

Committee: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **17 January 2014**

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

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

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

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

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 Services for LAC are funded from the Children's Services base budget and supported with transformation money agreed within the Thrive budget and with an Adoption Reform Grant in 2013-14. On Christmas Eve we were informed that the grant will continue in the next financial year but as yet we don't have confirmation of any changes to conditions or of the actual amount.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The most recent LAC statistics are attached as Appendix 1. It is important to be aware that the figures are a 'snapshot' at the end of each month and therefore mask considerable activity throughout the months.

2.2 Looking at the figures, between the end of September 2013 and the end of December 2013, there were 15 fewer children overall and the rise over the year appears to have been reversed, with the caveat that December is a short month given the holiday season. Looking at subsets of children, it is apparent that both agency foster care numbers have increased and agency residential numbers have remained stable. The number of children placed in house with ESCC foster carers has dropped significantly by 18.

2.3 There has also been a drop of 5 children with kinship carers. The number of parent and baby placements has reduced to 2.

2.4 The number of children placed with prospective adopters has dropped to 1 at the end of the quarter after higher rates in previous months. Activity rates are obviously closely allied to individual care planning for children. Recruitment and assessment activity within the Adoption Service remain very positive and children will not normally be placed with adoptive carers in the lead up to Christmas because staff support is not consistently available. A number of children are due to move to their new families in January.

2.5 The number of children subject to a Care Order placed at home with their parents has risen again by 6. Planning for placements of this sort is always monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to begin or end a placement with parents is given at a senior level.

2.6 The number of children subject to Residence Orders (RO) has risen by 8, with 22 additional children becoming subject to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO).

2.7 At the end of June there were 5 young people resident at The Bungalow, in line with their individual care plans

2.8 At the end of the quarter 4 East Sussex children, were subject to a Secure Order with 3 placed at Lansdowne.

2.9 At the end of the quarter we have 1 young person placed in bed and breakfast accommodation.

3. Conclusion

3.1 LAC numbers are closely monitored by the management team and also within the overall Thrive programme. Overall numbers have reduced steadily over the quarter which is disappointing. This rise would be even steeper were we not seeing continued use of ROs and SGOs to promote permanent options for children who would otherwise be LAC.

GED ROWNEY

Interim Director of Children's Services

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

Appendix 1

Accommodation Type	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
Total Foster Placements	485	483	484	476	466	479	487	488	486	481	474	464
<i>Breakdown of total foster placements:</i>												
<i>Foster Care - ESCC Approved</i>	<i>307</i>	<i>297</i>	<i>302</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>296</i>	<i>308</i>	<i>321</i>	<i>317</i>	<i>318</i>	<i>318</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>300</i>
<i>Foster Care - Kinship</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Foster Care - Agency</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>118</i>
<i>Foster Care - Parent & Baby</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Foster Care - Supported Lodgings</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
Placed For Adoption	35	36	28	38	40	39	37	42	42	33	34	37
Bed & Breakfast	4	4	5	3	4	2	3	3	4	6	3	1
Supported People Accommodation	6	8	7	7	7	5	4	3	2	1	3	4
Independent Living	2	3	4	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Residential - East Sussex Home	21	21	21	22	18	16	15	15	15	18	18	19
Residential - Agency Residential Care	14	14	14	14	16	17	18	16	17	15	18	17
Residential - Schools	7	4	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7
Residential - Secure	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3
Residential - Other	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Prison / Youth Offending Institution	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2
Placed With Parent	18	19	21	16	9	9	8	8	11	14	16	17
Hospital/Health Setting	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4
Total	597	597	596	592	576	582	587	589	591	581	580	576

Legal Status Type	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
Residence Orders	213	215	217	224	227	230	229	230	232	232	235	240
Special Guardianship Orders	203	203	206	214	222	223	229	233	237	246	257	259
Total	416	418	423	438	449	453	458	463	469	478	492	499