

Please note refreshments are available in the room from 5.30pm

Agenda

1. Introductions and Apologies

County Councillor Brown

To note who is attending and any apologies for absence.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 26 November 2019

(Pages 1 - 6)

County Councillor Brown

To agree for accuracy the notes of the meeting and receive any matters arising.

3. Lancashire Safeguarding Model (30 mins)

(Pages 7 - 10)

Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Social Care, Education and Children's Services

To receive information on the Lancashire Safeguarding Model.

4. Future Corporate Parenting Board Meetings (30 mins)

(Pages 11 - 16)

Barbara Bath, Head of Service, Fostering, Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending Teams

To discuss how the Board can revise the way it works, including looking at the Terms of Reference, frequency of meetings, statutory information and membership.

5. Lancashire County Council's Foster Carers' Charter (10 mins)

(Pages 17 - 26)

Barbara Bath, Head of Service, Fostering, Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending Teams

To receive Lancashire County Council's Foster Carers' Charter which represents the Local Authority's commitment to its role as a Corporate Parent. The document details the roles and responsibilities of the Corporate Parenting Board, the Fostering Service and the foster carers.

6. Children in Care and Care Leavers performance information (25 mins) (Pages 27 - 28)

Umer Khonat, Business Intelligence Analyst, Business Intelligence Team

To receive the Annex 'A' performance data report for children in care and care leavers and receive any issues/comments arising from the report.

7. Adoption Panel Report (10 mins) (Pages 29 - 48)

Barbara Bath, Head of Fostering, Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending Teams

This report summarises the work of Lancashire County Council's Adoption Panel over the six months period from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019. Lancashire Adoption Panels are joint panels which means that they compose of both adoption and fostering items, however this report considers just the adoption items.

8. Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Plan (5 mins) (Verbal Report)

Barbara Bath, Head of Service, Fostering, Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending Teams

To receive an update on the Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Open Actions Plan and update from the Permanence and Children in Our Care Board.

9. Any Other Business

County Councillor Brown

To receive any other business.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

County Councillor Brown

Wednesday, 25 March 2020 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 'C' – Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD.

Agenda Item 2

Lancashire County Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th November, 2019 at 6.00 pm in Committee Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present: Members

County Councillor Ian Brown	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Stephen Clarke	- Lancashire County Council
County Councillor Joan Burrows	- Lancashire County Council
Liz Donnelly Nelson	- Adoption
Barbara Bath	- Fostering, Adoption, Residential and YOT Team, LCC
Jake	- LINX Representative
Kris	- LINX Representative
Emily	- LINX Representative
Saarah	- LINX Representative

Co-opted members

Jeanette Woods	- Residential Providers
Audrey Swann	- Vulnerable and Looked After Children, LCC
Amanda Mansfield	- Independent Reviewing Officers, LCC
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Judith Gault	- Children and Family Wellbeing Service, LCC
Andy Smith	- Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Team, LCC
Natasha Wright	- Barnardo's
Rebecca King	- Barnardo's
Mia Leyland	- Barnardo's
Jenny Donnelly	- Virgin Care 0-19 Service
Jane Jones	- Clinical Commissioning Groups

Other Attendees

Yoni Ejo	- Leaving Care, LCC
Sam Gorton	- Democratic Services, LCC
Umer Khonat	- Business Intelligence, LCC

1. Introductions and Apologies

As this was part of Takeover Month, the meeting would be jointly chaired by County Councillor Ian Brown and Jake, a member of Lancashire's Children in Care Council (LINX).

All were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were received from County Councillor Rear, County Councillor Julie Gibson, Marieta Birt, Angela Epps, Stephen Young, Jane Hylton and Tracey Ellmore.

County Councillor Joan Burrows attended on behalf of County Councillor David Foxcroft.

Jane Jones attended on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Groups and Jenny Donnelly attended on behalf of Virgin Care 0-19 Service.

2. Notes of the Meeting and Matters Arising from 17 September 2019

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and there were no matters arising from them.

3. Exploitation and Violence Reduction

Andy Smith, Head of Safeguarding, Inspection and Audit Team updated the Board on the strategic aims and ethos on the Violence Reduction Unit and also the strategic aims of knife crime and the next steps. The PowerPoint attached to the agenda gave further information on this.

Andy informed the Board that this was a new campaign in its' early stages.

Resolved: That the Board welcomed the information received and agreed to receive an update at a future meeting once the campaign was more embedded to see how it was progressing.

4. Children in Care and Care Leavers Performance Information

Umer Khonat, Business Intelligence Analyst, presented the Children's Services Performance Update for October 2019.

The data provided was collated fortnightly and used at every level within the Authority. Care leaver indicators were split into areas – North, East and Central.

The information was used to compare areas, see what works well and share best practice and learn from each service. Information was also shared on figures that were not 100%, ie if an area was 79% good then look at what could be improved for the 21% that was not working. Colours on the information were thresholds that had been set which mirrored the bandings that Ofsted had used.

The analysis information was used at performance meetings in districts and localities where it was scrutinised and performance was reviewed and teams engaged and commissioned research to look at how the data was used, any training issues there might be and the data acts as a mechanism.

As at October 2019 Lancashire was good at the following:

Assessments

Timeliness – 6 month rate 85% (on par with national rate), improvement from 78% in 2017/18. October performance 89%

Children Protection Plans

1194 (48.2 per 10,000), reduced from 1296 since September 2019, this remained below the regional and statistical neighbour averages, however above the national average of 45.7 (per 10,000)

Children Looked After

- Short term placement stability – 8.2%
- Visits in Timescale – 92%
- Placements :
 - increase in Fostering to 61.1%
 - reduction in Supported accommodation to 6.7%

The North West was increasing on a national level, however it was not increasing as much as other areas.

Care Leavers

In Suitable Accommodation (19-21 Years) – 92.4%

Caseloads

Average caseload – 17 for all social workers (October 2019)

As at October 2019, this was what needed to improve and/or challenges for Lancashire.

Re-referrals

Re-referral rate 21.3% - October 2019

Child Protection (CP)

- Visits within timescale – 85%
- Repeat child protection in 12 months (7.1%) and ever (25.5%) off target

Children Looked After (CLA)

- Rate of CLA per 10,000 – 85.0
- Repeat CLA 10.2%
- Dental current performance 70.3%

- Missing episodes interview completed within three days – 44.8%
- Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ)
- No Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire – 312 (this is currently being worked on to improve this figure and look at themes).

Care Leavers

- Care leavers in Education, Employment or Training – 43.8%
- Care leavers in Contact (Last two Months) – 72.2%

After receiving this information the Board felt that they would like more information on the Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaires and what was being done to support and improve this figure.

A recent follow up visit from Ofsted showed that the Authority was improving and the compliments social workers received was incredible. There was demonstrations of lots of auditing and quality assurance work being undertaken. Partners were complimented along with young people who were spoken too and the work that the social work academy continued to deliver in developing social workers was incredibly good. Also following on from the Staff Survey ran by Lancashire County Council, social workers feedback was really positive and caseloads had also dropped to 17. Independent Reviewing Officers caseloads had also dropped significantly from 130 to around the mid-70s with mid-80s being the highest.

Another issue that came out from the Ofsted report was retention of staff within Children's Services and the Board were informed that turnover of staff has reduced significantly and also that there were now no agency Independent Reviewing Officers in the Authority.

Young people reported that they were involved with the social work academy and enjoyed sharing their experiences with social workers who in turn, felt it extremely beneficial to hear from young people first hand.

Resolved: That the Board discussed and commented on the information presented and agreed the content of future performance information provided to subsequent meetings.

5. Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Plan

The Board were asked to look at the Corporate Parenting Strategy Delivery Plan in groups and look at the objectives and list areas that they felt they required more information on in 2020. This would then form the work plan for the Corporate Parenting Board for the year ahead.

Resolved: That Barbara Bath would develop a work plan for the Board and present it at the next meeting in January 2020.

6. Timetable of Meetings 2020/2021

The dates for the 2020/2021 meetings were noted.

7. Any Other Business

Young People's Feedback on the Hertfordshire Model

Young people had looked into Hertfordshire County Council's Social Care system and commented that it sounded positive and that it could benefit a lot of people, however, wondered how it would be embedded in Lancashire. Young people felt that this would be a huge overall of all the different teams within Lancashire County Council's Children's Social Care system and wondered how big in comparison Lancashire was to Hertfordshire. Following research on Children's Social Care statistics between the two Councils young people came to the following conclusions:

- Although the population of the two counties was similar, the size of Lancashire was far bigger.
- Lancashire also had a far greater number of young people accessing support from social care.
- Could this mean a new way of working was more difficult to carry out?
- Young people would like to see any changes be successful and with the right planning, if Hertfordshire could do it, why could Lancashire not?

The Board were informed that the figures the young people had researched were from 2017/18.

Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Social Care replied to the young people's findings by informing them that Hertfordshire had implemented the family safeguarding model three years ago when their numbers were a lot higher, than those researched in 2017/18. A front door reduction of 40% had now been noted at Hertfordshire since the Family Safeguarding Model was implemented which was a significant reduction and they were, where Lancashire was now. Lancashire would want to see a noticeable difference within three years of implementation also. The route out of care in Hertfordshire was a lot quicker than Lancashire was administering currently.

Some of the key principles of the model was to:

- Support families.
- Multi-agencies working together to support families and keep families together.
- Work in a more supportive way to prevent children coming into care.

Working with families to help strengthen and support them would be carried out differently and social workers would have more time to dedicate to spend with families. Social workers would need the right amount of cases to allow them time to support families and processes would change to help reduce time taken with administrative work ie new electronic notebooks which could be used whilst mobile, which would aide a more efficient way of working.

The Chair queried as to why children in care figures were rising in Lancashire and continued to do so? The Board were informed that this was a national trend and was down to poverty, austerity, organisations that had demised who supported Local Authorities, inadequate Ofsted reports and risk averse Authorities which all added to the trajectory rising across the Country including Lancashire.

Resolved: That an item be placed on the next agenda to give the Board a more informed overview on the Hertfordshire model.

Care Leavers Christmas Gifts

The Chair reminded the Board that the Care Leavers Christmas gifts collection was running until 6 December 2019 with various drop off points across the County.

Young Peoples Involvement in Future Corporate Parenting Boards

It was raised by the young people, that they had recently seen their time allocation on the agenda at Board meetings reduced significantly, after they used to have half of the meeting to discuss their issues.

It was noted that the young people's involvement in the meetings were valued and a vital role of the Board and there were plans in place to look at the Board as a whole and how the meetings could be improved. Further discussions would be taking place at the next agenda setting meeting and there would be further discussion at the next Board meeting in January 2020.

Health

Health colleagues invited young people to challenge them at future Board meetings on issues they wanted to raise.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 30 January 2020 at 6pm in the Duke of Lancaster Room – Committee Room 'C', County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD.

Corporate Parenting Board

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Report of the Director of Children's Social Care

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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Lancashire Safeguarding Model

Contact for further information: Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Social Care , Tel: 01772 538956, sharon.hubber@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

This report is to provide an overview of the Lancashire Safeguarding Model proposals and next steps

Recommendation

The Board to note the information and receive further updates as the Lancashire Safeguarding Model work moves forward.

Background and Advice

Over the last twelve months Lancashire have been working with Hertfordshire to understand the model they developed to support families within the safeguarding arena in an asset based way allowing families to succeed and keep their children safe.

The model in Hertfordshire has been highlighted by the Department for Education (DfE) as good practice and they invited Local Authorities to consider if they thought the model would help them in moving forward. Lancashire believed the model supported the direction it wanted to travel and expressed an interest in adopting and adapting the model to suit Lancashire's needs.

In September 2019, the Council were delighted to learn that the Department for Education wanted to support Lancashire and would make the change possible by providing finances to begin the journey of change. This is a whole system change bringing together partnerships and using motivational interviewing across all the disciplines working with families.

The Council's plan is to roll out the new way of working in October 2020 but the lead up to this will be the time of greatest change.

Why Are We Doing This?

By adopting the model Lancashire believe it will allow practitioners across the County to spend more time with families, increase the skills and knowledge needed to work effectively and provide a whole family response allowing parents and children to have issues addressed collectively. It is believed this way of working will keep more high risk families together by reducing physical and emotional harm and engaging with families offering help and support from adult services that is coordinated and immediate, improve the health and educational outcomes of children, strengthen information sharing and provide high quality services at a lower cost.

What Will Be Different?

At the moment social workers in Lancashire have caseloads that cover, Child in Need (CIN) Child Protection (CP) Children who are Looked After (CLA) and young people who have left care.

To undertake the new way of working social workers will work in defined teams dealing with children and families where safeguarding has been identified. Research shows that a great deal of the families the Council work with experience Domestic Abuse, Alcohol or Drug problems and Mental Health issues. To improve the service Lancashire presently offers, specialist adult workers will join the social work teams alleviating the need to refer into services as is presently done. This will enable families to receive the right level of support in a timely manner helping support a different way of thinking.

How Will We Do This?

The Council will increase the numbers of social workers working within the safeguarding teams who will have caseloads of 15. Specialist adult roles will be recruited to who will co-locate with the safeguarding teams. These roles will lead on Mental Health, domestic abuse working with perpetrators, domestic abuse working with victims and substance misuse practitioner. To enable all staff to make the change Lancashire will be using motivational interviewing, a thorough training programme is being produced for both county council staff and partners. Systems will be introduced to make the way it records and undertake assessments far less process driven allowing for direct work to take place with families.

What Next?

Although Lancashire will not start the new model until October 2020 a great deal of work will be taking place to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support the implementation. A project team will be established in January.

January 2020

Victoria Gent appointed to the role of Transformation Lead for 12 months

Bernadette Pike appointed to the role of Policy and Procedure lead

Natalie Williams appointed to the system lead post

Brendan Lee has the lead on Children in our care and Care Leavers

Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership of the Corporate Parenting Board – September 2019

Terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Board

Purpose:

The Corporate Parenting Board is an advisory body. It has two main functions:

1. To support and make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Schools on matters related to corporate parenting.
2. To advise, guide and provide leadership to the county council on issues relating to looked after children and its corporate parenting responsibility.

To meet this purpose, the Corporate Parenting Board has the following aims and objectives:

- (a) To make sure that the whole council and relevant partner agencies commit to excellent standards of corporate parenting.
- (b) To set high expectations and stable relationships for all children in care.
- (c) To seek improved long term outcomes for children in care and their families – for their happiness; well-being; educational success; and future prospects.
- (d) To make sure that the voice of the child and young person in care influences both policy and the services that they receive, and that young people are engaged with any action intended to develop and improve services or to recruit key staff members.
- (e) To oversee and monitor the key performance indicators for the health, well-being and education of looked after children.
- (f) To consider the outcomes of regulatory visits and inspection reports on provision for children in care and to receive regular reports on:
 - the work of the adoption and fostering services;
 - work experience schemes
 - provision for leaving care, housing and training for care leavers; and
 - work with those in the Secure Estate.
- (g) To ensure that relevant key plans, strategies and associated resources identify and make explicit the contribution that they make to targets agreed for improvement.
- (h) To celebrate the achievements of children looked after and their carers.

- (i) To develop an informed view of County Council provision and services through a programme of well planned visits and feedback from Board members.
- (j) To ensure that children looked after by the local authority are offered the protection of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2 September 1990.
- (k) To establish and maintain specific task groups as necessary to make recommendations to it.

Constitution

All Members of the Board and the Chair of the Board will be appointed by the Leader who will determine their period of office.

The Board will comprise of at least the following members but the Leader may appoint additional members at his/her discretion:

- One or more Members of the largest group
- Opposition Groups Member nominee(s)
- Director of Children's Social Care
- Family/carer representatives
- Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers representing young people from across the county

All the above members of the Board will be entitled to vote and the Chair will have a casting vote.

The Leader can make changes to the above appointments at any time.

- No Cabinet members will serve on the Board

Co-opted membership

The Board may co-opt representatives, without voting rights, from significant services involved in corporate parenting:

Health provision – including CAMHS
 Children, Family and Wellbeing Service
 Schools
 Colleges
 Police
 Youth Justice
 Private sector provision
 Voluntary sector provision
 Safeguarding Board
 Department for Work and Pensions
 Lancashire County Council Corporate Management Team

The Board can make changes to the co-opted representation at any time.

The Board does not have decision-making powers and is not a formal Committee of the County Council.

The Board will receive advice and reports from the following:

- (a) The Headteacher for Children Looked After, School Improvement
- (b) CiCC - Lancashire's Children in Care Council
- (c) Children and Young People's Champions:
 - representing the elected members of Lancashire County Council
 - representing the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
- (d) Children's Right Service
- (e) Barnardo's

Updated May 2018

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

January 2020

MEMBERS	
NAME	REPRESENTING
CC Ian Brown	Chair – Conservative, Lancashire County Council (LCC)
CC Jayne Rear	Conservative, Lancashire County Council
CC David Foxcroft	Conservative, Lancashire County Council
CC Stephen Clarke	Conservative, Lancashire County Council
CC Julie Gibson	Labour, Lancashire County Council
6 Young People Reps	LINX (Lancashire's Children in Care Council)
Liz Donnelly-Nelson	Adoption
Marieta Birt	Foster Carer Forum
Barbara Bath	Adoption, Residential and Youth Offending Services
CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBER	
NAME	REPRESENTING
Caroline Waldron	Primary Care Trust
Nicola Bamford	Designated Doctor and Consultant Paediatrician
Audrey Swann	Vulnerable and Looked After Children, LCC
Amanda Mansfield	Independent Reviewing Officers. LCC
Jeanette Woods	Agency Residential
Angela Epps	Agency Fostering
Lynda Pearson/ Roxanne McCallister	Managers, Leaving Care Team, LCC
Caroline Waldron	Clinical Commissioning Groups
Terri Crossland	Virgin Care 0-19 Service
Stephen Young	Corporate Management Team, LCC
Michael Walder	Business Intelligence Team, LCC
Mia Leyland	Barnardo's
Dylan Williams	Barnardo's

Corporate Parenting Board

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Report of the Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and YOT

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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Lancashire County Council's Foster Carers' Charter (Appendix 'A' Refers)

Contact for further information: Barbara Bath, Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and YOT, Tel: 01772 535491, barbara.bath@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Lancashire County Council's Foster Carers' Charter (Appendix 'A') represents the commitment of the Local Authority in its role as a Corporate Parent. The document sets out the roles and responsibilities of Lancashire County Council, the Fostering Service and the foster carers themselves.

Recommendation

Board Members are invited to review Lancashire County Council's Foster Carers' Charter (Appendix 'A'), and ask any questions that arise when the document is discussed at the meeting.

Background and Advice

The Foster Carers' Charter was introduced by the government in 2011 with the following principles;

Children come first:

- Children in foster care deserve to experience as full a family life as possible as part of a loving foster family with carers who can make everyday decisions as they would their own child and without the child feeling that they 'stand out' as a looked after child.
- Children must be given every support to develop their own identities and aspirations, fulfil their potential, and take advantage of all opportunities to promote their talents and skills. Above all, they should be listened to.

Local authorities and fostering services must:

- Recognise in practice the importance of the child's relationship with his or her foster family as one that can make the biggest difference in the child's life and which can endure into adulthood.
- Listen to, involve foster carers and their foster children in decision-making and planning, and provide foster carers and their foster children with full information about each other.
- In making placements be clear about the continuing care or support there will be (including for the child into adulthood), be sensitive to the needs of the foster carer and the child in making and ending placements and have contingency plans should the placement not work.
- Treat foster carers with openness, fairness and respect as a core member of the team around the child and support them in making reasonable and appropriate decisions on behalf of their foster child.
- Ensure that foster carers have the support services and development opportunities they need in order to provide their foster child with the best possible care. That includes liaising with local foster carers groups and seeking to respond to problems and disseminate best practice.
- Make sure foster carers are recompensed on time and are given clear information about any support, allowances, fees, and holidays they will receive including in cases of dispute with the service or during gaps in placements.

Foster carers must:

- Provide positive adult role models, treat the foster child as they would their own child, and be a "pushy parent" in advocating for all aspects of the child's development, including educational attainment and physical and emotional health and wellbeing and co-operate fully as part of a team with other key professionals in the child's life.
- Support their foster child and do all they can to make the placement work. Take part in learning and development, use skills and approaches that make a positive impact and enable the child to reach his or her potential. Support their foster child to help them to counter possible bullying and discrimination as a result of their care status.

Lancashire County Council's first Foster Care Charter was developed in 2011 and has been updated periodically since. Attached is the latest updated version for the Corporate Parenting Boards information and comment.

Lancashire County Council

Foster Carers' Charter

Roles and Commitment

The foster carers' charter represents a commitment on behalf of Lancashire County Council in its role as the corporate parent, Lancashire County Council fostering service and the foster carer to work in partnership in the best interests of the children for whom they care. It is a promise, owned by everybody involved, to strive for best practice at all times.

Lancashire County Council's Corporate Parent Role

The role of the corporate parent when placing and supporting children in a foster home is to:

- Act in their best interests, and promote their physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings and take them into account.
- Help them to gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by Lancashire and its relevant partners.
- Promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes for them.
- Ensure that they are safe, and that there is stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
- Prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

Lancashire County Council's Fostering Service Role

The fostering service aims to provide stable and first rate foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals. To achieve this aim the service recruits, trains and approves foster carers and delivers ongoing support to them, in order to give them the skills and confidence they need to develop meaningful relationships with the children and young people they care for. In this way the service provides stable and loving homes while the children are part of the foster family.

The Foster Carer's Role

Foster carers look after children by developing meaningful relationships in a safe and nurturing family environment. The stability, care and love provided by foster carers helps the child to achieve recovery and healing from past trauma and promotes resilience in order for the child to realise their full potential.

A foster carer's relationships with other members of the team around the child should be based on mutual trust and respect.

This charter explains what all parties can expect from one another.

What foster carers and fostering services can expect from Lancashire County Council as the corporate parent.

1. Working in partnership

We understand that we must provide foster carers with the best possible opportunity to give the children in our care a loving, stable home, and to enable those children to enjoy a positive, nurturing experience of family life – one that does not set them apart from their peers.

We must:

- Treat foster carers as experts on the child and include them where appropriate in all relevant meetings where planning and decision making affect them or the children they care for.
- Treat foster carers without discrimination.
- Value foster carers' skills and expertise equally to those of other professionals.
- Respect confidentiality.

2. Information

We know that information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's need.

We must:

- Share all the relevant information needed in order to care safely for the child and to support the child in fulfilling their potential with the foster carer.
- Provide this information in writing prior to the placement, or as soon as possible in the case of emergency placements.
- Secure clear and timely plans for the child's care.

3. Clarity about decisions

We recognise that in order for children to live a full family life, foster carers must be able to make decisions regarding the children they look after.

We must:

- Ensure that foster carers are able to make everyday decisions as appropriate that mean that their fostered child is not treated differently from their peers and can feel part of their family.
- Provide clarity about any decision foster carers cannot take at the outset so that everyone is clear about their respective responsibilities.
- Deal swiftly with any requests for decision making on matters that are outside of the foster carer's authority.

4. Communication and Consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We must:

- Facilitate communication between foster carers and decision makers.
- Provide foster carers with the opportunity to influence relevant policies and procedures.

What foster carers can expect from Lancashire County Council fostering service:

1. Working in partnership

We recognise that foster carers have skills and expertise and can make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of children in care.

We must:

- Value foster carers' skills and expertise.
- Recognise that foster carers are the people who live with children every day and usually know them best.
- Include foster carers where appropriate in all meetings that affect them and the children they care for.
- Ensure that our fostering service will comply with fostering regulations and guidance.

- Treat foster carers without discrimination and with respect.
- Respect confidentiality.

2. Information

We know that information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's needs.

We must:

- Share all information we have about the child in order to care safely for them.
- Provide foster carers with access to relevant policies and procedures.

3. Support

We recognise that fostering can be an isolating and challenging task, and that appropriate and timely support makes all the difference to the fostering family and to the children in their care.

We must:

- Ensure there is a robust post-approval induction process.
- Respond and consider requests for additional support, including respite and out of hours support.
- Provide foster carers with regular supervision, support and phone contact.
- Give foster carers honest and open feedback.
- Provide foster carers with access to out of hours support from people with fostering expertise, where possible.
- Pay foster carers' allowances in a timely manner.
- Ensure that there is a local group, recognised by the fostering service, where foster carers and their family can find support and share experiences with other fostering families.
- Support foster carers to facilitate positive relationships with birth families.
- Recognise and champion the contribution foster carers and their families make to fostering.

4. Learning and Development

We believe foster carers must have learning and development opportunities throughout their fostering career. This will ensure they have the skills and

knowledge they need, and allow them to develop their practice in order that they can help transform the lives of the children they foster.

We must:

- Ensure all foster carers have an individual personal development plan.
- Provide foster carers and their family members, where appropriate, with appropriate, accessible and relevant training by trainers who understand fostering.
- Support foster carers to develop meaningful relationships with the children in their care and the other members of the team around the child.
- Continue to provide all foster carers with other development opportunities which make the best use of their skills and expertise, such as mentoring or providing training or support.

5. Fair treatment

We recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly, no matter what the circumstances.

We must:

- Consult, where possible, with foster carers before changing terms and conditions.
- Ensure honesty and openness in all of our discussions and communications with foster carers.
- Provide a framework for dealing with allegations, including access to independent support, and adhere to agreed timescales.
- Ensure that foster carers are treated with respect, kept informed and provided with emotional support should they be subject to an allegation.

6. Communication and consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We must:

- Ensure that we consult with foster carers in a meaningful way on matters that affect them.
- Give foster carers feedback from consultations.

- Provide clear information on how foster carers can give us feedback and report concerns.

What Lancashire County Council fostering services can expect from foster carers

1. Working in partnership

We must demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct. We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship and we will aim to build a meaningful and collaborative relationship with our supervising social worker and the child's social worker.

We must:

- Demonstrate our expertise and make use of our skills to the best of our ability.
- Provide children with a positive experience of family life.
- Attend meetings and take part in any discussions about the children and young people we care for and follow through on any actions agreed.
- Work with the individuals and agencies involved with the child such as the child's social worker, fostering service, school, and health and religious bodies.
- Work with birth parents, wider family and any other significant people in a child's life.
- Meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance and follow policies and procedures.
- Inform our supervising social worker about factors that impact on our fostering including changes in our household.
- Inform our supervising social worker about any difficulties that arise for us.
- Inform the child's social worker about any concerns we have related to the child.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Maintain an open dialogue with the fostering service.
- Take ownership for accessing appropriate training to further enable them to meet the needs of the child.

2. Respect for the child

Every child and young person should be respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations and potential.

We must:

- Develop a meaningful relationship with the child - understand their needs, support their growth, become an advocate and champion for them, and endeavour to remain in touch with them when they move on.
- Care for the child in a manner that recognises and respects their identity - including their ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural heritage.
- Afford the same level of protection and care to a child as we would our own child.
- Support the child to make decisions regarding their own lives, as appropriate to their age, understanding and ability.
- Support the child to inform the development of the services which affect their care, as appropriate to their age, understanding and ability.
- Careful consideration to stability and permanence including post 18.

3. Learning, development and support

We must access learning and development opportunities throughout our fostering career in accordance with the needs of the children we are caring for. This will ensure we have the skills and knowledge we need and allow us to develop our practice in order that we can help transform the lives of the children we foster.

We must:

- Be willing and able to develop our skills throughout our fostering career.
- Attend relevant training.
- Be willing to attend and contribute to support groups.

Corporate Parenting Board

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Report of the Head of Business Intelligence

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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Children in Care and Care Leavers performance information

Contact for further information: Michael Walder, Senior Business Intelligence Manager, Tel: 01772 533637, michael.walder@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The report provides an overview of performance information that Business Intelligence produce in relation to Children in Care and Care Leavers for the Board to review, discuss and agree what they would like provided at future meetings.

Recommendation

For the Board to discuss and comment on the information presented and agree the content of future performance information provided to subsequent meetings.

Background and Advice

At the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board a report was presented informing them of some of the performance information produced which can be provided, and is available to the Board on Children in Care and Care Leavers. It was requested this information was reviewed to inform the content of future performance information provided to subsequent meetings.

In addition to the information referred to at the previous meeting of the Board, data required to be provided to Ofsted prior to any visits they make may also be of interest to the Board. Our performance in relation to this data is regularly monitored by a group of senior officers and the latest available data will be provided and presented at the meeting.

The information provided will include:

- Children In Need (CIN) plan numbers and rates
- Child Protection (CP) plan numbers and rates
- Children Looked After (CLA) numbers and rates
- Statutory visit data
- Care leavers % in suitable accommodation

- Care leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Care leavers % in touch

Additional information regarding CLA and Care leavers which may be of interest is available in the following monthly report (presented to the previous meeting of the committee):

<http://intranet.ad.lancscc.net/how-do-i/council-and-democracy/business-intelligence-performance-data/?page=1>

Consultations

None

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

No significant risks have been identified in relation to the proposals contained within this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

None

Corporate Parenting Board

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Report of the Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and YOT

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
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Adoption Panel Report

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information: Barbara Bath, Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and YOT, Tel: 01772 535491, barbara.bath@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

This report (Appendix 'A') summarises the work of Lancashire County Council's Adoption Panel over the six month period from 1 April to 30 September 2019. Lancashire Adoption Panels are joint panels which means that they compose of both adoption and fostering items. However this report considers just the adoption items.

With regard to children's cases and the decision to place for adoption, this was removed from the panels remit, except in cases where there is no court scrutiny (relinquished children). However, this report also summarises the work of these separate 'should be placed for adoption' (SHOPA) meetings.

Recommendation

Board Members are invited to review Lancashire County Council's Adoption Panel report (Appendix 'A'), and ask any questions that arise when the document is shared at the meeting.

Background and Advice

Adoption panels perform an important role in assisting the agency to reach the best possible decision in respect of:

Whether a child should be placed for adoption, where there is parental consent, the suitability of prospective adopters or the termination of approval of a prospective adopter, and whether a child should be placed for adoption with a specific prospective adopter.

They are intended to be multi-disciplinary bodies with a considerable element of independence from the agency. This independence means that they cannot themselves make decisions but make recommendations to the agency's decision maker in respect of cases referred to it.

Panels play an important quality assurance role, providing objectivity and having the ability to challenge practice which is felt not to be in the interests of children or fall short of the Regulations or National Minimum Standards.

Panels are required to give regular feedback to the agency. The panel can give advice to the agency (but it is not required to do so) on: contact arrangements; whether an application for a placement order should be made; the number of children the prospective adopter may be suitable to adopt, their age range, sex, likely needs and background; and the provision of adoption support.

The agency should monitor its performance and provide reports to its trustees or board members if it is a voluntary adoption agency or the executive side of the local authority every six months about children who are in the care of their local authority and who are waiting to be placed with new families.

These reports should include: the number, type and age of the children waiting for an adoptive placement and length of time they have been waiting; the agency's performance against the timescales set out for the two-stage process; progress in the recruitment of suitable adoptive families; the number of children placed for adoption and adopted since the last report; and the number of children whose placement has disrupted or where there has been a change of plan and the child is no longer to be placed for adoption.

Introduction

This report summarises the work of Lancashire County Council's Adoption Panel over the 6 month period from 1st April to 30th September 2019. Lancashire Adoption Panels are Joint panels which means that they compose of both Adoption and fostering items. However this report considers just the adoption items.

With regard to children's cases and the decision to place for adoption, this was removed from the panels remit, except in cases where there is no court scrutiny (relinquished children). However, this report also summarises the work of these separate SHOPA meetings (see section 2 of this report).

SECTION ONE**1. Composition of the adoption panels and recruitment activity**

The Agency is required to maintain a central list of persons who are considered to be suitable members of an adoption panel.

The central list is designed to reduce delay for children through by avoiding postponement of panels due to not being quorate (requires a minimum of five members). Each panel must include a social worker with a minimum of three years' experience.

Each panel also requires an independent chair (or vice chair) and three other members, at least one of whom must be independent if the Chair is not present. Both our panel chair and vice chair are independent panel members. We also have a medical advisor at each panel, a minute taker and a panel advisor.

During this period we have had a level of uncertainty due to the ongoing Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) planning. However, we have recruited 2x new independent social workers who are now available to sit as panel members. One is a retired registered manager of a private fostering agency and the other a retired practice manager from a local authority fostering service. In addition, enquiries have been made to our democratic services regarding the availability of elected members to sit on our panels. Due to the imminent changes to panel scheduling as a result of the RAA, it has been agreed that elected members will be approached to sit on panel once the new timetable and structure of panels comes into effect.

2. Support and training available to panel members

During this period, there has been one panel development day which took place on 4th June 2019. This development day focused on team building between the panel members for the two authorities that are merging to become a RAA in the near future (Lancashire and Blackpool). As such the panel members from both authorities were invited to attend. The session was hosted by the panel advisor for Lancashire County Council and a student on placement with the advisor at the time.

This session included the following:

- Introductions and agenda for the day. Housekeeping.
- A brief guided meditation to relieve stress (included as part of Lancashire's Health & Wellbeing initiative)
- Life highlights session- an icebreaker which touched on social media use, the positives and the issues to be aware of. This sparked conversation regarding the need for foster carers to understand social media and how children use it.
- The Apprentice- a team building exercise which involved everyone bringing a precious item to the session (which they were advised of at invite stage) and each team deciding on one

of the items to pitch (or sell) to the whole cohort. This led on to discussion about precious items and life story work for children who are adopted.

- Hopes and fears- A team exercise which explored hopes and fears in relation to the team merge as part of the RAA development. The panel advisor answered as many questions as possible and two of the three panel chairs from across the two authorities were also present to assist.
- Evaluation (see below)

The feedback from panel members regarding this development day was as follows:

1. Something they enjoyed today

- Chocolate from the apprentice session
- Meeting people
- Meeting new people, excellent advice, team building exercise, nice atmosphere, well organised and good participation
- The apprentice session and mindfulness session

2. Something they would like to point out

- The student was very good, and it was good to have an agenda in advance
- Bigger room would be better and more Blackpool attendees
- Not everyone is comfortable with icebreakers and meditation, the facilitators could have mixed us up more
- Not a strong Blackpool representative

3. Something they did not enjoy

- Mindfulness as it felt uncomfortable
- Standing up at the front singing and dancing as the room was too small
- Nothing
- Mindfulness and room too small

4. Something they will treasure

- Meeting Blackpool and Preston panel members and meeting new members
- The pitches were informative and funny, made nice new friends and the clarity and structure of the day was good.
- The pitches presentations session
- Meeting new and old people

5. Something they would like to add

- Formal joint briefing sessions including all panel members and staff
- More factual information about the RAA
- Grieving process and overview of systems. Overall the day was well led and organised and the time limits for each of the sessions were perfect.

6. What have you taken away from the day?

- Meeting new faces, laughter and teamwork in a fun way. We also felt welcomed throughout the day.
- Smiles and laughter, friendships, a better understanding of the RAA and fond memories of the day.
- Meeting new people and putting names to faces.

Panel members have also had access to briefings each month which are provided on the server. The following topics have been covered during this reporting period:

- A copy of the Independent Review Mechanism's (IRM) report from 2016 shared.
- Briefing produced by the panel advisor regarding a Lancashire case that went to the IRM – discussion on lessons learned. Reflection on whether panel need to adapt their questions when considering a negative recommendation.
- A 7 minute briefing from The Safeguarding Board on Coercive Control
- A 7 minute briefing from The Safeguarding Board on Social Media and Mental Health
- Copy of The Fostering Network Summary Report 2019 provided for information.
- A 7 minute briefing from The Safeguarding board on making safeguarding Personal.

All regular panel members have an appraisal each year of service. Those who are on the reserve list and attend ad hoc have appraisals as appropriate depending on how often they attend.

All panel members have again completed GDPR online training in this reporting period or at least within the last year. The requirement is that this online training is completed every year.

3. Panel Functions

The Adoption Panels key function is to make recommendations to the agency decision maker on the following:

- The suitability of prospective adoptive applicants to adopt
- Whether a child should be placed for adoption with particular prospective adopters.
- To consider the review of approved adopters who have not been linked to a child in the first 12 months of approval
- To scrutinise cases where children are relinquished for adoption.
- The panels also look at any disrupted placements and cases where adopters resign within their first year, as lessons learned exercises.

In addition, the National Minimum Standards 2014 states that:

- Panel's report every 6 months on the quality of reports presented
- Panel's report on the restrictions on preparing these reports
- Panel's report on the consistency of linking's, approvals and decisions to place for adoption (in the case of the later, as already noted this is reported on in section 2 of this report)

3. Composition and comparison of items presented to panel during this period

To prevent these reports being cumbersome, the data for this period is compared with the last 2 reportable periods only. This will allow an analysis of data over the whole year and a comparison between this reporting period and the same reporting period last year.

BREAKDOWN OF PANEL ITEMS 1ST APRIL - 30TH SEPTEMBER 2019	
Total number of items presented	82
Mainstream Approvals	37
Concurrent Approvals	5
De-registration	0
Relinquished Child – SHOPA	1
Mainstream Linkings	29
Concurrent Linkings	4
FFA Linkings	6
BREAKDOWN OF PANEL ITEMS 1ST OCT 2018 – 31ST MAR 2019	
Total number of items presented	66
Mainstream Approvals	28
Concurrent Approvals	9
De-registration	1
Relinquished Child – SHOPA	1
Mainstream Linkings	19
Concurrent Linkings	3
FFA Linkings	5
BREAKDOWN OF PANEL ITEMS 1ST APR 2018 – 30TH SEPT 2018	
Total number of items presented	82
Mainstream Approvals	29
Concurrent Approvals	9
De-registration	1

Relinquished Child – SHOPA	1
Mainstream Linking's	32
Concurrent Linking's	4
FFA Linking's	6

BREAKDOWN OF THE ABOVE AND ANALYSIS

- Over the last year there has been a total of **148** items submitted to the Lancashire adoption panels. Of these **14** were for the approval of concurrent carers, **65** were mainstream approvals and **66** were linking's. We have had only **1** deregistration for the whole year and only **2** relinquished children.
- On completion of the next 6 monthly report from October 2019 to March 2020 there will be a comparison and analysis between the last 2 reporting years to chart the overall increase or decrease in panel business.
- Comparison between this 6 monthly reporting period and the same reporting period last year shows that the statistics have remained fairly consistent. Both periods had a total of **82** items submitted.
- The only significant difference between this period and the same reporting period last year is that mainstream approvals are up from **29** to **37**. That's a **27%** increase in the number of adopters available to the service.

5 The quality of reports presented to panel

The panels grade the paperwork for each item that is presented using an electronic feedback system. Assessments are completed by a central team who cover all areas of Lancashire and therefore this analysis does not include a comparison between localities. This feedback is given on all approvals or PARS, relinquished babies and on all linking's or APRs. It is not however given on disruptions, reports submitted where there is a negative recommendation or for resignations.

The feedback is sent to the panel advisor in the form of an email from the data capture software (clicksuite). This is then forwarded by the advisor to the social worker and their manager so that this can form part of their supervision as appropriate.

Submissions are graded as either: Very Good, Fairly Good, Average, Fairly Poor or Poor.

There were **81** reports of the **82** submissions that required feedback. Of those reports a total of **75** received feedback. The missing 6 reports were presented to a panel in June while the advisor was not available. This will be raised with the service for future to ensure that feedback is sought even in the advisors absence. However the total number of reports receiving feedback has improved since the last reporting period whereby out of **65** reports that required feedback only **48** received it.

Therefore, in this reporting period, a total of **92%** of submissions received feedback compared to only **73%** in the last period. .

THE RESULTS

THE QUALITY OF REPORTS FOR THIS PERIOD 1 ST APR – 30 TH SEPT 2019				
VERY GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	AVERAGE	FAIRLY POOR	VERY POOR
53	18	4	0	0
THE QUALITY OF REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 ST OCT 2018- 31 ST MAR 2019				
VERY GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	AVERAGE	FAIRLY POOR	VERY POOR
35	5	8	0	0
THE QUALITY OF REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD 1 ST APR – 30 TH SEP 2018				
VERY GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	AVERAGE	FAIRLY POOR	VERY POOR
38	9	4	2	0

BREAKDOWN OF THE ABOVE

- **70%** of the items that received feedback were considered to be of very good quality.
- Of the figures above, **29** of the items graded as very good were PARs (assessments) and **24** were APRs (linking's).
- Of those considered average, all **4** were linking's.
- There were **0** items considered to be below an average quality
- The reasons given for the average scores for the APRs were: lack of an appropriate support plan to highlight the support available for adopters who come from external agencies, CPR not being updated (this was the reason in **2** cases) and the practicalities of managing 2x children as a single carer not explored, the practicalities of a couple managing 3x children placed at the same time not explored.

ANALYSIS OF THE ABOVE

From the above table it is clear that the number of reports receiving the top grading has improved. However, as noted, the number of reports receiving feedback has also gone up considerably, this will skew the data. What can be determined is that for both the previous period and the same period last year, there is a positive trend towards more reports receiving a good or very good grading and fewer reports receiving a mark of average or below.

6. Timescales

For previous reports we have used the regulatory timescales. However for this report and the previous report we have used the Adoption scorecard data. Thus comparison is only available over the last year.

DATA FOR THIS PERIOD

A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (days)

Start of Care to Placement - average 493 days

Total Placed	Within Timescale	Outside of Timescale	
47	22	25	46.8% within timescale

A2: Days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)

Placement Order to Matching Decision - average 157 days

Total Matched	Within Timescale	Outside of Timescale	
46	28	19	69.9% within timescale

A3: Children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family %

Total Placed	Less than 14 months	
47	22	46.8% in less than 14 months

DATA FOR THE PREVIOUS PERIOD

A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (days)

Start of Care to Placement - Current Target = less than 425 days

Total Placed	Within Timescale	Outside of Timescale	
83	49	34	59% within timescale

A2: Days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)

Placement Order to Matching Decision - Current target = less than 121 days

Total Matched	Within Timescale	Outside of Timescale	
84	56	28	66.6% within timescale

A3: Children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family %

Total Placed	Less than 14 months	
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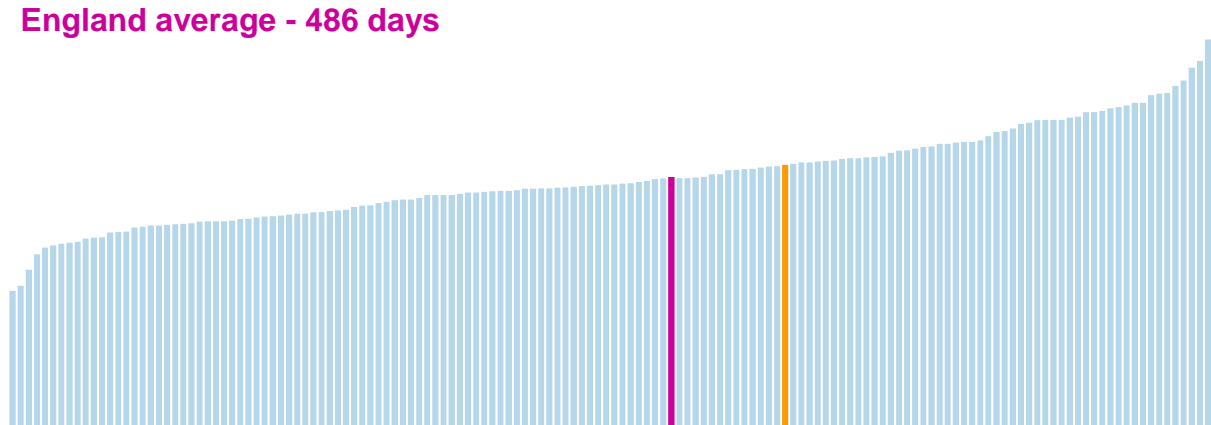
83

48

57.8% in less than 14 months

A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, 2015-18

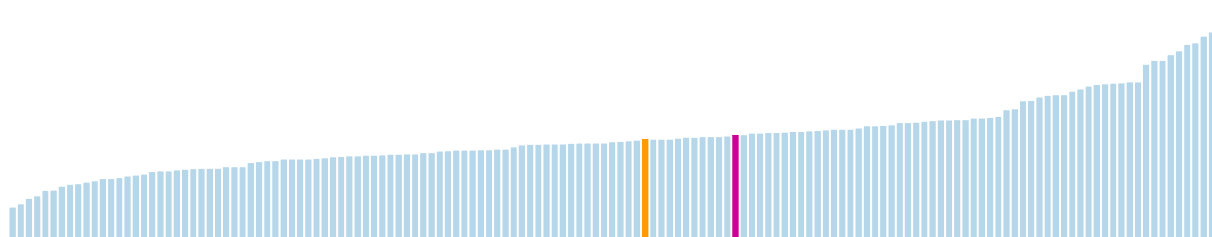
England average - 486 days



The chart above is the adoption scorecard for A1 timescales. The red line indicates the average marker. The yellow line shows Lancashire's position nationally. Therefore, Lancashire are above average in terms of the time taken between a child entering care and moving into an adoptive family.

A2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family, 2015-18

England average - 201 days



The chart above is the adoption scorecard for A2 timescales. The red line indicates the average marker. The yellow line shows Lancashire's position nationally. Therefore, Lancashire are below average in terms of the time taken between receiving authority to place and deciding on a match.

ANALYSIS

Comparison over the year shows a slight drop in the targets with less than **50%** within the A1 timescale for this period compared to nearly **60%** in the previous period. In addition the total number with orders dropped considerably. Lancashire's average of **493** days for A1 is above the national average of **486** as can be seen from the chart above.

However, our A2 statistics show a better than the national average result. Our average number of days being **157** days compared to the national average of **201** days.

7. Qualified Social workers

Panels are required to feedback on whether the social worker preparing the reports is suitably qualified under the restrictions on writing reports 2005 regulations. It is the panel advisor's view that **100%** of cases were presented by a suitably qualified social worker as in the cases where a social worker was not suitably qualified, the work was overseen by a relevant qualified social worker or manager who was qualified. However, the table is useful to determine the number of newly qualified social workers who are undertaking this task.

THIS PERIOD	APPROVALS	LINKING'S		RELINQUISHED BABY
	PAR	PAR	APR	CPR
Social Worker Qualified	27	32	27	1
Social Worker Not Qualified (report overseen by practice manager who is qualified)	15	4	11	0
Social Worker Qualified - not recorded	0	3	1	0

LAST PERIOD	APPROVALS	LINKING'S		RELINQUISHED BABY
	PAR	PAR	APR	CPR
Social Worker Qualified	30	26	17	1
Social Worker Not Qualified (report overseen by practice manager who is qualified)	7	0	9	0
Social Worker Qualified - not recorded	1	0	0	

PREVIOUS PERIOD	APPROVALS	LINKING'S		RELINQUISHED BABY
	PAR	CPR	PAR	CPR
Social Worker Qualified	33	37	40	1
Social Worker Not Qualified (report overseen by practice manager who is qualified)	4	5	2	

Social Worker Qualified - not recorded	1	0	0	
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ANALYSIS OF THE ABOVE

Comparison of the above highlights that the number of newly qualified staff completing these reports has risen since the last reporting period and in comparison to the same reporting period last year.

SECTION TWO

1. 'Should be placed for adoption' (SHOPA) decisions

The decision to place a child for adoption is considered by the agency decision maker (ADM) without attendance at a panel. The ADM takes into account the paperwork submitted by: the childcare social worker, the panel advisor, the medical advisor and the legal advisor. There are 3 SHOPA (should be placed for adoption) submissions every month. There is a general requirement that submissions for legal advice require 5 days for completion as a minimum. All paperwork goes through a quality assurance (QA) process before it reaches the ADM.

2. The breakdown of business and grading of submissions

BREAKDOWN OF BUSINESS

DETAILS OF SUBMISSIONS FOR THIS PERIOD	
Total number of cases presented to ADM Consultation	55
Number considered for SHOPA	49
Number of SHOPA agreed	49
Number of SHOPA recommendations deferred	0
Number of SHOPA not agreed within this timeframe (will be carried forward to the next period)	3
Number considered for Change of Plan	3
Number of Changes of Plans agreed	3
Review of SHOPA	0
Number of Change of Plans deferred	0
DETAILS OF SUBMISSIONS FOR THE LAST PERIOD	
Total number of cases presented to ADM Consultation	51
Number considered for SHOPA	46
Number of SHOPA agreed	43

Number of SHOPA recommendations deferred	2
Number of SHOPA not agreed	1
Number considered for Change of Plan	2
Number of Changes of Plans agreed	1
Review of SHOPA	0
Number of Change of Plans deferred	1
DETAILS OF SUBMISSIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1st APRIL 2018 TO 30th SEPTEMBER 2018	
Total number of cases presented to ADM Consultation	53
Number considered for SHOPA	42
Number of SHOPA agreed	37
Number of SHOPA recommendations deferred	5
Number considered for Change of Plan	11
Number of Changes of Plans agreed	7
Review of SHOPA	4

ANALYSIS OF THE ABOVE

- During this period a total of **55** cases have been brought to the SHOPA ADM. Of these, **49** were for a SHOPA decision and **3** were to change an existing SHOPA decision to an alternative care plan. The remainder will receive a decision within the next reporting period.
- The above figures are comparable to both the previous six months and to the same period last year.
 - In the previous six months there were a total of **51** cases with **46** of those being for a SHOPA decision and **2** for a change of plan
 - In the same period last year the figures were: **53** cases with **42** of those being for a SHOPA decision and **11** for a change of plan.
- Over the last year there has been a total of **106** submissions to the agency decision maker. Of these **0** were deferred. That's **100%** of reports submitted deemed to be good enough for a decision to be made.
- The number of change of care plan submissions for the whole year is **5**, with only **3** in this period, which is a considerable drop from the same reporting period last year, which was **11**.

That's a decrease of **72%** which is encouraging. The aim is to reduce the number of change of plans that are presented by ensuring a more robust decision making process at the initial submission to SHOPA.

GRADING OF BUSINESS

The agency decision maker has considered the quality and consistency of all child permanence reports (CPRs) across the different areas of Lancashire, as seen below.

The paperwork presented for the change of care plans (3 cases in total) does not receive a grading from the ADM.

The grading scale used is: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

The table below for this period can then be compared to the data provided for the previous period.

QUALITY OF REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR THIS PERIOD			
	Number of SHOPA cases from the East of the county	Number of SHOPA cases from the North of the county.	Number of SHOPA cases from the Central area of the county
Total considered	25	5	19
Number considered outstanding	0	0	0
Number considered good	1	0	2
Number considered to require improvement	21	5	9
Number considered in adequate	3	0	8
Number that ADM did not record a grade for	0	0	0
QUALITY OF REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR THE LAST PERIOD			
	Number of SHOPA cases from the East of the county	Number of SHOPA cases from the North of the county.	Number of SHOPA cases from the Central area of the county
Total considered	20	8	18
Number considered outstanding	0	0	0

ADOPTION PANEL REPORT - 1ST APRIL -30TH SEPTEMBER 2019

Number considered good	8	3	4
Number considered to require improvement	9	4	12
Number considered inadequate	2	0	0
Number that ADM did not record a grade for	1	1	2

QUALITY OF REPORTS SUBMITTED FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2018

	Number of SHOPA cases from the East of the county	Number of SHOPA cases from the North of the county.	Number of SHOPA cases from the Central area of the county
Total considered	14	10	18
Number considered outstanding	0	0	0
Number considered good	2	1	5
Number considered to require improvement	11	6	13
Number considered inadequate	0	1	0
Number that ADM did not record a grade for	1	2	0

BREAKDOWN AND ANALYSIS OF THE ABOVE

- There are no outstanding reports for this period or the previous, or for the same reporting period last year.
- Only 6% of the reports for this period were considered to be of a good standard compared to 32% of reports in the last period. This highlights a decrease in the quality of reports submitted to SHOPA.

- Comparison over the three localities highlights that the most submissions came from East and that of those submissions the majority were considered to require improvement. Equally, in all 3 localities the most consistent grading was 'requires improvement' which suggests further work is needed to improve the standard of submissions throughout the Authority.
- In addition to the above, Central submitted the most submissions that were considered to be inadequate, a total of **42%** of their overall submissions. This will be highlighted to the advanced practitioners for the area so that further work can be conducted to ensure an increase in the quality of reports submitted to SHOPA.

4.Timescales of submissions for 'should be placed for adoption' decisions

The timescales are measured from the point the plan of adoption has been ratified by the independent reviewing officer (IRO) to the date of the SHOPA decision. This should be no more than 8 weeks with a requirement to present to SHOPA within 6 weeks to allow time for a decision to be made. Changes of plan are not included in this data therefore there are **52** submissions to consider.

SHOPA TIMESCALES BASED ON SHOPA AGREED FOR THIS PERIOD	
Number recorded out of timescales	2
Number recorded within timescales	50
Number of cases where timescales have not been recorded	0
Number of cases where social worker considers within timescales	0

REASONS GIVEN FOR TIMESCALES DELAYS	
Adoption medicals	0
Staffing	0
Viability assessments	0
No reason given	2
Other	0
SHOPA TIMESCALES BASED ON SHOPA AGREED FOR THE LAST PERIOD	
Number recorded out of timescales	6

Number recorded within timescales	31
Number of cases where timescales have not been recorded	3
Number of cases where social worker considers within timescales	6
REASONS GIVEN FOR TIMESCALES DELAYS	
Adoption medicals	0
Staffing	0
Viability assessments	0
No reason given	0
Other	Reports not of sufficient quality Leave to oppose PO application
SHOPA TIMESCALES BASED ON SHOPA AGREED FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR	
Number recorded out of timescales	10
Number recorded within timescales	24
Number of cases where timescales have not been recorded	5
Number of cases where social worker considers within timescales	2
REASONS GIVEN FOR TIMESCALE DELAYS	
Adoption medicals	3
Staffing	0
Viability assessments	3
No reason given	4

BREAKDOWN OF THE ABOVE

- There appears to be an improvement in the number of submissions that are considered to be within timescale in this last period. Out of the **52** submissions a total of **50** were within timescale, that's **96%** compared with **67%** for the last period.
- The reasons given for delay in this period have not been provided.

4. Qualified Social workers

The agency decision maker for should be placed for adoption decisions is required to feedback on whether the social worker preparing the reports was suitably qualified.

ADOPTION AGENCIES REGULATIONS SOCIAL WORKER QUALIFIED FOR 3 YEARS (SHOPA AGREED)	
Number recorded as qualified	33
Number recorded as not qualified and reports overseen by qualified Practice Manager	15
Number not recorded	4

ANALYSIS

It is the panel advisors view that in **100%** of cases presented the paperwork was either completed by a suitably qualified social worker OR overseen by a suitably qualified social worker thus meeting the report writing regulations.

There is a need to ensure that the social worker completing the submission sheet understands the importance of ensuring they complete the 'reason for being out of timescale' section of the form.

KEY THEMES FROM THIS REPORT

- The quality of reports submitted to the adoption panel has improved in this period compared to the last. The number of submissions is consistent with that of the same period for the previous year.
- The total number of submissions to the SHOPA ADM has remained consistent with the same period last year.
- The quality of reports submitted to the SHOPA ADM has decreased significantly with only **6%** of submissions receiving a grade higher than ' requires improvement'. This will be addressed and reported on in the next reporting period. The plan to address this includes the completion of a new policy and guide by the panel advisor which will be circulated to all the children's social care teams and the advanced practitioners to assist with the completion of SHOPA submissions.

Tracey Ellis

Panel advisor 25/11/19

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL CHAIR

The panel continues to provide robust analysis of all the material presented to it and offers recommendations based on members' thoughtful and detailed exploration of suitability. All members attend when required; there have been no incidents where the panel has failed to form a quorum.

The membership of the panel's central list is well balanced with a wide range of experiences and backgrounds; this engenders opportunities to bring different perspectives to discussions and analysis. As outlined above the recruitment of two social workers to the panel has improved the balance considerably. The only challenge yet to be overcome, is the cultural and heritage backgrounds of the membership, which doesn't fully reflect the community which the panels serve.

The panel receives consistently positive feedback from attendees, both applicants and professionals. Members always provide a friendly and open welcome to all who attend, regardless of their circumstances.

Sean White: Panel Chair
