

Responding to the growing numbers of Looked-After Children: Families r First

Presentation to Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

24th September 2014

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Coverage of this presentation

- **LAC: the current position**
- **LAC trends in the recent past**
- **Families r First: keeping families together**
- **Future projections of LAC, and the intelligence programme to understand the key drivers**

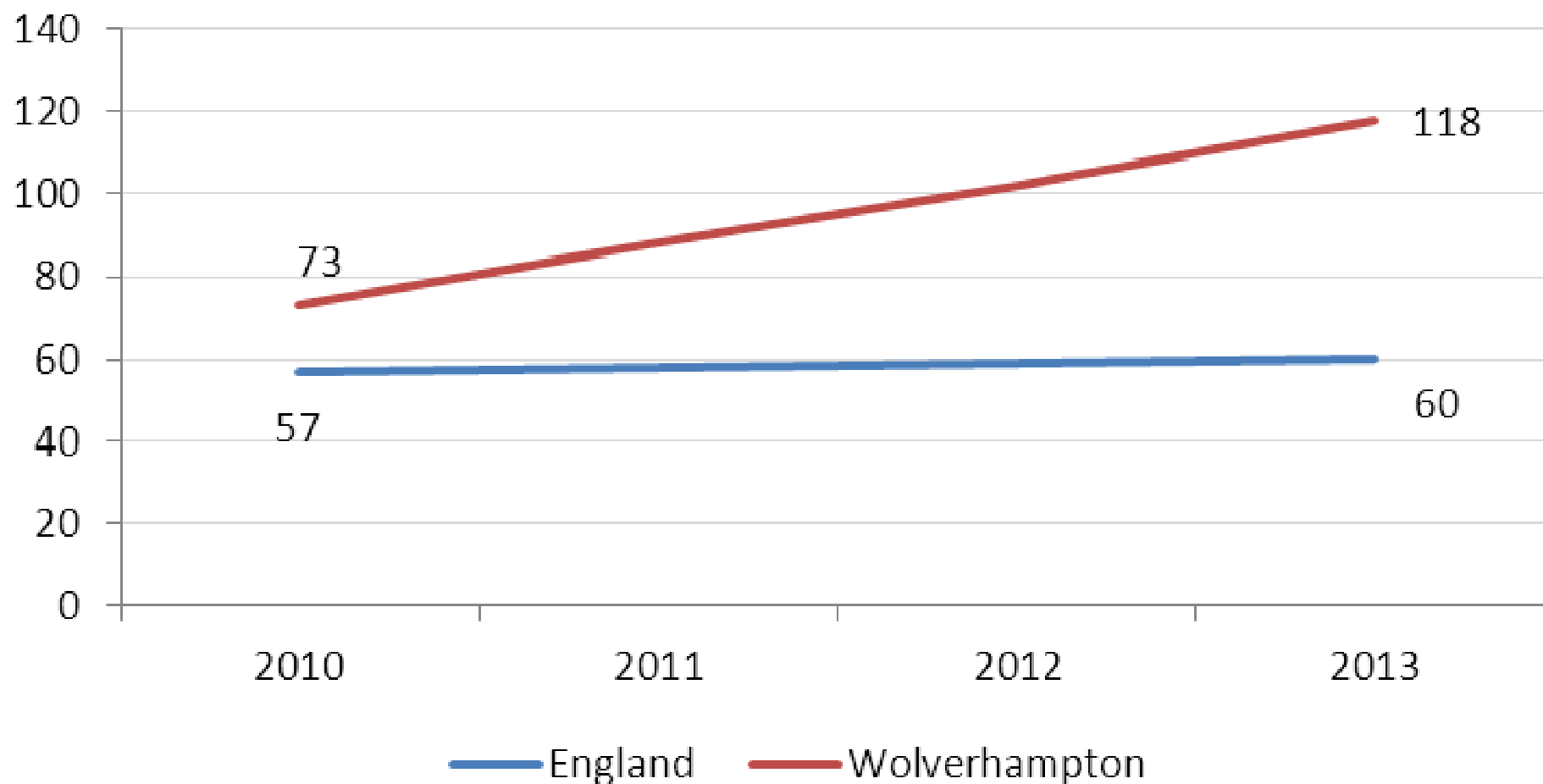
LAC: Current position

- Continuing growth in LAC numbers (benchmarked in terms of rates per 10,000 children aged 0 to 17) for latest available financial year for which we have comparators (12/13 FY):

Wolverhampton: 118 per 10,000 vs
60 per 10,000 (England), 72 per 10,000 (West
Midlands), 81 per 10,000 (Comparator Average)

- Current (Q1 14/15 FY): **797** LAC children out of **56,849** 0-17 year olds, means a rate of **140** per 10,000

LAC rates per 10,000 0-17 year olds



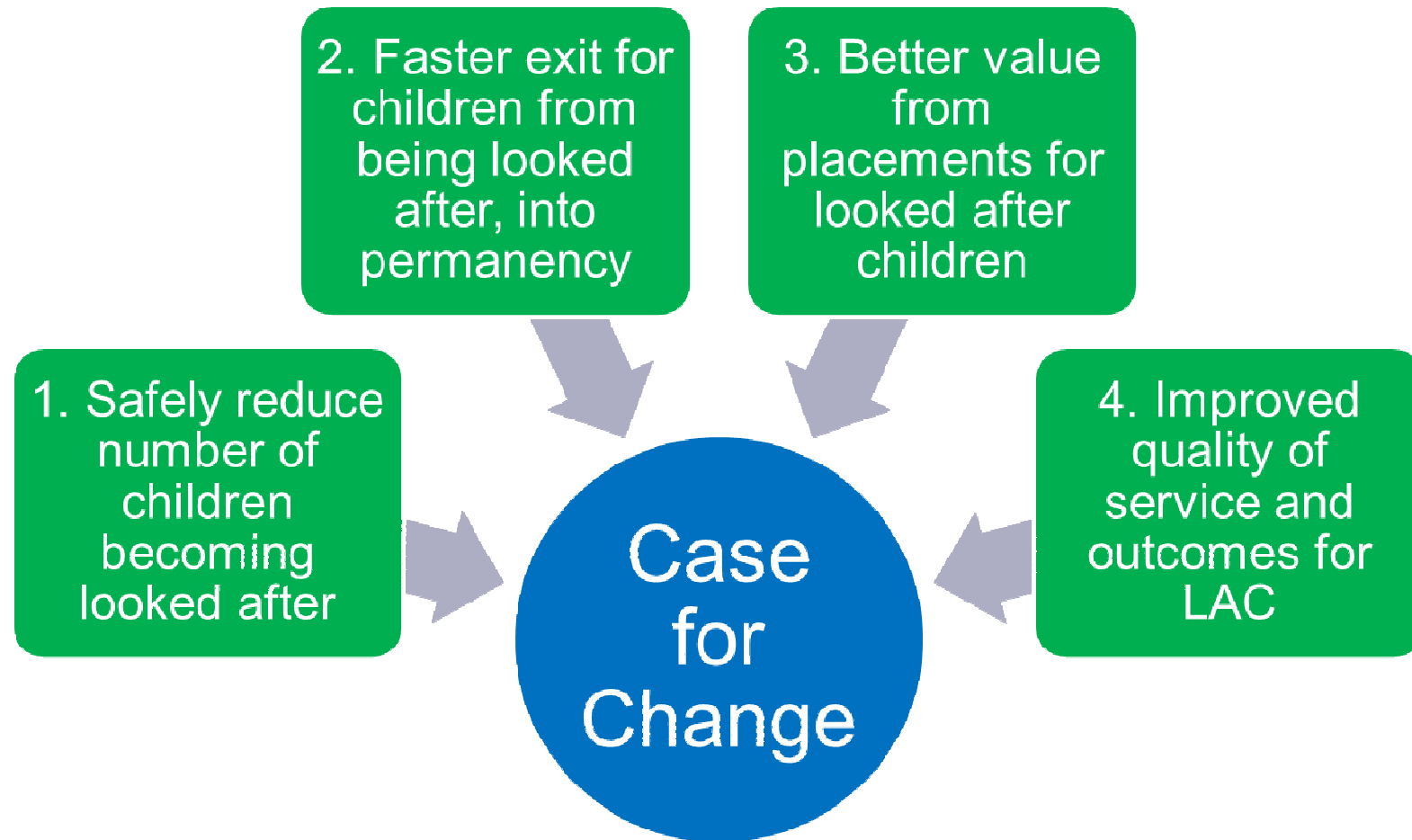
LAC trends

Date	Rate per 10,000 children	Rank (of 153 LEAs)
2010	73	44
2011	88	25
2012	102	8
2013	118	6

•Our numbers of LAC rose in absolute terms, from 405 in 2010 to 660 in 2013. This was a 62.9% increase.

- If we compare 2010 with the latest figures (797 children in Q1 14/15), we have a rise of 392 children since 2010.
- Such a situation is unsustainable...

What we want for LAC in the city



Families r First: values & principles

Children should remain
with their families
whenever possible.

Only the right children
should be in care.



Work Stream 1: A Committed Partnership

- **Information sharing at the earliest point**
- **Shared responsibility and understanding**
- **Commitment to engaging in the Early Help process**
- **Commitment to ‘Whole family’ approach**
- **Virtual ‘Unblockers’ service**
- **Resilience building**
- **Trigger tree**

Interagency referrals, joint working

- **Agreed and shared understanding across key services of who are the children at risk of impaired development**
- **Clear step up-step down procedures with a consistent response**
- **Assertive engagement and outreach**
- **Well understood 'edge of care' procedures**
- **Tracking of all children from the 'edge of care' into permanency**

Work Stream 2: Early Help Support

- **New Operating Model (NOM) across Children, Young People and Families – promoting a ‘team around the child/family/school/locality’ approach**
- **Early Help assessment pathway**
- **Troubled Families agenda**
- **Locally based family support**
- **Virtual ‘Whole Family’ locality teams**
- **Community Developments**

Work Stream 3: Targeted Intervention

- **Review of Looked After Children**
- **Reunification action plan**
- **Risk management framework**
- **Gateway to being looked after**
- **Review of social care structure to promote twin priorities of supporting families in the community and on enabling CYP to leave care**
- **Targeted action plan to increase in house foster carers and decrease external placements**

Families r First Programme –25 August 2014 to 19 September 2014

Report Author:	Elaine O'Callaghan		Programme Manager:	Elaine O'Callaghan
Accountable Strategic Director:	Sarah Norman		Accountable Assistant Director:	Emma Bennett
Overall Programme Budget	Revenue:	Nil	Capital:	Nil
Timescales	Start date:	7 April 2014	End Date:	31 March 2015
Corporate Plan objective:	Empowering families and working with community resources and partner agencies to enable children and young people to remain with their families where possible			
Programme Objective	Over the last 5 years Wolverhampton has seen a continued growth in Looked After children (LAC) at a greater pace than has been seen nationally and more recently this has significantly increased rising from 118 per 10,000 in 2012/13 to currently 133 per 10,000. This is a multi-agency strategic programme, governed by the Children's Trust Board with principles of supporting children to live safely with their families, ensuring only the right children come into care and, when they do, robustly managing placements and permanency plans, promoting an ambition that all children are provided with a permanent family. The FrF Programme has three key elements: A committed partnership, Early help support and Targeted intervention			
Overall Programme RAG status last reporting period	Overall Programme RAG status this reporting period	Comments		
AMBER	AMBER	The numbers of looked after children are still high. The programme actions are on target to reduce the numbers by March 2016 with a mid point target of reducing to 720 by March 2015		
Overall risk RAG status relating to savings and finance last reporting period	Overall risk status relating to savings and finance this reporting period	Comments		
AMBER	RED	The costs associated with looked after children budget continue to increase, with a projected overspend of £2.7m		
Actions required by SEB/CDB:	Monitoring by SEB: If the number of LAC is not reduced this will result in an increase in costs, budget overspends and an increased demand on children's services and on the resources and budgets of partner agencies			
Information to be noted by SEB / CDB:	Early indication is a stabilisation in the number of children coming into care in the past three months and an increase in the number of children and young people leaving care. This means the numbers are stabilising and we are heading in the right direction. However, large sibling groups do have an impact on these trends when a family is in crisis and the children become looked after			

Title of Project/s or workstreams. List all applicable	Project Manager	Overall RAG status Last Month	Overall RAG status This Month	Comments – use this space to make general comments around the status of the project or workstream
1.0 Early Help Assessments Project	S Cartwright / A Wolverson / Steve Dodd	GREEN	GREEN	Early Help assessment went live week commencing 2/6/14 Training to be rolled out by October Evaluation of data to be delivered by October
1.2 Early Help: Family Support Role	R King /E O'Callaghan	GREEN	GREEN	Staff to transfer over to Early Help Step down of CIN cases to be completed Training on EHA for all FSW's transferring to be completed.
1.3 Development of Family Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive Family Support project • Saif • Innovation Bid 	W. Edwards S.Nash N.Price	GREEN	GREEN	Pilot on providing intensive support to families focusing on neglect and under 5's. Policy and procedures to be written and circulated Report on evaluation of pilot to be provided. SAIF – policy and procedures to be developed. Report to be provided to next meeting Bid for funding to support specialist foster carers to prevent the need for residential placements enabling young people to live in a family. Linked to placement sufficiency. Go ahead given for next stage (November 2014)
1.4 Early Help sites	E O'Callaghan / Site Leads	GREEN	GREEN	Development of the outstanding areas and plans for staff moving in. Site report as a separate document detailing IT requirements and moves. Final site move scheduled for 10 September. Movement of staff within Priory Green to be completed.
2.0 Partnership working : Summit and Charter Events	E Bennett	GREEN	GREEN	Details of Charter to be drawn up and circulated to all partner leads to sign up to. Tasks from event to be included in FrF project: Charter to CTB for agreement in Sept, Launch scheduled for November.
2.1 Partnership working: Adult services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TCA Bid / Trigger Tree •Unblocker / Task Group 	E O'Callaghan A Wolverson	GREEN	GREEN	Joint approach by Community Safety team, Mental Health, Early Intervention /Domestic Violence , Health, Police and Vol. Agencies to bid for funding to redesign service pathways for agencies where children may be a secondary consideration. Proposal submitted for £789,000 on 1 July 2014. for 15/16 funding given the go ahead by DCLG Submit full bid by October 1 st . Unblocker / Task group have met to plan way forward. Andrew meeting with Housing in September to scope project and plan for pilot in December and January. Report on pilot to be delivered in Jan 2015.
3.0 Targeted Intervention: Gateway to becoming looked after	EO'Callaghan	GREEN	GREEN	Ensuring everything possible is done to help families before the need to become looked after. Referral Pathways and thresholds to be reviewed Edge of care meetings, admission to care panel, care plan tracking. Policy and Guidance reviewed and distributed 30/6/2014. Monitoring and evaluation to be provided by October

Title of Projects all applicable	Project Manager	Overall RAG status Last Month	Overall RAG status This Month	Comments – use this space to make general comments around the status of the project
3.2 Targeted Intervention: Exit from Care Team Project	A Hinds	GREEN	GREEN	Teams in place. Recruitment to vacancies to be completed by October. Care Plan tracking in place to review LAC PwP and Placement Orders identified for revoking and sent to legal services. Cases to heard in court by November. This is linked to the panel reviews.(3.4)
3.3 Targeted Intervention: Placement Sufficiency	F Ellis / A Hinds	GREEN	GREEN	Report on review of sufficiency strategy by October. Proposal on redevelopment of fostering / residential care to be provided by October Use of Boarding Schools to be explored-September (link to 3.0)
3.4 Targeted Intervention: Review of current LAC	E O'Callaghan	GREEN	GREEN	Review Panels set up on 22/7/14, 24/7/14, 31/7/14, 12/9/14, 25/9/14 & 6/10/14. Review of 16/17 year olds, parental placements, external (agency) placements and young people in residential care. Three panels completed, 45 young people reviewed. Report on outcome of panels to be delivered by October 2014.
4.0 Business Intelligence	E.O'Callaghan	AMBER	AMBER	Work with Management of Information team to provide information on performance indicators, LAC drivers analysis, reports and evaluations. Initial work undertaken by Mol and Policy Team on early analysis of LAC. Scoping meeting for reports on 2/7/14. Business intelligence analyst to be appointed by August 2014 Will link with partner agencies and early help to analyse data / triggers which may contribute to children becoming LAC. Risk is in delay to analyst being appointed. Interviews for post to be held week com 15 September
5.0 Marketing Strategy •FrF •NOM	R Warrender	GREEN	GREEN	Communicating changes and expectations to staff in all agencies. Formal Launch of children's services / charter /NOM to be held in November
6.0 Changing the Culture	E.O'Callaghan	GREEN	GREEN	Management away days arranged. Survey monkey in January to review embedding of culture change.

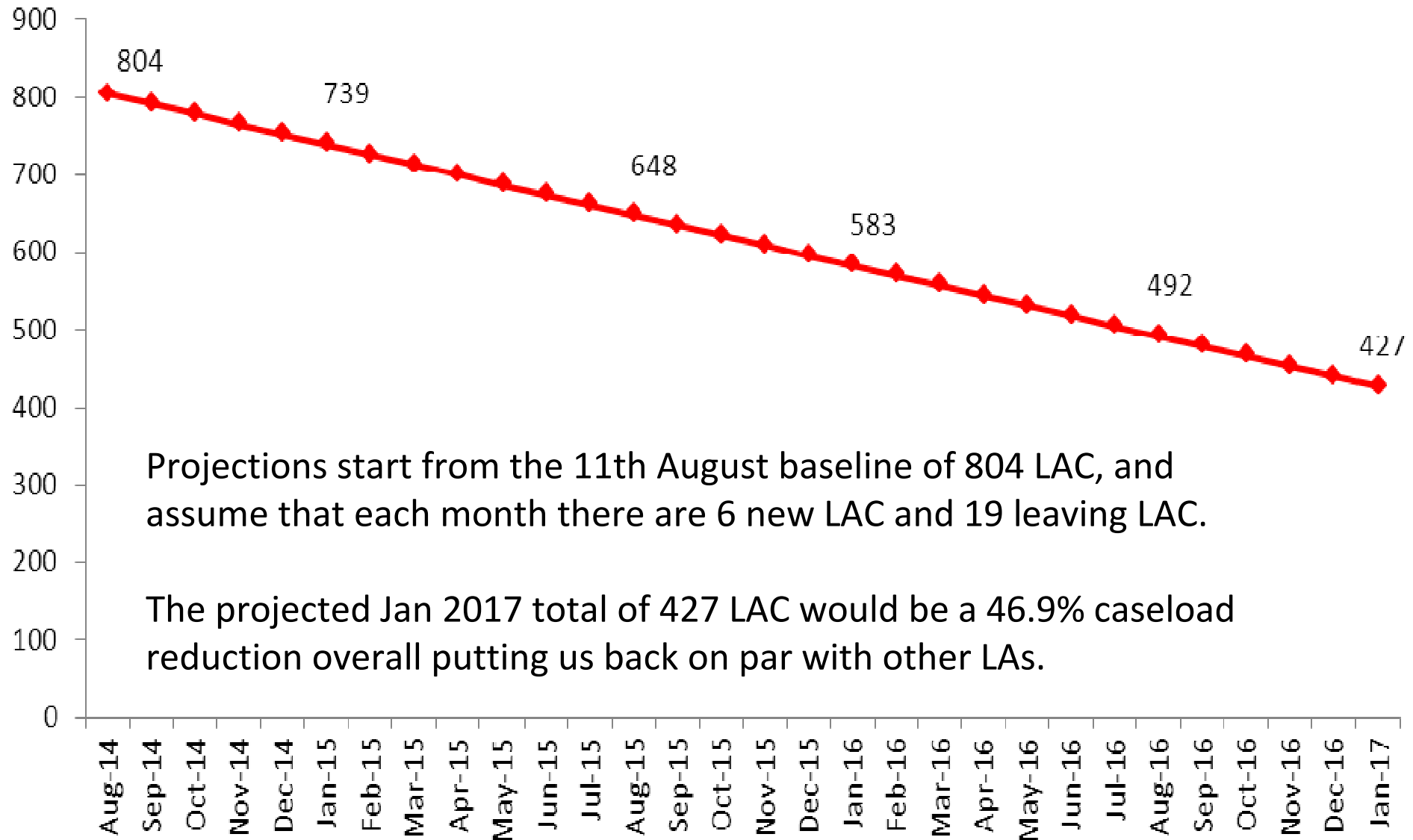
Key to RAG status reporting for workstreams	
RED	Reflects significant delays to progression due to missed milestones within the project / programme or reflects that the project / programme will exceed its end date and or has high reputational damage implications for the council if not delivered
AMBER	Reflects some potential delays to progression due to baseline dates being likely to be exceeded within the project / programme or reflects that the project / programme is likely to exceed its end date and or has some reputational damage implications for the council if delayed
GREEN	Reflects the project / programme is on target and is due to be completed by its target end date

LAC Projections

- **We have recently been attempting to project LAC figures for several years hence using monthly data.**
- **Projections assume that, from the figure as of 30th June 2014 of 804 LAC, there will be 6 new LAC cases per month, and 19 LAC ends.**
- **Each month, a net reduction of 13 LAC cases, but projection assumes no outside drivers causing sudden increases unexpectedly.**

Baseline LAC, and total LAC projections

◆ LAC numbers



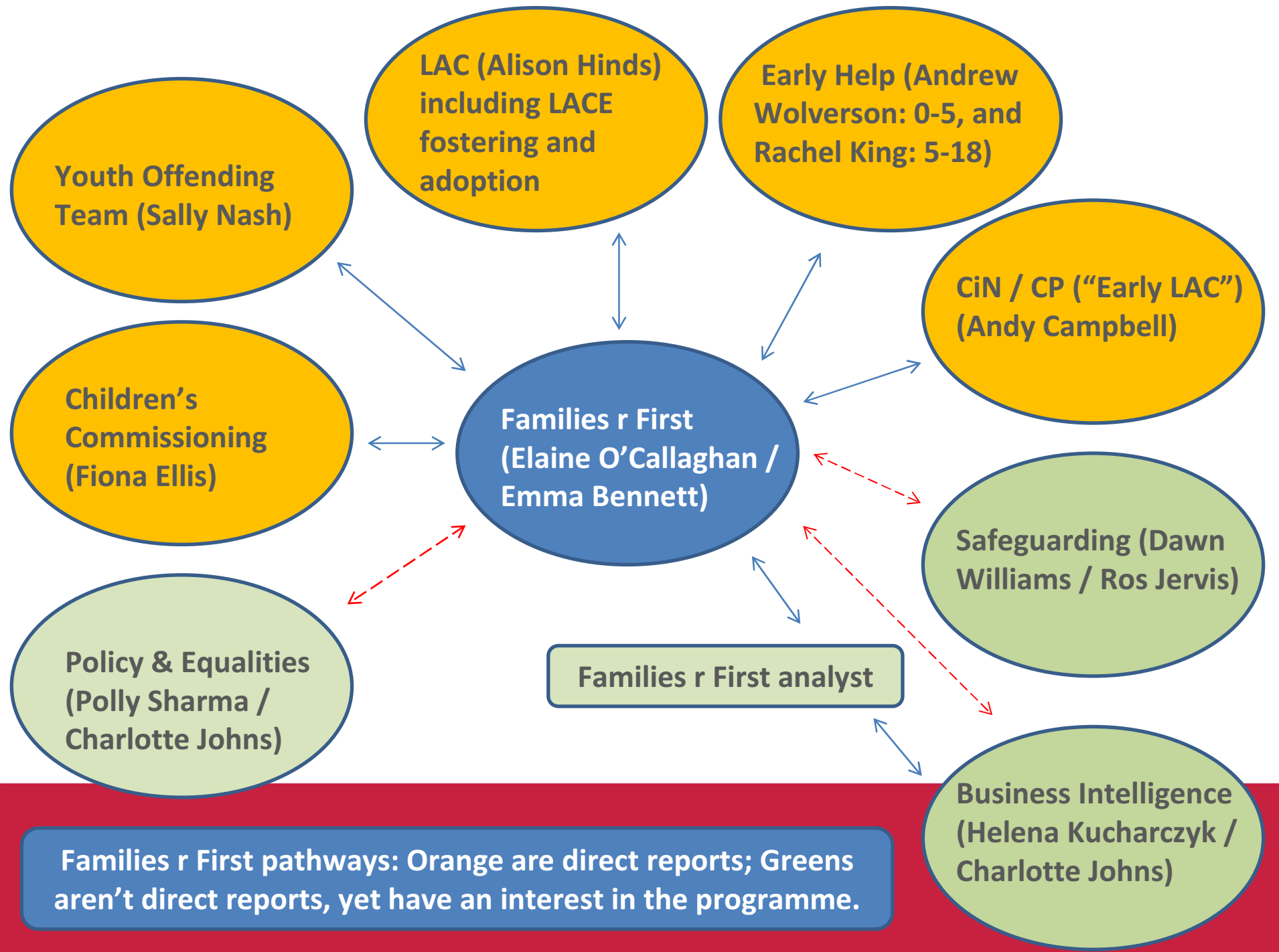
Projections start from the 11th August baseline of 804 LAC, and assume that each month there are 6 new LAC and 19 leaving LAC.

The projected Jan 2017 total of 427 LAC would be a 46.9% caseload reduction overall putting us back on par with other LAs.

The intelligence programme

To reach the position we want to, we need a nuanced understanding of who the LAC cohort are exactly...

- Pathways into and out of LAC
- Overall demography of the LAC cohort
- Characteristics / circumstantial risk factors
- Partnerships and systems of reporting



Families r First pathways: Orange are direct reports; Greens aren't direct reports, yet have an interest in the programme.

Any questions?

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