

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Diane Booth, Director of Childrens Services
Date of Meeting	20 June 2019

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND YOUTH OFFENDING INSPECTION UPDATES

1.1 To update the Scrutiny Committee on the work of the 'Getting to Good' Journey for Social Care and Youth Offending.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To review progress and improvement made in the areas of Children's Social Care and Youth Offending, identifying any specific areas for further review and challenging where progress is not considered to be satisfactory.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure satisfactory progress is being made in the response to the inspections.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options considered:

Services are subject to national and statutory frameworks.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is:

- Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

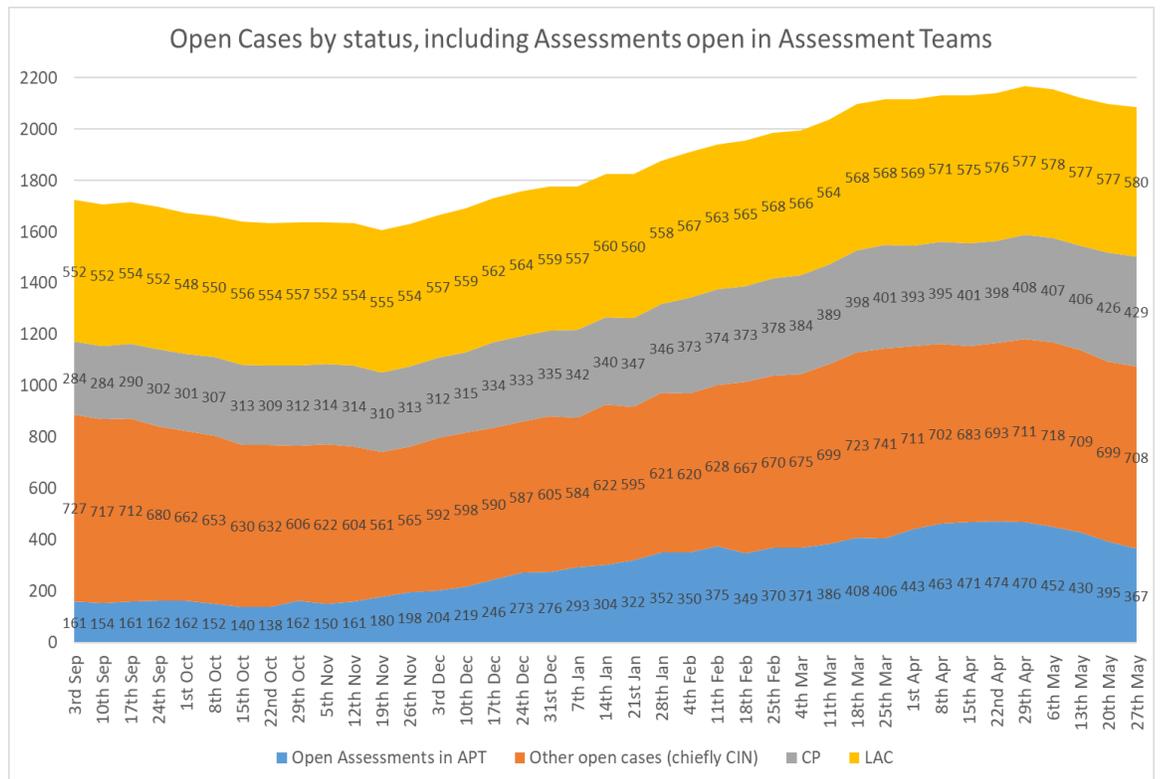
Phase 2 Children's Social Care Improvement Plan can be found at Appendix 4(a).

5.1 Children’s Social Care Performance Overview at Month End – May 2019

5.2 Children open to Children’s Social Care and Early Help

5.2.2 Total number of **open cases** has fallen from its highest ever position at the end of April 2019. The fall has been driven from a decrease in the number of Child in Need/cases under assessment. The number of children looked after continues to rise, slowly, as does the number of children subject to child protection plans. So an increasing proportion of the open cases are open at the higher end of the continuum of need, currently standing at 49% of all open cases (up from 45% as at the end of 2017/2018), compared to an average for similar authorities of 38% and a national average of around a third.

5.2.3



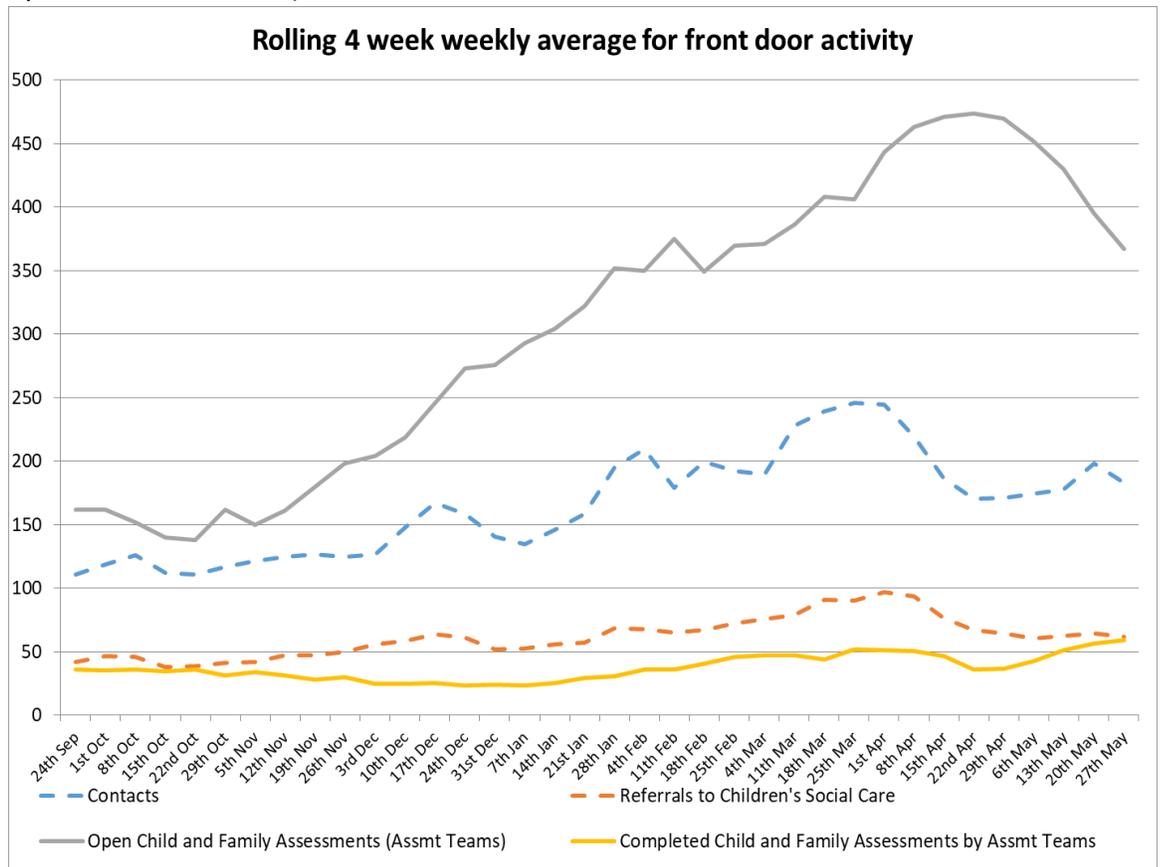
5.2.4 Looked at in terms of the make-up of the local population – boys are overrepresented across the whole continuum of need, except in Early Help, but particularly in children in care (similar to the national picture: 56:44), children in need and in assessments. Girls are very slightly overrepresented in children subject to child protection plans, although this is chiefly in younger age groups, not in teenagers. The past six months have seen an increase in the number of girls open to the service as children in need or subject to a CP plan (up from 44% of a smaller total typically in November to between 46 and 50% now).

5.2.5 Looked at by age, as one would expect, under 1 year olds are overrepresented in the cohorts open to children’s social care – representing vulnerability and the need to assess new circumstances. Primary school age and pre-school children are slightly under-represented, except in child protection planning. Secondary school age children are over represented across the continuum, especially amongst those in care, with the exception of child protection plans. The pattern for all three groups probably reflects differential vulnerability, together with the culmination of long term high entry rates into care. 16 and 17 year olds are over-represented amongst the care cohort, but under-represented everywhere else.

5.3 Front Door Activity – Assessment & Planning

5.3.1 **Contact** – seem to have stabilised at around an average of between 170 and 180 a week – down from a peak of close to 250 in March, but a third higher than before Ofsted inspection (albeit these were historically low levels. Should the figure settle at this level, this would be lower than the typical level for the period between 2012 and mid-2017. It is also worth noting that the proportion of contacts that are repeat contacts within the past 3 months has risen to 12% (it was 8% in the three months up to November 2018).

5.3.2



5.3.3 **Referrals** – the proportion of contacts converting to referrals remains high, although it has begun to fall – down to a third for the past four weeks (N.B. the regional average is around 30%). This figure has fallen from the peak figure of over 40% through most of March and April 2019. This probably suggests that some of the legacy entrants of children and young people for referral and assessment have now passed through the front door to the assessment teams. The weekly number of referrals received, on average, over the past four weeks is 62, down from the peak of 100 a week in March and April and moving to a position of average levels for Blackpool, still well over a 1,000 referrals per 10,000 population, if annualised.

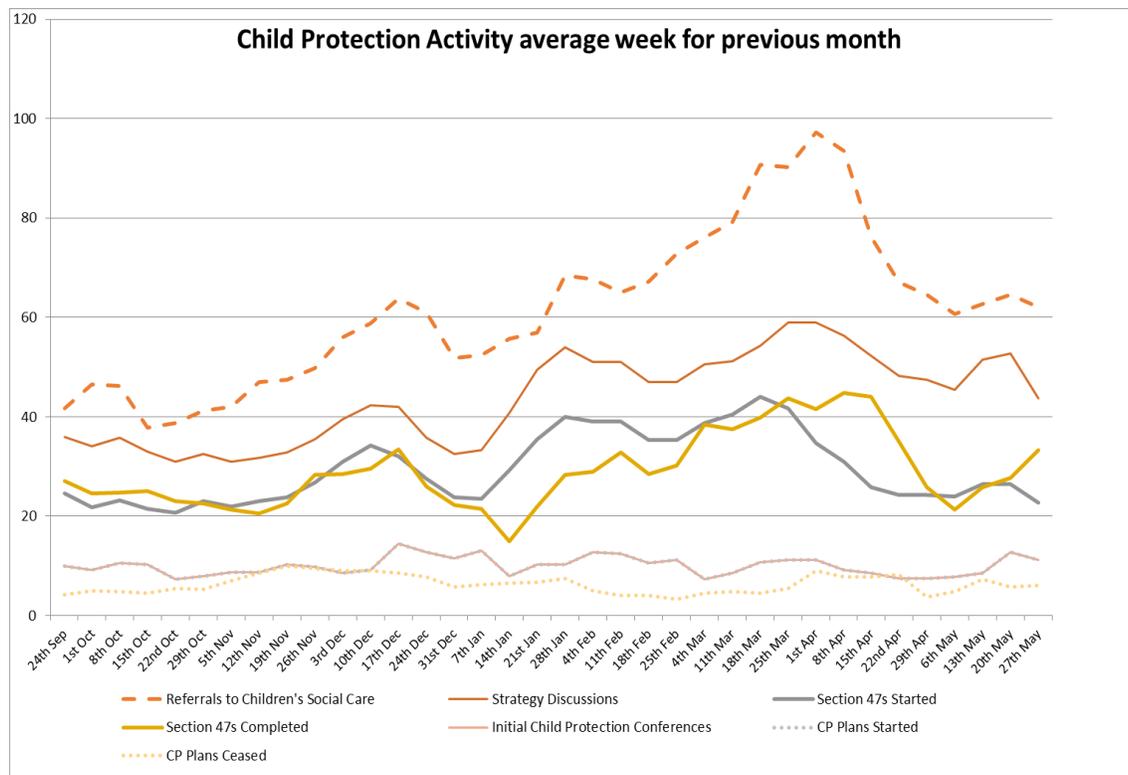
5.3.4 The **number of open assessments** in APT continues to fall – now down to 367, having been as high as 500 before Easter. This reflects the new dedicated resource within the assessment teams; and a dedicated Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub. The Assessment teams are now completing as many or more assessments on a weekly basis, as there are referrals progressing to assessment: the system is in equilibrium. Around three quarters of assessments of new referrals are completed within 45 days; and the number of incomplete assessments that are significantly out of timescale is decreasing. The **proportion of referrals NFA'd after assessment** has begun to rise – up to 48% over the past four weeks, from barely 30% in the period between January and the end of March 2019. This suggests that a higher proportion of the work taken in through the early part of the year is not being deemed to require an ongoing social work intervention following assessment. Finally, it is worth noting that the re-referral rate remains comparatively low: 17% for referrals received in the past three months.

5.4 **Child Protection Activity**

5.4.1 **Strategy Discussions** continue to fall from a peak of 60 in March 2019 to an average of 44 for the past four weeks, with the **conversion rate to section 47 enquiries** also falling to 50% for the past six weeks or so from a peak of 75 to 80% during February and March. The **number of section 47s initiated** weekly over the past four weeks has been 23 – half the number undertaken in February and March. Should the figure stay close to this level, it would represent an annual rate of around 410, which would move Blackpool towards the levels of similar authorities. The **proportion of section 47s resulting in ICPC** seems to be falling towards 20% (the lag in completion makes it difficult to say definitively), having been as high as 45% in February. The number of ICPCs being held weekly has steadied at around 10 to 11 a week, with almost all resulting in a CP Plan. Again, this is down somewhat on the levels immediately before and after New Year. The high level of ICPC conversion to CP Plan – running at 97% over the last 6 months – raises questions concerning the

degree of scrutiny/challenge occurring at conference, as it is nearly 10% above the national average.

5.4.2



5.4.3

While the volume of activity has decreased, **timeliness around child protection processes to ICPC** remains a significant concern – only 50% of section 47 enquiries were completed within 13 days in the past month and performance in this measure has been between 50 and 60% since February; and only 30% of 13 ICPCs held in May were held within the 15 day timescale from the start of section 47 enquiries. This remains the single biggest issue for Assessment and Planning teams to address.

5.5 Child Protection Plans

5.5.1

Since the middle of 2018 there has been a sustained rise in the **children subject to child protection plans** – up from a low point of 257 in July 2018 to a figure at month end May 2019 of 429 (149 per 10k). This is more than double the median in similar authorities (70 per 10k); and three times the national average.

5.5.2

This pattern reflects activity running at double the median rate for similar authorities from the front door through each stage of the child protection process (see table below, comparing the current rate in Blackpool with the median rate for similar authorities for the 2017/2018 financial year).

5.5.3

Per 10k rate	Blackpool	Similar LA median	Ratio
Referrals	1247	662	1.9
s.47s	442	278	1.6
ICPC	221	101	2.2
CP reg	190	89	2.1
CP de-reg	110	80	1.4
CP Plan	149	70	2.1

5.5.4

The drive for the rise is a combination of a slight rise in the number of children becoming subject to a plan, combined with a significant fall in the number ceasing to be subject to a plan. The rate per 10k population of **children ceasing to be subject to a plan** in the past 6 months is at its lowest level for the past 7 years. The rate of **children becoming subject to a plan** in the past 6 months is on the high side of normal for Blackpool, i.e. very high when compared to similar areas in England.

5.5.5

The rise in Child Protection Plans since the middle of 2018 has been split more or less evenly across three **age groups**: 1 to 4 year olds, 5 to 9 year olds and 10 to 15 year olds– all provided between 60 and 80 children with a plan in July 2018, now provide between 115 and 130 (5 to 9 year olds). All these age groups have also seen a rise in the numbers entering and a fall in the numbers ceasing. Under 1 year olds have a similar, but less pronounced pattern.

5.5.6

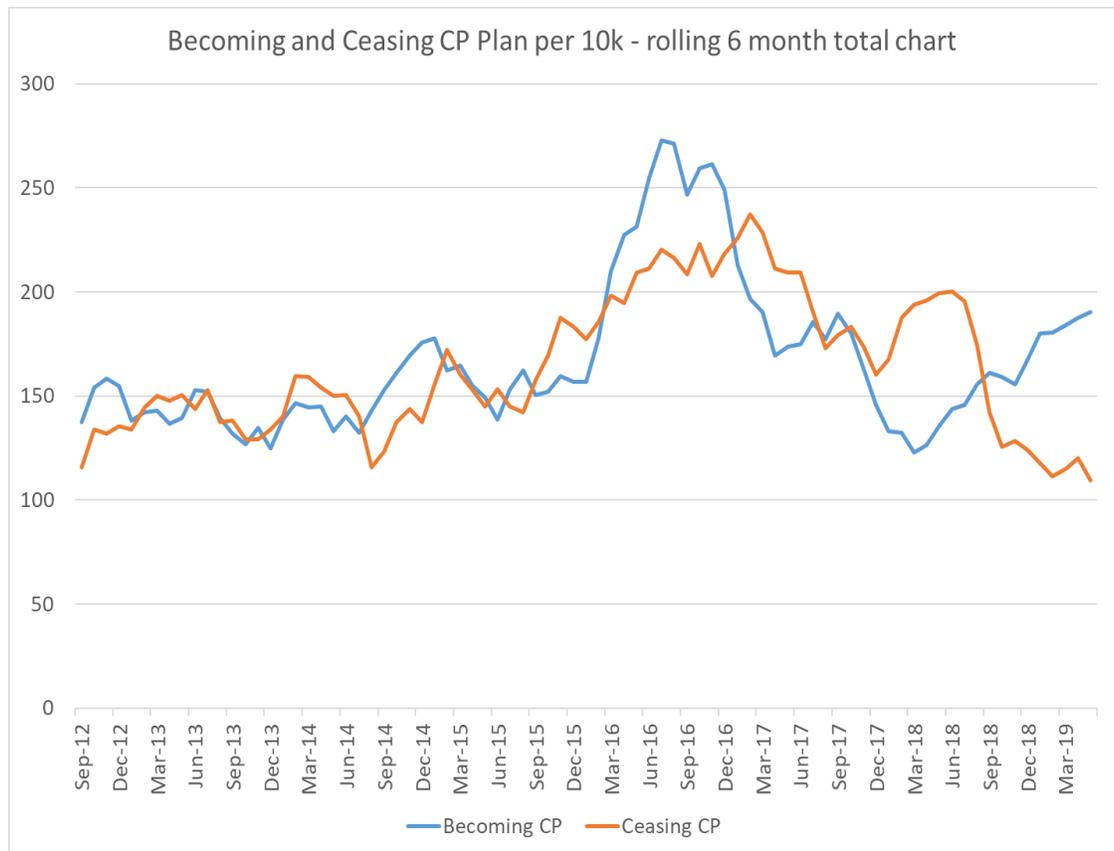
So, across the last year there has been a shift across all age groups - a general shift, but one focused particularly on those aged 5 to 9 year olds and older children, in terms of becoming subject to a plan. Those same age groups also have the most pronounced downward trend in terms of children ceasing to be subject to a plan.

5.5.7

It is difficult to establish precisely why this increase has taken place – three factors are most likely to explain the rise. Firstly, there is a **cyclical element for child protection plan numbers**, with rises in the numbers becoming subject to a plan being mirrored by surges in those ceasing to be subject to a plan 12 months afterwards. One can see the substantial rise in the numbers ceasing to be subject to a plan during late 2017 to the middle of 2018 mirroring the surge of those becoming subject to a plan through 2016. Therefore, the net position in the middle of 2018 was low partially because of the unusually high numbers of children ceasing to be subject to a plan in the preceding 12 months.

5.5.8 However, this explains less than half of the pattern. Other important factors are firstly that **from the latter part of 2017 through to the middle of 2018 there was a significant squeeze on the number of children becoming subject to a plan**, i.e. risk/need was being managed lower down the continuum of need, probably in Child in Need plans. Through the winter of 2017 until the early summer of 2018, the rate of children becoming subject to a plan reached its lowest rate since 2012 (122 per 10k). The rate began to rise in the later part of the summer through the autumn, back to 155 per 10k by the time of the inspection in November, but accelerating back to annualised rates of 190 per 10k post inspection. Finally, **the trend of fewer plans ceasing is an ongoing one (see chart overleaf)**. The rate for the previous six months fell from a peak of 200 per 10k in the middle of 2018 (for the period January to July 2018), to 125 per 10k in October 2018 (the low side of normal in the child protection cycles in Blackpool), but it has continued to fall subsequent to that date – down to 112 per 10k in February 2019; and currently 110 per 10k at the end of May 2019. This suggests that **the fall is driven by factors over and beyond the cycle**.

5.5.9

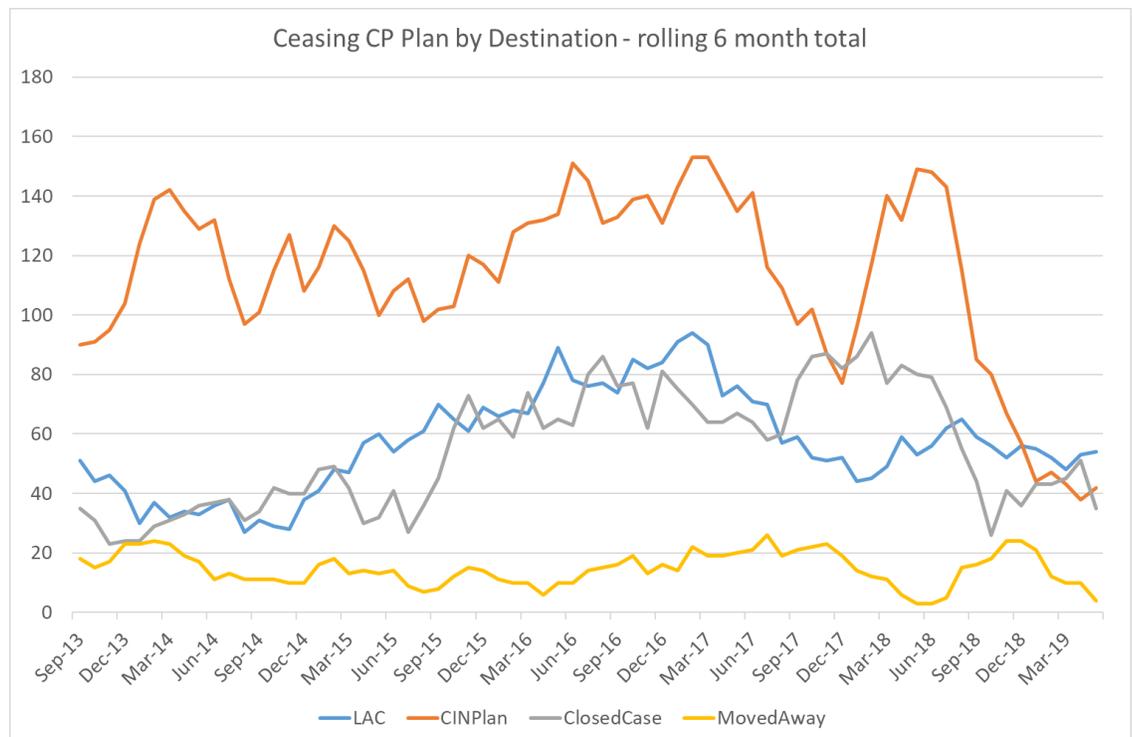


5.5.10 Looking at other aspects of the data for greater understanding, it is notable that **the number of CP Plans for neglect has risen by 86 since the summer of 2018 (up to**

176, 95%), with a particularly sharp rise of nearly 60 since the end of January 2019. Child protection plans for emotional abuse have also risen since the middle of 2018, up 31 to 184, but it is less striking than for neglect. As an aside, the proportion of children with CP Plans for sexual abuse has also risen through this period – up from 8% of the total in November to 13% currently – the age profile of those children subject to a plan under the category of sexual abuse is similar to the overall pattern for CP plans, with only a slightly greater prevalence of teenagers than in other categories, suggesting intra-familial sexual abuse is at least as important as contextual safeguarding issues.

5.5.11 Finally, across this period of time, while there has been a relatively steady number of children ceasing to be subject to a plan because of entering care (around 50 across a rolling six month period), there has been **a considerable fall in the numbers ceasing through de-escalation to CIN or closing to Children’s Social Care** – both these figures are currently running for the past six months at the lowest rate since 2015 (closing to children’s social care), or for the period since the analysis began (2012). In particular, de-escalation to Child in Need has been running at around 40 per six month period since January 2019 (42 for the six months up to the end of May). This compares with a customary range for the preceding six years of 100 to 130 per six months. (see chart below).

5.5.12



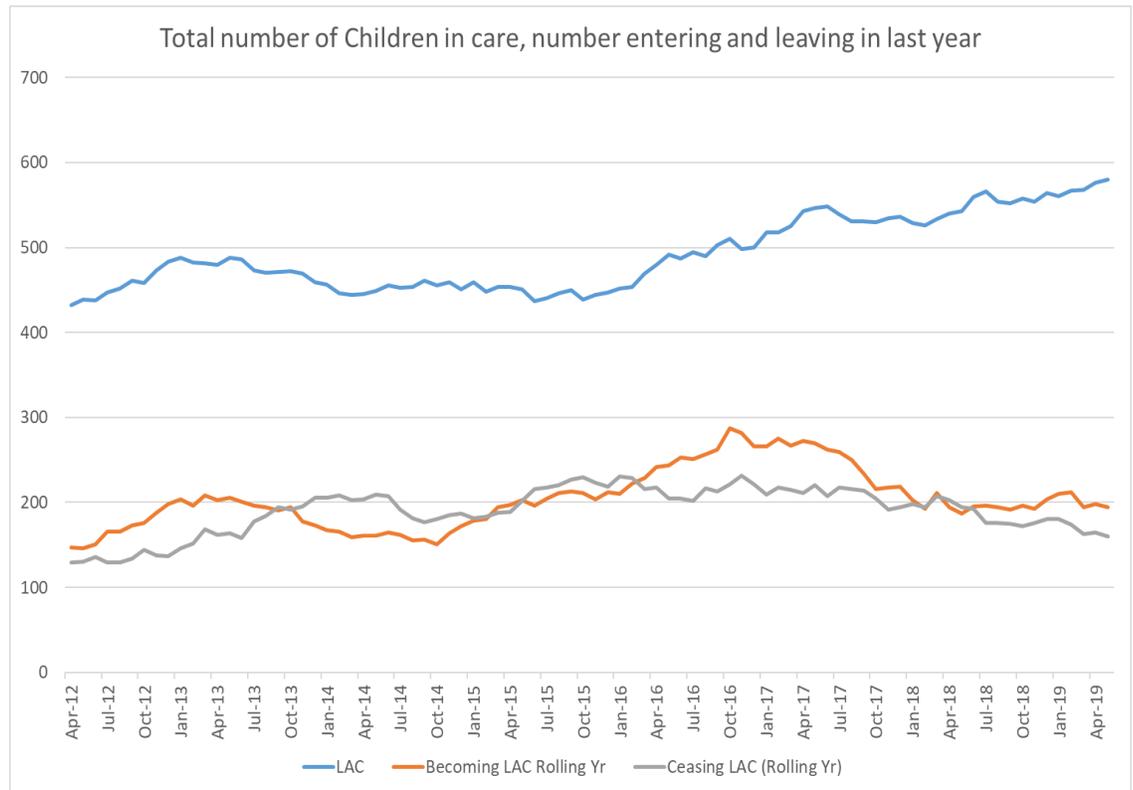
- 5.5.13 So, in summary, the CP system shows signs of both a post-inspection shock, perhaps not surprising in the light of the commentary concerning long-term neglect; and this manifests itself both in terms of increasing number of children subject to plans for neglect, especially in the primary school and early secondary school age bands, but also in a severe slowing down in the number of children ceasing to be subject to a plan and de-escalating to either being a child in need or closed to the service. It points to an understandable recalibration and wobble in confidence. But the result is a child protection system that appears to be gummed up, which in turn raises questions regarding the application of thresholds – has the service become more risk averse? - ; and the effectiveness of work undertaken with children and families by the service.
- 5.5.14 In spite of the increasing number of children subject to plans, basic compliance around children subject to plans remains good, with 89% of **CP visits taking place in timescale**, with a range of 83% to 97% across the main Safeguarding Teams. **CP review and Core Group timeliness** also remain strong. This has been a consistent pattern across recent months and the past 2 years, albeit with a slight dip in February 2019, swiftly remedied. Therefore, the issue is less whether children and families are being seen regularly, it is around the impact of the intervention and the challenge as to whether children (still) need to be subject to a child protection plan.
- 5.5.15 The period following the inspection has not seen a significant rise in the proportion of **children becoming subject to a plan who have previously been subject to a plan** – falling from 22% in November 2018 to a current figure for the last six months of 20%, which is in line with national average levels.

5.6 Children and Young People in Care

- 5.6.1 At month end, Blackpool had the highest number of children in care ever (586).
- 5.6.2 The number of **children becoming looked after** is running at just under 200 a year (68 per 10,000 population) on a rolling year, but lower than that through the first five months of the calendar year (184 a year, 64 per 10k – the lowest sustained rate since late 2014/early 2015). While this is to be very much welcomed, it is still high – the median for similar authorities is 46 per 10k.
- 5.6.3 The rise in the number of looked after children continues due to a greater slowing in the **number of children leaving care** – down to 160 in a rolling 12 months (56 per 10k); and down to 51 per 10k for the first five months of 2019. Again, even with this decline to the lowest position for Blackpool in six and a half years, it remains

markedly higher than the average for similar authorities (30 per 10k).

5.6.4



5.6.5

The continued gap between the number becoming and the number ceasing to be in care explains the ongoing rise in the total number of children in care. While the current figure is the highest on record, it is worth noting that this is not being driven from a notably high number of children entering care. In Blackpool terms, the current rate is low; and it is falling. And this is even following the recent negative Ofsted inspection, which could have been expected to lead to an increase in entry into care. In contrast, there are clear signs of a sustained calming in the entry and exit of children from care. One has to go back to five years to find a period of similarly low activity.

5.6.6

While the vast majority of children in care are on full care orders or interim care orders, the past 6 months has seen a rise in the number accommodated under section 20: currently 10% (56 children) having been 6% in November. 36% of these young people are aged 16 or 17 years old, with a further 39% being aged 10 to 15 years old.

5.7 Changing Age Profile of Children in Care

5.7.1 The current age profile of children in care shows:

- A sustained rise in the number of 10 to 15 year olds in care since January 2018 – up by 37 in that period to 239
- A rise in under 1s as well (up 9) and 1 to 4 year olds (up from 69 to 87)
- The number of 16 to 17 year olds – steady at 86
- The number 4 to 9 year olds falling a little from 127 to 112.

5.7.2 Looked at comparatively, this is not very different to the proportions in the regional care cohort – notably higher in the under 1 year olds and lower in those aged 16 or 17 years old, with a slight preponderance of 10 to 15 year olds (41% of the total, compared with 39% regionally or nationally).

5.7.3 However, the growth in the number of 10 to 15 year olds in care over the past 18 months has not been driven by a rise in the number entering care.

5.7.4 Since January 2018, the number of 10 to 15 year olds entering has remained steady at around 50 per year (slightly less in recent months). The number of 5 to 9 year olds has fallen from around 40 to closer to 30 a year. The number of 1 to 4 year olds has followed a similar pattern across the period.

5.7.5 The groups that are rising are the 0 to 1 year olds (up from 12 to 15 over a year to a current figure closer to 20); and 16 and 17 year olds, where the figure for the past 12 months is 63, compared with mid 50s in the 12 months before January 2018).

5.7.6 What this must mean is that the growth in the 10 to 15 year olds in care is being driven by children ageing within the care system and a declining rate of exit for the age group.

5.7.7 Looking at those leaving care by age, the following age groups have seen a fall in the numbers leaving over the past 16 months:

- 1 to 4 year olds – down from 72 per year to 38 for the past 12 months
- 5 to 9 year olds – down from 35 to 23
- 10 to 15 year olds – down from 35 to 23
- 16 and 17 year olds down from 13 to 9

5.7.8 The number of under 1 year olds leaving care has picked up through the year and is now running at 23, while the number of young people 'ageing out' at 18 has grown

is currently 48 over the past 12 months.

- 5.7.9 Therefore, **the core of the cohort by age – between 1 and 17 years old – has seen a relative fall in the number of children leaving care – down from 155 children and young people a year in 12 months up to January 2018, to 93 in 12 months up to the end of May 2019.** This represents quite a major shift from the previous pattern of entry and exit. While the figures reflect action taken to cease care orders during 2017, the continued fall in the numbers leaving care needs to be arrested and efforts redoubled around reunification of children with families or other routes to permanence. The current pattern across most age groups is a concern, with the high numbers of children ageing out of the system at 18 somewhat masking the degree of slow-down in exit in other age groups.
- 5.7.10 Compliance around Looked after Children remains strong around key social work activity – so the percentage of **statutory visits in timescale** is 88% at month end, with a range of 73% to 96% across individual teams. The percentage of **reviews undertaken in timescales** is 96%. Other aspects of performance are less strong, with only 62% of children in care with up to date **health assessments** and only 65% with an up to date **dental checks**.
- 5.7.11 Analysis of those not receiving dental or health checks show that they are slightly more likely to live in Blackpool than outside the town; and are likely to be older children (between 80 and 90% of 1 to 4 year olds have up to date checks, compared with two thirds of 10 to 15 year olds and half of 16 and 17 year olds). They are also more likely to be in an adoption or foster placement (nearly 80%+ up to date), than in residential provision, independent living or placed at home with parents (typically around 50% with up to date dental and health checks).

5.8 Placements of Children in Care

- 5.8.1 The majority of children continue to be placed in **foster placements** – 71% of the total, of which 75% are in the local authority's own provision. This pattern has scarcely shifted over the past 6 months. 52 children are **placed at home with parents**, down 3 on 6 months ago, still a significant percentage of the total (9%), but now comfortably less than the regional average (13%). The number of young people in **children's homes** has risen a little – up to 57 at the end of May, compared with 49 in November; and this has a substantial cost implication for the council at an average annual cost per external residential placement of £170,000 (8 more placements could lead to an annual pressure of £1.36m).

5.8.2 Detailed analysis of the impact of placement changes in the year to date show an additional projected net full year pressure of £1.17m based on the changes that have taken place since the start of April. This figure reflects additional full year pressures incurred since April of £1.65m. The majority of this pressure is coming from placement moves amidst the group of children and young people already long term in care (52%), rather than new entrants (31%), with a further 10% due to delay in planned placement movement. There are offsetting full year savings of £475,000, chiefly from planned moves of young people aged 16+ (59%), but also some movement out of care through rehab home/discharge (25%) or adoption placement (12%).

5.8.3 **Long term placement stability** stands at 64% of children in young people in care for 2 and a half years being in the same placement for the past 2 years, down a little on 6 months ago (66%). **Short term stability** (the proportion of those in care with 3 placements or more in the past year), stands at 12%, slightly less than 6 months ago. Both these measures of stability are a bit worse than the national average (10% for short term, 70% for long term). Local performance probably reflects the pressure on placements of high (and rising) numbers in care. Short term stability seems to be affected as much by the very young and the eldest within the cohort (see table below).

5.8.4

Number of Children in Care	580	
Children with 3 or more placements	71	12%
Of which by age group:		# Per yr grp
0 to 1 year olds	15	7.5
2 to 9 year olds	12	1.5
10 to 15 year olds	31	5.2
16 and 17 year olds	13	6.5

5.8.5 The number of **children in care with a missing incident** recorded in the last 12 months remains higher than in similar authorities or nationally (14%, compared with 11%). The proportion of children who have been missing who were offered a **return home interview** remains just slightly over half (52%); although the acceptance rate is high (88%). This would appear to indicate that return interviews are not offered consistently, or as a matter of course. This is an aspect of performance worth further exploration, as it could reflect a core of children going repeatedly missing limiting the opportunity to offer an interview, or it could mean that interviews are only being offered to those likely to accept, or a mixture of both.

5.8.6 Further analysis of the children and young people in care going missing from placement and not receiving the offer of a return home interview shows that, paradoxically, those placed outside of the town are just as likely to have been

offered an interview following their most recent missing episode and that the age of the missing young person had little bearing on the offer being made. The frequency that a young person went missing did appear to have an impact with those going missing once or twice in the past 12 months being offered a return home interview 80% of the time, while less than 40% of those going missing three times or more were offered a return interview. Finally, the type of home that a young person was living in also had a differential pattern for the likelihood of the offer of an interview – with those in foster care likely to be offered an interview 70% of the time, while those in residential provision or independent living, or placed at home with parents less likely.

5.9 Adoption and Special Guardianship

5.9.1 There has been a decrease in the **number of children adopted** in the past 12 months, compared to six months ago (down from 30 to 24), with 14 more children now waiting to be adopted (56 at end of May), of which 11 more (42) have a placement order, of which 28 are in adoption placements. So, there are children within the adoption system, but fewer children are leaving care through adoption (just 14% of those leaving care in the last 6 months have been adopted, lower than any full year figure for the past 5 years).

5.9.2 In spite of the above picture, the **time from entry into care to adoption placement** remains good: 346 days and over two thirds of all those children adopted waited less than the national target level. The **time between placement order and deciding on a match** also remains in line with the national threshold level at 116 days. Finally, the local authority seldom changes its permanence decision away from adoption (only once in the last year).

5.9.3 **Special Guardianship Orders** have become a more important exit route from care over recent years; and a quarter of those leaving care in the last six months have left by this route, up from 21% in 2017/18 and more than double the national average, or the average for similar authorities.

5.10 Care Leavers

5.10.1 The past six months has seen relatively consistency in terms of the outcomes achieved for care leavers. There has been a slight growth in the number of care leavers supported, rising from 182 young adults in November to 195 currently. We are **in touch** with 84% of 17 and 18 year olds – a disappointing figure, down from 93% in November; and 89% of 19 to 21 year olds. Nine out of 10 care leavers

turning 18 years old in the last 6 months remained looked after until their 18th birthday – considerably better than the national average.

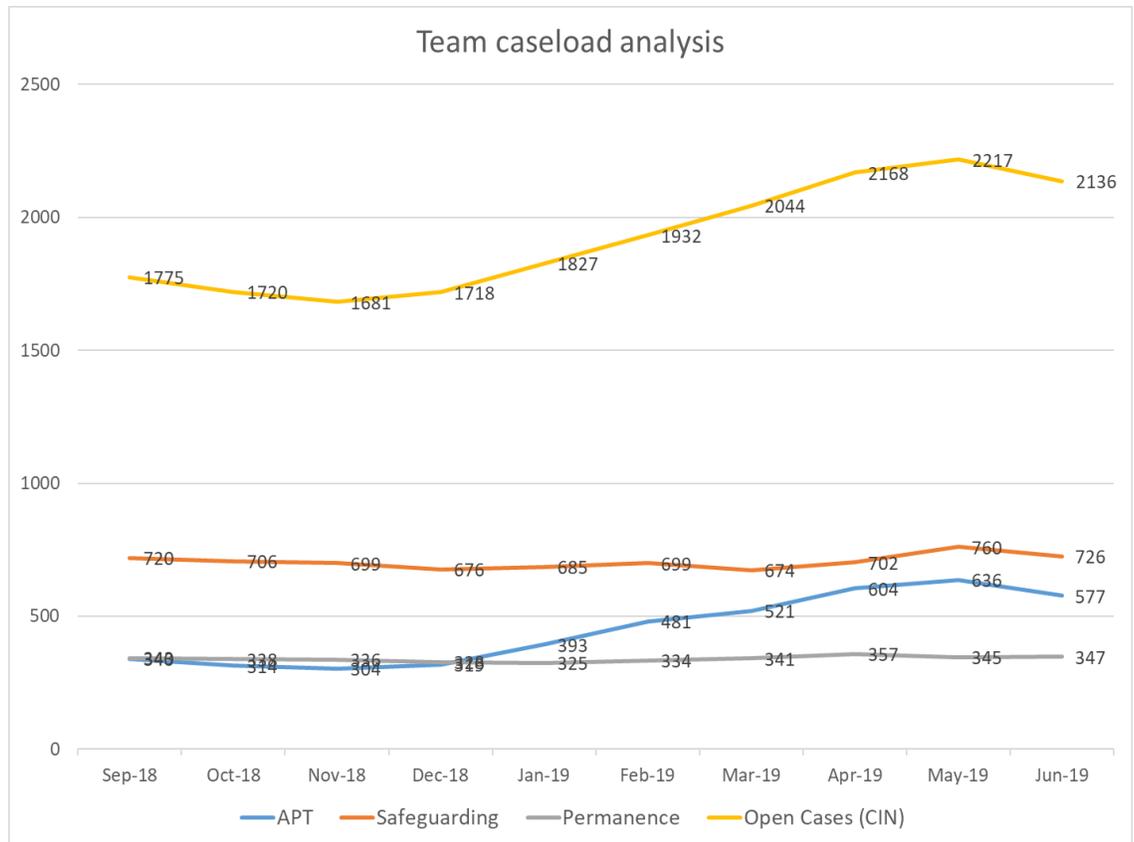
5.10.2 The proportion of 17 and 18 year olds in **suitable accommodation** remains steady at 87% - slightly beneath the national average; and for 19 to 21 year olds, the figure is currently 90%, better than the national average and better than typical performance over the past 5 years within the local authority. However 8% of care leavers are living in houses of multiple occupancy (15 young people, compared with 8 6 months ago. Looking at the detailed type of accommodation, it is noticeable that a higher proportion of care leavers in Blackpool are living independently.

5.10.3 **Care leaver engagement with education, employment or training** remains roughly in line with the national average for 19 to 21 year olds (47% , down 2% on November 2018) and 17 and 18 year olds (54%, rising from 48% six months ago). Pleasingly, the proportion of care leavers in higher education remains higher than the national average or the average for similar authorities, with 1 in 9 of the 19 to 21 year old cohort attending.

5.11 **Caseloads**

5.11.1 As can be seen in the chart (overleaf), the fall in the number of open cases is being seen across all the teams at present, except Permanence, which remain steady.

5.11.2



5.11.3 As you might expect, given the foregoing analysis, the biggest fall in caseloads has been in the Assessment teams. This is because the glut of assessments undertaken in the early part of 2019 are now largely completed and the size of the team has been significantly increased to address the larger volume of incoming work. The remit of the teams had also been narrowed with the introduction of a dedicated MASH team. It is clear that these changes have had a positive impact.

5.11.4 The increase in the number of open cases over the past six months has been around 410 (an increase of just under a quarter of the total number of children and young people open at the start of December). This consists of: 160 more referrals resulting in assessments, 120 more Children subject to Child Protection Plans, 23 more children in care; and 110 more Children in Need.

5.11.4 The significant investment in the service has had a beneficial impact on caseloads for social workers. Average caseloads in Assessment Teams are around 25 (median value 24). In Safeguarding Teams it is around 23 (median 24). Permanence Teams have an average caseload of 19.

5.12 Recruitment and Retention

- 5.12.1 The Improvement Plan has been supported by significant additional investment to recruit qualified social workers to the service and has led to the development of a new service design which builds on the work already underway prior to the inspection to address concerns about our service to children and families. There is a recruitment campaign running across social media, in sector focussed publications and we have an incentive scheme for staff for introducing friends who go on to work with us. So far 33 new appointments have been made to permanent qualified roles, and vacancies and long term absences in essential roles are covered by Agency staff to ensure that teams are resilient to the current demand. Key to the delivery of a different way of working – more family focussed and with more purposeful direct work to support families through change - is having the right number of experienced and confident workers in the right places. A demand management plan has been developed which uses a tool coproduced with Dartington Social Research Lab to ensure resource is deployed effectively to achieve the most impact on outcomes.
- 5.12.2 Commitment from the workforce is high, and we have not seen significant numbers of experienced staff leaving the service even though there is no doubt that caseloads are higher than we would like them to be at the moment. A commitment to the workforce has been shared with all our staff, and is part of our extensive recruitment campaign.
- 5.12.3 Evaluation of the recruitment campaign is underway and will be reported at the next meeting.

5.13 Youth Offending Service

In November 2018, the Youth Offending Service in Blackpool was inspected and found to be inadequate. The service has responded positively to the inspection outcomes and across the partnership there has been significant positive change in support of an improved approach to coordinating and delivering support. There has been a refresh of the Youth Offending Service Board with a clear expectation of participation and engagement and consistency of attendance from members. There is a twelve month partnership improvement plan which is built around the new standards which have been introduced in the sector, each standard is owned by a senior leader from across the organisations who are key to effective service delivery including the Police, Local Authority and Probation. At our invitation, the Youth Justice Board provide an independent chair for the Executive and give an

informed, but impartial, challenge to progress. A specialist Service Manager has been recruited and has now started in post. Other key posts are currently being recruited to which will support the management of and pace of change to deliver improved outcomes.

Performance against the plan is discussed monthly, with a full performance focus every quarter.

The majority (77%) of actions are on track, and there is a report in place for actions which require update or are not meeting initial timescales (attached as example of tracking in place). The YOT Improvement Plan and Progress Tracker are attached at appendices 4(b) and 4(c) respectively.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

Appendix 4(a) - Phase 2 Children's Social Care Improvement Plan

Appendix 4(b) - YOT Improvement Plan

Appendix 4(c) - YOT Progress Tracker

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Human Resources considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 Children's Social Care overspent by £5.575m due to ongoing demand pressures relating to Looked After Children (LAC). When budgets were set, LAC numbers were around 530, however numbers increased over the year and peaked at 572 in December. Whilst numbers did fall back to 565 by the end of March LAC totals were consistently above budgeted levels. Furthermore, the breakdown of placements has contributed significantly to the overspend. Additional costs were incurred relating to children with complex needs being moved into more expensive placement categories, requiring additional support or being unable to step down as early as

planned. £282,000 was also spent on the interim support following the Ofsted inspection in December 2018.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None

14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

14.1 None

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None