

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

Corporate Parenting Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **3 March 2020**

Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex, RM17 6SL.

Membership:

Councillors Joycelyn Redsell (Chair), Steve Liddiard (Vice-Chair), Abbie Akinbohun, Daniel Chukwu, Barry Johnson, Sue MacPherson and Sue Shinnick
Thurrock Independent Member (To Be Confirmed)

Rafael Antunes, Chair, Children in Care Council
Christopher Bennett, Vice Chair, Children in Care Council
Annie Guidotti, Open Door
Jackie Howell, Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association
Sharon Smith, Vice Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association

Substitutes:

Councillors Luke Spillman, Gary Collins, Bukky Okunade and Lynn Worrall

Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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1 Apologies for Absence	
2 Minutes	5 - 10
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting held on 7 January 2020.	
3 Items of Urgent Business	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	

4	Declaration of Interests	
5	Children's Social Care Performance	11 - 20
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Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:

Please contact Kenna Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk

Agenda published on: **24 February 2020**

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DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- **relate to; or**
- **likely to affect**

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps

Non- pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.

Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
 - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
 - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
 - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
 - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
 - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
 - Fewer public buildings with better services

3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
 - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
 - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
 - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on 7 January 2020 at 7.00 pm

- Present:** Councillors Joycelyn Redsell (Chair), Abbie Akinbohun (Vice-Chair), Chris Baker, Daniel Chukwu, Barry Johnson, Steve Liddiard and Jennifer Smith
- Jackie Howell, Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association
Sharon Smith, Vice Chair, The One Team, Foster Carer Association
Kerry King, Children in Care Council
- Apologies:** Councillors Sue MacPherson
- In attendance:** Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Housing and Health/Interim Director of Children's Services
Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director of Children's Services
Janet Simon, Strategic Lead, Looked After Children
Tiffney Bright, Skills Manager
Keeley Pullen, Head Teacher for Virtual School
Kenna-Victoria Healey, Senior Democratic Services Officer
-

Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

24. Minutes

The minutes of the Corporate Parenting Committee held on 10 September 2019 were approved as a correct record.

Councillor Redsell, Chair of the Committee explained that she had agreed for the recently circulated document, which had been published by the Local Government Association and would allow this to be discussed at the Work Programme.

25. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

26. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

27. Children's Social Care Performance

The Assistant Director of Children's Services introduced the report and in doing so, explained it gave Members an overview of the performance of the

Children Social Care Service. It also compared the authority to its statistical neighbours.

The Chair of the Committee thanked officers for the report and sought as to how many children under the age of 2 years were in the Councils care. The Assistant Director of Children's Services advised the figure was low with a percentage of between 4 and 5 percent of children in care being under 2years old. She continued to explain that unless the Council was assured a child could return home safely, then they would be placed with a family member, and if this was not possible the child would be adopted.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That members note the areas of improvement in Children's Social Care and work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services;**
- 2. For any specific areas of interest to be flagged for inclusion/expansion within the next report.**

28. Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS)

The Assistant Director of Children's Services presented the report, advising the Committee, that the ILACS inspections by Ofsted focused on the effectiveness of local authority children's services and arrangements in four areas. At the end of the Inspection Ofsted rated Thurrock's services as Good.

Following the inspection, Ofsted left three recommendations, which Officers were already working on.

Members were further informed that Thurrock's children's social care last Ofsted inspection was judged to be 'requires improvement'. Members heard how the Council were notified of the ILAC inspection on the 4 November, with inspectors vising from the 11 November for two weeks.

The Corporate Director for Adults, Housing and Health and Interim Director for Children's Services commented that during the inspection there were up to seven Ofsted inspectors in the service. He stated he was impressed with the attitude of staff and the way they embraced the inspection, with many preparing for weeks in advance, staying late and even working weekends.

It was enquired by Members as to how Officers were planning to improve on recommendation 3. The Assistant Director for Children Services explained it was supporting children and being ready to listen when they were ready to tell their story.

Members thanked officers for their continued hard work not just through the recent Ofsted inspection.

RESOLVED:

That the Members of the Committee are informed about Thurrock's outcome from the Ofsted ILACS.

29. Head Start Housing - Progress To Date

The Skills Manager addressed Members notifying them the Head Start Housing Strategy was formally launched in December 2018 and was an initiative between Children Services and Housing.

She continued to advise the Head Start Housing Strategy aimed to return all care leavers to Thurrock by December 2023, it was explained this was so they could be better supported by more visits from their After Care Personal Advisor, have easier access to local services, diverse education and employment opportunities and regular access to networks of family and friends.

During questions from the Committee it was enquired if Officers felt Grays was the right area for housing care leavers. The Skills Manager advised she felt it was, for a number of reasons including easy access to the services on offer to them, quick support from advisors and in an area where many care leavers had family ties too.

Councillor Johnson commented that he welcomed the strategy and the cross-working between both services.

RESOLVED:

- 1. Continue to work on cross directorate specifications for services covering estate agency, repairs, storage and floating support;**
- 2. Continue work with Housing to purchase up to 12 beds for exclusive use by Care Leavers;**
- 3. Create and promote innovative ways to engage Care Leavers to evaluate the Head Start Housing service, as well as develop basic maintenance and cleaning skills;**
- 4. Continue reducing costs, improving quality, maximising cost avoidance, regularly reviewing/modifying processes and developing effective working relationships with partners to further extend the portfolio of properties;**
- 5. Continue work to develop joint protocols, enable consistent use of terminology and templates for services from 16 years+ and positively contribute to other directorates' strategies.**

30. Intensive Foster Carer Training Action Research

The Head Teacher for Virtual Schools, presented the report to the Committee explaining one of the roles of the Virtual School was to provide training to a range of colleagues including social workers, designated teachers and foster carers. This training included providing information which enabled those professionals to support the educational outcomes for Looked after Children.

Members heard how the Virtual School Headteacher was currently participating in an exciting new professional qualification for Virtual Schools which explored support for a range of colleagues who supported children in care. It was explained the two year course was being provided by Bath/Spa University and the National Association of Virtual School Heads.

At the end of the course the Virtual School Headteacher for Thurrock would obtain a Master's Degree in Professional Practice for Care Experienced Children. A key element of the course was to complete a piece of action research which related to the role of the Virtual School Headteacher; with the focus of this particular subject having been chosen based upon prior research into the impact that foster carers could have on promoting the educational outcomes for children in their care.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the One Team, Foster Carer Association, both shared their experiences of being foster carers and having to speak with schools to get the best for the children they were caring for.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Committee support the structured training programme to be delivered to foster carers which is provided annually by the Virtual School;**
- 2. That the Committee sets an expectation that all Thurrock foster carers attend the training to improve their knowledge and confidence to support the education of the children and young people in their care.**

31. The Annual Report of the Virtual School Headteacher for Children Looked After - Academic Year 2018/2019

The Head Teacher for Virtual Schools introduced the report to the Committee explaining she was pleased with the improvement in attendance rates to 96% as this was above the national average for all schools.

She continued to explain there had been a there had been no permanent exclusions of Children Looked After for over a six year period and that wherever possible schools were encouraged to avoid fixed term exclusions. The Committee were informed a total of 16 pupils had been excluded across the academic year, which equated to 8.2% of the cohort.

It was then expressed that the Local Authority carefully monitored any child missing education for those Children Looked After placed in and out of the borough. With the Virtual School producing weekly data for any child who was missing education due to lack of a school place or through extended absence.

Members heard how the attainment in the phonics screening check was low for this year. In response to this, the Virtual School had purchased phonics resources for children to use at home which were linked to developing

recognition, synthesis and segmentation of letters and words. It was explained that these games and practical approach should support the work completed in school.

Councillor Akinbohun enquired as to how Officers were planning to reduce the number of exclusions. It was explained that there were a number of reasons for a child to be excluded from school and the aim was to be made aware of a decision to exclude before the decision was made; as in many cases the virtual headteacher was informed after this decision was taken.

It was commented that it was important for schools, carers, the virtual school and the local authority to be in communication at all times, so to ensure the right support was given to Looked after Children.

The Chair of the Committee commended the report and thanked the Headteacher of the Virtual School for all of her work.

RESOLVED:

- 1. The Committee notes the non-validated DFE outcomes of the summer 2019 teacher assessment, tests and examinations and commends the pupils, their schools and parents/carers on their achievements;**
- 2. That the Committee notes that prior attainment for pupils will impact on attainment in later years and CLA in care have made good progress;**
- 3. The Committee approves the Annual Report of the Virtual School Headteacher for the academic year 2018-2019 and uses this information to acknowledge, evaluate and if appropriate, challenge the services that are provided for all CLA.**

32. Corporate Parenting Committee Work Programme 2019/2020

The Chair of the Committee addressed Members explaining that the document that had been circulated to them by Democratic Services, had been published by the Local Government Association, with the aim to offer support to local Members in their roles as Corporate Parents. She asked that the document be added to the work programme for the March meeting; so that a full discussion could be had.

RESOLVED:

That the following reports be included on the Corporate Parenting Committee Work Programme for the 3 March 2020:

- Support for Care Leavers – Resource Pack**
- Update on Ofsted Recommendation – Timeliness of Health Assessments**

The meeting finished at 8.05pm

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIR

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Democratic Services at Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk**

3 March 2020	ITEM: 5
Corporate Parenting Committee	
Children’s Social Care Performance	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-key
Report of: Anna Watkins, Business Intelligence Analyst	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care and Early Help	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Health and Housing and Interim Director of Children’s Services	
This report is: Public	

Executive Summary

All below data refers to 2019-20 and comparisons to previous year have been made wherever possible.

The data in this report is obtained from “At a Glance” monthly performance reporting, regional benchmarking data and national data sets and is presented and discussed with the Social Care Senior Management Team and the Corporate Director’s Performance Group. Data has not yet been published in relation to statistical neighbours and national averages for 2019-20 therefore, for the purpose of benchmarking, we have used the 2018-19 outturn figures.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That members note any areas of improvement in Children’s Social Care and work undertaken to manage demand for statutory social care services**
- 1.2 For any specific areas of interest to be flagged for inclusion/expansion within the next report.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This report provides a summary of Children’s Social Care performance. It describes current activity levels and performance of Children’s social care services in responding to the needs of vulnerable children.
- 2.2 Thurrock produces a number of data sets and performance reports to meet internal and external reporting requirements. It is important to note that data reported is a reflection of what is formally recorded in the Social Care record management system as at the date a report is produced and can be subject to change.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Practice summary of performance and trends

In Q3, the number of contacts received was 1,669 compared to 1,710 in Q2 representing a 2.4% decrease. Q3 rolling figure is 6,833 and year end 2017-18 figure 7,074.

3.2 The data continues to be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that decision-making within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) remains robust and ensures families are supported by the most appropriate service. In Q3 there is a noticeable increase in the rate of referrals into Social Care, which has resulted in a higher number of assessments being undertaken. In addition, in Q3 there has also been an increase in the number of children referred to the Early Help Service. In this way, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub continues to support a shared understanding and management of threshold decisions. Children and families receive the right help at the right time and the response to family difficulties is proportionate to risk.

3.3 The timeliness of Child and Family Assessments remains good. Assessments completed during Q3 has increased when compared to Q2, due to a new process of updating assessments for all open cases, such as, for children supported under Child In Need, Child Protection or Children Looked After.

3.4 In Q3, the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 170 compared to 142 in Q2. This represents an increase of 19.7%.

3.5 The number of children looked after in Q3 was 287 compared to 289 in Q2. In Q3, the rate per 10,000 was 65.5 compared to 67.0 in Q2 which is the same rate as with similar authorities.

3.6 We have increased our focus on permanence planning to ensure children do not wait to have a long term home. More children are moving to live with relatives where they cannot remain in their parent's care. The number of young children who are placed for adoption is improving with 9 year to date (September 2019), compared to 13 for total year 2018/19.

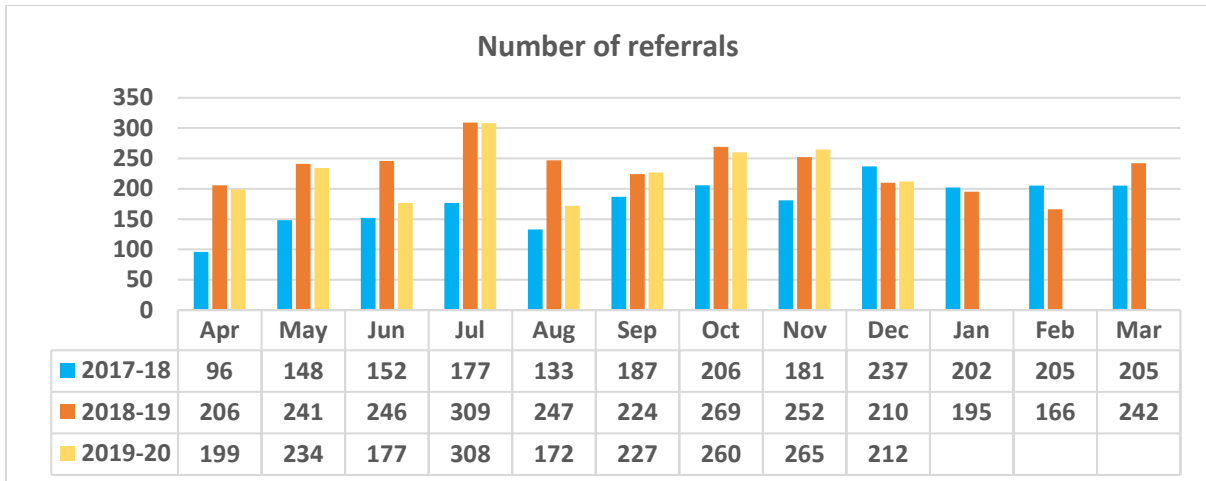
3.7 Children looked after continue to make good educational progress with better than national average figures for attainment for looked after children. Performance this year being in the top 25% of authorities.

3.8 Managers and their teams use the data to understand and respond to changes in activity levels and to monitor and respond to the quality and timeliness of services and information about how well children are doing. The information is also discussed with front line workers.

4. Performance

4.1 Number of referrals

In some instances when contact progresses to a referral, there may be the need for social care intervention because of more serious concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.



In Q3, Thurrock received 737 referrals compared to 707 in Q2. This represents 4.2% increase in the number of referrals received since Q2.

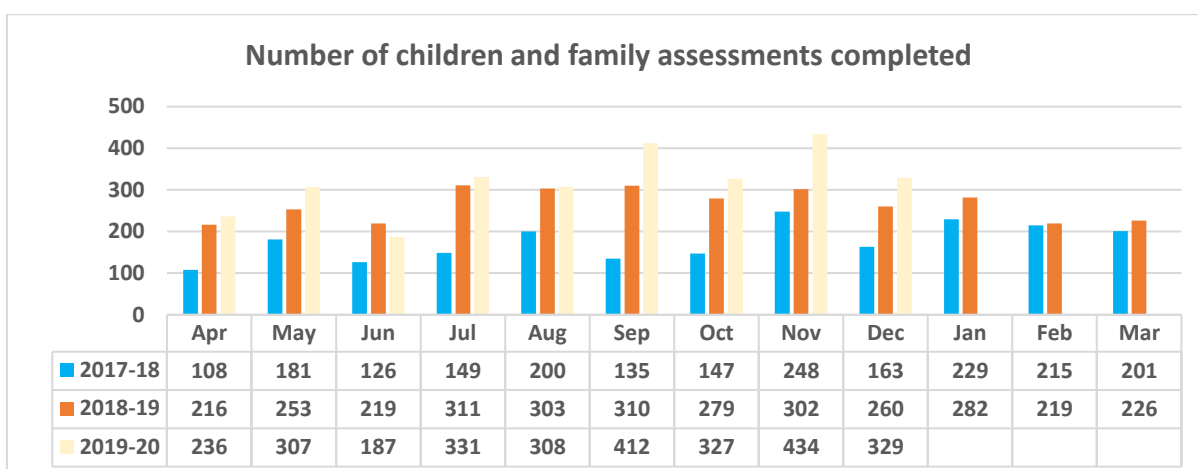
Number of repeat referrals

Repeat referral is when a child has been referred to us in the reporting period and who has had a previous referral within a 12 month period.

In Q3, 99 of referrals were for children that had been referred to us within 12 months compared to 113 in Q2. This represents a decrease of 12.4%. Year to date for Thurrock data of 15.3% shows a better performance compared to our statistical neighbours' 2018-19 outturn at 20% and national figure of 23%.

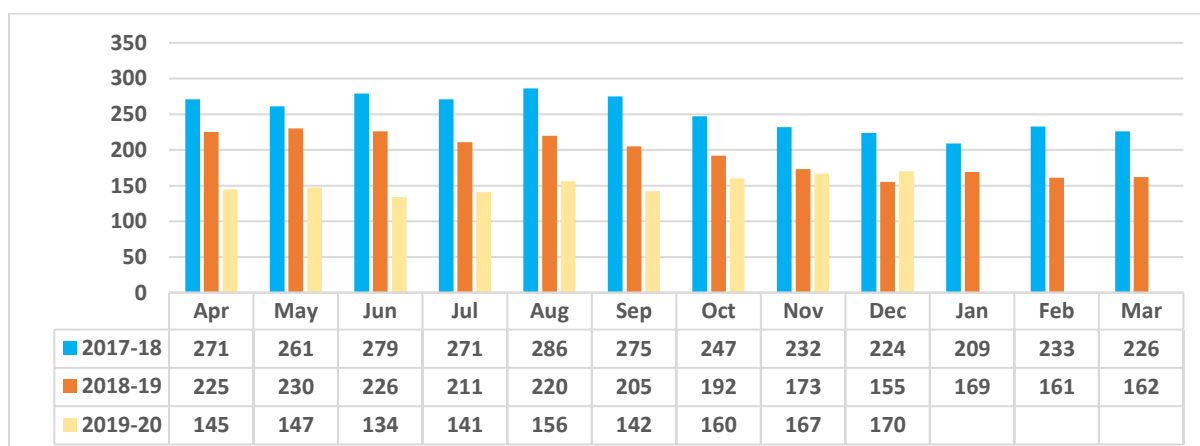
4.2 Assessments

Number of children and families assessments completed per month



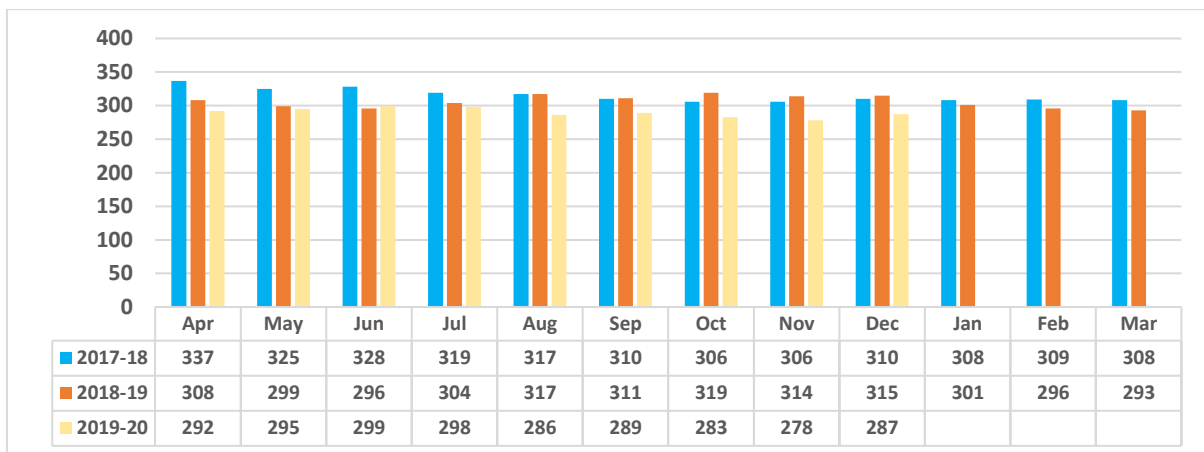
During Quarter 3, there was a total of 1,090 children and families assessments completed. The assessments completed within 45 working days year to date figure is 89.3%, this is good performance compared to our statistical neighbours 2018-19 outturn of 78.0%.

4.3 Children Subject to Child Protection Plans



As at the end of Q3, the total number of children subject to a child protection plan was 170. This is the highest figure reported in the last 12 months and showing an increase of 19.7% since Q2. However this reflects a trend towards higher levels of risk factors within cases referred to Children's Social Care. These Child Protection Plans are regularly reviewed by the Strategic Lead to ensure that risk is being well managed and children do not remain subject to Plans for longer than necessary. Local Authorities which manage child protection plans with purpose and pace tend to have lower rates of children subject to Child Protection Plans, as duration of plans are reduced. This indicator is closely monitored and regularly discussed at monthly performance board meetings.

4.4 Children Looked After

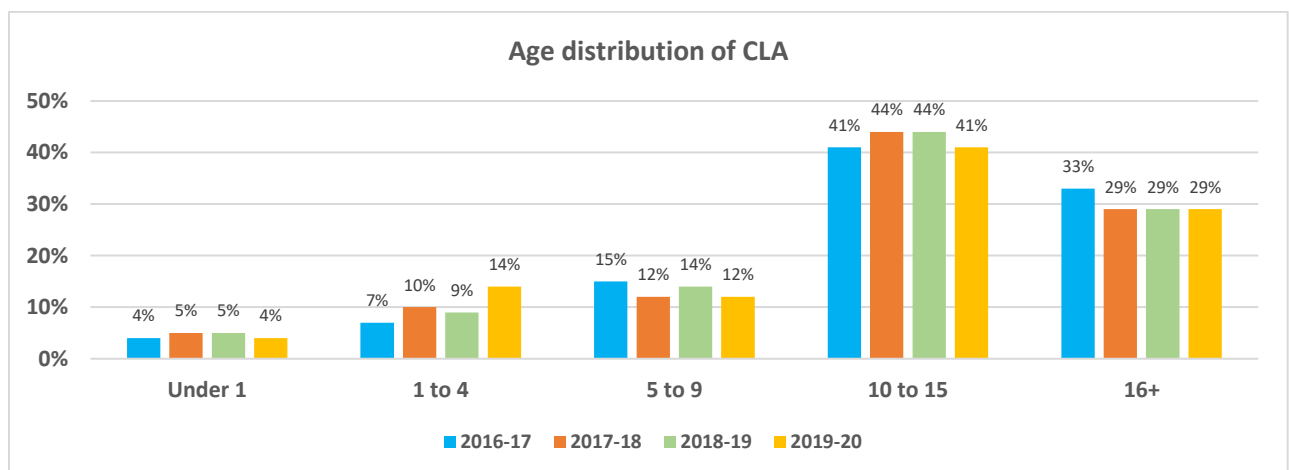


In 2018-19, the number of children looked after figure was 293. In Q3, the figure was 287.

The rate of Children Looked After as at the end of Q3 was 65.6 per 10,000 compared to 67.5 at the end of Q2. The year-end position of 65.6 is lower than our statistical neighbour average of 67.0 in 2018-19.

Purposeful early permanency planning continues to ensure that children are in the right placement at the right time to meet their needs. Placement of children within their own families and where appropriate, supporting children to remain at home with their families is a priority and children are only looked after outside of their families is the only viable option.

Age of Children and Young People in Care



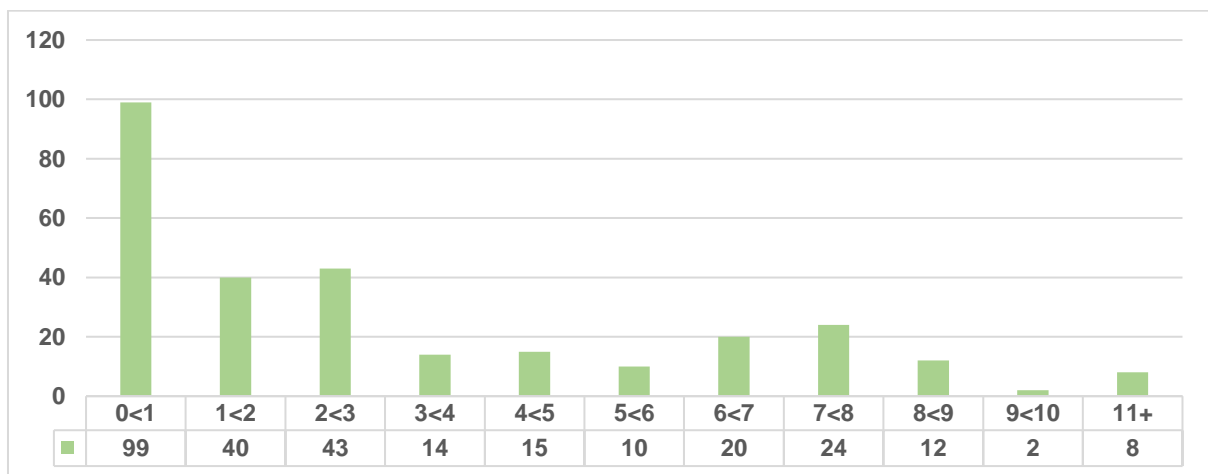
Age of children looked after as at 31 December 2019

In the age 1-4 bracket, 34 children represent 12% of the Looked After population at the end of December 2019 an increase of 5% from the end of 2018/19. The majority of children under five are moved on to permanency through adoption or placement with connected carers and progressing through the court. There is an

increasing numbers of children aged under 5 who are part of sibling groups as follows:

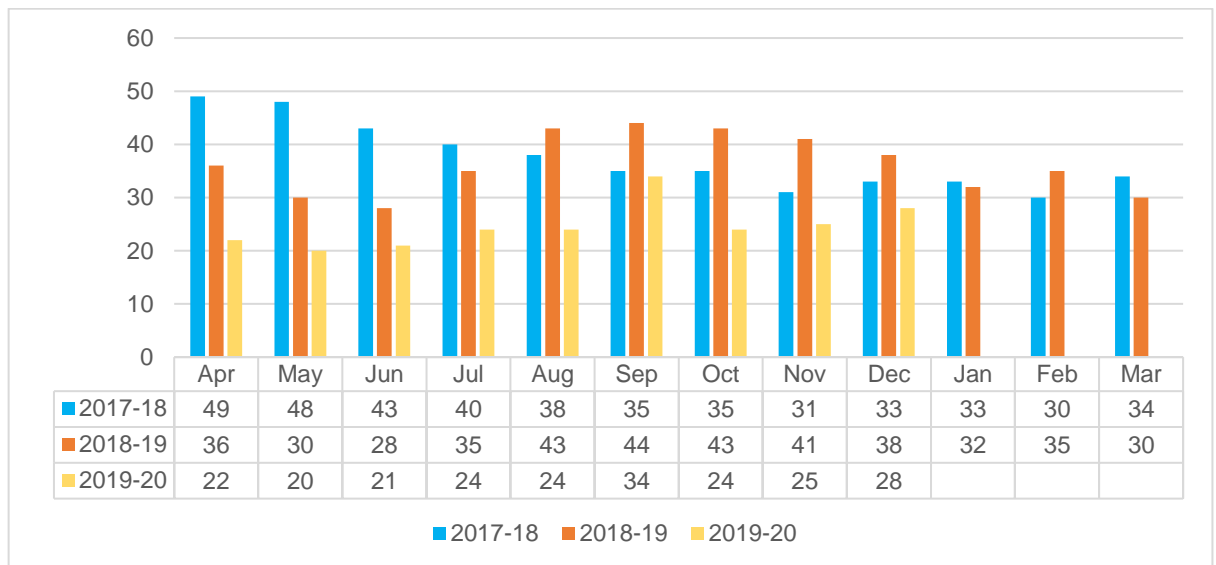
Sibling groups	Children under 5	
Sibling group of 5	1	2
Sibling group of 4	3	7
Sibling group of 3	5	9
Sibling group of 2	5	10
Totals	14	28

Time in Care for Children and Young People



The graph above shows the number of children looked after as at 31 December 2019 broken down by period in care, 63% (139) children are in care for less than three years. All children are subject to rigorous permanency planning.

Number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children



The above graphs shows UASC looked after since 2017-18 and 2018-19, plus the current figures. As of end December 2019, there were 28 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children cared for by Thurrock, a reduction from 38 last year and a sustained reduction over the year. This sustained reduction is supported by the continued cooperation of Eastern Region colleagues in the dispersal of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

4.5 Adoption

As at end of Q3 2019-20 12 children were adopted compared to the same period last year when at Q3 2018-19, 9 children were adopted. This is indicative of improved performance on 2018-19 where we achieved 13 Adoption Orders within the full year. A further 9 children have a placement order made by the Courts in proceedings 4 of these children have been matched to and are placed with adopters but an adoption order has not yet been made. We can anticipate a continued need for adopters at a higher level than in previous years. This reflects the significantly increased activity of our new adoption service, which is driving adoption for those children that require it.

The below data is reported as a 3-year average:

- The number of days for a child from “entering care” to “being placed with adopters” has reduced from an average of 527 in 2015-18 to 381 days in 2016-19. This is above the 2017/18 national average of 486 days.
- The time scale from “Court authority” to “place to matching with adopters” has reduced from an average of 183 days in 2015-18 to 153 in 2016-19 which is below the national average of 201 days. This good performance has been achieved by robust tracking processes.

4.6 Children looked after with missing episodes

	Q4. 2018-19			Q1. 2019-20			Q2. 2019-20			Q3. 2019-20		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Missing Children Looked After (CLA)	16	12	18	19	12	14	17	15	15	15	16	12
No of Instances started in the month (CLA)	32	30	32	59	29	25	49	33	29	13	47	35
Missing Child Looked After (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child)	3	0	3	2	2	2	6	4	2	3	4	1
No. of instances started in the month (UASC)	3	0	3	3	3	2	7	6	2	3	7	1

During December 2019, there were total of 13 children going missing out of which one child was unaccompanied asylum seeker. In Q3, the total number of episodes was 131 compared to 111 in Q2. This represents an increase of 18%. It is important to note that the same child often goes missing more than once.

Children are offered a return interview after they have been missing with the aim to identify the reason and to address these reasons. The reasons vary from “not being settled in placement” to the “draw of friends”. Key workers from placements; foster carers and social workers discuss missing incidents with children and there is an ongoing work to try to reduce incidents and increase engagement of children at the return interviews.

4.7 Fostering

Number of new carers approved between April 19 – To Date	14
Number of mainstream fostering applications currently in progress	11
Number of children currently placed in Thurrock fostering households	131 (including children placed with approved connected carers)

The year to date number of new carers is 14. This is reflective of increased efforts to recruit foster carers.

4.8 Care Leavers

The care leavers 17-18 years of age not in education, employment and training has seen a 5% drop since end of Q2 2019-20. There has been additional work within the service to establish the reasons for this drop in performance, which has resulted in a change in how we recording care leaver information for children who remain looked after which should show an improvement in performance. Care leavers 19-25 years of age that are in education, employment and training was 67% in Q3. Care leavers 19-25 that are in suitable accommodation was 81.4% in Q3 and those in touch was 95.1%

There is a close alignment of the aftercare service with the Inspire Youth Hub, a partnership which has seen a significant improvement in the number of young people in education employment and training. The On-Track Thurrock Programme continues to offers a bespoke programme to ensure that care leavers can access education, employment and training. We have had considerable success with this.

For many of our care leavers we provide our Prince's Trust programme, which is a way in which we enable young people to build confidence. We actively seek apprenticeship opportunities for our care leavers and continue to provide a range of support programmes to enable them to engage fully in the local communities in which they live.

Housing remains one of the key challenges for young people who are Leaving Care, to address this we have further developed the Head Start Housing Programme – which will look to support care leavers. This will provide a holistic approach to supporting young people in both sourcing and sustaining tenancies. We recognise that one of the key barriers relating to this is budget management and to address this we have developed a budgeting programme to ensure that young people can manage finances.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 Corporate Parenting Committee to note and comment on current performance position.

6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

6.1 Not applicable

7. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

7.1 None

8. Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall
Management Accountant**

No implications identified

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks
Deputy Head of Legal Social Care & Education**

No implications identified

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith
Strategic Lead Community Development &
Equalities**

No implications identified

8.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder) -

- Not applicable

9. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Not applicable

10. Appendices to the report

- None

Report Author(s):

Joe Tynan, Strategic Lead - Child In Need and Child Protection

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Anna Watkins, Business Intelligence Analyst

3 March 2020	ITEM: 6
Corporate Parenting Committee	
Local Government Association: Support for Care Leavers; Resource Pack for Members, published January 2020	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care and Early Help	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care and Early Help	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Health and Housing and Interim Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary:

The Local Government Association (LGA) have produced a resource pack on ‘Support for Care Leavers’ for Members in their Corporate Parenting role. The resource pack sets out an introduction for Members about care leavers and statutory responsibilities for Council’s and Members. The resource pack has a section on Key Lines of Enquiry for all councillors and sets out the issues that Members need to consider when having oversight of services for care leavers. The resource pack has a section on case studies from Local Authorities who have tried different ways of working with their care leavers. The resource pack is a helpful tool for Members in their Corporate Parenting role, to consider what areas of practice relating to care leavers they wish to scrutinise.

1. Recommendation(s) That Corporate Parenting Members:

- 1.1 Consider the Support for Care Leavers resource pack**
- 1.2 Consider which lines of enquiry regarding care leavers, they wish to pursue with Officers**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 extended support for care leavers by clarifying in law the role of corporate parents, by giving care leavers access to their personal advisers until the age of 25, and legislation for the publication of care leavers local offers (the Thurrock care leavers local offer has been to Committee previously) to make sure every care leaver knows what help and support they can get.

As corporate parents to care leavers, it's our job to make sure that these young people are ready for what's next, know they're supported as they take those first steps into independence, and to help them access the same opportunities as their peers have – without worrying that if they make a mistake, they won't get another chance.

The Support for Care Leavers resource pack, aims to assist Members in their corporate parenting role for Care Leavers. There is an emphasis on listening to care leavers so we can make sure we are giving care leavers the right support.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The Local Government Association: Support for Care Leavers; Resource Pack is attached at appendix 1.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 For Members to effectively perform their corporate parenting duties towards care leavers they are responsible for.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Not Applicable

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 No impact.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial:

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no financial implications to this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsay Marks**
Principal Solicitor Children's Safeguarding

There are no legal implications to this report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Community Development Officer

There are no Diversity and Equality implications to this report.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

- None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. Appendices to the report:

- Appendix 1 - The Local Government Association: Support for Care Leavers; Resource Pack

Report Author:

Sheila Murphy

Assistant Director, Children's Social Care and Early Help

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Support for care leavers resource pack

Foreword

Striking out into the world on your own for the first time is exciting and daunting for all of us. The opportunity to carve your own path and the newfound independence is a huge draw. On the other hand, learning to budget to keep on top of the bills, remembering to put a wash on in time so you have clean clothes for work on Monday morning, and managing to keep the fridge stocked, let alone keeping yourself healthy – it's a huge learning curve for any young person.

It's even more difficult for those without supportive families to fall back on, or for those who can't stay at home for other reasons. Those who have grown up, or spent time, in care don't always have the luxury of a family home to return to if something goes wrong, or a parent to phone when they aren't sure how to fix a problem.

That's where we come in.

As corporate parents to care leavers, it's our job to make sure that these young people are ready for what's next, know they're supported as they take those first steps into independence, and to help them access the same opportunities as their peers have – without worrying that if they make a mistake, they won't get another chance.

We need to give them the practical, social and emotional support that any good parent gives their child. From help to find the right accommodation, to guiding them through job applications and interviews, to making sure they know where to turn if they're having trouble.

We also need to make sure we're listening. If we can really hear what care leavers are telling us about their needs, dreams and ambitions, we can make sure we're giving the right support to help them get there.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 extended support for care leavers by clarifying in law our role as corporate parents, by giving care leavers access to their personal advisers until the age of 25, and legislating for the publication of local offers to make sure every care leaver knows what help and support they can get.

In reality, many councils have been doing much of this work for some time, and we've included some excellent case studies in this pack to highlight the good work already taking place. Much of the good practice doesn't take a lot of money to implement – it's more about making sure we have the right culture, and understanding what's best for the care leavers in our areas so that we can shape our services, and work with our partners, appropriately.

Our responsibilities don't end when a child leaves care, and getting them right is the best way of making sure we set young people on the right path to a settled, successful and happy adulthood.

Councillor Judith Blake

Chair, LGA Children and Young People Board

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Support for care leavers

An introduction

What is a 'care leaver'?

A care leaver is a young person aged 16-25 who has been looked-after for at least 13 weeks in total since the age of 14.

Those who are aged 16 or 17 are 'eligible' (still looked-after) or 'relevant' (no longer looked-after) children. Those aged 18-25 are 'former relevant children'.

The Government has outlined five key outcomes that it wants to achieve for care leavers¹:

- better preparation and support to live independently
- improved access to education, employment and training
- stability, and to feel safe and secure
- improved access to health support
- financial stability.

Some young people will return home rather than remaining with foster carers or moving on to independent living, but the council still has responsibilities towards them as care leavers.

Statutory responsibilities

The statutory responsibilities of councils are set out in the Children Act 1989, including through amendments made by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 made additional provisions for care leavers, and outlined in law for the first time what it means for a local authority to be a good corporate parent. Councils have responsibilities towards care leavers until they are 25.

The seven corporate parenting principles introduced by the 2017 Act are aimed at complementing existing practices, embedding a positive culture and ensuring that all the different service areas and leadership are doing what they can to support this group of young people.

The principles are:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

Personal advisers and pathway plans

The local authority must complete an 'Assessment of Need' for the young person leaving care, and make sure that a pathway plan is in place by their 16th birthday. Discussions with other partners may also need to take place to make sure the needs assessment shapes a pathway plan that is both meaningful and purposeful.

The pathway plan should look at how best to meet the young person's needs to help them effectively make the transition from care to living independently, looking at areas including²:

- accommodation
- education and training
- financial support
- support to develop relationships
- life skills and employability
- access to support for health needs, including mental health
- contingency plans for support if independent living breaks down.

The plan also needs to take into account current and previous events in the young person's life so that potential risks can be identified and addressed.

It is important that the plan contains specific actions and deadlines, spelling out exactly who will take what action, and when. The plan should be reviewed at least every six months by a social worker or personal adviser (PA). It is not unusual for a young person to leave care at 16 years of age, whether to move on to independent living or to return to family or friends. Around 14 per cent leave care at this age, and it is therefore essential that pathway plans be developed in a timely manner.

This will make sure that if a young person is considering leaving care at 16, they know what support is available to them, know what their future options are, and have a plan to help them move on to independence successfully.

A PA should be appointed to support the young person and implement and monitor the pathway plan. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, this PA should be available to work with the young person until the age of 25.

The PA acts as a focal point for the young person and can help with practical and emotional support, needed to make a successful transition to adulthood. Local authorities should ensure that all care leavers know who their PA is and how to contact them. Where possible, care leavers should have the same PA from when they leave care until they no longer require support.

Financial support

Care leavers aged 16-18 are entitled to financial support to meet their education, training and employment needs, as well as help to pay for things such as accommodation, food and clothing.

Those aged 18-21 are entitled to living expenses associated with living near their place of work or where they plan to work, along with help with education and training.

Care leavers are entitled to a £1,200 bursary if they stay in full-time education, or £2,000 if they go to university. From August 2018, care leavers have also been entitled to a £1,000 bursary if they choose to do an apprenticeship.³

Care leavers can also ask the local authority for £2,000 towards setting up home, making sure that they have the equipment and household items they need to set up safe, secure and stable accommodation.

Accommodation

Care leavers must be provided with appropriate accommodation for their needs. This should be discussed as part of the pathway plan well before the young person is due to leave care.

Councils should avoid moving and disrupting young people who are settled, offer a choice of accommodation (where practicable) and provide a support package to go with the accommodation. There should also be a contingency plan in case accommodation arrangements break down.

Any care leaver under 21 who spent at least one night in care when they were 16 or 17 is automatically considered to be in 'priority need', if they become homeless or are at risk of homelessness.⁴ From the age of 21, they may also be in priority need if they are vulnerable because they were previously looked-after – for example, if they have not had a stable home since leaving care. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 also stipulated that a young homeless care leaver should be treated as having a connection to the area that they were looked-after. This will make it easier for them to get support in the area in which they feel most at home.

In April 2018, councils were given new and strengthened powers to offer advice and assistance to homeless people, including care leavers, in their area.⁵ Despite these initiatives, homelessness amongst care leavers continues to be a concern.

Staying in touch

Councils should attempt to stay in touch with all of their care leavers to monitor progress on their pathway plans, and plans should outline how frequently that contact should take place.

When a care leaver moves to new accommodation, their PA must see them at that accommodation within seven days of the move. After the first subsequent review of the pathway plan, they must visit the care leaver at no less than two-monthly intervals.

In some cases, care leavers may decline the support of the council. This should be respected, however periodic attempts should continue to be made to remain in contact. If a young person's situation changes, they need to know that support is still available, and refusing support once doesn't mean that it won't be available in the future.

Staying put

'Staying put' is an arrangement that allows a looked-after child to continue to live with their foster carer – whether a local authority carer or an independent fostering agency (IFA) carer – after their 18th birthday, when they cease to be 'looked-after' by the local authority. This can take place where the council considers it appropriate, and both the young person and the carer want to enter a staying put arrangement.

The council has a responsibility to monitor the arrangement and provide advice and support (including financial) to the foster parent, and the young person to facilitate the arrangement until the young person reaches 21.⁶

Staying close

A number of councils are trialling approaches to 'staying close' – a variant of staying put for young people leaving residential care – using funding from the Department for Education's (DfE) Innovation Programme.

The scheme sees care leavers living independently in accommodation close to their children's home. This would see them continuing to have the support of a key worker from their previous home, and they could visit the home frequently. A full evaluation is expected in 2020.

Local offer

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires local authorities to publish a local offer for care leavers, with guidance⁷ recommending this be reviewed every two to three years. This should include all services offered by the council that can support care leavers in, or in preparing for, adulthood and independent living. This includes both those that the authority is legally obligated to provide, such as 'staying put' and housing support, and universal services such as careers advice or public health services. The offer can also include relevant services provided by other organisations, where appropriate. Care leavers should be consulted before the offer is published.

Access to Information

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, care leavers have a right to access their care records, to better understand their care history and decisions made during their time in care. Councils must facilitate any request made and have a transparent policy in place to support this. They should also work with partners who may hold relevant information. Councils should keep these records for a minimum of 75 years from the date of birth of the adult care leaver and consider suitable retention and storage processes.⁸

Care Leaver Covenant

The Government has introduced the Care Leaver Covenant. This aims to encourage public, private and voluntary sectors to pledge support, and make specific offers to support care leavers aged 16-25 in living independently.

The covenant links care leavers to offers which can include:

- discounts
- financial support
- exemptions
- personal development
- workshops
- training
- work experience, apprenticeships and internships.

The covenant can be used by councils to support and extend their local offer, and trials are underway with six councils to identify how it can best be used to support care leavers. A toolkit is being developed for councils and will be available in early 2020.

Key lines of enquiry for all councillors

What do we know about our care leavers – both existing, and coming up?

It is important that the council knows as much as possible about care leavers and their needs to make sure that plans can be made to effectively meet those needs. Care leavers are statistically more likely to have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and are more likely to suffer from mental health problems. It is therefore important that sufficient provision be available for those care leavers who need additional support.

It is also important to treat each young person as an individual. Many care leavers will have no such difficulties and, like many young people, will be focussed on achieving their potential through work, training or higher education. Like any good parent, councils should consider the specific ambitions of individual young people and aim to provide the tailored support they need to fulfil them.

There have been growing numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) entering the country in recent years. If your council is looking after unaccompanied children, they may have very specific needs that must be catered for to help them prepare for and adjust to independent living, whether in the UK or in their home country, and to fulfil their potential. Similarly, your council may be looking after foreign-national children who are not necessarily asylum-seekers, but may have immigration issues and links to other countries.

Nationally, young people are also starting to come into the care system at an older age; the council should know whether this trend

applies to its area, and account for this when planning services.

How are we making sure that the voice of the young person is heard and reflected in the pathway plan?

Pathway plans should include clear, specific actions to drive care leavers' progress, and identify support to help them find and sustain education, training or employment. Different young people will have different ambitions, plans and concerns, so it is vital to make sure pathway plans are very specifically tailored to each young person. This will help them to develop their independence and meet their goals at a pace that suits them.

Every young person should be fully involved in the development of their pathway plan. Make sure that arrangements are made for this, including in the case of young people placed out of area, those in custody and those who may need support to communicate their needs effectively, for example, those with certain learning difficulties or disabilities.

Feedback from care leavers – whether through a care leaver's forum or directly – will be key in identifying whether they feel that their voices are being heard, and what improvements could be made. Independent reviewing officers (IROs) have an important role to play in checking that this has happened, and will be able to report on how effectively young people are influencing their pathway plans.

What are care leavers telling us?

The council should have a variety of methods for obtaining feedback from care leavers, for example care leaver councils or collating information from PAs. Regular reports on this information to the corporate parenting panel will help to spot issues early and make sure they're addressed, with the voices of care leavers considered in relevant decision making. In particular, the council should assure itself that care leavers feel safe, understand that they have someone they can talk to if there are any problems, and that they feel supported and listened to. The proportion of care leavers that the leaving care service is still in touch with should also be monitored. Councils should be striving to maintain contact with all care leavers up to the age of 25.

How are we making sure that young people are able to take advantage of 'staying put'?

All young people in foster care should have access to staying put arrangements. Whenever a long term placement is being considered, there should be discussion between the foster carer and the child's social workers about the possibility of it leading to a staying put arrangement. The young person should, however, not have to decide whether this is something they wish to do until they are ready.

Young people living with IFA carers should also be able to stay put. Make sure that commissioning arrangements with IFAs allow for this possibility; staying put is not a fostering placement, so arrangements will need to be separately negotiated.

Both care leavers and foster carers need access to good information about staying put so that they fully understand the arrangements; make sure that both groups know where they can get the advice they need.

Councils will also need to consider what arrangements are in place for looked-after children who are not in foster care – for example, those in residential care – to support them when they have left formal care.

Do we have a suitable range of accommodation options for care leavers, and how are they supported in each? What happens if something goes wrong?

Different care leavers will have different needs, so there should be a range of accommodation options available to give care leavers the appropriate support. Bed and breakfast accommodation is not considered suitable. While some young people may be able to take on a flat with minimal support from the council, others may need 24/7 access to support. Making sure that options are available to smooth the transition will increase the chances of a care leaver successfully settling into independent living, and reduce the chances of them becoming homeless.

There will need to be close working between the lead member for housing and the lead member for children, as well as between their respective departments. This will make sure care leavers' accommodation needs are catered for. Councils in two-tier areas will need to develop and maintain strong links with their district councils, who have responsibility for housing. This will make sure that the needs of care leavers are being taken into account in housing plans and housing allocation; what arrangements are in place for this, and how well are they working?

Having a fall back option – an emergency place to stay if things go wrong – can be a big comfort to care leavers. Most of us know that if something goes wrong, we've got somewhere to go, and someone who can work through problems with us even if it's not the first time.

Offering this to care leavers reduces the pressure on them, and is part of being a good corporate parent.

Care leavers up to the age of 21 are exempted from recent housing benefit reforms, meaning that they are not limited to the shared accommodation rates as most other young people are. However, there is still significant competition for affordable social and private rented accommodation in many areas. Consideration should be given to how care leavers will access this accommodation, for example, through allocation schemes, or by identifying particular private landlords to work with personal advisers to provide care leaver accommodation. How are care leavers helped to prepare for when this exemption ends at 21?

How are we preparing care leavers to live independently?

One of the biggest issues raised by care leavers is that of isolation – without a strong and stable social network, it can be extremely hard to navigate life after leaving care. Some councils are already looking at ways in which they can help care leavers to develop social networks, while efforts to ensure stability of placements and school throughout care are also positive. This allows young people to spend time developing friendships and local connections. Some care leavers find it helpful to be in touch with fellow care leavers; are there opportunities for this in your council?

Practical support to develop life skills will significantly ease the transition for care leavers. In particular, teaching about budgeting will make it easier for young people when they need to start managing their own money, while making sure that children in care are learning to cook healthy meals will help them to look after themselves later on. Encouraging young people to help with household tasks, take on weekend jobs and allowing them increasing independence will all develop important skills to make the move to independent living less daunting.

Some local authorities have given council tax exemptions to care leavers to help them with their budgets as they adjust to living independently, while others have introduced budgeting courses so that care leavers understand what to expect when managing their own tenancy.

Care leavers should also have easy access to key documents and information that they will need when taking on tenancies or starting work. Examples of these could be a birth certificate, National Insurance number, passport and examination certificates.

The local offer is an important source of information, and it should reflect what care leavers say they need. When this is being developed, find out what care leavers said in the consultation, and what changes were made as a result. Having a clear local offer will make it far easier for care leavers to know what is available to help them to live independently.

It is also important to update the local offer regularly, in consultation with care leavers, to ensure that it is responsive to their changing needs.

How are we working with our partners to support care leavers?

The Government wants to improve access to mental health provision for care leavers, as well as more general improved accountability for the local provision of health services. The NHS has a responsibility alongside councils to act as a corporate parent to care leavers,⁹ and should be considering their needs in the development of plans and commissioning of services. Councillors can influence the design and funding of local NHS services through engagement with sustainability and transformation partnerships.

Your council should be represented on your local partnership through the director of public health or another senior lead.

Joint health and wellbeing strategies are developed by local leaders to enable planning and commissioning of integrated services to meet the needs of the local community. This will include reducing health inequalities and supporting the needs of vulnerable groups. These plans should include specific consideration of how partners will work together to support care leavers. Delivery of the strategy should also be monitored by the health and wellbeing board. Health scrutiny committees provide further opportunities to look at whether health services for care leavers are sufficient and appropriate.

There will be particular partnership considerations for young people leaving custody, who are at greater risk of becoming homeless, and are likely to have a range of specific needs for support including help with employment, training, or mental health. There should be strong joint working relationships and protocols between the leaving care service, the Youth Offending Service and the probation service to start making plans well ahead of a young person's release. The young person's voice and needs must be at the forefront of planning.

A national protocol has recently been introduced to encourage councils to work with partners to reduce unnecessary criminalisation of looked-after children and care leavers.¹⁰ It may be useful to consider the local arrangements and specific support in place for care leavers.

How do we help care leavers to find, and remain in, employment or further education and training?

While 62 per cent of care leavers aged 19-21 are already in education, employment or training and achieving well, this still leaves a significant minority who are not.¹¹

Improvements are being made, for example, through the promotion of apprenticeships and further education, but clearly councils have a key role to play in making sure that care leavers have a clear path to follow to live independent lives.

Councils have approached this in various ways, from establishing partnerships with local businesses, to encouraging apprenticeship providers to actively consider care leavers, to providing training positions within the local authority. Personal advisers can support young people as they develop their pathway plans to find routes to achieve their goals, including applying for university places or finding jobs or traineeships. Universal careers services should also be involved in supporting care leavers to consider what they want to do after compulsory education has finished.

Bear in mind potential barriers to opportunities – care leavers might worry about where they will stay during university holidays, how they will get to a job outside their town, or whether they can support themselves through an apprenticeship. Check that it is easy to find out about financial and practical support available for all options, and that these are discussed with care leavers well in advance of key decision points.

How are we promoting the care leaver covenant?

The Care Leaver Covenant aims to engage a range of partners across sectors to improve outcomes for care leavers. Councils may therefore wish to consider how they can promote and engage in this, for example:

- raising awareness of the covenant amongst council staff and partners
- offering ring-fenced apprenticeships, internships or work experience opportunities for care leavers
- revising the social value policy to ensure that apprenticeships, internships and work experience specifically for care leavers are a standard part of procurement practices
- working with local businesses, employer groups and other partners to increase the number, range and take up of education, employment and training (EET) opportunities for care leavers.

The covenant advocates a 'whole council' approach to this work, recognising that the responsibility for being a corporate parent does not solely reside with children's services.

Are we being good corporate parents to care leavers?

Being ambitious for young people does not stop when they leave care. Find out how many care leavers the council is still in touch with – regular contact with care leavers will help to make sure they are in education, employment or training (or getting support to do so), managing their money and accommodation well, limiting the risk of homelessness, and that they are looking after their health and wellbeing.

Care leavers also need to know that the council is still ambitious for them, helping them to achieve goals in their pathway plans and working with them so that they can reach their potential.

Every councillor and officer across a local authority has a responsibility as a corporate parent to care leavers. This needs to be acknowledged across all levels of the organisation, and all corporate parents should prioritise the needs of care leavers.

For more information on corporate parenting, please see our 'Corporate parenting' resource pack.

How are we ensuring that the corporate parenting principles are being applied to care leavers?

The aim of the corporate parenting principles is to provide leadership, challenge and accountability at every level and ask probing questions to ensure that care leavers are well supported. The Corporate Parenting Panel and Scrutiny Committee have a role in monitoring how the principles are being applied, what the barriers are and how the local offer for care leavers can be improved.

How are we making sure care leavers have access to services they need for their health and wellbeing?

Care leavers are statistically more likely to need mental health support than young people in the general population because of the trauma and neglect that they may have experienced. So check what arrangements have been put in place to make sure they can get help if they need it. For young people with a need that meets the threshold for CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services), find out what arrangements are in place for a smooth transition between children and adult services in your authority. Issues that do not meet the CAMHS threshold, for example, depression and anxiety, are likely to be treated through public health interventions such as online support, or through provision from GPs. Consider the

criteria for access to mental health services; do care leavers receive any priority access, and how are they told about this? The local offer is a good place to signpost to support services, including advising that GPs can help with mental as well as physical health – which some young people may not know.

While the majority of care leavers will have no such problems, the difficulties some have faced in their lives mean that, without proper support, they can be more likely to experience substance misuse problems or teenage pregnancy. A third of young people leaving care report problems with drugs or alcohol within a year¹², while a quarter of young women leaving care are pregnant, and nearly half become pregnant within two years.¹³ Access to drug and alcohol prevention and treatment services, sexual health and family planning services, should be well promoted. Data on take-up of these services, along with anonymised user feedback, will help to identify whether those services are operating effectively or need to change to meet young people's needs.

All of these issues fall within local authority public health responsibilities. When budgets are being set, consider what services are prioritised, the potential impact on care leavers and make sure you are satisfied that any risks to provision are adequately mitigated. For example, if a drug prevention service is to be reduced, are the remaining sessions in locations and at times that are accessible to care leavers, and will that provision be enough?

Physical health is also important. Care leavers should know who their GP and dentist are and how to make appointments. Support with prescription costs is available for those on certain benefits or on low incomes – care leavers may need to be made aware of this, and how to fill out prescription forms to ensure they receive this entitlement. Councils might also look at what support they can give to help care leavers look after their health, for example, access to leisure centres or support to keep up activities that they started in care.

¹² Ibid

¹³ HM Government, 'Keep On Caring: Supporting Young People from Care to Independence', July 2016

Are there particular considerations for unaccompanied asylum-seeking care leavers?

The 2016 Immigration Act removes the automatic right to support for an unaccompanied asylum seeking child following their 18th birthday. As they approach their 18th birthday, these young people must apply for extended leave to remain in the UK. This can be an extremely stressful time for young people, and it is important that they be supported through the process.

Councils can claim up to £200 per week to support care leavers who were supported as unaccompanied children and have leave to remain in the UK. They can also claim this support for care leavers awaiting the outcome of their asylum claim, or who are on their first appeal.

It is important that pathway planning for unaccompanied children takes into account a young person's immigration status; while most unaccompanied children are granted refugee status, humanitarian protection or another form of leave to remain, the decision-making process can be lengthy, leaving the young person in a difficult position to plan ahead. Engagement with the Home Office on asylum claims should be timely. Furthermore, work on the pathway plan should take into account both a potential future in the UK, or plans to leave the UK and resume life in the young person's home country if they have no lawful basis to remain.

It should be noted that those awaiting a decision on an asylum claim are not allowed to work. Pathway plans should be clear on the support available to the young person, and safeguard against potential risks, for example, informal work in poor conditions, or modern slavery. The risk of the young person going missing should also be considered when agreeing how often they will be in contact with their personal adviser. For more information, the Local Government Association (LGA) has worked with the Independent Anti-Slavery

Commissioner to produce a council guide to tackling modern slavery (see key resources and further reading).

Are there particular considerations for other children in care with immigration issues?

Some children in care may have immigration issues but have not applied for asylum. For example, these children can be foreign-nationals who were removed from their families due to neglect or abuse, or who came to the UK with their families and were abandoned here. In some cases, the child might be stateless, or might be eligible for British citizenship but their citizenship application has not been made. As with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, it is important that the child's immigration status be considered in any care plan, assessment, and pathway planning. Support, including legal advice, should also be provided so that the child can have the most secure status possible in accordance with their plans.

Do we have processes in place for adult care leavers to access information about them?

An adult care leaver can ask their local authority at any time for information about their care records. So it is important to have systems and processes in place to enable them to do this smoothly and effectively. Some of the information that adult care leavers may read about their history in care or the way in which they came into care may be traumatic. Is support available to help people through this?

Case studies

City of York Council

City of York Council has a strong track record of supporting young people leaving care; a strength highlighted by Ofsted in its report published in February 2017. The inspectors acknowledged that, by listening to care leavers' views and shaping services around them, York now sees the vast majority of care leavers living in accommodation that suits their needs, with low numbers not in education, employment and training, and most making a successful transition to adult life.

This transition starts with developing a pathway plan at the care review nearest the young person's 16th birthday. This gives two years to put the right plan in place – whether that involves staying with a foster family beyond the 18th birthday ('staying put') or moving into independent living, and education, training or employment. Each case is referred to a personal adviser (PA) when the young person is 17. PAs generally manage caseloads of around 21, helping them know each young person well and make sure they get the best possible support to experience a smooth transition into the leaving care service.

The pathway team is well connected with information, advice and guidance services and the virtual school. This has resulted in the proportion of care leavers in education, employment or training being well above the national average. Two new programmes are being introduced to increase this proportion further, improve career information and support care leavers with learning opportunities.

Teaching life skills is a key element of preparing care leavers to live independently. A pathway life-skills toolkit supports carers

and key workers to make sure young people get the right level of help to develop those skills; which include saving money, budgeting and cooking for themselves. Young people are encouraged to remain with their foster carers after their 18th birthdays to continue learning life skills with them as part of the staying put programme, while those in supported housing benefit from personalised support to build their life skills and confidence at a pace that suits them.

Staying put is an option for all care leavers. Those in residential placements outside York are increasingly moved back to the city before their 18th birthdays so that they can take up this option which is part of a strategic initiative to 'Make York Home' for all young people in care. Staying put also includes young people fostered by connected persons or kinship carers, and those placed with independent fostering agencies. Acting on feedback from young people, those who stay put are encouraged to start work, or to get a Saturday job if they are in education, to make life as 'normal' and as like any other family as possible. As one young person commented, "I'm learning to handle money better as I pay board and pay my own phone bills", while another said they enjoyed "feeling part of a family". Those who go to university can return to their foster carer each holiday.

The option of a four-week stay in a 'taster flat' gives care leavers the chance to experience independent living. They know that they have support throughout their stay there as they develop their life skills before returning to their placement to work on any areas of development and consider what to do next. Accommodation options are varied to suit different needs. Some care leavers might

choose to go into a trainer flat with support from the pathway accommodation officer and pathway worker. While others who need more support might opt for supported lodgings with charity SASH or permanently-staffed hostel accommodation, where they have a named key worker and access to daily education sessions and independence skills training. This variety of options allows for gradually increasing independence.

The focus on life skills and a careful transition into accommodation is paying off – the vast majority of care leavers are successfully living independently in suitable accommodation, with none in houses of multiple occupancy. Where there are difficulties, regular risk assessments mean that they are caught early, with creative support packages put in place to help the young person to get back on their feet and move forward. Where care leavers aren't keen to engage and things go wrong, emergency accommodation is also provided – there is always another chance available.

Building a programme of support that genuinely works for care leavers has been helped by social workers and support staff who listen to the views of young people. Care leavers told Ofsted that the council listened carefully, recorded their views well and – importantly – acted upon them. As a result, most were positive about the care and support that they received.

David Purcell, Pathway Team Practice Manager at City of York Council, said: “We’ve made a real effort to learn from our care leavers to make sure that we can give them the best possible transition into adulthood. It’s important that each young person in care can work with us to achieve their ambitions, and can do that at their own pace.

“Every child in York deserves a place they can call home, and to enjoy family life wherever possible. As the corporate parents to care leavers, that’s what we do our best to give them.”

For more information, please contact:
david.purcell@york.gov.uk

Royal Borough of Greenwich

The Royal Borough of Greenwich has been working with charity MyBnk to make sure care leavers get good quality financial education to help them when they move into independent accommodation. Care leavers moving on to supported housing all attend the week-long accredited ‘Money House’ programme as part of their pathway, spending a week with other young people in a real flat learning about everything from tenancy agreements and safe borrowing to budgeting and choosing utility providers.

Referrals are all considered individually to make sure needs are understood and catered for on the course, and the young people are all contacted to sort out logistics to make sure they can attend.

The results of its first year are impressive:

- 97 per cent felt more confident about their financial situation
- attendees are three times less likely to have rent arrear issues than their peers
- no one who has completed the training has been evicted
- 90 per cent of those who felt their ability to pay rent and keep their tenancy was below average or poor felt that this improved as a result of the course, with 80 per cent going on to rate their ability as good or excellent.

Anneta Corbin, Family and Young People Service Manager at the Royal Borough of Greenwich said: “Money management is a vital skill for young people when they move into their own accommodation. We know from our care leavers that the better the support they receive to build these skills, the more confident they feel about making that move. Feedback from our care leavers on the programme has been really positive, and we’ve found that those who have been on the course are much more likely to maintain their tenancies when they move on to independent accommodation.”

For more information, visit:
<http://mybnk.org/programmes/financial-education-the-money-house>

*The Money House has now expanded to Newham and is funded by the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Berkeley Foundation and Hyde Housing.

Leeds City Council

A not uncommon challenge faced by young people leaving care and moving on into independent living and setting up their homes for the first time is getting practical support with things like decorating, plumbing in and setting up white goods, putting shelves up, and so on. These are things that many other young people moving on into independence might get support from their families to do. We work closely with our housing services within Leeds to provide suitable accommodation for young people making this first step, though often these tenancies require some degree of decoration and homemaking. Our experience has been that for some young people the condition of their new home can be variable and the desire to settle our young people into a personalised home can mean that we need to identify support to do this.

As a champion authority of the national Care Leavers Covenant, Leeds Care Leavers Services established a partnership with Engie Regen (Places and Communities Division). Engie Regen is the first private company to sign up as a signatory partner to the covenant, to provide a range of practical supports and offers directly to benefit care leavers. They are also long-standing ambassadors of 'Child Friendly Leeds', and have undertaken some fantastic work to support care leavers in Leeds. Such support includes redecoration, donation of paint, garden clearing, plumbing in washing machines, joinery and other practical home making support and DIY projects. ENGIE Regen are on target to complete 12 projects by December 2019.

This project has provided invaluable support to care leavers, allowing some to have their homes decorated to a high-quality professional standard and in many cases has enabled

young people to move quicker, feel settled and to feel a real pride in their new homes.

For further information, contact
joel.hanna@leeds.gov.uk

Hampshire County Council

It isn't unusual for a young person to have goals that might seem unachievable. However, as corporate parents, it's important that councils put the views and wishes of care leavers at the heart of their plans, and work with them to progress towards their goals while keeping alternatives in mind.

At the age of 16, Rob was in the care of Hampshire Children's Services. He didn't engage in education, was using alcohol and was working with the Youth Offending Team following an assault charge. He did, however, show a flair for boxing, continuing to attend training even as he failed to show up for education or work. His hobby was supported by his foster carers, social worker and personal adviser. A pathway plan was developed that allowed him to follow his ambition to become a professional boxer, while encouraging him to take up opportunities with local colleges as alternative options.

As Rob started to win more local and UK title fights, his drive and commitment so impressed the children's services team that they sought out ways to acknowledge and reward his progress and encourage him further, as any good parent would do. This included helping with travel costs to fights, allowing him to travel abroad to a training school for a month, and then supporting him when he took the decision to move abroad to embark on a professional boxing career. A weekly allowance was also allowed, and goods were sent to help him set up home.

When Rob showed a desire to further his own education by learning the language of the country he competed in most frequently, Hampshire helped him to pay for a language course; his dedication to learning means he is now fluent in that second language.

Thanks to the flexibility, support and encouragement offered by Hampshire Children's Services and everyone else working with Rob, he is now a professional boxer who no longer drinks or smokes, and is living a successful, independent life.

For more information, please contact:
cathi.hadley@hants.gov.uk

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council

Listening to your care leavers is the perfect way to find out what can really make a difference to them – and it isn't always complicated. In Trafford, the care leavers' forum highlighted that their £57.10 per week benefit had one key problem – it left £7.10 each week that couldn't be withdrawn from the cash point. The point was raised with councillors, who agreed that raising the benefit to £60, which could be withdrawn in £10 denominations, made far more sense. It was also noted that the extra £2.90 could pay for two day's gas in a young person's flat, or cover a chip supper treat. Care leavers were delighted with the response, which showed that they were genuinely listened to and that their corporate parents cared about their lived experiences.

On another occasion, a care leaver raised with Trafford Council that it didn't feel fair for him to search for work or training while his fellow care leavers could still get their benefits without making the same effort. The council therefore decided that the importance of getting care leavers into education, employment or training made it worth providing an incentive. The Corporate Parenting Board agreed an incentive of up to £30 a week for care leavers who were actively engaged – which could cover anything from work experience, to visiting a job centre, to working with their personal adviser. They could also get a free weekly bus pass to help them carry out these activities. The overall package was worth more than £100 to care leavers who actively worked towards

improving their own outcomes, and has proven extremely popular. Seventy per cent of Trafford care leavers are now in education, employment and training – higher than the national average, and a positive indicator of how care leavers are supported by the council.

For more information, please contact:
aftercare@trafford.gov.uk

London Borough of Islington

Islington's leaving care service, Independent Futures, works with care leavers and 16 to 17-year-olds in care to provide a holistic service that prepares and supports them as they move towards independent living. The service has sought innovative ways to help care leavers to make sure they're in a strong position when they leave care. Support includes establishing support networks, providing mental health support, and helping with finding further education and employment.

A key concern of young people when they leave care is around the support networks they will have when they are no longer 'looked-after'. The Grand Mentoring Scheme pairs care leavers with a 'grandparent' who mentors the young person, and provides support and guidance as they move into adult life. This gives them someone independent from the council that they can rely on for help, and who they can build a stable relationship with as they take on greater independence.

Independent Futures has also teamed up with a wide range of local partners from the public, private and charity sectors to give care leavers access to employment and training opportunities. We have an enhanced offer that enables those who wish to attend university to be able to do so with the support of services and additional financial allowances. The variety of partners reflects the range of young people looked-after by the council, providing a broad spectrum of possibilities to show them how much is possible.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

The council also works closely with partners in the arts and performance sector to give young people a way to develop their sense of identity and personal achievement, promoting the confidence and resilience that they'll need as they move into work, as well as raising aspirations.

Supporting the physical and mental health, and wellbeing of care leavers is paramount. Well-used weekly drop in health sessions make sure care leavers can get advice when they need it, while free counselling and advice commissioned from a local mental health charity allows them to get support quickly if they find themselves struggling with mental health difficulties. We have also recently embedded clinicians within the service and introduced a specialist mental health social worker within the service in recognition of the level of need some of our young people present with. Regular liaison between CAMHS and adult mental health services ensures continuity of provision for those care leavers who have specific emotional health needs. Where young people need to visit specialists, young people's advisers offer to attend with them for moral support and to make sure they can attend the appointment. We are keen to offer early intervention and encourage young people to make use of personal health budgets (Choice and Control) to improve their mental wellbeing.

Councillor Kaya Comer Schwartz, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families, said: "Young people when discussing their care experience, have told us that forming and maintaining relationships is important to them and we are committed to being their lifelong champions. We work hard to ensure that we reduce any barriers to them being involved and achieving their full potential. Our revised offer to care leavers reflects this as well as the passion and commitment we as a council have for our care leavers."

For further information, please contact stephen.rice@islington.gov.uk

When Ofsted rated support for care leavers at East Riding of Yorkshire Council as 'outstanding', it confirmed one of the pathway team's core beliefs – that getting the basics right, and really understanding what works, are key to making sure that care leavers have a positive experience and make good progress.

Staff working with care leavers know the importance of stability and relationships to children in care, so the pathway team starts working with them in Year 11 to carefully manage the transition from looked-after child to care leaver. Care leavers also work with several members of the team to make sure there is always someone who they can talk to, and who knows them well enough to provide the right kind of support.

Each member of the pathway team has an average caseload of 15, giving them the time to dedicate to each care leaver, while managers work hard to make sure staff have all they need to do the best possible job. This includes an excellent range of training to cover the types of issues young people may face, including the dangers of radicalisation and self-harm.

East Riding has also set up a post-16 sub-group of the virtual school to make sure care leavers' needs are being met and to raise aspirations among both the young people and the service providers. The group is chaired by the pathway team manager, and includes further education colleges, training providers and Jobcentre Plus. Care leavers are given highly supportive mentoring and specialist advice about their potential options as they progress into further or higher education, training or employment. This strong partnership working at all levels has led to the authority having 69 per cent of care leavers engaged in education, employment or training, higher than similar authorities and the national average.

Pathway Team Manager Sue Smyth said:
“One of the most important things that we do is to gain care leavers’ trust, and show them that we’ll support them, no matter what. We’re always keen to try new ideas, but we make sure those basic relationships and core support are never compromised, because they’re the foundations for a strong service. Our care leavers tell us that they feel safe, and that they wouldn’t be where they are now without our support – and that’s the most important thing for all of us.”

For more information, please contact Sue Smyth: www.eastriding.gov.uk

Key resources and further reading

Barnardo's and St Basil's Care leavers accommodation and support framework, 2015

Children and Families Across Borders
www.cfab.org.uk

Department for Education, Children Act 1989 Statutory Guidance: Transition to adulthood for care leavers, October 2010 (updated January 2015)

Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions, and HM Revenue and Customs, Staying Put guidance, May 2013

Department for Education, Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers, February 2018

Department for Education, Extending personal adviser support to all care leavers to age 25: statutory guidance for local authorities, February 2018

Department of Education, Home Office, Ministry of Justice, National protocol on reducing the criminalisation of looked-after children and care leavers, November 2018

Fostering Network, Staying Put: Guidance for children and young people services, fostering services and leaving care services, September 2017

HM Government, Keep On Caring: Supporting young people from care to independence, July 2016

House of Commons Library: Support for care leavers: Briefing Paper, March 2019

Local Government Association, Tackling Modern slavery: A council guide, December 2017

www.local.gov.uk/modern-slavery-council-guide

Local Government Association, A councillor guide to tackling modern slavery, September 2019

www.local.gov.uk/councillor-guide-tackling-modern-slavery

Care Leaver Covenant
www.mycovenant.org.uk

The Children's Partnership, Staying Put: Good practice guidance, 2014



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3 March 2020	ITEM: 7
Corporate Parenting Committee	
Update on Ofsted Recommendation – Timeliness of Initial Health Assessments	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non-Key
Report of: Janet Simon, Strategic Lead for Children Looked After	
Accountable Assistant Director: Sheila Murphy, Assistant Director, Children’s Social Care and Early Help	
Accountable Director: Roger Harris, Corporate Director of Adults, Health and Housing and Interim Director of Children’s Services	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report is to update Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee on Thurrock’s timeliness of Initial Assessments

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That Corporate Parenting Members are informed about Health and Children’s Services efforts to improve the timeliness of Initial Assessments for Children Looked After

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 When a child or young person comes into care, they will have an Initial Health Assessment (IHA). This is a statutory health assessment. The assessment is to be completed within 28 days of coming into care. A paediatrician or an appropriately trained medical practitioner completes the assessment.

The Initial Health Assessment identifies existing health problems and deficits in previous healthcare and provides a baseline for managing the child’s future health needs.

2.2 This report sets out the actions taken by Children’s Social Care and Health colleagues to address the timeliness of Initial Health Assessments for Children who are Looked After.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The local authority, through its Corporate Parenting responsibilities, has a duty to promote the welfare of Looked after Children, including those who are eligible and those children placed in pre-adoptive placements. This includes promoting the child's physical, emotional and mental health.

3.2 Every Looked After Child needs to have an up to date health assessment so that a health care plan can be developed to reflect the child's health needs and be included as part of the child's overall Care Plan.

Health assessments are statutorily required to be carried out a minimum of:

- 6-monthly for babies and children under 5 years of age; and
- Annually for those aged 5 years and over.

3.3 The Originating and Receiving Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) should have arrangements in place to support the local authority to complete statutory health assessments for Looked After Children within statutory timescales, irrespective of whether the placement of the child is an emergency, short term or in another CCG.

3.4 The Local Authority should always advise the CCG when a child is initially accommodated. Where there is a change in placement, which will require the involvement of another CCG, the child's Originating CCG, and Receiving CCG should be informed, as well as the child's GP.

3.5 Both Local Authority and relevant CCG(s) should develop effective communications and understandings between each other as part of being able to promote children's wellbeing. The assessment is to be completed within 28 days of coming into care. A paediatrician or an appropriately trained medical practitioner completes the assessment.

3.6 During the Ofsted Inspection in November 2019, Ofsted highlighted the delay in completing timely Initial Health Assessments. Ofsted acknowledged the work between Social Care and Health colleagues to resolve the delay but that the pace of change was too slow and said;

Timeliness of initial health assessments when all children come into care needed to improve.

3.7 Before the assessment

Information is sourced from parents, carers, GPs, health visitors and school nurses

3.8 The assessment

The assessment consists of a general discussion about the young person's health and general well-being. There will be an opportunity for the young

person appropriate to their age and understanding to discuss any concerns or worries they may have.

All children and young people need to be present for their health assessment.

Parents and carers will be consulted but older young people and where it is deemed appropriate will be offered time to be seen alone.

3.9 During the assessment, advice and information may be given on:

- Child development
- Height and weight
- Emotional health
- Dental health and oral hygiene
- Vision and hearing
- Immunisations and health promotion
- Substance misuse
- Sexual health and relationships

Appointment times may vary in length, and will often dependant on need.

3.10 **After the assessment**

All looked after children are reviewed periodically throughout the year and health needs are reviewed and revised.

3.11 **Issues**

Timeliness of initial health assessments when all children come into care needed to improve.

Prior to Ofsted's visit in November 2019 a Review was undertaken of the Initial Health Assessment Process to identify blockages and issues preventing timely assessments:

- Process for arranging an Initial Assessment was complicated and difficult to fill in within required timescales.
- Consent to Initial Health Assessment not always sought at the time the child became looked after.
- Parents refusing consent to Initial Health Assessment.

3.12 Performance to date

Children looked after (IHA's)	Apr 19	May 19	Jun 19	Jul 19	Aug 19	Sep 19	Oct 19	Nov 19	Dec 19
Number of Initial Health Assessment completed	4	11	11	16	17	3	3	3	7
% Initial Health Assessment completed in timescale	25.0%	36.0%	9.0%	0.0%	5.0%	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%	71.0%

3.13 Actions taken to address identified issues

- Health assessments regularly discussed and actions identified at the Monthly LAC Health Steering Group.
- Weekly tracking meeting to discuss outstanding Initial Health Assessments.
- Live tracking sheet developed to identify timeliness or blockages at each stage of the process of Initial Assessments.
- Streamlining of paperwork to arrange Initial Health Assessments.
- Consent for Initial Health Assessments included in the consent for children looked after.
- Clear escalation process where delay identified.
- Flowchart developed in partnership with Health to support staff in arranging medicals.
- Meeting arranged at the end of February 2020 between Admin and Management in NELFT and Thurrock Social Care to identify further solutions.

3.14 Outcomes

Following the actions identified above being implemented there has been a significant improvement in the timeliness of assessments.

Where children are placed outside of the local authority area there have been recently emerging problems in organising Initial Assessments within timescales. This has been escalated within the CCG and arrangements made children to be brought back to Thurrock for their assessments.

- Communication between Social Care colleagues has improved.
- The actions taken to improve outcomes will continue to be monitored at the LAC Health Steering Group and the weekly tracking meeting to

scrutinise performance.

- The live database is being shared with Health colleagues.
- Timelessness is a key agenda item on the monthly management performance meeting.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 Members of the Committee are aware of Statutory Duty to complete Initial Assessments for all children and young people who come into care and how we are meeting these duties.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Consultation has been held with health in preparing this report.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 None

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Michelle Hall**
Management Accountant

There are no financial implications to this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsay Marks**
Principal Solicitor Children's Safeguarding

Local authorities have a duty to safeguard and to promote the welfare of the children they look after. Local authorities should make arrangements to ensure that every child who is looked after has:

- His/her health needs fully assessed;
- A health plan which clearly sets out how health needs identified in the assessment will be addressed, including intended outcomes for the child,
- Measurable objectives to achieve the outcome, actions needed to meet the objectives,
- The person responsible for each action and the timescales for achieving this; and
- His/her health plan reviewed.
- Local authorities should make plans at a strategic level to ensure local delivery of these arrangements and at an operational level to act as a parent and advocate for each child in their care.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Community Development Officer

The Service is committed to practice, which promotes inclusion and diversity, and will carry out its duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and related Codes of Practice and Anti-discriminatory policy.

7.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)**

- None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Brief Report of Ann Kavanagh – Designated Nurse LAC

Report Author:

Janet Simon
Strategic Lead – Children Looked After

IHA progress report for Corporate Parenting Committee.

NELFT (North East London Foundation Trust) are commissioned to provide the IHA's (Initial Health Assessment) for Basildon Brentwood and Thurrock. Within the past week it has come to the attention of the CCG that there are capacity challenges to undertake the IHA assessment of Thurrock children and this has been highlighted as a problem across a number of local authorities including Basildon Brentwood and Thurrock. This was raised to the Designated Nurse for Looked after Children, who promptly raised it the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and the Named Professional for Primary Care and the Commissioning lead for Thurrock. Following this, an early discussion was had with our Providers to review the possibility of having an extra clinic to clear the backlog of current IHA, this will be a temporary arrangement and in the interim regarding a long term plan, the CCG commissions and Providers plus senior managers within the CCG, will be discussing a future long term plans.

Problems with IHA are historical, so collectively across Essex we are in the early stages of discussing a central data base, which will be used a cross SET (Southend Essex and Thurrock) but please be advised this has not been agreed. The aim is to have one digital solution, which would show where the child is within the IHA pathway, this will be a live data base and have the ability to trace the child journey from when they come into care. The Designated Nurse for LAC has also arranged for the end of February 2020 for NELFT admin team and managers and Thurrock admin and management team for Social care, to meet to discuss if they feel there are any problems at admin level and if yes, how we can progress forward with a productive action plan.

Report End.

Ann Kavanagh

Designated Nurse LAC

Basildon Brentwood and Thurrock CCG.

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Work Programme

Committee: Corporate Parenting

Year: 2019/2020

Dates of Meetings: 4 June 2019, 10 September 2019, 7 January 2020 & 3 March 2020

Topic	Lead Officer	Requested by Officer/Member
4 June 2019		
Children's Social Care Performance	Janet Simon/Mandy Moore	Officers
Overview of Academic Year 2018/19	Keeley Pullen	Officers
Fostering and Adoption Statements of Purpose	Dan Jones	Officers
Fostering/Adoption Panel Reports	Dan Jones	Officers
Private fostering Annual report	Julia Sutton	Officers
Care Leavers Presentation	Michele Lucas	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
10 September 2019		
Sufficiency Placement	Sheila Murphy/Sue Green	Officers

Intensive Foster Carer Training Action Research	Keeley Pullen	Officers This item was deferred to the January meeting.
Looked After Children Pledge	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Local Offer for Care Leavers	Michele Lucas	Officers
Case Study's regarding how/why children come into our care	Janet Simon	Officers
Annual Report – IRO	Ruth Murdock	Officers
Corporate Parenting Committee – Annual Report 18/19	Shelia Murphy/Democratic Services Officer	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
7 January 2020		
Children's Social Care Performance	Jackie Groom	Officers
Ofsted Report Verbal Update or To Follow Report	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Annual Report of the Virtual Schools	Keeley Pullen	Officers
Intensive Foster Carer Training Action Research	Keeley Pullen	Officers
Head Start Housing	Michele Lucas	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item
3 March 2020		
Children's Social Care Performance	Sheila Murphy	Officers

Local Government Association: Support for Care Leavers; Resource Pack for Members, published January 2020	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Update on Ofsted Recommendation – Timeliness of Initial Health Assessments	Sheila Murphy	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services Officer	Standard Item

Clerk: Kenna-Victoria Healey

Last Updated: 21 February 2020

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