Looked After Children Conversation framework
May 2019

- Profile of LAC population

- Background to structures and services

- Developments in children's social care

- Developments in prevention and early intervention

- Workforce and approach to practice

- Next steps

Profile

LAC population:

381 March 2019 (412 in 2014)

Rate per 10,000 130.40 2018/19 (141.85 in 2013/14)

Profile

Children becoming looked after:

Average monthly – 12.2 (2013/14)

7.7 (2018/19)

Children ceasing to be looked after:

Average monthly – 10.1 (2013/14)

- 7.9 (2018/19)

Parental factors (LAC population):

- Learning disability 43

- Mental Health 213

- Domestic Abuse 197

- Substance misuse 178

Age groups (becoming looked after):

Percentage by Age Group:	2014-15	2018-19
Under 1	28.7%	27.5%
1-4 Years Old	15.6%	18.7%
5-9 Years Old	11.5%	20.9%
10-15 Years Old	32.0%	26.4%
16-17 Years Old	12.3%	6.6%

Profile

Legal Status (LAC population):

74.3 % Care Order

6.8% Interim care Order

12.9% Placement Order

5.8% Section 76

0.3% Police protection

Placement type:

Percentage by Placement Type:	2014	2019
Independent Residential	3.16%	2.1%
In- house Residential	1.70%	2.1%
Independent Fostering	26.21%	16.80%
Kinship Fostering	15.78%	16.80%
In-house Fostering	39.08%	39.37%
Pre Adoption	4.61%	4.99%
Placement with Parent	7.28%	14.96%
Section 38(6) Court directed unregulated placement	1.21%	0.00%
Hospital	0.00%	0.52%
Independent Living	0.97%	0.52%
Supported Living	0.00%	1.84%
Young Offender Institution Or Prison	0.00%	0.00%

Placement location:

Percentage by Placement Location:	2014	2019
Within LA	68.93%	69.82%
In Wales (neighbouring authority)	16.02%	16.27%
In Wales (not neighbouring authority)	8.01%	7.09%
In England	2.43%	1.84%
Pre-adoption	4.61%	4.99%

BCBC LAC Analysis

Average No. Placements	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Internal Fostering	209	218	214
Independent Fostering (IFAs)	**90**	**75**	**61**
Out of County Residential	6	9	15

LAC Spend £'000
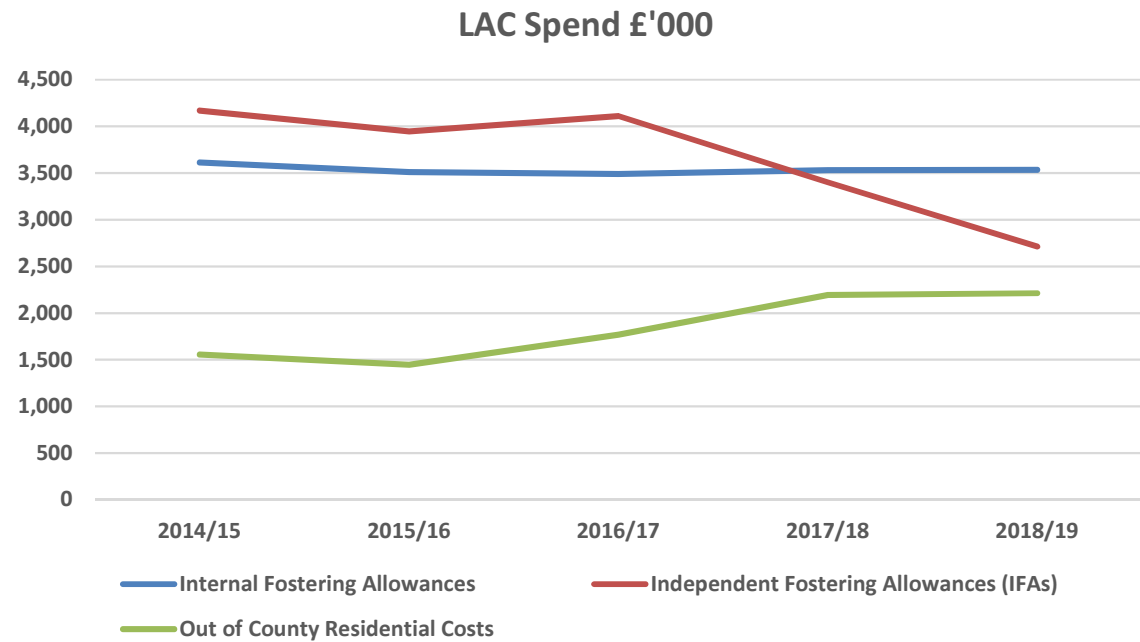
Background

- **2014/2015**: Significant re-structure of EH services resulting in a development of locality/hub based model.

- Review of statutory case management teams

- Safeguarding Hubs established and co located with Early Help Teams

Joint Early Help and Permanence Strategy

- Described our aim of supporting families to stay together wherever it is safe to do so, and minimising the need for children to become "Looked After" in the first instance or receive other statutory interventions

- Outlined what would change in relation to our work with children, young people and their families at the earliest possible stage

- Confirmed we were committed to striving for stability and permanence for children who were looked after

Action Plan (Early Help and Permanence)

- Front Door arrangements

- Early Intervention and Prevention

- Rehabilitation and Permanence

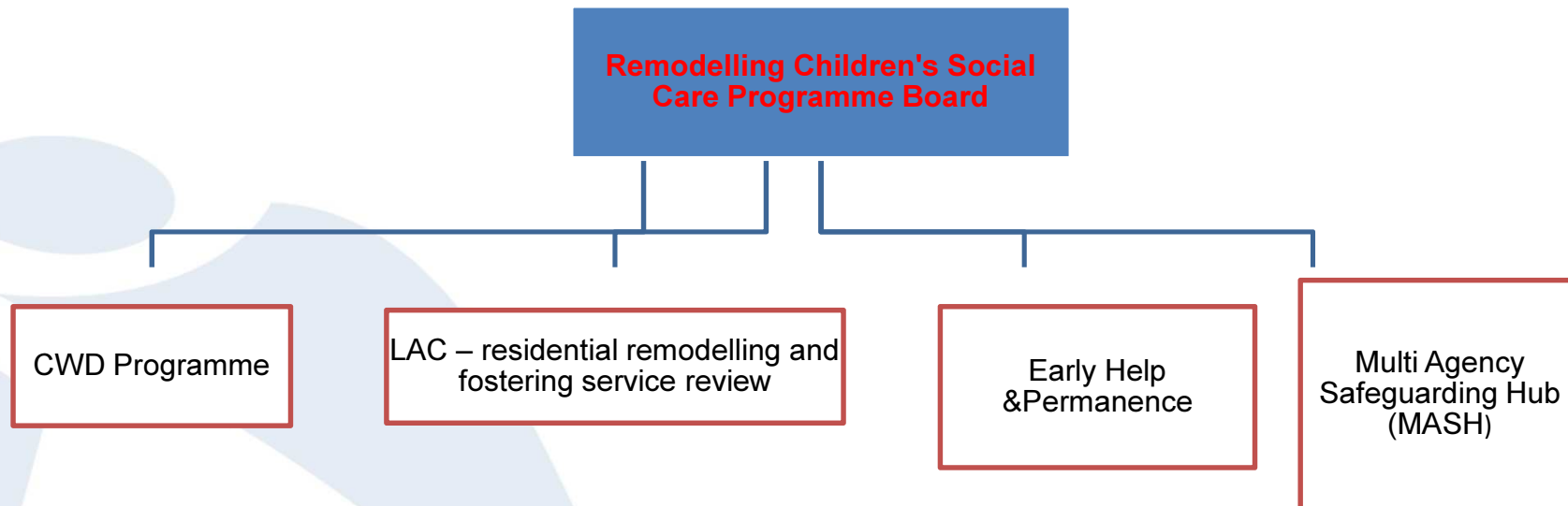- Shared data set

Thresholds for Accessing Services
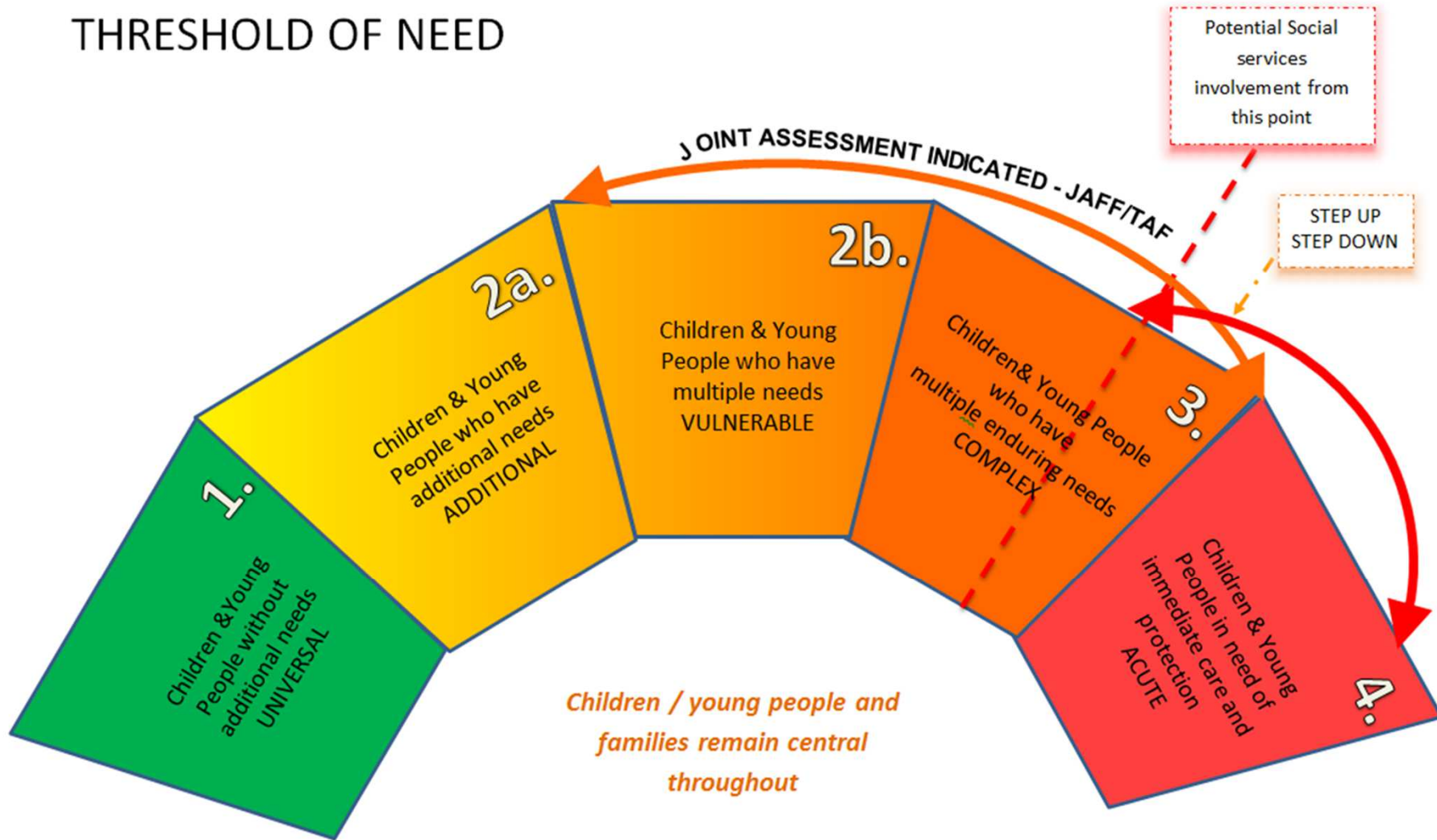
Children's Social Care – Vision Statement (2016)

'Together enabling better outcomes for children, young people and their families via responsive and timely services which support them to live together, work on difficulties and be safe'

Journey so far

Remodelling Children's Social Care Programme Board

- CWD Programme
- LAC – residential remodelling and fostering service review
- Early Help &Permanence
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Front Door Arrangements

- Co-location of Staff within MASH

- Single Point of Contact

- Processes in line with SSWB Act

- Consistent Threshold between SS and EH

REVIEW OF DECISION MAKING ON THE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) PATHWAY (2017)

In November 2017, IPC undertook a review of the pathways experienced by 35 children and young people who had become looked after in the last year, to review decision-making and analyse practice across their care pathway and explore with teams how interventions and decision-making might have been more effective.

Themes

- The quality of decision making, timeliness, and threshold management at the front door including any relevant Information Advice and Assistance (IAA) arrangements;

- How risk was identified, assessed, mitigated and managed;

- Whether there is a coherent model of early intervention and preventative services, and the relationship between children's social care and these services;

- Whether there is evidence of strength based, outcome focussed assessments and care plans;

Themes cont'd

- Whether there is evidence of strength based, outcome focussed assessments and care plans;

- Whether there is evidence of strong partnership working underpinned by a common value base and clear roles and responsibilities;

- Whether there are dynamic quality assurance and quality improvement systems driving continuous improvement within and between teams;

- Whether there is evidence of the involvement of children, young people and families at a service level and in practice.

Findings/Recommendations

- Safeguarding practice/decisions were "solid"

- Strengthen progression of work in pre-birth cases

- Review services for parents who have had more than one child removed

- Ensure parenting/psychological assessments are considered as part of CPR/PLO process

Findings/Recommendations cont'd

- Better use of FGCs

- Chronologies in all cases

- Ensure consistency of assessments

- Ensure robust management oversight

- Review Early Help model and impact.......

Early Help review (2018)

"Review the impact of early interventions to understand whether and where they are making a positive difference, especially with the children and families with the highest needs, and where there are gaps in services or where existing services are not having an impact".

Early Help Teams

- **Screening Team** – SPOC for all referrals into Early Help co-located with MASH

- **Early Help Hubs** – Family Assessments and Direct Work with children and families

- **Youth Development** – Lead Workers, Part Time Youth Service, Participation

- **Early Years and Childcare** – Flying Start, Basic Skills

Referrals into Early Help
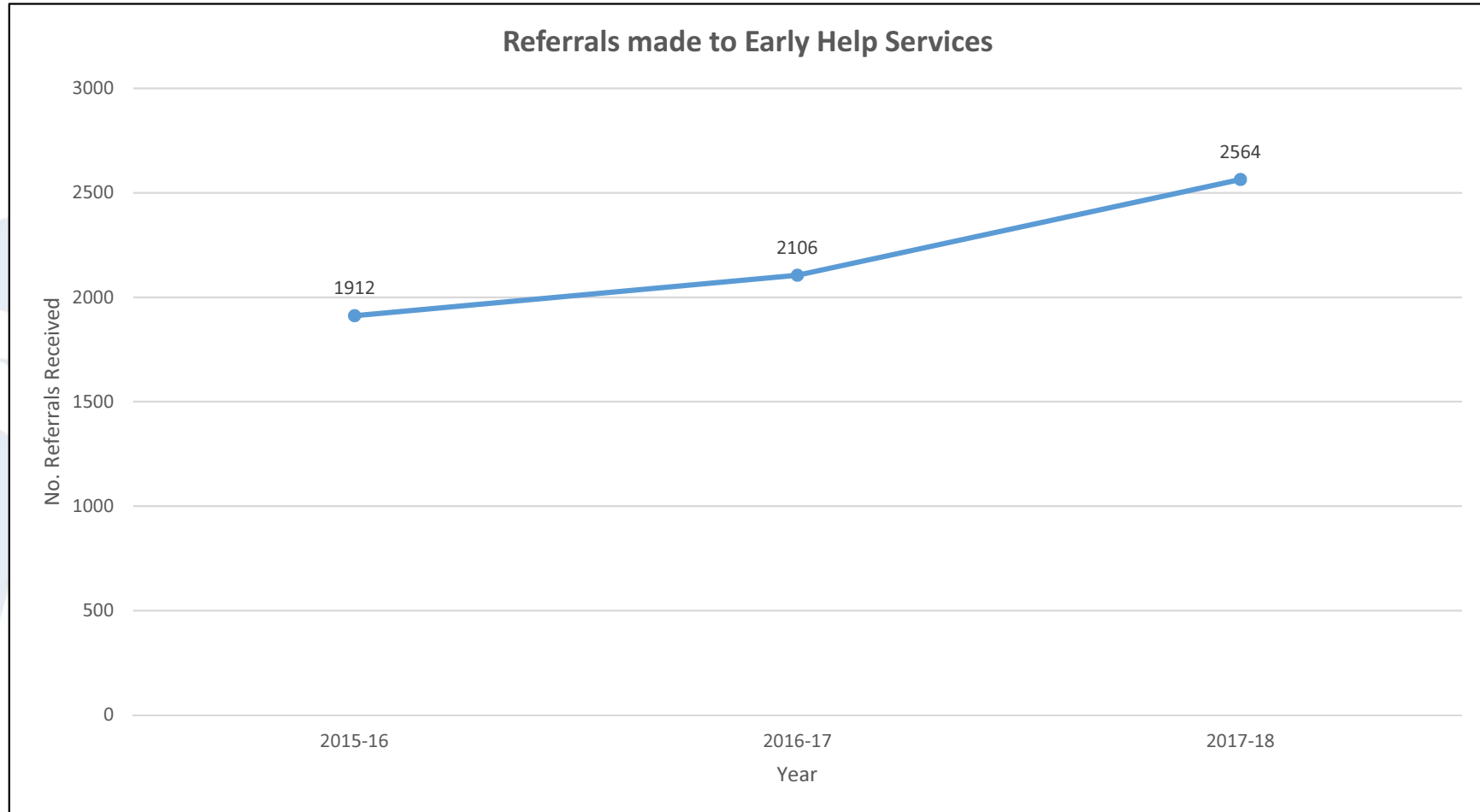
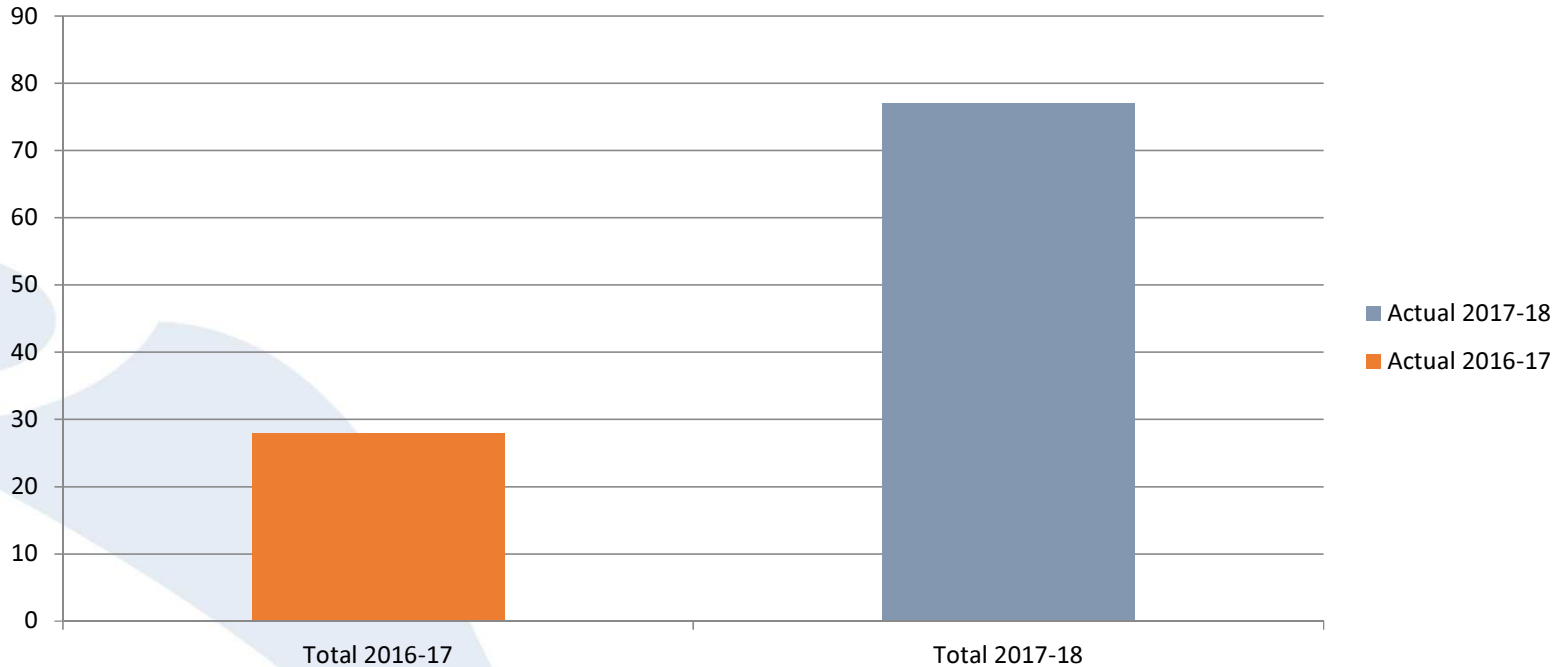# Analysis of referrals to Early Help Services

Referrals to Early Help Services
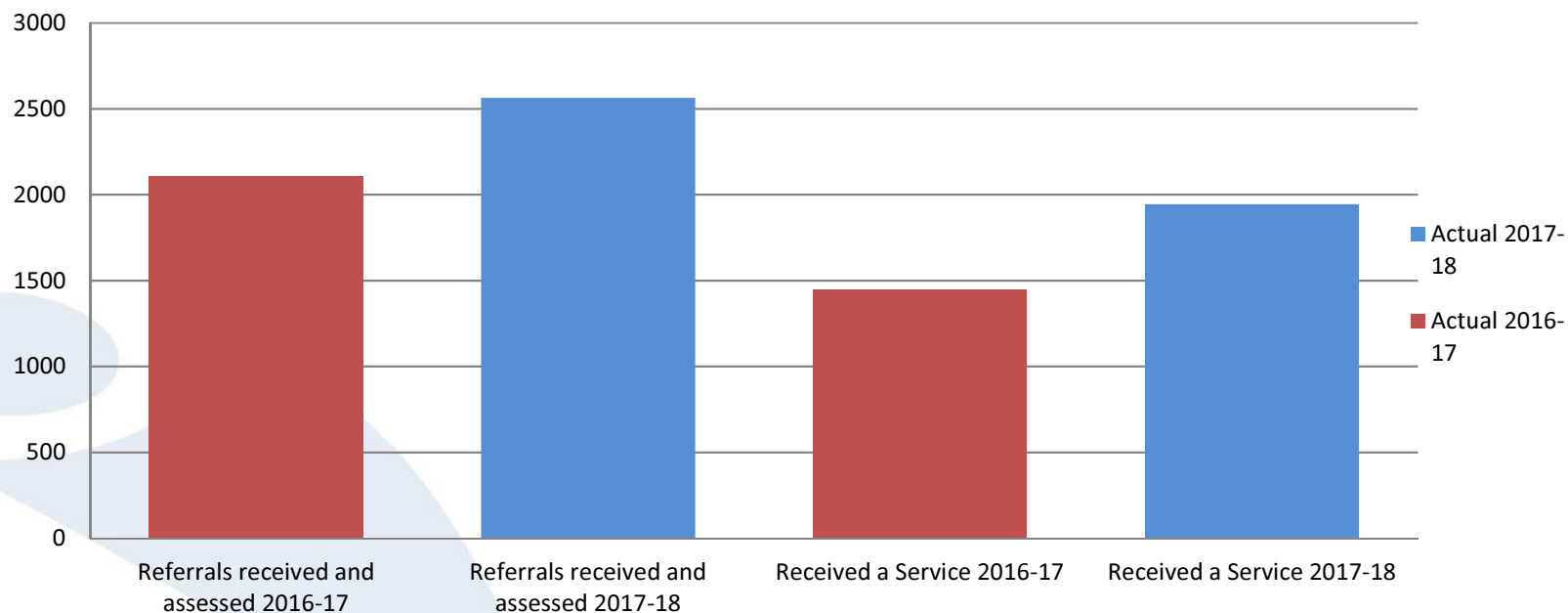
- In 2016-17, 68.8% of families referred and assessed went on to receive a service.

- This increased to 75.9% in 2017-18.

Requests for Step Down from Safeguarding

Requests for Step Down Support

- The number of Requests for Help made by the Safeguarding Teams for Step Down support during 2017-18 (77) shows an increase of 185.2% from requests made during 2016-17 (27).

Central Hub Services

Rapid Response

- Operational August 2017
- 3 x Rapid Response Workers
- Intensive support to prevent becoming known to Children Services or becoming accommodated
- Support for child/children to return to family care.
- Mornings, Evenings and Weekend Working – large demand
- Evidenced Based Practice
- 168 children have been supported (data to 30th June 2018)
- 145 children identified as being at risk of becoming looked after
- 23 children were supported to prevent foster placement breakdown

Impact

- **29.7% (43 / 145)** of children have been closed to safeguarding

- **2.1% (3 / 145)** of children have been de-registered from the Child Protection Register

- **5.5% (8 / 145)** of children were placed on the CPR

- **6.2% (9 / 145)** of children became looked after

- **93.8% (136 / 145)** remain out of care

Connecting Families

- Multi-agency team

- Intensive support

- Prevention of LAC

- Re-unification work

- 12 week package of support

- Group work

- Evidenced Based Working

Impact

- 204 children identified as being at risk of coming into care were supported in 2017-18

- **91.0% (186 / 204)** of the children referred remain out of care

- 14 family referrals for reunification received

- **16.6% (3 / 18)** children have been reunified with families from care

- 16 workshops involving 105 individuals

Integrated Family Support Service

- Multi-Agency Team – Health and Social Worker's
- Parental Substance misuse
- Children at risk of significant harm
- Children at risk of becoming looked after
- Re-unification from care
- Intensive 4-6 week intervention
- Leading on Family Group Conferencing work
- Training Element including NQSW and CPEL work
- Evidenced Based Intervention
- Statutory service

Impact

- 47 family referrals received into service during 2017-18

- **38.3% (18 / 47)** progressed into Intensive Support

- These 18 referrals were made up of of 44 adults and 33 children

- **18.2% (6 / 33)** children were closed to Safeguarding

New Edge of Care Services

Baby in Mind Service

- Operational April 2018

- 1 x Consultant Social Worker, 1x p/t Health Visitor, 2 x Family Support Worker

- Mother no later than 26 weeks pregnant

- Risk of becoming looked after

- Family willing to work with service

- Care proceedings ended 6 months prior to new pregnancy and there is a change in circumstances

- Flexible support – mornings, evenings and weekends

- Weekly support pre-birth. Intensive post-birth

- Evidenced Based Interventions (EBI's)

Reflect Project

- Welsh Government commissioned service working across Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), Merthyr and Bridgend Councils

- 2 x project workers

- Prevent repeat pregnancies where risk of baby being removed

- Operational April 18

Other Local Authorities

- Visits to other local authority's were conducted to explore the impact their approach to reducing LAC numbers was having.

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPT)

- Newport City Council (NCC)

- Carmarthenshire County Borough Council (CCBC)

Findings

- All experiencing similar pressures linked to budget and preventing children becoming looked after

- Lots of similarities between LA's and delivery of Edge of Care services

- Increased pressures at front door especially for Early Help services

- Social Work model implemented in all LA's visited

- IFSS identified as a challenge

Action Taken so far

- Reconfigured IFSS to expand criteria to work with mental health and domestic abuse. The service also works with more cases than the previous guidance.

- Explored potential resource to assist in the increased demand at the front door of early help services. This was achieved with the appointment of an additional screening officer in August 2018.

Next steps

- Establishment of a practice framework/ social work model
- Implementation of the NSPCC reunification toolkit.
- Evaluate the new service provisions of Baby in Mind, Rapid Response Team and Reflect in April 2019.
- Creation of 4 practice support workers to assist with direct work, crisis intervention, placement support for LAC including weekend and evening working and FGC.

Placements

Residential remodelling:

- Hub opened in December 2018
- 2 emergency beds
- 4 Assessment beds
- Co located with placements team
- Outreach provision
- Therapeutic services
- Alternative supported living/move on options

Placements cont'd

Fostering Service Review:

- Realigned structures
- Liaison carers
- Training
- Payments and fees
- Recruitment
- SGOs

Placements cont'd

Placement Commissioning Strategy:

- Data/trends
- Profile of LAC
- Existing provision and gap analysis
- Options for future provision
- Commissioning intentions

Leadership

Strong corporate parenting commitment:

- Overview and scrutiny
- Corporate parenting committee
- Cabinet
- Corporate management board

Leadership & Management

- IPC Leadership & Management Development

   Programme

- Bespoke Management Development Programme

- Action Learning sets

- Coaching & Mentoring

Recruitment and Retention

- Established a Recruitment and Retention Board

- Developed a Social Care Recruitment Website

- Exit interviews for all leavers

- Flexible employment

- 'Growing our own'

- Supporting the Newly Qualified Workforce in their first three years of practice

- First year in practice programme

- Consolidation Programme

- Aspiring senior practitioners programme

- Development of a Casual Social Worker Scheme

Thank you

Any questions?