



|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>Report for:<br/>INFORMATION</b> |
| <b>Item Number:</b>                |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Contains Confidential or Exempt Information</b>   | NO   |
| <b>Title</b>   | Management Information Summary – Children Looked After   |
| <b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>  | Carolyn Fair<br>Director of Children and Families<br>020 8825 5177<br><a href="mailto:CFair@ealing.gov.uk">CFair@ealing.gov.uk</a>   |
| <b>Author(s)</b>   | Carolyn Fair<br>Director of Children and Families<br>020 8825 5177<br><a href="mailto:CFair@ealing.gov.uk">CFair@ealing.gov.uk</a><br>Andy Leung<br>Performance Information Manager<br>0208 825 5806<br><a href="mailto:leunga@ealing.gov.uk">leunga@ealing.gov.uk</a> |
| <b>Portfolio(s)</b>  | Schools and children' services   |
| <b>For Consideration By</b>  | Corporate Parent Committee   |
| <b>Date to be considered</b>   | 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2020   |
| <b>Implementation Date if Not Called In</b>  | Not Applicable   |
| <b>Affected Wards</b>  | All  |
| <b>Area Committees</b>   | All  |
| <b>Keywords/Index</b>  | Performance Assessment Framework, performance indicators.  |
| <b>Purpose of Report:</b><br>To provide a brief analysis on the 6 months to September 2020/21 performance for children looked after (CLA), child protection (CP) and care leavers. |  |

## **1 Review of Performance Indicators for Children Services**

### **Children & Families Performance Assessment Framework 2020/21**

1.1 The use of Performance Indicators (PIs) in assessing performance enables the council to evaluate its current performance, monitor improvements and inform service development. Performance is reviewed monthly by operational service management and by the departmental senior management team.

1.2 The external inspection and assessment of services led by Ofsted uses the indicators as part of the evidence to inform their assessments of the council's performance. These indicators, however, must be considered as part of a broader set of performance evidence including inspection and review, regular liaison and monitoring of services and the commissioning and delivery of services with partners, particularly with the schools' service and health.

1.3 The service has identified all key measures through developing the business planning processes, service and team plans and it is through monitoring these alongside the indicator set that we will make ensure that we achieve what we have set out to do.

1.4 To set the performance data for CLA and leaving care in the context of the whole remit for safeguarding, the report contains information on assessment and child protection activity as follows:

#### **1.4.1 Children Looked After**

As at end of September 2020, there were 318 looked after children in Ealing, down from 339 at the same time in 2019, which equates to a 6% reduction. Current CLA population remains lower than the national average of 514 children.

The number of CLA in Ealing remains one of the lowest for many years. There was a 13.7% reduction in Ealing's CLA population between 2011/12 (410) and 2018/19 (354), bucking the national trend of 16.5% growth children looked after in the same period (67,070 vs 78,150).

The equivalent rate of looked after children in September 2020 is 38.7 children per 10,000, a reduction of 2.7 per 10,000 from last year. A downward trend since 2010 and is one of the lowest in Ealing, and below the London and National average for over a decade.

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) at end of September 2020 stands at 33, down from 52 (-37%) in September 2019. The reduction is against the backdrop of rising number of UASC in Ealing in recent years from 5 in March 2013 to 55 in March 2019.

In the 6 months to September 2020, a total of 74 children and young people have become looked after; this is down from 91 (-19%) on last year. Nearly a third (31%) of the total number of new children and young people coming into care in this period is 16-17-year-old with 23 young people and 12 in each age group between 5- 9 years old and 13-15 years old. Only 6 USAC have taken into care this year so far, compared to 16 last year, reflecting the overall reduction of UASC population.

A total of 86 children and young people have ceased care in the 6 months to September 2020, down from 112 from last year. Many of the CLA ceasing care have returned to a more permanent and stable environment. 34% (29) have returned home to their families, while 39% (34) turned 18 years old and 12% (10) were granted special guardianship order.

#### **1.4.2 Child Protection**

Children subject of a child protection plan have been increasing since start of the year. At the end of September 2020, 222 children were subject of a CP plan, which has risen by 16% since April 2020 with 192 children on CP plan. The rate per 10,000 for the current CP population is 27.0; this is significantly lower than our neighbours at 38.1, London at 36.7 and England at 43.7.

The largest age groups of children and young people (CYP) subject of CP plan are age between 5-9 years old and 10-15 years old; with 74 and 61 children and young people in each group respectively and represents a combined 60% of the 222 CP population.

Emotional abuse (55%) and Neglect (41%) are the prevailing reasons for those CYP subject of a CP plan.

A total of 148 children and young people were made subject of a CP plan between April and September 2020, whilst 119 have been deregistered reflecting an overall increase in children on CP plan this year so far.

#### **1.4.3 Re registrations of children & young people to child protection plans**

A total of 148 children started on CP Plan during April to September 2020. Of those, 26 children (18%) were re-registrations. The re-registration rate is comparatively higher than last year's figure at 12%.

The statutory definition for CP re-registrations is the proportion of children becoming subject of CP plan regardless when they were previously last on plan in Ealing. In context, 2 out of the 26 children had been on plan between 0-12 months, whilst the remaining between 1-7 years, which means majority of children have had a period of stability before returning on plan.

In some circumstances, re-registration of children to CP plan is essential to keep the child safe and from harm.

#### **1.4.4 Timing of Children and Family Assessments (CFAs)**

A total of 1,929 child and family assessments have been completed in the 6 months to September 2020, lower than 2,315 reported last year (-16.7%).

CFA year to date performance has increased from 70.1% at end of June 2020 to 74.4% at end of September 20, and already exceeds the 2019/20 outturn of 69%. Current performance is below national (83.1%) and London average (84.1%).

Senior managers have implemented a series of actions to improve performance via regular monitoring, reducing the internal timescales target and a clear commitment to reduce the time children and families should wait for completion of assessments.

#### **1.5 There are several key measures for children looked after and child protection, they are as follows:**

##### **1.5.1 Percentage of looked after children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption**

There were 5 adoptions recorded in the 6 months to September 2020, where one child (20%) was placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision.

Compared to previous year, a total of 11 children have been adopted in 2019/20, of which nine (82%) were placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision.

This measures the effectiveness of an important part of the adoption process and timescales. When placing children for adoption, the timeliness in which they are adopted will be affected by how easy or difficult it is to find an adoptive placement. Good performance is represented by a high percentage.

##### **1.5.2 Stability of placements of children looked after**

A stable placement for our looked after children is important for their health and well-being and we have been doing well in minimizing children with frequent placement moves.

Figures to end of September 2020 shows 2.2% (7 children out of 318) of the total number of looked after children have had 3 or more placement moves, which means nearly 98% of the children are living in stable environments.

Ealing has seen sustained performance improvements in this area for the last couple of years reducing the rate from 9.14% in 2018/19 to 6.41% in 2019/20, which means more children in care have fewer placement moves. Good performance is indicated by a low percentage

Placement moves are regularly monitored by senior managers however, some placements moves are essential to keep children and families safe and from harm.

### **1.5.3 Child protection plans ceased lasting 2 years or more**

This measure provides an indication on the effectiveness of social care work towards specified outcomes which should lead to the child being removed from the CP register within two years. Good performance is typified by a lower percentage.

Performance at the end of September 2020 shows only 5 children coming off CP plan that have lasted 2 years or more. This equates to 4.2% of the 119 CP de-registrations, a reduction from 12% reported at the same time last year.

Managers are informed of children who are approaching the two-year mark to ensure their cases are reviewed and, if appropriate, to de-register the children in a safe and timely manner.

### **1.5.4 Timeliness of looked after children reviews**

Provisional performance at end of September 2020 shows all 305 eligible children in care have had their reviews completed on time during the year.

The Department for Education have ceased producing and publishing comparison data for looked after children reviews for several years.

### **1.5.5 Reviews of child protection cases**

Latest performance in the 6 months to September 2020 shows 94% of all reviews have been completed to timescales for 145 out of the 154 eligible children. This compares well with our statistical neighbour (94.0%) and national (91.8%) averages.

All eligible children are required to be reviewed within 3 months from the start of the plan and then 6 months thereafter. Good performance is represented by a high percentage.

### **1.5.6 Employment, education and training (EET) for care leavers**

Ealing continue to exceed expectations by supporting many of our care leavers into education, employment and training.

Data for 2019/20 shows 60.2%, up from 56% in previous year, for 19- 21-year-old care leavers and 76.9%, up from 67% previous year for 17- 18-year-old care leavers were in EET. Performance exceeds national average of 52% and 64% respectively.

Provisional performance for 6 months to end of September 2020 shows 75% of 17-18-year olds and 60% for 19-21-year olds are in EET.

Research shows that care leavers experience high levels of unemployment and are at risk of homelessness and social exclusion. The monitoring of whether care leavers are in Education, Employment or Training (EET) is used to show the performance of local authorities in improving outcomes for young people leaving care, so that they are enabled to achieve, to make a positive contribution and to be offered the opportunity to secure their future economic well-being. A higher percentage would represent good outcomes for young people.

## 2. Other Implications

### 2.1 Risk Management

The service has in place a risk register linked to the current business plan and priorities. The register is reviewed regularly by the senior management team and where appropriate remedial and action in mitigation are considered and agreed.

### 2.2 Links to Strategic Objectives

Children Services is key to delivering the strategic objectives of supporting young people to be safe, healthy and prosper. The vision will be achieved by working on shared priorities with key partners and stakeholders via the Children and Young People Board.

### 2.3 Equalities and Community Cohesion

An Equality Impact Assessment is undertaken for each area of development within the services

### 2.4 Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

None.

### 2.5 Property and Assets

None.

### 2.6 Any other implications:

None.

### 2.7 Consultation

Consultation arrangements across internal partners, external partner agencies and strategic partnerships will be to be determined and managed through the Children and Young Peoples Board.

**Background papers – None**

### **Consultation**

| Name of Consultee | Department   | Date sent to Consultee | Date response received from Consultee | Comments appear in report para |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Internal Director | Director C&F | November 2020          | November 2020                         |                                |
| Cllr Johnson      | Portfolio    | November 2020          | November 2020                         |                                |

### ***Report History***

| Decision type:               | Urgency Item?  |                 |                  |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|------------------|
| For Information              | No   |                 |                  |
| Authorised by Cabinet Member | Date report drafted  | Report deadline | Date report sent |
| Report No:                   | Report author and contact for queries  |                 |                  |
|                              | Andy Leung, Performance Information Manager<br>020 8825 5806<br><a href="mailto:leunga@ealing.gov.uk">leunga@ealing.gov.uk</a> |                 |                  |