

Corporate Parenting Board

19 July 2018

Report title	Wolverhampton Sufficiency Strategy 2017-2020: 2017-2018 Implementation Plan Summary Report	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet Children and Young People	
Wards affected	All wards	
Accountable director	Emma Bennett, Director for Children's Services	
Originating service	People Commissioning	
Accountable employee(s)	Nick Price	Commissioning Officer
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Report to be/has been considered by	Transforming Children's Services Programme Board	12 June 2018
	People Leadership Team	02 July 2018

Recommendation for action or decision:

The Corporate Parenting Board is recommended to:

1. Consider the report

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The report provides information on the position at the end of the first year of the current strategy period (2017-2018) and the progress made in relation to the priorities contained in the Sufficiency Strategy Implementation Plan 2017-2018.

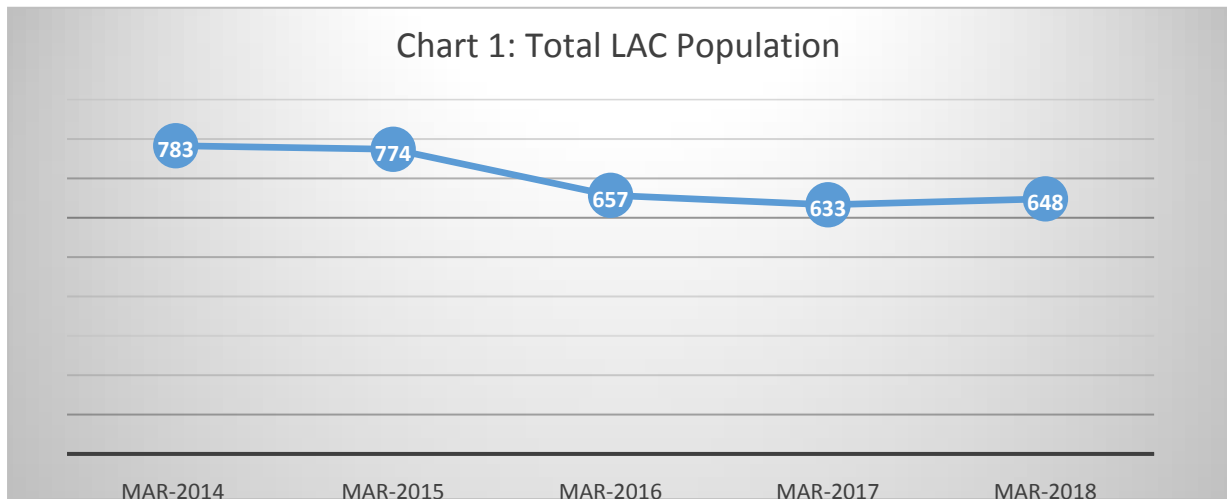
2.0 Background

- 2.1 A Sufficiency Duty was placed on local authorities in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 and this has been reinforced by the Draft Statutory Guidance Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children (2009). Section 22G requires local authorities to take all reasonably practicable steps to secure sufficient accommodation for looked-after children under their care who cannot live at home and whose circumstances indicate that it would be in a child's best interest to be accommodated by the local authority. There is a requirement to ensure access to a sufficient range of placements so that, whenever it is in the interests of a looked-after child, they can be placed locally with access to the full range of services and support necessary.
- 2.2 The duty applies to each Local Authority providing children's services and the Sufficiency Strategy sets out what steps have, and will be, taken to secure sufficient services and accommodation to meet the needs of children that it is looking after and children whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation.
- 2.3 The Sufficiency Strategy is one of a number of strategies/programmes which support these ambitions and as such it has been developed with reference to those other strategies/programmes (e.g. Corporate Parenting Strategy) so that they are consistent and reinforce and support one another.
- 2.4 The Sufficiency Strategy sets out, and provides information about, Wolverhampton's ambitions for vulnerable children, young people and their families, what the priorities will be over the three-year period 2017-2020 and what action has and will be taken to address these priorities and achieve the ambitions. In Wolverhampton the sufficiency duty has been interpreted to include children and young people on the edge of care (including care leavers) as well as those Looked After by the Council.
- 2.5 The high level strategic priority outcomes, endorsed by Ofsted in their latest inspection report, set out in the strategy document are supported by an annual implementation plan which contains detailed operational performance indicators and targets. Performance monitoring currently takes place on a six-monthly basis. The implementation plan will identify and set out actions relating to specific specialist needs and particular cohorts such as unaccompanied asylum seeker children and disabled children and young people.

3.0 Contextual Information

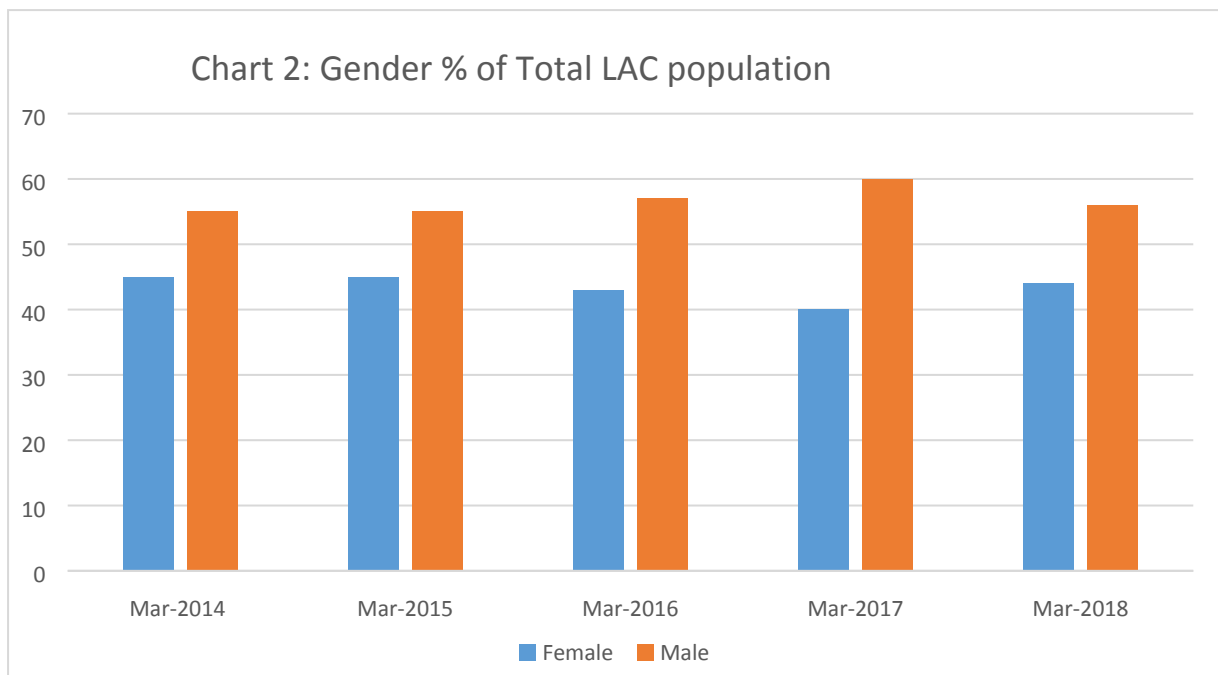
Total Looked after Children (LAC) Population

- 3.1 Since 31 March 2014 the total LAC population has decreased by 17.2% (783-648) compared to the same date in 2018.
- 3.2 The chart below shows that on 31 March 2017 the total LAC population was 633 so on the same date 12 months later the population was marginally higher (+2.4%) [One-year trend]:



Gender

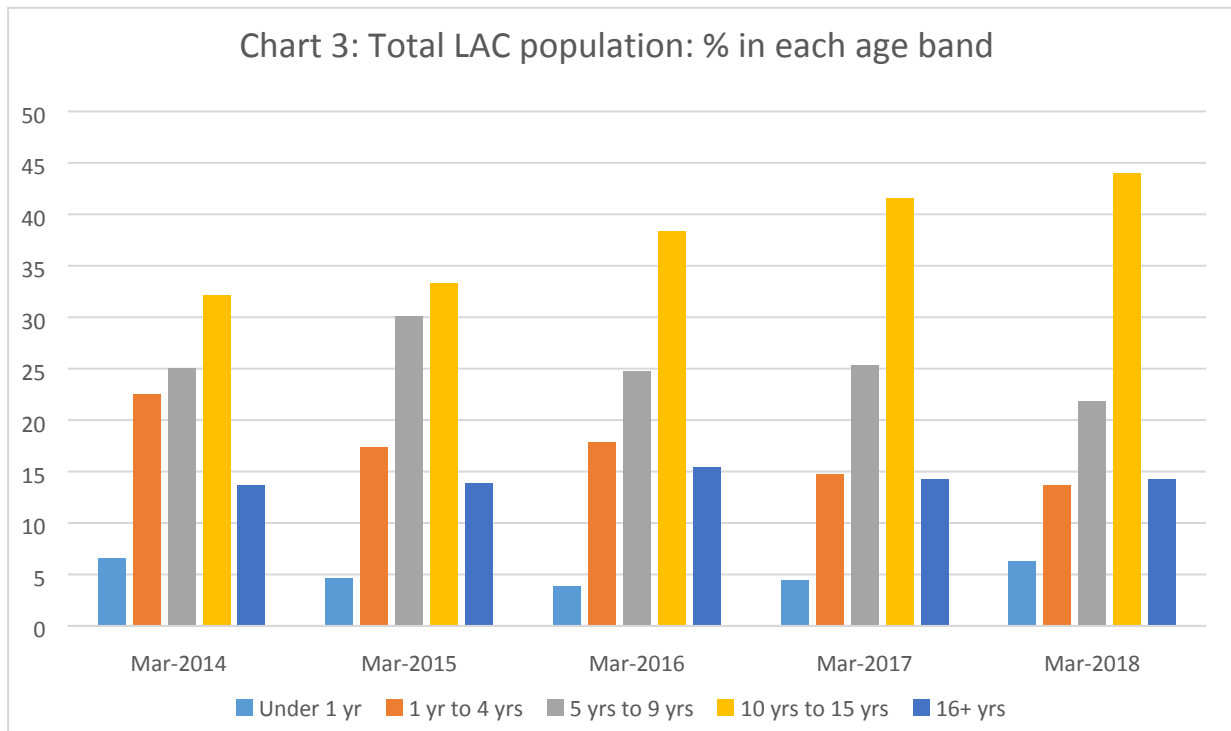
- 3.3 The chart below shows that over the last five years the gender balance has remained relatively constant at around female 45% - male 55%:



Age

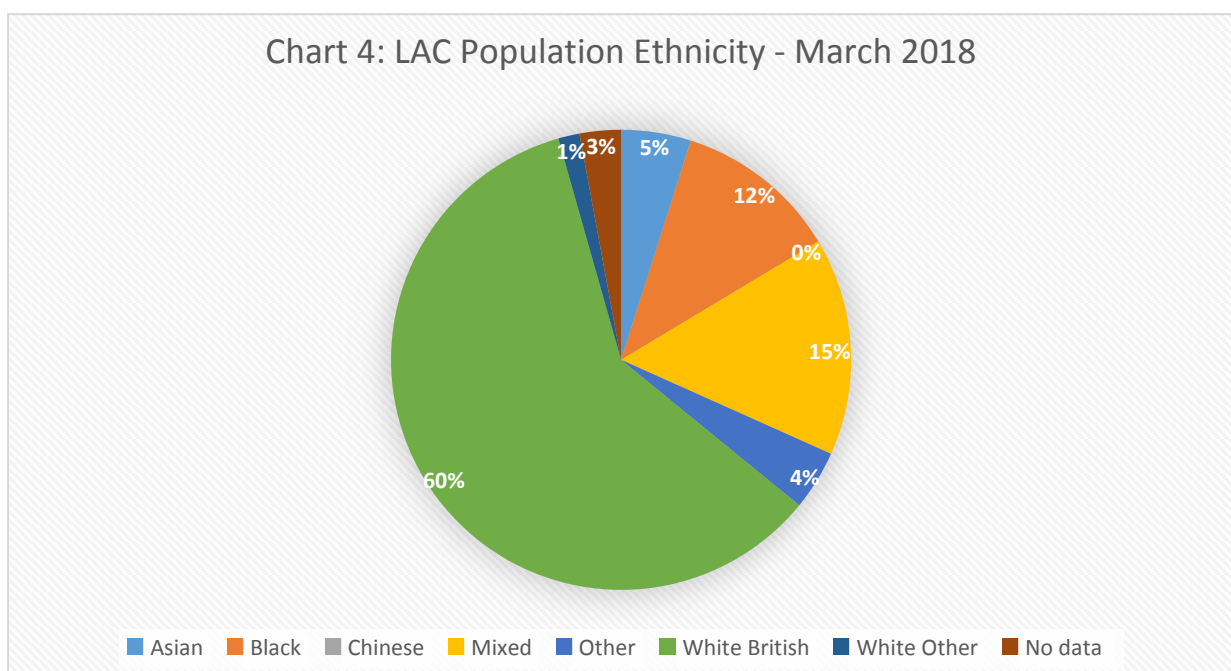
- 3.4 There have been significant trends with regard to the age profile of the overall LAC population. The chart below shows that the last five years has seen general downward

trends for the one to four-year olds and five to nine-year old age bands whilst the 10-15-year-old age band has increased from 33% to 44%:



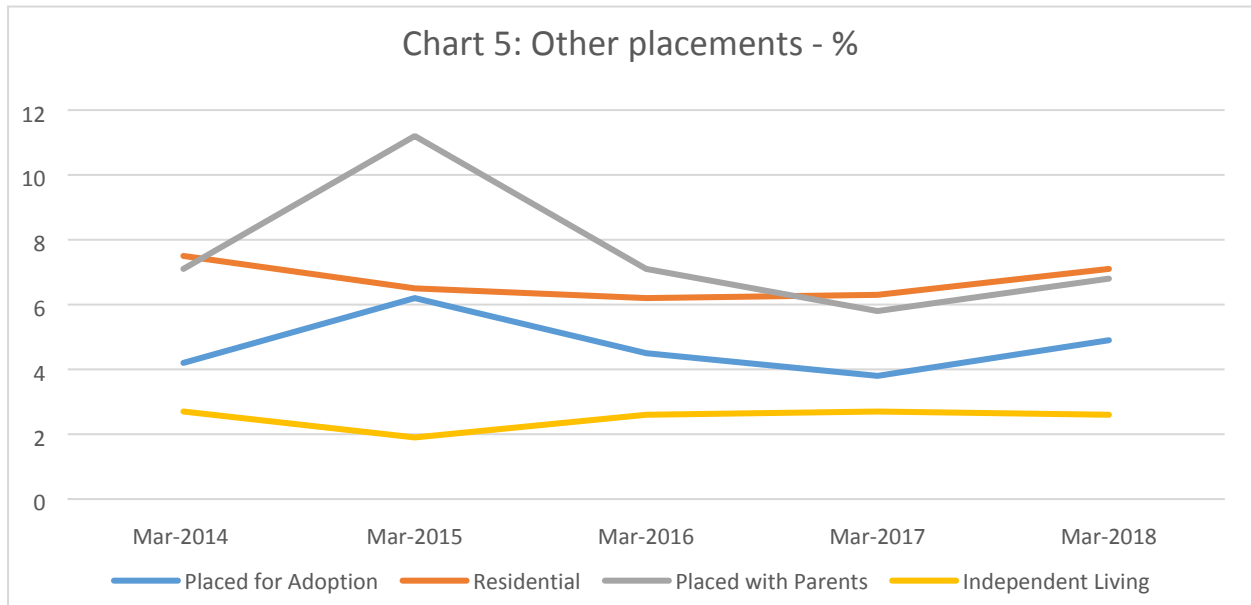
Ethnicity

- 3.5 Overall there have been no major changes in the ethnic make-up of the LAC population over the last five years. The chart bellows shows the largest proportion are in the White British category (60%) followed by those in the Dual Heritage category (15%). The proportion of LAC in the White British category has decreased from 63.5% in March 2014 to 59.7% in March 2018. There have been very slight increases in all the other categories.



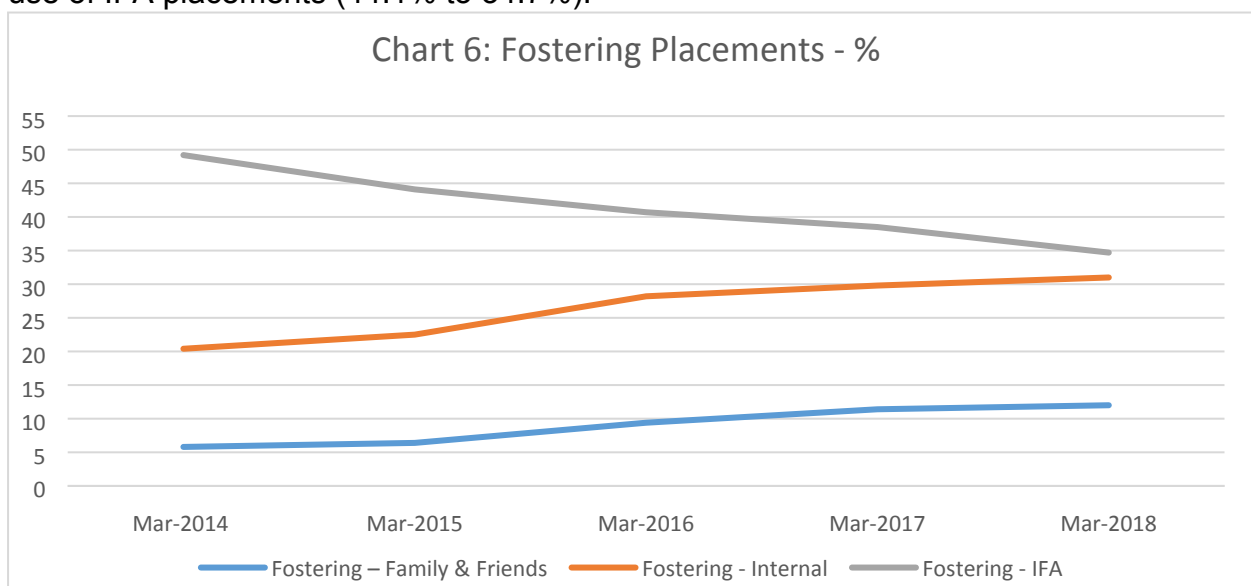
Placements

- 3.6 Whilst there have been fluctuations in the proportion of LAC in other types of placements other than fostering over the last five years there has, overall, been relatively little change. LAC placed with Parents reached a peak in 2014-2015 but then saw a significant reduction in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.
- 3.7 The chart below shows the overall there has been an increase in the proportion of LAC placed in fostering placements. In March 2014 73% of LAC were fostered compared to 77.7% in March 2018. In terms of other placement types, after an initial rise in LAC Placed with Parents, there has been an overall decrease since March 2015 (11.2% to 6.8%).



Foster Care Placements

- 3.8 The chart below shows fostering continues to be biggest placement type and there have been significant changes in the various types of fostering placement. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of Family & Friends placements (5.8% to 12%) and a steady increase in the proportion of children and young people placed with internal foster carers (20.4% to 30%). This increase has been matched by a similar rate of decrease in the use of IFA placements (44.1% to 34.7%).

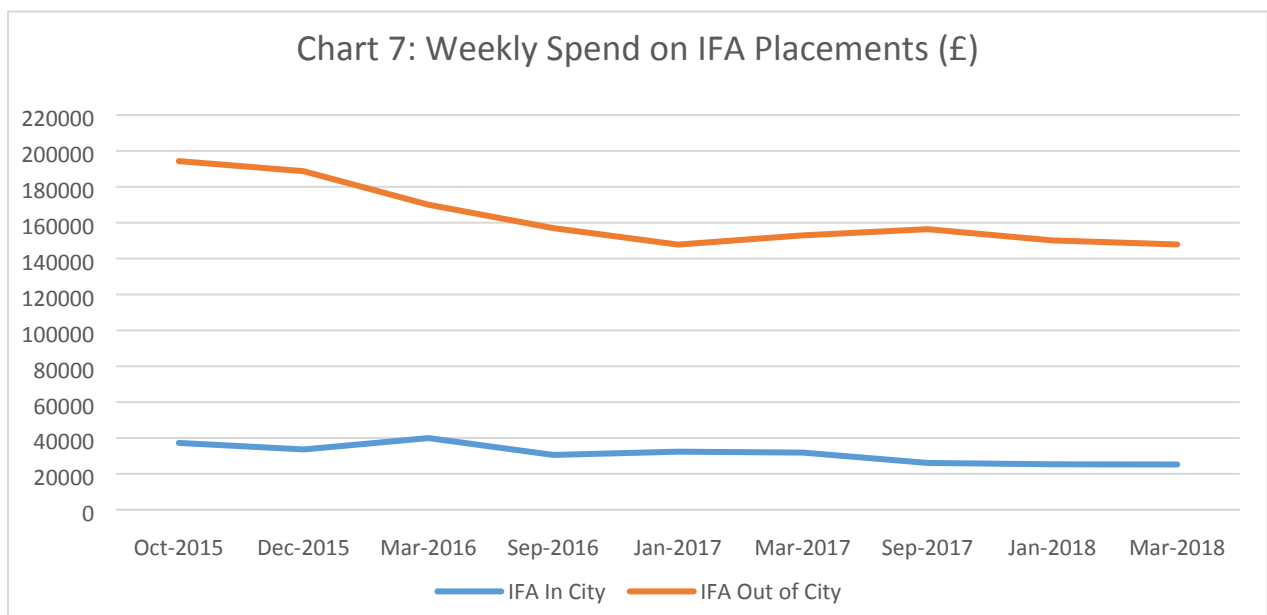


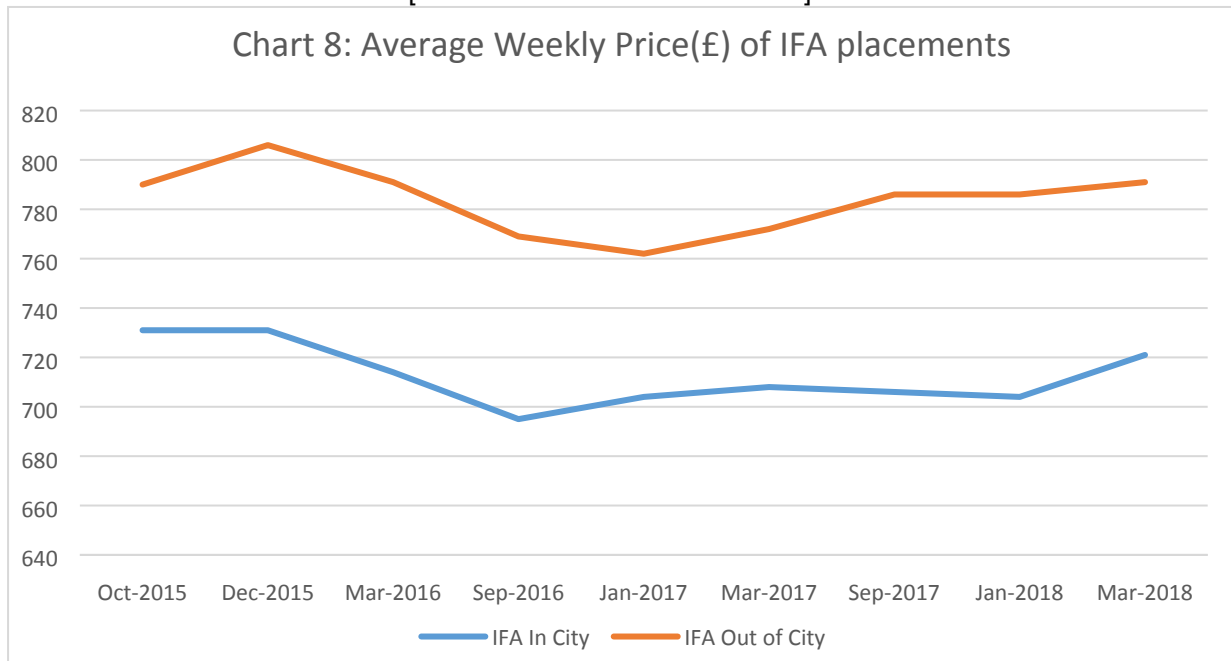
Residential Placements

- 3.9 Over the five-year period there has been a significant reduction in the number of residential placements “in city” (29 to 11). This is partly explained by the closure of Council owned homes and the termination of block contracts during that period. In March 2018 “in city” residential placements accounted for 1.7% of all placements. “Out of City residential placements have changed little numerically over the five-year period (28 to 31) but given the reduced size of the overall population this means that the proportion of young people placed in residential settings outside the city has increased from 3.6% to 4.8%.

Fostering Costs

- 3.10 Due to the decrease in the number of IFA placements there has been a reduction in weekly spend for the time period. In City IFA placement spend has decreased by 32% and Out of City IFA placement spend has decreased 24% (Chart six). Whilst the first part of the five-year reporting period also saw a reduction in IFA placement average weekly prices, in recent times have seen an increase (Chart seven). At 31 March 2018 the average weekly cost of an IFA placement in city was £721 compared to £791 for an out of city IFA placement. A recent review identified an average weekly cost for internal fostering placements (including Family and Friends) of £358.10. The chart below shows the weekly expenditure on weekly IFA placements and the weekly average price:





Residential Costs

- 3.11 Over the last four years there appears to have been a steady increase in the average weekly costs of residential placements both in and out of the City (Chart 10). As a result, the weekly spend on residential placements has increased (8% for out of city placements and 22% for “in city” placements).
- 3.12 The data presented in Charts 12 and 13 shows how the proportions of placements in the different price bands has changed. Since September 2017 “in city” placements in the higher price band have exceeded that in the lower. In March 2018 the lowest price band for out of city residential placements accounted for only 23% compared to 46% at its height in January 2017.

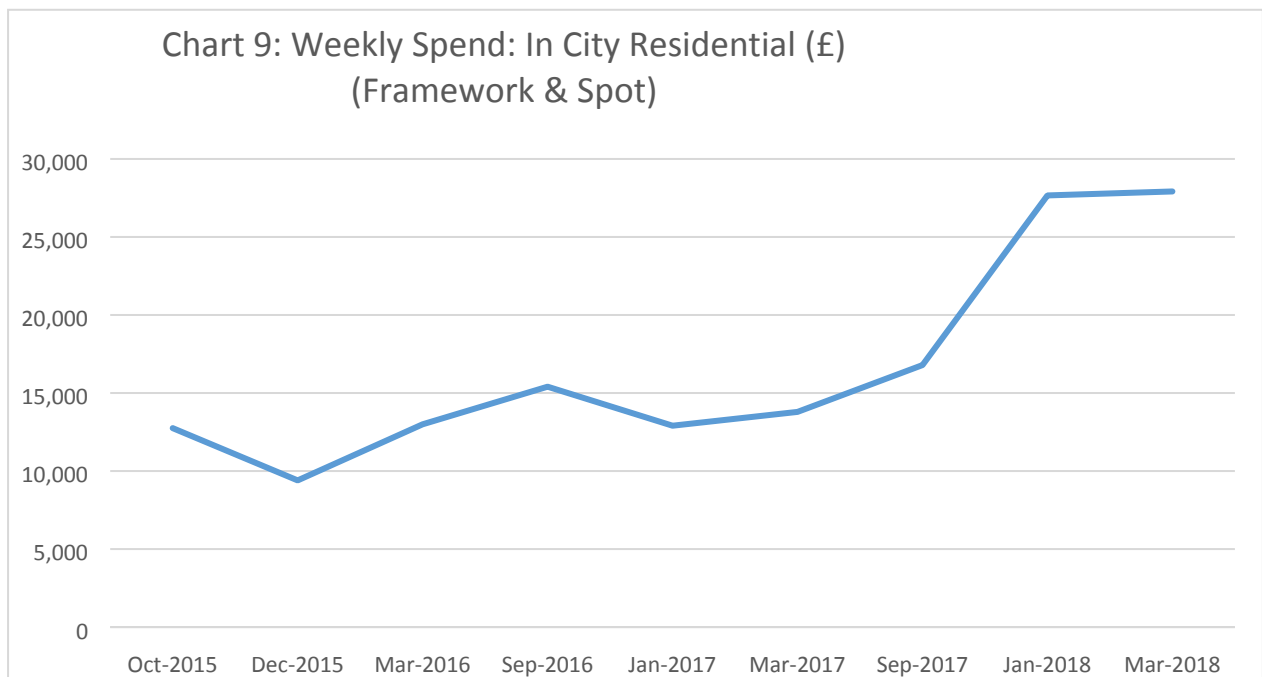


Chart 11: Average Weekly Price of Residential Placements (£)

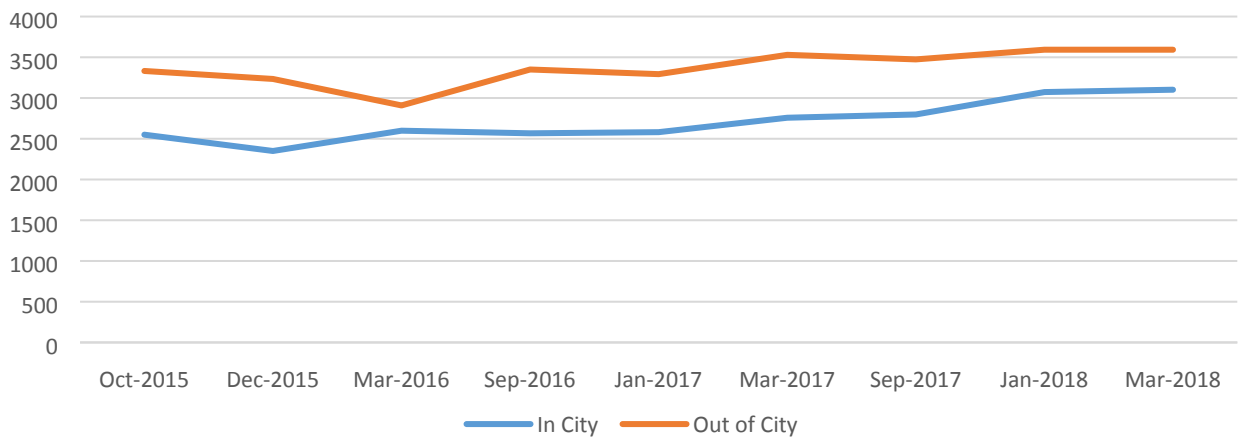


Chart 12: % of in city residential placements in price bands

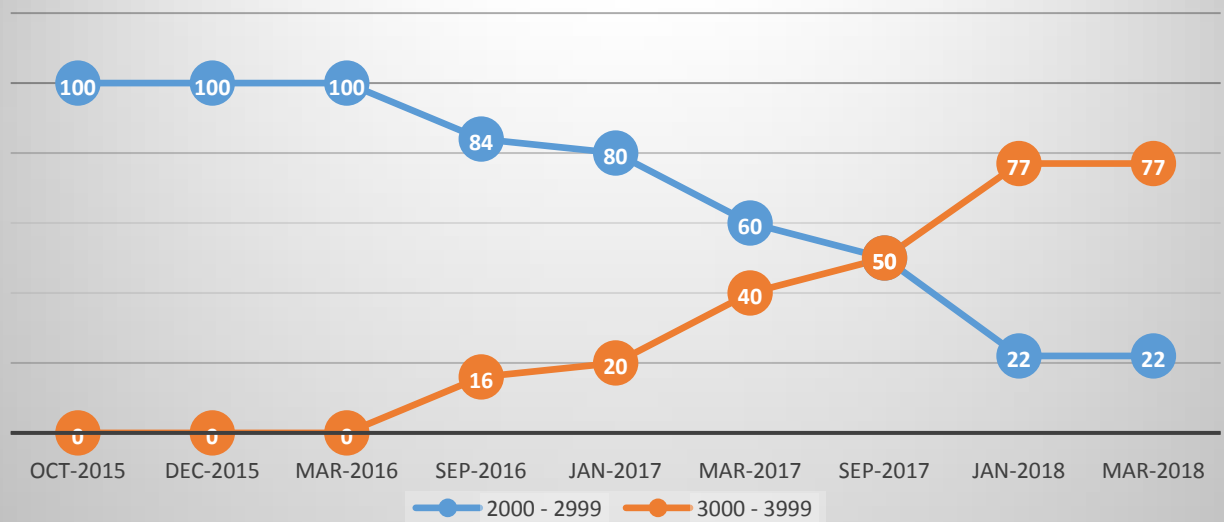
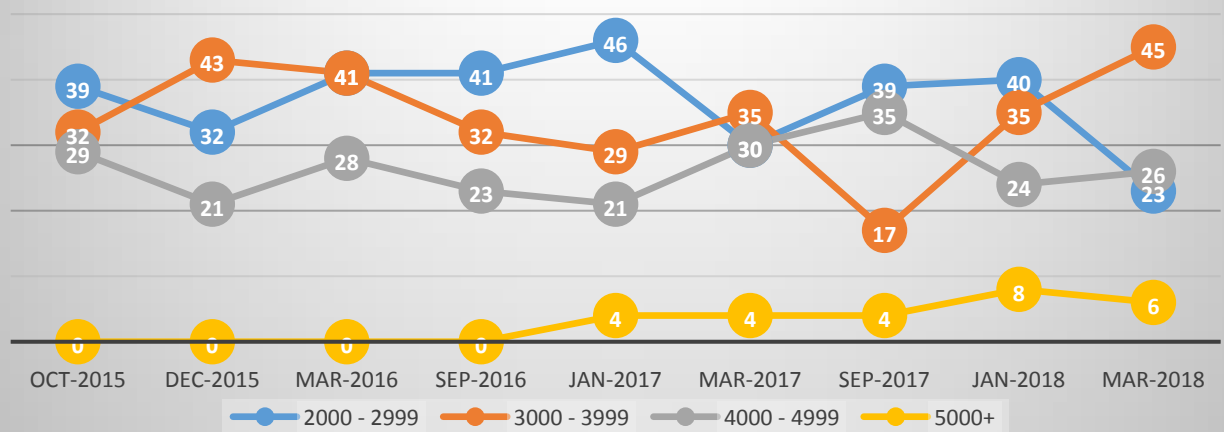


Chart 13: % of Out of City Residential Placements by price band



4.0 End of Year 2017-2018 Performance Monitoring

- 4.1 This section of the report provides an overview of performance in relation to each strategic priority and its related performance indicators.

Priority One: To ensure we have access to sufficient appropriate services to support children and young people, especially those on the edge of care, to remain with their family where possible.

Responsible Officer: Rachel King – Head of Specialist Support Services

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
1a: Percentage of planned cases who have been supported by Upper Pendeford Farm where placements have not broken down	90%	89%
1b: Percentage of CYP who at the point that Specialist Support Services casework ends have not been admitted to care	95%	94%
1c: Percentage of LAC with a “return home” plan who have been successfully reunified with their families	80%	78%

- 4.2 There are plans being developed to expand the scope of the performance monitoring prevention of admission to care to include longitudinal studies which will enable the long-term impact to be assessed.

Priority Two: To increase the proportion of looked after children and young people placed in family settings and ensure that only those LAC with complex needs who are assessed as needing a residential placement are placed in residential settings

Responsible Officer: Alison Hinds – Head of Looked After Children

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
2a: Proportion of the total LAC population in a foster care placement.	Increase year on year	77.8% compared to 79.8% on same date 2017
2b: Proportion of LAC in residential placements who have a current care plan for residential care	100%	A dip sample audit is being undertaken
2c: Percentage of LAC assessed as needing a residential setting are systematically scrutinised on a six-monthly basis	100%	100%

Priority Three: To increase the size of the pool of internal foster carers and ensure that there are placement options for LAC of all ages and levels of complexity.

Responsible Officer: Alison Hinds – Head of Looked After Children

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
3a: Number of available internal foster carers	To increase year on year	Net increase for 2017-2018 =1

4.3 In relation to Indicator 3a there were 26 approvals of new foster carers during the year but due to existing foster carers leaving there was overall only a net gain of one.

4.4 The Family Values Project is providing the opportunity for more focussed business planning around recruitment and retention of internal foster carers which will have a beneficial effect on the achievement of Sufficiency Strategy priority goals.

Priority Four: To continue to improve our understanding of which types of need we have not been able to meet through “internal” placements in order to change the profile of the internal carer population so that we have sufficient internal carers to meet need (less reliance on external providers).

Responsible Officer: Alison Hinds – Head of Looked After Children

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
4a: Number and proportion of internal foster carers on each tier/level	No specific target set	Tier 1 = 49 Tier 2 = 115 Tier 3 = 41 Tier 4 = 1
4b: Proportion of internal foster carers who have completed appropriate training	No specific target set	100%

4.5 In relation to Indicator 4a, no specific target was set but there is a need for the spread of foster carers across the tiers reflects the level of complexity of need of Looked After Children who require foster care. In order to match provision with an aging population and increasing complexity of need there will be a need for an increase in the number of foster carers represented at the higher tiers.

Priority Five: To achieve permanence for LAC as early as possible.

Responsible Officer: Alison Hinds – Head of Looked After Children

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
5a: Number of early permanence placements	Increase year on year. Baseline 2016-17 = 4	3
5b: Number and percentage of Family and Friends placements which lead to Special Guardianship Orders or adoption.	No target set	11
5c: Average time between receiving a placement order and a match to an adoptive family being decided	National average 487 days	Local average 547 days

- 4.6 In relation to Indicator 5c, there were 15 revocation orders in 2017-2018 and these took an average of 265 days to achieve compared to a national average of 121 days. It should be noted that in relation to the timeliness indicators, there were a small number of outliers which significantly affected the local average.

Priority Six: To ensure that we have access to sufficient appropriate services, accommodation and types of placement to prevent admission to care and respond positively to increasing and changing needs in the LAC population (especially in terms of older LAC and care leavers up to 18 years of age and beyond)

Responsible Officer: Alison Hinds – Head of Looked After Children

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
6a: NI62 - Percentage of children looked after at 31 March each year with three or more placements during the year.	National target 16%	16.2%
6b: NI63 - Percentage of Children Looked After aged 16 and under who had been looked after for 2.5 years in the same placement.		69.35%
6c: Percentage of care leavers who report feeling safe and supported in their accommodation	100%	Annual Care Leavers Survey data is pending

		[2016-2017 = 90%]
6d: Percentage of care leavers who have sustained their own tenancies in Council owned flats for six months post 18.	100%	87% Improvement on 2016-2017 [75%]

- 4.7 The figures included for national performance indicators NI 62 and NI 63 are at this stage provisional. These indicators are calculated from the 903 LAC Return that is not due for submission until the end of June 2018 and therefore the figures presented in the table are current internal estimates.

Priority Seven: To ensure that a Market Position Statement is developed and published as part of a cross Directorate approach to developing closer working relationships with providers (internal & external) in order to improve choice, quality, quantity and availability of services to closely match needs of children and young people on the edge of care and in care.

Responsible Officer: Sarah Smith – Head of Strategic Commissioning

Performance Indicator	2017-2018 Target	2017-2018 Out turn
7a: The Market Position Statement document is in place, is up to date and is readily available to those who need it.	No specific milestones set	Completed
7b: Market Position Statement is fit for purpose		Yes
7c: A programme of provider engagement events for 2018-2019 is in place		Regional arrangements in place

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 The total approved budget for the Children and Young People's Service for 2017-2018 was £48.4 million, this included savings of £3.9 million that were removed from the budget as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- 5.2 The outturn position for 2017-2018 for the service was £699,000 overspend.

[NM/19062018/U]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 The production of the Strategy fulfils the Sufficiency Duty placed on local authorities in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 which has subsequently been reinforced by the Draft Statutory Guidance Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children (2009).

[RB/19062018/V]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 There are no equalities issues to this report as the needs of all looked after children and those on the edge of care are specifically addressed through the existing processes that are in place.

8.0 Environmental implications

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental implications as a result of this report or the implementation of the Sufficiency Strategy over the next three years.

9.0 Project Implications

- 9.1 Project management support has been identified to assist in the process of agreeing and completing the Implementation Plan particularly in relation to the 2018-19 Implementation Plan.

10.0 Human resources implications

- 10.1 There are no specific human resources implications as a result of this report.

11.0 Corporate Landlord implications

- 11.1 There are no specific Corporate Landlord implications arising from this report.

12.0 Schedule of background papers

- 12.1 Sufficiency: Statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children – DCSF 2010

Wolverhampton Sufficiency Strategy 2014-17

Report to Children & Young People Management Team 26 January 2017

Report to Children & Young People Management Team 23 March 2017

Report to Transforming Children's Services Programme Board 21 March 2018

Report to Transforming Children's Services Programme Board 12 June 2018

Report to People Leadership Team 02 July 2018