

## **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **REPORT TO SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1**

**16 APRIL 2018**

#### **JOINT REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING**

#### **EARLY HELP AND CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE**

##### **1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To provide elected members with information that has been requested in a variety of areas, namely:

- information and impact as to how Early Help and Children Social Care are working together;
- the local authority's current looked after children (LAC) population;
- a breakdown on referral figures including those from local pre-school nurseries;
- the services being provided to post-16 care leavers;
- data shared at the Early Help and Safeguarding Board;
- detailed analysis of the causes and demands on Children Social Care; and the
- independent review of the decision-making along the LAC pathway by the Institute of Public Care (IPC).

##### **2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan/other corporate priorities**

- Helping people become more self-reliant
- Smarter use of resources

##### **3. Background**

3.1 The effective oversight and management of the looked after children population is a key priority for the Council and there is a commitment to further improve both early intervention and statutory services for children, young people and their families. It is recognised that this is significantly dependent upon the ability of all directorates to work together and specifically the Social Services and Wellbeing and Education and Family Support Directorates. Since April 2015, Children Social Care Safeguarding teams and the Early Help teams, have been co-located in three separate, shared hubs and this has enabled the teams to work in closer partnership and also develop more effective processes and procedures that assist the transition of families between the two services.

##### **4. Current situation/proposal**

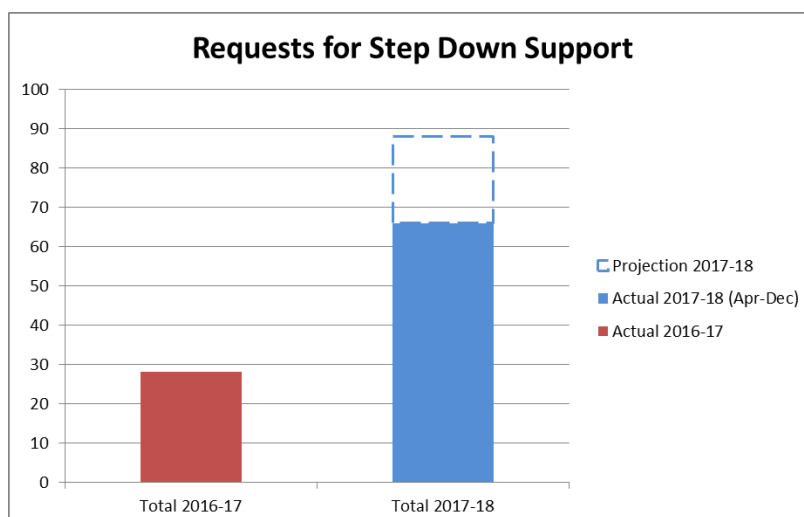
**Information and impact as to how Early Help and Children Social Care are working together**

- 4.1 In April 2015, a significant restructure of Integrated Working and Family Support services was implemented. This re-structure was predicated on the need to support children, young people and families in a more joined-up way with a greater focus on preventative services to avoid escalation into statutory services. Prior to the re-structure, there were significant barriers for families in accessing services due to threshold constraints and lack of consistency with the assessment of needs.
- 4.2 A change programme ran alongside the re-structure which resulted in:
- a common assessment;
  - co-located, multi-disciplinary locality teams (co-located with safeguarding);
  - a greater emphasis on staff development and evidence based interventions; and
  - improved multi-agency working.
- 4.3 The new integrated Early Help Service has been operational since April 2015. It is based on one joint front door for all referrals. It consists of three co-located (with safeguarding teams) locality hubs in the north, west and east of the county borough. In addition, a central hub consisting of a range of specialist family support services (see Appendix 1) offering a range of evidenced based interventions to those children, young people and families open to Children Social Care. An early years and childcare service and a youth development team are also part of the early help portfolio.
- 4.4 Childrens Social Care includes six assessment and care management teams (county-wide front door/information, advice and assistance team, three locality safeguarding hubs, disabled children's team, Just Ask (leaving care)), Bridgend Foster Care, four Residential Units (Harwood House, Bakers Way, Sunnybank and Newbridge House) and the Independent reviewing service. We also have an adoption service that is delivered on a regional basis. All of these teams are involved with looked after children, as case managers or as service providers.
- 4.5 A joint Early Help and Permanence Strategy is in place which describes the services available to children, young people and their families within Bridgend. Such services support and enable where possible children and young people to safely remain in the care of their family and/or safely return to their family or an alternative carer. Where this is not possible, the strategy describes the alternative care arrangements that are provided and commissioned for LAC to improve their outcomes by affording them the opportunities available to all children.
- 4.6 Both directorates within the local authority are driving a whole-system approach to supporting LAC and keeping families together. Together with the Early Help and Permanence Strategy, they form a multi-agency approach to improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- 4.7 Early help refers to a way of working which will ensure that children, young people and families who are at risk or vulnerable to poor outcomes are identified early and that their needs are effectively assessed and met by agencies working together. The aim being to prevent their escalation rather than to respond only when the difficulty has become so acute as to demand intervention from statutory services.
- 4.8 The early help hubs, children with eligible care and support needs, child protection (CP), and LAC systems are all multi-disciplinary processes which differ only in

terms of their threshold focus.

- 4.9 The co-location of the early help hubs in the three localities (ie north, west and east) in addition to the central hub based at the Civic Centre, enables timely case discussions and information sharing which inform decisions regarding the need to step up or step down interventions with families.
- 4.10 There have already been a number of changes to the way in which we approach this area of work and the impact of this is evident including:
- joint early help and safeguarding front door/screening arrangements to more effectively channel referrals (see Appendix 1);
  - an agreed step-up and step-down process for cases between Safeguarding and Early Help Services, resulting in a significant increase in the number of cases stepping down to the Early Help Service;
  - a reduction in referrals to Children Social Care; and
  - a reduction in number of care and support cases (formerly child in need cases) open to Children Social Care.
- 4.11 However, there are challenges in managing the impact of these changes. For example, the Early Help Service has experienced:
- an increase of 180% of referrals in 2016-2017 compared with 2015-2016 data;
  - a further increase in referral numbers between April to December 2017 of 33% compared with the same period in 2016-2017;
  - the reliance on predominantly annual grant monies to fund Early Help services and the associated uncertainty of this funding arrangement; and
  - the increased complexity of cases now open to the Early Help Service.
- 4.12 Between April to December 2017, the highest referrers to the Early Help Service are:
- social services (28%);
  - primary health (26%); and
  - schools (24%).
- 4.13 These services account for nearly 80% of referrals to Early Help. In 2017-2018, the Early Help Service has seen a sharp rise in referrals from South Wales Police. The pilot Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Project in the north locality will be a contributing factor to this increase as Police colleagues are now appropriately referring directly to the Early Help Service.
- 4.14 Further to this, the co-location within early help hubs alongside Children Social Care teams has seen the development of a process for children and families who are either 'stepped up' into Childrens Social Care where there are child protection concerns or 'stepped' down into the Early Help Service following statutory involvement. The following chart highlights the number of cases being stepped down into the Early Help Service for the periods 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. This is shown in Chart 1 below.

**Chart 1** Requests for step-down support between 2016 and 2018



4.15 The step-down process that was implemented in 2016 has contributed to the reduction in the number of care and support cases open to Children Social Care.

	31 March 2017	12 March 2018
Care and Support (formerly child in need)	624	462

4.16 Other services impacting positively on children and young people open to Children Social Care include:

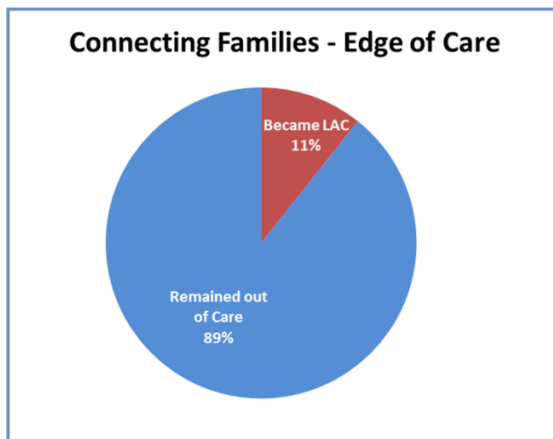
### Connecting Families

4.17 Connecting Families is a multi-agency team offering a 12-week intensive intervention to families whose children are at risk of becoming looked after or are already looked after but require additional intervention to return home to family. The service delivers all of the evidenced based interventions outlined earlier within the report. The support consists of intensive support (two to three visits a week). The service has been operational since 2011, but has focused its work since 2014 on preventing children becoming looked after.

4.18 Further to this support, Connecting Families also delivers group support. This includes the delivery of the three parenting programmes (Non-Violent Resistance Parenting, Incredible Years and Grobrain). These groups are delivered as a rolling programme so at any point in time a family who may not be eligible for any of the above elements of Connecting Families support, can access these interventions.

4.19 Outcomes in respect of the support from Connecting Families are extremely positive and confirms that the delivery of evidenced-based interventions (EBIs) within the service have a positive impact on children, young people and families. This can be evidenced in Chart 2 below.

**Chart 2** Connecting Families – Edge of Care data 2014 to 2017



- Between April 2014 and December 2017 Connecting Families worked with 431 children\* on the edge of coming into the care system.
- Of these 385 (89%)\*, remained out of care following the Connecting Families intervention.

\*as at December 2017

4.20 In respect of children returning home to family following a period in care, since April 2014, Connecting Families has completed work that has led to the safe return home of 51 children following a period in the care system. Given Connecting Families is unique to Bridgend, comparable data is not available with other local authorities.

### **Western Bay Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS)**

4.21 The Central Hub also delivers the statutory Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) which is a Welsh Government initiative in working with parental substance misuse to prevent children becoming looked after or those who are in care with a plan to return home. The service is a Western Bay collaboration and delivers intensive (three to four visits a week) evidenced-based interventions to whole families for four to six weeks.

4.22 In respect of outcomes for the Bridgend element of the service, six children supported between April and December 2017 have closed to Children Social Care following an IFSS intervention. A total of six children also closed to Children Social Care in Neath Port Talbot CBC with a further three children ceasing to become looked after. In Swansea, eight children were de-registered from the child protection register (CPR) with a further four children de-commissioned from the Public Law Outline (PLO) process.

### **Rapid Response Team**

4.23 A Rapid Response Team was introduced in August 2017. This service was introduced in recognition that there are occasions when children and families require support in an immediate fashion in order to prevent issues escalating. The service consists of two Rapid Response Team workers (an additional Rapid Response Team worker is planned to commence on 1 April 2018). The workers offer intensive support (three to four visits a week) for a four to six-week period including early mornings, evenings and weekends with the main aim of preventing

children becoming looked after or to enable them to return home to family following a period in care.

- 4.24 Since August 2017, the service has worked with 68 families. From this cohort of families, only two children have become looked after during the time the Rapid Response Team has been operational. Once more, the outcomes linked to the service demonstrate the importance of flexible intensive EBIs being delivered to children and families. In addition to this, the service has also delivered over 68 hours of weekend support to children and families known to Children Social Care evidencing the flexibility of support available from within the service.

### **New services in development**

- 4.25 It is important to note that the Central Hub is in the process of developing new services to assist in the prevention of children becoming looked after. These include the Baby in Mind and Reflect Services.

### **Baby in Mind Service**

- 4.26 The Baby in Mind Service has been developed following additional 'edge of care' grant monies that have become available during the latter part of 2017. The service will provide intensive multi-agency support at a crucial time for parents of pre-birth and post birth babies to ensure that risks can be managed, and plans put into place that would prevent the baby from becoming either separated from its parent(s) or being placed in a mother/parent and baby placement for further assessment. In 2016-2017, the local authority used 23 parent and baby placements. These are high cost placements and raise questions as to whether these families could have been supported in the community. There is a clear need for a service to assist pregnant mothers and their partners to develop the necessary skills to keep their children safe. This service will also assist social workers in assessing and care planning for these children and families where there is a risk of care proceedings and the care system possibly being required. This has been highlighted as an issue within the IPC review.
- 4.27 The Baby in Mind Service consists of a consultant social worker to lead and supervise the delivery of the team, two family support workers to work in partnership and deliver evidenced based interventions to families and a part-time health visitor. The family support workers have been recruited and the health visitor post is currently out to advertisement. It is anticipated that this new service will become fully operational in April 2018.

### **Reflect Service**

- 4.28 The Reflect Service is a Welsh Government initiative developed to work with mothers who have had children removed from their care following care proceedings. There is a wealth of evidence that highlights the vulnerabilities for these individuals in respect of repeat pregnancies. Across Bridgend, of the 67 children who became looked after between 1 April 2017 and 12 March 2018, 18 of these were born to mothers who had previously had children removed suggesting that there were some missed opportunities in preventing repeat pregnancy leading to children social care involvement. The Reflect Service is being developed in response to this and will be delivered as part of a regional arrangement with

Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil CBCs. It is anticipated that the service for Reflect will be operational in April 2018.

### The local authority's current LAC population

4.29 Bridgend's current LAC population stands at 389. The following table outlines the legal status of the children who have become looked after as at 12 March 2018.

Legal status*	Number of children
Section 76	15
Interim care order	28
Care order	289
Placement order	57
<b>Total LAC</b>	<b>389</b>

\*Definitions included at Appendix 4

4.30 The local authority continues to have a high number of LAC per 10,000 population in Bridgend and, at year end 2016-2017, we were the fourth highest in Wales. For the same period overall numbers across Wales had increased by 5.5%; however, Bridgend were below this average as our increase was only 2.2%. Of the 17 local authorities that had shown increases, 7 were over 10%, of which 3 were over 15% and 1 at 30%.

4.31 A comparison of LAC numbers across local authorities in Wales is included at Appendix 2.

4.32 5.7% of looked after children (as at 12 March 2018) have a disability and are supported by our Children with Disabilities Team. This year, together with Adult Social Care, we have piloted our transition team which supports disabled children from the age of 14 years and upwards, aiming to ensure a joined up, seamless approach in supporting disabled children on their path to adulthood. A high proportion of children and young people became looked after during the first year of their life (30%), and, with this in mind, the local authority has used a significant proportion of its 'edge of care' grant to develop a Baby in Mind Service that will focus on support for parents during the pre-birth period and the first six months of a baby's life. This service is due to become operational from April 2018.

4.33 In terms of the legal status of children, only 3.9% (as at 12 March 2018) are looked after under section 76 of the SSWBA 2014 (no order). The local authority holds a weekly legal surgery which is chaired by a senior manager to ensure there is no drift in cases where children have become looked after. The majority of these 2.9% are cases where there is a short period of assessment and a rehabilitation plan is being implemented.

4.34 In addition to the work that has been undertaken to support families earlier, there has also been project work around identifying children within our looked after population that no longer need to be looked after or whose needs could be better met by being cared for under an alternative order. We now have a Permanence Team which focuses on assessing and supporting special guardians. Alongside this, we convene a permanence meeting on a six-weekly basis and scrutinises the

care plans of children focusing on whether Care Orders can be discharged.

### **Breakdown on referral figures including those from local pre-school nurseries**

- 4.35 Referral figures are highlighted in Appendix 3 as part of joint Early Help and Safeguarding dataset. These are considered by the Early Help and Safeguarding Board to review performance across both directorates and to identify areas for development linked to preventing children and young people coming into the care system.
- 4.36 In respect of referrals into Early Help from pre-school settings, from April 2017 to December 2017, a total of 444 referrals were received from education services. Nine of these were received from pre-school settings. It must be noted that although this a low number, during the same period, 487 referrals were received from primary health services of which 380 were from health visitors for children under four years of age.
- 4.37 In addition to the above, 38 referrals were received from the Early Years and Childcare Service.
- 4.38 In summary, therefore, the Early Help Service received 427 referrals for children under four years of age. This equates to 23% of the total number of referrals received for the period April to December 2017.
- 4.39 Pre-school data for referrals into the Safeguarding Team is not available at this point in time.

### **The services being provided to post-16 care leavers**

#### **Inspire 2 Work**

- 4.40 Inspire 2 Work (I2W), an employability project for young people 16 to 24-years-old, who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) work in partnership with Just Ask Plus to support our LAC population.
- 4.41 This close partnership involves I2W staff working alongside personal advisers to provide a holistic package of support tailored to meet the needs of each individual young person. I2W staff, following agreement in LAC reviews, take the lead on identifying suitable progression routes and provide transitional support for the young person.
- 4.42 Under a new initiative, linked to a measure with the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 (the rate (%) of apprenticeships taken by looked after children), I2W and Just Ask Plus are leading on a project to offer to all LAC young people who are school leavers, an opportunity to undertake a week's work experience within the local authority.
- 4.43 It has been established that there is a currently a cohort of 24 young people that are LAC that will be of school leaving age as of July 2018. As a pathway to securing an employment opportunity, it has been agreed that every young person will be offered at least a week's work experience within BCBC during the summer holiday period. The outcome of this initiative is twofold: getting young people apprenticeship ready;



and enhancing individual CVs with recent and relative work experience relating to their respective educational pathways.

### **Confident Futures Project**

- 4.44 Over the past nine years, Bridgend's Looked After Children in Education Team (LACE) has worked in close partnership with Cardiff University supporting LAC and care leavers to access the Confident Futures project. A total of 68 Bridgend LAC students have participated.
- 4.45 The Confident Futures Project, funded by Cardiff University, is a project run for LAC and care leavers between the ages of 14 and 19 to raise their aspirations and confidence. The sessions run fortnightly from October to April throughout the academic year, and they consist of group activities as well as individual support given by current Cardiff University students. Attending the project provides young people access to workshops which can support their studies and applications to university, as well as university events such as GCSE/A level revision workshops and advice sessions to support personal education plans and pathways.
- 4.46 In brief, the purpose is to provide young people who have a background in care with the skills and information to obtain Higher Education, and to help them become familiar with the main aspects of life at university.

### **Leaving Care Team**

- 4.47 Young People who are leaving the local authority's care, or who have left care (16 years-25 years) are supported by a Personal Advisor from the Leaving Care team. The Personal Advisor is able to provide the young person with practical assistance including making/attending appointments, setting up home, preventing homeless, housing, financial support, developing independent living skills and much more.
- 4.4.9 Emotionally, the Personal Advisors are on hand to listen to a young person, and support them emotionally during any issues that arise eg family relationship issues, past childhood events. We are able to provide them with life story work/ later life letters, referrals to appropriate specialist agencies (eg counselling).

### **4.5 Data shared at the Early Help and Safeguarding Board**

- 4.5.1 The shared dataset regularly considered by the Early Help and Safeguarding Board is at attached Appendix 3.

### **4.6 Detailed analysis of the causes and demands on Children Social Care**

- 4.6.1 On 12 March 2018, Children's Social Care (CSC) were working with 1025 children and young people. 380 of these are looked after, 174 are on the child protection register, 9 are Looked After and on the child protection register, 462 are subject to a care and support plan. Children Social Care are also working with 129 care leavers who are over 18 years old. 74% of children who became looked after in Bridgend in 2017 had been subject to a child protection plan at the time they were accommodated. This would indicate that the local authority had already identified, in a substantial majority of cases that children were at risk of serious harm prior to

them being accommodated and had tried to address these risks through implementing a child protection plan.

4.6.2 On 12 March 2018, our Child Protection Register comprised the following profile:

Age Group	Category of Registration										Total
	Emotional Abuse	Neglect	Neglect and Physical Abuse	Neglect and Sexual Abuse	Neglect, Physical Abuse & Emotional Abuse	Neglect, Physical Abuse	Physical Abuse	Physical and Emotional Abuse	Physical and Sexual Abuse	Sexual Abuse	
Under 1	6	10				1					17
1 to 4	21	15	3		3		2	1			45
5 to 9	22	18	6		1		4		1	1	53
10 to 15	25	16	2	3	2		2		2	1	53
16 to 18	6	4		3					1	1	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>183</b>

4.6.3 This information, in addition to the joint dataset described earlier in this report equips us to analyse the reasons why children and young people in Bridgend are deemed to be at risk, issues that are affecting the parenting that they are receiving and the services that need to be available to address these issues with the aim of preventing children from becoming looked after. By collecting and analysing information about the age profile we are also able to target specialist services to relevant groups. An example of this is the Baby in Mind Service described earlier in this report. The IPC report has also provided an analysis of our interventions and potential missed opportunities for unborn babies and children age 0 to 11 years and 13 – 17 years respectively. This will be used to inform the review of our existing service provision and options for the future.

#### 4.7 Independent review of the decision-making along the Looked After Children pathway by the Institute of Public Care

4.7.1 In November 2017, IPC undertook a review of the pathways experienced by 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. They looked at 35 children who became looked after during the period October 2016 to September 2017. The cases were randomly selected by Bridgend Borough Council from all the children who became looked after in that period. The cases were in the following categories:

- Unborn – where the family were referred during the pregnancy of the child who became looked after;
- Early intervention for children aged 0 to 11 years. Where the child referred was aged 0 to 11 years and there may have been opportunities for early intervention prior to the start of the child becoming looked after; and
- Early intervention for children who were teenagers. Where the child referred was aged 13 to 17 years and there may have been opportunities for early intervention prior to the start of the child becoming looked after.

4.7.2 The project involved four stages:



#### 4.7.3 IPC were asked to look specifically at:

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

#### 4.7.4 The recommendations of the review were:

- Strengthening of earlier assessments of pre-birth families;
- Review services that are available to parents following the removal of their children with a view of preventing future removals;
- Parenting and psychological assessments to be completed at Child Protection or Public Law Outline stage;
- Utilise Family Group Conferencing (FGCs) to assist in developing supportive family networks;
- Ensure completion of chronologies within cases;
- Improve consistency in social work assessment;
- Work with multi-agencies to improve information sharing;
- Ensure good quality supervision of cases is administered; and
- Review the impact early intervention services have to ensure that they are making a difference for children and families.

4.7.5 An action plan is being developed to progress the recommendations and will be overseen by the Early Help and Safeguarding Board.

## 5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 There is no effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 No Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to date.

## **7. Financial implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **8. Recommendation**

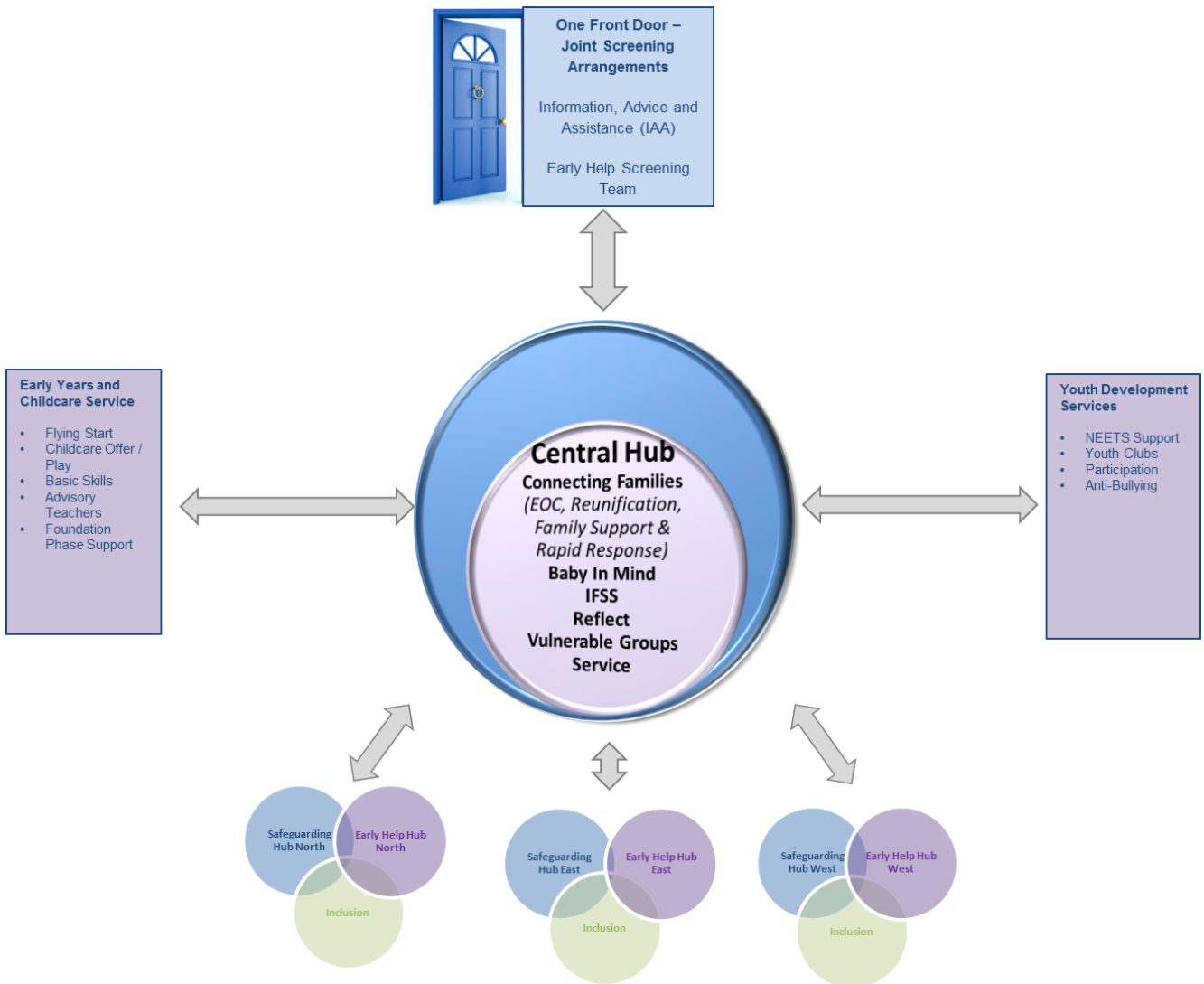
8.1 The Committee is requested to note and comment on the developments of the Early Help and Children Social Care services and their whole-system approach across the County Borough in reducing cases open to statutory services.

**Susan Cooper**  
**Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing**  
**March 2018**

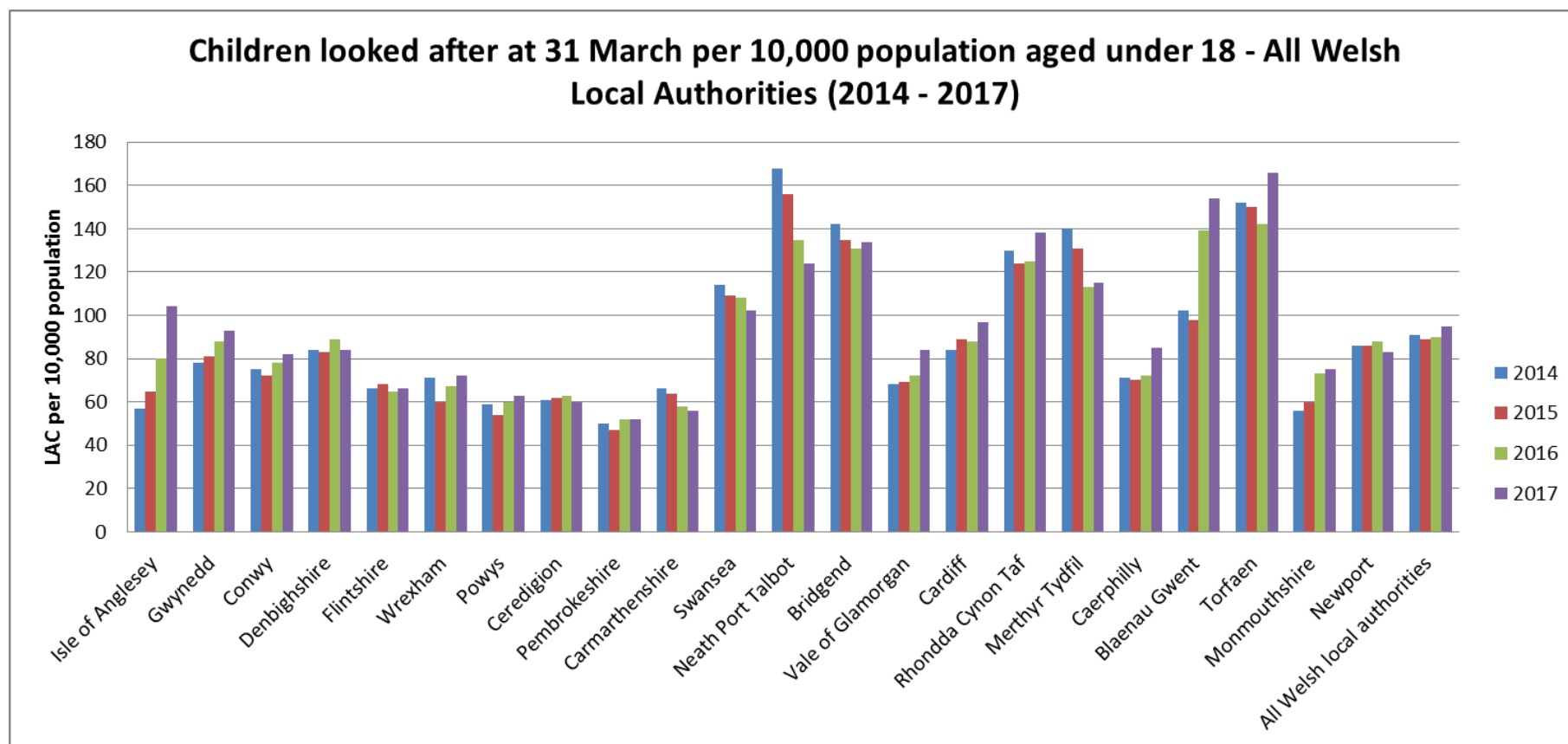
**Lindsay Harvey**  
**Interim Corporate Director, Education and Family Support**  
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# Appendix 1 - Central Hub Services



## Appendix 2 - Looked After Children Data



- The number of Looked After children in Bridgend per 10,000 of population aged under 18 decreased from 142 in 2014, to 131 in 2016.
- This figure increased slightly in 2017 to 134 per 10,000, however this is in line with the average across all Welsh Local Authorities, with 68% of Local Authorities reporting an increase in the LAC figures from 2016 to 2017.

## Shared Dataset for the Early Intervention & Safeguarding Board *(1 April 2016 – 31 December 2017)*

**Please Note:**

- 1. This data does not reflect all activity within Early Help Services (eg Education Welfare, Lead Worker, School-Based Counselling Services)**
- 2. All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**

## Section 1 - Requests for Help

**Table 1 - Requests for Help referrals received by agency**

Between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017, Safeguarding received 4274 referrals for **children and young people**. For the same period Early Help received 3966 **family referrals**.

Source of agency	Safeguarding Individual Referrals					Early Help Family Referrals				
	Total 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q3 2017-18	% (Q3 2017-18)	Q1 – Q3 2017-18	Total 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q3 2017-18	% (Q3 2017-18)	Q1 – Q3 2017-18
Central Government	15	6	1	0.2%	6	1	1	0	0.0%	7
Early Help	153	34	18	4.0%	53	133	32	57	8.2%	107
Education	365	89	94	21.1%	233	694	179	183	26.4%	444
Fire Service	8	0	0	0.0%	4	0	0	0	0.0%	0
Housing	26	9	7	1.6%	14	18	1	2	0.3%	6
Individuals	227	46	24	5.4%	95	86	14	26	3.8%	91
Other	4	2	0	0.0%	0	1	0	0	0.0%	7
Other Directorate in Local Authority	75	3	12	2.7%	28	34	5	14	2.0%	44
Other Local Authority	29	15	7	1.6%	47	13	3	8	1.2%	13
Police / Courts	1122	239	167	37.4%	493	5	2	29	4.2%	66
Primary Health	205	54	55	12.3%	136	458	105	178	25.7%	487
Probation	13	26	3	0.7%	11	0	0	2	0.3%	4
Private Service Provider	75	0	0	0.0%	3	12	4	0	0.0%	0
Secondary Health	175	40	7	1.6%	58	3	0	2	0.3%	7
Social Services	264	67	46	10.3%	127	574	136	176	25.4%	527
Voluntary Agency	157	24	5	1.1%	53	74	14	16	2.3%	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>2913</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1361</b>	<b>2106</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1860</b>

- Although the number of Safeguarding referrals received during Quarter 3 2017-18 is significantly lower than the Quarter 3 2016-17, it is consistent with number received during Quarter 1 & 2 2017-18.
- Whilst the Police remain the highest referrer to Safeguarding during Quarter 3 2017-18, there has been a 30% decrease in this referral source when compared to Quarter 3 2016-17.
- To date, during 2017-18 the highest referrer to Early Help is Social Services, making 527 of 1860 Requests for Help (28.3%).
- Referral numbers to Early Help between Quarters 1 & 3 for 2017-18 shows an increase of 39.7% (*difference of 197*) when compared to Requests for Help received between Quarters 1 & 3 of 2016-17.

**All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**



## Section 2 – Requests for Help from Social Services

**Table 1 – Requests for Help referrals made by Social Services to Early Help (*Family Referrals*)**

Agency	Total 2016-17	Quarter 3 2016-17	Quarter 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 % (2017-18)	Quarter 1 - Quarter 3 2017-18
<b>Children's Services Assessment Team</b>	212	54	60	<b>34.1%</b>	177
<b>Safeguarding East Hub</b>	92	21	43	<b>24.4%</b>	111
<b>Safeguarding North Hub</b>	115	28	21	<b>11.9%</b>	82
<b>Safeguarding West Hub</b>	60	12	19	<b>10.8%</b>	45
<b>Children's Services Community Home</b>	0	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	1
<b>Disabled Children's Team</b>	47	12	9	<b>5.1%</b>	28
<b>Just Ask Plus</b>	26	7	6	<b>3.4%</b>	27
<b>Foster Care Team</b>	1	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	1
<b>Connecting Families</b>	1	0	2	<b>1.1%</b>	4
<b>IFSS</b>	1	0	1	<b>0.6%</b>	2
<b>Western Bay Adoption Service</b>	0	0	3	<b>1.7%</b>	3
<b>Youth Justice &amp; Early Intervention</b>	4	0	1	<b>0.6%</b>	6
<b>Adult Services</b>	15	2	11	<b>6.3%</b>	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>527</b>

- Year to date (Quarter 1 to Quarter 3 2017-18) the number of referrals received by Early Help from Social Services has increased by 27.6% when compared with the same period last year.
- In 2016-17 the highest referrer from Social Services to Early Help was the Assessment Team, making 36.9% (212 / 574) of Requests for Help. Between Quarters 1 & 3 of 2016-17, 153 Requests for Help were made by the Assessment Team, and for the same period in 2017-18, 177 requests were made (*increase of 15.7%*).
- In addition to the referrals indicated in the table above, between Quarters 1 and 3 2017-18 Early Help received an further 116 referrals for families who were already receiving Early Help support – 19 referrals from the Assessment Team & 87 referrals from Safeguarding Hubs.

**All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**

**Table 2 - Number of Requests for Help received from the Assessment Team to Early Help (*Family Referrals*)**

Requests for Help received	Total 2016-17	Quarter 3 2016-17	Quarter 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 % (2017-18)	Quarter 1 & Quarter 3 2017-18
Referrals received following completion of the Care & Support Assessment	164	42	49	81.7%	119
Referrals received for those cases not requiring a Care & Support Assessment	48	12	11	18.3%	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>177</b>

- During 2016-17, 77.4% (164 / 212) of Requests for Help were made by the Assessment Team to Early Help following completion of a Care & Support Assessment. Between Q1 & Q3 2017-18, 67.2% (119 / 177) of Requests for Help were made by the Assessment Team to Early Help following completion of a Care & Support Assessment.
- Of the referrals received from the Assessment Team between Quarter 1 & 3 for 2017-18, 32.8% (58 / 177) of the families did not receive a Care & Support Assessment from the Assessment Team.
- During Quarters 1 to 3 2017-18, in addition to these referrals, 19 referrals were received from the Assessment Team for families where support was already in place, and 51 Requests for Help were passed directly on to Early Help by the Assessment Team (*where the referral form was completed by another service*). In 92.2% (47 / 51) of cases these referrals were PPN's submitted to the Assessment Team from the Police.

**All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**

**Table 3 - Number of Requests for Help received from Safeguarding Teams requesting Step Down support (*Family Referrals received between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017*)**

Requests for Help received	Total 2016-17	Quarter 3 2016-17	Quarter 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 % (2017-18)	Quarter 1 & Quarter 3 2017-18
Safeguarding East	11	3	15	65.2%	25
Safeguarding North	12	7	6	26.1%	28
Safeguarding West	4	0	2	8.7%	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>66</b>

- **Between Quarters 1 & 3 2017-18 there have been 66 Requests for Help from the Safeguarding Teams requesting Step Down support. This has exceeded the number of the requests received during the same period in 2016-17 by 200.0% (difference of 44).**
- A number of cases were stepped down as part of the Care and Support Case Project; however, some of these requests may not be included in these figures.

**All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**

**Table 4 – Outcome of Requests for Step Down support (*Family Referrals* received between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017)**

Safeguarding Outcomes	Total No. Step Down Requests	% of Step Down Requests
Case closed to Children’s Social Care (CSC) following Step Down request	80	86.0%
Case remains open to Children’s Social Care (CSC)	5	5.4%
Case did not close to Children’s Social Care (CSC) following Step Down request, case is now closed	8	8.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

- Of the 93 requests for Step Down support submitted, 13 (14.0%) families were already receiving support from Early Help services.
- Of the 80 families closed to Safeguarding following a Step Down request, the Assessment team have not received a re-referral for 62.5% (50 / 80) of the families during the 12 month period following receipt of the Step Down request.
  - ➔ Of the 30 families that were re-referred to the Assessment Team 36.7% (11 / 30) of the families were closed & logged, and 63.3% (19 / 30) of the families received a Care & Support Assessment as a result of the new referrals.
- Of the step down requests, 54 of the referrals have closed to Early Help services.
  - ➔ Of these, 40.7% (22 / 54) closed with successful outcomes (*Closed – All Work Completed, or closed to Single Agency Support*).
  - ➔ 29.6% (16 / 54) of these families have been re-referred to Early Help teams during the 12 month period following the step down request. Of the 16, 2 did not engage, 1 was passed on for single agency support, and 13 families have received support from Early Help or Connecting Families services.
  - ➔ 3 families have been referred again for Step Down support.
- Of the 93 requests for Step Down support submitted to Early Help, 30.1% (28 / 93) families have closed fully to both Safeguarding & Early Help Services and have not been re-referred to either services during the 12 month period following the Step Down request.

**All Early Help data reflects family referrals, not individual children, unless otherwise indicated**

### Section 3 – Assessment Team Re-referrals

**Table 1 – Number of Re-referrals to the Assessment Team (Referrals received between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017)**

Please note that this table compares arrangements / requirements pre and post Social Services & Wellbeing Act, therefore data is not directly comparable with 2017/18 reporting year

Re-referrals to the Assessment Team	2016-17	
Total Number of Safeguarding referrals period	2913	
Total number of individual children referred into Safeguarding in 2016-17	2357	NA
No. individuals that had a referral in the previous 12 months	610	25.9%
→ Of which, had an Early Help Referral during the previous 12 months	214	35.1%
→ Of the children re-referred the number that resulted in a Care and Support Plan	162	26.6%
→ Of the children re-referred, the number whose names were added to the CPR in 2016-17	39	6.4%
→ Of the children re-referred, the number who became Looked After in 2016-17	4	0.7%

**Table 2 – Number of Re-referrals to the Assessment Team (Quarters 1 - 3 2016-17 & Quarters 1 - 3 2017-18)**

Re-referrals to the Assessment Team	Quarter 1 2017-18		Quarter 2 2017-18		Quarter 3 2017-18	
Total Number of Safeguarding referrals	520		395		446	
Total number of individual children referred into Safeguarding	505	NA	383	NA	439	NA
No. individuals that had a referral in the previous 12 months	178	35.20%	120	31.30%	106	31.30%
→ Of which, had an Early Help Referral during the previous 15 months	63	12.50%	80	20.90%	72	31.60%
→ Of the children re-referred the number that resulted in a Care and Support Plan	25	5.00%	17*	4.40%	19	4.40%
→ Of the children re-referred, the number whose names were added to the CPR	13	2.60%	5	1.30%	5	1.30%
→ Of the children re-referred, the number who became Looked After	2	0.40%	1	0.30%	1	0.30%

\* In some cases the care & support assessment is still ongoing so the outcome is not yet known

- Since Quarter 1 the referral rate has dropped by 3.9% compared to Quarter 3.

## Section 4 – Looked After Data

**Table 1 – Number of children who became Looked After between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017**

The number of Looked After children as of 31 December 2017 was 383.

Between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017 there were 144 episodes of LAC, of which 141\* individuals became Looked After. Of these 79 were individual children, and there were 25 sibling groups.

\*1 individual has been counted in both 2016-17 & 2017-18 Quarter 2 figures, due to becoming Looked After in both periods.

Became Looked After	2016-2017	Quarters 1 - 3 2016-17	Quarters 1 - 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 2016-17	Quarter 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 % (2017-18)
No of individuals BLA	97	84	44	18	11	100.0%
No. receiving Early Help support at BLA Date	48	41	24	15	5	45.5%
No. receiving new or additional support during 6 month period since BLA Date	58	49	27**	10	7**	63.6%

\*\*In some cases the 6 month period since BLA date has not yet passed, more families may be referred for Early Help support

- During Quarters 1 to 3 of 2017-18 there were 46 episodes of LAC (44 individuals BLA). This is a 45.9% decrease on the 85 episodes of LAC between Quarter 1 and 3 of 2016-17(84 individuals BLA).
- 11 individuals became Looked After during Quarter 3 2017-18. Of these, 5 were receiving support from Early Help at the BLA date, 4 of which were referred to Early Help less than 1 month prior to Becoming Looked After
- Of the children who became Looked After between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017, 51.1% (72 / 141) were allocated to Early Help for support at the BLA Date.
  - ➔ Of the 72 children allocated to Early Help for support at BLA date, 47.2% (34 / 72) of the referrals were received less than 2 months prior to the BLA date.
  - ➔ Although the remaining 38 families were referred to Early Help over 2 months prior to Becoming Looked After, in 12 cases the children were removed at birth (31.6%).
  - ➔ Of the children who were allocated to Early Help for support at BLA Date, 48.6% (35 / 72) were allocated for support from the Connecting Families Team. 54.3% (19 / 35) of the families were referred to Connecting Families less than 2 months prior to the BLA date; and of the remaining 16 families, in 4 cases the children were removed at birth, and a further 6 were aged under 4 years old.

**Table 2 – Number of children who ceased to be Looked After between April 1 2016 to December 31 2017**

Between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017 there were 140 episodes where children ceased to be Looked After, of which 137\* individuals ceased to be Looked After. Of these 112 were individual children, and there were 11 sibling groups.

\*1 individual has been counted in both 2016-17 & 2017-18 Quarter 2 figures, due to becoming Looked After in both periods.

Ceased to be Looked After	Total 2016-17	Quarters 1 - 3 2016-18	Quarters 1 - 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 2016-17	Quarter 3 2017-18	Quarter 3 % 2017-18
<b>No of individuals CLA</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>No. of individuals who received Early Help support during LAC Period</b>	36	29	27	8	3	<b>25.0%</b>
<b>No. receiving new or additional support during 6 month period since CLA Date</b>	16	13	5**	1	2**	<b>16.7%</b>

\*\* In some cases the 6 month period since CLA date has not yet passed, more families may be referred for Early Help support

- During Quarters 1 to 3 of 2017-18 there were 52 episodes of children ceasing to be Looked After. This is a 34.2% reduction on the 79 episodes between Quarters 1 and 3 of 2016-17 (76 individuals CLA).
- Of the children who ceased to be Looked After between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017, 35% were aged under 4 years, 17.5% aged 4-12 years, 43.8% aged 13-17 years, and 3.6% aged over 18 years of age.
- Of the children who ceased to be Looked After between April 1 2016 and December 31 2017, 48.9% (67 / 137) were allocated to Early Help for support during the LAC period
- Of the families who were allocated to Early Help for support throughout the LAC period, or since CLA date, 70.8% (51 / 72) were allocated for support from the Connecting Families Team.

## **Appendix 4 - Breakdown of placement type:**

**Care Order (CO) S.31 Childrens Act 1989** – The Local Authority shares parental responsibility (PR) for children and has placed them in a regulated placement. A regulated placement is with approved foster carers.

**Interim Care Orders (ICO)** – The Local Authority shares PR for children and has placed them in a regulated placement for the duration of care proceedings, the final care plan for the child has not yet been agreed by the Court.

**Voluntary accommodation S76 SSWBA** – children have been voluntarily accommodated with the consent of their parents into the care of the Local Authority often whilst assessments are undertaken or via the Public Law Outline (PLO) process where parents retain PR.

**Regulation 26 of the Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations (Wales 2015)** – immediate or emergency placement of children with relatives or family friends under a temporary approval agreement. These placements are overseen and managed within the Local Authority often whilst a full unified assessment is undertaken as part of care proceedings.

**Placement with Parents (PWP) S16 Social Services and Wellbeing Act (SSWBA)** – Children who are accommodated under a care order but placed with their parents upon the conclusion of care proceedings, (or sometimes under an interim care order whilst the court proceedings are ongoing)

**S.38(6) placements, Children Act 1989** – The Court directs that children are placed with family members in an unregulated placement for the purposes of assessment. The Local Authority whilst working the case does not have responsibility or management of those placements and the Court accepts that risk.

**Remanded into custody** - All children and young people who are remanded into custody become “Looked After” children.

**Placed for adoption** – Placed with prospective adoptive parents prior to the application and granting of an Adoption Order. Once an Adoption Order is granted children cease to be “Looked After” children.