

Committee:	Corporate Parenting Panel
Date:	8 July 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

RECOMMENDATION:

The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the report.

1. Background

1.1 At the end of February a new client recording system was introduced within Children's Services, please therefore note the new format for Appendix 1 that provides data in new categories. It has been challenging to retrieve confident performance data but this picture is improving as staff become more confident in using the new system. Services for LAC are funded from the Children's Services base budget.

2. Supporting information

2.1 Between the end of March 2016 and June 2016, there were 4 more children overall bringing ESCC to a total of 548 Looked After Children. A total of 443 children were in foster care with 87 children in agency placements, a rise of 1.

2.2 The number of children with kinship carers now stands at 35, a decrease of 3.

2.3 The number of children subject to a Care Order placed at home with their parents has increased by 2 to 17. 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.

2.4 24 children were placed in agency residential placements, an increase of 3 placements.

2.5 At the end of the quarter, 3 East Sussex children were secured via a welfare route, all three in the context of risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE). 2 were placed at Lansdowne with the third placed in the Midlands.

2.6 6 young people from ESCC were in criminal secure placements.

2.7 The numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children (UASC) has remained stable at 13. As of 1st July the national dispersal system has begun and this will mean that over the coming three years ESCC will be asked to take an additional number of children, to arrive at a total number that equals 0.07% of the total child population. For ESCC this will mean an additional 61 children. New children coming in via our 'local routes' eg via Newhaven, will be included in the total number of UASCs that ESCC will be asked to look after. The DfE will pay a grant to ESCC for each UASC that is accepted by ESCC but this is unlikely to cover the full cost of services. Further guidance is awaited from the DfE on obligations to these young people as they become care leavers.

2.8 There are now 318 children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders, a rise of 3 and 380 children subject to Special Guardianship Orders, a rise of 15.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Confident performance data is improving but continuing to embed this remains a priority.

3.2 As numbers of UASC increase as the dispersal system comes on stream, ESCC will keep data on both numbers and financial impact.

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES: Appendix 1 - Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/04/2016 and 30/06/2016