

Committee: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **14 October 2016**

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**

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***RECOMMENDATION:***

**The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the report.**

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**1. Background**

1.1 The most recent LAC statistics are attached as Appendix 1. As ever this is a 'snapshot' at the end of each month and therefore masks considerable activity throughout the months. Services for LAC are funded from the Children's Services base budget.

**2. Supporting information**

2.1 At the end of September 2016, there were 7 more children overall bringing ESCC to a total of 555 LAC. A total of 398 children were in foster care with 71 of those children in agency placements, a decrease of 2 over the quarter. 20 children were placed for adoption. 5 children were placed with foster carers who are also approved adopters.

2.3 The number of children with kinship carers now stands at 43, some of whom have been placed at the direction of a judge.

2.4 16 children subject to a Care Order were placed at home with their parents, an increase of 2. 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.

2.5 At the end of the quarter 21 children were placed in agency residential placements, an increase of 1 placement.

2.6 During the quarter, at various times a total of 6 East Sussex children were secured via a welfare route, four in the context of risk of CSE, one in the context of chaotic and dangerous substance misuse and the final child due to extremely challenging behaviour in response to trauma within her birth family. 3 had to be placed externally to East Sussex for some of the time because of either the mix of young people at Lansdowne or because of a lack of available space at Lansdowne. At the end of the quarter we still have 3 young people secured with one placed in the West Country.

2.7 At the end of the period there were no young people from ESCC in criminal secure placements.

2.8 The numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children has increased by 5. ESCC has accepted responsibility for 6 young people via the dispersal scheme but one young person went missing almost immediately following placement and before an age assessment could be completed. ESCC has also assumed responsibility for 4 young people placed by Kent within the East Sussex borders.

2.9 There are now 321 children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders a rise of 3 and 387 children subject to Special Guardianship Orders, a rise of 7.

2.10 During the quarter 8 complaints from Looked After Children were received by the Customer Relations and Complaints team. Of these;

2 were complaints related to Lansdowne:

- one related to alleged aggressive staff behaviour which turned out to have no basis after full investigation and review of CCTV footage
- the other was about choice of suppertime snacks. This was resolved by offering a different choice and encouraging the young person to meet with the cook on a regular basis.

2 were complaints related to Brodrick Road:

- one was easily resolved with an explanation and an apology for any upset (related to the way the LAC was spoken to and staff omitting to send a form into school)
- the other was from a LAC who didn't like her social worker and didn't believe decisions were being made in her best interests. She was also unhappy at Brodrick. A meeting with the manager allowed the child to discuss all the concerns and how they could be addressed.

2 were complaints about Homefield Cottage:

- one from a young person who claimed she was not being kept safe by the staff. This was fully investigated and her claims turned out to be unfounded.
- the other was from a young person wanting a mobile phone. The manager fully explained the reasons for not allowing her to keep her phone and our duty to keep her safe. The young person did not accept this and said she will continue to complain.

The remaining 2 complaints were firstly from a child who was unhappy about the delay in confirming her new placement. She was placed in a Children's Home in Haverfordwest before the complaint was responded to. The other was a complaint about the care provided by one of our foster carers, which is currently under investigation.

### **3. Conclusion**

3.1 Numbers and costs for LAC have remained reasonably stable and continued close oversight will be maintained.

3.2 A relatively small number of complaints have been received. All have been or are being investigated fully.

**STUART GALLIMORE**  
**Director of Children's Services**

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

# Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/07/2016 and 30/09/2016

Appendix 1

Placement Type	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16
A3 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	3	3	3
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	7	7	8
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	9	9	9
H5 - Residential accommodation	5	4	4
K1 - Secure unit	5	4	3
K2 - Homes and Hostels	41	43	47
P1 - Placed with own parents	14	14	16
P2 - Independent living	3	2	4
S1 - All Residential schools	6	6	6
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	11	11	10
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	28	32	33
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	159	153	152
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	6	6	5
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	234	244	246
Z1 - Other placements	7	10	9
Total	538	548	555

Immigration Status	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16
Asylum Seeker	1	1	1
Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK (ILR)	1	1	1
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	11	15	16

Legal Status	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sep 16
Child Arrangements Order/Residence Order S8(1)CA'89	320	321	321
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89	382	385	387