

**CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

*To:* **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee**

*Meeting Date:* **25<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

*From:* **Lisa Reid  
Head of Partnerships and Quality Assurance**

*Electoral division(s):* **All**

*Purpose:* **To report on the performance of services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers - as required in legislation and fulfilling the purpose of monitoring and offering advice.**

*Recommendation:* **The Sub-Committee is asked to:**

- a) review performance in relation to Looked after Children;**
- b) comment on the themes and trends identified in this report.**

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### **Summary:**

- As of the 28 February 2018 there are 697 looked after children supported by the Council
- 57% of looked after children are male, 43% are female
- 8% have a disability
- 52% of the current placements are in-county, with 48% of placements out of county
- Almost 84% of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people are placed out of county
- The proportion of looked after children being visited within the statutory timescales has been improving through the year, from 70.3% in April 2017 to 92.5% in February 2018
- The number of looked after children who were reported missing within the month, and the number of individual instances where a looked after child went missing has continued to fall since November 2017.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report provides the sub-committee with an overview of performance of services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers. The full performance report can be found in Appendix A.

## **2. MAIN ISSUES**

- 2.1 This report has been re-designed since the previous meeting to include a breakdown of the placement type for children in and out of County.
- 2.2 Further improvements to this report are currently being worked on. These will include:
- Information on foster carers, including recruitment figures
  - Further information on education of Looked After Children
- 2.4 As of the 28 February 2018 there are 697 looked after children supported by the Council. 57% of these children are male, 43% are female. 8% have a disability.
- 2.5 Although there has been a 1.75% increase in the number of looked after children since April 2017, this equates to a rate of 51 per 10,000 of population. The national average is 60.0 per 10,000 of population, meaning Cambridgeshire is performing favourably compared to nationally.
- 2.6 52% of the current placements are in-county, with 48% of placements out of county. 83.9% of unaccompanied asylum seeking young people are placed

out of county and this is due to lack of availability of accommodation in Cambridgeshire. These placements are mostly in Peterborough. This area is better placed to serve some of the cultural needs of this cohort of young people and it is relatively close to our borders, making statutory visits and keeping in touch manageable.

- 2.7 The proportion of Looked After children being visited within the statutory timescales has been improving through the year, from 70.3% in April 2017 to 92.5% in February 2018. Capacity issues are the largest contributing factor to late visits. Individual cases have management oversight and where there are capacity issues, the priority is given to the most vulnerable children. Performance on children having their Looked After review in timescales fell in February and this was around adverse weather conditions and meetings needing to be rescheduled.
- 2.8 Performance around newly Looked After children having their health assessment in 20 days of becoming looked after has fallen in February to 43%. This is around the late notification from children's social care to health. There were also a number of large sibling groups arriving in care, impacting on clinic time and Nurse availability. Six of the children placed out of County did not have their health assessments within the 20 day timescale. Their health assessments are organised by the hosting Primary Care Trust and Cambridgeshire cannot specifically determine when their assessment takes place. The 20 day timescale is national guidance so all Health trusts do work to the same arrangements, but it is important to highlight that Health authorities will prioritise seeing children from their local area, before assessing the needs of children placed in their area by other authorities.
- 2.9 7% of children are placed in children's homes. Some of these children will have disabilities and will require specially equipped settings to meet their needs. 73% of all looked after children are placed with foster carers.
- 2.10 The number of Looked After children who were reported missing within the month, and the number of individual instances where a Looked After child went missing has continued to fall since November. In the month of February, 14 children went missing 15 times. This means that these children went missing once each during the month (with 1 child going missing twice). This is a significant figure because it means that these children were being worked with positively for missing behaviours not to become a pattern as is a common feature within this cohort.

### **3. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

#### **3.1 Resource Implications**

The number of children who are Looked After increased by 1.75% since April. Social workers and other staff are travelling distances to visit children placed out of County. Many of these children are in Independent Fostering Agency placements.

### **3.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications**

None

### **3.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications**

Ofsted will consider the data and analysis available to the Sub-Committee when considering the effectiveness off the council's Corporate Parenting Function.

### **3.4 Equality and Diversity Implications**

All children who become Looked After have access to the same service provision irrespective of their age, gender and ethnicity. There is a gap in suitable in-County provision for children and young people seeking asylum, with the majority of placements located in Peterborough.

### **3.5 Engagement and Communications Implications**

None

### **3.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement**

Relevant to all Members in the role as corporate parents.

### **3.7 Public Health Implications**

None

Source Documents	Location
None	