

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Wednesday, 9 November, 2016

1.00 pm

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Wednesday, 9 November, 2016, at 1.00 pm Ask for: **Theresa Grayell**
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Telephone **03000 416172**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the meeting

Membership

Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mrs Z Wiltshire (Vice-Chairman), Ms H Carpenter, Mrs T Carpenter, Mrs P T Cole, Mr S Collins, Mr T Doran, Ms S Dunn, Ms S Dunstan, Mr S Gray, Mr S Griffiths, Ms B Haskins, Mr A Heather, Mrs S Howes, Ms N Khosla, Mr G Lymer, Ms D Marsh, Mrs C Moody, Mr B Neaves, Mr P Segurola, Ms B Taylor, Mr M J Vye, Mrs J Whittle and one vacancy (Virtual School Kent shared seat)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

The Chairman will open the meeting. The first item of business will be a motion to exclude the press and public for item 1, as set out below.

MOTION TO EXCLUDE PRESS AND PUBLIC FOR EXEMPT BUSINESS

That, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

- 1 The views of Young People in Care on post-adoption support

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open the public)

A. PANEL BUSINESS

- A1 Apologies and substitutes

- A2 Minutes of the meeting of this Panel held on 23 September 2016 (Pages 5 - 12)
- A3 Chairman's Announcements
- A4 Verbal Update from Our Children and Young People's Council (OCYPC)
- A5 Verbal Update by Cabinet Member

B. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- B1 Kent/Coram Partnership Report - Post-Adoption Support Team (Pages 13 - 26)
- B2 Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups update report on the Health of Looked After Children (Pages 27 - 30)
- B3 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children - update report (Pages 31 - 38)

John Lynch,
Head of Democratic Services
03000 410466

Tuesday, 1 November 2016

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held in Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 23 September 2016.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mrs Z Wiltshire (Vice-Chairman), Mr R H Bird (Substitute for Mr M J Vye), Mr T Doran, Ms S Dunstan, Ms M Emptage (Substitute for Ms S Dunn), Mr S Gray, Mr S Griffiths, Mrs S Howes, Ms N Khosla, Mr G Lymer, Ms D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr P Segurola, Ms B Taylor, Mr B Weeks (Substitute for Mr S Collins) and Mrs J Whittle

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms G O'Grady (Participation Co-ordinator, Specialist Children's Services), Ms C Smith (Head of Fostering) and Miss T A Grayell (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**166. Membership**

(Item A1)

The Panel noted that County Councillor Ms Diane Marsh had joined the Panel to fill the vacancy left by Robert Brookbank, as had Andy Heather, Principal Educational Psychologist. The Chairman welcomed both of them.

167. Tribute to Robert Brookbank

The Chairman referred to the recent death of Robert Brookbank and said the Corporate Parenting Panel owed him a great debt. He had championed the provision of young people's mental health support services, which he had pursued energetically in his role as Chairman of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He was a true children's champion and would be sorely missed.

168. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Ms H Carpenter, Mrs T Carpenter, Mrs P Cole, Mrs S Collins, Ms S Dunn, Ms B Haskins, Mr A Heather, Ms C Moody and Mr M J Vye.

Mr R H Bird was present as a substitute for Mr M J Vye, Ms M Emptage for Ms S Dunn and Mr B Weeks for Mr S Collins.

169. Minutes of the meeting of this Panel held on 20 July 2016

(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of this Panel held on 20 July 2016 are correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

170. Verbal Update from Our Children and Young People's Council (OCYPC)
(Item A5)

1. Ms Dunstan and Ms Taylor gave a verbal update on recent work undertaken by the participation team on behalf of the Children In Care Councils (CICC) and Young Adult Council (YAC).

5 August – Annual celebratory event for CICC:

- corporate parents who had attended this event were thanked for their participation.
- the main activity at this event was a group exercise, in which groups, each including CICC members, a corporate parent and member of County Council staff, were tasked with answering two questions:
 - (a) what do you think is the purpose and role of the CICC's? and
 - (b) what are the things that corporate parents need to do to help the CICC's achieve their purpose?

The responses to the first listed six things around enabling young people to network, engage and express their views, and to the second the replies included a request for corporate parents to dress informally in meetings, to be less intimidating.

The Chairman commented that county councillors dressed smartly to show respect for visitors attending their meetings.

10 September - London Bridge Trek

- This had been completed in just over 5 hours and had been great fun. Corporate parents who had sponsored the participants were thanked for their support.
- The aim of taking part was to raise awareness of Who Cares Trust. A passenger on the train home had overheard the group talking about the event and had immediately made a donation.

The group was congratulated on its fund-raising efforts and the Panel commented that it was particularly pleasing to see children in care raising money to support other children in care.

2. The verbal updates were noted, with thanks.

171. Verbal Update by Cabinet Member
(Item A6)

Mr P J Oakford gave a verbal update on the following issues:-

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) – Although the rate of monthly arrivals was still much less than at last summer, there were currently 1,400 UASC in Kent and the number was still increasing. Mr Oakford would write to the new Immigration Minister, Robert Goodwill, to press for a mandatory programme of dispersal of UASC around the country. Although new arrivals were being dealt with as they arrived, a core of long-standing cases was not being addressed, and the longer a young person stayed in the county, the more settled they became, for example, in education, and the harder they would be to move on. Once they reached 18, Kent would be obliged to take on responsibility for them as care leavers, and the costs of this were not fully covered by Home Office funding.

Visit to Border Force at Dover – this had been most useful in demonstrating the tactics used to smuggle people into the country and the tools available to detect them, including a method of x-raying large vehicles to detect people concealed inside. It was also possible to visit the holding suite used by the immigration service to detain and interview people.

Children's Centres were currently displaying charts illustrating the sugar content of various popular drinks, as part of a pilot scheme to raise awareness among parents. Kent had been chosen by Public Health England as one of only five local authorities in the UK to pilot this scheme as part of the 'Change4Life' campaign, to test which messages worked best in addressing childhood obesity. Schools, GPs' surgeries and other County Council premises had also been approached to carry similar displays.

Children's Centres improved utilisation review – a working group had recently been established with officers from Property, Public Health and Early Help services to ensure that optimum use was being made of children's centres premises, both in terms of the services based there and the number of days per week on which the premises were used, to achieve best use of public money. For instance, in Tonbridge, the youth centre and children's centre previously occupied two separate buildings but had combined to share the space and make full use of the children's centre building.

10 September Virtual School Kent Awards Day – this had been an excellent day and it had been most enjoyable to see young people celebrating their achievements.

Children In Care Council 'Take Over' Challenge – for one day in November, young people from the OCYPC would take over the running of the County Council. This would include covering the issues that a Cabinet Member would deal with in a day, and questioning officers on issues relevant to children in care and care leavers.

172. Fostering Service Independent Review

(Item B1)

1. Ms Khosla introduced the report and highlighted progress made in the six months since a review of the fostering service had been requested in April 2016, when she had taken up her post. The fostering team now had a permanent head of service, Caroline Smith.

2. The Cabinet Member, Mr Oakford, commented that the report of the independent review had been excellent. However, he expressed his disappointment at the media coverage which had ensued from its publication, which had focussed on and magnified a negative part of the review report. An industry expert who had been asked in a radio interview to comment on the review had been most complimentary about Kent's service.

3. Ms Khosla, Ms Smith and Mr Segurola responded to comments and questions from Members, as follows:

- a) in response to a question asked on behalf of a Thanet foster carer, about independent foster carers being used for placements ahead of in-house foster carers who might have capacity, Mr Segurola said he understood Thanet foster carers' frustration at having vacancies but had to bear in mind the pressure that large numbers of children in care would have on local services, for example, school places and health services. Having criticised other local authorities for placing excessive numbers of children in care in Kent, Kent must be careful that it did not replicate this trend with its own children in care. He clarified that the county council had discretion to place non-Thanet children within Thanet, as long as good quality matches could be found. He undertook to reply directly to the foster carer who had submitted the question;
- b) in response to a question about how the county council could compete with independent fostering agencies (IFAs), and the extent to which avoiding paying IFA fees would increase the funding available to support young people, Ms Smith explained that the county council was seeking both to broaden its range of foster carers and to have foster carer ambassadors to target recruitment of foster carers in shortest supply, such as mature carers and carers for disabled children, older children and siblings. It was known that many foster carers were first attracted to the service via word of mouth from friends and neighbours. The target was to recruit 200 new foster carers in the next 12 months, to support the improvement of the service. Recruitment campaigns would target areas of high footfall, such as rail stations. The content and visual impact of fostering campaign leaflets was praised;
- c) in response to a question about the quality of recording and record keeping, which Ofsted had criticised, Ms Khosla confirmed that Ofsted inspectors had been able to view all records. Ms Smith added that a dedicated officer had been engaged whose job it was to review and upload all records electronically. This project was currently halfway through and would be complete by the time of the next Ofsted review;
- d) it was suggested that the report, with the addition of suitable RAG ratings for each part of the action plan, be submitted to full Council in 3 months' time. This would raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibility of all 84 Members and give them confidence that a robust service was in place. The best timing of this report was discussed, and whether or not the issue should first be reported back to the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committees, although the need to raise awareness of the corporate parenting responsibility among other Members was agreed. Ms Khosla advised that the action plan was already RAG rated; and
- e) the issue of corporate parenting training for newly-elected Members was then discussed, and a view expressed that this be part of the core training, early in a new Member's term of office. It was pointed out that the corporate parenting role did not appear in the 'job description for a County Councillor in the county council constitution. It was also suggested that the

'key questions to ask' document, concerned with safeguarding, be re-issued. Ms O'Grady reported that she was working with young people to re-design the e.learning module on safeguarding and the corporate parenting handbook, and to raise the profile of this issue.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the content of the fostering review be noted, and the fostering service action plan be endorsed; and
- b) a further report be made to the Panel in six months' time and the Chairman take advice on reporting the issue to full Council.

173. Kent Adoption Service - Annual Report 2015/2016

(Item B2)

Mrs S Skinner, Head of the Adoption Service, was in attendance for this issue.

1. Mrs Skinner introduced the annual report and reported latest figures, as follows:-

- 19 new adopter assessments were currently at stage 2
- 22 new adopter assessments were currently at stage 1

- 13 approved adopters were awaiting matching with suitable children
- 56 children had been placed for adoption, up from 31 since April 2016
- 27 adoption orders had been granted so far in 2016/17

- There were 18 agency decision maker (ADM) decisions in the courts system

2. Mrs Skinner, Mr Segurola and Ms Khosla responded to comments and questions from the Panel, as follows:-

- a) the number of adoption orders made so far in 2016/17 was much lower than that for the same time last year and matched the national trend. Previous years' figures had been higher as they had included a legacy of cases which had been delayed in the system, and current rates were lower, partly as adoption was not necessarily the preferred option for some children in care. There had been a sharp increase in the number of special guardianship orders being granted by courts, which had brought a corresponding rise of costs to the County Council. Such cases often resulted in a child returning to care, and in these cases the County Council would return the case to court. Children could only be placed for adoption on the direction of a court;
- b) the level of engagement with the Judiciary had improved in the last five years, with engagement with the Adoption Leadership Board, and this work had sought to emphasise to the Judiciary the need to have regard to a guardian's lifelong ability to care for a child placed with them via a special

guardianship orders. It was expected that, if the number of adoption placements were not to increase, there would be calls for changes to primary legislation; and

- c) a mentoring system for prospective adopters had previously been proposed, and Mrs Skinner undertook to advise a questioner outside the meeting about the progress which had been made on this.
3. RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions, and the Adoption Service Performance for 2015/2016, be noted, and the plans in place to deliver an 'Outstanding' service during 2016/17 be endorsed.

174. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children update *(Item B3)*

Ms J Williams, UASC Strategic Manager, was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Williams and Mr Segurola introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from the Panel, as follows:-
 - a) the deadline for local authorities to commit to take part in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) was 22 September 2016, so the final level of take-up could not yet been identified. However, 38 local authorities were known to have signed up to take part;
 - b) responsibility for assessing the age and health status of a new arrival would fall upon the authority taking over responsibility for them via the national transfer scheme. However, if there was any suspicion that they were older than they purported to be, the County Council would investigate this upon their arrival in Kent;
 - c) the duties which would arise when a young person turned 18, and the associated costs, may deter other local authorities from taking over responsibility for them in a dispersal scheme. Mr Segurola confirmed that this was a huge concern for many local authorities. In Kent, the 18+ accommodation funding available was adequate to cover the costs of in-house foster carer placements but not adequate for independent foster carer placements. Kent's shortfall in Home Office grant funding for this in the current year was expected to be approximately £2million. In addition, the County Council was the 'anchor' authority for the NTS and should be adequately funded for undertaking this administrative role;
 - d) Mr Segurola referred to a new but increasing trend for young arrivals *not* to claim asylum, and hence not be part of the cohort for which the County Council could claim Home Office UASC funding. Those who were accompanied but whose companions later left them also did not qualify as UASC and hence would not attract funding, although their status as children in care required the County Council to take responsibility for them. Those over 18 whose rights to remain had been exhausted had to be accommodated in the county at the County Council's expense, while Human Rights assessments were completed;

- e) the youngest UASC to arrive in Kent was 6, travelling with a sibling of 8, although the main cohort was aged between 15 to 17, with a few aged 11 or 12;
 - f) the pressures previously placed on accommodation services had eased since 2015. Young people aged over 18 would be supported via shared accommodation services, which were currently being re-commissioned;
 - g) the provision of education placements for UASC was another pressure for the County Council, and finding suitable placements was a challenge for foster carers looking after them. Secondary education for UASC was a big issue as there was a dis-incentive for colleges to offer sufficient entry-level courses for them. UASC would arrive and want to enter college throughout the year, so were often not on roll at the start of the academic year, when funding was allocated for the number of students then enrolled. In addition, provision of good English as a Second Language (ESOL) courses was inconsistent across the county. These issues were similar to those experienced by special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) students, and colleges were often reluctant to look beyond a student's basic English and maths skills. What was required for UASC students was a more bespoke programme of courses; and
 - h) some schools seemed to be reluctant to enter UASC students for GCSEs as they feared that it would harm their performance figures. Mr Doran undertook to look into this issue.
2. RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

175. Performance Scorecard for Children in Care
(Item B4)

Mrs M Robinson, Management Information Service Manager, was in attendance for this item.

1. Mrs Robinson introduced the report and explained that the reporting format had changed since previous reports to the Panel. The two red-rated areas of performance were around health assessments, and performance on both of these had increased greatly since the report had been prepared. One area of performance, the number of children in care experiencing three or more placement changes, was approaching a red rating but this issue, and the reasons for the pattern, had been well covered in other reports recently to the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee and to this Panel.
2. In response to a question about monitoring the number of complaints about services received from young people, there was general agreement in the Panel that this should be included in future scorecard reports.
3. RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

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From: Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services

Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

To: Corporate Parenting Panel – 9 November 2016

SUBJECT: **KENT/CORAM PARTNERSHIP REPORT – POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT TEAM**

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary: This report attached as Appendix 1 has been produced by Coram to provide an overview of the work undertaken by them, based on the specification set out in the one-year contract (from April 2016 to March 2017) agreed between Coram and Kent in January 2016, and additional activities that were not part of the original specification.

Recommendation: The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to **NOTE** the progress made and the future priorities.

1. Overview

- 1.1 The report provides a comprehensive summary of several work streams including staffing, parenting programmes, support groups, learning and development programme, education conference, mentoring scheme, strengthening the adopter's voices, quality assurance, preparation for Ofsted, policy framework, integrated work with the adoption service, adoption support fund, strengthening adopted children and young people's voices.
- 1.2 Young people have been invited to attend the Corporate Parenting Panel to share information regarding the young people's participation initiatives that are reported on within the report.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 The Coram/Kent partnership has made significant progress and will continue to develop the service in partnership with adopters, children and young people. Adopters are consistently reporting back their overall satisfaction with the service provided and making constructive suggestions for improvements.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Recommendations: The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to **NOTE** the progress made and the future priorities.

4. Background Documents

None

5. Contact details

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Kent/Coram Partnership Report – Post Adoption Support Team Corporate Parenting Panel – 9 November 2016

1. Introduction

This partnership report from Coram provides an overview of the work undertaken by Coram, based on the specification set out in the one-year contract (from April 2016 to March 2017) agreed between Coram and Kent in January 2016 and additional activities that were not part of the original specification. The specification set out key deliverables with regard to the development of the multi-disciplinary post adoption support team. The Coram progress report has been written by Yashi Shah, now in the role of the Coram/Kent Partnership Project Manager. The report will be supplemented by young people attending the panel to share their adoption experiences and launch the school kit.

2. Staffing

The Post Adoption Support Team provides short term therapeutic and social work support to adopters, children and young people following the granting of the Adoption Order. As at 18th October 2016, the team was supporting 156 children – 127 supported by clinicians and 29 by social workers.

As part of the contract agreement it was agreed that Coram will continue to employ the clinicians and the clinical lead. The team consists of a part-time social work team manager, a full-time child psychotherapist, a full-time family therapist, a full-time adult psychotherapist, a part-time music therapist, two full-time social workers and an administrator. Two systemic practitioners have recently been appointed and hope to join the team within the next couple of months. One of the systemic practitioners is undertaking a two-year training course, starting from September 2016 at the Tavistock, that will lead to a qualification of an MSc in Psychotherapy.

All the clinical staff, except the child psychotherapist, are supervised by an experienced systemic family therapist (clinical lead) who has been seconded from CAMHS on one day a week basis. This arrangement will

increase to two days per week between January and March 2017. The child psychotherapist receives supervision from an external clinician to meet his registration requirements – however, this will finish at the end of December 2016 and he will then be supervised by the clinical lead. The clinical lead reports to a clinical lead in Coram.

Despite best efforts by the partnership to recruit a permanent clinical lead, this has proved challenging. In order to attract applicants who will not lose out on their NHS pension and other conditions of service, an agreement was reached between Tavistock NHS Trust and the partnership that the clinical lead would be appointed by Tavistock NHS Trust on a three day a week basis on a two-year fixed-term contract. A candidate was recently offered a post on such an arrangement, however they did not accept the post, citing the commute as a key challenge.

The social workers and the administrator report to the social work team manager. One social worker left in September 2016 for personal reasons. Their post has been offered to another social worker and she will be starting within the next couple of months. An experienced permanent social work team manager managed the team from January to August 2016 on 3 day a week basis. However, this manager was promoted to a service manager post within Kent on a secondment basis for 9 months and started her new post in September 2016. The previous interim manager will be managing the team from November 2016 on 3 day a week basis.

The work has involved Yashi writing job descriptions for the various disciplines, co-ordinating the advertisement and recruitment of the posts and negotiating secondment arrangements with CAMHS. As both the team manager and the clinical lead are part time, Yashi has also been providing support to the overall team.

3. Parenting Programmes

3.1 The **Incredible Years**, 12-week Parenting Programme (two hour sessions), is a programme specifically developed by Coram for adopters parenting children aged 8 years old and under. When Coram was directly managing the service, three Incredible Years Parenting Programmes were delivered by Coram Associates co-facilitating with a

trained social worker from the Post Adoption Support Team. However, this social worker left due to personal reasons quite suddenly, and therefore two Coram Associates are delivering the fourth programme, which started in September 2016. The team's music therapist and two adopters have now been trained to deliver the programme and it is hoped that they will deliver the next programme in January 2017. One of the adopters who has been trained will be observing a couple of sessions from the current programme. It is hoped that this parenting programme, which has been received well by Kent adopters, would be offered on a rolling programme to all new adoptive parents from January 2017. The future plan is to train more adopters to deliver the training.

3.2 The **STOP**, 12-week (two and half hour sessions) Parenting Programme, is a programme specifically developed by Coram for adopters parenting adolescent children. An adult psychotherapist and a social worker have been trained, and they are currently co-facilitating the first programme in Kent (started in September 2016) with the support of an experienced Coram associate. Currently 8 families are attending, with children aged from 12 to 17 years old. Again it is hoped that this programme will be delivered to adopters on a rolling programme from January 2017. As with Incredible Years Parenting Programme, the plan for the future is to train more adopters to deliver the programme.

3.3 The first Parenting Programme **specifically aimed at adoptive parents of autistic children and young people** will be delivered as a pilot programme in February 2017 by an education colleague from Kent with an adult psychotherapist from the team. The education colleague is experienced in delivering this programme to the general population. However, the pilot programme will be for adopters only.

4. Support Groups

Structured support groups for adopters are facilitated by the clinical lead with a social worker mainly in the observation role. The purpose of the group is to support and strengthen parenting skills to help adoptive parents make sense of their children's behaviours and, most importantly, give voice and understanding to their underlying unvoiced emotional experiences. Three such groups have been facilitated to-date, with two further groups (one in the East and the other in the West) to be provided

from November 2016. The aim is to train the adult psychotherapist to facilitate future groups. The feedback from the previous groups has included:

“The experience of meeting fellow adopters and realising the extent of our shared problems and experiences was very valuable”

Most valuable the facilitator had the experience of being an adoptive parent”

“Felt more equipped to deal with difficult situation and aware of potential future difficulties”

5. Learning and Development Programme

This is a new programme that was developed in the summer and is constantly reviewed so that feedback from the Adoption Advisory Board is taken on board. In addition, the plan is for the young people’s participation group to contribute to preparation group training and learning and development seminars – for example, the seminar on impact of social media, life story book and work etc.

Yashi and the clinical lead are also meeting on the 21st of October to review the programme so that new ideas from adopters are incorporated.

The feedback from the different courses included:

“Group exercises regarding control were good to see. Also discussing and hearing different strategies on how to cope with tantrums or meltdowns”

“Learning to relinquish control myself – ideas about ways of responding to my daughter’s need to control – techniques, word, etc.”

“It is ideal that this course is run by an adopter with first-hand experience”

“I am less worried about the impact of my daughter searching for her birth mother”

Further improvements include:

“I would have liked a rough guide to current social media platforms, specifically, what they can do i.e. geo-mapping”

“More examples of putting strategies in place”

“Bibliography/resources attached to handouts”

6. Education Conference

A full day conference took place on the 7th of October. The conference was aimed at adopters, professionals, elected members and primary and secondary school representatives: 72 adopters, 27 school representatives and 30 professionals (included three elected members) attended. The conference had two main external speakers followed by an adopter and a school representative speaking about their experiences of working in partnership with their children’s schools. In addition two young people shared their educational experiences and the school kit developed by Coram Adoptables was launched. The feedback has been positive – comments included:

“So valuable, hopefully going forward our schools will automatically be adoption aware”

“It was essential to hear the Adoptables”

“Mind blowing information provided in the morning session, followed up by excellent speakers in the afternoon”

“A real excellent balance of professionals, adopters and organisations”

“I felt inspired by each speaker”

“Conference was excellent - the content was so relevant and well-presented. It was really worthwhile to attend - felt I learnt a great deal. Plus fantastic to have an event of this kind focussed on such an important concern for adoptive families - has made me feel empowered to ask more questions of my daughter's school”

“It was brilliant to hear parents and the Adoptables young people speak about their experience - incredible of them to share this and so good to hear positive outcomes, even if it has been a struggle to get there”.

Improvements suggested were mainly in relation to better information about parking facilities and joining instructions and ensuring that follow up work was undertaken with schools. Some adopters were disappointed, understandably that their children's schools did not attend.

A meeting took place with Coram/Cambridgeshire to learn from the excellent work they have undertaken with schools to support them in becoming 'adoption-friendly schools'. As stated earlier the plan is to consider how their work and learning can be translated into work with Kent schools. A meeting has been organised for the 20th of October to discuss this further with Yashi and the Adult Psychotherapist. This work will be co-ordinated with the Virtual School to avoid any duplication.

Following a discussion with the key stakeholders, it was agreed that the team would benefit from a part-time staff member with education expertise. This was on the basis that the Virtual School is currently not resourced to totally support adopters and adopted children. One applicant was interviewed who was not appointed. One of the recently appointed systemic practitioners will lead on building relationships with schools and developing educational expertise as she has considerable knowledge of working with schools. Yashi and Lesley Hanney, the clinical lead in the team, would also like to recruit adopters as educational champions to support schools in becoming more adoption friendly and aware.

7. Mentoring Scheme

The purpose of the pilot scheme is to provide new adoptive parents with a mentor following a match being recommended at the matching meeting. The mentor will provide peer support and practical advice from their own experience. The support will be provided through telephone conversations - half an hour's telephone support for the first 6 weeks, followed by fortnightly support for another 6 weeks, with a review telephone call a month later.

21 experienced adopters applied to be mentors – 20 were interviewed and 14 have been offered the role. Training took place on the 23rd of September and 1st of October. Yashi and Lesley Hanney provided the training, which had to be developed by Coram as there is no blue print

which could be completely adapted. Feedback from the training included:

“Really positive, well thought through, feel able to be confident in role”

“Very good and user friendly – good mix of theory and application to our roles as mentors – this project really has the capacity to make a difference to the lives of future adoptive parents and their children”

“Very clear understand, presented in a good format”

“Very clear with good explanations of complicated subjects”

A few mentors could not attend the training. Therefore an additional session has been organised for the 11th of November.

All the mentors will be supported through group supervision, which will be facilitated by Yashi and Lesley – the first two sessions have been organised for 18th of November and 16th of December. It is hoped that a representative from the safeguarding team will provide training on the 18th of November on safeguarding issues.

In addition the scheme has been presented to both the adoption management meeting and the service meeting – who have all been very supportive and positive of the scheme. Lesley will also be meeting with the adoption social workers from the recruitment and family finding teams on the 17th of October to take them through the referral, and matching process. Yashi will be presenting the scheme to the children in care service managers on the 21st of October. The scheme is now in operation and to-date one new adoptive parent-to-be has been referred to the scheme. A reminder has been sent to all the adoption managers about referring to the scheme.

8. Strengthening the adopters’ voices: Adoption Advisory Board

The Board continues to meet on a quarterly basis. The Board consists of adopters as members who act as a critical friend in relation to continuous learning and service development. The Board agreed the mentoring scheme in June 2016, and were very pleased that the scheme was finally being operationalised.

The Board is well attended and adopters continue to work in partnership – this has included developing an information leaflet for new adopters, an information leaflet for the team, supporting the education conference etc. The information leaflet is now ready to be circulated to adopters and professionals. The Board members are keen to support with the other priorities too, for example the development of a newsletter for adopters, refreshing the post adoption support website, recruiting adopters as educational champions to support schools, etc.

A recent development has included an adopter being part of an interview panel to recruit staff for the team. This worked really well. The plan is for an adopter to be involved in future recruitment.

A couple of adopters who have been selected as mentors have also expressed an interest in being a member of the adoption panel – this is being progressed by the panel advisor.

9. Quality Assurance

A Coram associate undertook 72 clinical case work audits between November 2015 and February 2016 in relation to the clinical work. 40 audits had been signed off when she left in March 2016 as all the actions had been completed. A detailed report was provided to the team manager and the then head of adoption, setting out the findings both in relation to individual work and overall themes so that the actions could be followed up in conjunction with the clinical lead. In addition the associate also provided a flowchart and narrative to support further development of the post adoption support pathway on Liberi. Prior to this audit, written guidance was provided to all the clinicians in relation to expectations around case recording in November 2015.

Coram's Head of Quality and Safeguarding has also been undertaking audits from July 2016 (some jointly with the clinical lead) and she has shared her findings with the team manager and the clinical lead so that the actions can be followed up immediately. The Coram clinical lead and the safeguarding head recently attended a team meeting to share their findings, to reiterate the recording expectations and the continuation of monitoring through further thematic and individual audits. In addition a

further recording workshop is being organised for November by the clinical lead.

Coram's overall findings and the grading tool (provided by Kent) will be discussed at the next Contract monitoring meeting on the 26th of October.

Coram will be putting forward a proposal at the contract meeting to evaluate the impact of the service model, which if agreed would be undertaken in the new year. This will include discussions with adopters and young people. In addition Coram is reviewing the current feedback form and will also be collating all the feedback into a single report so that achievements can be celebrated and improvements made. This specific report will be ready by the end of December 2016.

Within the next couple of months, an outcomes measure framework will be developed and implemented to measure the impact of therapeutic intervention – Coram/Cambridgeshire have developed robust outcome measures and a meeting or a teleconference is being organised to learn from their work.

10. Preparation for OFSTED and Recording expectations

The Coram associate who undertook the audits last year also attended a number of team meetings to support the team in understanding the OFSTED methodology, and preparing for an impending inspection. In addition, she also discussed recording expectations.

11. Policy Framework

The clinicians follow Kent's policies and procedures, except for Human Resources processes and policies. A draft escalation policy in relation to safeguarding and operational issues with particular focus on operational issues has been developed by Coram with helpful feedback from Kent. It is hoped that this will be agreed at the next contract meeting on the 26th of October. To date two contract meetings have taken place, and these have been helpful in problem solving and focusing on the work undertaken.

12. Integrated work within the adoption service

A child psychotherapist and a senior social worker facilitated two groups for approved adopters and waiting. At the time this was seen as innovative practice, and a few other local authorities have since adopted this approach. The last group finished in July 2016. The plan is to run another group – the time framework will be decided by Kent.

The child psychotherapist also provided reflective space for adoption social workers as a group to share their case work dilemmas, challenges etc. This was run as a pilot group and currently consideration is being given to supporting adoption managers with reflective space.

13. Adoption Support Fund

The fund was introduced in May 2015 by central government for local authorities to apply for funding to support adopters and children through therapeutic case work intervention, therapeutic parenting programmes, learning and development seminars etc.

A senior representative from the fund met with Kent adopters on two occasions and is coming again on the 20th of October to directly share the funding criteria and the process. This was a useful exercise and in light of the new restrictions on the fund (£5,000 per child until March 2017), this is necessary. In addition the previous team manager and Yashi met with the senior representative in the summer to discuss how the fund could be maximised in Kent – this was a very helpful meeting.

As the fund is likely to become more restrictive in relation to criteria and actual amounts that can be claimed, a partnership meeting consisting of Sarah Skinner, Sarah Jones and Yashi will look at strengthening the current reviewing process and making it more formal so that there is a tighter overview of the work undertaken involving any commissioning arrangement. This meeting will also look at the current assessment template so that it can be made more user-friendly.

14. Strengthening Adopted Children and Young People's voices

A family therapist and a senior social worker have been working closely with Coram Adoptables. The Adoptables are a peer network of young adopted people who share their experiences of being in care and being adopted. The Adoptables ambassadors aim to improve the lives of other

adopted children by speaking on a public platform about their experiences and developing resources such as a school toolkit.

A local children and young people's participation group for children aged 12 to 18 years, facilitated by the family therapist and senior social worker started in September 2015 – attendance has varied from 10 to 12 young people. The Coram Adoptables Manager is promoting the Kent participation model with the other local authorities as she said it was based on “best practice”.

The young people attended a picnic in summer at Coram, which they thoroughly enjoyed, in particular meeting with other adopted children and young people. Two of the Kent adopted young people have been trained to act as ambassadors by Coram Adoptables. Another will be trained in November 2016. One of the Kent ambassadors attended an event in Parliament to launch the school kit with Members of Parliament, Head Teachers and other professionals. The same young person attended an event in a school setting to launch the kit, which was covered in the local press. The Head Teacher of the school said “the inspiring young people who visited us really got our students to think about the complexity of adoption, but more importantly that in the end we are all the same, whatever our backgrounds.

A school kit was launched at the Education Conference and schools will be sent details with an open invite for them to launch it in their schools with all their staff members, with support from Coram Adoptables.

Eight Kent adopted young people will also be taking part in a theatre performance on Friday 21st of October facilitated and organised by Coram Adoptables. The purpose is for young people to share their adoption story including the challenges and achievements. The content will include some of the significant changes and events in an adopted young person's life - meeting new social workers, moving to a new family. Coram Adoptables hopes to use the material for training adoption professionals in the future.

170 adopters attended a summer party with their children, where a number of activities were provided, including face painting and a magic

workshop. Another one is being planned for Xmas, when it is hoped that one of the activities will include a theatre/drama fun workshop.

The vision for the future is as follows:

Develop a participation group for younger children

Develop an apprenticeship scheme for adopted young people – an initial meeting took place between Yashi and Kent key stakeholders. A work placement has been offered to a young person by Sadler’s Wells in London and this is currently being considered. One of the Coram ambassadors is currently working in Coram London on an apprenticeship basis.

Following Yashi’s discussions with Sadler’s Wells in London, discussions are progressing with two representatives from Kent’s Art and Regeneration Department to consider specific activities for adopted children and young people in partnership with adopters and children in line with the Kent Art 31 project.

Conclusion: The Coram/Kent partnership has made significant progress and will continue to develop the service in partnership with adopters, children and young people. Adopters are consistently reporting back their overall satisfaction with the service provided and making constructive suggestions for improvements.

Recommendations: The Corporate Parenting Panel is being asked to note the progress made and the future priorities.

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Report To	Kent Corporate Parenting Panel, 9 th November 2016
Subject	Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups Update Report on the Health of Looked after Children
Kent CCG Representative	Bethan Haskins, Chief Nurse, Ashford NHS CCG and Canterbury and Coastal NHS CCG

1. Context

In March 2015, the Department of Education and Department of Health reissued statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commission groups and NHS England (*Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children*). This document sets out an expectation that Local Authorities, NHSE and CCGs cooperate in commissioning resources for looked after children (LAC) and to ensure that the health and wellbeing needs of children are met.

Alongside the statutory guidance, the Intercollegiate Role Framework, March 2015, further details the competences and the expected set of abilities that health staff should have to effectively safeguard, protect and promote the welfare, health and wellbeing of looked after children and young people, as well as care leavers.

These two documents provide the framework for an effective and child-centred approach to meeting the health needs of looked after children, and also the quality of care that children can expect to receive. Part of that duty is discharged within the roles of Designated Doctor for LAC and Designated Nurse for LAC. These roles are to ensure that the needs of LAC are sufficiently represented at a strategic level and influence the commissioning arrangements to improve outcomes for LAC. The Intercollegiate Role Framework states that both the Designated Nurse and Doctor should be a member of the Corporate Parenting Board; in Kent, this is the Corporate Parenting Panel. These are senior and experienced positions within the CCGs and they are currently filled by:

- Dr Georgie Siggers, Kent Interim Designated Doctor for LAC
- Ene Odeh, West and North Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC
- Janette Shaw, East Kent Interim Designated Nurse for LAC

The Kent CCGs are currently recruiting for permanent posts for all positions and will update the Panel accordingly.

All Kent CCGs have a responsibility to meet the health needs of Kent LAC but also for those children placed in Kent by other Local Authority areas. Currently, Kent CCGs are accountable for over 3,600 children and young people that fall into this category. CCGs are required to deliver statutory initial and review health

assessments and to provide enough capacity for wider health and wellbeing needs.

2. Response to Corporate Parenting Select Committee Report (December 2015)

Since the last CCG report to the Corporate Parenting Panel in September 2015, KCC have published the Select Committee Report on Corporate Parenting.

The findings have been discussed within the Kent LAC and Adoption Health Commissioners Group and in response to the recommendations the Kent CCGs would like to confirm their support to KCC in meeting the commitments within the report. Kent CCGs are keen to support the Corporate Parenting Panel and KCC Members to:

- Develop a wider understanding of the health system and the health needs of Looked after Children
- Support with informing the health aspects of sufficiency
- Improve the information we collect about the health needs of LAC
- Work in partnership to look holistically at the needs of this population within Kent.

3. Strategic Planning and Service Innovation

Kent CCGs have increased commissioning resource and commitment to deliver improvements for looked after children. To deliver this effectively, the CCGs are working with partners to develop a LAC health strategy which will inform future planning and commissioning arrangements and will link with any strategy refresh from KCC. Initial meetings with health and partners strongly highlighted the needs of care leavers and the gaps in both statutory imperative and services to support this vulnerable group.

As a response to identified need through the strategy work, Thanet CCG have successfully bid for some significant funding from NHS England, Health and Justice department to pilot an integrated Thanet Youth Taskforce which will target LAC, care leavers and other vulnerable groups aged 14 to 21. The project will support those with mental health issues and are at risk of/or have offended. This project will support Kent CCGs to better understand how to target and address health needs of this population and the learning and models will be shared across Kent.

Over the past 15 months, Kent CCGs like KCC have had to mobilise vast capacity and resources as a result of the increased number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) entering Kent. Initially, the health response was slow to mobilise and there were challenges regarding information sharing between KCC and the CCGs due to unremitting numbers arriving. However,

issues resolved rapidly and productive partnership arrangements are in place with CCGs represented at the UASC Partnership Board.

In September 2016, Kent CCGs launched a specific UASC Health website (www.uaschealth.org) which contains clinical resources, tools, templates, translated videos and materials. This has been recognised as national best practice and has been referenced within the national transfer protocol from the Home Office. Kent CCGs are working closely with KCC through the UASC Partnership Board to explore opportunities to expand the web resource to include social care, education and wider support knowledge of UASC.

4. Looked after Children provision

CCGs have a statutory responsibility to provide initial and review health assessments for LAC and adoption medicals for those Looked after Children who have a plan of adoption. In addition the statutory guidance clearly articulates other health interventions that a specialist LAC team is required to undertake. Further to this CCGs have to commission medical advisers to give advice on the health of prospective foster carers and adopters (to ensure that they are medically fit to foster/adopt), meet with adopters to discuss the health needs of potential adopted children and sit on the adoption panels. For a number of years Kent CCGs have commissioned Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) and East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) to provide these services. The lengthy, holistic assessments are carried out by community paediatricians and specialist LAC nurses. The assessments are undertaken to ensure that previously unmet or unrecognised health needs are identified and relevant support and intervention provided, recognising the health vulnerabilities that this population have. There is a statutory timeframe in which children must be seen and a statutory framework around the content of the assessment and the actions required as a result.

Both KCHFT and EKHUFT are working in partnership with the CCGs to improve pathways of care and to transform services to make them effective and holistic. Senior CCG representatives have been in dialogue with both provider Chief Executives Officers, gaining commitment to the long-term improvement of current services which are child-focussed and seamless.

Mental health support for LAC continues to be delivered through Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust (SPFT) through both the 'mainstream' Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and the dedicated CAMHS Children in Care team. Kent CCGs and KCC are working in partnership to procure a new CAMHS services to be in place in September 2017.

In March 2016, Kent CCGs committed additional funding through the Children and Young People Mental Health Transformation Fund, and SPFT were asked to

undertake a research project into the health needs of UASC. The project offered direct support to staff and young people in the KCC Appledore Reception Centre and those in independent living. Feedback from KCC has been very positive and the findings of the project have been showcased at national conferences, published in health journals and both universities in Kent are keen to apply and test the finding from the project across Europe.

5. Areas of Focus for 2017/18

All seven Kent CCGs are working hard to design new models of care for the whole population of Kent, including our most vulnerable children and young people. The financial pressures within the health system are significant and increasing. However, CCGs recognise the imperative to deliver services for LAC and as such are prioritising the following for 2017/18:

- Closer working and support with KCC operation, strategic staff and Members to deliver recommendations within the Scrutiny Committee report
- Recruiting a stable and permanent designated professional work force to strengthen Corporate Parenting representation and interface
- Putting in place a clearer and more holistic service specification with KCHFT and EKHUFT and driving improvements for a seamless pathway
- Supporting the mobilisation of the new CAMHS contract
- Continuing to develop the UASC expertise and share with CCG and Local Authority areas outside of Kent
- Commissioning a bespoke LAC database to collect vital health profiling information to support commissioning intentions

6. Further Information

Further information on the health needs of Kent LAC can be found on the KCC Public Health website; *Health needs assessment of children in care in Kent March 2015*.

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From: Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services

Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

To: Corporate Parenting Panel – 9 November 2016

SUBJECT: UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN - UPDATE REPORT

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Divisions: All

Summary: This paper builds on the report presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel on 23 September 2016; providing an update on the current status and future of Kent's services for Children in Care who have sought or are seeking asylum, alongside the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).

Crucially, in light of the current activity and media coverage, this report focuses on the Calais migrant camp, Dublin III Regulations, the "Dubs amendment" and how these may affect Kent.

Recommendation: The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to **COMMENT ON** and **NOTE** the information provided within this report.

1. The current picture

1.1 Figure 1: Unaccompanied children referred to KCC in 2015

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total for 2015
31	18	29	14	42	105	179	128	98	212	51	41	948

Figure 2: Unaccompanied children referred to KCC in 2016, to date (*20.10.16)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total for 2016
35	28	35	48	31	32	47	42	42	17*			357*

1.2 The camp in Calais, so called "the Jungle", is in the process of being dismantled by French authorities. The majority of individuals resident in the camp will be supported by the French Government to seek asylum in France; however the British Government are currently establishing which individuals (including children) may be eligible to seek Leave to Remain in the UK. At the time of writing this report there is concern that some children and adults will take this opportunity to make another attempt to reach the UK hidden in lorries - putting themselves at significant risk of harm, not just from the vehicles, but also from smugglers and traffickers. A small number of Kent social workers

joined those from other Local Authorities assisting the Home Office and French authorities in Calais, ensuring vulnerable children are identified swiftly.

2. The National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

- 2.1 The Interim National Transfer Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) 2016-17 became operational on 1 July 2016. It is the protocol which governs the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). It is locally led by Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships; with the 33 London Boroughs initially being excluded. Due to the numbers of children presenting at Lunar House in Croydon and Heathrow in Hillingdon, London has a pre-established rota for ensuring each borough supports their fair proportion of children requiring a Local Authority's care.
- 2.2 The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in care a Local Authority is expected to accept is proportionate to its size and resident population. A threshold is set at 0.07% of the resident child population in a Local Authority area (based on the mid-2014 population estimates), and the numbers of unaccompanied children already in that Local Authority's care. Kent for instance has approximately 328,250 children resident here (excluding Medway); 0.07% of which means the county is expected to be able to support a maximum of 230 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Through the NTS, the overall numbers of Kent's unaccompanied children in care has seen a decrease since 2015; nevertheless the county continues to Look After over 730 children aged 17 or under.
- 2.3 In addition, Kent County Council is supporting over 600 former unaccompanied children, now aged 18+ and leaving care. Care leaving young people are excluded from "dispersal" under the National Transfer Scheme as they are already more settled in their local community. Further detail is contained in section 5 of this report.
- 2.1. Outside of the London boroughs, there are 8 regions consisting of 119 Local Authorities which could participate in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). A small number of those 119 local authorities, however, are counties such as Northamptonshire, which are already supporting over their 0.07% threshold.
- 2.2. Over the past four months, the NTS has gained momentum as more Councils and Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships have begun participating. To this end, a [Frequently Asked Questions document](#) was produced by the Home Office and Association for the Directors of Children Services, to help facilitate the process in child-centred timescales.
- 2.3. Kent County Council remains very grateful for all offers of support and transfer which Other Local Authorities have given. Most importantly, because the more that Other Local Authorities participate in the NTS, the less time children which become Looked After temporarily by Kent have to wait before finding a settled place to live and access education.
- 2.4. The Department for Education has confirmed that as soon as an unaccompanied child has been accommodated for 24 hours, they become

Looked After under Section 20, Children Act 1989. Children therefore that arrive into Dover, are Looked After by Kent County Council until another Local Authority is identified to take on full care and social-work responsibilities. At the moment, unaccompanied children are waiting, on average, around three weeks in Kent before moving on to a receiving local authority, elsewhere in England.

- 2.5. Due to the pace of transfers, the numbers of children and young people who have found permanence with Other Local Authorities changes weekly.

As at 21 October 2016:

- Since 1 July, 149 children have been referred to KCC;
- 101 children have transferred to the care of 36 Other English Local Authorities.

- 2.6. In light of the NTS, it is predicted over the coming months and years that numbers of children who have sought or are seeking asylum, in Kent's care will continue to decrease. This is based on projections that children entering Kent over the coming months will transfer out to Other Local Authorities under the NTS, and children already in our care (pre 1 July^t 2016) will remain Looked After until they "age out" and transfer to KCC's 18+ Care Leaver Service. The impact of this though is that the numbers of 18+ young people supported by the Council's Leaving Care services is expected to grow to nearly 1000 by the end of 2017. Section 5 of this report illustrates the work to date to alleviate this growing pressure on the service, and ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations to young people leaving care.

3. Dublin III Regulations

- 3.1. The Dublin Regulations are European Union (EU) law. They first came into force in 1997, but have since gone through several amendments and revisions. It was intended to bring about a Common European Asylum System. Dublin Regulations determine which signatory European country will be responsible for an individual's application for asylum and humanitarian protection. The Dublin III Regulations (No. 604/2013) are the third and most recent iteration. They apply to all asylum applications made on or after 1st January 2014.
- 3.2. For reference, on 4th May 2016, the European Commission published a proposal for Dublin IV Regulations, in light of the 2015 and 2016 movement of over 1 million persons into Europe, displaced by conflict - particularly across North Africa and the Middle East (MENA region). These reforms however continue to be negotiated.
- 3.3. Originally, any person who sought international protection under the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, would have their application for asylum processed by the first European country that they were registered in. This is because any EU country is considered to be a suitable state of safety for those fleeing conflict or persecution. Whilst this principle generally still applies, over time, a strict interpretation of this had some limitations and led to the third version of the Regulations. Most notably, previous iterations of the Dublin Regulations did not sufficiently focus on family unity.

- 3.4. Under Dublin III, States which are signatory must consider what is in a child's best interests; this will include family reunification if that is a safe option. Children and young people with close family members already lawfully resident in the UK, may therefore have their asylum considered here - even if they were finger printed or registered in other European countries.
- 3.5. Under Dublin III, children to whom this Regulation applies are being supported by the Home Office to enter the UK legally and re-join their families in the UK. Children may be living in the Calais "Jungle", or other places in Europe - for instance, camps in Greece. Children supported under this arrangement have not submitted an application, nor been granted asylum anywhere else in Europe. Their application will therefore be undertaken by the British government, taking family arrangements into consideration. The Home Office has reported they have supported 130 children to come to the UK under Dublin III. Theoretically, children transported to the UK under this arrangement will not come into a Local Authority's care, as there is an appropriate adult already in the UK who already has or will assume parental responsibility.

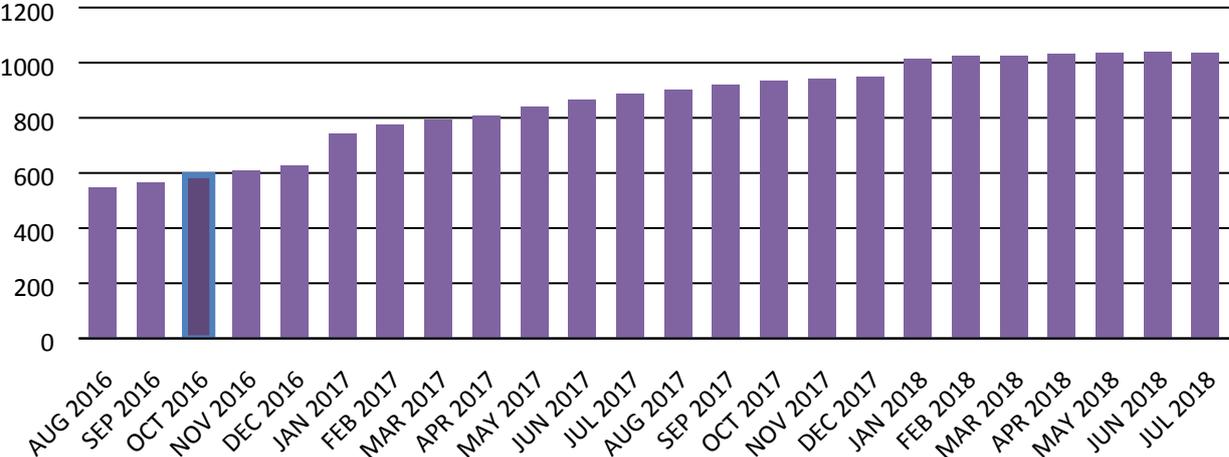
4. The "Dubs" Amendment

- 4.1. The so called "Dubs amendment" is named after Lord Dubs, who sponsored an amendment to the 2016 Immigration legislation, before it received Royal Assent. This is now enshrined in Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016; entitled "Unaccompanied refugee children: relocation and support"
 - (1) *The Secretary of State must, as soon as possible after the passing of this Act, make arrangements to relocate to the United Kingdom and support a specified number of unaccompanied refugee children from other countries in Europe.*
- 4.2. This programme is in addition to the work to relocate vulnerable children to the UK under Dublin III. The two strands, though similarly named, are separate, and relate to different cohorts of children and young people. The intent of the "Dubs amendment" is to identify and provide Leave to Remain to eligible unaccompanied children with no familial links in Europe. It comes from fears that thousands of children who have migrated to Europe seeking protection have gone missing since 2015.
- 4.3. As of 22 October 2016, eligible children are being supported into the UK under the "Dubs Amendment" s.67 measures to a number of pre-determined reception facilities, none of which is in Kent, by the Home Office. Children welcomed under this arrangement will enter into the National Transfer Scheme, for equitable allocation across England, in the same way as a child who enters the country via lorries or other means. Kent continues to be in regular discussions with the Home Office; but has been clear that due to the "legacy" of both UASC Children in Care and growing numbers of eligible former-UASC Care Leavers we are already looking after and accommodating, the county is unable to support further unaccompanied children entering the UK under the "Dubs amendment".

5. 18+ Care Leaver Service Modelling

- 5.1. As a result of the unprecedented number of children who arrived into Kent's care in 2015, the Care Leaving Service is currently seeing a rapid increase in demand. The majority of young people who entered care during 2015 were 16 and 17 year olds, which means the majority of these young people are now becoming eligible for an 18+ service as Former Relevant Care Leavers. This leaves the Council with a substantial legacy of children and young adults to take care of as care leavers.
- 5.2. As of late October 2016, there are 602, 18+ young people with an Asylum flag open to KCC's Care Leaving service. Due to the ages of our current cohort of UASC who entered care prior to 1 July 2016, it is predicted that numbers of young people entering the Care Leaver Service will continue to climb, reaching nearly 1000 by the end of 2017.

Projections- Over 18, former UASC Care Leavers



5.3. The Council has always had a significant shortfall with the Care Leavers (18+) budget, as the Home Office Grant does not fully cover the costs to support a young adult. In the past however, this shortfall has been offset with a surplus from the cohort aged 17 and under. As the National Transfer Scheme assists however with “dispersing” children aged 17 or under who enter Kent's care, the overall numbers of UASC Children in Care is decreasing. The numbers of young people becoming Care Leavers though is rapidly increasing. Any surplus previously seen will no longer be able to offset the growing costs needed to effectively support young people aged 18-21; up to 25 if still in education. There are also proposed changes within the Children and Social Work Bill 2016 for all Care Leavers to receive a service until they are 25 years. The increase in former-UASC Care Leavers is not just a pressure on the Council's budgets. There is also a need for increased numbers of Personal Advisors and team managers to meet the rising demand, ensure Kent's Care Leavers get the dedicated support they need and statutory duties continue to be met; as prescribed in the Childrens (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

- 5.4. A data modelling exercise is currently ongoing, with input from the Specialist Children's Services Management Information Unit (MIU), Children's Strategic Commissioning and the Council's Business Intelligence Unit to identify need moving forwards. The intent is to upscale the whole 18+ service in response to both existing pressure on the service and the projected increase in demand. The project is being led by the Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting.
- 5.5. Kent's current Care Leaver service does not differentiate between support for former- UASC and citizen young people. Personal Advisors hold a mixed caseload. The 18+ Service also manages an accommodation provision which provides housing options for young people aged 16 to 21 years of age. This service works with the 12 district councils to ensure there are processes in place for Care Leavers to access appropriate housing. There is a Team Manager for accommodation services and 6 accommodation officers. The current service has needed to absorb a net increase of 150 young people in the past 10 months.
- 5.6. The challenge of increased numbers of Care Leavers who have sought, or are seeking asylum/further Leave to Remain means staff must have specialist knowledge. Further 18+ Personal Advisors and social workers will assist former-UASC Care Leavers access housing, Pathway Plans, immigration meetings, college places, and Human Rights Assessments for those refused Asylum (either outright or following an appeal). Additional staff are required in the 18+ Service to ensure caseloads remain manageable and young people are supported in line with [Kent's Care Leaver offer](#).

6. Corporate Parenting- current challenges accessing education for UASC

- 6.1. Despite the best efforts of both the Virtual School Kent and the Council's Education Services, notably the Skills & Employability Team, there is an ongoing challenge in assisting Unaccompanied Children who have sought or are seeking asylum, to access suitable education within the county. The most significant gap is in Medway where Mid-Kent College is hugely oversubscribed, despite offering 100 more places for UASC than last year. The other significant provider in Medway last year is Gillingham Football Trust. They delivered a very successful and popular study programme from Priestfield Stadium under a sub-contract from Canterbury College. This achieved excellent outcomes for children and young people, and earned very good feedback from students, social workers and their managers.
- 6.2. Although Gillingham Football Trust had 45 learners waiting to start in September 2016, Canterbury College has been unable to fund the programme and Gillingham Football Trust has now been left without funding to deliver to these learners. This is part of an ongoing difficulty experienced nationally, to secure sufficient further education funding from the Education Funding Agency (EFA), for 16-18 year old learners.
- 6.3. Gillingham Football Trust have applied to both the EFA and local college Principals for funding and in both cases have been advised that this provision ought to be sub-contracted by KCC's own EFA contract. If this is not authorised then the students concerned will either be Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) or be obliged to travel considerable distances, perhaps to

London, to attend suitable provision. This not only has an impact in terms of travel costs the Council may incur but also affects young people's ability to effectively learn.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Recommendations: The Corporate Parenting Panel is asked to **COMMENT ON** and **NOTE** the information provided within this report.

7. Background documents

none

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