT: FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2016 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to bring to the Committee's attention the activity of the Fostering Service during the period 1 April 2016 to September 2016.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. Leicestershire County Council is responsible for a Local Authority Fostering Service. It undertakes statutory responsibilities relating to Fostering.

3. Under the National Minimum Standards (25.7) all Fostering services are required to provide one half year and one annual report to the Local Authority Executive regarding the activity and work of the Fostering Agency and Fostering Panel.

4. The annual report for the period ending 31st March 2016 was considered by Children and Families Overview Scrutiny Committee on 13th June 2016.

Executive Summary

5. As of September 30th 2016 there were 498 children in our care.

6. The Fostering Service has 209 mainstream and kinship carers approved (some connected carers are temporarily approved).

7. In this period there were 146 children placed with in-house mainstream carers (compared to 131 in March 2016), and 81 children placed with kinship carers (compared to 80 in March 2016).

8. 134 children were placed in Independent Fostering Agency placements (IFAs). This is an increase of 18 since March 2016 as result of an increase in demand for sibling placements and unaccompanied asylum seeking (UASC) placements.

9. On the 30th September 2016 there were 51 children living in private residential type provision (other than IFAs) – of these 37 are placed in independent children's homes, 12 in independent living and 2 in residential schools.

10. There are 2 children placed in an NHS/Health Trust provision.

11. 4 young people were living in Leicestershire's children home, Welland House.

12. As of 30th September 2016, there were 31 UASC in our care under Section 20 of the Children Act. Of these, 1 was placed in an in-house provision and 30 in private provision (IFA and semi-independent accommodation). 7 of the 30 UASC transferred to Leicestershire County Council care as part of the National Transfer Scheme. The UASC team works with a further 27 young people who have a legal status under Leaving Care.

13. In the year we approved 7 new foster carers at panel (excluding Connected/Kinship carers). This has been a slow start to the year because of issues with the use of the market portal (Tribal) and the need to stagger mainstream campaigns with targeted campaigns.

14. 10 foster carers were deregistered - 7 retired, 2 adopted children in placement, and 1 was deregistered by the authority for practice reasons.

15. In the same period, there were 28 new kinship fostering households approved and a similar number of kinship carers left the authority as the children in their care were made subject to Children Arrangement Order or Special Guardianship Order.

16. A further 11 foster carers are scheduled to go to panel between now and December with an expected deregistration rate of 6.

17. The target net growth for 2016-17 is 15 in-house carers.

18. Children/carers not specified in the above include children placed for adoption, those placed with parents (under regulation 17 and 19) and those children placed under S17 (Children Act 1989).

19. The service (including Adoption) has a budget of £22,301,116. The projected spend for the year is £22,240,000.

20. The sufficiency strategy as outlined in the Service's Market Position Statement has allowed the Council to respond to the increase in Looked After Child numbers, within the current budget envelop.

Background

21. Our strategy for the Fostering and Children in Care Service is focused on the following key activities:

- Increasing market share in Leicestershire's fostering provision including our 'in-house' foster carers, kinship and connected carers and supported lodgings;
- Increase the number of specialist foster carers to enable children and young people's return to their family's care or local provisions;
- Recruitment of specialist short-term foster carers who can work with young people with emotional-behavioural needs and their parents to promote positive relationships;
- Introduction of dedicated support to promote positive relationships between young people and their carers, stabilise placements and improve community integration;
- Improved outcomes through promotion of an all service-all provision focus on the 'Golden Triangle' and in doing so ensuring that our children and young people are safe, achieve and enjoy good health-wellbeing;
- Making best use of our resources through improved commissioning arrangements across social care, health and education, use of the placement's framework, use of decision-making panels.

22. In April 2015 the Fostering, Adoption and Placement Service restructured to improve sufficiency functions and address the growing pressure on the placement budget. The remodelling saw the introduction of:

- Brokers (Placement commissioning and contract monitor)
- Commissioning Manager
- Contract Manager
- Business Analyst and Project Manager
- Additional recruitment staff.

23. The Service's first Market Position Statement was published in June 2015, and is the primary document driving activity across the service.

24. Following extensive consultation in December 2015 to the proposal to close Greengate, one of Leicestershire's in-house ran children homes for up to seven young people, was approved at Cabinet in February 2016. The home closed on June 22nd 2016 following the successful transition of the one resident to an appropriate move on placement. The staffing budget was transferred to the Fostering Service to develop a new team with the aim of supporting placement stability and developing our specialist fostering placements, called the Dedicated Placement Support Team.

25. In July 2016 the Service Manager of Fostering and Adoption left the service and a new Service Manager was appointed.
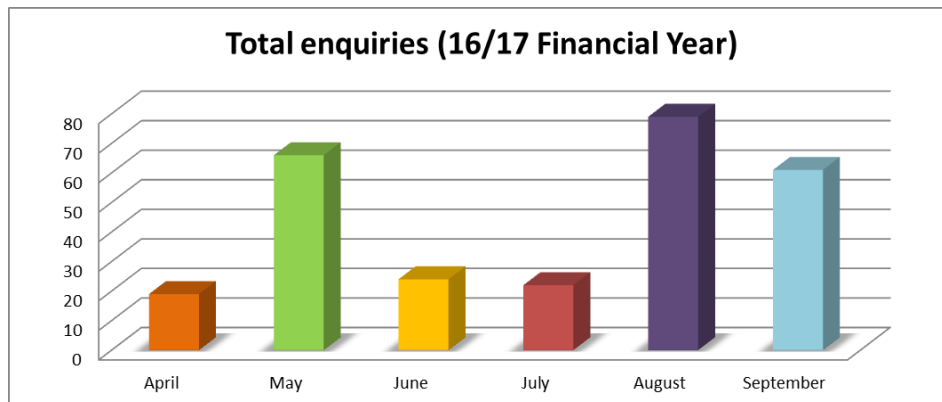
Current Position

26. The fostering and placement/commissioning support teams within the service work closely with locality colleagues and partners through the decision-making panels
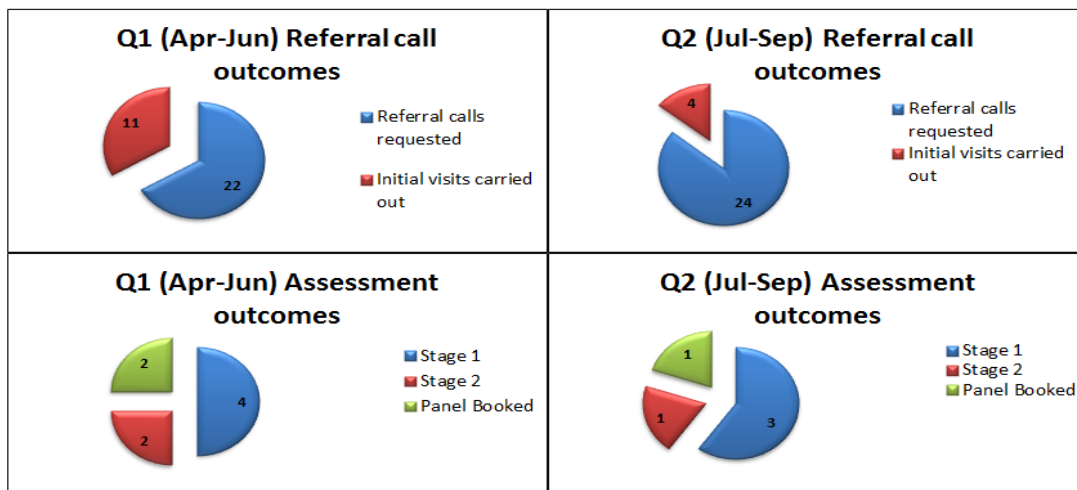
(Permanence Panel, Placement and Resource Panel and the Integrated Children's Panel). Through these panels, children's needs are considered to ensure that care planning is focused and timely, the provision is appropriate and meets the child's needs.

27. Recruitment:
   - Since the remodelling in April 2015, the Placement Commissioning unit within the service has a dedicated recruitment focus, priorities and targets. These commissioning priorities are set out in Market Position Statement, June 2016.
   - The evidence provided in this Statement helps the Council and its commissioning partners to take a strategic approach to understand and meet the needs of Leicestershire's most vulnerable children by focusing on priority supply issues, commissioning priorities and developmental needs.
   - Current priority supply and services issues include:
     a. Sibling placements
     b. UASC placements
     c. Supporting lodgings for young people with mild-moderate learning difficulties or emotional-behavioural needs
     d. Responding in a timely and appropriate way to placement instability, support to return home, adolescent developmental crisis, attachment issues.

   Activity in relation to recruitment can be best understood through the graphs below:

Total enquiries (16/17 Financial Year)

Q1 (Apr-Jun) Referral call outcomes
- Referral calls requested: 22
- Initial visits carried out: 11

Q2 (Jul-Sep) Referral call outcomes
- Referral calls requested: 24
- Initial visits carried out: 4

Q1 (Apr-Jun) Assessment outcomes
- Stage 1: 4
- Stage 2: 2
- Panel Booked: 2

Q2 (Jul-Sep) Assessment outcomes
- Stage 1: 3
- Stage 2: 1
- Panel Booked: 1

The data above was extracted from the FPT database on the 29th September 2016 at 9.41am and is only a reflection of what is recorded on the database.

A referral call is a call that occurs before an initial visit is carried out and acts as a short opportunity for the assessment team to decide if an initial visit is needed or not.

28. **Fostering Panel Activity**:

- Between April-September 2016, the service approved 7 new in-house foster carers at panel.
- 10 in-house carers are no longer working with us- 7 retired, 2 adopted children in placement, and 1 was deregistered by the authority for practice reasons.
- Therefore the net increase in new mainstream fostering households is -3 for the period April- September i.e. there has been a reduction in overall numbers.
- In the same period, there were 28 new kinship fostering households approved. A similar number left the authority as the children became subject to Children Arrangement or Special Guardianship orders.
- In the same period 2 kinship households were deferred for further work by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM), and 1 household was not approved.
- During 2015 several local authority and independent assessors were commissioned to meet statutory deadlines and the ongoing sufficiency needs of the service in relation to increasing foster carer provision. This flexible approach will be used within commissioning rules in the coming period as it has proven successful and cost effective.

Brief details of the current recruitment campaigns are provided below.

Specialist carers:

- Four week Facebook campaign ongoing from 24 September16 with 5 leads generated so far;
- The service currently have adverts for One2One and Parallel carers on EMSS, Indeed.com and Leicester Mercury;
- The service is awaiting approval from birth parents for a case study press release which will be featured in the Leicester Mercury;
- Contingency planning for external commissioning of level 6 carers has begun.

UASC Carers:

- Four week Facebook campaign ongoing from 03 October 16 with 15 leads generated so far;
- Ivan Ould - Radio Leicester & Capital FM radio interview broadcast.
- UASC Fostering information event booked for Monday 17th October 2016.
- There will be a constant "dripping" of messages via "other" social media (Twitter / Facebook) and our blog.

Supported Lodging providers:

- Four week Facebook campaign due to launch when UASC campaign ends.
- Generic fostering recruitment continues in the background, which includes regular posting on Facebook, contacting 'warm' enquiries that we have spoken to previously but were unable at that point to proceed, and promotion of the 'find out about fostering' events.

Word of Mouth – Foster carers toolkit:

- The flyers and information for our foster carers' toolkit were finalised in time for a pilot launch in April 2016.
- The official launch took place in September 2016 with a presentation to carers at County Hall.

Locality events:

As well as the popular 'Find out about Fostering' based at County Hall which run every three weeks, locality events are booked in Sure-start centres around the county.

29. Foster Carers and Fostering Profile:

During 2015 and early in 2016, the number of complaints from foster carers escalated. Generally, carers reported feeling un-supported, felt they were made subject of allegations when the issue really related to lack of support. The issues related both to a changeover of staff and high supervising social worker caseloads. Morale appeared to be low for some of our foster carers.

30. In May/June a survey was launched for all of our carers to ascertain their views on:

- The level of support and communication from the fostering team;
- The level of support and communication from the Children in Care Team;
- The Training offered;
- Involvement in locality groups;
- What the fostering team was good at;
- What the fostering team could do better;

31. We had a response from 70 carers, who told us that:
    - In general they were happy with the service but felt that we could improve our communication;
    - Our training schedule was good, but would like training in the evenings and weekends;
    - Wanted managers to be more visual and accessible;
    - Wanted us to be more creative in the way we communicated with them.

32. In response to the survey, the Fostering Service:
    - Ensured all carers had an allocated worker;
    - Realigned resources to increase supervising social worker capacity reducing caseloads from 25+ to 17;
    - Received visits within regulatory timescales;
    - Managers from the service attended locality groups;
    - Scheduled quarterly meetings with Leicestershire Foster Carers Association;
    - Implemented a monthly Fostering Newsletter delivered to all carers to update them on events, training, staff changes, information from other services – education, health and localities. This has been a huge success;
    - Returned to a more accessible/hands on approach service;
    - Organised social events to allow for networking and relationship building. The "Foster Family Fun Day" was a great success, attended by over 100 people;
    - Scheduled events throughout the year – Children who Foster Event, Foster Carer Recognition Event;
    - We also recruited a permanent Team Manager to the team, ensuring the team had the support, advice and supervisory overview required;
    - We introduced a complaint log, which initially was reviewed quarterly with the Head of Service and Assistant Director;
    - We met in August and there were no new complaints from foster carers evidencing that our actions as identified above are successful;
    - We implemented a Foster Carer tracker to report on visits to carers, unannounced visits and statutory checks are undertaken at the required frequency;
    - We implemented a Foster Care Case Allocation tracker to ensure all carers have an allocated worker.

33. **Dedicated Support Team -** In June 2016 the Dedicated Placement Support Team began operation. The team consists of:

    1 x Team Manager
    1 x Assessing Social Workers
    4 x Team Support Workers
    1 x Training Co-ordinator
    2 x level 6 carers (One2One carers).

34. The role of the team is to provide support to foster placements that are experiencing difficulties and to prevent breakdown. Provide support to One2One foster placements where a more intensive support package is required; to work with parents / carers to prevent breakdown; to work with the Parallel Carers, the young person and their family to support re-unification; to provide time limited intensive support to maintain placements and return home.

35. Since June 2016, this new team has worked with 35 children and young people. Examples of their success include:

    Young person B moved from a residential home. He now has 100% school attendance and the school have written a compliment letter. He is due to return home in October;
    Young Person L has worked very hard with his family and the dedicated support team to repair his relationship with his family. He will return home in October;
    Young Person H has returned home from residential care;
    A's kindship carer requested readmission to care. A's behaviour was difficult. The family have now stabilised, other agencies involved and A is still living within his family.

36. The impact of this team is that placement stability has increased month by month. In April 2015, placement instability was 15%. By May 2016 the service had maintained instability within the 12% band and by the end of August 2016 within the 10% band for 2 months; and 9.45% for September 2016. The 2016 target is 9%.

37. It must be acknowledged that other developments within the service have contributed to the improvement in placement stability (introduction of the three decision-making panels, revised authority levels for independent/private placement search, use of a placement framework, contract monitoring, improved care of and relationship with our foster carers and reduced supervising social worker caseloads etc).

38. Independent Visitors:

    All Looked After Children should have access to an Independent Visitor. We currently have 33 visitors attached to 33 young people. Some of these visitors have been providing support to a young person for over 7 years, supporting them and their carers through some difficult times, such as supporting transition to supported lodgings, support to a young person when a carer passed away, being part of the happier times like attending the young person`s graduation and being Maid of Honour at the visitors wedding. These visitors play a crucial role in supporting our children and young people and are areas of our service that needs to be developed.

39. Kinship Carers (Formerly Known as 'Connected Carers'):

- Kinship foster care is a formal arrangement where a child is looked after by the Local Authority and placed with a relative, friend or connected person. 'Relative of Friend' is defined as a: grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or by marriage), step-parent, or friend of the child;
- A 'Connected Person' is anyone who has a pre-existing connection to a child through their extended network. This may be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a child-minder, a teacher, a youth worker, although these are not exclusive categories (National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2013);
- This case law lead to an increase in the formality of assessment of a large group of carers in Leicestershire and subsequent directives from the family courts to complete assessments in shrinking timescales has had a significant impact on assessment and supervisory capacity in the Fostering Service;
- Currently we have 5 full time assessing Social Workers, completing 5 assessments at any one time and team of 3 supervising social workers supporting connected carers (those carers who are foster carers and those who require support post the making of a Children Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order). This was initially a team of 2 but the caseloads were too high and resource was moved from within the service to improve care received by connected cares. The case loads are still too high and management are looking for means to best support this team and the carers;
- Our Kinship carers are a major growth area due to PLO and the requirement to look within a Child`s own family network when initiating proceedings;
- We have also had to commission external assessments due to the capacity of the team and the requirements to complete assessments within short Court timeframes;
- We are now consulting to implement the new BAAF Kinship proforma, (Form C). This encompasses all the required information and will ensure consistency in information.

40. Emotional Permanence:

- Children are placed permanently within their families or with other connected persons through Special Guardianship Orders and Child Arrangement Orders (replacing Resident Orders). They provide a legally secure foundation for building a permanent relationship between the child and their special guardian, while preserving the legal link between the child and their birth family;
- SGO orders and the related support needed by these carers is a continuing growth area within the authority;
- We provide financial support to 246 children subject to SGO orders in place compared to 224 in March 2016;
- We provide financial support to 64 children subject to Residence/Child Arrangement Order, which is a fairly stable figure;
- Special Guardianship Support has now been identified as to receive support from the Adoption Support Fund. The service is required to complete an assessment of need to access the fund on behalf of the funding. The assessment demand has escalated significantly over the past year without the additional support to local authorities to complete these assessments and support with commissioning of the services to meet the identified need;

- The fostering and placement/commissioning support teams within the service work closely with locality colleagues and partners through the decision-making panels (Permanence Panel, Placement and Resource Panel and the Integrated Children's Panel). Through these panels, children's needs are considered to ensure that care planning is focused and timely, the provision is appropriate and meets the child's needs.

41. Development and Training:

- Staff development and their engagement in the development of fostering services is a key priority and will help to deliver improved outcomes for children. In order to ensure the Fostering Service is working consistently with the locality teams the Growing Safety methodology is undertaken in all of the work the service does;
- The Head of Service and Service Manager regularly audit foster carer supervision records to determine the baseline of use of Signs of Safety by the supervising social workers. The outcome of the audit will be to determine what developmental activity/training is needed to ensure Signs of Safety is used meaningfully to inform the support and training needs of foster carers to best meet the outcomes of children and young people in care;
- Over the next year Signs of Safety will be a fully embedded form of practice in the Fostering Service and will be used to help carers improve children's readiness for school, to choose and for adulthood;
- We have produced a new Fostering Training Programme for 2016/17 and this is published on our website. This can be found at: http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/fostering/training-and-support-for-foster-carers
- We also publish forthcoming training in our Monthly Newsletter to ensure maximum application and attendance;
- We are creating episodes within FWI to ensure Core Training renewal is pulled through to the Supervising Social Worker to ensure these remain up to date.
- We are linking in training attendance into Annual Reviews for carers to ensure we have a skilled fostering service, developed to meet the needs of our children
- We have funded two workers to attend Theraplay training, a therapeutic sensory approach to aide children to recognise and self-regulate their feelings and emotions. Workers will work with carers to incorporate these approaches in their parenting of our children;
- Each team within the service has a Storyboard which they in supervisions and team meetings to track progress against priority activities, targets and key performance indicators based on the outcomes for children.

42. Payments to carers:

- We recognise that the new payments scheme was introduced on 1st April 2013 and payments are made through the children's social care database, Frameworki. The new scheme was introduced to ensure fairness, transparency and an emphasis on payment for evidenced skills;
- Simultaneously the long standing practice of making additional payments to carers is being addressed and reduced. The central feature of the new scheme is

that carers are paid for their skills and abilities and there are defined additional benefits for key expenditure such as start-up grants, and clothing when a child comes into care or begins school;

- Matching our payments to Independent Foster Carer Agencies is being reviewed to make our position more attractive to recruit new carers and encourage transfers to the Local Authority;
- A business case will be presented to the Departmental Management Team in November 2016 to propose a new payment structure that will improve the in-house recruitment success by making the Council more competitive with independent fostering agencies;
- The proposal will also simplify the payment structure and make caring for adolescent children more attractive.

Resource Implications

43. People Implications: Over the past year, the service has seen a change in practice, has embraced commissioning principles, has worked to targets and has achieved success in recruitment. It is believed that our fostering team are best placed to support our children and carers and there is support for our strategy to move to having a significantly greater market share of provision placed within the Council. The managers and staff also understand that within the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, increased in-house provision is most cost-effective and will ensure that the money at our disposal is used in the most effective way to provide the best care.

44. The managers are aware of the strategy and are assisting with the future plans i.e. what the service will need to look like to support the expansion. A service structure proposal will be provided with the business case to change the foster carer payments to escalate recruitment.

45. Due to the rigour of the care planning, care support and new commissioning arrangements, the service is currently operating within the budget envelop, despite an increase of LAC numbers over a 4 month period. The three areas of projected overspend or risk within this budget are:
   - SGO allowances
   - Independent Fostering Agencies
   - Residential provision.

Circulation Under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officer(s) to Contact

Paul Meredith
Director
Paul.Meredith@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3057441

Sharon Cooke
Assistant Director
Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3055479

Nicci Collins
Head of Strategy
Nicci.Collins@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3054504

Joss Longman
Service Manager
Joss.Longman@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3053288

Equality and Human Rights Implications

46. The Choices Sufficiency Strategy and Market Position Statement identified priorities for recruitment, support and training of foster carers.

47. The Market Position Statement has been refreshed for 2016-17. The Market Position Statement uses demographic and statistical information to identify the most vulnerable and highest needs. Priority action, supply needs and development issues related directly to the analysis of this information.

Agenda Item 11

Leicestershire County Council

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

7 NOVEMBER 2016

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND ADOPTION AGENCY
STATUTORY QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT: FOR THE
PERIOD 1 APRIL 2016 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICES**

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to bring to the Committee's attention the activity of the Leicestershire and Rutland Adoption Agency during the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. This report is issued by the Leicestershire & Rutland Adoption Agency.

3. Under the 2011 National Minimum Standards 25.6 all Adoption Agencies are required to provide one six month and one annual report to the Executive regarding the activity and work of the Adoption Agency and Adoption Panel.

4. The annual report for the period ending 31st March 2016 was considered by Children and Families Overview Scrutiny Committee on 13th June 2016.

Executive Summary

5. 21 adoption orders were finalised for children in this period. 21 Leicestershire children; 0 Rutland children.

6. 18 children were adopted by Leicestershire County Council approved adopters, 3 via the inter-agency process.

7. 16 children have been placed with their prospective adopters during this period.

8. 2 sibling groups have been placed including 1 set of twins.

9. 5 adopters were approved in this period: all are white British.

10. There are 18 approved adopters and 29 children awaiting an adoption placement.

Background

11. Leicestershire County Council is responsible for a Local Authority Fostering Service. It undertakes statutory responsibilities relating to Fostering. This report is from the Leicestershire County Council Fostering Service. Leicestershire County Council is also responsible for a Local Authority Adoption Agency. It undertakes statutory and regulated responsibilities relating to adoption and has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Rutland County Council.

Current Position

12. Adoption Plans:

- 6 adoption panels were held during this period;
- In this period 19 children were presented to the Agency Decision Maker for an adoption plan;
- 5 adopters were approved in this period. All are white British;
- Of the 19 children considered by the Agency Decision Maker, 17 met the National Minimum Standard timescale of coming to panel within two months of adoption being agreed as the plan. Those out ofthe timescale are due to deferment for technical reasons acceptable under the regulations. The requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 were fully met.

13. Performance - Children Placed and Adopted:

- 16 children have been placed with their prospective adopters during this period; (14 LCC & 0 Rutland Children) - 2 were an inter-agency adoption;
- 21 adoption orders were finalised for children in this period (21 Leicestershire children; 0 Rutland children) ;
- 18 children were adopted by Leicestershire County Council approved adopters, 3 via the inter-agency process;
- 2 sibling groups placed – 1 set of twins.

14. Performance - Adoption Approvals:

- During this period 5 adopter households were approved, 4 households were completed within the six month timescale;
- The freeze on recruiting adopters was reviewed in July 2016, where it was decided to commence recruitment;
- 5 sets of adopters approved in this period are White/British;
- As of 30th September 2016, there are 18 adopter households waiting;
- The requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 were fully met for all assessments.

15. Performance - Adoption Scorecard:

- Leicestershire's adoption scorecard results are:

	Indicator	LCC April-Sept 2016	LCC three year period to *31st March 2015* are	National
1	The length of time a child spends in care before being placed with his/her adopters	422	546	593
2	The length of time between court granting a placement order and the Agency Decision Maker agreeing a placement match	168	209	233

- Notwithstanding the DfE target for indicator 2 being 121 days this adoption agency remains in the top quartile for performance (England and Wales). The DfE target for Indicator 2 was missed by 88 days.

16. Quality of Reports:

- 19 child permanence reports were considered by the Agency Decision Maker during this period;
- 5 Prospective Adopters Reports were presented to the Adoption Panel during this period. The Panel felt they were all good and raised only minor issues.

17. Children Waiting for Adoption:

- At the 30th September 2016 there were 29 children awaiting an adoption placement;
- Family finding is being actively pursued with placements being sought via the National Adoption Register, the local East Midlands Adoption Consortium and specialist advertising including SEN magazines and children featured in advertising journals (be My Parent) etc. Children have also attended the adoption activity days and the national exchange days;
- The service is also revisiting the list of 90 or so would be adopters who have contacted the agency since we closed recruitment in April 2015;
- 1 child was placed under Foster-For-Adoption protocols.

18. Adoption Disruptions:

- There have been 2 adoption disruptions during this period. In each case, the children returned to the care of the local authority;
- There are currently have 2 children working to re-unification home.

19. Post Adoption Support:

- Pre and post adoption support is provided in a number of ways within LCC. The adoption social worker offers support up to three years post adoption order, especially in cases where adoption breakdown or disruption is a threat;

- After this 3 year period, locality led support is available to families at risk of adoption breakdown – this includes active intervention; signposting to support networks and providers; respite; and, accommodation of the child or children in the most extreme cases;
- Therapeutic support is also available through the Adoption Support Fund, a centralised granting process administered by the DfE, which seeks to pay for therapeutic interventions in order to prevent adoption breakdown. This went live on the 1st May 2015;
- To 30th September 2016, LCC has drawn down over *£700,000* of Adoption Support Fund to pay for direct interventions with adoptees and their families in Leicestershire;
- Some of the most complex cases may be co-worked by the Locality Team with support from the Post Adoption Support Worker. In such cases an assessment will be conducted and an application may be made for appropriate therapeutic services through the Adoption Support Fund;
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) offers services to our adopted children and meets regularly with practitioners in the Adoption Team to provide advice. This arrangement works well and the Adoption Team value this support;
- The demand for Post Adoption Support continues to grow in all areas, however, the Adoption Support Fund has recently capped the level of support available through the Fund and a requirement for local authority match funding should the support package exceed the cap;
- Birth Parents are routinely offered support prior to the adoption of their children. Post Adoption Support still requires further work. This will be enhanced with the addition of two new workers in spring 2016;
- Birth Records Counselling was assessed as good in the last Ofsted Inspection, although the service is dealing with a couple of delayed responses to Birth Records Counselling;
- Intermediary services where adopted children are supported to find and meet their birth parents are not carried out in house in Leicestershire. Some initial advice may be given but as with other LA's we signpost adoptees who request this service to third sector agencies;
- The Post Adoption Support Team liaises with education. We offer training to schools particularly around attachment issues for adopted children and how to successfully manage these in the school setting;
- Under the new 2016 offer the team will provide specialised training for approved adopters and workers as required.

20. Permanence Team:

- The current role of the team is to undertake all family finding for children who need permanence via the adoption route. This allows the assessing social workers to focus on assessing prospective adopters, placing and supporting children through to Adoption Order;
- This work also includes family finding for long term fostered children;
- During the reported period the team have completed a number of developmental projects, many of which have been designed to improve practice as well as improving our corporate image;

- Training has been designed and facilitated to a number of audiences, including locality teams and foster carers. The training has included Child Permanence Report (CPR) training to address the quality of CPR's as well as introducing a new template;
- In addition to day to day operations, the team is very committed to ongoing developmental projects such as the introduction of Life Appreciation Days; processes for the permanence planning of children in Long Term Foster Care; and, further embedding of the Signs of Safety methodology in our practice;

21. Statement by the Agency Decision Maker, Helen Gronhaug

The ADM role has now been in place as a stand-alone post since August 2014. The time elapsed has given the opportunity to see how this role functions independently of case management hierarchy. Issues have arisen that would have been otherwise unlikely had the ADM role sat with a more senior manager such as Head of Service or Assistant Director as has previously been the case. Certain challenges have been highlighted in terms of accountability and governance of the ADM decision making. This has been particularly apparent where the ADM is considering children's care plans for adoption. Adoption Guidance 2013 requires the Local Authority to urgently hold an urgent care planning meeting if an adoption plan has not been agreed by the ADM. An ADM can require further work and clarification in order to make such a decision. However there have been occasions where this work has not been completed as requested.

An ADM Action Plan has been developed & updated to promote clarity about the status that work required by the ADM when such decisions are being given.

The independent position of the ADM allows for a valuable opportunity to gain an over view of children's care planning and outcomes through oversight of adoption and fostering panels; children's adoption plans as well as foster carer reviews. This allows for the identification of practice and policy themes. Work is underway to ensure such themes are harvested and fed into the Continuous Improvement Action Plan so that the learning loop is completed. Thematic learning will be drawn from the 4 gateways of ADM decision making – children's adoption plans; adoption and fostering panels as well as foster carer reviews. A system to escalate and track individual children's cases is being developed where ADM highlights practice/ process issues. The ADM quality assurance function is being further strengthened by greater collaboration with the Safeguarding and Improvement Unit, particularly the IRO challenge meeting with AD. ADM membership on the newly formed permanence panel will further develop the ADM's QA function.

22. East Midlands Adoption Consortium (EMAC):

- The Adoption Agency of Leicestershire and Rutland continues to be a member of EMAC. Central government is keen to see the success of such arrangements and so we have made a commitment to this group of 9 LA's and 3 Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA);
- The project team of for the 'Regionalisation of Adoption' in the midlands has put forward the following proposed models:

- ✓ **Single LA** – A local authority is authorised to provide services on behalf of other LA's. The services can be delivered directly by the hosting authority or commissioned from another body on behalf of the RAA e.g. Adopt Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead hosts services for four LAs
- ✓ **Joint Venture** - A joint venture between LAs creating a new public sector owned entity such as a Local Authority Trading Company. Arrangements are set up under the Teckal Exemption and give certain freedoms around charging and borrowing. Ownership is retained by the partners.
- ✓ **New VAA led** - The RAA is created in the form of a new Voluntary adoption Agency to which delivers services in scope on behalf of the LA Adoption Agencies
- ✓ **Existing VAA led** - LAs involved in the RAA commission an existing VAA to deliver the services in scope on their behalf.

- There is now a proposal to progress regionalisation through a staged approach of pilot programs. This proposal is currently under development.
- Directors of Children's Services meet regularly to review plans for the regionalisation of adoption and have identified priority areas to underpin future decision making. These include financial modelling (that regionalisation will not cost local authorities more); ICT/HR implications and cost, and outcomes for children are good or better.

23. Developments:

- It is recognised that adoption has been a central part of government policy in recent years and that the future will present many opportunities and some challenges. The current developmental challenges for the Adoption Team include:
    - (i). Improved tracking of cases for early identification;
    - (ii). Improved communication with locality teams to track cases and prevent delay;
    - (iii). Improved performance for hard to match/place children;
    - (iv). Consistent decision making for adoption support through Placement and Resource Panel;
    - (v). Updated procedures/guidance for post adoption support.

24. Frameworki:

- The modernisation process work continues to bring the work of the adoption service on to the electronic record system. Assessment processes are now up and running with the plan for family finding having been live since August 2016. These processes are currently in User Acceptance Stage. Once family finding processes go live, the Adoption Service will be up and running on Frameworki from point of initial enquiry, through assessment, matching processes, post placement support and finally the granting of the Adoption Order.

25. Statement of Purpose:

- The Statement of purpose was reviewed and uploaded to the public facing LCC Website in January 2016 and will be reviewed annually.

26. Rutland Arrangements:

- We continue to provide adoption services for Rutland County Council under a Service Level Agreement. The Service Level Agreement was due for review in September 2014. A meeting was held where it was agreed that whilst Rutland reviewed their service level agreement with ourselves, we would continue to provide a service in the interim.
- During the reporting period, 8 Rutland children were matched with adopters by this agency.

27. Adoption Panel:

- There is one panel chair and two vice chairs;
- 3 Social Work representatives and 18 Independent panel members were recriuited to the Central List;
- All appointees attended panel member training which was provided by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF);
- This will ensure consistency in panels and improve quality assurance.
- Efforts to recruit a diverse panel were successful and there will be good representation from minority groups including BME and LGBT.

28. Financial Implications

Fostering & Adoption summary 2015/16

Parent Code	Parent Code Narrative	Cost Centre	Cost Centre Narrative	Annual Budget	Actual YTD	Variance
*147	C&FS Fostering & Adoption	1482	Project & Support Team	0	939	939
		1483	Child Placement Commissioning	599,309	602,373	3,064
		1484	Assessment Team	1,104,948	1,139,506	34,558
		1485	Team around the Child	552,966	601,460	48,494
		1502	Permanence Team	0	0	0
		1508	Placement Support Team	0	0	0
		1510	Connected Team	0	5,764	5,764
	C&FS Fostering & Adoption Total			2,257,223	2,350,043	92,820
*155	C&FS Operational Placements	1486	Adoption Inter-Agency Fees	108,000	-185,013	-293,013
		1487	SGO & Residents Allowance	1,419,500	1,734,224	314,724
		1511	Adoption Team	539,550	753,132	213,582
		1512	Fostering Budget	3,314,000	3,144,445	-169,555
	C&FS Operational Placements Total			5,381,050	5,446,787	65,737
				7,638,273	7,796,830	158,557

- Budget overspend is solely attributable to fees paid to LCC foster carers, adopters, and recipients of Special Guardianship allowance.
- The service has been successful in 'selling' adopter households, hence the income on this budget line.

29. Conclusion

Adoption has been a key part of the Government Agenda since 2012 and has seen significant change. Adoption is an integral part of our emotional permanence strategy

for Looked After Children and we continue to perform well, both in terms of quality provision and timeliness of provision, to find new families. The growing demand for adoption support is placing increasing demand on the team, both in relation to completion of Adoption Support assessments and application, reducing the ability of the workers to engage directly with families and staff across the service to offer advice. CAMHS offers services to our adopted children and meets regularly with practitioners in the Adoption Team to provide advice. This arrangement works well and the Adoption Team value this support.

The recent Education and Adoption bill proposes further changes most notably the need for Adoption Agencies and Local Authorities to devise regionalised plans, based on working together in order to improve services delivered to children and adopters. We will continue to attend the EMAC meetings where this matter will be discussed and plans prepared, thereafter reporting separately as required.

Officer(s) to Contact

Paul Meredith
Director
Paul.Meredith@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3057441

Sharon Cooke
Assistant Director
Sharon.Cooke@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3055479

Nicci Collins
Head of Strategy
Nicci.Collins@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3054504

Joss Longman
Service Manager
Joss.Longman@leics.gov.uk
Tel: 0116 3053288

30. Equality and Human Rights Implications

Adoption is a regulated activity subject to statutory requirements and court oversight. The child permanency plan is scrutinized by the court and subject to the Guardian ad Litem's (GAL) oversight. The GAL is a person the court appoints to investigate what solutions would be in the best interests of a child.

Leicestershire County Council

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 NOVEMBER 2016

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW OF OUTCOMES IN KEY STAGE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide information to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the performance of schools, including inspection outcomes in statutory tests and examinations.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. There is no longer a requirement for the Local Authority to agree targets annually with the Department for Education (DfE) to support improvements in key stage assessments and GCSE results. However, the Local Authority continues to have a duty to monitor these results for maintained schools and monitors outcomes across schools and academies as part of the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership.

3. In October 2013, DfE announced changes to the performance measures that would be used following changes to the national curriculum; this is the first year that these new measures come into place fully across all key stages.

4. Due to the changes in curriculum and assessment systems, outcomes are not directly comparable with previous years.

Background

5. It should be noted that some of these results remain provisional until they are confirmed by DfE. Whist there is not usually any significant change in the results, there is a chance that the final percentages may change slightly.

6. In 2016, considerable changes have taken place in the curriculum affecting statutory assessment and performance measures across all key stages.

Changes to Reporting at Key Stages 1 and 2

7. National curriculum levels are no longer used having been replaced with age-related expectations in key stages 1 and 2 which represent a rise in standards in the primary curriculum.

8. In 2016, the assessments used to measure the progress between key stage 1 and key stage 2 are:

   - key stage 1 results in English reading, English writing and mathematics (teacher assessments) that took place in summer 2012 when the 2016 Year 6 cohort were aged 7;

   - key stage 2 results in English reading and mathematics tests, reported as scaled scores, and the English writing teacher assessments that took place in summer 2016.

9. The headline measures in 2016 are:

   - the percentage of pupils achieving the 'expected standard' in English reading, English writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2;

   - the pupils' average scaled score:
     o in English reading at the end of key stage 2
     o in mathematics at the end of key stage 2

   - the percentage of pupils who achieve at a higher standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics;

   - the pupils' average progress:
     o in English reading;
     o in English writing;
     o in mathematics.

10. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is a combined measure across the three subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have a scaled score of 100 or more in reading and a scaled score of 100 or more in mathematics; and have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at the expected standard' or 'working at a greater depth in the expected standard'.

11. The percentage of pupils achieving at a higher standard is also a combined measure across the three subjects. To be counted towards the measure, a pupil must have a 'high scaled score' of 110 or more in reading and mathematics; and have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at a greater depth within the expected standard'.

12. The previous expected progress measure has been replaced by a value-added measure. Unlike the previous system, there is no 'target' for the amount of progress

an individual pupil is expected to make. Any amount of progress a pupil makes contributes towards the school's progress score.

Changes to Performance Measures at Key Stage 4

13. Performance Measures for Key Stage 4 have also changed, with the focus now being on the progress that all pupils make between the end of primary and secondary education.

14. The previous foci in 2015 were:
   - 5A*C at GCSE with English and mathematics
   - % of pupils making the expected progress in English
   - % of pupils making the expected progress in mathematics.

   Whereas in 2016 the foci are:
   - Progress 8
   - Attainment 8
   - % achieving A*-C in GCSE English and mathematics
   - English Baccalaureate Entry (Ebacc) and Achievement Rates.

15. Attainment 8 measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 qualifications including mathematics (double weighted) and English (double weighted), 3 further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) measure and 3 further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list.

16. Progress 8 represents the progress a pupil makes from the end of primary school to the end of secondary school. It is a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils with the same prior attainment.

17. A Progress 8 score is calculated for each pupil by comparing their achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment'), calculated using assessment results from the end of primary school. The greater the Progress 8 score, the greater the progress made by the pupil compared to the average of pupils with similar prior attainment.

18. A school's Progress 8 score will be calculated as the average of its pupils' Progress 8 scores. It will give an indication of whether, as a group, pupils in the school made above or below average progress compared to similar pupils in other schools. Broadly, a Progress 8 score of 0 would represent progress in line with the national average; a Progress 8 score of above 0.5 would represent well above average progress, whereas a progress 8 score of below -0.5 would represent progress well-below average.

19. The new performance measures are designed to encourage schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a focus on an academic core at key stage 4 and reward schools for the teaching of all their pupils, measuring performance across 8

qualifications. Every increase in every grade a pupil achieves will attract additional points in the performance tables.

Floor Standards

20. The floor standard for a school is the minimum standard for pupil achievement and/or progress that the Government expects schools to meet. Broadly, in 2016, a school will be above the floor standard if:

- At the end of Key Stage 2, at least 65% of pupils meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics;

   or

- the school achieves sufficient progress scores in all three subjects. At least -5 in English reading, -5 in mathematics and -7 in English writing.

21. At the end of Key Stage 4, a school will be considered to be below floor standards if the Progress 8 score is below -0.5.

Overall Performance and Evaluation

The figures are recently released and are provisional.

Foundation Stage (age 5)

22. 67.6%. of children in Leicestershire achieved a Good Level of Development in 2016, this is an increase of 3.9%. National levels also increased meaning that Leicestershire remains below the national average by 1.7%.

23. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals achieving a Good Level of Development was 43%. National comparison are not yet available.

Key Stage One (age 7)

24. The percentage of children achieving the Phonics benchmark at Year 1 was 80.3%. This was similar to the national average of 80.5%.

25. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is 58.4%. The national figure is 60.3%. This is the first time in recent years that Leicestershire's Key Stage 1 outcomes have been below national.

Key Stage Two (age 11)

26. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics is 52.5%; whilst 0.7% lower it is broadly in line with the national average.

27. Reading and maths individual test subject outcomes are below the national average. For statistical neighbours they are below for Reading.

28. Both locally and nationally there are big differences between Test and Teacher Assessment outcomes at Key Stage 2 in this first year of operation of the new systems. Contrary to the test data all teacher assessments are above or at the national averages; reading is 1.6% above and in the top quartile nationally.

29. The average scaled scores for pupils sitting the test are:

- 102.3 in reading compared to 102.6 nationally

- 102.6 in mathematics compared to103.0 nationally.

- Writing was assessed through teacher assessment and so has no comparative scaled score.

30. Average progress (where "0" would represent expected progress and + or – represents above or below).
    o in English reading is -1.04
    o in English writing is -0.73
    o in mathematics is   -1.12

31. The percentage of pupils who achieved at a higher standard in Reading was 17.3% (18.8% national); Writing 15.1% (14.7% national) and mathematics 14.9% (16.6% national)

32. Un-validated results suggest that 14 schools may be below floor standards (6 maintained schools and 8 academies).

Key Stage Four (age 16) – Progress 8

33. In 2016, there were 32 schools with GCSE results and Progress 8 (P8) in Leicestershire was at -0.11. Twelve schools attained a positive progress 8 score; five of these schools were new to GCSE in the last two years. 20 schools had negative Progress 8, two of which were new to GCSE in the last two years.

34. Five schools were below the floor standard (two of which have now closed).

35. The Progress 8 measures in Leicestershire secondary schools range from -1.24 to 0.65. The only LA maintained school attained a P8 score of -0.10. The Leicestershire data implies that each pupil would need to improve their outcomes by 1 grade in 1 subject to be in line with national progress outcomes or that 10% of their pupils would need to achieve one grade higher in all 8 subjects.

36. Looking in detail at progress scores for core outcomes at key stage 4 it can be seen that progress in mathematics is close to national progress.

37. The area causing greatest concern is the open option choice element of the Progress 8 measure which has a progress score of -0.27. This means that if pupils

did as well in their 8th option subject as they did in mathematics and English, the overall P8 figure would be very close to national. Further work will be done to identify the subjects of particular concern and this will be shared with the relevant groups such as Leicestershire Secondary Head Teachers, Teaching School Alliance Leads and LEEP.

38. Considering disadvantaged groups within Leicestershire, pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) made better progress than their peers nationally, however for all other groups; such as those pupils on free school meals, boys and white British pupils, progress is below that of national comparators.

39. With a P8 of -0.11, Leicestershire's score is better than that of the East Midlands (-0.14). Overall Leicestershire is ranked 100th out of 151 local authorities for P8.

Attainment at Key Stage Four

40. The percentage of pupils achieving GCSE A*-C in English and mathematics, at 64.8%, is above the national figure of 62.5%.

41. On attainment of grades A*- C, Leicestershire has improved its position being above the national averages on all the key measures for the first time in recent years:

Subject	Leicestershire % attaining A*-C	National % attaining A*-C
English	75.9	74.4
Mathematics	71.3	68.4
English and mathematics	64,8	62.5
5 A*- C with English and maths	57.2	56.8

42. The Attainment 8 score for Leicestershire in 2016 is at 49.4, this is slightly less than the national average of 49.8. Given that the progress outcome (at -0.11) is not strong, this implies that, although above average in maths and English, the attainment of Leicestershire pupils at Key Stage 4 is not high enough given their prior attainment at Key Stage 2.

English Baccalaureate Entry (Ebacc) and Achievement Rates.

43. Both entry and achievement rates remain below the national averages. 31.4% of Leicestershire pupils were entered for the Ebacc in 2016, with an 18.8% achievement rate, compared to 40% nationally and a 24.5% achievement rate. This is a rise of 2% in entries in Leicestershire and an even greater rise nationally of 4%. The achievement rate in Leicestershire has risen by 1.5% while nationally it has remained static compared to 2015.

Key Stage Five (age 18)

44. The Average point score per Key Stage 5 qualification entry in Leicestershire state funded institutions remains below the average of these institutions nationally. 208.5 points per entry is the Leicestershire performance, compared to 213.8 nationally. Both of these point scores translate to an average of a Grade C. The performance

nationally has improved by almost a point, whereas for Leicestershire a decline of 0.5 points has occurred.

Children in Care

45. At Key Stage 2, 17.64% of children in care achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. No national figures are yet available for comparison. The breakdown by subject was: reading 29.4%; writing 41.2%; mathematics 35.3%.

Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

46. The latest data from Prospects is for the end of August 2016 and shows a Leicestershire NEET figure of 3.1% (619 young people) for young people aged 16-18. This is the same as the reported quarter 1 figure and remains in the top quartile nationally.

Ofsted Outcomes (schools)

47. As of August 2016, 88.7% of all Leicestershire's schools were judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding, this is an improvement on the previous year by 2.5%. This is above the latest national figure of 87.8%. The average for statistical neighbours is 88%.

48. Ofsted rated as good or better:

    o 89.5% of primary schools and academies;

    o 83% of secondary schools and academies;

    o 100% of all maintained secondary schools, Oakfield Short Stay School (the Pupil Referral Unit) and all Area Special Schools.

49. The percentage of Leicestershire pupils attending a Good or Outstanding school is currently 86.6%. This compares to 84.7% nationally and 85.7% for statistical neighbours.

Conclusion

50. There have been improvements in several areas of performance, which is below but broadly in line with national outcomes.

51. Overall, progress between each key stage is not good enough given pupils' starting points.

52. Leicestershire is in the lower half of all schools for progress between key stages 1 and 2 and in the bottom third for progress between key stages 2 and 4.

53. The progress of every single pupil makes a difference in the new accountability measures. Where disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for free school meals, with

special educational needs and the more able do not make as much progress as their peers nationally, this has an impact on overall progress measures.

54. The majority of this data has been recently released. More detailed analyses will identify those areas in each key stage which should become a focus of improvement activity over the next year.

55. The percentage of schools and of pupils attending good and outstanding schools are above national averages; education officers have worked effectively with schools and teaching school alliances to identify and support those schools at risk of adverse Ofsted inspections.

56. The challenge now, for the vast majority of schools in Leicestershire, is to increase the overall rates of progress that all pupils make between key stages.

57. Education Officers work through the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (LEEP) with the Head Teacher Organisations and the Teaching School Alliance Network. We are in a strong position to continue to work together across the whole education system to bring about improvements in outcomes, especially with regard to the rate of pupil progress. Previous LEEP projects to improve outcomes in mathematics and writing, for example, have had a demonstrable impact in improved outcomes; work on improving outcomes for pupil premium pupils has been well received by schools across the age ranges and best practice is being actively shared through research and development projects.

58. The Department for Education White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' published in March 2016 states that: "devolving power to individual school and system leaders sits squarely within this government's devolution agenda; that means the role of local – or combined – authorities will change. They will take on a more focused and clearly defined remit so they can concentrate on delivering their core functions. The local authority's duties will focus on three areas:

    a)   ensuring every child has a school place;
    b)   ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met;
    c)   acting as champions for all parents and families (ref para1.52)."

59. The white paper goes on to say that the Dfe will establish clearly defined roles for local government. Local authorities well step back from running schools and will focus instead on delivering and strengthening core functions – becoming one of the key partners working to deliver educational excellence everywhere (4.46).

60. "Local authorities should act as advocates for their electorate, challenging school providers to deliver high educational standards and better outcomes for children". The proactive approach taken by members in setting up LEEP, with funding to carry out its role, has enabled Leicestershire to be well-placed to carry out the functions described in the white paper.

Resource Implications

61. Further consideration now needs to be given as to how Leicestershire meets the challenges set out in the white paper; it has a small team of Education Quality Officers with limited capacity to work across all schools and academies to challenge outcomes and champion children. Whilst performance has improved in some areas the figures show there are still improvements to be made. Consideration needs to be given to what resources will be deployed in the future and how these will be used in order to achieve the most cost effective outcome which will be to achieve and maintain the highest level of performance. The ongoing role of the LEEP will be a key component of this.

Background Papers

62. Figures are derived from the DfE Research and Statistics department which collates data on behalf of local authorities.

63. The technical descriptions used in the Background section are derived from the DfE documents:

- Primary School accountability in 2016. A technical guide for primary maintained schools, academies and free schools, September 2016. Department for Education. DFE-00043-2016.

- Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measure in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Guide for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools. October 2016. Department for Education. DFE-00075-2015.

64. Educational Excellence Everywhere. Department for Education. March 2016.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

65. None.

Officer(s) to Contact

Paul Meredith, Director of Children and Family Services
Tel: 01163057441 paul.meredith@leics.gov.uk

Chris Connearn, Head of Strategy Achievement of Vulnerable Groups,
Tel: 0116 305 5138 chris.connearn@leics.gov.uk

Equality and Human Rights Implications

66. These are the results achieved by all Leicestershire children and young people in the summer of 2016. The analysis of groups will inform any further targeted interventions for maintained schools where underperformance id identified.

This page is intentionally left blank