

## EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 30 November 2016

### Performance Information

1. As of 31 October 2016:-

Current Children Looked After (LAC) figures are:	434	(135.77 per 10,000)
Current Child Protection (CP) figures are:	254	(79.46 per 10,000)
Current Children in Need (CIN) figures are:	1280	(400.45 per 10,000)

### Assessment & Care Planning

2. It is positive to note that since the writing of the previous briefing, CP numbers have reduced from 279 to 254, however there has been a continued increase in LAC numbers from 413 (19/09/16) to 434 (31.10.16.) Planning towards a new operating model for Safeguarding & Children's Care has now commenced, with a view to tackling, and more importantly reducing, the high numbers of CP/LAC within Middlesbrough in order to bring the authority in line with its statistical neighbours and to give children and families in Middlesbrough more support to stay together. It is anticipated that the recent appointment of a Team Manager to the Review & Development Unit will also assist in more robust oversight and assist in the reduction in the high numbers of CP/LAC.
3. Workforce development remains a priority across the ACP Teams; thirty newly qualified social workers are currently on the AYSE programme, with six portfolios due to be approved at panel on 21st October and a further six on November 17th.
4. The department also continues to work closely with the University, with a number of social work students having now commenced their placements across the eight teams as well as other specialist areas of the service.

### Fostering & Adoption

5. Fostering: A new payment scheme has been introduced (4th October 2016) for foster carers which is fair and equitable and supports recruitment strategies, whilst encouraging the development of skills and expertise within the service. This will lead to increased placement stability and to a reduction in the use of external placements and therefore produce savings.

6. Adoption: National Adoption Week took place w/c 17th October. The impact of that is not likely to be felt until January 2017, meanwhile the number of enquiries from prospective adopters continues at a slow and steady pace. Key issue for this area currently is that there has been a 'spike' in the number of children for whom the LA is family finding - now at 26, whilst the number of adoptive families has reduced. This is because they have virtually all been matched successfully with children who were 'waiting' up to this point. As a solution the Adoption team will hold an event on 30th November which will be attended by other Local Authority and Voluntary Adoption Agency adopters from the North East Consortium in a bid to find excellent families for this group of children. The team is also going to invite Adoption Agencies at a national level to maximise opportunities.
7. Regionalising Adoption: At the last board meeting (5.10.16) it was suggested that Directors of Children's Services agree to the next tranche of work to move the Tees Valley proposal forward – i.e. work streams to commence which will provide detailed information on the required infrastructure which will underpin Members' ability to make the RAA key decision in April 2017, in terms of progressing to implementation.
8. Children Looked After Achievement Night is to take place on Friday 18th November at Middlesbrough Football club. Each child's individual success will be celebrated and awards given to those whose achievements have been outstanding.

### **South Tees Youth Offending Service**

9. Funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the YOS Triage programme ends on 31.3.17. Triage now forms a significant part of YOS work and the risk of the funding being withdrawn is that the number of young people coming in to contact with the criminal justice system will increase; clearly the consequences of this are far reaching. STYOS has provided the PCC office with detailed information in relation to Triage figures, which show positive results. In addition, a recent report by the Children and Young people in custody working group also recommend the project to continue.
10. Following discussions with Hartlepool and Stockton Youth Offending Services a decision has been taken that a collective 'Tees' bid will be made for Triage funding, and a meeting is scheduled for mid-November to progress the bid.

### **Learning and Development**

11. MSCB Lay Person Appointments - After a successful advertising campaign via the LoveMiddlesbrough magazine the Middlesbrough Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) has been able to appoint three lay people. The purpose of the lay people will be to bring the voice of the community to the MSCB. The backgrounds of the appointments are a retired surgeon, retired Occupational Therapist and a senior lecturer from Teesside University. The appointees will be in post for the November board meeting following the necessary DBS checks and induction process.

12. Supporting newly qualified social workers in Middlesbrough: The Department for Education ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) programme is a one year, employer-led induction programme, which aims to provide support and assessment to newly qualified Social Workers working with children and families during their first year of employment, in order to develop their skills, knowledge and professional confidence.
13. Middlesbrough Council continues to offer one of the most supportive children and families ASYE programmes in the North East, which is often said to be one of the attractions for newly qualified social workers to come to work here.
14. There are currently 30 social workers on the ASYE programme, 12 of which are due to be presented to panel soon and are all expected to achieve a pass. Since October 2015, 17 social workers have passed their ASYE and now continue to work for Middlesbrough and are progressing in their careers well.

Councillor Michael Carr  
Executive Member, Children's Social Care