Notice of Meeting

CHILDREN’S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 8 February 2017 - 7:00 pm
Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Barking

Members: Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (Lead Member), Cllr Melanie Bartlett (Deputy Lead Member), Cllr Simon Bremner, Cllr Edna Fergus, Cllr Irma Freeborn, Cllr Syed Ghani, Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole and Cllr Danielle Smith

Co-opted Members (for education related matters):
Faith Representatives: Glenda Spencer (Roman Catholic Church) and Ingrid Robinson (Church of England)
Parent Governor Representatives: Ellen Grant (Primary) and 1 vacancy (Secondary)
Youth Representative: Rao Khan (Chair, BAD Youth Forum)

Date of publication: 26 January 2017

Chris Naylor
Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Masuma Ahmed
Tel. 020 8227 2756
E-mail: masuma.ahmed@lb bd.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

   In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 (Pages 3 - 7)

4. Social Care and Education Performance (Pages 9 - 18)

5. Children’s Services Finance Update (Pages 19 - 24)

6. Adoption Scorecard Performance 2013-2016 (Pages 25 - 45)

   This is the last planned item which relates to the Committee’s Scrutiny Review on
7. **Work Programme (Page 47)**

8. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

9. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

**Private Business**

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Children’s Services Select Committee, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). **There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.**

10. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**
Our Vision for Barking and Dagenham

One borough; one community; London’s growth opportunity

Encouraging civic pride

- Build pride, respect and cohesion across our borough
- Promote a welcoming, safe, and resilient community
- Build civic responsibility and help residents shape their quality of life
- Promote and protect our green and public open spaces
- Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child

Enabling social responsibility

- Support residents to take responsibility for themselves, their homes and their community
- Protect the most vulnerable, keeping adults and children healthy and safe
- Ensure everyone can access good quality healthcare when they need it
- Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential
- Fully integrate services for vulnerable children, young people and families

Growing the borough

- Build high quality homes and a sustainable community
- Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities
- Support investment in housing, leisure, the creative industries and public spaces to enhance our environment
- Work with London partners to deliver homes and jobs across our growth hubs
- Enhance the borough’s image to attract investment and business growth
MINUTES OF
CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 6 December 2016
(7:05 pm - 9:20 am)

Present: Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (Chair), Cllr Simon Bremner, Cllr Edna Fergus,
Cllr Irma Freeborn, Cllr Syed Ghani and Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole

Also Present: Rao Khan

Apologies: Cllr Danielle Smith

14. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2016 were confirmed as correct.

16. Presentations from representatives involved in the Adoption Process

The Chair welcomed members, officers and guests to the meeting and asked all those present to introduce themselves.

The Operational Director for Children’s Care and Support (ODCCS), stated that the Committee had commenced a scrutiny review on ‘Improving the Council's Adoption Scorecard Performance’ in September this year and included in the scope for the review were the presentations arranged for this meeting. The presentations would help the Committee answer the question of how the views and experience of others involved in the adoption process might help improve the Council’s practice, which partly formed the terms of reference of the scrutiny review.

The ODCCS stated that the presentations today would be delivered by Roy Stewart, the Independent Chair of the borough’s Adoption Panel, who had over ten years’ experience in the role, the Council’s Senior Solicitor for Safeguarding (SSS), the Group Manager for Looked After Children, Adoption and Prevention Services (GMLAC), who would present on family-finding and a Social Worker (SW) who would deliver a presentation on post-adoption services.

**Mr Stewart gave a presentation on the following issues:**

- Why have an adoption panel?
- Who is on the Panel?
- Independent members
- What does the Panel do?
- What does the Agency Decision Maker do?
- Other matters.
Members asked how often the Panel met and what factors it took into account when considering matching a child with a potential adoptive family. Mr Stewart stated that the Panel met once a month and that it would take all relevant factors into account, including the potential adoptive family’s ethnicity and cultural background. The government had changed the law so that there was no longer a requirement to match the child ethnically with the family. Whilst the Panel was not against transracial placements, it still placed importance on ensuring that the family would be able to support the child develop a strong sense of identity.

Members asked how members of the Panel were selected and what safeguards were in place to ensure they understood data protection requirements. Mr Stewart stated that the adoption agency (who in this case was the Council’s adoption service) advertised vacancies and recruited members to the Panel according to its policy. With regards to data protection, members were interviewed to check their understanding of the requirements of the role and also required to read and sign a confidentiality agreement. Furthermore, when Mr Roy met new members he talked them through issues such as where papers should be stored.

Members asked whether there were any examples of the Agency Decision Maker not agreeing with the Panel’s recommendation on a potential adoptive family for a child. The ODCCS, who is also the ADM, stated that she had never disagreed with the Panel’s recommendation whilst working for this authority; however, she had whilst working for another authority. She added that when she met with Mr Stewart, that their discussions included cases which involved areas of social work practice that could be improved.

Members asked who was on the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) panels (panels set up by the IRM to provide adoption applicants in England with the option of applying to ask for a review of the adoption agency’s decision not to approve them as adopters). Mr Stewart stated that the IRM had set up IRM panels to consider applications within certain areas, which would usually be similar in composition to adoption panels.

Daniel Agyei (Deputy Chair of the BAD Youth Forum) stated that in his view, transracial and cross cultural adoption placements could also be positive and asked whether the Adoption Panel should be more open to this view. Mr Stewart stated that this was an area of contention amongst academics, professionals, and the government so there was no straightforward answer. The government had changed the law because it believed children were waiting too long for an adoptive family, and it felt removing racial and cultural requirements would speed up the adoption process for some children. Mr Stewart believed that it was true that some social workers may have in the past been overzealous in matching children with families who were of the same race and/or culture; however, this was not the Panel’s approach as the Panel would look at the potential adoptive family’s overall ability to look after all the child’s needs. Having said this, providing a strong cultural identity was also a part of the child’s needs and the Panel would take this factor into account when making the recommendation to the ADM.

In response to a question, Mr Roy stated that four members of the Panel were lay people although some may have had previous experience of working in adoption or the adoption process.
The SSS delivered a presentation on:

- Changes in the way courts consider care cases;
  - The most important of these cases is Re. BS where the Court gave guidance that a care plan of adoption should only be endorsed if the Court was satisfied that “nothing else will do”.
- Guidance Issued by the Court of Appeal in 2015; and
- Where do we go from here?

Members asked the SSS whether there were cases in which the court appeared to be giving a preference for adoption to the child’s relative over a non-related but suitable potential adopter. The SSS stated that the courts would not grant adoption in favour of a non-related potential adopter over a member of the child’s extended family, without a social worker’s assessment, which included an assessment of how well the related person would meet the child’s needs. This could often lead to complicated circumstances as sometimes the relatives were willing to adopt the child but did not have a prior relationship with the child.

Members commented that whilst they understood why a birth parent may wish to appeal a decision that their child should be adopted, appeals cause delay, which is harmful to the child. The SSS stated that many adoption practitioners would agree; however, it was important to balance this consideration against the rights of the birth parents, given that a decision that the child should be adopted is of the most draconian action authorities can take. The SW stated that she had had a recent experience of birth parents appealing against the authority’s decision that the child be adopted, which would have led to the adoption placement breaking down, had it not been for the very high level of support put in place. Often the birth parents’ solicitor would advise them that they could appeal the authority’s decision, which can lead to a false sense of hope.

In response to comments, the SSS stated that this local authority always informs birth parents of each stage of the process, including in care proceedings. She stated that legal aid was now means tested to remove spurious claims for financial help from the system. Those not entitled to legal aid could represent themselves. Whilst this would not be suitable for all parents, as the adoption process and the court’s judgment was now much more transparent than previously, some birth parents could effectively represent themselves. In some cases, for example where a single mother has relinquished the care of her child, a court hearing may not be necessary, as long as she had had independent advice from the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. Parents may appeal at any stage up until the child has been placed with an adoptive family. In the last year 3.5 percent of cases were challenged and had resulted in the return of the child to the birth parents. In all cases the law states that the needs of the child are paramount. The GMLAC stated that throughout the process of bringing a child into local authority care, birth parents were aware that adoption may be an outcome and officers did advise the birth parents to get legal representation.

The SW stated that the Council offered counselling to birth parents who were faced with the prospect that their child may be adopted; however, take-up of this service was extremely low. The ODCCS stated that the authority did recognise the traumatic nature of having one’s child taken into care and adopted. She suggested that the Committee may wish to recommend as part of this review, that the
authority work with a programme called PAUSE which aimed to support women to stop having repeat births when it was clear that they would not be able to keep the child, for example, due to a serious addiction to drugs and/or alcohol.

The GMLAC delivered a presentation on family-finding which included:

- Where we look;
- Process once a family is identified; and
- The national context.

Members noted that previously the cost of purchasing an adopter from another authority could be reimbursed from central government; however, this had now changed which meant that the authority would be paying £27 000 to purchase an adopter if an in-house match could not be found. The reason for this was that local authorities used to be able to purchase out of borough adopters for approximately £9000 from other local authorities but if they wished to purchase from private or voluntary agencies, the cost was much higher. The Government set the price at £27 000 for purchasing an adopter from any agency to standardise the price.

In response to a question, Ms Tarbutt confirmed that publications aimed at prospective adopters, which included information on children who were looking to be adopted, were usually accessed through specialised websites which were password protected.

The SW delivered a presentation on Post-Adoption Support Services, which covered:

- The number of staff – one full time post and one part time;
- What post-adoption services are offered;
  - Intermediary Services;
  - Contact - indirect and direct (open adoptions);
  - Adoption preparation groups;
  - Professional meetings;
  - Birth parents support groups;
  - Assessment of need;
  - Supporting colleagues;
  - Providing advice to other professionals;
  - Birth counselling; and
- What the Adoption and Children Act 2002 says about post-adoption services.

Members noted that there was a low take-up by birth fathers of the offer to attend group support sessions. The SW stated that the service would be writing to birth fathers to find out the reasons for this and where possible, it would be implementing the feedback in the hope that this would increase take-up.

In response to questions, the SW confirmed that her team included only herself and her colleague who was part-time, which meant that their workload was extremely challenging. This was further exacerbated by the removal of a business support officer role. Members felt strongly that they wished to make a recommendation to Cabinet that the shortage in resources in the post adoption support team should be addressed. Members asked the SW whether an
apprentice or student looking for a placement would help reduce the workload, to
which the SW responded that this would not be of help as these people would
need support themselves; what was needed was an experienced social worker to
help ease the pressures of the workload.

Members asked whether children who had been with one foster carer for a long
period of time were encouraged to keep contact with them after they had been
adopted. The SW stated that it would depend on what was best for the child.
Usually some form of contact would be maintained through, for example, emails
and phone, but it would not usually take place in the child’s new or old home as it
could give them confusing messages. Some children wish to meet their foster
carer which is encouraged only after they have settled in, which could take up to a
year.

Members asked the GMLAC to describe what usually took place on an Adoption
Activity Day which aimed to find families for children in care. The GMLAC stated
that only children aged four years and above took part in Activity Days, which
usually took place in a large hall, with various activities set up for children of
different ages and abilities. Potential adopters could move from one area to the
next to watch the children play and talk to them. The children’s foster carers and
social workers were also there and every effort was made to ensure the day was
enjoyable for the children and the potential adopters; for example, one year the
children were in fancy dress.

In response to a questions the SW stated that there was a photocopying charge
for adults who had been adopted as children requiring the Council’s help to contact
their birth family and that many families who adopted did keep the Council aware
of changes in address and would get in touch for support if they felt there may be a
potential breakdown in the relationship with the adopted child, further down the
line. The ODCCS stated the Council would have to accept the decision of families
who did not wish to remain in contact with the Council.

17. Work Programme for remaining meetings in 2016/17

Councillor Freeborn queried whether the agenda item on Child Sexual Exploitation
that had been scheduled for the 20 March 2017 meeting could be moved to the
meeting on 8 February 2017. The Chair referred to an informal meeting of the
Committee on 25 October 2016, during which members agreed to move this item
from the agenda of the 8 February 2017 meeting to the agenda for the 20 March
2017 meeting, on the request of officers as Child Sexual Exploitation week would
be held just prior to the 20 March meeting, and they wish to include information on
the activity of that week in the paper.

The Work Programme was noted.
Summary:
This report provides the Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC) with an overview and analysis of the latest performance trends in the Children’s Care and Support and Education portfolio areas. The report aims to bring to the Cabinet Member’s attention those key performance indicators that have been flagged as areas of concern, for example, indicators that are RAG rated Amber or Red (middle and lower quartile position) to support the development of the Committee’s work programme for 2017/18. The report does not provide a commentary for performance indicators that are performing well (RAG rated Green).

The performance indicators reported on in this report represent the headline measures across statutory social care and education standards, including post 16 performance outcomes reported to senior management and Portfolio Lead Members.

Alongside the performance commentary are two data appendices; Appendix 1 (Care and Support performance dashboard) and Appendix 2 (the education performance dashboard comprising of the headline education measures). The figures in this report relate to 2016 for education performance and performance as at the end of November 2016/17 for social care.

Recommendation(s)
The Children’s Services Select Committee is recommended to:

(i) Note content of the performance report;
(ii) Develop a work programme based on the performance report and appended datasets.

Reason(s)
As above. The CSSC has requested a Children’s Services performance report to assist with the development of a scrutiny work programme for 2017/18.
1. Introduction and Background

1.1 This report provides the Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC) with an overview and analysis of the latest performance trends in the Children’s Care and Support and Education portfolio areas.

1.2 The performance report aims to bring to the Cabinet Member’s attention to those indicators that have been flagged as areas of concern and risk i.e. indicators RAG rated Amber and Red (middle and lower quartile position) to support the development of the Committee’s work programme for 2017/18.

1.3 The performance indicators reported on in this report represent the headline performance metrics across statutory social care and education standards and participation, including post 16 performance outcomes.

1.4 Alongside the performance commentary are two data appendices; Appendix 1 - the local care and support performance dashboard, comprising of key performance indicators reported on in social care. The figures in this report relate to end of November 2016 for social care and 2016 results for education performance – the latest data available.

1.5 Current performance frameworks are in place for children’s performance indicators and, where relevant, are presented at existing Boards and senior management meetings. These are:

- Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board (B&DSCB) quarterly performance dataset;
- The Children’s Trust receives performance datasets and reports across priority areas;
- Looked after children quarterly dataset presented at the Corporate Parenting Group, which meets bimonthly; this dataset provides a comprehensive profile of looked after children and care leavers and reports on adoption;
- Education Improvement Board – a sub-group of the Children’s Trust responsible for monitoring and reporting on education standards, participation, post 16 outcomes and school inspection outcomes;
- Corporate Performance Group (quarterly);
- Portfolio leads monthly performance meetings; and
- Senior management monthly meetings in social care and education.

2. Performance Overview

2.1 For each indicator, where data is available, a performance status has been applied and takes the form of a R/A/G assessment. In each case, the assessment has been made based upon performance in relation to a quartile analysis on latest available benchmark position (National), as well as progress to target. For each indicator, a direction of travel arrow is provided to note improvement or decline in performance.

2.2 There are many areas of good performance (RAG rated Green) apparent in the Care and Support and Education performance dataset. However, this performance report is not focusing on areas which are performing well (RAG rated Green). This report
provides a commentary on key performance indicators currently RAG rated Amber and Red and, therefore, a cause of concern for the Local Authority. This approach has been taken for the CSSC to inform the development of a scrutiny work programme that is focused on priority areas in need of consideration or detailed scrutiny.

Performance Commentary

Social Care

2.3 The following indicators are currently RAG rated Amber (middle quartile position) based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be a cause for close monitoring. However, it is important to note the direction of travel as many of those indicators are improving.

- **Timeliness of assessments (45 days):** The timeliness of assessments is now monitored in terms of a statutory assessment to be completed within 45 days. 71% of statutory social care assessments were completed within 45 days in the year to date up to November 2016/17, a 1% increase on last month. Performance remains below the year end 2015/16 performance of 76%, and our target of 80%. Performance is RAG rated amber based on direction of travel and progress to target (10% within target set at 80%).

- **Number and rate of children on child protection plans:** The number of children on child protection plans decreased by 1 to 254 in November 2016. The rate per 10,000 remains at 42. This is below the national rate (43) and the statistical neighbours rate (49) but above the London rate (38).

- **Percentage of Core Groups within timescale:** November data shows an increase from 85% to 92% (225/244) of Child Protection Core Groups completed in time. This compares to 84% at year-end 2015/16. Performance needs to increase to over 95% to be in line with target.

- **Percentage of ceased child protection plans lasting 2 years or more:** This performance indicator measures children ceasing to be the subject of child protection plan during the year who had been the subject of the plan for two years or more. 12 children (6.1%) were de-planned in the year to November who had been on a plan for 2 years or more and performance is just above the local target of up to 5%.

- **Number and rate of looked after children:** The number of children looked after decreased from 423 to 412 in November. The rate per 10,000 is now 68, a similar position to our year end 2015/16 figure (69). The borough still has however, a higher rate of looked after children per 10,000 compared to London and nationally, but is in line with similar areas.

- **% of school age looked after children with an up to date Personal Education Plan (PEP):** As at the end of November 2016/17, 95% (228/241) of school aged looked after children had an up to date PEP compared to 92% in October. Performance has improved year-on-year over the last five years and we are just short of our target set at over 95%. National data is not published for PEPs so benchmark data is not available.

- **% of care leavers in suitable accommodation (at age 19, 20 & 21 from 2014):** November performance has decreased by 1% to 76% (129 out of 169) of care
leavers living in suitable accommodation. Performance remains below London, national and statistical neighbour averages. It is important to note that of the 40 care leavers not in suitable accommodation, 8 are in Prison and 32 are not engaging with the Council.

(Accommodation is regarded as suitable if it provides safe, secure, and affordable provision for young people. It would generally include short-term accommodation designed to move young people on to stable long-term accommodation, but would exclude emergency accommodation used in a crisis.)

- **Percentage of children looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years during the year**: November 2016/17 performance increased to 64% compared to 62% in the previous month. We remain 4% lower than the local target set of 68% and RAG rated Amber.

- **Child Protection visits completed in 4 weeks**: Monitoring and reporting is now on 4 weekly child protection visits and our target is 100%. As at the end of November 2016/17, 95% of child protection visits were completed in 4 weeks, a decrease on the October figure of 98%. All managers across the division have been set a target of 100% for 4 weekly child protection visits.

2.4 The following indicators are currently RAG rated Red (lower quartile position) based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be a cause for concern.

- **Looked after Children with up to date Health Checks**: At the end of November 2016/17, 72% of looked after children in care for a year or more had an up to date health check compared to 77% last month. Despite this decline, performance is predicted to increase to 90% by end of year.

**Education**

2.5 The following education indicators are currently banded as quartile C (RAG rated Amber) based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be closely close monitored. However, it is important to note the direction of travel as many of those indicators are improving and in quartile A (RAG rated green) for progress.

- **EYFS Good Level of Development**: In 2016, 69.8% of children in the borough reached a good level of development, a 2-percentage point increase from 2015. Performance remains above the national and statistical neighbour picture of 69.3% and 68% respectively. Although the gap has narrowed with London, performance is below the London average of 71.2%. Based on 2016 performance, the borough is in quartile B.

- **Key Stage 2 test results**: In 2016, 65% of pupils achieved the expected standard or above in Reading at KS2, 1 percentage point below national and in quartile C. Attainment for Reading is also below London average of 69% but above statistical neighbours. The borough’s 2016 average scaled score is also above national for maths and GPS (both in quartile B) but below for Reading.

---

1 Greenwich, Newham, Enfield, Waltham Forest, Birmingham, Coventry, Manchester, Luton, Slough and Nottingham.)
GCSEs: 2016 sees the introduction of some significant changes to national performance measures. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C including English and maths as the headline indicator has been removed and replaced by A*-C in English and maths. Other key performance measures are the percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate, Progress 8 and Attainment 8. In 2016, Barking and Dagenham is above the national for each GCSE measure, apart from performance in the EBacc and is also in Quartile C for each measure.

A*-C English & Maths: The provisional headline results for the borough at A*-C English and maths shows a good improvement on 2015 with a 3.8% rise to 59.5%. This reverses last year’s dip and is a result of all the schools improving on their 2015 performance (ELUTEC is reporting for the first time in 2016). Attainment for 2016 is above the national average (58.7%), in line with statistical neighbours (59.9%), but below the London average of 65.9%. Based on 2016 performance, the borough’s performance is in quartile C (RAG rated Amber).

Average Progress 8 Score: In 2016, the Local Authority average score of 0.16 is above the overall national value of 0 and in line with London (0.16). This can be interpreted as every LBBD pupil achieving one whole grade better for every 8 GCSEs taken when comparing performance with students with the same prior attainment at KS2. Average Attainment 8 Score: The LA average attainment 8 score is 49.6, above national and statistical neighbours, but just below the London average score of 51.7. 2016 performance is in quartile C.

% English Baccalaureate (EBacc): The percentage of pupils achieving the EBacc rose in 2016 to 22.1%, despite the national figure remaining steady at 22.8%. Despite improvement, performance remains below similar areas (23.8%) and around 10% below London. The LA is in quartile C but progress is in the top quartile A.

Average point score per entry A Level Cohort (New): From 2016, new measures related to APS per entry have been reported by the DfE and are, therefore, not comparable with previous years. In 2016, the average point score per entry A level cohort is 28.8, lower than national and London. Although the average point score per entry for best 3 A levels is lower when compared to all benchmarks, this equates to a grade C+ on average for A levels taken for pupils in Barking and Dagenham, nationally, London and similar areas. 2016 performance is also in quartile band C.

2.6 The following indicators are currently in quartile band D and RAG rated Red based on our latest position and are, therefore, considered to be a cause for concern:

- % 16-17 year olds participating in education and training: Participation has improved to 90.4% of 16-17 year olds in education and training in 2015 compared
to 89% in 2014 and 85% in 2013. As at the end of Q1 2016/17, the proportion has remained at 90.4%. Participation levels remain below the national average of 91.5% and our current performance falls in the lower quartile position (ranked 120th). London participation rates are also higher at 92.2%, but we are in line with our statistical neighbours.

- **The percentage of 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) or who have Unknown Destinations (new DfE measure):** This measure was introduced on 1 September 2016. The annual published measure is an average taken between November and January of each year (Q3/4). In 2013, the borough’s Nov-Jan NEET and Unknown average was poor at 13.7% against the national average of 8.2%. Since 2013, performance has improved at a faster rather than other East London boroughs and national, with the 2015 figure sitting at 8.5% against 7.1% nationally. The DfE has published new NEET scorecards based on the annual published figure Nov-Jan average 2015/16 and LBBD is in the 5th quintile (RAG rated Red). Current performance still places performance more than 10% away from target as at end of Q3 (8.2%) but the rate of improvement is continuing and, if it continues at this pace, performance will be in line or close to the national average. The November 2016 combined NEET and Unknown figure for 16 and 17 year olds figure was 7.8% and in December 2016 the figure dropped to 7.2%. We, therefore, fully anticipate that that we will be within 10% of the national target once our November-January average data is published and RAG rated Amber.

**Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:**

None.

**List of appendices:**

- Appendix 1 – The Children’s Care and Support Performance Dataset; and
- Appendix 2 – The Education Performance Dataset
## Appendix 1: Care and Support Performance Dataset - 2016/17

### Key
- **Data unavailable** - due to reporting frequency; performance indicator being new for the period or no longer collected/published
- **Data unavailable as not yet due or published yet**
- **Data missing and requires updating**
- **Provisional/awaiting confirmation**

*Please note that all end of year Social Care figures remain provisional at this stage and are subject to change. SG = Safeguarding. NC = No colour*

### INDICATOR DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. no.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Q1 2016/17</th>
<th>Q2 2016/17</th>
<th>October 2016/17</th>
<th>November 2016/17</th>
<th>DoT (compared to previous month)</th>
<th>RAG Status</th>
<th>BENCHMARKING</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The number of Common Assessment Frameworks / Family Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs/FCAFs) initiated (includes step down cases to early help)</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Local Measure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Percentage of children referred to social care with a CAF in place</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** CAF indicators are produced quarterly, not monthly, for BDSCB. In Q2, 15% (74 out of 505) of children subject to a social care referral had a CAF in place comparable with Q1 figure against a target of 25%. The Q2 data comprises of 32 children with an actual open CAF (6.3%) and 42 (8.3%) that had a CAF previously but now closed. *(KPI3 relates to TF2 and will be a rolling figure as at the end of each month.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. no.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Q1 2016/17</th>
<th>Q2 2016/17</th>
<th>October 2016/17</th>
<th>November 2016/17</th>
<th>DoT (compared to previous month)</th>
<th>RAG Status</th>
<th>BENCHMARKING</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Number of families turned around - have met all the outcomes on their outcome plan and have shown significant and sustained improvement (rolling figure) (TF2)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** This indicator measures the number of families turnaround as part of Troubled families programme (TF2) in terms of claims accepted by the TF Data Team and LBBD auditing process. Once approved claims are submitted to DCLG for PBR payment. This indicator is reported on a rolling basis. As at end of November 2016, total accepted claims increased in total to 450 (covers 15/16 and 16/17). Total number of claims in 16/17 financial year is 275 against target of 500 - RAG rated red based on progress to date.

### Social Care - Contacts, Referrals and Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. no.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Q1 2016/17</th>
<th>Q2 2016/17</th>
<th>October 2016/17</th>
<th>November 2016/17</th>
<th>DoT (compared to previous month)</th>
<th>RAG Status</th>
<th>BENCHMARKING</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Number of Contacts received in Children’s Social Care Service</td>
<td>8475</td>
<td>8856</td>
<td>8515</td>
<td>11393</td>
<td>2199</td>
<td>2118</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>790</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Local Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rate of Contacts received in Children’s Social Care per 10,000 children (aged 0-17)</td>
<td>1540.0</td>
<td>1553.0</td>
<td>1494.0</td>
<td>1928.0</td>
<td>364.2</td>
<td>350.8</td>
<td>108.3</td>
<td>130.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Local Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Number of referrals to Children’s Social Care Service</td>
<td>2586</td>
<td>3126</td>
<td>4084</td>
<td>3215</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>223</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Local Measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Number of referrals to Children’s Social Care Service per 10,000 children (aged 0-17)</td>
<td>470.0</td>
<td>558.0</td>
<td>691.0</td>
<td>544.0</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>532.0 - 700.0 - 491.0 In line national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Percentage of contacts going on to referral</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Percentage of children subject to a repeat referral</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>22.0% - 19.0% - 16.0% &lt;20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Number and % of children coming into care under Police Protection Orders</td>
<td>106 (44%)</td>
<td>134 (43%)</td>
<td>69 (25%)</td>
<td>54 (24%)</td>
<td>11 (21%)</td>
<td>11 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
<td>13.7% - 20.6% - 20.3% In line with London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Percentage of Assessments completed within 45 working days</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>83.0% - 83.0% - 82.0% - 80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Children subject to a Child Protection Plan per 10,000</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>In line London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Percentage of 6 weekly Child Protection Visits in timescale*</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>95.4%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>97.9%</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>&gt;95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Percentage of 4 weekly Child Protection Visits in timescale</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Percentage of Core Groups within timescale</td>
<td>98.8%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Percentage of Child Protection Plan reviews held in timescales</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10%-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>&lt;5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** CP visits are measured 4 weekly from August 2015 and the end of year outturn is 86%. Monthly data for 2016/17 will be provided for 4 weekly visits not 6 weekly visits. This indicator is not published nationally.

**Looked after Children Key Indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Number of children in care</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Rate of children in care per 10,000</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Percentage of children looked after with three or more placements during the year ending 31 March</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Percentage of children looked after in the same placement for at least 2 years during the year ending 31 March</td>
<td>74.8%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Looked after children cases that were reviewed within required timescales</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>97.5%</td>
<td>96.2%</td>
<td>95.7%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>91.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>% of school age LAC with an up to date PEP (last 6 months)</td>
<td>74.8%</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>90.2%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>&gt;95.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Looked After Children with up to date Health Checks (in care for one year or more)</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>% of care leavers in employment, education or training (aged 19 -21)</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>% of care Leavers - Suitable Accommodation (at age 19, 20 &amp; 21 from 2014)</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
<td>76.7%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 2: Education Performance Dataset - 2016/17

**Key**
- Data unavailable - due to reporting frequency; performance indicator being new for the period or no longer collected/published
- Data unavailable as not yet due or published yet
- Data missing and requires updating
- Provisional/awaiting confirmation

#### INDICATOR DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good level of development</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>England Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>89.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Writing (Teach Assess from 2012)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>RWM %</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Reading (average scaled score)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102.0</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>102.0</td>
<td>103.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Maths (average scaled score)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>104.0</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>104.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>GPS (average scaled score)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>104.0</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>105.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## GCSE or equivalent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>S+ A*-C inc Eng &amp; Maths</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>52.8% 54.0% 59.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>A* A Eng &amp; Maths</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>58.7% 59.9% 65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Average Progress 8 Score (new GCSE Headline Measure)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
<td>..</td>
<td>0.00 0.03 0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Average Attainment 8 Score (new GCSE Headline Measure)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>48.2 49.1 51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>% English Baccalaureate (Ebacc)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>22.8 23.8 31.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** The new education measures reported on from 2016 are A*-C English and maths and Attainment 8 and Progress 8.

## GCE/A Level/Level 3 Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>APS per pupil (all quals) - Discontinued</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>682.7</td>
<td>655.7</td>
<td>669.4</td>
<td>643.4</td>
<td>641.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>717.8 682.5 694.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>APS per entry (all quals) - Discontinued</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>214.8</td>
<td>203.2</td>
<td>211.1</td>
<td>211.4</td>
<td>212.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>215.9 209.8 213.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Average point score per entry A Level Cohort (New)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>31.5 28.7 30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Average point score per entry - Best 3 A Levels (New)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>34.6 32.4 33.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Post-16 Participation in Education, Training & Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>% 16-18 yr olds Not in Education/ Employment/ Training (NEET) - Discontinued</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>4.2% 4.6% 3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>% 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) or who have Unknown Destinations (new measure)</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>7.1% 9.1% 7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>% 16-17 year olds participating in education and training</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>91.5% 90.1% 93.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** NEETs and Unknowns will be reported and published as a joint figure for Year 12 and 13 (academic age 16 and 17) only - new DfE measure. Annual published data is the Nov-Jan average in each year i.e. Nov 2015, Dec 2015 and Jan 2016. Quarterly data provided is a quarterly average in the year i.e. Q3 is Oct, Nov and Dec average.

## School Inspection Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>% of schools rated as good or outstanding</td>
<td>Rolling</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>89.0% 89.0% 93.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:** School inspections have commenced in the new academic year 2016/17. As at the end of December, 90% of schools are rated good or outstanding in LBBD, a further increase on end of August position. Benchmark data relates to 31st March 2016.
Summary

This report provides an update on the financial position of Children’s Services in particular the successful action taken this year to address the long-standing pressures and the risks and issues that remain going forward. It will also provide an update on Education funding for Barking and Dagenham.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is recommended to note the:

(i) Continued demand and demographic pressures facing Children’s Care and Support Services;

(ii) Impact of the action taken this year to address those pressures; and

(iii) Remaining risks and issues for the service including those relating to Schools and Education funding.

Reason

The CSSC requested this report as part of its 2016/17 Work Programme.
significant part of the overall budget. The Children’s Care and Support budget for 2016/17 is £48.573m of which £39.172 is the Operational Service and a further £4.4m of Council budget is spent on Education, Youth and Childcare Services. In addition the borough receives around £250m Dedicated Schools Grant.

1.2 The under 18 population has been growing steadily over recent years and this demographic pressure together with the high level of need in the borough and other issues has resulted in the slow build up of financial pressures in the Care and Support service in particular. This lead to a very significant overspend being forecast for the service in 2015/16. It was recognised by the service and the Council as a whole that the scale of these challenges required a formal programme approach to ensure that the pressures could be fully addressed.

1.3 The Social Care Ambition and Financial Efficiency (SAFE) programme was therefore established and provided with management and business analysis capacity to support the Operational Director and her service managers.

1.4 This approach has been successful and the pressures within the service have been contained and a significant level of savings have been found. This is expected to result in a forecast outturn position of £2.75m for Children’s Care and Support Operations. In addition, savings have also been found within Children’s Care and Support Commissioning that will further reduce this forecast to an overall position of £2.1m. However, this service is by nature inherently high risk and will continue to require close monitoring and strong management.

1.5 The borough’s education funding will also be affected in the medium term by wider changes to the national funding system. These changes are not currently expected to be as bad as the most pessimistic forecasts suggested but they will still present challenges for local schools and related services. This report provides an update based on the latest information released by the Department of Education.

2. **2016/17 Children’s Care and Support Budget**

2.1 The Children’s Care and Support budget for 2016/17 is £48.573m of which £39.172 is the Operational Budget. A full budget risk assessment was carried out for this service in February 2016 (i.e. before the beginning of the current financial year) and this revealed a potential outturn variance of £9.5m of which £9.0m was within Operations. The main drivers of this variance were identified as including:

- High demand for services at all levels of need (that is Children in Need, Child Protection and Looked After)
- High numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and families with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- High cost of some placements especially residential placements (the number of such placements is fairly small but these can be very high cost.)
- Dependency on agency staffing paid at higher rates than permanent social work staff.

2.2 The SAFE programme therefore working with Service Managers put in place a range of actions to tackle these issues while still maintaining the safety and quality of the service. This resulted in a savings programme of £5.9m that was agreed by Finance and budget holders to be robust and realistic. The budget was set on this
basis so that if managers delivered fully on the savings programme there would be no variance on the individual budget lines. This left a budget gap of £3.1m which was held centrally within Children’s Services. Effectively this meant that the service began the year with a forecast of this level of variance.

2.3 The savings programme was made up of 23 initiatives that can be grouped into six main themes:
   - Review of high cost placements for Looked After Children
   - Young People’s Housing Options
   - Review of care packages for Disabled Children
   - A new approach to Families with No Recourse to Public Funds
   - Children In Need Case Reduction and consequent staff restructure (no savings expected in 2016/17 but this will contribute £250k to the 2017/18 savings)
   - Recruiting and Retaining Permanent Staff

2.4 Throughout the year Service Managers worked with the programme team and others to deliver the actions set out in the SAFE plan. Progress against the plan was closely monitored and the overall plan was reviewed in August. This review showed that the savings on the first four measures were being achieved and the first group was in fact over achieved. At that point there was little progress on the sixth group. The review of the plan resulted in a change in the targets set for each project and an overall reduction in the in year savings target of £0.5m

2.5 However, in addition to the specific actions in the plan there has also been a visible improvement in the strength and consistency of financial management within the service linked to the existence of a more stable permanent service management team. This resulted in the delivery of around £1m cost reductions in other aspects of the budget – most notably in the services provided under section 17 and section 20 of the Children’s Act to Children in Need.

2.6 The net result therefore is a forecast outturn variance for Children’s Care and Support Operations of £2.7m as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Children’s Care and Support Operations – Forecast Outturn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>2016-17 Budget</th>
<th>2016-17 Forecast</th>
<th>Current 2016-17 Variance</th>
<th>2016-17 Further Savings</th>
<th>2016-17 Final Projected Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£'000</td>
<td>£'000</td>
<td>£'000</td>
<td>£'000</td>
<td>£'000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Staffing</td>
<td>15,283</td>
<td>16,896</td>
<td>1,613</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placements</td>
<td>22,565</td>
<td>20,636</td>
<td>-1,929</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1,928</td>
<td>2,177</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRPF</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UASC</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>-129</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unattributed savings/ funding gap¹</td>
<td>-3,148</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,148</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total C&amp;S Operations</td>
<td>39,172</td>
<td>42,114</td>
<td>2,942</td>
<td>-192</td>
<td>2,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Unattributed savings/ funding gap
2.7 As the table shows, in addition to the inherent £3.15m budget gap there is an underspend within the placements budget (where the saving is being overachieved) and an overspend within the staffing budget (where the saving has not yet been achieved) and in Transport. Furthermore, the budget shows only the in year impact of the savings initiatives. The SAFE team estimate the full year effect of the savings to be an additional £2.4m above this. It would therefore follow that when the staffing saving is achieved in full the inherent budget gap should reduce to in the region of £0.3m to £0.5m.

2.8 A note of caution is necessary as the staffing saving has not yet been achieved. To achieve all the organisation related savings, we are reliant on replacing agency staff with permanent staff. This has been, and remains, far from straightforward due to the shortage of experienced social workers and competition within the market. Several mitigating actions to address this issue are being worked on, and these include: ensuring our offer is competitive; reducing caseloads; running a dedicated recruitment marketing campaign; re-designing our branding and launching a social media campaign; re-invigorating our pipeline of student and newly qualified social workers; streamlining our recruitment and onboarding processes and enhancing our training and development opportunities. It may not be the case therefore that the service begins next year with this saving fully achieved and the budget pressure will persist until this happens.

2.9 It must also be remembered that this is a demand led service that will always be exposed to changes in population size, external need pressures and market forces. The service’s priority must always be to safeguard the most vulnerable children and this may from time to time result in financial pressures that must be managed safely. The Council must therefore continue to closely monitor both demand and service cost and act on early warnings of pressure.

3. Children’s Services in the Medium Term Financial Strategy

3.1 As set out in the MTFS report to Cabinet in November the Council is embarking on a programme of ambitious change to address the financial pressures it will face over the next four years. A key part of this is the creation of a Community Solutions service to provide Early Intervention, Advice and Prevention to support Families at an early stage and so avoid later demands on the statutory services. This is expected over the long term to provide benefits for Children’s Services. This will also need to be carefully monitored.

3.2 In 2017/18 Children’s Care and Support are required to make savings of £0.49m. These will be found from a restructure of part of the service and savings in commissioning and placements. These savings will build on the successes of the SAFE programme including the reduction in numbers of Children in Need.

4. Education Funding

4.1 The Department of Education is in the process of a large scale reform of Education Funding which will have long lasting impacts on all schools in the country. The main source of funding for 5-16 Education in Schools, provision for students with High Needs and Childcare for 2, 3, and 4 year olds are three blocks of the
ringfenced Dedicated Schools Grant. All three blocks are being reviewed in linked but separate reviews.

4.2 The Early Years Block funds 15 hours of free education and childcare for eligible two year olds and all three and four year olds. Funding is allocated to Local Authorities for distribution to local providers according to a local formula. This system will continue but the government has reviewed the funding distribution between local areas which was previously highly variable and based on historic factors rather than current need. This review has been very favourable to Barking and Dagenham as this area has been underfunded compared with other London Boroughs. Funding has increased by £2.5m. This will be passed onto providers in the form of a much increased hourly rate.

4.3 However, there are new restrictions introduced on the level of funding that can be retained centrally by Local Authorities. For LBBD this means a reduction from £1.67m to a maximum of £1.081m in 2017/18 and £0.77m in 2018/19. The Council is therefore reviewing the services formerly funded from this pot.

4.4 The High Needs Block has also been historically underfunded in Barking and Dagenham. The allocation for 2017/18 has been increased by the government resulting in a net effective increase of just over £1m. The DfE has recently opened the second stage of a consultation on a new formula for allocating this funding to Local Authorities. The consultation suggests that the formula should be favourable to Barking and Dagenham as it will better recognise the rising school age population and levels of need in the area. If the consultation figures are fully implemented eventually this should result in an increase of around £4.7m – however any increase will be phased in over a number of years. The first year increase would be £0.7m. This increase is welcome but the block will need very careful managing as there is a risk that needs will continue to increase at a faster rate than the funding change.

4.5 Of course the largest element of the DSG is the Schools Block. The DfE are proposing to introduce a fixed national funding formula removing all scope for local flexibility. The second stage of consultation on the National Funding Formula (NFF) was announced just before Christmas. The impact of the NFF as set out in the consultation is less severe than had been feared. London schools have seen their funding reduce on average but the loss has been limited to a maximum of 3% and for Barking and Dagenham this is partly offset by high allocations for deprivation and other needs factors.

4.6 The DfE have published illustrative values for all schools in the country using the proposed formula but 2016/17 data. It must be recognised that these figures can be indicative only as the data used will change. On this illustration basis, primary schools in LBBD will all lose some funding – mostly in the region of 2% to 3% once the formula is fully implemented. Transitional protection will apply and so in the first year the loss is capped at 1.4% per school. However, secondary schools would gain between 0.2% (Barking Abbey) and 5.7% (The Warren, Sydney Russell) eventually, although in the first year this will be limited by the cap.

4.7 It should be noted that the difference in outcome seems to be driven by the high level of need indicators in the secondary schools such as deprivation and low prior attainment. This means that if there are changes to these factors then secondaries
too could see reductions in funding. It is also still at the consultation stage and may change based on the responses received by the DfE.

4.8 However, the biggest issue for Schools funding as a whole is that the Government has only provided cash protection to the budget overall. This means that Schools have absorbed or will need to absorb the following costs with no additional funding:

- Increase in employers National Insurance contributions
- Introduction of apprenticeship levy
- Teachers and other staff Pay awards
- Energy and other costs inflation.

This amounts to a significant real terms cut for all schools even those that appear to be gaining in cash terms.

4.9 On the whole, schools in Barking and Dagenham are managing their budgets well and some have substantial surpluses. However, the next few years will be more challenging for them.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 This is a finance update and so the financial implications are set out in the main body of this report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 Local Authorities are required by law to set a balanced budget for each financial year. During the year there is an ongoing responsibility to monitor spending and ensure the finances continue to be sound. This does mean as a legal requirement there must be frequent reviews of spending and obligation trends so that timely intervention can be made

7. Other Implications – Safeguarding Children –

7.1 This report provides an update on Children’s Services finance and the progress made in addressing the financial pressures. The Council does aim to reduce costs where possible but will also continue to have the safeguarding of vulnerable children as a priority.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

None.

List of appendices:

None.
Summary:
This report and appendices summarise the performance in relation to the Adoption Scorecard between 2013-2016 (3-year rolling performance).

It highlights the reasons for delay in placing children for adoption and summarises the needs of each of the 66 children who are on this Scorecard. In addition, it highlights the actions being taken to address delay, the impact on performance of the children due to go onto the Scorecard, and the needs of the children we are currently family finding for.

Recommendation(s)
The Children's Services Select Committee (CSSC) is recommended to:

(i) Note the performance that will be reported in the Barking and Dagenham Adoption Scorecard for 2013 – 2016.
(ii) Note this report, which will form part of the evidence for the Committee’s deep dive scrutiny on adoption timeliness and will assist with any recommendations arising.

Reason(s)
The CSSC is undertaking an in-depth review, a ‘deep dive’, into the timeliness of adoption for children. This report addresses some of the questions that have arisen during the review and is part of the evidence that will inform the final report, it’s conclusions and recommendations.

1. Introduction and Background
1.1 The CSSC opted to undertake a deep dive scrutiny of the timeliness of adoption performance following the 2013 - 2015 LBBD Adoption Scorecard not meeting government recommended timescales. CSSC have been provided with
This report summarises the performance issues within the 2013 – 2016 Adoption Scorecard which is imminently due to be published by the Department for Education (DfE). It should be noted that performance has further deteriorated from the 2012 – 2015 Scorecard. The reasons for the decline in performance and the complexities of this work are highlighted in the report and appendices.

Recommendations for the future direction of the Adoption Service and how the Council can assist with adoption performance will be summarised by the CSSC at the end of the scrutiny review process.

2. Performance Overview of Adoption Scorecard

2.1 **A1 - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)**

Our rolling three-year average for 2012-15 as published in the adoption scorecard is 658 days, 171 days above the Department for Education (DfE) performance threshold of 487 days and 40 days above the London three-year average of 618 days. Barking and Dagenham’s performance is in line with our statistical neighbours with a three-year average of 655 days.

In 2013 -16 our three-year rolling average has increased to 721 – which is 295 above the DfE threshold of 426 days. Comparator information for 2013-2016 will be published within the next month.

2.2 **A2 - Average time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family**

Our rolling three-year average for 2012-15 as published in the adoption scorecard is 236 days, 115 days above the DfE performance threshold of 121 days, and 31 days above the London three-year average of 205 days. Barking and Dagenham’s performance is better than our statistical neighbours that have a three-year average of 250 days.

In 2013 -16 our three-year rolling average has increased to 309 days – which is 188 above the DfE threshold of 121 days. Comparator information for 2013-2016 will be published within the next month.

The deterioration in performance for 2013 – 2016 is not unexpected and was raised in earlier reports including to the Council’s Corporate Performance Group on 18th May.
2016. The DfE raised concern about Barking and Dagenham’s performance for 2012–2015 and invited the former Director of Children’s Services and senior managers to a meeting on 12 June 2016 to discuss the reasons for the performance. Following the meeting, the Secretary of State, Edward Timpson, wrote to Anne Bristow, Director of Children’s Services, acknowledging the commitment of the Council to adoption as an outcome for children. The anticipated deterioration in performance was also noted. Please see Appendix 2, Letter from Secretary of State, Edward Timpson, 8 September 2016.

2.3 **What are the key factors which have contributed to the 2013-2016 under performance?**

- Lengthy delays in care proceedings due to the Courts requesting further assessments of family members and difficulties in obtaining dates for cases to be heard at Court due to the demand for hearings.

- A delay from the submission of social workers reports and other legal paperwork to our Legal Department and the lodging of the application.

- A delay between Legal Department lodging an application at court and obtaining first hearing dates.

- Work undertaken prior to a court hearing in line with good practice, that is, pre-proceedings work expected of social workers, being marginalised by the Court. The Court then requests further assessments to be done - this is also costly as well as adding delay.

- Delays when transferring cases between social care teams that undertake adoption work and delays with Independent Reviewing Officers raising permanency planning (including for adoption) at the relevant review for children in care.

- High numbers of children in ‘difficult to place’ categories which means family finding takes much longer. Difficult to place children include older children, disabled children, BME children and children in sibling groups.

- Children’s Guardians and courts being over involved with decisions e.g. which adoptive family the child should be placed with rather than ratifying the care plan for adoption and allowing the local authority to progress placement.

- The Adoption Team prioritising family finding in a timely way.

- More parental legal challenges to placement orders (the court order that allows social workers to begin looking for a new family for a child) resulting in delays placing children with adopters. This is an increasing but relatively new practice.
2.4 What are we doing to improve performance?

The Adoption Team has in place an Adoption Action Plan that sets out the actions required for improvement. Please see appendix 3. The Action Plan was reviewed by the DfE in June 2016 and was positively received. The points below are some of the actions in place for improvement:

- Introduction of the Adoption Improvement Group in 2016 on a bi-monthly basis to track performance of all children who are being considered for adoption and who have Placement Orders to ensure that actions to find adoptive families are robust. The Adoption Action Plan is also reviewed at this meeting. This Group is chaired by the Director of Operations for Children’s Care and Support and is attended by the Group Managers for Care Management, Adoption, Child Protection and Review Service and Legal.

- All children that we are actively family finding for are discussed at fortnightly Adoption Team Meetings to ensure activity is taking place to find families for children outside of the Borough and to identify possible in-house families, including currently in assessment.

- Attendance at specific events aimed at finding families for harder to place children e.g. Walsall in December 2016 and Adoption Activity Days. The latter are ‘play days’ for children with prospective adopters in attendance. Prospective adopters have an opportunity to meet children in person rather than just see a picture or DVD.

- Attendance at all East London Consortium family finding events. Working in this way enables Barking and Dagenham to draw from a wider pool of prospective adopters.

- Working with the relevant children’s social care teams for early notification of children who may be considered for adoption.

- All adopters in assessment are approached for consideration of approval for Fostering to Adopt. This means a child can be placed with prospective adopters while a court hearing is planned or taking place, therefore reducing timeliness.

2.5 Challenges to being successful

There remain several factors that can lead to delays with adoption. These include:

- Large sibling groups and older children who are more difficult to place for adoption.

- Increase in the numbers of disabled children, older children and children from BME who are often more difficult to place.
The adopters available nationwide do not match the children available for adoption. Not all, by many prospective adopters are couples who ideally still want a very young single child with no special needs.

The increase in appeals to court decisions by parents leading to delayed placements of children as the court will not allow placement with adopters (even if identified/matched) if there is an outstanding appeal.

The Court’s reluctance to agree adoption plans and the national increase of parental appeals have impacted on the number of adopters willing to consider Fostering to Adopt arrangements in the event that the child will return to extended family. Fostering to Adopt arrangements significantly improve scorecard performance.

Future recruitment of adopters who are willing to consider harder to place children. This is a challenge for all local authorities, but requires dedicated resources which the team do not have. We are the only local authority in the East London Consortium that does not have a dedicated recruitment resource. It should be noted that it is not a straight-line equation between resources and number of adopters recruited.

However, in-house recruitment is going to be a priority for 2017 onwards as the interagency fee reimbursement from the DfE stopped in October 2016. This means that any external adopter we purchase from another local authority or voluntary adoption agency will cost £27,000 per child.

Nationally, as the focus on budgets remains high this could impact on scorecard performance. There is, potentially, a tension between spend on families for children and the timeliness of adoption. For example, a local authority might wait for a match to take place once an in-house family is approved if this is likely within a few months leading to delay on the adoption scorecard, rather than purchase an external family who may be available immediately and reduce delay.

2.6 Analysis of cohort for 2013-16 performance

Of the 66 children in the current Scorecard cohort, 48 fall into harder to place categories:

- BME - 5
- Special needs - 7
- Siblings - 26
- Multiple categories – 10

Given the significant number of children who fall into harder to place categories, achieving adoption for them has been a successful outcome albeit that it has taken much longer than the government prescribed timescales. The reality is that family finding takes much longer for such children and careful consideration has to be given
to the robustness of adopters to cope and sustain more challenging placements to prevent placement breakdown.

Placement breakdown performance:

- No children have had a placement breakdown in the last 3 years post the adoption order being granted.
- Children have had a placement breakdown in the last 3 years prior to the adoption order being granted – both broke down during introductions.

2.7 Children due to go onto Scorecard for 2014-17

These are the children who are currently placed with adopters and will go onto the Scorecard once the adoption orders are granted. These are 10 children which include:

- 2 sibling groups of 2 (1 group was aged 8 and 10 at time of placement)
- 1 eight-year-old child who is visually impaired
- 1 young child who has Downs Syndrome
- 1 child who has a query re developmental delay.

Once these children are added to the scorecard the performance will worse:

- A1 – increase from 783 to 802 days
- A2 – increase from 357 to 371 days.

2.8 Children who are currently awaiting an adoptive family

There are currently 11 children in total waiting for an adoptive family:

- Sibling group of 2 with developmental delay – possible match in early 2017 once adopters have been given more detailed medical information.
- 1 child under 5 – likely to remain with foster carer under special guardianship
- 2 babies – with at least one birth parent with learning difficulties which a lot of adopters are concerned about in case there is a genetic link.
- 1 child aged under 1 whose foster carer is currently being assessed as an adopter.
- 1 baby who has some developmental delay. Further delay caused by a 4 month wait for a court date for appeal by a parent which was unsuccessful.
- 1 child aged under 1 year with a match with adoptive parents planned for early 2017.
- Toddlers – issues in the group include siblings, developmental delay, sickle cell anaemia and BME.
- In addition, 1 child is currently having introductions to the adoptive family.
2.9 **What can the council do to promote adoption?**

- Use of in-house newsletters and other media to promote adoption for harder to place children and the type of adopters we require for our children.
- Focus on promotion of adoption in Council buildings and events.
- Any internal campaign could include the promotion of adoption within extended family and friends’ networks that may be outside of LBBD as we require many families outside of our locality for safety reasons.
- Identify a dedicated resource from Marketing (or elsewhere) to specifically focus on recruitment of adopters for harder to place children.
- Members to be briefed on LBBD specific issues re adoption so they can promote to constituents where appropriate.

3. **Financial Implications**

Implications completed by: Daksha Chauhan, Group Accountant, Children’s Services

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. A full analysis of financial implications arising from the recommendations from the scrutiny process will need to be fully worked up.

4. **Legal Implications**

Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks Principal Solicitor for Children’s Safeguarding

4.1 The adoption scorecards were introduced by the government to address delays in the adoption system and to allow Local Authorities and other Adoption Agencies to monitor and compare their performance.

The changes in the Family Courts mean that there is an expectation that all care proceedings will be concluded within 26 weeks. It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Courts will allow a case to last longer than 26 weeks.

The decision in the case of Re B-S has had an impact on Placement Order applications and the challenges to Placement Order applications by birth parents. In Re B-S the Court was clear that a Placement Order should only be made where adoption was the only option and “nothing else will do”. This decision has resulted in extended family members coming forward at a late date to be assessed as alternative carers for a child. This creates delay and impacts upon the adoption scorecards as the Courts faced with the decision in Re B-S feel there is no option other than to assess those extended family members.

The decision in Re B-S and the direction that at the end of the care proceedings all Courts have to advise the parents that they have a period of 21 days to appeal any order means that there are an increasing number of appeals by the birth parents.
Those appeals are often unsuccessful, but once an application has been made to appeal then, if the child has not already been placed with prospective adopters, the Local Authority is unable to place the child until the Court determines the appeal as unsuccessful.

5. Other Implications

5.1 Risk Management – Risk of Government scrutiny/intervention if Scorecard performance continues to be below expectations.

5.2 Customer Impact – Consideration to be given to the impact of not putting forward children for adoption who are considered harder to place due to their age, ethnicity, disability due to impact on scorecard performance.

5.3 Safeguarding Children – Research states that children who are adopted generally have better life chances than children who remain in the care system. Children who remain in care are considered to be vulnerable and more at risk of harm. Therefore, permanent arrangements, including adoption, is considered a better outcome for children and young people.

5.4 Health Issues – The emotional wellbeing of children placed in adoptive families is generally better than those who are looked after, according to research.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

None.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1  Option Report on Adoption Scorecard Performance, June 2016
Appendix 2  Letter from the Secretary of State, Edward Timpson, 8 September 2016.
Appendix 3  Adoption Action Plan
## Overview

**Children in Care and Adoption.**

The policy of the council is to work with children and families to support them live happily together in a family unit such that the children in the family are protected and are not placed at risk of significant harm.

For some children it is considered unsafe for them to live at home and when this happens they are removed from the care of their parents and placed in care, that is, the state (Barking and Dagenham Council) becomes the child’s corporate parent and has responsibilities for the child’s care and well being.

Should all efforts to return the child safely to the family fail, then alternative long term care options such as adoption are considered for the child. Adoption is not considered lightly as it is the permanent removal of a child from its family and in some cases this means a child will not see its birth parents again.

Adoption is a legal process and is the decision of the family courts. The child must first become looked after and then new parent/s, adoptive parent/s are found for the child. The adoptive parent/s must obtain a legal order to become the new permanent parent/s for the child for the rest of the child’s life.

Successive governments have been concerned about the low rate at which children in care become adopted. This is because children in care generally have poorer life outcomes than children not raised in the care system. This means that children in care, for example, are more likely to be unemployed, to experience mental health problems, to become homeless and to have their own children removed from them. It should be noted that children in care often arrive in care with significant issues that contribute to poor outcomes; however, a care experience can exacerbate rather than remedy these issues.

The Secretary of State for Children, Edward Timpson wrote to the Council in March 2016 asking questions about the adoption performance of the Council because it had deteriorated from the previous year. The Council’s Corporate Performance Board received a report from the DCS (Helen Jenner) setting out actions in place to improve performance and a copy of the reply to Edward Timpson that contained the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy and Legislative issues</th>
<th><strong>Coalition Government Action Plan for Adoption – reducing delay 2011</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order to improve outcomes for children in care, the Coalition Government introduced the ‘Action Plan for Adoption - reducing delay’ in 2011 with legislative changes to the monitoring of the adoption process through an Adoption Scorecard. The legislation was the Children and Families Act 2014.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance/Evidence</th>
<th>The Adoption Scorecard acted as a ‘league table’ for the adoption performance of local authority adoption agencies. The adoption scorecard has a number of measures, the key ones are known as A1 and A2;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Average time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Average time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Adoption Scorecard looks at performance over a rolling three years, for example, from 2010-2013 and then from 2011-2014. The Scorecard includes targets that become more challenging each year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance/Evidence</th>
<th>The Barking and Dagenham performance for A1 and A2 is set out in the tables below.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>In summary, our performance on A1 and A2 is below the national average. This is despite historic improvement in early years. It is anticipated that it will take some time for the scorecard to show improvement. This is because where it has taken a long time to achieve adoption for some children, this data will remain on the score care for a further 2 – 3 years thus having a negative impact on the overall scorecard. In one example, it has taken over 800 days for a child to be adopted when the government target is currently 487 and next year will be 428. The 800 days will show on our scorecard for a total of 3 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>The reasons for performance deteriorating in recent years are many and include for example,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>- a dedicated focus on working to get children who are hard to place adopted rather than placing them in less secure options such as long term fostering,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>- a desire to ensure that sibling groups are not separated but adopted together,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>- the process taking too long due to complex court process and also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance/Evidence</td>
<td>- in some cases there has been drift in casework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The service has already put in place processes to improve practice for children in this process. For example, the time it takes for cases to go through the court process is reducing, the quality of care plans has improved, and there are systems and processes in place to speed up the care planning process. Addressing some historically poor practice, working on cases that have drifted and continuing with adoption as an outcome has impacted the outcome of the scorecard. The scorecard could have improved if adoption did not take place for some children. If the child that was adopted in over 800 days was not adopted, then this child’s data would not appear in the scorecard at all.
On 26th May 2016, Corporate Performance Board agreed with the position that the service is taking, that is, to pursue adoption as the best outcome for a child where this is appropriate, rather than place them in less secure alternatives in order to improve the Adoption Scorecard performance.

The Director of Operations has established an Adoption Improvement Group to ensure that where adoption is considered for a child, that all actions are taken to see that this process is completed in a timely manner.

Please see chart below for performance in table format with performance and DfE targets

Table A1 Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>LBBD 3 Year Average</th>
<th>DfE Threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2012</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2013</td>
<td>657</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2014</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2015</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2016 (up to Jan 15/16)</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A2 Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>LBBD 3 Year Average</th>
<th>DfE Threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2011</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2012</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2013</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2014</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2015</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2016 (up to Jan 15/16)</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Areas for potential enquiry could include:

1. Requesting further information on the reasons for reduced Adoption Scorecard performance and for this to include bench marked data.
2. Information on outcomes for children and young people Actions in place to improve the performance.
Appendix 1

| 3. Information about alternatives to adoption that impact the number of children adopted (Special Guardianships) |
| 4. Actions in place to improve performance |
| 5. Information about where the performance is monitored. |

Ann Graham
Operations Director, Children’s Care and Support.
This page is intentionally left blank
Edward Timpson MP  
Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families  
Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT  
tel: 0370 000 2288  www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Anne Bristow  
Deputy Chief Executive and Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration  
Town Hall  
Barking  
Essex  
IG11 7LU

September 2016

ADOPTION SERVICES AND TIMELINESS PERFORMANCE

I am grateful for Helen Jenner’s letter of 6 May 2016, which outlines in detail the performance of your adoption service. I am aware that your colleagues also took the time to speak to Andrew Christie and my officials at our offices on 12 July.

Having reviewed your authority’s response alongside more recent data, it is clear that Barking and Dagenham is committed to securing the best outcomes for its children in a timely way. I am pleased to hear about the measures being put in place in order to improve your service. Andrew was also convinced that Barking and Dagenham pursues a balanced approach of improving its timeliness scores without compromising quality outcomes for children. I note that these efforts will likely not be reflected in next year’s scorecard data. However, Andrew was pleased to note that the authority is aware of its challenges and is focused on addressing them.

I recognise that the data alone cannot provide the full story and officials are currently considering how scorecards can be improved, particularly in the new context of regionalised services. Reducing unnecessary delay in placing children for adoption remains a high priority for this government and officials continue to monitor the performance of all authorities.

I encourage you to think creatively and innovatively about the ways that Barking and Dagenham can improve its adoption services, especially within a Regional Adoption Agency. One way you may do so, is through the Practice and Improvement Fund, which will be open to bids from RAAs in the autumn. As you are aware, the Adoption Support Fund continues to be available to all local authorities and the Interagency Fund was recently extended to October 2016.

I invite you to continue to draw upon these opportunities to strengthen your service. I also invite you to contact my officials at any time, should you wish to discuss challenges to your authority or ways that the government can help you. As I mentioned in my previous letter, I am keen to work constructively with you to secure whatever further changes are required to improve the experiences of children requiring adoption.
I am copying this letter to: Cllr Darren Rodwell, Leader of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham; Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe, Lead Member for Children’s Services Select Committee; Chris Naylor, Chief Executive.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Timpson MP
Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families
## Adoption Service Action Plan

### 2016/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Progress Update</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To set up Adoption Improvement Group to monitor systems, processes, practice and outcomes for children considered for adoption and to ensure that cases are fast tracked for permanency where appropriate.</td>
<td>1. Initial meeting scheduled for 25 May 2016.  &lt;br&gt;2. Meetings to take place monthly tracking all cases considered for parallel planning from entry into care until placed with adoptive family.  &lt;br&gt;3. Replace NI61 performance monitoring in monthly dataset with Adoption Scorecard performance.  &lt;br&gt;4. Progress will be reported at monthly Portfolio meetings  &lt;br&gt;5. Progress reports to be presented to quarterly Corporate Parenting Group to ensure Adoption Improvement Group is having necessary impact and to understand any issues that may negatively be impacting on performance.</td>
<td>Ann Graham/Joanne Tarbutt  &lt;br&gt;Gareth Crane  &lt;br&gt;Ann Graham  &lt;br&gt;Joanne Tarbutt</td>
<td>May 2016  &lt;br&gt;Ongoing</td>
<td>Completed  &lt;br&gt;Completed  &lt;br&gt;From September 2016  &lt;br&gt;Summary report for 2013-16 provided at January 17 meeting. Quarterly updates to continues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Embed use of Adoption Tracker | 1. Update current Tracker to ensure all children currently being considered for adoption are fast tracked for permanency. | Joanne Tarbutt/Carolyn | May 2016 | Completed |
across all teams to monitor timescales for performance

2. Identify BSO/s who are responsible for updating Tracker.
3. Document to be used in Adoption Improvement Group to ensure ownership across the Service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliver a range of training to include Permanency Planning, process for parallel planning, timescales and links to performance.</th>
<th>Greenaway</th>
<th>May 2016</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Commission training on permanency planning.</td>
<td>Joanne Tarbutt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Deliver training on writing good quality CPRs 3 times per year.</td>
<td>Ann Graham/Joanne Tarbutt/Carolyn Greenaway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Re-launch Adoption Referral Meeting process for Team Managers and Social Workers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deliver training on Later Life Letters and Lifestory Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver a range of training to include Permanency Planning, process for parallel planning, timescales and links to performance.</td>
<td>Learning and Development/Joanne Tarbutt</td>
<td>Sept 2016</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Deliver training on writing good quality CPRs 3 times per year.</td>
<td>Marie Ologbosere</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Re-launch Adoption Referral Meeting process for Team Managers and Social Workers.</td>
<td>Helen Kahn</td>
<td>June, Oct, Feb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Deliver training on Later Life Letters and Lifestory Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to work with London Regionalisation Group and East London Adoption and Permanency Group re regionalisation planning</td>
<td>Joanne Tarbutt/Marie Ologbosere</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Attend all London wide events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work with ELAPG to ensure East London’s views are represented in addition to individual boroughs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To identify additional resources to make</td>
<td>Joanne Tarbutt</td>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. All applications to be submitted by end of July for those currently with a Panel/ADM decision that adoption is no longer the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Responsible Person(s)</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications to court to rescind all Placement Orders where adoption is no longer the plan for the child.</td>
<td>Marie Ologbosere</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To ensure that all future applications are submitted within one month of ADM decision that adoption is no longer the plan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management steer is required re adoption planning for children who are considered ‘difficult to place’ (sibling groups, disabled children, children with a high level of needs, older children and BME). The length of family finding will impact on Scorecard performance and adoption may never be achieved.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Director of Children’s Services to clarify position so that social work teams and ADM are clear about parameters when considering adoption plans for children who are difficult to place.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To continue to make applications to the Adoption Support Fund to access resources for post adoption support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Therapeutic support to be identified at an early stage to ensure good performance on placement stability is maintained.</td>
<td>Post Adoption Workers (Mary Manuel and Sharon Moore)</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To make applications to the ASF to support Special Guardianship placements (introduced 2016)</td>
<td>SG Consultant (Karen McKevitt)</td>
<td>As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To continue to make applications for interagency funding reimbursement to</td>
<td>Marie Ologbosere and Joanne Panting</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To continue to make use of all interagency placement options for children who are waiting for an adoptive placement to ensure timely placement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications are considered on a case by case basis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
maximise use of interagency placements to ensure timely placement

To ensure IROs understand their role in adoption performance.

1. To work with CPRS managers to ensure that IROs raise practice alerts when any drift is identified in permanency planning at any stage.
2. IROs to ensure that Group Manager for Adoption is copied into any alerts for information to ensure that there is oversight on any potential drift.
3. Adoption TM to attend IRO team meeting for discussion on adoption performance and delay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with Legal to put on agenda for next meeting with Designated Judge.</td>
<td>Ann Graham/Joanne Tarbutt/Carolyn Greenaway</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identify appropriate methods of engagement with Judiciary re mismatch in government agenda, case law and impact on LA performance on adoption.

1. Work with Legal to put on agenda for next meeting with Designated Judge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with ELAPG to deliver regular preparation groups to prevent delay in assessment of prospective adopters.</td>
<td>Adoption Team</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To target recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters who can meet the needs of LBBD children.

1. All initial enquiries to be thoroughly vetted to try to identify those who are likely to consider difficult to place children.
2. Work with ELAPG to deliver regular preparation groups to prevent delay in assessment of prospective adopters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All initial enquiries to be thoroughly vetted to try to identify those who are likely to consider difficult to place children.</td>
<td>Adoption Team</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legals are in discussion with Designated Judge regarding a date to meet.

Offers attend the regional Family Court meetings and issues are raised here.

Barnardo’s to be commissioned by ELAPG to deliver preparation groups.
### Inter-country adoption assessments

1. Continue to offer assessments to inter-country adopters as this generates income and ensures expertise of ICA remains within the Service.

Marie Ologbosere/ Michelle Bakay

Under review due to capacity issues in team

### Staffing

1. Fill 2 vacant posts within the team to maximise capacity for family finding, assessments of adopters and post SGO support.

Marie Ologbosere/Joanne Tarbutt

tbc

### Policies and procedures

1. Continue to ensure TriX procedures are updated.

Marie Ologbosere

2. Highlight essential parts for ‘easy reference’ for social workers re permanency planning, which includes ADM process.

Marie Ologbosere

As necessary when TriX updates are required.

May 2016

Completed

### Adoption Diagnostic

1. Commission a review Adoption Diagnostic to review current performance.

Joanne Tarbutt

tbc

Consider peer review within ELAPG
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting date</th>
<th>Agenda items</th>
<th>Officer/Presenter</th>
<th>Final Papers deadline</th>
<th>Relevant Cabinet Member(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 March</td>
<td>Child Sexual Exploitation (Chair of SSCSC and LSCB to be invited. The CSSC will receive a report on the impact of the Council and its partners’ approaches to tackling CSE). <strong>Provisional</strong> - Adoption Scrutiny Review – draft report and recommendations (The CSSC will receive the draft report arising from the Scrutiny Review on Adoption for review and comment. The Cabinet Members for Social Care and Health Integration and Educational Attainment &amp; School Improvement will be invited to comment on the report).</td>
<td>Group Manager Safeguarding &amp; Quality Assurance</td>
<td>Mon 6 March</td>
<td>Councillor Worby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>