

## **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

### **AGENDA**

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room No. 2) on Monday 7 February 2011 at 5.30 p.m.**

#### **Part I**

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1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
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6.	<b>MALAP Strategy</b> Presentation by the Services for Looked After Children Manager.	-

## **Part II**

### **Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

The following items are not for publication as the Board is likely to exclude the public during consideration thereof as they contain information relating to any individual, or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).

- |    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 7. | <b>Minutes – Part II</b>  | 23 |
|    | Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 September 2010, Part II (copy herewith). |    |
| 8. | <b>Reports of Ofsted Inspections of Children’s Homes</b>                        | 25 |
|    | Report of the Executive Director of Children’s Services (copy herewith).        |    |

ELAINE WAUGH  
Head of Law and Governance

Civic Centre  
SUNDERLAND

21 January 2011.

## ***Corporate Parenting Board***

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 13 September 2010 in  
Committee Room No. 2, Civic Centre, Sunderland at 5.30 pm**

### **Present:**

Councillor P. Smith (Chair)  
Councillor Speding  
Councillor Trueman  
Councillor A. Hall  
Councillor D. Smith

### **Members of the Board**

Executive Member, Children and Learning City  
Executive Member, Healthy City  
Executive Member, Sustainable Communities  
Coalfield  
Copt Hill

### **Also in attendance:**

Phil Taylor  
Helen Fay  
John Arthurs  
Alan Caddick  
Jane Hedley  
Debra Dorward

### **All Supporting Officers**

Residential Services Manager  
Fostering Review Manager  
Independent Reviewing Manager  
Head of Housing  
Senior Solicitor  
Democratic Services Officer

### **Young People**

Craig Clifford  
Kallam Addison  
Konnar McCully  
David Lamb  
Daniel Johnson  
Daniel Bensley  
Tiffany Johnson  
Shanice Sykes

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Ball, Gofton, Maddison, I. Richardson, Walker, L. Walton and D. Wilson.

Apologies were also submitted from Meg Boustead, Nick Murphy and Alyson Boucher.

## **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes of Meeting held on 5 July 2010**

9. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

John Arthurs, Independent Reviewing Manager updated Members that since the last meeting, the young people had held a workshop to look at priorities to be included in the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) such as accommodation, education, health, contact issues/placements, finance, jobs and bullying.

## **Update on Housing Issues**

Alan Caddick, Head of Housing provided a verbal update in response to the accommodation issues the young people had raised at a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board held on 12 January 2010. During the update he referred specifically to the Corporate Parenting Board minutes where the young people had delivered a PowerPoint presentation detailing their concerns regarding accommodation.

Having reflected on the points that the young people had raised, the Head of Housing clarified that work was underway on plans to work more closely with young people in relation to their moving and/or leaving care. Access to an appropriate range of housing was regarded an important issue by both the Council and young people and in future it was intended that there would be a simplified way for young people to access appropriate housing.

The Head of Housing stated that the Council intended to work with landlords and in future would underwrite bonds, rather than supply the landlord with the bond upfront. The Council would begin to offer a service focused on the individual and the type of accommodation that could best meet their needs.

In response to a series of questions put forward by the young people, the Head of Housing clarified that in relation to the number of 16-17 year olds staying in bed and breakfast accommodation, at the moment across the ages there were four young people residing in bed and breakfast accommodation compared to 19 young people two years ago.

The young people were assured that work was underway with landlords regarding allowing visitors into their homes. He also stated that work would continue with accommodation providers generally in relation to the creation of more accommodation for young people and assisting young people with costs.

One of the young people in attendance enquired what options young people had if they wished to live outside of Sunderland. In response the Head of Housing stated

that Sunderland City Council did work closely with other Local Authorities and by continuing to do so would improve the chances of young people being able to reside elsewhere. He admitted that sometimes it was difficult placing young people in the exact location that they specify, however that every effort was made to accommodate their needs.

Mr. Caddick responded to an enquiry regarding the type of accommodation available for young people aged 16. In doing so he advised that the type of accommodation offered depended upon the individual's needs and that these would be determined during an assessment review process to identify support requirements. He stated that the Council wanted to allow young people the independence that they require whilst providing them with adequate support.

In relation to private landlords, Mr. Caddick explained that some private landlords did not accept tenancies from young people. However work was underway to overcome that and every effort was being made to get more private landlords on board. He clarified that 157 young people were recorded last year as residing in privately rented accommodation. The reason for the numbers being so high was because there were few social landlords available.

Councillor A. Hall enquired if Mr. Caddick had held discussions with private landlords regarding the issue of the bond not being supplied at the beginning of the tenancy. In response, Mr. Caddick explained that these discussions had indeed taken place and that some landlords had been more receptive than others.

Councillor P. Smith and the young people in attendance then thanked Mr. Caddick for his attendance.

### **Children Looked After: Performance Report**

The Head of Safeguarding submitted a report providing Board Members with information about performance in relation to key performance indicators and targets for Children Looked After.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Phil Taylor, Residential Services Manager outlined the report. In doing so he informed Members that final performance information was submitted to the DFE annually in June.

The information contained within the report was based on data from 01/07/09 to 30/06/10. A summary of the key points was then provided, during which the following corrections were made:-

- “7 CLA were privately fostered” was to be reworded. Privately fostered young people would not be classified as Children Looked After.

- “Almost all CLA had a current Personal Education Plan (PEP) at the end of June 2010”. The word ‘almost’ was considered inappropriate for a statistical report.

Councillor Speding referred to NI148 which measured that less than half of care leavers aged 19 were in education, employment or training. Councillor Speding enquired how this compared generally. In response, John Arthurs, Independent Reviewing Manager advised the figures contained within the report were low and that the September figures were higher due to enrolments. Nonetheless, for young people, sustaining employment and training cannot always be maintained as it depended on what other issues they had going on. He reinforced that support mechanisms for young people were very important.

Councillor P. Smith in referring to NI71 raised concern regarding the numbers of Children Looked After who go missing from home/care. The Independent Reviewing Manager responded advising that work was underway with the Police to tackle this. Members were informed that there was a balance to be struck and without removing independence from young people, a register would be taken. This system would be robust, and would assist in identifying at what point young people are reported missing.

Members were advised further that the risks would be greater for some young people, particularly because it was often the same young people that go missing time after time. The performance indicator in question had already been flagged up in the Children and Young People’s Plan in order to try to identify procedures to meet the needs of runaways, including why they go missing, protocols for responding to urgent/out of hours referrals and local procedures including effective needs assessment protocols.

Jane Hedley, the Solicitor in attendance then clarified upon questioning that the summary containing numbers of missing instances by month meant that each number showed the number of episodes during that particular month e.g. 60. That did not mean that 60 children had gone missing. The exact numbers of missing young people would be submitted for the next meeting.

John Arthurs, Independent Reviewing Manager then provided Members with an update on young people’s participation in reviews. In doing so he advised that in future performance data would be broken down into seven categories. The most recent information was broken down as follows:-

- PN0 - Child aged under 4 at the time of review – 20%
- PN1 - Child physically attends and speaks for him or herself – 55%
- PN2 - Child physically attends and an advocate speaks on his or her behalf – 2%
- PN3 - Child attends and conveys his or her view symbolically (non-verbally) – 3%
- PN4 - Child attends but does not speak or convey views non-verbally, does not ask an advocate to speak for him – Zero

- PN5 - Child does not attend physically but briefs an advocate to speak for him or her – 35%
- PN6 - Child does not attend but conveys his or her feelings to the review by a facilitative medium – Very small number
- PN7 - Child does not attend nor are his or her views conveyed to the review – currently being monitored

Upon consideration, it was:-

- 10. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **Independent Advocacy for Looked After Children**

The Head of Safeguarding submitted a quarterly report concerning the Independent Advocacy Service for the year 2009-2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

John Arthurs, Independent Reviewing Manager, outlined the report and in doing so advised Members that the number of young people accessing the service was the equivalent to the Advocacy Service's highest take-up year.

During the current year, eleven new cases had been picked up by the service.

Members were informed that all but one referral during the year had been in respect of children or young people in foster care, including children and young people placed outside of Sunderland.

In terms of the Contract Review, due to various changes in the arrangements for Corporate Commissioning and changes in personnel at Corporate Procurement, the re-issue of the service for tender had been delayed.

Nonetheless, arrangements had been agreed with the current provider to continue the service provision to individual young people as required, pending the completion of the re-commissioning process.

Upon consideration, it was:-

- 11. RESOLVED to note the continuing development of the service and the due arrangements for re-commissioning the contract.

### **Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006**

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

12. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to an individual, or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (including the Authority holding that information) (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1 and 2).

(Signed) P. SMITH,  
(Chairman).



REPORT OF: HEAD OF SAFEGUARDING

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER: PERFORMANCE (1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010)

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Corporate Parenting Board with performance information relating to Children Looked After (CLA) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010, with a particular focus on the end of the period. It also gives a detailed breakdown of the Children Looked After performance indicators via a Performance Grid.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The work of Children's Services Social Care in Sunderland is of critical importance to achieving good outcomes for the authority's CLA; to ensure that each and every child looked after is able to achieve their full potential.
- 2.2 Whilst the National Indicator Set for local authorities has now been removed, continued use of the indicators for the immediate future, provides a means by which Sunderland can (a) measure performance for its CLA, (b) compare performance to previous periods, and (c) flag areas for improvement.
- 2.3 The former National Indicator Set on which this report is based covers Placements, Placement Stability, Reviews, Care Leavers, Missing Children, Adoptions, Offending, Emotional and Behavioural Health, and Ethnicity.

**3.0 Context**

- 3.1 Final performance information is submitted to the DfE annually in June, and thereafter follows a period of validation. The data provided in this report and in the Performance Grid is therefore subject to finalisation and validation, which can cause changes to the outcome.

**4.0 Methodology**

- 4.1 This report and Performance Grid provides data on a cumulative basis from 01/04/10 where feasible, although some data is represented on a snapshot or rolling basis. The 'measure' is made explicit in each case, via the Performance Grid, to aid interpretation.
- 4.2 Colour-coding is used throughout the Performance Grid to indicate whether a target has been met or to indicate the direction of performance travel from the previous month. When colour-coding direction of travel, an interpretation has been made as to whether the move is positive, negative or neutral – the interpretation is entirely subjective and is open to further discussion. Green is positive, red is negative and grey is neutral.

**5.0 Summary of Key Points**

- 5.1 By the end of November 2010:
- 387 children were looked after (68.0 per 10,000 children in the local population) – following a peak of 400 in July 2010.
  - 75.19% (291 of 387) of all CLA were placed in foster care, and of those, 72.85% (212 of 291) were placed within the local authority boundary.
  - 82.52% (118 of 143) of CLA aged 10-15 were in a family placement, increasing to 99.41% (169 of 170) for the under-10's.
  - 58.91% (228 of 387) of all CLA were male, and 41.09% (159 of 387) were female.

- 91.99% (356 of 387) of CLA were experiencing a stable placement (less than 3 placements) - the first improvement in three-months.
- 66.92% (87 of 130) of long-term CLA were retaining a stable long-term placement – more than in any other month of the financial year.
- 100% of CLA had participated in their reviews.
- 97.71% (341 of 349) of all CLA cases that should have been reviewed, were reviewed on time.
- 68.29% (56 of 82) of all Foster Carer cases that should have been reviewed, were reviewed on time.
- 90% (27 of 30) of care leavers were in suitable accommodation – the first time this financial year that the target was both met and exceeded.
- 50% (15 of 30) of care leavers were in suitable Education, Training or Employment.
- The self-assessment for children missing from home/care remained at 12 with further work being needed across a number of areas. However, the number of children going missing reduced, as did the number of times they went missing.
- 47.62% (10 of 21) of children adopted were adopted within 12-months of the best interest decision. Those not adopted in timescale were either aged 5 and over or had complex needs.
- 7.67% (25 of 326) of children looked after for over six-months had an Adoption Order or Guardianship Order.
- 1.15 CLA offended for every one 10-17-year-old offender in the general population (April to September period).
- 13.3 (low mental health concerns) was the average mental health score for children aged between 4 and 16 who had their mental health needs assessed (by the end of September, 2010).
- 4.91% (19 of 387) of CLA belonged to an ethnic minority population.
- 0.52% (2 of 387) of CLA were unaccompanied asylum seekers.

## 6.0 Children Looked After (CLA) Performance

- 6.1 CLA levels are down 3.25% from the peak in July, standing at 387 by the end of November (68.0 per 10,000 children in the local population). The gradual reduction over the last few months could be said to reflect the effectiveness of safeguarding gatekeeping processes in keeping children appropriately out of local authority care.

*\*It is important to note that these figures reflect a snapshot in time and are subject to change on a daily basis.*

- 6.2 Foster care remains the most common placement for CLA, with 75.19% (291 of 387) in this type of placement at the end of November 2010 (remaining comparative to the preceding months). At the end of the same period 72.85% (212 of 291) of foster care placements were within the LA boundary, rising to 75.63% (180 of 238) for LA provided foster care - these percentages are marginally higher than the previous two-months.

6.2.1 As historically experienced, children in agency provided foster care are less likely to be placed in the boundary. From levels of 25% in the summer, the levels of agency-provided foster care provided in the LA boundary have been steadily increasing to a level of 48.39% by the end of November. The increase in agency-provided foster care placed in the boundary is thought to be as a result of closer working relationships with providers in relation to costing and better clarity on available placement locations.

- 6.3 After foster care, the next most common placement is residential care, with between 11.11% and 12.05% (43 to 48 children) typically placed in this setting. Latest data shows that at the end of November, 11.63% (45 of 387) were placed residentially.

- 6.4 The remaining children not placed in foster care or residentially, are either placed with parents or placed for adoption.

6.4.1 Overall, the numbers placed with parents has fallen from May's peak of 4.60% (18 of 391) to 3.36% (13 of 387) by the end of November.

6.4.2 The percentage of children placed for adoption, generally decreased on a monthly basis from April, but an extra five children placed for adoption between September and October increased the percentage from 7.79% (31 of 398) in September to 9.11% (36 of 395) in

October. At the end of November however, the outturn was at an average level of 8.27% (32 of 387). Of the 32 placed for adoption at the end of November, over half were aged-5 and over, and it is this age group are that traditionally harder to place within 12-months – thereby directly impacting on the future performance of NI61 (see below).

- 6.5 The above figures reflect that at 30<sup>th</sup> November, 86.82% (336 of 387) of CLA were in a family placement. Breaking this down across the age-groups however, gives more insight into family placements, where more younger children are placed in this type of setting than older children:
- 6.5.1 Up until October, as has been the case for the last 2-years, all (100%) of the under-10's retained a family placement. During October however, one child aged-8 was placed in a Children's Home outside of the authority's boundary due to their exceptionally complex needs. The child continued to retain that placement during November which took the percentage to 99.41% (169 of 170).
- 6.5.2 At the end of November three children under-12 did not hold a family placement. This includes the 8-year-old highlighted above. This equated to 98.47% (193 of 196) of under-12's in a family placement, under the 100% target. For those three children, it is the exception rather than the norm that they are placed residentially, given that Sunderland's Children's Homes are registered to accommodate only children aged-12 and over.
- 6.5.3 As expected, the proportion of 10-15 year olds in family settings decreases further, with November's outturn at 82.52% (118 of 143) and under the 84% target for the second consecutive month.
- 6.6 Throughout the financial year, males have accounted for more than half of all CLA and females less than half. At the end of November, 58.91% (228 of 387) were male and 41.09% (159 of 387) were female. These ratios are not significantly different to any other month.
- 6.7 (NI 62) 8.01% (31 of 387) of all CLA were experiencing an unstable placement at the end of November, where they had had three or more placements. This also means that 91.99% (356 of 387) of all CLA were experiencing a stable placement (less than three placements) - the first improvement since July 2010. Latest performance remains within target.  
*\*Note that previous figures have been amended following the identification of a corruption in the data extract report. Amendments have equated to up to 2.5 percentage points reduction, but have followed a very similar trend throughout the year.*
- 6.8 (NI 63) For those children in long-term placements, 66.92% (87 of 130) were retaining a stable long-term placement at the end of November. Despite remaining under the 75% target, the latest outturn is the highest this financial year i.e. compared to May's outturn of 62.59%.
- 6.8.1 The target for this indicator is 75%. It is this target which appears difficult to achieve across the whole of Tyne and Wear, with only one of the authorities' reaching the target at 75.70% by the end of October. Looking back to 2009/2010, the same is true for Sunderland's Statistical Neighbours where the average outturn was 68.1%, compared to Sunderland's 69.6% - both therefore under the current target. In Sunderland, a decision to move a child is taken on a case-by-case basis, and is made in line with the child's best interests (i.e. to bring siblings together) – such positive moves however do have a negative impact on this particular indicator, making it one of the most challenging indicators in the set.
- 6.8.2 A suggestion has been raised to develop a local indicator which could provide a better understanding of placement quality and which could lend to better explain performance changes across NI63 - the Performance and Information Team are investigating this suggestion.
- 6.9 Throughout the financial year, no child has changed school as a result of a placement move.  
*\*This measure excludes those that moved as a result of an adoption placement.*
- 6.10 CLA participation in reviews continues at 100% (620 of 620), for those eligible to participate. Since April (figures include participation at each review that takes place, regardless of how many reviews a child has in the period):
- 52.26% (324 of 620) physically attended and spoke for themselves

- 1.77% (11 of 620) physically attended and had an advocate speak on their behalf
  - 0.32% (2 of 620) physically attended and conveyed their views symbolically (non-verbally).
  - 41.61% (258 of 620) did not attend physically but briefed an advocate to speak on their behalf
  - 4.03% (25 of 620) did not attend physically but conveyed their feelings to the review by a facilitative medium.
- 6.11 (NI 66) The percentage of children looked after cases which should have been reviewed during the year ending 31 March 2011 that have been reviewed on time, has increased for another consecutive month to 97.71% (341 of 349) for the April to November period, against a 100% target.
- 6.12 A new measure has been incorporated into the Performance Grid relating to the timeliness of Foster Carer Reviews. This shows that 68.29% (56 of 82) of Foster Carer reviews were completed on time between April and November (at least once every 12-months). Of those 26 that were outside of timescale, 15 were completed within three months and 11 were awaiting completion/recording at the time of data extraction (none of the latter were more than seven-months overdue).
- 6.13 The percentage of care leavers in suitable Accommodation has increased substantially during November compared to previous months at 90% (27 of 30). Conversely, the percentage of care leavers in suitable Education, Training or Employment (EET) decreased from a high of 70% in May to 50% (15 of 30) by the end of November. November was the first time this financial year that the proportions in suitable accommodation have both met and exceeded the 86% target, although those in suitable EET remain under the 67% target. The difficulties of engaging care leavers in this cohort are well known, with several refusing contact and more unwilling to engage.
- 6.13.1 Preceding November, both measures were performing under target which led to the Acting Team Manager for Leaving Care undertaking a validation exercise. The validation exercise highlighted that some of the figures were being negatively affected by under-recording – this has now been resolved and has led to an increase of those in suitable accommodation. Also, the Manager has researched the practices of other local authorities to determine how they make achievements in this area - the outcome of this research is to be fed back to the Head of Safeguarding, with a view to identifying service improvement measures.
- \* In assessing the performance of care leavers in suitable Accommodation or EET, it should be noted that the indicators relate to a very small cohort, meaning just 1 or 2 children can affect the overall percentage.*
- 6.14 The self-assessment at the end of November 2010 remains at 12 from a possible 15, in relation to the missing children protocols. To raise the rating, further work is needed in the areas of (i) Local procedures to meet the needs of runaways, (ii) Protocols for responding to urgent/out of hours referrals and (iii) Local procedures including effective needs assessment protocols. To aid performance management in this area, further detail on those missing from home or care has been provided, as has detail on those missing for over 24-hours
- \*Note that the DfE are reviewing this performance measure and therefore did not require a Quarter 2 submission.*
- 6.14.1 As can be seen from the chart included in the Performance Grid, the number of missing episodes has been steadily reducing since August – from 68 in August to 37 in November. The number of *children* going missing in the period has also reduced from 38 to 27 – with more going missing from home than from care during November. 73% (27 of 37) of all missing episodes in November were for less than 24-hours.
- \*Note that this data is derived from Northumbria Police and is according to their definition of 'missing'.*
- 6.15 Since April, 21 children have been adopted. 11 of those children were adopted outside the 12-month best interest decision, equating to 47.62% adopted within timescale against an 82% target. Ten of those not adopted in timescale were aged-5 and over at the time of the adoption plan (and of those ten, seven were aged seven and over) - an age group which is traditionally harder to place within 12-months.
- 6.15.1 All ten aged over-5 that were adopted out of timescale, were adopted with external agency families and required extensive family finding which took longer than a year.

- 6.15.2 The remaining child not adopted in timescale was aged under-5 – the child was adopted outside of 12-months by a matter of days. This was a child with considerable disabilities who required extensive family finding via 'Be My Parent' and was adopted in another agency's adoptive family.
- 6.15.3 With more than half of all children currently placed for adoption aged-5 and over, a continued performance under target could be experienced. However, it is predicated that more children aged under-one will enter the cohort before the end of the financial year.
- 6.16 Against a 9% target, Adoption/Guardianship orders as a percentage of CLA for 6-months has been improving monthly to 7.67% (25 of 326) by the end of November 2010.  
*\*Note that previous figures have been amended following the identification of a corruption in the data extract report. Amendments have equated to less than 1-percentage point per month.*
- 6.17 At the end of the period April to September there were 200 CLA for 12months+, of which 13 of them were offenders. This gives a cumulative offending rate of 6.50% for CLA, compared to 5.66% for the general 10-17 population in Northumbria. Thus, there were 1.15 CLA Offenders for every one 10-17-year-old offender at the end of the Quarter 2, compared to 1.21 the previous quarter. Figures are based on a probable cohort, which won't be finalised until March 2011. At the time of publication, Quarter 3 data is awaited.
- 6.18 It has been found that looked after children experience significantly worse mental health than the general child population. Nationally, an estimated 45% of looked after children aged 5 to 17 have mental health problems, over four times higher than for the general child population. Sunderland's CLA for 12month+ have their emotional and behavioural health assessed through a screening questionnaire that produces a score 0-40 and covers Emotions, Conduct, Hyperactivity, Peer Problems and Pro-social Behaviour. A score above 16 indicates the beginning of mental health concerns).
- 6.18.1 All relevant children aged 4-16 (inclusive) looked after for 12months+ were assessed in Quarter 2 – their average score remained at 13.3 (against a target of <16) indicating low mental health concerns (on average) for the second-consecutive quarter. Breaking the measure down further however, 64% had low mental health needs, 13% had borderline mental health needs and 24% had higher than average mental health needs.
- 6.19 A small number of children belonging to an ethnic monitoring have entered the looked after system since September, taking the percentage at the end of November to 4.91% (19 of 387). Of the 19 ethnic minority children:
- 1 was Asian or Asian British (any other Asian)
  - 1 was Asian or Asian British (Indian)
  - 1 was Black or Black British (any other Black)
  - 4 were Mixed ethnicity
  - 6 were mixed White and Asian
  - 4 were Other Ethnic Group (Chinese)
  - 2 were Other.
- 6.20 New reporting measures introduced during October show that of the 387 children looked after at the end of November, 2 (0.52%) were unaccompanied asylum seekers.

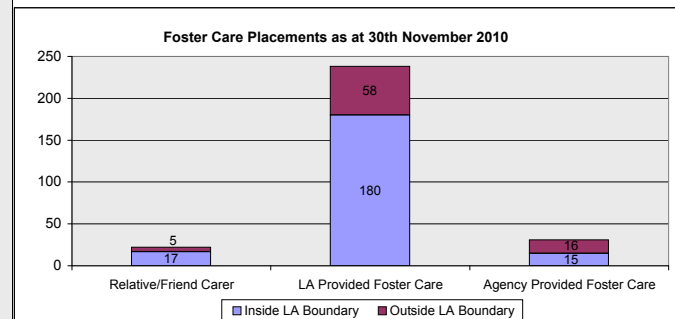
## **7.0 Performance Grid**

- 7.1 See attached - separated by Placements, Placement Stability, Reviews, Care Leavers, Missing Children, Adoptions, Offending, Emotional and Behavioural Health, and Ethnicity.

# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER																										
Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative												
CLA Overview																										
▫	CLA per 10,000 under 18 population	Snapshot	Data	Data	67.7	69.5	68.8	69.9	69.4	68.0	▫	▫	▫	CLA levels are down 3.25% from the peak in July, standing at 387 by the end of November (68.0 per 10,000 children in the local population). The gradual reduction over the last few months could be said to reflect the effectiveness of safeguarding gatekeeping processes in keeping children appropriately out of local authority care. <i>"It is important to note that these figures reflect a snapshot in time and are subject to change on a daily basis.</i>												
▫	Numbers of CLA....	Snapshot			390	400	396	398	395	387																
Placements																										
▫	...Placed with Parent	Snapshot	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	13/390	11/400	13/396	13/398	11/395	13/387	▫	▫	▫	Overall, the numbers placed with parents has fallen from May's peak of 4.60% (18 of 391) to 3.36% (13 of 387) by the end of November.												
					3.33%	2.75%	3.28%	3.27%	2.79%	3.36%																
▫	...Placed in Residential Care	Snapshot			47/390	48/400	46/396	46/398	46/395	45/387	▫	▫	▫	Between 11.11% and 12.05% (43 to 48 children) are typically placed in a residential setting. Latest data at the end of November shows that 11.63% (45 of 387) were placed residentially.												
					12.05%	12%	12%	11.56%	11.65%	11.63%																
▫	...Placed for Adoption	Snapshot			32/390	32/400	33/396	31/398	36/395	32/387	▫	▫	↓	The percentage of children placed for adoption, has generally decreased on a monthly basis from April, but an extra five children placed for adoption between September and October increased the percentage from 7.79% (31 of 398) in September to 9.11% (36 of 395) in October. At the end of November however, the outturn was at an average level of 8.27% (32 of 387). Of the 32 placed for adoption at the end of November, over half were aged-5 and over, and it is this age group are that traditionally harder to place within 12-months – thereby directly impacting on the future performance of NI61 (see below).												
					8.21%	8%	8.33%	7.79%	9.11%	8.27%																
▫	...Placed in Foster Care	Snapshot			291/390	302/400	297/396	302/398	296/395	291/387	▫	▫	▫	As at the end of November 2010, 291 of 387 children were placed in foster care, which represents 75.19% of the total CLA population. Averaging at three-quarters of all CLA, this outturn does not deviate significantly from any of the preceding months. The table below shows those placed in and out of the area, according to placement provider.  As historically experienced, children in agency provided foster care are less likely to be placed in the boundary. From levels of 25% in the summer, the levels of agency-provided foster care provided in the LA boundary have been steadily increasing to a level of 48.39% by the end of November. The increase in agency-provided foster care placed in the boundary is thought to be as a result of closer working relationships with providers in relation to costing and better clarity on available placement locations.												
					74.6%	75.50%	75.00%	75.88%	74.94%	75.19%																
<div><p><b>Foster Care Placements as at 30th November 2010</b></p><table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Inside LA Boundary</th><th>Outside LA Boundary</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Relative/Friend Carer</td><td>17</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>LA Provided Foster Care</td><td>180</td><td>58</td></tr><tr><td>Agency Provided Foster Care</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr></tbody></table></div>															Category	Inside LA Boundary	Outside LA Boundary	Relative/Friend Carer	17	5	LA Provided Foster Care	180	58	Agency Provided Foster Care	15	16
Category	Inside LA Boundary	Outside LA Boundary																								
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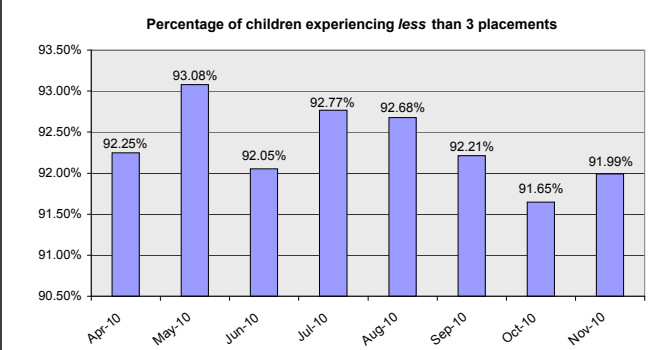
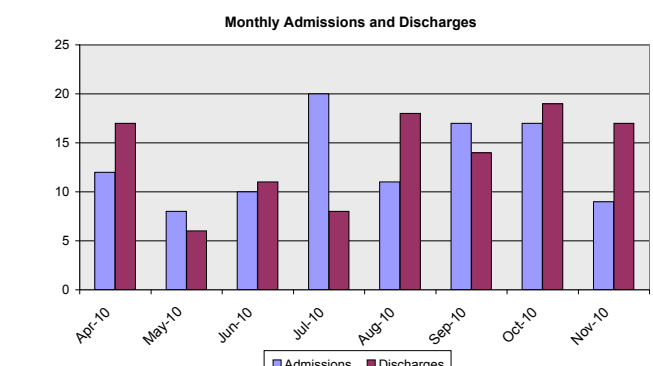
# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative
▫ ...Female		Snapshot	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	160/390	166/400	163/396	163/398	163/395	159/387	▫	▫	▫	Throughout the financial year, females have accounted for less than half of all CLA, to a percentage of 41.09% at the end of November. This outturn does not deviate significantly to any of the preceding months.
					41.03%	41.50%	41.16%	40.95%	41.27%	41.09%				
▫ ...Male		Snapshot			230/390	234/400	233/396	235/398	232/395	228/387	▫	▫	▫	Throughout the financial year, males have accounted for more than half of all CLA, to a percentage of 58.91% at the end of November. This outturn does not deviate significantly to any of the preceding months.
					58.97%	58.50%	58.84%	59.05%	58.73%	58.91%				
▫ Family Placements: Under 10's		Snapshot			162/162	166/166	170/170	173/173	173/174	169/170	100%	✗	↓	Up until October, as has been the case for the last 2-years, all (100%) of the under-10's retained a family placement. During October however, one child aged-8 was placed in a Children's Home outside of the authority's boundary due to their exceptionally complex needs. The child continued to retain that placement during November which took the percentage to 99.41% (169 of 170).
					100%	100%	100%	100%	99.43%	99.41%				
▫ Family Placements: Under 12 (excluding those placed with parents)		Snapshot			203/204	196/198	196/198	200/202	201/204	193/196	100%	✗	↓	At the age of 10 and 11, there is a small proportion of children who do not secure family placements. At the end of November three children under-12 did not hold a family placement (this includes the 8-year-old highlighted above), equating to 98.47% (193 of 196) of under-12's in a family placement. For those three children, it is the exception rather than the norm that they are placed residentially, given that Sunderland's Children's Homes are registered to accommodate only children aged-12 and over.
					99.51%	98.99%	98.99%	99.01%	98.53%	98.47%				
▫ Family Placements: 10-15 inclusive		Snapshot			122/143	127/150	123/145	123/146	120/146	118/143	84%	✗	↑	Older children are typically harder to place in a family placement, which is reflected in the 10-15 year-old's outturn. Of those in this age-group, 82.52% (118 of 143) were in a family placement at the end of November.
					85.32%	84.67%	84.83%	84.25%	82.19%	82.52%				
▫ School age CLA with a PEP		Snapshot			98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	100%	✗	→	Figures cannot be validated at this time due to lack of recording on ICS. However, work commenced during October to begin recording this data on ICS, meaning that data should be available in the near future.

# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

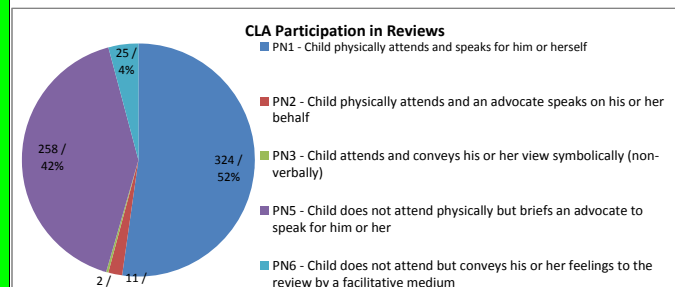
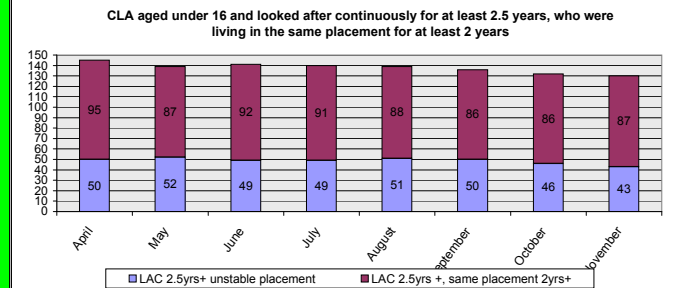
Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative
Placement Stability														
NI62	Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements 3+	Snapshot	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	31/390	29/401	29/396	31/398	33/395	31/387				<p>(NI 62) 8.01% (31 of 387) of all CLA were experiencing an unstable placement at the end of November, where they had had three or more placements. This also means that 91.99% (356 of 387) of all CLA were experiencing stable placements (less than three placements) - the first improvement since July 2010. The tables below show the improved placement stability, and uncovers the activity across admissions and discharges that is currently masked in the figures.</p> <p><b>Percentage of children experiencing less than 3 placements</b></p>  <p><b>Monthly Admissions and Discharges</b></p> 
					7.95%	7.23%	7.32%	7.79%	8.35%	8.01%	<10%	✓ (green)	↓ (green)	



# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10 May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative
NI63	The percentage of looked after children aged under 16, who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years, who were living in the same placement for at least 2 years	Snapshot	Data suppressed Data suppressed	92/141	91/140	88/139	86/136	86/132	87/130	75%	✗ (red)	↑ (green)	<p>For those children in long-term placements, 66.92% (87 of 130) were retaining a stable long-term placement at the end of November. Despite remaining under the 75% target, the latest outturn is the highest this financial year i.e. compared to May's outturn of 62.59%. In Sunderland, a decision to move a child is taken on a case-by-case basis, and is made in line with the child's best interests (i.e. to bring siblings together) – such positive moves however do have a negative impact on this particular indicator, making it one of the most challenging indicators in the set. Sunderland is not alone with performance under 75% - all but one Tyne and Wear authority were also performing under the target at the end of October, and the 2009/2010 Statistical Neighbour average was also under the target at 68.1%.</p> <p>A suggestion has been raised to develop a local indicator which could provide a better understanding of placement quality, which could lend to better explain performance changes across NI63 - the Performance and Information Team are investigating this suggestion.</p>
□	School moves as a result of a placement	Cumulative		0	0	0	0	0	0	□	□	→ (green)	<p>Throughout the financial year, no child has changed school as a result of a placement move. This measure excludes those that moved as a result of an adoption placement.</p>
Reviews													
PAF C63	Participation of CLA in Reviews (excluding those aged under 4)	Cumulative	Data suppressed Data suppressed	100%	100%	100%	100%	540/540	620/620	100%	✓ (green)	→ (green)	<p>CLA participation in reviews continues at 100%, for those eligible to participate. The chart below shows a further breakdown, demonstrating that 54% (335) attended their review in the period (figures include participation at each review that takes place, regardless of how many reviews a child has in the period).</p>



# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER														
Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative
NI66	The percentage of children looked after cases which should have been reviewed during the year ending 31 March 2011 that were reviewed on time during the year.	Cumulative	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	199/346	262/354	285/354	334/355	325/345	341/349	100%	✖ <sub>(red)</sub>	⬆ <sub>(green)</sub>	The percentage of children looked after cases which should were reviewed during the year ending 31 March 2011 that have been reviewed on time, has increased for another consecutive month to 97.71% (341 of 349) for the April to November period, against a 100% target. <i>*As the is a cumulative measure, performance should improve monthly as more cases come into the denominator, which has been the case so far with performance currently at its highest of 97.71%.</i>
					57.51%	74.01%	80.51%	93.52%	94.20%	97.71%				
□	Percentage of foster carer reviews that were completed within timescale	Cumulative	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	25/42	29/48	32/52	44/69	46/73	56/82	100%	✖ <sub>(red)</sub>	⬆ <sub>(green)</sub>	A new measure has been incorporated into the Performance Grid relating to the timeliness of Foster Carer Reviews. This shows that 68.29% (56 of 82) of Foster Carer reviews were completed in time between April and November (at least once every 12-months). Of those that were outside of timescale, 15 were completed within three months and 11 were awaiting completion/recording at the time of data extraction (none of the latter were more than seven-months overdue).
					59.52%	60.42%	61.54%	63.77%	63.01%	68.29%				
Care Leavers														
NI147	Former care leavers aged 19 in suitable accommodation	Rolling	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	9/13	11/18	15/21	15/22	23/27	27/30	86%	✔ <sub>(green)</sub>	⬆ <sub>(green)</sub>	The percentage of care leavers in suitable Accommodation has increased substantially during November compared to previous months at 90% (27 of 30) - the first time this financial year that the proportions in suitable accommodation have both met and exceeded the 86% target. Previous under-performance was tackled with a validation exercise which led to improvements in data recording and with research into the practices of other local authorities in order to identify areas of service improvement in Sunderland (the results of which are to be feedback to the Head of Safeguarding). <i>* In assessing the performance of care leavers in suitable Accommodation, it should be noted that the indicators relate to a very small cohort, meaning just 1 or 2 children can affect the overall percentage.</i>
					69.23%	61.11%	71.43%	68.18%	85.19%	90.00%				
NI148	Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training at the age of 19	Rolling	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	6/13	8/18	11/21	11/22	13/27	15/30	67%	✖ <sub>(red)</sub>	⬆ <sub>(green)</sub>	The percentage of care leavers in suitable Education, Training or Employment (EET) decreased from a high of 70% in May to 50% (15 of 30) by the end of November. Performance therefore remains under the 67% target. Under-performance was tackled with a validation exercise which led to improvements in data recording and with research into the practices of other Council's in order to identify areas of service improvement in Sunderland (the results of which are to be feedback to the Head of Safeguarding). However, the difficulties of engaging care leavers in this cohort are well known, with several refusing contact and more unwilling to engage. <i>* In assessing the performance of care leavers in suitable EET, it should be noted that the indicators relate to a very small cohort, meaning just 1 or 2 children can affect the overall percentage.</i>
					46.15%	44.44%	52.38%	50%	48.15%	50.00%				

# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10 May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative
Missing CLA													
NI71	CLA missing from home/care	Snapshot	Data suppressed Data suppressed	12	12	12	12	12	12	15	X (red)	→ (red)	<p>The self-assessment at the end of November 2010 remains at 12 from a possible 15. To raise the rating, further work is needed in the areas of (i) Local procedures to meet the needs of runaways, (ii) Protocols for responding to urgent/out of hours referrals, and (iii) Local procedures including effective needs assessment protocols. Work is ongoing to track those missing in order to offer them services - and the following chart shows missing activity as defined by Northumbria Police during November.</p> 
Adoptions													
NI61	Percentage of children adopted who were placed for adoption within 12 months of best interest decision being made	Cumulative	Data suppressed Data suppressed	2/5	3/6	4/7	10/16	10/17	10/21	82%	X (red)	↓ (red)	<p>Since April, 21 children have been adopted. 11 of those children were adopted outside the 12-month best interest decision, equating to 47.62% adopted within timescale against a 82% target. Ten of those not adopted in timescale were aged-5 and over at the time of the adoption plan (and of those ten, seven were aged seven and over) - an age group which is traditionally harder to place within 12-months. Notes (1) All ten aged over-5 not adopted in timescale, were adopted with external agency families and required extensive family finding which took longer than a year; (2) The remaining child not adopted in timescale was aged under-5 – the child was adopted outside 12-months by a matter of days. This was a child with considerable disabilities who required extensive family finding via 'Be My Parent' and was adopted in another agency's adoptive family; (3) With more than half of all children currently placed for adoption aged-5 and over, a continued performance under target could be experienced. However, it is predicated that more children aged under-one will enter the cohort before the end of the financial year.</p>

# CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

## CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER																																				
Ref	Definition	Measure	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Target 10/11	Target Met?	Direction of Travel from previous month (%)	Monthly Narrative																						
PAF C23	Annual No. of Adoptions/Guardianship Orders as a percentage of CLA continuously for 6 months	Cumulative			8/338	9/337	12/333	16/336	20/329	25/326	9%	✖	⬆️ (green)	Against a 9% target, Adoption/Guardianship orders as a percentage of CLA for 6-months has been improving monthly to 7.67% (25 of 326) by the end of November 2010. *As this is a cumulative indicator, performance will and has been, increasing month-by-month.																						
					2.37%	2.67%	3.60%	4.76%	6.08%	7.67%																										
Offending																																				
PAF C18	Offending whilst looked after	Cumulative	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	9.28% (S'land) / 7.68% (N'bria)	n/a	n/a	6.50% (S'Land) / 5.66% (N'bria)	n/a	n/a	<2.4	✔️ (green)	⬇️ (green)	At the end of the period April to September there were 200 CLA for 12months+, of which 13 of them were offenders. This gives a cumulative offending rate of 6.50% for CLA, compared to 5.66% for the general 10-17 population in Northumbria. Thus, there were 1.15 CLA Offenders for every one 10-17-year-old offender at the end of the Quarter 2, compared to 1.21 the previous quarter. Figures are based on a probable cohort, which won't be finalised until March 2011. At the time of publication, Quarter 3 data is awaited.																						
					1.21	n/a	n/a	1.15	n/a	n/a																										
Emotional and Behavioural Health																																				
NI58	Emotional and Behavioural Health of CLA	Rolling	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	13.3 (revised outturn)	n/a	n/a	13.3	n/a	n/a	<16	✔️ (green)	➡️	Performance at the end of Quarter 2 remains stable at 13.3, indicating low mental health needs of CLA on average (64% had low mental health needs, 13% had borderline mental health needs and 24% had higher than average mental health needs). Those scoring 17- (borderline mental health needs) are offered a mental health appointment. <i>The score is derived from an average of completed questionnaires, each containing 25 questions rated relating to Emotions, Conduct, Hyperactivity, Peer Problems and Pro-social Behaviour – the total of which gives a score of 0-40. A score above 16 indicates the beginning of mental health concerns).</i>																						
Disabilities																																				
□	□	□	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	□	□	□	□	□	□	tbc	tbc	tbc	Outcome indicators are currently being sought and developed for children with disabilities																						
					□	□	□	□	□	□																										
Ethnicity																																				
□	Unaccompanied asylum seekers	Snapshot	Data suppressed	Data suppressed	□	□	□	□	2	2	□	□	➡️	New reporting measures introduced during October show that of the 387 children looked after at the end of November, 2 (0.52%) were unaccompanied asylum seekers.																						
										0.51%					0.52%																					
□	Ethnic origin other than White British or White Irish	Snapshot			14/390	20/400	16/396	20/398	19/395	19/387			□	□	⬆️	A small number of children belonging to an ethnic monitoring have entered the looked after system since September, taking the percentage at the end of November to 4.91% (19 of 387). The split of ethnic origin is represented below: <div><p>CLA Ethnicity as at 30th November 2010</p><table><thead><tr><th>Ethnic Group</th><th>Count</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Asian or Asian British (Any Other ...)</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Asian or Asian British (Indian)</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Black or Black British African</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Black or Black British (Any Other ...)</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed Any Other Mixed Background...</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Mixed White &amp; Asian</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Other Ethnic Group - Chinese</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>White Irish</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>White British</td><td>367</td></tr></tbody></table></div>	Ethnic Group	Count	Asian or Asian British (Any Other ...)	1	Asian or Asian British (Indian)	1	Black or Black British African	0	Black or Black British (Any Other ...)	4	Mixed Any Other Mixed Background...	6	Mixed White & Asian	4	Other Ethnic Group - Chinese	2	Other	1	White Irish	1
Ethnic Group	Count																																			
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Mixed White & Asian	4																																			
Other Ethnic Group - Chinese	2																																			
Other	1																																			
White Irish	1																																			
White British	367																																			
			3.59%	5%	4.04%	5.03%	4.81%	4.91%																												

## **CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**January 2011**

### **INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

#### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF SAFEGUARDING**

#### **LINK TO WORK PROGRAMME : Corporate Parenting: Safeguarding**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on Young People's access to Independent Advocacy

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Independent Advocacy for looked after young people, care leavers and other users of Children's Social Care Services is provided under the Advocacy Services and Representations (Children)(Amendment) Regulations 2004. This has been provided through an independent service provider since 2007, meeting the requirements of the National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services 2004.
- 2.2 This was initially on a spot-purchase basis, but from 2008 was provided under a one-year contract, with provision for a one-year extension up to March 2010 under a contract with Action for Children (previously NCH).
- 2.3 Work on renewal of the contract tender process commenced in September 2009 anticipating a new contract to be in place in March 2010. However, as reported to the Board in June 2010, the completion of the process was required to be halted due to changes in the corporate commissioning process, and it was necessary to begin the process again from the start to ensure legal compliance with the new arrangements. During the delay the service was sustained through quarterly extensions under delegated powers.

### **3 Current Position**

- 3.1 The new procurement process elicited 'Expressions of Interest' from 18 potential providers, of whom six submitted Pre Qualification Questionnaires, At

the Tender Evaluation stage four tenders were received by the deadline from 'Action for Children', 'Barnado's', 'Children North-East' and 'Skills for People'

- 3.2 In the Tender Evaluation process Action For Children were the successful bidder, on the basis of both assessment of quality of service in relation to the Service Specification and competitive pricing.
- 3.3 The newly awarded contract runs initially for 3 years with subsequent extension options subject to continued quality and funding has potential to provide long-term continuity of service to our children and young people.
- 3.4 The new contract commences on 1 February 2011 under a substantially changed financing arrangement, which, on the basis of our now-established experience of take-up of the service, should bring financial savings in the remainder of the current financial year and over the coming three years.

#### **4 Service use and outcomes**

- 4.1 Whilst the take-up of the service was lower in 2009-2010 than in previous years, eighteen new referrals have been picked up in 2010-11, two of these being in the current quarter.
- 4.2 The number of referrals from children in foster care continues to exceed those from residential care, with more direct requests from children and young people or from carers on their behalf.
- 4.3 The Advocacy Service provides information about themes identified by young people, and feedback regarding responses.
- 4.4 Themes continue to relate to young people's uncertainty about their plans, but a significant characteristic of some cases is that the child is seeking support to resolve difficulties which are essentially rooted in entrenched disagreements between the local authority and their parents. Some representations have related to specific decisions about placement moves or school enrolment.
- 4.5 There have been six occasions when young people have asked for their representations to be supported by the Children and Young People's Rights Officer without using the Advocacy Service. Where the issues have been relatively straightforward, their wishes have been met although where the issues are more complex the Children and Young People's Rights Officer has encouraged the young person to use the Advocacy Service.
- 4.6 Not all requests for advocacy result in representations via the Children's Complaints Service. In some cases the young person is assisted to make

representations directly to carers or social workers and ensure that their wishes are considered in care planning.

- 4.7 Not all young people wishing to make complaints take up the offer of an advocate, feeling well able to make their own representations, or feeling sufficiently supported by peers, relatives or staff.

## **5 Accessing the Service**

- 5.1 Allocation of advocates continues to be rapid, and well within the 5 working days of referral.
- 5.2 Four referrals have concerned young people placed a considerable distance from Sunderland. Action for Children have liaised with the Safeguarding Unit to confirm appropriate steps to resolve the additional logistical issues involved in dealing with these, but it is encouraging that the service children placed out of area are aware of the service and are able to access it.
- 5.3 There is continuing developing awareness amongst professionals about the service, however some inquiries and referrals has highlighted the need to continue to ensure that the service is not compromised by being asked to provide assistance to a young person as an alternative to assistance which should be provided by the authority.

## **6 New arrangements from 1 February 2010**

- 6.1 The new arrangements from 1 February 2010 will be relatively unchanged as far as the role of Independent Advocates and young people's access is concerned, but Action for Children will have a more pro-active role in directly promoting the service by visiting children's homes and foster carer groups to ensure a sustained level of awareness of the service, and the Independent Advocate allocation timescale is reduced from 5 to 3 working days.
- 6.2 The main change to the contract from the Council's perspective are:
- 6.2.1 Changes to financial arrangements in the interests of improving value for money. This involves replacing the current fixed 'block' payments for the whole service, with a smaller fixed fee (10% of the current contract value) with additional hourly fees charged according to actual usage of the service. This will mean that the total annual cost will vary according to use of the service, but based on our experience over the past three years, this is expected to result in continued savings without compromising the effectiveness of the service.

- 6.2.2 A longer contract period of 3 years plus the prospect of annual extension at the Council's discretion for up to 3 further years, thus giving the prospect of long-term consistency for young people

## **7 Summary:**

- 7.1 The service continues to be accessed by our young people and awareness of its availability continues to spread and the service is accessible to all our young people including those placed out of area
- 7.2 Service take up has increased over the past six months
- 7.3 Procurement arrangements for re-contracting the service have been completed and the new contract will take effect from 1 February 2011.
- 7.4 The new contract will enable cost-savings in the remainder of the financial year, and based on past usage, will enable continued savings over the next 3 years.

## **8 Recommendation**

The Board is requested to note the continuing development of the service and the due arrangements for re-commissioning the contract.