

Committee: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **21 October 2011**

Title of Report: **Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Purpose of Report: **To update the Panel on changes in the last quarter**

Recommendation: **The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the contents of the report.**

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 Services for Looked After Children are funded from the Children's Services base budget, supplemented by the Early Intervention Grant. Clearly rising LAC numbers are putting the available budgets under intense pressure.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The most recent LAC Statistics are attached as Appendix 1.

2.2 Between June and September 2011, the upward trend in the overall number of LAC has continued with an increase of 2 children by the end of September after a higher number still in July. Given that this quarter includes the summer holidays, which is a very volatile period, this degree of movement is understandable.

2.3 During this quarter, the total number of children in foster care has increased by 3, with 8 additional placements with in house foster carers at the end of the quarter. There is 1 additional agency foster placements at the end of this quarter. There has also been a decrease of 6 children with kinship carers. As requested parent and baby placements are now reported separately and there were 7 at the end of the quarter.

2.4 The number of children placed with prospective adopters has fallen slightly over this period. Activity rates are obviously closely allied to individual care planning for children but it will be necessary to keep activity under close review given that overall numbers of children needing adoptive placements are up.

2.5 The number of children subject to a Care Order placed at home with their parents has risen again over the quarter. These placements should always be monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to the placement is given at a senior level.

2.6 The number of children subject to Residence Orders has risen by 1 with 10 additional children being subject to Special Guardianship Orders.

2.7 Full time placements in both Acorns and the Bungalow continue as a response to a combination of individual family situations and ongoing budget pressures. There are still 3 children living in Acorns and 2 children in the Bungalow, with a further 4 children, 2 in each unit, having shared care packages in that they spend part of each week with their family.

2.8 During this period 5 East Sussex children have been subject to secure orders on welfare grounds with 4 currently secured in in-house provision at Lansdowne and the 5th child secured at Beechfield in West Sussex.

3. Conclusion and recommendation

- 3.1 Pressure on the system remains very intense and there have been several days over the summer when the system has been 'full'. Staff continue to make tremendous efforts to try and contain the pressure. It is perhaps too optimistic at the moment to be confident that a plateau has been reached but close attention will be paid to numbers going forward.

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

| Accommodation Type | Oct-10 | Nov-10 | Dec-10 | Jan-11 | Feb-11 | Mar-11 | Apr-11 | May-11 | Jun-11 | Jul-11 | Aug-11 | Sep-11 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total Foster Placements (Parent & Baby Placements) | 468 | 468 | 473 | 472 | 476 | 482 | 496 | 496 | 517 | 525 | 516 | 520 |
| <i>Of these:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | 7 |
| <i>In House fostercarers</i> | <i>328</i> | <i>320</i> | <i>321</i> | <i>328</i> | <i>327</i> | <i>334</i> | <i>339</i> | <i>337</i> | <i>350</i> | <i>361</i> | <i>353</i> | <i>358</i> |
| <i>Kinship fostercarers</i> | <i>56</i> | <i>60</i> | <i>68</i> | <i>64</i> | <i>66</i> | <i>65</i> | <i>65</i> | <i>69</i> | <i>71</i> | <i>66</i> | <i>62</i> | <i>65</i> |
| <i>Agency fostercarers</i> | <i>84</i> | <i>88</i> | <i>84</i> | <i>80</i> | <i>83</i> | <i>83</i> | <i>92</i> | <i>90</i> | <i>96</i> | <i>98</i> | <i>101</i> | <i>97</i> |
| Placed For Adoption | 20 | 22 | 20 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 19 | 19 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 21 |
| Independent Living | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| ESCC Residential | 19 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 15 | 18 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 17 | 14 | 14 |
| Agency Residential | 11 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 17 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| Special Education | 14 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| Placed With Parent | 18 | 17 | 20 | 25 | 31 | 27 | 26 | 23 | 20 | 20 | 22 | 22 |
| Hospital/NHS Establishment | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Prison Estab/Secure Unit | 4 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Total | 556 | 560 | 568 | 573 | 581 | 585 | 599 | 594 | 618 | 626 | 615 | 620 |

| Legal Status Type | Oct-10 | Nov-10 | Dec-10 | Jan-11 | Feb-11 | Mar-11 | Apr-11 | May-11 | Jun-11 | Jul-11 | Aug-11 | Sep-11 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Residence Orders | 148 | 158 | 159 | 163 | 163 | 164 | 167 | 168 | 167 | 166 | 166 | 168 |
| Special Guardianship Orders | 48 | 53 | 57 | 60 | 62 | 64 | 68 | 80 | 82 | 85 | 90 | 92 |
| Total | 196 | 211 | 216 | 223 | 225 | 228 | 235 | 248 | 249 | 251 | 256 | 260 |