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TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

AGENDA PAPERS MARKED 'TO FOLLOW' FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 19 March 2019

Time: 6.30 p.m.

**Place: Committee Room 2 and 3, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford,
M32 0TH**

A G E N D A	PART I	Pages
4. MINUTES		1 - 8
To receive and, if so determined, to agree as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2019.		
6. REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY		9 - 22
To receive a report from the Acting Director of Safeguarding.		
7. TRAFFORD YOUTH PARLIAMENT		23 - 28
To receive a report from the Acting Director of Safeguarding.		
8. CHILD PROTECTION PLAN UPDATE		Verbal Report
To receive a report from the Acting Director of Safeguarding.		
9. SEND TASK AND FINISH GROUP		To Follow
To receive a report from the Committee's Task and Finish Group.		

SARA TODD
Chief Executive

Membership of the Committee

Councillors D. Western (Chair), Miss L. Blackburn (Vice-Chair), T. Carey, J. Coupe, J. Dillon, J. Holden, D. Jerrome, A. New, J.R. Reilly, G. Whitham, A.M. Whyte, D. Acton (ex-Officio), R. Chilton (ex-Officio), Goodstadt and Khan.

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 JANUARY 2019

PRESENT

Councillor D. Western (in the Chair).

Councillors Miss L. Blackburn (Vice-Chair), T. Carey, J. Coupe, J. Dillon, J. Holden, D. Jerrome, A. New, J.R. Reilly, G. Whitham, A.M. Whyte and D. Acton (ex-Officio)

In attendance

Cathy Rooney	Acting Corporate Director for Children's Services
Rebecca Demaine	Associate Director of Commissioning
Glynis Williams	Acting Director of Safeguarding
Karen Samples	Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance
Sarah Butters	Early Years Manager & Service Directory Lead
Alexander Murray	Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Chilton.

Apologies were also received from Co-opted Members Goodstadt and Khan.

1. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 9 October 2018 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. CLOSING THE GAP: REDUCING EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF TRAFFORD

The Director Education Standards, Quality and Performance went through the report that had been distributed with the agenda. This was a follow on from a piece of work that had been done by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a few years prior and the Interim Director detailed the areas that had changed since that work had been done. The first section of the report covered the areas where children were struggling. The Committee were told about the graduated approach that the Council was taking within Children's services and that a key part of this approach was reducing the gap in attainment.

The Committee were told that while the term disadvantaged had a broad definition generally within Children's services it related to children who received Pupil Premium funding and free school meals. The pupil premium was given to schools and the Council had no say in how the schools spent this funding. A Committee Member asked whether there was any way that the Council held schools to

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account for how they spent these funds. The Interim Director stated that the Council did do some work with the schools they supported around pupil premiums. The Council discussed Pupil Premiums in the conversations that they had with academies but there was very little that they could do influence them or hold them to account.

The Director then went through the four Trafford early years priorities. Within the four priorities there were many pieces of work which would help to close the attainment gap including having highly detailed place based plans in place for the areas where there was low attainment and a health visitor review which would establish Early Help delivery and create links into the wider offer.

The Committee were shown some statistics which showed that by key stage two disadvantage children were doing better against national statistics but there was still a gap between them and their peers within Trafford. Tackling the ongoing gap in attainment was a main focus of the work in this area. By key stage four there had been a narrowing of the gap and by that point disadvantaged children who attended grammar schools achieved the same levels of attainment as their peers. At high schools Trafford had invested resources in narrowing the gap and there had been a reduction in the attainment gap during that time.

The Director informed the Committee that the Pupil Premium Network, which was a forum where schools discussed pupil premiums and to shared best practice, had been launched in October. It was hoped that this Network would help to ensure that pupil premiums were utilised correctly and that the forum would hold schools to account. A Member of the Committee enquired as to how the Network would work and they were told that one of the school improvement deputies had aligned the meetings with the deputy forum meetings. The Network then held additional reviews in between the meetings.

A Committee Member asked whether there was any evidence that schools were not using the pupil premium funding well. The Director responded that whilst Trafford were not able to directly review schools individual budgets but they were able to identify trends of underperformance through the data available.

Another Committee Member enquired as to whether Trafford had a full parenting offer in place. The Early Years Manager and Service Directory Lead stated that Trafford did have a parenting offer a full description of which was available on the Family Information Service. The Acting Corporate Director for Children's Services added that Trafford used a model called the Webster Stratton Model within their Children's Centres but they were not available for all parents. There were other offers available from Trafford CCG and some local private companies. Trafford were looking at working with these organisations to create a more comprehensive and cohesive offer for parents.

A Committee Member asked whether Trafford had been slow to utilise the impact that Health Visitors could have upon children in the area. The Director agreed with the Councillor and added that Trafford were now moving in the right direction and the review would further this work. The Acting Corporate Director added that the Council could look at the school readiness work which linked in with this work at

their next meeting. The Committee agreed to the Acting Corporate Directors Suggestion for the item to be added to the next meeting agenda.

A Committee Member asked whether there was any work being done around people not accessing free childcare places. The Director responded that there was no work being done in this area as it was entirely down to parent choice. The Early Years Manager and Service Directory Lead added that the main reason that people did not take their free places was that they felt that their child was too young to be in nursery. The Family Information Service informed parents of other services available which are more suitable to their needs.

Another Committee Member enquired as to whether any data was gathered on children's quality of life. The Director stated that the only data relating to Children's standard of living were attendance figures. It was hoped that this would change with the new Curriculum approach that Ofsted were taking.

A Member noted that there were a lot of acronyms and abbreviations within the report and asked for a glossary of terms to be provided for future reports.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That School Readiness be added to the agenda of the next meeting.
- 3) That reports are to include glossary of terms.

5. OUT OF BOROUGH PLACEMENTS FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The Acting Director of Safeguarding went through the presentation which supported the report which had been circulated. The Committee were informed that Out of Borough Placements referred to children who were Trafford residents but needed to be placed outside of the borough.

Research into the impact of placements had found that the further away children were placed from their original home the worse their outcomes were, so Trafford always aimed to place children as close by as possible. The Committee were shown a breakdown of all of Trafford's placements and their types including Foster Placements with the Council, placed with parents, residential inside and residential outside of borough. Out of 399 children 26 were placed outside of the borough. The Committee were shown the costs of all placements and they were told that there had been a slight increase in the costs since the last time this was reported to Scrutiny.

Because of the difference in price the Council's strategic priorities had been focused on increasing in house fostering within Trafford. This had included increasing the funding for foster carers to bring Trafford's payments in line with those with other Greater Manchester Councils. The Council had also introduced foster carer plus which was a set of very experienced and resilient foster carers who would be able to provide respite for other foster carers and children on the edge of care. There were plans to introduce a specialist fostering scheme with a

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high level support and therapeutic approach to enable those carers to look after children who would otherwise require specialist residential care.

The Council had drawn down money from Greater Manchester through a project called no wrong door. The aim of the project was that no child would be seen as un-fosterable so that all young people were able to remain in a family setting. Key element of the project was creating capacity to deal with Children in Crisis. The Committee were then told about the other work being done to reduce external placements and the role that commissioning played in supporting this work.

Following the presentation the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions. One Member asked whether children who turned 16 in care had to make a transition. The Director responded that if they were already with a carer they did not have to change their placement however, the regulations relating to children older than 16 were not as robust as for younger children.

Another Member asked whether there were private fostered children in the area and what drove the placements of children to these services. The Director answered that Trafford did have some children placed with private agencies and that there were many factors that could result in children being placed with a private foster agency. One reason was if there was a sudden rise in demand and Trafford did not have places available. There were other factors such as the number of children that a foster carer could place and factors surrounding the child such as need for specialist care. The Head of All Age Commissioning explained that the commissioning team arranged these placements using the North West Framework for providers and then negotiated the price for that particular placement with the provider.

The Chair enquired whether the increase in pay for foster carers had helped with recruitment. The director responded that there had been a large intake of foster carers in the last year and it was hoped that they would get the same response in the next year.

Another Member asked how long it took to train a foster carer. The Director stated that it took roughly 16 weeks from the expression of interest to them being fully trained. She added that the feedback which had been received from foster carers showed that they liked to feel part of the organisation and liked that they were working for the same employer as the others involved with the children they looked after.

The Member then asked how many who applied to be foster carers were rejected. The Director did not have those figures to hand but could get hold of that information for the Committee. They added that there were also a number of potential foster carers who completed the training and then withdrew as they decided that it was not right for them.

A Member of the Committee asked whether Trafford would continue to review the payments made to foster carers to ensure that Trafford did not end up at the bottom of the list again. The Corporate Director assured the Committee that the Council would conduct either conduct reviews either annually or every two years.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the number of foster carers rejected or that drop out be provided to the Committee.

6. COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR CHILDREN

Associate Director of Commissioning explained the makeup of the Integrated Commissioning Unit (ICU) and their commissioning priorities. She then spoke about how commissioning was linked in with the other services being delivered by the Council. The Associate Director informed the Committee that the report provided an overview and that a more detailed update could be provided on any areas that the Committee were interested in. Trafford CCG had just published its ten year plan and children and young people's services formed a key aspect of that plan.

The Committee were informed that the new provider of Community services within Trafford was to be MFT. Trafford CCG and MFT were currently going through due diligence prior to working out the details and finally awarding the contract. The Committee were told the governance arrangements for the transition and the process that would be followed to switch services from Pennine to MFT.

The Head of All Age Commissioning told the Committee that as she had not written the report she did not have the greatest depth of knowledge on all the services but she would do her best to answer the Committees questions. The Head of all age commissioning then went through the report. The report covered Children's Mental Health (Wider Projects & Services), Children's Mental Health (Healthy Young Minds), and Children's Community Services. There were a number of services listed in each of these areas and the Head of all age Commissioning gave a brief overview of each one.

The Trafford were working on making the Rapid Assessment Interface Discharge (RAID) an all age service. This was an adult service which had great success and they were looking to expand this to include Children. There were also plans to expand the service to cover mental health in the same way as for physical health.

A new training offer for staff was being delivered to address a lack of confidence in their abilities to deal with children's mental health issues. Feedback from the training provided showed that it had given staff members the confidence to support children with low level issues and stopped those children's issues escalating.

There had been a number of issues in the transition from the old CAMHS model to the new Healthy Young Minds service model. The delays caused by these issues had added to the development of a long waiting list for the service. In response additional funds had been allocated as the new model was in place it was hoped that the waiting lists would be reduced quickly. A large part of the new service model was bringing parents into the process and the coproduction of services where possible.

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Early help services had proven very popular and had attracted a large demand so waiting lists had developed for them. In response to the waiting lists some changes had been put in place including 42nd street moving to holding their first meeting over the phone rather than face to face. The team were looking at other ways to reduce these waiting times.

Trafford were heavily involved in the development of the Greater Manchester CAMHS service specification which looked to enable a standardised approach to be taken across GM. The specification laid out a list of targets that Trafford were working towards including the need to hire an additional 5.8 FTE staff. The services supporting eating disorders were functioning well although there were some concerns regarding the contracts held with Pennine which had been agreed jointly with other authorities.

Within Children's community Health Services there were waiting lists for speech and language therapy but Trafford were looking to reduce these. A new pathway had been introduced and there had been a reduction in waiting times since September. A report on the speech and language service was overdue and would be published in the next couple of months. A review of the weight management was being undertaken however in light of the transition to MFT the review had put on hold.

Following the report the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions. The Chair asked for figures on the number of children on pathways, the numbers of children on waiting lists, and the waiting times.

A Committee member then asked who delivered the training to staff. The Head of all age Commissioning state that she did not know but would find out and pass that information onto the Committee.

The Committee Member then asked who were able to refer into services and whether the waiting lists were to get into the actual service or just initial assessment followed by further waiting. The Associate Director responded that she would look into the referral process and provide a detailed response to the Committee.

The Committee Member then asked whether the Committee could be provided with the speech and language therapy report when it was ready. The Head of All Age Commissioning confirmed that they would report back to the Committee once the report was released.

Another Committee Member requested that they are provided with details as of how the commissioning team were performing strategic commissioning. This was to include how the work reflected wider agendas and the impact that can be had through commissioning and procurement. The Head of All Age Commissioning stated that this was something that they could definitely bring to a later meeting. They explained that the brief that had been received for the report had been very vague and they welcomed input from the Committee as to what information they wanted to receive going forward. The Associate Director pointed out that the

current Commissioning of services was due for a review especially in light of the creation of the ICU. There was the opportunity for commissioners to look at the wider determinants and the work of partners in order to take a more strategic approach to commissioning and service delivery as a whole.

A Member then asked whether the focus upon lower level needs and identification would have an impact upon the children who had pre-existing conditions and had higher level needs. The Head of all age Commissioning responded that there was investment being made across all parts of the service so it was hoped that improvements would be seen for all service users. Trafford were looking to develop a wide range of services to deal with the differencing need as of children. The Associate Director added that this was part of Trafford's approach to focus upon the person rather than their condition.

Another Member asked about the Trafford overweight strategy and whether enough was being done. The Associate Director answered that commissioners recognised the issue which was why a large review had been conducted in 2017. Whilst there had been a delay on the implementation of this review it was a key priority and focus for commissioning. The Committee Member then requested that an update on this be brought to the Committee in the next municipal year.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That figures on the number of children on pathways, the numbers of children on waiting lists, and the waiting times be provided to the Committee.
- 3) That information regarding who provides training for staff is to be provided to the Committee.
- 4) That the referral process for services be provided to the Committee.
- 5) That the report on Speech and Language Therapy be shared with the Committee.
- 6) That an update be provided to the Committee on Trafford's Strategic Commissioning and how it fits into the wider agenda for the area.
- 7) That an update on Trafford's overweight strategy and implementation of the Commissioning review be added to the Committee's work programme for 2019/2020.

7. OVERVIEW OF FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

Early Years Manager and Service Directory Lead went through a presentation which had been circulated and summarised the report which had been sent out with the agenda. The presentation covered what the Family Information Service was and it could be accessed. The FIS had around 7500 contacts with people annually and they engaged with stakeholders from across the area including professionals and employers. The service received over 1700 enquiries each year

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via phone, email, and through the website. The Early Years Manager then gave breakdown of these interactions by the reason why people contacted the services.

The FIS covered council services and those of local providers and VCSE services in the area. The Committee were given an overview of how the FIS functioned with users able to adjust pages which were then moderated by the team before being updated upon the site. The Early Years Manager told the Committee about a Survey that had been conducted with 200 young people which asked them how engaged they felt with their EHCP. 56% of the children gave positive feedback about their annual EHCP review and around the same number said that they felt that they were listened to. The FIS were also involved in developing a parent guide to the SEND graduated approach and had created a SEND Local offer promotional video.

Following the presentation a Committee Member asked that given that the team only received around 5 office enquiries a day whether most interactions came through the website. The Early Years Manager answered that they had seen a large channel shift in recent years of how people accessed the service. The Committee Member then followed up by asking what the size of the team was. The Early Years Manager informed the Committee of the makeup of the team that supported the FIS.

The Chair asked if the Committee could be showed the video and the Early Years Manager displayed the video to the Committee. The video was accessed through a link on <https://www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/kb5/trafford/fsd/localoffer.page?newlocalofferchannel=0>

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 8.35 pm

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny

Date: 19th March 2019

Report of: Glynis Williams Acting Director of Safeguarding
Report Title

Trafford's Adoption Performance and the role of Adoption Counts, the Regional Adoption Agency for Trafford

Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide assurance for the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee regarding the performance within Trafford with regard to Adoption.

The report outlines the role of Adoption Counts, the regional adoption agency that hosts our arrangements for managing adoption work.

The adoption performance for Trafford is good, whilst numbers being adopted are low; we have timely and good outcomes for those children adopted within Trafford with good support plans in place.

An area for focus within Adoption Counts is to continue growth of Adopters and the offer of adoption support.

An area of focus for Trafford Children's Social Care is to continue ensuring we increase our children with legal permanency through adoption.

Recommendation(s)

To accept the content of the report.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Glynis Williams Acting Director of Safeguarding
Extension: x5009

Adoption Counts, Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)

1. Background

In May 2015, the Government announced changes to the delivery of adoption services by proposing that all adoption services would need to be delivered on a regional basis by 2020. The premise for this was to:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post adoption support services to families who have adopted
- Reduce the number of adoption agencies thereby improving efficiency effectiveness

Stockport led the development of the regional adoption agency comprising of five LAs: Stockport; Salford; Trafford; Manchester and Cheshire East. The Department for Education made it clear that they wished to see Voluntary Adoption Agencies as integral partners in the regional agencies. Adoption Matters and Caritas Care were invited to join our Regional Adoption Agency (RAA).

The Transition Plan set out how the five partner local authorities would work together with the two Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA's) to set up the new RAA by April 2017. The objectives of the new Regional Adoption Agency were and are:

- a. To provide children with the right adopters at the right time, approving those equipped to meet the needs of children waiting.
- b. To minimise changes of plan away from adoption
- c. To reduce delay and improve timescales for matching and placement for all children –working with care planning processes in each Council to improve early identification / twin track planning and to achieve best practise and consistency across the region.
- d. To improve earlier permanency planning using:
 - i. Concurrent Planning
 - ii. Fostering for Adoption
- e. To take innovative approaches to placing 'hard to place' children
 - i. linking children with adopters from enquiry stage onwards where appropriate
 - ii. thoroughly preparing child and family for placement
- f. To reduce the likelihood of placement breakdown through timely and improved matching, preparation and adoption support.

In the longer term, it is anticipated that the new agency might:

- Support all permanence options for children including Special Guardianship Orders.
- Reduce the number of parents who have successive children placed for adoption

Adoption Counts became one of five demonstrator projects i.e. a project seen as having the most likely chance of success and early delivery and we have very much been at the forefront of national developments over the last 3 years.

The hub went live in June 2017 providing:

- A centralised marketing function
- A centralised team to receive recruitment enquiries

- A central register of children and carers
- A strategic plan for the delivery of Adoption Support across the region

Three 'spoke' offices covering the North, Centre and South of the region were then set up, delivering:

- Adopter preparation and approval
- Early identification of the children being looked after by each local authority and likely to require adoption.
- The capacity and skills to place children and support adopters
- Adoption Support services

Staff moved into the new spokes and newly configured teams in October 2017, working in 3 specialisms, recruitment, family finding and adoption support. Staff are seconded to Stockport who as host provides back office support services under an Service Level Agreement.

Adoption Counts has been a fully functioning regional agency since that point in time, providing all the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters, family finding and adoption support to Trafford as well as the other four partner LAs. Clearly the LAs who are partners in the RAA are of differing sizes and populations which impacts on their numbers of children. Each LA has a named team manager who links to them and a named Operations Manager who links to a number of LAs in the partnership. Staff are allocated within the teams taking into account the numbers of children in the cohorts. This has recently been reviewed as the picture is ever changing to ensure fairness and parity. Following a period of major transition, the service is now well established, well-staffed and highly motivated to deliver high quality service provision.

2. Working with Trafford

Since going live, Adoption Counts has had responsibility to discharge Trafford's responsibilities as an Adoption Agency. The working relationship between the LA and the RAA has been fundamental to the success so far of the partnership working and has been embedded at all levels. The Acting Director - Safeguarding for Trafford sits as a member of the Adoption Counts Board. The Service Manager for Fostering and Adoption attends the six weekly Operations Group meetings which provide an important opportunity for operational issues to be raised and shared with equivalent manager from the other partner LAs and with the senior managers in the RAA. There is a shared ownership of the agenda and a range of issues are discussed with very positive communication and outcomes as a result. The group has identified the need for input from the RAA to ensure that staff in the LAs maintain their knowledge and benefit from updates to practice and research. A multi-topic adoption summit approach will be used to provide a broad span of information. A date will be fixed in Trafford in the next few months.

The Head of the RAA and the Operations Manager linked to Trafford meet twice a year with the Strategic Lead for Children in Care, the Service Manager for Fostering and Adoption and the Team Leader for adoption to discuss performance over the period and any issues or themes that may be arising. This meeting is very much a two-way dialogue, with Trafford ensuring that the RAA is fulfilling its responsibilities as well as the RAA being able to offer feedback to the LA about any emerging themes or issues in care planning or working together.

The Trafford Team Leader for adoption attends the monthly Adoption Counts tracking and is an active participant. The tracking meetings are an opportunity for scrutiny and performance management following the whole cohort of Trafford children where there is or may be a plan of adoption including:

- Children now adopted to ensure that lifestory books and later life letters are received
- Children placed for adoption but not yet adopted to track the progress of placements and the timeliness of adoption order applications
- Children where a family has been identified to ensure that there is no avoidable delay in the shortlisting and matching process and through into the planning of introductions and placement
- Children subject to a Placement Order where a family has not yet been identified. This cohort is rigorously discussed to ensure that the family finding strategy is being carried out effectively and is the forum for escalation of agreements regarding family finding within the RAA, other LAs or in the voluntary sector.
- Children in care proceedings where there may be a plan of adoption as their final care plan. These children are tracked closely both in the LA and the RAA to ensure that there is timely progression of the plan from Agency Decision that they Should Be Placed for Adoption, through profiling and the identification of a family.
- Children under the Public Law Outline where there may be a plan of adoption should care proceedings be initiated.

There is no doubt that the efficacy of these meetings is improved when a care planning representative from the local authority (LA) attends as this ensures a robust joint approach.

The team manager in the RAA linked to Trafford also attends the LA Permanence Tracking meeting and she, and the two dedicated Family Finders, regular work in Trafford office bases alongside the Fostering and Adoption Team, attend legal gateway meetings and final care planning meetings to provide advice and a view where required. Links between Trafford and the RAA seem to be embedded well.

3. Performance

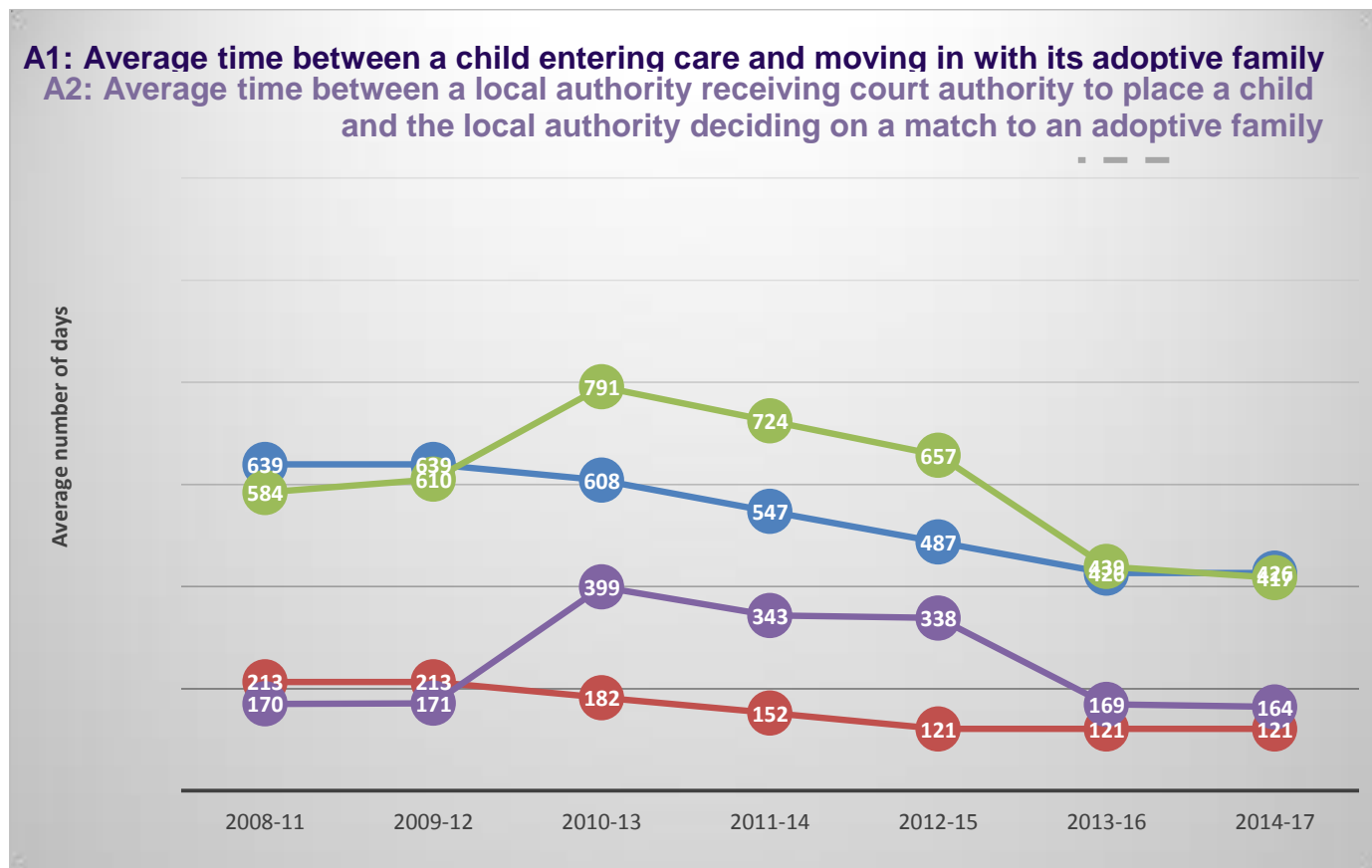
Adoption Scorecard Performance

In 2014, as part of its' Adoption Reform Agenda, the government introduced Adoption Scorecards to track local authority performance and to tackle delay in the adoption system. Scorecards are produced for a three year rolling average with the latest data being published in May 2018 for the period April 2014-March 2017. Trafford's performance is detailed below. Data for April 2015-March 2018 is expected to be published in Spring 2019.

The indicators are:

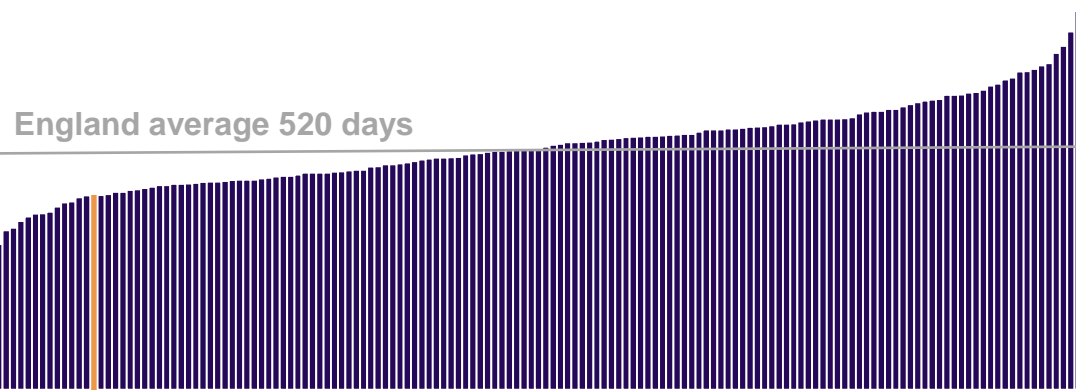
A1 – number of days between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. The current threshold is 426 days.

A2 – the number of days between receiving court authority to place a child for adoption and the Agency decision about a match to an adoptive family. The current threshold is 121 days.



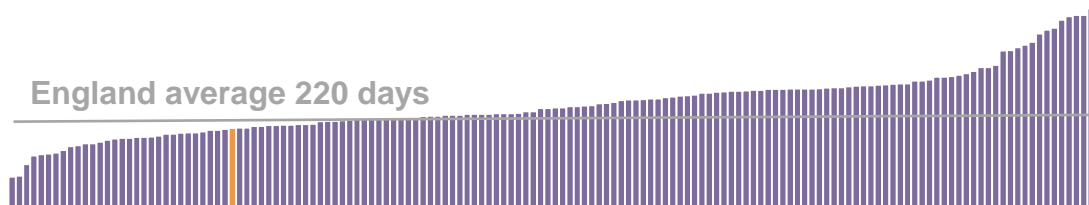
This graph shows Trafford's performance for both A1 (in grey) and A2 (in yellow) indicators in days with the reducing thresholds also shown in blue and red.

A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, 2014-17



This chart shows that Trafford's average performance for the A1 indicator is within the threshold and is at the higher end of performance compared with all other local authorities.

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, 2014-17



This chart shows that, whilst Trafford's performance for the A2 indicator is above the threshold of 121 days at 164 days, it is still performing well in the context of other local authorities, being well below the England average of 220 days and again at the higher end of the performance spectrum.

2018/19 performance to date

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Total to date
ADM decisions	3	4	8	15
Placement Orders granted	1	4	1	6
Matched with prospective adopters	3	4	0	7
Placed with prospective adopters	2	2	3	7
Adoption orders granted	2	1	1	4

Adoption Scorecard Performance Narrative for Q1-3 2018-19

Four Trafford children were made subject to Adoption Orders during this period.

Number of children made subject to adoption orders										
	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Trafford	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4

Despite some delays for some children, it is important to recognise that excellent outcomes for these children have been achieved, and the authority has been ambitious in their planning.

4. Recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters within Adoption Counts

There have been 69 families approved to date in 2018/19 within Adoption Counts with a further 22 planned to be at Panel for approval before the end of this financial year, which will take our total to 91 families approved in the year. This is an improvement of almost 100% on the previous year.

We were however predicting over 100 families to be approved and so are undertaking a piece of work to look at what has impacted i.e. where people have left or slowed down in the system. It seems to be a combination of some withdrawals and largely delay in stage 1 and 2 timescales. If this delay is in any way agency rather than adopter led the service needs to understand the causes and take preventive action in future.

Nationally the picture continues to show that the numbers of placement orders are surpassing adopter approvals although the picture is improving with the gap having narrowed slightly.

We currently have 32 families in Stage 1, 5 in between Stage 1 and 2 and 35 in Stage 2, which is a promising start for next year when we have an ambitious target of 120 families approved.

Specialist Training:

Now that the service is embedded, we are moving forward with a number of new developments to strengthen the basic preparation training for adoptive families including early permanence, taking siblings, lifestory work, attachment and play, the impact of in-utero experiences and medical issues and parenting children who have experienced trauma. Training for the family and friends of our families is now under way and the first groups for support network members have taken place with very positive feedback.

5. Family Finding developments

We held our first internal Activity Day in November, with successful outcomes. We are likely to place 6 children, including a sibling group of 3, all of whom had been waiting a significant length of time since Placement Order including one Trafford child. Unfortunately, the other local Regional Adoption Agencies were not able to send any adopters and we had only 4 families attend from voluntary agencies in the region. We will be running a further four Activity Days in 2019 and inviting a wider range of agencies to send their approved and stage 2 adopters.

Another key development has been a trial of bespoke family finding, involving two children, where we have used social media to profile both children to groups /forums containing people who are more likely to have an interest in adopting children with complex health needs. Agreement was given by the local authority to use information about these children and photographs in this targeted way. We anticipate using this approach for two Trafford children in the near future.

6. Adoption Support

The demand for adoption support remains very high with a current waiting list of 248 across the RAA. For Trafford there are 24 families awaiting a service. 80 Trafford families are receiving an adoption support service.

We are exploring a number of strategies to address this and have implemented a new duty/triage system.

The new Adoption Support First Response Team (Duty for short) went live on 15th January 2019. This means that all enquiries for Adoption Support will be screened and responded to by the team, to ensure a timely, consistent and reliable response. Families in need will then be offered a surgery appointment to complete an initial assessment, whilst others may benefit from advice and signposting and need no further immediate support.

Since October 2017, Adoption Counts has been funded by the Department for Education to develop a Centre of Excellence for Adoption Support (COE), one of only two in the country. The funding received was £521,564 over two years. This ends on 30th June 2019. Work has therefore taken place to identify how these services can continue in the context of uncertainty over future funding.

The grant manager from the DfE is seeking further funding for the COE for the financial year 2019-2020. Confirmation of this is not expected until the end of March 2019. However, if successful it is anticipated that the funding will continue from the 30th June 2019 until 31st March 2020 and the COE model will continue as is.

7. Continuous Professional and Service Development

North West Employers have recently delivered 1.5 days management training to the first line team managers. All staff across the agency are currently having half-day sessions on strength-based conversations. Based on a coaching model, this helps staff at all levels in the organisation improve the quality of their development conversations in order to maximise the potential and performance of staff and our partnerships, be it with other agencies, our partner LA's or adopters.

The adoption psychology team will deliver a full day conference on Trauma Informed Practise to all staff in the new financial year to ensure that the learning from available research is embedded across our recruitment and family finding services. Whole service training on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders is planned for the autumn. Recruitment and Assessment workers will all benefit from Making Good assessments training by CoramBAAF in June 2019. Staff have also had the opportunity to attend a number of external training opportunities and have returned to cascade their learning to colleagues.

The Regional Manager started a leadership programme run by Deloitte and funded by DFE in November and this is being supplemented by a series of masterclasses which can also be attended by an operations manager as part of their development.

A programme of personal development reviews is ongoing.

Having previously recognised the need to ensure learning continues to be shared within LA fieldwork teams, this is a standing agenda item at operation meetings and a number of lunchtime learning opportunities in our partner LAs have taken place with more being planned.

There are some exciting developments based on recent research from the University of East Anglia in relation to Contact after adoption and Transitions. This year has seen a significant move from embedding the basic principles and services without a dip in performance to looking at innovation and development.

8. Voice and Influence of adopted children and young people, parents and adopted adults on our services

With regard to the voice and influence of adoptive families, we are working with Adoption UK and their Adopter voice programme. They have recruited 'adoption champions', an adopter advisory group, and contribute to our Adoption Support sub board. We have just undertaken a large adopter survey and will be using the rich information gathered to inform service development.

Feedback from young people is largely gathered through their attendance at support events rather than any direct consultation and may be an area for future development.

Adopted adults largely interface with the service in relation to access to records. We will seek to enhance the feedback from this service in order to build influence into service development.

9. Budget

The current forecast outturn position reported against this budget is a **surplus of £0.048m**. Following a 50% release of 2017/18 outturn surplus agreed at the Board of 11th May 2018, brought forward reserves were £153,588. Based on the current forecast above the closing reserves for 2018/19 will increase by £47,577 to £201,165.

In setting the operational budget for 2019/20, based on the agreed funding formula, the Board committed £100,000 of reserves for smoothing the change in partner contribution rates in transition to the new funding formula. After deducting this £100,000 the remaining reserves from 1st April will be £101,165.

Sue Westwood, Regional Adoption Manager, Adoption Counts
Cathy Sowden, Operations Manager (linked to Trafford), Adoption Counts

Appendix 1 - Quarter 3 performance data;

Table A1 Timeliness and numbers of children who are adopted for the quarter (01/10/2018 to 31/12/2018). The other table looks at the scorecard indicators A1 and A2 for the previous years with the Adoption Counts quarter 1 recorded.

Quarter 3	Average days between a child entering care and moving in with adoptive family	Average days between Placement Order and deciding on a match	Children and young people adopted
Trafford	1267	468	1
Adoption Counts	448	132	26

	Average days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (single-year data) Scorecard Indicator A1				Average days between Placement Order and deciding on a match (single-year data) Scorecard Indicator A2			
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Trafford	X	X	X	436	X	X	X	147

Table A2 Timeliness of children **matched** during the quarter (01/10/2018 to 31/12/2018)

Children Matched		
Quarter 3	Average days between Placement and deciding on a match	% of Children matched in period who were matched within 121 days of placement order
Trafford	N/A	N/A
Adoption Counts	145	60%

Table A3 Timeliness of children **placed** during the quarter (01/10/2018 to 31/12/2018)

Children Placed				
Authority	Average days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family	% of placed children who were placed within 426 days of entering care	Average days between Placement Order and deciding on a match	% of placed children who were matched within 121 days of placement order
Trafford	426	67%	130	33%
Adoption Counts	464	61%	137	61%

Table A4 Provision of Placements within the quarter (01/10/2018 to 31/12/2018)

Placements within quarter				
Authority	Children placed in period, within RAA	Children placed in period, Inter-agency (LA)	Children placed in period, Inter-agency (VAA)	Children placed in period, Total Inter-agency
Trafford	3	0	0	0%
Adoption Counts	23	3	2	18%

Authority	Percentage In House	Percentage Inter-Agency
Trafford	100%	0%
Adoption Counts	82%	18%

Table A5: children progressing through the stages of the adoption process for the quarters (01/10/2018 to 31/12/2018)

Authority	ADM decisions	Number of Placement Orders granted	Matched	Placed in period - incl FFA with a ADM Match
Trafford	8	1	0	3
Adoption Counts	40	28	25	28

Table A6: characteristics of children waiting (with a placement order waiting to be placed)

Authority	Aged 0-2 years old	Aged 3-5 years old	Aged 5 years old and over	Female	Male
Trafford	2	4	0	0	6
Adoption Counts	51	24	9	41	43

Table A7: snapshot numbers of children within the adoption process (1)

Authority	With a decision not yet placed	With a placement order not yet matched	With a placement order not yet placed (18 months or more since entering care)
Trafford	15	8	4
Adoption Counts	143	84	42

Authority	Average length of time spent waiting (since entering care) for those with a placement order not yet placed (days)	Average length of time spent waiting (since placement order granted) for those not yet placed (days)
Trafford	542	273
Adoption Counts	465	208

Appendix two

This appendix contains a range of measures related to prospective adopters progressing through the approval and adoption process.

Table A9: individuals and families progressing through the approval and adoption processes within Adoption Counts

	Started Stage 1	Started Stage 2	Approved	Matched	Placed	Adopted
Individuals	2	1	2	3	2	2
Families	21	22	20	19	16	14
Total	23	23	22	22	18	16

Table A10: snapshot numbers of prospective adopters at different stages of the approval process

	Prospective Adopters				Approved adoptive families waiting		
	Prospective adopters not yet approved	In Stage 1	In Stage 2	On hold	Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched	Approved adoptive families waiting to be matched for more than 6 months	Average time since approval (months)
As at 31/12/2018	67	35	32	6	40	14	11

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14th March 2019

Report of: Trafford Youth Cabinet

Report Title

Trafford Youth Cabinet report on 2018 'Make Your Mark' consultation.

Summary

In July 2018 members of Youth Parliament from across the country came together to discuss the issues they felt were most important to young people. They voted on a list of issues they had collated and the top ten issues were put forward to young people in the country to vote on. The vote was called 'Make your Mark'.

The ten issues were:

1. Mental Health
2. End Period Poverty
3. Votes at 16
4. End Knife Crime
5. Curriculum for Life
6. Support Youth Services
7. Equal Pay, Equal Work
8. Homelessness
9. Transport
10. Welcome Refugees

From August to October young people voted for their top issue. In Trafford 12 schools got involved in the vote. When the votes for Trafford were counted the top five issues were:

1. End knife crime (1221 votes)
2. Homelessness (824 votes)
3. Equal pay, equal work (801 votes)
4. Mental health (723 votes)
5. Transport (716 votes)

Since the vote, Trafford Youth Cabinet have done work in their meetings and have consulted with other young people at their annual 'Let's Talk Youth' conference in November.

Recommendation(s)

To note the contents of the report and for C&YP Scrutiny Committee and partners to work with Trafford Youth Cabinet on a response to these issues raised.

1. End knife crime

Trafford Youth Cabinet ran a workshop at our annual 'Let's Talk Youth' conference on this topic. Young people told us that they think that knife crime is on the rise and people are starting to fear for their safety and that some young people are getting knives to protect themselves. There is easy access to knives and knife crime is unique in that it is harder to detect than gun crime. Some young people believed this was fuelled by gang culture and some said rising knife crime was helped by video games and social media. We believe there is a lack of knowledge about knives and some young people don't understand the consequences of having knives and getting involved in knife crime. When pupils were asked in November at the 'Let's Talk Youth' conference, half said knife crime was a problem in Trafford.

2. Let's Tackle Homelessness

Homelessness has long been a visible presence in Manchester but we have noticed that there are now homeless people in Altrincham, Sale and Urmston. Members of Youth Cabinet have given their own money to homeless people as well as supporting charities who work with them. We are also concerned that there are more young people homeless and that there is now a stigma around homelessness.

3. Equal pay, equal work

We believe we are discriminated against in the job market. We believe it is unfair that we can be paid £3.63 less an hour for doing the exact same job as an adult over 25 (Minimum wage 25 and over: £7.83. Under 18: £4.20). This makes us feel unappreciated and that we are there purely as cheap labour. It means we have to work much longer hours to earn the same amount.

4. Mental health

We are concerned about pupil's lack of knowledge about school nurses and that school nurses need more training about mental health. We believe that some schools are doing good work on this issue. School listeners, wellbeing ambassadors, wellbeing rooms with teachers and worry boxes are good. ChildLine is well known but only half the pupils at the recent 'Let's Talk Youth' conference knew about Kooth (online emotional health support). We believe all teachers need training on mental health. We all need to talk more about mental health.

5. Transport

We believe transport should be accessible, cheap and safe. Tram fares are very expensive and we can feel unsafe at tram stations (particularly in winter) and when on trams. We are happy about the GM Mayor's plan for free bus travel for 16-18 year olds as this has been an issue for a long time. However it would be better if it was extended to trams as well.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Mark Bailey, Advocacy and Engagement Officer
Extension: x 5094

Implications

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	
Financial	
Legal Implications:	
Equality/Diversity Implications	
Sustainability Implications	
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	
Risk Management Implications	
Health and Safety Implications	

Schools results 2018 'Make Your Mark' consultation

Appendix 1

Name of school, college or youth group	Mental Health	End Period Poverty	Votes@16	End Knife Crime	Curriculum for Life	Support Youth Services	Equal Pay, Equal Work	Homelessness	Transport	Welcome Refugees	Total
Altrincham college of Arts	94	34	35	110	42	20	76	77	52	33	573
Altrincham Grammar School for Girls	70	181	31	173	101	12	129	154	130	69	1050
Ashton On Mersey School	26	16	18	66	21	1	33	36	30	9	256
Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College	80	10	33	181	101	27	72	74	102	44	724
BROADOAK SCHOOL	37	19	7	61	28	3	65	62	64	16	362
Lostock College	35	16	11	31	18	2	42	45	38	6	244
Manor Academy	25	6	9	22	5	6	2	25	9	8	117
Sale Grammar	114	74	70	147	53	6	82	99	85	66	796
Stretford Grammar School	20	22	27	54	33	1	70	37	39	38	341
Urmston Grammar	20	12	5	18	13	3	8	20	11	4	114
Wellacre Academy	54	11	27	96	56	7	71	51	74	9	456
Wellington School	148	119	43	261	123	7	151	143	81	35	1111
Online Votes		1		1				1	1	1	5
Total	723	521	316	1221	594	95	801	824	716	338	6149

Appendix 2 –The top three areas identified by School votes

Altrincham College of Arts: End knife crime; Mental health; Homelessness
Altrincham Grammar School for Girls: End period poverty; End knife crime; Homelessness
Ashton On Mersey School: End knife crime; Homelessness; Equal pay, equal work
Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College: End knife crime; Transport; Curriculum for life
Broadoak School: Equal pay, equal work; Transport; Homelessness
Lostock College: Homelessness; Equal work, equal pay; Transport
Manor Academy: Homelessness; Mental health; End knife crime
Sale Grammar: End knife crime; Mental health; Homelessness
Stretford Grammar School: Equal work, equal pay; End knife crime; Transport
Urmston Grammar: Homelessness; Mental health; End knife crime
Wellacre Academy: End knife crime Transport Equal work, equal pay
Wellington School: End knife crime Equal work, equal pay Mental health

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