

Appendix B: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham adoption performance analysis

- 1.1 The attached performance analysis has been prepared by Adopt London East following a review of information provided to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB)

Numbers of children adopted

- 1.2 Adopt London East became operational on 1st October 2020. Q 1 and 2 are therefore preoperational go-live and Q 3 and 4 post go-live. Most Regional Adoption Agencies experienced a dip in performance both pre and post go live, Child placements in LBBB declined on the previous year in terms of numbers of placements.

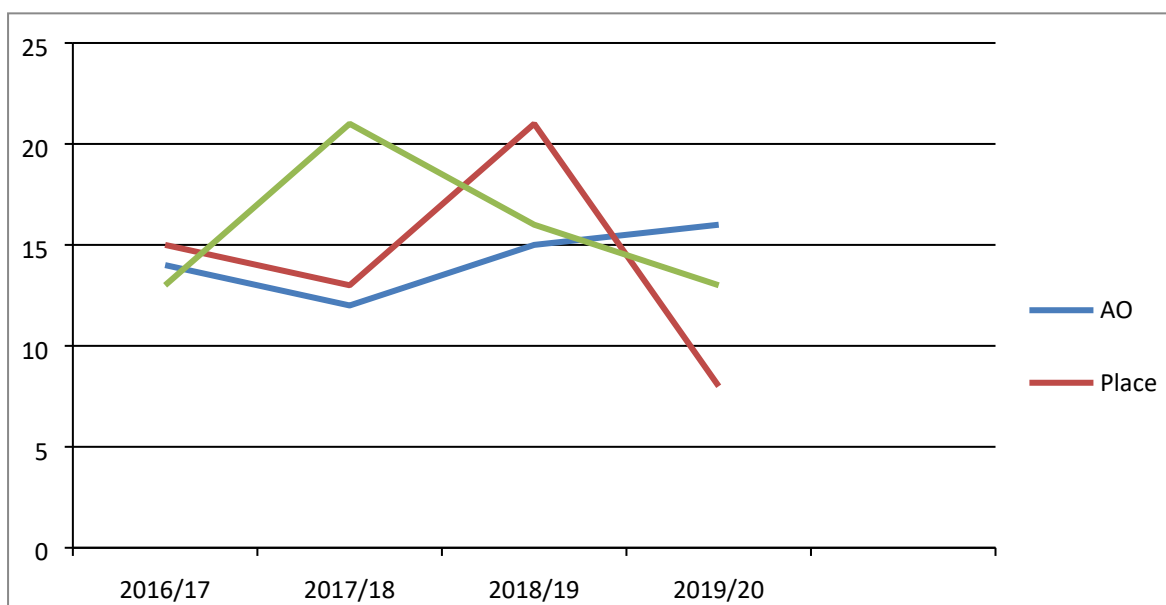
		2019/20 Q1	2019/20 Q2	2019/20 Q3	2019/20 Q4	Total 2019/20
Number of...	AOs	6	3	1	6	16
	Placements	2	2	0	4	8
	Matches	2	2	1	3	8
	POs	1	3	4	5	13
	Best interest decisions	10	3	2	6	21
	Foster for adoption Placements	0	0	0	0	0
	Changes of Plan	1	0	0	0	1

- 1.3 Adoption orders were granted on 17 children and a further 8 children were placed for adoption. The higher number of adoption orders reflects the higher number of placements made in 2018/19. The number of children placed was subject to a sharp decline due to several factors associated with change over to a regional arrangement including staffing issues and hand over of information. Forecasts indicate a rapid increase in the number of placements in Q 1 of 2020/21
- 1.4 The chart below shows trend information in respect of numbers of adoption orders, placements, and decisions that adoption is in the best interests of the child (BID).
- 1.5 In common with most Local Authorities the numbers of children in the adoption system are small and subject to a high level of fluctuation. The numbers of children about whom a best interest decision was made peaked in 2017/18 followed by a sharp increase in numbers placed in 2018/19 this would have been expected as a higher number of children had been identified as needing a placement. The numbers

with a BID decreased thereafter. The numbers placed decreased sharply in 2019/20 following the peak in 2018/19. A decrease in numbers would have been expected as the numbers with a BID and therefore requiring an adoptive placement decreased. The decrease in numbers placed was further exacerbated by a slow-down in adoption work, primarily because of staff leaving the service prior to regionalisation of adoption.

- 1.6 Although not contained within this review of 2019/20 adoption activity, the number of placements is predicted to rise considerably in 2020/21

Adoption Orders, Placements and Best Interest Decisions



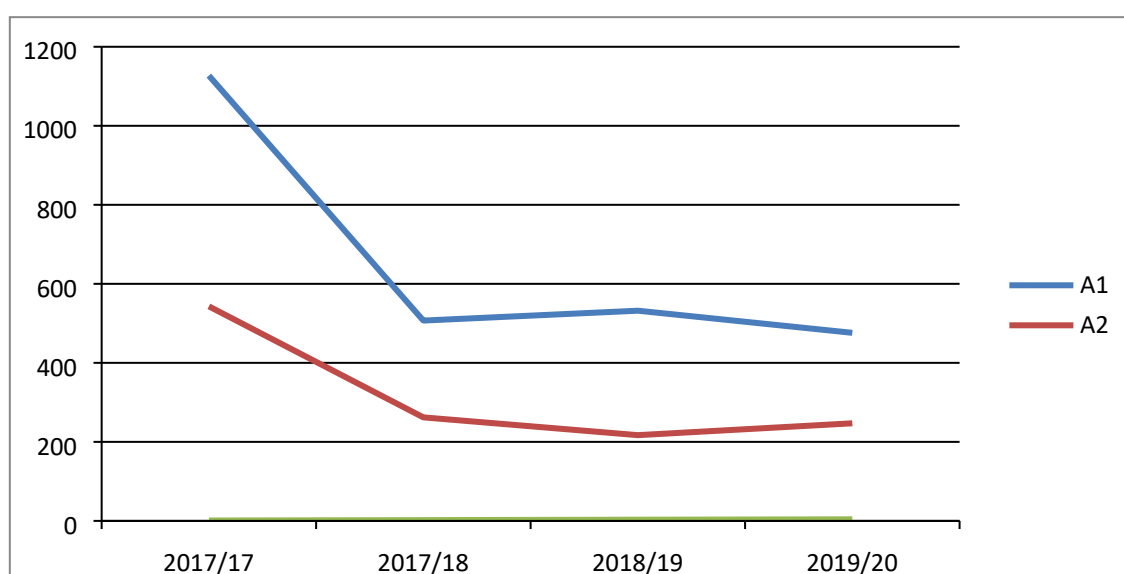
Timeliness of adoption

- 1.7 The average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family for children adopted decreased in the last 12 months from a three-year average of 504 days to 476 days. This remains above the nationally set target of 426 days but reflects improving practice.
- 1.8 Conversely the average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family remained relatively stable with a three-year average of 241 days and 247 days over the last 12 months. This is also above the nationally set target of 121 days and does reflect to a certain extent the complex nature of some of the children placed in LBBB.
- 1.9 The percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving with their adoptive family has also decreased from a 40% three-year average to 20% in the last 12 months. This reflects the interim slow down.

Indicator	2017 – 2020	Last 12 months
A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	504 days	476 days
A2: Average time between an LA receiving court authority to place a child and the LA deciding on a match to an adoptive family	241 days	247 days
A3: Children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)	40 (51%)	20 (36%)

Breakdown of A1 and A2 indicators by year.

- 1.10 The scorecard indicator is calculated on a three-year rolling average. The annual breakdown below shows the volatility of timeliness in adoptive placements. One placement which takes a long time will have a considerable impact on the overall figure due to the small numbers of children placed.
- 1.11 Social work system efficiencies are shown most clearly in the A1 indicator: average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family. This shows considerable improvement between 2017/198 and 2018/19 which has been sustained since. Adoption system efficiencies are shown most clearly in the A2 indicator which plots the average time from receiving permission to place from the court and matching to an adoptive family, although placement times may also be affected disproportionately by a lengthy search for a harder to place child. There is some evidence for improved and sustained efficiencies in the A2 indicator.



Characteristics of children

- 1.12 16 children were adopted in the last 12 months. 17 have a placement order and are waiting to be adopted and of these 9 have been waiting for 18 months or over since becoming looked after.

- 1.13 The majority of children adopted (11 of 16) were aged under 5. This proportion is reasonably consistent with those waiting (13 of 17) and of those waiting the longest (9 of 11 children)
- 1.14 11 of 16 children adopted are female with the proportions reversed for those waiting (4 of 13) and those waiting the longest (3 of 8). Male children especially older male children are harder to place than female.
- 1.15 The proportion of children who are classed as BME shows some variance. A quarter of children adopted and of children waiting are classed as BME but a third of children who wait the longest are BME. Children from BME backgrounds typically wait longer, although LBBB has more BME children waiting for longer overall performance is good in this respect. Only one adopted child is categorised as disabled. 2 disabled children await a placement, and both have been waiting over 18 months. 5 children have been adopted as part of a sibling group, 8 are waiting in 4 sibling groups of 2, of these 4 children in 2 sibling groups have been waiting for over 18 months. All sibling groups are white British and have no child identified with a disability.
- 1.16 Harder to place children include children over 5, of BME heritage, disabled and requiring adoption in a sibling group. The vast majority of LBBB's children are defined as harder to place. As 10 of the 16 children placed were in a harder to place category there is no substantial difference between those placed and those yet to place, though it is of note that all 9 who have been waiting at least 18 months are in harder to place categories. As harder to place children wait longer LBBB's performance in terms of timeliness is ameliorated by the LA commitment to place all children who would benefit from adoption.

	Under 5	5 and over	female	male	BME	Disabled	Sibling group	Harder to place
Adopted last 12 months	11	5	11	5	4	1	5	10
Waiting with PO	13	4	4	13	4	2	8	14
Waiting at least 18 months since BLA	9	2	3	8	3	2	4	9