



NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

TUESDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2018 AT 4.00 PM

THE EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM - THIRD FLOOR, THE GUILDHALL

Telephone enquiries to David Penrose 02392 834870

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If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Councillor Rob Wood (Liberal Democrat)

Group Spokespersons

Councillor Ryan Brent, Conservative

Councillor Judith Smyth, Labour

(NB This Agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting.)

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AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests
- 3 **Children and Families Portfolio Budget Monitoring for the Second Quarter 2018-19 (Pages 3 - 10)**

Purpose

To inform the Cabinet Member of the projected revenue expenditure within the portfolio cash limit and capital programme for the current financial year 2018-19. This report sets out the budget position and contributing factors to the projected year-end overspend within the portfolio as at the end of September

2018.

Recommended

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1) Notes the Children and Families Portfolio forecast budget position, at the end of September 2018, of £5.6m in excess of current approved cash limit provision;**
- 2) Supports the ongoing process of budget review and implementation of proposals to reduce the projected overspend position and move towards the delivery of a balanced budget within the area of Children's Social Care; and;**
- 3) Notes the position in respect of the approved capital schemes for the portfolio.**

4 Annual Adoption Panel Activity Report April 2018 (information report) (Pages 11 - 22)

Purpose

It is required by Standard 25.6 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011 for Local Authority Adoption Services that the executive receives a six-monthly written report outlining the management and performance of the adoption agency.

The Cabinet Member is asked to note the performance of the Portsmouth Adoption Agency in terms of:

- 1) Reducing waiting times for children being placed in permanent families;
- 2) Sustained number of children adopted in contrast to the national picture; and;
- 3) The progress of Portsmouth becoming part of a regional adoption agency.

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Title of Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Children's and Families
Date of meeting:	18th December 2018
Subject:	Children and Families Portfolio Budget Monitoring Report for the Second Quarter 2018/19
Report by:	Chris Ward, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Budget & policy framework decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To inform the Cabinet Member of the projected revenue expenditure within the portfolio cash limit and capital programme for the current financial year 2018-19. This report sets out the budget position and contributing factors to the projected year-end overspend within the portfolio as at the end of September 2018.

2. Summary

- 2.1. Following overspend positions in the previous four years, and an initial projected financial pressure of around £4.2m on the budget for this year, the portfolio revenue cash limit is currently forecast to overspend by £5.6m in 2018-19.
- 2.2. The approved capital programme incorporates four capital schemes for the portfolio; despite some operational delays these are forecast to be within budget.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member:
 - 3.1.1 Notes the Children and Families Portfolio forecast budget position, at the end of September 2018, of £5.6m in excess of current approved cash limit provision.
 - 3.1.2 Supports the ongoing process of budget review and implementation of proposals to reduce the projected overspend position and move towards the delivery of a balanced budget within the area of Children's Social Care.

3.1.3 Notes the position in respect of the approved capital schemes for the portfolio.

4 Background

4.1 Expenditure on Children's Social Care and Safeguarding has been subject to much scrutiny during the last few years, having exceeded the budget provision for each of the last four years. Under the approved financial arrangements, an overspend is carried forward by the portfolio in the following financial year, since portfolios are expected to manage their financial resources across financial years in order to encourage medium term operational and financial planning. However, recognising the pressures already being placed on the portfolio at the beginning of each year, the portfolio overspends from prior years have been subsumed corporately, thereby providing a clean starting point for the portfolio in the ensuing year.

5 Summary Position against Cash Limited Budget at the end of September 2018

5.1 The current projected overspend for the Children and Families Portfolio is some £5.6m, all attributable to the Children's Social Care and Safeguarding service as identified below.

Service Area	Current Budget	Current Forecast	Variation
	£000	£000	£000
Children Social Care & Safeguarding	24,767	30,434	5,667
Early Help and Intervention	57	(3)	-60
Troubled Families	0	0	0
	24,823	30,431	5,607

5.2 Troubled Families is fully grant funded. The grant is estimated at some £426,000 for 2018-19, of which £228,000 is dependent on achieving a cumulative attachment of 1,672 families to the programme. Together with grant brought forward, there is funding available for an anticipated spend level of £671,000 with current spending being in line with these estimates.

5.3 Early Help and Intervention have a cash limit budget of £56,600, which is supplemented by a Public Health funding allocation and other income, providing an overall budget of £1,424,000. Turnover of staffing and vacant posts, which are currently being recruited to, suggest a forecast underspend of £60,000 for the year.

5.4 The Children's Social Care and Safeguarding service is currently forecasting an overspend of £5.7m. This is an increase over the projected position reported at the end of the first quarter and encompasses variations across the service.

5.5 The most significant area of overspend relates to the cost of Looked After Children placements; in particular, external residential placements account for £2.6m of the forecast overspend. This is a reduction in this area of £1.1m compared to the quarter 1 forecast and follows a drive to move children on from expensive external residential placements where it is appropriate to do so; however, the number of children in external residential homes still exceeds the budgeted provision by 12 placements.

5.6 The reduction in residential placements has inevitably had a knock-on effect and has increased the forecast placement costs in other areas, specifically in-house foster placements. Overall, though, the placement forecast has reduced by £0.8m from the quarter 1 position.

5.6.1 **Assessment and Intervention Service** (£148,000 overspend): This level of overspend is predominantly the result of the growing need to deliver support to those who have no recourse to public funds. As well as the direct costs involved, additional travel costs for social workers have been incurred as they regularly have to make visits to looked after children all across the country.

5.6.2 **Looked After Children (LAC)** (£4,996,000 overspend): The overspend on placements is currently projected at £4,170,000 as shown in the table below. This has increased by £419,000 since the beginning of the year, as a result of increased numbers and prices. The number of children in care continues to rise; for example; at the end of 2016/17, we reported an average full time equivalent (FTE) number of children looked after during the year of 474.5; the table below shows a predicted average for the year of 510.9. The table also includes an "overall average placement cost" [the shaded figures] for the current and prior years. These must obviously be treated with some caution given the potential for disparity and lack of comparability in the underlying data.

September 2018 Placement Type	Budget			Current Projection			
	Average	Av Unit Cost	Budget	Average Predicted No.s	Av Unit Cost	Estimated Outturn	Budget Pressure
	Nos	£	£	Nos	£	£	£
External Residential	9.02	137,151	1,237,100	20.72	186,561	3,865,536	2,628,436
Semi Residential	0	0	0	2.95	35,367	104,334	104,334
Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)	36.62	39,379	1,442,000	37.48	51,227	1,919,992	477,992
In-House Fostercare	206.67	23,253	4,805,700	226.17	24,058	5,441,126	635,426
Adoption	41.81	8,371	350,000	60.75	8,981	545,571	195,571
Residence Orders	37.24	4,834	180,000	14.08	5,047	71,082	-108,918
Special Guardianship	93.56	6,289	588,400	148.75	5,548	825,199	236,799
2018/19 [Sept Projection]	424.92	£20,247	8,603,200	510.90	£25,001	12,772,839	4,169,639
2018/19 [Jun Projection]	424.92	20,247	8,603,200	510.61	26,534	13,548,392	4,945,192
2017/18	408.6	20,386	8,329,750	501.33	23,722	11,892,530	3,562,780
2016/17	439.3	19,098	8,389,900	474.56	21,115	10,020,182	1,630,282

The figures in the above table are subject to rounding and may not calculate exactly

- 5.6.3 Work has taken place to reduce reliance on high cost external residential providers which is reflected in the decrease of £0.8m in the placement forecast since June 2018. The Children & Families service has advised that it has implemented a robust system for authorising new placements, as well as a monthly review to ensure that high cost placements are only utilised for as long as necessary and that move-on arrangements are facilitated in a timely manner.
- 5.6.4 Projections are based on current placement numbers being maintained until the year end, unless identified end dates are known for specific placements. These costs exclude unaccompanied minors.
- 5.6.5 Unaccompanied minors (UAM) are currently forecasting an overspend on direct costs of £426,000 as numbers continue to grow (at the end of September, there were 95 UAMs in care, compared to 28 at the end of March 2016). In addition to these directly attributable costs, the level of support needed has caused pressures in other budget areas, so that overall, the unfunded cost is likely to be in the region of £1.3m. The cost of UAM care leavers were previously funded by the care leaver budget. However due to the increase in numbers this budget is no longer sufficient to cover these costs.
- 5.6.6 Three secure placements made during this year, one of which is still currently active, have generated a further budget pressure of £213,000.
- 5.6.7 There is also a probable shortfall of income, in the region of £104,000, within the adoption and fostering service primarily as a consequence of not having adopters available for possible usage by other agencies.
- 5.6.8 A recent recruitment exercise for social workers to fill vacant posts, together with the use of agency social workers to cover maternity leave, has resulted in a combined anticipated overspending against staffing budgets, in the region of £139,000.
- 5.6.9 **Safeguarding & Monitoring** (£176,000 overspend): the increased need and cost of direct support packages to Children with Disabilities that was evident last year has continued and resulted in an anticipated overspend position for the current year.
- 5.6.10 **Support Activities** (£246,000 overspend): This projected overspend is related to staffing requirements within the core support team. This is partly due to backfill arrangements to provide cover for staff absences. In addition, one-off specific staffing pressures have resulted in increased costs. Also, it has not yet been possible to realise planned savings following delays to the introduction of a Regional Adoption Agency.
- 5.6.11 **Edge of Care Services** (£100,000 overspend): Staffing pressures within the MASH and YOT teams are generating the overspend. The budget for the MASH team includes a target for other agencies to contribute to the staffing costs however this has never been realised.

6 Capital

6.1 Shown below is the current approved capital programme, and payments made to date. Funding for all schemes was approved by Council on 13th February 2018.

Scheme	Current Approved Budget	Actual Spend to Sept 2018	Forecast Spend
Adaptations to Foster Carer Properties	195,000	85,724	195,000
Children's Case Management Software Replacement (Mosaic)	1,907,000	373,409	1,907,000
Tangiers Road Children's Home	495,000	317,407	495,000
Beechside Children's Home	55,000	16,291	55,000
	2,652,000	792,831	2,652,000

6.2 Adaptations to Foster Carer properties relates to capital grants that assist in delivering foster placements. Each proposal is subject to a separate financial appraisal and approval arrangement. There has been no expenditure so far during the current financial year.

6.3 The supplier of the current Children's Case Management system has indicated their intention to cease supporting the system from 2020. A contract has been signed with a new supplier for a replacement system which is expected to be in place early in 2019.

6.4 The scheme at Tangier Road children's home provides for the delivery of two 2-bedded placement facilities next to the home. This will necessitate the re-siting of office space and renovation of the home itself. These placement facilities are an integral part of the successful "Staying Close" Social Care Innovation bid which aims to support the transition to independent living. Contractors are on site and have commenced the works with the total costs anticipated to be within budget provision. The scheme has, however, been delayed as the result of an environmental impact assessment.

6.5 The Beechside Children's Home had been identified as requiring some specific renovation works to comply with regulations and standards. These works have now been completed within the budget availability, with some final retention payments outstanding at the end of September.

7 Summary

7.1 The portfolio revenue budget is currently overspending, which in the main can be attributed to placement costs as described in section 5 of this report. There are additional pressures on the staffing budget which are currently being reviewed to identify any mitigating action.

- 7.2 Whilst spending in Children's Social Care is outside of the allocated budget in Portsmouth, we are not considered a high spending service when benchmarked against comparators; rather, recent activity with the LGA (Newton Consultants) highlighted Portsmouth as low spending in Children's Social Care in comparison with other authorities. Recently, two Systems Thinking reviews have been conducted (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and Access to Resources), neither of which identified any significant efficiencies. The Service is currently working with Other Local Authorities across the region to identify joint strategies for cost reductions, particularly in relation to placements.
- 7.3 The service has a robust sufficiency plan to manage placement demands, reviewed monthly by the Director of Children's Services, to achieve performance targets and reduce spending. Peopletoo, a consultancy company, has recently been commissioned to work with the council to undertake a diagnostic to test the financial sustainability plan.

8 Equality impact assessment (EIA)

- 8.1 An equality impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not have a negative impact on any of the protected characteristics as described in the Equality Act 2010. There is no change to policy or service and through the budget review process equality impact assessments would be undertaken on an individual basis as required.

9 Legal comments

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations set out in paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.3 of this report.

10 Director of Finance comments

- 10.1 Financial comments are contained within the body of the report.

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Chris Ward, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The information upon which this report has been based has been drawn from a variety of sources; however much of the information used is held in budget files prepared by the Children and Education Finance Team. Please contact Beverley Pennekett, Finance Manager, if required.

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by the Cabinet on

.....
Signed by: Cabinet Member

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Agenda Item 4

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY
(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Equality Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY. (Please note that 'Information Only' reports do not require Equality Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance comments as no decision is being taken.)

Title of meeting: Cabinet member for Children and Families Services
Subject: Annual Adoption Panel Activity Report April 2018
Date of meeting: 18th December 2018
Report by: Jackie Clark, Service Leader, Adoption
Wards affected: None

1. Requested by:

- 1.1. It is required by Standard 25.6 of the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011 for Local Authority Adoption Services that the executive receives a six-monthly written report outlining the management and performance of the adoption agency.
- 1.2. The Lead Member is asked to note the performance of the Portsmouth Adoption Agency in terms of:
 - (a) Reducing waiting times for children being placed in permanent families.
 - (b) Sustained number of children adopted in contrast to the national picture
 - (c) The progress of Portsmouth becoming part of a regional adoption agency.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The previous report was prepared 1st April 2018 and presented July 2018. This report updates the Lead Member on Portsmouth Adoption Agency performance for the period April 1 2018 to 31 October 2018 and ongoing development in accordance with the Government's Adoption Reform Programme introduced in 2012.

3. Background

- 3.1. Practices in adoption continue to receive government attention to promote stable, permanent care arrangements for children unable to be cared for by their birth families. In the DfE paper 'Adoption - A Vision For Change' the government outlined expectations for improved practices through regionalised agencies.

3.2. Government grants have been made available for local authorities to develop these agencies and Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, Isle of Wight Council and Hampshire County Council have worked with the voluntary sector to develop a regional adoption agency (RAA) - Adopt South. The date for Adopt South to go live is April 2019. A proposal for the RAA was accepted by Cabinet on 5 June 2018 and a summary of the progress to date is provided within this report.

3.3. Portsmouth Children and Families Service were subject to Ofsted inspection September 2018 and the service was graded as 'Good' . With regard to the adoption service the Ofsted report stated:

"Children who need adoption benefit from timely decision-making and effective planning. Good assessment, training and support is available for prospective adopters. Children move quickly to live with their adoptive families and they enjoy stability. Good use is made of the adoption support fund to meet children's therapeutic needs. Close work with CAMHS, the virtual school, educational psychologists and play therapist holistically supports carers to meet their children's needs."

4. Areas that are doing well

4.1. The timeliness and number of Looked After Children leaving foster care through adoption has generally continued to be in accordance with government-led targets. Portsmouth has an average of 31 children needing adoptive families at any time over the course of a year. For the period 1st April-31st October 2018 seven children have been adopted and at the time of writing applications for adoption orders for two children were pending in court. This figure is a significant reduction from the number of children adopted over the same period last year (16); however the number of children with court orders as the court has deemed them needing prospective adoptive families is 22 which is double the number of children during the same period last year (11). Therefore this year there is an increase in the number of children needing adoptive families.

4.2. During this period 12 children were matched and placed with their prospective adoptive families and applications for adoption orders are generally made to the court after ten weeks of being placed. Of those children placed with adoptive families there were two pairs of siblings age 0-6yrs, one child with developmental delay, and one child of black African heritage. There are currently 18 children waiting for a prospective adoptive family to be found, including two children with disabilities, three children of black and minority ethnicity, and six sibling pairs including a pair where one is over the age of five. Sadly, despite a robust support package in place one adoption placement ended for an older child with emotional and behavioural issues.

4.3. Whilst Portsmouth has experienced a reduction in the number of prospective adoptive families coming forward (in line with a national trend), we have continued to use a range of means to identify the most suitable adoptive families for children. The vast majority of adoptive families recruited and approved by Portsmouth live within a 50 mile radius (but not within the city) in order to protect the identity of the adoptive placement. Of the children matched 75% percent were matched with Portsmouth approved adoptive families and 25% percent with other agency adoptive families. This reflects Portsmouth being proactive with wide-scale family finding for children particularly with complex needs, which may take time, but has secured the most suitable families for those children. One of the benefits of Portsmouth becoming part of the RAA is reducing the number and costs of children placed with other agency adoptive families.

- 4.4. For some very young children unable to live with their birth family it is possible for them to be placed with Fostering for Adoption Placements (FfA). These are adoptive families who are also approved temporarily as foster carers. It can offer the best opportunity for the child if the carer decides on a plan for adoption. Since 1st April there have been two children placed and/or adopted through FfA placements.
- 4.5. Portsmouth's timeliness for children being adopted has continued to improve. The government measurement in number of days from the date the child entered care to the date the child is placed with an adoptive family has improved from 541 days in March 2016 (average over three years) to 488 in March 2017. This compares favourably to the national England average number of days between 2014 and 2017, which is 520 days.

5. Adopter Recruitment

- 5.1. Adopter recruitment has fallen again this year while the number of children with placement orders has increased which reflects the national trend. Recruiting prospective adopters is very competitive as each local authority is seeking adoptive families for their Looked After Children. If a child is placed with another local authority's adoptive family or voluntary adoptive agency family the local authority responsible for the child incurs a government set universal fee.
- 5.2. Portsmouth has an adopter recruitment strategy in place for 2018/19 and to date there have been events at Portsmouth Football Club and at the Spinnaker Tower .
- 5.3. Portsmouth had a total of 167 enquiries this year which resulted in total of 63 potential adoptive families attending information sessions which led to 45 initial assessment visits culminating in 17 assessments in process over the course of the year leading to 11 adoptive families being approved as prospective adopters. Since 1st April 2018 there have been 132 potential adopter enquiries leading to 31 initial assessment visits with a total of 23 applicants in the process of being assessed as prospective adoptive families.
- 5.4. The Government timescale for the adopter two stage assessment is a total of six months . Last year the average timescale for assessments completed was six months. The timescale for the assessments completed to date is 6.4months. Factors that can impact timescales are DBS checks and the timing of the formal medical examination and report - both are legal requirements as part of the prospective adopter assessment report (PAR).

6. Adoption Support

- 6.1. Many children needing adoption come from families with complex backgrounds where they have experienced trauma due to ongoing neglect , families characterised by domestic abuse, drug and alcohol abuse. Research shows the impact of those experiences can have a significant impact upon the child's development and these children need nurturing, resilient and stable families able to care for the child through to adulthood and sometimes beyond. Prospective adopters undertake a six-month assessment to enable them to develop the knowledge and understanding related to adoption preparing them for a child/children to join their family. As children are matched with prospective adoptive families it is imperative to those families they are able to access support. In recognition of their support needs the Government introduced the Adoption Support Fund for adoptive families in 2015 and Pupil Premium for adopted children in school.

- 6.2. Adoptive families are supported by the adoption support service for three years after the making of the adoption order and thereafter they are entitled to support from the adoption agency local authority in which they live until the child reaches the age of 18. Therefore, Portsmouth is responsible for those children they placed with adoptive families and those placed by other adoption agencies within the city three years after the adoption order. The Adoption Support Service has continued to develop in order to provide a range of support to families. The themes for adoptive families needing support are managing children's challenging behaviours resulting from the impact of early trauma and neglect.
- 6.3. Portsmouth currently has 142 adoptive families eligible for adoption support. Of those families 32 have had an assessment of their support needs culminating in support being provided by either direct work with child/family and or specialist therapeutic support. Adoptive families can refer for an assessment of their needs at any time, others may receive support through attending learning workshops, the adopters support group or direct work with an allocated worker.
- 6.4. In order to support adoptive families and minimise the risk of adoption breakdown, the adoption support service has continued to develop offering therapeutic parenting strategies, support with child-on-parent violence, sensory integration guidance, life-story work, regular adopter workshops for specific issues related to adoption. The adoption support service in conjunction with special guardianship support is a relatively high-demand service for families. Adoptive families continue to access monthly consultations with our adoption CAMHS practitioner; virtual school education worker and education psychologist.
- 6.5. Last year the service was boosted as 36 children accessed specialist therapeutic support through funding created by the Government's Adoption Support Fund (ASF) at a total cost of £114,091. From 1st April this year there have been 14 families supported via ASF funding totalling £51,404. The ASF has been particularly beneficial enabling those families living outside of Portsmouth to receive specialist therapeutic support, for example specialist psychological assessment, multi-disciplinary assessment, therapeutic parenting courses and sensory integration therapy.
- 6.6. In response to feedback from adoptive parents and their children over (?) this period the support service has provided three adopted children's activity sessions during the school holidays. Many adopted children need support to make sense of their birth history and adoptive history so there has been a workshop for parents to help them discuss their child/ren's history,
- 6.7. The Adoption Service continues to learn and improve following feedback provided by adopted adults and birth parents. Between 1st April and 31st October there have been 19 referrals received for birth records counselling, intermediary and tracing work. This figure is consistent with last year which culminated in a total of 35 referrals being made. There is an increasing number of younger adults who were adopted requesting their adoption records. Younger adults adopted are more likely to have been adopted through care proceedings and it is evident that adopted adults need to understand the detail in decisions made to separate them from birth parents and particularly if they were separated as siblings. Many adopted adults will be successfully reunified with their siblings as adults.
- 6.8. Adoption birth-parent counselling is an open offer to birth parents losing a child to adoption. Many birth parents are not ready to access this service in parallel with or just after care proceedings and will access the service months, or years, later. They may also join the

quarterly birth parent support group, which comprises birth parents having relinquished children many years ago and birth parents having children removed from their care to adoption. The majority of adopted children will continue to have indirect contact with birth parents up to the age of 18 through a letterbox exchange co-ordinated by the adoption service. Over the course of the year there are 250 letterbox exchanges.

7. Areas for consideration

- 7.1. Nationally, the number of children needing adoption has reduced and Portsmouth did see a reduction from an average of 42 to 31 children since 2015/16. However the number of Portsmouth children with plans for adoption appears to be at an increasing rate in comparison to last year, as is the number of placement orders, endorsing a child's plan for adoption, granted by the court. Portsmouth continues to maintain a robust permanence tracking process to ensure children becoming Looked After have a clear, timely permanence plan appropriate to their needs. This may be placement with birth parents, special-guardians relatives, long-term fostering or adoption. For the year 2017/18 22 children left care to live with relatives via special guardianship compared to 13 the previous two years. Special guardians are entitled to support for three years from the local authority placing the child and for Portsmouth the special guardian support service sits within the Adoption Support Service and is a high demand service for carers supporting children with complex needs.
- 7.2. Currently, there are 18 children waiting to be matched to adoptive families. The majority of Portsmouth children need to be placed outside of the city in order to maintain security of the adoptive placement. The challenge for the service is recruiting adoptive families when there has been a national reduction in potential adoptive families, particularly for children with complex needs, in a competitive environment with neighbouring local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies.
- 7.3. The adoption support service is available to an average total of 142 families each year, which includes adoptive families transferring from other local authorities. The availability of the Adoption Support Fund has been invaluable in bolstering the support needs. Whilst there have been some restrictions introduced in 2017 by the ASF criteria for applications, Portsmouth families to date have not been adversely affected by these. The challenge will be for the regional adoption agency to develop and sustain the improved adoption support services once the ASF ceases in 2020, within a static budget.

8. Areas of development

- 8.1. A Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) project team has been established to drive the development of Adopt South, which is expected to go live in April 2019. Adopt South comprises Portsmouth City Council, Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council; Southampton City Council the voluntary adoption agencies (VAAs), Barnardo's, Parents and Children Together (PACT) and Adoption UK. With the contributions from the VAAs the four local authorities will come together to provide a regional agency specialising in the recruitment of adoptive families; expecting high quality family finding for the local authorities and offering comprehensive support for adoptive families.

The agreed model for the RAA -Adopt South is a centralised recruitment and marketing team with each of the local authority adoption teams delivering prospective adopter assessment, training and support and post adoption support service for adoptive families, children and birth family members.

8.2. The benefits of a regional adoption agency to Portsmouth will be:

- 8.2.1. The removal of local competitive recruitment for prospective adoptive families.
- 8.2.2. Immediate access to a wider pool of adoptive families for Portsmouth children across the region.
- 8.2.3. Adoptive placements more localised within the local regional area, promoting efficiency in adoption support, particularly specialist local service providers for adoption support.
- 8.2.4. Adoptive families being able to access robust comprehensive support packages to mitigate risk of disruption for children with complex needs.
- 8.2.5. Building on local authority good practice, skills and expertise to enable prospective adopters to be fully prepared and suitably matched and supported with those children placed - securing that child's future throughout their childhood and beyond.
- 8.2.6. The RAA adoption expertise to contribute to each local authority children's social work learning and development programme to promote and improve early permanence planning for children in care.

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Alison Jeffery, Director of Children, Families and Education

Appendices:

- Adoption activity 2014-2019 Appendix 1
- PCC Adoption Scorecard Appendix 2

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

Appendix 1

Adoption activity 2013 – 2019

Year 1 April - 31 March	Adoption orders No. of children adopted	Children's plans for adoption agreed	Placement Orders granted	Children linked with adoptive family	Prospective adoptive families approved	FfA placements	Placements disrupted
2013/14	27	41	30	35	37	0	0
2014/15	34	29	27	31	32	1	2
2015/16	25	41	41	28	22	4	2
2016/17	35	21	19	31	21	5	0
2017/18	30	31	30	20	11	5	0 (1 FfA placement ended)
2018/19*	7	22	20	12	7	2	1

Table 2: Placement type

***OLA other local authority *Voluntary adoption agency**

From	To	PCC	OLA*	VAA*
2014	2015	14	6	11
2015	2016	22	2	4
2016	2017	19	5	6
2017	2018	11	7	2

Appendix 2 - PCC Adoption Scorecard

Portsmouth Adoption Service Scorecard - October 2018

Government thresholds for

A1: 426 days

A2 : 121days

Government Adoption Leadership Board figures for year 2014-2017

A1 National England average 520 days

A2 National England average 220 days

ADOPTION TEAM SCORECARD - OCTOBER 2018

A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days)

3yr average	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
A1	454	460	429	429	410	414	416	415	414	413	410	412	400

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 (days)

3yr average	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
A2	228	239	213	213	207	211	211	212	211	211	208	211	199

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

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Number	71	72	73	75	77	78	78	78	75	75	75	80	79
%	59.2%	59.5%	60.8%	61.5%	63.1%	63.9%	63.9%	65.0%	63.0%	61.9%	61.5%	63.5%	64.8%

A4: Adoptions from care (number adopted and % leaving care who are adopted)

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Number	93	96	98	98	98	92	88	87	86	85	83	83	83
%	22.2%	22.5%	22.5%	23.0%	22.6%	21.6%	20.6%	20.6%	20.2%	20.0%	19.5%	19.5%	19.5%

A5: Number and % of children for whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Number	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	14	13	12	12	12	15
%	9.6%	9.4%	9.6%	9.4%	9.4%	9.4%	9.4%	10.3%	9.4%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	10.9%

A6: Adoptions of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (number adopted and % of BME children leaving care who are adopted)

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Number	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
%	4.3%	4.4%	3.9%	3.8%	3.6%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%

A7: Adoptions of children aged five or over (number adopted and % of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted)

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Number	19	20	19	19	18	17	16	14	14	14	13	13	13
%	7.0%	7.3%	6.7%	6.9%	6.5%	6.2%	5.8%	5.0%	5.1%	5.1%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%

A8: Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks)

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
A8	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	21	22	22	22	22

A9: Number of children awaiting adoption (as at Month end)

	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
A9	30	28	26	28	28	34	38	37	37	40	44	47	43

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